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MOSES AND THE FIRST FIVE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

ORIGINAL TITLE: THE MOSAIC ORIGIN OF THE
PENTATEUCHAL CODES

BY

GEERHARDUS VOS

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Chapter One^(TOC)

Statement and Division of the Subject

The subject defined by this title is one of very complicated and comprehensive character. Especially since Pentateuch-Criticism has become pre-eminently historical in its most advanced leaders—the school of Reuss, Kuenen, Wellhausen, and others—the field of investigation has been so enlarged, and the various arguments have assumed such complex relations to each other, that more space would be required for a full discussion than we can allow ourselves. Pentateuch-Criticism has, to a very large extent, been reduced to a question of facts. A detailed examination of facts must furnish the basis upon which all debate must at present be conducted between the conservative and destructive critics. On account of this comprehensiveness, it will be necessary to define our subject, that every thing which does not properly belong to it, or is not vitally connected with it, may be excluded at the outset.

1. We do not intend to discuss the authenticity of the Pentateuch, but only the Mosaic origin of the Codes which it contains. The latter is independent of the former, though the reverse may not be true. Both questions are connected in so far that the establishment of the Mosaic origin of the Codes would furnish one of the strongest arguments for the authenticity of the whole, since the narrative is in most cases subsidiary to the legislation, and serves as its framework.

2. By the predication of Mosaic origin is not meant that every statute and regulation in particular can be proven to have emanated from the mouth of Moses. From the nature of the case, such proof can never be given. Neither will it be possible to show that the *ipsissima verba* of the law in its present form descend from Moses. All that we intend to make a point of inquiry is, *whether the bulk and essence of the Pentateuchal Codes, in so far as they exhibit the evidences of being one great system of legislation, bear the impress of the Mosaic age.* The origin of each individual part must be estimated by its relation to this systematic whole.
3. The questions whether Moses promulgated the laws that pass under his name, and whether he codified them in written form, should be kept distinct. Abstractly they admit of being separated. How far such separation is supposable in this concrete case will appear hereafter.
4. The problem may be stated in a somewhat different form; viz., whether the law be the immediate product of divine revelation, complete from the first, and not admitting of development, or the final outcome of a long process of growth, oftentimes changed before it petrified into its present form. Is the law soil and seed, or is it the fruit of the religious development of Israel? All these contrasts are nearly synonymous with the great alternative—Mosaic, or non-Mosaic? The former naturally represents revelation, the latter development. Hence it appears that the unity of the Codes must occupy an important place in the discussion.

5. Our subject is one of wide and important bearings, not only in the department of Criticism, but also of Apologetics. It touches the heart of the Christian conception of revelation. Criticism on the part of our opponents has long since left its independent position, and become subservient to naturalistic tendencies. It manifests a spirit of enmity against the very material upon which it works. The innocent literary aspect of the question has been lost: it is no longer a matter of dilettantism, but of pressing and practical importance, which cannot be confined to the lecture-rooms and studies of the learned, but claims the interest of the Church at large.

We shall endeavor to arrange the numerous questions involved under certain general heads, and choose the following scheme—

I. Unity of the Pentateuchal Codes.

A. Unity of the laws in Exodus-Numbers

1. The linguistic and literary argument.
2. Incompleteness of the Codes.
3. System, or disorder?
4. Contradictions.
5. Repetitions.
6. Development of law.

B. Unity of Deuteronomy and the laws of the intermediate books.

1. Does a unity of relation exist between Deuteronomy and the Codes of the middle books?
2. If so, to which of the two must we assign the priority?

II. Internal evidence of the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuchal Codes.

A. Internal evidence of the Mosaic origin of the Deuteronomic Code.

1. Direct testimony of the Code to its own origin.
2. Indirect internal testimony.
3. The fraud-theory.

B. Internal evidence of the Mosaic origin of the laws in Exodus-Numbers

1. Direct testimony of the laws to their own origin
 - a. Simply Mosaic origin claimed.
 - b. Codification of laws in written form.
2. Indirect internal evidence.

III. External evidence of the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuchal Codes.

A. The testimony of the historical books, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel 1 and 2 Kings.

B. Testimony of the early prophets, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Micah.

C. Testimony of the poetical books.

D. 2 Kings 22 and Nehemiah 8-10.

Chapter Two^(TOC)

History of the Linguistic Argument

The critical examination of the linguistic character of the Pentateuch has been carried on with a double purpose: **a.** To obtain the criteria for an analytical distribution of its contents among the various documents which critics profess to find; **b.** To fix the relative date of these documents. Whilst in the latter respect, however, the linguistic argument is no longer counted as a decisive factor, it has been elaborated for the former purpose to such a degree of minuteness, and with such consummate skill, that at present it constitutes one of the most perplexing phenomena for those who defend the essential unity of the Pentateuch.

For a just estimate of the character and force of the argument, it will be necessary to exhibit not only its historical connection with the discovery of Astruc, but also its logical dependence on the latter. The critics have gradually detached the one from the other, apparently unconscious that in doing so they have destroyed the very basis on which they rest. We must start with a recognition of the very remarkable use of the divine names in Genesis and the first chapters of Exodus. The question, what is the cause of this, cannot be ultimately decided by an interpretation of the much discussed passage, Exodus 6:2, 3. If we understand it in the sense that the name Jahveh was previously to this absolutely unknown to the patriarchs and Israelites, it follows immediately that the writer of this passage cannot be the author of the Jehovistic passages which precede, unless we take recourse with Clericus and others to the assumption of a prolepsis, which, however, as Hengstenberg has

shown, will not account for the facts. But when we take the passage in its other more probable sense, that God had not previously revealed to Israel those special attributes which constitute him Jahveh, it does not follow immediately, that, by this different interpretation, the interchange of both names is satisfactorily explained. To show that the writer of Exodus 6:2, 3, did not absolutely deny the previous knowledge of the name Jahveh, is quite a different thing from explaining how he, acquainted with the facts, could have used both names in the course of the same work in such a peculiar manner.

In favor of the former interpretation, attention has been called to the fact, that, in the Hebrew mind, there was a very intimate connection between the name and the nature of a thing; that the name is never accidental or arbitrary, but the expression of the nature; that consequently not to know God as to his name Jahveh, is equivalent to a not-knowing of his nature as such and the reverse. Nature and name are so indissolubly connected, that, where knowledge of the former is wanting, acquaintance with the latter cannot be imagined. We must admit that there is an amount of truth in this statement: still, it is not sufficient to disprove the possibility of an external proclamation of the divine name previous and preparatory to the actual exhibition of its meaning. Exodus 3:13-15 furnishes a parallel, and shows that nothing else is intended than an announcement of God's purpose to manifest himself in those attributes of his nature emphasized in the name Jahveh, which had already existed, and been used before. As has been remarked, however, this by no means decides the bearing of the passage on the unity of Genesis or the Pentateuch. The point at issue is, whether the various theories which have been proposed by critics in connection with this interpretation can be fairly said to account for the fact, that, in certain portions, Jahveh is used exclusively, in others Elohim, whilst still others are of a mixed character. We

must examine the various explanations presented, before we can have any argument, either for unity or diversity of authorship.

The most plausible theory is that of Hengstenberg, Keil, Hävernick, and Kurtz (who afterwards, however, adopted the supplementary hypothesis). They ascribe the alternation of Jahveh and Elohim to intentional adjustment on the part of the writer to the historical circumstances and contents. It is certainly true that both names are not synonymous; but the question remains, whether the difference in their signification accounts for their appearance in all the passages under consideration. It creates a strong presumption against the theory that all these writers, notwithstanding their agreement in principle, still, when they come to apply it in individual cases, differ widely. This shows that their ingenious explanations have not been suggested by the circumstances themselves, but by their own subjective fancy imposed upon them. The very grounds which should have induced the writer to choose one of the names in a certain passage can be shown to have existed for another passage, where the other name is used. Even the principle of Keil, which is that of Hengstenberg in a refined form, does not agree with the facts. The weakness of the whole theory is admitted by a man like Delitzsch. He confesses, that all the ingenuity which Keil has expended on the matter to explain the use of Jahveh or Elohim in each single instance, from their original meaning, might have been applied with the same success had the names been employed in exactly the reverse order. Both Drechsler and Kurtz have retracted their former opinion, which was substantially the same with that of Hengstenberg.

Others have considered the preference of either one of the divine names as due to the peculiarity of the speakers who are introduced by the writer. But this explanation, besides being unsatisfactory in other respects, is only a

partial one; as it does not account for the same phenomenon where no persons appear speaking in the narrative.

Some have appealed to mere accident, or to a striving after variety on the part of the author. Delitzsch admits the possibility that the author of Genesis could have used both names alternately, and adduces the Jahveh-and Elohim-Psalms as a parallel. He quotes also Genesis 7:16, 27:27, 28; Exodus 3:4, and other passages. Indeed, if all the passages under consideration were of a similar character, this would be the most easy and simple explanation. But what may be possible abstractly, and even in a few actual cases, becomes highly improbable, nay impossible, when taken as a theory to account for all the phenomena from Genesis 1:1 to Exodus 6:2.

Now, if we could satisfy ourselves with one of these theories, the other evidence which the critics claim to possess of a diversity of authorship would have but little weight. It is of a strictly linguistic character; and how largely the subjective element enters into all such argumentation, needs no special proof. When taken by itself, deprived of the accompanying use of the special divine name, it becomes weak and inconclusive. More than one, to whom the internal literary evidence of analytical criticism has been presented in this light, has been astonished at the credulity of the critics and the extremely fine webs on which their structures are suspended. But here, as in other cases, the evidence is cumulative and mutually sustaining. The strength of their position with regard to the use of the divine names enables the critics seemingly to justify and commend their analytical researches to an extent and with a success which would otherwise have been impossible. Long since, traces of a peculiar *usus loquendi* have been sought, in Elohist sections specially.

We are told, that **hzx**) and **wnyMl** and **hzh mwyh mc(b**, etc., are favorite words and phrases of the Elohist; and they appear wherever the name

Elohim appears, as its inseparable satellites. Proceeding on this principle, the critics divide Genesis; and they all agree as to the main results. The bearing of this startling fact upon our question is self-evident. If it can be proved that Genesis consists of at least two documents, and that the writer of each had a plan in mind to continue his narrative until the possession of the Holy Land by the Israelites, the suggestion becomes a natural one to attempt to apply the same tests, so successfully employed in analyzing Genesis, to the subsequent books of the Pentateuch also. And, in fact, the critics claim that they are able to assign each law, or Code, to its original document; and, as far as analysis is concerned, in the main their results agree.

We do not see how the objections to the unity of Genesis on the ground just stated can be answered; neither do we know of any satisfactory answer that has been given as yet. But whilst we cannot enter upon a discussion of this matter, which would open up a field of critical research scarcely less extensive than that of our own subject, we simply wish to indicate how closely the two problems are interwoven. The treatment and solution of the one will necessarily affect that of the other. It is only within the limits to which we are confined that the destructive tendencies of the documentary hypothesis burst upon us in their full light. One might accept it for Genesis, without yielding to the critics in the least with regard to its Mosaic origin. But how can we vindicate this claim if driven to the confession, that the history of the Mosaic age itself has reached us in two distinct documents, bearing the same distinctive marks as in Genesis, and thereby proving themselves to be their continuation? And not to speak of Mosaic origin, how, and to what extent, can we claim unity for a Code that appears to be made up of at least two such documents? It is easy to see how much depends on the answer that we shall give to these and similar questions. If it should become evident that the extreme conservative position with regard to the unity of Genesis has to

be abandoned, we can comfort ourselves with the thought that Moses might be, after all, the redactor, and in a modified sense the author, of Genesis. The critical attack does not reach the heart of our camp. It is different here. The vital point around which criticism has moved for several decades in concentric circles, is now made the point of a double attack along the historical and literary lines. Will it prove tenable?

Before we try to answer this question, it may be well to remark,^[1] that the history of the linguistic argument is not adapted to inspire confidence in its validity. It was considered from the outset, even by advanced and rationalistic critics, with distrust and reserve. Apart from a few general observations in this line by Spinoza, Simon, and Clericus; apart from Astruc's theory, and the scanty remarks of Eichhorn under the pretentious title, "Proof from the Language,"—Ilgen, who first introduced the terms Elohist and Jehovist, was also the first to point out certain peculiarities in style and expressions, and meaning of words; e.g., that the Elohist avoided the use of pronouns, had a tendency towards redundancy, etc. In the main, the argument was either met by direct refutation, or at least by the claim that the materials were not distinct and conspicuous enough to justify the inference of diversity of authorship and of sources. The latter was the prevalent opinion among such men as Hasse, Herbst, Jahn, Sack, and even Ewald. In 1807 De Wette declared that he would not undertake to eliminate the original source from Genesis and the first chapters of Exodus by a purely literary process. The argument found no more favor with Hartmann, who pronounced it perilous and misleading. So largely did this sentiment of aversion and distrust prevail among the critics, that Gesenius, in his "History of the Hebrew Language" (1815), disregarded the claims of Eichhorn and Ilgen entirely. The fragmentary hypothesis was in no wise favorable to the literary criticism. Vater, having established, as he thought, by other than linguistic arguments,

the existence of various fragments, expended no labor on that which he esteemed himself fully able to dispense with.

In 1823 the fourth edition of Eichhorn's introduction appeared, and wrought a remarkable change in the indifference with which the argument from language had hitherto been dismissed or ignored. Gramberg worked in the line indicated by Eichhorn, and analyzed Genesis. His methods drew the assent of De Wette, and made even Hartmann less persistent in his opposition; though the latter continued to characterize the linguistic criteria as "*indicia fallacia*." In the mean while Vater's and Hartmann's criticism had this effect, that it distracted the attention of conservative critics from Genesis, and kept them occupied with the attempt to prove that the laws of Deuteronomy did not essentially differ from those of the preceding books, and that the whole Pentateuch was to be assigned to the Mosaic age. Hengstenberg, Ranke, and Hävernick, however eminent their achievements on other lines may be, did little thorough and complete work in this direction. Drechsler, though he found much to criticize in the critics from a formal point of view, did not assail their main position. In the main, critics on the conservative side were little concerned about the literary weapons which their opponents were handling with such destructive skill and agility. Herbst thought, in 1841, that he could dismiss the matter without discussion; and Welte, though not wholly omitting it, considered it to be "of very slight importance." On the other side, it was chiefly Stähelin who accomplished the work begun by Eichhorn and others. In 1831, and afterwards in 1844, he gave the linguistic characteristics of Genesis a thorough examination, and turned his attention also to the peculiarities of the Jehovist. To Stähelin's statements, very little that is essential has been added since.

The year 1844 indicated a marked change in the attitude of both parties.

Kurtz applied himself to a subtle examination of all that had been claimed in support of the divisive theory, and instituted an accurate and scrutinizing inquiry into the nature and validity of the whole argumentation. His example had this good effect, that henceforth believing critics no longer refrained from meeting their opponents on this field also; though it must be added, that the battle thus auspiciously begun did not issue in their favor. The interest thus awakened, disposed believing scholars to give the matter an unprejudiced and fair consideration; and even Kurtz, who had entered the lists as a defender of the unity of the Pentateuch, was induced by Delitzsch to join the ranks of the Supplementarists. (Second edition of the "History of the Old Covenant," 1858.) But it appeared that Criticism had run, as yet, only half of its course, and could not abide long on the same level with men like Delitzsch and Kurtz. Having gradually won their consent, it now went on to gain new laurels in the construction of ingenious hypotheses. The literary argument had become stale, and could be left with the conservative critics. Hupfeld appeared (1853) with his denial that the Jehovist had supplemented the Elohist; and now not the diversity of both, but their independence of one another, immediately absorbed universal attention. It lay in the nature of the case, that Hupfeld tried to establish his position, not so much by literary criticism as by tracing the nexus of the history. Since the fall of the supplementary hypothesis, and the general acceptance of the documentary hypothesis, the linguistic argument came, if not into disrepute, at least into neglect among the critics. Then the school of Kuenen, Graf, and Wellhausen, with its revival of the historical methods of George, Vatke, and Reuss, took the lead; and, the question having been thus put on a historical basis, the corresponding literary side lost much of the attention it had attracted so largely in former days. Since then, though the critics go on to apply their criteria, and put every line of the Pentateuch to this test, little that is new has

been added. Kayser, who has attempted to supply the Graf-Wellhausen theory with a literary basis, uses the argument outside of Genesis only. Kleinert speaks ambiguously of its value. Dillmann has carefully sifted the rich collections of Knobel. Wellhausen finally contents himself with the remark, that it is settled among scholars, that the sections in Genesis which he ascribes to the Jehovist and the second Elohist (JE), are as distinct from the Elohist portions as they are cognate to each other. Neither, however, is proved, or rests on any more than the gratuitous assumption, that the literary argument has met with unqualified approval in every quarter. With how little right this can be claimed, our short historical sketch has sufficiently shown.

Before turning to the evidence itself, we must make some preliminary remarks, which shall guide us in its examination. They are chiefly the following—

1. There must be, in the first instance, some reasonable ground why the critical analysis should be applied to the Pentateuchal Code, to justify any use being made of it whatever. If there be no presumptive evidence that it consists of various documents, it will be justly condemned as a most arbitrary and unscientific procedure to divide it into several pieces, more or less strongly marked by linguistic or stylistic peculiarities. The question is not whether the process admits of being made plausible by apparently striking results, but whether it be necessary, or at least natural, on *a priori* considerations. We might take a chapter or poem of any one author, sunder out a page, note the striking expressions, then examine the other parts of the work, combine all the passages where the same terms appear, give them the name of a document, and finally

declare that all the rest constitutes a second document, and that the two were interwoven by the hand of a redactor so as to form now an apparent unity. Our first demand, therefore, is that the critical analysis shall rest on a solid foundation, and show its credentials beforehand. So long as this rule is not strictly observed, the analytical methods will be open to the criticism of having created their own criteria; so that it is no wonder, if in the end they seem to be verified by consistent or even plausible results. If we first fabricate our criteria so as to suit the phenomena under consideration, it is no longer a startling fact when these phenomena afterwards appear to fall in with our critical canons.

2. A direct inference from the principle just stated is, that the argument from style and diction has no independent value, unless the differences be so marked, and in such a degree irreconcilable with unity of authorship, that they impress any reader of ordinary discriminating literary taste at first sight. To argue from a few bare phrases and isolated words is simply absurd. The evidence, if it be valid at all, must bear out the literary idiosyncrasy of the author: it must not only be complete and manifold, but constitute one cognate whole. We do not believe that, in the light of this canon, the results of critical analysis will stand very favorably. For centuries and centuries the pretended differences were not discovered, which is a *de facto* proof that they are not of such a nature as may be rightly demanded for independent argumentation.
3. Before a fair conclusion can be reached, we must eliminate

the influence which the diversity of subject-matter will always have on both diction and style. Legal language constitutes a genus by itself, and can be judged only by its own characteristics. Furthermore, it is admitted on both sides that the Elohist wrote or copied priestly, ritual law; whilst the Jehovist legislation is chiefly concerned with laying down the fundamental principles of civil life. Now, it is self-evident that the same author, writing on both lines, would be obliged to use a different terminology in each case. The ritual has its own ideas and conceptions, for which certain words are exclusively employed; and so with civil law. The idiom of neither can be expected to re-appear in the other. Only when two laws treat of the same topic, and an actual diversity as defined in the preceding paragraph exists, can we draw a valid inference of diversity of authorship.

4. Due importance must likewise be attached to the context and the situation in which the alleged peculiarities appear. That they recur in certain passages cannot be taken as proof that these together form a separate document. On the contrary, the assertion will stand unproved so long as it is possible that other influences may have caused the appearance of such characteristic expressions in all instances under consideration. We have no right to limit the writers in their selection of phrases, or to confine them to the use of one set of words. Neither can the privilege of employing synonyms be denied them. They may consult their subjective taste, which is always more or less fluctuating, have regard to rhythm in the construction of their sentences, and in many ways be

influenced by what they think conducive to fullness and elegance of diction. What the critics must show, is that one class of phenomena testifies to such a developed taste in grammar and style as would render the other class of phenomena insupposable in the same writer. And since it is not possible, in view of our partial acquaintance with the Hebrew, to determine by what considerations the writer may have been led in the use of his vocabulary, or the shaping of his sentences, we must insist upon it, that the critics on their part show the impossibility that such causes should have been at work as might account for the facts consistently with unity of authorship. We must continually remember, that in this whole matter the burden of proof lies on the other side.

5. The critics constantly indulge in certain favorite practices which strongly tend to destroy any thing objective in their argument. One of these is to take a single verse, or half a verse, or even a smaller portion still, out of its natural connection, and attach it to a section from which it is remotely separated, for the simple reason that it does not conform to their literary canons. The method looks very innocent, but it is at bottom extremely deceptive in a twofold aspect: **a.** It begs the question, for thus all traces of an Elohist *usus loquendi* may be eliminated from Jehovistic sections and the reverse; if this be allowed, the argument might as well be given up. **b.** What the critics in reality do by this method, is just by a dexterous but suspicious movement to turn in their favor what is in fact against them. That an Elohist phrase all at once makes its appearance in the midst of a purely Jehovistic

environment, is a most perplexing difficulty, which cannot be relieved by declaring it the result of a variety of hands which have been at work upon the composition of the Pentateuch. For it is a sound critical axiom, that diversity of style and diction can only be verified by a comparison of lengthy passages, whose *usus loquendi* is exclusive. Isolated exceptional cases turn back upon the theory, and prove exactly the opposite; viz., that the criteria intermingle, which is tantamount to saying that they are no criteria at all. In every instance in which such a mixture appears, critics must leave it alone; and we have a right to claim it as evidence on our side. Another practice, of which we have a right to complain, is the frequent calling in of a redactor to do away with troublesome facts. When the Sinaitic Decalogue is found to contain certain characteristically Deuteronomic expressions, Wellhausen is ready to assume a Jehovistic redaction to account for it. We need hardly say, that to such cases the same maxim applies which was laid down a moment ago. To us the redactor is as yet no living personality: our belief in his existence will, to a large extent, depend on the estimate we shall put on the critical analysis. It is very obvious, therefore, that to fall back on his mysterious influence for the removal of difficulties, invokes an open *petitio principii*.

Chapter Three^(TOC)

The Linguistic Argument Examined

When we test the claims of the critics by these principles, the first question is, what *a priori* right have they to analyze the Pentateuchal Codes? The most plausible answer refers us to the use of the divine names in Genesis in connection with the fact, that the writers of the Elohist and Jehovistic documents had evidently both planned a history covering the time from creation down to the conquest of the Holy Land. Here, however, a difficulty appears. The whole body of Pentateuchal legislation falls after Exodus 6:2, 3; and so the basis on which the right of analysis would rest, breaks down immediately. And, as to the prospective features of the Elohist and Jehovistic documents, they are most easily accounted for by ascribing them to the redaction of Moses, who may have combined the two so as to form a real unity.

Still, we must admit that these considerations, whilst they deprive the argument of independent value, do not entirely destroy its basis. There can be no objection against here also using the criteria furnished by an analysis of Genesis, where there certainly exists, in the alternation of divine names, an *a priori* right to attempt the analysis. If it were possible to show that they re-appear after Exodus 6:2, 3, with the same, or even greater, frequency and regularity, in lengthy coherent passages, which admit of an easy and natural separation from their context, in that case it might not be easy to dispute further the claims of critical analysis to the whole domain of the Pentateuch. Both Kuenen ("Hist. krit. Onderz.," 1861, i. p. 85) and Delitzsch ("Genesis,"

4te Ausg., p. 30) put the argument on this basis. As we shall see hereafter, in the hands of less cautious critics it has long since outgrown these modest beginnings. As far as we have been able to ascertain, the following words and phrases, considered as belonging to the Elohist *usus loquendi* of Genesis, re-appear after Exodus 6:2, 3. Where they are not too numerous, we shall add the references.

1. **myrgM** (*sojournings* or *pilgrimage*), *passim* in Genesis; Exodus 6:4.
2. **hzx** (*possession*), ten times before Exodus 6:4, *passim* in Leviticus—Numbers, once in an Elohist passage of Deuteronomy 32:49.
3. **mkytrdl** and **mtrdl** and **wytrdl**, and **wytrdb** (*in his, their, or your generations*), four times before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 6:9, 17:7, 9, 12; *passim* in the middle books.
4. **wnyMl** or **whnyMl** and **hnyMl** and **mhnyMl** (*after his, her, or their kind*), sixteen times before Exodus 6:4, nine times in Leviticus, four times in Deuteronomy.
5. **hzh** and **mwyh** and **mc(b)** (*in the self-same day*), three times before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 7:13, 17:23, 26; three times in Exodus 12:17, 41, 51; five times in Leviticus 23:14 and (**mc(d)**), and 21, 28, 29, 30; once in an Elohist passage of Deuteronomy 32:48.
6. **tyrb myqh** (*establish a covenant*), six times before Exodus

6:4; once in Exodus 6:4; once in Leviticus 26:9; once in Deuteronomy 8:18 (**tyrb Ntn**, Genesis 17:2, Numbers 25:12).

7. **rkn-Nb** (*stranger*), twice before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 17:12, 27; once in Exodus 12:43; once in Leviticus 22:25.
8. **)y#n** (*prince*), four times before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 17:20, 23:6, 25:16, 34:2; four times in Exodus 16:22, 22:28, 34:31, 35:27; once in Leviticus 4:22; sixty-two times in Numbers.
9. The Hiphil of **dly** (*beget*), fifty-eight times before Exodus 6:4; once in Leviticus 25:45; twice in Numbers 26:29, 58; twice in Deuteronomy 4:25, 28:41.
10. **hnqM** (*bought* or *price*), five times before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 17:12, 13, 23, 27, 23:18; once in Exodus 12:44; four times in Leviticus 25:16, 51, 27:22.
11. **MIw(** (*for ever*), with a noun in construction, eight times before Exodus 6:4; thirty-eight times in Exodus—Numbers; four times in Deuteronomy 13:16, 15:17, 33:15, 27.
12. **rkz-lk** (*every male*), seven times before Exodus 6:4; once in Exodus 12:48; three times in Leviticus 6:18, 29, 12:6; thirteen times in Numbers.
13. **Cr#** (*bring forth abundantly*), and **Cr#** (*creeping thing*), seven times before Exodus 6:4; twice in Exodus 1:7, 8:3; *passim* in Leviticus; Deuteronomy 14:19.

14. **d)M** and **d)M** (*exceedingly*), four times before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 7:19, 17:2, 6, 20; once in Exodus 1:7; once in Numbers 14:7.
15. **N(nk Cr)** (*land of Canaan*), *passim* before Exodus 6:4; once in Exodus 16:35; three times in Leviticus 14:34, 18:3, 25:38; *passim* in Numbers; Deuteronomy 32:49.
16. **hbrw hrp** (*be fruitful and multiply*), *passim* in Genesis, Leviticus 26:9.
17. **hwqM** (*gathering together*), Genesis 1:10, Exodus 7:19, Leviticus 9:36.
18. **hlk)** (*food*), four times before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 1:29, 30, 6:21, 9:3; once in Exodus 16:15; twice in Leviticus 11:39, 25:6.
19. **#Mr** (*creep*), and **#Mr** (*creeping thing*), *passim* in Genesis; three times in Leviticus 9:44, 46, 20:25; Deuteronomy 4:18.
20. The emphatic repetition of **h#(** with **Nk** (*so he did*), once in Genesis 6:22; six times in Exodus 7:6, 12:28, 50, 39:32, 43, 40:16; three times in Numbers 1:54, 8:20, 17:26.
21. The Hiphil of **ldb** (*separate*), five times in Genesis 1; once in Exodus 26:33; *passim* in Leviticus; four times in Deuteronomy 4:41, 10:8, 19:7, 29:21.

22. **hbqnrw rkz** (*male and female*), six times before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 1:27, 5:2, 6:19, 7:3, 9, 16; four times in Leviticus 3:1, 6 (**w**) -**m**), and 12:7 (**w**)), and 15:33 (**lw-l**); Deuteronomy 4:16 (**w**)).
23. **l)r#y-td(lhq** (*the assembly of the congregation of Israel*), Exodus 12:6, and Numbers 14:5.
24. **ypl** (*according to*), once before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 47:12; three times in Exodus 12:4, 16:16, 18; twice in Leviticus 25:16, 27:16; twice in Numbers 9:17, 26:54.
25. **#pn** (*soul*), in the sense of "person," *passim* before Exodus 6:4; in Exodus-Numbers, *passim*.
26. **rg** (*stranger*), twice before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 15:13, 23:4; Exodus-Deuteronomy, *passim*.
27. **b#wt** (*sojourner*), once before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 23:4; once in Exodus 7:45; Leviticus 22:10; seven times in Leviticus 25; Numbers 35:15.
28. **r#b-lk** (*all flesh*), *passim* in Genesis; three times in Leviticus 17:14; Numbers 16:22, 18:15, 27:16; Deuteronomy 5:23.
29. **hxp#** (*maidservant*), *passim* before Exodus 6:4; Exodus 6:5, Leviticus 19:20.

30. **twxp#Ml** (*according to families*), with suffixes, *passim* in Genesis; Exodus-Numbers, *passim*.
31. **(wg** (*expire*), *passim* in Genesis; Numbers 17:26, 28, 20:3, 29.
32. **+x#** (*slay*), twice before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 22:10, 37:31; Exodus-Numbers, *passim*.
33. **tx#** (*destroy*), in the Piel and Hiphil species, *passim* before Exodus 6:4; *passim* in Exodus-Deuteronomy.
34. **#kr** (*get*), and **#wkr** (*substance*), *passim* in Genesis; Numbers 16:32, 35:3.
35. **t)M** (*hundred*), *passim* in Genesis; *passim* in Exodus-Numbers.
36. **p l) (M#** (*hearken unto*), four times before Exodus 6:4, viz., Genesis 3:17, 16:11, 21:17, 39:10; Exodus 6:9, 16, 20.
37. **)whx #pnh htrknw** (*that soul shall be cut off*), Genesis 17:14; *passim*, Exodus-Numbers.
38. **Nynq** (*substance*), Genesis 34:23, 36:6; Leviticus 22:11.

We find accordingly that thirty-eight words and phrases in all, which are claimed in Genesis to belong to the *usus loquendi* of the Elohist, re-appear after Exodus 6:2, 3. At first blush, the not inconsiderable number might impress us; but, after the necessary sifting, a very scanty harvest will remain.

There is much in this collection that cannot stand the test of our principles laid down above (pp. 25 *ff.*)

1. Some of these terms occur only in Genesis 17, which is confessedly a chapter of legal contents; so that their re-appearance in the Codes has nothing to do with Elohist or Jehovistic authorship. The fact, that they are nowhere else found in Genesis, warrants us to consider them as legal expressions. This rules out **hnqM** and {10} (besides Genesis 17, only in 23:18), **rkz-lk** and {12} (besides Genesis 17, only in 34, and there likewise with reference to circumcision). **rkn-Nb** and {7} and **trdl** and {3} with suffixes (only once besides Genesis 17, viz., 6:9).
2. Likewise we must exclude from the list all words that occur only once or twice in Genesis, since it is an open fallacy to conclude from such few cases that they are Elohist. This applies to **hwqM** and {17} (only in Genesis 1:10), the emphatic phrase **h#(Nk** and {20} (once, Genesis 6:22), **ypl** and {24} (once in Genesis 47:12), **rg** and {26} (twice 15:13, 23:4), **b#wt** and {27} (only in 23:4), **+x#** and {32} (22:10, 37:31), **Nynq** and {38} (Genesis 34:23, 36:6). In all such cases, the occasional use in Genesis is probably nothing but a prolepsis of legal terms.
3. Neither can we admit as characteristic those words which, though perhaps frequent in Genesis, appear in the Codes in

one or two instances at most. It is evident that such isolated words are no index of style. To this class belong **myrnM** and {1} (only in Exodus 6:4), **d)M d)M** and {14} (Exodus 1:7, Numbers 14:7), and **hbrw hrp** and {16} (Leviticus 26:9), **hxp#** and {29} (Leviticus 19:20), **(wg** and {31} (Numbers 17 and 20), **#kr** and {34} and **#wkr** and {34} (Numbers 16:32, 35:3), **k l) (M#** and {36} (only in Exodus 6).

4. Our rule stated above, under No. 5, page 28, forbids us to accept as criteria of the Elohist, words which are found also in confessedly Jehovistic passages. Instances of this are **)y#n** and {8} (Exodus 22:28 (27)), and **tx#** and {33} (Exodus 21:26, 32:7), **p l) (M#** and {36} (Genesis 16:11, Jehovist according to Schrader, Knobel, Kayser, Dillmann; 39:10, Jehovist according to Schrader, Kayser, Dillmann), **N(nk Cr)** and {15} (Genesis 47:13, Jehovist according to Schrader, Kayser).
5. Of the residuum, a considerable number of words are so intimately related to the idea to be expressed or the thing to be mentioned, that it is absurd to call in the influence of Elohistic style to explain their occurrence. The thought and expression were inseparable, so that the presence of the former necessarily involved that of the latter. If the Jehovist had found occasion to convey the same ideas, we may expect that he would have employed the same forms. It remains only to

ask why these ideas and conceptions are peculiar to the Elohist, but here also the answer is obvious. Critics have assigned the ritual legislation to the Elohist exclusively, and consider his narrative in Genesis as subsidiary to this. It is no wonder, then, that the expressions in question are found neither in the Jehovistic Code nor in the corresponding narrative. We believe that the author did not use them in Exodus 20-23 because he did not touch the subjects which would have given him occasion to do so. The following words are of this character: **wnyMl** and {4} occurring only where the distinction of species is referred to; and even then it is not used exclusively, for the Elohist knows and employs the synonymous term **mhytxp#Ml** also (Genesis 8:19, Elohist according to Hupfeld, Knobel, Schrader). It is difficult to see how this word could have found a place in the Covenant-law. The only occasions on which the Elohist uses it are in his account of the creation, of the flood, and in the laws of food, Leviticus 11. When the Deuteronomist treats of the same topic, he, too, employs the very same expression. **mlw(** and {11} with a noun in construction (often followed by **mkytrdl** and {3}), and the phrase **)whh #pnh htrknw**, and {37} appear only as sanctioning laws that constitute the essential peculiarity of the theocratic people, such as circumcision, the passover, offerings, etc., and accordingly could not be looked for in the Covenant-law, which is rather ethical and civil. **Cr#** and {13} means "to creep;" and, if the Jehovist never employs the word, it is simply because he nowhere refers to a creeping

thing. It is so little characteristic of the Elohist, that he himself substitutes for it a number of times the synonym **#Mr** and {19} The Hiphil of **ldb** and {21} is evidently a ritual term (compare Ezekiel 22:26, 42:20, and **lxl #dqh** and **Nyb lydbh**), denoting the divinely constituted difference between "holy" and "profane." Hence also it occurs in Genesis 1, where the various created bodies and elements are represented as classified and distinguished from the beginning according to a principle that regulated the plan of a holy Creator. Of course, the Jehovistic legislation is not concerned with such distinctions. **hbqnw rkz** and {22} denotes the physical sex-distinction: to designate the ethical personality, the Elohist chooses **wt#w #y**) as well as the Jehovist (Exodus 36:6; Leviticus 23:29, 38; Numbers 5:6, 6:2. 30:17). And the Jehovist knows **hbqnw rkz** also, and uses it occasionally (Genesis 7:3, Jehovist according to Schrader, Knobel). **#pn** and {25} in the sense of "person:" An examination of the passages in Genesis discloses the fact that the word occurs almost exclusively (when it has this sense of "person") in connection with numerals. This explains fully why it does not re-appear in the Covenant-law, but rather in Leviticus and Numbers. There it denotes frequently the legal personality of man, that which constitutes him responsible to God and his law. Hence the frequent use of **yk#pn** to introduce certain laws, especially in Leviticus. That this introduction is lacking in Exodus 20-23 is partly accounted for by the general (less

personal or individual) tenor of these laws, partly because, as Keil remarks, in many of them the predicate of the sentence makes provision rather for the object than for the subject of the action referred to, so that the construction of the sentence forbade the emphatic, personal mention of the subject by **yk #pn** at the beginning. **t)M** and {35} in construction, is not characteristic of the Elohist; since he uses the absolute state just as frequently, and the Jehovistic legislation had no occasion to employ this numeral. The expressions **tyrb myqh** and {6} and **tyrb Ntn** are not entirely synonymous with the Jehovistic **tyrb trk**. In the latter, the idea of a covenant made with sacrifice is rendered prominent, and the concurrence of two parties emphasized (compare Psalm 50:6); whilst in **tyrb mrqh** and **tyrb Ntn**, the fact is brought out, that the covenant-relation springs from God's free grace; that he stoops to man, and *establishes* his Covenant amongst men, who could not advance to meet him. It is quite natural, therefore, that in Exodus 20-23, the phrase **tyrb trk** should repeatedly occur (23:32, 24:8; compare also 34:27); since, according to 24:4, 5, the Sinaitic covenant was solemnly contracted with the offering up of sacrifices. **hzx)** and {2} occurs only six times outside of the Pentateuch and Joshua, if we except Ezekiel 40-48, where it is in frequent use. Numbers 32:22, which Schrader and Kayser assign to the Jehovist, shows that the word does not belong exclusively to the Elohist diction. It denotes permanent and firmly held

property, in contrast with the unsettled, nomadic life of the patriarchs and the Israelites in the desert. This explains its disappearance from the common language after the conquest of Canaan, and its resumption by Ezekiel, who wrote during the captivity. As a proper name, we find it in Genesis 26:26, a passage which Schrader and Kayser give to the Jehovist. **hzh mwyh mc(b** and {5} appears twelve times in the Pentateuch; in each of these cases, it serves to mark out the accurate date of a momentous event: Genesis 7:13, Noah's entering the ark; 17:23, 26, the first circumcision; Exodus 12:17, 41, 51, the exodus from Egypt; Leviticus 23:14, the second day of Mazzoth; verse 21, the feast of weeks; verse 28, 29, 30, the day of atonement; Deuteronomy 32:48, the announcement of Moses' death.

It is an exceedingly small group to which the host of "satellites" marshaled by the critics has thus gradually dwindled down. Three words only, **hlk**), and {18} the Hiphil of **dly**, and {9} and **r#b-lk**, and {28} have not found an explanation. The last two are found only once in the Levitical code, the first one twice. The Qal-species of **dly**, which (in the sense of "begetting") the critics claim as characteristically Jehovistic, does not occur in Exodus 20-23; for in 20:4 it means "to bear." The fact that these three terms occur only in the Levitical law is hardly striking enough to need an explanation.

If thus the argument drawn from the Elohist *usus loquendi* of Genesis proves to be worthless, we can have no great expectations of the independent evidence collected from the Codes themselves. To say that the Levitical law employs a ceremonial terminology which is wanting in the Jehovistic parts of

Exodus, is true, but so much so that it amounts to a truism. What use is there in arraying a list of names of utensils and implements of the tabernacle, parts of the priestly apparel, etc., and then declaring that they belong exclusively to the Elohist? Still, Knobel has taken pains to do this! Again, what can be made of the Jehovist not using a sacrificial phrase like **mybr(h Nyb** >(**between the evenings**), or such as refer specifically to the religious life of Israel, on which the Jehovist did not legislate at all? It sounds strange when we hear **#dq)rqM** >(**holy convocation**) classed as an Elohistic phrase. Do the critics mean, that in the time of Jehoshaphat, or whatever date they may choose to fix for the origin of the Covenant-law, no such "holy convocations" were held? And, if not, where is the slightest trace of proof that the Jehovist has another word to designate the same thing? We cannot but infer that he had no occasion to use the word, and that this is the one and the only reason why the word is not found in his vocabulary. He does use a similar phrase, however, in Exodus 22:30 (31); viz., **#dq y#n**) >(**holy men**). What is to be thought of Elohistic words which do not occur even once in the whole book of Leviticus, such as **tw)bc** >(**hosts**), **my+p#** >(**judgments**), or of **tyM(** >(**neighbor**), which appears only in laws of injury done to a neighbor, whilst, moreover, the Elohist employs the synonymous **Nk#** >and **(r** >in common with the Jehovist just as well? Besides **Cr)h xrz**), the Old Testament knows no other word for "native of the land;" and so we will have to hold that its absence in the Jehovist has no further cause than a want of occasion to use it. It is useless to collect here all the pretended evidence of this and like character, except in so far as it might furnish an apt illustration of the ease with which some critics make the transition from proving a theory to applying it, all the while forgetting that their application, as it results in a **reductio ad absurdum**, instead of fortifying, practically weakens, all the

previous evidence.

We now turn to the Jehovistic part of the Mosaic Code. The passages, Exodus 12:24-27, 13:3-10, 11-16, are assigned to it by Knobel, Dillmann, Nöldeke, Schrader, Kayser (Dillmann and Kayser, in addition 12:21-24). Here, also, it is claimed that the dissection rests on solid literary grounds, which we shall have to examine.

First, the proper name **myrcM** >(Egypt), not preceded by the usual **Cr** >(land), 12:27. But neither form, with or without **Cr** >is exclusively used by either the Jehovist or the Elohist. The former uses the form with **Cr**), Genesis 13:10 (according to Schrader, Knobel, Kayser, Dillmann), and 21:21 (according to Kayser); also Exodus 22:20. The Elohist, on the other hand, employs that without **Cr**), Genesis 46:6-8 (according to Hupfeld, Knobel, Schrader, Dillmann).

Next comes **mydb(tyb** >(house of bondmen), 13:3, 4. This is used only here and in 20:2; also four times in Deuteronomy. But the fact that the phrase does not occur before the exodus shows that its use does not depend on the style of the writer, but on the intention of the law-giver. The reference to the bondage of Egypt is urged as a motive to faithful observance of God's commands; and, of course, this was only appropriate in such laws as directly reminded the people of their sojourn in Egypt (Passover, Mazzoth, Treatment of strangers and servants), and suited ethical commands better than ceremonial prescriptions, which were given to the priests, not addressed to the people in general.

byb) #dx >(the month Abib), 13:4; also 23:15, 34:12; Deuteronomy 16:1. A comparison of all the passages will show, that, wherever a specific date is

given, the month is numbered also; and, wherever the date is left indefinite, the month is designated by the name Abib. In all these pretended Jehovistic passages, there is no specification; and accordingly Abib is retained. Of Wellhausen's assertion, that the custom of numbering the months, in connection with the adoption of the spring era, was derived from the Babylonians during the captivity, we shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

hwhy (b#n) >(*Jehovah* swear), 13:5, 11, 32:13, 33:1. But the Levitical law contains no reference to God's swearing, neither is it easy to see at what occasion it could have introduced God as doing so.

The enumeration of the seven Canaanitish nations 13:5; also 23:23, 25, 33:2, 34:11. But it is not merely this complete enumeration which is peculiar to the Jehovist, but the idea that the Israelites shall possess the land of the Canaanite tribes. He conveys this idea without the same enumeration, Genesis 13:7, 34:30: in Exodus 23:28, only three tribes are mentioned. That the idea is found with him rather than with the Elohist is natural; since the critics assign to the latter only ritual law, with which it stands in no way related. And, even if we suppose that it was peculiar to the Jehovistic document in Genesis, what wonder would there be in Moses' repeating the phrase? How do we know that he cannot have appropriated some elements of the diction of the documents?

#bdw blx and **tbz Cr)** >(*land flowing with milk and honey*), 13:5, 33:3.

This phrase occurs also in Leviticus 20:24. In Numbers 14:8, Schrader is obliged to divide a single verse to eliminate it from an Elohist context. This must accordingly be given up as peculiarly Jehovistic.

lwbg >(*quarters* or *borders*), 13:7, occurs in the Elohist passages, Genesis 23:12; Numbers 20:23, 34:3, 6, 35:26, and elsewhere. How this can be called

Jehovistic may remain for the critics to determine. The word occurs throughout the whole Old Testament.

rwb**** >(because), 13:8; also 19:9, 20:20; *passim* in Genesis. The expression is of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament, from Amos down to Chronicles. It is absurd to call it the peculiar property of the Jehovist, since it belonged evidently to the common stock of the language.

rxM**** >(in time to come), Exodus 13:14, 32:5; Numbers 4:25, 16:7, 16. The two latter passages are both Nöldeke and Schrader assigned to the Elohist, so that the word ceases to be characteristically Jehovistic. Moreover, the Elohist has it in somewhat different form, **trx**MM**** >Leviticus 23:11, 15, 16.

With regard to the Decalogue our task is easy; since the critics all admit that the criteria of Jehovist, Elohist, and Deuteronomist intermingle. The sanction added to the Sabbath-command, verse 11, refers back to the Elohist account of the creation. Also the phrase **hk)l**M** h#** >(do work) is Elohist.

Kyr(#b**** >(in thy gates), in verse 10, is Deuteronomic. Wellhausen claims the same for the whole of verse 6. **mydb(tyb**M**** >(from the house of bondmen) is Jehovistic. The whole Decalogue, however, forms a strict unit, and the critical analysis will not apply. To assume a post-Deuteronomic redaction, or even modifications later than the final redaction of the Pentateuch (Dillmann), seems precarious, and in the highest degree improbable. Everybody who has no preconceived idea that the Pentateuch must necessarily be of composite character, and have gone through a series of redactions, will not fail to find in these phenomena a striking proof that the author of the legislation employed words from the Elohist, Jehovistic, and Deuteronomic vocabulary promiscuously.

The passage, Exodus 20:18 -chapter 23, remains to be examined. Here also we have an illustration of criteria intermingling, on account of which the redactor is again resorted to. Wellhausen assigns chapter 21-23 to J.^[2] Dillmann thinks they were taken by B (Wellhausen's E) from another source. With regard to 34:10-25, Dillmann tries to vindicate the authorship of C; whilst Wellhausen assumes a *tertium quid*, an unknown source, neither Q nor J nor E, from which this piece alone has been preserved to us. Dillmann, moreover, gives as his opinion that the whole passage 34:1-28, is out of place in the present connection, and stood in C originally, behind 20:20, 24:1, 2; so that the redactor must have taken the twofold liberty of first substituting the Covenant-laws, 20-23, for those found in C (now chapter 34:10-26), and of afterwards using the opportunity offered him by the breach and restoration of the Covenant, to resume what he had first thrown out. It is alike needless and useless to follow the critics into this labyrinth of dissections, transpositions, and interpolations, by which they condemn themselves, and frequently each other. Perhaps a dozen other ways might be devised to transform a beautifully connected passage into a miserable patchwork. A comparison of the criteria will suffice to convince any unprejudiced mind how impossible it is to prove diversity of authorship on literary grounds. For the traces of B, compare Dillmann, "Exodus," p. 220. To C belong, amongst others, **hcx** >(divide), 21:35; **hq(c)** >(cry), 22:22; **tyx hd#h** >(beast of the field), 23:12; **tMwy twM** >(shall surely be put to death), *passim*; **qr** >(only), 21:19; and **llq** >(curse), 21:17. Of A we note the following words: **)y#n** >(prince, ruler), 22:27; and **rg** >(stranger), 22:20; **tx#** >(destroy), 21:27; and **myrcM Cr** >(land of Egypt), 21:20, 23:8; and **P) hrx** >(anger burn), 22:23 (in Genesis the Jehovist is said to use **hrx** >as impersonal, with the preposition **l**). The

statement in 23:18 has a Deuteronomic color.

In Leviticus, chapter 17-26 have been partially denied to the Elohist. Ewald, Nöldeke, and Schrader accounted for the peculiarity of chapter 18-20 by the use which the Elohist had made of an older Code. Graf assigned 17-22, 25, 26, to Ezekiel. Kayser, not content to deal with the material in such a summary way, institutes a marvelous analysis carried out with hair-splitting *finesse*. He agrees with Graf in considering Ezekiel as the author, and confidently claimed in 1874 to have settled this fact beyond the possibility of doubt. Three years afterwards, however, this theory had been already superseded; since Klostermann instituted a still closer comparison between Ezekiel and these chapters, which showed, that, with much similarity, there were also considerable differences in expression, making the view untenable. With him Kuenen and Nöldeke agreed; whereupon the former with Wellhausen reversed the order, and declared the chapters one of the earliest exilic bodies of law composed in dependence upon Ezekiel, a sort of bridge between him and the Pentateuchal Codes. Dillmann says emphatically that for all this there is no ground in the contents and language of these chapters, which he regards as containing very old, even some of the oldest, laws. The redactor composed the collection from two different redactions of what Dillmann calls the "Sinaitic Law," these two redactions being respectively those of the Elohist and the Jehovist.

Where there is so much disagreement among the critics, it seems superfluous to discuss the numerous divisions of which the majority must necessarily be wrong. The greater part of the peculiar expressions stated by Kayser (p. 66) arise naturally from the contents: some express ideas that occur only here; several of them are confessedly Jehovistic, others Elohist; the whole division is arbitrary and precarious, one of the most striking proofs that the

critical analysis, if consistently carried out, issues in absurdities. Often a single verse is sundered out, because it presents traces of the Elohist.

And after all, Kayser himself is obliged to confess that the elimination of the new source ("law of holiness"), though constituting a connected and somewhat cognate whole, leaves the remaining parts incoherent and detached, without any central idea, or guiding principle of connection.

It may still further be remarked, that the denial of the Elohist origin of Numbers 8:23-26 (Kayser assigns it to the redactor) does not rest on literary considerations, but is maintained in direct opposition to the decidedly Elohist language of these verses, simply on account of a pretended contradiction to chapter 4:30.

We have reached the end of our discussion of the literary argument, and may state as our conclusion that, whatever it be held to prove with regard to Genesis, it is incompetent to prove a diversity of authorship for the Pentateuchal Codes. It appears that the divisive methods partake rather of the nature of an applied hypothesis than of a strictly linguistic argumentation. The conviction that the middle books of the Pentateuch are of a composite character may rest on various grounds. With the newest school it is based on a historical theory of the development of the ceremonial and religious institutions for which of necessity a literary counterpart must be sought. On the whole, the work has been carried out for more than a century with marvelous ingenuity; and the comparatively uniform results need not surprise us. Given the preconceived notion of a composite character in the critic's mind; given the two Codes, though closely related, still sufficiently distinct; given furthermore the acute scrutinizing and analyzing of a century, cautiously fortifying all weak points, and guarding against exposure on any point where any tolerable assertion may avoid it—and who can wonder, that,

under the concurrence of such favorable conditions, results have been obtained that seem to equal in plausibility the skill at work in their production? But the fruit, however beautiful in appearance, has grown on a tree radically different from that rooted in the soil of truly Evangelical Criticism. Let us not appropriate theories and schemes, at the basis of which lie historical conceptions, that we can never make our own. The critics may jump without hesitation from a composite Genesis to a composite legislation: for us there is a wide gulf between the two, and more than Christian prudence prevents us from placing what claims to be one continuous revelation of the living God on our dissecting-tables before we have been furnished with positive and unequivocal proof that it is composite. All the evidence hitherto produced is such that it convinces only him who is imbued with the *a priori* belief, that there is no divine revelation in the law: for all others, who repudiate such a belief, it is no more than the outcome of a subtile and ingenious, but none the less unfounded and deceptive, imagination.

Chapter Four^(TOC)

Incompleteness of the Codes

If we expect in the Mosaic Codes a complete legislation in the modern sense of the word, we shall surely be disappointed. As modern society, or even Roman life, shaped itself, it presents many a feature in its legislation for which the Codes of ancient Israel have no correlative. But the principle of Israel's constitution was radically different. The theocratic idea made every thing subordinate to itself; and the law presents this idea clothed in outward, ceremonial and civil forms. Accordingly, whatever is not so directly related to this one central conception as to be molded and transformed by it, is omitted, and left to existing usage or future provision. In this respect, the law does not preclude development or increase. It has a spirit as well as a letter, however the most recent critics may emphasize the latter, in order to substitute the notion of development for the former. On this point, diametrically opposite objections meet; for, whilst one finds fault with the law on account of incompleteness, another finds it far too elaborate and perfect for a nomad tribe just awaking to the first consciousness of a life of civilization. Both extremes may supplement and correct each other. We should constantly keep in mind, that the Mosaic legislation was intended for a peculiar people, that had a peculiar destiny. It was to live, to a large extent, isolated, and the more it could be protected against contamination by foreign influences, the better. There was no need of a Code that would provide for all the complicated relations that arise from a lively intercourse with surrounding peoples. On the other hand, the agrarian principle, on which the civil law

proceeded, secured to every member of the Covenant-people an equal share in the promised inheritance of Canaan. It is obvious how largely this tended to simplify both public and private life among the chosen people. It would be historically wrong to institute a comparison between the Mosaic Codes and the Roman body of law. The Romans were the people of law *par excellence*: in Israel the law was a subordinate means to a higher and spiritual end, subservient and adapted to the peculiar position which the nation occupied, and to its unique calling in the history of God's Church.

Chapter Five^(TOC)

System, or Disorder?

Another objection frequently raised against the unity of these laws is, that they present all the features of a compiled body, where no guiding-thread combines the collected material. This is indeed doing little honor to the redactor on the part of those who hold the divisive theories. But even among believers in the Mosaic origin and essential unity of the Codes, it is not uncommon to hear the remark made, that they are not arranged systematically on any legal or religious principle, and that the sequence of the laws is only determined by the chronology of their promulgation. This statement, however common it may be, involves a double mistake: First, by laying so much stress on the chronological principle, it tends to awaken the idea that a systematic and a chronological arrangement exclude each other; and secondly, it would seem improper to assert that God, when revealing himself, and his will concerning Israel, in successive acts or stages, should do so without any inherent order.

Chronology is the frame of history; and Israel's history is nothing but the record of God's revelation, its beginning, progress, and fulfillment. Separated from the world, that it might be holy unto God, with Israel every thing becomes subservient to this high calling. Hence its history is not shaped by accident or chance, or according to earthly purposes: it does not run its course independent of God's intentions with regard to his people, but flows from beginning to end in the channels of his revealing grace.

God is a God of order. We must therefore expect, if the law be his revelation, and not the fruit of a blind process of development, to find in it a system, an intended adjustment of part to part, and of each part to the whole, a gradual progress and advance from the more fundamental and simple to the more complex and specified in detail.

This order, if there be any, must be a genetic one. God made Israel his Covenant-people at Sinai. He did not present to them all at once their perfect and complete constitution, requiring immediate conformity to its demands. Gradually and progressively they were organized and built into a theocratic nation, first on a broad basis, then on a more specified plan, till finally the superstructure appeared in its divinely intended perfection and beauty. The process of logic has here become a process in time: the organism is shown to us, not in the reality of completion, but in the mirror of history, only for this very reason the more clear and distinct.

Bertheau has found in the Code of Exodus—Numbers seven groups of Mosaic laws, each of them containing seven series, each series ten commandments. The four hundred and ninety commands thus obtained, according to him, once constituted a Code of purely legal contents, and existed prior to the narrative which now divides the groups, and is often interwoven with them. The hypothesis is very ingenious, but cannot be carried out without great precariousness in details. Reuss has characterized it as "a beautiful illusion." We shall have occasion to refer to it more than once.

First of all we must consider the charges that have been made against the unity of the feast-laws in Exodus 12 and 13. A survey of the numerous critical divisions proposed cannot be given here. The main divisions, on which all critics more or less agree, have been stated before. They are, Exodus 12:24-27, 29-39 (except verse 37), 13:3-16, Jehovistic, the rest

Elohistic.

A positive exposition of the essential unity will prove the best argument against all these dissections. (1) 12:1-20 contain the divine institution of Passover and Mazzoth (unleavened bread) *as given to Moses and Aaron*. (2) 12:21-27. The communication of this divine command to the elders of the people, *so far as it was required by immediate necessity*. For the latter reason, only the prescriptions concerning the Passover-lamb are repeated, whilst the announcement of the Mazzoth-law is reserved for a later occasion. Verse 28 states the fulfilment of this command on the part of the people in the emphatic phrase, "so did they." (3) Verse 29-42 describe the last plague, the exodus, and how the children of Israel were providentially compelled to leave Egypt with unleavened dough. Verse 40, *seqq.*, contain a retrospective glance at the whole sojourn in Egypt during four hundred and thirty years, which serves to enforce anew the sacredness of the feast instituted as a memorial of this exodus. (4) Since verse 38 had stated that a mixed multitude went up with the Israelites, a new provision was made necessary for observance of the feast by strangers. This is given in verse 43-51. (5) The divine command *to Moses* that the first-born henceforth shall belong to Jehovah 13:1, 2. (6) The communication of this to the people, verse 11-16, after Moses had first discharged the second half of the commission received before the exodus 12:1-20, which was then only partially given to the people on account of the peculiar circumstances, verse 3-10.

All this forms a well-connected complete narrative; and, as we shall see, it is only a persistent refusal to consider each single part in the light of the whole, that can give some semblance of necessity to the application of the critical knife.

A chronological objection has been raised against 12:3; for whilst 11:4 falls

evidently on Abib 14, the divine injunction to Moses and Aaron must have been given before the 10th, as on the latter date the lamb was to be selected and set apart. The difficulty disappears on the natural supposition, that the author did not wish to interrupt his narrative of the plagues by this law, and therefore, having reserved it up to this point, uses the account of its execution to mention also its promulgation, though the latter actually took place at least four days before. The expression **hzh hlylb** >in verse 8 does not contradict this; for it does not designate the present night, but the night referred to in the context, and spoken of in verse 6.

Hupfeld's objection, that here a memorial is instituted and observed *ante factum*, has no force at all. The first Passover, as Wellhausen has strikingly remarked, was no memorial feast, it was history; and it was a sacrament, a real instrument of salvation. Of the unwarranted inferences which Wellhausen draws from this, we shall speak hereafter. As to the fact, his statement is correct, and the best answer to Hupfeld's objection.

Kayser alleges that the Elohist alone makes the institution of Pesach (Passover) and Mazzoth precede the facts of which they were memorials, whilst the Jehovist gives the more natural representation that it followed them. This is inaccurate; for the Jehovistic verses, as he reckons them 12:21-27, treat of the rite, not as to be observed in the remote future, but as in the immediate present, during the night of the exodus: verse 23 says, "When He seeth the blood upon the lintel," etc.

Common to nearly all the critics is the statement, that the Jehovist (12:34) gives a different explanation of the eating of Mazzoth from the Elohist. The truth is, that neither of them gives an explanation at all. At least, it is not explicitly stated in the narrative. Verse 34 simply informs us that the Israelites were providentially compelled to take no leaven out of the land of

Egypt along on their journey, which certainly had a deeper symbolic meaning; so that it would be exactly the Jehovist, whom the critics charge with having ascribed the origin of such an important usage to so trifling an accident, who intimates the real significance of eating Mazzoth.

But we are told verse 8 of the Elohist is inconsistent with verse 34. If the flesh of the Passover-lamb was to be eaten with unleavened bread, and for this purpose, according to verse 15, all leaven had to be removed, how can it be ascribed to the haste of the Israelites in departing, that they took their dough before it was leavened?

The answer is obvious. According to verse 21-27, only the first half of God's commission to Moses was communicated to the people before the exodus. Concerning Mazzoth, as yet nothing was said. The Israelites were simply instructed to kill the Passover-lamb, and eat it with unleavened bread. God evidently intended that Moses should confine his immediate instructions to this point. That only the Passover-law was to go into effect before the exodus, is intimated by the peculiar position of verse 11-14. They apply only to the observance in Egypt; and their insertion between the Pesach-command and the Mazzoth-law shows that the former was, the latter was not, destined for immediate observance in Egypt. Hence the regulations concerning Mazzoth are kept general throughout, as they were evidently adapted to a more remote period in the future. Compare verse 19 and 20.

Now, if Moses, in agreement with God's purpose, published only the Passover-law immediately; if, further, this law neither commands nor forbids that leaven should be altogether removed, but simply prescribes that the lamb should be eaten *with unleavened bread*—then it is entirely natural that the Israelites, as yet not knowing that the Passover would be followed by Mazzoth, and that the latter feast would forbid the presence of any leaven in

the houses, should have kept their leaven, and were only prevented by their hasty departure in the morning from using it in the preparation of their dough and bread.

But even if we admit that all leaven was actually removed for the observance of this first Passover, still, it is not likely that the Israelites intended to go on their journey without providing leaven. They evidently thought, that, when the Passover-night was past, the prohibition had ceased. God's providence, however, as we have seen, intervened preparatory to the promulgation of the Mazzoth-law. As Ranke has beautifully expressed it, "Jehovah's history and Jehovah's law were made by him the mirror of each other."

Kayser's allegation that verse 11-13 make a violent separation between 10 and 14, and are accordingly a Jehovistic section interpolated by the redactor, is groundless. The verses are entirely appropriate in this connection when we understand them, as was intimated above. They served, indeed, to make a separation between verse 10 and 14, though not a violent, but a necessary one, which should indicate that only the Passover-ordinance was to be published immediately before the Exodus.

Neither is it true, as Kayser also asserts, that verse 22 contradicts verse 4 and 7. That small households should combine for the purpose of consuming the lamb, does not prove that they joined each other during the night. They could do this the evening before. To press the possessive pronoun in verse 22, "**his** house," is absurd.

It is claimed by Hupfeld and Dillmann, that verse 42 stands very abrupt in its present connection. Hupfeld asserts that it formed originally the close of the section, verse 1-13; whilst he makes verse 14 prospective, and belonging to the Mazzoth-law. As Bachmann, however, remarks, the transition from the

second person in verse 1-13 to the third in verse 42 (**m)ycwhl**) would be very strange. For this reason Dillmann helps himself in another way by carrying the verse back to verse 39, and assigning it to B; though he finds this hard to reconcile with the expression **mtrdl** >(proper to A), so that he must also call in the redactor to account for its insertion. All this trouble is avoided by giving the verse its natural and unforced meaning. In connection with the retrospective glance at the whole sojourn in Egypt (verse 40, 41), it contains a new reminder of the sacredness of the feast instituted in memory of the deliverance from so long a bondage.

Dillmann, moreover, objects against the unity of these chapters, that we have here two laws concerning the consecration of the first-born, two concerning Mazzoth, and three about the Passover, of which the second (12:21, *seqq.*) differs somewhat from the first. The right view of the relation of these laws to each other has been given already, and no other answer is necessary.

Finally, the remark has been made that Moses, in his instruction to the elders (verse 21, *seqq.*), makes no mention of unleavened bread at all; which would fall in with Kayser's view, who combines these verses with the following Jehovistic section. It is obvious that we have here no *verbatim* report of Moses' words, but simply a summary, which could be all the shorter since the divine injunction had been stated in full. The use of the article in **xsph** >is an independent proof that the *ipsissima verba* of Moses are not retained here.

If, then, all the objections urged against the unity of these feast-laws prove irrelevant, we may proceed to the book of the Covenant. The name is derived from Exodus 24:7, and the Mosaic authorship expressly stated in 24:4. Whether it included the Decalogue, it is difficult to determine; but the view that the passage last quoted refers to the Decalogue alone, is certainly

untenable. All critics agree that we find in both the oldest preserved Code, though not even this in its original form. Kuenen places its origin in the reign of David, "if not earlier:" still, he has serious objections against the Mosaic authorship. Reuss assigns it to the reign of Jehoshaphat; others, to yet other dates. Proofs in the strictest sense of the word are not given. We simply remark, that whatever arguments are urged in favor of the relative antiquity of this Code, are entirely derived from its peculiar significance and unique place in the constitution of Israel. When Kuenen claims that the laws of Exodus 20-23 distinguish themselves by their simplicity and originality, this is exactly what we would expect of a Code destined to be the fundamental law of Israel, and to present in a few general commands the primary relations and duties devolving upon the Covenant-people. To speak of originality is begging the question, and the simplicity is fully accounted for by the historical situation in which the Pentateuch places it. Indeed, we should be surprised if these commands were less simple, if God had at the outset overwhelmed the Israelites with a mass of ceremonial detail, and on such a basis entered with them into a solemn covenant. Jeremiah 7:22 gives the right point of view. On the other hand, how natural and fitting is the place of this Code at the beginning of the great career upon which Israel was to enter. The whole is an application of the Decalogue to the most general features of national life. Consequently, in chapter 21:1 we meet the word **my+p#M**, designating "the rights by which the national life was formed into a civil commonwealth and the political order secured." Intimately connected with the Decalogue, they start with emphasizing the same principle—viz., the unity and spirituality of God—and cover nearly the same ground. Exception has been taken to the lack of the religious element; but the objection leaves out of view Exodus 20:22-26 and 23:14-19, which certainly formed a part of the book of the Covenant.

Next come the directions concerning the building of the sanctuary (chapter 25-30). After the people, by their adhesion to the Covenant, had been constituted the peculiar property of God, their Theocratic King, provisions are made for his dwelling amongst them. The relation having been defined, the first step is taken to realize it in the accurate description of the tabernacle, which would be its symbol and pledge. As Keil expresses it, "A definite external form must be given to the covenant just concluded, a visible bond of fellowship constructed." This is explicitly stated in chapter 25:8, with a clear allusion to 23:20, 21. The critics, otherwise so acute in discovering traces of affinity, where details are concerned seem to be blind for this most intimate relation, which makes one passage grow out of the other in the most natural way. Their dissecting methods seem to have disqualified them for a true appreciation of the theocratic idea, which germinates in the soil of God's Covenant, and thence develops itself into the manifold forms of a system in which the social and religious life interpenetrate.

At first sight the section, chapter 31:12-17, might appear superfluous and out of place. Keil justifies its occurrence by suggesting that the Israelites might have thought it unnecessary or non-obligatory to observe the Sabbath-commandment during the execution of so great a work in honor of Jehovah. With him agree Knobel and Graf. There is nothing in the context, however, to favor this view; and it seems better to explain the emphatic repetition of this law from the great importance of the Sabbath as a Covenant sign between Israel and the Lord. In verse 13 it is called an **tw**), in verse 16a **tyrb**. For this reason it is subjoined to that other visible bond of fellowship, the tabernacle. As in the latter, God by his glorious presence signified his gracious attitude towards Israel, so Israel by the observance of this day of rest would show its faithful adherence to Jehovah's Covenant.

We pass on to chapter 34:10-27. As we have seen already, Dillmann recognizes in these verses the Covenant-law of C as it once stood after 20:20 and 24:1, 2, whilst Wellhausen postulates a new source for this passage alone. The fact is, that we have here nothing but a shorter re-enactment and restatement of the Covenant-law, that had been broken by idolatry. As the first solemn conclusion of the Covenant preceded the gift of the first tables, so, after the latter had been broken, the former must be renewed before the new tables of the Decalogue can be handed to Moses. It was a deep insight into the sinful nature of the people and a clear apprehension of the corrupt tendency manifested in this single act of idolatry, that led to emphasizing specially the prohibition of intercourse with the Canaanites. Also the reference to the golden calf in verse 17, **hksM yhl**), is obvious. Both points of contact with the preceding chapters are disregarded by the divisive critics. It is more difficult to see why, from verse 18 onward, the feast-laws are restated with slight differences in form from Exodus 23. Partly their religious and theocratic importance may have caused their appearance in this connection: partly their place at the end of the Covenant-law (chapter 23) may account for the fact that they, and not other laws, are repeated. As the first covenant began with the Decalogue, engraven in stone, and closed with the feast-laws, so after the breaking, though there be no formal restatement of every particular, still we find the beginning and end of the former law repeated, to indicate that this new covenant rests on essentially the same basis as the old. The repetition is not pleonastic, but of deep significance. Decalogue and feast-laws stand as representatives of all the contents of the Covenant-book.

The promulgation of the Sabbath-commandment in chapter 35:1-3 is parallel to chapter 31:12-17. Moses had been commissioned to remind the Israelites in particular of this Covenant-sign. Having come down, according to chapter

34:29, he immediately executes this commission as soon as the opportunity offers itself. Here also there are regular progress and perfect connection. Chapter 35-40 correspond to 30-35, and describe the execution of what was commanded there. Of the peculiar position which chapter 30:1-10 (of the altar of incense) occupies, we must speak hereafter.

The Levitical Code, though forming a unit in its own compass, is nevertheless but a single link in the great chain: as we hope to show, it takes up the development of the Theocracy where Exodus left off, and carries it onward.

The sacrificial laws (chapter 1-7) form, as the closing verses show, a coherent group. Their position at this juncture is not only natural, but necessary. The sacrifices in their whole ritual presuppose the completed sanctuary, the erecting of which was recorded in Exodus 40. Moreover, it is stated (Leviticus 1:1), that the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him, out of the tabernacle of the congregation, in accordance with his promise (Exodus 25:22). A third reason for our statement that this Code occupies a fitting place in the history of revelation, is that it is so general in its character. No specification being made concerning the time for presentation of sacrifices, or the order in which they were to succeed each other, or the number of the animals to be offered at the various occasions, all which was to be regulated afterwards, the Code confines itself to what was its evident purpose; viz., the laying down of the general principles of sacrificial service as a necessary supplement and completion of the tabernacle-worship. The enumeration of all chief topics proves beyond doubt, that we possess the Code in its original, unaltered condition. The last two chapters refer to the priests, and give special instructions concerning their treatment of sacrifices, which accounts for some repetitions of previous statements.

Chapter 8-10 describe the induction of Aaron and his sons into the priestly office. The fulfillment of the command given at the same time with the directions for the building of the tabernacle could not have been placed earlier, because the laws of sacrifices had a bearing upon this act. It could not have occurred later, because the completed regulation of the tabernacle ceremonial required an officiating priesthood, and waited but for their investiture to go into full operation. Thus we find the place of these three chapters again naturally and necessarily determined by what precedes and follows. Their omission would leave a gap, and their insertion at any other juncture would create a disturbance in the systematic order of the whole.

In chapter 11-25 we find the laws concerning uncleanness, purification, and holiness. They add a new feature to the hitherto imperfect scheme of the Theocracy. We saw its constitution in the Covenant-law, its initial realization in the laws of the sanctuary, the sacrifices, and the priesthood: here our attention is called to the fruits of purity and holiness which this organization was intended to produce, both in a ceremonial and moral aspect. Holiness was the ever-recurring condition of God's dwelling amongst them—the one great demand, which the ritual was both to symbolize and to effect.

First it is only ceremonial and outward purity, announcing itself in the discrimination between clean and unclean animals, and in the purification of the body (11-15); but this in its turn becomes a type of that higher spiritual and moral doing away of sin, whose completion was foreshadowed in the Day of Atonement (16), and directly urged on the people by the moral commands from chapter 17 onward. It is important to notice how at this very juncture, where the critics claim to have discovered the attachment of an earlier Code ("law of holiness") to a later one, there is the most intimate coherence and connection manifested in a gradual advance from the outward

to the inward; from the ritual to the moral; from what is demanded of the people, to what is imposed on the priests, to whom the call for holiness came with double force, and in a more special sense (21); from the everyday life, with its distinction in the daily food, to those holy exercises at the sanctuary, which were to be the highest and most adequate expression of an all-pervading sanctity and entire consecration to God (23). How the theocratic principle has shaped these laws, and determined their sequence, is seen in the fact, that holiness, though required in the most simple acts and forms of life, is ultimately referred to as finding its full realization in religious observances, in sacrifices (22), and holy convocations (23), and its most significant representation in the burning lamps and show-bread of the tabernacle (24:1-9).

The unity of chapter 23 has been doubted and denied on various grounds. Chiefly the frequent repetition of titles, verse 1, 9, 23, 26, 33, has led to the inference, that the chapter presents a compilation of feast-laws, notwithstanding the undeniable fact that they are all ranged under one general principle—the holding of a **#dq)rqM** >(holy convocation)—and presented in the strictest chronological order. Dillmann thinks that verse 9-22, 23-32, 33-43, once formed independent regulations concerning the respective feasts of which they treat. George, Hupfeld, and recently Wellhausen, assumed two complete feast-Codes—one of the Elohist, verse 1-8, 23-38; and one of another hand, verse 9-22, 39-43, interwoven by the redactor. Both assertions are equally gratuitous. The two Codes as separated by Wellhausen are not complete; since the one lacks the feast of weeks, the other Mazzoth. And against both views, that of Dillmann as well as Wellhausen's, stand the uniformity of treatment, the similarity throughout in expression, and the retention of the same leading idea in all the parts. The appearance of a second title in verse 4 is accounted for by the consideration, that here the

myd(wM, the appointed seasons proper, begin in distinction from the Sabbath. And how the recurring titles can awake suspicion in critics who are accustomed to comment upon the redundancy of the Elohist, we do not understand. By taking verse 37, 38, not as the close of the whole preceding chapter, but only of verse 4-36 (of the **myd(wM** >proper), the difficulty arising from the words "beside the Sabbaths" is relieved, and at the same time the reference of verse 4 to the yearly recurring feasts strikingly confirmed. This view also leaves room for the supplementary Succoth-law (verse 39-43); since, according to it, verse 37, 38, do not close the whole, but only a subdivision, of the topic. The final close does not follow until verse 44. The positive explanation of the supplementary character of verse 39-43 is best given by Bachmann; viz., that the aspect of the observance described in these verses stood in no direct relation to the **#dq)rqM** >and the sanctuary, and therefore could be better added subsequently than connected with 34-36, since the latter would have destroyed the unity of the chapter, which is up to that point governed by one central idea. Negatively, the view which holds verse 39-43 to be an addition of the redactor from a different source is untenable, as Dillmann remarks, against Wellhausen and Kayser. For (a) The Elohist must have given fuller directions concerning Succoth, which he had not as yet treated in detail, than those contained in verse 34-36. (b) Verse 39-43 is incomplete: it does not even contain the name of the feast referred to, and requires what precedes for its explanation. (c) The language is Elohistic. We may finally remark, that in chapter 23 special attention is paid to the feasts not exhaustively treated before (Pentecost, Succoth), whilst others, for which full provision had been previously made already, are here more summarily dismissed (Passover, Day of Atonement).

The promulgation of the laws concerning murder, damage, and blasphemy

(24:10-23) was occasioned by the blasphemy of Shelomith's son.

The heading of chapter 25 indicates that its contents close the main body of Sinaitic legislation, which accordingly ends with the regulations for the Sabbath-year and the year of jubilee. This position is entirely appropriate. By these institutions the existence and continuance of the theocratic community was insured, by securing a permanent validity to its agrarian basis, which depended, of course, on the equal division of property among all its members.

Chapter 26 formally closes the Levitical Code with a prophetic appeal to the people, urging upon them faithful observance of God's law, and threatening a curse against all disobedience, showing, in a warning disclosure of future apostasy, to what dangers the people would be exposed when once in possession of the promised land. There is a manifest similarity in the closing sections of the Covenant-law, the Levitical Code, and the Deuteronomic legislation, which betrays their essential unity. The Covenant-law made last of all provision for the feasts: so does Leviticus. And as the former was sanctioned by special promises in accordance with its special scope and character (Exodus 23:20-33), so the more voluminous law of Leviticus has its more comprehensive statement of the blessing and curse at its close. Such underlying harmonious unity far outweighs the numerous external contradictions which the critics claim to have discovered in detail. Unity lies at the bottom: the discord is superficial and imaginary.

Chapter 27 treats of vows. Probably the non-obligatory character of this religious service caused its treatment outside of the main body of laws.

During the promulgation of the Levitical Code, the history of the Covenant-people had offered nothing remarkable, which could have been the occasion of the enactment of a new law. With a few exceptions in chapter 8, 9, 10,

Leviticus contains no narrative.

In Numbers the historical principle becomes again predominant, as it was in Exodus. There is this difference, however—that in Exodus the majority of the laws were so important that they influenced history, and drew it into their own appointed course, so that it became subordinate to legislation. In Numbers, on the contrary, much refers to the temporary circumstances of the desert journey, and therefore appears as the historical occasions offered themselves. Accordingly, the systematic arrangement has more and more to give place to an external attachment of legal fragments to the facts of history.

Still, even where the outward unity and connection are wanting, there is a ruling idea, which, as it has determined the history of this period, also has given a common character to its laws. They all relate in some way to the civil and political constitution of Israel, to the external and internal organization of the tribes as the army and the congregation of Jehovah, either as this was determined for the present by the journey towards Canaan (chapter 1-10:10), or required for the future by possession of the Holy Land (22-36). The former of these sections is chiefly legal, the latter of a mixed character: all that falls between them gives the history of the journey from Sinai to the Jordan, interrupted by legal sections in chapter 15, 17, 18, 19.

Bertheau, up to this point having been able to trace a combination of the significant numbers 7 and 10 in various groups and series and decalogues, is now obliged to confess, that only a certain arrangement on the principle of decades can be discovered here.

The remarks made above concerning the chronological position of the laws which occur here, show that a positive vindication of their systematic unity would be in vain. We may content ourselves with answering a few objections

raised against the good order of these legal passages.

Bertheau considers Numbers 3:1-4 as an insertion, lacking all connection both with what precedes and with what follows, loosely suspended between 2 and 3.

The reason, however, why the generations of Aaron should be given at this juncture, is obvious; viz., to distinguish the priests at the outset from the Levites. Had the service of the latter been described without this distinction being made, it would have appeared as if they stood on a par with the priests. Verse 6 states emphatically that the Levites were to minister unto ***Aaron the priest***.

The first part of chapter 9 has suggested to many a twofold difficulty. (a) It seems unnecessary that the Passover-law should have been repeated here without any additional or supplementary directions (verse 1-5). (b) The date mentioned in verse 1 carries us back before the date given in chapter 1:1.

Both difficulties are best removed by considering verse 1-5 as an introduction to the law of the second Passover, from verse 6 onward. This instruction was, according to the context, revealed by God to Moses in the first month; i.e., at the regular Passover-time. But the supplementary provision for defiled persons was not made until some time after the regular observance—according to 1:1, at least fourteen days later. Thus the chapter fits well in the chronology of the book, and verse 1 repeats a command given a few weeks before to introduce the new provision stated in verse 6, ***seqq.***

Dr. Kuenen objects to chapter 15, that it is evidently an interpolation. His reasons are, that it is not connected with what precedes and follows, and that verse 2, as it stands now, comes in very inappropriately, and sounds almost like sarcastic irony in the mouth of God, after the events narrated in the two

preceding chapters. The fact is, that these laws were given during the thirty-nine years' wandering in the desert. As there is a break in the history here, neither the exact chronological position, nor the historical occasion of the announcement of them, can be determined. The irony would certainly disappear, if, between the judgment of chapter 14 and the directions of chapter 15, some months, or even years, had intervened. Instead of sarcasm and irony, it would seem that there fell a ray of hope and divine consolation on the background of these verses, in so far as the possession of Canaan is alluded to. Probably this was done to remind the rising generation that to them God would keep his promise, and bestow upon them these benefits which their fathers had forfeited by their rebellion and unbelief.

This part, also, of our task is now accomplished. Having shown that all the laws in Exodus-Numbers, so far as language and context are concerned, form one systematic, progressive, well-connected whole, we possess a vantage-ground on which to meet the critics in their next attack upon the unity of the pre-Deuteronomic Codes.

Chapter Six^(TOC)

Contradictions and Repetitions

It is claimed that the Pentateuchal Codes, even when Deuteronomy is left out of view, confront us with cases of flat and irreconcilable contradiction. Of course, if this be true, it precludes most positively all unity of authorship. Two contradictory laws cannot have been in operation at the same time: the one must have been antiquated when the other went into effect. And least of all is it thinkable, the critics say, that the same legislator should have prescribed two contradictory laws, and thus destroyed his own work and authority.

1. It must be admitted, if a number of contradictory laws, exclusive of each other, can be pointed out, without any reason to account for their difference in the altered circumstances, or any explicit statement that the one has been substituted for the other, that in this case we shall be shut up to the denial of the unity, and consequently the Mosaic authorship, of the Code. On the other hand, nothing less than this can accomplish the result, which the critics wish to produce, of putting Moses at variance with himself. A second condition to which this argument is tied, should be that a considerable number of discrepancies be adduced. To argue from a few isolated cases, and to leave the perfect agreement on the whole out of sight, is to substitute the letter for the spirit, and awakens a strong suspicion against the critics, that they are intent upon making

out a case; that it is not the contradictions which compel them to deny the unity, but that *they* strain and press the former unduly to summon them as witnesses against it. It requires a very strong combination of individual facts to overthrow the presumptive evidence in favor of unity, which we have discovered in the remarkable similarity and agreement of all the Codes.

2. Abstractly, all admit the possibility that two laws might apparently contradict each other, whilst the difference might simply arise from the peculiar aim of each. In modern law, instances of such a character are numerous; but, whilst they are abstractly obliged to make this concession, the critics never endeavor to harmonize in concrete cases. This clearly proves that the question at issue is begged from the outset: it is a settled affair with the critics that the Codes are distinct. Thus prejudice and bias deal with the law in an unlawful way, and deprive it of its inherent right to speak for itself. The lawgiver is stopped in the midst of his instructions; and the dislocated and detached sentences of laws thus rendered incomplete, are triumphantly held up as contradicting each other. All such methods must be met with a bold protest; and no reasoning which in its premises anticipates an element of the conclusion to be reached, can be considered as valid.
3. Dr. Kuenen distinguishes two sorts of contradictions: 1. The discrepancy, though it actually exists, is of such a character that exegetical ingenuity, combined with the arts of jurisprudence, can solve the harmonistic problem. 2. The one

law positively excludes the other. We must protest against this *a priori* decision of how much jurisprudence may be admitted in the exposition of law. If historical interpretation may be guided by historical canons, why not facilitate the explanation of law by all legal means? That the solution of a complicated legal problem can be reached only with the help of fine distinctions, gives Dr. Kuenen no right to affirm that the discrepancies actually existed in the mind of the lawgiver.

4. If it be admitted that law may and must be interpreted and harmonized on legal principles, we find that there are in general two ways in which apparent contradictions can be removed; and it is but fair to try either of them before an absolute disagreement is alleged.

(a) *Systematically* we harmonize two statements by assigning to each its proper domain, considering them from the peculiar point of view which the lawgiver had in mind when he prescribed them, by making the one supplement the other.

(b) *Historically* the chronologically later passage must be given the preference over the one enacted earlier. There is nothing unreasonable in the assumption that provisional directions were subsequently modified, especially when at first only stated in outline rather for theoretical than practical purposes. This right of historical harmonization must be insisted on the more firmly, since the Pentateuch presents codified law in the framework of history, from a historical point of view. In many cases, the earlier

enactment was not given for a legal, but simply for a historical, purpose, or only intended to suit a transient state of affairs. When the latter ceased, it became self-evident that the provisional law had lost its binding force. This principle is of wide application in comparing Deuteronomy with the Levitical Code.

To both methods as presented by Delitzsch (Genes. Einl., 43, 44), Dr. Kuenen again takes exception. Delitzsch had referred to the *corpus juris Justinianum* as a parallel, and shown by a quotation from Savigny, how jurists resort to the same principle, when the Digesta, Institutiones, and the Codex occasionally contradict each other or themselves. Kuenen remarks, "I do not believe that the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuchal Codes is made more probable by this analogy. Does not the discrepancy between the various parts of the *corpus juris* arise from the origin of its laws in various periods? If, therefore, the case be the same with the Pentateuch, the successive origin of the Mosaic Codes becomes highly probable." This retort of his own argument upon Delitzsch would be justified if we had the same historical testimony for the gradual origination of the Mosaic institutions as there is for the development of Roman law. The opposite of this is true. And Dr. Kuenen overlooks, that the point of analogy consists simply in the fact that a Code may be in operation of which the individual laws seem to contradict each other. What may be the cause of this discrepancy is not the question here: it is enough that the fact be verified. If the *corpus juris* was valid law at a certain time, why not the

Mosaic law also? And if it be proven that the variations in the former are due to diversity of origin, we will wait till the same evidence is presented for the Mosaic laws. The contradictions in themselves do not prove anything as long as—

- (a) They can be harmonized.
- (b) The difference explained on other grounds.
- (c) The positive proof that they owe their origin to diversity of authorship is not given.

We cannot enter here upon the discussion of individual cases, most of which will, moreover, come up at later points of our inquiry. And it can be confidently claimed that all of them have met with a satisfactory solution long ago.

With regard to repetitions, a few remarks may suffice—

1. The objection based on the frequent restatement of essentially the same law, disregards the peculiar relation in which the living God stood to his Covenant-people Israel. He was the great Law-giver and Theocratic King, but at the same time the father of his subjects; and where he had to command in the former capacity, he could urge and beseech repeatedly in the latter.
2. The Pentateuch, as a whole, is not a legal Code, but a history of the foundation of the Theocracy. What may be less appropriate in an official Code, becomes quite natural in its historical environment.

3. The character of the repeated laws affords an easy explanation of this fact. Most of them are of the highest importance for Israel's religious life. As an example, we may refer to the Sabbatical laws. Not less than eleven substantially the same are found in Exodus-Numbers.
4. Very few actual repetitions exist where the subject is not approached in every new treatment from a different side, or with the purpose to introduce some modification.

Chapter Seven^(TOC)

Development of Law

By far the most formidable objection raised by modern critics against the unity of the Pentateuchal Codes, rests on the assertion that they betray by their contents and form a natural growth from the simple to the complex, and that their various parts represent each a different stage of religious development, and fit exactly into the historical periods to which their origin is respectively ascribed. This evolutionary theory, of course, has led to the reconstruction of the whole Jewish history. If the essence of the Christian conception of revelation consist in a direct interference of God, the creation of a new order of things, the implanting by an act of grace of what nature had become unable to produce; if the perfect and absolute stand here at the beginning, and are the source, not the fruit, of all development—then it will surely follow that a naturalistic philosophy must end with the beginning, and begin with the end. The difference must needs be radical. Whosoever, like Dr. Kuenen, rules out the supernatural element from Israel's history cannot occupy a halfway position: he will place the contents of revelation at the end, because, at every other point, their interpolation would disturb the order of development.

The law according to Wellhausen is an accommodation to the natural tendencies of the people. Originally the ceremonial cultus was rooted in the soil of heathen nature-worship, and in its primitive form it was the spontaneous expression of a natural religious impulse. To the first part of his Prolegomena, treating the history of the cultus, he has prefixed the motto,

Legem non habentes natura faciunt legis opera. What distinguished Israel from the Gentiles was not its ceremonial institutions—rather the opposite; for "the cultus is the heathen element in the Jewish religion." Only after the codification and systematizing of these primitive elements during and after the exile, did the law become the exponent of the people's peculiar character. First, prophecy had raised its powerful voice in opposition to all outward rites, as being rooted in, closely allied to, and in necessary connection with, the worship of other gods. Pure Jahveism in a spiritual sense was the ideal which the prophets continually held up before the people, without being able to realize it amongst them. How we shall account for the sudden appearance of a class of men with such spiritual ideas and lofty aspirations, among a people scarcely awakened out of the mystic sleep of Oriental nature-worship, to the first faint consciousness of something more definite and personal, we ask in vain. The fact is surely not less miraculous and astounding than the promulgation of a divine law on Sinai. But the prophetic voice so powerfully raised at first, became weaker and weaker, and at last was silenced entirely. Spiritualism had taken up arms against ritualism, and lost the battle. Seeing that it could not successfully resist this natural tendency of Israel, it began to accommodate its demands to the desires of the people, and tried to assimilate the essentially heathen elements to its own Jahvistic ideas; and by this strange but dexterous renouncement of former principles, the strongest obstacle in the way of Jahvistic monotheism was all at once transformed into its most powerful incentive and reliable safeguard. What happened, according to Wellhausen, finds an illustration in the methods followed by the Christian Church, in adopting heathen practices and customs, and making them the symbols of Christian facts and ideas.

It is true this scheme presents a difficulty which has not entirely escaped the critics themselves. Wellhausen confesses that the Levitical Theocracy

indicates a retrogressive movement in the religious growth of Israel. He characterizes the introduction of the Pentateuchal Codes as a systematic relapse into that heathenism which the prophets had condemned and opposed with all their might. There is a break in the process here. Prophetism had proclaimed spiritual Jahveism, and condemned ritualism instead of adhering to this vital principle (its only *raison d'être*), and exalting the idea above the form, which was the true import of its mission, it now forsakes the essential and spiritual aim of all its striving, satisfied if merely the form be saved, if only a sort of Jahveism, be it ever so gross and superstitious and ceremonial, be preserved.

Not all critics agree as to the precise order in which the several portions of the various Codes originated. As to the Codes themselves, the most favorite succession is that proposed by the reconstructionists of Wellhausen's type, being Covenant-law, Deuteronomy, Ezekiel's Program, Priest Code. Graf distributes the legal contents of the Pentateuch in the following way—

1. The Jehovistic recension of the Elohist narrative (which he assigns to the time of King Ahaz) contained Exodus 13, 20-23, 34.
2. The law-book discovered in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, and written during his reign, contained Deuteronomy 4:45 to 28:68. Of this, however, chapter 21-25 belong to an earlier time, and formed originally a supplement to the laws of Exodus. Graf is inclined to identify the Deuteronomist with Jeremiah.
3. Ezekiel is the author of Leviticus 18-26, and of the Sabbath-law in Exodus 31.

4. In the time of Ezra, and probably by Ezra himself, were written Exodus 12:1-28, 43-51; 25-31 and 35-40; Leviticus 1-16 (only chapter 11 contains an older law), 24:10-23; Numbers 1:48 -10:28, 15-19, 28-31, 35:16-36:13.
5. Soon after the time of Ezra the whole was completed by the addition of Leviticus 27 and some minor parts.

Since the latest schemes place Deuteronomy between the Covenant-book and the Levitical laws, we must anticipate some parts of our discussion. The historical side of the problem will also come here, already more or less under consideration.

Chapter Eight^(TOC)

Unity, or Plurality, of Sanctuary?

It is alleged, that before the Deuteronomic reform and the centralization which it effected, sacrifices were offered, even by the most pious Israelites, at all places throughout the land, specially on the Bamoth, or high places, to which a peculiar sanctity was ascribed. The Covenant-law is claimed to testify to this state of affairs; and the classical passage, Exodus 20:24-26, is generally quoted as decisive for the view, that, long after the conquest of the land, a plurality of sanctuaries was not only tolerated, but legalized.

All will, of course, depend on the exegesis of this passage; and the latter will be determined by the context. As we have hitherto discovered no evidence of the composite character of the Codes, we vindicate our right to interpret these verses in the light of what precedes and follows. Thus viewing them, we would state their bearing on the present question under the following heads—

1. They contain simply some provisional directions—
 - (a) For the altar to be erected for the Covenant-sacrifice (Exodus 24).
 - (b) For all sacrifices to be offered before the tabernacle was ready (compare also Joshua 8:31).

The only objections that can be reasonably urged against this natural explanation are the following two—

- (1) The time between the promulgation of this command and the erection of the tabernacle was too short to require a special provision.

According to Exodus 40:1, the tabernacle was not reared before the first day of the first month of the second year after the exodus. And even then the tabernacle-service could not go into effect, because the sacrificial laws had not yet been given. Not before Leviticus 8 do we find the command to consecrate Aaron and his sons (compare also Numbers 1:1). Thus the time between the publication of this command and the inauguration of the tabernacle-service was at least eight full months. Were the children of Israel without sacrifices all this time? If not, and if each was his own priest, and built his own altar, what was more natural than a provision of this character? Afterwards, of course, it was partially abrogated by the fuller and permanent arrangement of the ritual system.

- (2) The directions that the altar should be of unhewn stone, and that it should not be ascended by steps, are claimed to be of general character, and thus to preclude the subsequent promulgation of the Levitical law, which contradicts them.

As to the first of these points, we claim on our side that the command is not general, but special and temporary. Because the altar which each man would build for himself could not be consecrated, it should

consist of simple, undefiled, natural material. Of course, to the altar of the tabernacle, made according to God's own prescriptions, solemnly consecrated and served by an official priesthood, these restrictions did not apply.

The prohibition to ascend the altar by steps, had in it an element of permanent validity, as verse 26 intimates. Only the special way in which this necessity was met, had no perpetual binding force. Hence, whilst the Levitical law preserved the former, it could disregard the latter. The principle was maintained, but in the manner stated in Exodus 28:42, 39:28.

2. The critics cannot satisfactorily account for the addition, "where I record my name." Wellhausen dismisses the significant phrase with the following insignificant remark: "This only means that the place of communion between heaven and earth is not to be regarded as arbitrarily chosen, but as in some way designated by God himself." The reference of this clause to the successive stations of the tabernacle during the desert-journey, is not excluded, but does not do full justice to the meaning. It is intended that all places become sacred by a manifestation of God, whether it be in a theophany, or by the Shechinah, or in some other way. On Sinai, God recorded his name in a glorious revelation and thus to the Israelites the provisional right could be given to build an altar there. Afterwards, when the manifestation of God's

glory was transferred to the tent of the testimony, this of necessity became the only recognized sanctuary. The passage clearly intimates, that, as often as altered circumstances would in the future render centralization of worship practically impossible, the same freedom would be restored, always, of course, with the same restriction, that no place of sacrifice should be arbitrarily chosen, but only such as were sanctified by "a recording of God's name." Actually, we find in subsequent history that all such consecrated spots had been the scene of a theophany: they were so many "Sinais," where the same command could be repeated, and the pious Israelite once more erect his simple altar of earth or unhewn stone, and sacrifice his burnt-offering and peace-offering, his sheep and oxen.

That the Covenant-law positively presupposes unity of worship and cultus, is seen from the feast-laws, Exodus 23:17, 19, where every male is required to appear three times in the year before the LORD God. If the sanctuaries were so numerous as the critics assert, and accordingly visited continually and frequently by all Israelites, a command like this, to appear *three times* before the LORD, would have been superfluous and unmeaning.

We see that the attempt to bring the Covenant-law into contradiction with the subsequent Codes, or to show that it sanctions a more primitive form of sanctuary-worship, rests on a very forced interpretation of a single passage severed from its context. That there was a relative element in this regulation, is absurd to deny; and the absolute principles involved were retained, though in a somewhat modified form, in the Levitical law, so that no discrepancy exists. Surely no development of centuries was required to effect the

inessential difference between these verses and the description of the altar in the tabernacle, modifications which are fully accounted for by the historical situation that conditioned both.

It is further alleged that this first Code makes no provision for the priests and their support, and thus silently assumes the common right of all Israelites to offer sacrifice. We deny that the latter proposition can be logically deduced from the former; and as to the silence of the Code, if the argument. proves any thing, it proves that there was no privileged priesthood as late as the time of David or Jehoshaphat, which is more than even the most destructive critics are willing to assert. The *argumentum e silentio* has no force unless it be shown, that to legislate on this topic fell within the scope and purpose of this law. It regulates simply the Covenant-relation between Jehovah and his people. Shall we conclude from the silence as to circumcision and leprosy, and many other topics, that these were unknown in the tenth or ninth century? But we have no more right to draw any inference from the fact that no priests are mentioned here. Moreover, an evidently prospective statement is made (Exodus 24:1, 9) concerning Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, who are commanded with Moses to come up to the LORD. By this distinction they are singled out from the rest of the people; and on no other ground could this distinction of Aaron's sons have been made, than in view of their future priesthood, and their appearing before God in the tabernacle.

Deuteronomy is quoted as testifying to the actual state of affairs during the transition period immediately before the centralization under Josiah. It contains, we are told, the reminiscences of what the Covenant-law represented as indispensable reality. The Deuteronomist writes throughout in a polemic tone, and assumes the character of a reformer. It indicates certainly no great concession when we admit that the Deuteronomic Code enforces and

inculcates unity of worship more than any thing else. To draw from this the direct inference, that it must be both the product of, and the norm for, the reaction against Bamoth-worship in the latter part of the seventh century B.C., is very hasty and sweeping. What the critics may be called upon to prove, is not that Deuteronomy had a striking fitness to serve as a reform-Code in the days of King Josiah. Nobody denies this, and there is abundant evidence that it was actually used thus. Neither will the evidence that the Code could accomplish a greater and more important mission in the seventh century than in the Mosaic time, justify the conclusion that it owes its origin to the former, and not to the latter. God did not inspire his holy word for a single age or generation: it never returneth void, but accomplishes sooner or later all that which he pleases. The one and the essential point which we wish the higher criticism to establish, is this, that the Code does not fit into the historical situation, by which, according to its own testimony, it was called forth. As far as we know, this has never been done. The two preceding points have been settled, which it required surely no higher criticism to do; but we object to a use of them as if they warranted an inference that can only be drawn from the third. Is there any impropriety in the tone and contents of the book, when we realize that the Israelites were to enter upon the possession of a land, for centuries defiled by a heathen cultus that almost every high place would by its associations expose them to the utmost danger of relapsing into idolatry and nature-worship? If ever a time called for an urgent appeal to the people to maintain the centralization of their cultus as a safeguard against Canaanitish influences, it was the latter part of the Mosaic period. And the remarkable fact, that Deuteronomy emphasizes as much the permanence of the once established sanctuary as its unity, suits far better the Mosaic time than the seventh century, when the thought that the temple could be removed from Jerusalem would have been considered absurd. Entirely too much has

been made of the frequently recurring expressions: "the place which the LORD your God shall choose (rxby) out of all your tribes to put (mw#) his name there (Nk#l)." Riehm asserts that this could not have been spoken by Moses with reference to the uncertain place of the tabernacle. But here criticism, otherwise so averse to prophetic foresight, seems to claim for Moses a minute knowledge of the future fate of the sanctuary. What else could Moses expect than that, after the conquest of Canaan, a definite place would be chosen by God to dwell there, either in tabernacle or temple? Even long after the Mosaic age, in the same time to which critics ascribe the origin of Deuteronomy, all these terms were applied to the tabernacle and its locality by Jeremiah 7:12. m# yM# ytnk# r#) wly#b.

So much about the prospective character of Deuteronomy. Since it has a retrospective side also, we must briefly inquire whether this lends stronger support to the critical view. Does Deuteronomy paint the past with such colors as compel us to postulate between it and the Covenant-law a period of at least two centuries?

We are referred chiefly to such expressions as the following: "Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes" (12:8, *seqq.*). Deuteronomy, it is said, "opposes consciously" "what we are now accustomed to do." Its reform is not merely modifying but condemning, previous legislation, not only reformatory, but polemic. And to explain this marked difference between it and the Jehovist, a considerable interval of time must be assumed. It is impossible, if the Covenant-law had been promulgated at Sinai and Deuteronomy in the plains of Moab, that the latter should condemn what the former had approved of.

In answer to this we remark—

1. The promulgation of the Levitical Code, which according to our view falls between the Covenant-law and Deuteronomy, has been overlooked here by the critics. The tabernacle represented absolute unity of worship; and, this having been abandoned in the desert, it is not strange that Deuteronomy condemns in the most polemic terms a subsequent relapse into previous customs, which had now become unallowable.
2. That such a subsequent relapse took place during the thirty-eight years of wandering in the desert under the judgment of God, is proved by historical testimony, not only that of the Pentateuch, but also of Amos 5:25, 26. Whatever may be the more definite exegesis of this difficult passage, it doubtless alludes to such a state of affairs as Deuteronomy condemns. It is true that Amos does not directly charge the Israelites with having sacrificed in a plurality of places at the same time, but only that they had "taken up the tabernacle of Moloch and Chiun their images, the star of their god, which they made to themselves." But it is clear that the former is a direct inference from the latter statement. Unity of worship stood and fell with pure Jahveism, of which the central idea is the recognition of one personal God, to whom belongs the initiative in all that pertains to his service. The moment this definite and exclusive idea is lost, there returns with the vague conceptions of nature-worship, the unlimited freedom to sacrifice at all places where this uncircumscribed deity of nature reveals itself; i.e., everywhere. That the idolatry to which Amos refers was conducted throughout the camp, and not centralized in the tabernacle, admits of no doubt; and this alone furnishes a

sufficient ground for the polemical tone of Deuteronomy. For it is true of the past as well as of the future, that the prophet's eye takes in more than a single day: it covers periods, and sees them in the light of their most significant features. Hence the prophet Moses, looking back upon the last forty years, could even in the fields of Moab, at the dawn of a new period, truthfully say, "Not as we are *now* accustomed to do."

3. The protest against a plurality of places of sacrifice is brought into close connection throughout the Code with the warning against heathen idolatry (Deuteronomy 12:2, 3, and so *passim*). But the critics are emphatic in telling us that Bamoth-worship was Jahveh-worship. Accordingly, this feature suits the Mosaic period far better than the age of the later Judaic kings. The dark future and the still darker past combined in these days of Moses to inspire him with fear for Israel's corrupt tendencies in this direction.
4. That Deuteronomy in its general representations often approaches very closely to the later times, proves nothing more than that we have here an example of generic prophecy. These later evils were the natural results of the dangers to which Israel was exposed in the midst of a heathen environment. It did not require a great amount of supernatural foresight to discern them beforehand. And all critics admit that Deuteronomy, on the whole, has a prophetic character. How can it awake our surprise, that the prescription of a general remedy for a general class of evils was found appropriate as often and as late as the occasion or the necessity required?

5. We close with the remark, that in view of the striking resemblance between the Mosaic time and the state of religion in the seventh century, and the almost perfect fitting of Deuteronomy into the historical circumstances of both, it must surprise us, that the critics have not been bold enough to reject the whole history of Israel's apostasy, and wandering in the desert, as a "historical fiction," a new and unprecedented example of carrying back the present into the past with a Jesuitical intention. If the attempt has been successful in the case of the tabernacle, we do not see why it should not be practicable here. But if there are so many temptations to reiterate the bold hypothesis, and nevertheless the stern reality of history would not allow them, it may well serve us as a warning not to yield too readily to similar facts, presented in the same attractive light, wherewith a little less historical testimony, the critics have actually risked the dangerous step of proclaiming that the history of the past is but an embellished reproduction of a subsequent present. We are content to call neither a counterfeit of the other, but to find in both the genuine reflection, which in all times and all places the invariable methods of God's dealing with men will produce in the mirror of history.

According to Wellhausen, there is no other difference between Deuteronomy and the Priest Code on this point than that the latter takes for granted what the former requires. With regard to a second point closely allied to the one just discussed, the case stands different. We must, in the second place, examine the pretended development of the sacrificial system.

Chapter Nine^(TOC)

The Sacrificial System

Here the Jehovist and Deuteronomist go together, and stand diametrically opposed to Ezekiel and the Priest Code. And even within the limits of the Priest Code itself, an expansion of the ceremonial is traceable. Wellhausen makes substantially the following statements—

1. According to the Jehovist and the Deuteronomist, sacrifices are a universal and extremely simple means of honoring the Deity, and conciliating his favor. They are pre-Mosaic, and along the line of Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, Noah, go back to the beginnings of humanity, to Cain and Abel. The Elohist, on the other hand, represents the sacrificial worship as an immediate divine institution, characteristically Mosaic in origin.
2. With the Jehovist and in Deuteronomy the important question is, "To whom?" The Elohist emphasizes the questions, "When, where, and by whom?" In other words, the Jehovist has not, and the Elohist has, an elaborate program of ritual.
3. In the Jehovistic and Deuteronomic Codes, no other than burnt-offerings (*olah*) and peace-(or thank-) offerings (*shelem, zebah, zebah shelamim*) appear. Moreover, the *olah* constitutes no separate class for itself, but is simply the substitute in a large *zebah* (consisting of several animals) of a single whole victim for all the pieces of fat and the blood,

otherwise offered to God, of each individual animal. Hence **olah** occurs almost always in connection with the **zebahir** in the singular number. That part of every **zebahir** which came upon the altar (fat and blood) could appropriately be called **olah**. Still, Wellhausen admits that the term is never used in this sense, but always denotes a **olokauston**. In Ezekiel and the Priest Code the order is reversed, and **zebahir** has become subordinate to the **olah**. The altar is called **mizbah-ha-olah** (the altar of burnt-offering). Two new kinds of sacrifices are added—**chattath** (sin-offering) and **asham** (trespass-offering).

4. It is claimed that we have a gradual modification of the idea of sacrifice.
 - (a) The primitive conception is that of a meal in which the Deity is host, and the offerer a guest. Sacrifices are identical with sacrificial meals.
 - (b) Next comes the **shelem** (peace-offering) of the Priest Code with a reminiscence of the old custom, in so far as the sacrificial meal is retained. The modification consists in the giving of the breast and the right shoulder to the priest. This is a first restriction upon the conception of a meal.
 - (c) Then follows the **olah** (burnt-offering) of the Priest Code. Here also the priests have their part in the skin. The whole victim is burnt upon the altar, which still admits the conception of a one-sided meal, consumed by God alone.
 - (d) In the **chattath** (sin-offering) and **asham** (trespass-offering), even this is lost; since none of the flesh is

brought upon the altar, but the whole eaten by the priests. All that could remind of a sacrificial meal, as flour, oil, wine, salt, is wanting; so that the last trace of the original idea is effaced.

5. As an example of modification within the limits of the Priest Code itself, stands the case of the offering of incense and altar of incense. The latter is unknown to the older parts of the Code, not mentioned among the utensils of the tabernacle, Exodus 25-29, but spoken of at the end, in a separate passage, evidently of later origin (30:1, etc.). The rite of the most solemn sin-offering, according to Exodus 29, Leviticus 8 and 9, was not performed at this altar. On the Day of Atonement, Aaron offers incense, not on the altar, but in a censer before the mercy-seat within the veil. So also Leviticus 10, Numbers 16, 17. In all these chapters, the altar of burnt-offering is called *ha-mizbeah*, which precludes the existence of another altar. In the later sections of the Pentateuchal Code, the name *mizbah-ha-olah* appears; and these are exactly the passages which know the altar of incense. This whole idea of a golden altar was an after-development from that of the golden table of show-bread. Other points in which a development is traceable are mentioned by Wellhausen; e.g., the flour first used was **xMq** (*meal*), the Priest Code demands **tls** (*fine flour*). The old custom of boiling the meat gave place to roasting—a refinement in the rite, of course, arising from a refinement of the eater's taste.

With reference to all these points, we would remark—

1. If Deuteronomy lays so much stress on the centralization of the cultus, it would be naturally expected, provided this were the formative principle of the development, as Wellhausen claims, that a corresponding change would be noticeable in its sacrificial prescriptions. This, however, is, not the case. We have Wellhausen's own confession that Deuteronomy falls in with the Jehovist on the whole line. This is a clear proof that the alleged discrepancies are not to be explained on the principle of development, but out of the peculiar aim of each Code in particular. In Deuteronomy, to say the least, we have positive proof that the two conceptions of sacrifice—that of a ceremonial act bound to a single place, and that of a joyful meal—are not exclusive, but mutually supplement each other.
2. The contrast that the Jehovistic legislation is only concerned with the question "to whom?" and the Priest Code exclusively emphasizes, "how, when, where, and by whom?" is by far too sharply drawn. We find with the Jehovist, provisions in the latter direction (Exodus 20:24-26, 23:18, 19). On the contrary, the Levitical law enforces principles which, according to the critics, are Jehovistic (e.g., Leviticus 19:4, 5, 20:1-5).
3. That sacrifices were originally extremely simple in their ritual, and pre-Mosaic in their essential features, does not prove any thing against the Mosaic origin of the Priest Code. The Levitical law nowhere asserts that Moses for the first time instituted sacrifices: it simply states that the ritual system, as adapted to Israel's new position as God's Covenant-people, dates from the Mosaic period.

4. That the **olah** did not originally constitute a separate class of sacrifices for itself, requires stronger proof than Wellhausen has been able to produce. All that he shows, is that **olah** and **zebahim** were frequently combined. This, however, is also the case in the Priest Code. The impossibility of considering the **olah** as a subordinate part of the **zebah** is manifest; because the fat and blood of an individual **zebah** are never called **olah**, as Wellhausen is obliged to admit. The term is exclusively employed of whole-burnt offerings, **olokausta**. It is plain, then, that the specific difference lies not in the coming upon the altar: in other words, **olah** and **zebah** are *essentially* distinct.
5. It is true that in the Jehovistic Code, only burnt-and peace-offerings are mentioned (Exodus 20:24, 24:5). But, on the one hand, nothing can be inferred from two passages: on the other hand, as the Levitical Code had not yet been promulgated, the Covenant-law retained provisionally the older practice and *ritus*.
6. Concerning Wellhausen's denial of the actual existence of the altar of incense, we remark—
 - (a) It cannot be maintained that Exodus 30:1-10 is out of place, and proves itself by this position a later appendix. The description of the utensils of the tabernacle began with the ark, and ended with the altar of incense; because both constituted, as it were, the two polar points of the sanctuary. Hence the altar is called **my#dq #dq** (*Holy of*

holies), in preference to the candlestick, and table of showbread.

- (b) That the altar is not mentioned in connection with the most solemn rite described in Exodus 29 (consecration of the priests commanded), Leviticus 8 (the same executed), and Leviticus 9 (entrance of Aaron and his sons upon their actual service), need not surprise us when we remember, that in all these cases, the priests, while still undergoing the rite of consecration, are not treated as priests. Hence the prescription of Leviticus 4, to put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of incense, did not apply here; because, *de facto*, Aaron was not a high-priest as long as the induction to his office lasted. Only for the sin-offering of the high-priest and the whole congregation, was the blood put upon the altar of incense (Leviticus 4:22, *seqq.*).
- (c) When, according to Leviticus 16, Aaron on the Day of Atonement brought incense in a censer before the mercy-seat, we surely could not expect him to have carried the heavy altar within the veil. And that coals are taken from the altar of burnt-offering is equally natural. Even the fire for the daily offering of incense was taken from this altar. The only remaining difficulty is, that in chapter 16 only one altar is mentioned as being sprinkled with blood. "The altar that is before the LORD" seems to denote the *olah* altar. Universal tradition has referred it to the altar of incense; and so does Delitzsch (Luth. Zeitschr., 1880, iii. p. 118), who adds the remark, that the name is exclusively

used of the golden altar in the holy place. The context, however, plainly contradicts this: from verse 14-20 the order is the same as in the recapitulation of verse 33. In the latter verse the altar cannot but designate the **olah** altar. Accordingly we must understand verse 18 in the same sense. The chapter distinguishes throughout between (a) the holy place (here the Holy of holies), (b) the tabernacle of the congregation, (c) the altar that is before the LORD, which can only mean the altar in the court.

The true explanation why the altar of incense is not specially mentioned, is that it was included under the general term, "the tabernacle of the congregation," together with the candlestick and table of showbread. On the contrary, the **olah** altar is marked out, because it was the only thing in the court to be atoned for. The phrase "before the LORD" is evidently intended in a wider sense here, to denote that the altar of burnt-offering stood in front of the whole tabernacle, God's dwelling-place.

- (d) Leviticus 10 and Numbers 16, 17, as extraordinary or unlawful transactions, do not come under consideration here.
- (e) It is untrue that the name **ha-mizbeah**, applied to the **olah** altar, precludes the existence of another altar. The former could be appropriately designated by that name, because it was the place of sacrifice, if not exclusively, yet **par excellence**.

- (f) No more difficulty is created by the fact, that those sections of the Pentateuch which show acquaintance with the altar of incense, use the more definite name for the ***olah*** altar, whilst those which do not know the former, call the latter ***ha-mizbeah***. The simple explanation is, that, in passages where both altars are referred to, a closer distinction was necessary to prevent confusion. In other passages, where only the ***olah*** altar was mentioned, this was superfluous, and the simple name ***ha-mizbeah*** was sufficient to indicate that the altar ***par excellence*** was meant.
- (g) Wellhausen alleges that the idea of a golden altar is a mere development of that of the golden table of showbread, and finds confirmation for this theory in Ezekiel 41:22. "The altar of wood," etc.; "this is the table that is before the Lord." The fact is, that in Ezekiel's sanctum, neither candlestick nor table of show-bread appears—which once more proves how absurd it is, to draw from his Thora any inference as to the state of the ritual in his days. The statement in verse 22 applies to nothing else than to the very altar whose existence Wellhausen denies. It is certainly more probable that the prophet called the altar a table, than the table an altar. The designation of the altar as a table is warranted by post-exilic usage. Furthermore, Ezekiel clearly distinguishes two altars in the temple (9:2).

Chapter Ten^(TOC)

Priests and Levites

Our next point of inquiry concerns the priests and Levites, and their relation to each other. Critics claim that in no point is the development more clearly traceable step by step than here. By a gradual restriction, the priestly office became the exclusive prerogative of the so-called sons of Aaron. Ezekiel 44:6-11 describes the degradation of the great mass of Levites from priests to temple-servants, and is the bridge between Deuteronomy, which recognizes all Levites as priests, and uses the two terms interchangeably, on the one hand, and the Priest Code on the other hand, where only the Sons of Aaron are allowed to appear before Jahveh. According to 1 Kings 2:27, 35, Abiathar was removed by Solomon from the priesthood for political reasons, and replaced by Zadok, whose descendants from that time onward seem to have monopolized the temple-service. As Deuteronomy shows, in the days of King Josiah the Levites could still claim an equal right to this service. The distinction between the sons of Zadok and the other Levites was not one of rank, but simply of actual service. Accordingly we find them in juxtaposition in statements like the following: **mywlh-lkw qwdc** >(Zadok and all the Levites), 2 Samuel 15:24 (Graf, p. 48). Only within the circle of the sons of Zadok themselves, Graf admits that there may have been a certain gradation in rank, from the lowest temple-servant upward to the **lwdgh Nhk** >or **#)rh Nhk** >(high priest), 2 Kings 12:11, 22:4, 8; Jeremiah 20:1. With the centralization of Deuteronomy, the seed for the future distinction of rank was

sown. The Levitical priests of the province, separated from their altars, could no longer remain priests. Deuteronomy still puts them on a par with the sons of Zadok; but the latter had long ceased to consider them as equals, and now began to question their rights altogether. This was the actual state of affairs, which Ezekiel tries to present in a moral light. He reproves the idolatrous ministering of the Levites as priests at the Bamoth; and, in punishment for this iniquity, they are degraded to temple-servants. Thus they shall atone for what was most abominable in the prophet's estimation, and henceforward the Levites exist as an order distinct from the priests. Notwithstanding this moral semblance, it is clear that Ezekiel's retributive justice was of a peculiar retrogressive kind: he proclaims as a punishment what had long ago been the real situation, and was after all but a natural consequence of the centralization. What the prophet did, was to settle the controversy between Levites and Zadokites in favor of the latter. He did not claim for the house of Zadok, Aaronic descent, because in his days it was well known that the old line had ceased during the reign of Solomon. Not until after the exile, when the thread of tradition had been lost, could the Priest Code present this claim, and the chronicler establish it by a series of artificial genealogies.

We have accordingly in this development the following stages—

1. Jehovistic Code. No mention of priests. Young men offer sacrifices (Exodus 24:3-8). A priestly order, but no priestly family.
2. Deuteronomy recognizes a hereditary *clerus* consisting of numerous families with exclusive and indisputable privileges. Also the name "Levitical priests" appears. The principle of heredity, though afterwards carried back into the Mosaic age, actually dates from the later times of the kingdom, and was

entirely Judaic in origin.

3. Ezekiel legalizes the distinction between the priestly family connected with the temple and the families before connected with the Bamoth. This distinction had long been valid as a matter of fact; viz., ever since the Bamoth were destroyed. Now, however, it is clothed with divine authority.
4. What Ezekiel saw it necessary to justify as a divinely authenticated innovation, the Priest Code finds it possible to proclaim as an "eternal statute." Reminiscences of opposition appear in the history of Korah's rebellion (compare also Numbers 17:10, 18:23). Here we have the regular gradation in descending order: Aaron as high-priest, his sons as priests, his tribe as Levites, constitute a systematic hierarchy. In pre-exilic history and literature, an imposing figure like that of the high-priest was wholly unknown. The priesthood was rather a royal dependency. But in the Priest Code the high-priest is sovereign, the top of the pyramid of Israel's congregation reaching into heaven, and unto Jahveh himself. A theocratic king beside him is unthinkable. That the head of the cultus is at the same time head of the nation, points us to a time when the nation was robbed of its secular independence, and had nothing left but its ecclesiastical organization. Israel has become a congregation, **hd(**. Dependence on foreign power is the necessary prerequisite for the origin of a hierarchy. Hence the Priest Code must be post-exilic.

In commenting upon this ingenious theory, it will be necessary more than once to cast a side-glance at the historical arguments by which it is fortified.

Our remarks are the following—

1. It is positively untrue that the Jehovistic law knows nothing of a priestly order. That it is only occasionally alluded to, and not repeatedly mentioned, cannot awake suspicion: for **(a)** it did not exist when the Covenant-law was promulgated; **(b)** the purpose of this law was not to regulate the ritual system, but simply to furnish a basis on which it could be constructed. On the other hand, that incidental allusions and prospective remarks should be made in reference to the subject can be expected. The following passages, which are Jehovistic, fully warrant us in saying that the Covenant-law is not contradictory to, but rather preparatory for, the more full Levitical legislation (Exodus 4:14, 19:22, 32:1, 29, 33:7-11). Wellhausen rules out such passages from the list of arguments by mere capricious remarks like the following "Exodus 32:29 stands on the basis of Deuteronomy," and "Exodus 19:22 can hardly (?) have belonged to the original Jehovistic sources" (Prolegomena, 2d ed., p. 146).
2. It is inaccurate, also, to say that Deuteronomy puts the priests and Levites on a par. No argument for this can be drawn from the absence of a strongly marked and everywhere emphasized distinction. As we hope to show hereafter, this absence is wholly in accordance with the general character of the book. Moreover, Deuteronomy does not aim to give complete or precisely formulated directions, but only compact popular restatements of matters minutely regulated elsewhere. That the author speaks of Levites in general in not a few passages,

where, more accurately expressed, the priests are meant, must be explained on the rule, that the genus may be used to designate the species, where there is no danger of ambiguity. The same inaccuracy occurs in the historical books (compare Joshua 3:3, 8:33, 13:14, 18:7; 1 Samuel 2:27; 2 Chronicles 5:5, 30:27): even Malachi, who wrote after the pretended promulgation of the Priest Code, speaks in the same manner (2:4). The priests were Levites in reality. Is it not natural that in the middle books of the Pentateuch, in laws enacted while yet Aaron and his sons occupied the priestly office, the priests should have been designated by the familiar term "sons of Aaron" and that afterwards, when both Aaron and two of his sons had died, in a book of prophetic character, the more general term "Levitical priests" should have been chosen, denoting "those Levites who shall be priests at any time of the future"? The lack of definiteness in Deuteronomy, where it employs these terms, cannot be construed as proving entire ignorance of the distinction. The passage (Deuteronomy 18:1) is instructive in this respect. Graf and other critics hold that "Levites" stands here in apposition to "priests," and the expression "all the tribe of Levi" to "priests (and) Levites." On this critical presupposition we have three terms to express that which each of them separately would have expressed with sufficient clearness, so that at least two are superfluous. Under these circumstances we are certainly justified in taking an alternative, and considering the construction as an *asyndeton*: "The Levitical priests (and) the whole tribe of Levi," which is in full accordance with the context. In verse 5, if the

priesthood of the whole tribe was presupposed, we would naturally expect "him (the priest) and his brethren for ever." The phrase "him and his *sons*" strikes us as more suitable to a hereditary priesthood within a single family, than to the existence of a priestly tribe.

Other instances of this generic designation of the priests occur in the Old Testament, even in books written after the exile, which cannot but have known the distinction between Levites and priests (Ezra 10:5; Nehemiah 10:28, 38, 11:20).

But, we are told, Deuteronomy allows the Levites "to stand before the LORD," **hwhy ynpl dM(**; "minister to the LORD," **hwhy m#b tr# (hwhy t)**—); "bless in the name of the LORD," **hwhy m#b Krb**; all these being in the Priest Code the exclusive prerogatives of the Aaronic priests.

These expressions occur in five passages (10:8, 17:12, 18:5, 7, 21:5). In two, however, the functions referred to are predicated of the priests, no mention being made of Levites viz., 17:12 and 21:5. We have only to examine the remaining ones 10:8, 18:5, 7. It is a remarkable fact, that in those very books, which, according to the critics, have reconstructed the history, and thus are beyond suspicion of non-conformity to the Levitical law—that in those very books, we say, the identical expressions are applied to the Levites. How absurd it would be to infer from 2 Chronicles 29:4, 5, 11, 12, where the Levites are addressed by Hezekiah as "standing before the LORD, and serving and ministering unto him," that the author of

Chronicles did not distinguish between priests and Levites (compare also 2 Chronicles 23:6). Why shall we make the expression to prove in Deuteronomy what it cannot prove with any possibility in Chronicles? If Deuteronomy be written before the Priest Code, then Chronicles also.

We need not deny that these phrases originally indicated a function peculiar to the priesthood, especially in the case of **ynpl dM** (*stand before Jehovah*). But it is equally plain, that they gradually assumed a looser and wider signification, which made them alike applicable to the work of both priests and Levites. The name for all service at the sanctuary was taken *a potiori* from its most honorable and important part in which the priests officiated. This fully accounts for their exclusive use in the middle books with reference to the priests, and for their modified sense in subsequent literature.

All that remains of the argument, is that in 10:8 the phrase "to bless in his name" is without any specification applied to the whole tribe of Levi. There are no other instances in which this same construction, **Krb** with the preposition **b**, is used, when others than priests are spoken of. Still, this is far from admitting that the verse under consideration teaches the equality of priests and Levites. The best exegesis seems to be, to take the whole verse as predicated in general of the whole tribe of Levi. Of the duties enumerated, part belonged to the Levites and priests in common, as, "to stand before the LORD," "to minister unto him"; part to the Levites especially,

as the bearing of the ark; part to the priests alone, as "to bless in the LORD's name." All this was so perfectly self-evident, that no specification was needed.

3. Ezekiel's Thora is for the modern critics what his **doj moi pou stw** was for Archimedes. With their interpretation of it and the inferences drawn therefrom, the whole structure of their historical theories stands or falls. At first blush, the point would seem to have been very badly chosen for historical argumentation. The whole section is of a highly ideal character, and was written in a time when, from historic reality, the cultus had become already a distant dream, and the prophetic idealization could accordingly be given free play. It is needless to point out in detail how many features in these chapters will not admit a historical or literal interpretation, and never received one even at the hand of the most obstinate literalist. It has been reserved for the higher criticism to handle and utilize this unwieldy material in the most sober and practical way.

In the face of their ideal, prospective character, the critics have been bold enough to make these chapters speak for the past, forgetting that the threads of historical tradition had been freely interwoven with those of bold forecast of the future, so as to form a prophetic mantle. We must remember that this is a vision, and in it Ezekiel sees only higher spiritual realities through the medium of an ever-changing and ever-growing symbolism. Though the latter had, of course, its points of contact with the present and the past, it could not be limited by them the essentially new truth, which the prophet revealed, required also new and modified forms, in which to clothe itself. It is from this

point of view, that the critics should have estimated the historical significance and value of what they are accustomed to style "Ezekiel's program."

But let us grant, that there is at least a background of historical truth in the statements of Ezekiel 44:5-16, with which we have here specially to deal. Do they bear out the critical theory of a degradation of some Levitical priests to temple-servants as the first origin of the legal distinction between priests and Levites?

The answer to this question can only be obtained from a careful and fair examination of the passage itself. Ezekiel makes three statements: the first contains an accusation, the second an announcement of punishment, the third confirms a privilege. 1. Uncircumcised persons have been used for menial employments in the temple. 2. Certain Levites have committed idolatry, and in punishment are henceforward to perform the same menial service, formerly done by the uncircumcised. 3. Certain Levitical priests, specified as the sons of Zadok, who have remained faithful when the others apostatized, are honored with the exclusive privilege of officiating before the Lord.

Our first remark is, that there must be more than an incidental connection in the prophet's mind between his first and second statement. It is unnatural to suppose that both are mentioned together, simply because the removal of the uncircumcised made a return of the Levites necessary, or because the punishment of the latter required the removal of the former, or finally because by a play of history both gave the prophet an occasion for ingenious combination. A more than superficial reading of the passage will convince us, that there is a deeper, more causal, connection. That the apostate Levites have to occupy the place of the uncircumcised, is for no other reason than because by their apostasy they had made the employment of the latter possible. They abandoned what was their specific duty—viz., the ministering unto the priest

in the temple—sinned themselves, and became the cause of the defilement of the sanctuary. Hence a double penalty is inflicted 1. The destruction of their self-chosen places of worship; 2. The restitution of what had been abstracted from the sanctuary, by their becoming again temple-servants.

We regard it as settled by this interpretation, that Ezekiel does more than spread a moral mantle over historical facts. His words imply that the facts themselves had a moral quality. The Levites who served at the Bamoth had not always been there, but willfully left their original position at the only legal sanctuary.

The prophet does not further specify who these Levites were. That he calls them Levites (verse 10) decides nothing, since his terms are not derived from their former position, but already from the future degradation he imposes. Neither does the fact that their destiny to officiate as temple-servants is considered as a punishment, prove, on the other hand, that they held a higher position at the sanctuary before. The only thing that can be said about it, is that they were Levites whether exclusively non-Aaronic, or partly Aaronic, is not stated. It is highly probable, however, that both priests and Levites, in the more strict sense of the term, were found amongst them.

The critical allegation, that they consisted of nothing else than Bamoth-priests out of occupation, rests on the arbitrary assumption, that the sons of Zadok are honored, not for their exceptional faithfulness to Jehovah, but on account of their extraordinary position. They were the priestly family for centuries in charge of the temple-worship. Hence, the critics infer, Ezekiel's approval of their attachment to Jehovah can but mean a prophetic sanction of the temple as the only legal sanctuary, and at the same time a side-attack upon all other places of worship. In other words, the sons of Zadok were not examples of a rare attachment to Jehovah, but the favored incumbents of a

highly lucrative office. It was not a question of right and wrong, but of facts. If all this be true, if they were not only the original and highest, but also the exclusive, officers of the temple, our position, that the Levites now condemned to perform menial service, had once shared this privilege with the sons of Zadok, cannot be maintained. If the one party is approved simply for officiating at the temple, then the other was condemned simply for officiating at the Bamoth; and other moral considerations cannot have influenced the degradation of the latter.

The answer to the question, "For what special reason did the sons of Zadok deserve praise?" will decide every thing. *A priori* it seems improbable that the prophet should bestow upon them such a eulogy simply because they did not leave their comfortable position at the chief sanctuary of the land. It needed no great amount of self-abnegation and pious adherence to Jehovah, to make them stay where they were. But why may not their faithfulness have manifested itself in quite another way? We know from history, that the temple itself had been more than once the central seat of apostasy. Urijah was the instrument of the idolatrous lusts of King Ahaz; and, when Manasseh defiled the temple, no opposition on the part of the priests is so much as heard of. That such abominations were not uncommon, even after Josiah's reform, the prophet's vision in chapter 8 sufficiently shows. Hence there is all reasonable ground to assume that the merit of the sons of Zadok consisted in something more than a matter-of-fact serving in the Jerusalem temple. They evidently had remained faithful when others, occupying the same or similar privileges with them, had gone astray. And, instead of an objection, we may find in this high praise, with which their conduct is extolled, a confirmation of our view that others had abandoned that same trust, which they had so faithfully and piously kept.

This explains how Ezekiel with the Priest Code and all before him could still make a degradation out of that which the critics have declared to be explicable only on their suppositions. The whole solution lies in the fact, that Perhaps many of the apostates had been priests in the temple before. They had left the central sanctuary, and sought the Bamoth. In the reform of Josiah they lost their position. Now, in this ideal vision, Ezekiel describes their degradation from priests, which they had once been lawfully, and afterwards illegally, to Levites.

But is not this an objection to our view, that certainly the majority of these priests of the Bamoth must have been originally Levites? How in their case will the punishment apply? Can the restoration to a previous state after apostasy be called a penalty for the latter? In rashly answering these questions in the negative, the critics have found a tempting occasion to display their sarcasm. Dr. Kuenen asks, "How can common citizens be threatened with the penalty that henceforward they shall have no seat and vote in a council of noblemen?" But what if these citizens had either legally or illegally possessed for a considerable time this right of vote and session? When they were afterwards deprived of these in punishment of their intrusion, could anybody take exception to such a penalty? The case is not different here. The Levites had probably left the temple, aspiring to a higher position; viz., that of priests. As such they had officiated at the Bamoth. When these are destroyed, their punishment is made to consist in the disgraceful and humiliating re-entrance upon functions which in self-exalting pride they had left. What is there inappropriate in all this?

Still, it will be said that the deposed priests must have gladly accepted the most humble charge, and that so, after all, the punishment was turned into a favor, and failed to reach its end. History, however, testifies to the contrary.

At the first return from the captivity under Zerubbabel and Joshua, forty-two hundred and eighty-nine priests, and only three hundred and forty-one Levites, joined the expedition. At the second, under Ezra, only thirty-eight Levites were with much trouble collected. This shows how even a long exile had not extinguished the priestly pride in those who could no longer claim a higher rank than that of Levitical servants. When they preferred captivity to this humiliation, how can it be doubted that they considered it as a punishment from the outset, and that accordingly Ezekiel was justified in representing it as such?

So much in positive explanation of Ezekiel's statements. We do not claim to have relieved all difficulties, but may console ourselves with the thought, that even what remains dark and mysterious, stands out in a far more credible form than the absurdities to which the critical theory necessarily leads. We notice the following points—

1. At the time of the first return from exile under Zerubbabel and Joshua, the distinction of rank between priests and Levites was so firmly established that nobody questioned its validity any longer. The whole population of Jerusalem consisted, according to 1 Chronicles 9, of Israel, priests, and Levites, **l)r#y**, and **mynhk**, and **mywl**. On this all critics agree. But, on the critical supposition, this universal recognition of the Aaronic prerogative is a most astonishing fact. Before the exile a violent opposition was continually carried on by the provincial priests against the Zadokites at Jerusalem. No doubt, the Bamoth priests argued that the sons of Zadok possessed their exclusive rights, not *de jure*, but *de facto*. They once occupied the place, and it was impossible to expel

them. This opposition continued during the first part of the exile. With the abolition of the temple-service, the Zadokites lost their only stronghold; viz., the actual occupancy of the office. From that time onward they were no more than the other Levites, like them deprived of their sanctuary. Instead of there being reason for the opposition to subside, and for the superiority of the sons of Zadok to gain silent recognition, all things seemed to work in the other direction. And still, a few verses of the prophet Ezekiel, in a never-realized vision, were sufficient to conjure the strife, and make out of the proud Bamoth priests, humble Levites and temple-servants! Who would believe, that from all the features in Ezekiel's vision, to which the returning exiles attached no importance, this single one was excepted, and that the slighted Levites meekly suffered the exception to their own degradation?

2. Among those who returned, there were far more priests than Levites. In the first expedition, the proportion was twelve to one. With Ezra, only thirty-eight Levites returned. How will this agree with the theory that Ezra was the writer of the Priest Code? Surely the proportion between Levites and priests there assumes a totally different character, and cannot be explained out of the actual state of affairs, immediately after the exile. Wellhausen assumes that the priesthood in Jerusalem was as numerous as that of the Bamoth. He concludes from the genealogies of the chronicler, that the proportion must have been changed in conformity with the statements of the Priest Code. This change was effected by Levitizing strange families of Nethinim, singers and janizaries. But that the Zadokites

were as numerous as all the Bamoth priests together, is highly improbable; for in Ezekiel they appear as a small exception in contrast with an apostate majority. Then the assumption that non-Levitical families were Levitized rests on no historical basis whatever. And finally the critics must not only account for the proportion in Chronicles, but for that in the Priest Code itself.

3. It is arbitrary to assume that only this part of Ezekiel's Thora had binding force, and that all other parts were utterly disregarded. If the degradation of priests to Levites was so persistently adhered to, it becomes incomprehensible how afterwards a conscientious man like Ezra could substitute a legal fiction for a divinely authorized prophecy, of which he admitted, in part at least, the obligatory character.
4. It cannot be properly called a gradual restriction, when Ezekiel limits the priesthood to the sons of Zadok, and the Priest Code confines it to the wider circle of Aaron's descendants. Thus, the Priest Code would not only have carried out one part of Ezekiel's statements, and disregarded others, but in the same matter accepted one element, and rejected the others. On Ezekiel's authority, it continues to keep down the Levites still, it goes back on the prophet's limitations, and widens the circle of favorite priests. The sons of Aaron are substituted for those of Zadok. This is no restriction, but relaxation: God's words are made of no effect. Doubtless, there had been Aaronites among the Bamoth priests. That they were afterwards re-admitted into the

priesthood, **we** can understand when we recognize the ideal character of Ezekiel's prophecy; but the critics can by no means do so, who make it the basis of historical argumentation.

All this shows in what difficulties the critical theories involve us, so far as their so-called Deuteronomic period and the subsequent time are concerned. But when we go back to the pre-Deuteronomic times, the difficulties are not less numerous, and the precarious methods by which critics remove them not less obvious. We can only point out the weakest spots of the theory here, without laying claim to an exhaustive treatment of the subject.

1. The theory fails to explain how the tribe of Levi became the priestly tribe *par excellence*. A denial of this fact is impossible, since the historical testimony is too plain and unequivocal. Throughout the Old Testament, Levites appear clothed with priestly authority (Judges 17-20, *passim*; 1 Samuel 6:15; 2 Samuel 15:24; 1 Kings 8:4, 12:31). This will never agree with a theory that holds to the original universal right of all Israelites to officiate as priests. And, apart from this, the historical basis for such a distinction as we meet here is entirely wanting in the critical scheme. The only possible solution of the mystery of Levitism is that proposed by the Priest Code, which says that God separated the tribe of Levi from the other tribes for this purpose. The historical books, moreover, testify to this origin of the distinction, 1 Samuel 2:27, 28; Deuteronomy 33:8-11 (a so-called independent North-Israelitish document). It is easy to see how a single family could gradually form itself into an hereditary

priesthood; but when, in the time of the Judges, we find a whole tribe clothed with this prerogative, we look for something more than logical possibilities in explanation. Priestly tribes do not originate in such an incidental way. If Levi possessed the priesthood in the days of the Judges, he must have possessed it long before, and obtained it at a definite point of time; since the elements out of which a scheme of development might be constructed are entirely wanting. It seems absurd, in the face of this historical testimony, for critics to persistently deny any connection of this distinction with the facts that both Moses and Aaron were Levites, and with the momentous changes of the exodus. A historical explanation must be given here; and when one that is suitable, and accounts for all the facts, and is verified by history, presents itself, there is no ground for rejecting it. And finally, even apart from all this, the fact that from the earliest historic (according to the critics, even prehistoric) times, this distinction between Levites and non-Levites existed, is fatal to the whole hypothesis of gradual restriction. It proves, that in the history of the cultus, there was a stable and fixed element from the beginning, which, for this reason alone, cannot have arisen from unconscious development, but must have been based on intentional appointment.

It is amusing to see how the critics try to get around this fact. Wellhausen in particular makes two statements here, whose boldness, bordering upon temerity, is evidently only a cover for the weakness of his position on this important point. The first is, that no real connection whatever exists between the

tribe of Levi (early dissolved into the neighboring tribes) and the priestly caste afterwards designated by that name. Both actually existed, but neither of them had any thing to do with the other. The tribe had long since disappeared when the caste rose into prominence. All this is based on a critical interpretation of Genesis 49:5-7, and clearly invented to escape the consequences which this, as we think unavoidable, combination involves. For the existence of Levi as a ***priestly tribe*** in the time of Judges, compare 17:7-9, 19:1, 18, and afterwards 1 Samuel 6:15, 2 Samuel 6:7.

Wellhausen's second statement is a conclusion drawn from a series of premises, which we quote from him in their logical order without any further comment, since they speak for themselves—

- (1) Jonathan the Levite, who joined the Danites, was a descendant of Moses, according to Judges 18:30.
- (2) The priestly family at Shiloh stood also in genealogical connection with Moses (!), according to 1 Samuel 2:27.
- (3) There is historic probability that the house of Eli descended from Phinehas, who was, in the early period of the Judges, priest of the ark.
- (4) This Phinehas, according to Joshua 24:33 (Elohistic), was a son of Eleazar.
- (5) Though tradition uniformly claims Eleazar for a son of Aaron, it has no right to speak in this matter.

(6) *Eleazar* does not differ in its orthography from *Eliezer*.
And *Eliezer* was a brother of Gershom, a son of Moses.

(7) When we, therefore, read Eliezer instead of Eleazar, and disregard tradition, the following facts are established: **(a)** Jonathan the Levite descended from Moses; **(b)** The priestly house at Shiloh descended from Moses.

Conclusion: All that appears of an hereditary priesthood must be explained by descent from Moses. In his family the priestly office was perpetuated. The priests at Dan and Shiloh claimed Mosaic extraction for themselves. All priests considered Moses, if not as their genealogical ancestor, still as the institutor of their guild. In Judah the guild became a "gens." Levite, at first the name of an office-bearer, now became a *nomen gentile*; and thus the Levitical priesthood originated.

2. Within the limits of the tribe of Levi itself, however, a distinction is traceable. First we have Deuteronomy 33:8-11. The passage, as a whole, applies to the tribe of Levi (notice the transition to the plural number in verse 9b and 10). In Moses and Aaron, Levi was proved, his fidelity tested by the Lord. But the very fact that these two were treated as representatives of the whole tribe, shows that they stood in a certain representative relation to it, not merely as leaders, but, in the case of Aaron, as the person in whom the priestly character culminated. To say the least, we have an allusion here to the peculiar position which the house of Aaron occupied in the tribe of Levi. The same representative capacity is ascribed to Aaron in the words 1 Samuel 2:27, 28.

The existence of an Aaronic priesthood is confirmed by abundant testimony, both for the beginning and the close of the period of Judges. The facts are these: **(a)** The tabernacle was in Shiloh (18:31); **(b)** It was called "**the** house of the LORD," *par excellence*, excluding, at least legally, all others (19:18); **(c)** the ark of the covenant was at Bethel (20:27); **(d)** Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, "stood before it in those days." Here we have one legal sanctuary in which only the descendants of Aaron have the right to perform the highest functions, "to stand before the ark." The First Book of Samuel testifies to the same for the close of this period (1 Samuel 2:14, 22, 24, 30). Here the same indisputable facts appear—one *universal* sanctuary served by an Aaronitic priesthood, which could only be deposed by direct divine interference, and accordingly must have been based likewise on direct divine appointment by Jehovah himself.

It has been claimed by Kuenen and others, that the passage, Deuteronomy 33:8-11, implies the right of the whole tribe of Levi to the priestly prerogatives of bearing Urim and Thummim. But apart from the fact, that, in verse 8, 9a the singular is used, and nothing prevents us from referring it to Aaron (or ideally to the high-priestly line descended from him), it involves no concession when we say that the "holy one" is a personification of the whole tribe. For in this case we could simply understand the passage as describing the prerogatives of the tribe, without any specification which of them belonged to the priests exclusively, which to the Levites. If it could be said that the whole tribe of Levi was proved at Massah, and striven with at the waters of Meribah, whilst only Aaron and Moses are meant, it surely is not inconsistent to say that the whole tribe had the Urim and Thummim, though in reality only the high-priest could consult them.

The name "priests" occurs thirty-four times in the books of Samuel, sixty

times in those of Kings, that of Levites twice in Samuel (1 Samuel 6:15, 2 Samuel 15:24), once in Kings (1 Kings 8:4). This preponderant use of the former shows already that both terms were not synonymous. That the two offices were distinct is evident from the last reference, 1 Kings 8:4, "the priests and the Levites," **mywlhw mynhkh**.

That specific priestly duties are not particularly emphasized is easily accounted for when we find that in none of the numerous passages where the name occurs, was there any occasion for it (see the statement in Curtiss's "Levitical Priests," p. 89). That Levites are mentioned as handling the ark (1 Samuel 6:15) does not prove that all Levites were priests. All we can infer, is that in Beth-shemesh there were "Levitical priests." If the use of the general term "Levites" implies a denial of their descent from Aaron, we may just as well infer from the second half of the verse, that the "men of Beth-shemesh" who offered and sacrificed were not Levites. Beth-shemesh was a priestly city, so that the priests must have been present at this solemn occasion.

Of the alleged deviations in the *praxis* of that time from the Levitical law, we shall speak hereafter.

A few remarks concerning the high-priest may be added. The critical opinion, that such an imposing figure as his was entirely unknown before the exile, has been stated. We must now examine the arguments adduced to sustain this statement—

1. Wellhausen asserts, that in no product of Old Testament literature prior to the Priest Code does the term high-priest appear as a standing designation of a peculiar office, and that persons to whom the title is given are in other places called simply **Nhkh** (*the priest*). Only in the Priest Code and

thereafter the use of the term becomes fixed in the traditional sense. At first blush, this fact might seem to corroborate the critical theory of a gradually originating hierarchy. When examined more closely, however, it loses all value, for the following reasons—

- (a) The term **#)rh Nhk** (*high-priest*) appears as a synonym.
 - (b) The rare use of the name proves nothing, since it occurs only thrice in the Priest Code itself (Leviticus 21:10, Numbers 35:25, 28). In all other instances, the simple **Nhkh** (*the priest*) is employed.
 - (c) The chronicler, who must have attached special importance to the name if the office was unprecedented in importance, and required historical justification, would certainly have used the term frequently. But the opposite is true. In most cases, he designates the high-priest with the simple **Nhkh** (*the priest*). In Ezra, Joshua, the son of Jozadak, has no title at all. Neither is any found in the genealogy of the high-priests (Nehemiah 12:10, *seqq.*).
2. The second argument is, that no historical evidence of such an eminent position occupied by a single priest is found anywhere in the historical books. We answer, just as much there as in the Priest Code. When we leave the period of Judges out of the account, do we not find Eli, Ahijah, Ahimelech, Abiathar, Zadok, Jehoiada, Hilkiah, Azariah, all called absolutely **Nhkh**, wearing the ephod, consulting the

Urim and Thummim, evidently in great authority and of great influence with kings and people alike? What more can be demanded? If an explicit and accurate description of the high-priest's apparel and his work were given, how little would the critics hesitate to declare it a gloss or interpolation of later date? When assertions are made so strongly, and theories constructed so boldly, have we not the right to demand at least the evidence that somebody other than the high-priest officiated in the Holy of holies? All that can be adduced is 1 Samuel 3:3, where Samuel is said to have slept near the ark. The passage simply means that Samuel slept within the same precincts where the ark was.

Even Wellhausen's exaggeration of the plenipotentiary authority of the high-priest after the exile, as described in the Priest Code, does not entirely lack parallels in previous times. The example of Jehoiada and the important part acted by him in the revolution that placed Joash on the throne may be remembered here. That before the exile the sanctuary was a royal dependency, is only true with reference to the apostate idolatrous Northern kingdom. While Amaziah of Bethel speaks of a king's sanctuary, **KlM #dqM**, the temple at Jerusalem is, without exception, called **y #dqM**, the sanctuary of Jehovah; and the priests are always **y ynhk**, the priests of Jehovah. Wellhausen himself admits that the Priest Code nowhere claims secular power for the high-priest. Still, in the next sentence, he does not hesitate to make the bold assertion, that beside him, no theocratic king is thinkable. If the former

be true, we do not see how the latter can be maintained. Do not the historical books mention more than one instance where kings consulted their priests, and Urim and Thummim decided? And to the possibility of the coexistence of two powers, each relatively sovereign and absolute in its own sphere, the coexistence for centuries of prophetism and the kingdom abundantly testifies. The post-exilic high-priest is no more imposing figure beside Ezra and Nehemiah than Samuel beside Saul.

3. The third statement is that Deuteronomy knows nothing of a high-priest. That the blessing of Moses (33:8-11) teaches the contrary, we have already seen (compare also 17:12).

Chapter Eleven^(TOC)

Levitical and Priestly Revenues

Closely related to the question just discussed, is that concerning Levitical and priestly revenues. The measure of priestly authority and independence must necessarily have determined the priestly income. According to Graf and Wellhausen, the following modification in the latter respect is traceable in the Codes and in the corresponding history—

A. The priest's part of the sacrifices

In Deuteronomy: The shoulder, the two cheeks, the maw. From the analogy of the Levites, it may be supposed that priests shared in the sacrificial meals. Originally this was the only thing which the priests could lay claim to.

In the Priest Code: Sacrificial meals become subordinate. *Minchah* (meat-offering) and *chattath* (sin-offering) and *asham* (trespass-offering) (at least in some cases) fell, as a whole, to the priest. Of *olah* (burnt-offering), the skin was for him. Of the *shelamim* (peace-offerings), the breast and the right shoulder. Wellhausen finds an approach towards *chattath* and *asham* in the fines of money mentioned in 2 Kings 12:16, "the trespass-money and sin-money."

We remark on this—

1. The difference between the Priest Code and Deuteronomy as to sacrificial meals is entirely due to the critics imposing on the latter their self-made theory, that all sacrifices were originally nothing but sacrificial meals. There is no warrant for this in the legislation, neither do the historical books favor the view.
2. All that needs reconciliation is the apparently contradictory statement, that, according to Deuteronomy, the priests obtained the shoulder, two cheeks, and maw; according to the Priest Code of *shelamim*, the breast and the right shoulder. Here every thing will depend on our interpretation of the passage Deuteronomy 18:3. Two opinions can be and have

been actually maintained concerning it: it has been taken either as a modification of the Levitical law, or as a supplementary new legislation. The context favors the latter, which is also the traditional interpretation followed by Josephus and the Mishna and the later practice. We then understand the passage to mean, that, of all animals slaughtered for food, these three parts fell to the priest. An additional reason why we should understand the verse of private slaughtering is found in verse 1, where the income of the priests is said to consist in "the offerings of the Lord made by fire." The word **h#**) (*fire-offering*) occurs only here in Deuteronomy, and evidently refers back to the Priest Code, where it is of extensive currency. This would involve that Deuteronomy refers to the Levitical law for a more definite statement of the priest's share, and verse 3 becomes of necessity a new, supplementary regulation.

B. The tithes^(TOC)

According to the early *praxis* (Genesis 28:22; Amos 4:4, *seqq.*) and Deuteronomy (14:22-29), the tithes are not delivered to the priests, but are carried to the sanctuary for the purpose of being eaten in sacrificial meals. Only corn, wine, and oil are tithed (verse 23). Every third year the tithe was to be distributed among those who possessed no landed property. Wellhausen sees in the last appointment an innovation of the Deuteronomist, made in view of the destruction of the local sanctuaries.

In the Priest Code, the *clerus* lays claim to the whole tithe. At first the Deuteronomic regulations were disregarded. Afterwards a second tithe was added in conformity with the older and original *praxis*.

Another point of discrepancy is that the Priest Code extends the tithe system to cattle (Leviticus 27:32), and in general to all products of husbandry. Wellhausen denies that this law was ever enforced.

1. The historical instances referred to by Wellhausen—viz., that of Jacob and the prophecy of Amos—do not prove any thing: unless we assume the narrative in Genesis to be proleptic and unhistorical, what Jacob did will not decide what was law centuries thereafter. And Amos, in the passage referred to, does not say what was done with the tithes brought to Bethel and Gilgal. Even if we admit that a joyful meal is referred to, all may be explained by finding the so-called second tithes of Deuteronomy mentioned here. See, however, under 2.
2. The tithes in Deuteronomy do not exclude these in Leviticus,

or the reverse. There is nothing inconsistent or unnatural in the assumption of two tithes, the one for the priests, the other for the offerer himself. As Wellhausen himself reminds us, Jewish tradition harmonizes the passages in this way. Or if we prefer another explanation, which indeed seems to be favored by the analogy of the first-born, it may be suggested, that the priests restored to the offerer enough of his tribute to enable him to prepare his meal. From Deuteronomy we get the impression that the cases of tithes and firstlings were of similar character. Now, it is difficult to conceive of "second first-born," so that the latter view seems to deserve the preference.

3. The very conception of *tithes*—i.e., of a definite and specified proportion of the produce—seems to involve the idea of a tribute paid to somebody. If they were destined for sacrificial meals exclusively, and had no further destination than the offerer's enjoyment, we would not expect a specification of the amount to be consumed. This consideration favors the view proposed under 2 **B**.

C. The firstlings^(TOC)

Here the same principle is assumed, that all the original gifts to the Deity were destined for religious meals. When Exodus 22:30, where the first-born are commanded to be given to Jehovah, seems to contradict this assumption, Wellhausen appeals to Deuteronomy in proof that "to give to Jehovah" need not mean "to pay to the priests," but simply "to eat before Jehovah." It is significant, however, that Deuteronomy never uses the phrase "to give to Jehovah" with reference to the tithes to be eaten at the sanctuary. We are not therefore warranted to understand the passages Exodus 22:30 and Deuteronomy 15:19 as implying nothing more than that a sacrificial meal should be eaten. That this is called "a giving to Jehovah" makes it necessary to suppose that a part, at least, fell to the priest. What is intimated in Exodus is stated in Deuteronomy; for the eating which is required in 15:20, and the sacrificing which is forbidden in verse 21, are not synonymous, but stand in juxtaposition, so that a twofold use of the firstlings is also implied here. Thus understood, both the Covenant-law and Deuteronomy will bear out the fact, that the priest received the firstlings, but restored so much of them to the offerer as to enable him to prepare a meal. And this agrees fully with what the Priest Code teaches, Numbers 18:15.

D. The Levitical cities^(TOC)

Numbers 35 assigns forty-eight cities to the Levites, of which thirteen fell to the priests. That the right of full possession is intended, admits of no doubt. Compare the execution of the command, Joshua 21. In addition to each city, a square of two thousand cubits was set apart, to serve for suburbs or commons.

1. The principal objection raised by critics against these appointments regards the practical impossibility of carrying them out. So first Gramberg, and afterwards Graf and Wellhausen. The latter says, "The directions to set apart a common of two thousand cubits square around the cities (in which the latter are considered as mere points), to serve as pasture-ground for the Levites, could perhaps be executed in a South-Russian steppe, or in the case of newly built cities in the West of North America, but by no means in mountainous Palestine, where such a geometrical space is nowhere to be found," etc.
2. Historical traces of the existence of these Levitical cities do not appear outside of the Book of Joshua. A considerable number of them was still in the possession of the Canaanites during the period of Judges and the early kings; e.g., Gibeon, Gezer, Taanach, Shechem.
3. In the Deuteronomic time the Levites lived scattered over all Judah: each place had its own, nowhere did they live together

in a compact mass.

4. Even after the exile the situation of the Levites was not materially changed. The execution of this command was deferred until Messianic days: indeed, it did not lie within the compass of human power, and cannot have been demanded in full earnest by the Priest Code itself.
5. The first historical germs of the whole conception must be sought in the cities of asylum of Deuteronomy. All altars were originally *asyla*. But whilst the former were destroyed by Josiah's reform, of course the need of the latter remained, and was provided for by the appointment of these cities of refuge. The truth is, that all of them were priestly or Levitical cities, moreover famous seats of the old cultus. Hence the suggestion, that the law of the Priest Code arose from nothing but the reminiscences of the pre-exilic plurality of places of worship. The idea of altar and priesthood was associated with many a city, and found natural expression in declaring the forty-eight places to have been the peculiar inheritance of the *clerus* ever since the Mosaic times.

Let us briefly see what these serious charges amount to. The impracticability of the command might be considerably less than Wellhausen imagines. His objection, that the arithmetical precision with which every thing is described proves an ideal character, falls immediately away as soon as we consider the numbers given as indicating the average allowance to be made for pasture-ground, nothing more than a general limit, a minimum which might be modified according to the circumstances or the geographical condition of the country. That the cities are considered as a point is true, if we take the point,

not in its geometrical sense, but as having the size of each individual city. If Wellhausen means that the square of two thousand cubits included the city, there is nothing in the text to justify this view. The comparison with newly built cities is not entirely out of place; since in the conquest of Canaan many a city must have been destroyed, and a clean sweep made. That Levitical cities remained in possession of the Canaanites is nothing remarkable, and may at the same time account for the statement of Deuteronomy and later historical facts, which presuppose a partial scattering of the Levites all over the country. Wellhausen's remark, that no traces of the existence of Levitical cities appear in subsequent time, is most positively untrue. The fact is, that some very striking coincidences make the existence of this law highly probable. We refer to what happened in Beth-shemesh; to the fact that Jeremiah, of priestly descent, was born in Anathoth; that Abiathar, when dismissed by Solomon, was told to go to Anathoth; that Nob was a residence of priests. To see in the mention of all these cities in Joshua, not the origin of their priestly character, but simply the reminiscence of it, is possible indeed; but the critics should never forget that such statements are mere applications, not proofs, of their theory. That, according to Deuteronomy, the Levites lived scattered all over the country, may be attributed to various causes. If we could grant that the critical opinion of the late origin of the book was true, the natural explanation would be, that at the schism under Jeroboam I the Levites of the Northern kingdom emigrated to Judah. This shows, however, from their own premises, that the critics have no right to conclude the non-existence of the law. But it will suffice to assume only so much prophetic foresight in Moses as enabled him to see that the Levites might not immediately or perpetually enjoy the full possession of their patrimony. For a believer in prophecy, it is not impossible to suppose that Moses, under the inspiration of God's spirit, penetrated the future, even so far as to take in the

time of Jeroboam and Josiah. Deuteronomy seems to allude to the Levitical cities in chapter 18:8b: "beside that which cometh of the sale of his patrimony" (compare Keil *in loco*, from whom Schultz differs). If it must be admitted that these laws did not go into operation after the exile, what can hinder us from putting them back into the Mosaic time, and assuming that they were never fully lived up to for the same reasons that prevented their execution after the exile? As to ineffectiveness, the case stands alike; and as to historical inducements to frame such regulations, the Mosaic period certainly offered more of them than the time of Ezra. The latter must have **known** that the law was impracticable: the Israelites in the desert need not. The analogy with the cities of refuge in Deuteronomy and the division of the land in Ezekiel is so far-fetched, and there are so many discrepancies between the latter and the Priest Code, that it is impossible to assume any other real connection, than that the prophet in a free manner reproduced what was known to him from the Priest Code. That such an institution as the cities of refuge could not have taken its rise in the reign of Josiah, but must at the very least be anterior to the establishment of the kingdom, is strongly argued by Dr. A. P. Bissell, in "The Law of Asylum in Israel," Leipzig, 1884.

Chapter Twelve^(TOC)

Feasts

The last and most important point in regard to which the critics have attempted to point out a modification in the *praxis*, followed by a corresponding development in the laws, is that of the feasts. In the Jehovistic-Deuteronomic part of the Pentateuch, a cycle of three feasts is known (Exodus 23, 34; Deuteronomy 16); and all these are designated by the name **nx** >(pilgrimage festival): Mazzoth, *unleavened bread*; Kazir, *harvest* (Shabuoth, *weeks*); and Asiph, *ingathering* (Succoth, *tabernacles*). Whilst, with respect to the two last-mentioned, there is perfect agreement between the Jehovist and Deuteronomy, a difference appears with reference to the first. Exodus 34 connects the offering of firstlings with Mazzoth: Deuteronomy uses the name Pesach (*passover*) for the first time. The inference is, that Pesach and Mazzoth are distinct and originally independent from each other, the latter by far the elder of the two, constituting a triad with Kazir and Asiph. All three are essentially agrarian feasts. Mazzoth indicates the beginning of harvest; and accordingly a sheaf is offered to Jahveh, as the first produce of the ground in its most simple form. This is also alleged to be the original meaning of Mazzoth; viz., that of hastily prepared, inartificial bread, symbolizing the new, fresh harvest, which men do not take time carefully to leaven, to knead, and to bake (Wellhausen). Kazir closes the grain-harvest, to which the loaves of wheat bread correspond. Finally, Asiph celebrates the autumnal ingathering of oil and wine; and here the agrarian character has been preserved by dwelling in booths of branches, as is indicated by the name

Succoth.

A second point, in which Deuteronomy shows an advance upon the Covenant-law, is the more definite specification of the time at which the feasts are to be held. Exodus 23 and 34 prescribe in vague and general terms, Mazzoth in the month Abib, Kazir when the wheat is cut, Asiph when the ingathering of fruits is ended. The centralization of the cultus made a more fixed date necessary, as is found in the expressions, "The first day at even," 16:4; "At even, at the going down of the sun," verse 6; "Thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents," verse 7; "Seven weeks shalt thou number," verse 9; "The feast of tabernacles seven days," verse 13.

Thirdly, the quantity of the gifts to be brought to the feasts was at first left to the choice of the individual, afterwards settled more definitely. Exodus does not require any precise amount of the firstlings or of the produce of the field: Deuteronomy requires the tithe. In case of the first-born, of course, no determination was needed.

Fourthly, in accordance with its centralizing tendency, Deuteronomy commands that all feasts shall be kept at the sanctuary of Jehovah. On the whole, the primitive cycle of feasts is said to have a purely agricultural basis: it is only in Deuteronomy that the first modest traces may be seen of that substituting history for nature, of which the later legislation is so fruitful.

The peculiarities and innovations of the Priest Code are by Wellhausen stated under the following heads—

1. The sacrificial meals of the feasts have given place to minutely prescribed burnt-and sin-offerings (Numbers 28).
2. The aparchae (*firstfruits* and *firstlings*) are separated from the

feasts: they appear no longer as offerings, but have been transformed into priestly revenues.

3. The date of the harvest-feasts is now definitely settled—Mazzoth on the fifteenth of the first month, Succoth on the fifteenth of the seventh month, Shabuoth seven weeks after Mazzoth. This shows that they have ceased to be purely agrarian feasts, which, as such, could never have been bound to a fixed date, but were dependent on the ripeness of the harvest.
4. The historical interpretation of the feasts is carried to the extreme. Succoth becomes a memorial of the dwelling in tents in the desert. Passover is not merely made a sacrament, but a sort of mass: it was celebrated, according to the Priest Code, in the night of the exodus, and effected the salvation of Israel. In the same manner, the keeping of Mazzoth is already commanded before the exodus. Only on Shabuoth no historical interpretation is imposed.
5. The Priest Code requires that all feasts from beginning to end shall be kept at Jerusalem, and in this respect advances upon Deuteronomy. For by requiring a Mikra Kodesh (holy convocation) on the seventh day of Mazzoth, visitors who did not live in the immediate neighborhood of Jerusalem were under the necessity of remaining there through the whole feast-week. To Succoth the Priest Code adds an eighth day. In Ezekiel, both Mazzoth and Succoth are still limited to seven days each (chapter 45).

6. The Priest Code has added two new feasts to the original cycle of three; viz., the feast of Teruah (trumpets), on the first of the seventh month, and the Yom Kippurim (Day of Atonement), on the tenth of the same month. During the exile the ecclesiastical new year began on the tenth of the seventh month. The Day of Atonement was not observed before the year 444 B.C., or even later, and had its origin in the commemoration of the days of Jerusalem's destruction during the exile by fasting. Ezekiel mentions two days of reconciliation, the one falling on the new moon of the seventh month (45:20, according to the Septuagint). Afterwards the Priest Code reversed the order of the new year and Kippurim by putting the latter on the tenth, and the former on the first, day of the seventh month.
7. The law of the Sabbath-year is modified by the Priest Code in two particulars **(a)** What was a relative year in Exodus 23:10, 11, is now absolutely fixed; all fields have to rest in the same year. **(b)** Not only reaping, but also sowing, is to be suspended. The Year of Jubilee is entirely an invention of the Priest Code.

The first attempt to establish the theory just stated, occupies itself with pointing out the naturalistic origin of the triad of main feasts. Wellhausen takes great pains to claim for all of them a purely agricultural basis. The [prwton yeudoj](#) of his reasoning consists in the assumption that this naturalistic basis would exclude an additional historical sanction or confirmation. We grant that its relation to the harvest was probably the only significance of Pentecost, and admit that such a relation exists with regard to Mazzoth and Succoth, but do not bind ourselves by this concession to the

naturalistic denial of all other accessory historical associations.

More than this. We maintain that the imposition of this theory, on what the critics claim to be the earliest legislation and the earliest history, cannot be accomplished without the most arbitrary methods of reconstructing history and of misinterpreting Scripture. This admits of demonstration in detail. We hope to show that the historical origin of the feasts, in addition to their natural basis, is not only possible, but absolutely required by all accessible evidence. What falls outside of this, is, of course, pure hypothesis.

Let us examine the primitive laws. For Pentecost, a historical basis is nowhere claimed. For Succoth, only in the Priest Code (Leviticus 23:43). For Mazzoth and Pesach (Passover), however, in *all* the laws *without a single exception*: both are *always* brought in connection with the exodus (Exodus 23, 34; Deuteronomy 16). This fact is a serious obstacle in the way of Wellhausen's naturalizing presentations. It is wonderful how innocently he tries to remove it, as if a mere incidental feature, and not a vital principle, were at stake. He remarks that the cycle presupposes the original similarity of all its members. Hence, if Kazir and Asiph are harvest-feasts, Mazzoth cannot have been a historical one. This critical "cannot" is weighty enough in Wellhausen's view to set aside the explicit testimony of both the Covenant-law and Deuteronomy. A semblance, indeed, of proof is adduced: "The feast proper is not called Hag-ha-Pesach, but Hag-ha-Mazzoth: only the latter stands co-ordinate with both the other harvest-feasts.... For a companion with Kazir and Asiph, only Mazzoth can come under consideration."

It is difficult to see what is gained by this violent separation of Mazzoth from Pesach. But let us suppose for a moment that the two could be severed. Would this alter the case with regard to Mazzoth? Not in the least; for in the Covenant-law the exodus is twice mentioned as the historical ground of

Mazzoth, and not of Pesach. Wellhausen's language conveys the erroneous impression that the primitive laws brought only Pesach in connection with the exodus. The opposite is true: the passages in Exodus 23 and 34 do not so much as mention Pesach; and in Deuteronomy, though Pesach is made more prominent than Mazzoth, still the great fact of deliverance from Egypt is almost exclusively combined with the latter.

Let us now consider in how far the severance of Pesach and Mazzoth can be justified. In Exodus 23:15 no allusion to the Passover appears. But in verse 18 it is said, "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning." We do not know how Wellhausen understands this verse, but to us every other explanation but that which refers it to the Passover-lamb seems unnatural: verse 18 is evidently an appendix to verse 15 (Mazzoth), verse 19a to verse 16 (Kazir), verse 19b to verse 16b (Asiph). So Hengstenberg, Bertheau, Knobel, Bachmann, Keil. The passage 34:25 is parallel. Moreover, in Exodus 34:19, 20, the command to give the male first-born of men and animals to Jehovah is immediately subjoined to the Mazzoth-law. The offering of the first-born belongs to Pesach, so that also in this passage the two appear inseparably connected. Deuteronomy makes Mazzoth already subordinate to Pesach. So they must have co-existed already for a considerable time, and not only this, but have been intimately connected.

We take it to be established beyond doubt, that, according to the Covenant-law and Deuteronomy, the institution of Mazzoth rested on a divine act of deliverance that, though in part an agricultural feast, it had at the same time a national and historic character. If, however, Pesach is so closely allied to Mazzoth, that the two always appear together, it would seem fair to infer the historical basis of the latter from that of the former.

On the other hand, the question of Pesach is one of the most intricate and difficult problems which the newer criticism will have to solve. The numerous hypotheses proposed in explanation of this mystery may help us to form an estimate of the hopelessness of the task. We cannot enter into a discussion of all these, for the simple reason, that none of them rests on either exegetical or historical warrant, or even claims to rest on such; they are hypotheses in the true sense of the word, products of the critical imagination: and we shall confine ourselves to scriptural facts.

The name even is not clear. No satisfactory etymology, besides the scriptural one, has as yet been given. Wellhausen says, "Essentially Pesach is the feast of the offering of the first-born." The natural inference would seem to be, that this definition confirms our view of the historical origin of the feast. For the right of Jehovah to Israel's first-born is, so far as we know, everywhere founded on his sparing them when he slew the first-born of the Egyptians. This is not only the case in the Priest Code, but also in the Jehovist (Exodus 13:11, *seqq.*). Wellhausen is candid enough to admit this. How, then, does he avoid the inference fatal to his theory? His first recourse is to the dissecting-knife of analytical criticism. He declares that (also on other grounds) the whole section (13:1-16) does not belong to the sources of the Jehovist, but was added by a Deuteronomic redactor. We cannot follow him into this labyrinth of divisive operations. But let us suppose that the passage be Deuteronomic. It is in any case, together with Deuteronomy 16, according to Wellhausen's own view, the first explicit statement concerning Pesach. As such, it has the right to be heard as the oldest historical testimony accessible. That the critics refuse to recognize the historic credibility of Deuteronomy, we cannot help. Still, a reason must be given why the Deuteronomist, seeking an historical ground for the origin of Pesach, hit exactly upon this point, Israel's exodus from Egypt.

Wellhausen helps himself by the following hypothesis: The exodus occurred, according to early tradition, about the time of the ancient spring-festival. Exodus 5:1, Moses and Aaron ask from Pharaoh, "Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness." This is made to prove that the feast existed before the historical occasion assigned to it in the law. Also chapter 12 verse 21 is quoted, where Moses addresses the elders of Israel with the words, "Kill *the* Passover." The feast was the occasion of the exodus. Afterwards the order was reversed; and after the feast had thus been supplied with an historical basis, its main and original feature, the offering of the first-born, required an explanation also. This was found in the narrative of God's slaying the first-born of Egypt. And he adds, "Unless we assume the existence of the custom to offer the firstborn, the narrative becomes unexplainable and no reason is given why the pestilence made such a strange selection."

That this is unscrupulously distorting facts to suit a theory, the critic seems not to feel. Not a particle of evidence, either in law or in history, can be claimed to favor this hypothesis. That it is the only thing "which suits the nature of the case," is true, if the transactions were purely natural. This is exactly what we deny, the very point at issue: to assume it, is openly begging the question. To those who believe in the supernatural element in history, it may be somewhat easier than for Wellhausen to explain why the pestilence made such a strange selection among the Egyptians.

The two passages quoted from Exodus decide nothing. Exodus 5:1 only proves that the Israelites desired to keep a feast. That it was an annually recurring feast, is not stated, and rather doubtful. But if we grant that a spring-festival was observed, this cannot warrant Wellhausen in discarding all additional historical explanation. That Moses said to the elders, "Kill *the*

Passover," is due to the writer unconsciously putting a term familiar to himself into the mouth of the speaker. Of course, the narrative does not pretend to give the *ipsissima verba* of Moses' communication to the elders.

After all, the former of these passages would make strongly against Wellhausen's theory of Mazzoth being an agricultural feast. The Israelites desired to hold a festival in the desert. And a rural festival in the wilderness is a downright absurdity. How impossible it is to put Mazzoth on a par with Kazir and Asiph, is seen from two other features: **(a)** Mazzoth occupied seven days, Kazir only one: had both been rural festivals, the one to celebrate the beginning, the other the completion, of harvest, we would expect the latter to have lasted the longer. **(b)** Wellhausen's explanation touching the origin of eating unleavened bread, leaves out of view that ***all leaven bread had to be removed out of the houses***. How this feature will ever be explained on naturalistic principles, it is not easy to determine.

Another consideration would be enough to disprove the naturalistic element, which all newer hypotheses with regard to Pesach have in common; viz., that it was simply a sacrificial feast, on which the first-born, either in reality or by substitution, were offered to God. We refer to the fact, that, in connection with it, the male first-born of ***men*** are claimed for Jehovah. If the offering of the firstborn was the occasion of a spring-feast, and this the origin of Pesach, we must logically infer that at this spring-festival also human sacrifices were brought. The two commands stand on a par, and logic is severe. It is impossible to see how the idea of offering human first-born could ever arise in connection with Pesach, at so early a time that the Jehovist already combines the two, unless they were actually combined. We must, then, assume that this primitive prehistoric rural feast witnessed the terrible scenes of manslaughter in honor of the Deity. In spite of all his naturalism,

Wellhausen is not inclined to follow others, who actually hold that human sacrifices were more or less common among the Israelites. He is candid enough to admit, that only a few examples of such a horrible practice are found, and that it appears as throughout voluntary and exceptional. Not until shortly before the exile did the burning of children become more customary.

It must be necessary to account for the combination in some other way. We look for this in vain. All that Wellhausen gives us is contained in this sentence: "When the human first-born are also claimed, this is nothing but a later generalization. It will not escape the thoughtful reader, that *this* is nothing but a groundless assertion. And, at any rate, the generalization needs an explanation just as much as the practice.

Under these circumstances, where all the evidence is on our side, and on the other hand the critics are obliged to support one assumption by another, we must protest against all naturalistic explanations of Pesach which make any higher pretensions than that of being logically possible. The old historical view, given by the Bible in Exodus 12, accounts fully for all the facts, gives a plausible etymology of the name, is not half so one-sided as that of the critics, since it does not exclude the connection between Passover and the incipient harvest.

That neither the Covenant-law nor Deuteronomy alludes to the historical associations of Succoth, cannot be made to speak for a later origin of this historical idea. Even in the Priest Code these historical associations are not made prominent. The whole tenor of the law, Leviticus 23:39-43, shows that the main end of the feast was to celebrate the autumnal ingathering of fruit. The customary dwelling in booths in memory of the desert-journey was secondary, and is only incidentally referred to at the end in a single verse. And here also it appears what the *argumentum e silentio* is worth. The

remarkable fact is, that both the Jehovist and Deuteronomist place Pesach or Mazzoth in a historical light; the Priest Code, on the contrary, does not so much as allude to its historical character in Leviticus 23—in both cases, exactly the opposite of what the critical theory would lead us to expect. Surely, no critic would infer from this silence that the agricultural significance of Mazzoth was unknown to the Jehovist and the Deuteronomist. Just as little need we infer from their silence as to the historical character of Succoth, that this must have been the fruit of a later development.

We turn to Deuteronomy, and ask in what the pretended advance upon the Covenant-law consists. The dates of the feasts are said to have been more definitely fixed, in accordance with the centralization of the cultus. The truth is, that no dates are given besides a single relative one; viz., that Shabuoth shall be seven weeks from Pesach. But this is no advance, nor is the specification new in Deuteronomy; since Exodus 34 already uses the name Shabuoth, which implies the dependence of the feast for its computation upon Mazzoth. All the other specifications of time regard only the duration of the feast, or the exact time of day to begin its observance, all which cannot have had any thing to do with the centralization of the cultus. On the contrary, where a specification for this purpose might be expected, it is not made. Chapter 16:1, "Observe the month of Abib," is even more indefinite than the Jehovistic phrase, "in the time appointed of the month Abib," Exodus 23:15. Indeed, it is hardly conceivable, if Deuteronomy was written with the tendency ascribed to it by the critics, that the author would have failed to secure what was first of all necessary to centralization; viz., to fix for each feast a definite date.

Deuteronomy, it is alleged, shows an advance by defining the exact quantity of the produce of the field which had to be brought to the feasts. It does not

appear, however, that Deuteronomy identifies the first-fruits and the tithes in this way. They were distinct, and are kept so in chapter 26, where verse 1-11 treat of the first-fruits, verse 12-15 of the third year's tithe. Naturally the first-fruits, the quantity of which is nowhere determined (chapter 26, a basket), would be taken along at the occasion of a feast still, this is nowhere prescribed. The command to give the first-born to Jehovah is in Exodus 34:19 subjoined to that of Mazzoth on account of the historical connection. Chapter 22:30 seems even to preclude the offering at a feast; as it says, "The eighth day thou shalt give it me." Exodus 23:19 refers probably to the single sheaf of Shabuoth. The only evidence in favor of this view lies in the position of Deuteronomy 15:19-23 immediately before the Passover-law. Indeed, when we combine this with the injunction to sacrifice the Passover to the Lord of the flock and the herd, the suggestion gains in plausibility that the firstlings were offered at Passover or Mazzoth. But this is far from proving Wellhausen's theory, that the feasts were originally nothing else than occasions to offer the *aparchae*. The law knows nothing of such an identification of the two, any more than it identifies tithes and first-fruits. An explicit statement would in both cases have been necessary, as Wellhausen himself admits. "In the Jehovistic and Deuteronomic Codes, the connection between *aparchae* and feasts is rather assumed than expressed." And assumed it is, not, however, by the laws, but by the critic himself.

With regard to the four peculiarities of the Priest Code first mentioned, little need be said. That sacrificial meals were changed into minutely defined sin- and burnt-offerings, rests on the utterly fallacious notion, that, until shortly before the exile, all sacrifices were sacrificial meals. We have spoken of this before. It is self-evident that the feast-offerings of the Priest Code (Numbers 28) do not exclude the **rqbw N)c** >(flock and herd), which Deuteronomy commands to be freely offered, and then to be eaten before the LORD. The

whole passage in Deuteronomy does not purport to give complete regulations concerning the feasts and their ceremonies and sacrifices, but simply considers them under the one great aspect, that of unity of cultus, for the maintenance of which they were one of the most effectual and important means.

The *aparchae*, it is further alleged, are separated from the feasts: they appear no longer as offerings, but have been transformed into priestly revenues. We have already seen that Deuteronomy 15:19-23 furnishes the only support to the view that the *aparchae* were connected with the feasts at all. Historical probability is all that can be claimed here. But that the Priest Code severs the *aparchae* from the feasts is positively untrue. It simply does not specify a time when they shall be offered, and this for the obvious reason, that the words, Numbers 18, are addressed to the priests, who were the receivers, and not to the people. The other half of Wellhausen's statement is equally inaccurate. It is true that the Priest Code makes the *aparchae* priestly revenues. Compare Numbers 18:13, 15. Still, the context itself shows that this is not meant in such a sense as would be inconsistent with the evident purpose indicated in Deuteronomy 14 and 15, that they should serve as a joyful meal to the offerer. Numbers 18:17, 18, shows that the first-born were to be offered as *shelamim*, with this distinction only, that not only breast and shoulder, but all the flesh, fell to the priests. Now, when we remember that probably all the first-born came in at the same time of Passover, it becomes almost impossible that the priests should have kept all this to themselves. The most natural inference is, that they restored a portion of the meat to the offerer, sufficiently large to enable him to keep the meal mentioned in Deuteronomy.

Thirdly, the critics discover an advance in the fact that the Priest Code has

finally settled the dates of all the feasts. The main point is, to show that the original conception of agricultural feasts has been entirely lost. The latter, depending on the ripeness of the harvest, cannot be bound to any definite date.

The critics must admit that the Priest Code does not only recognize an agricultural element in its feast-laws, but dwells upon it with special emphasis in the case of both Mazzoth and Succoth (Leviticus 23). Still, it assigns to each a fixed date. Is any thing more required to show that both are perfectly consistent, and that the law could definitely appoint the time of observance without giving the skeptical critics any well-grounded suspicion that the two could not go together? How impracticable that Priest Code must have been!

But in the fourth place, still graver charges are made against it. It is accused of fictitiously substituting historical combinations for the natural basis of the feasts. We saw how little this is the case. Leviticus 23 does not mention the historical occasion of the institution of Pesach and Mazzoth, whereas both the Jehovist and the Deuteronomist do so. Also in the case of Succoth, the historical element is given only a secondary importance. Succoth is the only feast for whose historical significance we have independent testimony outside of the law in Hosea 12:10.

That in Exodus 12, Pesach and Mazzoth are instituted not merely in commemoration of the exodus, but as an effectual means of saving Israel, is true. The cause, however, lies not in any tendency pursued by the author, but in the peculiar position of Israel. Their whole history, and relation to the Gentiles, were typical of the relation of God's saved people to the world. Hence, that which distinguished them from the Egyptians, and secured their safety from the slaying angel, could be nothing else than a type of that great

Passover-lamb, participation in which would one day distinguish the spiritual Israel from the world under condemnation. The case finds a parallel in the institution of our Lord's supper before the crucifixion.

By prescribing a Mikra Kodesh (holy convocation) on the seventh day of Mazzoth, the Priest Code makes it obligatory for all Israelites to spend the whole feast in Jerusalem. Critics find in this a new advance upon Deuteronomy. Stähelin, Von Lengerke, De Wette, Hupfeld, and Knobel understand by Mikra Kodesh a holy convocation at the central sanctuary, so that a pilgrimage thither was required.

Though the words in themselves might have this meaning, the view becomes untenable when we see that a Mikra Kodesh was appointed not less than three times for one—viz., the seventh—month. Since it would have been impossible to demand three pilgrimages to Jerusalem in one month, the phrase must necessarily denote any convocation in a local place of worship, for the purpose of observing the day. Hence we reach the conclusion, that neither in Leviticus nor in Deuteronomy does the law determine how long the Israelites were to remain at the sanctuary at the annual feasts. That the prevalent custom was to stay all seven days, is probable. Still, the law does not expressly demand it. Deuteronomy 16:7 seems even to indicate the contrary: "Thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents." As they suppose that the laws require a seven days' stay, Keil and Riehm take this as signifying a return to their homes and lodgings at the place of the sanctuary. This involves the assumption, that the Passover was eaten in the court of the sanctuary by all Israelites, which would have been hardly practicable. We understand verse 7 as containing a permission to return after the first night. That the custom was to remain during the whole feast, is not denied. But the law allowing this return in the morning, evidently tries to emphasize the

absolute necessity of being at the place of the sanctuary at least during that one night.

To both Mazzoth and Succoth, the Priest Code adds one day, according to Wellhausen. That Leviticus 23 assigns eight days to Succoth is clear. On the other hand, Deuteronomy speaks only of seven days of the feast. Its silence respecting the eighth day of **trc** (>*solemn assembly*) is easily accounted for. The purpose of Deuteronomy was not to lay down minute rules for feast-observance. So only the feast proper, consisting of seven days, is summarily referred to. And even the Priest Code does not consider the eighth day as an essential part of the feast. It is rather a close to the whole cycle of feasts, and consequently added to the last. Numbers 29:35, in assigning to it fewer sacrifices than to the feast proper, puts this beyond doubt. The notion that the Priest Code makes Mazzoth one day longer than Deuteronomy, arises simply from the popular use of the date in Leviticus 23:5, "On the fourteenth day of the first month at eve," evidently meaning, "On the evening with which the fifteenth day begins." This was also the of the first Mazzoth-day, and so no contradiction exists.

We come now to the last and most serious charge against the Priest Code viz., that it has added two new feasts, unknown before, that of Teruah (trumpets) and the Yom Kippurim (Day of Atonement). That the Priest Code adds new feasts, is inaccurate. Leviticus 23 does not enumerate the feasts, but simply the Moedim (appointed seasons) on which a Mikra Kodesh (holy convocation) was held. That neither the Covenant-law nor Deuteronomy makes mention of these two Moedim, is in consequence of their enumerating only such feasts as required an appearance before the LORD at the sanctuary.

Hence the Sabbath is not even alluded to in connection with the feast-laws. Since Teruah and Yom Kippurim required only a Mikra Kodesh, they are

omitted.

In so far as Wellhausen holds that before the exile the Jewish year began in the autumn, it is strange that he should consider Teruah as of post-exilic origin. It is highly probable *a priori*, that the beginning of the harvest-year was celebrated by a feast, the more so since the ordinary observance of the new moons would naturally lead to it. But this point also must be utilized to prove the late origin of the Priest Code. During the exile, the Jews derived their spring-era from the Babylonians, whose year, according to Assyriologists, began in the spring. The Priest Code wishing to preserve the old autumn-year, made a distinction between the civil and the ecclesiastical year. Against this hypothesis of Wellhausen, the simple reference to such passages as 2 Samuel 11:1; 1 Kings 20:22, 26; Jeremiah 36:9, 22, and *passim*, may suffice. For the rest, even Graf admits (p. 40), that, from the silence of the previous Codes, no conclusion as to the non-existence of Teruah can be drawn.

The argument against a pre-exilic existence of the Day of Atonement is twofold. First, the common *argumentum e silentio*. Little need be said about this. The critics agree that the cycle of the three great feasts dates back to the earliest times of the possession of Canaan. Instead of repeated mention, as we would expect, we find the observance of Shabuoth but once stated before the exile (2 Chronicles 8:13), Succoth four times (probably Judges 21:19 and 1 Samuel 1:20, 21; 1 Kings 8:2, 12:32), Pesach twice (probably Isaiah 30:29; 2 Kings 23:21), the three together (1 Kings 9:25 and 2 Chronicles 8:13). At the same time the prophets speak in terms which presuppose a fixed cycle of yearly feasts (Isaiah 29:1). When we add to this, that the *argumentum e silentio*, strictly applied, would bring the origin of the Day of Atonement down to the time of John Hyrcanus, or even of Herod the Great (37 B.C.),

little more need be added.

In Ezekiel 40:1, we read that the prophet received his vision in "the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month." Ezekiel follows the autumn-era in other instances (compare chapter 45:18, 20). Accordingly, Leviticus 25:9 would be parallel, where the Year of Jubilee is said to begin on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the Day of Atonement. As the critics recognize a close relationship between Leviticus 18-26 and Ezekiel, the inference would not be rash, that Ezekiel takes "the beginning of the year" and "the tenth day of the month" as synonymous; was acquainted with the Year of Jubilee as beginning on that particular day, and consequently with the Day of Atonement itself, since its connection with the beginning of the year of release was not incidental, but of deep significance (compare Isaiah 58, especially verse 5). Wellhausen avoids the inference by declaring **myrwpkh mwyb** >(in the Day of Atonement) an interpolation of a later hand, and is consequently obliged to assume that to Ezekiel the new year began on the 10th of Tisri. How this happened to fall on the tenth of a month, he does not explain; for what is said on p. 114 hardly deserves the name of an explanation. That it became easy, after the beginning of the civil year had been transferred to spring, to fix upon any date whatever, is not true. The old date, Tisri 1, was there; and what could have occasioned its change from the beginning to the middle of the month, it is not easy to see.

But there is another way of arguing *e silentio*. It is alleged that there are certain pre-exilic passages, where mention of the day would have been appropriate, or even necessary, had it been in existence. We give them in their order of occurrence, and add a few explanatory remarks to each respectively:^[3]—

In 1 Kings 8:66, the consecration of the temple is said to have occasioned a

double feast. The feast referred to in verse 2 must have been Succoth. The chronicler gives his comment upon this in his second book (7:7-10). According to him, the last seven days closed on the twenty-third of the seventh month. Hence the additional seven days preceded the common Succoth-week. But then they extended from the eighth of the month onward, and the feast of consecrating the temple coincided with the Day of Atonement. Since the latter was a day of affliction, this would have been impossible and critics claim to have here the most conclusive argument, that no Day of Atonement existed either in Solomon's time or in that of the chronicler. For the chronicler would not have failed to notice and correct the incongruity, had it really existed. We remark—

1. The conception of the Day of Atonement was not so much that of sadness and gloom, as to be entirely inconsistent with the consecration of the temple (compare Isaiah 58). Both the Mishna and Gemara present it as a day of joy.
2. If the consecration of the temple was going on, and no rites and ceremonies could be legally performed before this came to an end, it was not strange if the observance of the Day of Atonement was disregarded for once. The idea of purifying a sanctuary newly built, not yet quite consecrated, and filled with the glorious presence of God, is absurd.
3. That, according to the chronicler, Solomon put this initiatory feast at the time of the yearly atonement, is highly significant, and contained rather an allusion to the day than a proof of its non-existence.

Ezra 3:1-6. From Tisri 536 the full sacrificial service commenced.

Accordingly, neither Yom Teruah nor Yom Kippurim was observed. But how could the latter, when, according to verse 6b, the foundation of the temple of the LORD had not yet been laid?

In Nehemiah 8:13-17, which speaks of the year B.C. 444, the feast of tabernacles is observed, but as something new. This shows, says Wellhausen, that the Thora, which contained Leviticus 23 (with the exception of verse 26-32), had not yet been promulgated, and was now published by Ezra and Nehemiah in this very year 444.

From Ezra 3:4, it is clear that an absolute ignorance of Succoth cannot be assumed. The emphasis in the passage referred to, lies evidently in the *so* (8:17). Hence the theory, that Ezra now published the Code for the first time, finds no support in this fact; and no inference of the non-existence of the Day of Atonement can be drawn. Compare, for a parallel case, Deuteronomy 23:4-6 with Nehemiah 13:1. The fast-day in Nehemiah 9 is radically different in conception from the Day of Atonement.

Ezekiel mentions no Day of Atonement, but only two days of reconciliation, on the first of the first and seventh month respectively. Apart from the fact that Ezekiel is also silent with regard to other feasts, of which we know he was not ignorant (e.g., Shabuoth), we have seen already that chapter 40:1 contains probably an allusion to this day. And it is far more probable, that the two days of reconciliation were a modification of the Day of Atonement than the reverse.

Even the post-exilic Zechariah is summoned as a witness against this day. Graf says, "When interrogated concerning the commemorative fast-days, he does not even allude to the Day of Atonement" (chapter 7 and 8). The simple reason is, that he had no occasion to do so. For the Day of Atonement was

not a day of sad historical remembrance, not a "*dies ater*" in the sense in which the four referred to were.

There are several considerations which make the high antiquity of this day very plausible.

1. All ancient peoples had special feasts of purification. It is not likely that the Israelites formed an exception.
2. It is difficult to conceive how, without any precedent in the practice before the exile, such a fiction could, after the exile, have found immediate acceptance.
3. That the Day of Atonement was not so universally observed, and did not make such a deep impression upon the national life of the people, must be attributed to its deep spiritual significance. The joyful agricultural feasts appealed more to the national inclinations than the day of affliction to the consciousness of sin.
4. That, especially after the exile, more traces of such a consciousness appear, must be explained on the same ground. The judgment of the captivity had greatly deepened the sense of sin, and taught them better to appreciate this atoning feast.
5. The ceremony with the goat for Azazel points to a high antiquity. So also other forms of language.
6. The most incredible feature of the newer theory is, that at a time when no ark or mercy-seat existed any longer, or could be hoped ever to exist again, the law should have been framed in which they play such a prominent, almost exclusive, part.

7. The critics cannot help themselves by merely removing Leviticus 16 from the Priest Code. The whole Code in all its parts abounds in references to it (compare Exodus 30:10, Leviticus 23, 25). Numbers 8:7 is very striking. Also the name of the mercy-seat, **trpk** reminds us of the solemn ceremony of sprinkling atoning blood on the cover of the ark once a year.

Finally, Wellhausen asserts that the Priest Code makes of the relative Sabbath-year an absolute one, which required all fields to rest at the same time. But the expressions in Exodus 23:10, 11, do not decide either for or against Wellhausen's theory, that at first the year was chosen arbitrarily by each individual for each separate field. And his second statement, that the Priest Code advances upon the Covenant-law by requiring the suspension of sowing also, rests on a mistaken exegesis of Exodus 23:11, which refers the suffix (it), not to **Cr**) >(land), but to **h)wbt** >(fruit), of the preceding verse. That the Year of Jubilee does not appear in any previous legislation, need not awake surprise. Neither does the Covenant-law mention new moons. It is true, history offers no instance in which the law was observed; but this simply shows that it was in a certain sense very *impracticable*, and difficult to carry out. Still, the prophets allude to it (compare Isaiah 58, 61:1; Ezekiel 46:17).

We have reached the end of our discussion of the pretended development in the cultus of Israel. However deficient it may have been, we hope it shows that the newest Pentateuchal criticism has weak points in its very strongholds. No single point has been discovered which was utterly inconsistent with the unity of the Codes. We approach a new topic now. Having found the unity of the laws in Exodus-Numbers confirmed by positive proof, and the objections brought against it unfounded, we may proceed to consider the relation of this

body of the law to Deuteronomy.

Chapter Thirteen^(TOC)

Unity of Deuteronomy and the Laws of the Intermediate Books

On the essential unity of Deuteronomy 5-26, all critics agree. They differ somewhat in opinion as to the subsequent parts of the book. Also, the introductory chapters have been severed from the bulk of the book, which is legal. Still, they are often attributed to the same author, who forged the Code, and composed them afterwards to unite his book with the Jehovistic document. For example, Graf holds that Jeremiah was the author of Deuteronomy 1-30. Kayser ascribes to one and the same author 4:44; 26, 27 in part, and 28. He does not decide whether the introductory and closing chapters belong to him or not (p. 141). Kuenen thinks that chapter 1:1-32:47 were composed as one piece.

When we speak here of unity, it is obviously in a wider sense than before. The Sinaitic legislation was given within a few months, whilst between it and Deuteronomy fall more than forty years. It is not unity of time, much less of circumstances and environment, but unity of authorship of spirit and aim, and of underlying ideas, which we seek. Even the old view of Delitzsch, who held that a man like Joshua, or one of the elders, **mynqz**, on whom the spirit of Moses rested, supplemented the Elohist narrative by writing Deuteronomy, maintains the essential unity in this wide sense. Kleinert's view, on the other hand, that Deuteronomy was written in the time of Samuel, would already give it up; and to speak of laws, originating in as late a period as that of the

Kings, as Mosaic, is not only inaccurate, but misleading.

We are chiefly concerned with two questions here—

1. Does a relative unity between Deuteronomy and the middle books exist?
2. To which of the two must we assign the priority?

1. Does a relative unity exist? [\(TOC\)](#)

The peculiar character of Deuteronomy has been defined in various ways, owing to the fact that individual traits have been exclusively emphasized, and made to account for all the others. Kurtz and Riehm describe it as the people's Code, and find in this designation the main distinction from the Levitical legislation. Keil speaks of "a hortatory description, explanation, and enforcement of the most essential contents of the Covenant relation and Covenant-laws, with emphatic prominence given to the spiritual principle of the law and its fulfillment." Ewald as "a fresh and independent law, standing side by side with the earlier one—a transformation of the old law, to suit altered circumstances." Schultz gives as the aim of the book, "to secure by supplementary regulations that the laws and institutions of the previous books, whose full validity is presupposed, shall be observed, not only in an external way, but as to their inner significance, their higher aim, their spiritual principle, etc.

A comparison of all these definitions will be the best test of their accuracy. Once admitted that each of them has some support in the book, their deficiency will immediately appear by observing that they do not cover each other. That Deuteronomy is the people's Code, does not explain why it should not only interpret, but also enlarge and add. The same objection may be raised against Schultz's definition and that of Keil. The supplementary character of the Code is by no means so accidental and secondary that it can be overlooked in a definition.

Another inference is, how little right we have to determine the date of a book from the indications of a single feature. All these traits must have an

underlying common cause. Their bearing upon the critical question of authenticity can be truly estimated only when this deeper principle has been recognized. Individual features derive their true significance from their common source, and severed from this are very likely to be misinterpreted.

This one principal tendency seems to have been best appreciated by Hävernick. He recognizes two prominent contrasts with the Levitical law—*subjectivity* and *parenesis* or hortatory character. Proceeding on this observation, Hävernick finds in Deuteronomy the fundamental type of all Old-Testament prophecy. "Moses appears here as a prophet, **);ybn**; and subsequent prophetism is considered as nothing but the development of his work, standing with it in the most intimate and vital connection."

It is remarkable how much light is shed by a just appreciation of this principle on all other features of the Code. That it addresses the people, no longer awakens surprise. Prophecy roots itself in the law, not abolishing, counteracting, or modifying it, but explaining, exhorting, enforcing, above all things evolving the spiritual kernel from the objective external form. Subjectivity and a reflective character are adequately explained. Once more, prophecy does not indulge in scholastic repetition of separate statutes, but seizes upon the prominent points, which, under the circumstances of the time, need special elucidation and enforcement. Thus also for what the Code passes by in silence, Hävernick's view assigns a satisfactory ground of omission. How it embraces the features which Schultz has so well brought out, is self-evident. Not less does it include the view of Ewald and Riehm, for Moses is prophet and legislator at the same time. Hävernick says, "As mediator of the Old Covenant, he stands at the summit of all prophecy:... the distinctive character of his work is, that it not merely approaches the law from the standpoint of subjective application, but also develops and completes it."

The correctness of this view may further be tested by its applicability to all the phenomena. We cannot enter upon the matter in detail, but only indicate the rough outlines along which the argument ought to proceed.

- (1) Instead of God speaking to Moses, and Moses to Aaron and his sons, Moses speaks here directly as God's mouthpiece in long discourses to the people. That such is the conception of prophecy, the book states itself (18:15, *seqq.*).
- (2) The hortatory, parenetical style exhibits a mind not bound by the letter of the law, but aroused and swayed by the powerful impulse of direct inspiration.
- (3) The generalizing method, which seizes upon points of present practical importance, adapts and applies the law to the wants of contemporary history, and emphasizes principles instead of giving legal *minutiae*, exhibits a striking conformity to the work of the later prophets.
- (4) The generic treatment of the future. Where there is foresight, and provision is made for remote conditions, they are still such as will be the natural outgrowth of the present, and germinally contained in it. This is the case with the law of the kingdom (chapter 17) and of prophecy (18). The prophetic eye saw the future in the present, since the former was conditioned by the latter. This accounts for the emphasis laid on centralization of worship, and for the possibility of making regulations now which could be used centuries after as reformatory rules.
- (5) The same principle may have caused the general treatment of

certain classes—e.g., the priests as Levites—and a few other peculiarities.

We are now enabled to put the question more definitely. Does the diversity of character preclude the unity of authorship? In other words, is it unthinkable that one and the same person should combine in himself the qualifications of a legislator and a prophet? That the modern criticism has answered this question in the negative, is enough to show how incapable it is of a deeper philosophical conception and appreciation of the Old Testament. It deals with phenomena as if they were the ultimate data; mathematical figures, which can be made to represent whatever value the critic ascribes to them. At the bottom of all this lies the naturalistic denial of those great principles whose recognition is absolutely necessary to a right understanding of the Old Testament. "In all induction, theory leads." Dr. Kuenen himself declares it impossible to argue from facts alone. He admits, that from certain indubitable points the chief lines must be drawn, and that these must guide in our interpretation of the rest. But whilst he accuses Schrader of having disregarded this principle, we might retort the charge upon himself and the newer criticism in general. In using the facts to establish its theory of development, this criticism has already violated the rule, that they are not to be interpreted outside of their legitimate sphere, or in the light of a naturalistic philosophy, but by the relation they sustain to the system of God's revelation of which Scripture is the record.

We believe, that, on the basis of a sound psychology, nothing can be said against the union of these qualifications in Moses. The example of Ezekiel, of whose Thora the critics have made such an extensive use, is enough to decide the question. Looked at from an historical standpoint, the combination was favored by all the circumstances. Israel was at the eve of a new period in its

history, which would bring the final realization of long delayed promises, but at the same time expose to new and unknown allurements from the heathen world. It entered with the possession of Canaan upon a crisis of the same kind as those which in later ages called forth the warning and consoling voice of prophecy. It would have been anomalous, had it made this transition so far-reaching in its consequences without the attending light of a prophetic interpretation of the law to guide it. Not less obvious were these circumstances with regard to Moses himself, which favored this result. He had now nearly attained the end of his labors; and as, before his death, he saw the promised land from the top of Nebo, so in the sphere of time the range of his vision is widened. As the dying patriarchs saw and foretold the future fate of their descendants, and blessed their house in their last moments, so Moses, the greatest of all Old-Testament saints, left to the whole house of Israel, as a dying father, the best of all blessings, a law adapted to all future conditions. His work was not for one generation: "mediator of the Old Covenant," he stands high above all other prophets and saints; already half glorified, no longer subject to the limitations of time, he surveys the Israel of all ages until the coming of Christ, and accordingly his work assumes a prospective and ideal character, so striking that unbelieving critics could not but mistake it as the evidence of a much later origin.

Even a man like Dr. Kuenen admits that these formal characteristics of Deuteronomy do not necessarily prove that it was written by another hand than the intermediate books. It is only in connection with other material points that they obtain significance and convincing power. We need not examine all the arguments that have been adduced to prove the diversity of authorship, such as the peculiar style and language, the silence of Deuteronomy with regard to certain laws, the modification of previous laws, addition of some entirely new laws, etc. Some of these points have been

partially discussed before; and all of them have been so exhaustively treated by Hengstenberg, Hävernick, Keil, Schultz, and others, that our remarks could be nothing more than a repetition of their statements.

We pass on to the second question involved—

2. To which of the two legislations^(TOC)

(That of the intermediate books, or of Deuteronomy)

Shall we assign the priority?

It might appear almost unnecessary after having thus defined the relation of Deuteronomy to the other Codes, to put the question just stated. If our conception of the book as prophetic is in the main correct, and verified by its applicability to the phenomena, this will decide the matter at once.

Prophecy presupposes the law—roots itself in it, and grows out of it. The legal and formal is before the spiritual and ideal, not in the mind of God, but in its historical realization. Nevertheless, since the history of modern criticism is very instructive on this special point, and a fair exponent of its unreliable character, we offer a few remarks.

1. In 1861 Dr. Kuenen gave the following comment on the views of Von Bohlen, George, and Vatke, who asserted that the Deuteronomic legislation was earlier than that of the middle books of the Pentateuch: "He [George] assumes that the historical elements of the Pentateuch are the oldest, that Deuteronomy was written during the reign of Josiah, whilst the greater part of the laws in Exodus-Numbers did not exist until after the exile. His arguments are partly external, partly

internal; i.e., derived from a comparison of the two legislations. (1) Jeremiah, who knows Deuteronomy and makes frequent use of it, shows no acquaintance with the laws in Exodus-Numbers, as appears from chapter 7:21-23, where he appeals to Deuteronomy 7:6, 14:2, 26:18, but ignores the whole sacrificial Thora. But Jeremiah could, as Hosea, Isaiah, and other prophets before him, exalt the moral commands of the law far above its ceremonial prescriptions, and consider the former as the real basis of the Covenant with Jahveh, without the implication that a ceremonial Code did not yet exist in his time: he could even pronounce his conviction, that the laws concerning burnt-offering and sacrifice are later than the moral commands, and still it would not follow from this that Exodus-Numbers were committed to writing later than Deuteronomy. (2) Internal evidence. The priority of Deuteronomy is argued on the ground of several strange assertions, **which are not worthy of refutation**; to wit, that before the Babylonish captivity, there was no distinction between priests and Levites, high-priest and priests; that the Mosaic tabernacle never existed; that the spirit and tendency of Deuteronomy indicate an earlier period than those of Leviticus. Deuteronomy 31:14 is considered wholly arbitrarily as a later addition: 18:2, 24:8, are left out of view. The view of George in this form as presented by him has been almost universally rejected."

So far Dr. Kuenen. The quotation is instructive in many respects. It proves (**a**) That a critic may proclaim as incontestable truth at one time what, a decade before, he

deemed unworthy of refutation. **(b)** That he may use the same statements at different times to establish views which are diametrically opposed to each other (this with regard to Deuteronomy 18:2, 24:8). **(c)** That he may propose, as a reasonable explanation of certain phenomena, what he condemns afterwards as uncritical dogmatism in others (this with regard to Jeremiah). **(d)** That so long as his mind is unbiased by preconceived philosophical theories, he may find the postulates of his own later philosophy absurd. **(e)** That consequently his theory is not determined by the facts, but that the facts are colored by a theory framed independently of them, and afterwards imposed upon them.

2. This is not the only instance, however, in which criticism has itself closed the way to its own later development, which it was not far-sighted enough to discern sufficiently long in advance. It is well known that Graf in 1866, five years after the appearance of Kuenen's introduction, declared the legislation of the middle books posterior to that of Deuteronomy. Connected with this was the statement that Deuteronomy presupposed not only the Jehovistic, but (***a potiori***) also the Elohist, narrative. Pp. 9-19 of Graf's book contain an elaborate argument to prove that the narrative of the Elohist in Exodus-Numbers was known and used by the Deuteronomist. It was shown no less in detail that the Deuteronomist did not know the Levitical Code. It was evident, however, that in the Elohist document, narrative and legislation were so indissolubly blended, that even the most daring critic could not sever them. This state of affairs was

soon realized. Kuenen immediately discovered the weak point in Graf's hypothesis, and called his attention to it in a letter. Now, when two mutually inconsistent propositions have been independently established by an elaborate survey of facts, the natural suggestion would be, to reject the whole process of criticism, that had led to such results, as unreliable. Instead of doing this, however, Kuenen advises Graf to extend his hypothesis to the narrative of the Elohist also. This advice was followed; and out came the present theory of Wellhausen, Kuenen, etc. We ask what has become in the mean while of Graf's arguments apparently so conclusive, that the Elohistic narrative was known to Deuteronomy? Have they been carefully reviewed? Not in the least. Dr. Kuenen simply declares it necessary, that either the laws should follow history, or history follow the laws. Here, however, criticism has denied its own principles. Whosoever claims to argue from facts, is not allowed to discard one of his conclusions to save another. If two conclusions are mutually exclusive, then nothing remains but to declare the whole argument invalid. We have exactly the same right to ignore Graf's proofs that the Deuteronomist shows no acquaintance with the Levitical law, in order to recognize merely his arguments that he knew the Elohistic narrative, and then, after the innocent remark that the laws must follow history, to consider the pre-Deuteronomic existence of the whole Priest Code established. But the idea of one thing "following" the other has no legitimate place in the sphere of criticism.

When placed in the light of the two facts just mentioned, the following

considerations obtain a double force—

1. The fact that Deuteronomy, on the whole, attaches itself to the Jehovistic Code, is no proof that the Levitical law did not then exist. The Covenant-law furnished the real basis for the Covenant between God and the people. It is no more than natural that Deuteronomy, wishing to bring out the fundamental ideas of this Covenant-relation in their spiritual bearing upon the popular life, should go back to the Code in which they were already germinally contained.
2. Whilst, in most cases, it is difficult to decide how two laws stand related to each other, it is quite different with history. One clearly stated proof that the Deuteronomist knew the narrative of the Elohist, is enough to settle the matter. But numerous proofs have been given by Graf and others. It is therefore safer to abandon the ambiguous method of ascertaining the relative age of two laws by a comparison of their contents, and to adhere to the results obtained from history, than the reverse.
3.
 - (a) There are some indications, however, that Deuteronomy knows the Elohist legislation. Attention has been called by the critics from a stylistic point of view to the frequent combinations of **twqX** (*statutes*), **twcM** (*commandments*), **my+p#M** (*judgments*), **hrwt** (*law*), **twd**(*testimony*). When we remember that the statutes of

the Covenant-law are pre-eminently called **my+p#M** (*judgments*), Exodus 21:1, and that the other terms are predominantly used of the Levitical legislation, then their combination in Deuteronomy becomes highly significant. Besides, it gives us the impression that the author of the latter had a voluminous body of law in mind, to which he referred the people. It is unnatural to refer the terms he uses to the scanty contents of the Jehovistic Code (Exodus 13, 20-23, 34).

(b) The two laws (Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14:3-21) are so similar in language and contents, that their interdependence cannot be doubted. Graf assigns the priority to Deuteronomy. This view is at once overthrown by the consideration that the language is Elohist, and is accordingly in its place in the Priest Code, and out of place in Deuteronomy. Graf seeks to relieve this difficulty by assuming that both the Elohist and the Deuteronomist drew from an older source, but there is not the least ground for this assumption. And how this older source came to possess such a remarkable resemblance in language and contents to the Priest Code of much later date, remains a profound mystery. Moreover, the originality in the Priest Code is clear, because the reference to the touching of a dead carcass does not coincide with the plan of Deuteronomy, which is only to give law about clean and unclean food, but agrees perfectly with the plan of the Priest Code, which is to treat of every kind of defilement.

- (c) Other cases of interdependence in which the priority of Leviticus is clear are Leviticus 19:19 = Deuteronomy 22:9-11, Leviticus 19:13 = Deuteronomy 24:14, Leviticus 19:35 = Deuteronomy 25:13-16.
- (d) That Deuteronomy alludes to the priesthood of Aaron and Eleazar (10:6), to the Urim and Thummim (33:8), and to the priestly inheritance (10:9, 12:12, 14:27, 29, 18:1), has been pointed out before.
- (e) The passages, Deuteronomy 24:8, and 31:14, are even by Dr. Kuenen admitted as proof for the priority of Leviticus. When Kayser sees no reference in the former passage to the law of leprosy in Leviticus 13, 14, but assumes that some other law may have been alluded to just as well, this other law exists only in his imagination, and there is not the slightest trace of its actual existence.
- (f) A comparison of Deuteronomy 28 with Leviticus 26 will show that the Deuteronomist knew the latter discourse, or rather that both proceeded from the same author; in which case the priority of the chapter in Leviticus as the shorter one is, of course, beyond dispute.
- (g) Leviticus 17 and Deuteronomy 12 leave no doubt, both as to their mutual relation and their Mosaic origin. Without the Levitical law being presupposed, that in Deuteronomy could have no meaning. Deuteronomy here abolishes in the fortieth year what the Priest Code had enacted in the second. The same relation exists between Deuteronomy

4:41, 19:1-13, and Numbers 35, treating of the cities of refuge.

(*h*) A reference to the ark in chapter 10:1 points back to Exodus 25:10.

4. All these cases, in which Deuteronomy makes short, incomplete, and evidently supplementary statements in regard to matters not treated by the Jehovist, are so many proofs of the priority of the Priest Code.
5. It was generally acknowledged that Deuteronomy throughout presupposes the Levitical legislation, until theoretical bias obliged the critics to deny it. Even a man like De Wette once declared, "Deuteronomium prioribus libris tamquam fundamento niti quaevis pagina docet."

Chapter Fourteen^(TOC)

Internal Evidence for the Mosaic Origin of the Deuteronomic Code

We have come to the conclusion, that, whilst the unity of the Codes is vouched for by all evidence that can be reasonably demanded, the arguments adduced against it, when considered each on its own merits, cannot stand the test of a fair criticism. We could sum up the result in the statement, that the newest phase of Pentateuch-criticism presents no theory, but merely a hypothesis, one of the many ways of accounting for a number of facts. We believe that we have shown that the old hypothesis, if we may indeed call it so, accounts for these facts just as well as the new one, and in many respects better.

But it is not a matter of indifference which of the two hypotheses we shall choose. For whilst the new one must stand or fall on the mere merits of its plausibility and applicability, the old one has all the advantage of the direct testimony of the law itself, which lifts it out of the category of hypotheses, so that it becomes a theory founded on such facts as will admit no other interpretation.

For the whole Deuteronomic Code, we have in chapter 31:9, 24, the explicit testimony, that it was not only promulgated, but committed to writing, by Moses himself. With this statement, to be sure, nothing is decided as to the authorship of Deuteronomy as a whole. We may have our peculiar views, like Delitzsch and Kleinert, with regard to the composition of the book as a

whole, and still agree on the fact, that Moses actually delivered these discourses. The only question that must be considered here, is whether the statements in verse 9 and 24 do, or do not, refer to the whole Pentateuch. On this point, there is considerable difference of opinion. Hengstenberg, Hävernick, Keil, Schultz, etc., extend them to the whole Pentateuch, with the exception of the closing sections of Deuteronomy. Delitzsch, Kurtz, and, of course, the whole host of modern critics, limit them to the legal discourses of Deuteronomy. The latter view seems to be the most plausible one, for the following reasons—

1. The passages 29:19, 26, 19:10, 30:20, 28:58, 61, suffer no other interpretation than that they refer to the Deuteronomic Code. From analogy we would expect the same to be intended here. Schultz admits this, but, since Deuteronomy proper does not extend beyond chapter 30, claims that the rest is written as a closing section of the whole Thora, and may accordingly refer to it as a whole. If such were the case, however, we would naturally first expect a direct statement that Moses committed Deuteronomy to writing, before it could be tacitly included under the general term of the Thora as a written whole. As this is nowhere found, and 30:1 speaks simply of Moses having *spoken* all these words, we must seek it in verse 9 and 24.
2. It is not impossible, still it is improbable, that the delivering of this law mentioned in verse 26 was a mere symbolic act, as the other view implies.
3. It was the special duty of the priests to preserve the law, and more specially the Levitical law was entrusted to them. We

must therefore suppose that the latter had been delivered to them long before. If it be said that this may have been a mere copy of the Code, but that now the historical work of the Pentateuch was handed to them, we may answer that this analogy makes it only the more probable, that also the Deuteronomic Code was at first put into their hands separately without its historical frame.

4. The passage 29:1 shows that the Covenant made in the fields of Moab is considered as a separate one, distinct from that contracted at Horeb. There is no reason, then, to deny, that, according to the analogy of **t)zh tyrbh** (*this covenant*), also **t)wh hrwth** (*this law*) means simply the Deuteronomic law.
5. Joshua 8:32 can hardly mean that the whole Pentateuch was written in stones on Mount Ebal. Keil claims that the expression used in Deuteronomy 27:2, 8, "All the commandments, which I command you this day," is clearly intended to indicate, that here the whole Pentateuch is not meant, and that for this reason it does not decide any thing for the less explicit statements in other passages. But chapter 28:1 shows that the addition of "this day" cannot have been made for this special purpose. We have, therefore, a right to consider the passages where it is found as parallel to all the others, and find in them a confirmation of our view that also the latter speak only of the Deuteronomic Code.

It appears, then, that, from Deuteronomy 31:9, 24, no direct argument for the Mosaic origin of the other Codes can be obtained. It does contain, however,

an indirect testimony. If the Deuteronomic discourses were committed to writing immediately after their deliverance, we may infer *a potiori*, that Moses did the same with regard to the previous laws. That such was his custom, as it was the last thought at the end of his life, shows how much he laid to heart the careful preservation of the Codes.

Since the modern critics find themselves at liberty to disbelieve this explicit self-testimony of the Deuteronomic Code, there should be a strong weight of evidence to the contrary. Before we proceed to examine this, it is important to realize fully what such a disbelief involves; for on it will depend how much contrary evidence we demand in order to be convinced.

The term "literary fiction" has found large acceptance with the critics to designate their pretended origin of Deuteronomy. It does not fully suit the case, however. Again and again, critics have been anxious to remind us that the ideas of literary property were not so developed in antiquity as they are in our days. The Book of Deuteronomy, presenting itself to us as the work of Moses, has been compared to a parable; and Robertson Smith declares, that it matters little "whether these things were spoken by Moses literally, or in a parable." Dr. Kuenen, at least, is fair enough to confess that the fiction of the Deuteronomist cannot be defended from our stand-point of morality, but hastens to add, that a writer in the time of Manasseh cannot be measured by our moral standard. We must acknowledge, he says, that such a *pia fraus* was in those days quite consistent with a high degree of religious development.

Before proceeding farther, we must distinguish between a literary fiction and a legal forgery. When Riehm draws a parallel between Ecclesiastes and Deuteronomy, and then puts the question, "Why should we grant this liberty to the philosopher, and deny it to the lawgiver and prophet?" he has himself already intimated the answer that should be given to such questions. Suppose

that Ecclesiastes were a literary fiction, still we could not blame the author for having introduced his work under the name of Solomon, because the fictitious character was not concealed, but intended to be understood and appreciated. On the other hand, there is every possible proof that the author of Deuteronomy wished his work to pass for the genuine work of Moses. The element of "falsehood" would be surely involved here. Most decisive in this respect is his statement that Moses wrote this law; also the fact that he does not allow any additions or subtractions or modifications to be made in what he gives as the words of Moses 4:2, 12:32. How can we free from the charge of deceit, him who condemns most emphatically in his book a practice of which the book itself was the product? Further, the writer of Ecclesiastes would have given nothing more than subjective human speculation, under the authority of Solomon, since he need not have had the intention of foisting his book into the Canon. But the Deuteronomist applied his fictitious methods in the sphere of divine authoritative law, and knew, if he succeeded, that the first result of his success would be a deception of men in their most holy interests, an adulteration of the Canon, and in its ultimate analysis an encroachment upon God's sovereign right to prescribe law to Israel. It would be necessary to think that the times of Manasseh and Josiah were like the nineteenth century, when those initiated into the secrets of criticism do not hesitate to laugh contemptuously within the walls of their schools at the superstition of God's common people, who still cling to the antiquated notion of the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch. The writer of Deuteronomy must have had some resemblance to our present heroes of Old-Testament science, who for themselves having long outgrown the traditional notions, still, out of the fullness of their benevolence, are willing to leave the less instructed class a kind of regulative knowledge. It is exceedingly saddening in the present state of the question, whilst the one alternative is "**fraud**," that even a man like Dr.

Delitzsch declares that the Church at large has no interest in the Pentateuch question, and ought not to have. It is no longer the time to mislead ourselves by unmeaning phrases. The Church has an interest in this matter. If she has been deceived by the Deuteronomist more than twenty-five centuries ago, it is more than time that she knew it now. With Dr. Kuenen we say it is "either one thing or the other," and every attempt at compromise involves a concession to our opponents.

Before we hear the grounds on which critics think themselves justified in assuming this terrible fraud, let us survey the indirect testimony of Deuteronomy to its Mosaic origin.

1. The time in which the author speaks is evidently the later part of Moses' life. The people appear to be on the point of crossing the Jordan, the conquest of Canaan is promised as the reward of fidelity to Jehovah, the people are encouraged not to dread the Canaanites, commanded to extirpate the Canaanites, etc. To quote passages is superfluous.
2. The author shows intimate acquaintance with the geographical condition of the country in which Israel received this law. Whilst his statements concerning the eastern side of the Jordan betray by their minuteness and accuracy an eye-witness, those concerning the west side are general throughout.
3. When Riehm and others ascribe all this to the endeavor of the Deuteronomist to make his work pass for that of Moses, all the evidence is against them. For (a) The information concerning the Mosaic period is in part new, not contained in the previous books of the Pentateuch; and there is no proof that the

Deuteronomist used other sources. **(b)** The history, though conforming to that of Exodus-Numbers, is remodeled with a freedom that nobody would have allowed himself to use in post-Mosaic times, least of all a writer who wished to authenticate his work with the impress of a genuine Mosaic character, and who everywhere proclaims the sacred, inviolable character of the Mosaic law. **(c)** It should be noticed, that all these references to the Mosaic period present themselves as natural and unintentional. If we had to assume that they were interwoven with a purpose, we would expect them to be more explicit, prominent, and emphatic.

4. Though Deuteronomy presupposes throughout the possession of the promised land, the point of view is never lost, that the conquest is still future. The possibility of fiction is precluded here by the promise of extended territory (11:24, "From Lebanon, from Euphrates, unto the uttermost sea"), such as even the most visionary expectations of later times could not have aspired to. How could a contemporary of King Manasseh or Josiah say, "From the river Euphrates shall your coast be," without exposing himself to ridicule?
5. Retrospectively the Code contains many references to the sojourn in Egypt of such a character as only the national consciousness in the Mosaic period could understand or appreciate. Memory of the Egyptian bondage is made an incentive to kind treatment of servants and strangers. The book is full of Egyptian reminiscences (11:10, 20:1, 23:4, 7, 24:22). The modern criticism has attributed all this to mercantile

intercourse with Egypt. Apart from the fact, that in this case the allusions would have been more direct and intentional, the explanation is only a partial one. Mercantile intercourse was not adapted to make the reminder of Egyptian servitude a forcible incentive to humane treatment of servants. Neither would it account for historical coincidences, since there is no proof that intercourse with Egypt led to a professional study of Egyptian history and antiquities.

Chapter Fifteen^(TOC)

Objections Answered

All this, however, is most daringly rejected by the critics, as the product of a legal fiction which took to itself a Mosaic dress, thus to have better opportunity of imposing upon the people. Though there is some difference of opinion as to the exact date of composition, all agree that it is a Reform Code prepared in the days of the later Judaic kings. De Wette, Knobel, Schrader, Kayser, assign it to the reign of Josiah; Ewald, Bleek, Kuenen, to that of Manasseh; Riehm, who also first declared himself in favor of the second half of Manasseh's reign, afterwards changed his opinion, and preferred the time of Hezekiah. A peculiar view is held by Stähelin and Kleinert, that it was written during the period of the Judges.

When we ask for the proof of all this, it is arrayed before us in a series of propositions. Riehm's treatise affords a fair example of the common method. He proves in succession: 1. Deuteronomy is not Mosaic, but written a considerable time after the conquest of Canaan. 2. After the reign of Solomon. 3. Not before that of Jehoshaphat. 4. Not before that of Hezekiah. 5. In the second half of the reign of Manasseh, between 667 and 640. All which is inferred from internal evidence and corresponding facts in history during the period of the Kings.

That this method of determining the date of origin of a prophetic book involves a denial of its supernatural character, is obvious. When Deuteronomy prohibits exactly those things in which Solomon transgressed,

it is claimed that there must be a *vaticinium ex eventu*. So far as these assertions proceed on the denial of the supernatural element in the history of Israel, no common ground of debate is left between us and the critics.

But there are others, like Riehm and Kayser, who recognize the supernatural element, and *profess* to derive their conclusions, not from an *a priori* philosophy, but from critical premises. Between them and us the question is reduced to the simple statement, whether these utterances of Deuteronomy exhibit the internal character of *vaticinia ex eventu*, or of real inspired prophecies.

Let us consider the law of the kingdom first. Chapter 17:14-20 offers several points of contact with Solomon's reign: 1. Multiplication of horses, verse 16. 2. Multiplication of wives, verse 17a. 3. Of silver and gold, verse 17b. These points would certainly have some force to convince us, if it could be shown that Solomon's conduct in this respect was exceptional and distinct from what Eastern monarchs were accustomed to do. If not, there is no reason why Moses should not have dreaded for a king of Israel, what was prevailing at all Oriental courts, and hit upon exactly those vices which foreign influence afterwards tempted Solomon to imitate, in spite of the Deuteronomic law. That the author of 1 Kings 10:26-29, 11:2, uses nearly the same terms as Deuteronomy, does not prove that the latter merely copied the facts. The author of Kings may just as well have clothed the facts in Deuteronomic language. When Riehm objects that he evidently describes with admiration and approval the hints of Solomon's courts, and hence was not acquainted with the disapproval and condemnation of the law, this sounds strange in the mouth of a critic who declares in a footnote, that the writer of Kings did not live before the exile. Then, he must have known Deuteronomy, after all; and what becomes of the argument from approval or admiration?

The narrative of 1 Samuel 8 has also been used, or rather abused, to deny the authenticity of this law. What is there condemned, is here commanded. But such a summary statement leaves out of account several facts. First of all, Deuteronomy does *not command*, but merely allows, the institution of the kingly office. It does this with certain restrictions touching the points which would tend to make the office an object of national pride, derogatory to the honor of God, to whom alone such glory was due among Israel. The passage bears all the evidence of being a restrictive law. In one sense a kingdom is permitted, but evidently this permission is but subsidiary to the prohibition of it in another sense. It is clearly stated what the Israelites would be allowed to have, in order to bring out more emphatically and distinctly what they would *not* be allowed to desire. So, whilst there is no command in either sense, the whole is equivalent to a prohibition in the one sense. The restrictions stated constitute the very essence of kingly pride among the heathen nations of the East. Considered in this light, the Deuteronomic law not merely does not contradict, but strikingly confirms, the narrative in Samuel. The people desired exactly that kind of royalty which the Code prohibited, and from the very motive which the law condemned. Because the nation wished to transfer the national pride which it should have had in God alone to an earthly monarch, the spirit of the law was violated, even though the transgressors dared to quote its letter in their favor. That other causes co-operated with this to make the desire sinful, is not denied. Schultz has discussed the matter very thoroughly, though he seems to seek the solution rather in a peculiar interpretation of 1 Samuel 8 than of Deuteronomy.

The law presents no features which are not fully consistent with its Mosaic origin. But it contains some statements which are inconsistent with a later origin. The following may be noted: (*a*) The prohibition to confer royal authority upon a stranger, verse 15. For this the whole post-Mosaic period

offers no single point of contact. What Professor Robertson Smith adduces, rests on the misinterpretation of an isolated passage, Isaiah 7:6. **(b)** The reminiscence of Egyptian servitude, verse 16. How the multiplication of horses could tend to make the people return to Egypt, has never yet been satisfactorily explained on the critical hypothesis. Riehm's explanation, together with his view of the passage 28:68, rests on ingenious but unwarranted combinations, by which more is assumed than history has recorded. **(c)** If this law had been forged in a time when the kingly office had existed for many centuries, it is impossible that no more definite and concrete statements should have been made.

The same remarks apply to the institution of Judges, and of what the critics would call a supreme court (Deuteronomy 17:8-13). Both are the necessary result of the people being scattered over the land immediately after the conquest. Here also the critics have substituted for this very natural interpretation an extremely forced one. They claim that Deuteronomy gives only the abstract statement of what Jehoshaphat had introduced in the concrete. But law and history conflict in so many points, that only a superficial acquaintance with both can make the one the reflex of the other. The following are essential differences: **(a)** Deuteronomy presents as future what under King Josiah had already existed for a considerable time. **(b)** What Jehoshaphat instituted was really a supreme court, consisting of Levites and laymen, with two presidents—the high-priest Amariah, and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael. Deuteronomy knows nothing of this: the judge in verse 9 is only the occasional president at the local court at the seat of the sanctuary, and he owes his right of decision in cases of appeal to his benefit of priestly assistance and instruction. The high-priest in verse 12 is not introduced as such, but merely in his priestly capacity, to indicate that his assistance was not a matter of judicature, but of instruction. **(c)** The absence of concrete and

detailed statements is here also a strong testimony against later origin.

As the law of the kingdom does not warrant us in bringing Deuteronomy down to Solomon's time, so that of the Judges does not prove its origin during or after the reign of Jehoshaphat. More general, but most whimsical and worthless of all, is the argument derived from the promises in chapter 18, that prophets like Moses would succeed him, and specially the reference to false prophets from verse 20 onward. By remanding all this to a later time, we take away the only basis on which to rest prophecy. The eminent position and undisputed authority of later prophetism become a mystery when the law had made no provision for both. This is an apt illustration of the untenable positions to which the critical theories lead. If, as has been customary of late, prophecy is not considered as the fruit and interpreter of law, but law as the petrification of prophecy, the latter of necessity comes to hang in the air. The reference to false prophets, if it proves any thing, will prove against the later origin. In verse 22 the people are exhorted not to be afraid of them, **wnMk rwgt)l**. In what a contrast does this supposed denunciatory character of the false prophets stand to the later reality! (compare 1 Kings 22:22, **seqq.** Isaiah 9:15; 30:10; Jeremiah 14:13, 14). Another feature which forbids us to think that the author had the development of prophetism behind him, is the promise that the prophets would be like unto Moses. So only God and Moses could speak. None of the later prophets ever thought of claiming equality with Moses.

In Deuteronomy 4:19, 17:3, star-worship is emphatically forbidden. The historical books mention, that after the schism it became prevalent at first in the Northern kingdom, afterwards also in Judah, in the time of Ahaz and Manasseh. Hence the critics inferred, that this kind of idolatry was not of Canaanitish origin, but was imported from the Far East, and not known

before the schism. The protest of Deuteronomy against it then proves its later origin. We need not determine to what influences the increasing popularity of star-worship under the later kings was due, but have only to show that prior to this star-worship existed. This does not merely follow from the second command of the Decalogue forbidding to make a likeness of any thing "in heaven above," but also from the statement of Amos 5:26. The prophets of the Assyrian period refer to it; e.g., Isaiah 17:8 (where the Revised Version has sun-images). Also the name Beth-shemesh (house of the sun) is noteworthy in this respect. Schultz calls attention to the fact that the service of Baal and Astarte was connected with star-worship; but, as Deuteronomy treats of this idolatry separately (4:3, 12:31, 18:20), the passage (4:19) must refer to something distinct from it. That Deuteronomy considers this cult under the aspect of nature-worship, and not so much of Polytheism as it came pre-eminently to be afterwards, makes the acquaintance of the writer with this later state of affairs improbable.

The phrase **Ndryh rb(b)** >(*beyond Jordan*) has been appealed to as indicating the true stand-point of the later writer. It is used interchangeably of the east and the west side of the river. In making this fact a proof of later origin, the critics involve themselves in a serious difficulty. All evidence of Mosaic origin is summarily dismissed with the remark, that the Deuteronomist would take care to reproduce faithfully the Mosaic situation. In all other instances he succeeded so completely, that for centuries all critical opinion was led astray by his fiction. How, then, could he fall out of his role here? Even granted that Deuteronomy is non-Mosaic, the double sense in which the writer employs the phrase puts beyond doubt that he considered it as geographically fixed already in the Mosaic time. Still, it is most probable that even in this case he would not have made Moses employ it of the east side, for fear that people less instructed in ancient geographical

terminology might suspect the Code on account of this expression. Riehm, feeling this, tries to protect the Deuteronomist against this charge of thoughtlessness, by saying that he continually distinguishes between his own work and the discourses of Moses, and that in the latter the phrase is only applied to the western country. Chapter 3:8 is enough to overthrow this notion, where Moses himself speaks "And we took... the land that was **Ndryh rb(b** >from the river of Arnon unto Mount Hermon." Riehm is under the necessity of declaring the latter words to be a gloss of a later hand; but with the same right we might declare all passages where the term is applied to the eastern country interpolations, which would certainly be the easiest way to relieve the whole difficulty. As the matter stands, the critics may choose between admitting that the Deuteronomist fell out of his role here, which will add the more weight to other evidence of Mosaic origin, or that he thought Moses could have spoken thus. We take the latter alternative in view of the impossibility that a man who wore his mask so well should have made such a blunder here, and because we do not see why Moses and the Israelites in general could not be familiar with a settled phrase like this. The western side was at all times, even from the days of the patriarchs, the real Canaan, the fixed point, determining the usage of all relative terms. Much more could it be so for Moses, who continually in the prophetic spirit transfers himself to the future time, and speaks for the period when Western Canaan would be already conquered and occupied.

We close with noticing a few positive arguments which make the later origin of Deuteronomy very improbable.

1. The military law of chapter 20, which commands emphatically the extirpation of the Canaanites, is out of place in the time after Solomon, since he made the remnant of Canaan's heathen

inhabitants servants to Israel in a peaceful way. The warning against an idolatrous cultus may not have been superfluous at a later date; but the military law had become utterly unmeaning, and the latter could never have been used as a safeguard against the former. Professor Robertson Smith admits that "this feature points us directly back to the days of Moses."

2. The curse upon Amalek (chapter 25:17) leads to the same conclusion. According to 1 Chronicles 4:43, the last remnant of the Amalekites was destroyed by the tribe of Simeon positively not later than the reign of Hezekiah, as even Graf and Kayser admit. That the passage is simply repeated from Exodus 17:14 will not help us. Kayser should have made clear what occasion there was in Josiah's time to make the repetition.
3. The hostile attitude towards the Ammonites prescribed in 23:3-6 could be explained just as well from the later times. Parallel passages are found in Jeremiah and Zephaniah. But the friendly feelings towards Edom lack all points of contact with the history of the seventh century. The same applies to the mention of Egypt (23:7). Until the destruction of Jerusalem the prophets speak of Edom as the representative of the enemies of God's people. A command, "thou shalt not abhor an Edomite," would be unparalleled in the prophetic literature of Israel. When Kayser tries to show that Judah was occasionally on friendly terms with Edom, his quotations do not prove this. Riehm infers from the tendency in Hezekiah's

time to seek the alliance of Egypt, that this required a friendly relation to the Edomites, and that accordingly the Deuteronomist would recommend it. But both Kayser and Riehm have overlooked that Deuteronomy is written in a prophetic spirit, and could by no means approve of this tendency to lean upon Egypt, or favor any thing resulting from it, since all the prophets unanimously condemn such associations. It is therefore impossible that the writer should speak in such terms of Egypt. Josiah himself, whose conduct better expresses the theocratic spirit out of which Deuteronomy must have been written, according to the critics, opposed Egypt, and lost his life in doing so.

4. Deuteronomy 12:15 contains a modification of the law (Leviticus 17), which was practicable only during the desert-journey, when the people lived in the immediate vicinity of the tabernacle. Its impracticability at any other time is self-evident. Even the plurality of sanctuaries afterwards would not have made it practicable, since they were by no means so numerous that all slaughtering of animals could be done in their neighborhood.
5. Several laws present features that become unintelligible in the light of later conditions. For instance 20:5-8 makes military service almost a matter of free choice. How could this be in the warlike period of the later kings? Compare also 22:13-21, evidently an old custom, which must have been antiquated long before the seventh century; also 27:21.
6. Though Deuteronomy is eminently prophetic in one sense, it

is in so far distinguished from the later prophets, as that no reaction appears against ceremonial formalism. This is an unequivocal sign that such a contrast did not yet exist. Positively the ideal character of the law is exhibited, but nowhere is observance of its external prescriptions negatively condemned. The critics, who make such an extensive use of this latter feature in their interpretation of the prophets, should at least have wondered why it is entirely lacking in Deuteronomy.

7. Finally, this fact speaks against a later origin, that, so far as would appear from Deuteronomy, the passing of Jordan, the complete conquest of Canaan, and its quiet, undisturbed possession, coincide. This is wholly inconsistent with the theory of historical retrospection. The latter knew that a long period had been necessary to subdue the Canaanites, and that the task was not fully accomplished before Solomon.

Chapter Sixteen^(TOC)

Internal Evidence of the Mosaic Origin of the Laws in Exodus-Numbers

If our belief in the Mosaic origin of the Deuteronomic Code rests on valid grounds, we have an *a potiori* argument for the authenticity of the laws contained in the middle books. Our work is rendered more easy and simple, because a great number of traces of later origin discovered by the critics in Deuteronomy are not found here.

1. We first state the direct testimony of the laws to their own origin

Which is of a twofold character: **(a)** when simply Mosaic origin is claimed; **(b)** when it is explicitly stated that Moses committed certain laws to writing.

(a) A great number of laws are introduced by formulas like the following: "The LORD spake unto Moses." "And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation." "And he [Moses] said unto Aaron." "And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron." "And the LORD spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai." These introductory statements cover the whole book of Leviticus, and in Numbers we find the same repeated throughout. All these laws claim for themselves Mosaic origin.

(b) The passages in which Moses is said to have committed certain laws to writing are the following—

Exodus 17:14: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." The statement falls outside of the Code, and is important for our present purpose only in so far as the book referred to might furnish an indirect testimony to the fact that Moses wrote the history of his lifetime. The Massorah has it, **rpsb** (*in the book*), with the article. Though the presence or

the absence of the article depends on the punctuation, still we may inquire whether the Massorah had no good grounds in putting it here, in spite of its omission in the Greek and Arabic translations (the only ones which could express it). For, as the punctuation without the article would have doubtless been the more natural one, its addition must have rested on positive reasons in the nature of the case. Now, we cannot but find it absurd to call a separate note of this character "a book," or even to preserve it as an isolated sentence in written form. The passages which Bleek adduces, do not prove that a single sentence committed to writing could constitute a book. One of them (Jeremiah 32:19) does not speak of a book, and the others refer to more comprehensive laws or decrees. The most plausible interpretation is that which the Massorah intimated by adding the article viz., that Moses was accustomed to commemorate important events and commands, and that this book, the origin of our present Pentateuch, is referred to by God.

Exodus 24:4: "And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD." The words of the Book of the Covenant are meant, which included chapter 20:22-23:33. Whether the Decalogue was included is not certain, but improbable for the following reasons: **(a)** The book was read in the audience of the people (verse 7); this would have been superfluous in case of the Decalogue, which God himself had promulgated with audible voice. **(b)** It is not stated that Moses wrote the Decalogue: God himself wrote it on tables of stone. **(c)** The parallel Covenant-law in chapter 34, equally committed to writing, did not repeat

the Decalogue.

Numbers 33:2: Moses wrote the list of stations during the desert-journey (verse 3-49).

These passages cover a comparatively small part of the Sinaitic legislation. Critics have rashly inferred that we have no positive testimony of its codification by Moses, and have even gone to the length of asserting that the passages just enumerated exclude the writing of any other part of the law by Moses. Dr. Kuenen says, "When in the first four books of the Pentateuch, only a few pieces of little length are ascribed to Moses, it becomes probable that all the rest, in the writer's opinion, is non-Mosaic." Delitzsch and Bleek and many others are of the same opinion.

We believe that this conclusion is as unwarranted as the other extreme, to which some conservative critics have gone, of asserting that we might reason, from the part being written by Moses, that the whole was. The truth is, that these passages prove nothing in either direction; since the special command to write was clearly occasioned by extraordinary circumstances, and served a special purpose. That Exodus 17:14 presupposes a more comprehensive work, we have seen already. The Covenant-law had to be written separately for its symbolic use in the solemn transaction (chapter 24). After the Covenant had been broken, the second law (chapter 34) was, of course, written separately after the analogy of the first.

There can be, then, no doubt that the Jehovistic and Elohist legislation claim for themselves Mosaic origin. We must accept this self-testimony, so long as it has not been disproved by other evidence. Accordingly we might stop here, and, remembering how the unity of the laws in Exodus-Numbers has been established, dismiss the subject. Still, it may be well to survey the

contents of the intermediate books with special regard to—

2. Their indirect internal evidence of Mosaic origin^(TOC)

Many of the Levitical laws are so formulated, that they presuppose the sojourn of the people in the desert-camp around the tabernacle; and many commands rest for their practicability entirely on this situation. It is superfluous to point this out in detail. Compare Leviticus 1-7, 11-16, 13, 14, 16, 17; Numbers 1, 2, 4, 10:1-8, 19.

In the case of other laws, the form is determined by the historical event that occasioned them, so that they cannot have existed separate apart from the latter. Exodus 35-40 is thus connected with chapter 25-31. Leviticus 16 attaches itself to chapter 10:1.

Bleek based on these facts the following propositions—

1. Even if the Pentateuch in its present form be not composed by Moses, and it be shown that many individual laws are the product of a later time, still the Pentateuchal Code as a whole is, as to its spirit and character, genuine and Mosaic.
2. The art of writing must have been already known among the Hebrew people in the Mosaic period, and practiced to such an extent that comprehensive law-books were in existence.
3. We stand in the Pentateuch (as far as the middle books are concerned) throughout on an historical basis.

At first blush, it would seem that these positions were unassailable. The old

way of speaking of myths, legends, or at best of traditions, so extensively applied to history, proved impracticable here. All the characteristics of myths and legends were wanting; and, as Wellhausen strikingly remarks, "For the originality of legends, exactly the opposite criteria decide from those by which actual history is tested. Legends are at the farthest distance from their source, where they appear in connection with an exact chronology." And so the case actually stands. The phenomena admit of only two theories for their explanation; more and more the extremes draw to themselves the occupants of abandoned intermediate positions; we have to choose between Baal and God, nature-worship and supernatural religion, fraud and history.

The modern criticism has not shrunk from taking the former of these alternatives. The Priest Code cannot be Mosaic. Still, it bears the impress of Mosaic origin. To reconcile these two facts, only one way is left open: what is not genuine, and still so striking, must have been fabricated with a purpose; the Mosaic dress of the priestly laws is woven for it by the skillful hands of exilic and post-exilic fraud.

These extreme views seem to have no common ground left on which to meet each other. What we recognize as one of the most striking proofs of Mosaic origin, is immediately construed on the other side as the meanest sort of Judaizing fiction. The material, under the molding hands of criticism, is like clay in the hands of a potter. There is no manner of argumentation which is not instantly, under the influence of these profane principles, turned round in the opposite direction.

To decide this question critically, no amount of philosophy or religious conviction will suffice. It is only when on both sides the following principles are admitted, that there is some hope of an historical solution of the problem

1. A legal as well as a literary fiction, however ingeniously devised, will always more or less betray the time of its origin. The veil thrown over it will be so transparent in some spots, that the actual situation can be recognized. With regard to Deuteronomy, the whole critical argument rests on the validity of this principle. We do, therefore, no injustice to the critics in applying it here.
2. The fiction will naturally seize upon such points in the fictitious situation which it portrays, as stand in immediate contact with the present for which it tries to provide. The ideal is not for its own sake, but serves a practical purpose: it must accordingly be chosen so as to have a direct bearing upon the latter.

Even a superficial observer cannot but discover that the pretended Priest Code does not comply with either of these conditions. Numerous historical allusions, referring even to minute and unimportant points, as we saw, are discovered in Deuteronomy. Historical data are disentangled from their Mosaic environment, and successively assigned to their alleged true place in the history of later times. Riehm proves by a purely internal process, that Deuteronomy must have been written after the time of Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Manasseh, in the reign of Josiah. Will the critics lay before us a similar series of propositions, that we may gradually and reasonably convince ourselves of the post-exilic origin of the Priest Code? No semblance of internal evidence is given, neither do the critics claim that any exists. There must certainly be a reason, if the Code originated between Ezekiel's Thora (B.C. 574) and its promulgation by Ezra (B.C. 444), a time of such critical and momentous changes in the history of Israel—there must, we

say, be a reason why it lacks all historical references. Had the art of forgery made such marvelous progress in the mean while, that, whilst the Deuteronomist still partially failed, the writers of the Priest Code fully succeeded in hiding themselves behind the shield of Moses?

What point of contact do the exilic and post-exilic times offer for Leviticus 17? What practical bearing could such a law as that of chapter 16, concerning the Day of Atonement, have upon a period when the ark no longer existed? How can we find a positive reason for the forging of such commands? The cultus of the past was in many cases deficient, and could not furnish a norm. Neither did Ezekiel's Thora bind them. What other principle can have governed the framers of these laws, if not their adaptability to the future restoration? How, then, shall we account for the scene of the whole not being laid in Canaan, but in the desert, and, moreover, the laws being adapted to a large extent only to the desert-life? It is no answer to say that the fictitious character made such dissimulation necessary. The question is, why was exactly this form of dissimulation chosen? That the Mosaic mask could have been imposed on more attractive and appropriate features, the critical opinion of Deuteronomy shows. Why is not Moses represented as giving a law with special reference to the settled life of the people in Canaan? All these questions the newer criticism fails to answer. As it has stripped the Mosaic period of its miraculous character, so it has enshrouded the time of the exile and the subsequent period in an impenetrable mist.

We ask whether there are no portions of these laws whose authenticity can be established independently of this self-testimony, so that we may make them the basis for further argumentation. If only one case can be indicated where the internal evidence is verified beyond doubt by external considerations, the critical theory of fiction fails.

Now, there are such cases. The Mosaic institutions, as they are represented in the Codes, are full of Egyptian reminiscences. It is true, every resemblance does not justify us in assuming a historical connection, since certain rites and ceremonies are common to all ancient peoples. But in some cases the similarity may be so striking, and so strongly corroborated by historical testimony, that accident is out of the question. An illustration of this we find in the law concerning leprosy, and its treatment by the priests (Leviticus 13, 14). The following facts, as stated by Delitzsch, concur to establish their Mosaic origin almost beyond dispute **(a)** The exodus of Israel has been identified by nearly all Egyptologists with the expulsion of the lepers spoken of by Manetho, Chaeremon, Lysimachus, Tacitus, Diodorus, and Justinus. **(b)** The peculiar form in which Egyptian tradition has preserved this memory of the exodus can only be accounted for by the assumption that leprosy prevailed more or less among the Israelites. Over-population, the result of their rapid increase in Goshen, may have been the natural cause of this impurity. This is confirmed by Scripture testimony of Jehovistic character (Exodus 4:6; Numbers 12:10, 15). **(c)** On account of this plague, the Egyptians would necessarily consider the Jews as the importers of leprosy, and, as they carried their systematic purifications to an extreme for themselves, would exert an influence in the same direction upon the Israelites. **(d)** This sanitary, and more specially prophylactic, treatment of the disease was among the Egyptians assigned to the priests, and must have been pursued in accordance with certain fixed rules, as was the case with their medical practice in general. **(e)** It admits of no doubt, that the Israelites would follow in their treatment of the plague Egyptian usage. **(f)** Actually we find in their laws a carefully prescribed method of dealing with it; diagnostic criteria are given; it appears also as the special task of the priests, to discern the various phases of the disease, and declare the persons clean or unclean after a

careful inspection. All these traits combined, amount almost to a logical demonstration of the Egyptian, and consequently Mosaic, origin of the law of leprosy.

That there was such a law prior to the Deuteronomic Code, the passage 24:8 shows. When the critics resort to the arbitrary assumption, that some other law may just as well have been referred to by the Deuteronomist, we have reached the sphere of the unknowable, where it is not safe to carry on the discussion.

This case of a clearly established Mosaic law within the limits of the Priest Code has significance in more than one respect. 1. As in the regulations, mention is made of the tabernacle of the congregation and of the camp (13:16, 14:11), we infer that such local specifications, when occurring elsewhere, are justly considered as internal marks of Mosaic origin, and that, in the main, the local coloring of these laws is not fictitious, but reliable. 2. The fact that the tabernacle appears here as a place of sacrifice in verse 11, and not merely as a tent for consulting God, which, according to the critics, is its Jehovistic conception, proves that in the laws of the tabernacle and of the Aaronic priesthood we stand on historic ground. 3. The mention of the sin- and trespass-offering in chapter 14 is a proof that these two species of sacrifice were pre-exilic, and indeed Mosaic, in their origin, and not, as the critics assert, post-Ezekielian.

If any thing in this collection of laws is Mosaic, it will be the Decalogue. Belonging to what the critics themselves consider the oldest Code, and, according to the oldest history, being written on tables of stone by the finger of God, its simple form, early appearance, and indubitable presence in the ark in later time, all combine to render the highest antiquity plausible. To this may be added the remarkable fact, that the Decalogue of Exodus, though

slightly differing in form from the Deuteronomic one, is nevertheless essentially Deuteronomic in language and expression. At the same time, it shows the usual characteristics of the Jehovist. What the critics adduce against its Mosaic origin, cannot outweigh these strong presumptions in favor of it. The alterations in the Deuteronomic text can only awake surprise when we assign as late a date to the composition of the book as the critics do. Moses' reproduction might be a free one, as his whole Deuterosis of the law evidently is. That the Deuteronomic Decalogue puts the Sabbath-law on another basis is inaccurate. The truth is, that the real foundation of the command is not restated, but a practical incentive substituted—the reminder that the people had been servants in Egypt; and this reference to Egypt pervades the whole Code. Another objection of Reuss, Wellhausen, etc., is, that the prohibition to worship God under an image cannot reach up to the time of Moses, and that the cultus instituted by Jeroboam after the schism proves its non-existence at that date. But the assertion that Jeroboam's cultus was not essentially new or exotic, but was customary long before in Canaan (R. Smith), cannot be proved. Neither did the earlier prophets tolerate the calf-worship, except as a lesser evil in contrast with the service of Baal and Astarte. The calf made in the wilderness by Aaron reminds us of Egypt: likewise Jeroboam's cultus probably proceeded from Egypt, where he had enjoyed the hospitality of the king.

This transgression of a well-known command is not without parallel in history: certainly the Romish Church, in adoring Mary, the angels, and saints, shows no ignorance of the Decalogue. Just as well may Jeroboam have quieted his not too tender conscience by some forced interpretation of the law. The newer critics, who are inclined to leave to Moses as little as possible, generally make an exception in this case. Smend admits the Mosaic origin of the Decalogue unconditionally. Others with some restrictions. Graf

conceded Mosaic origin in some original form, different from the one we possess now, and holds that the ten words were at first transmitted orally. Nöldeke is unwilling to grant even as little or as much as that; and Reuss, with Wellhausen, goes to the length of denying that Moses had any thing whatever to do with the Decalogue.

Chapter Seventeen^(TOC)

Testimony of the Historical Books

Judges, First and Second Samuel, First and Second Kings

The radical difference between our conception of the Old Testament and that of the critics is such that it makes historical argumentation extremely difficult. Of course, all depends on our estimate of the sources and here the disagreement begins already. Joshua is so dependent on the Pentateuch, that its testimony is *a priori* declared invalid. Judges has undergone various redactions, in which the historical truth was molded for religious instruction (Reuss, *Gesch.*, p. 337). First, it consisted of a number of independent legends, lacking all unity except that of a common national spirit. They were collected into a body, and the religious tendency of the redactor furnished the thread of their connection. History was made revelation, says Reuss. "Judges is a prophetic sermon," To the author's generation, the old, heroic times had become quite unintelligible so that it devolves upon an omniscient criticism to correct in a pedantic schoolmasterly way the wrong conceptions entertained by the Israelites concerning their own history. The case stands no better with the books of Samuel and Kings (compare Reuss, §§ 245, *seqq.*, 340, *seqq.*). And how the newer criticism has dealt with Chronicles, is too well known to need special mention here.

From all this, it appears that to assail the critics on historical grounds is lost

labor. They have their conception of the Old Testament, and we have ours. When, in Judges, certain deviations from the Mosaic law appear, often with the express disapproval of the author, all statements of the latter character are attributed to the redactor, who sees the facts in his own subjective light, so that the disapproval is not God's, but his. According to our view, the historical books were written with the very purpose of making past history a mirror and warning for the future Israel. According to the critics, all tendency towards instruction is of later date. In other words, we claim that the self-conscious, revealing God was in history from the beginning, and caused history to be written as such: the critics refuse to recognize any history as genuine except as it presents itself under the fascinating disguise of a legend or myth. All deeper conception of history is excluded. This amounts, of course, to a denial of the supernatural element in its course. But the fact remains, that it is a hopeless task to convince our opponents by adducing phenomena, because they will construe them according to their own theory, as we do according to ours. The illusion that theories are founded on facts, has to be given up: neither should it be so, for without more or less of preconceived hypothesis, the facts alone remain dark and indifferent.

For this reason, we think it useless to prove positively from the historical books, that, in the time of which they treat, the Pentateuchal Codes, or, even as Hengstenberg and others have attempted to demonstrate, the Pentateuch itself, existed. The direct testimonies collected from such passages as 2 Samuel 22:23; 1 Kings 2:3, 6:12, 8:53, are not of such a character, or so numerous, but the critics can help themselves with the assumption of a few interpolations. References to civil or ceremonial usages of similar character to those described in the Codes do not prove that the latter existed; for all the critics admit, e.g., that the ritual was pre-exilic in substance, though not codified before the exile. Only manifest verbal quotations would help; but

these, again, are not numerous enough to warrant general and decisive conclusions and very seldom is the relation of two passages such that it permits only one view concerning their interdependence. We do not mean to say that the traces of the existence of a ritual, as they appear in the historical books, have no right to speak in this matter, but simply that they are no decisive proofs of the existence of the Pentateuchal Codes. Their value consists in the evidence they afford, that the ritualistic spirit was by no means exclusively the fruit and exponent of post-exilic Judaism, but one of the features of Jewish national life from the beginning. Israel was the people of the law long before the pretended origin of the Priest Code. And, in so far as the historical books bear testimony to this fact, they furnish abundant material for the construction of a solid argument against the newest phase of criticism. It should also be remembered, that the difference between ritualistic usage and ritual law is not so great as it is often represented by the critics. Every one who admits that a ritual existed corresponding to the *technique* of the Priest Code, has thereby taken our side with regard to the main question; and we will not dispute with him on the subordinate point, whether this usage was written or unwritten law. Usage, when once fixed, necessarily becomes law.

In the main, our attitude on this point must be apologetic. In making this concession, we can justly claim that the critics shall not construe the silence of history concerning any law as a proof of its nonexistence. We do not infer from the mention of some usage, that it was regulated by law. Neither should our opponents infer from the absence of such mention, that no law could have existed. For the rest, we simply try to show that the facts, which are admitted as historical on both sides, do *not exclude* the existence of the Pentateuchal Codes.

We begin with the period of Judges. That the people sacrificed at Bochim (2:5), Gideon at Ophrah (6:21), Manoah at Zorah (13:19), can by no means have involved a transgression of the law; for in all these instances, there was an appearance of the **y K)IM** >(angel of Jehovah); and the provisional regulation given at Sinai, before the promulgation of the Levitical law, went into effect once more. That this is the true explanation, is specially seen from one fact generally overlooked; viz., that **no theophany took place without a sacrifice**, which shows how closely the ideas of a revelation made by God, and of a sacrifice made by man, were connected in the Israelitish mind so that we are not only warranted in thus harmonizing law and history, but positively claim that the right to sacrifice at an arbitrary place, as the critics postulate it, was utterly inconsistent with the most primitive elements of the Hebrew religious consciousness.

For Gideon's sacrifice (6:26), the peculiar circumstances and the symbolical significance are enough to make it an exceptional case. In the place where the idol had been served, Jehovah reclaimed what was his own. This nocturnal, private **olah**, on a spot whose vicinity had been shortly before sanctified by a theophany (verse 11, **seqq.**), decides, of course, nothing as to the common practice.

In other passages, no mention of sacrifices is made. Gideon's altar was strictly memorial, as appears from the fact that **(a)** he gives it a name: altars erected for practical use had no names. **(b)** Until this day it is yet in Ophrah; i.e., as a memorial or ancient relic. **(c)** Gideon is commanded in verse 26 to build a second altar, this time for a practical purpose. That in chapter 11:11, Jephthah is said to have uttered all his words before the LORD at Mizpeh, can be used on the critical side only by a double allegation: **(a)** that the swearing of an oath was necessarily connected with sacrifices, of which the

preceding verse is already a flat contradiction; **(b)** that **y ynpl** > must refer to a sanctuary. It simply means, "as in the presence of Jehovah," a circumlocution for "taking Jehovah as witness," "testifying with invocation of his name"; i.e., "solemn swearing." Chapter 20:1 must and can be explained on the same principle. Neither does the narrative of chaps. 20, 21, afford any serious difficulty; for in 20:27 it is explicitly stated that the ark was in the vicinity with Phinehas the priest, howsoever we may understand **l) tyb** > (Bethel, or house of God) in verse 26 and in chapter 21:2.

In other cases, where there is an actual transgression of the law, as that of Micah and the Danites, the censure of the writer is not only expressed in the whole tenor of the narrative, but also explicitly stated.

The objection that others than priests officiated in sacrificial transactions, has still less force. Gideon and Manoah offered, because Jehovah, in approaching them visibly, sanctioned an immediate exercise of that priestly right, which, belonging to all Israel, was only representatively vested in the Levitical priests. Wherever the LORD appears, there is his altar. To whomsoever he draws near, he gives the right to come near, which is the essence of the priesthood.

It is alleged that we do not get the impression from the first chapters of Samuel, that the elaborate Levitical law was in operation. This is certainly true but very little dependence can be placed on such an impression, which it certainly could not be the intention of the writer to convey. Who will be rash enough to infer, because Eli's sons are the only priests mentioned, that there were no others? From 1 Samuel 21 we get the impression that there was only a single priest, Ahimelech, at Nob. But chapter 22 takes away the impression by stating that not less than fourscore and five priests were slain by Doeg.

It was an old objection, already made by Gramberg, and now revived by Wellhausen and the newer school, that, in the oldest sacrificial *praxis*, the meat was boiled. 1 Samuel 2:15-17 is quoted as an example. But the most superficial inspection of the passage shows that there is no allusion to the offering of cooked flesh at all. Verse 15 says, "Before they burnt the fat:" we have to do here with *shelamim*. The sin of the priests consisted in desiring their part before Jehovah. For the rest, the whole passage implies that the customs then in vogue at the sanctuary cannot be taken as exponents of the existing laws.

The circumstances of Samuel's time—first the captivity of the ark, afterwards its separation from the sanctuary, the general apostasy of the people—account for all the facts that confront us here. It has been asked, If unity of worship was the divine command, why was not the ark, after its return, restored to the sanctuary, and the centralization of sacrifices enforced? The answer is obvious. Then, as at all times, mighty reforms require a period of long inward preparation. To effect the latter was Samuel's mission, and to keep this in mind affords the only key to a right understanding of his whole life. This meets the critical objection, that, if Israel were deprived of a national sanctuary, all worship, at least sacrificial worship, ought to have ceased. Between Eli and David's time, this slow process of inward preparation went on; the spirit of reform was striving with the spirit of apostasy; all intermediate phenomena testify to an abnormal state. So at least the Old Testament itself considers it (Jeremiah 7:12, 14, 26:6; Psalm 78:60, 68). The transition was from Shiloh to Zion. What happened at both was legal, and does bear witness to the law: what falls between them was in part abnormal, in part illicit, and should not be made to testify against the law. Still, even here matters do not stand out in so bad light as critics represent them. When Saul undertakes to sacrifice, without waiting for Samuel's

presence, he is severely rebuked; and this act becomes the turning-point in his life. This certainly does not look like a state of affairs in which everybody could sacrifice. When the author of the books of Samuel mentions with manifest approval, that Saul built an altar, this must be understood in the entire light of Saul's character: it expressed a sort of piety, though in a deficient form. What David did on the threshing-floor of Araunah was justified by the appearance of the angel, and the authority of a prophet of God, and was in anticipation of the erection of the sanctuary on that very spot. The repeated sacrifices on the high-place of Gibeon are accounted for by the presence of the tabernacle and *olah* altar (1 Chronicles 16:39, 40). That David was accustomed to worship God on the top of the mount in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, does not imply that he sacrificed there. His ephod was not the high-priestly garment, but simply an ephod *bad*; that is, a linen ephod. The modification made by David in the age fixed for the Levites' entering upon the service at the sanctuary, is best explained by the change in the abode of the ark, which had now become a permanent one, so that the work of the Levites became easier, and the time of their service could be proportionally prolonged. Those who defend the post-exilic origin of the Priest Code may try their skill in harmonizing the passages 2 Chronicles 31:17, and Ezra 3:8, which prove that not only in Hezekiah's time, but also in that of Zerubbabel, the limit was twenty years. Notwithstanding the prominent part taken by Solomon in the consecration of the temple, nothing is ascribed to him which would have been an intrusion upon the rights of the priesthood. For the true character of this whole period from a religious point of view, compare 1 Kings 3:2.

For the period succeeding the schism, the existence of a divinely authenticated law becomes a postulate without which the history is wholly unintelligible. This only could prevent the Northern kingdom from becoming

fully apostate, and relapsing into complete heathenism. There was a restraining power, even in the worst days of the dynasty of Omri: there was what Elijah called a "halting between two opinions." It is, indeed, possible to find in all this nothing but the influence of long existing usage, owing its origin to the centralization in the days of David and Solomon. But, on the one hand, the period in which this *usus* should have gained ascendancy is far too short to account for the unwavering attachment which the pious in Israel retained to the sanctuary at Jerusalem: on the other hand, the reaction in the Northern kingdom opposed the modified cultus so long and so firmly, that it must have had a deeper source than the custom of a few decades; the only satisfactory explanation is, that it rooted in the divine Thora, and preserved a clear consciousness of this origin to the very last.

The objection was raised already by Eichhorn and Vatke, and afterwards has often been repeated, that the prophets of the Northern kingdom (Elijah and Elisha) did not oppose the idolatry of the golden calves, but simply Baal-worship. But obviously their opposition was determined by the sins that were most objectionable at the time; and, when Baal-worship had found such general acceptance, the idolatry of the golden calves became a comparatively unimportant affair. How the prophets who were not influenced by this excess of wickedness, judged of the plurality of altars and the worship of the calves, is seen in Amos, Hosea, and the Micaiah of 1 Kings 22. The passage, 1 Kings 19:14, must, of course, be explained on the same principle. It is not necessary to think of the altars referred to as connected with those at Dan and Bethel. And, though their existence was not in strict accordance with the letter of the law, it had become a temporary necessity. The attitude of the prophets in Israel towards the existing national cultus is manifest in the fact of their forming schools at the famous seats of idolatry, Bethel, (Jericho,) Gilgal, in standing protest against it.

Before we turn to the prophetic books themselves, one point calls for a fuller discussion. The origin and character of the Bamoth-worship (that on high-places) in the kingdom of Judah are of paramount importance for the question of the existence or non-existence of the Codes. It has a bearing on the whole debate concerning the primitive religious state of Israel. The critics claim, that, before the temple at Jerusalem existed, all places of worship were equally honored and sacred. In the time of Solomon, not so much a centralization as an elevation took place of the newly built temple to be the sanctuary *par excellence*. But the Bamoth (high-places) existed all along, and their right of existence was not disputed. The war afterwards waged against them was the result of a higher stage of religious life among the prophets—that great movement which resulted in the production and enforcement of the Deuteronomic Code. The prophets Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, do not yet condemn the Bamoth *per se*, but simply their corrupting influence tending towards idolatry. It was not an abnormal cultus, but a primitive state of affairs: in one continuous line it can be traced back, from the eighth century upwards, through the reigns of Solomon, David, Saul, into the period of the Judges.

We must begin with denying the last proposition, which is indeed the basis of the whole argument. The statement needs considerable qualification before it will satisfy the facts. These are, that, when there was no legal central sanctuary, the Bamoth-worship was temporarily tolerated, in order that the spontaneous impulse of the pious might find opportunity to express itself. This was the state of affairs from Samuel onward, until the building of Solomon's temple. It was, however, condemned, and considered illegal, as long and as often as the presence of God in his dwelling-place constituted this the only place of worship, as during the period of Judges at Shiloh, and after Solomon's time at Jerusalem. The chain which the critics have fabricated lacks two necessary links: 1. Judges contains no evidence that the worship on

high-places was allowed or practiced by the pious. 2. The same evidence is wanting for the time subsequent to the building of the temple in Solomon's reign, till the first only partially successful attempt of Hezekiah to do away with the Bamoth.

The second ground on which this theory rests, is that the earlier prophets do not condemn the worship as sinful *per se*, but only on account of its corrupting tendency. If there are passages in Amos and Hosea which would bear out this meaning, the natural inference is, that they accommodated their teaching to the difficult situation in which the northern people had been placed by the tyranny of their rulers. On the whole, it is very artificial to ascribe such a distinction between "*per se*" and "*per accidens*" to the prophets. Even the law did not prohibit plurality of sanctuaries because of any inherent necessity in the character of Jahveism, but for the practical purpose of securing by unity purity, by centralization elevation of the cultus. When the prophets, in accordance with their general method, do not state the law *in abstracto*, but in its inner meaning; when they emphasize more the final cause of the command than the command itself—this exhibits only the more strikingly their true relation to the law as its spiritual interpreters. They immediately go to the root of the matter, and state not only the "what," but the "why" also. This is all that the critical distinction amounts to.

The critics themselves must admit that the writer of Kings represents all Bamoth-worship since the building of the temple as unlawful, and imputes it even to the pious kings of Judah as sin, that they did not terminate it. That the latter did not take their stand as strongly against this cultus as afterwards Hezekiah and Josiah, finds its full explanation in what has been remarked. Bamoth-worship, tolerated from Samuel till Solomon, had become a second nature to the people. The consciousness of its abnormal character had been

lost. It may have been revived in the pious kings more or less: the people as a whole were not awake to it. The objection, that if such ignorance prevailed, the prophets could not have reckoned neglect of the law as sin, finds its answer in Hosea 4:6. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God." It is as if the passage were written in direct refutation of the critics. To produce a reform among the people, a renewed enforcement by a special divine providence of the prophetic Deuteronomic Code was required, to which point we shall hereafter direct our attention.

Chapter Eighteen^(TOC)

Testimony of the Early Prophets

It will not be necessary for our purpose, to investigate all the amount of evidence that might be collected from the prophetic writings of the Old Testament. We are chiefly concerned with the books of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah. Of Joel we cannot make any use, since a number of critics remand his prophecy to the post-exilic period. Jeremiah and Ezekiel wrote after the pretended origin of the Deuteronomic Code. Deutero-Isaiah is declared to be exilic.

The testimony of the earlier prophets has a double weight, since they speak as contemporary witnesses. When the author of the Book of Kings makes mention of the Mosaic laws, the critics are ready to call it one of his anachronisms. This is precluded here. We have no reason to fear that we shall find ourselves hunting our own shadow.

We have first the passages in which a direct reference to the **hwhy trwt** > (**law of Jehovah**) is found. They are in succession the following Amos 2:4; Hosea 4:6, 8:1, 12; Isaiah 1:10, 2:3, 5:24, 8:16, 20, 24:5, 30:9; Micah 4:2.

The value of this testimony seems to be somewhat lessened by the consideration that the phrase **y trwt**, or **hrwt**, absolutely may designate something else than the Mosaic law. On the one hand, the etymology (from **hry jacere, ejicere, manum extendere**, and then **instruere, docere**), on the other hand, the exegesis of some passages, as Isaiah 8:16, 30:9; Micah 4:2,

which require the more general sense, go to prove that the phrase may denote ***all instruction of God***, whether given in his law, or by the prophets. Compare the instances where **hrwt** >is parallel with **rbd** >(word). The Mosaic law doubtless was Thora from the beginning; but that it was Thora in the later specific, traditional sense cannot be proved. All that can be said, is that it was probably the Thora of Jehovah ***par excellence***.

We may concede all this without depriving ourselves of the ability to show that the prophets refer and appeal to Mosaic laws. For after the subtraction of all the passages where the general meaning is admissible, we keep a ***residuum*** where no other sense than that of "***written law***" will satisfy the context.

There are cases where Thora designates God's instructions in days gone by. To this class belong—

Isaiah 24:5: "They have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting Covenant." Thora is here parallel with the "everlasting Covenant," and with "ordinance," the former of which would certainly not apply to "prophetical teaching."

Amos 2:4: "Because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked."

Hosea 4:6. Here a priestly law had not only been disobeyed, but forgotten, which implies its existence for considerable time. Its knowledge and interpretation are represented as a priestly inheritance.

Hosea 8:1: "Because they have transgressed my Covenant, and trespassed against my law." Here "law" and "Covenant" are synonymous, as in Isaiah

24:5.

But the critics will say, How can we know, when Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah refer to a Thora, different from their own words, that this must be the Thora of Moses? Why can it not refer to the teaching of the older prophets, who had preceded those of the ninth and eighth century? We might just as well retort the answer, Why can it not refer to Moses, for he certainly was a prophet? Still, this is not enough. Our claim is, that Moses occupies a unique position. He is the prophet *par excellence*, the legislator to whose work the later prophets appealed, in whose institutions they lived and moved and had their being. We must show, that, in the passages referred to, nothing but the Mosaic law can reasonably be meant. This follows from several considerations—

1. In two of them the law is used parallel with "Covenant," meaning the conditions which the Covenant imposes. This conception must date back to a definite, historical event, which is, according to the whole Old Testament, the Sinaitic legislation. Hence the Thora which stands parallel to the Covenant must be the Sinaitic Thora.
2. The prophetic word was a fleeting one, which had as yet no permanence and stability. It was God's intention, that it should be preserved for future generations; but till a relatively late period, it served only the needs of the present. It is therefore improbable that Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah should have referred their contemporaries to the words of earlier prophets, who had long ceased to speak, and of the preservation of whose commands there is no evidence. The prophecies in their time were "testimony" in the strictest sense. They came and went,

but constituted no codified law.

3. To fall back upon earlier prophets transfers, but does not relieve, the difficulty. So far as we know, the mission of all prophets was to enforce and vindicate the law. They never pretend to introduce a new religion, never require of the people that it shall commit itself to unreasonable authority. All their appeals are addressed to the conscience, the moral or national consciousness of Israel, both of which presuppose the law as their root and norm. Even Smend says, "Antiquitus tradita atque accepta esse oportebat, ad quae prophetae provocare poterant." Now, it will certainly do to say that the younger prophets appealed to the older ones, the later to the earlier. But to what did the older and the earlier appeal? Did **they** stand on their own authority? Did **they** prescribe law, instead of upholding it? To this assertion the critics must resort, but it is out of all analogy. We touch here again the weak spot in the reconstructive scheme. Prophetism, at least incipient prophetism, hangs in the air. It had no seed to spring from, no soil to root in: its origin and growth are involved in a profound mystery. The early prophets, we claim, must have stood on the platform constructed by Moses.

Next comes the passage Hosea 8:12, which deserves to occupy a place by itself—

wb#xn rz-wMk ytrwt wbr wl bwtk) >

We follow the reading of the Kethib, and translate **wbr** >"ten thousand."

Our first remark is, that **ytrwt wbr** >can by no means refer to prophetic teaching. It does not matter whether we take **wbr** >in apposition, or as the *nomen regens* of **ytrwt**: in either case, the reference must be to law proper. The prophetic Thora constituted one whole: it appears as synonymous with **y rbd**, a mere abstraction. Accordingly, neither translation—"My Thora, ten thousand," or "Ten thousand of my Thora"—will apply to it. Also the word **bwtk**) >precludes all other meanings than that of written law. The prophets, as remarked above, did not teach their contemporaries by writing, but by the living word.

We may infer that the idea of a written law was very familiar in Hosea's time. Whether this verse contains a definite allusion to law actually written, will depend partly on the context, partly on the construction of **bwtk**).

Keil takes the latter as an historical present, from which the meaning would result, "I have written ten thousand precepts of my law [in the time of Moses], which still exist." But there is no evidence that the Hebrew future ever has such a sense. It is not equivalent to the Greek perfect, but to the Latin imperfect, and denotes repeated action; so that the meaning would be, that God by Moses, and afterwards by the prophets, had repeatedly prescribed law to Israel.

This is, indeed, Ewald's interpretation. There is no evidence, however, of such a legal literature as Ewald imagines to have existed.

We may explain the future with Hitzig as purely hypothetical: "Though I had written ten thousand," etc. But how could the multitude of commandments increase the guilt of disobedience? We would expect that in this case, the

prophet had taken as small a number as possible to express this idea.

Smend does not understand the **wbr** >of numerous commands, but rather in a qualitative sense, commands minutely stated. This certainly yields a meaning appropriate to the context, but is less suitable to the hypothetical interpretation.

Two more views are possible. Either we may take the future as a *praesens historicum*, not in Keil's sense of the Greek perfect, but in the sense of a simple Hebrew perfect, for which, in the alacrity of discourse, it is often substituted (Gesenius, § 127, 4 c.), or we can understand the future to introduce a conditional clause—"Even when I write to him ten thousand of my law, they are counted as nothing."

We must choose between the last two constructions, either of which presupposes the existence of a written divine law in the days of Hosea.

The context furnishes no sufficient data to determine what the contents of this law were. Only verse 11 might give us a glimpse. "Because Ephraim has made many altars to sin, his altars shall be unto him to sin." Ewald considers the two members of the verse as expressing the same thought, which would be nothing more than a truism. The sin which the Israelites had committed consciously in erecting the many altars, cannot be the sin to which God's righteous judgment gave them up. It must have been a new phase of evil consequent upon the former. The most natural explanation is, that because Israel sinned in transgressing the command, which required unity of worship, the many altars would be productive of the further sin of apostasy and idolatry. One sin was punished by a process, a sliding scale of sin. With this interpretation and the immediately following statement of verse 12, "that God's commands were counted for nothing," we can hardly fail to recognize

in it an allusion to the Deuteronomic Code, whose principal aim was to enforce unity of the sanctuary.

Smend, in his "Moses apud Prophetas," admits all this in principle, and still refuses to see in it a proof of the existence of the Pentateuchal Codes. He says (p. 13), "Itaque Hoseae verba octavo saeculo, apud Ephraimitas multas leges scriptas fuisse comprobant... quamvis a magna populi parte negligenterentur... ut adeo divini juris videantur, acsi ab ipso Jehova scriptae essent." Page 19, "Certe plurimas illas leges quarum Hosea mentionem facit, ad Mosem inventorem relatas esse putandum est." His argument for this is quite conclusive. All laws, according to the prophets, have their foundation in the Covenant between God and the people. But the Covenant was Sinaitic: "Revelation vera semel in Monte Sinai per Mosem junctum esse, traditione certissima atque unanimi antiquitas constabat. Ni [Moses] fuisset, prophetarum munus ne cogitari quidem potuisset."

These remarkable confessions give all that can be reasonably demanded. There were many written laws, which the prophet and his contemporaries ascribed to Moses. They were universally neglected. Though their contents cannot be accurately determined, nothing contradictory to the Pentateuchal Codes is ever approved of. The Sinaitic legislation was considered as an historical fact. And, after having granted all this, the critic stands up in his own authority, and declares, "At libros illos, si quidem multi erant non ex antiquissimis temporibus Mosis originem traxisse *jure* concludas!" We ask with what right? Does critical skepticism go so far as to deny the credibility of the prophets' testimony for the time that lay behind them? When Hosea says that God gave the law at Sinai through Moses, shall the critics say, It cannot have been, laws must have gradually appeared? Or, do they desire that Hosea and Amos shall tell us in so many words, "The laws which we refer to

are no other than the Mosaic Codes"? There is no evidence that any collection of laws ever existed but the Mosaic. And we must deny to the critics the right of substituting an imaginary one, to do away with the plain meaning of Hosea's words.

As in the historical books, we do not believe that much can here be made of the ceremonial usages and religious customs referred to by the prophets. When we would array it as evidence of the existence of the Codes, Wellhausen would from his standpoint have the right to remind us, "Legem non habentes natura faciunt legis opera." Once more our attitude must be an apologetic one. We must show that the Codes may have existed.^[4]

First of all, the critics discover in these prophets an antagonism against the priesthood and ceremonial institutions in general, and consider them as defenders of a more spiritual type of religion. The principal passages are: Amos 5:21, *seqq.*, 8:10; Isaiah 1:11, *seqq.*, 29:13; Micah 6:6-8; Hosea 4:6, 7:14, 10:12, 12:6. Dr. Kuenen says, "The prophets nowhere insist upon fidelity in observing the holy ceremonies. On the contrary, they speak of them with an indifference which borders upon disapproval, sometimes even with unfeigned aversion."

It must be remembered, that Hosea and Amos prophesied in the Northern kingdom, where there was no legal Aaronic priesthood. The priests opposed by the prophets were no rightful priests. Still, they are hardly ever condemned in this official capacity, but for lack of knowledge, for being murderers, robbers, etc. The point at issue is, whether the prophets condemned the ceremonies *per se*, or on account of their wrong performance. An unprejudiced examination of the evidence will not leave us in doubt on which side the truth lies. We note the following points of decisive importance

1. If the ceremonies had been condemned by the prophets *per se*, in contrast with a more spiritual religion, Jehovah's attitude ought to have been represented as one of indifference towards them. This is not the case. When Kuenen speaks of "indifference bordering upon disapproval, sometimes unfeigned aversion," all these words are not synonymous indeed, they are mutually exclusive. God disapproves of the ceremonies, not for formal, but for material, reasons. He hates, despises, the feast-days. He will not smell in their solemn assemblies: his ears revolt against the melody of their viols. The ritual is represented as offensive in the highest degree. We are warranted to draw from such positive terms two conclusions: (1) There must have been a positive element of sin in the ritual performances which the prophets condemn. (2) The very fact, that they offend God, awake his hatred and revolt, shows that he stands in a sort of necessary relation towards them. He cannot disregard or abolish the ceremonies, but is obliged (*sit venia verbo*) to attend, to see, to hear. No stronger evidence could be furnished that the ritual was a divine institution, and recognized as such by the prophets. Isaiah 1:14 is very instructive in this respect: "They are a **trouble** unto me; I am **weary** to **bear** them."

2. Ceremonies and true piety were so closely allied in the religious consciousness of the time, that even evil-doers thought they could either conciliate by them the favor of God, or at least secure the esteem of the pious. That the right conception of sacrifices was known and shared by the prophets, is not disproved by this self-righteous abuse of the

wicked, but on the contrary presupposed by it.

3. The high esteem in which the prophets held the ceremonial, and how far the idea of emancipating Israel from it was outside of their intentions, are shown incidentally several times. In Amos 7:17, the Lord threatens Amaziah "that he shall die in a polluted land." There is a climax in the verse of all evils which would befall the priest, this dying in a polluted land would be the most formidable one. The land and the priest are called pure, not on account of their piety, but on account of the outward worship and cultus of the true Jehovah, which was lacking in heathen lands. Now, if this ritual, as it was represented in a wicked priest, was still sufficiently sacred to make the land of Israel pure, we surely are not warranted to consider Jehovah and his prophets as despisers of the ceremonies. The soil itself contracted purity and impurity from the worship of its inhabitants. Smend calls this sentiment "Levitismus." Of the same character is the passage Hosea 9:1-6 "They shall eat unclean things in Assyria:... their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted," etc. (compare also 3:4). Smend confesses, "(Qui) talia iudicent iis quae in ipso Levitico inveniuntur nihil cedunt."
4. The passage Isaiah 29:13, which has been claimed in favor of the critical view, teaches, properly interpreted, exactly the opposite. The contrast is not between commands given by man and commands prescribed by God, but between those learned from man and those learned from God. The former represents

mere external ritualism; the latter inward piety, expressing itself in outward forms. The ceremonial worship of the people was not a spontaneous manifestation of spiritual-mindedness, but worthless compliance with a form from self-righteous motives. This externalism is strikingly characterized as "doing precepts learned from men." Of course, nothing as to the origin of these precepts is decided thereby.

5. The estimate put by the prophets on the ritual system is throughout very favorable. Isaiah associates it with the vision of his great commission (chapter 6). He sees an altar (verse 6), and smoke (of sacrifices?) (verse 4). The Egyptians, when converted, will erect an altar and a **mazzebah** (pillar) for a monumental purpose, do sacrifice and oblation, vow a vow, and perform it (chapter 19:19, **seqq.**). Jehovah has a fire in Zion and a furnace in Jerusalem (31:9). In Hosea 4:4 it is counted the highest contumacy to strive with a priest.
6. The passage Amos 5:25, 26, seems to deserve a closer examination. We do not intend to inquire into the kind of idolatry of which the verse speaks, but simply raise the question, whether Amos denies in this passage the antiquity of the ritual in general, or at least of the ritual as it was in his day.

The verse has been interpreted in the most various ways. The question of paramount importance is, whether a positive or negative answer was expected by the prophet. That he supposed the answer to be obvious, is clear; so much so, that he did not even think it necessary to add it.

Vaihinger and Kuenen claim that an affirmative answer is presupposed. Kuenen gives as the meaning, that the Israelites had combined the offering of sacrifices to God with idolatry, and that the prophet takes this as proof of the worthlessness of sacrifices, which were consistent with the greatest apostasy. To this interpretation, there are the following objections: **(a)** The use of **h**, and not **lh**, leads us to expect a negative answer. Though **h** may be followed by an affirmation, it is only where the answer is doubtful, never where it is considered as self-evident. **(b)** If the co-existence of Jehovah-worship and idolatry were emphasized, we would expect in verse 26a **w consecut. cum futuro**; but there is a perfect. **mt)#nw**. **(c)** The argument would have been very inconclusive to the contemporaries of the prophet. That the sacrifices of their idolatrous ancestors were worthless, proved nothing against theirs. And if those who are addressed here were idolaters themselves, the prophet would not have used such a far-fetched argument.

The majority of commentators admit that the words imply that the Israelites did not sacrifice to Jehovah in the desert. But they differ widely as to the reason assigned for this—

- (a)** It is most commonly held, that the suspension of sacrificial worship was a result of the idolatry described in verse 26, whatever that may have been. So Keil and Hitzig and many others. Against this interpretation, the following objections are urged: 1. The order of the words in the Hebrew. It is claimed, if Jehovah were contrasted with strange gods, the question would have been introduced by **ylh**, with the emphasis on **me**. 2. The example of the forty years' wandering in the desert was, according to Keil, intended to show how, from the beginning,

the Israelites were a perverse and apostate people. But how can, in verse 21-24, the excess of ceremonial, and in verse 25, the suspension of the same, be urged alike as a proof of Israel's iniquity?

- (b) The same objection bears against the view of those who separate verse 25 from the preceding verses. They understand that the prophet addresses in this verse other persons than in verse 21-24. After having rebuked those who self-righteously put their trust in sacrifices, he now proceeds to condemn the false security of others based on the Covenant of Sinai by reminding them that the Covenant had already been broken in the desert. But there is no trace in the context of a transition from the persons first addressed to others.
- (c) Smend's interpretation is, that the prophet wishes to show that God's favor was not dependent on outward ceremonies, and that for this purpose he refers to the sojourn in the wilderness, during which, notwithstanding the fact that the ritual was necessarily suspended, still God's favor was not withdrawn. Of course, this makes it necessary to understand verse 26 either of the present or of the future. Smend translates with Ewald: "Ergo tolletis; i.e., cum idolis vestris exsulatum abibitis." To this view it may be objected, 1. We would, if the subjects of verse 25 and 26 were not the same, expect to see the latter introduced by **ht(w** or something analogous. 2. It is doubtful whether the preterite can be used in this connection in the future sense, which Smend ascribes to it. We may add, however, that it is necessary to take the verb in verse 27 as a

future, and why not, then, verse 26 also? 3. The forty years' wandering in the desert are always considered elsewhere as a period of apostasy, in which God's favor was actually withdrawn. The only consideration in favor of this view lies in the separation of verse 25 from the verses 21-23 by verse 24. The latter verse seems to begin the statement of what God did require in contrast with what he did not demand in verse 21-23. We might infer from this, that the conduct of the Israelites in the desert is referred to as an exponent of what was really well-pleasing to God.

We do not pretend to give a new and better explanation of this difficult passage than any one stated above. But we have certainly shown that nothing can be inferred from it inconsistent with the high antiquity of the Sinaitic legislation. We may once more quote Smend, who says with regard to it, "Attamen falluntur qui quum certas Pentateuchi leges recentiores esse contendunt se Amoso teste uti putant."

Chapter Nineteen^(TOC)

Testimony of the Poetical Books

Delitzsch assures us that the literature of the time of David and Solomon presupposes the existence of the entire Thora in its present form. He verifies this statement by several quotations, of which the greater part do doubtless show acquaintance with the Pentateuch. Still, we would be greatly mistaken if we considered his argument as decisive. What Delitzsch assigns to the Davidic and Solomonic age, becomes with our present critics the product of a much later time. Reuss supposes Job to have been written about the time of the destruction of the Northern kingdom, before Deuteronomy and the Priest Code were as yet in existence; and that the Song of Solomon was composed shortly after the schism. He declares that his doubts do not go so far as to deny to the period of the Kings the composition of any Psalm whatever. After this magnanimous and liberal concession, he hastens to add that it must be limited to the first division of the Psalter, which originally contained Psalm 3-41. Even the largest part of this is post-Deuteronomic, the whole collection not pre-exilic; and for our present purpose we would retain nothing more than Psalm 2, 18, 20, 21 (45, 46, 49). Probably the Psalter contains no Davidic Psalms at all.

He claims that the Solomonic authorship of not a single line in the Book of Proverbs can be proved. The book, as a whole, was published after the exile. Koheleth (Ecclesiastes) is remanded to the time of the Ptolemies, 200 B.C.

Reuss, however, goes farther, especially with regard to the Psalms, than the

very boldest among German doubters have done. Hitzig and Ewald agree on the Davidic origin of at least Psalm 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 19a. Ewald admits in addition, 2, 20, 21, 24, 29, 32, 110. Hitzig, on the other hand, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19b. Leaving out of the account those Psalms which both Hitzig and Ewald consider as pre-Deuteronomic, we obtain the number of twenty-one Psalms, to which we may safely appeal, without being suspected of traditional prejudice in calling our witnesses.

After all this deduction, our harvest must be scanty. Its power lies, not so much in the number of witnesses as in the unequivocal character of their testimony. A single indisputable mention of the Thora, or reference to it, outweighs many arguments *e silentio*. The former leaves no choice: the latter do.

A most important objection to the newer theory of religious development may be drawn from the deep spiritual conceptions, the lofty moral sentiments, which these Davidic Psalms breathe throughout. A David who was the prototype of the picture drawn by the critics could not have written such hymns. He could by no means have anticipated what lay hidden in the future consciousness of prophetism two centuries after his reign. All the laws of development protest against it. Moreover, there is no trace in his songs of that peculiar reaction against an exaggerated ritual which characterizes the prophets of the ninth and the eighth centuries. The outward is here the clear mirror in which the inward throws its spontaneous reflex. This leads to a twofold observation: 1. When spiritual religion and ceremonial worship conflicted afterwards, this cannot have been the original, normal relation, but must be considered as the result of externalization of the ritual. Thus, the testimony of the prophets, that Israel's religious state was one of apostasy, is verified anew. 2. This spiritual conception of the law as we find it in David

cannot be the product of a natural development, but testifies to a divine origin of both the spirit and the letter. Whether a development of religion by contrasts on the principle of negativity may, or may not, account for the opposition to ceremonies on the part of the prophets, it certainly fails to explain the synthesis of this spiritual appreciation in David. The following passages are noteworthy in this respect Psalm 4:5, *seqq.*, 7:8, 9, *seqq.*, 15, *passim*, 20:3, *seqq.*, 24:3, 4, and especially the whole of 32.

The "judgments" of the LORD are mentioned (10:5); his words (12:6), "his judgments and statutes (18:22). The second part of the nineteenth Psalm speaks of the Thora in a way not different from that in which a Jew after the exile would have done. It is easy to remand all this to Maccabean times; but when even Hitzig concedes the Davidic origin, we may safely say that our critics have no other reason to deny it than an over-anxious regard for their own hypothesis.

Zion is the only legal sanctuary, where God dwells in the center of his people (9:11); the holy temple, a symbol of his heavenly dwelling-place (11:4); the tabernacle, to which only the pure and righteous may ideally approach (15:1, *seqq.*), from whence help is sent in the day of trouble (20:1, 2); his holy place (24:3), from whence the rod of his strength is sent (110:2), where the cherubs are attached to the ark as a symbol of his throne and power (18:10).

It may also be remarked, that in Psalm 7:7 the term **hd(** >occurs, which, according to Wellhausen, can only be understood in connection with the Levitical system, and is therefore post-exilic. The few instances that it occurs in Judges may be set to the account of a redactor, but in a Davidic Psalm this will not do. Perhaps also 110:4 implies a contrast with the Aaronic priesthood.

Psalm 24:4 reminds us of the third commandment in a very striking way. Psalm 4 has several allusions to the very words of the Covenant-law; likewise Psalm 16 (Compare Delitzsch in Luth. Zeitschrift, 1882, Heft vi.).

Neither do references to the historical portions of the Pentateuch fail. Psalm 7:6, **hMwq**, "arise," and verse 7, **hbw#**, "return," may be compared with Numbers 10:35, 36 (Jehovistic); 17:8, **Ny(tb Nw#y)**, with Deuteronomy 23:10, **wny(Nw#y)**; Psalm 11:6, **tyrpnw #**), with Genesis 19:24.

Some of the allusions which Delitzsch finds in Proverbs are of no use for our purpose. The "tree and the way of life" are both Jehovistic; so that, when the critics assign a relatively late date to the collection of Proverbs, they lose their value. The comparison of Deuteronomy 6:6, 8, with Proverbs 7:3; Leviticus 19:36 with Proverbs 11:1, has more force.

A connection between Song of Solomon 6:13 and Genesis 32:1, 2, cannot be proved. Neither is it necessary to translate Job 31:33 "as Adam." But the allusions in Job 31:11 to Leviticus 18:17; of verse 8-12 to Deuteronomy 22:22; of verse 26-28 to Deuteronomy 17:2-5, can hardly be denied. Even Kuenen calls them far from improbable. And, as we saw, even Reuss thinks that Job is pre-Deuteronomic.

Chapter Twenty^(TOC)

Second Kings 22 and Nehemiah 8-10

We conclude our survey with a short discussion of the critical view of the narrative found in these chapters. After all that has been said, we may approach them without any prepossession, and consider them as mere historical records, which have to be interpreted in their own light.

Our criticism of the *pia fraus* theory imposed on 2 Kings 22 is the following

1. According to the critics, the forgery of the Deuteronomic Code was a skillful stroke of policy, to which a despondent reform-party resorted as the only means of reaching its ends. It had failed in the days of Hezekiah, and its failure was a defeat. The terms in which Kuenen speaks of the situation, imply that the party-lines must have been sharply drawn. There was an opposition to the centralizing Mosaic tendency; and it was strong, influential, and fully on its guard against every movement of the latter. Notwithstanding this, the bare assertion of the reformers, that their program was of Mosaic origin, sufficed to silence all these opponents, many of whom were doubtless reduced to poverty and disgrace, or even exposed to death by the intended reform. No trace of resistance is discovered: all the people stood to the Covenant. We cannot but observe that all this does not resemble the usual

execution of a *coup d'état*. For this sudden change in the relation of the parties, Dr. Kuenen gives no other reason than what might be called an appeal to the maxim, "*Cujus regio, illius religio*." The regal power was in the East and in Judah unlimited. The majority of the people complied with the will and command of their princes. How utterly inadequate such general phrases are to explain the pretended situation, will not escape any thoughtful observer of the facts.

2. It is improbable, if the so-called Mosaic party stood in favor with the king, and if the forgery was perpetrated within the very circle aspiring to such favor, and relying upon it for future success, that the author or authors would have extended their threatenings to the monarch himself in such a way as is here done (Deuteronomy 28:36).
3. If the chief or only ends which the forgers had in view were abolition of idolatry and Bamoth-worship, it is hard to see why they put themselves to the unnecessary trouble of writing a whole Code, containing numerous laws which served no present purpose whatever.
4. It should also be remembered, that the practice of forgery, as it is now claimed by the critics for the origin of Deuteronomy and the Priest Code, stands unparalleled in the whole domain of Old-Testament literature. The Pseudepigraphae are all of later date, and without exception owe their origin to far lower tendencies than we are warranted to ascribe to the Mosaic party of King Josiah's time.

We now turn to Nehemiah 8-10. The credibility of these chapters was at first doubted by Dr. Kuenen in 1861. Afterwards, in 1870, he retracted these doubts; since his whole hypothesis respecting the origin of the Priest Code was based on the facts which they contain. The two important and decisive questions to be answered here are—

1. What portion of the Pentateuch did the law read by Ezra comprehend?
2. What inferences may be drawn from Ezra's knowledge and the people's ignorance of this law?

To the first question, critics have but one answer. Unanimously they declared the book of the law to have been the priestly legislation. To prove this, they commonly refer to what is said regarding the feast of tabernacles. We must remark, however, that this is far from settling the point in dispute. That Leviticus 23 belonged to the law that was read, by no means shows that the Priest Code alone constituted this law. So far from this being the case, there are several reasons which forbid us to assume it.

1. The reading was continued for at least ten days, and the first day for six hours. The terms seem to imply that this reading was not a mere rehearsal of what had been read before. It is, then, necessary to assume that the law-book was more comprehensive than Leviticus. When we remember that the Deuteronomic Code was read before the king and the people at one time, this conclusion will appear all the more necessary.
2. The reading of the law seems to have been in execution of the command, Deuteronomy 31:11. Though Deuteronomy speaks only of each seventh year, we can easily conceive that the first

opportunity to comply with the newly published command was eagerly seized upon. From Nehemiah 10:31, it appears that hitherto the Year of Jubilee had not been observed. It was therefore necessary to compute the seven years from the publication of the law onward; and thus the current year became, *ipso facto*, a Sabbath-year, which required the reading of the law. We conclude that not only the Priest Code, but also the Deuteronomic law, was read.

3. Evidently the confession made by the Levites on the twenty-fourth day of the month, contained in chapter 9, is in substance and form the echo of the frequent and diligent study of the newly published law during the three previous weeks. Its contents furnish the best means of identifying the law referred to. Now, a careful examination will convince us that this confession is full of reminiscences, not only of the Elohist narrative, but just as well of that of the Jehovist and of Deuteronomy.
4. The promises made by the people are characteristic of the Jehovistic and Deuteronomic law. As such we note the promise not to intermarry with strange nations (Nehemiah 10:30; Exodus 34:16; Deuteronomy 7:3), the promise to intermit the exaction of debts every seventh year (verse 31; Deuteronomy 15:2), the promise to offer the corn, the new wine, and oil (verse 37, 39; Deuteronomy 12:17).

All these considerations favor the view, that Ezra did not publish the Priest Code merely, but the whole Mosaic Thora, Elohist and Jehovist and Deuteronomist. The historical credibility of the narrative cannot be doubted.

The confession, as reported in chapter 9, must be authentic. In denying it, the critics would destroy the only basis on which they rest their theory of the Ezraic origin of the Priest Code.

Let us now consider the second question. What are we to hold respecting Ezra's relation to the law, which he is said to have read before the people?

It has become almost an axiom with the latest critics, that Ezra was, if not the author, at least the redactor, of the Elohist legislation. "The law of God was in his hand" (Ezra 7:14) when he went to Jerusalem, in the year 458 B.C. Between this date and the return under Zerubbabel and Joshua, 536 B.C., lies a period of nearly eighty years, concerning whose history, as far as the remaining exiles are concerned, we know absolutely nothing. This utter ignorance has afforded the critics a splendid chance to spin out their famous theory of the gradual origin of the Priest Code. Where history has left no record, conjectural criticism has not only free play, but seems to a certain extent justified and commendable.

The starting-point is Ezekiel's program. Kuenen and others are candid enough to admit that his work is no just exponent of the general sentiment prevailing among the exiles. In his time his figure is unique. So far as Ezekiel's testimony goes, the people of his day were by no means the priestly Israel which the prophet describes in his visionary Thora. We have no ground to assume, that, besides him, others were occupied with the elaboration of a ritualistic system. In his own words (specially chapter 20), his priestly character stands out in bold contrast with the indifference or anti-Jahvistic tendencies of the mass. Even the following generation seems not to have been influenced by his Thora, as no traces of an attempt to execute it appear. We believe that the Book of Ezekiel, as a whole, does not give the impression that the exiles troubled themselves in Babylon with writing priestly law.

Far less can the theory find support in the writings of the pretended Deutero-Isaiah. If he wrote immediately before the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, we have but one explicit testimony the more, that, among the best elements of the captivity, no such priestly tendencies prevailed. Deutero-Isaiah speaks "like one of the old prophets," if not actually, still seemingly opposed to all ritualism. Isaiah 58 is decisive in this respect.

Neither does it appear that special stress was laid on the priestly ceremonial side of their religion by the exiles who returned in 536. We need not assume that intentional disobedience prevailed at the beginning, but that soon a lack of zeal manifested itself may be seen from Haggai and Zechariah. How much Ezra and Nehemiah found to reform afterwards, is abundantly known. Surely, if such an attachment to the temple-service and the ceremonial side of the national life had existed among the exiles in Babylon, as could produce a lively interest in the law, even as to its theoretical aspects, we may take for granted that the history of the new colony would have shaped itself differently.

These are positively all the data from which we can obtain any *a priori* information as to the eight decades which, according to many critics at present, enclose the mysterious birth of a whole legal system in their unknown and ever unknowable history. *A posteriori* there is but a single fact which gives us a glimpse into the dark past—the fact that Ezra came from Babylon, with the law in his hand, as the ready scribe, evidently with the purpose to instruct his countrymen, and revive their zeal for the work of God amongst them.

A correct estimate of these historical data will immediately show whether the view, that during these eighty years the Priest Code was framed, deserves to be put on the list of plausible theories, or under the head of "legal fictions,"

fanciful and arbitrary alike.

Notwithstanding our utter lack of historical information, Kuenen, Wellhausen, and Reuss undertake to tell us how within its limits the priestly laws successively made their appearance. There was first the so-called "Law of Holiness," comprising Leviticus 17-26. Next comes a group consisting of Exodus 12, 25-31, Leviticus 1-17, 24, 27, and most of the priestly portions in Numbers. From both is still distinguished a third group containing later additions.

1. To this whole scheme we must, first of all, object the lack of all positive evidence, that the work of codifying ritual law was carried on in Babylon on such a grand scale. Where do the least traces appear in Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah, Haggai, Zechariah, the Book of Ezra, and of Nehemiah, we do not say of the completion of the process (for this simply begs the whole question), but of the tendencies that originated or the influences that favored and ripened it?

But more than this. If we realize the situation well, we cannot but doubt the critics' assumption, that in the circles that remained at Babylon when the first colony set out for Jerusalem, there was enough of productive energy to create all at once what centuries had not been able to produce when the nation was still prosperous and independent, and the temple-service flourishing and in high esteem.

First of all, the better element must have joined Zerubbabel and Joshua. Those who remained were certainly the least influenced by theocratic concern in the restoration of the temple-worship and the repossession of the holy city. Ezra 1:5 states that those whose spirit God had raised, went up to build the house of the Lord. The rest seem to have been on the whole indifferent, and

to have preferred the riches of Babylon to the wants and dangers of the little caravan that set its face towards Jerusalem.

Secondly, the majority of the priesthood returned, and comparatively a small number of priests remained in Babylon. The priests were least of all likely to prefer captivity in a polluted land to a relative freedom in the holy city. And what adds a decisive weight to this, is the fact that not less than four thousand priests joined the expedition of Zerubbabel; and with Ezra there went only two priestly families, which cannot have been very numerous (Ezra 8:2).

We have the indisputable facts that the theocratic element left Babylon, and that amongst the worldly remnant, there was only a comparatively small number of priests, and these so indifferent to the land and people of God, that only two of their families were induced to return under Ezra's protection.

Now, the critics wish us to believe two facts which strangely contrast with the two we have just stated: 1. That among the better element, which rebuilt Jerusalem and the temple, and restored its service, there was a development for the worse in an anti-theocratic direction. 2. That among the remnant in Babylon, who had no temple amongst them, and evidently no intentions of ever returning, there was such an interest awakened in the temple-service, that a long literary activity ensued, which resulted in the production of a complete elaborated Code, called by the modern critics the Priest Code.

This demand upon our credulity is most unreasonable. The view contradicts all historic probability. That it is so boldly and persistently maintained, is due to the fact, that, where historical records fail, critical ingenuity is at liberty to fill up the blank with any picture of the imagination whatever.

Dr. Kuenen has felt this difficulty very seriously. He tries to remove it in his own peculiar way, by a number of considerations, which would have force to

convince us if we could grant the premises on which they rest. That the Jews were eagerly looking for a future, more favorable, occasion to return, we will have to believe when it is proved. Why had they not joined the expedition which departed under such auspicious circumstances, with the favor and protection of Cyrus, in direct fulfillment of ancient prophecies, those of Jeremiah at least, to leave Deutero-Isaiah out of view? That they were desirous of religious instruction, may be admitted in a general sense; but their attitude does not exhibit interest in that aspect of the Jewish religion which was inseparable from the sanctuary. When afterwards men like Ezra and Nehemiah arose amongst them, their character was not the fruit of the natural state of affairs, but rather a new factor introduced by a special divine intervention to provide for a special need of God's people. The inferences which Kuenen draws from Zechariah 6:9-15 are entirely too sweeping. That a few men had come from Babylon, whose arrival is evidently stated as an exceptional case, cannot be made to prove that the great body of the exiles entertained a lively interest in what happened at Jerusalem.

The main objection against the whole scheme lies in its impracticability. Here, as in the case of Deuteronomy, the question recurs, What made it necessary for Ezra to ascribe his laws to Moses? What accounts for the element of fraud entering this piece of Jewish legislation also, as we are asked to believe?

Critics answer, when Ezra arrived at Jerusalem, he found the colonists far below his ideal of righteous Israelites. After a first successful attempt at reform, Ezra is silent for thirteen years. The reasons for this interruption were chiefly twofold. 1. He saw the necessity of adapting his law, formed in Babylon, to the circumstances of the people. 2. He must have met already in his first reform, as well as afterwards, with a strong and influential

opposition, as appears from Nehemiah 13 and Malachi's prophecy. It was in part the zealous spirit, which both Ezra and Nehemiah manifested, partly more material objections against their innovations, which led to this resistance. The reform involved a limitation of liberty, imposed heavy duties upon the laymen, and on the whole showed a decidedly hierarchical tendency. On the other hand, it bound the priests themselves henceforward to a written word, and thus essentially modified their position. Such a radical revolution did not fail to cause a strong reaction, both from among the people and the priesthood. Hence the claim of Mosaic origin for the Code was absolutely necessary to the success of Ezra's plans.

So we meet here again with the same remarkable phenomena as in the case of Deuteronomy. There it was "the people stood to the Covenant." Here they make a sure covenant, write it, and seal unto it (Nehemiah 9:38). And in both cases alike the opposition is silent, no word of resistance is uttered, no murmuring or dissenting voice heard. The question recurs here as there: How was this possible, if Ezra's Thora was a mere fiction? If it was genuine and Mosaic, we can understand why the opponents desisted. But suppose them to have been fully on their guard, to have watched Ezra's every movement, to have kept him in suspense for thirteen years, and then finally to have accepted in the most meek and submissive way the most radical changes, contrary to their own opinions and interests, simply because Ezra pretended that his law was Mosaic!

The story sounds incredible, and still we must believe it if the critics are right. We can the less conceive that the opponents were misled on this occasion by the appearances, since, as we have seen, the Priest Code was already combined with the Jehovistic and Deuteronomic laws, and was read together with them. What appears as an addition, and in so far modifies the old, is, *per*

se, exposed to suspicion. Still, Ezra's Code was not suspected: the people made a sure covenant, and sealed unto it.

It would certainly seem safer, in view of all these impossibilities, to adhere to the old notion, be it traditional or not, that Ezra published the Thora in no other capacity than that of a ready scribe, who had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments; that he did this at a special occasion of the feast of trumpets, at a special request of the people, who expressed by this desire their gratitude for the final completion of the walls of Jerusalem under the supervision of Nehemiah.

Chapter Twenty-One^(TOC)

Did Moses Write the Laws?

We have hitherto occupied ourselves exclusively with the question whether the claim of Mosaic origin which the Codes make for themselves could be vindicated. A few remarks may be added now with regard to the related question whether Moses committed the laws to writing.

That only the Book of the Covenant and the Deuteronomic Code are expressly stated to have been written by Moses, was remarked on a previous page. It will be necessary to keep in mind what was argued there, that these emphatic statements with reference to a part can never disprove the view that Moses wrote the whole.

On the other hand, if it could be shown that Moses wrote only these parts of the legislation, this would not contradict the statements of the Pentateuch itself. Caution is more than anywhere else required on this point of the discussion. The fact is remarkable, that all parts of the Pentateuch, of which it is expressly said that *Moses wrote them*, are Jehovistic-Deuteronomic, have one common style, and are of the same prophetic character. Even if the critics could settle it beyond doubt that the writer of the Priest Code was not the same with the author of the Book of the Covenant and of Deuteronomy, still the statements of the Pentateuch concerning its own origin would stand untouched.

Doubts have repeatedly been expressed whether the art of writing was known among the Semitic peoples, and among the Israelites in particular, during the

Mosaic age (compare Reuss, *Geschichte des A. T.*, § 76). In general, however, the possibility, and even probability, of this knowledge at that time are now recognized. Dr. Kuenen says, "That the Israelites possessed an alphabet, and knew the art of writing, in the Mosaic age, is not subject to reasonable doubt, and now almost universally admitted." The objection which he raises against an extensive practice of the arts of reading and writing among the Israelites from their more frequent mention in Deuteronomy than in the middle books, has since then lost all its power, because Dr. Kuenen himself at present assigns the priority to Deuteronomy.

The Greeks received their knowledge of the art of writing from Semitic colonists. But whence did the Semitic tribes obtain this knowledge? Two answers have been given to this question. Until recently, many favored the derivation of the Semitic alphabet from Babylon or the cuneiform inscriptions of Assyria. At present, however, the opinion seems to prevail among Egyptologists, that the alphabet came from Egypt to the Semites, and was transferred by them to the Greeks, and farther West.

Dr. Taylor, a recent writer on this subject, says (I. p. 133), "It is proved beyond controversy (from the Moabite stone), that the Semitic alphabet was fully developed and established as early as the beginning of the ninth century; while, to the practiced eye of the paleographer, it also indicates that alphabetic writing must have been in familiar use for a very considerable precedent period" (compare also Ewald's "History of Israel," I. p. 52, *seqq.*).

On another page (p. 139), Dr. Taylor sums up his conclusion from the facts in this statement: "The external evidence connects in an unmistakable manner the date of the origin of the alphabet with the period of the sojourn of Israel in Egypt."

Reconstructive criticism is ready to combine with the denial of the historical character of the Pentateuch its own hypothetical conception of the primitive state of Israel during the sojourn in Egypt and the journey in the desert. We are reminded over and over again, that the Jews were a wild nomad-tribe possessing only the first germs of civilization. This view, it must be remembered, rests on no historical grounds whatever. According to the Pentateuch, not only was Moses instructed in all the wisdom of Egypt, but also the Israelites, as a whole, became from nomads a settled people being influenced by Egyptian civilization. They dwelt in houses, not by themselves, but among the Egyptians, sustained friendly relations to the latter, and adopted most of their arts. When we consider how easily the Jews have at all times assimilated the elements of foreign civilization, it admits no longer of any doubt, that, at the time of the exodus, they were something entirely different from the nomad-tribes imagined by the critics. There is no ground, accordingly, for making a distinction, as Reuss does, between Moses and the other Israelites, as if the former had been the only cultured person amongst them, and the rest an uncivilized horde.

It makes no difference whether we assume with Ewald and De Rougé that the Semitic alphabet was transmitted from the Hyksos to the Phoenicians, or suppose with Lenormant and Sayce that the reverse took place: the fact is firmly established, that the Hebrews, before their exodus, had an alphabet; and, as Ewald says, "We need not scruple to assume that Israel knew and used it in Egypt before Moses."

That the Egyptian priests were accustomed to write their laws and sanitary prescriptions, is well known. Diodorus says that the physicians belonged to the priestly class, received their salary from the government, and were bound in their treatment of diseases by a written law made up by many of the most

famous of old doctors.

Abstractly, it is not impossible to suppose that even such comprehensive laws as the Priest Code contains might have been orally transmitted in priestly circles. Perhaps the hypothesis might account for a gradual development of law consistent with a germinal or substantial Mosaic origin. But in view of the course of Hebrew history with its numerous relapses, as in the days of Eli, Ahab, Ahaz, Manasseh, and at other critical points, the preservation of a traditionary Code would be scarcely less than a miracle. The fate of Deuteronomy suggests what might have become of a law existing only in the mouth of an apostate priesthood.

To this, two other considerations may be added. We have explicit testimony that the Covenant-law was written in a book, and the Decalogue on tables of stone. To assume a codification of the priestly laws is simply to argue from analogy, or rather *a fortiori*; for if the people had their Code, much more the priests, whose lips should keep knowledge, and at whose mouth one should seek the law.

Finally, we learn that in his last days it was Moses' chief concern to write down the Deuteronomic discourses. The end testifies to the whole. We may expect, if he took care to fix the Deuteronomic Code in written form, and thus solemnly bound the people by a permanent allegiance to God, that he at the same time would protect them against oppression on the part of the priesthood, which wielded such extraordinary influence in Egypt. This could be done in no better way than by codifying and publishing the divinely authenticated rule, by which both priesthood and people would be bound in the future.

So far, therefore, as inherent probability goes, we must accept, together with

the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuchal Codes, the view that they were written either by Moses, or by others under his direction and superintendence.

^[1] The material for this historical sketch has been largely drawn from König: "De criticae sacrae argumento e linguae legibus repetito." (Leipzig, 1879.)

^[2] In the nomenclature of Wellhausen, the Elohist is Q, the Jehovist JE, made up from two sources, J, the Jahvist, and E, the second Elohist. Dillmann calls the Elohist A, the second Elohist B, and the Jehovist C. This last corresponds, not to the composite Jehovist of Wellhausen, but to what he denominates the Jahvist.

^[3] For much on this point, we are indebted to the paper of Dr. Delitzsch in Luthardt's Zeitschrift, 1880, Heft. iv.

^[4] On this point, compare what was said on a previous page in regard to the historical books.

PLEASURE AND PROFIT IN BIBLE STUDY

BY

D. L. MOODY

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart... More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb—Psalm 19:8-10.

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Preface^(TOC)

It is always a pleasure to me to speak on the subject of this volume. I think I would rather preach about the Word of God than anything else except the Love of God; because I believe it is the best thing in this world.

We cannot overestimate the importance of a thorough familiarity with the Bible. I try to lose no opportunity of urging people by every means in my power to the constant study of this wonderful Book. If through the pages that follow, I can reach still others and rouse them to read their Bibles, not at random but with a plan and purpose, I shall be indeed thankful.

D. L. MOODY

*When thou goest, it shall lead thee;
When thou sleepest, it shall keep thee;
When thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.
—Proverbs 6:22.*

Chapter I_(TOC)

Close Contact with the Word of God—Word and Work—The Christian's Weapon—Young Converts and Bible Study—Up to Date—Every Case Met —"Great Peace"—Starving the Soul—The Guide-Book to Heaven.

A QUICKENING that will last must come through the Word of God. A man stood up in one of our meetings and said he hoped for enough out of the series of meetings to last him all his life. I told him he might as well try to eat enough breakfast at one time to last him his lifetime. That is a mistake that people are making; they are running to religious meetings and they think the meetings are going to do the work. But if these don't bring you into closer contact with the Word of God, the whole impression will be gone in three months. The more you love the Scriptures, the firmer will be your faith. There is little backsliding when people love the Scriptures. If you come into closer contact with the Word, you will gain something that will last, because the Word of God is going to endure. In the one hundred and nineteenth psalm David prayed nine times that God would quicken him—according to His word, His law, His judgment, His precepts, etc.

If I could say something that would induce Christians to have a deeper love for the Word of God, I should feel this to be the most important service that could be rendered to them. Do you ask: How can I get in love with the Bible? Well, if you will only arouse yourself to the study of it, and ask God's assistance, He will assuredly help you.

Word and Work^(TOC)

Word and Work make healthy Christians. If it be all Word and no work, people will suffer from what I may call religious gout. On the other hand if it be all work and no Word, it will not be long before they will fall into all kinds of sin and error; so that they will do more harm than good. But if we first study the Word and then go to work, we shall be healthy, useful Christians. I never saw a fruit-bearing Christian who was not a student of the Bible. If a man neglects his Bible, he may pray and ask God to use him in His work; but God cannot make use of him, for there is not much for the Holy Ghost to work upon. We must have the Word itself, which is sharper than any two-edged sword.

We have a great many prayer meetings, but there is something just as important as prayer, and that is that we read our Bibles, that we have Bible study and Bible lectures and Bible classes, so that we may get hold of the Word of God. When I pray, I talk to God, but when I read the Bible, God is talking to me; and it is really more important that God should speak to me than that I should speak to Him I believe we should know better how to pray if we knew our Bibles better. What is an army good for if they don't know how to use their weapons? What is a young man starting out in the Christian work good for if he does not know how to use his Bible? A man isn't worth much in battle if he has any doubt about his weapon, and I have never found a man who has doubts about the Bible who has amounted to much in Christian work. I have seen work after work wrecked because men lost confidence in the spirit of this Old Book.

Young Converts^(TOC)

If young converts want to be used of God, they must feed on His Word. Their experience may be very good and very profitable at the outset, and they may help others by telling it; but if they keep on doing nothing else but telling their experience, it will soon become stale and unprofitable, and people will weary of hearing the same thing over and over again. But when they have told how they have been converted, the next thing is to feed on the Word. We are not fountains ourselves; but the Word of God is the true fountain.

And if we feed on the Word, it will be so easy then to speak to others; and not only that, but we shall be growing in grace all the while, and others will take notice of our walk and conversation. So few grow, because so few study. I would advise all young converts to keep as much as they can in the company of more experienced Christians. I like to keep in the society of those who know more than I do; and I never lose a chance of getting all the good I can out of them. Study the Bible carefully and prayerfully; ask of others what this passage means and what that passage means, and when you have become practically acquainted with the great truths it contains, you will have less to fear from the world, the flesh, and the devil. You will not be disappointed in your Christian life.

Something New^(TOC)

People are constantly saying: We want something new; some new doctrine, some new idea. Depend upon it, my friends, if you get tired of the Word of God, and it becomes wearisome to you, you are out of communion with Him.

When I was in Baltimore last, my window looked out on an Episcopal Church. The stained-glass windows were dull and uninviting by day, but when the lights shone through at night, how beautiful they were! So when the Holy Spirit touches the eyes of your understanding and you see Christ shining through the pages of the Bible, it becomes a new book to you.

A young lady once took up a novel to read, but found it dull and uninteresting. Some months afterwards, she was introduced to the author and in the course of time became his wife. She then found that there was something in the book, and her opinion of it changed. The change was not in the book, but in herself. She had come to know and love the writer. Some Christians read the Bible as a duty, if they read it at all; but as soon as a man or woman sees Christ as the chiefest among ten thousand, the Bible becomes the revelation of the Father's love and becomes a never-ending charm. A gentleman asked another, "Do you often read the Bible?" "No," was the answer, "I frankly admit I do not love God." "No more did I." the first replied, "but God loved me."

A great many people seem to think that the Bible is out of date, that it is an old book, and they think it has passed its day. They say it was very good for the dark ages, and that there is some very good history in it, but it was not intended for the present time; we are living in a very enlightened age and men

can get on very well without the old book; we have outgrown it. Now you might just as well say that the sun, which has shone so long, is now so old that it is out of date, and that whenever a man builds a house he need not put any windows in it, because we have a newer light and a better light; we have gaslight and electric light. These are something new; and I would advise people, if they think the Bible is too old and worn out, when they build houses, not to put windows in them, but just to light them with electric light; that is something new and that is what they are anxious for.

Every Case Met^(TOC)

Bear in mind there is no situation in life for which you cannot find some word of consolation in Scripture. If you are in affliction, if you are in adversity and trial, there is a promise for you. In joy and sorrow, in health and in sickness, in poverty and in riches, in every condition of life, God has a promise stored up in His Word for you. In one way or another every case is met, and the truth is commended to every man's conscience. It is said that Richard Baxter, author of "The Saints' Everlasting Rest," felt the force of miracles chiefly in his youth; in maturer years he was more impressed by fulfilled prophecy; and towards the end of his life he felt the deepest satisfaction in his own ripe experience of the power of the Gospel.

*"If you are impatient, sit down quietly and commune with Job.
If you are strong-headed, read of Moses and Peter.
If you are weak-kneed, look at Elijah.
If there is no song in your heart, listen to David.
If you are a politician, read Daniel.
If you are getting sordid, read Isaiah.
If you are chilly, read of the beloved disciple.
If your faith is low, read Paul.
If you are getting lazy, watch James.
If you are losing sight of the future, read in Revelation of the
promised land."*

Great Peace^(TOC)

In Psalm 119:165, we find these words: "Great peace have they which love Thy law; and nothing shall offend them." The study of God's Word will secure peace. Take those Christians who are rooted and grounded in the Word of God, and you will find they have great peace; but those who don't study their Bible, and don't know their Bible, are easily offended when some little trouble comes, or some little persecution, and their peace is all disturbed; just a little breath of opposition and their peace is all gone.

Sometimes I am amazed to see how little it takes to drive all peace and comfort from some people. A slandering tongue will readily blast it. But if we have the peace of God, the world cannot take that from us. It cannot give it; it cannot destroy it. We must get it from above the world, it is the peace which Christ gives. "Great peace have they which love Thy law, and nothing shall offend them." Christ says, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me." Now, you will notice that where ever there is a Bible-taught Christian, one who has his Bible well marked, and who daily feeds upon the Word with prayerful meditation, he will not be easily offended.

Such are the people who are growing and working all the while. But it is the people who never open their Bibles, who never study the Scriptures, who become offended, and are wondering why they are having such a hard time. They are the persons who tell you that Christianity is not what it has been recommended to them; that they have found it is not all that we claim it to be. The real trouble is, they have not done as the Lord has told them to do. They have neglected the Word of God. If they had been studying the Word of God, they would not be in that condition, they would not have wandered these

years away from God, living on the husks of the world. They have neglected to care for the new life, they haven't fed it, and the poor soul, being starved, sinks into weakness and decay, and is easily stumbled or offended. If a man is born of God, he can not thrive without God.

I met a man who confessed his soul had fed on nothing for forty years.

"Well," said I, "that is pretty hard for the soul—giving it nothing to feed on!" That man is a type of thousands and tens of thousands to-day; their poor souls are starving. We take good care of this body that we inhabit for a day, and then leave; we feed it three times a day, and we clothe it, and deck it, and by and by it is going into the grave to rot; but the inner man, that is to live on and on forever, is lean and starved. "Man shall not Live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

The Guidebook to the Christian's Home[\(TOC\)](#)

If a man is traveling and does not know where he is going to, or how he is going to get there, you know he has a good deal of trouble, and does not enjoy the trip as much as if he has a guidebook at hand. It is not safe traveling, and he does not know how to make through connections. Now, the Bible is a guidebook in the journey of life, and the only one that points the way to Heaven. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." Let us take heed then not to refuse the light and the help it gives.

Chapter II^(TOC)

Doubting and Inquiring—Proving—A Saviour of Life unto Life, or Death unto Death—Understanding the Scriptures—Cavilling—Using the Penknife—The Supernatural—Inspiration.

WE DO NOT ask men and women to believe in the Bible without enquiry. It is not natural to man to accept the things of God without question. If you are to be ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is within you, you must first be an enquirer yourself. But do not be a dishonest doubter, with your heart and mind proof against evidence. Do not be a doubter because you think it is "intellectual;" do not ventilate your doubts. "Give us your convictions," said a German writer, "we have enough doubts of our own." Be like Thomas who did not accept Jesus' offer to feel the nail-prints in His hand and side; his heart was open to conviction. "Faith," says John McNeill, "is not to be obtained at your finger-ends."

If you are filled with the Word of God, there will not be any doubts. A lady said to me once, "Don't you have any doubts?" No, I don't have time—too much work to be done. Some people live on doubt. It is their stock in trade. I believe the reason there are so many Christians who are without the full evidence of the relationship, with whom you only see the Christian graces cropping out every now and then, is that the Bible is not taken for doctrine, reproof and instruction.

Proving^(TOC)

Now the request comes: "I wish you would prove to me that the Bible is true." The Book will prove itself if you will let it; there is living power in it. "For this cause also we thank God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." It does not need defence so much as it needs studying. It can defend itself. It is not a sickly child that needs nursing. A Christian man was once talking to a skeptic who said he did not believe the Bible. The man read certain passages, but the skeptic said again, "I don't believe a word of it." The man kept on reading until finally the skeptic was convicted; and the other added: "When I have proved a good sword, I keep using it." That is what we want to-day. It is not our work to make men believe: that is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Convicted—Lost—Saved[\(TOC\)](#)

A man once sat down to read it an hour each evening with his wife. In a few evenings he stopped in the midst of his reading and said: "Wife, if this Book is true, we are wrong." He read on, and before long, stopped again and said: "Wife, if this Book is true, we are lost." Riveted to the Book and deeply anxious, he still read on, and soon exclaimed: "Wife, if this Book is true, we may be saved." It was not many days before they were both converted. This is the one great end of the Book, to tell man of God's great salvation. Think of a book that can lift up our drooping spirits, and recreate us in God's image!

It is an awful responsibility to have such a book and to neglect its warnings, to reject its teachings. It is either the savour of death unto death, or of life unto life. What if God should withdraw it, and say: "I will not trouble you with it any more?"

Can't Understand^(TOC)

You ask what you are going to do when you come to a thing you cannot understand. I thank God there is a height in that Book I do not know anything about, a depth I have never been able to fathom, and it makes the Book all the more fascinating. If I could take that Book up and read it as I can any other book and understand it at one reading, I should have lost faith in it years ago. It is one of the strongest proofs that that Book must have come from God, that the acutest men who have dug for fifty years have laid down their pens and said, "There is a depth we know nothing of." "No scripture," said Spurgeon, "is exhausted by a single explanation. The flowers of God's garden bloom, not only double, but seven-fold: they are continually pouring forth fresh fragrance." A man came to me with a difficult passage some time ago and said, "Moody, what do you do with that?" "I do not do anything with it." "How do you understand it?" "I do not understand it." "How do you explain it?" "I do not explain it." "What do you do with it?" "I do not do anything." "You do not believe it, do you?" "Oh, yes, I **believe** it." There are lots of things I do not understand, but I believe them. I do not know anything about higher mathematics, but I believe in them. I do not understand astronomy, but I believe in astronomy. Can you tell me why the same kind of food turns into flesh, fish, hair, feathers, hoofs, finger-nails—according as it is eaten by one animal or another? A man told me a while ago he could not believe a thing he had never seen. I said, "Man, did you ever see your brain?"

Dr. Talmage tells the story that one day while he was bothering his theological professor with questions about the mysteries of the Bible, the latter turned on him and said: "Mr. Talmage, you will have to let God know

some things you don't."

A man once said to an infidel: "The mysteries of the Bible don't bother me. I read the Bible as I eat fish. When I am eating fish and come across a bone. I don't try to swallow it, I lay it aside. And when I am reading the Bible and come across something I can't understand, I say, 'There is a bone,' and I pass it by. But I don't throw the fish away because of the bones in it; and I don't throw my Bible away because of a few passages I can't explain."

Pascal said, "Human knowledge must be understood in order to be loved; but Divine knowledge must be loved to be understood." That marks the point of failure of most critics of the Bible. They do not make their brain the servant of their heart.

Cavillers^(TOC)

Did you ever notice that the things that men cavil most about are the very things to which Christ has set His seal? Men say, "You don't believe in the story of Noah and the flood, do you?" Well, if I give it up, I must give up the Gospel, I must give up the teachings of Jesus Christ. Christ believed in the story of Noah, and connected that with His return to earth. "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Men say, "You don't believe in the story of Lot and Sodom, do you?" Just as much as I believe the teachings of Jesus Christ. "As it was in the days of Lot..... even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Men say, "You don't believe in the story of Lot's wife, do you?" Christ believed it.

"Remember Lot's wife." "You don't believe the story of Israel looking to a brass serpent for deliverance, do you?" Christ believed it and connected it with His own cross. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life." Men say, "You don't believe the children of Israel were fed with manna in the desert, do you?" "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert;... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven." Men say, "You don't believe they drank water that came out of a rock?" Christ believed it and taught it. Men say, "You don't believe in the story of Elijah being fed by the widow, do you?" Certainly. Christ said there were many widows in the days of Elijah, but Elijah was fed by only one widow. Christ referred to it Himself, He set His seal to it. The Son of God believed it, and, "shall the servant be above his master?"

Jonah and the Whale^(TOC)

Men say, "Well, you don't believe in the story of Jonah and the whale, do you?" I want to tell you I **do** believe it. A few years ago there was a man whom some one thought a little unsound, and they didn't want him to speak on the Northfield platform. I said, "I will soon find out whether or not he is sound." I asked him, "Do you believe the whale swallowed Jonah?" "Yes," he said, "I do." I said "All right, then I want you to come and speak." He came and gave a lecture on Jonah. In Matthew they twice asked Jesus for a sign, and He said the only sign this generation shall have shall be the sign of Jonah in the whale's belly. He connected that with His resurrection, and I honestly believe that if we overthrow the one, we must overthrow the other. As you get along in life and have perhaps as many friends on the other side of the river as you have on this side, you will get about as much comfort out of the story of the resurrection as any other story in the Bible. Christ had no doubt about the story. He said His resurrection would be a sign like that given unto the Ninevites. It was the resurrected man Jonah who walked through the streets of Nineveh. It must be supposed that the men of Nineveh had heard of Jonah being thrown overboard and swallowed by a great fish. I think it is a master-stroke of Satan to make us doubt the resurrection. But these modern philosophers have made a discovery. They say a whale's throat is no larger than a man's fist, and it is a physical impossibility for a whale to swallow a man. The book of Jonah says that **God prepared a great fish** to swallow Jonah. Couldn't God make a fish large enough to swallow Jonah? If God could create a world, I think He could create a fish large enough to swallow a **million** men. As the old woman said, "Could He not, if He chose, prepare a man that could swallow a whale?" A couple of these modern philosophers

were going to Europe some time ago, and a Scotch friend of mine was on board who knew his Bible pretty well. They got to talking about the Bible, and one of them said: "I am a scientific man, and I have made some investigation of that Book, and I have taken up some of the statements in it, and I have examined them, and I pronounce them untrue. There is a statement in the Bible that Balaam's ass spoke. I have taken pains to examine the mouth of an ass and it is so formed that it could not speak." My friend stood it as long as he could and then said, "Eh, mon, you make the ass and I will make him speak." The idea that God could not speak through the mouth of an ass!

Clipping the Bible^(TOC)

There is another class. It is quite fashionable for people to say, "Yes, I believe the Bible, but not the supernatural. I believe everything that corresponds with this reason of mine." They go on reading the Bible with a pen-knife, cutting out this and that. Now, if I have a right to cut out a certain portion of the Bible, I don't know why one of my friends has not a right to cut out another, and another friend to cut out another part, and so on. You would have a queer kind of Bible if everybody cut out what he wanted to. Every adulterer would cut out everything about adultery; every liar would cut out everything about lying; every drunkard would be cutting out what he didn't like. Once, a gentleman took his Bible around to his minister's and said, "That is your Bible." "Why do you call it *my* Bible?" said the minister. "Well," replied the gentleman, "I have been sitting under your preaching for five years, and when you said that a thing in the Bible was not authentic, I cut it out." He had about a third of the Bible cut out; all of Job, all of Ecclesiastes and Revelation, and a good deal besides. The minister wanted him to leave the Bible with him; he didn't want the rest of his congregation to see it. But the man said, "Oh, no! I have the covers left, and I will hold on to them." And off he went holding on to the covers. If you believed what some men preach, you would have nothing but the covers left in a few months. I have often said that if I am going to throw away the Bible, I will throw it all into the fire at once. There is no need of waiting five years to do what you can do as well at once. I have yet to find a man who begins to pick at the Bible that does not pick it all to pieces in a little while. A minister whom I met awhile ago said to me, "Moody, I have given up preaching except out of the four Gospels. I have given up all the Epistles, and all the Old Testament; and I do not know why I

cannot go to the fountain head and preach as Paul did. I believe the Gospels are all there is that is authentic." It was not long before he gave up the four Gospels, and finally gave up the ministry. He gave up the Bible, and God gave him up.

A prophet who had been sent to a city to warn the wicked, was commanded not to eat meat within its walls. He was afterwards deceived into doing so by an old prophet, who told him that an angel had come to him and said he might return and eat with him. That prophet was destroyed by a lion for his disobedience. If an angel should come and tell a different story from that in the Book, don't believe it. I am tired and sick of people following men. It is written, "though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed." Do you think with more light before us than the prophet had that we can disobey God's Word with impunity?

The Supernatural in the Bible^(TOC)

It is a most absurd statement for a man to say he will have nothing to do with the supernatural, will not believe the supernatural. If you are going to throw off the supernatural, you might as well burn your Bibles at once. You take the supernatural out of that Book and you have taken Jesus Christ out of it, you have taken out the best part of the Book. There is no part of the Bible that does not teach supernatural things. In Genesis it says that Abraham fell on his face and God talked with him. That is supernatural. If that did not take place, the man who wrote Genesis wrote a lie, and out goes Genesis. In Exodus you find the ten plagues which came upon Egypt. If that is not true, the writer of Exodus was a liar. Then in Leviticus it is said that fire consumed the two sons of Aaron. That was a supernatural event, and if that was not true we must throw out the whole book.

In Numbers is the story of the brazen serpent. And so with every book in the Old Testament; there's not one in which you do not find something supernatural. There are more supernatural things about Jesus Christ than in any other portion of the Bible, and the last thing a man is willing to give up is the four Gospels. Five hundred years before His birth, the angel Gabriel came down and told Daniel that He should be born. "And whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation." Again, Gabriel comes down to Nazareth and tells the Virgin that she should be the mother of the Saviour. "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus." We find, too, that the angel went into the temple and told Zacharias that he was to be the father

of John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah; Zacharias was struck dumb for nine months because of his unbelief. Then when Christ was born, we find angels appearing to the shepherds at Bethlehem, telling them of the birth of the Saviour. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The wise men seeing the star in the east and following it was surely supernatural. So was the warning that God sent to Joseph in a dream, telling him to flee to Egypt. So was the fact of our Lord's going into the temple at the age of twelve, discussing with the doctors, and being a match for them all. So were the circumstances attending His baptism, when God spake from heaven, saying: "This is my beloved Son." For three and a half years Jesus trod the streets and highways of Palestine. Think of the many wonderful miracles that He wrought during those years. One day He speaks to the leper and he is made whole; one day He speaks to the sea and it obeys Him. When He died the sun refused to look upon the scene; this old world recognized Him and reeled and rocked like a drunken man. And when He burst asunder the bands of death and came out of Joseph's sepulchre, that was supernatural. Christmas Evans, the great Welsh preacher, says: "Many reformations die with the reformer, but this reformer ever lives to carry on His reformation." Thank God we do not worship a dead Jew. If we worshipped a dead Jew, we would not have been quickened and have received life in our souls. I thank God our Christ is a supernatural Christ, and this Book a supernatural Book, and I thank God I live in a country where it is so free that all men can read it.

Some people think we are deluded, that this is imagination. Well, it is a glorious imagination, is it not? It has lasted between thirty and forty years with me, and I think it is going to last while I live, and when I go into another world. Some one, when reading about Paul, said he was mad. Well, it was replied, if he was he had a good keeper on the way, and a good asylum at the

end of the route. I wish we had a lot of mad men in America just now like Paul.

Inspiration^(TOC)

When Paul wrote to Timothy that *all* Scripture was given by inspiration of God and was profitable, he meant what he said. "Well," some say, "do you believe all Scripture is given by inspiration?" Yes, every word of it; but I don't believe all the actions and incidents it tells of were inspired. For instance, when the devil told a lie he was not inspired to tell a lie, and when a wicked man like Ahab said anything, he was not inspired; but some one was inspired to write it, and so all was given by inspiration and is profitable.

Inspiration must have been verbal in many, if not in all, cases. Peter tells us, regarding salvation through the sufferings of Christ:

"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you. Searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."

So that the prophets themselves had to enquire and search diligently regarding the words they uttered under the inspiration of the Spirit.

A man said to a young convert: "How can you prove that the Bible is inspired?" He replied, "Because it inspires me." I think that is pretty good proof. Let the Word of God into your soul, and it will inspire you, it can not help it.

Chapter III^(TOC)

The Old and the New Testaments

I WANT to show how absurd it is for anyone to say he believes the New Testament and not the Old. It is a very interesting fact that of the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, it is recorded that our Lord made quotations from no less than twenty-two. Very possibly He may have quoted from all of them; for we have only fragments reported of what He said and did. You know the Apostle John tells us that the world could scarcely contain the books that could be written, if all the sayings and doings of our Lord were recorded. About eight hundred and fifty passages in the Old Testament are quoted or alluded to in the New; only a few occurring more than once.

In the Gospel by Matthew there are over a hundred quotations from twenty of the books in the Old Testament. In the Gospel of Mark there are fifteen quotations taken from thirteen of the books. In the Gospel of Luke there are thirty-four quotations from thirteen books. In the Gospel of John there are eleven quotations from six books. In the four Gospels alone there are more than one hundred and sixty quotations from the Old Testament. You sometimes hear men saying they do not believe all the Bible, but they believe the teaching of Jesus Christ in the four Gospels. Well, if I believe that, I have to accept these hundred and sixty quotations from the Old Testament. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians there are fifty-three quotations from the Old Testament; sometimes he takes whole paragraphs from it. In Hebrews there are eighty-five quotations, in that one book of thirteen chapters. In Galatians, sixteen quotations. In the book of Revelation alone, there are two hundred

and forty-five quotations and allusions.

A great many want to throw out the Old Testament. It is good historic reading, they say, but they don't believe it is a part of the Word of God, and don't regard it as essential in the scheme of salvation. The last letter Paul wrote contained the following words: "And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are **able to make thee wise unto salvation** through faith which is in Christ Jesus." All the Scriptures which the apostles possessed were the Old Testament.

When skeptics attack its truths, these find it convenient to say, "Well, we don't endorse all that is in the Old Testament," and thus they avoid an argument in defence of the Scriptures. It is very important that every Christian should not only know what the Old Testament teaches, but he should accept its truths, because it is upon this that truth is based. Peter said the Scriptures are not given for any private interpretation, and in speaking of the Scriptures, referred to the Old Testament and not to the New.

If the Old Testament Scriptures are not true, do you think Christ would have so often referred to them, and said the Scriptures must be fulfilled? When told by the tempter that He might call down the angels from heaven to interpose in His behalf, he said: "Thus it is written." Christ gave Himself up as a sacrifice that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. Was it not said that He was numbered with the transgressors? And when He talked with two of His disciples by the way journeying to Emmaus, after His resurrection, did He not say: "Ought not these things to be? am I not to suffer?" And beginning at Moses He explained unto them in all the Scriptures concerning Himself, for the one theme of the Old Testament is the Messiah. In Psalm 40:7, it says: "In the volume of the book it is written of me." "What **Book?**" asks Luther, "and what **Person?** There is only one book—the Bible; and only one person—

Jesus Christ." Christ referred to the Scriptures and their fulfillment in Him, not only after He arose from the dead, but in the book of Revelation He used them in Heaven. He spoke to John of them on the Isle of Patmos, and used the very things in them that men are trying to cast out. He never found fault with or rejected them.

If Jesus Christ could use the Old Testament, let us use it. May God deliver us from the one-sided Christian who reads only the New Testament and talks against the Old!

Chapter IV (TOC)

*"My Word shall not Pass Away"—Printing the Revised Version in Chicago—
Circulation of the Bible*

CHRIST speaking of the law, said: "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law until all be fulfilled." In another place He said: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Word shall not pass away." Now, let us keep in mind that the only Scripture the apostles and Christ had was the Old Testament. The New Testament was not written. I will put that as the old and new covenant. "One jot or tittle of the law shall in no wise pass away until all be fulfilled,"—the old covenant; and then Christ comes and adds these words: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Word shall not pass away,"—the new covenant. Now, notice how that has been fulfilled. There was no shorthand reporter following Him around taking down His words; there were no papers to print the sermons, and they wouldn't have printed His sermons if there had been any daily papers—the whole church and all the religious world were against Him. I can see one of your modern free-thinkers standing near Him, and he hears Christ say: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Word shall not pass away." I see the scornful look on his face as he says: "Hear that Jewish peasant talk! Did you ever hear such conceit, such madness? He says Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his Word shall not pass away." My friend, I want to ask you this question—have they passed away? Do you know that the sun has shone on more Bibles to-day than ever before in the history of the world? There have been more Bibles printed in the last ten years than in the first eighteen hundred years. They tried in the dark ages to chain it, and keep it from the nations, but God has preserved it,

and the British and American Bible Societies print thousands of Bibles every day. One house in New York has sold one hundred thousand Oxford Bibles during the last year.

Printing the Revised Version^(TOC)

Suppose some one had said that when we had a revised version of the New Testament, it was going to have such a large circulation—men reading it wherever the English language is spoken—the statement would hardly have been believed. The new version came out in New York on a Friday—on the same day that it was published in London. Chicago did not want to be behind New York. At that time the quickest train between the two cities could not accomplish the journey in less than about twenty-six hours. It would be late on Saturday afternoon before the copies could reach Chicago, and the stores would be closed. So one of the Chicago daily papers set ninety operators at work and had the whole of the new version, from Matthew to Revelation, telegraphed to Chicago on Friday; it was put at once into print and sold on the streets of that city next day. If some one had said years ago, before telegraphs were introduced, that this would be done, it would have been thought an impossibility. Yet it has been done.

Notwithstanding all that skeptics and infidels say against the old Book, it goes on its way. These objectors remind one of a dog barking at the moon; the moon goes on shining just the same. Atheists keep on writing against the Bible; but they do not make much progress, do they? It is being spread all abroad—silently, and without any blasts of trumpets. The lighthouse does not blow a trumpet; it goes on shedding its light all around. So the Bible is lighting up the nations of the earth. It is said that a lecturer on Secularism was once asked, "Why can't you let the Bible alone, if you don't believe it?" The honest reply was at once made, "Because the Bible won't let me alone."

Circulation of the Bible^(TOC)

The Bible was about the first book ever printed, and to-day New Testaments are printed in three hundred and fifty-three different languages, and are going to the very corners of the earth. Wherever the Bible has not been translated, the people have no literature. It will not be long before the words of Jesus Christ will penetrate the darkest parts of the earth, and the darkest islands of the sea. When Christ said, "The Scriptures can not be broken," He meant every word He said. Devil and man and hell have been in league for centuries to try to break the Word of God, but they can not do it. If you get it for your footing, you have good footing for time and eternity. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Word shall not pass away." My friends, that Word is going to live, and there is no power in perdition or earth to blot it out.

What we want to-day is men who believe in it from the crown of their heads to the soles of their feet, who believe the whole of it, the things they understand and the things they do not understand. Talk about the things you understand, and leave the things you do not. I believe that is one reason why the English and the Scotch Christians have got ahead of us, because they study the whole Bible. I venture to say that there are hundreds of Bible readings in London every night. You know there are a good many Christians who are good in spots and mighty poor in other spots, because they do not take the whole sweep of the Bible. When I went to Scotland I had to be very careful how I quoted the Bible. Some friend would tell me after the meeting I was quoting it wrong.

Chapter V (TOC)

*Fulfilled Prophecy—Unexplored Country—Babylon—Tyre—Jerusalem—
Egypt—The Jew*

I KNOW nothing that will upset an honest skeptic quicker than ***fulfilled prophecy***. There are very few Christians who think of studying this subject. They say that prophecies are so mysterious, and there is question about their being fulfilled. Now the Bible does not say that prophecy is a dark subject, to be avoided; but rather that "we have a more ***sure word*** of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the daystar arise in your hearts." Prophecy is history unfulfilled, and history is prophecy fulfilled.

When I was a boy I was taught that all beyond the Mississippi river was the great American desert. But when the first pick-axe struck into the Comstock lode, and they took out more than one hundred million dollars' worth of silver, the nation realized that there was no desert: and to-day that part of the country—Nevada, Colorado, Utah and other western states—is some of the most valuable we possess. Think of the busy cities and flourishing states that have sprung up among the mountains! So with many portions of the Bible: people never think of reading them. They are living on a few verses and chapters. The greater part of the Bible was written by prophets, yet you never hear a sermon preached on prophecy.

Between five and six hundred Old Testament prophecies have been remarkably and literally fulfilled, and two hundred in regard to Jesus Christ alone. Not a thing happened to Jesus Christ that was not prophesied from

seventeen hundred to four hundred years before He was born.

Take the four great cities that existed in the days when the Old Testament was written, and you will find that prophecies regarding them have been fulfilled to the letter. Let me call your attention to a few passages.

Babylon^(TOC)

First regarding Babylon—"And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." And again: "The word that the Lord spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the Prophet. Declare ye among the nations, and publish and set up a standard; publish and conceal not; say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces. For out of the north there cometh a nation against her; which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein; they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast." "Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate; every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues." "How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art taken, oh Babylon, and thou wast not aware; thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the Lord."

A hundred years before Nebucadnezzar ascended the throne, it was foretold how Babylon should be destroyed, and it came to pass. Scholars tell us that

the city stood in the midst of a large and fruitful plain. It was enclosed by a wall four hundred and eighty furlongs square. Each side of the square had twenty gates of solid brass, and at every corner was a strong tower, ten feet higher than the wall. The wall was eighty-seven feet broad, and three hundred and fifty feet high. These figures give us an idea of the importance of Babylon. Yet nothing but ruins now remain to tell of its former grandeur. When Babylon was in its glory, the queen of the earth, prophets predicted that it would be destroyed; and how literally was it fulfilled!

A friend going through the valley of the Euphrates tried to get his dragoman to pitch his tent near the ruins, and failed. No Arabian pitches his tent there, no shepherd will dwell near the ruins.

Nineveh^(TOC)

Now take Nineveh. "And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazing-stock. And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste; who will bemoan her? Whence shall I seek comforters for thee?" Now, how are you going to cover the city up? "I will cast upon her abominable filth." How are you going to cast abominable filth upon the city? And yet for 2,500 years Nineveh was buried and an abominable filth lay upon her. But now they have dug up the ruins, and brought them to Paris and London, and you go into the British museum, and there is not a day except the Sabbath but what you can see men from all parts of the world gazing upon the ruins. It is just as the prophets prophesied. For 2,500 years Nineveh was buried, but it is no longer buried.

Tyre^(TOC)

Then look at Tyre: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, Oh Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God, and it shall become a spoil to the nations." Coffin, who was correspondent of the Boston *Journal* during the war, went round the world after the war was over in '68. One night he came to the site of old Tyre, and he said the sun was just going down, and he got his dragoman to pitch his tent right over by the ruins, where the rocks were scraped bare, and he took out his Bible and read where it says, "It shall be a place for the spreading of nets." He said the fishermen had done fishing and were just spreading their nets on the rocks of Tyre, precisely as it was prophesied hundreds and hundreds of years before. Now mark you! When they prophesied against these great cities, they were like London, Paris and New York in their glory, but their glory has gone.

Jerusalem^(TOC)

Now take the prophecy in regard to Jerusalem: "And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it saying, If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace: But now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side." Didn't Titus do that? Didn't the Roman Emperor do that very thing? "And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

I have read of two Rabbis going up to Jerusalem, and they saw a fox playing upon the wall; one began to weep when he thus looked at the desolation of Zion. The other smiled and rebuked him, saying that the spectacle was a proof that the Word of God was true, and that this was one of the prophecies which should be fulfilled—"Because of the mountain of Zion, which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it." It was also said that Jerusalem should be as a ploughed field. This prophecy has also been fulfilled. The modern city is so restricted that outside of the walls, where part of the old city stood, the plough has been used.

Egypt^(TOC)

Now take the prophecies regarding Egypt: "It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations; for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations." Now, mark you! Egypt was in its glory when this was prophesied. It was a great and mighty empire, but for centuries it has been the basest of all nations. They have not got a native prince or king to reign over them. The man that is reigning over them now is not an Egyptian, but he is some foreigner, and so it has been.

The Jews^(TOC)

Then, again, the prophecy of Balaam with regard to the Jews has been already greatly fulfilled. "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth *part* of Israel?" The Jews were not to be reckoned amongst the nations. There is something in this people's looks and habits that God continues to perpetuate, just, as I believe, to make them witnesses in every land of the truth of the Bible.

The race has remained all these centuries separate and distinct from other nations. In America there are all kinds of nationalities. Take an Irishman, and in a generation he will have forgotten his nationality. So, too, with the Germans, Italians, and French; but the Jew is as much a Jew as he was when he came over one hundred years ago. See how the race has been persecuted, yet the Jews control the finances of the world and can not be kept down. Egypt, Edom, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Rome, and all the leading nations of the earth have sought to crush out the Jews. Frederick the Great said, "Touch them not, for no one has done so and prospered." The people are the same now as they were in the days of Pharaoh, when he tried to destroy all the male children. The prophecy is fulfilled—God has made the nation numerous and united. The time is coming when God will reinstate the Jew. "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a King, and without a Prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim." Are they not without a King, without a nation, and without a sacrifice? Are they not scattered among the nations of the earth, a separate and distinct people? and they do not bow down to idols. Their last

King they crucified, and they will never have another until they restore Him.
He was Jesus Christ, as inscribed upon His cross, "The King of the Jews."

Other Prophecies^(TOC)

We see how it was prophesied that Eli should suffer. He was God's own high priest, and the only thing against him was that he did not obey God's word faithfully and diligently. He was like a good many nowadays. He was one of these good-natured old men who don't want to make people uncomfortable by saying unpleasant things, so he let his two boys go on in neglect, and did not restrain them. He was just like some ministers. Oh! let every minister tell the truth, though he preach himself out of his pulpit. Everything went all right for twenty years, but then came fulfilment of the prophecy. God's ark was taken, the army of Israel was routed by the Philistines; Hophni and Phineas, old Eli's two sons, were killed, and when the old man heard of it, he fell back in his chair, broke his neck and died. So with King Ahab, taking the sinful advice of Jezebel. Naboth would not sell him that piece of land, so they got him out of the way. Three years afterwards the dogs licked Ahab's blood from his chariot in the very spot where Naboth's had been murderously shed.

Chapter VI_(TOC)

Text Preaching and Expository Preaching—Peter and Paul at Jerusalem— Oratorical Preaching

HERE is a word of counsel for young men who have their eye on the ministry. If you take my advice, you will seek not to be a text preacher, but an expository preacher. I believe that what this country wants is the Word of God. There is no book that will draw the people like the Bible. One of the professors of the Chicago University gave some lectures on the Book of Job, and there was no building large enough to hold the people. If the Bible only has a chance to speak for itself, it will interest the people. I am tired and sick of moral essays. It would take about a ton of them to convert a child five years old. A man was talking of a certain church once, and said he liked it because the preacher never touched on politics and religion—just read nice little essays. Give the people the Word of God. Some men only use the Bible as a text book. They get a text and away they go. They go up in a balloon and talk about astronomy, and then go down and give you a little geology, and next Sunday they go on in the same way, and then they wonder why it is people do not read their Bibles. I used to think Charles Spurgeon was about as good a preacher as I ever knew, but I used to rather hear him expound the Scripture than listen to all his sermons. Why is it that Dr. John Hall has held his audience so long? He opens his Bible and expounds. How was it that Andrew Bonar held his audience in Glasgow? He had a weak voice, people could hardly hear him, yet thirteen hundred people would file into his church twice every Sabbath, and many of them took notes, and they would go home and send his sermons all over the world. It was Dr. Bonar's custom to lead his

congregation through the study of the Bible, book by book. There was not a part of the Bible in which he could not find Christ. I preached five months in Glasgow, and there was not a ward or a district in the city in which I did not find the influence of that man.

A Reminiscence of Dr. Andrew Bonar^(TOC)

I was in London in '84 and a barrister had come down from Edinburgh. He said he went through to Glasgow a few weeks before to spend Sunday, and he was fortunate enough to hear Andrew Bonar. He said he happened to be there the Sunday Dr. Bonar got to that part of the Epistle of Galatians where it says that Paul went up to Jerusalem to see Peter. "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days." He let his imagination roam. He said one day he could imagine they had been very busy and they were tired, and all at once Peter turned to Paul and said, "Paul, wouldn't you like to take a little walk?" And Paul said he would. So they went down through the streets of Jerusalem arm in arm, over the brook Cedron, and all at once Peter stopped and said, "Look, Paul, this is the very spot where He wrestled, and where He suffered and sweat great drops of blood. There is the very spot where John and James fell asleep, right there. And right here is the very spot where I fell asleep. I don't think I should have denied Him if I hadn't gone to sleep, but I was overcome. I remember the last thing I heard Him say before I fell asleep was, 'Father, let this cup pass from me if it is Thy will.' And when I awoke an angel stood right there where you are standing, talking to Him, and I saw great drops of blood come from His pores and trickle down His cheeks. It wasn't long before Judas came to betray Him. And I heard Him say to Judas so kindly, 'Betrayest thou the Master with a kiss?' And then they bound Him and led Him away. That night when He was on trial I denied Him." He pictured the whole scene. And the next day Peter turned again to Paul and said, "Wouldn't you like to take another walk

to-day?" And Paul said he would. That day they went to Calvary, and when they got on the hill, Peter said, "Here, Paul this is the very spot where He died for you and me. See that hole right there? That is where His cross stood. The believing thief hung there and the unbelieving thief there on the other side. Mary Magdalene and Mary His mother stood there, and I stood away on the outskirts of the crowd. The night before when I denied Him, He looked at me so lovingly that it broke my heart, and I couldn't bear to get near enough to see Him. That was the darkest hour of my life. I was in hopes that God would intercede and take Him from the cross. I kept listening and I thought I would hear His voice." And he pictured the whole scene, how they drove the spear into His side and put the crown of thorns on His brow, and all that took place.

And the next day Peter turned to Paul again and asked him if he wouldn't like to take another walk. And Paul said he would. Again they passed down the streets of Jerusalem, over the brook Cedron, over Mount Olivet, up to Bethphage, and over on to the slope near Bethany. All at once Peter stopped and said, "Here, Paul, this is the last place where I ever saw Him. I never heard Him speak so sweetly as He did that day. It was right here He delivered His last message to us, and all at once I noticed that His feet didn't touch the ground. He arose and went up. All at once there came a cloud and received Him out of sight. I stood right here gazing up into the heavens, in hopes I might see Him again and hear Him speak. And two men dressed in white dropped down by our sides and stood there and said, 'Ye men of Galilee, why stand Ye gazing into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.'"

My friends, I want to ask you this question: Do you believe that picture is overdrawn? Do you believe Peter had Paul as his guest and didn't take him to

Gethsemane, didn't take him to Calvary and to Mount Olivet? I myself spent eight days in Jerusalem, and every morning I wanted to steal down into the garden where my Lord sweat great drops of blood. Every day I climbed Mount Olivet and looked up into the blue sky where He went to His Father. I have no doubt, Peter took Paul out on those three walks. If there had been a man that could have taken me to the very spot where thy Master sweat those great drops of blood, do you think I wouldn't have asked him to take me there? If he could have told me where I could find the spot where my Master's feet last touched this sin-cursed earth and was taken up, do you think I wouldn't have had him show it to me?

Oratorical Preaching^(TOC)

I know there is a class of people who say that kind of preaching won't do in this country. "People want something oratorical." Well, there is no doubt but that there are some who want to hear oratorical sermons, but they forget them inside of twenty-four hours.

It a good thing for a minister to have the reputation of feeding his people. A man once made an artificial bee, which was so like a real bee that he challenged another man to tell the difference. It made just such a buzzing as the live bee, and looked the same. The other said, "You put an artificial bee and a real bee down there, and I will tell you the difference pretty quickly." He then put a drop of honey on the ground and the live bee went for the honey. It is just so with us. There are a lot of people who profess to be Christians, but they are artificial, and they don't know when you give them honey. The real bees go for honey every time. People can get along without your theories and opinions, "Thus saith the Lord"—that is what we want.

Chapter VII^(TOC)

Reading and Studying—At Family Prayers—A Word in Season—Helpful Questions.

MERELY reading the Bible is not what God wants. Again and again I am exhorted to "search."

*"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and **searched** the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."*

"So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."

We must study it thoroughly, and hunt it through, as it were, for some great truth. If a friend were to see me searching about a building, and were to come up and say, "Moody, what are you looking for? have you lost something?" and I answered, "No, I haven't lost anything; I'm not looking for anything particular," I fancy he would just let me go on by myself, and think me very foolish. But if I were to say, "Yes, I have lost a dollar," why, then, I might expect him to help me to find it. Read the Bible, my friends, as if you were seeking for something of value. It is a good deal better to take a single chapter, and spend a month on it, than to read the Bible at random for a month.

I used at one time to read so many chapters a day, and if I did not get through my usual quantity I thought I was getting cold and backsliding. But, mind you, if a man had asked me two hours afterward what I had read, I could not tell him; I had forgotten it nearly all. When I was a boy I used, among other

things, to hoe corn on a farm; and I used to hoe it so badly, in order to get over so much ground, that at night I had to put down a stick in the ground, so as to know next morning where I had left off. That was somewhat in the same fashion as running through so many chapters every day. A man will say, "Wife, did I read that chapter?" "Well," says she, "I don't remember." And neither of them can recollect. And perhaps he reads the same chapter over and over again; and they call that "studying the Bible." I do not think there is a book in the world we neglect so much as the Bible.

Family Worship^(TOC)

Now, when you read the Bible at family worship or for private devotions, look for suitable passages. What would you think of a minister who went into the pulpit on Sunday and opened the Bible at hazard and commenced to read? Yet this is what most men do at family prayers. They might as well go into a drug store and swallow the first medicine their eye happens to see. Children would take more interest in family prayers if the father would take time to search for some passage to suit the special need. For instance, if any member of the family is about to travel, read Psalm 121. In time of trouble, read Psalm 91. When the terrible accident happened to the "Spree" as we were crossing the Atlantic in November, 1892, and when none on board ship expected to live to see the light of another sun, we held a prayer-meeting, at which I read a portion of Psalm 107:

*"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;
These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.
For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.
They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.
They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end.
Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.
He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.
Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them*

unto their desired haven.

Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

A lady came to me afterwards and said I made it up to suit the occasion.

Helpful Questions^(TOC)

I have seen questions that will help one to get good out of every verse and passage of Scripture, They may be used in family worship, or in studying the Sabbath School lesson, or for prayer meeting, or in private reading. It would be a good thing if questions like these were pasted in the front of every Bible:

1. What persons have I read about, and what have I learned about them?
2. What places have I read about, and what have I read about them? If the place is not mentioned, can I find out where it is? Do I know its position on the map?
3. Does the passage refer to any particular time in the history of the children of Israel, or of some leading character?
4. Can I tell from memory what I have just been reading?
5. Are there any parallel passages or texts that throw light on this passage?
6. Have I read anything about God the Father? or about Jesus Christ? or about the Holy Spirit?
7. What have I read about myself? about man's sinful nature? about the spiritual new nature?
8. Is there any duty for me to observe? any example to follow? any promise to lay hold of? any exhortation for my guidance? any prayer that may echo?

9. How is this Scripture profitable for doctrine? for reproof? for correction? for instruction in righteousness?
10. Does it contain the gospel in type or in evidence?
11. What is the key verse of the chapter or passage? Can I repeat it from memory?

Chapter VIII (TOC)

How to Study the Bible—Feeding one's self—The Best Law—Three Books Every Christian Should Possess—The Bible in the Sabbath School.

SOMEONE has said that there are four things necessary in studying the Bible: Admit, submit, commit and transmit. First, admit its truth; second, submit to its teachings; third, commit it to memory; and fourth, transmit it. If the Christian life is a good thing for you, pass it on to some one else.

Now I want to tell you how I study the Bible. Every man cannot fight in Saul's armor; and perhaps you cannot follow my methods. Still I may be able to throw out some suggestions that will help you. Spurgeon used to prepare his sermon for Sunday morning on Saturday night. If I tried that, I would fail.

Feed Yourself^(TOC)

The quicker you learn to feed yourself the better. I pity down deep in my heart any men or women who have been attending some church or chapel for, say five, ten, or twenty years, and yet have not learned to feed themselves.

You know it is always regarded a great event in the family when a child can feed itself. It is propped up at table, and at first perhaps it uses the spoon upside down, but by and by it uses it all right, and mother, or perhaps sister, claps her hands and says, "Just see, baby's feeding himself!" Well, what we need as Christians is to be able to feed ourselves. How many there are who sit helpless and listless, with open mouths, hungry for spiritual things, and the minister has to try to feed them, while the Bible is a feast prepared, into which they never venture.

There are many who have been Christians for twenty years who have still to be fed with an ecclesiastical spoon. If they happen to have a minister who feeds them, they get on pretty well; but if they have not, they are not fed at all. This is the test as to your being a true child of God—whether you love and feed upon the Word of God. If you go out to your garden and throw down some sawdust, the birds will not take any notice; but if you throw down some crumbs, you will find they will soon sweep down and pick them up. So the true child of God can tell the difference, so to speak, between sawdust and bread. Many so-called Christians are living on the world's sawdust, instead of being nourished by the Bread that cometh down from heaven. Nothing can satisfy the longings of the soul but the Word of the living God.

The Law of Perseverance^(TOC)

The best law for Bible study is the law of perseverance. The Psalmist says, "I have *stuck* unto thy testimonies." Application to the Word will tend to its growth within and its multiplication without. Some people are like express-trains, they skim along so quickly that they see nothing.

I met a lawyer in Chicago who told me he had spent two years in studying up one subject; he was trying to smash a will. He made it his business to read everything on wills he could get. Then he went into court and he talked two days about that will; he was full of it; he could not talk about anything else but wills. That is the way with the Bible—study it and study it, one subject at a time, until you become filled with it.

Read the Bible itself—do not spend all your time on commentaries and helps. If a man spent all his time reading up the chemical constituents of bread and milk, he would soon starve.

Three Books Required^(TOC)

There are three books which I think every Christian ought to possess.

The first, of course, is the Bible. I believe in getting a good Bible, with a good plain print. I have not much love for those little Bibles which you have to hold right under your nose in order to read the print; and if the church happens to be a little dark, you cannot see the print, but it becomes a mere jumble of words. Yes, but some one will say you cannot carry a big Bible in your pocket. Very well, then, carry it under your arm; and if you have to walk five miles, you will just be preaching a sermon five miles long. I have known a man convicted by seeing another carrying his Bible under his arm. You are not ashamed to carry hymn-books and prayer-books, and the Bible is worth all the hymn-books and prayer-books in the world put together. If you get a good Bible you are likely to take better care of it. Suppose you pay ten dollars for a good Bible, the older you grow the more precious it will become to you. But be sure you do not get one so good that you will be afraid to mark it. I don't like gilt-edged Bibles that look as if they had never been used.

Then next I would advise you to get a Cruden's Concordance. I was a Christian about five years before I ever heard of it. A skeptic in Boston got hold of me. I didn't know anything about the Bible and I tried to defend the Bible and Christianity. He made a misquotation and I said it wasn't in the Bible: I hunted for days and days. If I had had a concordance I could have found it at once. It is a good thing for ministers once in a while to tell the people about a good book. You can find any portion or any verse in the Bible by just turning to this concordance.

Thirdly, a Topical Text Book. These books will help you to study the Word of God with profit. If you do not possess them, get them at once; every Christian ought to have them.^[1]

Sunday School Quarterlies and the Bible^(TOC)

I think Sunday school teachers are making a woeful mistake if they don't take the whole Bible into their Sunday school classes. I don't care how young children are, let them understand it is one book, that there are not two books—the Old Testament and the New are all one. Don't let them think that the Old Testament doesn't come to us with the same authority as the New. It is a great thing for a boy or girl to know how to handle the Bible. What is an army good for if they don't know how to handle their swords? I speak very strongly on this, because I know some Sabbath schools that don't have a single Bible in them. They have question books. There are questions and the answers are given just below; so that you don't need to study your lesson. They are splendid things for lazy teachers to bring along into their classes. I have seen them come into the class with a question book, and sometimes they get it wrong side up while they are talking to the class, until they find out their mistake, and then they begin over again. I have seen an examination take place something like this:

"John, who was the first man?"

"Methuselah."

"No; I think not; let me see. No, it is not Methuselah. Can't you guess again?"

"Elijah."

"No."

"Adam."

"That's right, my son; you must have studied your lesson hard."

Now, I would like to know what a boy is going to do with that kind of a teacher, or with that kind of teaching. That is the kind of teaching that is worthless, and brings no result. Now, don't say that I condemn helps. I believe in availing yourself of all the light you can get. What I want you to do, when you come into your classes, is to come prepared to explain the lesson without the use of a concordance. Bring the word of God with you; bring the old Book.

You will often find families where there is a family Bible, but the mother is so afraid that the children will tear it that she keeps it in the spare room, and once in a great while the children are allowed to look at it. The thing that interests them most is the family record—when John was born, when father and mother were married.

I came up to Boston from the country and went into a Bible class where there were a few Harvard students. They handed me a Bible and told me the lesson was in John. I hunted all through the Old Testament for John, but couldn't find it. I saw the fellows hunching one another, "Ah, greenie from the country." Now, you know that is just the time when you don't want to be considered green. The teacher saw my embarrassment and handed me his Bible, and I put my thumb in the place and held on. I didn't lose my place. I said then that if I ever got out of that scrape, I would never be caught there again. Why is it that so many young men from eighteen to twenty cannot be brought into a Bible class? Because they don't want to show their ignorance.

There is no place in the world that is so fascinating as a live Bible class. I believe that we are to blame that they have been brought up in the Sunday school without Bibles and brought up with quarterlies. The result is, the boys are growing up without knowing how to handle the Bible. They don't know where Matthew is, they don't know where the Epistle to the Ephesians is, they don't know where to find Hebrews or any of the different books of the Bible. They ought to be taught how to handle the whole Bible, and it can be done by Sunday school teachers taking the Bible into the class and going right about it at once. You can get a Bible in this country for almost a song now. Sunday schools are not so poor that they cannot get Bibles. Some time ago there came up in a large Bible class a question, and they thought they would refer to the Bible, but they found that there was not a single one in the class. A Bible class without a Bible! It would be like a doctor without physic; or an army without weapons. So they went to the pews, but could not find one there. Finally they went to the pulpit and took the pulpit Bible and settled the question. We are making wonderful progress, aren't we? Quarterlies are all right in their places, as helps in studying the lesson, but if they are going to sweep the Bibles out of our Sunday schools, I think we had better sweep them out.

Chapter IX^(TOC)

*The Telescopic and Microscopic Methods—Job—The Four Gospels—Acts—
Psalm 52:1*

THERE are two opposite ways to study the Bible. One is to study it with a telescope, taking a grand sweep of a whole book and trying to find out God's plan in it; the other, with a microscope, taking up a verse at a time, dissecting it, analyzing it. If you take Genesis, it is the seed-plant of the whole Bible; it tells us of ***Life, Death, Resurrection***; it involves all the rest of the Bible.

The Book of Job^(TOC)

An Englishman once remarked to me: "Mr Moody, did you ever notice this, that the book of Job is the key to the whole Bible? If you understand Job you will understand the entire Bible!" "No," I said, "I don't comprehend that. Job the key to the whole Bible! How do make that out?" He said: "I divide Job into seven heads. The first head is: ***A perfect man untried.*** That is what God said about Job; that is Adam in Eden. He was perfect when God put him there. The second head is: ***Tried by adversity.*** Job fell, as Adam fell in Eden. The third head is: ***The wisdom of the world.*** The world tried to restore Job; the three wise men came to help him. That was the wisdom of the world centred in those three men. You can not," said he, "find any such eloquent language or wisdom anywhere, in any part of the world, as those three men displayed, but they did not know anything about grace, and could not, therefore, help Job." That is just what men are trying to do; and the result is that they fail; the wisdom of man never made man any better. These three men did not help Job; they made him more unhappy. Some one has said the first man took him, and gave him a good pull; then the second and third did the same; the three of them had three good pulls at Job, and then flat down they fell. "Then in the fourth place," said he, "in comes ***the Daysman,*** that is Christ. In the fifth place, ***God speaks;*** and in the sixth, ***Job learns his lesson.*** 'I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.' And then down came Job flat on the dunghill. The seventh head is this, that ***God restores him.***" Thank God, it is so with us, and our last state is better than our first.

A friend of mine said to me: "Look here, Moody, God gave to Job double of

everything." He would not admit that Job had lost his children; God had taken them to heaven, and He gave Job ten more. So Job had ten in Heaven, and ten on earth—a goodly family. So when our children are taken from us, they are not lost to us, but merely gone before.

Now, let me take you through the four Gospels. Let us begin with Matthew.

Matthew^(TOC)

Men sometimes tell me when I go into a town: "You want to be sure and get such a man on your committee, for he has nothing to do and he will have plenty of time." I say: "No, thank you, I do not want any man that has nothing to do." Christ found Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom. The Lord took some one He found at work, and he went right on working. We do not know much about what he did, except that he wrote this Gospel. But, what a book! Where Matthew came from we do not know, and where he went to we do not know. His old name, Levi, dropped with his old life.

The Key. The Messiah of the Jews and the Saviour of the world. Supposed to have been written about twelve years after the death of Christ, and to be the first Gospel written. It contains the best account of the life of Christ. You notice that it is the last message of God to the Jewish nation. Here we pass from the old to the new dispensation.

Matthew does not speak of Christ's ascension, but leaves Him on earth.

Mark gives His resurrection and ascension.

Luke gives His resurrection, ascension and the promise of a comforter.

John goes a step further and says he is coming back.

There are more quotations in Matthew than in any of the others; I think there are about a hundred. He is trying to convince the Jews that Jesus was the son

of David, the rightful king. He talked a good deal about the **kingdom**, its mysteries, the example of the kingdom, healing the sick, etc., the principles of the kingdom as set forth in the sermon on the mount; also, the rejection of the king. When anyone takes a kingdom they lay down the principles upon which they are going to rule or conduct it.

Now, let me call your attention to five great sermons. In these you have a good sweep of the whole book:

1. The sermon on the mount. See how many things lying all around Him He brings into His sermon, salt, light, candle, coat, rain, closet, moth, rust, thieves, eye, fowls, lilies, grass, dogs, bread, fish, gate, grapes, thorns, figs, thistles, rock, etc.

Someone, in traveling through Palestine, said that he did not think there was a solitary thing there that Christ did not use as an illustration. So many people in these days are afraid to use common things, but don't you think it is better to use things that people can understand, than to talk so that people can't understand you? Now, a woman can easily understand a candle, and a man can easily understand about a rock, especially in a rocky country like Palestine. Christ used common things as illustrations, and spoke so that everyone could understand Him. A woman in Wales once said she knew Christ was Welsh, and an Englishman said, "No, He was a Jew." She declared that she knew He was Welsh, because He spoke so that she could understand Him. Christ did not have a short-hand reporter to go around with Him to write out and print His sermons, and yet the people remembered them. Never mind about finished sentences and rounded periods, but

give your attention to making your sermons clear so that they stick. Use bait that your hearers will like.

The Law was given on a mountain, and here Christ lays down His principles on a mountain. The law of Moses applies to the outward acts, but this sermon applies to the inward life. As the sun is brighter than a candle, so the sermon on the mount is brighter than the law of Moses. It tells us what kind of Christians we ought to be—lights in the world, the salt of the world, silent in our actions but great in effect.

"I say unto you," occurs twelve times in this sermon.

2. The second great sermon was delivered to the twelve in the tenth chapter. You find over and over again the sayings in this sermon are quoted by men viz.: "Shake off the dust off your feet against them." "Freely ye have received, freely give," etc.
3. The open air sermon. You want the best kind of preaching on the street. You have to put what you say in a bright, crisp way, if you expect people to listen.

You must learn to think on your feet. There was a young man preaching on the streets in London when an infidel came up and said: "The man who invented gas did more for the world than Jesus Christ." The young man could not answer him and the crowd had the laugh on him. But another man got up and said: "Of course the man has a right to his opinion, and I suppose if he was dying he would send for the gasfitter, but I think I should send for a minister and have him read the fourteenth chapter of John;" and he turned the laugh back on

the man.

This sermon contains seven parables. It is like a string of pearls.

4. The sermon of woes; Christ's last appeal to the Jewish nation. Compare these eight woes with the nine beatitudes. You notice the closing up of this sermon on woes is the most pathetic utterance in the whole ministry of Christ. "Your house is left unto you desolate." Up to that time it had been "**My Father's** house," or "**My** house," but now it is "**your house.**" It was not long until Titus came and leveled it to the ground. Abraham never loved Isaac more than Jesus loved the Jewish nation. It was hard for Abraham to give up Isaac, but harder for the Son of God to give up Jerusalem.
5. The fifth sermon was preached to His disciples. How little did they understand Him! When His heart was breaking with sorrow, they drew His attention to the buildings of the temple.

The first sermon was given on the mount; the second and third at Capernaum; the fourth in the Temple; the fifth on Olivet.

In Matthew's Gospel there is not a thing in hell, heaven, earth, sea, air or grave that does not testify of Christ as the Son of God. Devils cried out, fish entered the nets under His influence, wind and wave obeyed Him.

Summary—Nine beatitudes; eight woes; seven consecutive parables; ten consecutive miracles; five continuous sermons; four prophecies of His death.

Mark^(TOC)

The four Gospels are independent of each other, no one was copied from the other. Each is the complement of the rest, and we get four views of Christ, like the four sides of a house.

Matthew writes for Jews.

Mark writes for Romans.

Luke writes for Gentile converts.

You don't find any long sermons in Mark. The Romans were quick and active, and he had to condense things in order to catch them. You'll find the words "Forthwith," "Straightway," "Immediately," occur forty-one times in this gospel. Every chapter but the first, seventh, eighth and fourteenth begins with "And," as if there was no pause in Christ's ministry.

Luke tells us that Christ received little children, but Mark says He took them up in His arms. That makes it sweeter to you, doesn't it?

Perhaps the high water mark is the fifth chapter. Here we find three very bad cases, devils, disease and death, beyond the reach of man, cured by Christ. The first man was possessed with devils. They could not bind him, or chain or tame him. I suppose a good many men and women had been scared by that man. People are afraid of a graveyard even in daylight, but think of a live man being in the tombs and possessed with devils! He said: "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not." But Jesus had come to do him good.

Next, the woman with the issue of blood. If she had been living to-day, I suppose she would have tried every patent medicine in the market. We would have declared her a hopeless case and sent her to the hospital. Some one has said: "There was more medicine in the hem of His garment than in all the apothecary shops in Palestine." She just touched Him and was made whole. Hundreds of others touched Him, but they did not get anything. Can you tell the difference between the touch of faith and the ordinary touch of the crowd?

Thirdly, Jarius' daughter raised. You see the manifestation of Jesus' power is increasing, for when He arrived the child was dead and He brought her to life. I do not doubt but that away back in the secret councils of eternity it was appointed that He should be there just at that time. I remember once being called to preach a funeral sermon, and looked the four gospels through to find one of Christ's funeral sermons, but do you know He never preached one? He broke up every funeral He ever attended. The dead awaked when they heard His voice.

Luke^(TOC)

We now come to Luke's gospel. You notice his name does not occur in this book or in Acts. (You will find it used three times, viz.; in Colossians, Timothy and Philemon). He keeps himself in the background. I meet numbers of Christian workers who are ruined by getting their names up. We do not know whether Luke was a Jew or a Gentile.

The first we see of him is in Acts 16:10 "And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called **us** for to preach the gospel unto them." He did not claim to be an eye-witness to Christ's ministry nor one of the seventy. Some think he was, but he does not claim it. It is supposed that his gospel is of Paul's preaching, the same as Mark's, was of Peter. It is also called the Gospel of the Gentiles, and is supposed to have been written when Paul was in Rome, about 27 years after Christ. One-third of this gospel is left out in the other gospels. It opens with a note of praise: "And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at His birth;" "And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God;" and closes the same way.

Canon Farrar has pointed out that we have a seven-fold gospel in Luke:

1. It is a gospel of praise and song. We find here the songs of Zacharias, Elizabeth, Mary, Simeon, the angels, and others. Some one has written beautifully of Simeon as follows: "What Simeon wanted to see was the Lord's Christ. Unbelief would suggest to him, 'Simeon you are an old man, your day is

almost ended, the snow of age is upon your head, your eyes are growing dim, your brow is wrinkled, your limbs totter, and death is almost upon you: and where are the signs of His coming? You are resting, Simeon, upon imagination—it is all a delusion.' 'No,' replied Simeon, 'I shall not see death till I have seen the Lord's Christ; I shall see Him before I die.' I can imagine Simeon walking out one fine morning along one of the lovely vales of Palestine, meditating upon the great subject that filled his mind. Presently he meets a friend: 'Peace be with you; have you heard the strange news? What news?' replies Simeon. 'Do you not know Zacharias the priest?' 'Yes, well.' 'According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense in the temple of the Lord, and the whole multitude of the people were praying without. It was the time of incense, and there appeared unto him an angel, standing on the right side of the altar, who told him that he should have a son, whose name should be called John; one who should be great in the sight of the Lord, who should go before the Messiah and make ready a people prepared for the Lord. The angel was Gabriel who stands in the presence of God, and because Zacharias believed not, he was struck dumb.' 'Oh,' says Simeon, 'that fulfills the prophecy of Malachi. This is the forerunner of the Messiah: this is the morning star: the day dawn is not for off: the Messiah is nigh at hand. Hallelujah! The Lord shall suddenly come to His temple!' Time rolls on. I can imagine Simeon accosted again by one of his neighbors: 'Well, Simeon, have you heard the news?' 'What news?' 'Why there's a singular story in everybody's mouth. A company of

shepherds were watching their flocks by night on the plains of Bethlehem. It was the still hour of night, and darkness mantled the world. Suddenly a bright light shone around the shepherds, a light above the brightness of the midday sun. They looked up, and just above them was an angel who said to the terrified shepherds, Fear not, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people!' 'This is the Lord's Christ,' said Simeon, 'and I shall not taste death till I have seen him.' He said to himself, 'They will bring the child to the Temple to present Him to the Lord.'

Away went Simeon, morning after morning, to see if he could get a glimpse of Jesus. Perhaps unbelief suggested to Simeon, 'You had better stop at home this wet morning: you have been so often and have missed Him: you may venture to be absent this once.' 'No,' said the Spirit, 'go to the Temple.' Simeon would no doubt select a good point of observation. See how intently he watches the door! He surveys the face of every child as one mother after another brings her infant to be presented. 'No,' he says, 'That is not He.' At length he sees the Virgin appear, and the Spirit tells him it is the long-expected Saviour. He grasps the child in his arms, presses him to his heart, blesses God and says: 'Lord, now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word. For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.'"

2. It is a gospel of thanksgiving. They glorified God when Jesus

healed the widow's son at Nain, when the blind man received sight, etc.

3. It is a gospel of prayer. We learn that Christ prayed when he was baptised, and nearly every great event in His ministry was preceded by prayer. If you want to hear from Heaven you must seek it on your knees. There are two parables about prayer—the friend at midnight and the unjust judge.
4. Here is another thing that is made prominent, namely, the gospel of womanhood. Luke alone records many loving things Christ did for women. The richest jewel in Christ's crown was what he did for women. A man tried to tell me that Mohammed had done more for women than Christ. I told him that if he had ever been in Mohammedan countries, he would be ashamed of himself for making such a remark. They care more for their donkeys than they do for their wives and mothers.

A man once said that when God created life He began at the lowest forms of animal life and came up until He got to man, then he was not quite satisfied and created a woman. She was lifted up the highest, and when she fell, she fell the lowest.

5. This is the gospel of the poor and humble. When I get a crowd of roughs on the street I generally teach from Luke. Here are the shepherds, the peasant, the incident of the rich man and Lazarus. This gospel tells us He found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me—to preach the gospel to the poor." It is a dark day for a church when it gets out that they do not want the common people. Whitfield

labored among the miners, and Wesley among the common people. If you want the poor, let it get out that you want them to come.

6. It is a gospel to the lost. The woman with the seven devils, the thief on the cross illustrate this. Also, the parables of the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver, and the lost son.

7. It is a gospel of tolerance.

"He that winneth souls is wise." Do you want to win men? Do not drive or scold them. Do not try to tear down their prejudices before you begin to lead them to the truth. Some people think they have to tear down the scaffolding before they begin on the building. An old minister once invited a young brother to preach for him. The latter scolded the people, and when he got home, asked the old minister how he had done. He said he had an old cow, and when he wanted a good supply of milk, he fed the cow; he did not scold her.

Christ reached the publicans because nearly everything he said about them was in their favor. Look at the parable of the Pharisee and publican. Christ said the publican went down to his house justified rather than that proud Pharisee. How did He reach the Samaritans? Take the parable of the ten lepers. Only one returned to thank Him for the healing, and that was a Samaritan. Then there is the parable of the Good Samaritan. It has done more to stir people up to philanthropy and kindness to the poor than anything that has been said on this earth for six thousand years. Go into Samaria and you find that story has reached there first. Some man has been down to Jerusalem and heard it, and gone back home and told it all around; and they say "If that Prophet ever comes up here, we'll give Him a hearty reception." If you want

to reach people that do not agree with you, do not take a club to knock them down and then try to pick them up. When Jesus Christ dealt with the erring and the sinners, He was as tender with them as a mother is with her sick child. A child once said to his mother, "Mamma, you never speak ill of any one. You would speak well of Satan." "Well," said the mother, "you might imitate his perseverance."

John^(TOC)

John was supposed to be the youngest disciple, and was supposed to be the first of all that Christ had to follow Him. He is called the bosom companion of Christ. Someone was complaining of Christ's being partial. I have no doubt that Christ did love John more than the others, but it was because John loved him most. I think John got into the inner circle, and we can get in too if we will. Christ keeps the door open and we can just go right in. You notice nearly all his book is new. All of the eight months Christ spent in Judea are recorded here.

Matthew begins with Abraham; Mark with Malachi; Luke with John the Baptist; but John with God Himself.

Matthew sets forth Christ as the Jew's Messiah.

Mark as the active worker.

Luke as a man.

John as a personal Saviour.

John presents Him as coming from the bosom of the Father. The central thought in this gospel is proving the divinity of Christ. If I wanted to prove to a man that Jesus Christ was divine, I would take him directly to this gospel. The word **repent** does not occur once, but the word **believe** occurs ninety-eight times. The controversy that the Jews raised about the divinity of Christ is not settled yet, and before John went away he took his pen and wrote down these things to settle it.

A seven-fold witness to the divinity of Christ:

1. Testimony of the Father. "The Father that sent me beareth

witness of me."

2. The Son bearing testimony. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true; for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I came, and whither I go."
 3. Christ's works testify: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in Him."
- No man can make me believe that Jesus Christ was a bad man; because He brought forth good fruit. How any one can doubt that He was the Son of God after eighteen centuries of testing is a mystery to me.
4. The Scriptures: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me."
 5. John the Baptist: "And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."
 6. The Disciples: "And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."
 7. The Holy Ghost: "But when the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."

Of course there many others that show His divinity, but I think these are enough to prove it to any man. If I went into court and had seven witnesses

that could not be broken down, I think I would have a good case.

Notice the "I am's" of Christ.

"I am from above."

"I am not of this world."

"Before Abraham was, I am."

"I am the bread of life."

"I am the light of the world."

"I am the door."

"I am the Good Shepherd."

"I am the way."

"I am the truth." Pilate asked what truth was, and there it was standing right before him.

"I am the resurrection and the life."

In the gospel of John, we find eight gifts for the believer: the bread of life; the water of life; eternal life; the Holy Spirit; love; joy; peace; His words.

Acts^(TOC)

A good lesson to study is how all through the book of Acts defeat was turned to victory. When the early Christians were persecuted, they went every where preaching the Word. That was a victory, and so on all through.

Luke's gospel was taken up with Christ in the body, Acts with Christ in the church. In Luke we read of what Christ did in His humiliation, and in Acts what He did in His exaltation. With most men, their work stops at their death, but with Christ it had only begun. "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to My Father." We call this book the "Acts of the Apostles," but it is really the "Acts of the Church (Christ's body)."

You will find the key to the book in chapter 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

We would not have seen the struggles of that infant church if it had not been for Luke. We would not have known much about Paul either if it had not been for Luke.

There were four rivers flowing out of Eden; here we have the four gospels flowing into one channel.

Three divisions of the Acts—

I. Founding of the church.

II. Growth of the church.

III. Sending out of missionaries.

I believe that the nearer we keep to the apostles' way of presenting the gospel, the more success we will have.

Now there are ten great sermons in Acts, and I think if you get a good hold on these you will have a pretty good understanding of the book and how to preach. Five were preached by Peter, one by Stephen and four by Paul. The phrase, "We are witnesses," runs through the entire book. We say, to-day, "We are eloquent preachers." We seem to be above being simple witnesses.

I. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost. Someone said that now it takes about three thousand sermons to convert one Jew, but here three thousand were converted by one sermon. When Peter testified of Christ and bore witness that he had died and had risen again, God honored it, and he will do the same with you.

II. Peter preaches in Solomon's porch. A short sermon, but it did good work. They did not get there till three o'clock, and I believe the Jews could not arrest a man after sundown, and yet in that short space of time five thousand were converted. What did he preach? Listen:

"But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

And killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised from the dead: whereof we are witnesses.

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the

presence of the Lord."

III. Peter preaches to the high priests. They had arrested them and were demanding to know by what power they did these things. "By the name of Jesus Christ,... doth this man stand here before you whole." When Bunyan was told he would be released if he would not preach any more, he said, "If you let me out I will preach to-morrow."

IV. Peter's testimony before the council. They commanded them not to preach in the name of Christ. I don't know what they could do if they were forbidden that. Some ministers to-day would have no trouble; they could get along very well. About all the disciples knew was what they had learned in those three years with Jesus, hearing His sermons and seeing His miracles. They saw the things and knew they were so, and when the Holy Ghost came down upon them, they could not help but speak them.

V. Stephen's sermon. He preached the longest sermon in Acts. Dr. Bonar once said, "Did you ever notice, Brother Whittle, that when the Jews accused Stephen of speaking blasphemous words against Moses, the Lord lit up his face with the same glory with which Moses' face shone?"

An old Scotch beadle once warned his new minister, "You may preach as much as ye like about the sins of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but stick to them and don't come any nearer hand if ye want to stay here." Stephen began with them, but he came right down to the recent crucifixion, and stirred them

up.

VI. Peter's last sermon and the first sermon to the Gentiles.

Notice the same gospel is preached to the Gentiles as to the Jews, and it produces the same results. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all of them which heard the word."

Now the leading character changes and Paul comes on.

VII. Paul's sermon at Antioch, in Pisidia. An old acquaintance once said to me, "What are you preaching now? I hope you are not harping on that old string yet." Yes, thank God, I am spreading the old gospel. If you want to get people to come to hear you, lift up Christ; He said, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."

VIII. Paul's sermon to the Athenians. He got fruit at Athens by preaching the same old gospel to the philosophers.

IX. Paul's sermon at Jerusalem.

X. Paul's defence before Agrippa. I think that is the grandest sermon Paul ever preached. He preached the same gospel before Agrippa and Festus that he did down in Jerusalem. He preached everywhere the mighty fact that God gave Christ as a ransom for sin, that the whole world can be saved by trusting

in Him.

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:

That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people and to the Gentiles."

The Microscopic Method^(TOC)

Let me show what I mean by the microscopic method by taking the first verse of Psalm 52: "Why boastest thou thyself in iniquity, O mighty man? The goodness of God endureth continually." This verse naturally falls into two divisions, on the one side being—man, on the other—God. Man—mischief; God—goodness. Is any particular man addressed? Yes: Doeg the Edomite, as the preface to the psalm suggests. You can therefore find the historic reference of this verse and Psalm in 1 Samuel 22:9. Now take a concordance or topical text-book, and study the subject of "boasting." What words mean the same thing as "boasting"? One is glorifying. Is boasting always condemned? In what does Scripture forbid us to boast? In what are we exhorted to boast? "Thus saith the Lord: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this: that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Treat the subject "mischief," in a similar manner. Then ask yourself is this boasting, this mischief, always to last? No: "the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment." "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not: Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." The other half of the text suggests a study of goodness (or mercy) as an attribute of God. How is it manifested temporally and spiritually? What Scripture have we for it? Is God's goodness conditional? Does God's goodness conflict with His justice? Now, as the end of Bible study as well as of preaching is to save men, ask yourself is the Gospel contained in this text in type or in evidence? Turn to Romans 2:4:

"Despiseth thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long suffering: not knowing that ***the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?***

" Here the verse leads directly to the subject of repentance, and you rise from the study of the verse ready at any time to preach a short sermon that may be the means of converting some one.

Chapter X^(TOC)

One Book at a Time—Chapter Study—The Gospel of John

I KNOW some men who never sit down to read a book until they have time to read the whole of it. When they come to Leviticus or Numbers, or any of the other books, they read it right through at one sitting. They get the whole sweep, and then they begin to study it chapter by chapter. Dean Stanley used to read a book through three separate times: first for the story, second for the thought, and third for the literary style. It is a good thing to take one whole book at a time.

How could you expect to understand a story or a scientific text-book if you read one chapter here and another there?

Dr. A. T. Pierson says: Let the introduction cover five P's; place where written; person by whom written; people to whom written; purpose for which written; period at which written.

Here it is well to grasp the leading points in the chapters. The method is illustrated by the following plan by which I tried to interest the students at Mt. Hermon school and the Northfield Seminary. It provides a way of committing Scripture to memory, so that one can call up a passage to meet the demand whenever it arises. I said to the students one morning at worship: "To-morrow morning when I come I will not read a portion of Scripture, but we will take the first chapter of the Gospel of John and you shall tell me from memory what you find in that chapter and each learn the verse in it that is most precious to you." We went through the Whole book that way and

committed a verse or two to memory-out of each one.

I will give the main headings we found in the chapters.

The Gospel of John, By Chapters [\(TOC\)](#)

Chapter 1. The call of the first five disciples.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon that John stood and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God." Two of John's disciples then followed Jesus, and one of them, Andrew, went out and brought his brother Simon. Then Jesus found Philip, as he was starting for Galilee, and Philip found Nathaniel, the skeptical man. When he got sight of Christ his skeptical ideas were all gone. Commit to memory verses 11 and 12: "He came unto his own and his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Key word, Receiving.

Chapter 2. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." We had a good time in this chapter on Obedience, which is the key word.

Chapter 3. This is a chapter on Regeneration. It took us more than one day to get through this one. This gives you a respectable sinner, and how Jesus dealt with him. Commit verse 16: "God so loved the world, that He gave His Only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Key word, Believing.

Chapter 4. A disreputable sinner, and how Jesus dealt with her. If we had been dealing with her, we would have told her what Jesus told Nicodemus, but He took her on her own ground. She came for a water-pot of water, and, thank God, she got a whole well full. Key word, Worshipping. Memorize verse 24: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Chapter 5. Divinity of Christ. Commit verse 24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." Key word, Healing.

Chapter 6. We called that the bread chapter. If you want a good loaf of bread, get into this sixth chapter. You feed upon that bread and you will live forever. Key verse: Christ the bread of life. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Key word, Eating.

Chapter 7 is the water chapter. "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." You have here living water and Christ's invitation to every thirsty soul to come to drink. Key word, Drinking.

Chapter 8. The Light chapter. "I am the light of the world." Key, Walking in the light. But what is the use of having light if you have no eyes to see with, so we go on to

Chapter 9. The Sight chapter. There was a man born blind and Christ made him to see. Key word, Testifying. Memory verse: "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work."

Chapter 10. Here you find the Good Shepherd. Commit to memory verse 11: "I am the Good Shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Key word, Safety.

Chapter 11. The Lazarus chapter. Memorize verse 25: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Key word, Resurrection.

Chapter 12. Verse 32: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Here Christ closes up his ministry to the Jewish nation. Key word, Salvation for all.

Chapter 13. The Humility chapter. Christ washing the feet of his disciples. Learn verse 34: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." Key word, Teaching.

Chapter 14. The Mansion chapter. Commit to memory verse 6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Key words, Peace and comfort.

Chapter 15. The Fruit chapter. The vine can only bear fruit through the branches. Verse 5: "I am the vine; ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing." Key word, Joy.

Chapter 16. The promise of the Holy Ghost. Here you find the secret of Power, which is the key word.

Chapter 17. This chapter contains what is properly the "Lord's prayer." Learn verse 15: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." Key word, Separation.

Chapter 18. Christ is arrested.

Chapter 19. Christ is crucified.

Chapter 20. Christ rises from the dead.

Chapter 21. Christ spends some time with his disciples again, and invites them to dine with him.

Chapter XI^(TOC)

*Study of Types—Types of Christ—Leprosy a Type of Sin—Bible Characters—
Meaning of Names*

ANOTHER way of studying is to take five great divisions—History, Type, Prophecy, Miracle, Parable.

It is a very interesting thing to study the types of the Bible. Get a good book on the subject and you will be surprised to find out how interested you will become. The Bible is full of patterns and types of ourselves. That is a popular objection against the Bible—that it tells about the failings of men. We should, however, remember that the object of the Bible is not to tell how good men are, but how bad men can become good. But more especially the Bible is full of types of Christ. Types are foreshadowings, and wherever there is a shadow there must be substance. As John McNeill says, "If I see the shadow of a dog, I know there's a dog around." God seems to have chosen this means of teaching the Israelites of the promised Messiah. All the laws, ceremonies and institutions of the Mosaic dispensation point to Christ and His dispensation. The enlightened eyes see Christ in all. For instance, the tabernacle was a type of the incarnation of Jesus; John 1:14, "and the word was made flesh, and **tabernacled** amongst us." The laver typified sanctification or purity: Ephesians 5:26, "that he might sanctify and cleanse the Church with the washing of water by the word." The candlesticks typified Christ as the Light of the world. The shewbread typified Christ as the Bread of Life. The High Priest was always a type of Christ. Christ was called of God, as was Aaron; He ever liveth to make intercession; He was consecrated

with an oath, and so on. The Passover, the Day of Atonement, the Smitten Rock, the sacrifices, the City of Refuge, the Brazen Serpent—all point to Christ's atoning work. Adam was a beautiful type. Think of the two Adams. One introduced sin and ruin into the world, and the other abolished it. So Cain stands as the representative natural man, and Abel as the spiritual man. Abel as a shepherd is a type of Christ the heavenly Shepherd. There is no more beautiful type of Christ in the Bible than Joseph. He was hated of his brethren; he was stripped of his coat; he was sold; he was imprisoned; he gained favor; he had a gold chain about his neck; every knee bowed before him. A comparison of the lives of Joseph and Jesus shows a startling similarity in their experience.

The disease of leprosy is a type of sin. It is incurable by man; it works baneful results; it is insidious in its nature, and from a small beginning works complete ruin; it separates its victims from their fellow-men, just as sin separates a man from God; and as Christ had power to cleanse the leper, so by the grace of God His blood cleanseth us from all iniquity.

Adam represents man's innate sinfulness.

Abel represents Atonement.

Enoch represents communion.

Noah represents Regeneration.

Abraham represents Faith.

Isaac represents Sonship.

Jacob represents Discipline and Service.

Joseph represents Glory through suffering.

Bible Characters[\(TOC\)](#)

Another good way is to study Bible characters—take them right from the cradle to the grave. You find that skeptics often take one particular part of a man's life—say, of the life of Jacob or of David—and judge the whole by that. They say these men were queer saints; and yet God did not punish them. If you go right through these men's lives you will find that God did punish them, according to the sins they committed.

A lady once said to me that she had trouble in reading the Bible, that she seemed to not feel the interest she ought. If you don't keep up your interest in one way, try another. Never think you have to read the Bible by courses.

Proper Names[\(TOC\)](#)

Another interesting study is the meaning of proper names. I need hardly remark that every name in the Bible, especially Hebrew names, has a meaning of its own. Notice the difference between Abram (a high father), and Abraham (father of a multitude), and you have a key to his life. Another example is Jacob (supplanter), and Israel (Prince of God). The names of Job's three daughters were Jemima (a dove), Kezia (cassia), and Keren-happuch (horn of paint). These names signify beauty; so that Job's leprosy left no taint.

Chapter XII^(TOC)

Study of Subjects—Love—Sanctification—Faith—Justification—Atonement—Conversion—Heaven—Revivals—Separation—Grace—Prayer—Assurance—God's Promises.

I FIND some people now and then who boast that they have read the Bible through in so many months. Others read the Bible chapter by chapter, and get through it in a year; but I think it would be almost better to spend a year over one book. If I were going into a court of justice, and wanted to carry the jury with me, I should get every witness I could to testify to the one point on which I wanted to convince the jury. I would not get them to testify to everything, but just to that one thing. And so it should be with the Scriptures.

I took up that word "**Love**" and I do not know how many weeks I spent in studying the passages in which it occurs, till at last I could not help loving people. I had been feeding so long on Love that I was anxious to do everybody good I came in contact with.

Take **Sanctification**. I would rather take my concordance and gather passages on sanctification and sit down for four or five days and study them than have men tell me about it.

I suppose that if all the time that I have prayed for **Faith** was put together, it would be months. I used to say when I was President of the Young Men's Christian Association in Chicago, "What we want is faith; if we only have faith, we can turn Chicago upside down"—or rather, right side up. I thought that some day faith was going to come down, and strike me like lightning. But faith did not seem to come. One day I read in the tenth chapter of

Romans, "Now faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." I had closed my Bible, and prayed for faith. I now opened my Bible, and began to study, and faith has been growing ever since.

Take the doctrine that made Martin Luther such a power, **Justification**—"The just shall live by faith." When that thought flashed through Martin Luther's mind as he was ascending the Scala Santa on his knees (although some people deny the truth of this statement), he rose and went forth to be a power among the nations of the earth. Justification puts a man before God as if he had never sinned; he stands before God like Jesus Christ. Thank God, in Jesus Christ we can be perfect, but there is no perfection out of Him. God looks in His ledger, and says, "Moody, your debts have all been paid by Another; there is nothing against you."

In New England there is perhaps no doctrine assailed so much as the **Atonement**. The Atonement is foreshadowed in the garden of Eden; there is the innocent suffering for the guilty, the animals slain for Adam's sin. We find it in Abraham's day, in Moses' day; all through the books of Moses and the prophets. Look at the fifty-third of Isaiah, and at the prophecy of Daniel. Then we come into the Gospels, and Christ says, "I lay down My life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself."

Conversion^(TOC)

People talk about **Conversion**—what is conversion? The best way to find out is from the Bible. A good many don't believe in sudden conversions. You can die in a moment. Can't you receive life in a moment?

When Mr. Sankey and myself were in one place in Europe a man preached a sermon against the pernicious doctrines that we were going to preach, one of which was sudden conversion. He said conversion was a matter of time and growth. Do you know what I do when any man preaches against the doctrines I preach? I go to the Bible and find out what it says, and if I am right I give them more of the same kind. I preached more on sudden conversion in that town than in any town I was in in my life. I would like to know how long it took the Lord to convert Zaccheus? How long did it take the Lord to convert that woman whom He met at the well of Sychar? How long to convert that adulterous woman in the temple, who was caught in the very act of adultery? How long to convert that woman who anointed His feet and wiped them with the hairs of her head? Didn't she go with the word of God ringing in her ears, "Go in peace"?

There was no sign of Zaccheus being converted when he went up that sycamore tree, and he was converted when he came down, so he must have been converted between the branch and the ground. Pretty sudden work, wasn't it? But you say, "That is because Christ was there." Friends, they were converted a good deal faster after He went away than when He was here. Peter preached, and three thousand were converted in one day. Another time, after three o'clock in the afternoon, Peter and John healed a man at the gate of the Temple, and then went in and preached, and five thousand were added to

the church before night, and Jews at that. That was rather sudden work. Professor Drummond describes a man going into one of our after-meetings and saying he wants to become a Christian. "Well, my friend, what is the trouble?" He doesn't like to tell. He is greatly agitated. Finally he says, "The fact is, I have overdrawn my account"—a polite way of saying he has been stealing. "Did you take your employer's money?" "Yes." "How much?" "I don't know. I never kept account of it." "Well, you have an idea you stole \$1,500 last year?" "I am afraid it is that much." "Now, look here, sir, I don't believe in sudden work; don't you steal more than a thousand dollars this next year, and the next year not more than five hundred, and in the course of the next few years you will get so that you won't steal any. If your employer catches you, tell him you are being converted; and you will get so that you won't steal any by and by." My friends, the thing is a perfect farce. "Let him that stole, steal no more," that is what the Bible says. It is right about face.

Take another illustration. Here comes a man and he admits that he gets drunk every week. That man comes to a meeting and he wants to be converted. I say, "Don't you be in a hurry. I believe in doing the work gradually. Don't you get drunk and knock your wife down more than once a month." Wouldn't it be refreshing to your wife to go a whole month without being knocked down? Once a month, only twelve times in a year! Wouldn't she be glad to have you converted in this new way! Only get drunk after a few years on the anniversary of your wedding, and at Christmas; and then it will be effective because it is gradual. Oh! I detest, all that kind of teaching. Let us go to the Bible and see what that old Book teaches. Let us believe it, and go and act as if we believed it, too. Salvation is instantaneous. I admit that a man may be converted so that he can not tell when he crossed the line between death and life, but I also believe a man may be a thief one moment and a saint the next. I believe a man may be as vile as hell itself one moment, and be saved the

next.

Christian growth is gradual, just as physical growth is; but a man passes from death unto everlasting life quick as an act of the mind—"He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life."

People say they want to become heavenly-minded. Well, read about *heaven* and talk about it. I once preached on "Heaven," and after the meeting a lady came to me and said, "Why, Mr. Moody, I didn't know there were so many verses in the Bible about heaven." And I hadn't taken one out of a hundred. She was amazed that there was so much in the Bible about heaven.

When you are away from home, how you look for news! You skip everything in the daily paper until your eye catches the name of your own town or country. Now the Christian's home is in heaven. The Scriptures contain our title-deeds to everything we shall be worth when we die. If a will has your name in it, it is no longer a dry document. Why, then, do not Christians take more interest in the Bible?

Then, again, people say they don't believe in *revivals*. There's not a denomination in the world that didn't spring from a revival. There are the Catholic and Episcopal churches claiming to be the apostolic churches and to have sprung from Pentecost; the Lutheran from Martin Luther, and so on. They all sprung out of revivals, and yet people talk against revivals! I'd as soon talk against my mother as against a revival. Wasn't the country revived under John the Baptist? Wasn't it under Christ's teachings? People think that because a number of superficial cases of conversion occur at revivals that therefore revivals ought to be avoided. They forget the parable of the sower, where Jesus himself warns us of emotional hearers, who receive the word with joy, but soon fall away. If only one out of every four hearers is truly

converted, as in the parable, the revival has done good.

Suppose you spend a month on **Regeneration**, or **The Kingdom of God**, or **The Church** in the New Testament, or the **divinity of Christ** or the **attributes of God**. It will help you in your own spiritual life, and you will become a workman who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Make a study of the **Holy Spirit**. There are probably five hundred passages on the Holy Spirit, and what you want is to study this subject for yourself. Take the **Return of our Lord**. I know it is a controverted subject. Some say He is to come at the end of the Millennium, others say this side of the Millennium. What we want is to know what the Bible says. Why not go to the Bible and study it up for yourself; it will be worth more to you than anything you get from anyone else. Then **Separation**. I believe that a Christian man should lead a separated life. The line between the church and the world is almost obliterated to-day. I have no sympathy with the idea that you must hunt up an old musty church record in order to find out whether a man is a member of the church or not. A man ought to live so that everybody will know he is a Christian. The Bible tells us to lead a separate life. You may lose influence, but you will gain it at the same time. I suppose Daniel was the most unpopular man in Babylon at a certain time, but, thank God, he has outlived all the other men of his time. Who were the chief men of Babylon? When God wanted any work done in Babylon, He knew where to find some one to do it. You can be in the world, but not of it. Christ didn't take His disciples out of the world, but He prayed that they might be kept from evil. A ship in the water is all right, but when the water gets into the ship, then look out. A worldly Christian is just like a wrecked vessel at sea.

I remember once I took up the **grace of God**. I didn't know the difference between law and grace. When that truth dawned upon me and I saw the

difference, I studied the whole week on grace and I got so filled that I couldn't stay in the house. I said to the first man I met, "Do you know anything about the grace of God?" He thought I was a lunatic. And I just poured out for about an hour on the grace of God.

Study the subject of **Prayer**. "For real business at the mercy seat," says Spurgeon, "give me a homemade prayer, a prayer that comes out of the depths of your heart, not because you invented it, but because the Holy Spirit put it there. Though your words are broken and your sentences disconnected, God will hear you. Perhaps you can pray better without words than with them. There are prayers that break the backs of words; they are too heavy for any human language to carry."

Some people say, "I do not believe in **Assurance**." I never knew anybody who read their Bibles who did not believe in Assurance. This Book teaches nothing else. Paul says, "I know in whom I have believed." Job says, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." It is not "I hope," "I trust."

The best book on Assurance was written by one called "John," at the back part of the Bible. He wrote an epistle on this subject. Sometimes you just get a word that will be a sort of key to the epistle, and which unfolds it. Now if you turn to John 20:31, you will find it says, "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through His name." Then if you turn to 1 John 5:13, you will read thus: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may **know** that ye have eternal life; and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." That whole epistle is written on assurance. I have no doubt John had found some people who questioned about assurance and doubted whether they were saved or not, and he took up his pen and said, "I will settle that question;" and he wrote that last verse in

the twentieth chapter of his gospel.

I have heard some people say that it was not their privilege to know that they were saved; they had heard the minister say that no one could know whether they were saved or not; and they took what the minister said, instead of what the Word of God said. Others read the Bible to make it fit in and prove their favorite creed or notions; and if it does not do so, they will not read it. It has been well said that we must not read the Bible by the blue light of Presbyterianism; nor by the red light of Methodism; nor by the violet light of Episcopalianism; but by the light of the Spirit of God. If you will take up your Bible and study "assurance" for a week, you will soon see it is your privilege to know that you are a child of God.

Then take the *promises of God*. Let a man feed for a month on the promises of God, and he will not talk about his poverty, and how downcast he is, and what trouble he has day by day. You hear people say, "Oh, my leanness! how lean I am!" My friends, it is not their leanness, it is their *laziness*. If you would only go from Genesis to Revelation, and see all the promises made by God to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, to the Jews and the Gentiles, and to all His people everywhere; if you would spend a month feeding on the precious promises of God, you would not go about with your heads hanging down like bulrushes complaining how poor you are; but you would lift up your heads with confidence and proclaim the riches of His grace, because you could not help it. After the Chicago fire a man came up to me and said in a sympathizing tone, "I understand you lost everything, Moody, in the Chicago fire." "Well, then," said I, "some one has misinformed you." "Indeed! Why I was certainly told you had lost all." "No; it is a mistake," I said, "quite a mistake." "Have you got much left, then?" asked my friend. "Yes," I replied, "I have got much more left than I lost; though I can not tell how much I have

lost." "Well, I am glad of it, Moody; I did not know you were that rich before the fire." "Yes," said I, "I am a good deal richer than you could conceive; and here is my title-deed, 'He that overcometh shall inherit all things.'" They say the Rothschilds can not tell how much they are worth; and that is just my case. All things in the world are mine; I am joint heir with Jesus the Son of God. Some one has said, "God makes a promise; Faith believes it; Hope anticipates it; and Patience quietly awaits it."

Chapter XIII^(TOC)

Word Study—"Blesseds" of Revelation—"Believings" of John—"The Fear of the Lord" of Proverbs—Key Words

ANOTHER way to study the Bible is to take one word and follow it up with the help of a concordance.

Or take just one word that runs through a book. Some time ago I was wonderfully blessed by taking the seven "**Blesseds**" of the Revelation. If God did not wish us to understand the book of Revelation, He would not have given it to us at all. A good many say it is so dark and mysterious that common readers cannot understand it. Let us only keep digging away at it, and it will unfold itself by and by. Some one says it is the only book in the Bible that tells about the devil being chained; and as the devil knows that, he goes up and down Christendom and says, "It is no use your reading Revelation, you can not understand the book; it is too hard for you." The fact is, he does not want you to understand about his own defeat. Just look at the **blessings** the book contains:

1. "**Blessed is** he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."
2. "**Blessed** are the dead which die in the Lord.... Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors."
3. "**Blessed** is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments."
4. "**Blessed** are they which are called to the marriage supper of

the Lamb."

5. "**Blessed** and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. On such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."
6. "**Blessed** is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."
7. "**Blessed** are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Or you may take the eight "**overcomes**" in Revelation; and you will be wonderfully blessed by them. They take you right up to the throne of heaven; you climb by them to the throne of God.

I have been greatly blessed by going through the "**believings**" of John. Every chapter but two speaks of believing. As I said before, he wrote his gospel that we might believe. All through it is "Believe! **Believe!**" If you want to persuade a man that Christ is the Son of God, John's gospel is the book for him.

Take the six "**precious**" things in Peter's Epistles. And the seven "**walks**" of the Epistle to the Ephesians. And the five "**much mores**" of Romans V. Or the two "**receiveds**" of John I. Or the seven "**hearts**" in Proverbs 23, and especially an eighth. Or "**the fear of the Lord**" in Proverbs—

*"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.
The fear of the Lord prolongeth days.*

*In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence
The fear of the Lord is a fountain of Life.
Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and
trouble therewith.
The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom.
By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.
The fear of the Lord tendeth to life.
By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and
life.
Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long."*

Key Words^(TOC)

A friend gave me some key words recently. He said Peter wrote about **Hope**: "When the Chief Shepherd shall appear." The keynote of Paul's writings seemed to be **Faith**, and that of John's, **Love**. "Faith, hope and charity," these were the characteristics of the three men, the key-notes to the whole of their teachings. James wrote of **Good Works**, and Jude of **Apostasy**.

In the general epistles of Paul some one suggested the phrase "**in Christ**." In the book of Romans we find justification by faith **in Christ**. Corinthians presents sanctification **in Christ**. The book of Galatians, adoption or liberty **in Christ**. Ephesians presents fulness **in Christ**. Philippians, consolation **in Christ**. In Colossians we have completeness **in Christ**. Thessalonians gives us hope **in Christ**.

Different systems of key words are published by Bible scholars, and it is a good thing for every one to know one system or other.

Chapter XIV (TOC)

Bible Marking—Borrowing and Lending Bibles—Necessity of Marking—Advantages—How to Mark and What to Mark—Taking Notes—"Four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise"—"Every eye shall see Him"—Additional Examples—Suggestions.

DON'T be afraid to borrow and lend Bibles. Some time ago a man wanted to take my Bible home to get a few things out of it, and when it came back I found this noted in it:

Justification, a change of state, a new standing before God.

Repentance, a change of mind, a new mind about God.

Regeneration, a change of nature, a new heart from God.

Conversion, a change of life, a new life for God.

Adoption, a change of family, new relationship towards God.

Sanctification, a change of service, separation unto God.

Glorification, a new state, a new condition with God.

In the same hand-writing I found these lines:

Jesus only; *the light of heaven is the face of Jesus.*

The joy of heaven is the presence of Jesus.

The melody of heaven is the name of Jesus.

The theme of heaven is the work of Jesus.

The employment of heaven is the service of Jesus.

The fulness of heaven is Jesus himself.

The duration of heaven is the eternity of Jesus.

Bible Marking: Its Necessity[\(TOC\)](#)

An old writer said that some books are to be tasted, some to be swallowed, and some to be chewed and digested. The Bible is one that you can never exhaust. It is like a bottomless well: you can always find fresh truths gushing forth from its pages.

Hence the great fascination of constant and earnest Bible study. Hence also the necessity of marking your Bible. Unless you have an uncommon memory, you cannot retain the good things you hear. If you trust to your ear alone, they will escape you in a day or two; but if you mark your Bible and enlist the aid of your eye, you will never lose them. The same applies to what you read.

Its Advantages^(TOC)

Bible marking should be made the servant of the memory. If properly done, it sharpens the memory; rather than blunts it, because it gives prominence to certain things that catch the eye, which by constant reading you get to learn of by heart.

It helps you to locate texts.

It saves you the trouble of writing out notes of your addresses. Once in the margin, always ready.

I have carried one Bible with me a great many years. It is worth a good deal to me, and I will tell you why; because I have so many passages marked in it, that if I am called upon to speak at any time I am ready. I have little words marked in the margin, and they are a sermon to me. Whether I speak about ***Faith, Hope, Charity, Assurance***, or any subject whatever, it all comes back to me; and however unexpectedly I am called upon to preach, I am always ready. Every child of God ought to be like a soldier, and always hold himself in readiness. If the Queen of England's army were ordered to India tomorrow, the soldier is ready for the journey. But we can not be ready if we do not study the Bible. So whenever you hear a good thing, just put it down, because if it is good for you it will be good for somebody else; and we should pass the coin of heaven around just as we do the coin of the realm.

People tell me they have nothing to say. "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." Get full of Scripture and then you can't help but say it. It says itself. Keep the world out of your heart by getting full of something else. A man tried to build a flying machine. He made some wings and filled

them with gas. He said he couldn't quite fly, but the gas was lighter than the air and it helped him over lots of obstructions. So when you get these heavenly truths, they are lighter than the air down here and help you over trouble.

Bible marking makes the Bible a new book to you. If there was a white birch tree within a quarter of a mile of the home of your boyhood, you would remember it all your life. Mark your Bible, and instead of its being dry and uninteresting, it will become a beautiful book to you. What you see makes a more lasting impression on your memory than what you hear.

How to Mark and What to Mark^(TOC)

There are many methods of marking. Some use six or eight colored inks or pencils. Black is used to mark texts that refer to sin; red, all references to the cross; blue, all references to heaven; and so on. Others invent symbols. When there is any reference to the cross, they put "+" in the margin. Some write "G", meaning the Gospel.

There is danger of overdoing this and making your marks more prominent than the scripture itself. If the system is complicated it becomes a burden, and you are likely to get confused. It is easier to remember the text than the meaning of your marks.

Black ink is good enough for all purposes. I use no other, unless it be red ink to draw attention to "the blood."

The simplest way to mark is to underline the words or to make a stroke alongside the verse. Another good way is to go over the printed letters with your pen, and make them thicker. The word will then stand out like heavier type. Mark "only" in Psalm 62 in this way.

When any word or phrase is oft repeated in a chapter or book, put consecutive numbers in the margin over against the text. Thus, in the second chapter of Habakkuk, we find five "woes" against five common sins; (1) verse 6, (2) verse 9, (3) verse 12, (4) verse 15, (5) verse 19. Number the ten plagues in this way. When there is a succession of promises or charges in a verse, it is better to write the numbers small at the beginning of each separate promise. Thus, there is a seven-fold promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:2-3: "(1) I will make of thee a great nation, (2) and I will bless thee, (3) and make

thy name great; (4) and thou shalt be a blessing; (5) and I will bless them that bless thee, (6) and curse him that curseth thee: (7) and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." In Proverbs 1:22, we have (1) simple ones, (2) scorers, (3) fools.

Put a "x" in the margin against things not generally observed: for example, the laws regarding women wearing men's clothes, and regarding bird-nesting, in Deuteronomy 22:5-6; the sleep of the poor man and of the rich man compared, Ecclesiastes 5:12.

I also find it helpful to mark:

1. cross-references. Opposite Genesis 1:1, write "Through faith, Hebrews 11:3"—because there we read—"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." Opposite Genesis 28:12, write—"An answer to prayer, Genesis 35:3." Opposite Matthew 6:33, write "1 Kings 3:13" and "Luke 10:42," which give illustrations of seeking the kingdom of God first. Opposite Genesis 37:7, write—"Genesis 50:18"—which is the fulfilment of the dream.
2. Railroad connections, that is, connections made by fine lines running across the page. In Daniel 6, connect "will deliver" (verse 16), "able to deliver" (verse 20), and "hath delivered" (verse 27). In Psalm 66, connect "come and see" (verse 5) with "come and hear" (verse 16).
3. Variations of the Revised Version: thus Romans 8:26 reads—"the Spirit Himself" in the R. V., not "itself." Note also marginal readings like Mark 6:19, "an inward grudge" instead of "a quarrel."

4. Words that have changed their meaning; "meal" for "meat" in Leviticus. Or where you can explain a difficulty: "above" for "upon" in Numbers 11:31. Or where the English does not bring out the full meaning of the original as happens in the names of God: "Elohim" in Genesis 1:1, "Jehovah Elohim" in Genesis 2:4, "El Shaddai" in Genesis 17:1, and so on.
5. Unfortunate divisions of chapters. The last verse of John 7 reads—"And every man went unto his own house." Chapter 8 begins "Jesus went unto the mount of Olives." There ought to be no division of chapters here.
6. At the beginning of every book write a short summary of its contents, something like the summary given in some Bibles at the head of every chapter.
7. Key words and key verses.
8. Make a note of any text that marks a religious crisis in your life. I once heard Rev. F. B. Meyer preach on 1 Corinthians 1:9, and he asked his hearers to write on their Bibles that they were that day "called unto the fellowship of His Son Christ our Lord."

Taking Notes^(TOC)

When a preacher gives out a text, mark it; as he goes on preaching, put a few words in the margin, key-words that shall bring back the whole sermon again. By that plan of making a few marginal notes, I can remember sermons I heard years and years ago. Every man ought to take down some of the preacher's words and ideas, and go into some lane or by-way, and preach them again to others. We ought to have four ears—two for ourselves and two for other people. Then, if you are in a new town, and have nothing else to say, jump up and say: "I heard someone say so and so;" and men will always be glad to hear you if you give them heavenly food. The world is perishing for lack of it.

Some years ago I heard an Englishman in Chicago preach from a curious text: "There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise." "Well," said I to myself, "what will you make of these 'little things'? I have seen them a good many times." Then he went on speaking: "The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer." He said God's people are like the ants. "Well," I thought, "I have seen a good many of them, but I never saw one like me." "They are like the ants," he said, "because they are laying up treasure in heaven, and preparing for the future; but the world rushes madly on, and forgets all about God's command to lay up for ourselves incorruptible treasures."

"The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make these their houses in the rocks." He said, "The conies are very weak things; if you were to throw a stick at one of them you could kill it; but they are very wise, for they build their houses in rocks, where they are out of harm's way. And God's people are very wise,

although very feeble; for they build on the Rock of Ages, and that Rock is Christ." "Well," I said, "I am certainly like the conies."

Then came the next verse: "The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands." I wondered what he was going to make of that. "Now God's people," he said, "have no king down here. The world said, 'Caesar is our king;' but he is not *our* King; our King is the Lord of Hosts. The locusts went out by bands; so do God's people. Here is a Presbyterian band, here an Episcopalian band, here a Methodist band, and so on; but by and by the great King will come and catch up all these separate bands, and they will all be one; one fold and one Shepherd." And when I heard that explanation, I said; "I would be like the locusts." I have become so sick, my friends, of this miserable sectarianism, that I wish it could all be swept away.

"Well," he went on again, "the spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces." When he got to the spider, I said, "I don't like that at all; I don't like the idea of being compared to a spider." "But," he said, "If you go into a king's palace, there is the spider hanging on his gossamer web, and look-down with scorn and contempt on the gilded salon; he is laying hold of things above. And so every child of God ought to be like the spider, and lay hold of the unseen things of God. You see, then, my brethren, we who are God's people are like the ants, the conies, the locusts, and the spiders, little things, but exceeding wise." I put that down in the margin of my bible, and the recollection of it does me as much good now as when I first heard it.

A friend of mine was in Edinburgh and he heard one of the leading Scotch Presbyterian ministers. He had been preaching from the text, "Every eye shall see Him," and he closed up by saying: "Yes, every eye. Adam will see Him, and when he does he will say: 'This is He who was promised to me in that dark day when I fell;' Abraham will see Him and will say: 'This is He whom I

saw afar off; but now face to face;' Mary will see Him, and she will sing with new interest that magnificat. And I, too, shall see Him, and when I do, I will sing: 'Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee.'"

Additional Examples^(TOC)

Turn to Exodus 6:6-7, 8. In these verses we find seven "I wills."

I will bring you out from under the burden of the Egyptians.

I will rid you out of their bondage.

I will redeem you with a stretched-out arm.

I will take you to me for a people.

I will be to you a God.

I will bring you in into the land [of Canaan].

I will give it to you for a heritage.

Again: Isaiah 41:10. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Mark what God says:

*He is **with** His servant.*

*He is his **God**.*

*He will **strengthen**.*

*He will **help**.*

*He will **uphold**.*

Again: Psalm 103:2: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." If you can not remember them all, remember what you can. In the next three verses there are five things:

*Who **forgiveth** all thine iniquities.*

*Who **healeth** all thy diseases.*

*Who **redeemeth** thy life from destruction.*

*Who **crowne** thee with loving kindness and tender mercies.*

*Who **satisfieth** thy mouth with good things.*

We can learn some things about the mercy of the Lord from

this same Psalm:

verse 4—Its quality, "tender."

verse 8—Its measure, "plenteous."

verse 11—Its magnitude, "great," "according to the height of the heaven above the earth." See margin.

verse 17—Its duration, "from everlasting to everlasting."

Twenty-third Psalm. I suppose I have heard as many good sermons on the twenty-third Psalm as on any other six verses in the Bible. I wish I had begun to take notes upon them years ago when I heard the first one. Things slip away from you when you get to be fifty years of age. Young men had better go into training at once.

With me, the Lord.

Beneath me, green pastures.

Beside me, still waters.

Before me, a table.

Around me, mine enemies.

After me, goodness and mercy.

Ahead of me, the house of the Lord.

"Blessed is the day," says an old divine, "when Psalm twenty-three was born!" It has been more used than almost any other passage in the Bible.

verse 1—A happy life.

verse 4—A happy death.

verse 6—A happy eternity.

Take Psalm 102:6-7: "I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert. I watch and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop." It seems strange until you reflect that a pelican carries its food with it, that the owl keeps its eyes open at night, and that the sparrow watches alone. So the Christian must carry his food with him—the Bible—and he must keep his

eyes open and watch alone.

Turn to Isaiah 32, and mark four things that God promises in verse 2: "And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." There we have—

The hiding place from danger.

The cover from the tempest.

Rivers of water.

The Rock of Ages.

In the third and fourth verses of the same chapter: "And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly." We have eyes, ears, heart and tongue, all ready to pay homage to the King of Righteousness.

Now turn into the New Testament, John 4:47-53.

The noble **heard** about Jesus.

went unto Him.

besought Him.

believed Him.

knew that his prayer was answered.

Again: Matthew 11:28-30:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Someone has said these verses contain the only description

we have of Christ's heart.

Something to do, come unto Jesus.

Something to leave, your burden.

Something to take, His yoke.

Something to find, rest unto your soul.

Again: John 14:6. "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

The way, follow me.

The truth, learn of me.

The life, abide in me.

Suggestions^(TOC)

Do not buy a Bible that you are unwilling to mark and use. An interleaved Bible gives more room for notes.

Be precise and concise: for example, Nehemiah 13:18: "A warning from history."

Never mark anything because you saw it in some one else's Bible. If it does not come home to you, if you not understand it, do not put it down.

Never pass a nugget by without trying to grasp it. Then mark it down.

Chapter XV (TOC)

Personal Work—Three Kinds of Church Services—Church Members—Individual Experience—One Inquirer at a Time—Those who lack Assurance—Backsliders—Not Convicted of Sin—Deeply Convicted—The Divinity of Christ—Can't Hold Out—No Strength—Feelings—Can't Believe—Can't be Saved all at Once—Not Now—Further Suggestions.

PERSONAL dealing is of the most vital importance. No one can tell how many persons have been lost to the Kingdom of God through lack of following up the preaching of the Gospel by personal work. It is deplorable how few church-members are qualified to deal with inquirers, yet that is the very work in which they ought most efficiently to aid the pastor. People are not usually converted under the preaching of the minister. It is in the inquiry-meeting that they are most likely to be brought to Christ. They are perhaps awakened under the minister, but God generally uses some one person to point out the way of salvation and bring the anxious to a decision. Some people can't see the use of inquiry-meetings, and think they are something new, and that we haven't any authority for them. But they are no innovation. We read about them all through the Bible. When John the Baptist was preaching he was interrupted. It would be a good thing if people would interrupt the minister now and then in the middle of some metaphysical sermon, and ask what he means. The only way to make sure that people understand what he is talking about is to let them ask questions. I don't know what some men, who have got the whole address written out, would do if some one should get up and ask: "What must I do to be saved?" Yet such questions would do more good than anything else you could have. They would awake a spirit of inquiry. Some of Christ's sweetest teachings were

called forth by questions.

Three Kinds of Church Services [\(TOC\)](#)

There ought to be three kinds of services in all churches: one for worship—to offer praise, and to wait on the Lord in prayer; another for teaching; and at these services there needn't be a word to the unconverted, (although some men never close any meeting without presenting the Gospel), but let them be for the church people; and a third for preaching the Gospel. Sunday morning is the best time for teaching, but Sunday night is the best night in the whole week, of the regular church services, to preach the simple Gospel of the Son of God. When you have preached that, and have felt the power of the unseen world, and there are souls trembling in the balance, don't say, as I have heard good ministers say: "***If*** there are any in this, place concerned—at all concerned—about their souls, I will be in the pastor's study on Friday night, and will be glad to see them." By that time the chances are the impression will be all wiped out. Deal with them that night before the devil snatches away the good seed. Wherever the Gospel is proclaimed, there should be an expectation of immediate results, and if this were the case the Church of Christ would be in a constant state of grace.

"Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God." How much would Paul and Barnabas have accomplished if they had pronounced the benediction and sent these people home? It is a thing to weep over that we have got thousands and thousands of church members who are good for nothing towards extending the Kingdom of God. They understand bazaars, and fairs, and sewing-circles; but when you ask them to sit down and show a man or woman the way into

God's kingdom, they say: "Oh, I am not able to do that. Let the deacons do it, or some one else." It is all wrong. The Church ought to be educated on this very point. There are a great many church-members who are just hobbling about on crutches. They can just make out that they are saved, and imagine that is all that constitutes a Christian in this nineteenth century. As far as helping others is concerned, that never enters their heads. They think if they can get along themselves, they are doing amazingly well. They have no idea what the Holy Ghost wants to do through them.

No matter how weak you are, God can use you; and you cannot say what a stream of salvation you may set in motion. John the Baptist was a young man when he died; but he led Andrew to Christ, and Andrew led Peter, and so the river flowed on.

In the closing pages of this book I want to give some hints in regard to passing on the good to others, and thus profiting them by your knowledge of the Bible. Every believer, whether minister or layman, is in duty bound to spread the gospel. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" was the wide command of our parting Savior to His disciples.

There are many Bible students, however, who utterly neglect the command. They are like sponges, always sucking in the Water of Life, but never imparting it to thirsty souls around.

A clergyman used to go hunting, and when his bishop reproved him, he said he never went hunting when he was on duty.

"When is a clergyman off duty?" asked the bishop.

And so with every Christian: when is he off duty?

To be ready with a promise for the dying, a word of hope for the bereaved

and afflicted, of encouragement for the downhearted, of advice for the anxious, is a great accomplishment. The opportunities to be useful in these ways are numerous. Not only in inquiry-meetings and church work, but in our everyday contact with others the opening constantly occurs. A word, a look, a hand-clasp, a prayer, may have an unending influence for good.

"Is your father at home?" asked a gentleman of a doctor's child.

"No," he said, "he's away."

"Where can I find him?"

"Well," he said, "you've got to look for him in some place where people are sick or hurt, or something like that. I don't know where he is, but he's helping somewhere."

That ought to be the spirit animating every follower of Him who went about doing good.

Laying Down Rules^(TOC)

I admit one can't lay down positive rules in dealing with individuals about their religious condition. Tin soldiers are exactly alike, but not so men. Matthew and Paul were a good way apart. The people we deal with may be widely different. What would be medicine for one might be rank poison for another. In the 15th of Luke, the elder son and the younger son were exactly opposite. What would have been good counsel for one might have been ruin to the other. God never made two persons to look alike. If we had made men, probably we would have made them all alike, even if we had to crush some bones to get them into the mould. But that is not God's way. In the universe there is infinite variety. The Philippian jailer required peculiar treatment. Christ dealt with Nicodemus one way, and the woman at the well another way.

Your Own Experience^(TOC)

It is a great mistake, in dealing with inquirers, to tell your conversion experience. Experience may have its place, but I don't think it has its place when we are dealing with inquirers; for the first thing the man you are talking to will do will be to look for your experience. He doesn't want your experience. He wants one of his own.

Suppose Bartimeus had gone to Jerusalem to the man that was born blind, and said:

"Now, just tell us how the Lord cured you."

The Jerusalem man might have said: "He just spat on the ground, and anointed my eyes with the clay."

"Ho!" says Bartimeus, "I don't believe you ever got your sight at all. Who ever heard of such a way as that? Why, to fill a man's eyes with clay is enough to put them out!"

Both men were blind, but they were not cured alike. A great many men are kept out of the kingdom of God because they are looking for somebody else's experience—the experience their grandmother had, their aunt, or some one in the family.

One Inquirer at a Time^(TOC)

Then it is very important to deal with one at a time. A doctor doesn't give cod-liver oil for all complaints. "No," he says, "I must seek what each one wants." He looks at the tongue, and inquires into the symptoms. One may have ague, another typhoid fever, and another may have consumption. What a man wants is to be able to read his Bible, and to read human nature, too.

Those do best who do not run from one person in an inquiry-meeting to another, offering words of encouragement everywhere. They would do better by going to but one or two of an afternoon or evening. We are building for eternity, and can take time. The work will not then be superficial.

Try first to win the person's confidence, and then your words will have more weight. Use great tact in approaching the subject.

It will be a great help to divide persons into classes as much as possible, and bring certain passages of Scripture to bear upon these classes. It is unwise, however, to use verses that you have seen in books until you are perfectly clear in your own mind of their meaning and application. Avail yourself by all means of suggestions from outside sources, but as David could not fight in Saul's armor, so you possibly may not be able to make good use of texts and passages which have proved powerful in the hands of another. The best way is to make your own classification, and select suitable texts, which experience will lead you to adopt or change, according to circumstances. Make yourself familiar with a few passages, rather than have a hazy and incomplete idea of a large number.

The following classification may be found helpful—

1. Believers who lack assurance; who are in darkness because they have sinned; who neglect prayer, Bible study, and other means of grace; who are in darkness because of an unforgiving spirit; who are timid or ashamed to confess Christ openly; who are not engaged in active work for the Master; who lack strength to resist temptation and to stand fast in time of trial; who are not growing in grace.
2. Believers who have backslidden.
3. Those who are deeply convicted of sin, and are seeking salvation.
4. Those who have difficulties of various kinds. Many believe that they are so sinful that God will not accept them, that they have sinned away their opportunities and now it is too late, that the gospel was never intended for them. Others are kept back by honest doubts regarding the divinity of Christ, the genuineness of the Bible. Others again are troubled by the mysteries of the Bible, the doctrines of election, instant conversion, etc., or they say they have sought Christ in vain, that they have tried and failed, they are afraid they could not hold out. A large class is in great trouble about feelings.
5. Those who make excuses. There is a wide difference between a person who has a *reason* and one who had an *excuse* to offer.

The commonest excuses are that there are so many inconsistent Christians, hypocrites in the church; that it would cost too much to become Christians, that they could not continue in their present occupation, etc.; that they expect to

become Christians some day; that their companions hold them back, or would cast them off if they were converted.

6. Those who are not convicted of sin. Some are deliberately sinful; they want to "see life," to "sow their wild oats;" others are thoughtless; others again are simply ignorant of Jesus Christ and His work. A large number do not feel their need of a Savior because they are self-righteous, trusting to their own morality and good works.
7. Those who hold hostile creeds, embracing sectarians, cranks, Jews, spiritualists, infidels, atheists, agnostics, etc.

Always use your Bible in personal dealing. Do not trust to memory, but make the person read the verse for himself. Do not use printed slips or books. Hence, if convenient, always carry a Bible or New Testament with you.

It is a good thing to get a man on his knees (if convenient), but don't get him there before he is ready. You may have to talk with him two hours before you can get him that far along. But when you think he is about ready, say, "Shall we not ask God to give us light on this point?" Sometimes a few minutes in prayer have done more for a man than two hours in talk. When the spirit of God has led him so far that he is willing to have you pray with him, he is not very far from the kingdom. Ask him to pray for himself. If he doesn't want to pray, let him use a Bible prayer; get him to repeat it; for example: "Lord help me!" Tell the man: "If the Lord helped that poor woman, He will help you if you make the same prayer. He will give you a new heart if you pray from the heart." Don't send a man home to pray. Of course he should pray at home, but I would rather get his lips open at once. It is a good thing for a man to hear his own voice in prayer. It is a good thing for him to cry out: "God be

merciful to me a sinner!"

Urge an immediate decision, but never tell a man he is converted. Never tell him he is saved. Let the Holy Spirit reveal that to him. You can shoot a man and see that he is dead, but you can not see when a man receives eternal life. You can't afford to deceive one about this great question. But you can help his faith and trust, and lead him aright.

Always be prepared to do personal work. When war was declared between France and Germany, Count von Moltke, the German general, was prepared for it. Word brought to him late at night, after he had gone to bed. "Very well," he said to the messenger, "the third portfolio on the left"; and he went to sleep again.

Do the work boldly. Don't take those in a position in life above your own, but as a rule, take those on the same footing. Don't deal with a person of opposite sex, if it can be otherwise arranged. Bend all your endeavors to answer for poor, struggling souls that question of all importance to them. "What must I do to be saved?"

Chapter XVI_(TOC)

Summary of Suggestions

1. Have for constant use a portable reference Bible, a Cruden's Concordance, and a Topical Text Book.
2. Always carry a Bible or Testament in your pocket and do not be ashamed of people seeing you read it on trains, etc.
3. Do not be afraid of marking it, or of making marginal notes. Mark texts that contain promises, exhortations, warnings to sinners and to Christians, gospel invitations to the unconverted, and so on.
4. Set apart at least fifteen minutes a day for study and meditation. This little will have great results and will never be regretted.
5. Prepare your heart to know the law of the Lord, and ***to do it***. Ezra 7:10.
6. Always ask God to open the eyes of your understanding that you may see the truth; and expect that He will answer your prayer.
7. Cast every burden of doubt upon the Lord. "He will never suffer the righteous to be moved." Do not be afraid to look for a reason for the hope that is in you.

8. Believe in the Bible as God's revelation to you, and act accordingly. Do not reject any portion because it contains the supernatural, or because you can not understand it. Reverence all Scripture. Remember God's own estimate of it: "Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy Name."
9. Learn at least one verse of Scripture each day. Verses committed to memory will be wonderfully useful in your daily life and walk. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." Some Christians can quote Shakespeare and Longfellow better than the Bible.
10. If you are a preacher or a Sunday school teacher, try at any cost to master your Bible. You ought to know it better than any one in your congregation or class.
11. Strive to be exact in quoting Scripture.
12. Adopt some systematic plan of Bible study: either topical, or by subjects, like "The Blood," "Prayer," "Hope," etc.; or by books; or by some other plan outlined in the preceding pages.
13. Study to know for what and to whom each book of the Bible was written. Combine the Old Testament with the New. Study Hebrews and Leviticus together, the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles, the Prophets and the historical books of the old Testament.
14. Study how to use the Bible so as to "walk with God" in closer communion; also, so as to gain a working knowledge of Scripture for leading others to Christ. An old minister used to

say that the cries of neglected texts were always sounding in his ears, asking why he did not show how important they were.

15. Do not be satisfied with simply reading a chapter daily. **Study** the meaning of at least one verse.

^[1] ***The New Topical Text Book***. An aid to topical study of the Bible. Cloth, 25 cents; by mail, 30 cents. ***The Bible Text Cyclopedic***, a complete classification of Scripture texts in the form of an alphabetical list of subjects by Rev. James Inglis. Large 8 vo. cloth, \$1.75. ***Both issued by the publishers of this volume.***

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST

BY

ANDREW MURRAY

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Preface^(TOC)

In olden times believers met God, knew Him, walked with Him, had the clear and full consciousness that they had dealings with the God of heaven, and had, too, through faith, the assurance that they and their lives were well pleasing to Him. When the Son of God came to earth, and revealed the Father, it was that such intercourse with God, and the assurance of His favour, might become clearer, and be the abiding portion of every child of God. When He was exalted to the Throne of Glory, it was that He might send down into our hearts the Holy Spirit, in whom the Father and the Son have their own blessed life in heaven, to maintain in us, in Divine power, the blessed life of fellowship with God. It was to be one of the marks of the New Covenant that each member of it should walk in personal communion with God. 'They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity! 'The personal fellowship and knowledge of God in the Holy Spirit was to be the fruit of the pardon of sin. The Spirit of God's own Son, sent into our hearts to do each moment a work as Divine as the work of the Son in redeeming us, to displace our life and replace it by the life of Christ in power, to make the Son of God divinely and consciously present with us always—this was what the Father had promised as the distinctive blessing of the New Testament. The fellowship of God as the ThreeOne was now to be within us; the Spirit revealing the Son in us, and through Him the Father.

That there are but few believers who realize this walk with God, this life in God, such as their Father has prepared for them, no one will deny. Nor will it

admit of dispute what the cause of this failure is, It is acknowledged on all hands that the Holy Spirit, through whose Divine Omnipotence this inner revelation of the Son and the Father in the life and the likeness of the believer is to take place is not known or acknowledged in the Church as He should be. In our preaching and in our practice He does not hold that place of prominence which He has in God's plan and in His promises. While our creed on the Holy Spirit is orthodox and scriptural, His presence and power in the life of believers, in the ministry of the word, in the witness of the Church to the world, is not what the word promises or God's plan requires.

There are not a few who are conscious of this great need, and earnestly ask to know God's mind concerning it, and the way of deliverance out of it. Some feel that their own life is not what it should and might be. Many of them can look back to some special season of spiritual revival, when their whole life was apparently lifted to a higher level. The experience of the joy and strength of the Saviour's presence, as they learned that He would keep them trusting, was, for a time, most real and blessed. But it did not last: there was a very gradual decline to a lower stage, with much of vain effort and sad failure. They would fain know where the evil lies. There can be little doubt that the answer must be this: they did not know or honour the Indwelling Spirit as the strength of their life, as the power of their faith, to keep them always looking to Jesus and trusting in Him. They knew not what it was, day by day, to wait in lowly reverence for the Holy Spirit to deliver from the power of the flesh, and to maintain the wonderful presence of the Father and the Son within them.

There are many more, tens of thousands of God's dear children, who as yet know little of any even temporary experiences of a brighter life than one of never-ending stumbling and rising. They have lived outside of revivals and

conferences; the teaching they receive is not specially helpful in the matter of entire consecration. Their surroundings are not favourable to the growth of the spiritual life. There is many an hour of earnest longing to live more according to the will of God, but the prospect of its being really possible to walk and please God, worthy of the Lord to all well pleasing has hardly dawned upon them. To the best part of their birthright as God's children, to the most precious gift of the Father's love in Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit, to dwell in them, and to lead them, they are practically strangers.

I would indeed count it an unspeakable privilege if my God would use me to bring to these His beloved children the question of His Word: 'Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' and then to tell them the blessed news of what that glorious work is which this Spirit, whom they have within them, is able to do in each of them. I would if I might, show them what it is that has hitherto hindered that Spirit from doing His blessed work, and how divinely simple the path is by which each upright soul can enter into the joy of all that He has been given to work within us, even the full revelation of the presence of the Indwelling Jesus. I have humbly, asked my God that He would give, even in my feeble words, the quickening of His Holy Spirit, that through them the Thoughts and the Truth, the Love and the Power of God, may enter and shine into the hearts of many of His children, and bring in blessed reality and experience the wondrous Gift of Love of which they tell—the Life and the Joy of the Holy Ghost, as He brings nigh and glorifies within them that Jesus whom hitherto they have only known at a distance, high above them.

I must confess to having had still another wish. I have strong fears-I desire to say it in deep humility-that in the theology of our Churches the Teaching and Leading of the Spirit of Truth, the anointing which alone teacheth all things,

has not practical recognition which a Holy God demands, which our Saviour meant Him to have. In everything that concerns the Word of God, and the church of Christ, and the work of Saving Love to be done on the earth in the name of Christ, it was meant that the Holy Spirit should have the same and supreme place of honour that He had in the Church of the Acts of the Apostles. If the leaders of our church-thought and church-councils, our professors of theology and our commentators, if our ministers and students, our religious writers and workers, were all fully conscious of this fact, surely the signs of that honour given and accepted, marks of His Holy Presence would be clearer, His mighty works more manifest. I trust it has not been presumptuous in me to hope that what has been written may help to remind even our Masters in Israel of what is so easily overlooked, that the first, the indispensable requirement for what is really to bear fruit for eternity is, that it be full of the power of the Eternal Spirit.

I am well aware that it is expected of what asks the attention of our men of mind and culture, our "scientific theologians, that it shall bear such marks of scholarship, of force of thought and power of expression, as I cannot dare to lay claim to. And yet I venture to ask any of these honoured brethren under whose eyes these lines may come, to regard the book, if in no other aspect, at least as the echo of a cry for light rising from ten thousand hearts, as the statement of questions for the solution of which many are longing. There is a deep feeling abroad that the Scripture ideal, that Christ's own promise of what the Church should be, and its actual state, do not correspond.

Of all questions in theology there is none that leads us more deeply into the glory of God, or that is of more intense vital and practical importance for daily life, than that which deals with what is the consummation and culmination of the Revelation of God and the work of Redemption: in what

way and to what extent God's Holy Spirit can dwell in, can fill, can make into a holy and beautiful temple of God, the heart of His child, with Christ reigning there, as an Ever-present and Almighty Saviour. It is the question in theology of which the solution, if it were sought and found in the presence and teaching of the Spirit Himself, would transform all our theology into that knowledge of God which is eternal life.

Of theology, in every possible shape, we have no lack. But it is as if, with all our writing, and preaching, and working, there is something wanting. Is not the power from on high the one thing we lack? May it not be that, with all our love for Christ and labour for His cause, we have not made the chief object of our desire what was the chief object of His heart when He ascended the throne—have His disciples as a company of men waiting the clothing with the power of the Holy Ghost, that in that power of the felt presence of their Lord they might testify of Him? May God raise from among our theologians many who shall give their lives to secure for God's Holy Spirit His recognition in the lives of believers, in the ministry try of the word by tongue and pen, in all the work done in His Church.

I have noticed with deep interest a call to union in prayer, in the first place, 'that Christian life and teaching may be increasingly subject to the Holy Ghost.' I believe that one of the first blessings of this united prayer will be to direct attention to the reason why such prayer is not more evidently answered, and to the true preparation for receiving an abundant answer. In my reading in connection with this subject, in my observation of the lives of believers, and in my personal experience, I have been very deeply impressed with one thought. It is, that our prayer for the mighty working of the Holy Spirit through us and around us can only be powerfully answered as His indwelling in every believer is more clearly acknowledged and lived out. We

have the Holy Spirit within us: only he who is faithful in the lesser will receive the greater. 'As we first yield ourselves to be led by the Spirit, to confess His presence in us; as believers rise to realize and accept His guidance in all their daily life; will our God be willing to entrust to us larger measures of His mighty workings. If we give ourselves entirely into His power, as our life, ruling within us, He will give Himself to us in taking a more complete possession, to work through us.

If there is one thing I desire, it is that the Lord may use what I have written to make clear and impress this one truth: it is as an Indwelling Life that the Holy Spirit must be known. In a living, adoring faith, the Indwelling must be accepted and treasured, until it become part of the consciousness of the new man: The Holy Spirit possesses me. In this faith the whole life, even to the least things, must be surrendered to His leading, while all that is of the flesh or self is crucified and put to death. If in this faith we wait on God for His Divine leading and working, placing ourselves entirely at His disposal our prayer cannot remain unheard; there will be operations and manifestations of the Spirit's power in the Church and the world such as we could not dare to hope. The Holy Spirit only demands vessels entirely set apart to Him. He will delight to manifest the glory of Christ our Lord.

I commit each beloved fellow-believer to the teaching of the Holy Spirit. May we all, as we study His work, be partakers of the anointing which teacheth all things.

ANDREW MURRAY.

WELLINGTON, CAPE OF GOOD HOPE 15th August 1888.

Chapter 1^(TOC)

A New Spirit, and God's Spirit

'A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will put my Spirit within you.'—Ezekiel 36:26, 27.

GOD has revealed Himself in two great dispensations. In the Old we have the, time of promise and preparation, in the New that of fulfilment and possession.' In harmony with the difference of the two dispensations, there is a two fold working of God's Spirit. In the Old Testament we have the Spirit of God coming upon men, and working on them in special times and ways, working from above and without, inwards. In the New we have the Holy Spirit entering them and dwelling within them, working from within, outwards and upwards. In the former we have the Spirit of God as the Almighty and Holy One; in the latter we have the Spirit of the Father of Jesus Christ.

The difference between the twofold, operation of the Holy Spirit is not to be regarded as if, with the closing of the Old Testament, the former ceased, and there was in the New no more of the work of preparation. By no means. Just as there were in the Old blessed anticipations of the indwelling of God's Spirit, so now in the New Testament the twofold working still continues. According to the lack of knowledge, or of faith, or—of faithfulness, a believer may even in these days get little beyond the Old Testament measure

of the Spirit's working. The indwelling Spirit has indeed been given to every child of God, and yet he may experience little beyond the first half of the promise, the new spirit given us in regeneration, and know almost nothing of God's own Spirit, as a living person put within us. The Spirit's work in convincing of sin and of righteousness, in His leading to repentance and faith and the new life, is but the preparatory work. The distinctive glory of the dispensation of the Spirit is His Divine personal indwelling in the heart of the believer, there to reveal the Father and the Son. It is only as Christians understand and remember this, that they will be able to claim the full blessing prepared for them in Christ Jesus.

In the words of Ezekiel we find, in the one promise, this twofold blessing God bestows through His Spirit very strikingly set forth. The first is, 'I will put within you a new spirit,' that is, man's own spirit is to be renewed and quickened by the work of God's Spirit. When this has been done, then there is the second blessing, 'I will put my Spirit within you,' to dwell in that new spirit, Where God is to dwell, He must have a habitation. With Adam He had to create a body before He could breathe the spirit of life into him. In Israel the tabernacle and the temple had to be built and completed before God could come down and take possession. And just so a new heart is given, and a new spirit put within us, as the indispensable condition of God's own Spirit being given to dwell within us. The difference is the same we find in David's prayer. First, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God! and renew a right spirit within me;' then, 'Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.' Or what is indicated in the words, 'That which is born of the spirit is spirit:' there is the Divine Spirit begetting, and the new spirit begotten by Him. So the two are also distinguished, 'God's Spirit beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God! Our spirit is the renewed regenerate spirit; dwelling in this, and yet to be distinguished from it, is God's Holy Spirit, witnessing in, with,

and through it.'

The importance of recognising this distinction can easily be perceived. We shall then be able to understand the true relation between regeneration and the indwelling of the Spirit. The former is that work of the Holy Spirit, by which He convinces us of sin, leads to repentance and faith in Christ, and imparts a new nature. Through the Spirit God thus fulfils the promise, 'I will put a new spirit within you.' The believer is now a child of God, a temple ready for the Spirit to dwell in. Where faith claims it, the second half of the promise is fulfilled as surely as the first. As long now as the believer only looks at regeneration, and the renewal wrought in his spirit, he will not come to the life of joy and strength which is meant for him. But when he accepts God's promise that there is something better than even the new nature, than the inner temple, that there is the Spirit of the Father and the Son to dwell within him, there opens up a wonderful prospect of holiness and blessedness. It becomes his one great desire to know this Holy Spirit aright, how He works and what He asks, to know how he may to the full experience His indwelling, and that revelation of the Son of God within us which it is His work to bestow.

The question will be asked, How these two parts of the Divine promise are fulfilled? simultaneously or successively? The answer is very simple: From God's side the twofold gift is simultaneous. The Spirit is not divided: in giving the Spirit, God gives Himself and all He is. So it was on the day of Pentecost. The three thousand received the new spirit, with repentance and faith, and then, when they had been baptized, the Indwelling Spirit, as God's seal to their faith, on one day. Through the word of disciples, the Spirit, which had come upon them, wrought mightily on the multitude, changing disposition and heart and spirit. When, in the power of this new spirit

working in them, they had believed and confessed, they received the baptism of Holy Spirit to abide in them. And so still in times when the Spirit of God moves mightily, and the Church is living in the power of the Spirit, the children which are begotten of her receive from the first beginnings of their Christian life the distinct conscious sealing and indwelling of the Spirit. And yet we have indications in Scripture that there may be circumstances, dependent either on the enduement of the preacher or the faith of the hearers in which the two halves of the promise are not so closely linked. So it was with the believers in Samaria converted under Philip's preaching; and so too with the converts Paul met at Ephesus. In their case was repeated the experience of the apostles themselves. We regard them as regenerate men before our Lord's death; it was only at Pentecost that the promise was fulfilled, 'He shall be in you!' What was seen in them, just as in the Old and New Testaments—the grace of the Spirit divided into two separate manifestations—may still take place in our day. When, the standard of spiritual life in a Church is sickly and low, when neither in the preaching of the word nor in the testimony of believers, the glorious truth of an Indwelling Spirit is distinctly proclaimed, we must not wonder if, even where God gives His Spirit, He be known and experienced only as the Spirit of regeneration. His Indwelling Presence will remain a mystery. In the gift of God, the Spirit of Christ in all His fulness is bestowed once for all as an Indwelling Spirit; but He is received and possessed only as far as the faith of the believer reaches.

It is generally admitted in the Church that the Holy Spirit has—not the recognition which becomes Him as being the equal of the Father and the Son, the Divine Person through whom alone the Father and the Son can be truly possessed and known, in whom alone the Church has her beauty and her blessedness. In the Reformation, of blessed memory, the Gospel of Christ had to be vindicated from the terrible misapprehension which makes man's

righteousness the ground of his acceptance, and the freeness of Divine grace had to be maintained. To the ages that followed was committed the trust of building on that foundation, and developing what the riches of grace would do for the believer through the indwelling of the Spirit of Jesus. The Church rested too content in what it had received, and the teaching of all that the Holy Spirit will be to each believer in His guiding, sanctifying, strengthening power, has never yet taken the place it ought to have in our evangelical teaching and living.

And there is many an earnest Christian who will in the confession lately made by a young believer of intelligence: I think I understand the work of the Father and the Son, and rejoice in them, but I hardly see the place the Spirit has. Let us unite with all who are pleading that God in power may grant mighty Spirit workings in His Church, that each child of God may prove that in him the double promise is fulfilled: I will give a new spirit within you, and I will give my Spirit within you. Let us pray that we may so apprehend the wonderful blessing of the Indwelling Spirit, as to turn inward and have our whole inmost being opened up for this, the full revelation of the Father's love and the grace of Jesus.

'Within you!' Within you! This twice-repeated word of our text is one of the keywords of the 'New Covenant.' I will put my law in their inward parts, 'and in their heart will I write it.' I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.' God created man's heart for His dwelling. Sin entered, and defiled it. Four thousand years God's Spirit strove and wrought to regain possession. In the Incarnation and Atonement of Christ the Redemption was accomplished, and the kingdom of God established. Jesus could say, 'The kingdom of God is come unto you;' 'the kingdom of God is within you.' It is within we must look for the fulfilment of the New Covenant, the Covenant

not of ordinances but of life: in the power of an endless life the law and the fear of God are to be given in our heart: the Spirit of Christ Himself is to be within us as the power of our life. Not only on Calvary, or in the resurrection, or on the throne, is the glory of Christ the Conqueror to be seen—but in our heart: within us, within us is to be the true display of the reality and the glory of His Redemption. Within us, in our inmost parts, is the hidden sanctuary where is the ark of the Covenant, sprinkled with the Blood, and containing the Law written in an ever-living writing by the Indwelling Spirit, and where, through the Spirit, the Father and the Son now come to dwell.

O my God! I do thank Thee for this double blessing. I thank Thee for that wonderful holy temple Thou hast built up in me for Thyself—a new spirit given within me. And I thank Thee for that still more wonderful Holy Presence, Thine Own Spirit, to dwell within me, and there reveal the Father and the Son.

O my God! I do pray Thee to open mine eyes for this the mystery of Thy love. Let Thy words, within you, bow me low in trembling fear before Thy condescension, and may my one desire be to have my spirit indeed the worthy dwelling of Thy Spirit. Let them lift me up in holy trust and expectation, to look for and claim all that Thy promise means.

O my Father!, I thank Thee that Thy Spirit doth dwell in me. I pray Thee, let His indwelling: be in power, in the living fellowship with Thyself, in the growing experience of His renewing power, in the ever fresh anointing that witnesses to His Presence, and the indwelling of my Glorified Lord Jesus. May my daily walk be in the deep reverence of His Holy Presence within me, and the glad experience of all He works. Amen.

Chapter 2^(TOC)

The Baptism of the Spirit

'John bare witness, saying, He that sent me to baptize with water, He said unto me, Upon Whomsoever thou shalt see the, Spirit descending, and abiding on Him the same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit.'—John 1:33.

THERE were two things that John the Baptist preached concerning the person of Christ, The one was, that He was the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world The other, that He would baptize His disciples with the Holy Ghost and with fire. The Blood of the Lamb, and the Baptism of the Spirit were the two central truths of his creed and his preaching. They are, indeed, inseparable: the Church cannot do her work in power, nor can her exalted Lord be glorified in her, except as the Blood as the foundation-stone, and the Spirit as the corner-stone, are fully preached.

This has not at all times been done even among those who heartily accept Scripture as their guide. The preaching of the Lamb of God, of His suffering and atonement, of pardon and peace through Him, is more easily apprehended by the understanding of man, and can more speedily influence his feelings, than the more inward spiritual truth of the baptism, and indwelling, and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The pouring out of the blood took place upon earth, it was something visible and outward, and, in virtue of

the types, not unintelligible. The pouring out of the Spirit was in heaven, a Divine and hidden mystery. The shedding of the blood was for the ungodly and rebellious; the gift of the Spirit, for the loving and obedient disciple. It is no wonder, when the life of the Church is not in very intense devotion to her Lord, that the preaching and the faith of the Baptism of the Spirit should find less entrance than that of redemption and forgiveness.

And yet God would not have it so. The Old Testament Promise had spoken of God's Spirit within us. The forerunner at once took up the strain, and did not preach the Atoning Lamb without telling whereunto it was that we were to be redeemed, and how God's high purpose was to be fulfilled in us. Sin was not only guilt and condemnation; it was defilement and death. It had incurred not only the loss of God's favor it had made us unfit for the Divine fellowship. And without this the wonderful love that had created man could not be content. God wanted really to have us for Himself—our hearts and affections, yea, our inmost personality, our very self, a home for His love to rest in, a temple for His worship. The preaching of John included both the beginning and the end of redemption: the blood of the Lamb was to cleanse God's Temple and restore His Throne within the heart; nothing less than the Baptism and Indwelling of the Spirit could satisfy the heart of either God or man.

Of what that Baptism of the Spirit meant, Jesus Himself was to be the type: He would only give what He Himself had received: because the Spirit abode on Him, He could baptize with the Spirit. And what did the Spirit descending and abiding on Him mean? He had been begotten of the Holy Spirit; in the power of the Spirit He had grown up a holy child and youth, had entered manhood free from sin, and had now come to John to give Himself to fulfil all righteousness in submitting to the baptism of repentance. And now, as the

reward of His obedience, as the Father's seal of approval on His having thus far yielded to the control of the Spirit, He receives a new communication of the Power of the Heavenly Life. Beyond what—He had yet experienced, the Father's conscious indwelling presence and power takes possession of Him, and fits Him for His work. The leading and the power of the Spirit become His more consciously (Luke 4:1, 14, 22) than before; He is now anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power.

But though now baptized Himself, He cannot yet baptize others. He must first, in the power of His baptism, meet temptation and overcome it; must learn obedience and suffer, yea, through the Eternal Spirit, offer Himself a sacrifice unto God and His will—then only would He afresh receive the Holy Spirit as the reward of obedience (Acts 2:33), with the power to baptize all who belong to Him.

What we see in Jesus teaches us what the baptism of the Spirit is. It is not that grace by which we turn to God, become regenerate, and seek to live as God's children. When Jesus reminded His disciples (Acts 1:4) of John's prophecy, they were already partakers of this grace. Their baptism with the Spirit meant something more. It was to be to them the conscious presence of their glorified Lord, come back from heaven to dwell in their hearts, their participation in the power of His new Life. It was to them a baptism of joy and power in their living fellowship with Jesus on the Throne of Glory. All that they were further to receive of wisdom, and courage, and holiness, had its root in this: what the Spirit had been to Jesus, when He was baptized, as the living bond with the Father's Power and Presence, He was to be to them: through Him, the Son was to manifest Himself, and Father and Son were to make their abode with them. 'Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon Him, the same is He that baptizeth with the

Holy Spirit.' This word comes to us as well as to John. To know what the baptism of the Spirit means, how and from whom we are to receive it we must see the One upon whom the Spirit descended and abode. We must see Jesus baptized with the Holy Ghost. We must try to understand how He needed it, how He was prepared for it, how He yielded to it, how in its power He died His death, and was raised again. What Jesus has to give us, He first received and personally appropriated for Himself; what He received and won for Himself is all for us: He will make it our very own. Upon whom we see the Spirit abiding, He baptizeth with the Spirit.

In regard to this baptism of the Spirit there are questions that we may not find it easy to answer, and to which all will not give the same answer. Was the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost the complete fulfilment of the promise, and is that the only baptism of the Spirit, given once for all to the newborn Church? Or is not the coming of the Holy Spirit on the disciples in the fourth of Acts, on the Samaritans (Acts 8), on the heathen in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10), and on the twelve disciples at Ephesus (Acts 19), also to be regarded as separate fulfilments of the words, 'He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost'? Is the sealing of the Spirit given to each believer in regeneration to be counted by him as his baptism of the Spirit? Or is it, as some say, a distinct, definite blessing to be received later on? Is it a blessing given only once, or can it be repeated and renewed?—In the course of our study we shall find light in God's word that may help us to a solution of difficulties like these. But it is of great consequence that at the outset we should not allow ourselves to be occupied with points as these, which are after all of minor importance, but fix our whole hearts on the great spiritual lessons that God would have us learn from the preaching of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. These are specially two.

The one is, that this baptism of the Holy Spirit is the crown and glory of Jesus' work, that we need it, and must know that we have it, if we are to live the true Christian life. We need it. The Holy Jesus needed it. Christ's loving, obedient disciples needed it. It is something more than the working of the Spirit in regeneration. It is the Personal Spirit of Christ making Him present within us, always abiding in the heart in the power of His glorified nature, as He is exalted above every enemy. It is the Spirit of the Life of Christ Jesus making us free from the law of sin and death, and bringing us, as a personal experience, into the liberty from sin to which Christ redeemed us, but which to so many regenerate is only a blessing registered, on their behalf, but not possessed or enjoyed. It is the endowment with power to fill us with boldness in presence of every danger, and give the victory over the world and every enemy. It is the fulfilment of what God meant in His promise—I will dwell in them, and walk in them. Let us ask the Father to reveal to us all that His love meant for us, until our souls are filled with the glory of the thought: He baptizeth with the Holy Spirit.

And then there is the other lesson: It is Jesus who thus baptizeth. Whether we look upon this baptism as something we already have, and of which we only want a fuller apprehension, or something we still must receive, in this all agree: it is only in the fellowship of Jesus, in faithful attachment and obedience to Him, that a baptized life can be received or maintained or renewed. 'He that believeth in me,' Jesus, said, 'out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.' The one thing we need is living faith in the indwelling Jesus: the living water will surely and freely flow. Faith is the instinct of the new nature, by which it recognises and receives its Divine food and drink. In the power of the Spirit who dwells in every believer, let us trust Jesus, who fills with the Spirit, and cling to Him in love and obedience. It is He who baptizes: in contact with Him, in devotion to Him, in the confidence that He

has given and will give Himself wholly to us, let us look to Him for nothing less than all that the baptism of the Spirit can imply.

In doing so let us specially remember one thing: only he that is faithful in the least will be made ruler over much. Be very faithful to what thou already hast and knowest of the Spirit's working. Regard thyself with deep reverence as God's holy temple. Wait for and listen to the gentlest whispering of God's Spirit within thee. Listen especially to the conscience, which has been cleansed in the blood. Keep that conscience very clean by simple childlike obedience. In thy heart there may be much involuntary sin, with which thou feelest thyself powerless. Humble thyself deeply for thy inbred corruption, strengthened as it has been by actual sin. Let every rising, of such sin be cleansed in the blood.

But in regard to thy voluntary actions say, day by day, to thy Lord Jesus, that everything thou knowest to be pleasing to Him thou wilt do. Yield to the reproofs of conscience when thou failest; but come again, have hope in God, and renew the vow: What I know God wants me to do, I will do. Ask humbly every morning, and wait, for guidance in thy path; the Spirit's voice will become better known, and His strength will be felt. Jesus had His disciples three years in His baptism class, and then the blessing came. Be His loving, obedient disciple, and believe in Him on whom the Spirit abode, and who is full of the Spirit, and thou too shalt be prepared for the fulness of the blessing of the baptism of the Spirit.

Blessed Lord Jesus! with my whole heart I worship Thee, as exalted on the Throne to baptize with the Holy Ghost. Oh! reveal Thyself to me in this Thy glory, that I may rightly know what I may expect from Thee.

I bless Thee that in Thyself I have seen what the preparation is for receiving

the Holy Spirit in His fulness. During Thy life of preparation in Nazareth for Thy work, O my Lord, the Spirit was always in Thee. And yet when Thou hadst surrendered Thyself to fulfil all righteousness, and to enter into fellowship with the sinners Thou camest to save, in partaking of their baptism, Thou didst receive from the Father a new inflowing of His Holy Spirit. It was to Thee the seal of His love, the revelation of His indwelling, the power for His service. And now Thou, on whom we see the Spirit descend and abide, doest for us what the Father did for Thee.

My Holy Lord I bless Thee that the Holy Spirit is in me too. But, oh I beseech Thee, give me yet the full, the overflowing measure Thou hast promised. Let Him be to me the full unceasing revelation of Thy presence in my heart, as glorious and as mighty as on the Throne of Heaven. O my 'Lord Jesus! baptize me, fill me with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Chapter 3^(TOC)

Worship in the Spirit

'The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth; for such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.'—John 4:23, 24.

'We are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.'—Philippians 3:3.

To worship is man's highest glory. He was created for fellowship with God: of that fellowship worship is the sublimest expression. All the exercises of the religious life meditation and prayer, love and faith, surrender and obedience, all culminate in worship. Recognising what God is in His holiness, His glory, and His love, realizing what I am as a sinful creature, and as the Father's redeemed child, in worship I gather up my whole being and present myself to my God, to offer Him the adoration and the glory which is His due. The truest and fullest and nearest approach to God is worship. Every sentiment and every service of the religious life is included in it: to worship is man's highest destiny, because in it God is all.

Jesus tells us that with His coming a new worship would commence. All that heathen or Samaritans had called worship, all even that the Jews had known of worship in accordance with the provisional revelation of God's law, would make way for something entirely and distinctively new—the worship in

Spirit and in Truth. This is the worship He was to inaugurate by the giving of the Holy Spirit. This is the worship which now alone is well pleasing to the Father. It is for this worship specially that we have received the Holy Spirit. Let us, at the very commencement of our study of the work of the Spirit, take in the blessed thought that the great object for which the Holy Spirit is within us is, that we worship in spirit and in truth. 'Such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers,'—for this He sent forth His Son and His Spirit.

In Spirit. When God created man a living soul, that soul, as the seat and organ of his personality and consciousness, was linked, on the one side, through the body, with the outer visible world, on the other side, through the spirit, with the unseen and the Divine. The soul had to decide whether it would yield itself to the spirit, by it to be linked with God and His will, or to the body and the solicitations of the visible. In the fall, the soul refused the rule of the spirit, and became the slave of the body with its appetites. Man became flesh; the spirit lost its destined place of rule, and became little more than a dormant power; it was now no longer the ruling principle, but a struggling captive. And the spirit now stands in opposition to the flesh, the name for the life of soul and body together, in their subjection to sin.

When speaking of the unregenerate man in contrast with the spiritual (1 Corinthians 2:14), Paul calls him psychical, soullish, or animal, having only the natural life. The life of the soul comprehends all our moral and intellectual faculties, as they may even be directed towards the things of God, apart from the renewal of the Divine Spirit. Because the soul is under the power of the flesh, man is spoken of as having become flesh, as being flesh. As the body consists of flesh and bone, and the flesh is that part of it which is specially endowed with sensitiveness, and through which we receive our sensations from the outer world, the flesh denotes human nature, as it has

become subject to the world of sense. And because the whole soul has thus come under the power of the flesh, the Scripture speaks of all the attributes of the soul as belonging to the flesh, and being under its power. So it contrasts, in reference to religion and worship, the two principles from which they may proceed. There is a fleshly wisdom and a spiritual wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:12; Colossians 1:9). There is a service of God trusting in the flesh and glorying in the flesh, and a service of God by the spirit (Philippians 3:3, 4; Galatians 6:13).

There is a fleshly mind and a spiritual mind (Colossians 2:18, 1:9). There is a will of the flesh, and a will which is of God working by His Spirit (John 1:13; Philippians 2:13). There is a worship which is a satisfying of the flesh, because it is in the power of what flesh can do (Colossians 2:18, 23), and a worship of God which is in the Spirit. It is this worship Jesus came to make possible, and to realize in us, by giving a new spirit in our inmost part, and then, within that, God's Holy Spirit.

'In Spirit and in Truth.' Such a worship in Spirit is worship in Truth. Just as the words in Spirit do not mean internal as contrasted with external observances, but Spiritual, inwrought by God's Spirit, as opposed to what man's natural power can effect, so the words in Truth do not mean hearty, sincere, upright. In all the worship of the Old Testament saints, they knew that God sought Truth in the inward parts; they sought Him with their whole hearts, and most uprightly, and yet they attained not to that worship in Spirit and Truth, which Jesus brought us when He rent the vail of the flesh. Truth here means the substance, the reality, the actual possession of all that the worship of God implies, both in what it demands and what it promises. John speaks of Jesus as 'the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' And he adds, 'For the Law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by

Jesus Christ.' If we take truth as opposed to falsehood, the law of Moses was just as true as the Gospel of Jesus; they both came from God. But if we understand what it means, that the law gave only a shadow of 'good things to come, and that Christ brought us the things themselves, their very substance, we see how He was full of truth, because He was Himself the Truth, the reality, the very Life and Love and Power of God imparting itself to us. We then also see how it is only a worship in Spirit that can be a worship in Truth, in the actual enjoyment of that Divine Power, which is Christ's own life and fellowship with the Father, revealed and maintained within us by the Holy Spirit.

'The true worshippers worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth.' All worshippers are not true worshippers. There may be a great deal of earnest honest worship without its being worship in Spirit and in Truth. The mind may be intensely occupied, the feelings may be deeply moved, the will may be mightily roused, while yet there is but little of the Spiritual Worship which stands in the Truth of God. There may be great attachment to Bible truth, and yet through the predominating activity of that which cometh not from God's working but from man's effort, it may not be the Christ—given, Spirit-breathed worship which God seeks. There must be accordance, harmony, unity between God, who is a Spirit, and the worshippers drawing near in the Spirit. Such doth the Father seek to worship Him. The Infinite, Perfect, Holy Spirit which God the Father is, must have some reflection in the spirit which is in the child.

And this can only be as the Spirit of God dwells in us. If we would strive to become such worshippers in Spirit and in Truth—true worshippers—the first thing we need is a sense of the danger in which we are from the Flesh and its worship. As believers we have in us a double nature—flesh and spirit. The one

is the natural part which is ever ready to intrude itself, and to undertake the doing of what is needed in the Worship of God. The other is the Spiritual part, which may still be very weak, and which possibly we do not yet know how to give its full sway. Our mind may delight in the study of God's Word, our feelings may be moved by the wonderful thoughts there revealed, our will may—we see this in Romans 7:22—delight in the law of God after the inward man, and we may yet be impotent to do that law, to render the obedience and worship we see and approve.

We need the Holy Spirit's indwelling for life and worship alike. And to receive this we need first of all to have the flesh silenced. 'Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord.' 'Let no flesh glory in His presence.' To Peter had already been revealed by the Father that Jesus was the Christ, and yet in his thoughts of the cross he savoured not, his mind was not according to, the things of God, but the things of men. Our own thoughts of Divine things, our own efforts to waken or work the right feelings must be given up, our own power to worship must be brought down and laid low, and every approach to God must take place under a very distinct and very quiet surrender to the Holy Spirit. And as we learn how impossible it is at our will any moment to ensure the Spirit's working, we shall learn that if we would worship in the Spirit we must walk in the Spirit. 'Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.' As the Spirit dwells and rules in me, I am in the Spirit, and can worship in the Spirit.

'The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth. For such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers.' Yes, the Father seeks such worshippers, and what He seeks He finds, because He Himself works it. That we might be such worshippers, He sent His own Son to seek and to save the lost; to save us with this salvation,

that we should become His true worshippers, who enter in through the rent veil of the flesh, and worship Him in the Spirit. And then He sent the Spirit of His Son, the Spirit of Christ, to be in us the Truth and Reality of what Christ had been, His actual presence, to communicate within us the very life that Christ had lived. Blessed be God! the hour has come, and is now, we are living in it this very moment, that the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth. Let us believe it; the Spirit has been given, and dwells within us, for this one reason, because the Father seeks such worshippers. Let us rejoice in the confidence that we can attain to it, we can be true worshippers, because the Holy Spirit has been given.

Let us realize in holy fear and awe that He dwells within us. Let us humbly, in the silence of the flesh, yield ourselves to His leading and teaching. Let us wait in faith before God for His workings. And let us practise this worship. Let every new insight into what the work of the Spirit means, every exercise of faith in His indwelling or experience of His working, terminate in this as its highest glory: the adoring worship of the Father, the giving Him the Praise, the Thanks, the Honour, and Love which are His alone.

O God! Thou art a Spirit, and they that worship Thee must worship Thee in Spirit and in Truth. Blessed be Thy name! Thou didst send forth Thine Own Son to redeem and prepare us for the worship in the Spirit; and Thou didst send forth Thy Spirit to dwell in us and fit us for it. And now we have access to the Father, as through the Son, so in the Spirit.

Most Holy God! we confess with shame how much our worship has been in the power and the will of the flesh. By this we have dishonoured Thee, and grieved Thy Spirit, and brought infinite loss to our own souls. O God! forgive and save us from this sin. Teach us, we pray Thee, never, never to attempt to worship Thee but in Spirit and in Truth.

Our Father! Thy Holy Spirit dwells in us. We beseech Thee, according to the riches of Thy glory, to strengthen us with might by Him, that our inner man may indeed be a spiritual temple, where spiritual sacrifices are unceasingly offered. And teach us the blessed art, as often as we enter Thy presence, of yielding self and the flesh to the death, and waiting for and trusting the Spirit who is in us, to work in us a worship, a faith and love, acceptable to Thee through Christ Jesus. And, oh! that throughout the universal Church, a worship in Spirit and in Truth may be sought after, and attained, and rendered to Thee day by day. We ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Chapter 4^(TOC)

The Spirit and the Word

'It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken unto you are Spirit and are life. Lord, to whom shall we go? I Thou hast the words of eternal life.'—John 6:63, 68.
'The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.'—2 Corinthians 3:6.

Our Blessed Lord had been speaking of Himself as the Bread of Life, and of His flesh and blood as the meat and drink of eternal Life. To many of His disciples it was a hard saying, which they could not understand. Jesus tells them that it is only when the Holy Spirit is come, and they have Him, that His words will become clear to them. He says, 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life.'

'It is the Spirit that quickeneth,' in these words and the corresponding ones of Paul, 'the Spirit giveth life,' we have the nearest approach to what may be called a definition of the Spirit. (Comp. 1 Corinthians 15:45, 'a life-giving Spirit.') The Spirit always acts, in the first place, whether in nature or grace, as a Life-giving principle. It is of the deepest importance to keep firm hold on this. His work in the believer, of Sealing, Sanctifying, Enlightening, and Strengthening, is all rooted in this: it is as He is known and honoured, and place given to Him, as He is waited on as the Inner Life of the soul, that His

other gracious workings can be experienced. These are but the outgrowth of the Life; it is in the power of the Life within that they can be enjoyed. 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth.'

In contrast to the Spirit our Lord places the flesh. He says, 'the flesh profiteth nothing.' He is not speaking of the flesh as the fountain of sin, but in its religious aspect, as it is the power in which the natural man, or even the believer who does not fully yield to the Spirit, seeks to serve God, or to know and possess Divine things. The futile character of all its efforts our Lord indicates in the words, 'profiteth nothing;' they are not sufficient, they avail not to reach the Spiritual reality, the Divine things themselves. Paul means the same when he contrasts with the Spirit, the letter that killeth. The whole Dispensation of the Law was but a dispensation of the letter and the flesh. Though it had a certain glory, and Israel's privileges were very great, yet, as Paul says, 'Even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.'

Even Christ Himself, as long as He was in the flesh, and until, in the rending of the veil of His flesh, the dispensation of the Spirit took the place of that of the flesh, could not by His words effect in His disciples what He desired. 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing!'

Our Lord applies this saying now specially to the words He had just spoken, and the Spiritual truth they contained. 'The words that I have spoken unto you are Spirit and are Life.' He wishes to teach the disciples two things. The one is, that the words are indeed a living seed, with a power of germinating and springing up, asserting their own vitality, revealing their meaning, and proving their Divine Power in those who receive them and keep them abiding in the heart. He wanted them not to be discouraged if they could not at once comprehend them. His words are Spirit and Life; they are not meant for the

understanding, but for the Life. Coming in the Power of the Unseen Spirit, higher and deeper than all thought, they enter into the very roots of the Life, they have themselves a Divine Life, working out effectually with a Divine energy the Truth they express into the experience of those who receive them. As a consequence of this their spiritual character—this is the other lesson He wished His disciples to learn—these words of His need a spiritual nature to receive them. Seed needs a congenial soil: there must be life in the soil as well as in the seed. Not into the mind only, nor into the feelings, nor ever, the will alone must the word be taken, but through them into the life. The centre of that life is man's spiritual nature, with conscience as its voice; there the authority of the word must be acknowledged. But even this is not enough: conscience dwells in man as a captive amid powers it cannot control. It is the Spirit that comes from God, the Spirit that Christ came to bring, becoming our life, receiving the word and assimilating it to our life, that will make them to become the Truth and Power in us.

In our study of the work of the Blessed Spirit, we cannot be too careful to get clear and firm hold, of this blessed truth. It will save us from right-hand and left-hand errors. It will keep us from expecting to enjoy the teaching of the Spirit without the Word, or to master the teaching of the Word without the Spirit.

On the one side, we have the right-hand error, seeking the teaching of the Spirit without the Word. In the Holy Trinity, the Word and the Spirit are ever in each other, one with the Father. It is not otherwise with the God-inspired Words of Scripture. The Holy Spirit has for all ages embodied the thoughts of God in the written word, and lives now for this very purpose in our hearts, there to reveal the power and the meaning of that Word. If you would be full of the Spirit, be full of the Word, If you would have the Divine Life of the

Spirit within you grow strong, and acquire power in every part of your nature; let the Word of Christ dwell richly in you. If you would have the Spirit fulfil His office of Remembrancer, calling to mind at the right moment, and applying with Divine accuracy what Jesus has spoken to your need, have the Words of Christ abiding in you. If you would have the Spirit reveal to you the Will of God in each circumstance of life, choosing from apparently conflicting commands or Principles with unerring precision what you must do, and suggesting it as you need, oh! have the Word living in you, ready for His use. If you would have the Eternal Word as your Light, let the Written Word be transcribed on your heart by the Holy Spirit. 'The Words that I have spoken unto you, they are Spirit and are Life.' Take them and treasure them: it is through them that the Spirit manifests His quickening power.'

On the other side, we have the left-hand and more common error. Think not for one moment that the Word can unfold its Life in thee, except as the Spirit within thee accepts and appropriates it in the inner life. How much of Scripture reading, and Scripture study, and Scripture preaching is there in which the first and main object is to reach the meaning of the Word? Men think that if they know correctly and exactly what it means, there will come as a natural consequence the blessing the Word is meant to bring. This is by no means the case. The Word is a seed. In every seed there is a fleshy part, in which the life is hidden. One may have the most precious and perfect seed in its bodily substance, and yet unless it be exposed in suitable soil to the influence of sun and moisture, the life may never grow up. And so we may hold the words and the doctrines of Scripture most intelligently and earnestly, and yet know little of their life or power. We need to remind ourselves and the Church unceasingly, that the Scriptures which were spoken by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, can only be understood by holy men as they are taught by the same Spirit. The words I have spoken are Spirit

and Life;' for the apprehending and partaking of them 'the flesh profiteth nothing: it is the Spirit that quickeneth,' the Spirit of Life within us.

This is one of the awfully solemn lessons which the history of the Jews in the time of Christ teaches us. They were exceeding zealous, as they thought, for God's word and honour, and yet it turned out that all their zeal was for their human interpretation of God's word. Jesus said to them: 'Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which testify of me: and ye will not come to me that ye may have life.' They did indeed trust to the Scriptures to lead them to eternal life; and yet they never saw that they testified of Christ, and so they would not come to Him. They studied and accepted Scripture in the light and in the power of their human understanding, and not in the light and power of God's Spirit as their life. The feebleness of the life of so many believers who read and know Scripture much has no other cause; they know not that it is the Spirit that quickeneth that the flesh, that the human understanding, however intelligent, however earnest, profiteth nothing. They think that in the Scriptures they have eternal life, but the living Christ, in the power of the Spirit, as their life, they know but little.

What is needed is very simple: the determined refusal to attempt to deal with the written word without the quickening Spirit. Let us never take Scripture into our hand, or mind, or mouth, without realizing the need and the promise of the Spirit. First, in a quiet act of worship, look to God to give and renew the workings of His Spirit within you; then, in a quiet act of faith, yield yourself to the power that dwells in you, and wait on Him, that not the mind alone, but the life in you, may be opened to receive the Word. Let the Holy Spirit be your life. To the Spirit and the Life coming out from within to meet the Word from without as its food, the words of Christ are indeed Spirit and

Life.

As we further follow the teaching of our Blessed Lord as to the Spirit, it will become clear to us that, as the Lord's Words are Spirit and Life, so the Spirit must be in us as the Spirit of our Life, Our inmost personal life must be the Spirit of God.

Deeper down than mind, or feeling, or will, the very root of all these, and their animating principle, there must be the Spirit of God. As we seek to go lower down than these, as we see that nothing can reach the Spirit of Life which there is in the words of the Living God, and wait on the Holy Spirit within us, in the unseen depths of the hidden life, to receive and reveal the words in His quickening power, and work them into the very life of our life, we shall know in truth what it means: 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth.' We shall see how divinely right and becoming it is that the words which are Spirit and Life should be met in us by the Spirit and the Life dwelling within, how then alone they will unfold their meaning and impart their substance, and give their divine strength and fulness to the Spirit and the Life already within us.

O my God! again I thank Thee for the wonderful gift of the indwelling Spirit. And I humbly beseech Thee anew that I may indeed know that He is in me, and how glorious the divine work He is carrying on. Teach me specially, I pray Thee, to believe that He is the life and the strength of the growth of the Divine life within me, the pledge and assurance that I can grow up into all my God would have me. As I see this, I shall understand how He, as the Spirit of the Life within me, will make my spirit hunger for the Word as the food of the life, will receive and assimilate it, will indeed make it Life and Power.

Forgive me, my God, that I have so much sought to apprehend Thy words,

which are Spirit and Life, in the power of human thought and the fleshly mind. I have been so slow to learn that the flesh profiteth nothing. I do desire to learn it now.

O my Father! give me the Spirit of wisdom, grant me the mighty workings of the Spirit, that I may know how deeply spiritual each word of Thine is, and how spiritual things can only be spiritually discerned—Teach me in all my intercourse with Thy word to deny the flesh and the fleshly mind, to wait in deep humility and faith for the inward working of the Spirit to quicken the word. May thus all my meditation of Thy Word, all my keeping of it in faith and obedience, be in Spirit and in Truth, in Life and Power. Amen.

Chapter 5^(TOC)

The Glorified Jesus

'The Spirit of the glorified Jesus He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him were to receive for the Spirit was not yet; because Jesus was not yet glorified,'—John 7:37, 38.

Our Lord promises here, that those who come unto Him and drink, who believe in Him, will not only never thirst, but will themselves become fountains, whence streams of living water, of life and blessing, will flow forth. In recording the words, John explains that the promise was a prospective one, that would have to wait for its fulfilment till the Spirit should have been poured out. He also gave the double reason for this delay: The Holy Spirit was not yet; because Jesus was not yet glorified. The expression: the Spirit was not yet, has appeared strange, and so the word given has been inserted. But the expression, if accepted as it stands, may guide us into the true understanding of the real significance of the Spirit's not coming until Jesus was glorified.

We have seen that God has given a twofold revelation of Himself, first as, God in the Old Testament, then as Father in the New. We know how the Son, who had from eternity been with the Father, entered upon a new stage of existence when He became flesh. When He returned to Heaven, He was still

the same only-begotten Son of God, and yet not altogether the same. For He was now also, as Son of Man, the first-begotten from the dead, clothed with that glorified humanity which He had perfected and sanctified for Himself. And just so the Spirit of God as poured out on Pentecost was indeed something new. Through the Old Testament He was always called the Spirit of God or the Spirit of the Lord; the name of Holy Spirit He did not yet bear as His own proper name.' It is only in connection with the work He has to do in preparing the way for Christ, and a body for Him, that the proper name comes into use (Luke 1:15, 35). When poured out at Pentecost, He came as the Spirit of the glorified Jesus, the Spirit of the Incarnate, crucified, and exalted Christ, the bearer and communicator to us, not of the life of God as such, but of that life as it had been interwoven into human nature in the person of Christ Jesus. It is in this capacity specially that He bears the name of Holy Spirit, it is as the Indwelling One that God is Holy. And of this Spirit, as He dwelt in Jesus in the flesh, and can dwell in us in the flesh too, it is distinctly and literally true; the Holy Spirit was not yet. The Spirit of the glorified Jesus, the Son of man become the Son of God He could not be, until Jesus was glorified.

This thought opens up to us further the reason why it is not the Spirit of God as such, but the Spirit of Jesus, that could be sent to dwell in us. Sin had not only disturbed our relation to God's law, but to God Himself; with the Divine favour we had lost the Divine life. Christ came not only to deliver man from the law and its curse, but to bring human nature itself again into the fellowship of the Divine life, to make us partakers of the Divine nature. He could do this, not by an exercise of Divine Power on man, but only in the path of a free, moral, and most real human development. In His own person, having become flesh, He had to sanctify the flesh, and make it a meet and willing receptacle for the indwelling of the Spirit of God. Having done this,

He had, in accordance with the law that the lower form of life rise to a higher, only through decay and death, in death both to bear the curse of sin and to give Himself as the seedcorn to bring forth fruit in us. From His nature, as it was glorified in the resurrection and ascension, His Spirit came forth as the Spirit of His human life, glorified into the union with the Divine, to make us partakers of all that He had personally wrought out and acquired, of Himself and His glorified life. In virtue of His atonement, man now had a right and title to the fulness of the Divine Spirit, and to His indwelling, as never before. And in virtue of His having perfected in Himself a new holy human nature on our behalf, He could now communicate what previously had no existence—a life at once human and Divine. From henceforth the Spirit, just as He was the personal Divine life, could also become the personal life of men. Even as the Spirit is the personal life principle in God Himself, so He can be it in the child of God: the Spirit of God's Son can now be the Spirit that cries in our heart, Abba, Father. Of this Spirit it is most fully true, "The Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

But now, Blessed be God! Jesus has been glorified; there is now the Spirit of the glorified Jesus; the promise can now be fulfilled: He that believeth on me, out of him shall flow rivers of living waters. The great transaction which took place when Jesus was glorified is now an eternal reality. When Christ had entered with our human nature, in our flesh, into the Holiest of all, there took place that of which Peter speaks, 'Being by the right hand of God exalted, He received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost.' In our place, and on our behalf, as man and the Head of man, He was admitted into the full glory of the Divine, and His human nature constituted the receptacle and the dispenser of the Divine Spirit. And the Holy Spirit could come down as the Spirit of the God-man—most really the Spirit of God, and yet as truly the spirit of man. He could come down as the Spirit of the glorified Jesus to be in

each one who believes in Jesus, the Spirit of His personal life and His personal presence, and at the same time the spirit of the personal life of the believer. Just as in Jesus the perfect union of God and man had been effected and finally completed when He sat down upon the throne, and He so entered on a new, stage of existence, a glory hitherto unknown, so too, now, a new era has commenced in the life and the work of the Spirit. He can now come down to witness of the perfect union of the Divine and the human, and in becoming our life, to make us partakers of it. There is now the Spirit of the glorified Jesus: He hath poured Him forth; we have received Him to stream into us, to stream through us, and to stream forth from us in rivers of blessing.

The glorifying of Jesus and the streaming forth of His Spirit are intimately connected; in vital organic union the two are inseparably linked.. If we would have, not only the Spirit of God, but this Spirit of Christ, which 'was not yet,' but now is, the Spirit of the glorified Jesus, it is specially with the glorified Jesus we must believably deal. We must not simply rest content with the faith that trusts in the cross and its pardon; we must seek to know the New Life, the Life of Glory and Power Divine in human nature, of which the Spirit of the glorified Jesus is meant to be the Witness and the Bearer. This is the mystery which was hid from ages and generations, but is now made known by the Holy Spirit, Christ in us; how He really can live His Divine life in us who are in the flesh. We have the most intense personal interest in knowing and understanding what it means that Jesus is glorified, that human nature shares the life and glory of God, that the Spirit was not yet, as long as Jesus was not glorified. And that not only because we are one day to see Him in His glory, and to be with Him in it. No, but even now, day by day, we are to live in it. The Holy Spirit is able to be to us just as much as we are willing to have of Him, and of the life of the glorified Lord.

'This spake Jesus of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet; because Jesus was not yet glorified.' God be praised! Jesus has been glorified: there is now the Spirit of the glorified Jesus; we have received Him. In the Old Testament only the unity of God was revealed; when the Spirit was mentioned, it was always as His Spirit, the power by which God was working: in the New was not known on earth as a Person. In the New Testament the Trinity is revealed; with Pentecost—the Holy Spirit descended as a Person to dwell in us. This is the fruit of Jesus' work, that we now have the Personal Presence of the Holy Spirit on earth. Just as in Christ Jesus, the second Person, the Son, came to reveal the Father, and the Father dwelt and spoke in Him, even so the Spirit, the third Person, comes to reveal the Son, and in Him the Son dwells and works in us. This is the glory wherewith the Father glorified the Son of man, because the Son had glorified Him, that in His Name and through Him, the Holy Spirit descends as a Person to dwell in believers, and to make the glorified Jesus a Present Reality within them. This is it of which Jesus says, that whoso believeth in Him shall never thirst, but shall have rivers of waters flowing out of him. This alone it is that satisfies the soul's thirst, and makes it a fountain to quicken others; the Personal Indwelling of the Holy Spirit, revealing the Presence of the glorified Jesus.

'He that believeth on me, rivers of water shall flow out of him. This spake He of the Spirit.' Here we have once again the, blessed Key of all God's treasures: He that believeth on me. It is the glorified Jesus who baptizes with the Holy Ghost: let us believe in Him. Let each one who longs for the full blessing here promised only believe. Let us believe in Him, that He is indeed glorified, that all He is and does and wishes to do is in the power of a Divine glory.

According to the riches of His glory, God can now work in us. Let us believe that he has given His Holy Spirit, that we have the personal presence of the Spirit on earth and within us. By this faith the glory of Jesus in heaven and the Power of the Spirit in our hearts become inseparably linked. Let us believe that in the fellowship with Jesus the stream will flow ever stronger and fuller, into us and out of us. Yes; let us believe on Jesus. But let us remember: thinking on these things, understanding them, being very sure of them, rejoicing in a fuller insight into them, all this, though needful, is not itself believing.

Faith is surrender: believing is that power of the renewed nature which, forsaking self and dying to it, makes room for the Divine, for God, for the glorified Christ to come and take possession and do His work. Faith in Jesus bows in lowly stillness and poverty of spirit, to realize that self has nothing, and that Another, the unseen Spirit, has now come in to be its leader, its strength, and its life. Faith in Jesus bows in the stillness of a quiet surrender before Him, fully assured that as it waits on Him, He will cause the river to flow.

Blessed Lord Jesus! I do believe, help Thou mine unbelief. Do Thou, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, perfect the work of faith in me too. Teach me, I pray Thee, with a faith that enters the unseen, to realize what Thy glory is, and what my share in it is even now, according to Thy word: 'The glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them.' Teach me that the Holy Ghost and His power is the glory which Thou givest us, and that Thou wouldst have us show forth Thy glory in rejoicing in His holy presence on earth and His indwelling in us. Teach me above all, my blessed Lord to take and hold these blessed truths in the mind, but with my spirit that is in my inmost parts, to wait on Thee to be filled with Thy Spirit.

O my glorified Lord I do even now bow before Thy glory in humble faith. Let all the life of self and the flesh be abased and perish, as I worship and wait before Thee. Let the Spirit of Glory become my life. Let His Presence break down all trust in self, and make room for Thee. And let my whole life be one of faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. Amen.

Chapter 6^(TOC)

The Indwelling Spirit

'I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: ye know Him, for He abideth with you, and shall be in you'—John 14:16, 17.

'He shall be in you.' In these simple words our Lord announces that wonderful mystery of the Spirit's indwelling which was to be the fruit and the crown of His redeeming work. It was for this man had been created. It was for this, God's mastery within the heart, the Spirit had striven in vain with men through the past ages. It was for this Jesus had lived and was about to die. Without this the Father's purpose and His own work would fail of their accomplishment. For want of this the intercourse of the Blessed Master with the disciples had effected so little. He had hardly ever ventured to mention it to them, because He knew they would not understand it. But now, on the last night, when it was but a little time, He discloses the Divine Secret that, when He left them, their loss would be compensated by a greater blessing than His bodily presence. Another would come in His stead, to abide with them for ever, and to dwell in them. Dwelling in them, He would prepare them to receive Himself their Lord, and the Father, within them too. 'He shall be in you.'

Our Father has given us a twofold revelation of Himself. In His Son He reveals His Holy Image, and setting him before men invites them to become like Him by receiving Him into their heart and life. In His Spirit He sends forth His Divine Power, to enter into us, and from within prepare us for receiving the Son and the Father. The dispensation of the Spirit is the dispensation of the inner life. In the dispensation of the Word, or the Son, beginning as it did with the creation of man in God's image, continued as it was through all the preparatory stages down to Christ's appearing, in the flesh, all was more external and preparatory. There were at times special and mighty workings of the Spirit; but the indwelling was unknown; man had not yet become an habitation of God in the Spirit. Now first, this was to be attained. The eternal life was to become the very life of man, hiding itself within his very being and consciousness, and clothing itself in the forms of a human will and life. Just as it is through the Spirit that God is what He is; just as in the Father and the Son, the Spirit is the principle in which their personality has its root and consciousness, so this Spirit of the Divine life is now to be in us, in the deepest sense of the word, the principle of our life, the root of our personality too, the very life of our being and consciousness. He is to be one with us in the absoluteness of a Divine immanence, dwelling in us, even as the Father in the Son, and the Son in the Father. Let us bow in holy reverence to worship and adore, and to receive the mighty blessing.

If we would enter into the full understanding and experience of what our Blessed Lord here promises, we must above everything remember that what He speaks of is a Divine indwelling. Wherever God dwells He hides Himself. In nature He hides Himself; most men see Him not there. In meeting His saints of old He mostly hid Himself under some manifestation in human weakness, so that it was often only after He was gone that they said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. 'The Blessed Son came to reveal

God, and yet He came as a root out of a dry ground, without form or comeliness; even His own disciples were at times offended at Him. Men always expect the kingdom of God to come with observation; they know not that it is a hidden mystery, to be received only as, in His own self-revealing power, God makes Himself known in hearts surrendered and prepared for Him. Christians are always ready, when the promise of the Spirit occupies them, to form some conception as to how His leading can be known in their thoughts; how His quickening will affect their feelings; how His sanctifying can be recognised in their will and conduct. They need to be reminded that deeper than mind and feeling and will, deeper than the soul, where these have their seat, in the depths of the spirit that came from God, there comes the Holy Spirit to dwell.

This indwelling is therefore first of all, and all through, to be recognised by faith. Even when I cannot see the least evidence of His working, I am quietly and reverently to believe that He dwells in me. In that faith I am restfully and trustfully to count upon His working, and to wait for it. In that faith I must very distinctly deny my own wisdom and strength, and in childlike self-abnegation depend upon Him to work. His first workings may be so feeble and hidden that I can hardly recognise them as coming from Him; they may appear to be nothing more than the voice of conscience, or the familiar sound of some Bible truth. Here is the time for faith to hold fast the Master's promise and the Father's gift, and to trust that the Spirit is within and will guide. In that faith let me continually yield up my whole being to His rule and mastery; let me be faithful to what appears the nearest to His voice; in such faith and such faithfulness my soul will be prepared for knowing His voice better. Out of the hidden depths His power will move to take possession of mind and will, and the indwelling in the hidden recesses of the heart will grow into a being filled with His fulness.

Faith is the one faculty of our spiritual nature by which we can recognise the Divine, in whatever low and unlikely appearances it clothes itself. And if this be true of the Father in His glory as God, and the Son as the manifestation of the Father, how much more must it be true of the Spirit, the unseen Divine life-power come to clothe itself, and hide itself away, within our weakness? Oh! let us cultivate and exercise much our faith in the Father, whose one gift through the Son is this, the Spirit in our hearts. And in the Son too, whose whole Person and Work and Glory centre in the gift of the Indwelling Spirit. And so let our faith grow strong in the unseen, sometimes unfelt Divine Presence of this Mighty Power, this living Person, who has descended into our weakness, and hidden Himself in our littleness, to fit us for becoming the dwelling of the Father and the Son. Let our adoring worship of our glorified Lord ever seek to catch the wondrous answer He gives to every prayer, as the seal of our acceptance, as the promise of deeper knowledge of our God, of closer fellowship and richer blessedness: The Holy Spirit dwelleth in you.

The deep importance of a right apprehension of the indwelling of the Spirit is evident from the place it occupies in our Lord's farewell discourse. In this and the two following chapters, He speaks of the Spirit more directly as Teacher, I as Witness, as representing and glorifying Himself, as convincing the world. At the same time, He connects this, and He says of His and the Father's indwelling, of the union of the Vine and the branches, of the Peace and Joy and Power in Prayer which His disciples would have, with 'that day,' the time of the Spirit's coming. But, before all this, as its one condition and only source, He places the promise, 'the Spirit shall be in, you.' It avails little that we know all that the Spirit can do for us, or that we confess our entire dependence on Him, unless we clearly realize, and place first, what the Master gave the first place; that it is as the indwelling Spirit alone that He can be our Teacher or our Strength. As the Church, as the believer, accepts our

Lord's, 'He shall be in you,' and lives under the control of this faith, our true relation to the Blessed Spirit will be restored. He will take charge and inspire; He will mightily fill and bless the being given up to Him as His abode.

A careful study of the epistles will confirm this, In writing to the Corinthians, Paul had to reprove them for sad and terrible sins, and yet he says to all, including the feeblest and most unfaithful believer, 'Know ye not that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?' He is sure that if this were believed, if to this truth were given the place God meant it to have, it would not only be the motive, but the power of a new and holy life. To the backsliding Galatians, he has no mightier plea to address than this: they had received the Spirit by the preaching of faith; God had sent forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts; they had their life by the Spirit in them; if they could but understand and believe this, they would also walk in the Spirit.

It is this teaching the Church of Christ needs in our days. I am deeply persuaded that very few of us realize aright to what extent believers are ignorant of this aspect of the truth concerning the Holy Spirit, or to what an extent this is the cause of their feebleness in holy walk and work. There may be a great deal of praying for the Holy Spirit's working, there may be great correctness in our confession, both in preaching and prayer, of entire and absolute dependence on Him; but unless His personal, continual, Divine indwelling be acknowledged and experienced, we must not be surprised if there be continual failure. The Holy Dove wants his resting place free from all intrusion and disturbance. God wants entire possession of His temple. Jesus wants His home all to Himself. He cannot do His work there, He cannot rule and reveal Himself and His love as He would, unless the whole home, the whole inner being, be possessed and filled by the Holy Spirit. Let us

consent to this. As the meaning of the indwelling dawns upon us in its full extent and claims, as we accept it as a Divine reality to be carried out and maintained by nothing less than an Almighty Power, as we bow low in emptiness and surrender, in faith and adoration, to accept the promise and live on it, 'He shall be in you,' the Father will, for Jesus' sake, delight to fulfil it in our experience, and we shall know that the beginning, and the secret, and the power of the life of a true disciple is, the Indwelling Spirit.

Blessed Lord Jesus! my soul doth bless Thee for Thy precious word: The Spirit shall be in you. In deep humility I now once again accept it, and ask Thee to teach me its full and blessed meaning.

I ask for myself and all God's children that we may see how near Thy love would come to us, how entirely and most intimately Thou wouldst give Thyself to us. Nothing can satisfy Thee but to have Thy abode within us, to dwell in us as the life of our life. To this end Thou hast sent forth, from Thy glory, Thy Holy Spirit into our hearts, to be the power that lives and acts in our inmost being, and to give in us the revelation of Thyself. O holy Saviour! bring Thy Church to see this truth that has been so much hid and lost, to experience it, and to bear witness to it in power. May the joyful sound be heard throughout her borders, that every true believer has the indwelling and the leading of Thy Spirit. And teach me, my Lord! the life of faith, that goes out of self, to wait on Thee, as in Thy Spirit Thou dost Thy work within me. May my life from hour to hour be in the holy, humble consciousness: Christ's Spirit dwelleth in me. In humility and silence I bow before this holy mystery, my God! my Lord Jesus! Thine own Spirit dwells in me. Amen.

Chapter 7^(TOC)

The Spirit given to the Obedient

'If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments: and I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth.'—John 14:15, 16.

'The Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey Him.'—Acts 5:32.

The truth which these words express has often suggested the question—How can this be? We need the Spirit to make us obedient; we long for the Spirit's power, just because we mourn so much the disobedience there still is, and desire to be otherwise. And how is this? The Saviour claims obedience as the condition of the Father's giving and our receiving the Spirit.

The difficulty will be removed if we remember what we have more than once seen, that there is a twofold manifestation of the Spirit of God, corresponding to the Old and New Testament. In the former, He works as the Spirit of God, preparing the way for the higher revelation of God, as the Father of Jesus Christ. In this way He had worked in Christ's disciples, as the Spirit of conversion and faith. What they were now about to receive was something higher—the Spirit of the glorified Jesus, communicating the power from on high, the experience of His full salvation. And though now, to all believers under the New Testament economy, the Spirit in them is the Spirit of Christ, there is still something that corresponds to the twofold dispensation. Where

there is not much knowledge of the Spirit's work, or where His workings in a Church or an individual are but feeble, there even believers will not get beyond the experience of His preparatory workings; though He be in them, they know Him not in His power as the Spirit of the glorified Lord. They have Him in them to make them obedient; it is only as they yield obedience to this His more elementary work, the keeping of Christ's commandments, that they will be promoted to the higher experience of His conscious indwelling, as the Representative and Revealer of Jesus in His glory. 'If ye love me, keep my commandments: and I will pray the Father, and He will send you another Comforter.'

The lesson is one we cannot study too attentively. In Paradise, in the angels of heaven, in God's own Son, by obedience and obedience alone, could the relationship with the Divine Being be maintained, and admission secured to closer experience of His Love and His Life. God's will revealed is the expression of His hidden perfection and being; only in accepting and doing the will, in the entire giving up for the will to possess and use as He pleases, are we fitted for entering the Divine Presence. Was it not thus even with the Son of God? It was when, after a life in holy humility and obedience for thirty years, He had spoken that word of entire consecration, 'It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness,' and given Himself to a baptism for the sins of His people, that He was baptized with the Spirit. The Spirit came because of His obedience. And again, it was after He had learned obedience in suffering, and became obedient to the death of the cross, that He again received the Spirit from the Father (Acts 2:33) to pour out on His disciples. The fulness of the Spirit for His body the Church was the reward of obedience. And this law of the Spirit's coming, as revealed in the Head, holds for every member of the body: obedience is the indispensable condition of the Spirit's indwelling. 'If ye love me, keep my commandments: and the Father will send you the Spirit.'

Christ Jesus had come to prepare the way for the Spirit's coming. Or rather, His outward coming in the flesh was the preparation for His inward coming in the Spirit to fulfil the promise of a Divine indwelling. The outward coming appealed to the soul, with its mind and feeling, and affected these. It was only as Christ in His outward coming was accepted, as He was loved and obeyed, that the Inward and more Intimate revelation would be given. Personal attachment to Jesus, the personal acceptance of Him as Lord and Master to love and obey, was the disciples' preparation for the baptism of the Spirit. And so now, it is as in a tender listening to the voice of conscience, and a faithful effort to keep the commands of Jesus, we prove our love to Him, that the heart will be prepared for the fulness of the Spirit. Our attainments may fall short of our aims, we may have to mourn that what we would we do not—if the Master sees the whole-hearted surrender to His will, and the faithful obedience to what we already have of the leadings of His Spirit, we may be sure that the full gift will not be withheld.

Do not these words suggest to us the two great reasons why the presence and the power of the Spirit in the Church is so feebly realized? We do not understand that as the obedience of love must precede the fulness of the Spirit, so the fulness of the Spirit must still follow on it. They err who want the fulness of the Spirit before they obey, no less than those who think that obedience is already a sign that the fulness of the Spirit is there. '

Obedience must precede the baptism of the Spirit. John had preached Jesus as the true Baptist—baptizing with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Jesus took His disciples as candidates for this Baptism into a three years' course of training. First of all, attached them to Himself personally. He taught them to forsake all for Him. He called Himself their Master and Lord, and taught them to do what He said. And then in His farewell discourse He time after time spoke of

obedience to His commands as the one condition of all further spiritual blessing. It is to be feared that the Church has not given this word Obedience the prominence Christ gave it. Wrong views of the danger of Self-righteousness, of the way in which free Grace is to be exalted, of the power of sin and a needs be of sinning, with the natural reluctance of the flesh to accept a high standard of holiness, have been the causes. While the freedom of grace and the simplicity of faith have been preached, the absolute necessity of obedience and holiness has not been equally insisted on. It has been thought that only those who had the fulness of the Spirit could be obedient. It was not seen that obedience was the lower platform—that the baptism of the Spirit, the full revelation of the glorified Lord as the Indwelling One in His power to work in us and through us His mighty works, was something higher, the Presence that the obedient should inherit. It was not seen that simple and full allegiance to every dictate of conscience, and every precept of the word, that a 'walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleasing,' was to be the passport to that full life in the Spirit in which He would witness to the abiding Presence of the Lord in the heart.

As the natural consequence of the neglect of this truth, the companion truth was also forgotten: The obedient must and may look for the fulness of the Spirit. The promise of the special, conscious, active indwelling. of the Spirit to the obedient is a thing to many Christians unknown. The great part of life is spent in mourning over disobedience, over the want of the Spirit's power, and praying for the Spirit to help them to obey, instead of rising in the strength of the Spirit already in them to obedience, as indeed possible and necessary. The thought of the Holy Spirit being specially sent to the obedient to give in them the Presence of Jesus as a continuous reality, that He might do in them the greater works, even as the Father had worked in Him, was hardly thought of. The meaning of the life of Jesus as our example is not

understood. How distinctly there was with Him the outward lowly life of trial and obedience in preparation for the hidden spiritual one of Power and Glory! It is this inner life that we are made partakers of in the gift of the Spirit of the glorified Jesus. But in our inner personal participation of that gift we must walk in the way He dedicated for us; as in the crucifixion of the flesh we yield ourselves to God's will, for Him to do in us what He wills, and for us also to do what He wills, we shall experience that God is to be found nowhere but in His will. His will in Christ, accepted and done by us, with the heart in which it is done, is the home of the Holy Spirit. The revelation of the Son in His perfect obedience was the condition of the giving of the Spirit; the acceptance of the Son in love and obedience is the path to the indwelling of the Spirit.

It is this truth which has in these latter years come home with power to the hearts of many in the use of the words full surrender and entire consecration. As they understood that the Lord Jesus did indeed claim implicit obedience, that the giving up all to Him and His will was absolutely necessary, and in the power of His grace truly possible, and in the faith of His power did it, they found the entrance to a life of peace and strength formerly unknown. Many are learning, or have to learn, that they do not yet fully know the lesson. They will find that there are applications of this principle beyond what we have conceived. As we see how in the all-pervading power of the Spirit, as we already possess Him, every movement of our life must be brought into allegiance to Jesus, and give ourselves to it in faith, we shall also see that the Spirit of the glorified Lord can make Him present and work His mighty works in us and through us, in a way far beyond what we can ask or think. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit was intended by God and Christ to be to the Church more, oh! so much more, than we have yet known., Oh! shall we not yield ourselves, in a love and obedience that will sacrifice

anything for Jesus, that our hearts may be enlarged for the fulness of His blessing prepared for us.

Let us cry to God very earnestly, that He may waken His Church and people to take in this double lesson: A living obedience is indispensable to the full experience of the indwelling; the full experience of the indwelling is what a loving obedience may certainly claim. Let each of us even now say to our Lord that we do love Him, and keep His commandments. In however much feebleness and failure it be, still let us speak it out to Him as the one purpose of our souls; this He will accept. Let us believe in the indwelling of the Spirit as already given to us, when in the obedience of faith we gave ourselves to Him. Let us believe that the full indwelling, with the revelation of Christ within, can be ours. And let us be content with nothing less than the loving, reverent, trembling, but blessed consciousness that we are the Temples of the Living God, because the Spirit of God dwelleth in us.

Blessed Lord Jesus! with my whole heart do I accept the teaching of these words of Thine. And most earnestly do I beseech Thee to write the truth ever deeper in my heart, as one of the laws of Thy Kingdom, that Loving Obedience may look for a Loving Acceptance, sealed by ever-increasing experience of the Power of the Spirit.

I thank Thee for what Thy word teaches of what the Love and Obedience of Thy disciples were. Though still imperfect—for did they not all forsake Thee?—yet Thou didst cover it with the cloak of Thy love: 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh weak;' and accept it, feeble though it was. Saviour! with my whole heart I say I do love Thee, and would keep each one of Thy commandments.

Afresh I surrender myself to Thee for this. In the depths of my soul Thou

seest there is but one desire, that Thy will should be done in me as in Heaven.

To every reproof of conscience I would bow very low. To every moving of Thy Spirit I would yield in implicit obedience. Into Thy death I give my will and life, that, being raised with Thee, the Life of Another even of Thy Holy Spirit, who dwelleth in me, and revealeth Thee, may be my life. Amen.

Chapter 8^(TOC)

Knowing the Spirit

'The Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive, for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: Ye know Him; for He abideth with you, and shall be in you.'—John 14:17.

'Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?'—1 Corinthians 3:16.

THE value of knowledge, that is, true spiritual knowledge, in the life of faith can hardly be exaggerated. Just as a man on earth is none the richer for an inheritance that comes to him, or a treasure in his field, as long as he does not know of it, or does not know how to get possessed of it, and to use it—so the gifts of God's Grace cannot bring their full blessing until we know and, in knowing, truly apprehend and possess them. In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; it is the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, his Lord, for which the believer is willing to count all things but loss. It is owing to the want of a true knowledge of what God in Christ has prepared for us that the lives of believers are so low and feeble. The prayer Paul offered for the Ephesians—that the Father would give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of their heart being enlightened, that they might know the hope of their calling, and the riches of the inheritance, and the exceeding goodness of the power working in them—is one we never can pray enough, whether for ourselves or for others. But of

what special importance it is that we should know the Teacher through whom all the other knowledge is to come! The Father has given each one of His children not only Christ, who is the truth, the reality of all life and grace, but the Holy Spirit, who is the very Spirit of Christ and the Truth. 'We received the Spirit, which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given us by God.'

But now comes the important question, How do we know when it is the Spirit that is teaching us? If our knowledge of Divine things is to be to us a certainty and a comfort, we must know the Teacher Himself. It is only knowing Him that will be to us the full evidence that what we count our spiritual knowledge is no deception. Our blessed Lord meets this question, with all the solemn issues depending upon it, by assuring us that we shall know the Spirit. When a messenger comes to tell of a king, when a witness gives a testimony for his friend, neither speaks of himself. And yet, without doing so, both the messenger and the witness, in the very fact of giving their evidence, draw our attention to themselves, and claim our recognition of their presence and trustworthiness. And just so the Holy Spirit, when He testifies of Christ and glorifies Him, must be known and acknowledged in His Divine commission and presence. It is only thus that we can have the assurance that the knowledge we receive is indeed of God, and not what our human reason has gathered from the Word of God. To know the King's seal is the only safeguard against a counterfeit image. To know the Spirit is the Divine foundation of certainty.

And how now can the Spirit thus be known? Jesus says: 'Ye know Him, for He abideth with you, and shall be in you.' The abiding indwelling of the Spirit is the condition of knowing Him. His presence will be self-evidencing. As we allow Him to dwell in us, as we give Him full possession in faith and

obedience, and allow Him to testify of Jesus as Lord, He will bring His credentials: He will prove Himself to be the Spirit of God. 'It is the Spirit beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.' It is because the presence of the Spirit as the indwelling teacher of every believer is so little known and recognised in the Church, and because, as the result of this, the workings of the Spirit are few and feeble, that there is so much difficulty and doubt, so much fear and hesitation about the recognition of the witness of the Spirit. As the truth and experience of the indwelling of the Spirit is restored among God's people, and the Spirit is free again to work in power among us, His blessed presence will be its own sufficient proof: we shall indeed know Him. Ye know Him, for He shall be in you."

But meanwhile, as long as His presence is so little recognised, and His working straitened, how is He now to be known? To this question the answer is very simple. To every one who honestly desires, not only to know that he has the Spirit, but to know Him in His person, and as a personal possession and Teacher, we say: Study the teaching of the Word in regard to the Spirit. Be not content with the teaching of the Church or of men about the Spirit, but go to the Word. Be not content with your ordinary 'reading of the Word, or what you already know of its doctrines. If you are in earnest to know the Spirit, go and search the Word specially with this view, as one thirsting to drink deeply of the water of life. Gather together all the Word says of the Spirit, His indwelling and His work, and hide it in your heart. Be determined to accept of nothing but what the Word teaches, but also to accept heartily of all it teaches.

But study the Word in dependence on the Spirit's teaching. If you study it with your human wisdom, your study of it may only confirm you in your mistaken views. If you are a child of God, you have the Holy Spirit to teach

you, even though you do not yet know how He works in you. Ask the Father to work through Him in you, and to make the Word life and light in you. If, in the spirit of humility, and trusting in God's guidance, you submit heartily to the Word, You will find the promise surely fulfilled: you will be taught of God. We have more than once spoken of the progress from the outward to the inward: be whole-hearted in giving up all your thoughts and men's thoughts as you accept the Word; ask God to reveal in you by His Spirit His thoughts concerning His Spirit: He will assuredly do so.

And what will be the chief marks to be found in the Word by which the Spirit in us can be known? They will be chiefly two. The first will be more external, referring to the work He does. The second more in the inner life, in the dispositions which He seeks in those in whom He dwells.

We have just heard how Jesus spoke of a loving obedience as the condition of the Spirit's coming. Obedience is the abiding mark of His presence. Jesus gave Him as a Teacher and Guide. All Scripture speaks of His work as demanding the surrender of the whole life. 'If by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.' 'Your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost: glorify God therefore in your body.' 'If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.' 'We are changed into the same image, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' Words like these define very distinctly the operations of the Spirit. As God is first known in His works, so with the Spirit. He reveals God's will, Christ doing that will—and calling us to follow Him in it. As the believer surrenders himself to a life-in the Spirit, cordially consents that the leading of the Spirit, the mortifying of the flesh, the obedience to the rule of Christ, without limit or exception, shall be what he gives himself up to, and as he waits on the Spirit to work all this, he will find and know the Spirit working

in him. It is as we simply make the aim of the Holy Spirit our aim, and give up ourselves entirely to what He is to come and work, that we are prepared to know Him as dwelling in us. As we are led by Him to obey God even as Christ did, it will be the Spirit Himself, bearing witness with our spirit, that He dwells in us.

We shall also know Him, and that still more certainly and intimately, as we not only yield ourselves to that life He works, but as we study the personal relation in which a believer stands to Him, and the way in which His working may most fully be experienced. The habit of soul the Spirit desires is contained in the one word-faith. Faith has ever to do with the Invisible, with what appears to man most unlikely. When the Divine appeared in Jesus, in what a lowly form was it hidden! Thirty years, He lived in Nazareth, and they had seen nothing in Him but the son of a carpenter. It was only with His baptism that His Divine Sonship came into complete and perfect consciousness. Even to His disciples His Divine glory was often hidden. How much more when the Life of God enters the depths of our sinful being, will it be matter of faith to recognize it! Let us meet the Spirit in holy, humble faith. Let us not be content just to know that the Spirit is in us: that will profit us but little. Let us cultivate the habit, in each—religious exercise, of bowing reverently in silence before God, to give the Spirit, the recognition that is His due, and keep down the will of the flesh that is so ready with its service of God. Let us wait on the Spirit in deep dependence. Let us have a season of quiet meditation, in which we enter the inner temple of our heart, to see that all there is indeed surrendered to the Spirit, and then bow before the Father to ask and expect from Him the mighty working of the Holy Spirit. However little we see or feel, let us believe. The Divine is always first known by believing. As we continue believing, we shall be prepared to know and to see.

There is no way of knowing a fruit but by tasting it There is no way of knowing the light but by being in it and using it. There is no way of knowing a person but by intercourse with him. There is no way of knowing the Holy Spirit but by possessing Him, and being possessed of Him. To live in the Spirit is the only way to know the Spirit. To have Him in us, doing His work, giving us His fellowship, and guiding our whole life, this is the path the Master opens when He says: 'Ye know Him, for He shall be in you.'

Believer! for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus Paul counted all things but loss. Shall we not do so too? Shall we not, to know the glorified Christ through the Spirit, give up everything? Oh, let us think of it! the Father hath sent the Spirit that we might fully share in the glory of the glorified Christ! Shall we not give ourselves up to have Him in us, to let Him have all in us, that we may fully know Him, through whom alone we can know the Son and the Father? Let us even now yield ourselves to the full to the indwelling and teaching of the Blessed Spirit whom the Son hath given us from the Father.

Blessed Father! who hast, in the name of Christ, sent us Thy Holy Spirit, graciously hear my prayer, and grant that I may know Him indeed by having Him within me. May His witness to Jesus be divinely clear and mighty, may His leading and sanctifying be in such holy power, may His indwelling in my spirit be in such Truth and Life, that the consciousness of Him as my Life may be as simple and sure as of my natural life, As the light is the sufficient witness to the sun, may His light be its own witness to the, presence of Jesus.

And lead me, O my Father, in knowing Him to know aright the mystery of Thy Love in giving Him within. May I understand how it was not enough to Thee to work in me by Thy secret, unknown, Almighty Power, nor even to work through Him who came to the earth to reveal Thee. Thy Son had

something more, and better still, for us the Spirit, the Blessed Third in the Godhead, was sent, that Thy Personal Presence, the most intimate union and unbroken fellowship with Thee, might be my portion. The Holy Spirit, Thy very Life and Self, has come to be now the life of my very self, and so take me wholly for Thine own.

O my God, do teach me and all Thy people to know Thy Spirit. Not only to know that He is in us, not only to know somewhat of His working, but to know Him as in His very person He reveals and glorifies the Son, and in Him Thee the Father, Amen.

Chapter 9^(TOC)

The Spirit of Truth

'But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of me.'—John 15:26.

'When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the Truth; for He shall not speak from Himself; but whatsoever things He shall hear, these shall He speak.'—John 16:13.

God created man in His image; to become like Himself, capable of holding fellowship with Him in His glory. In Paradise two ways were set before man for attaining to this likeness to God. These were typified by the two trees—that of life, and that of knowledge. God's way was the former—through life would come the knowledge and likeness of God; in abiding in God's will, and partaking of God's life, man would be perfected. In recommending the other, Satan assured man that knowledge was the one thing to be desired to make us like God. And when man chose the light of knowledge above the life in obedience, he entered upon the terrible path that leads to death.' The desire to know became his greatest temptation; his whole nature was corrupted, and knowledge was to him more than obedience and more than life.

Under the power of this deceit, that promises happiness in knowledge, the human race is still led astray. And nowhere does it show its power more terribly than in connection with the true religion and God's own revelation of

Himself. Even where the word of God is accepted, the wisdom of the world and of the flesh ever enters in; even spiritual Truth is robbed of its power when held, not in the life of the Spirit, but in the wisdom of man. Where Truth enters into the inward parts, as God desires, there it becomes the life of the Spirit. But it may also only reach the outer parts of the soul, the intellect and reason, and while it occupies and pleases there, and satisfies us with the imagination that it will thence exercise its influence, its power is nothing more than that of human argument and wisdom, that never reaches to the true life of the spirit. For there is a truth of the understanding and feelings, which is Only natural, the human image or form, the shadow of Divine Truth. There is a Truth which is substance and reality, communicating to him who holds it the actual possession, the life of the things of which others only think and speak. The truth in shadow, in form, in thought, was all the law could give; and in that the religion of the Jews consisted. The truth of substance, the Truth as a Divine life, was what Jesus brought as the Only-begotten, full of grace and truth. He is Himself 'the Truth.'

In promising the Holy Spirit to His—disciples, our Lord speaks of Him as the Spirit of Truth. That Truth, which He Himself is, that Truth and Grace and Life which He brought from heaven as a substantial spiritual reality to communicate to us, that Truth has its existence in the Spirit of God: He is the Spirit, the inner life of that Divine Truth. And when we receive Him, and just as far as we receive Him, and give up to Him, He makes Christ, and the Life of God, to be Truth in us divinely real; He gives it to be in us of a truth. In His teaching and guiding into the Truth, He does not give us only words and thoughts and images and impressions, coming to us from without, from a book or a teacher outside of us. He enters the secret roots of our life, and plants the Truth of God there as a seed, and dwells in it as a Divine Life. And where, in faith, and expectation, and surrender, this Hidden Life is cherished

and nourished, there He quickens and strengthens it, so that it grows stronger and spreads its branches through the whole being. And so, not from without but from within, not in word but in power, in Life and Truth, the Spirit reveals Christ and all He has for us. He makes the Christ, who has been to us so much only an image, a thought, a Saviour outside and above us, to be Truth within us. The Spirit brings with His incoming the Truth into us; and then, having possessed us from within, guides us, as we can bear it, into all the truth.

In His promise to send the Spirit of Truth from the Father, our Lord very definitely tells us what His principal work would be—'He shall bear witness of ME.' He had just before said, 'I am the Truth;' the Spirit of Truth can have no work but just to reveal and impart the fulness of Grace and Truth that there are in Christ Jesus. He came down from the glorified Lord in heaven to bear witness—within us, and so through us, of the reality and the power of the redemption which Christ has accomplished there. There are Christians who are afraid that to think much of the Spirit's presence within us will lead us away from the Saviour above us. A looking within to ourselves may do this; we may be sure that the silent, believing, adoring recognition of the Spirit within us will only lead to a fuller, a more true and spiritual apprehension that Christ alone is indeed all in all. 'He shall bear witness of me.' 'He shall glorify me.' It is He will make our knowledge of Christ Life and Truth, and experience of the Power with which He works and saves.'

To know what the disposition or state of mind is in which we can fully receive this guiding into all Truth, note the remarkable words our Lord uses concerning the Spirit: 'He shall guide you into all the Truth, for He shall not speak from Himself; but whatsoever things He shall hear, these shall He speak.' The mark of this Spirit of Truth is a wondrous Divine Teachableness.

In the mystery of the Holy Trinity there is nothing more beautiful than this, that with a Divine equality on the part of the Son and the Spirit, there is also a perfect subordination. The Son could claim that men should honour Him even as they honoured the Father, and yet counted it no derogation from that honour to say, The Son can do nothing of Himself; as I hear, so I speak. And even so the Spirit of Truth never speaks from Himself. We should think He surely could speak from Himself; but no, only what He hears, that He speaks. The Spirit that fears to speak out of its own, that listens for God to speak, and only speaks when God speaks, this is the Spirit of Truth.

And this is the disposition He works, the life He breathes, in those who truly receive Him—that gentle teachableness which marks the poor in spirit, the broken in heart, who have become conscious that as worthless as their righteousness, is their wisdom, or power of apprehending spiritual truth; that they need Christ as much for the one as the other, and that the Spirit within them alone can be the Spirit of Truth. He shows us how, even with the word of God in our hands and on our tongues, we may be utterly wanting in that waiting, docile, submissive spirit to which alone its spiritual meaning can be revealed. He opens our eyes to the reason why so much Bible reading, and Bible knowledge, and Bible preaching has so little fruit unto true holiness; because it is studied and held with a wisdom that is not from above, that was not asked for and waited for from God. The mark of the Spirit of Truth was wanting. He speaketh not, He thinketh not from Himself; what He hears, that He speaks. The Spirit of Truth receives everything day by day, step by step, from God in heaven. He is silent, and does not speak, except and until He hears.

These thoughts suggest to us the great danger of the Christian life-seeking to know the Truth of God in His word without the distinct waiting on the Spirit

of Truth in the heart. The tempter of Paradise still moves about among men. Knowledge is still his great temptation. How many Christians there are who could confess that their knowledge of Divine Truth does but little for them: it leaves them powerless against the world and sin; they know little of the light and the liberty, the strength and the joy the Truth was meant to bring. It is because they take to themselves God's truth in the power of human wisdom and human thought, and wait not for the Spirit of Truth to lead 'them into it.' Most earnest efforts to abide in Christ, to walk like Christ, have failed because their faith stood more in the wisdom of man than in the power of God. Most blessed experiences have been short lived, because they knew not that the Spirit of Truth was within them to make Christ and His Holy Presence an abiding reality.

These thoughts suggest the great need of the Christian life. Jesus said, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and follow me.' Many a one follows Jesus without denying himself, And there is nothing that more needs denying than our own wisdom, the energy of the fleshly mind, as it exerts itself in the things of God.

Let us learn that in all our intercourse with God, in His word or prayer, in every act of worship, the first step ought to be a solemn act of abnegation, in which we deny our power to understand God's word, or to speak our words to Him, without the special Divine leading of the Holy Spirit. Christians need to deny even more than their own righteousness, their own wisdom; this is often the most difficult part of the denial of self. In all worship we need to realize the alone sufficiency and the absolute indispensableness, not only of the Blood, but as much of the Spirit of Jesus. This is the meaning of the call to be silent unto God, and in quiet to wait on Him; to hush the rush of thoughts and words in God's presence, and in deep humility and stillness to wait, and

listen, and hear what God will say. The Spirit of Truth never speaks from Himself: what He hears, that He speaks. A lowly, listening, teachable spirit is the mark of the presence of the Spirit of Truth.

And then, when we do wait, let us remember that even then the Spirit of Truth does not at once or first speak in thoughts that we can at once apprehend and express. These are but on the surface. To be true they must be rooted deep. They must have hidden depth in themselves. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth because He is the Spirit of Life: the Life is the Light. Not to thought or feeling does He speak in the first place, but in the hidden man of the heart, in the spirit of a man which is within him, in his inmost parts. It is only to faith that it is revealed what His teaching means, and what His guidance into the Truth. Let our first work therefore today again be to believe; that is, to recognise the Living God in the work He undertakes to do. Let us believe in the Holy Spirit as the Divine Quickener and Sanctifier, who is already within us, and yield up all to Him. He will prove Himself the Divine Enlightener: the Life is the Light. Let the confession that we have no life or goodness of our own be accompanied by the confession that we have no wisdom either; the deeper our sense of this, the more precious will the promise of the Spirit's guidance become. And the deep assurance of having the Spirit of Truth within us will work in us the holy teacher's likeness, and the quiet hearkening to which the secrets of the Lord shall be revealed.

O Lord God of Truth! in them that worship Thee, Thou seekest Truth in the inward parts. I do bless Thee again that Thou hast given me too the Spirit of Truth, and that He now dwells in me. I bow before Thee in lowly fear to ask that I may know Him aright, and walk before Thee in the living consciousness that the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Christ, who is the Truth, is indeed within me, the inmost self of my new life. May every thought and

word, every disposition and habit, be the proof that the Spirit of Christ, who is the Truth, dwells and rules within me.

Especially do I ask Thee that He may witness to me of Christ Jesus. May the Truth of His atonement and blood, as it works with living efficacy in the upper sanctuary, dwell in me and I in it. May His Life and Glory no less be Truth in me, a living experience of His Presence and Power. O my Father! may the Spirit of Thy Son, the Spirit of Truth, indeed be my life. May each word of Thy Son through Him be made true in me.

I do thank Thee once again, O my Father, that He dwelleth within me. I bow my knees that Thou wouldest grant that, according to the riches of Thy glory, He may work mightily in me and all Thy saints. Oh, that all Thy people may know this their privilege and rejoice in it: the Holy Spirit within them to reveal Christ, full of Grace and Truth, as Truth in them. Amen.

Chapter 10^(TOC)

The Expediency of the Spirit's Coming

'I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I go, I will send Him unto YOU.'—John 16:7.

As our Lord is leaving this world, He promises the disciples here that His departure will be their gain; the Comforter will take His place, and be to them far better than He ever had been or could be in His bodily presence. This very specially in two aspects. His intercourse with them had never been unbroken, but liable to interruption; now it would even be broken off by death, and they would see Him no more. The Spirit would abide with them for ever. His own intercourse had been very much external, and, in consequence of this, had not resulted in what might have been expected. The Spirit would be in them; His coming would be as an Indwelling Presence, in the power of which they should have Jesus too in them as their Life and their Strength.

During the life of our Lord on earth, each of His disciples was dealt with by Him in accordance with his peculiar character, and the special circumstances in which he might be placed. The intercourse was an intensely personal one: in every thing He proved that He knew His sheep by name. For each there was a thoughtfulness and a wisdom that met just what was required. Would the Spirit supply this need too, and give back that tenderness of personal

interest and that special individual dealing which had made the guidance of Jesus so precious? We cannot doubt it. All that Christ had been to them, the Spirit was to restore in greater power, and in a blessedness that should know no break. They were to be far happier and safer and stronger with Jesus in heaven, than they ever could have been with Him on earth. This, the chief beauty and blessedness of their discipleship of such a Master, that He was so wise and patient to give to each one just what he needed and to make each one feel that he had in Him his best friend, could never be left out. The indwelling of the Spirit was meant to restore Christ's most personal intercourse and guidance, His direct personal friendship.

It is to many a matter of great difficulty to conceive of this or to believe it; much less do they experience it. The thought of Christ walking with men on earth, living and guiding them, is so clear; the thought of a Spirit hiding Himself within us, and speaking, not in distinct thoughts, but only in the secret depths of the life, makes His guidance so much more difficult.

And yet just what constitutes the greater difficulty of the new, the spiritual intercourse and guidance, is what gives it its greater worth and blessedness. It is the same principle we see in daily life: difficulty calls out the powers, strengthens the will, develops character, and makes the man. In a child's first lessons he has to be helped and encouraged; as he goes on to what is more difficult, the teacher leaves him to his own resources. A youth leaves his parents' roof to have the principles that have been instilled tested and strengthened. In each case it is expedient that the outward presence and help be withdrawn, and the soul be thrown upon itself to apply and assimilate the lessons it had been taught. God wants to educate us, indeed, to a perfect manhood, not ruled by an outward law, but by the inner life. As long as Jesus was with the disciples on earth, He had to work from without inward, and yet

could never effectually reach or master the inmost parts. When He went away He sent the Spirit to be in them, that now their growth might be from within outward. Taking possession first by His Spirit of the inmost secret recesses of their being, He would have them, in the voluntary consent and surrender to His inspiration and guidance, personally become what He Himself is, through His Spirit in them. So they would have the framing of their life, the forming of their character, in their own hands, in the power of the Divine Spirit, who really had become their spirit. So they would grow up to that true self-standingness, that true independence of the outward, in which they should become like Himself, a true, separate person, having life in himself, and yet only living in the Father.

As long as the Christian only asks what is easy and pleasant, he will never understand that it is expedient, really better for us, that Christ should not be on earth. But as soon as the thoughts of difficulty and sacrifice are set aside, in the honest desire to become a truly God-like man, bearing the full image of the first-born Son, and in all things living well pleasing to the Father, the thought of Jesus' departure that His Spirit may now become our very own, and we be exercised and disciplined in the life of faith, will be welcomed with gladness and gratitude. If to follow the leading of the Spirit, and experience the personal friendship and guidance of Jesus in it, be a much more difficult and dangerous path than it would have been to follow Him on earth, we must remember the privilege we enjoy, the nobility we attain, the intimacy of fellowship with God we enter into—all these are infinitely greater. To have the Holy Spirit of God coming through the human nature of our Lord, entering, into our spirits, identifying Himself with us, and becoming our very own just as He was the Spirit of Christ Jesus on earth, surely this is a blessedness worth any sacrifice, for it is the beginning of the indwelling of God Himself.

But to see that it is such a privilege and to desire it very earnestly does not remove the difficulty. And so the question comes again: the intercourse of Jesus with His disciples on earth, so condescending in its tenderness, so particular and minute in its interest, so consciously personal in its love, how can this be ours in the same degree now that He is absent, and the Spirit is to be our guide? The first answer here, is, as through the whole Christian life, by faith. With Jesus on earth, the disciples, when once they had believed, walked by sight, We walk by faith. In faith, we must accept and rejoice in the word of Jesus: 'It is expedient for you that I go away.' We must take time distinctly to believe it, to approve of it, to rejoice that He is gone to the Father. We must learn to thank and praise Him that He has called us to this life in the Spirit. We must believe that in this gift of the Spirit the presence and intercourse of our Lord are fully secured to us most certainly and effectually. It may indeed be in a way we do not yet understand, because we have so little believed and rejoiced in the gift of the Holy Spirit. But faith must believe and praise for what it does not yet understand; let us believe assuredly and joyfully that the Holy Spirit, and Jesus Himself through Him, will teach us how the intercourse and guidance are to be enjoyed.

Will teach us. Beware of misunderstanding these words. We always connect teaching with thoughts. We want the Spirit to suggest to us certain conceptions of how Jesus will be with us and in us. And this is not what He does. The Spirit does not dwell in the mind, but in the life. Not in what we know, but in what we are does the Spirit begin His work. Do not let us seek or expect at once a clear apprehension, a new insight, into this or any Divine truth. Knowledge, thought, feeling, action, all this is a part of that external religion which the external presence of Jesus had also wrought in the disciples. The Spirit was now to come, and, deeper down than all these, He was to be the Hidden Presence of Jesus within the depths of their personality.

The Divine Life was in a newness of power to become their life. And the teaching of the Spirit would begin, not in word or thought, but in Power. In the Power of a Life working in them secretly, but with Divine energy; in the Power of a Faith that rejoiced that Jesus was really near, was really taking charge of the whole life and every circumstance of it; the Spirit would inspire them with the faith of the Indwelling Jesus. This would be the beginning and the blessedness of His teaching. They would have the Life of Jesus within them, and they would by faith know that it was Jesus: their faith would be at once cause and effect of the Presence of the Lord in the Spirit.

It is by such a faith—a faith which the Spirit breathes, which comes from His being and living in us—that the Presence of Jesus is to be as real and all-sufficient as when He was on earth. But why then is it that believers who have the Spirit do not experience it more consciously and fully! The answer is very simple: they know and honour the Spirit who is in them so little. They have much faith in Jesus who died, or who reigns in heaven, but little faith in Jesus who dwells in them by His Spirit. It is this we need: faith in Jesus as the fulfiller of the promise, 'He that believeth in me, rivers of living water shall flow out of him.' We must believe that the Holy Spirit is within us as the Presence of our Lord Jesus. And we must not only believe this with the faith of the understanding as it seeks to persuade itself of the truth of what Christ says. We must believe with the heart, a heart in which the Holy Spirit dwells. The whole gift of the Spirit, the whole teaching of Jesus concerning the Spirit, is to enforce the word: 'The Kingdom of God is within you.' If we would have the true faith of the heart, let us turn inward, and very gently and humbly yield to the Holy Spirit to do His work in us.

To receive this teaching and this faith, which standeth in the Life and Power of the Spirit, let us above all fear that which hinders Him most—will and the

wisdom of man. We are still surrounded by a life of self, of the flesh; in the service of God, even in the effort to exercise faith, it is ever putting itself forward, and putting forth its strength. Every thought, not only every evil thought, but every thought, however good, in which our mind runs before the Spirit, must be brought into captivity. Let us lay our own will and our own wisdom captive at the feet of Jesus, and wait in faith and holy stillness of soul there. The deep, consciousness will grow strong that the Spirit is within us, and that His Divine Life is living and growing within us. As we thus honour Him, and give up to Him, as we bring our fleshly activity into subjection and wait on Him, He will not put us to shame, but do His work within us. He will strengthen our inner life; He will quicken our faith; He will reveal Jesus; and we shall, step by step, learn that the Presence and Personal Intercourse and Guidance of Jesus are ours as clearly and sweetly, yea, more truly and mightily, than if He were with us on earth.'

Blessed Lord Jesus! I do rejoice that Thou art no longer here on earth. I do bless Thee that in a fellowship more real, more near, more tender, more effectual than if Thou wert still here on earth, Thou dost manifest Thyself to Thy disciples. I do bless Thee that Thy Holy Spirit dwells within me, and gives me to know what that fellowship is, and what the realness of Thy holy indwelling.

Most Holy Lord! forgive that I have not known Thy Spirit sooner and better, that I have not praised and loved Thee aright for this most wonderful gift of Thine and the Father's love. And do teach me in the fulness of faith to believe in Thee, from whom, day by day, the fresh anointing flows and fills the life.

And hear me, Lord, when I cry to Thee on behalf of so many of Thy redeemed ones, who do not yet even see what it is to give up and lose the mixed life after the flesh, to receive in its stead the life that is in the power of

the Spirit. With many of Thy saints, I do beseech Thee, oh, grant that the Church may be wakened to know how the one mark of her election, the one secret of her enjoyment of Thy Presence, the one power for fulfilling her calling, is that each believer be led to know that the Spirit dwelleth within him, and that the abiding Presence of his Lord with him as Keeper, and Guide, and Friend is indeed his sure portion. Grant it, Lord, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

Chapter 11^(TOC)

The Spirit Glorifying Christ

'It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I go, I will send Him unto you. ... He shall glorify me: for He shall take of mine, and declare it unto you.'—John 16:7, 14.

THERE is a twofold glorifying of the Son of which Scripture speaks. The one is by the Father, the other by the Spirit: the one takes place in heaven, the other here on earth. By the one He is glorified 'in God Himself;' by the other, 'in us' (John 13:32, 17:10). Of the former Jesus spake: 'If God be glorified in Him (the Son of Man), God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him.' And again, in the high-priestly prayer, 'Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son.... And now, O Father, glorify me with Thyself.' Of the latter He said: 'The Spirit shall glorify me.' 'I am glorified in them.'

To glorify is to manifest the hidden excellence and worth of an object. Jesus, the Son of Man was to be glorified when His human nature was admitted to the full participation of the power and glory in which God dwells. He entered into the perfect spirit—life of the heavenly world, of the Divine Being. And all the angels worshipped Him as the Lamb on the Throne. This heavenly, spiritual glory of Christ the human mind cannot conceive or apprehend in truth. It can only be truly known by being experienced, by being

communicated and participated in the inner life. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of the glorified Christ, He comes down as the Spirit of Glory, and reveals the glory of Christ in us by dwelling and working in us, in the life and the power of that glory in which Christ dwelleth. He makes Christ glorious to us and in us. And so He glorifies Him in us, and through us in them who have eyes to see. The Son seeks not His own glory: the Father glorifies Him in heaven, the Spirit glorifies Him in our hearts.

But before this glorifying of Christ by the Spirit could take place, He must first needs go away from His disciples. They could not have Him in the flesh and in the Spirit too; His bodily presence would hinder the spiritual indwelling. They must part with the Christ they had ere they could receive the indwelling Christ glorified by the Holy Spirit. Christ Himself had to give up the life He had ere He could be glorified in heaven or in us. Even so, in union with Him, we must give up the Christ we have known, the measure of the life we have had in Him, if we are indeed to have Him glorified to us and in us by the Holy Spirit.

I am persuaded that just here is the point at which very many of God's dear children need the teaching 'It is expedient that I go away.' Like His disciples, they have believed in Jesus; they love and obey Him; they have experienced much of the inexpressible blessedness of knowing and following Him. And yet they feel that the deep rest and joy, the holy light and the Divine power of His abiding Indwelling, as they see it in Holy Scripture, is not yet theirs. Now in secret, and then under the blessed influence of the fellowship of the saints, or the teaching of God's ministers in church or convention, they have been helped and wonderfully blessed. Christ has become very precious. And yet they see something still before them, promises not perfectly fulfilled, wants not fully satisfied. The only reason can be this: they have not yet fully

inherited the promise: 'The Comforter shall abide with you, and He shall be in you. He shall glorify me.' The 'expediency of Christ's going away, to come again glorified in the Spirit, they do not fully understand. They have not yet been able to say, 'Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now know we Him so no more!

I Knowing Christ after the flesh:' it is this must come to an end, must make way for knowing Him in the power of the Spirit. After the flesh: that means, in the power of the external, of words and thoughts, of efforts and feelings, of influences and aids coming from without, from men and means. The believer who has received the Holy Spirit, but does not know fully what this implies, and so does not give up entirely to His indwelling and leading, still, to a great extent, has confidence in the flesh. Admitting that he can do nothing without the Spirit, he still labours and struggles vainly to believe and live as he knows he should. Confessing most heartily, and at times experiencing most blessedly, that Christ alone is his life and strength, it grieves and almost wearies him to think how often he fails in the maintenance of that attitude of trustful dependence in which Christ can live out His life. in him. He tries to believe all there is to be believed of Christ's nearness and keeping and indwelling, and yet, somehow, there are still breaks and interruptions; it is as if faith is not what it should be—the substance of the things we had hoped for. The reason must be that the faith itself was still too much the work of the mind, in the power of the flesh, in the wisdom of man. There has indeed been a revelation of Christ the Faithful Keeper, the Abiding Friend, but that revelation has been, in part, taken hold of by the flesh and the fleshly mind. This has made it powerless. Christ, the Christ of glory, the doctrine of the Indwelling Christ, has been received into the mixed life, partly flesh and partly spirit. It is only the Spirit can glorify Christ: we must give up and cast away the old way of knowing and believing and having Christ. We must

know Christ no more after the flesh. 'The Spirit shall glorify me.'

But what does it mean that the Spirit glorifies Christ? What is this glory of Christ that He reveals, and how does He do it? What the glory of Christ is we learn from Scripture. We read in Hebrews, 'We see not yet all things made subject to man. But we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour.' To Him all things have been made subject. So our Lord connects His being glorified, in both the passages we have taken as our text, with all things being given to Him. 'He shall glorify me, for He shall take of mine. All things, whatsoever the Father hath, are mine; therefore, said I, that He taketh of mine, and shall declare it unto you.' 'All things that are mine are Thine, and Thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.' In exalting Him above all rule and power and dominion, the Father hath put all things in subjection under His feet: He gave unto Him the Name which is above every name, that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow. The Kingdom and the Power and the Glory are ever one: Unto Him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb in the midst of the Throne, be the Glory and the Dominion for ever. It is as sitting on the Throne of the Divine Glory, with all things put in subjection under His feet (Ephesians 1:20-22), that Jesus has been glorified in heaven.'

When the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus in us, He reveals Him to us in this His glory. He takes of the things of Christ and declares them to us. That is not, He gives us a thought, or image, or vision of that glory, as it is above us in heaven; but He shows it to us as a personal experience and possession—He makes us in our inmost life partake of it. He shows Christ as present in us. All the true, living knowledge we have of Christ is through the Spirit of God. When Christ comes into us as a feeble infant; when He grows and increases and is formed within us; when we learn to trust and follow and serve Him—this is all of the Holy Spirit. All this, however, may consist, even as in the

disciples, with much darkness and failure. But when the Holy Spirit does His perfect work, and reveals the Glorified Lord, the Throne of His Glory is set up in the heart, and He rules over every enemy. Every power is brought into subjection, every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Through the whole of the renewed nature, there rises the song, 'Glory to Him that sitteth on the Throne! Though the confession holds true to the end, 'In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,' the Holy Presence of Christ as Ruler and Governor so fills the heart and life that His Dominion ruleth over all. Sin has no dominion: the law of the Spirit of the Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

If this be the glorifying of Christ which the Spirit brings, it is easy to see what the way is that leads to it. The Enthronement of Jesus in His glory can only take place in the heart that has promised implicit and unreserved obedience, that has had the courage to believe that He will take His power and reign, and in that faith expects that every enemy will be kept under His feet. It feels that it needs, it is willing to have, it claims and, accepts, Christ as Lord of All, with everything in the life, great or small, taken possession of and guided by Him, through His Holy Spirit. It is in the loving, obedient disciple the Spirit is promised to dwell; in him the Spirit glorifies Christ.

This only can take place when the fulness of time has come to the believing soul. The history of the Church, as a whole, repeats itself in each individual. Until the time appointed of the Father, who hath the times and seasons in His own hands, the heir is under guardians and stewards, and differeth nothing from a bond-servant. When the fulness of time is come, and faith is perfected, the Spirit of the Glorified One enters in power, and Christ dwells in the heart. Yea, the history of Christ Himself repeats itself in the soul. In the temple there were two holy places-the one before the veil, the other within the veil,

the Most Holy. In His earthly life Christ dwelt and ministered in the Holy Place without the veil: the veil of the flesh kept Him out of the Most Holy. It was only when the veil of the flesh was rent, and he died to sin completely and for ever, that He could enter the Inner Sanctuary of the full glory of the Spirit-life in heaven. And just so the believer who longs to have Jesus glorified within the Spirit, must, however blessed his life has been in the knowledge and service of his Lord, learn that there is something better. In him, too, the veil of the flesh must be rent; he must enter this special part of Christ's work through the new and living way into the Holiest of All. 'He hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.' As the soul sees how completely Jesus has triumphed over the flesh, and entered with His flesh into the Spirit-Life, how perfect in virtue of that triumph is Power over all in our flesh that could hinder, perfect in the power of the Spirit the Entrance, the Indwelling of Jesus as Keeper and King be, the veil is taken away, and the life hitherto the holy place is now one in the Most Holy, in the full Presence of the Glory.'

This rending of the veil, this Enthronement of Jesus as the Glorified One in the heart, is not always with the sound of trumpet and shouting. It may be thus at times, and with some, but in other cases it takes place amid the deep awe and trembling of a stillness where not a sound is heard. Zion's King comes, meek and lowly, with the Kingdom to the poor in spirit. Without form or comeliness He enters in, and, when thought and feeling fail, the Holy Spirit glorifies Him to the faith that sees not but believes. The eye of flesh saw Him not on the Throne; to the world it was a mystery; and so, just when all within appears feeble and empty, the Spirit secretly works the Divine assurance, and then the blessed experience, that Christ the Glorified has taken up His abode within. The soul knows, in silent worship and adoration, that Jesus is Master, that His Throne in the heart is established in righteousness; that the promise is now fulfilled, The Spirit shall glorify me.'

Blessed Lord Jesus! I worship Thee in the glory which the Father hath given Thee. And I bless Thee for the promise that that glory shall be revealed in the hearts of Thy disciples, to dwell in them and fill them. This is Thy glory, that all that the Father hath is now Thine: of this Thy glory in its infinite fulness and power Thou hast said the Holy Spirit shall take to show it unto us. Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: the hearts and lives of Thy beloved may be filled with it too. Lord, let it be so!

Blessed be Thy holy name for all in whom the rich beginning of the fulfilment hath already come! Lord, let it go on from glory to glory. To this end teach us, we pray Thee, to maintain our separation to Thee unbroken: heart and life shall be Thine alone. To this end teach us to hold fast our confidence without wavering, that the Spirit who is within us will perfect His work. Above all, teach us to yield ourselves in ever increasing dependence and emptiness to wait for the Spirit's teaching and leading. We do desire to have no confidence in the flesh, its wisdom, or its righteousness. We would bow ever lower and deeper before Thee in the holy fear and reverence of the faith that Thy Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Thy glory, is within us to do His Divine work. Blessed Lord! let Him rise in great power, and have dominion within us, that our heart may by Him be fully made the Temple and the Kingdom in which Thou alone art glorified, in which Thy glory filleth all. Amen.

Chapter 12^(TOC)

The Spirit Convincing of Sin

'If I go, I will send the Comforter unto you; and He, when He is come, will convince the world in respect of sin.'—John 16:7-8.

The close connection between the two statements in these words of our Lord is not always noticed. Before the Holy Spirit was to convince the world of sin, He was first to come into the disciples. He was to make His home, to take His stand in them, and then from out of them and through them to do His conviction work on the world. He shall bear witness of me, and ye shall also bear witness.' The disciples were to realize that the great work of the Holy Spirit, striving with man, convincing the world of sin, could only be done as He had a firm footing on earth in them. They were to be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, to receive the Power from on high, with the one purpose of being the instruments through whom the Holy Spirit could reach the world. The mighty, sin convicting power of the Spirit to dwell in them and work through them: it was for this our blessed Lord sought to prepare them and us by these words. The lessons they teach are very solemn.

1. The Holy Spirit comes to us, that through us He may reach others. The Spirit is the Spirit of the Holy One, of the redeeming God: when He enters us, He does not change His nature or lose His Divine character. He is still the Spirit of

God striving with man, and seeking his deliverance. Wherever He is not hindered by ignorance or selfishness, He looks out from the heart as His temple for the work He has to do on the world around, and makes it willing and bold to do that work; to testify against sin, and for Jesus the Saviour from sin, He does this very specially as being the Spirit of the crucified and exalted Christ. For what purpose was it that He received the Spirit without measure? 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor. He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives! It was this same Spirit—after Christ through Him had offered Himself unto God, and through Him as the Spirit of Holiness had been raised from the dead-whom He sent down on His Church, that now the Spirit might have a home in them, as He had had it in Himself. And no otherwise and no less than in Himself would the Divine Spirit in them pursue His Divine work, and as a Light shining in, and revealing, and condemning, and conquering the darkness, as 'the Spirit of burning and the Spirit of judgment,' be to the world the power of a Divine conviction and conversion. Not from heaven direct so much, as the Spirit of God, but as the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Church, would He convince the world. 'I will send Him to you, and when He is come, He will convince the world.' It is in and through us that the Spirit can reach the world.

2. The Spirit can only reach others through us by first bringing ourselves into perfect sympathy with Himself. He enters into us to become so one with us that He becomes as a disposition

and a life within us; and His work in us, and through us in others, becomes identical with our work.

The application of this truth to the conviction of sin in the world is one of great solemnity. The words of our Lord are frequently applied to believers in reference to the continued conviction of sin which He will ever have to work within them. In this sense they are, indeed, most true. This first work of the Spirit remains to the end the undertone of all His Comforting and Sanctifying work. It is only as He keeps alive the tender sense of the danger and shame of again sinning, that the soul will be kept in its low place before God—hiding in Jesus as alone its safety and its strength. As the Holy Ghost reveals and communicates the Holy Life of Christ within, the sure result will be a deeper sense of the sinfulness of sin. But the words mean more. If the Spirit through us, through our testimony, whether by word or walk, is to convince the world, He must first convince us, of its sin. He must give us personally such a sight and sense of the guilt of its unbelief and rejection of our Saviour, such a sight and sense of each of its sins, as being at once the cause, the proof, the fruit of that rejection, that we shall in some measure think and feel in regard to the sin as He does. There will be then that inner fitness in us for the Spirit to work through us, that inner unity between our witness and His witness against sin and for God, which will reach the conscience and carry conviction with a power that is from above.

Alas! how easy it is in the power of the flesh to judge others,

in the spirit which sees not the beam in our own eye, or which, if we are indeed free from what we condemn, yet does it with a secret, 'Stand by, I am holier than thou.' We either testify and 'work in a wrong spirit and in our own strength, or have not the courage to work at all. It is because we see the sin and the sinfulness of others, but not in a conviction that comes from the Holy Spirit. When He convinces us of the sin of the world, His work bears two marks. The one is the sacrifice of self, in the jealousy for God and His honour, combined with the deep and tender grief for the guilty. The other is a deep, strong faith in the possibility and power of deliverance. We see each sin in its terrible relation to the whole; we see the whole in the double light of the cross. We see sin unspeakably hateful in its awful guilt against God and its fearful power over the poor soul: we see sin condemned, atoned, put away, and conquered in Jesus. We learn to look on the world as God looks upon it in His holiness: hating its sin with such an infinite hatred, and loving it with such a love, that He gives His Son, and the Son gives His life, to destroy it and set its captives free.

May God give His people a true and deep conviction of the sin of the world in its rejection of Christ, even in the midst of its profession of believing in Him and serving Him, as the fitting preparation for the Spirit's using them in convincing the world of sin.

3. To obtain this conviction of sin, the believer needs not only to pray for it, but to have his whole life under the leading of the

Holy Spirit. We cannot too earnestly insist upon it, that the many different gifts of the Spirit all depend upon His personal indwelling and supremacy in the inner life, and the revelation in us of the Christ that gave His life to have sin destroyed. When our Lord spake that word of inexhaustible meaning, 'He shall be in you,' he opened up the secret of all the Spirit's teaching, and sanctifying, and strengthening. The Spirit is the Life of God; He enters in, and becomes our Life; it is as He can sway and inspire the life that He will be able to work in us all He wills. It is desirable and useful to direct the attention of the believer to the different operations of the Spirit, that he may neglect or lose nothing through ignorance. But it is still more needful, with each new insight into what the Spirit can work, to get firmer hold of the truth: Let the life be in the Spirit, and the special blessing will not be withheld. Would you have this deep spiritual conviction of the sin of the world such an affecting sense of its terrible reality and power, its exceeding sinfulness, as will fit you for being the man through whom the Spirit can convince sinners, just yield your whole life and being to the Holy Spirit. Let the thought of this wondrous mystery of the nearness, the Indwelling, of the Holy God in you quiet your mind and heart into lowly fear and worship. Surrender the great enemy that opposes Him—the flesh, the self-life—day by day to Him to mortify and keep dead. Be content to aim at nothing less than being filled with the Spirit of the Man whose glory it is that He gave Himself to death to take away sin, with the whole being and doing under His control and inspiration. As your life in the Spirit

becomes healthy and strong, as your spiritual constitution gets invigorated, your eye will see more clearly, your heart feel more keenly, what the sin around you is. Your thoughts and feelings will be those of the Holy Spirit breathing in you; your deep horror of sin, your deep faith in the redemption from it, your deep love to the souls who are in it, your willingness like your Lord to die if men can be freed from sin, will make you the fit instrument for the Spirit to convince the world of its sin.

4. There is one more lesson. We are seeking in this little book to find the way by which we all can be filled with the Spirit. Here is one condition: He must dwell in us as the world's Convincer of sin, I will send Him unto you, and He will convince the world.' Offer yourself to Him to consider, and feel, and bear the sins of those around you. Let the sins of the world be your concern, as much as your own sin. Do they not dishonour God as much as yours? Are they not equally provided for in the great redemption? And does not the Spirit dwelling in you long to convince them too? Just as the Holy Spirit dwelt in the body and nature of Jesus, and was the source of what He felt, and said, and did, and just as God through Him worked out the will of His holy love; so the Spirit now dwells in believers: they are His abode. The one purpose for which there has been a Christ in the world, for which there is now a Holy Spirit, was that sin may be conquered and made an end of. This is the great object for which the baptism of the Spirit and of fire was given, that in and through believers He might convince of sin, and deliver

from it. Put yourself into contact with the world's sin. Meet it in the love and faith of Jesus Christ, as the servant and helper of the needy and the wretched. Give yourself to prove the reality of your faith in Christ by your likeness to Him: so will the Spirit convince the world of its unbelief. Seek the full experience of the indwelling Spirit, not for your own selfish enjoyment, but for this one end, that He can do the Father's work through you as He did through Christ. Live, in unity of love with other believers, to work and pray, that men may be saved out of sin: 'then will the world believe that God hath sent Him.' It is the life of believers in self-sacrificing love that will prove to the world that Christ is a reality, and so convince it of its sin of unbelief.

The comfort and success with which a man lives and carries on his business depends much upon his having a suitable building for it. When the Holy Spirit, in a believer, finds the whole heart free and given up to Him as His home, to fill it with God's thoughts of sin and God's power of redemption, He can through such a one do His work. Be assured that there is no surer way to receive a full measure of the Spirit than to be wholly yielded to Him, to let the very mind of Christ in regard to sin work in us. 'He took away sin by the sacrifice of Himself,' through the Eternal Spirit. What the Spirit was in Him, He seeks to be in us. What was true of Him, must in its measure be true of us.

Christians! would you be filled with the Holy Spirit, seek to have a clear impression of this: the Holy Spirit is in you to convince the world of sin. If you sympathize thoroughly with Him in this, if He sees that He can use you for this, if you make His work in this matter your work too, you may be sure He will dwell in you richly, and work in you mightily. The one object for

which Christ came was to put away sin; the one work for which the Holy Ghost comes to men is to persuade them to give up sin. The one object for which the believer lives is to join in the battle against sin; to seek the will and the honour of his God. Do let us be at one with Christ and His Spirit in their testimony against sin. An exhibition of the life and Spirit of Christ will have its effect: the holiness, and the joy, and the love, and the obedience to Christ will convince the world of its sin of unbelief. The Presence of Christ in us through the Spirit will carry its own conviction. And just as Christ's death, as His sacrifice for sin, was the entrance to His glory in the power of the Spirit, so our experience of the Spirit's indwelling will become the fuller just as our whole life is more given up to Him for His holy work of convincing the world of sin.

Blessed Lord Jesus! it is by the Presence and Power of the Holy Spirit in Thy people that the world is to be convinced of its sin in rejecting Thee, and that sinners are to be brought out of the world to accept of Thee. It is in men and women full of the Holy Ghost, testifying in the power of a holy joy to what Thou hast done for them, that the proof is to be given that Thou art indeed at the right hand of God. It is in a body of living witnesses to what Thou hast done for them, that the world is to find the irresistible conviction of its folly and guilt.

Alas! Lord, how little the world has seen of this. We do call upon Thee, in deep humiliation, Lord Jesus, make haste and rouse Thy Church to the knowledge of its calling. Oh that every believer in his personal life, and all Thy believing people in their fellowship, might prove to the world what reality, what blessedness, what power there is in the faith of Thee! May the world believe that the Father hath sent Thee, and has loved them as He loveth Thee.

Lord Jesus, lay the burden of the sin of the world so heavy on the hearts of Thy people, that it may become impossible for them to live for anything but this; to be the members of Thy body, in whom Thy Spirit dwells, and to prove Thy presence to the world. Take away everything that hinders Thee from manifesting Thy presence and saving power in us. Lord Jesus, Thy Spirit is come to us to convince the world: let Him come and work in ever-growing power. Amen.

Chapter 13^(TOC)

Waiting for the Spirit

'He charged them to wait for the promise of the Father, which said he, ye heard from me.'—Acts 1:4.

In the life of the Old Testament saints, waiting was one of the loved words in which they expressed the posture of their souls towards God. They waited for God, and waited upon God. Sometimes we find it in Holy Scripture as the language of an experience: 'Truly my soul waiteth upon God.' 'I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait.' At others it is a plea in prayer: 'Lead me, on Thee do I wait all the day.' 'Be gracious unto us; we have waited for Thee,' Frequently it is an injunction, encouraging to perseverance in a work that is not without its difficulty: 'Wait on the Lord; wait, I say, on the Lord.' 'Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.' And then again there is the testimony to the blessedness of the exercise: 'Blessed are they that wait upon Him.' 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.'

All this blessed teaching and experience of the saints who have gone before, our Lord gathers up and connects specially, in His use of the word, with the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit. What had been so deeply woven into the very substance of the religious life and language of God's people was now to receive a new and a higher application. As they had waited for the manifestation of God, either in the light of His countenance on their own

souls, or in special interposition for their deliverance, or in His coming to fulfil His promises to His people; so we too have to wait. But now that the Father has been revealed in the Son, and that the Son has perfected the great redemption, now the waiting is specially to be occupied with the fulfilment of the great Promise in which the love of the Father and the grace of the Son are revealed and made ours the Gift, the Indwelling, the Fulness of the Holy Spirit. We wait on the Father and the Son for ever-increasing inflowings and workings of the Blessed Spirit; we wait for the Blessed Spirit, His moving, and leading, and mighty strengthening, to reveal the Father and the Son within, and to work in us all the holiness and service to which the Father and the Son are calling us.

'He charged them to wait for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of me.' It may be asked whether these words have not exclusive reference to the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and whether, now that the Spirit has been given to the Church, the charge still holds good. It may be objected that, for the believer who has the Holy Spirit within him, waiting for the promise of the Father is hardly consistent with the faith and joy of the consciousness that the Spirit has been received and is dwelling within.

The question and the objection open the way to a lesson of the deepest importance. The Holy Spirit is not given to us as a possession of which we have the charge and mastery, and which we can use at our discretion. No. The Holy Spirit is given—to us to be our Master, and to have charge of us. It is not we who are to use Him; He must use us. He is indeed ours; but ours as God, and our position towards Him is that of deep and entire dependence on One who giveth to every one 'even as He will.' The Father has indeed given us the Spirit; but He is still, and only works as the Spirit of the Father. Our asking for His working, that the Father would grant unto us to be

strengthened with might by His Spirit, and our waiting for this, must be as real and definite as if we had to ask for Him for the first time. When God gives His Spirit, He gives His inmost Self. He gives with a Divine giving, that is, in the power of the eternal life, continuous, uninterrupted, and never-ceasing. When Jesus gave to those who believe in Him the promise of an ever-springing fountain of ever-flowing streams, He spake not of a single act of faith that was once for all to make them the independent possessors of the blessing, but of a life of faith that, in neverceasing receptivity, would always and only possess His gifts in living union with Himself. And so this precious word wait—'He charged them to wait,'—with all its blessed meaning from the experience of the past, is woven into the very web of the new Spirit dispensation. And all that the disciples did and felt during those ten days of waiting, and all that they got as its blessed fruit and reward, becomes to us the path and the pledge of the life of the Spirit in which we can live. The fulness of the Spirit, for such is the Father's Promise, and our waiting, are inseparably and for ever linked together.

And have we not here now an answer to the question why so many believers know so little of the joy and the power of the Holy Spirit? They never knew to wait for it; they never listened, carefully to the Master's parting words: 'He charged them to wait for the Promise of the Father, which ye have heard of me'. The Promise they have heard. For its fulfilment they have longed. In earnest prayer they have pleaded for it. They have gone burdened and mourning under the felt want. They have tried to believe, and tried to lay hold, and tried to be filled with the Spirit. But they have never known what it was with it all to wait. They have never here said, or even truly heard, 'Blessed are all they that wait for Him.' 'They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength.'

But what is this waiting? And how are we to wait? I look to God by His Holy Spirit to teach me to state in the simplest way possible what may help some child of His to obey this charge. And let me then first say that, as a believer, what you are to wait for is the fuller manifestation of the Power of the Spirit within you. On the resurrection morn Jesus had breathed on His disciples, and said, Receive the Holy Ghost: they had yet to wait for the full baptism of fire and of power. As God's child you have the Holy Ghost. Study the passages in the Epistles addressed to believers full of failings and sins (1 Corinthians 3:1-3, 16, 6:19, 20; Galatians 3:2, 3, 4:6). Begin in simple faith in God's word to cultivate the quiet assurance: The Holy Spirit is dwelling within me. If you are not faithful in the less, you cannot expect the greater. Acknowledge in faith and thanks that the Holy Spirit is in you. Each time you enter your closet to speak to God, sit first still to remember and believe that the Spirit is within you as the Spirit of prayer who cries Father! within you. Appear before God and confess to Him distinctly, until you become fully conscious of it yourself, that you are a temple of the Holy Ghost.

Now you are in the right posture for taking the second step, that is, asking God very simply and quietly, there and then, to grant you the workings of His Holy Spirit. The Spirit is in God and is in you. You ask the Father who is in heaven that His Almighty Spirit may come forth from Him in greater life and power, and as the indwelling Spirit may work more mightily in you. As you ask this on the ground of the promises, or of some special promise you lay before Him, you believe that He hears and that He does it. You have not to look at once whether you feel anything in your heart; all may be dark and cold there; you are to believe, that is, to rest in what God is going to do, yea, is doing, though you feel it not.

And then comes the waiting. Wait on the Lord; wait for the Spirit. In great

quietness set your soul still, silent unto God, and give the Holy Spirit time to quicken and deepen in you the assurance that God will grant Him to work mightily. We are a 'holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifice.' The slaying of the sacrifice was an essential part of the service. In each sacrifice you bring there must be the slaying, the surrender and sacrifice of self and its power to the death, As you wait before God in holy silence, He sees in it the confession that you have nothing—no wisdom to pray aright, no strength to work aright, Waiting is the expression of need, of emptiness. All along through the Christian life these go together, the sense of poverty and weakness, and the joy of all sufficient riches and strength. It is in waiting before God that the soul sinks down into its own nothingness, and is lifted up into the Divine assurance that God has accepted its sacrifice and will fulfil its desires.

When thus the soul, has waited upon God, it has to go forward to the daily walk or the special duty that waits it, in the faith that He will watch over the fulfilment of His Promise and His child's expectation. If it is to prayer you give yourself, after thus waiting for the Spirit, or to the reading of the word, do it in the trust that the Holy Spirit within guides your prayer and your thoughts. If your experience appears to prove that it is not so, be sure this is simply to lead you onwards to a simpler faith and a more entire surrender. You have become so accustomed to the worship in the power of the understanding and the carnal mind, that truly spiritual worship does not come at once. But wait on: 'He charged them to wait.' Keep up the waiting disposition in daily life and duty. 'On Thee do I wait all the day:' it is to the Three One God I thus speak; the Holy Spirit brings nigh and unites to Him. Renew each day and, as you are able to do it, also extend, your exercise of waiting upon God. The multitude of words and the fervency of feelings in prayer have often been more hindrance than help. God's work in you must

become deeper, more spiritual, more directly wrought of God Himself. Wait for the promise in all its fulness. Count not the time lost you thus give to this blessed expression of ignorance and emptiness, of faith and expectation, of full and real surrender to the dominion of the Spirit. Pentecost is meant to be for all times the proof of what the exalted Jesus does for His Church from His Throne. The ten days' waiting is meant to be for all time the posture before the Throne, which secures in continuity the Pentecostal blessing, Brother! the Promise of the Father is sure. It is from whom you have it. The Spirit is Himself already working in you. His full indwelling and guidance is your child's-portion. Oh, keep the charge of your Lord! Wait on God: wait for the Spirit. 'Wait, I say, on the Lord.' 'Blessed are all they that wait for Him.'

Blessed Father! from Thy Beloved Son we have heard Thy Promise. In a streaming forth that is Divine and neverceasing, the river of the water of life flows from under the Throne of God and the Lamb; Thy Spirit flows down to quicken our thirsty souls. 'For we have not heard, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him.'

And we have heard His charge to wait for the Promise. We thank Thee for what has already been fulfilled to us of it. But our souls long for the full possession, the fulness of the blessing of Christ. Blessed Father! teach us to wait on Thee, daily watching at the posts of Thy doors.

Teach us each day, as we draw near to Thee, to wait for Him. In the sacrifice of our own wisdom and our will, in holy fear of the workings of our own nature, may we learn to lie in the dust before Thee, that Thy Spirit may work with power. Oh, teach us that as the life of self is laid low before Thee day by day, the Holy Life, that flows from under the Throne, will rise in power, and our worship be in Spirit and in Truth. Amen.

Chapter 14^(TOC)

The Spirit of Power

'Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses.'—Acts 1:5, 8.

'Tarry ye in the city, till ye be clothed with power from on high.'—Luke 24:49.

The disciples had heard from John of the Baptism of the Spirit. Jesus had spoken to them of the Father's giving of the Spirit to those that ask Him, and of the Spirit of their Father speaking in them. And on the last night he had spoken of the Spirit dwelling in them, witnessing with them, having come to them to convince the world. All these thoughts of what this coming of the Holy Spirit would be were thus connected in their mind with the work they would have to do and the power for it. When our Lord gathered up all His teaching in the promise, 'Ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and shall be my witnesses,' it must have been to them the simple summing up of what they looked for: a new Divine power for the new Divine work of being the witnesses of a Crucified and Risen Jesus.

This was in perfect harmony with all they had seen in Holy Scripture of the Spirit's work. In the days before the flood He had been striving with men. In the ministry of Moses He fitted him, and the seventy who received of his Spirit, for the work of ruling and guiding Israel, and gave wisdom to those

who built God's house. In the days of the Judges He gave the power to fight and conquer the enemies. In the times of Kings and Prophets He gave boldness to testify against sin, and power to proclaim a coming redemption. Every mention of the Spirit in the Old Testament is connected with the honour and Kingdom of God, and the fitting for service in it. In the great prophecy of the Messiah, with which the Son of God opened His ministry at Nazareth, His being anointed with the Spirit had the one object of bringing deliverance to the captives and gladness to the mourners. To the mind of the disciples, as students of the Old Testament and followers of Christ Jesus, the promise of the Spirit could have but one meaning—fitness for the great work they had to do for their Lord when He ascended the Throne. All that the Spirit would be to them personally in His work of comforting and teaching, sanctifying the soul and glorifying Jesus, were but as a means to an end—their induement with power for the service of their departed Lord.

Would God that the Church of Christ understood this in our days! All prayer for the guiding and gladdening influence of the Holy Spirit in the children of God ought to have this as its aim: fitness to witness for Christ and do effective service in conquering the world for Him. Waste of power is always cause of regret to those who witness it. The economy of power is one of the great moving springs in all organization and industry. The Spirit is the great power of God; the Holy Spirit the great power of God's Redemption, as it comes down from the Throne of Him to whom all power has been given. And can we imagine that God would waste this power on those who seek it only for their own sake, with the desire of being beautifully holy, or wise, or good? Truly no. The Holy Spirit is the power from on high for carrying on the work for which Jesus sacrificed His Throne and His Life. The essential condition for receiving that power is that, we be found ready and fit for doing the work the Spirit has come to accomplish.

'My Witnesses:' these two words do indeed contain, in Divine and inexhaustible wealth of meaning, the most perfect description of the Spirit's Work and our work; the work for which nothing less than His Divine power is needed, the work for which our weakness is just fitted. There is nothing so effective as an honest witness. The learned eloquence of an advocate must give way to it. There is nothing so simple: just telling what we have seen and heard, or, perhaps in silence, witnessing to what has been done in us. It was the great work of Jesus Himself: 'To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth.' And yet, simple and easy as it appears, to make us witnesses of Jesus is what the Almighty power of the Spirit is needed for, and what He was sent to work. If we are, in the power of the eternal life, the power of the world to come, in heavenly power, to witness of Jesus as He reigns in heaven, we need nothing less than the Divine power of the heavenly life to animate the testimony of our lips and life.

The Holy Spirit makes us witnesses because He Himself is a witness. 'He shall witness of me,' Jesus said. When Peter, on the day of Pentecost, preached that Christ, when He had ascended into heaven, had received from 'the Father the Holy Ghost, and had poured Him forth, he spake of what he knew: the Holy Ghost witnessed to him, and in him, of the glory of his exalted Lord. It was this witness of the Spirit to the reality of Christ's power and presence that made him so bold and strong to speak before the council: 'God did exalt Him to be a Prince and a Saviour; and we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost.' It is as the Holy Spirit becomes to us, in a Divine life and power, the witness to what Jesus is at the present moment in His glory, that our witness will be in His power. We may know all that the Gospels record and all that Scripture further teaches of the person and work of Jesus; we may even speak from past experience of what we once knew of

the power of Jesus: this is not the witness of power that is promised here, and that will have effect in the world. It is the Presence of the Spirit at the present moment, witnessing to the Presence of the personal Jesus, that gives our witness that breath of life from heaven that makes it mighty through God to the casting down of strongholds. You can truly witness to just as much of Jesus as the Holy Spirit is witnessing to you in life and truth.

The baptism of power, the induelement of power, is sometimes spoken of and sought after as a special gift. If Paul asked very distinctly for the Ephesians who had been sealed with the Holy Spirit, that the Father would still give them 'the Spirit of wisdom' (Ephesians 1:17), we cannot be far wrong in praying as definitely for 'the Spirit of power.' He who searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, and will give not according to the correctness of our words, but the Spiritbreathed desire of our hearts. Or let us take that other prayer of Paul (Ephesians 3:16), and plead that 'He would grant us to be mightily strengthened by His Spirit.' However we formulate our prayer, one thing is certain: it is in unceasing prayer, it is in bowing our knees, it is in waiting on God, that from Himself will come what we ask, be it the Spirit of Power or the Power of the Spirit. The Spirit is never anything separate from God; in all His going out and working He still ever is the inmost self of God; it is God Himself who, according to the riches of His glory, is mighty to do above what we ask or think who will in Christ give us to be clothed with the power of the Spirit.

In seeking for this Power of the Spirit, let us note the mode of His working. There is one mistake we must specially beware of. It is that of expecting always to feel the power when it works. Scripture links power and weakness in a wonderful way, not as succeeding each other, but as existing together. 'I was with you in weakness; my preaching was in power.' 'When I am weak,

then am I strong.' (See 1 Corinthians 2:3-5; 2 Corinthians 4:7, 16, 6:10, 7:10, 13:3, 4) The power is the power of God, given to faith; and faith grows strong in the dark. The Holy Spirit hides Himself in the weak things that God hath chosen, that flesh may not glory in His presence. Spiritual power can only be known by the Spirit of faith. The more distinctly we feel and confess our weakness and believe in the power dwelling within us, ready to work as need arises, the more confidently may we expect its Divine operation even when nothing is felt. Christians lose much not only by not waiting for the power, but by waiting in the wrong way. Seek to combine the faithful and ready obedience to every call of duty, however little thy power appears to be, with a deep, dependent waiting and expectation of Power from on high. 'Let thy intervals of repose and communion be the exercise of prayer and faith in the Power of God dwelling in thee, and waiting to work through thee; thy time exertion and effort will bring the 'proof that by faith out of weakness we are made strong.

Let us also see and make no mistake about the condition of the working of this Divine Power. He that would command nature must first, and most absolutely obey her. It does not need much grace to long and ask for power, even the power of the Spirit. Who would not be glad to have power? Man pray earnestly for power in or with their work, and receive it not, because they do not accept the only posture in which the Power can work. We want to get possession of the Power and use it. God wants the Power to get possession of us, and use us. If we give up ourselves to the Power to rule in us, the Power will give itself to us, to rule through us. Unconditional submission and obedience to the Power in our inner life is the one condition of our being clothed with it. God gives the Spirit to the obedient. 'Power belongeth unto God' and remains His for ever. If thou wouldst have His power work in thee, bow very low in reverence before the Holy Presence that

dwelleth in thee, that asks thy surrender to His guidance even in the least things. Walk very humbly in holy fear, lest in anything thou shouldest fail in knowing or doing His holy will. Live as one given up to a Power that has the entire mastery over thee, that has complete possession of thy inmost being. Let the Spirit and His Power have possession of thee: thou shalt know that His power worketh in thee.

Let us be clear, too, as to the object of this power, the work it is to do. Men are very careful to economize power, and to gather it there where it can do its work most effectually. God does not give this power for our own enjoyment—as little to save us from trouble and effort. He gives it for one purpose, to glorify His Son. Those who in their weakness are faithful to this one object, who in obedience and testimony prove to God that they are ready at any cost to glorify God—they will receive the power from on high. God seeks for men and women whom He can thus clothe with power. The Church is looking round for them on every side, wondering at the feebleness of so much of its ministry and worship. The world waits for it, to be convinced that God is indeed in the midst of His people. The perishing millions are crying for deliverance, and the Power of God is waiting to work it. Let us not be content with the prayer for God to visit and to bless them, or with the effort to do the best we can for them. Let us give up ourselves, each individual believer, wholly and undividedly, to live as witnesses for Jesus. Let us plead with God to show His people what it means that they are Christ's representatives just as He was the Father's. Let us live in the faith that the Spirit of power is within us, and that the Father will, as we wait on Him, fill us with the power of the Spirit.

Most Blessed Father! we thank Thee for the wonderful provision Thou hast made for Thy children—that out of weakness they should be made strong,

and that just in their feebleness Thy Might Power should be glorified. We thank Thee for the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of Power, coming down to make Jesus, to whom all Power is given, present with His Church, and to make His disciples the witnesses of that Presence.

I ask Thee, O my Father, to teach me that I have the power, as I have the Living Jesus. May I not look for it to come with observation. May I consent that it shall ever be a Divine strength in human weakness, so that the glory may be Thine alone. May I learn to receive it in a faith that allows the Mighty Lord Jesus to hold the power and do the work in the midst of weakness. And may, by the Holy Spirit, He be so present with me, that my witness may be of Him alone.

O my Father! I desire to submit my whole being to this Holy Power. I would bow before its rule every day and all the day. I would be its servant, and humble myself to do its meanest command. Father I let the Power rule in me, that I may be made meet for it to use. And may my one object in life be that Thy Blessed Son may receive the honour and the glory. Amen.

Chapter 15^(TOC)

The Outpouring of the Spirit

'And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak, as the Spirit gave them utterance.'—Acts 1:1-4.

In the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the work of Christ culminates. The adorable mystery of the Incarnation in Bethlehem, the great Redemption accomplished on Calvary, the revelation of Christ as the Son of God in the power of the Eternal Life by the Resurrection, His entrance into glory in the Ascension—these are all preliminary stages; their goal and their crown was the coming down of the Holy Spirit. As Pentecost is the last, it is the greatest of the Christian feasts; in it the others find their realization and their fulfilment. It is because the Church has hardly acknowledged this, and has not seen that the glory of Pentecost is the highest glory of the Father and the Son, that the Holy Spirit has not yet been able to reveal and glorify the Son in her as He fain would. Let us see if we can realize what Pentecost means.

God made man in His own image, and for His likeness, with the distinct object that he should become like Himself. Man was to be a temple for God to dwell in; he was to become the home in which God could rest. The closest and most intimate union, the indwelling of Love in love: this was what the Holy One longed for, and looked forward to. What was very feebly set forth

in type in the temple in Israel became a Divine reality in Jesus of Nazareth: God had found a man in whom He could rest, whose whole being was opened to the rule of His will and the fellowship of His love. In Him there was a human nature, possessed by the Divine Spirit; and such God would have had all men to be. And such all would be, who accepted of this Jesus and His Spirit as their life. His death was to remove the curse and power of sin, and make it possible for them to receive His Spirit. His resurrection was the entrance of human nature, free from all the weakness of the flesh, into the life of Deity, the Divine Spirit-life. His ascension was admittance as Man into the very glory of God; the participation by human nature of perfect fellowship with God in glory in the unity of the Spirit. And yet, with all this, the work was not yet complete. Something, the chief thing, was still wanting. How could the Father dwell in men even as He had dwelt in Christ? This was the great question to which Pentecost gives the answer.

Out of the depths of Godhead, the Holy Spirit is sent forth in a new character and a new power, such as He never had before. In creation and nature He came forth from God as the Spirit of Life. In the creation of man specially He acted as the power in which his god-likeness was grounded, and which, even after his fall, still testified for God. In Israel He appeared as the Spirit of the theocracy, distinctly inspiring and fitting certain men for their work. In Jesus Christ He came as the Spirit of the Father, given to Him without measure, and abiding in Him. All these are manifestations, in different degrees, of one and the same Spirit. But now there comes the last, the long-promised, an entirely new manifestation of the Divine Spirit. The Spirit that has dwelt in Jesus Christ, and, in His life of obedience, has taken up His human spirit into perfect fellowship and unity with Himself, is now the Spirit of the exalted God-man. As the Man Christ Jesus enters the glory of God and the full fellowship of that Spirit-life in which God dwells, He receives from the

Father the right to send forth this Spirit into His disciples, yea, in the Spirit to descend Himself, and dwell in them. In a new power, which hitherto had not been possible, because Jesus had not been crucified or glorified, as the very Spirit of the crucified and now glorified Jesus, the Spirit comes. The work of the Son, the longing of the Father, receives its fulfilment. Man's heart is now indeed the home of his God.

Said I not truly that Pentecost is the greatest of the Church's feasts? The mystery of Bethlehem is indeed incomprehensible and glorious, but when once I believe it, there is nothing that does not appear possible and becoming. That a pure, holy body should be formed for the Son of God by the power of the Holy Spirit, and that in that body the Spirit should dwell, is indeed a miracle of Divine Power. But that the same Spirit should now come and dwell in the bodies of sinful men, that in them too the Father should take up His abode, this is a mystery of grace that passeth all understanding. But this, glory be to God! is the blessing Pentecost brings and secures. The entrance of the Son of God into our flesh in Bethlehem, His entrance into the curse and death of sin as our Surety, His entrance in human nature as First-begotten from the dead into the Power of the Eternal Life, His entrance into the very Glory of the Father—these were but the preparatory steps: here is the consummation for which all the rest was accomplished. The word now begins to be fulfilled: 'Behold! the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them.'

It is only in the light of all that preceded Pentecost, of all the mighty sacrifice which God thought not too great if He might dwell with sinful men, that the narrative of the outpouring of the Spirit can be understood. It is the earthly reflection of Christ's exaltation in heaven; the participation He gives to His friends of the glory He now has with the Father. To be apprehended aright, it

needs a spiritual vision; in the story that is so simply told the deepest mysteries of the Kingdom are unfolded, and the title-deeds given to the Church of her holy heritage until her Lord's return. What the Spirit is to be to believers and the Church, to the ministers of the word and their work, and to the unbelieving world, are the three chief thoughts.

1. Christ had promised to His disciples that in the Comforter He Himself would again come to them. During his life on earth, His personal manifested Presence, as revealing the unseen Father, was the Father's great gift to men, was the one thing the disciples wished and needed. This was to be their portion now in greater power than before. Christ had entered the glory with this very purpose, that now, in a Divine way, 'He might fill all things,' He might specially fill the members of His body with Himself and His glory-life. When the Holy Spirit came down, He brought as a personal Life within them what had previously only been a Life near them, but yet outside their own. The very Spirit of God's own Son, as He had lived and loved, had obeyed and died, had been raised and glorified by Almighty power, was now to become their personal life. The wondrous transaction that had taken place in heaven in the placing of their Friend and Lord on the throne of heaven, this the Holy Spirit came to be the witness of, yea, to communicate and maintain it within them as a heavenly reality. It is indeed no wonder that, as the Holy Ghost comes down from the Father through the glorified Son, their whole nature is filled to overflowing with the joy and power of heaven, with the presence of Jesus, and their lips overflow with the praise of the wonderful works of God.

Such was the birth of the Church of Christ; such must be its growth and strength. The first and essential element of the true succession of the Pentecostal Church is a membership baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, every heart filled with: the experience of the Presence of the glorified Lord, every tongue and life witnessing to the wonderful work God had done, in raising Jesus to the glory of His Throne, and then filling His disciples with that glory too. It is not so much the Baptism of Power for our preachers we must seek; it is that every individual member of Christ's body may know, and possess, and witness to, the Presence of an indwelling Christ through the Holy Spirit. It is this will draw the attention of the world, and compel the confession to the Power of Jesus.

2. It was amid the interest and the questionings which the sight of this joyous praising company of believers awakened in the multitude that Peter stood up to preach. The story of Pentecost teaches us the true position of the ministry and the secret of its power. A church full of the, Holy Ghost is a power of God to awaken the careless, and attract all honest, earnest hearts. It is to such an audience, roused by the testimony of believers, that the preaching will come with power. It is out of such a church of men and women full of the Holy Ghost that Spirit-led preachers will rise up, bold and free, to point to every believer as a living witness to the truth of their preaching and the Power of their Lord.

Peter's preaching is a most remarkable lesson of what all Holy Ghost preaching will be. He preaches Christ from the

Scriptures. In contrast with the thoughts of man, who had rejected Christ, He sets forth the thoughts of God, who had sent Christ, who delighted in Him, and had now exalted Him at His right hand. All preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit will be thus. The Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of His personal life, taking possession of our personality, and witnessing with our spirit to what Christ has won for us. The Spirit has come for the very purpose of continuing the work Christ had begun on earth, of making men partakers of His redemption and His life. It could not be otherwise; the Spirit always witnesses to Christ. He did so in the Scriptures; He does so in the believer; the believer's testimony will ever be according to Scripture. The Spirit in Christ, the Spirit in Scripture, the Spirit in the Church; as long as this threefold cord is kept intertwined, it cannot be broken.

3. The effect of this preaching was marvellous, but not more marvellous than might be expected. The Presence and Power of Jesus are such a reality in the company of disciples; the Power from on High, from the Throne, so fills Peter; the sight and experience he has of Christ, as exalted at the right hand of God, is such a spiritual reality; that power goes out from him, and as his preaching reaches its application: 'Know assuredly that God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified,' thousands bow in brokenness of spirit, ready—to acknowledge the Crucified One as their Lord. The Spirit has come to the disciples, and through them convinces the world of unbelief. The penitent inquirers listen to the command to repent and believe, and they, too, receive the gift

of the Holy Ghost. The greater works Christ had promised to do through the disciples He has done. In one moment lifelong prejudice, and even bitter hatred, give way to surrender, and love, and adoration; from the glorified Lord power has filled his body, and from its power hath gone forth to conquer and to save.

Pentecost is the glorious sunrise of 'that day,' the first of 'those days' of which the prophets and our Lord had so often spoken, the promise and the pledge of what the history of the Church was meant to be. It is universally admitted that the Church has but ill fulfilled her destiny, that even now, after eighteen centuries, she has not risen to the height of her glorious privilege. Even when she strives to accept her calling, to witness for her Lord unto the ends of the earth, she does it too little in the faith of the Pentecostal Spirit, and the possession of His Mighty Power. Instead of regarding Pentecost as sunrise, she too often speaks and acts as if it had been noonday, from which the light must needs begin to wane. Let the Church return to Pentecost, and Pentecost will return to her. The Spirit of God cannot take possession of believers beyond their capacity of receiving Him. The promise is waiting; the Spirit is now in all His fulness. Our capacity of reception needs enlargement. It is at the footstool of the throne, while believers continue with one accord in praise and love and prayer, while delay only intensifies the spirit of waiting and expectation, while faith holds fast the promise, and gazes up on the exalted Lord, in the confidence that He will make Himself known in power in the midst of His people—it is at the footstool of the throne that Pentecost comes. Jesus Christ is still Lord of all, crowned with power and glory. His longing to reveal His presence in His disciples, and to make them share the glory life in which He dwells, is as fresh and full as when He first ascended the throne.

Let us take our place at the footstool. Let us yield ourselves in strong, expectant faith, to be filled with the Holy Ghost, and to testify for Jesus. Let the indwelling Christ be our life, and our strength, and our testimony. Out of such a Church Spirit-filled preachers will rise, and the power go forth that will make Christ's enemies bow at His feet.

O Lord God! we worship before the Throne on which the Son is seated with Thee, crowned with glory and honour. We thank and bless Thee that it is for us, the children of men, that Thou hast done this, and that He in whom Thou delightest belongs as much to earth as to heaven, to us as to Thee. O God! we adore Thy love: we praise Thy Holy Name.

We beseech Thee, O our Father, to reveal to Thy Church how our Blessed Head counts us as His own body, sharing with Him in His life, His power, and His glory, and how the Holy Spirit, is the bearer of that life and power and glory, is waiting to reveal it within us. Oh, that Thy people might awake to know what the Holy Spirit means, as the real Presence within them of the glorified Lord, and as the clothing with Power from on high for their work on earth. Oh that all Thy people might learn to gaze on their exalted King until their whole being were opened up for His reception, and His Spirit fill them to their, utmost capacity!

Our Father, we plead with Thee, in the name of Jesus, revive Thy Church. Make every believer to be indeed a temple full of the Holy Ghost: Make every church, in its believing members, a consecrated company ever testifying of a present Christ, ever waiting for the fulness of the power from on high. Make every preacher of the word a minister of the Spirit. And let throughout the earth Pentecost be the sign that Jesus reigns, that His redeemed are His body, that His Spirit works, and that every knee shall bow to Him. Amen.

Chapter 16^(TOC)

The Holy Spirit and Missions

'Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers, And as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. Then, when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, went down to Seleucia.'—Acts 13:1-4.

It has been rightly said that the Acts of the Apostles might well have borne the name, The Acts of the Exalted Lord, or, The Acts of the Holy Spirit. Christ's parting promise, 'Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth,' was indeed one of those Divine seed—words in which is contained the Kingdom of heaven in the power of an infinite growth, with the law of its manifestation, and the prophecy of its final perfection. In the Book of the Acts we have the way traced in which the promise received its incipient fulfilment, on its way from Jerusalem to Rome. It gives us the Divine record of the coming and dwelling and working of the Holy Spirit, as the Power given to Christ's disciples, to witness for Him before Jews and heathens, and of the triumph of the name of Christ in Antioch and Rome as the centres for the conquest of the uttermost parts of the earth. The book reveals, as with a light from heaven, that the one

aim and purpose of the descent of the Spirit from our glorified Lord in heaven to His disciples, revealing in them His presence, His guidance, and His Power, is to fit them to be His witnesses even to the uttermost parts of the earth. Missions to the heathen are the one object of the Mission of the Spirit.

In the passage we have as our text we have the first record of the part the Church is definitely called to take in the work of missions. In the preaching of Philip at Samaria, and Peter at Caesarea—we have the case of individual men exercising their function of ministry among those who were not of the Jews under the leading of the Spirit. In the preaching of the men of Cyprus and Cyrene to the Greeks at Antioch we have the Divine instinct of the Spirit of love and life, leading men to open new paths where the leaders of the Church had not yet thought of coming. But this guidance of the Spirit in separating special men was now to become part of the organization of the Church, and the whole community of believers is to be educated to take its share in the work for which the Spirit specially had come down to earth. If the second of Acts is of importance as giving us the induement of the Church for her Jerusalem or home mission work, the thirteenth is of no less interest as her setting apart for definite foreign mission work. We cannot sufficiently praise God for the deepening interest in missions in our days. If our interest is to be permanent and personal, if it is to be a personal enthusiasm of love and devotion to our Blessed Lord and the lost He came to save, if it is to be fruitful in raising the work of the Church to the true level of Pentecostal Power, we must learn well the lesson of Antioch. Mission work must find its initiative and its power in the distinct and direct acknowledgment of the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

It has often been remarked that true mission work has always been born of a revival of religious life in the Church. The Holy Spirit's quickening work stirs

up to new devotion to the Blessed Lord whom He reveals, and to the lost to whom He belongs. It is in such a state of mind that the voice of the Spirit is heard, urging the Lord's redeemed to work for Him. It was thus at Antioch. There were certain prophets and teachers at Antioch, spending part of their time in ministering to the Lord and fasting. With the public service of God in the Church they combined the spirit of separation from the world and of self-sacrifice. Their Lord was in heaven; they felt the need of close and continued intercourse, waiting for His orders; they understood that the Spirit that dwelt in them could not have free and full scope for action except as they maintained direct fellowship with Him as their Master, and entered as much as possible into the fellowship of Christ's crucifixion of the flesh. 'They ministered to the Lord and fasted: such were the men, such was their state of mind and their habit of life, when the Holy Spirit revealed to them that He had chosen two of their number to a special work, and called upon them to be His instruments in separating them, in presence of the whole Church, for that work.

The law of the Kingdom has not been changed. It is still the Holy Ghost who has charge of all mission work. He will still reveal His will, in the appointment of work and selection of men, to those who are waiting on their Lord in service and separation. When once the Holy Spirit in any age has taught men of faith and prayer to undertake His work, it is easy for others to admire and approve what they do, to see the harmony of their conduct with Scripture, and to copy their example. And yet the real power of the Spirit's guiding and working, the real personal love and devotion to Jesus as a Beloved Lord, may be present in but a very small degree. It is because a great deal of interest in the missionary cause is of this nature, that there has to be so much arguing and begging and pleading on lower grounds with its supporters. The command of the Lord is known as recorded in a book; the

living voice of the Spirit, who reveals the Lord in Living Presence and Power, is not heard.

'It is not enough that Christians be stirred and urged to take a greater interest in the work, to pray and give more: there is a more urgent need. In the life of the individual the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the Presence and Rule of the Lord of Glory which He maintains, must again become the chief mark of the Christian life. In the fellowship of the Church, we must learn to wait more earnestly for the Holy Spirit's guidance in the selection of men and fields of labour, in the wakening of interest and the seeking of support: it is in the mission directly originated in much prayer and waiting on the Spirit that His power can specially be expected.

Let no one fear, when we speak thus, that we shall lead Christians away from the real practical work that must be done. There is much that needs to be done, and cannot be done without diligent labour. Information must be circulated; readers must be found and kept; funds must be raised; prayer-meetings must be kept up; directors must meet, and consult, and decide. All this must be done. But it will be done well, and as a service well-pleasing to the Master, just in the measure in which it is done in the power of the Holy Spirit. Oh that the Church, and every member of it, might learn the lesson! The Spirit has come down from heaven to be the Spirit of Missions, to inspire and empower Christ's disciples to witness for Him to the uttermost parts of the earth.

The origin, the progress, the success of missions are all his. It is He who wakens in the hearts of believers the jealousy for the honour of their Lord, the compassion to the souls of the perishing, the faith in His promise, the willing obedience to His commands, in which the mission takes its rise. It is He who draws together to united effort, who calls forth the suitable men to go out,

who opens the door, and prepares the hearts of the heathen to desire or to receive the word. And it is He who at length gives the increase, and, even where Satan's seat is, establishes the cross, and gathers round it the redeemed of the Lord. Missions are the special work of the Holy Spirit. No one may expect to be filled with the Spirit if he is not willing to be used for missions. No one who wishes to work or pray for missions need fear his feebleness or poverty: the Holy Spirit is the power that can fit him to take his divinely appointed place in the work. Let every one who prays for missions, and longs for more of a missionary spirit in the Church, pray first and most that in every believer personally, and in the Church and all its work and worship, the power of the Indwelling Spirit may have full sway.

'Then when they had fasted and prayed, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, went down to Seleucia.' The sending forth was equally the work of the Church and of the Spirit. This is the normal relation. There are men sent forth by the Holy Spirit alone; amid the opposition or indifference of the Church, the Spirit does His work. There are men sent forth by the Church alone; it thinks the work ought to be done, and does it, but with little of the fasting and praying that recognises the need of the Spirit, and refuses to work without Him. Blessed the Church and blessed the mission which the Spirit originates, where He is allowed to guide, and where the blessing is waited for from Himself alone. Ten days' praying and waiting on earth, and the Spirit's descent in fire: this was the birth of the Church at Jerusalem. Ministering and fasting, and then again fasting and praying, and the Spirit sending forth Barnabas and Saul: this was at Antioch the consecration of the Church to be a Mission Church. In waiting and prayer on earth, and then in the power of the Spirit from the Lord in heaven, is the strength, the joy, the blessing of the Church of Christ and its missions.

May I say to any missionary who reads this in his far-off home, Be of good cheer, brother, The Holy Spirit who is the Mighty Power of God, who is the Presence of Jesus within thee, the Holy Spirit is with thee, is in thee. The work is His depend on Him, yield to Him, wait for Him; the work is His, He will do it. May I say to every Christian, be he director, supporter, contributor, helper in prayer or in any other way, in the great work of hastening the coming of the Kingdom.

Brother! be of good cheer. From that time of waiting before the Throne, and that baptism there received, the first disciples went forth until they reached Antioch. There they paused, and prayed, and fasted, and then passed on over to Rome and the region beyond. Let us from these our brethren learn the secret of power. Let us call on every Christian who would be a mission friend and mission worker to come with us and be filled with the Spirit whose is the work of missions. Let us lift up a clear testimony that the need of the Church and the world is, believers who can testify to an indwelling Christ in the Spirit, and prove it too. Let us gather such together in the antechamber of the King's Presence, the waiting at Jerusalem, the ministering and fasting at Antioch; the Spirit does still come as of old in power, He does still move and send forth; He is still mighty to convince of sin and reveal Jesus, and to make thousands fall at His feet. He waits for us: let us wait on Him, let us welcome Him

O God! Thou didst send Thy Son to be the Saviour of the world. Thou didst give Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And Thou didst pour out Thy Spirit upon all flesh, commissioning as many as received Him to make known and pass on the wondrous blessing. In the Love and Power in which Thy Spirit was sent forth, He likewise sends forth those who yield—themselves to Him, to be the

instruments of His Power in glorifying Thy Son. We bless Thee for this Divine and most glorious salvation.

O our God! we stand amazed, and abased, at the sloth and, neglect of Thy Church in not fulfilling her Divine commission; we are humbled at our slowness of heart to perceive and believe what Thy Son did promise, to obey His will and finish His work. We cry to Thee, our God! visit Thy Church, and let Thy Spirit, the Spirit of the Divine Sending forth, fill all her children.

O my Father! I dedicate myself afresh to Thee, to live and labour, to pray and travail, to sacrifice and suffer for Thy Kingdom. I accept anew in faith the wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit, the very Spirit of Christ, and yield myself to His indwelling. I humbly plead with Thee, give me and all Thy children to be so mightily strengthened by the Holy Spirit that Christ may possess heart and life, and our one desire be that the whole earth may be filled with His glory. Amen.

Chapter 17^(TOC)

The Newness of the Spirit

'But now we have been discharged from the law, having died, to that wherein we were holden; so that we serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.'—Romans 7:6.

If ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.'—Galatians 5:18

THE work of the indwelling Spirit is to glorify Christ and reveal Him within us. Corresponding to Christ's threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King, we find that the work of the Indwelling Spirit in the believer is set before us in three aspects, as Enlightening, Sanctifying, and Strengthening. 'Of the Enlightening it is that Christ specially speaks in His farewell discourse, when He promises Him as the Spirit of Truth, who will bear witness of Him, will guide into all Truth, will take of Christ's and declare it unto us. In the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians His work as Sanctifying is especially prominent: this was what was needed in Churches just brought out of the depths of heathenism. In the Epistles to the Corinthians, where wisdom was so sought and prized, the two aspects are combined; they are taught that the Spirit can only enlighten as He sanctifies (1 Corinthians 2, 3:1-3, 16; 2 Corinthians 3). In the Acts of the Apostles, as we might expect, His Strengthening for work is in the foreground; as the promised Spirit of Power He fits for a bold and blessed testimony in the midst of persecution and difficulty.

In the Epistle to the Church at Rome, the capital of the world, Paul was called of God to give a full and systematic exposition of His gospel and the scheme of redemption. In this the work of the Holy Spirit must needs have an important place. In giving his text or theme (Romans 1:17), 'The righteous shall live by faith,' he paves the way for what he was to expound, that through Faith both Righteousness and Life would come. In the first part of his argument, to verse 11, he teaches what the Righteousness of faith is. He then proceeds (verse 12-21) to prove how this Righteousness, is rooted in our living connection with the second Adam, and in a justification of Life. In the individual (6:1-13) this Life comes through the believing acceptance of Christ's death to sin and His life to God as ours, and the willing surrender (6:14-23) to be servants of God and of righteousness. Proceeding to show that in Christ we are not only dead to sin, but to the law too as the strength of sin, he comes naturally to the new law which His gospel brings to take the place of the old, the law of the Spirit Of life in Christ Jesus.

We all know how an impression is heightened by the force of contrast. Just as the apostle had contrasted (6:13-23) the service of sin and of righteousness, so he here (7:4) contrasts, to bring out fully what the power and work of the Spirit is, the service in the oldness of the letter, in bondage to the law, with the service in newness of the Spirit, in the liberty and power which Jesus through the Spirit gives. In the following passage, Romans 7:14-25, and Romans 8:1-16, we have the contrast worked out; it is in the light of that contrast alone that the two states can be rightly understood. Each state has its key-word, indicating the character of the life it describes. In Romans 7 we have the word Law twenty times, and the word Spirit only once. In Romans 8, on the contrary, we find in its first sixteen verses the word Spirit sixteen times. The contrast is between the Christian life in its two possible states, in the law and in the Spirit. Paul had very boldly said, not only, You are dead to

sin and made free from sin that you might become servants to righteousness and to God (Romans 6), but also, 'We were made dead to the law, so that, having died to that wherein we were holden, we serve in newness of spirit, and not in, oldness of the letter.' We have here, then, a double advance, on the teaching of Romans 6. There it was the death to sin and freedom from it, here it is death to the law and freedom from it. There it was newness of life' (Romans 5:4), as an objective reality secured to us in Christ; here it is 'newness of spirit' (Romans 7:6), as a subjective experience made ours by the indwelling of the Spirit. He that would fully know and enjoy the life in the Spirit must know what life in the law is, and how complete the freedom from it with which he is made free by the Spirit.

In the description Paul gives of the life of a believer, who is still held in bondage of the law, and seeks to fulfil it, there are three expressions in which the characteristic marks of that state are summed up. The first is, the word flesh. 'I am carnal (fleshly), sold under sin. In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing' (14, 18). If we want to understand the word carnal, we must refer to Paul's exposition of it in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3. He uses it there of Christians, who, though regenerate, have not yielded themselves to the Spirit entirely, so as to become spiritual.' They have the Spirit, but allow the flesh to prevail. And so there is a difference between Christians, as they bear their name, carnal or spiritual, from the element that is strongest in them. As long as they have the Spirit, but, owing to whatever cause, do not accept fully His mighty deliverance, and so strive in their own strength, they do not and cannot become spiritual. St. Paul here describes the regenerate man, as he is in himself. He lives by the Spirit, but, according to Galatians 5:25, does not walk by the Spirit. He has the new spirit within him, according to Ezekiel 36:26, but he has not intelligently and practically accepted God's own Spirit to dwell and rule within that spirit, as the life of His life. He is still carnal.

The second expression we find in verse 18 'To will is present with me, but how to do that which is good, is not.' In every possible variety of expression Paul (7:15-21) attempts to make clear the painful state of utter impotence in which the law, the effort to fulfil it, leaves a man: 'The good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I practise.', Willing, but not doing such is the service of God in the oldness of the letter, in the life before Pentecost (see Matthew 26:41). The renewed spirit of the man has accepted and consented to the will of God; but the secret of power to do, the Spirit of God, as indwelling, is not yet known. In those, on the contrary, who know what the life in the Spirit is, God works both to will and to do; the Christian testifies, 'I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me.' But this is only possible through faith and the Holy Spirit. As long as the believer has not consciously been made free from the law with its, 'He that doeth these things shall live through them,' continual failure will attend his efforts to do the will of God. He may even delight in the law of God after the inward man, but the power is wanting.

It is only when he submits to the law of faith, 'He that liveth shall do these things,' because he knows that he has been made free from the law, that he may be joined to another, to the living Jesus, working in him through His Holy Spirit, that he will indeed bring forth fruit unto God (see Romans 7:4).

The third expression we must note is in verse 23 'I see a different law in my members, bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members.' This word, captivity, as that other one, sold under sin, suggests the idea of slaves sold into bondage, without the liberty, or the power to do as they will. They point back to what he had said in the commencement of the chapter, that we have been made free from the law; here is evidently one who does not yet know that liberty. And they point forward to what he is to say in

chapter 8:2 'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.' The freedom with which we have been made free in Christ, as offered to our faith, cannot be fully accepted or experienced as long as there is ought of a legal spirit. It is only by the Spirit of Christ within us that the full liberation is effected. As in the oldness of the letter, so in the newness of the Spirit, a twofold relation exists: the objective or external, the subjective or personal. There is the law over me, and outside of me, and there is the law of sin in my members, deriving its strength from the objective one. Just so, in being made free from the law, there is the objective liberty in Christ offered to—my faith, and there is the subjective personal possession of that liberty, in its fulness and power, to be had alone through the Spirit dwelling and ruling in my members, even as the law of sin had done. This alone can change the plaint of the captive: 'Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from—the bondage of this death?' into the song of the ransomed: 'I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord,' 'The law of the Spirit made me free.'

And how now have we to regard the two states thus set before us in Romans 7:14-23 and via. 1-16? Are they interchangeable, or successive, or simultaneous?

Many have thought that they are a description of the varying experience of the believer's life. As often as, by the grace of God, he is able to do what is good, and to live well—pleasing to God, he experiences the grace of chapter 8, while the consciousness of sin or shortcoming plunges him again into the wretchedness of chapter 7. Though now the one and then the other experience may be more marked, each day brings the experience of both.

Others have felt that this is not the life of a believer as God would have it, and as the provision of God's grace has placed it within our reach. And as

they saw that a life in the freedom with which, Christ makes free, when the Holy Spirit dwells within us, is within our reach, and as they entered on it, it was to them indeed as if now, for ever they had left the experience of Romans 7 far behind, and they cannot but look upon it as Israel's wilderness life, a life never more to be returned to. And there are many who can testify what light and blessing has come to them as they saw what the blessed transition was from the bondage of the law to the liberty of the Spirit.

And yet, however large the measure of truth in this view, it does not fully satisfy. The believer feels that there is not a day that he gets beyond the words, 'In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.' Even when kept most joyously in the will of God, and strengthened not only to will but also to do, he knows that it is not he, but the grace of God: 'in me dwelleth no good.' And so the believer comes to see that, not the two experiences, but the two states are simultaneous, and, that even when his experience is most fully that of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus making him free, he still bears about with him the body of sin and death.' The making free of the Spirit, and the deliverance from the power of sin, and the song of thanks to God is the continuous experience of 'the power of the endless life as maintained by the Spirit of Christ. As I am led of the Spirit, I am not under the law. Its spirit of bondage, its weakness through the flesh, and the sense of condemnation and wretchedness it works, are cast out by the liberty of the Spirit.

If there is one lesson the believer needs to learn, who would enjoy the full indwelling of the Spirit, it is the one taught in this passage with such force: that the law, the flesh, that self-effort are all utterly impotent in enabling us to serve God. It is the Spirit within, taking the place of the law without, that leads us into the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.'

Beloved Lord Jesus! I humbly ask Thee to make clear to me the blessed secret of the life of the Spirit. Teach me what it is that we are become dead to the law, so that our service of God is no longer in the oldness of the letter. And what that we are married to Another, even to Thyself, the Risen One, through whom we bring forth fruit unto God, serving in the newness of the Spirit.

Blessed Lord! with deep shame do I confess the sin of my nature, that 'in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,' that 'I am carnal, sold under sin.' I do bless Thee, that in answer to the cry, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Thou hast taught me to answer, 'I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' 'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death.'

Blessed Master! teach me now to serve Thee in the newness and the liberty, the ever-fresh gladness of the Spirit of life. Teach me to yield myself in large and wholehearted faith to that Holy Spirit, that my life may indeed be in the glorious liberty of the children of God, in the power of an indwelling Saviour working in me both to will and to do, even as the Father did work in Him. Amen.

Chapter 18^(TOC)

The Liberty of the Spirit

'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death. If by the Spirit ye make to die the deeds of the body, ye shall live.'—Romans 8:13.

In the sixth chapter Paul had spoken (verse 18, 22) of our having been made free from sin in Christ Jesus. Our death to sin in Christ had freed us from its dominion: being made free from sin as a Power, as a Master, when we accepted Christ in faith, we became servants to righteousness and to God. In the seventh chapter (verse 1-6) he had spoken of our being made free from the law.

'The strength of sin is the law:' deliverance from sin and the law go together. And being made free from the law, we had been united to the living Christ, that, in union with Him, we might now serve in newness of the Spirit (7:4-6). Paul had, in these two passages (6 and 7:1-6), presented this being made free from sin and the law, in its objective reality, as a life prepared in

Christ, to be accepted and maintained by faith, According to the law of a gradual growth in the Christian life, the believer has, in the power of the Spirit with which he has been sealed, in faith to enter into this union and to walk in it. As a matter of experience, almost all believers can testify that, even after they have seen and accepted this teaching, their life is not what

they had hoped it would be. They have found the descent into the experience of the second half of Romans 7 most real and painful. It was because there is, as a rule, no other way for learning the two great lessons the believer needs. The one is the deep impotence of the human will, under the law urging it to obedience, ever to work out a Divine righteousness in man's life; the other, the need of the, conscious and most entire indwelling of the Holy Spirit as the only sufficient power for the life of a child of God.

In the first half of Romans 8 we have the setting forth of this latter truth. In the Divine exposition of the Christian life in this Epistle, as in its growth in the believer, 'there is a distinct advance from step to step. The eighth chapter, in introducing the Holy Spirit for the, first time in the unfolding of the life of faith, as we have it in chapters 6-8, teaches us that it is only as the Spirit definitely animates our life and walk, and as He is distinctly known and accepted to do this, that we can fully possess and enjoy the riches of grace that are ours in Christ. Let every one who would know what it is to be dead to sin and alive to God, to be free from sin and a bondsman unto God, to be freed from the law, and married to Him who is raised from the dead, come hither to find the strength he needs, in that Spirit, through whom the union with Christ can be maintained as a Divine experience, and His life be lived within us in Power and in Truth.

In the first half of this eighth chapter the second verse is the centre. It reveals the wonderful secret of how our freedom from sin and the law may become a living and abiding experience. A believer may know that he is free, and yet have to mourn that his experience is that of a wretched captive. The freedom is so entirely in Christ Jesus, and the maintenance of the living union with Him is so distinctly and entirely a work of Divine power, that it is only as we see that the Divine Spirit 'dwells within us for this very purpose, and know

how to accept and yield to His working it, that we can really stand perfect and complete in the liberty with which Christ hath made us free. The life and the liberty of Romans 6 and 7:1-6 are only fully ours as we can say, 'The law of the Spirit of the life that is in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death.' Through the whole Christian life the principle rules: 'According to your faith be it unto you.' As the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of faith, reveals the greatness of God's resurrection power working in us, and as faith in the indwelling Spirit submits to receive that power to the full, all that is true for us in Christ Jesus becomes true in our daily personal experience. It is as we perceive the—difference between this and the previous teaching (Romans 6-7:6), as we see what a distinct advance it is upon it, the indispensable completion of the wonderful revelation of our life in Christ there made, that the unique and most glorious place which the Holy Spirit as God holds in the scheme of redemption and the life of faith will open up to us. We learn thus, that, as divinely perfect as is the Life of Liberty in Christ Jesus, is also the power of that Life in the Holy Spirit, enabling us to walk in that Liberty. The living assurance and experience of the Holy Spirit's indwelling will become to us the very first necessary of the new Life, inseparable from the Person and Presence of Jesus Christ our Lord.

'The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus made us free from the Law of Sin and Death.' Paul here contrasts the two opposing laws; the one of Sin and Death in the members, the other of the Spirit of Life ruling and quickening even the mortal body. Under the former we have seen the believer sighing as a wretched captive. In the second half of Romans 6, Paul had addressed him as made free from sin, and by voluntary surrender become a servant to God and to righteousness. He has forsaken the service of sin, and yet it often masters him. The promise, 'Sin shall not'—shall never for a moment—'have dominion over you,' has not been realized. To will is present but how to

perform he knows not. 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? is the cry of impotence amid all his efforts to keep the law. 'I thank God, through Christ Jesus our Lord,' is the answer of faith that claims the deliverance in Christ from this power that has held him captive. From the Law, the Dominion of Sin and Death in the members, its actual power in working sin, there is deliverance. That deliverance is a new law, a mightier force, an actual power making free from sin. As real as was the energy of sin working in our members, and more mighty, is the energy of the Spirit dwelling in our bodies. It is the Spirit of the Life that there is in Christ. Out of that Life, when filled as it was in the resurrection and ascension with the mighty energy of God's power (Ephesians 1:17, 21), and admitted on the throne to the omnipotence of God as the Eternal Spirit-out of that Life there descended the Holy Spirit, Himself God. The Law, the Power, the Dominion of the Life in Christ Jesus, made, me free from the Law, the Dominion of Sin and Death in my members, with a freedom as real as was the slavery. From the very first beginnings of the New Life, it was the Spirit who breathed faith in Christ. On our first entering into justification, it was He who shed abroad the love of God in our hearts. It was He who led us to see Christ as our Life as well as our Righteousness. But all this was in most cases still accompanied with much ignorance of His Presence, of the great need and the supply of His Almighty Power. As the believer in Romans 7: (14-23) is brought to the discovery of the deep-rooted legality of the old nature, and its absolute impotence, the truth of the Holy Spirit, and of the Mighty Power with which He does make practically free from the Power of Sin and Death is understood as never before, and our text becomes the utterance of the highest faith and experience combined: 'The Law of the Spirit of Life made me free from the Law of Sin and Death.' As real, and mighty, and spontaneous as was the Law of Sin in the members, is now the Law of the Spirit of Life in those members

too.

The believer who would live fully in this liberty of the Life in Christ Jesus will easily understand what the path is in which he will learn to walk, Romans 8 is the goal to which Romans 6 and 7 lead up. In faith he will first have to study and accept all that is taught in these two earlier chapters of his being in Christ Jesus; dead to sin and alive to God, made free from sin and enslaved to God, free from the law, and married to Christ. 'If ye abide in my word ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' Let the word of God, as it teaches you your union with Christ, be the lifestoil in which your faith and life daily roots; abide, dwell in it, and let it abide in you. To meditate, to hold fast, to hide in the heart the word of this gospel, to assimilate it in faith and patience, is the way to rise and reach each higher truth the Scripture teaches. And if the passage through the experience of carnality and captivity, which the attempts to fulfil the law we delight in bring, appears to be anything but progress, let us remember that it is just in the utter despair of self that the entire surrender to the Spirit, to bring and keep us in the liberty with which Christ makes free, is born and strengthened. To cease from all hope in the flesh and the law, is the entrance into the liberty, of the Spirit.

To walk in the path of this New Life it will further be specially needful to remember what is meant by the expression the word so distinctly uses, a 'walk after the Spirit.' The Spirit is to lead, to decide and show the path. This implies surrender, obedience, a waiting to be guided. He is to be the ruling Power, we are in all things to live and act under the Law, the legislation, the Dominion of the Spirit. A holy fear to grieve Him, a tender watchfulness to know His leading, an habitual faith in His hidden but most sure presence, a lowly adoration of Him as God, must be the mark of such a life. The words

which Paul uses towards the close of this section are to express our one aim —'If ye, through the Spirit, make to die the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' The Holy Spirit possessing, inspiring, animating all the powers of our spirit and soul, entering even: into the body, and, in the power of His Divine life, enabling us to make and keep dead the deeds of the body, this is what we may count upon as the fulfilment of the word, 'The law of the Spirit of the Life in Christ Jesus made, me free from the law of Sin and Death. 'This is that salvation in sanctification of the Spirit' to which we have been chosen.

'We walk by faith:' this is what we specially need to remember in regard to a 'walk after the Spirit.' The visible manifestation of Christ to us, and His work, are so much more intelligible than the revelation of the Spirit within us, that it is here, above all, in seeking the leading of the Spirit, that faith is called for. The Almighty Power of the Spirit hides Himself away in such a real union with our weakness, with our personality in its abiding sense of weakness, that it needs patient perseverance in believing and obeying to come into the full consciousness of His indwelling, and of His having indeed undertaken to do all our living for us. It needs the direct fresh anointing day by day from the Holy One, in fellowship with Christ, the Anointed, and in persevering waiting on the Father. Here, if ever, the word is needed, 'Only believe! Believe in the Father and His promise! Believe in the Son and His life as thine: 'Our life is hid with Christ in God.' Believe in the Spirit, as the bearer, and communicator, and maintainer of the Life and Presence of Jesus! Believe in Him as already within thee! Believe in His power and faithfulness to work, in a way that is Divine and beyond thy conception, His work in thee! Believe, 'The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus made me free from the Law of Sin and Death.' Bow in deep silence of soul before God, waiting on Him to work mightily in thee by His Spirit. As self is laid low, He will do His blessed and beloved work. He will reveal, will impart, will make and keep

divinely present Jesus Christ as the Life of thy spirit.

Ever blessed God and Father! we do praise Thee for the wonderful gift of Thy Holy Spirit, in whom 'Thou with Thy, Son comest to make abode in us. We do bless Thee for that wonderful gift of Eternal Life, which Thy beloved Son brought us, and which we have in Jesus Himself, as His own life given to us. And we thank Thee that the Law of the Spirit of the Life in Christ Jesus now makes us free from the Law of Sin and Death.

Our Father! we humbly pray Thee to reveal to us in full and blessed experience what this perfect Law of Liberty is. Teach us how it is the Law of an inner Life, that in joyful and spontaneous power grows up into its blessed destiny. Teach us that the Law is none other than of the Eternal Life, in its power of continuous and unfading being. Teach us that it is the Law of the Life of Christ Jesus, the living Saviour Himself, living and maintaining it in us. Teach us that it is the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit revealing and glorifying Christ in us as an indwelling Presence. O Father! open our eyes and strengthen our faith, that we may believe that the Law of the Spirit is indeed mightier than the Law of Sin in our members, and makes free from it, so that through the Spirit we make dead the deeds of the body, and indeed live the life of Christ.

O Father! teach this to all Thy children. Amen.

Chapter 19^(TOC)

The Leading of the Spirit

'An many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.'—Romans 8:14.

By very many Christians the leading of the Spirit is chiefly looked for as a suggestion of thoughts for our guidance. In the decision of doubtful questions of opinion or of duty, in the choice of words from Scripture to use, or the distinct direction to the performance of some Christian work, they would be so glad of some intimation from the Spirit of what the right thing is. They long and ask for it in vain. When at times they think they have it, it does not bring the assurance, or the comfort, or the success, which they think ought to be the seal of what is really from the Spirit. And so the precious truth of the Spirit's leading; instead of being an end of all controversy, and the solution of all difficulty, a source of comfort and of strength, itself becomes a cause of perplexity, and the greatest difficulty of all.

The error comes from not accepting the truth we have had to insist upon more than one the teaching and the leading of the Spirit given in the Life, not in the Mind. The Life is stirred and strengthened; the Life becomes the Light. As the, conformity to this world spirit is crucified and dies, as we deliberate: and keep down the life of nature and the the flesh, we are renewed in the spirit of our mind and so the mind becomes able to prove and know the good and

perfect and acceptable will (Romans 12:2).

This connection between the practical sanctifying work of the Spirit in our inner life, and His comes out very clearly in our context. 'If by the Spirit ye make to die the deeds of the body, ye shall live,' we read in 8:13. Then follows immediately, 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.' That is, as many as allow they to be led by Him in this mortifying of the a the body, these are the sons of God. Th Spirit is the Spirit of the holy life which the and is in Christ Jesus, and which works in Divine life-power. He is the Spirit of Holin only as such will He lead. Through Him God works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure through Him God makes us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight. To be led of the Spirit implies in the first place the surrender to His work as He convinces of sin and cleanses soul and body for His temple. It is as the Indwelling Spirit, filling, sanctifying, and ruling the heart and life, that He enlightens and leads.

In the study of what the leading of the Spirit means, it is of the first importance to grasp this thought in all its bearings. It is only the spiritual mind that can discern spiritual things, and can receive the leadings of the Spirit. The mind must grow spiritual to become capable of spiritual guidance. Paul said to the Corinthians, that because, though born again, they were still carnal, as babes in Christ, he had not been able to teach them spiritual truth. If this holds of the teaching that comes through man, how much more of that direct teaching of the Spirit, by which He leads into all truth. The deepest mysteries of Scripture, as far as they are apprehended by human thought, can be studied and accepted and even taught by the unsanctified mind. But the leading of the Spirit, we cannot repeat it too often, does not begin in the region of thought or feeling. Deeper down, in the life itself, in the hidden

laboratory of the inner life, whence issues the power that moulds the will and fashions the character in our spirits, there the Holy Spirit takes up His abode, there He breathes and moves and impels. He leads by inspiring us with a disposition out of which right purposes and come forth. 'That ye may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and understanding:' that prayer teaches us that it is only to a spiritual understanding that the knowledge of God's will can be given. And the spiritual understanding only comes with the growth of the spiritual man, and the faithfulness to the spiritual life. He that would have the leading of Spirit must yield himself to have his life wholly possessed and filled of the Spirit. It was when Christ had been baptized with the Spirit that, 'being full of the Spirit, he was led by the Spirit in the wilderness (Luke 4:1), 'that He returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee' (4:14), and began His ministry in Nazareth with the words, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me.'

All leading implies following. It is easily understood that to enjoy the leading of the Spirit demands a very teachable, followsome mind. The Spirit is not only hindered by the flesh as the power that commits sin, but still more by the flesh power that seeks to serve God. To be able to discern the Spirit's teaching, Scripture tells us that the ear must be circumcised, in a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ. The will and wisdom of the flesh must be feared and crucified, and denied. The ear must be closed to all that the flesh and its wisdom, whether in self or in men around us, has to say. In all our thoughts of God or our study of His Word, in all our drawings nigh to worship, and all our goings out to work for Him, there must be a continued distrust and abnegation of self, and a very definite waiting on God by the Holy Spirit to teach and lead us. A soul that thus daily and hourly waits for a Divine leading, for the light of knowledge and of duty, will assuredly receive it.

Would you be led of the, Spirit, give up, day by day, not only your will and wisdom, but your whole life and being. The Fire will descend and consume the sacrifice.

This leading of the Spirit must very specially be a thing of faith, and that in two senses. The beginning of the leading will come when we learn in holy fear to cultivate and act upon the confidence the Holy Spirit is in me, and is doing His work.

The Spirit's indwelling is the crowning piece of God's redemption work: the most spiritual and mysterious part of the mystery of godliness. Here, if anywhere, faith is needed. Faith is the faculty of the soul which recognises the Unseen, the Divine; which receives the impression of the Divine Presence when God draws near; which in its measure accepts of what the Divine Being brings and gives to us. In the Holy Spirit is the most intimate communication of the Divine Life; here faith may not judge by what it feels or understands, but simply submits to God to let Him do what He has said. It meditates and worships, it prays and trusts ever afresh, it yields the whole soul in adoring acceptance and thanksgiving to the Saviour's word, 'He shall be in you.' It in the assurance: the Holy Spirit, the Power of God, dwells within; in His own may depend upon it, He will lead me.

And then, with this more general faith indwelling of the Spirit, faith has also exercised in regard to each part of the leading. When there is a question I have laid before the Lord, and my soul has in simplicity and emptiness waited for His exposition and application of what in Word or Providence has met me, I must in faith trust my God that His guidance is not withheld. As we have said before, not in sudden impulses or strong impressions, not in heavenly voices or in remarkable interpositions, must we expect the ordinary leading of the Spirit. There are souls to whom such leading undoubtedly is

given; time may come, as our nature becomes spiritual and lives more in direct contact with the Invisible, that our very thoughts and feeling become the conscious vehicles of His blessed voice. But this we must leave to Him, and the growth of our spiritual capacity. The lower steps of the ladder are let down low enough for the weakest to reach; God means every child of His to be led by the Spirit every day. Begin the path of following the Spirit's leading by believing, not only that the Spirit is within you, but that He, if hitherto you have little sought or enjoyed the wondrous blessing, does now at once undertake the work for which you ask and trust Him. Yield yourself to God in undivided surrender: believe with implicit confidence that God's acceptance of the surrender means that you are given in charge of the Spirit. Through Him Jesus guides and rules and saves you.

But are we not in danger of being led away by the imaginings of our own hearts, and counting as leading of the Spirit what proves to be a delusion of the flesh? And if so, where is our safeguard against such error? The answer ordinarily given to this last question is: The Word of God. And yet that answer is but half the truth. Far too many have opposed to the danger of fanaticism the word of God, as interpreted by human reason or by the Church, and have erred no less than those they sought to oppose. The answer is: The word of God as taught by the Spirit of God. It is in the perfect harmony of the two that our safety is to be found. Let us on the one hand remember, that as all the word of God is given by the Spirit of God, so each word must be interpreted to us by that same Spirit. That this interpretation comes not from the Spirit above us or around us, suggesting thoughts to us, but from the indwelling Spirit, we need hardly repeat; it is only the spiritual man, whose inner life is under the dominion of the Spirit, who can discern, the spiritual meaning of the word. Let us on the other hold fast, that as all the word is given by the Spirit, so His great work is to honour that Word, and to

unfold the fulness of Divine truth treasured there. Not in the Spirit without or with but little of the word; not in the word without or with but little of the Spirit; but in the word and Spirit both dwelling richly within us, and both yielded to in implicit obedience, is our assurance of safety in the path of the guidance.

This brings us back to the lesson we urged at the commencement: the leading of the Spirit is inseparable from the sanctifying of the Spirit each one who would be led of the Spirit begin by giving himself to be led—of the word as far as he knows it. Begin at the beginning: obey the commandments.' He that will do, shall know, said Jesus. 'Keep my commandments, and the Father will send you the Spirit.' Give up every sin. Give up in everything to the voice of conscience. Give up in everything to God, and let Him have His way.

Through the Spirit mortify the deeds the body (verse 13). As a son of God place yourself at the entire disposal of the Spirit, to follow where He leads (verse 14). And the Spirit Himself, this same Spirit, through whom you mortify sin: and yield yourself to be led as a son, will bear witness with your spirit, in a joy and power hitherto unknown, that you are indeed a child of God enjoying all a child's privileges in his Father's love and guidance.

Blessed Father! I thank Thee for the message that as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. Thou wouldest not have Thy children guided by any one less than Thy own Holy Spirit. As He dwelt in Thy Son, and led Him, so He leads us too with a Divine and most blessed leading.

Father, Thou knowest how by reason of our not rightly knowing and not perfectly following this holy guidance, we are often unable to know His voice, so that the thought of the leading of the Spirit is more a burden than a joy. Father, forgive us. Be pleased graciously so to quicken our faith in the simplicity and certainty of the leading of the Spirit, that with our whole heart

we may yield ourselves henceforth to walk in it.

Father, I do here yield myself to Thee as Thy child, in everything to be led of Thy Spirit. My own wisdom, my own will, my own way I forsake. Daily would I wait in deep dependence on a guidance from above. May my spirit ever be hushed in silence before Thy Holy Presence, while I wait to let Him rule within. As I through the Spirit make dead the deeds of the body, may I be transformed by the renewing of my mind to know Thy good and perfect will. May my whole being so be under the rule of the Indwelling, Sanctifying Spirit, that the spiritual understanding of Thy will may indeed be the rule of my life. Amen.

Chapter 20^(TOC)

The Spirit of Prayer

'In like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity—for we know not how to pray as we ought but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered; and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to God.'—Romans 8:26, 27.

Of the offices of the Holy Spirit, one that leads us most deeply into the understanding of His place in the Divine economy of grace, and into the mystery of the Holy Trinity, is the work He does as the Spirit of prayer. We have the Father to whom we pray, and who hears prayer. We have the Son through whom we pray, and through whom, in union with whom, we receive and really appropriate the answer. And we have the Holy Spirit in whom we pray, who prays in us according to the will of God, with such deeply hidden, unutterable sighings, that God has to search the hearts to know what is the mind of the Spirit. Just as wonderful and real as is the Divine work of God on the Throne, graciously hearing, and, by his—mighty power, effectually answering prayer; just as Divine as is the work of the Son interceding and securing and transmitting the answer from above, is the work of the Holy Spirit in us in the prayer which waits and obtains the answer. The intercession within is as Divine as the intercession above. Let us try and understand why this should be so, and what it teaches.

In the creation of the world we see how it was the work of the Spirit to put Himself into contact with the dark and lifeless matter of chaos, and by His quickening energy to impart to it the power of life and fruitfulness. It was only after it had been thus vitalized by Him, that the Word of God gave it form, and called forth all the different types of life and beauty we now see. So, too, again in the creation of man it was the Spirit that was breathed into the body that had been formed from the ground, and that thus united itself with what would otherwise be dead matter. Even so, in the person of Jesus it is the Spirit through whose work a body was prepared for Him, through whom His body again was quickened from the grave, as it is through Him that our bodies are the temples of God, and the very members of our body the members of Christ. We think of the Spirit in connection with the spiritual nature of the Divine Being, far removed from the grossness and feebleness of matter; we forget that it is the very work of the Spirit specially to unite Himself with what is material, to lift it up into Its own Spirit nature, and so to develop what will be the highest type of perfection, a spiritual body.

This view of the Spirit's work is essential to the understanding of the place He takes in the Divine work of redemption. In each part of that work there is a special place assigned to each of the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity. In the Father we have the unseen God, the Author of all. In the Son God revealed, made manifest, and brought nigh, He is the Form of God. In the Spirit of God we have the Indwelling God—the Power of God dwelling in human body and working in it what the Father and the Son have for us. The weakness and humiliation, yea, the very grossness of the flesh is the sphere for the operation of the Holy Spirit. Not only in the individual, but in the Church as a whole, what the Father has purposed, and the Son has procured, can be appropriated and take effect in the members of Christ who are still here in the flesh, only through the continual intervention and active operation

of the Holy Spirit.

This is specially true of intercessory prayer. The coming of the kingdom of God, the increase of grace and knowledge and holiness in believers, their growing devotion to God's work and power for that work, the effectual working of God's power on the unconverted through the means of grace—all this waits to come to us from God through Christ. But it cannot come except as it is looked for and desired, asked and expected, believed and hoped for. And this is now the wonderful position the Holy Ghost occupies, that to Him has been assigned the task of preparing the body of Christ to reach out and receive and hold fast what has been provided in the fulness of Christ the Head. For the communication of the Father's love and blessing, the Son and the Spirit must both work. The Son receives from the Father, reveals and brings nigh, as it were, descends from above; the Spirit from within wakens the soul to come out and meet its Lord. As indispensable as the unceasing intercession of Christ above, asking and receiving from the Father, is the unceasing intercession of the Spirit within, asking and accepting from the Son what the Father gives.

Very wonderful is the light that is cast upon this holy mystery by the words of our text. In the life of faith and prayer there are operations of the Spirit in which the word of God is made clear to our understanding, and our faith knows to express what it needs and asks. But there are also operations of the Spirit, deeper down than thoughts or feelings, where He works desires and yearnings in our spirit, in the secret springs of life and being, which God only can discover and understand. Of this nature is the real thirst for God Himself, the Living God, the longing to know the love 'that passeth knowledge,' and to be 'filled with all the fullness of God,' the hope in 'Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think,' even 'what hath not

entered the heart of man to conceive.' When these aspirations indeed take possession of us, we begin to pray for what cannot be expressed, and our only comfort is then that the Spirit prays with His unutterable yearnings in a region and a language which the Heart Searcher alone knows and understands.

To the Corinthians Paul says, 'I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also.' Under the influence of the moving of the Holy Spirit and His miraculous gifts, their danger was to neglect the understanding. Our danger in these latter days is in the opposite direction: to pray with the understanding is easy and universal. We need to be reminded that, with the prayer with the understanding, there must come the prayer with the Spirit, the 'praying in the Holy Spirit' (Jude verse 20; Ephesians 6:18). We need to give its due place to each of the twofold operations of the Spirit. God's Word must dwell in us richly; our faith must seek to hold it clearly and intelligently, and to plead it in prayer. To have the words of Christ abiding in us, filling life and conduct, is one of the secrets of acceptable prayer. And yet we must always remember that in the inner sanctuary of our being, in the region of the unutterable and inconceivable (1 Corinthians 2:6), the Spirit prays for us what we do not know and cannot express. As we grow in the apprehension of the divinity of that Holy Spirit who dwells within, and the reality of His breathing within us, we shall recognise how infinitely beyond the conceptions of our mind must be that Divine hunger with which He draws us heavenward. We shall feel the need of cultivating not only the activity of faith, which seeks to grasp and obey God's word, and from that to learn to pray, but its deep passivity too. As we pray we shall remember how infinitely above our conception is God and the spirit-world into which by prayer we enter. Let us believe and rejoice that where heart and flesh fail, there God is the strength of our heart, there His Holy Spirit within us in the inmost sanctuary of our spirit,

within the veil, does His unceasing work of intercession, and prays according to God within us. As we pray, let us at times worship in holy stillness, and yield ourselves to that Blessed Paraclete, who alone, who truly is, the Spirit of Supplication.'

'Because He maketh intercession for the saints.' Why does the apostle not say for us; as he had said, 'We know not how to pray as we ought'? The expression, the saints, is a favourite one with Paul, where he thinks of the Church, either in one country or throughout the world. It is the special work of the Spirit, as dwelling in every member, to make the body realize its unity. As selfishness disappears, and the believer becomes more truly spiritual-minded, and he feels himself more identified with the body as a whole, he sees how its health and prosperity will be his own, and he learns what it is to 'pray at all seasons in the Spirit, watching thereunto in all perseverance for all saints.' It is as we give up ourselves to this work, in a large heartedness which takes in all the Church of God, that the Spirit will have free scope and will delight to do His work of intercession for the saints in us. It is specially in intercessory prayer that we may count upon the deep, unutterable, but all-prevailing intercession of the Spirit.

What a privilege! to be the temple out of which the Holy Spirit cries to the Father His unceasing Abba! and offers His unutterable intercession, too deep for words. What blessedness! that as the Eternal Son dwelt in the flesh in Jesus of Nazareth, and prayed to the Father as man, that even so the Eternal Spirit should dwell in us, sinful flesh, to train us to speak with the Father even—as the Son did. Who would not yield himself to this blessed Spirit, to be made fit to take a share in that mighty Intercession work through which alone the Kingdom of God can be revealed? The path is open, and invites all. Let the Holy Spirit have complete possession. Let Him fill you. Let Him be

your life. Believe in the possibility of His making your very personality and consciousness the seat of His inbeing. Believe in the certainty of His working, and praying in you in a way that no human mind can apprehend. Believe that in the secrecy and apparent weakness and slowness of that work, His Divine Almighty Power is perfecting the Divine purpose and the Divine Oneness with your blessed Lord. And live as one in whom the things that pass all understanding have become Truth and Life, in whom the Intercession of the Spirit is part of your daily life in Christ.

Most Holy God! once more I bow in lowly adoration in Thy Presence, to thank Thee for the precious privilege of prayer. And specially would I thank Thee for the Grace that has not only given us in Thy Son the Intercessor above, but in Thy Spirit the Intercessor within. O my Father! Thou knowest that I can scarce take in the wondrous thought, that Thy Holy Spirit in very deed dwelleth in me, and prays in my feeble prayers. I do beseech Thee, discover to me all that hinders His taking full possession of me, and filling me with the consciousness of His Presence. Let my inmost being and my outer life all be so under His leading, that I may have the spiritual understanding that knows to ask according to Thy will, and the living faith that receives what it asks. And when I know not what or how to pray, O Father, teach me to bow in silent worship, and keep waiting before Thee, knowing that He breathes the wordless prayer which Thou alone canst understand.

Blessed God! I am a temple of the Holy Spirit. I yield myself for Him to use me as the Spirit of Intercession. May my whole heart be so filled with the longing for Christ's honour, and His love for the lost, that my life may become one unutterable cry for the coming of Thy Kingdom. Amen.

Chapter 21^(TOC)

The Holy Spirit and Conscience

'I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.'—Romans 9:1.

'The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit.'—Romans 8:16.

God's highest glory is His Holiness in virtue of which He hates and destroys the evil, loves and works the good. In man, conscience has the same work: it condemns sin and approves the right. Conscience is the remains of God's image in man, the nearest approach to the Divine in him, the guardian of God's honour amid the ruin of the fall. As a consequence, God's work of redemption must always begin with conscience. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of His Holiness; conscience is a spark of the Divine holiness; harmony between the work of the Holy Spirit in, renewing and sanctifying man, and the work of conscience, is most intimate and essential. The believer who would be filled with the Holy Spirit, and experience to the full the blessings He has to give, must in the first place see to it that he yields to conscience the place and the honour which belong to it. Faithfulness to conscience is the first step in the path of restoration to the Holiness of God. Intense conscientiousness will be the groundwork and characteristic of true spirituality. As it is the work of conscience to witness to our being right towards our sense of duty and towards God, and the work of the Spirit to witness to God's acceptance of our faith in Christ and our obedience to Him,

the testimony of the Spirit and of conscience will, as the Christian life progresses, become increasingly identical. We shall feel the need and the blessedness of saying with Paul, in regard to all our conduct: 'My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.'

Conscience can be compared to the window of a room, through which the light of heaven shines into it, and through which we can look out and see that heaven, with all that its light shines on. The heart is the chamber in which our Life dwells, our Ego, or Soul, with its powers and affections. On the walls of that chamber there is written the law of God. Even in the heathen it is still partly legible, though sadly darkened and defaced. 'In the believer the law is written anew by the Holy Spirit, in letters of light, which often at first are but dim, but grow clearer and glow brighter as they are freely exposed to the action of the light without. With every sin I commit, the light that shines in makes it manifest and condemns it. If the sin be not confessed and forsaken, the stain remains, and conscience becomes defiled, because the mind refused the teaching of the light (Titus 1:15). And so with one sin after another the window gets darker and darker, until the light can hardly shine through at all, and the Christian can sin on undisturbed, with a conscience to a large extent blinded and without feeling. In His work of renewal the Holy Spirit does not create new faculties: He renews and sanctifies those already existing.

Conscience is the work of the Spirit of God the Creator; the first care of the Spirit of God the Redeemer is to restore what sin has defiled. It is only by restoring conscience to full and healthy action, and revealing in it the wonderful grace of Christ, 'the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit,' that He enables the believer to live a life in the full light of God's favour. It is as the window of the heart that looks heavenward is cleansed and kept clean that we can walk in the Light.

The work of the Spirit on conscience is a threefold one. Through conscience the Spirit causes the light of God's holy law to shine into the heart. A room may have its curtains drawn, and even its shutters closed: this cannot prevent the lightning flash from time to time shining into the darkness. Conscience may be so sin-stained and seared that the strong man within dwells in perfect peace. When the lightning from Sinai flashes into the heart, conscience awakens up, and is at once ready to admit and sustain the condemnation. Both the law and the gospel, with their call to repentance and their conviction of sin, appeal to conscience. And it is not till conscience has said Amen to the charge of transgression and unbelief that deliverance can truly come.

It is through conscience that the Spirit likewise causes the light of mercy to shine. When the windows of a house are stained, they need to be washed. How much more shall the blood of Christ cleanse your conscience! The whole aim of the precious, blood of Christ is to reach the conscience, to silence its accusations, and cleanse it, till it testify: Every stain is removed; the love of the Father streams in Christ in unclouded brightness into my soul. 'A heart sprinkled from an evil conscience,' 'having no more conscience of sin' (Hebrews 9:14, 10:2, 22), is meant to be the privilege of every believer. It becomes so when conscience learns to say Amen to God's message of the Power of Jesus' Blood.

The conscience that has been cleansed in the blood must be kept clean by a walk in the obedience of faith, with the light of God's favour shining on it. To the promise of the Indwelling Spirit, and His engagement to lead in all God's will, conscience must say its Amen too, and testify that He does it. The believer is called to walk in humble tenderness and watchfulness, lest in anything, even the least, conscience should accuse him for not having done what he knew to be right, or done what was not of faith. He may be content

with nothing less than Paul's joyful testimony, 'Our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, by the grace of God, we behaved ourselves in the world' (2 Corinthians 1:12. Comp. Acts 23:1, 24:16; 2 Timothy 1:3). Let us note these words well: 'Our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience! It is as the window is kept clean and bright by our abiding in the light, that we can have fellowship with the Father and the Son, the love of heaven shining in unclouded, and our love rising up in childlike trustfulness. 'Beloved! if our heart condemn us not, we have boldness toward God, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight' (1 John 3:21, 22).

The maintenance of a good conscience toward God from day to day is essential to the life of faith. The believer must aim at, must be satisfied with, nothing less than this. He may be assured that it is within his reach. The believers in the Old Testament by faith had the witness that they pleased God (Hebrews 11:4, 5, 6, 39). In the New Testament it is set before us, not only as a command to be obeyed, but as a grace to be wrought by God Himself. 'That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, strengthened with all might according to His glorious power.' 'May God fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power.' 'Working in us that which is wellpleasing in His sight! (Colossians 1:10, 11; 2 Thessalonians 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:1; Hebrews 12:28, 13:21).

The more we seek this testimony of conscience that we are doing what is well-pleasing to God, the more shall we feel the liberty, with every failure that surprises us, to look at once to the blood that ever cleanses, and the stronger will be our assurance that the indwelling sinfulness, and all its workings that are yet unknown to us, are covered by that blood too. The blood that has sprinkled the conscience abides and acts there in the power of

the Eternal Life that knows no intermission, and of the unchangeable Priesthood that saves completely. 'If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.'

The cause of the feebleness of our faith is owing to nothing so much as the want of a clean conscience. Mark well how closely Paul connects them in 1 Timothy: 'Love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned' (1:5). 'Holding faith and a good conscience, which some having thrust from them, have made shipwreck of the faith' (1:19). And especially (3:9), 'Holding the mystery of—the faith in a pure conscience.' The conscience is the seat of faith. He that would grow strong in faith, and have boldness with God, must know that he is pleasing Him (1 John 3:21, 22). Jesus said most distinctly that it is for those who love Him and keep His commandments, that the promise of the Spirit, with the indwelling of the Father and the Son, the abiding in His love, and power in prayer, is meant.

How can we confidently claim these promises, unless in childlike simplicity our conscience can testify that we fulfil the conditions? Oh, ere the Church can rise to the height of her holy calling as intercessor, and claim these unlimited promises as really within her reach, believers will have to draw nigh to their Father, glorying, like Paul, in the testimony of their conscience, that, by the Grace of God, they are walking in holiness and godly sincerity. It will have to be seen that this is the—deepest humility, and brings most glory to God's free grace, to give up man's ideas of what we can attain, and accept God's declaration of what He desires and promises, as the only standard of what we are to be.

And how is this blessed life to be attained, in which we can daily appeal to God and men with Paul: 'I say the truth in Christ, my conscience bearing me

witness in the Holy Ghost'? The first step is: Bow very low under the reproofs of conscience. Be not content with the general confession that there is a great deal wrong. Beware of confounding actual transgression with the involuntary workings of the sinful nature. If the latter are to be conquered and made dead by the indwelling Spirit (Romans 8:13), you must first deal with the former. Begin with some single sin, and give conscience time in silent submission and humiliation to reprove and condemn. Say to your Father, that in this one thing you are, by His grace, going to obey. Accept anew Christ's wonderful offer to take entire possession of your heart, to dwell in you as Lord and Keeper. Trust Him by His Holy Spirit to do this, even when you feel weak and helpless. Remember that obedience, the taking and keeping Christ's words in your will and life, is the only way to prove the reality of your surrender to Him, or your interest in His work and grace. And vow in faith, that by God's Grace you will exercise yourself herein, 'alway to have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man.'

When you have begun this with one sin, proceed with others, step by step. As you are faithful in keeping conscience pure, the light will shine more brightly from heaven into the heart, discovering sin you had not noticed before, bringing out distinctly the law written by the Spirit you had not been able to read. Be willing to be taught; be trustfully sure that the Spirit will teach. Every honest effort to keep the blood-cleansed conscience clean, in the light of God, will be met with the aid of the Spirit. Only yield yourself heartily and entirely to God's will, and to the power of His Holy Spirit.

As you thus bow to the reproofs of conscience, and give yourself wholly to do God's will, your courage will grow strong that it is possible to have a conscience void of offence. The witness of conscience, as to what you are doing, and will do by grace, will be met by the witness of the Spirit as to

what Christ is doing and will do. In childlike simplicity you will seek to begin each day with the simple prayer: Father! there is nothing now between Thee and Thy child. My conscience divinely cleansed in the blood, bears me witness, Father! let not even the shadow of a cloud intervene this day. In everything would I do Thy will: Thy Spirit dwells in me, and leads me, and makes me strong in Christ. And you will enter upon that life which glories in free grace alone when it says at the close of each day, 'Our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, by the Grace of God, we have behaved ourselves in the world': 'My conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.'

Gracious God! I thank Thee for the voice Thou hast given in our heart, to testify whether we are pleasing to Thee or not. I thank Thee, that when that witness condemned me, with its terrible Amen to the curse of Thy law, Thou didst give the blood of Thy Son to cleanse the conscience. I thank Thee that at this moment my conscience can say Amen to the voice of the blood, and that I may look up to Thee in full assurance, with a heart cleansed from the evil conscience.

I thank Thee too for the Witness from heaven to what Jesus hath done and is doing for me and in me. I thank Thee that He glorifies Christ in me, gives me His Presence and His Power, and transforms me into His likeness. I thank Thee that to the presence and the work of Thy Spirit in my heart, my conscience can likewise say, Amen.

O my Father! I desire this day to walk before Thee with a good conscience, to do nothing that might grieve Thee or my Blessed Lord Jesus. I ask Thee, may, in the power of the Holy Spirit, the cleansing in the blood be a living, continual, and most effectual deliverance from the power of sin, binding and strengthening me to Thy perfect service. And may my whole walk with Thee

be in the joy of the united witness of conscience and Thy Spirit that I am wellpleasing to Thee. Amen.

Chapter 22^(TOC)

The Revelation of the Spirit

'My preaching was not in persuasive words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among the perfect: yet a wisdom not of this world; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which none of the rulers of this world knoweth. But unto us God revealed it through the Spirit. The things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God, But we received, not the spirit which in of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us by God; which things also we speak, not in the word which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth. Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things—1 Corinthians 2:4-15.

In this passage Paul contrasts the spirit of the world and the Spirit of God. The point in which the contrast specially comes out is in the wisdom or knowledge of the truth. It was in seeking 'knowledge that man fell. It was in the pride of knowledge that heathenism had its origin; 'professing themselves to be wise, they became fools' (Romans 1:22). It was in wisdom, philosophy, and the search after truth, that the Greeks sought their glory. It was in the knowledge of God's will, the form of the knowledge and of the truth in the law' (Romans 2:17-20), that the Jew made his boast. And yet when Christ, the wisdom of God, appeared on earth, Jew and Greek combined to reject Him.

Man's wisdom, whether in possession of a revelation or not, is utterly insufficient for comprehending God or His wisdom. As his heart is alienated from God, so that he does not love or do His will, so his mind is darkened that he cannot know Him aright. Even when in Christ the light of God in its Divine love shone upon men, they knew it not, and saw no beauty in it.

In the Epistle to the Romans, Paul had dealt with man's trust in his own righteousness, and its insufficiency. To the Corinthians, especially in the first three chapters, he exposes the insufficiency of man's wisdom. And that not merely when it was a question of discovering God's truth and will, as with the Greeks; but even where God had revealed it, as with the Jews, man was incapable of seeing it without a Divine illumination, the light of the Holy Spirit. The rulers of this world, Jew and Gentile, had crucified the Lord of glory because they knew not the wisdom of God. In writing to believers at Corinth, and warning them against the wisdom of the world, Paul is not dealing with any heresy, Jewish or heathen. He is speaking to believers, who had fully accepted his gospel of a crucified Christ, but who were in danger, in preaching or hearing the truth, to deal with it in the power of human wisdom. He reminds them that the truth of God, as a hidden spirit mystery, can only be apprehended by a spiritual revelation. The rejection of Christ by the Jews had been the great proof of the utter incapacity of human wisdom to grasp a Divine revelation, without the spiritual internal illumination of the Holy Spirit. The Jews prided themselves on their attachment to God's word, their study of it, their conformity to it in life and conduct. The issue proved that, without their being conscious of it, they utterly misunderstood it, and rejected the very Messiah whom they thought they were waiting for and trusting in. Divine revelation, as Paul expounds it in this chapter, means three things. God must make known in His word what He thinks and does. Every preacher who is to communicate the message, must not only be in possession of the

truth, but continually be taught by the Spirit how to speak it. And every hearer needs the inward illumination: it is only as he is a spiritual man, with his life under the rule of the Spirit, that his mind can take in spiritual truth.

As we have the mind, the disposition of Christ, we can discern the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. This teaching is what the Church in our days, and each believer, specially needs. With the Reformation the insufficiency of man's righteousness, of his power really to fulfil God's law, obtained universal recognition in the Reformed Churches, and in theory at least is everywhere accepted among Evangelical Christians. The insufficiency of man's wisdom has by no means obtained as clear recognition. While the need of the Holy Spirit's teaching is, in a general way, willingly admitted, it will be found that neither in the teaching of the Church, nor in the lives of believers, has this blessed truth that practical and all-embracing supremacy without which the wisdom and the spirit of this world will still assert their power.

The proof of what we have said will be found in what Paul says of His own preaching: 'Our preaching was not in man's wisdom, but in the Spirit; that your faith might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.' He is not writing, as to the Galatians, of two gospels, but of two ways of preaching the one gospel of Christ's cross. He says that to preach it in persuasive words of man's wisdom, produces a faith that will bear the mark of its origin; it will stand in the wisdom of man. As long as it is nourished by men and means, it may stand and flourish. But it cannot stand alone or in the day of trial—A man may, with such preaching, become a believer, but will be a feeble believer. The faith, on the other hand, begotten of a preaching in the Spirit and power, stands in the power of God. The believer is led by the preaching, by the Holy Spirit Himself, past man, to direct contact with the living God: his faith stands in the power of God. As long as the state of the

great majority of our church members, notwithstanding such an abundance of the means of grace, is so feeble and sickly, with so little of the faith that stands in the power of God, mighty to overcome the world, to purify the heart, and to do the greater works, we cannot but fear that it is because too much, even of our true gospel preaching, is more in the wisdom of man than in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power. If a change is to be effected both in the spirit in which our preachers and teachers speak, and our congregations listen and expect, it must commence, I am sure, in the personal life of the individual believer.

We must learn to fear our own wisdom. 'Trust in the Lord with thy whole heart, and lean not to thine own understanding.' Paul says, to believers: 'If any man thinketh that he is wise, let him become a fool, that he may be wise' (1 Corinthians 3:18). When Scripture tells us that 'they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh,' this includes the understanding of the flesh, the fleshly mind of which Scripture speaks. Just as in the crucifixion of self I give up my own goodness, my own strength, my own will to the death, because there is no good in it, and, look to Christ by the power of His life to give me the goodness, and the strength, and the will which is pleasing to God, so it must be very specially with my wisdom Man's mind is one of his noblest and most God-like faculties, But sin rules over it and in it. A man may be truly converted, and yet not know to what an extent it is his natural mind with which he is trying to grasp and hold the truth of God. The reason that there is so much Bible reading and teaching which has no power to elevate and sanctify the life is simply this: it is not truth which has been revealed and received through the Holy Spirit.

This holds good, too, of truth which has once been taught us by the Holy Spirit, but which, having been lodged in the understanding, is now held

simply, by the memory.' Manna speedily loses its heavenliness, when stored up on earth. Truth received from heaven loses its Divine freshness, unless there every day be the anointing with fresh oil. The believer needs, day by day, hour by hour, to feel that there is nothing in which the power of the flesh, of nature, can assert itself more insidiously, than in the activity of the mind or reason in its dealing with the Divine word. This will make him feel that he must continually seek, in Paul's language, 'to become a fool.' He needs, each time he has to do with God's word, or thinks of God's truth, in faith and teachableness, to wait for the promised teaching of the Spirit. He needs ever again to ask for the circumcised ear: the ear in which the fleshly power of the understanding has been removed, and in which the spirit of the life in Christ Jesus within the heart listens in the obedience of the life, even as Christ did. To such the word will be fulfilled: 'I thank Thee, Father, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.'

The lesson for all ministers and teachers, all professors and theologians, all students and readers of the Bible, is one of deep and searching solemnity. Have we felt, have we even sought to feel, that there must be perfect correspondence between the objective spiritual contents of the revelation, and the subjective spiritual apprehension of it on our part? between our apprehension of it and our communication of it, both in the power of the Holy Spirit? between our communication of it, and the reception by those to whom we bring it? Would God that over our theological halls and our training institutes, over the studies of our commentators and writers, our ministers and teachers, there were written those words of Paul: 'The things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God: unto us God revealed them through the Spirit.' Would that our ministers could influence and train their congregations to see, that not the amount, or the clearness, or the interest of the Bible

knowledge received will decide the blessing and the power that it brings, but the measure of real dependence on the Holy Spirit. 'Them that honour Me. I will honour:' nowhere will this word be found more true than here. The crucifixion of self and all its wisdom, the coming in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, as Paul did, will most assuredly be met from above with the demonstration Of the Spirit and of power.

Believer! it is not enough that the light of Christ shines on you in the Word, the light of the Spirit must shine in you. Each time you come to the word, in study, in hearing a sermon, or reading a religious book, there ought to be, as distinct as your intercourse with the external means, a definite act of self—abnegation, denying your own wisdom, and. yielding yourself in faith to the Divine Teacher. Believe very distinctly that He dwells within you. He seeks the mastery, the sanctification of your inner life, in entire surrender and obedience to Jesus. Rejoice to renew your surrender to Him. Reject the spirit of the world which is still in you, with its wisdom and self—confidence; come, in poverty of spirit, to be led by the Spirit that is of God. 'Be not fashioned according to the world,' with its confidence in the flesh, and self, and its wisdom; 'but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God.' It is a transformed, renewed life, that, only wants to know God's perfect will, that will be taught by the Spirit. Cease from your own wisdom; wait for the wisdom in the inward parts which God has promised: you will increasingly be able to testify of the things which have not entered into the hearts of men to conceive: 'God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit.'

O God! I bless Thee for the wondrous revelation of Thyself in Christ crucified, the wisdom of God, and the power of God. I bless Thee, that while man's wisdom leaves him helpless in presence of the power of sin, and death,

Christ crucified proves that He is the wisdom of God by the mighty redemption He works as the power of God. And I bless Thee, that what he wrought and bestows as an Almighty Saviour is revealed within us by the Divine light of Thine Own Holy Spirit.

O Lord! we beseech Thee, teach Thy Church that wherever Christ, as the power of God, is not manifested, it is because He is so little known as the wisdom. of God, in the light in which the indwelling Spirit alone reveals Him. Oh! teach Thy Church to lead each child of God to the personal teaching and revelation of Christ within.

Show us, O God! that the one great hindrance is our own wisdom, our imagination that we can understand the Word and Truth of God. Oh! teach us to become fools that we may be wise. May our 'whole life become one continued act of faith, that the Holy Spirit will surely do His work of teaching, guiding and leading into the truth. Father! Thou gavest Him that He might reveal Jesus in His glory within us; we wait for this. Amen.

Chapter 23^(TOC)

Spiritual or Carnal

'And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not Yet able to bear it; nay, not even now are ye able; for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk after the manner of men?'—1 Corinthians 3:1-3.

In the previous Chapter the Apostle had contrasted the believer as spiritual, with the unregenerate as the natural (Or Psychological) man: the man of the Spirit with the man of the soul (1 Corinthians 2:14, 15). Here he supplements that teaching. He tells the Corinthians that, though they, have the Spirit, he cannot call them spiritual; that epithet belongs to those who have not only received the Spirit, but have yielded themselves to Him to possess and rule their whole life. Those who have not done this, in whom the power of the flesh is still more manifest than that of the Spirit, must be called not spiritual, but fleshly or carnal. There are thus three states in which a man may be found. The unregenerate is still the natural man, not having the Spirit of God. The regenerate, who is still a babe in Christ, whether because he is only lately converted, or because he has stood still and not advanced, is the carnal man, giving way to the power of the flesh. The believer in whom the Spirit has obtained full supremacy, is the spiritual man. The whole passage is suggestive of rich instruction in regard to the life of the Spirit within us.

The young Christian is still carnal. Regeneration is a birth: the centre and root of the personality, the spirit, has been renewed and taken possession of by the Spirit of God. But time is needed for its power from that centre to extend through all the circumference of our being. The kingdom of God is like unto a seed; the life in Christ is a growth; and it would be against the laws of nature and grace alike if we expected from the babe in Christ the strength that can only be found in the young men, or the rich experience of the fathers. Even where in the young convert there is great singleness of heart and faith, with true love and devotion to the Saviour, time is needed for a deeper knowledge of self and sin, for a spiritual insight into what God's will and grace are. With the young believer it is not unnatural that the emotions are deeply stirred, and that the mind delights in the contemplation of Divine truth; with the growth in grace, the will becomes the more important thing, and the waiting for the Spirit's power in the life and character more than the delight in those thoughts and images of the life which alone the mind could give. We need not wonder if the babe in Christ is still carnal.

Many Christians remain carnal. God has not only called us to grow, but has provided all the conditions and powers needful for growth. And yet it is, sadly true, that there are many Christians who, like the Corinthians, remain babes in Christ when they ought to be going on to perfection, 'attaining unto a full-grown man.' In some cases the blame is almost more with the Church and its teaching, than with the individuals themselves. When the preaching makes salvation chiefly to consist in pardon and peace and the hope of heaven, or when, if a holy life be preached, the truth of Christ our Sanctification, our Sufficient Strength to be holy, and the Holy Spirit's indwelling, be not taught clearly and in the power of the Spirit, growth can hardly be expected: Ignorance, human and defective views of the gospel, as the power of God unto a, present salvation in sanctification, are the cause of the evil.

In other cases the root of the evil is to be found in the unwillingness of the Christian to deny self and crucify the flesh. The call of Jesus to every disciple is, 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself.' The Spirit is only given to the obedient; He can only do His work in those who are willing absolutely to give up self to the death.

The sin that proved that the Corinthians were carnal was their jealousy and strife. When Christians are not willing to give up the sin of selfishness and temper; when, whether in the home relationship or in the wider circle of church and public life, they want to retain the liberty of giving way to, or excusing evil feelings, of pronouncing their own judgments, and speaking words that are not in perfect love, then they remain carnal. With all their knowledge, and their enjoyment of religious ordinances, and their work for God's kingdom, they are carnal and not spiritual. They grieve the Holy Spirit of God; they cannot have the testimony that they are pleasing to God. God is Love: if we would not be carnal, let us love. 'Above all things, put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.'

The carnal Christian cannot apprehend spiritual truth. Paul writes to these Corinthians: 'I fed you with milk, and not with meat; for ye were not able to bear it; nay, not even now are ye able.' The Corinthians prided themselves on their wisdom; Paul thanked God that they were 'enriched in all knowledge.' There was nothing in His teaching that they would not have been able to comprehend with the understanding. But the real spiritual entering into the truth in power, so as to possess it and be possessed by it, so as to have not only the thoughts but the very thing the words speak of, this the Holy Spirit only can give. And He gives it only in the spiritually-minded man. The teaching and leading of the Spirit is given to the obedient, is preceded by the dominion of the Spirit in mortifying the deeds of the body (see Romans 8:13

and 14). Spiritual knowledge is not deep thought, but living contact, entering into and being united to the truth as it is in Jesus, a spiritual reality, a substantial existence. 'The Spirit teacheth, combining spiritual things with spiritual;' into a spiritual mind He works spiritual truth. It is not the power of intellect, it is not even the earnest desire to know the truth, that fits a man for the Spirit's teaching; it is a life yielded to Him in waiting dependence and full obedience to be made spiritual, that receives the spiritual wisdom and understanding. In the mind (nous, in the Scripture meaning of the term) these two elements, the moral and the cognitive, are united; only as the former has precedence and sway, can the latter apprehend what God has spoken.

It is easy to understand how a carnal or fleshly life with its walk, and the fleshly mind with its knowledge, act and react on each other. As far as we are giving way to the flesh, we are incapable of receiving spiritual insight into truth. We may 'know all mysteries, and have all knowledge,' without love, the love which the Spirit works in the innerlife; it is only a knowledge that puffeth up, it profiteth nothing. The carnal life makes the knowledge carnal. And this knowledge again, being thus held in the fleshly mind, strengthens the religion of the flesh, of self-trust and self effort; the truth so received has no power to renew and make free. No wonder that there is so much Bible teaching and Bible knowledge, with so little of real spiritual result in a life of holiness. Would God that His word might sound through His Church: 'Whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal?' Unless we be living spiritual lives, full of humility, and love, and self-sacrifice, spiritual truth, the truth of God, cannot enter or profit us. Love alone is light: want of love is darkness (1 John 2:9).

Every Christian is called of God to be a spiritual man. Paul reproves these Corinthians, only but a few years since brought out of gross heathenism, that

they are not yet spiritual. The great redemption in Christ had this most distinctly as its object, the removal of every hindrance, that the Spirit of God might be able to make man's heart and life a worthy home for God who is a Spirit. That redemption was no failure; the Holy Spirit came down to inaugurate a new, before unknown, dispensation of indwelling life and power. The promise and the love of the Father, the power and the glory of the Son, the presence of the Spirit on earth all are pledge and guarantee that it can be. As sure as the natural man can become a regenerate man, can a regenerate man, who is still carnal, become spiritual.

And why is it not so? The question brings us into the presence of that strange and unfathomable mystery-the power God has given men of accepting or refusing His offers, of being true or being unfaithful to the grace He has given. We have already spoken of that unfaithfulness on the part of the Church, in its defective teaching of the indwelling and the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit in the believer, and on the part of believers in their unwillingness to forsake all to let the Holy Spirit get entire possession, and do a perfect work in them. Let us here rather seek, once again, to gather up what Scripture teaches as to the way to become spiritual.

It is the Holy Spirit who makes the spiritual man. He alone can do it. He does it most certainly where the whole man is yielded up to Him. To have the whole being pervaded, influenced, sanctified by the Holy Spirit; to have first our spirit, then the soul, with the will, the feelings, the mind, and so even the body, under His control, moved and guided by Him, this makes and marks the spiritual man.

The first step on the way to this is faith. We must seek the deep, living, absorbing conviction that there is a Holy Spirit in us; that He is the Mighty Power of God dwelling and working within; that He is the representative of

Jesus, making Him present within us as our Redeemer King, mighty to save. In the union of a holy fear and trembling at the almost tremendous glory of this truth of an Indwelling God, with the childlike joy and trust of knowing Him to be the Paraclete, the Inbringer of the Divine and irrevocable presence of God and of Christ, this thought must become the inspiration of life: The Holy Spirit has His home within us: in our spirit is His hidden, blessed dwelling-place.

As we are filled with the faith of what He is and will do, and see that it is not done, we ask for the hindrance. We find that there is an opposing power, the flesh. From Scripture we learn how the flesh has its twofold action: from the flesh springs not only unrighteousness, but self-righteousness. Both must be confessed and surrendered to Him whom the Spirit would reveal and enthrone as Lord, our Mighty Saviour. All that is carnal and sinful, all the works of the flesh, must be given up and cast out. But no less must all that is carnal, however religious it appears, all confidence in the flesh, all self-effort and self-struggling be rooted out. The soul, with its power, must be brought into the captivity and subjection of Jesus Christ. In deep and daily dependence on God must the Holy Spirit be accepted, waited for, and followed.

Thus walking in faith and obedience, we may count on the Holy Spirit to do a divine and most blessed work within us. 'If we live by the Spirit;'—this is the faith that is needed; we believe that God, a Spirit dwells in us. Then follows: 'by the Spirit let us live;' this is the obedience that is asked. In the faith of that Holy Spirit who is in us, we know that we have sufficient strength to walk by the Spirit, and yield ourselves to His mighty working, to work in us to will and to do all that is pleasing in God's sight.

Gracious God! we humbly pray Thee to teach us all to profit by the solemn

lessons of this portion of Thy blessed word.

Fill us with holy fear and trembling lest, with all our knowledge of the truth of Christ and the Spirit, we should be carnal in disposition and conduct, not walking in the love and purity of Thy Holy Spirit. May we understand that knowledge only puffeth up, unless it be under the rule of the love that buildeth up.

Give us to hear Thy call to all Thy children to be spiritual. It is Thy purpose, that even as with Thy beloved Son, their whole daily life, even in the very least things, should give evidence of being the fruit of Thy Spirit's indwelling. May we all accept the call, as from Thy love, inviting us to our highest blessedness, conformity to Thy likeness in Christ Jesus.

Chapter 24^(TOC)

The Temple of the Holy Spirit

'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?'—1 Corinthians 3:16.

In using the illustration of the Temple as the type of God's dwelling in us by the Holy Spirit, Scripture invites us to study the analogy. The Temple was made in all things according to a pattern seen by Moses on the Mount, a shadow cast by the Eternal Spiritual Realities which it was to symbolize. One of these realities—for Divine Truth is exceeding rich and full and has many and very diverse applications—One of these realities shadowed forth by the Temple, is man's threefold nature. Because man was created in the image of God, the Temple is not only the setting forth of the mystery of man's approach into the presence of God, but equally of God's way of entering into man, to take up His abode with him.

We are familiar with the division of the Temple into three parts. There was its exterior, seen by all men, with the outer court, in to which every Israelite might enter, and where all the external religious service was performed. There was the Holy Place, into which alone the priests might enter, to present to God the blood or the incense, the bread or the oil, they had brought from without. But though near, they were still not within the veil; into the immediate presence of God they might not come. God dwelt in the Holiest of

all, in a light inaccessible, where none might venture nigh. The momentary entering of the High Priest once a year was but to bring into full consciousness the truth that there was no place for man there, until the veil should have been rent and taken away.

Man is God's temple. In him, too, there are the three parts. In the body you have the outer court, the external visible life, where all the conduct has to be regulated by God's law, and where all the service consists in looking to that which is done without us and for us to bring us nigh to God. Then there is the soul, with its inner life, its power of mind and feeling and will. In the regenerate man this is the Holy Place, where thoughts and affections and desires move to and fro as the priests of the sanctuary, rendering God their service in the full light of consciousness. And then comes within the veil, hidden from all human sight and light, the hidden inmost sanctuary, 'the secret place of the Most High,' where God dwells, and where man may not enter, until the veil is rent at God's own bidding.

Man has not only body and soul, but also spirit. Deeper down than where the soul with its consciousness can enter, there is a spirit-nature linking man with God.

So fearful is sin's power, that in some this power is given up to death: they are sensual, not having the Spirit. In others, it is nothing more than a dormant power, a possibility waiting for the quickening of the Holy Spirit. In the believer it is the inner chamber of the heart, of which the Spirit has taken possession, and from out of which He waits to do His glorious work, making soul and body holy to the Lord.

And yet this indwelling, unless where it is recognised, and yielded to, and humbly maintained in adoration and love, often brings comparatively little

blessing. And the one great lesson which the truth that we are God's temple, because His Spirit dwells in us, must teach us, is this, to, acknowledge the Holy Presence that dwells within us. This alone will enable us to regard the whole temple, even to the outmost court, as sacred to His service, and to yield every power of our nature to His leading and will. The most sacred part of the Temple, that for which all the rest existed and on which all depended, was the Holiest of all. Even though the priests might never enter there, and might never see the glory that dwelt there, all their conduct was regulated, and all their faith animated, by the thought of the unseen Presence there. It was this that gave the sprinkling of the blood and the burning of the incense their value. It was this made it a privilege to draw nigh, and gave confidence to go out and bless. It was the Most Holy, the Holiest of all, that made the place of their serving to them a Holy Place. Their whole life was controlled and inspired by the faith of the unseen indwelling glory within the veil.

It is not otherwise with the believer. Until he learns by faith to tremble in presence of the wondrous mystery that he is God's temple, because God's Spirit dwelleth in him, he never will yield himself to his high vocation with the holy reverence or the joyful confidence that becomes him. As long as he looks only into the Holy Place, into the heart, as far as man can see and know what passes there, he will often search in vain for the Holy Spirit, or only find cause for bitter shame that his workings are so few and feeble. Each of us must learn to know that there is a Holiest of all in that temple which he himself is; the secret place of the Most High within us must become the central truth in our temple worship. This must be to us the meaning of our confession: 'I believe in the Holy Ghost.'

And how is this deep faith in the hidden indwelling to become ours? Taking our stand, upon God's blessed Word, we must accept and appropriate its

teaching. We must take trouble to believe that God means what it says. I am a temple; just such a temple as God commanded to be built of old; He meant me to see in it what I am to be. There the Holiest of all was the central point, the essential thing. It was all dark, secret, hidden, till the time of unveiling came. It demanded and received the faith of priest and people. The Holiest of all within me, too, is unseen and hidden, a thing for faith alone to know and deal with. Let me, as I approach to the Holy One, bow before Him in deep and lowly reverence. Let me there say that I believe what He says, that His Holy Spirit,

God, one with the Father and the Son, even now has His abode within me. I will meditate, and be still, until something of the overwhelming glory of the truth fall upon me, and faith begin to realize it: I am His temple, and in the secret place He sits upon His throne. As I yield myself in silent meditation and worship day by day, surrendering and setting open my whole being to Him, He will in His divine, loving, living power, shine into my consciousness the light of His presence.

As this thought fills the heart, the faith of the indwelling though hidden presence will influence; the Holy Place will be ruled from the Most Holy. The world of consciousness in the soul, with all its thoughts and feelings, its affections and purposes, will come and surrender themselves to the Holy Power that sits within on the throne. Amid the terrible experience of failure and sin a new hope will dawn. Though long I most earnestly strove, I could not keep the Holy Place for God, because I knew not that He kept the Most Holy for Himself. If I give Him there the glory due to His name, in the holy worship of the inner temple, He will send forth His light and His truth through my whole being, and through mind and will reveal His power to sanctify and to bless. And through the soul, thus coming ever more mightily

under His rule, His power will work out even into the body. With passions and appetites within, yea, with every thought brought into subjection, the hidden Holy Spirit will through the soul penetrate ever deeper into the body. Through the Spirit the deeds of the body will be made dead, and the river of water, that flows from under 'the throne of God and the Lamb, will go through all the outer nature, with its cleansing and quickening power.

O Brother, do believe that you are the temple of the living God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you! You have been sealed with the Holy Spirit; He is the mark, the living assurance of your sonship and your Father's love. If this have hitherto been a thought that has brought you but little comfort, see if the reason is not here. You sought for Him in the Holy Place, amid the powers and services of your inner life which come within your vision, And you could hardly discern Him there. And so you could not appropriate the comfort and strength the Comforter was meant to bring. No, my brother, not there, not there. Deeper down, in the secret place of the Most High, there you will find Him. Within you! in your inmost part! there faith will find Him. And as faith worships in holy reverence before the Father, and the heart trembles at the thought of what it has found, wait in holy stillness on God to grant you the mighty working of His Spirit; wait in holy stillness for the Spirit, and be assured He will, as God, arise and fill His temple with His glory.

And then remember, the veil was but for a time. When the preparation was complete, the veil of the flesh was rent. As you yield your soul's inner life to the inmost life of the Spirit, as the traffic between the Most Holy and the Holy becomes more true and unbroken, the fulness of the time will come in your soul. In the power of Him, in whom the veil was rent that the Spirit might stream forth from His glorified body, there will come to you, too, an

experience in which the veil shall be taken away, and the Most Holy and the Holy be thrown into one. The hidden glory of the Secret Place will stream into your conscious daily life: the service of the Holy Place will all be in the power of the Eternal Spirit.

Brother, let us fall down and worship! 'Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord; for he is waked up out of His holy habitation.'

Most Holy God! in adoring wonder I bow before Thee in presence of this wondrous mystery of grace: my spirit, soul, and body Thy temple.

In deep silence and worship I accept the blessed revelation, that in me too there is a Holiest of all, and that there Thy hidden Glory has its abode.

O my God, forgive me that I have so little known it.

I do now tremblingly accept the blessed truth: God the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, who is God Almighty, dwells in me.

O my Father, reveal within what it means, lest I sin against Thee by saying it and not living it.

Blessed Jesus! to Thee, who sittest upon the throne, I yield my whole being. In Thee I trust to rise up in power and have dominion within me.

In Thee I believe for the full 'Streaming forth of the living waters.

Blessed Spirit! Holy Teacher! Mighty Sanctifier! Thou art within me. On Thee do I wait all the day. I belong to Thee. Take entire possession of me for the Father and the Son Amen.

Chapter 25^(TOC)

The Ministry of the Spirit

'Our sufficiency is of God; who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death came with glory, how shall not rather the ministration of the Spirit be with glory?'—2 Corinthians 3:6, 7.

In none of his Epistles does Paul expound his conception of the Christian ministry so clearly and fully as in the second to the Corinthians. The need of vindicating his apostleship against detractors, the consciousness of Divine Power and Glory working in him in the midst of weakness, the intense longing of his loving heart to communicate what he had to impart, stir his soul to its very depths, and he lays open to us the inmost secrets of the life that makes one a true minister of Christ and His Spirit. In our text we have the central thought: he finds his sufficiency of strength, the inspiration and rule of all his conduct, in the fact that he has been made a minister of the Spirit. If we take the different passages in which mention is made of the Holy Spirit in the first half of the Epistle, we shall see what, in his view, the place and work of the Holy Spirit in the ministry is, and what the character of a ministry under His leading and in His power.

In the Epistle, Paul will have to speak with authority. He begins by placing himself on a level with his readers. In his first mention of the Spirit he tells

them that the Spirit that is in him is no other than is in them. 'Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts' (1:21, 22). The anointing of the believer with the Spirit, bringing him into fellowship with Christ, the anointed One, and revealing what He is to us; the sealing, marking him as God's own, and giving him assurance of it; the earnest of the Spirit, securing at once the foretaste and the fitness for the heavenly inheritance in glory: of all this he and they are together partakers. However much there was among the Corinthians, that was wrong and unholy, Paul speaks to them, thinks of them, and loves them as one in Christ 'He that stablisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us,'—this deep sense of unity fills his soul, comes out throughout the Epistle, and is the secret of his power. See 1:6, 10, 2:3 'My joy is the joy of you all;' 4:5 'ourselves your servants;' 4:10-12 'death worketh in us, life in you;' 4:15 'all things are for your sakes;' 6:11, 7:3 'you are in our hearts to live and die with you.' If the unity of the Spirit, the consciousness of being members one of another, be necessary in all believers, how much more must it be the mark of those who are ministers? The power of the ministry to the saints depends upon the unity of the Spirit; the full recognition of believers as partakers of the anointing. But to this end the minister must himself live as an anointed and sealed one, making manifest that he has the earnest of the Spirit in his heart.

The second passage is 3:3 'Ye are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh.' As distinct an act of God as was the writing of the law on the tables of stone, is the writing of the law of the Spirit in the new covenant, and of the name of Christ on the heart. It is a divine work, in which, as truly as God wrote of old, the Holy Spirit uses the tongue of His minister as His pen. It is this truth that needs to be restored in the ministry:

not only that the Holy Spirit is needed, but that He waits to do the work, and that He will do it, when the right relation to Him is maintained. Paul's own experience at Corinth (Acts 18:5-11; 1 Corinthians 2:3) teaches us what conscious weakness, what fear and trembling, what sense of absolute helplessness may be, or rather is, needed, if the power of God is to rest upon us. Our whole Epistle confirms this: it was as a man under sentence of death, bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the power of Christ wrought in him. The Spirit of God stands in contrast to the flesh, the world, and self, with its life and strength; it is as these are broken down, and the flesh has nothing to glory in, that the Spirit will work. Oh that every minister's tongue might be prepared for the Holy Spirit to use it as a pen wherewith He writes!

Then come the words of our text (3:6, 7), to teach us what the special characteristic is of this New Covenant Ministry of the Spirit: it gives life.' The antithesis, 'the letter killeth,' applies not only to the law of the Old Testament, but, according to the teaching of Scripture, to all knowledge which is not in the quickening power of the Spirit. We cannot insist upon it too earnestly, that, even as the law, though we know it was 'spiritual,' so the gospel too has its letter. The gospel may 'be preached most clearly and faithfully; it may exert a strong moral influence; and yet the faith that comes of it may stand in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God. If there is one thing the Church needs to cry for on behalf of its ministers and students, it is that the Ministry of the Spirit may be restored in its full power. Pray that God may teach them what it is personally to live in the anointing, the scaling, the earnest of the Indwelling Spirit; what it is to know that the letter killeth; what it is that the Spirit in very deed giveth life; and what, above all, the personal life is under which the Ministry of the Spirit can freely work.

Paul now proceeds to contrast the two dispensations and the different

characters of those who live in them.' He points out how, as long as the mind is blinded, there is a veil on the heart which can only be taken away as we turn to the Lord. And then he adds (3:17, 18): 'Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.' It is because God 'is a Spirit' that He can give the Spirit. It was when our Lord Jesus was exalted into the life of the Spirit that He became 'the Lord the Spirit,' could give the New Testament Spirit, and in the Spirit come Himself to His people. The disciples knew Jesus long, without knowing Him as the Lord the Spirit. Paul speaks of this, too, with regard to himself (2 Corinthians 5:16). There may in the ministry be much earnest gospel preaching of the Lord Jesus as the Crucified One, without the preaching of Him as the Lord the Spirit. It is only as the latter truth is apprehended, and experienced, and then preached, that the double blessing will come that Paul speaks of here. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, is liberty:' believers will be led into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Romans 8:2; Galatians 5:1, 18). And then: 'we are transformed into the same image, even as from the Lord the Spirit:' He will do the work for which He was sent-to reveal the glory of the Lord in us and as we behold that glory, we shall be changed from glory to glory. Of the time before Pentecost it was written: 'The Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified.' But when He had been 'justified in the Spirit, and received up in glory,' the Spirit came forth from 'the excellent glory' into our hearts, that we, with unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord might be changed into His likeness, from glory to glory. What a calling! the Ministry of the Spirit! to hold up the glory of the Lord to His redeemed, and to be used by His Spirit in working their transformation into His likeness. 'Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, we faint not.' It is as the knowledge and

acknowledgment of Christ as the Lord the Spirit, and of the Spirit, of Christ as changing believers into His likeness, lives in the Church, that the ministry among believers will be in Life and Power—in very deed, a Ministry of the Spirit.

The power of the ministry on the Divine side is the Spirit; on the human, it is here, as everywhere, faith. The next mention of the Spirit is in 4:13 'Having the same Spirit of faith,' After having, in chapter 3, set forth the glory of the Ministry of the Spirit, and, 4:1-6, the glory of the Gospel it preached, he turns to the vessels in which this treasure is. He has to vindicate his apparent weakness. But he does far more. Instead of apologizing for it, he expounds its Divine meaning and glory, He proves how just this constituted his power, because in his weakness Divine power could work. It has been so ordained, 'that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.' So his perfect fellowship with Jesus was maintained as he bore about 'the putting to death of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also might be manifested in his mortal body.' So there was even in his sufferings something of the vicarious element that marked his Lord's: 'So then death worketh in us, but life in you.' And then he adds, as the expression of the animating power that sustained him through all endurance and labour: 'But having the same Spirit of faith,' of which we read in the, Scripture, 'according to that which is written, I believed, and therefore did I speak; we also believe, and therefore we also speak; knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you.'

Faith is the evidence of things not seen. It sees the Invisible, and lives in it. Beginning with trust in Jesus, 'in whom, though ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice,' it goes on through the whole of the Christian life. Whatever is of the Spirit, is by faith. The great work of God, in opening the

heart of His child to receive more of the Spirit, is to school his faith into more perfect freedom from all that is seen, and the more entire repose in God, even to the assurance that God dwelleth and worketh mightily in his weakness. For this end trials and sufferings are sent. Paul uses very remarkable language in regard to his sufferings in the first chapter (verse 9): 'We ourselves have had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead.' Even Paul was in danger of trusting in himself. Nothing is more natural; all life is confident of self; and nature is consistent with itself till it dies. For the mighty work he had to do, he needed a trust in none less than the Living God, who raiseth the dead. To this God led him by giving him, in the affliction which came upon him in Asia, the sentence of death in himself. The trial of his faith was its strength. In our context he returns to this thought: the fellowship of the dying of Jesus is to him the means and the assurance of the experience of the power of Christ's life. In the spirit of this faith he speaks: 'Knowing that He which raised up Jesus shall raise up us also.'

It was not until Jesus had died that the Spirit of life could break forth from Him. The life of Jesus was born out of the grave: it is a life out of death. It is as we daily die, and bear about the dying of Jesus; as flesh and self are kept crucified and mortified; as we have in ourselves God's sentence of death on all that is of self and nature, that the life and the Spirit of Jesus will be manifest in us. And this is the Spirit of faith, that in the midst of weakness and apparent death, it counts on God that raiseth the dead. And this is the Ministry of the Spirit, when faith glories in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon it. It is as our faith does not stagger at the earthiness and weakness of the vessel, as it consents that the excellency of the power shall be, not from ourselves, or in anything we feel, but of God alone, that the Spirit will work in the power of the living God.

We have the same thought in the two remaining passages. In chapter 5:5, he speaks again of 'the earnest of the Spirit' in connection with our groaning and being burdened. And then in chapter 6:6, the Spirit is introduced in the midst of the mention of his distresses and labours as the mark of his ministry. 'In everything commending ourselves, as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, ... in the Holy Ghost, ... as dying, and yet, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich.' The Power of Christ in the Holy Spirit was to Paul such a living reality, that the weakness of the flesh only led him the more to rejoice and to trust it. The Holy Spirit's dwelling and working in Him was consciously the secret spring and the Divine power of his ministry.

We may well ask, Does the Holy Spirit take the place in our ministry He did in Paul's? There is not a minister or member of the Church who has not a vital interest in the answer. The question is not whether the doctrine of the absolute need of the Holy Spirit's working is admitted; but whether there is given to the securing of His presence and working that proportion of the time and life, of the thought and faith of the ministry, which His place, as the Spirit of the Lord Jesus on the Throne, demands. Has the Holy Spirit the place in the Church which our Lord Jesus would wish Him to have? When our hearts open to the inconceivably glorious Truth that He is the Mighty Power of God dwelling in us, that in Him the Living Christ works through us, that He is the Real Presence with us of the Glorified Lord on the Throne, we shall feel that the one need of the ministry and the Church is this: to wait at the footstool of the Throne without ceasing for the clothing with the Power that comes from on high. The Spirit of Christ, in His love and power, in His death and life, is the Spirit of the ministry. As it possesses this, it will be what the Head of the Church meant it to be, the Ministry of the Spirit.

Blessed Father! we thank Thee for the institution of the Ministry of the Word, as the great means through which our exalted Lord does His saving work by the Holy Spirit. We thank Thee that it is a Ministry of the Spirit, and for all the blessing Thou hast wrought through it in the world. Our prayer is, most Blessed God! that Thou wouldst increasingly and manifestly make it throughout Thy Church what Thou wouldst have it be—a Ministry of the Spirit and of Power.

Give Thy servants and people everywhere a deep sense of how much it still comes short of Thy purpose. Reveal how much there is in it of trust in the flesh, of man's zeal and strength, of the wisdom of this world. Teach all Thy true servants the holy secret of giving place to the Spirit of Christ, that He may use them. May the conscious presence of Christ in their hearts by the Holy Spirit give them great boldness of speech. May the power of the Holy Spirit in their whole life make them fit vessels for Him to use in teaching others. May Divine Power in the midst of weakness be the mark of their public ministry.

Teach Thy people to wait on their teaching, to receive it, to plead with Thee for it as a Ministry of the Spirit. And may the lives of believers increasingly be, in the power of such a ministry, those of men led and sanctified by the Holy Ghost. Amen,

'We are also weak In Him, but shall live with Him through the power of God toward you.' With martyrs and missionaries, persecution and tribulation have been the fellowship of Christ's suffering and weakness, His Power and Spirit. We may invite neither persecutions nor suffering; how can in our days this fellowship of Christ's suffering and dying, the rending of the flesh, so indispensable to the Ministry of the Spirit, be maintained? In a deep entering into the needs and the sorrows of the suffering humanity around us. And in

that self-denial which in nothing allows the flesh, the self-life, to have its way, but increasingly seeks in utter weakness to make way for Christ's power to work, and depends upon His Spirit.

Chapter 26^(TOC)

The Spirit and the Flesh

'Are you so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh?'—Galatians 3:3

'We are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh; that I myself might have confidence even in the flesh.'—Philippians 3:3

The flesh is the name by which Scripture designates our fallen nature—soul and body. The soul at creation was placed between the spiritual or Divine and the sensible or worldly to each its due, and guide them into that union which would result in man attaining his destiny, a spiritual body. When the soul yielded to the temptation of the sensible, it broke away from the rule of the Spirit and came under the power of the body-it became flesh. And now the flesh is not only without the Spirit, but even hostile to it; 'the flesh lusteth against the Spirit.'

In this antagonism of the flesh to the Spirit there are two sides. On the one hand, the flesh lusts against the Spirit in its committing sin and transgressing God's law. On the other hand, its hostility to the Spirit is no less manifested in its seeking to serve God and do His will. In yielding to the flesh, the soul sought itself instead of the God to whom the Spirit linked it; selfishly prevailed over God's will; selfishness became its ruling principle. And now, so subtle and mighty is his spirit of self, that the flesh, not only in sinning

against God, but even when the soul learns to serve God, still asserts its power, refuses to let the Spirit alone lead, and, in its efforts to be religious, is still the great enemy that ever hinders and quenches the Spirit. It is owing to this deceitfulness of the flesh that there often takes place what Paul speaks of to the Galatians: 'Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh?' Unless the surrender to the Spirit be very entire, and the holy waiting on Him be kept up in great dependence and humility, what has been begun in the Spirit, very easily and very speedily passes over into confidence in the flesh. And the remarkable thing is, what at first sight might appear a paradox, that just where the flesh seeks to serve God, there it becomes the strength of sin.

Do we not know, how the Pharisees, with 'self-righteousness and carnal religion, fell into pride and selfishness, and became the servants of sin? Was it not just among the Galatians, of whom Paul asks the question about perfecting in flesh what was begun in the Spirit, and whom he has so to warn against the righteousness of works, that the works of the flesh were so manifest, and that they were in danger of devouring one another? Satan has no more crafty device for keeping souls in bondage than inciting them to a religion in the flesh. He knows that the power of flesh can never please God or conquer sin, and in due time the flesh that has gained supremacy over the Spirit in the service of God, will assert and maintain that same supremacy in the service of sin. It is only where the Spirit truly and unceasingly has the entire lead and rule in the life of worship, that it will have the power to lead and rule in the life of practical obedience. If I am to deny self in: intercourse with men, to conquer selfishness and temper and want of love, I must first learn to deny self in the intercourse with God. There the soul, seat of self, must learn to bow to the Spirit, where God dwells.

The contrast between the worship in the Spirit and the trusting in the flesh is very beautifully expressed in Paul's description of the true circumcision—the circumcision of the heart—whose praise is not of men, but of God: 'Who worship the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh.' Placing the glorying in Christ Jesus in the centre, as the very essence of the Christian faith and life, he marks on the one hand the great danger by which it is beset, on the other the safeguard by which its full enjoyment is secured. Confidence in the flesh is the one thing above all others that renders the glorying in Christ Jesus of none effect; worship by the Spirit the one thing that alone can make it indeed life and truth. May the Spirit reveal to us what it is thus to glory in Christ Jesus!

That there is a glorying in Christ Jesus that is accompanied by much confidence in the flesh, all history and experience teach us. Among the Galatians it was so. The teachers whom Paul used so earnestly were all preachers of Christ His cross. But they preached it, not as men taught by the Spirit to know what the infinite and pervading influence of that cross must be, but those who; having had the beginnings of God's Spirit, had yet allowed their own wisdom and their thoughts to say what that cross meant, and so reconciled it with a religion which to a very extent was legal and carnal. And the story of the Galatian Church is repeated to this day even in the Churches that are most confidently assured that they are free from the Galatian error. Just notice how often the doctrine of justification faith is spoken of as if that were the only teaching of the Epistle, while the doctrine of the Spirit's indwelling as received by faith, and walking by the Spirit, is hardly mentioned.

Christ crucified is the wisdom of God. The confidence in the flesh, in connection with the glorying in Christ, is seen in confidence in its own

wisdom. Scripture is studied, and preached, and heard, and believed in, very much in the power of the natural mind with little insistence upon the absolute need the Spirit's personal teaching. It is seen in the absolute confidence with which men know that they have the truth, though they have it far more from human than Divine teaching, and in the absence of that teachableness that waits for God to reveal His truth in His own light.

Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is not only the Wisdom but the Power of God. The confidence in the flesh, along with much glorying in Christ Jesus, to be seen and felt in so much of the work of the Christian Church in which human effort and human arrangement take a much larger place than the waiting on the Power that comes from on high. In the larger ecclesiastical organizations, in individual churches and circles, in the inner life of the heart and closet—alas! how much unsuccessful effort, what oft-repeated failure, is to be traced to this one evil! There is no want of acknowledging Christ, His person and work, as our only hope, no want of giving Him the glory, and yet so much confidence in the flesh, rendering it of none effect.

Let me here ask again, whether there be not many a one striving earnestly for a life in the fullness of consecration and the fullness of blessing who will find here the secret of failure. To help such has been one of my first objects and most earnest prayers in writing this book. As in sermon or address, in book or conversation or private prayer, the fulness of Jesus was opened up to them, with the possibility of a holy life in Him, the soul felt it all so beautiful and so simple, that nothing could any longer keep it back. And perhaps, as it accepted of what was seen to be so sure and so near, it entered into an enjoyment and experienced a power before unknown. It had now learnt to glory in Christ Jesus! But it did not last. There was a worm at the root. Vain was the search for what the cause of the discomfiture was, or the way of

restoration. Frequently the only answer that could be found was that the surrender was not entire, or faith's acceptance not perfect. And yet the soul felt sure that it was ready, as far as it knew, to give up all, and it did long to let Jesus have all and to trust Him for all. It could almost become hopeless of an impossible perfection, if perfect consecration and perfect faith were to be the condition of the blessing. And the promise had been that it would all be so simple—just the life for the poor and feeble ones.

Listen, my brother, to the blessed teaching of God's word today. It was the confidence in the flesh that spoilt thy glorying in Christ Jesus. It was Self doing what the Spirit alone can do; it was Soul taking the lead, in the hope that the Spirit would second its efforts, instead of trusting the Holy Spirit to lead and do all, and then waiting Him. It was following Jesus, without the denial of self. It was this was the secret trouble. Come and listen to Paul as he tells of the only safeguard against this danger: 'We are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.' Here are the two elements of spiritual worship, The Spirit exalts Jesus, and abases the flesh. And if we would truly glory in Jesus, and have Him glorified in us, if we would know the glory of Jesus in personal and unchanging experience, free from the impotence which always marks the efforts of the flesh, we must simply learn what this worship of God by the Spirit is.

I can only repeat, once again, what it is the purpose of this whole book to set forth as God's truth from His blessed word: Glory in Christ Jesus. Glory in Him as the Glorified One who baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. In great simplicity and trustfulness believe in Him as having given His own Spirit within you. Believe in that gift; believe in the Holy Spirit dwelling within you. Accept this the secret of the life of Christ in you: the Holy Spirit is

dwelling in the hidden recesses of your Spirit. Meditate on it, believe Jesus and His Word concerning it, until your soul bows with holy fear and awe before God under the glory of the truth: the Holy Spirit of God is indeed dwelling in me.

Yield yourself to His leading. We have seen that leading is not first in the mind or thoughts, but in the life and disposition. Yield yourself to God, to be guided by the Holy Spirit in all your conduct. He is promised to those who love Jesus and obey Him: fear not to say that He knows you love and do obey Him with your whole heart. Remember, then, what the one central object of His coming was: to restore the departed Lord Jesus to His disciples. 'I will not leave you orphans,' said Jesus; 'I will come again to you.' I cannot glory a distant Jesus, from whom I am separated. When I try to do it, it is a thing of effort; I must have the help of the flesh to do it. I can only truly glory in a present Saviour, whom the Holy Spirit glorifies, reveals in His glory, within me. As He does this, the flesh is abased, and kept in its place of crucifixion as an accursed thing: as He does it, the deeds of the flesh are made to die. And my sole religion will be: no confidence in the flesh, glorying in Christ Jesus, worship by the Spirit of God.

Beloved believer! having begun in the Spirit, continue, go on, persevere in the Spirit. Beware of for one single moment, continuing or perfecting a work of the Spirit in the flesh. Let 'no confidence in the flesh' be your battle-cry; let, a deep trust of the flesh and fear of grieving the Spirit by walking after the flesh, keep you very low and humble before God. Pray God for the spirit of revelation, that you may see how Jesus is all and does all, and how by the Holy Spirit a Divine Life indeed takes the place of your life, and Jesus is enthroned as the Keeper and Guide and Life of the soul.

Blessed God and Father! We thank Thee for the wondrous provision Thou

hast made for Thy children's drawing nigh to Thee, glorying in Christ Jesus, and worshipping by the Spirit. Grant, we pray Thee, that such may be our life and all our religious service.

We feel the need of asking Thee to show us how the one great hindrance to such a life is the power of the flesh and the efforts of, the self-life. Open our eyes, we pray Thee, to this snare of Satan. May we all see how secret and how subtle is the temptation to have confidence in the flesh, and how easily we are led to, perfect, in the flesh what has been begun in the Spirit. May we learn to trust Thee to work in us by Thy Holy Spirit, both to will and to do.

Teach us, too, we pray Thee, to know how the flesh can be conquered and its power broken. In the death of Thy beloved Son our old man has been crucified: may we count all things but loss to be made conformable to that death, and have the old nature kept in the place of death. We do yield ourselves to the lead and rule of Thy Holy Spirit. We do believe that through the Spirit Christ is our life, so that instead of the life of effort and work, an entirely new life works within us. Our Father—in faith we give up all to Thy Spirit to be our life in us. Amen.

Chapter 27^(TOC)

The Spirit through Faith

'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse, that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.'—Galatians 3:13, 14.

THE word faith is used the first time in Scripture in connection with Abraham. His highest praise, the secret of his strength for obedience, and what made him so pleasing to God, that he believed God; and so he became the Father of all them that believe, and the great example of the blessing which the Divine favour sows, and the path in which it comes. Just as God proved Himself to Abraham the God who quickens the dead, He does to us too, in fuller measure, in giving us the Spirit of His own Divine to dwell in us. And just as this quickening power came to Abraham through faith, so the blessing of Abraham, as now made manifest in Christ, even the promise of the Spirit, is made ours by faith. All the lessons of Abraham's life centre in this: 'We receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' If we want to know what the Faith is through which the Spirit is received, how that faith comes and grows, we must study what God has taught us of it in Abraham's story.

In Abraham's life we see what faith is: the spiritual sense by which man recognises and accepts the revelation of his God, a spiritual sense called forth and awakened by that revelation. It was because God had chosen Abraham,

and determined to reveal Himself, that Abraham became a man of faith. Each new revelation was an act of the Divine Will; it is the Divine Will, and the revelation in which it carries out its purpose, that is the cause and the life of faith. The more distinct the revelation or contact with God, the deeper is faith stirred in the soul. Paul speaks of 'trust in the Living God:' it is only as the Living One, in the quickening power of the Divine Life, draws nigh and touches the soul, that living faith will be called forth. Faith is not an independent act, by which in our own strength we take what God says. Nor is it an entirely passive state, in which we only suffer God to do to us what He will. But it is that receptivity of soul in which, as God comes near, and as His living Power speaks to us and touches us, we yield ourselves and accept His word and His working.

It is thus very evident that faith has two things to deal with: first the Presence, and then the Word of the Lord. It is only the Living Presence that makes the Living Word; so the Kingdom comes not in word only, but in power. It is on this account that there is so much reading and preaching of the word that bears so little fruit; so much straining and praying for faith, with so little result. Men deal with the word more than with the Living God. Faith has very truly been defined as 'Taking God at His word.' With many this has only meant, taking the word as God's; they did not see the force of the thought, Taking God at His word. A key or a door handle has no value until I use it for the lock and the door I want to open; it is alone in direct and living contact with God Himself that the word can work effectually and open the heart for God. Faith takes God at His word; it can only do this when and as He gives Himself. I may have in God's book all His precious promises most clear and full; I may have learnt perfectly to understand how I have but to trust the promise to have it fulfilled; and yet utterly fail to find the longed for blessing. The Faith that enters on the inheritance is the attitude of soul which waits for

God Himself, first to speak His word to me, and then to do the thing which He hath spoken. Faith is fellowship with God; faith is surrender to God; the impression made by His drawing nigh, the possession He takes of the soul by His word, holding and preparing it for His work. When once it has been awakened, it watches for every appearing of the Divine Will; it listens for and accepts ever indication of the Divine Presence; it looks for and expects the fulfilment of every Divine Promise.

Such was the faith through which Abraham inherited the promises. Such is the faith by which the blessing of Abraham comes upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, and by which we thus receive the promise of the Spirit. In all our study of the work of the Holy Spirit, and of the way in which He comes, from His first sealing us, to His full indwelling and streaming forth, let us hold fast this word: 'We receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' Whether the believer be striving for the full consciousness that the Spirit dwells within, for a deeper assurance of His shedding abroad of God's love in the heart, for a larger growth of all His fruits, for the clearer experience of His guiding into all truth, or for the indument of power to labour and to bless, let him remember that the law of faith, on which the whole economy of grace is grounded, here demands its fullest application: 'According to your faith be it unto you.' 'We receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' Let us seek for Abraham's blessing in Abraham's faith.

Let, in this matter, our faith begin where his began: in meeting God and waiting on God. 'The Lord appeared unto Abraham And Abraham fell on his face: and God talked with him: Let us look up to our God and Father as the Living God, who Himself, by His Omnipotent Quickening Power, to do this wonderful thing for us: to fill us with His Holy Spirit. The blessing He has for us is the same He gave to Abraham, but only larger, fuller, and more

wonderful. To Abraham, both when his own was now as dead, and later on, when his son already bound on the altar, the prey of death, He came as the Life—giving God. 'He believed who quickeneth the dead.' 'He offered up Isaac accounting God able to raise him up.' To us He comes, offering to fill spirit, soul, and body the power of a Divine life, through the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. Let us be like Abraham. Looking at the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform.' Let us have our souls filled with the faith of Him who has promised, our hearts fixed on Him who is able to perform: it is faith in God opens the heart for God, and prepares to submit to and receive His Divine working. God waits on us to fill us with His Spirit: oh, let us wait on Him. God must do it all with a Divine doing, most mightily and most blessed: let us wait on Him. To read and think, to long and pray, to consecrate ourselves and grasp the promise, to hold fast the blessed truth that the Spirit dwells within us; all this is good in its place, but does not, bring the blessing. The one thing needful is, to have the heart filled with faith in the Living God; in that faith to abide in living contact with Him, in that faith to wait, and worship, and work, as in His Holy Presence. In such fellowship with God, the Holy Spirit fills the heart.

When we have taken up this position, let us keep in it; we are then in the right state for the Spirit, in such measure as He already has had access to us, further revealing what God has prepared for us.' As we then think of some special manifestation of the Spirit, of which the conviction of need has been wrought, or go to the promises of the word to be led into all the Will of God concernig the life of the Spirit in us, we shall be kept in that humbling sense of dependence out of which childlike trust is most surely begotten. We shall be preserved from that life of strain and effort which has so often led to

failure, because in the very attempt to serve God in the Spirit we were having or seeking confidence in the flesh, in something we felt, or did, or wished to do. The deep undertone of our life, in listening to God's word, or in asking God to listen to us, in silent meditation or public worship, in work for God or daily business, will be the assurance that overpowers every other certainty: 'How much more will the Heavenly Father give,' has He given, and will He always be giving, 'the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.'

Such a faith will not be without its trials. Isaac, the God-given, faith-accepted life of Isaac, had to be given up to death, that it might be received back in resurrection-type, as life from the dead. The God-given experience of the Spirit's working many a time passes away, and leaves the soul apparently dull and dead. This is only until double lesson has been fully learnt; that a faith can rejoice in a Living God, even when all feeling and experience appear to contradict the promise; and that the Divine life only enters as the life of the flesh is given to the death. The life of Christ is revealed as His death works in us, and as in weakness and nothingness we look to Him. We receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. As faith grows larger and broader, the receiving of promised Spirit will be fuller and deeper. Each new revelation of God to Abraham made his faith stronger and his acquaintance with God more intimate. When his God drew near, he knew what to expect; he knew to trust Him even in the most unlikely appearances, when asking the death of his son. It is the faith that waits every day on the Living God to reveal Himself; the faith that in increasing tenderness of ear and readiness of service yields fully to Him and His Presence; the faith that knows that only as He wills to reveal Himself can the blessing come, but that because He always does love to reveal Himself, it will surely come—this faith receives the promise of the Spirit.

It was in God's Presence that this faith was wakened and strengthened in Abraham and the saints of old. It was in Jesus' Presence on earth that unbelief was cast out, and that little faith became strong. It was in the Presence of the glorified One that faith received the blessing of Pentecost. The Throne of God is now opened to us in Christ; it is become the Throne of God and the Lamb: as we tarry in humble worship, and walk in loving service before the Throne, the river of the water of life that flows from under it will flow into us, and through us, and out of us. 'He that believeth, rivers of water shall flow out of him.'

Ever-blessed God! who dost in Thy Divine Love and Power reveal Thyself to each of Thy children as far as he can possibly bear it, increase within us, we pray Thee, the faith through which alone we can know or receive Thee. Whether Thou comest as the Almighty, or the Redeeming, or the Indwelling God, it is ever faith Thou seekest, and according to faith we receive. O Father! convince us deeply that we have just as much of the Spirit as we have faith.

Our Holy God! we know that it is Thy Presence wakens and works the faith in the soul that yields to Thee. Draw us mightily, we pray Thee, yea, resistibly into Thy Holy Presence, and keep us waiting there. Oh, deliver us from the terrible fascination of world and flesh, that Thy Divine Glory may be our all-absorbing desire, and our whole heart emptied to receive the Holy Spirit's revelation of Christ within. We desire to take Thy words, and let them dwell richly in us. We desire in stillness of soul to be silent unto God and wait for Him; to trust and believe that the Father hast given us His Spirit within us, and is in secret working to reveal His Son. O God! we do live the life of faith; we do believe in the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Chapter 28^(TOC)

Walking by the Spirit

'Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. They that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh, with the passions and lusts thereof. If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk.'—Galatians 5:16, 24, 25,

'IF we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us walk.' These words suggest to us very clearly the—difference, between the sickly and the healthy Christian life. In the former the Christian is content to 'live by the Spirit;' he is satisfied with knowing that he has the new life; but he does not 'walk by the Spirit.' The true believer, on the contrary, is not content without having his whole walk and conversation in the power of the Spirit. He walks by the Spirit, and so does not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

As the Christian strives thus to walk worthy of God and well-pleasing to Him in all things, he is often sorely troubled at the power of sin, and asks what the cause may be that he so often fails in conquering it. The answer to this question he ordinarily finds in his want of faith or faithfulness, in his natural feebleness or the mighty power of Satan. Alas! if he rests content with this solution. It is well for him if he press on to find the deeper reason why all these things, from which Christ secured deliverance for him, still can overcome. One of the deepest secrets of the Christian life is the knowledge that the one great power that keeps the Spirit of God from ruling, that the last

enemy that must yield to Him, is the flesh. He that knows what the flesh is, how it works and how it must be dealt with, will be conqueror.

We know how it was on account of their ignorance of this that the Galatians so sadly failed. It was this led them to attempt to perfect in the flesh what was begun in the Spirit (3:3). It was this made them a prey to those who desired 'to make a fair show in the flesh' that they might 'glory in the flesh' (6:12, 13). They knew not how incorrigibly corrupt the flesh was. They knew not that, as sinful as our nature is when fulfilling its own lusts, as sinful is it when making 'a fair show in the flesh;' it apparently yields itself to the service of God, and undertakes to perfect what the Spirit had begun. Because they knew not this, they were unable to check the flesh in its passions and lusts; these obtained the victory over them, so that they did what they did not wish. They knew not that, as long as the flesh, self-effort, and selfwill had any influence in serving God, it would remain strong to serve sin, and that the only way to render it impotent to do evil was to render it impotent in its attempts to do good.

It is to discover the truth of God concerning the flesh, both in its service of God and of sin, that this Epistle was written. Paul wants to teach then how the Spirit—and the Spirit alone, is the power of the Christian life, and how this cannot be except as the flesh, with all that it means, is utterly and entirely set aside. And in answer to the question how this can be, he gives the wonderful answer which is one of the central thoughts of God's revelation. The crucifixion and death of Christ is the revelation not only of an atonement for sin, but of a power which frees from the actual dominion of sin, as it is rooted in the flesh. When Paul in the midst of his teaching about the walk in the Spirit (16-26) tells us, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts,' he tells us what the only way is in which deliverance from

the flesh is to be found. To understand this word, 'crucified. the flesh,' and abide in it, is the secret of walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Let each one who longs to walk by the Spirit try to enter into its meaning.

'The flesh'—in Scripture this expression means the whole of our human nature in its present condition under the power of sin. It includes our whole being, spirit, soul, and body. After the fall, God said, 'man is flesh' (Genesis 6:3). All his powers, intellect, emotions, will—all are under the power of the flesh. Scripture speaks of the will of the flesh of the mind of the flesh (fleshly mind), of the passions and lusts of the flesh. It tells us that in our flesh dwelleth no good: the mind of the flesh is at enmity against God. On this ground it teaches that nothing that is of the flesh, that the fleshly mind or will thinks or does, however fair the show it makes, and however much men may glory in it, can have any value in the sight of God. It warns us that our greatest danger in religion, the cause of our feebleness and failure, is our having confidence in the flesh, its wisdom and its work. It tells us that, to be pleasing to God, this flesh, with its self-will and self-effort, must entirely be dispossessed, to make way for the willing and the working of Another, even the Spirit of God. And that the only way to be made free from the power of the flesh, and have it put out of—the way, is to have it crucified and given over to the death.

'They that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh.' Men often speak of crucifying the flesh as a thing that has to be done. Scripture always speaks of it as a thing that has been done, an accomplished fact. 'Knowing, this, that our old man was crucified with Him.' 'I have been crucified with Christ.' 'They that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh.' 'The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.' What Christ, through the Eternal Spirit, did on the cross, He did not as

an individual, but in the name of that human nature which, as its Head, He had taken upon Himself. Every one who accepts of Christ receives Him as the Crucified One, receives not only the merit, but the power of His crucifixion, is united and identified with Him, and is called on intelligently and voluntarily to realize and maintain that identification. 'They that are of Christ Jesus' have, in virtue of their accepting the crucified Christ as their life, given up their flesh to that cross which is of the very essence of the person and character of Christ as He now lives in heaven; they 'have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts.'

But what does this mean: 'They have crucified the flesh'? Some are content with the general truth: the cross takes away the curse which there was on the flesh. Others think of causing the flesh pain and suffering, of the duty of denying and mortifying it. Others, again, of the moral influence the thought of the cross will exercise. In each of these views there is an element of truth. But if they are to be realized in power, we must go to the rootthought: to crucify the flesh is, to give it over to the curse. The Cross and the Curse are inseparable (Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13). To say, 'Our old man has been crucified with Him,' 'I have been crucified with Christ, means something very solemn and awful. It means this: I have seen that my old nature, myself, deserves the curse; that there is no way of getting rid of it but by death: I voluntarily give it to the death. I have accepted as my life the Christ who came to give Himself, His flesh, to the cursed death of the cross; who received His new life alone owing to that death and in virtue of it: I give my old man, my flesh, self, with its will and work, as a sinful, accursed thing, to the cross. It is nailed there: in Christ I am dead to it, and free from it. It is not yet dead; but day by day in union with Christ will I keep it there, making dead, as they still seek to rise up, every one of its members and deeds in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The power of this truth depends upon its being known, accepted, and acted on. If I only know the cross in its Substitution, but not, as Paul gloried in it, in its Fellowship (Galatians 6:14), never can experience its power to sanctify. As the blessed truth of its Fellowship dawns upon me, I see how by faith I enter into and live in spiritual communion with that Jesus who, as my Head and Leader, made and proved the cross the only ladder to the Throne. This spiritual union, maintained by faith, becomes a moral one. I have the same mind or disposition that was in Christ Jesus. I regard the flesh as sinful, and only fit for the curse. I accept the cross, with its death to what is flesh, secured to me in Jesus, as the only way to become free from the power of self, and to walk in the new life by the Spirit of Christ.

The way in which this faith in the power of the cross acts, as at once the revelation and the removal of the curse and the power of the flesh, is very simple, and yet very solemn. I begin to understand that my one danger in living by the Spirit is yielding to the flesh or self in its attempt to serve God. I see that it renders the cross of Christ of none effect. (1 Corinthians 1:17; Galatians 3:3, 5:12, 13; Philippians 3:3, 4; Colossians 2:18-23) I see how all that was of man and nature, of law and human effort, was for ever judged of God on Calvary. There flesh proved that, with all its wisdom and all its religion, it hated and rejected the Son of God. There God proved how the only way to deliver from the flesh was to give it to death as an accursed thing. I begin to understand that the one thing I need is: to look upon the flesh as God does; to accept of the death warrant the cross brings to everything in me that is of the flesh; to look upon it, and all that comes from it, as an accursed thing. As this habit of soul grows on me, I learn to fear nothing so much as myself. I tremble at the thought of allowing the flesh, my natural mind and will, to usurp the place of the Holy Spirit. My whole posture towards Christ is that of lowly fear, in the consciousness of having within me

that accursed thing that is ever ready, as an angel of light, to intrude itself in the Holiest of all, and lead me astray to serve God, not in the Spirit of Christ, but in the power that is of nature. It is in, such a lowly fear that the believer is taught to believe fully the need, but also the provision, of the Holy Spirit to take entirely the place which the flesh once had, and day by day to glory in the cross, of which he can say, 'By it I have been crucified to the world.'

We often seek for the cause of failure in the Christian life. We often think that because we are sound on what the Galatians did not understand—justification by faith alone, their danger was not ours. Oh that we knew to what an extent we have allowed the flesh to work in our religion! Let us pray God for grace to know it as our bitterest enemy, and the enemy of Christ. Free grace does not only mean the pardon of sin; it means the power of the New Life through the Holy Spirit. Let us consent to what God says of the flesh, and all that comes of it: that it is sinful, condemned, accursed. Let us fear nothing so much as the secret workings of our flesh. Let us accept the teaching of God's word: 'In my flesh dwelleth no good thing;' 'The carnal mind is enmity against God.' Let us ask God to show us how entirely the Spirit must possess us, if we are to be pleasing to Him in all things. Let us believe that as we daily glory in the cross, and, in prayer and obedience, yield the flesh to the death on the cross, Christ will accept our surrender, and will, by His Divine Power, maintain mightily in us the Life of the Spirit. And we shall learn not only to live by the Spirit, but, as those who are made free from the power of the flesh, by its crucifixion, maintained by faith, in very deed to walk by the Spirit.

Blessed God! I beseech Thee to reveal to me the full meaning of what Thy word has been teaching me, that it is as one who has crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts, that I can walk by the Spirit.

O my Father! teach me to see that all that is of nature and of self is of the flesh; that the flesh has been tested by Thee, and found wanting, worthy of nothing but the curse and death. Teach me that my Lord Jesus led the way, and acknowledged the justice of Thy curse, that I too might be willing and have the power to give it up to the cross as an accursed thing. Oh, give me grace day by day greatly to fear before Thee, lest I allow the flesh to intrude into the work of the Spirit, and to grieve Him. And teach me that the Holy Spirit has indeed been given to be the life of my life, and to fill my whole being with the power of the death and the life of my blessed Lord living in me.

Blessed Lord Jesus! who didst send Thy Holy Spirit, to secure the uninterrupted enjoyment of Thy Presence and Thy Saving Power within us, I yield myself to be entirely Thine, to live wholly and only under His leading. I do with my whole heart desire to regard the flesh as crucified and accursed. I solemnly consent to live as a crucified one. Saviour! Thou dost accept my surrender; I trust in Thee to keep me this day walking through the Spirit. Amen.

Chapter 29^(TOC)

The Spirit of Love

'The fruit of the Spirit is love.'—Galatians 5:22.

'I beseech you by the love of the Spirit.'—Romans 15:30.

'Who also declared unto us your love in the spirit.'—Colossians 1:8.

Our subject today leads us up into the very centre of the inner sanctuary. We are to think of the Love of the Spirit. We shall have to learn that love is not only one, among others, of the graces of the Spirit, is not only the chief among them, but that the Spirit is indeed nothing less than the Divine Love itself come down to dwell in us, and that we have only so much of the Spirit as we have of Love.

God is a Spirit: God Is Love. In these two words we have the only attempt that Scripture makes to give us, in human language, what may be called a definition of God.' As a Spirit, He has life in Himself, is independent of all around Him, and has power over all to enter into it, to penetrate it with His own life, to communicate Himself to it. It is through the Spirit that God is the Father of Christ, the Father of spirits, that He is the God of creation, that He is the God and Redeemer of man. All life is owing to the Spirit of God. And it is so because God is Love. Within Himself He is Love, as seen in the Father giving all He hath to the Son, and the Son seeking all He has in the Father. In this life of Love between the Father and the Son' the Spirit is the

bond of fellowship. The Father is the Loving One, the Fountain; the Son the Beloved One, the great Reservoir of Love, ever receiving and ever giving back; the Spirit the Living Love that makes them one. In Him the Divine Life of Love hath its ceaseless flow and overflowing. It is that same love with which the—Father loves the Son that rests on us and seeks to fill us too, and it is through the Spirit that this Love of God is revealed and communicated to us. In Jesus it was the Spirit that led Him to the work of love for which He was anointed, to preach glad tidings to the poor and deliverance to the captives; through that same Spirit He offered Himself a sacrifice for us. The Spirit comes to us freighted with all the love of God and of Jesus: the Spirit is the Love of God.

And when that Spirit enters us, His first work is: 'The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which was given unto us.' What He gives is not only the faith or the experience of how greatly God loves, but something infinitely more glorious. The Love of God, as a spiritual existence, as a Living Power, enters our hearts. It cannot be otherwise, for the Love of God exists in the Spirit; the outpouring of the Spirit is the inpouring of Love. This Love now possesses the heart: that one same Love with which God loves Jesus, and ourselves, and all His children, and which overflows to all the world, is within us, and is, if we know it, and trust it, and give up to it, the power for us to live in too. The Spirit is the Life of the Love of God; the Spirit in us is the Love of God taking up abode within us.

Such is the relation between the Spirit and the Love of God; let us now consider the relation between our spirit and love. We must here again refer to what has been said of man's threefold nature, body, soul, and spirit, as constituted in creation and disorganized by the fall.' We saw how the soul, as the seat of self-consciousness, was to be subject to the spirit, the seat of the

God consciousness. And how sin was simply self assertion, the soul refusing the rule of the spirit to gratify itself in the lust of the body. The fruit of that sin was that self ascended the throne of the soul, to rule there instead of God in the spirit. Selfishness thus became the ruling power in man's life. The self that had refused God His right at once refused fellow-man his due, and the terrible story of sin in the world is simply the history of the origin, the growth, the power, the reign of self. And it is only when the original order is restored when the soul gives the spirit the precedence it claims, and self is denied to make way for God, that selfishness will be conquered, and love toward our brother flow from love toward God. In other words, as the renewed spirit becomes the abode of the Spirit of God and His love, and as the regenerate man yields himself to let the Spirit have sole sway, that love will again become our life and our joy. To every disciple the Master says here again, 'Let him deny self and follow me.' Many a one has sought in vain to follow Jesus in His life of love, and could not, because he neglected what was so indispensable denying self. Self following Jesus always fails, because it cannot love as He loves.

If we understand this, we are prepared to admit the claim that Jesus makes, and that the world makes too, that our proof of discipleship is to be Love. The change we profess to have undergone is so Divine, the deliverance from the power of self and sin so complete, the indwelling of the Spirit of God's love is so real and true, and the provision made to enable us thus to live so sufficient, that love, or the new commandment, as the fulfilling of the law, ought to be the natural overflow of the new life in every believer. That it is not so is simply another proof of how little believers understand their calling to walk after the Spirit, really to be spiritual men. All the complaints that are continually being made by ourselves, or those around us, of tempers unconquered and of selfishness prevailing, of harsh judgments and unkind

words, of the want of a Christlike meekness and patience and gentleness, of the little that is really being done by the majority of Christians in the way of self-sacrifice for the social and religious needs of the perishing around them—all this is simply the proof that it has not yet been understood that to be a Christian just means to have the Spirit of Christ; just means to have His Love, to have been made by Him a fountain of Love springing up and flowing out in streams of living water. We know not what the Spirit is meant to be in us, because we have not accepted Him for what the Master gave. We are more carnal than spiritual.

It was thus with the Corinthians. In them we see the remarkable phenomenon of a Church, 'in everything enriched in Christ, in all utterance, and all knowledge, coming behind in no gift,' abounding in everything in faith, and utterance, and knowledge,' and yet so sadly wanting in love. 'Whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal?' The sad spectacle teaches us how, under the first movings of the Holy Spirit, the natural powers of the soul, knowledge, faith, utterance, may be mightily affected, without self yet being entirely surrendered; and how thus many of the gifts of the Spirit may be seen, while the chief of all, Love, is sadly wanting. It teaches us how to be truly spiritual. It is not enough for the Spirit to take hold of these natural soul-endowments and rouse them to exercise in God's service. Something more is needed. He has entered the soul, that through it He may obtain a fixed and undivided sway in soul and spirit both, that with self deposed God may reign. And the token that self is deposed and that God does reign will be Love; the surrender and the power to count nothing Life but Love, a life in the love of the Spirit.

Not very different was the state of the Galatians, to whom the words, 'The fruit of the Spirit is Love,' were addressed. Though their error was not that of

the Corinthians, boasting of gifts and knowledge, but a seeking after and trusting in carnal observances and ordinances, the result was in both the same-the Spirit's full dominion was not accepted in the inner life of love, and so the flesh ruled in them, causing bitterness and envy and enmity. (Galatians 5:15, 16, 25, 26) And even so it is still in much of what bears the name of the Christian Church. On the one hand the trust in gifts and knowledge, in soundness of creed and earnestness of work, on the other the satisfaction in forms and services, leaves the flesh in full vigour, not crucified with Christ, and so the Spirit is not free to work out true holiness or a life in the power of Christ's love. Oh, do let us learn the lesson, and pray God very fervently to teach it to His people, that a Church or a Christian professing to have the Holy Spirit must prove it in the first place by the exhibition of a Christlike love. Both in its gentleness in bearing wrong, and in its life of self-sacrifice to overcome the wrong, and to save all who are under its power, the life of Christ must be repeated in His members. The Spirit is indeed the Love of God come down to us.'

As searching and solemn as this truth is in this aspect, so comforting and encouraging is it in another. The Spirit is the Love of God come down to us. Then we have that love within our reach; it is indeed dwelling within us. Since the day when, in believing, we were sealed with the Holy Ghost, the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts. 'The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts, through the Holy Ghost which was given unto us.' Though there may have been little to see of it in our lives, though we ourselves have hardly felt or known it, though the blessing has been unrecognised, there it was; with the Holy Spirit came down the Love of God into our hearts; the two could never be separated. And if we would now come to the experience of the blessing, we must just begin by a very simple faith in what the word says. The word is Spiritbreathed, the Divinely-prepared organ

through which the Spirit reveals what He is and does. As we take that word as Divine Truth, the Spirit will make it Truth in us. Let us believe that the Holy Spirit, possessor and bearer to us of all God's Love, has been within our heart with all that Love ever since we became God's children. Because the veil of the flesh has never been rent in us, the outstreaming and power of that Love has been but feeble, and hidden from our consciousness. Let us believe that He dwells within us, to reveal as the Power of our Life, the Love of God in our hearts.

In this faith, that the Love-shedding Spirit is within us, let us look up to the Father in earnest prayer, to plead for His mighty working in our inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts, that we may be rooted and grounded in love, that our whole life may have its strength and nourishment in love. As the answer comes, the Spirit will first reveal to us the Love of God, the Love of the Father to Christ as His Love to us, the Love of Christ to us, the same with which the Father loved Him. Through the same Spirit this love then rises and returns to its Source, as our love to God and Christ. And because that Spirit has revealed that same love to all God's children around us, our experience of it as coming from God, or returning up to God, is ever one with love to the brethren. Just as the water descending in rain, and flowing out as fountains or streams, and rising up to heaven again as vapour, is all one, so the Love of God in its threefold form; His Love to us, our love to Him, and the love to each other as brethren. The Love of God is within thee by the Holy Spirit: believe it, and rejoice in it; yield thyself to it as a Divine fire consuming the sacrifice and lifting it heavenward: exercise and practise it in intercourse with every one on earth. Then thou shalt understand and prove that the Spirit of God is the Love of God.

Blessed Lord Jesus! in holy reverence I bow before Thee as Love Incarnate.

The Father's love gave Thee. Thy coming was a mission of Love. Thy whole life was Love; Thy death its Divine seal. The one commandment Thou gavest Thy disciples was Love. Thy one prayer before the throne is that Thy disciples may be one, as Thou with the Father, and that His Love may be in them. The one chief trait of Thy likeness Thou longest to see in us is, that we love even as Thou lovest. The one irresistible proof to the world of Thy Divine mission will be the love of Thy disciples to each other. And the Spirit that comes from Thee to us is the very Spirit of Thy self—sacrificing love, teaching Thy saints to live and die for others, as Thou didst.

Holy Lord Jesus! look upon Thy Church, look upon our hearts. And wherever Thou seest that there is not love like Thine, oh, make haste and deliver Thy saints from all that is still selfish and unloving "Teach them to yield that self, which cannot love, to the accursed cross, to await the fate it deserves. Teach us to believe that we can love, because the Holy Spirit hath been given us. Teach us to begin to love and serve, to sacrifice self and live for others, that love in action may learn its power, may be increased and perfected. Oh, teach us to believe that because Thou livest in us, Thy love is in us too, and we can love as Thou dost. Lord Jesus, Thou Love of God! Thine own Spirit is within us; oh, let Him break through, and fill our whole life with love. Amen.

Chapter 30_(TOC)

The Unity of the Spirit

'That ye walk with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit.'—Ephesians 4:1-4.

'Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit... All these worketh one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as He will. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body; and were all made to drink of one Spirit.'—1 Corinthians 12:4, 11, 13.

We know how, in the first three chapters of the Ephesians, Paul had set forth the glory of Christ Jesus as the Head of the Church, and the glory of God's grace in the Church as the Body of Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, growing up into an habitation of God through the Spirit, and destined to be filled with all the fulness of God. Having thus lifted the believer to his true place in the heavenlies, with his life hid in Christ, he comes with him down to his life in the earthlies, and, in the second half of the Epistle, teaches how he is to walk worthy of his calling. And the very first lesson he has to give in regard to this life and walk on earth (Ephesians 4:1-4) rests on the foundation-truth that the Holy Spirit has united him not only to Christ in heaven, but to Christ's body on earth. The Spirit dwells not only in Christ in heaven and in the believer on earth, but very specially in Christ's body, with all its members; and the full, healthy action of the Spirit can only be found

where the right relation exists between the individual and the whole body, as far as he knows or comes into contact with it. His first care in his holy walk must be, therefore, to give diligence that the unity of the Spirit be maintained intact. Where this unity of the one Spirit and one body is fully acknowledged, the cardinal virtue of the Christian life will be lowliness and meekness (verse 2, 3), in which each would forget and give up self for others; amid all differences and shortcomings, all would forbear one another in love. So the new commandment would be kept, and the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Love sacrificing itself wholly for others, would have free scope to do His blessed work.

The need of such teaching the first Epistle to the Corinthians remarkably illustrates. In that Church there were abundant operations of the workings of the Holy Spirit. The gifts of the Spirit were strikingly manifested, but the graces of the Spirit were remarkably absent. They understood not how there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; how, amid all difference, one and the same Spirit divides to each severally as He will; how all had been baptized in one Spirit into one body, and all made to drink of one Spirit. They knew not the more excellent way, and that the chief of all the gifts of the Spirit is the Love that seeketh not its own, and only finds its life and its happiness in others.

To each believer who would fully yield himself to the leading of the Spirit, as well as to the Church as a whole, in its longings for the experience in power of all that the indwelling of the Spirit implies, the unity of the Spirit is a truth fraught with rich spiritual blessing. In previous writings I have more than once made use of the expression of Pastor Stockmaier: 'Have a deep reverence for the work of the Holy Spirit within thee.' That injunction needs as its complement a second one: Have a deep reverence for the work of the

Holy Spirit in thy brother. This is no easy thing: even Christians, in other respects advanced, often fail here. The cause is not difficult to discover. In our books on education we are taught that the faculty of Discrimination, the observing of differences, is one of the earliest to be developed in children. The power of Combination, or the observing of the harmony that exists amid apparent diversity, is a higher one, and comes later; as the power of Classification, in its highest action, it is only found in true genius. The lesson finds most striking exemplification in the Christian life and Church. It needs but little grace to know where we differ from other Christians or churches, to contend for our views, or to judge their errors in doctrine or conduct. But this indeed is grace, where, amid conduct that tries or grieves us, or teaching that appears to us unscriptural or hurtful, we always give the unity of the Spirit the first place, and have faith in the power of love to maintain the living union amid outward separation.

Keep the unity of the Spirit: such is God's command to every believer. It is the New Commandment, to love one another, in a new shape, tracing the love to the Spirit in which it has its life. If you would obey the command, note carefully that it is the unity of the Spirit. There is a unity of creed or custom, of church or choice, in which the bond is more of the flesh than of the Spirit. Would you keep the unity of the Spirit, remember the following things.

Seek to know that in thyself in which the unity is to find its power of attachment and of victory. There is much in thee that is of self and of the flesh, and that can take part in a unity that is of this earth, but that will greatly hinder the unity of the Spirit. Confess that it is in no power or love of thine own that thou canst love; all that is of thyself is selfish, and reaches not to the true unity of the Spirit. Be very humble in the thought that it is only what is of God in thee that can ever unite with what appears displeasing to thyself.

Be very joyful in the thought that there is indeed that in thee which can conquer self, and love even what seems unloving.

Study also to know and prize highly that in thy brother with which thou art to be united. As in thyself, so there is in him, but a little beginning, a hidden seed of the Divine life, surrounded by much that is yet carnal, and often is very trying and displeasing. It needs a heart very humble in the knowledge of how unworthy thou thyself art, and very loving in the readiness to excuse thy brother, for so did Jesus in the last night: 'the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak' 'to look persistently at what there is in the brother of the image and Spirit of the Father. Estimate him not by what he is in himself, but by what he is in Christ, and as thou feelest how the same life and Spirit, which thou owest to free grace, is in him too, the unity of the Spirit will triumph over the difference and dislike of the flesh. The Spirit in thee, acknowledging and meeting the Spirit in thy brother, will bind thee in the unity of a life that is from above.

Keep this unity of the Spirit in the active exercise of fellowship. The bond between the members of my body is most living and real, maintained by the circulation of the blood and the life it carries. 'In one Spirit we were all baptized into one body! 'There is one body and one Spirit! The inner union of life must find expression and be strengthened in the manifested communion of love. Cultivate intercourse not only with those who are of one way of thinking and worshipping with thyself, lest the unity be more in the flesh than the Spirit. Study in all thy thoughts and judgments of other believers to exercise the love that thinketh no evil. Never say an unkind word of a child of God, as little as of others. Love every believer, not for the sake of what in him is in sympathy with thee or pleasing to thee, but for the sake of the Spirit of the Father which there is in him. Give thyself expressly and of set purpose

to love and labour for God's children within thy reach, who through ignorance, or feebleness, or waywardness, know not that they have the Spirit, or are grieving Him. The work of the Spirit is to build up an habitation for God; yield thyself to the Spirit in thee to do the work. Recognise thy dependence upon the fellowship of the Spirit. in thy brother, and his dependence upon thee, and seek thy growth and his in the unity of love.

Take thy part in the united intercession that rises up to God for the unity of His Church. Take up and continue the intercession of the Great High Priest for all who believe, 'that they may be one.' The Church is one in the life of Christ and the love of the Spirit. It is, alas! not one in the manifested unity of the Spirit. Hence the need of the command: Keep the unity. Plead with God for the mighty workings of His Spirit in all lands and churches and circles of believers. When the tide is low, each little pool along the shore with its inhabitants is separated from the other by a rocky barrier. As the tide rises, the barriers are flooded over, and all meet in one great ocean. So it will be with the Church of Christ. As the Spirit of God comes, according to the promise, as floods upon the dry ground, each will know the power in himself and in others, and self disappear as the Spirit is known and honoured.

And how is this wondrous change to be brought about, and the time hastened that the prayer be fulfilled, 'that they all may be one, that the world may know that Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved me'? Let each of us begin with himself. Resolve even now, beloved child of God, that this shall be the one mark of your life, the proof of your sonship, the having and knowing the Indwelling Spirit. If you are to unite, not with what pleases you, or is in harmony with your way of thinking and acting, but with what the Spirit in you sees and seeks in others, you must have given yourself entirely up to His way of thinking and acting. And if you are to do this, He must have

the mastery of your whole being. You need to abide in the living and neverceasing consciousness that He dwelleth within you. You need to pray unceasingly that the Father may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man. It is in the faith of the Triune God, the Father giving the Spirit in the name of the Son, and the Spirit dwelling within you; it is in this faith brought into adoring exercise at the footstool of God's throne; it is in direct contact and fellowship with the Father and the Son, that the Spirit will take full possession, and pervade your entire being. The fuller His indwelling and the mightier His working is, the more truly spiritual your being becomes, the more will self sink away, and the Spirit of Christ use you in building up and binding together believers into an habitation of God, Christ's Spirit will be in you the holy anointing, the oil of consecration, to set you apart and fit you to be, as Christ was, a messenger of the Father's love. In the humility and gentleness of daily life, in the kindness and forbearance of love amid all the differences and difficulties in the Church, in the warm-hearted sympathy and self-sacrifice that goes out to find and help all who need help, the Spirit in you will prove that He belongs to all the members of the body as much as to you, and that through you His love reaches out to all around to teach and to bless.

Blessed Lord Jesus! in Thy last night on earth Thy one prayer for Thy disciples was, 'Holy Father, keep them, that they may be one.' Thy one desire was to see them a united flock, all gathered and kept together in the One Almighty Hand of Love. Lord Jesus! now Thou art on the Throne, we come to Thee with the same plea: Oh, keep us, that we may be one! pray for us, Thou Great High Priest, that we may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that the Father hath loved us, as He loved Thee.

Blessed Lord! we thank Thee for the tokens that Thou art wakening in Thy

Church the desire for the manifestation to the world of the unity of Thy people. Grant, we pray Thee, to this end the mighty workings of Thy Holy Spirit. May every believer know the Spirit that is in him, and that is in his brother, and in all lowliness and love keep the unity of the Spirit with those with whom he comes into contact. May all the leaders and guides of Thy Church be enlightened from above, that the unity of the Spirit may be more to them than all human bonds of union in creed or church order. May all who have put on the Lord Jesus above all things put on love, the bond of perfectness.

Lord Jesus! we do beseech Thee, draw Thy people in united prayer to the footstool of Thy Throne of Glory, whence Thou givest Thy Spirit to reveal Thy presence to each as present in all. Oh, fill us with Thy Spirit, and we shall be one I one Spirit and one Body. Amen.

Chapter 31^(TOC)

Filled with the Spirit

'Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another.'—Ephesians 5:18

THESE words are a command. They enjoin upon us, not what the state of apostles or ministers ought to be, but what should be the ordinary consistent experience of every true-hearted believer. It is the privilege every child of God may claim from his Father, to be filled with the Spirit. Nothing less will enable him to live the life he has been redeemed for, abiding in Christ, keeping His commandments, and bearing much fruit. And yet, how little this command has been counted among those which all ought to keep! How little it has been thought possible or reasonable that all should be expected to keep it!

One reason of this is undoubtedly that the words have been wrongly understood. Because with the day of Pentecost, and on more than one subsequent occasion, the being filled with the Spirit was accompanied with the manifest enthusiasm of a supernatural joy and power, such a state has been looked on as one of excitement and strain, quite inconsistent with the quiet course of ordinary life. The suddenness and the strength and the outward manifestation of the Divine impulse were so linked with the idea of being filled with the Spirit, that it was thought to be something for special occasions, a blessing only possible to a very few. Christians felt as if they

could not venture, as if they did not need, to fix their hopes so high; as if, were the blessing given to them, it would be impossible in their circumstances to maintain or to manifest it.

The message I have to bring today is that the command is indeed for every believer, and that, as wide as the precept, is the promise and the power too. May God give us grace, that our meditation on this His Word may waken in the heart of every reader, not only strong desire but the firm assurance that the privilege is meant for him, that the way is not too hard, that the blessing will in very deed yet become his own.

In a country like South Africa, where we often suffer from drought, we find two sorts of dams or reservoirs made for catching up and storing water. On some farms you have a fountain, but with a stream too weak to irrigate with. There a reservoir is made for collecting the water, and the filling of the reservoir is the result of the gentle, quiet inflow from the fountain day and night. In other cases, again, the farm has no fountain at all; the reservoir is built in the bed of a stream or in a hollow where, when rain falls, the water can be collected. In such a place, the filling of the reservoir, with a heavy fall of rain, is often the work of a very few hours, and is accompanied with a rush and violence not free from danger. The noiseless supply of the former farm is, at the same time, the surer, because the supply, though apparently feeble, is permanent; in tracts where the rainfall is uncertain, a reservoir may stand empty for months or years.

There is the same difference in the way in which the fulness of the Spirit comes. On the day of Pentecost, at times when new beginnings are made, in the outpouring of the Spirit of conversion in heathen lands, or of revival among Christian people, suddenly, mightily, manifestly, men are filled with the Holy Ghost. In the enthusiasm and the joy of the newly found salvation,

the power of the Spirit is undeniably present. And yet, for those who receive it thus, there are special dangers. The blessing is often too much dependent on the fellowship with others, or extends only to the upper and more easily reached currents of the soul's life: the sudden is often the superficial; the depths of the will and the inner life have not been reached. Other Christians there are who have never been partakers of any such marked experience, and in whom, nevertheless, the fulness of the Spirit is no less distinctly seen in the deep and intense devotion to Jesus, in a walk in the light of His countenance and the consciousness of His Holy presence, in the blamelessness of a life of simple trust and obedience, and in the humility of a self-sacrificing love to all around. They have their types in what Barnabas was: 'a son of consolation, a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost.'

And which of these is now the true way of being filled with the Spirit? The answer is easy. There are farms on which both the above-named reservoirs are to be found, auxiliary to each other. There are even reservoirs, where the situation is favourable, in which both the modes of filling are made use of. The regular, quiet, daily inflowing keeps them supplied in time of great drought; in time of rain they are ready to receive and store up large supplies. There are Christians who are not content but with special mighty visitations: the rushing mighty wind, floods outpoured, and the baptism of fire-these are their symbols. There are others to whom the fountain springing up from within, and quietly streaming forth, appears the true type of the Spirit's work. Happy they who can recognise God in both, and hold themselves always ready to be blessed in whichever way He comes.

And what are now the conditions of this fulness of the Spirit? God's word has one answer-faith. It is faith alone that sees and receives the Invisible, that sees and receives God Himself. The cleansing from sin and the loving

surrender to obedience, which were the conditions of the first reception of the Spirit, are the fruit of the faith that saw what sin was, and what the blood, and what the will and the love of God. Of these we do not speak here again. Our text is for believers who have been faithful in their seeking to obey, and yet have not what they long for. By faith they must specially see what there is that needs to be cast out. All filling needs emptying. I do not here speak of the cleansing out of sin, and the surrender to full obedience. This is always the first essential. But I speak of believers who in this think they have done what God demands, and yet fail of the blessing. The first condition of all filling is emptiness. What is a reservoir but a great hollow, a great emptiness prepared, waiting, thirsting, crying for the water to come? Any true abiding fulness Of the Spirit is preceded by emptying. 'I sought the blessing long and earnestly,' said one, 'and I wondered why it did not come. At last I found it was because there was no room in my heart to receive it.' In such emptying out there are various elements. A deep dissatisfaction with the religion we have hitherto had. A deep consciousness of how much there has been of the wisdom and the work of the flesh in it. A discovery, and confession, and giving up of all in life that had been kept in our own hands and management, in which self had hitherto reigned, of all in which we had not thought it necessary or possible that Jesus should directly be consulted and pleased. A deep conviction of impotence and utter helplessness to grasp or seize what is offered. A surrender, in poverty of spirit to wait on the Lord in His great mercy and power, 'according to the riches of His glory, to strengthen us mightily by His Spirit in the inner man.' A great longing, thirsting, waiting, crying, a praying without ceasing for the Father to fulfil His promise in us, and take full possession of us within. Such an emptying is on the way to the filling.

With this is needed the believing which accepts, which receives, which holds

the gift. It is through faith in Christ and in the Father that the Divine fulness will flow into us. Of the same Ephesians, to whom the command is given, 'Be filled with the Spirit,' Paul had said, 'In Christ, having believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.' The command refers to what they had already received: the fountain was within them; it had to be opened up, and way made for it; it would spring up and fill their being. And yet not as if this was in their own power: Jesus had said, 'He that believeth, keeps believing in me, rivers of living water shall flow out of him.' The fulness of the Spirit is so truly in Jesus, the receiving out of Him must so really be in the unbroken continuity of a real life-fellowship, the ceaseless inflow of the sap from Him the living Vine must so distinctly be met by the ceaseless reciprocity of a simple faith, that the up springing of the fountain within can only be in the dependence on Jesus above. It is by the faith of Jesus, whose baptism with the Spirit has as distinct a commencement as His cleansing with the blood, but is also maintained by, as continuous a renewal, that the inflow will grow ever stronger until it comes to the overflowing.

And yet the faith in Jesus, and the hourly and ever growing up springing of the Spirit, will not dispense with faith in the Father's special gift and the prayer for His special renewed fulfilment of His promise. For these same Ephesians, who had thus the Spirit within them as the earnest of their inheritance, Paul prays to the Father 'that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man.' The verbs both denote not a gradual work, but an act, something done at once. The expression, 'according to the riches of His glory,' indicates something which is to be a great exhibition of the Divine love and power, something very special and Divine. They had the Spirit indwelling. He prayed for them that the direct interposition of the Father might give them such mighty workings of the Spirit, such a fulness of the

Spirit, that the indwelling of Christ, and a life in the love that passeth knowledge, and a being filled with the fulness of God, might be their blessed personal experience. When the flood came of old, the windows of heaven above, and the fountains of the great deep beneath, were together opened. It is still so in the fulfilment of the promise of the Spirit: 'I will pour floods upon the dry ground.' The deeper and clearer the faith in the Indwelling Spirit, and the simpler the waiting on Him, the more abundant will be the renewed down-coming of the Spirit from the heart of the Father direct into the heart of His waiting child.

There is one more aspect in which it is essential to remember that this fulness comes to faith. God loves when He appears to come in lowly and unlikely appearance, to clothe Himself in the garment of humility which He wants His children to love and wear. 'The Kingdom of Heaven is like a seed:' only faith can know what glory there is in its littleness. Thus was the dwelling of the Son on earth; thus is the indwelling of the Spirit in the heart. He asks to be believed in, when nothing is seen or felt. Believe that the fountain that springs up and flows forth in living streams is within, even when all appears dry. Take time to retire into the inner chamber of the heart, and thence send up praise and offer worship to God in the assurance of the Holy Ghost within. Take time to be still and realise, and let the Spirit Himself fill thy spirit with this most spiritual and heavenly of all truths-that He dwells within thee. Not in the thoughts or feelings first, but in the life, deeper than where we can see and feel, is His temple, His hidden dwellingplace. When once faith knows that it hath what it has asked, it can afford to be patient, and can abound in thanksgiving even where the flesh would murmur. It can trust the Unseen Jesus and the Hidden Spirit. It can believe in that little and unlikely seed, the smallest of all the seeds. It can trust and give glory to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all it can think, and can mightily strengthen in

the inner man, just when all appears feeble and ready to faint. Believer! expect not the fulness of the Spirit in the way which thy human reasoning deviseth, but even as was the coming of the Son of God without form or comeliness, in a way that is folly to human wisdom. Expect the Divine Strength in great weakness; become a fool to receive the Divine wisdom which the Spirit teacheth; be willing to be nothing, because God chooseth the things that are not to bring to nought the things that are. So shalt thou learn not to glory in the flesh, but to glory in the Lord. And in the deep joy of a life of daily obedience and childlike simplicity, thou shalt know what it is to be filled with the Spirit.

O my God! Thy fulness of love and of glory is like a boundless ocean-infinite and inconceivable. I bless Thee that, in revealing Thy Son, it pleased Thee that all the fulness of the Godhead should dwell in Him bodily, that in Him we might see that fulness in human life and weakness. I bless Thee that His Church on earth is even now, in all its weakness, His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all; that in Him we are made full; that by the mighty working of Thy Spirit, and the indwelling of Thy Son, and the knowledge of Thy love, we may be filled to all the fulness of God.

Blessed Father! I thank Thee that the Holy Spirit is to us the bearer of the Fulness of Jesus, and that in being filled with the Spirit we are made full with that Fulness. I thank thee that there, have been men on earth since Pentecost, not a few, of whom Thou hast seen that they were full of the Holy Ghost. O my God! make me full. Let the Holy Spirit take and keep possession of my deepest, inmost life. Let Thy Spirit fill my spirit.

Let thence the fountain flow through all the soul's affections and powers. Let it flow over and flow out through my lips, speaking Thy praise and love. Let the very body, by the quickening and sanctifying energy of the Spirit, be Thy

temple, full of the Life Divine. Lord my God! I believe Thou hearest me.
Thou hast given it me—I accept it as mine.

Oh, grant that throughout Thy Church the Fulness of the Spirit may be sought
and found, may be known and proved. Lord Jesus our glorified King, oh, let
Thy Church be full of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

EPHESIANS

BY

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Preface

REPEATED perusal of the Books of Scripture, and especially of the Epistles, will enable the devout student to detect certain words, which keep recurring, like a note or chord struck repeatedly in a musical composition. One of the most interesting and instructive methods of studying Scripture is with this aim in view. In the present case, it has been applied to the EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS with the following result.

The Epistle to the Ephesians is pre-eminently the Epistle of the Inner Life. It is not astonishing, therefore, to find that its characteristic key-words are also the key-words of the Inner Life. And in proportion as we weave them into the texture of our life, we shall become possessed of the tenderness and strength, the depth of knowledge and height of communion, which have endeared this Epistle to all ages of the church.

It has not been possible, in these narrow limits, to attempt a full Exposition of these marvellous words, aglow with heaven's altar-flame. But sufficient has been said to show its rich lodes of ore, and their direction, and the method by which they may be carried into currency for daily living.

F. B. MEYER.

1—The Father^(TOC)

WE NEED BOTH GRACE AND PEACE (Ephesians 1:2)

Grace to help in our times of need; Peace to keep our heart and mind. The one as the blue vault of Heaven above us, with its smile of sun, and breath of air, and reviving rain; the other as the blue depths of the ocean, tranquil and calm. But neither of these blessed gifts can be ours till we have come to recognise God as our Father. Be doubtful about that, and you will not dare to exercise the child's privilege of claiming what you want from the Father's stores; and you will miss the unspeakable rest which breathes through the heart of the child, as it nestles to the father's side. Open your heart to the Spirit of Adoption that He may flutter, dove-like, into its depths; and, in the cry Abba, bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God, and if a child, then a participator in his Grace and Peace.

IT WAS THUS THAT JESUS LIVED (Ephesians 1:3)

There was no lack of either Grace or Peace in his human life, because He dwelt ever in the bosom of the Father. He spake no word, and wrought no deed of mercy, that was not derived from his Father. He refused to make one stone into bread, because so sure that his Father could not forget Him, but knew just what was needed for the body which He had provided for Him. The often upturned eye witnessed to the attitude of his spirit. There was never a film of separation or cloud of misunderstanding, for the Father never left Him alone for a single instant; not even when He cried, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me." How could He, when Jesus did always those things which pleased Him? "Even so, Father," was the whisper with which He met

all the incidents of his life, whether cloud or sun.

Let us learn to live thus towards the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. There must always be an impassable gulf between his relationship to the Father and ours. But, withal, there are points of contact. He waits to reveal to us the Father, according to his own words (Matthew 11:27). He longs to reproduce in us, by the Holy Ghost, his own spirit of Sonship, and to bring us to know his Father as our Father, his God as ours. There is no joy, which more satisfies his soul for its travail, than that his own should come so to know the name and character of his Father, and so to abide in it, as that the love with which the Father loved Him, may be in them as a warm and blessed experience. When this purpose is accomplished in us, our Marahs will be turned to Elims; and we shall be full of peace, since our Father has mixed our cups, appointed our paths, set our life-tasks, and whispers to our secret hearts that He is well pleased with us in Jesus.

OUR FATHER IS THE FATHER OF GLORY (Ephesians 1:17)

Do we enough consider the glory of our relationship? Are we not apt to become so familiar with the thought of God as not sufficiently to consider the majesty of His nature, or the wonderful advantages that must accrue to those who know Him as their Father? All that He was to Jesus, He is willing to be to us; and all that He has He is willing to place at the disposal of our faith. Think, O tried and straightened soul, that God loves thee and watches thee, as no father ever loved or watched the helpless babe given him from the dying hand of his young and passionately-loved wife. Remember, too, His wealth as the Father of Glory. All beings in all worlds, all worlds in all spheres, all spheres in all ages, wait his word! be still and trust! Men and things could have no power against thee, except it were given them from above; their power is controlled by the Father's care; there is a thus-far beyond which they

cannot go: and it is through them that the Father is bringing you, as one of his many sons, to glory. May He give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, and open the eyes of your heart that you may know Him!

ACCESS TO THE FATHER (Ephesians 2:18)

Prayer assumes a new complexion so soon as we properly appreciate God's Fatherliness. Granted that it must always be through Jesus, and by the Holy Spirit, yet, ultimately, it is access to the Father. The first thought of a little child in any need is Mother, Father. There is instant movement of eyes, and feet, and voice, towards the one dear source of help and comfort. And so, when we have learnt to know the Father, as revealed in Jesus, our heart will be constantly going out towards Him. The Father's heart has twelve gates, that one of them may be contiguous to every conceivable position in which his children may be placed. Of course there will be times when we shall deliberately bow our knees unto the Father; but there will be many more when we shall have access to Him in a swift-winged thought, a tear hastily brushed away, a yearning, an ejaculation, a loving, restful glance of mutual understanding. Strange that we make so little of these wonderful opportunities of access to the Father!

ALL THE FATHERHOODS OF EARTH DERIVE THEIR MEANING AND VALUE FROM THE GREAT FATHERHOOD (Ephesians 3:14-15)

As the Tabernacle, with its sashes, cords, and curtains, was an embodiment of things in the heavens; so the homes of men are intended to represent aspects and conceptions of that love, which can be set forth by no one phase of human affection, but combines in itself, mother, father, brother, sister, lover, loved. The tenderest, noblest home-life is, at the best, but "broken light"; and yet it is a type, an emblem, an embodiment of God's love to us, its prototype

and ideal. Were you the nursling of a blessed home, receding far away in the vista of the past? Transfer its memories to the present, and know that they live still as facts in your relationship to God. And you, who never knew a home-life that you care to recall, be sure that the tenderest that man ever knew is not to be compared with that in which you are living, if only you knew it.

THE ONE FATHERHOOD MAKES THE ONE BROTHERHOOD AND SISTERHOOD (Ephesians 4:5-6)

To have been born of the same parents constitutes a bond of union between those of the most diverse temperaments and tastes. The variety becomes a true unity, and gives a flavour of keen interest to the life of the household. Nothing in this world is more beautiful than the play of life in the home where the babe and the young student, the merry boy and the thoughtful, earnest maiden blend. This also is a pattern of things in the heavens. Because there is one God and Father of all who are in Christ, over them to cover their heads in the day of battle; through them, as the breath of the wind murmuring through the many pipes of nature's organ; and in them as the source of their life—they are all one in Him.

LET US THEN GIVE THANKS ALWAYS FOR ALL THINGS TO THE FATHER (Ephesians 5:20)

I have a beloved friend, who has made it the habit of her life to obey this injunction literally. When her husband's factory was in flames, when her children were pronounced to be seriously ill, and when other apparent disasters befel her, she went alone into her chamber, and knelt down to thank God for all, because she knew that He was a Father still; that He loved her too well to give her anything but the best; and that He must love her very

much to be willing to bless her at the cost of so much pain. We may not always feel like thanking God for all things; but let us always will and dare to do it. Let us not look at the providence, but at the Father behind it. Let us not examine the crate, but let us search within for the gift of love. Though at first sight we may be disappointed and sad, whatever the Father sends must be the very best. Dare to believe it, and you will come to find it so.

***AND THUS WE SHALL LEARN TO RECEIVE AND KNOW THE
FATHER'S PEACE (Ephesians 6:23)***

The very peace that fills his own glorious nature—the peace which, in the experience of human hearts, is so closely allied with love and faith, the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ, will settle down upon the troubled, restless heart, as the evening, with its cool air and majestic beauty, settles on the fevered landscape.

2—The Father's Wealth^(TOC)

THE Epistle to the Ephesians is full of the wealth of God's nature. It is set to that master-chord struck centuries before by a temple minstrel, "Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all those that call upon Thee." The apostle struggles with the inadequacy of human language in his attempt to convey some conception of what God is willing to expend upon the heirs of salvation.

We are all familiar with God's prodigality in Nature. Every common hedgerow with its wealth of vegetation; every lazy trout-stream; where the fish lie in the cool depths, and the flowers dip down their dainty cups; every square foot of the midnight sky, set thick with rare jewels—attest the unsearchable resources of his power. But these are for all the world to see. And as the man of wealth opens richer stores to those that share his love than he displays to the casual visitor, so God has prepared for those that love Him, things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived. There are riches of grace in the heart of God, of forgiveness, and pitifulness, and mercy, of which the foremost of the saints in the heavenly ranks, and the chief of sinners on earth—however heavily they have drawn on them—know comparatively nothing. We have no standard for computing infinity; and infinity is the orbit in which God lives and loves.

This is what the apostle means when he speaks of the riches of God's grace.

OUR TRESPASSES ARE FORGIVEN, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE (Ephesians 1:7)

"Trespass" is the term used by our Lord of the negligence, sins, and

ignorance's, which mark the lives even of those who can look up into God's face and say, Our Father. The conjunction and which links the prayer for the forgiveness of these with the petition for daily bread, suggests that we need to plead for the one as often as we ask for the other. And our Father instantly and freely forgives us according to the riches of His grace. He is only too ready to forgive. He yearns over the wayward and stubborn, who keep their faces averted from his. He sorrows for their sins; but sorrows most of all that they will not take the only position in which his tender, forgiving grace can come to them.

As the hungry sea frets down the line of cliff to find an aperture through which to pour itself, and seethes and sobs until it find room; so does the love of God wait impatiently outside our hearts till we open to it in confession and repentance. Then God forgives, not meagerly or stingingly, but royally, gracefully, abundantly. His forgiveness is worthy of Himself, proportioned to the wealth of his glorious being, and according to the riches of his grace. He does more than forgive; He "remembers no more." He does more than forget: He sets the joybells ringing, and cries, "Let us make merry." He does more than this: He insets the scars of our sins with jewels—where sin abounded his grace abounds much more—and all because of the Blood that has set free this wealth of mercy.

GOD INDWELLS US WITH THE RICHES OF HIS GLORY (Ephesians 1:18)

His inheritance in the saints is not what they have in God, but what God has in them. "The Lord is the portion of my soul" is one side of the truth; but "the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance" is the other, and is equally important. We settle on the nature of God as our estate, living on its abundant crop, and mining for its hidden treasures; and God comes into

possession of us, as a man might of an estate which had lain for long years exhausted and barren.

Ah, what gladness rings through the deserted acres when the tidings fly from hedge to hedge, and from field to field, as though the birds carried them, that one has come into possession who is well able to pour in tons of enriching soil; and to continue doing so for long years, if need be, until corn replaces weeds, fir-trees thorns, and myrtle-trees briars. It may be that some soul, reading these lines, is sick at heart, and cries, "I am that barren thorn-cursed soil." Nevertheless, lift up thy head and rejoice! for the Lord has come in to dwell, never to depart; and He will do great things. He will create all that He commands. He will put in what He calls out. He will pour into thee wealth on wealth; as though a millionaire should put ten fortunes into an unproductive mine. He will make thee know the riches of the glory of his indwelling in the heart; and He will not forsake thee until the revenues of thy life begin to repay Him in love and adoration. But of this we shall have more to say ere this treatise has reached its close, (see [Chapter 14](#))

WE ARE MONUMENTS OF GOD'S WEALTH (Ephesians 2:4-8)

That He could love us when we were dead like Lazarus, in trespasses and sins; that He has linked us in the bonds of indissoluble union with his Son; that He had made it possible for us to share his Resurrection, his Triumph, and his Throne; that we, the poor children of earth and sin, should be admitted into the inner circle of Deity—this will be, to all eternity, the mightiest proof of the exceeding riches of his grace.

The word "exceeding" might be rendered "beyond throwing distance." Fling your thoughts forward as far as you can, and there will always be an immense beyond; throw them as high as you may, till they out soar the stars, and there

will always be an above; let them sink for ever, and there will always be a beneath—in the exceeding riches of God's grace.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork"; but the glory of the position and character of the saints, contrasted with the degradation from which they were raised, will be accounted in coming ages a more extraordinary exemplification of the riches of Divine grace than the splendour of the heavens is of the wealth of his skill.

GOD'S WEALTH IS FOR ALL (Ephesians 3:8)

The special note of this Epistle, and of that to the Colossians, is Paul's desire to express his conviction of the universality of God's bounty. It is not for Jews only, but for Gentiles. His commission was to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. The mine is inexhaustible; in it are the precious things of heaven above, and of the depth beneath, of the fruits of the sun, of the fulness of the earth, of the abundance of the seas, and of the hidden treasures of the sand: and it is all for all who believe.

OUR STRENGTH MAY BE IN PROPORTION TO OUR FATHER'S WEALTH (Ephesians 3:16)

Who is there of us all that does not long for strength, whether to suffer or to do? The sapling says, "Let me be strong, to bear the harvest of the rich autumn fruit." The child says, "Let me be strong, that I may help mother carry her burdens, and do her work." The invalid says, "Let me be strong, that I may tread again the heather, and roam the woods, and carry light into darkened homes." "Let me be strong," the Christian cries, "that I may not faint nor be weary; that I may launch the Master's boat; or that I may gather in the golden sheaves." Who would not wish to be strong for his sake, who

speaks as a Lamb from the Throne?

The strength of God awaits us, through his Spirit pouring into the inward man. Reader, I implore you, in moments of weakness and discouragement, to appropriate that strength in that measure; but remember that it is only perfected in weakness, and consummated in them that have no might.

3—In Him^(TOC)

THE sponge, as it expands in its native seas, is in the clear warm water; and the water is in it. Thus there is a double In-ness between the Lord and the soul that loves Him. He is in the believer, as the sap is in the vine, and the spirit of energetic life in the body. But, in a very deep and blessed sense, the believer is in Christ. Of each of these sides of this marvellous truth there are many illustrations in this Epistle, so specially devoted to the study of the preposition in. We are dealing now with those passages only that assure us, as believers, of being in the Beloved.

WE ARE IN CHRIST, IN THE FATHER'S THOUGHT (Ephesians 1:3, 1:4, 1:9, 1:11)

The disclosures made to the apostle Paul of God's hidden things, hidden from ages and generations, are perfectly overwhelming. He tells us that our connection with Christ, in the thought of God, is not a matter of yesterday, nor of the day before, but of eternity.

The foundations of the earth were not laid in a day. But, ere the aeons of creation began to revolve in their vast cycles, before the earth or the world was formed, God chose us in Christ. He chose Christ, and all those who, down the far vista of time, should answer to the attraction of his Spirit and become one with Him in a living faith.

How startling it would be if, according to a suggestion made by another, the geologist, mining deeply into the earth, should suddenly find, amid the footprints of animals long extinct, the initials of his own name cut in the primeval rock! How came those initials there? They must have been graven

by the finger of the Creator! Ah, what a rush of awe would fill the breast! But a greater marvel than this awaits us here. For we learn that our names were engraven on the breastplate of the great High Priest before the amethyst or jacinth was wrought in the laboratory of Nature, among her oldest and rarest treasures.

Is there a doubt that we shall be ultimately holy and without blemish, when the stream that is to bear us thither started in eternal ages from the Father's heart? Let us at least get comfort from the thought that He who foreordained works all things after the counsel of his will.

BUT THE ETERNAL PURPOSE DOES NOT EXHAUST THE MARVELS OF THIS REVELATION (Ephesians 2:10)

"We were created in Christ Jesus." It is as if the conception of the Man Christ Jesus, the Head, with the redeemed as his body, were an eternal thought in the mind of God. It is as if they were created in the thought and purpose of God, long ages ere they took shape in mortal form. It is as if the new creation were already accomplished in the intention of Him who calls things that are not as though they were. In his book all Christ's members were written when as yet there was none of them.

WE WERE IN CHRIST ALSO AMID THE MARVELS OF HIS DEATH (Ephesians 2:6)

In Him we paid the debt in Him we lay in the grave, and broke from death, and sped on the heavenly track home to the bosom of God. In Him we sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High, and sit there still.

TIME IS THE ELABORATION IN ACTUAL FACT OF THE THOUGHTS AND PURPOSES OF GOD (Ephesians 3:9-11)

Slowly the divine conception has taken shape in the formation and education of the church; just as of old it took shape in the making of the world. And it is a great help to us to catch a glimpse of the direction of the Divine movement. The explorer who, from a commanding headland, is able to descry the set or lie of a country, confers a lasting benefit on all who follow him; and it is one of the inestimable benefits of revelation that it removes the obscurity which drapes our mortal lives so closely, and makes all men see the dispensation of the mystery.

IN CHRIST THE BLESSINGS OF REDEMPTION ARE STORED.
(Ephesians 1:3, 1:6, 1:7, 1:13)

All conceivable spiritual blessings needed by us for living a holy and useful life are stored in Jesus. We must therefore be in Him by a living faith to partake of them; as a child must be in the home, to participate in the provisions of the father's care. It is only they who know the meaning of the life hidden with Christ in God, and who abide in Christ, to whom God gives the key of his granary, and says, "Go in, and take what you will."

How can mortal man exhaust the wonderful gifts of our Father's grace? But they are all freely bestowed in the Beloved, in whom we also stand accepted. Who can estimate the meaning of redemption, which begins with the forgiveness of our trespasses, and ends in the rapture of the sapphire throne? But it is to be found only in Him and through his blood. What do we not owe to the sealing of the Spirit, by which our softened hearts get the impress of the Saviour's beloved face, and are kept safe until He comes to claim us? But the sealing is only possible to those who are in Him. All things are ours, but only when we are in Christ.

WE ARE IN CHRIST AS THE SPHERE OF DAILY LIFE AND

EXPERIENCE (Ephesians 1:1, 3:17)

It is the intention of God that we who believe should ever live in Christ Jesus, as the very element and atmosphere of our life; never travelling beyond the golden limits established by his Love, or Life, or Light: in Him as the root in the soil, or as the foundation in the rock. Always in his love, because never permitting in speech or act what is inconsistent with it. Always in his life, because ordering our activities by the laws of his being. Always in his light, because saturated by his bright purity, and illumined by his gentle wisdom. Oh to be always one of the faithful in Christ Jesus, and to be able to say with the Psalmist, "I have no good beyond Thee"! (Psalm 16:2).

THEN IT WOULD BE EASY AT ANY MOMENT TO HAVE ACCESS WITH BOLDNESS INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD. (Ephesians 2:18, 4:21, 5:20, 6:10)

Confident that what we asked was according to his mind to give. Then we should sit at his feet, and be taught in Him, even as the truth is in Jesus, learning the secret of putting away the old man and putting on the new. Then it would not be so hard always to give thanks for all things in his name. An artesian well, fed from Heaven's deep joy, would then make perennial gladness in our hearts. Then we should never lack strength, our slender supply being fed from his Almightyness, on which we could draw perpetually. Spirit of God—Divine Anointing which we have received of Him—teach us concerning all things, and especially how to abide in Christ (1 John 2:27).

IN CHRIST AS THE CENTRE OF UNITY (Ephesians 1:10)

It is the evident purpose of God to finish as He began. He began by choosing us in Christ. He will end by summing up all things in Him, both the things in

the heavens and the things upon the earth. All the landscape focuses in the eye; all creation finds its apex in man; and all the story of the ages shall be consummated in our Lord, the Divine Man.

THAT UNIFICATION IS NOW IN PROGRESS. (Ephesians 2:13, 2:15, 2:21; 3:6)

The sheep are gathering up the mountainsides to stand together as one flock, beneath the care of the one Shepherd. Those who were far off are being made nigh. Those who were at enmity are being reconciled, because the middle wall has been broken down. Those who were strangers and foreigners are recognising each other as fellow-members, fellow-partakers of the promise, and fellow-heirs. Amid the many churches, the one Church, which Jesus purchased with his blood, is being formed. From the ruins of many structures the one Temple is being built.

4—Created In Him^(TOC)

CREATE is one of the great words of the Bible. It is its peculiar possession. Other religious books have their cosmogonies, and attempt to explain how all things came to be. The process of production is traced as far back as possible; but they dare not speak this wonderful word. It is left to the Bible to inscribe the name of God on all things visible and invisible, and append to it the word create. "In the beginning God." "In the beginning God created."

IT IS, HOWEVER, NOT WITH THE MATERIAL BUT WITH THE SPIRITUAL CREATION THAT WE HAVE TO DEAL (Ephesians 2:10)

When we first knelt at the Cross of the Lord Jesus, we were made new creatures. "If any man is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old things are passed away, behold they are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

But there was an older creation than that. If we read aright the apostle's thought, he takes us back, beyond the limits of our mortal life, to the eternal past, and reveals to us the workings of God's thought before even the earth or the world was made. We were created in Christ Jesus, in the purpose and intention of God, before an angel sped through the newly-created ether, or a seraph raised his first sonnet of adoration. Our creation at the Cross was the realization in our experience of an eternal thought of God.

Let us ponder deeply the Divine purpose in thus creating us in Christ. It was unto good works. The apostle was eager to put these in their legitimate and proper place. There was apparently a tendency among the converts whom he addressed to associate their salvation with their works, or, at the least, to get credit for their faith. He therefore reaffirms our entire indebtedness to grace,

and says that even our faith is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; "not of works, that no man should glory." We are not to work up to the new life, but from it. The good works we do before regeneration are not even reckoned to our account. The apostle calls them dead works. They are the automatic convulsive movements of a corpse. The only works that please God, and are accepted through the mediation of Christ, are those which emanate from that new life which He imparts in regeneration by the Holy Ghost. We are created unto good works. "He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works." Cain's gift of fruit may be both fair and fragrant; but it is rejected because it is an attempt to purchase God's favour, instead of being the outcome and flower of his faith. It is very blessed to know that our good works have been prepared for us to walk in. Walking implies a path, whether through the cornfield, or over the stretch of moorland, or beside the sea; and we may think, therefore, of our life-course as a path which starts from the Cross, where we entered on our real life, and ends, as Christian's did, at the gate of the Golden City.

All the paths begin and end at the same points; but how different their character! and how different the character of the same path at different places! Sometimes a bit of greensward, where at every step the foot sinks deep in flowers; then a few miles of rough walking over jagged flints, which cut the feet; then a climb up the Hill Difficulty, in the face of the pitiless blast; and finally a descent into the Valley of the Shadow. Now we shiver amid the snows of the mountains; and again we are enervated by the scorching heat of the plains. At times we come into the midst of congenial companions, and enjoy their blessed fellowship in the Gospel; at other times we are carried into loneliness and isolation, and the work itself tries us to the uttermost.

But when once we have learned to believe that the pathway of our good works was before prepared for us by God; that He created for us the prepared path, endowing us with all the qualities it might demand; and that He prepared the path for us whom He created, in order to afford scope for our special powers, we come to rest in the perfect adaptation between God's creations and his preparations. Fear not: go forward! He gives what He commands, and then commands what He wills.

WHAT RELIEF IS HERE!—We have no longer to choose our pathway; or to cut it through the thick undergrowth of the forest; or to scheme it through the trackless waste. It is all prepared, and we have but to walk in it, with God, one step at a time. Put your hand into God's, look up into his face, saying, "Lead me, Father, in the prepared way;" "Teach me thy way;" "Make me to know the way wherein I should walk."

WHAT CONFIDENCE IS HERE!—The only serious matter is to discover the prepared path. We may do this by abiding fellowship with the Spirit. Remember how when Paul essayed to turn aside from the prepared path of his life, and to go first to the left to Ephesus and then to the right into Bithynia, in each case the Spirit of Jesus suffered him not. For the most part the trend of daily circumstance will indicate the prepared path; but whenever we come to a standstill, puzzled to know which path to take of three or four that converge at a given point, let us stand still and consider the matter, asking God to speak to us through our judgment, and to bar every path but the right.

When once the decision is made, let us never look back. Let us never dare to suppose that God could fail them that trust Him, or permit them to make a mistake. If difficulties arise, they do not prove us to be wrong; and probably they are less by this path than they would have been by any other. Go

forward!—the way has been prepared. The mountains are a way; the rivers have fords; the lions are chained; the very waves shall yield a path; the desert shall be a highway to the land which flows with milk and honey.

WHAT SCOPE FOR LOVE IS HERE!—Envy and jealousy need have no place. God has prepared the path for each of us, according to His infinite wisdom and love. One way is adapted for one, and another for another. Peter is girded and carried whither he would not go; whilst John tarries until the Master comes for him in the peaceful decease of old age. "What is that to thee? follow thou Me." Each, then, can take a loving interest in the life-plan of another, sure that nothing can interfere with the evolution of his own, save his indolence or sin. Prepare us, O God, for all that Thou hast prepared for us. We will not be ambitious of great things, but to walk, day by day, humbly with Thee, and so fulfil our course. Thus shall we become thy workmanship.

THE REVELATION OF THE PURPOSE OF THE CREATOR (Ephesians 2:9)

The purposes of God have been hidden deep in unfathomable mines. From the first He knew that man would fall from his high estate; but He ordained that his purpose should still be executed of making man his son, his heir, the sharer of his glorious life. Yes, and further: He resolved that his dealings with redeemed men should bring out into clearer relief his own manifold wisdom.

So he created all things through Jesus Christ. The entire fabric of creation was based upon the Person and workmanship of our blessed Lord. He was the medium and organ through whom the creative purpose moved; just as He became that through which the redemptive purpose passed into execution.

For long ages the purposes of God were obscured. Men could not tell their drift, until the Spirit of Pentecost made them understand something of the

marvellous design. The mystery, which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, was revealed to the holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit. And now all babes who are Spirit-taught, know things which the great and good of previous ages failed to discern.

And when the completed Church stands before the assembled universe, the principalities and powers of the heavenlies will understand the manifold wisdom of God. To use the figure suggested by the Greek, then will the Church, like a prism, break into a spray of sevenfold colour, the single ray of the Divine wisdom. What a moment that will be, when God vindicates His dealings with individuals and the race!

5—The Heavenly Places^(TOC)

IN HIS conversation with Nicodemus, while the night-breeze played over the sleeping city, coming and going as it would, our Lord spoke of Himself as being already in heaven. His bodily presence was evidently in the chamber of that house in Jerusalem, robed in the simple peasant garb which his mother had spun for Him; but in spirit, He was much more really in heaven than there. So, according to the teaching of the apostle Paul, the Church, consisting of such as believe in Christ, is really less a denizen of earth than of those heavenly places which have been entered by her Lord. They are not heaven, but heaven-like.

ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS ARE STORED THERE. (Ephesians 1:3)

Human speech could never tell the infinite variety of blessings which are required for the life of the saints. Grace to endure what God sends or permits, as well as to do what He commands. So destitute are we of natural qualities and powers that we need to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. Everything that Christ asks of us must be received from Him before it can be yielded to Him. It is therefore a source of deep heart's-ease to learn that God has stored in Jesus every spiritual blessing. As all colour lies hidden in sunlight, waiting to be drawn off by the flowers, so does help for every time of need reside in Christ.

The tense denotes a definite past act. The apostle does not say that God does or will bless; but that He has blessed. He carries us back into the eternal ages, in which we were created in Christ, so far as the eternal purpose is concerned, and assures us that then every conceivable blessing which we should need in

our earthly pilgrimage was stored up in Christ Jesus our Lord. We have not therefore to plead for these things, as though God were unwilling to give; but humbly and reverently to lay claim to them by faith. All things are thine, O Christian soul; by which thou mayest become partaker of the Divine nature, and escape the corruption that is in the world by lust.

But since these spiritual blessings are in the heavenly places, we must live upon that plane. This is where so many mistake. They know that all the land is theirs; but they do not put their foot down upon it. We cannot inherit the treasures of the everlasting hills, whilst we are satisfied with the heavy air of the valleys. Our daily life must be spent in fellowship with the living Jesus; our thought and heart must not only ascend to Him, but continually dwell with Him; we must experimentally sit in the heavenly places ere we can claim or possess the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

CHRIST SITS THERE. (Ephesians 1:20)

It is not wonderful to find the second Person in the Holy Trinity seated far above all rule, and authority, and power, and every name that is named. But it is wonderful to find him there as Man, wearing our nature, identified for ever with our race. The Mediator between God and man is Himself man (1 Timothy 2:5). The vision of Ezekiel is a literal fact, upon the likeness of the throne, which is like a sapphire stone, there is the appearance of a Man, robed in fire.

We need not, therefore, anxiously inquire what "the heavenly places" are, or where. It is enough to know that they are where Jesus is, and that they are open to us, just in proportion as we live in communion with the Lord. Abide in Him, and you are by necessity an inhabitant of these heavenly places, wherever your earthly lot may be cast. They are the hallowed meeting

ground, where the saints of earth come to the spirits of the just made perfect. It was of them that Bunyan spake, when, describing the land of Beulah, he said, "Here they were within sight of the city they were going to; also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof, for in this land the Shining Ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of heaven." Only we need not locate them as always just preceding the river.

WE SIT THERE IN THE PURPOSE OF GOD. (Ephesians 2:6)

What Canaan was to the Jewish people, that the heavenly places are to us. When the twelve stones were taken from the bed of the Jordan and placed on the hither side, the whole people were deemed to have entered upon the possession of their inheritance; though as a matter of fact, two-and-a-half tribes had elected to settle on the farther side, and their wives and children would probably never cross the Jordan at all. So when Jesus passed to the throne we passed with Him.

Was He raised? So were we. Was He made to sit at the Father's right hand? That is our place. Was every foe made his footstool? Then not one of them can overcome us so long as we are in abiding fellowship with our risen Lord. If the "together" of the inner life is maintained, the "together" of victory is secure. Oh to tread in the power of the Holy Ghost on these high places!

MULTITUDES OF HOLY BEINGS ARE THERE. (Ephesians 3:10)

We know little of them. The vague term "principalities and powers in the heavenly places" veils as much as it reveals. But we shall know them one day, and be known by them. And we shall make them know the manifold wisdom and the eternal purpose of God. Here is the ministry that shall engage our redeemed energies in the land of the unsetting sun, where the flight of

time is not marked, because time shall be no more. Heaven is not set out with couches and beds of ease, for our luxurious enjoyment. His servants see his face and serve. And their aim is ever to pass on to others some deeper knowledge of the being and attributes of God.

HOSTS OF WICKED SPIRITS ARE THERE. (Ephesians 6:12)

Never in this life can we escape from temptation. The holier we get, the more subtle and vehement will be the assaults of the dark legions, though they may wear white over their dusky armour. The nearer we get to our Prince in thought and fellowship, the more shall we be put to it. It is from under the opened heaven that we are driven to the wilderness to be tempted. There is no such fighting as in the heavenly places themselves. Here we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against world-rulers of this darkness.

But the issue cannot be doubtful. In the thought of God, and in the Ascension of our blessed Lord, they are beneath our feet and conquered; and He waits to realize his purpose in the weakest of the saints. "Having done all, stand"; God will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.

6—Love: On God's Side^(TOC)

GOD'S LOVE FLOWS TO US THROUGH THE CHANNEL OF THE BELOVED. (Ephesians 1:6)

We must not think that the Father loves us because our Saviour interposed between his wrath and us, and made Him love us. To think this is heresy indeed. We cannot separate between the Father and the Son, for God is one. As is the Son, so is the Father. It was the one purpose of Jesus to dissipate these untrue and terrible conceptions of the Father, and to make man see that his own life and love were a true reflection of the depths of his Father's heart.

The love of God was not caused by the death of Jesus, but caused it. God did not love us because Jesus died: but Jesus died because God loved us so much as to give Him up to the death for us all. God loved us from eternity; but before his love could have its blessed way with us, it was needful for Him to satisfy the claims of a broken law, to vindicate his righteousness, to be just: and therefore He gave Himself to us in Jesus, who manifested God in the flesh, put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and entered into the Holiest of all to become a merciful and faithful High Priest.

Though God's love was not caused by the Beloved, it comes to us in Him. The ocean fullness pours itself through the channel of the man Christ Jesus. It has therefore all the abundance and wealth of the Divine, and all the adaptation and tenderness of the human. The Only-begotten and Beloved Son is the reservoir in which the great love of God is stored. In proportion therefore as we abide in Him, we shall realize its blessed fulness.

GOD'S LOVE WAS NOT DAUNTED BY OUR SIN. (Ephesians 2:5)

In the day that we were born, we were cast out in the open field, dead in trespasses and sins, and to the abhorring of our person. But He loved us even then. His great love was not diverted by the spectacle of our loathsomeness. He knew what we were, and what we should be, and how much pain and sorrow we should cost Him; but He loved us still. He foresaw our failures and backslidings, and lapses into the darkness of shadow; but none of these things availed to quench his love. So rich was He in mercy that He could afford to be prodigal of his wealth.

It is a great comfort to know that God loved us when there was nothing to attract his love; because He will not be surprised by anything He discovers in us, and He will not turn from us at those manifestations of evil which sometimes make us lose heart. He knew the worst from the first. He did not love us because we were fair, but to make us so. We cannot understand it; but since He began He will not fail nor be discouraged until He has finished his work.

GOD'S LOVE IN CHRIST PASSES KNOWLEDGE. (Ephesians 3:19)

We may apprehend it, but never comprehend it. We may enjoy it without realizing its infinite extent; as a child may shelter in a cave from the incoming tide without being able to compute the dizzy cliffs that rise sheer above it towards heaven. A single gentian sent us by a friend gives some idea of the glory of the Alpine flowers; but how little can we imagine the effect of the myriads that make blue patches on the mountain slopes! Every time we manifest love to others we learn a little more of the love of Christ; but though we give eternity to our inquiries, his love will always pass our knowledge. The arrows will ever be beyond us. There will always be as much horizon before as behind us. And when we have been gazing on the face of Jesus for

millenniums, its beauty will be as fresh and fascinating and fathomless as when we first saw it from the gate of Paradise.

ITS BREADTH—It is broad as the race of man. It: is like the fabled tent which, when opened in a courtyard, filled it; but when unfurled in the tented field, covered an army. It claims all souls. Its Length—It is timeless and changeless. It never began, it shall never stop. It cannot be tired out by our exactions or demands upon its patience.

ITS HEIGHT—Stand by the cradle, or lower yet, at the cross, and you behold it, like Jacob's ladder, reaching to the throne of God. A spiral staircase by which the guiltiest may climb from the dark dungeon into the palace.

ITS DEPTH—There is no sin so profound, no despondency so low, no misery so abject, but the love of Christ is deeper. Its everlasting arms are always underneath. "If I make my bed in Hades, behold Thou art there."

As we consider these things, we can almost hear the voice of God speaking to us as to Abraham: "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, and eastward and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee." When we separate ourselves from our Lots, this land is ours. It is an undiscovered continent on which we are settled; but every year we may push our fences outward to enclose more of its infinite extent.

GOD'S LOVE WAS EXPRESSED IN A SUPREME SACRIFICE.

(Ephesians 5:2)

Wherever there is true love, there must be giving, and giving to the point of sacrifice. Love is not satisfied with giving trinkets; it must give at the cost of

sacrifice: it must give blood, life, all. And it was so with the love of God. "He so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son." "Christ also loved and gave Himself up, an offering and a sacrifice to God."

And this was very grateful to the Father. It was as the odour of a sweet smell, reminding us of the sweet savour offerings of the ancient Levitical code (Leviticus 3:5, etc). To us the anguish of the cross seems one awful scene of horror; but it pleased the Lord to bruise Him.

In love, so measureless, so reckless of cost, for those who were naturally so unworthy of it, there was a spectacle which filled heaven with fragrance and God's heart with joy.

GOD'S LOVE IS AS THE LOVE OF THE BRIDEGROOM TO THE BRIDE. (Ephesians 5:25)

In Eden man needed one to answer to him (Genesis 2:18, R.V). There was none such among the animal creation, and his nature yearned for reciprocity of love. Then God made woman. Either sex without the other is incomplete. Together the twain are one. This is a great mystery; for our Maker is our husband, the Lord of hosts is his name. God needs us, as we need Him. The Son of God yearns for the redeemed who shall answer to Him, and give Him love for his love. Augustine said that God made us for Himself, and that we could never rest till we found rest in Him. We may reverently add that Christ Himself cannot rest satisfied until He has cleansed and sanctified the Church, and presented it to Himself in a union which eternity shall only strengthen. Ah, marvel of marvels, He wants my love! He seeks it of me, and offers his love in exchange!

GOD'S LOVE PASSES INTO HUMAN HEARTS. (Ephesians 6:23)

"Love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." The two are one. The stream issues from the common throne of God and of the Lamb; thence it flows downwards to redeemed hearts, and through them to a dying world.

Love and faith are inseparable. We trust before we love. We love, and find it easy to trust. Faith is the open channel down which God's love passes into our nature; and love in its passage hollows out the channel down which it came. Like burnished mirrors that face each other, they flash the sunbeams to and fro. And thus as we live near God we are filled with love, not ours, but his—his love reflected back on Himself—his love flung forward to men.

7—Love: On Our Side^(TOC)

IN ITS deepest sense love is the perquisite of Christianity. There is something like it, in germ, at least, outside the school of Christ; just as wild flowers on the hedgerows recall the rich splendour of the hothouse. But in all such there are flaws, traces of selfishness and passion, which prevent their realizing God's fair ideal. Love, as the Bible uses the word, is the fruit of the Spirit. It may be grafted on the natural stock, but it is essentially his creation.

To feel towards enemies what others feel towards friends; to descend as rain and sunbeams on the unjust as well as the just; to minister to those who are unprepossessing and repellent as others minister to the attractive and winsome; to be always the same, not subject to moods or fancies or whims; to suffer long; to take no account of evil; to rejoice with the truth; to bear, believe, hope, and endure all things, never to fail—this is love, and such love is the achievement of the Holy Spirit alone.

GOD'S ELECTION POINTS TO HIS LOVE. (Ephesians 1:4)

Men have sometimes thought and spoken of God's choice in such a way as to foster an exclusive and proud conceit; as though God's election were a high wall enclosing a favoured few, so that their flower and fruit might be kept from every defiling, pilfering hand. To think this is to misconceive the entire purpose of God.

We do not deny that God has enclosed us from the great moorland waste, or that He has expended on us special pains and care; but He has not gone to this expenditure for us or for Himself so much as that the perfume of our love might be wafted afar; that we might fertilize desert places, as bees carry the

pollen in their down; and that thirsty souls might be refreshed by our rare fruitage, wrought for us by the Holy Spirit. We were chosen to love, to love God above all; and to love man, made in his image.

If a man boast of his election in an arrogant and exclusive spirit, he shows that he has missed its point and aim, and is certainly outside its scope. The eternal purpose of God reveals itself, not merely in the new-found rapture, but in the new-found love. The love of God proves the election of God. If you do not love, you may prate of election as you will, but you have neither part nor lot in it. But if we are in Christ, by a living faith, we have been chosen to love, and love must be Divinely possible nay—easy. God's choice always carries with it an equivalent of power to be and do that for which He has chosen us.

LOVE AND FAITH ARE INSEPARABLE. (Ephesians 1:15)

When there is faith in the Lord Jesus, there will always be love toward all the saints; because faith is the faculty of taking God into the heart. Faith is God-receptiveness. Faith appropriates the nature of God; as the expanded lung does the mountain air, or as the child does the parent's gift. Faith, like a narrow channel, conveys God's ocean fullness into the lagoons of human needs. Wherever, therefore, faith links the believer to the Lord Jesus, his nature, which is love, pure as mountain dew, begins to flow in to the waiting, expectant heart; and then to flow out thence towards all the saints.

The love of God knows no favourite sect. It singles out no special school; but, as the sun and wind of nature, breathes and shines alike on all. It is cosmopolitan and universal. You cannot imprison it within the walls of any one Christian community. It laughs at your restrictions, and with equal grace raises up witnesses and standard-bearers from all parts of the Church. Thus as

we become more like God, our love overleaps the barrier of our little pond and passes out to greet all saints, and to expend itself on the great world of men.

***IT IS ONLY AS WE LOVE THAT WE APPREHEND CHRIST'S LOVE.
(Ephesians 3:17)***

The R.V. is very emphatic. The apostle asked that his Ephesian converts might be strengthened with power through the Spirit in the inner man; that Christ might dwell in their hearts through faith; to the end that, being rooted and grounded in love, they might be strong to apprehend, with all saints, the love of Christ. How remarkable this stress on strength! Why is it so needful in connection with love?

Is it that we should be strong to obey the least promptings of the gracious Master, Christ? Is it that we need strength to suppress ourselves in favour of the new passion which has entered our hearts, until it shall have become all-powerful? Is it that the bud of Divine love in its most perfect form can only be grafted on a strong stock? Any of these suppositions may meet the case. But we must be strengthened ere we can receive the fullness of the indwelling Lord; and one chief result of his presence within is to make us strong to apprehend his love.

ROOTED IN LOVE—The rootlets that moor a tree to the soil and gather nutriment for its growth are very slender and delicate. So the actions to which the Spirit prompts us on behalf of others may seem very trivial; but each one gives us greater constancy and strength, and makes us quicker to understand Christ's love to us.

GROUNDING IN LOVE—A grounded solid foundation is all-important for the building which is to tower into the air, affording distant glimpses of the

landscape; and those who desire to behold, as in a panorama, the love of God, must be content to perform many deeds of unselfish goodness in the depths of obscurity and self-forgetfulness. What we do for others for Christ's sake, and what we feel towards them, is a priceless education, preparing us to know his love. Perform loving deeds; will to do them, even if you at first shrink from them; do them from a sense of duty, if not of delight; presently you will come to delight in them, and you will say to yourself as you go to and fro, "This is something like Jesus feels towards me." Love apprehends love.

BUT LOVE NEVER LIVES ALONE—summons all saints to its aid. No one saint or school of devout thinkers can compass all God's love. He who has ascended Snowdon from Llanberis must take counsel with those who left Beddgelert and Capel Curig in the early morning, that each may detail the glories he has seen; and so together they apprehend the majestic beauty of the entire mountain, as no one could of himself.

***LOVE SHOULD BE THE ATMOSPHERE OF OUR CHURCH
RELATION SHIPS. (Ephesians 4:2, Ephesians 4:15, Ephesians 4:16)***

The unity or oneness of the Spirit is a Divine reality, which we have not to make, but to keep. Try as we may, we cannot make it a whit more perfect than it is. No bases of agreement, no conferences or conventions, can do this. But we are called upon to give all diligence, that the Divine ideal may be realized, so far as possible, among the saints. There will never be uniformity; but there may be unity. The pipes in the great organ will never be all of the same length or tone; but they may be supplied by the same breath, and conspire to utter the same melody.

It must be our endeavour to guard against everything that would jar with the inner unity of the Spirit. Jealousy, bickering, harsh words, uncharitable

misrepresentations—these must be under the ban of the loving soul. We must forbear one another in love.

It is often necessary to proclaim the truth, to defend it in the pulpit or the drawing-room, to enforce it to individuals to whom it may be extremely unpalatable. But love must prompt the speech and control the utterance. It is not enough to speak the truth; we must speak it in love. When a minister told the sainted McCheyne that on the previous Sunday he had preached the awful doom of the ungodly, he replied, "I hope you preached tenderly." Oh for more of the spirit of the apostle, who spoke with weeping of those that were enemies of the cross of Christ!..... It is when there is perfect love between us and our fellow-believers, that the grace of God can pass easily from one to another, through every busy point of supply, and through the working in due measure of every part. If we are out of fellowship with any, to that extent we cannot impart to them, or they to us. But when love pervades the body as the genial spring-warmth the woodlands, there is an up-building and out-flowering in love. Each gives to another, and gets as he gives.

HUMAN LOVE SHOULD BE MODELED ON THE DIVINE. (Ephesians 5:2, Ephesians 5:25, Ephesians 5:28, Ephesians 5:33)

It is no ordinary love to which we are summoned. Whether in the home circle, where man and wife live in each other's presence, or in the daily walk and conversation of life, we are to imitate God, as his dear children. It is not enough to love as our fellows do. We must love as Christ did. Our one ideal must be, "as Christ loved."

To love foes to make them friends; to love in the teeth of obloquy and shame; to love to the point of self-giving and blood; to love the foul till the pollution gives place to purity and beauty—such is the love of Christ. Let us sit at his

feet and learn of Him, until we reflect Him, and are changed into the same image from glory to glory. Oh to love like Thee, blessed Master! and that we may, fill us with thy love until our cup run over!

OUR LOVE MUST BE SINCERE. (Ephesians 6:24)

There are plenty who say, "Lord, Lord," but who do not the things that He says. It is easy to be profuse in our expressions, and readily swayed by gusts of emotion, and yet to be heartless and loveless. But such do not love with sincerity. They resemble the shallow soil, where the seed soon fructifies, and as soon dies, because there is only rock beneath. For such the apostle had no words of benediction.

But wherever there is sincere love to Jesus, however weak and ignorant the disciple, there is a member of the mystical body, the Church, and one on whom our benediction may alight. You may not speak our Shibboleth or accept our creed; but if you sincerely love Jesus, we bid you welcome and wish you grace.

Spirit of God, baptize us in God's holy fire, that we may begin to glow with the sacred flame, and be burning ones indeed!

8—The Holy Spirit^(TOC)

THE Holy Spirit is the special promise of the Father, made to those who are one with his Son by a living faith. "Wait," said our Lord, "for the promise of the Father, which ye heard from Me"; and immediately on his exaltation to the right hand of God He received the promise of the Holy Spirit, which He poured forth upon the suppliant Church. That promise is still open to as many as the Lord our God shall call (Acts 2:39). If, then, thou art among the called, thou mayest claim that most precious gift for thyself, and know by blessed experience "the Holy Spirit of Promise."

HE IS THE SEAL AND EARNEST OF OUR INHERITANCE. (Ephesians 1:14)

Upon the yielded soul the blessed Spirit descends, bearing with Him the likeness of Jesus, which He imprints and fixes, as a stamp will leave its die upon the softened wax. Only melted gold is minted; only moistened clay is moulded; only softened wax receives the die; only broken and contrite hearts can take and keep the impress of heaven. If that is thy condition, wait beneath the pressure of the Holy Spirit; He shall leave the image of Jesus upon thee, and change thee into his likeness, from glory to glory.

This gracious operation is God's seal of authentication. It is as though by an act that could not be mistaken, He said: This soul is mine—redeemed and appropriated for my own possession; and it shall be mine in the day when I make up my jewels. We place our seal on that which is unmistakably our own, and deem to be of value; so the likeness of Jesus wrought on us by the Spirit is the sign that God counts us his, and reckons us to be his peculiar

treasure.

It is also the earnest of our inheritance. The love, and joy, and peace, which are wrought in us by the Blessed Spirit, are fragrant with the scent and beautiful with the hues of Paradise. They are the grapes of Eshcol; the peaches and pomegranates of the Homeland; the first notes of angelic symphonies; the first flowers of the everlasting spring; the herald rays of a morning that shall rise to the meridian glory of a nightless day. We know that there is a land of pure delight, because we have tasted its fruits; just as Columbus knew that he was drawing near land, when the land-birds alighted on his ship, and the drift of the waves told of human habitations.

Nay, more: we know, as we experience the gracious work of the Holy Spirit, the quality, though not the infinite measure, of the blessedness of heaven. The Spirit's work is not only the pledge; it is the specimen of our inheritance.

HE IS THE INSPIRER OF PRAYER. (Ephesians 2:18)

However diverse the saints are, in national birth or religious customs, they become one in the exercise of true prayer. Because as suppliants they pass into the presence of the Father through the One Mediator; and because their prayers emanate from the same Holy Paraclete.

There are two Advocates or Paracletes: one is on the throne—Jesus Christ the righteous; the second is in our hearts—the Holy Spirit (1 John 2:1; Romans 8:26). And because He pervades all holy hearts, as the wind the variety of organ-pipes, He makes them one. Men as wide apart as Jew and Gentile have access by one Spirit unto the Father. They are therefore no more strangers, but fellows.

"If two of you agree on earth," said our Lord. The Greek word is symphonise.

A symphony is a consonance or harmony of sounds in which there is perfect agreement. Not necessarily the same notes if different keys, but different notes in the same key. Struck by a master hand, they make delightful music. So when souls are touched by the Holy Spirit, though in many respects they differ, yet they may accord in the same prayer. Peter and Cornelius, Saul of Tarsus and Ananias, though far apart and totally diverse in temperament, respond to each other in perfect harmony. And such accord indicates the purpose of God.

HE INDWELLS THE CHURCH. (Ephesians 2:21-22)

Other passages clearly teach that He indwells the individual believer. He does this, that each several Christian community, fitly framed together, may grow into a holy temple in the Lord (see R.V). The High and Holy One, who inhabits Eternity, makes his home with humble and contrite hearts. He tenants thee and me, if only we could realize it. But, in addition to this, when a company of believers is gathered in the name of Jesus, there is a habitation of God. "There am I in the midst of them."

This gives each company of disciples the mysterious power to bind and loose. Their acts receive Divine sanction, and achieve eternal results, because they are determined beneath the prompting of the Holy Spirit, and therefore in the presence of the living Saviour. The Spirit conveys the will of God to the saints, and bears back their prayers and decisions to God. Thus the Church keeps in step with Heaven, and utters, though sometimes unconsciously, the purposes of God.

HE IS THE SPIRIT OF REVELATION. (Ephesians 3:5)

There are deep things of God, mysteries, hidden things, of which the apostle

Paul often speaks.

The eyes of the natural man cannot discern, nor his ear detect, nor his heart conceive them. Deeper than the azure depths above us, or the fathomless lakes beneath, they defy the wise and prudent of this world. But they are revealed to babes—not in the land of light and glory, but here and now, through the grace of the Holy Spirit. "God hath revealed them unto us by the Spirit."

This is what Jesus promised, that when He, the Spirit of Truth, was come, He would lead us into all the truth, and take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto us. Let us be apt pupils of so transcendent a Teacher. Be willing to do, and you shall know.

HE IS THE SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL STRENGTH. (Ephesians 3:16)

There is no limit to the spiritual power we may receive and exercise. It is said of the Gadites that came to David, whilst he was in the hold, that the least was equal to a hundred, and the greatest to a thousand (1 Chronicles 12:14). And this might be typically true of each of us. We might, like Micah, be "full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might" (Micah 3:8).

There is one preliminary condition, however, which we must fulfil. We must be weak enough—willing to abjure the use of those sources of success on which others boast themselves; content that the thorn in the flesh, or the test of the stream, or the wrestle at the Jabbok-ford, should reveal our utter helplessness, that the power of Christ should rest upon us. When we are weak, we shall be strong. When we are worms, God will make us new sharp threshing instruments. When we are among things that are not, God will use us to bring to nought things that are.

HE IS THE SECRET AND SOURCE OF UNITY. (Ephesians 4:4)

There is one body, the mystical body of Christ; and as the human body, in all its different organs and members, is one living unit by reason of the spirit of life that pervades it, so the Church, with its manifold diversities of organization and belief, is one, because animated by the one Holy Spirit.

Many earnest and holy men refuse outward fellowship with those who do not belong to their communion; but they are still one with them, since the Holy Spirit is in them all. And they will recognise this on the shore of Eternity.

WE MUST WATCH CAREFULLY OUR OWN ATTITUDE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT. (Ephesians 4:30, Ephesians 5:18)

He is not merely an influence; He is a person, and may easily be grieved. The Dove of God is very tender and gentle; and if there are thorns in the nest, He cannot remain. The things that grieve Him are instantly recognised by the holy soul by an immediate veiling of the inner light. They are enumerated here as bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, railing, with all kinds of malice. There is no secret of the inner life more necessary than to retain the inner presence of an ungrieved Spirit.

But let us also seek to be filled by Him. We have drunk of Him, as Jesus has placed the pitcher to our lips; but we should never rest till He has become in us a spring of water, leading up to eternal life. The Holy Spirit is in every believer; but He cannot be said to fill each. There is all the difference possible between a few drops at the bottom of a bucket and a brimming well; between a few stray flowers scattered sparsely through the glade, and the myriads that make it blue with hyacinths or yellow with primroses.

To be filled with the Spirit was the blessing of Pentecost; but it awaits us all.

Indeed, we are here bidden to be Spirit-filled. It is a positive command. We have no option than to obey it. Mentioned in the same paragraph with the love of husband to wife, and the obedience of child to the parent, it is as obligatory as either. Let no reader of these lines rest without seeking and receiving by faith this blessed gift, which God is able to make abound towards us. Receive it without emotion by faith: reckon it is yours: and act as if you felt it.

HE IS EQUALLY NEEDFUL IN SERVICE AND PRAYER. (Ephesians 6:17-18)

In conflict with Satan, whether in our own experience or in the attempt to rescue souls from his accursed thrall, there is no weapon so useful as the Spirit's sword, which is the Word of God. Our blessed Lord parried the devil's attacks by "It is written"; and we shall not improve on his method. The armour of the enemy is impenetrable to all blades save that which has been forged in the celestial fires of the Holy Spirit.

And if you would acquire the habit of intercessory and earnest prayer, so as to be able to watch thereunto, and to persevere, pouring out supplications and entreaties for all saints, you can only do so "in the Spirit." He alone can teach this holy art, or give this eager temper of soul, or perpetuate its practice. Let us earnestly seek it at his hand; for there is nothing that so refines or ennobles, purifies or strengthens the spirit, as this constant breathing out of prayer and breathing in of the fulness of God.

9—Filled^(TOC)

IT IS said of Abraham that he died in a good old age, an old man, and full. It is a beautiful conception; as though all his nature had reached its complete satisfaction, and he could desire and receive nothing more. The Psalmist, too, sings of fulfilled desire; and Mary tells how God filled her hungry soul with good things. Can we speak with equal certainty of being "filled"?

CHRIST IS THE SOURCE OF FULNESS TO HIS CHURCH AND TO INDIVIDUAL SOULS. (Ephesians 1:23)

We have sought to be filled with earthly goods and human love. Away upon the mountains we have essayed to hew out for ourselves cisterns, to be fed by rushing brooks and falling showers, and be always brimming; but we have been greatly disappointed. In each case a flaw or crack has made our work abortive, and we have seen the water sinking inch after inch till only drops have remained to quench the fever-flush of our souls. Not more successful have been the attempts of those who have sought rest in systems of theology, in rites and ceremonies, or in the rush of unceasing engagements. In none of these can the nature of man find its completion or fruition.

All the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Him, that of that fulness we might all receive, and grace on grace; like repeated waves that follow one another up to the furthest reaches of the tide. In Him we have been made full in the purpose and intention of God (Colossians 2:9); and in Him we may be made full by the daily reception of his grace, through the operation of the Holy Spirit.

It is as if God stored the whole fulness of his nature in Jesus, that it might be

readily accessible by us. The river of God, which is full of water, flows over the low threshold of his humanity, that it may be within the reach of the weakest and smallest in his kingdom. We might be afraid of the Great Spirit; but what little child, what timid woman, ever shrank from the gentle Lamb of God?

There is not one, who is in Jesus by a living faith, that may not reckon on being filled by Him. As the life-blood flows from the cistern-heart into each member and part of the body, so do the tides of life and love that emanate from the heart of Jesus pulse against the doors of all believing hearts. He fills all.

And He fills all in all. The heart, with its keen power of enjoyment or sorrow. The mind, with its marvellous ability of tracking the footsteps of the Creator. The sense of humour and the sense of reverence. The hours of recreation and the hours of meditation. The days of work and the days of worship. All in all.

He cannot do otherwise, without robbing or impoverishing Himself. For, as each part of the plant is needed to fill up the measure of its ideal, and as each member is required to fulfil the complete conception of a man; so each one of the members of Christ's mystical body, that Church, is essential to the manifestation of his fulness. He needs thee and me, or there will be some portion of his fulness which will never be able to manifest itself. But as sure as we present ourselves to Him, there will be an infilling of our nature with Himself, as the chill morning air, at dawn, becomes suddenly radiant with sunbeams.

CHRIST'S FULNESS IS MEASURELESS. (Ephesians 3:19)

There is no limit to the infinite nature of our Lord. The fulness of Deity is resident in Him. Only God the Father knows Him, and no other being, saint

or seraph, beside. An angel with drooping wing might be imagined as reaching the furthest limit of space and be holding the last of the stars; but it is impossible to conceive of any limit whatsoever to the love, or power, or patience of Jesus. The ocean is shoreless. The height unsearchable.

The depth bottomless. Such is Jesus that there is no common standard by which to compare Him with the greatest and noblest and eldest created spirit in the universe of God. You might compare such a one with the aphid on a leaf, for they are alike finite; but you cannot compare the finite and the infinite.

All that fulness is for us. We are settlers on the continent of Christ's infinite nature, and we are at liberty to go on putting back the walls of our enclosure, so as to take in an ever-growing share of our inheritance. But we need never fear that we shall touch its furthest limit. When we have spent a million years exploring and appropriating, we shall know as little of its real contents as the Pilgrim Fathers knew of the America which has reared itself on the foundations they laid. Though our capacities to receive out of Christ's fulness were increased a thousandfold, all their need would be as regularly and constantly met as at this present hour; because the nature of God awaits to feed them, and we may count on being filled up to the measure of the fulness of God.

That measure will always be beyond us. We may therefore rest in perfect satisfaction that we cannot exhaust it; and yet we may ever strive in our poor measure to attain more nearly towards it. The Mediterranean is ever losing volume by evaporation; and yet is always full, because it can draw by the Straits of Gibraltar on the Atlantic. And its tidelessness may well become the emblem of the peace and restfulness of that soul which has learnt the secret of taking into itself the blessedness of Jesus.

THIS POWER TO FILL WAS WON BY CHRIST IN HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION. (Ephesians 4:10)

He did not ascend till He had first descended. Always death before resurrection; stooping before rising; the garden and the cross before the Ascension Mount.

But as surely as these come first, the others follow. He who condescended to the fashion of a man, and thence to death, even the death of the cross, must ascend by the very laws of that spiritual world which He obeyed. He could not be holden by death. "Wherefore God highly exalted Him." "Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain."

And being by the right hand of God exalted, He received of the Father the promised plenitude of the Spirit. It had been his before, as the second Person in the Holy Trinity; but it became his now as the Representative and High Priest of his people. It was entrusted to Him as their Trustee and Surety. As we receive the fulness of forgiveness from his death, so we may receive the fulness of the Spirit from his life.

There is no soul so low in its need, but He can touch it, because He has descended into the depths of Hades; and now from the zenith throne of his ascended glory He can reach the furthest and remotest points of spiritual need: as the sun can cover a wider area when it sits regnant in the sky at noon, than when pillowing its chin upon the western wave.

OUR GROWTH IN THE BODY IS TO BE WORTHY OF THE HEAD. (Ephesians 4:13)

In a caricature you will sometimes see a large head on a very diminutive and dwarfed body; but there will be no disparity between the Head and the Body

when the Divine workmanship is complete. We are diminutive and dwarfed just now; but as we abide in Him we shall grow and expand until each member of the mystical Body shall fill out to its complete proportion, and the ideal man shall stand forth before the gaze of the universe, in the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

But this can only be when each joint shall supply to the whole its appropriate nutriment, and when we all give ourselves unweariedly to perfect one another in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God.

THIS FULNESS MUST BE RECEIVED. (Ephesians 5:18)

The fulness is in Jesus' but we must take it. It is not enough even to pray; we must reverently and humbly appropriate its stores. "Give me this water," must be the cry of each, "that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

There are three methods indicated here by which the filling process may be hastened:

1. Give yourself to holy song; if not with the lip, then in the heart, and with the music of a loving, trustful spirit, and the rhythm of a life attuned to the will of God.
2. Give thanks always for all things. Some of God's best gifts come in the roughest cases. When you see your Father's handwriting in the direction, kneel down and thank Him for the contents before you unpack them. All must be good that comes from Him.
3. Give submission and subjection to one another, except in matters that touch conscience and the demands of God.

But, above all, learn the secret of an appropriating faith, that goes to God with its need, and dip its empty pitcher down into the fulness of Jesus, and takes up at any moment of the day the supply of its thirst; not trying to feel any joy or exhilaration or emotion, but daring to believe where it cannot discern, and to act on its sure reckoning that it does receive that which it asks of God. Too often God's ships came laden to our wharves, but we are not there to discharge them. Too often his couriers bring love letters, but we are asleep and they pass our doors. Too often his showers pass over the hills, but we do not catch their blessed fulness to fertilize and enrich our fields.

10—Power_(TOC)

MAN longs for Power. The young man will give all he has for love; the older man counts no sacrifice too great for power. He who wields power is the idol of his fellows, even though, like the first Napoleon, he has won it at the cost of the suffering of myriads. We are not wrong in longing for spiritual power, if only we desire it for the glory of our Master and the blessing of man. It is even our duty to covet this great gift, and to take all means to procure it, that we may be strong and able to do exploits.

Let us never forget that the power of the spiritual realm is never to be had except in submission to the laws of its operation. All around us in our world-home great forces are throbbing, prepared to do our bidding, to carry our messages or draw our carriages; but we must obey them ere we can use them. Once learn the laws of their operation, and yield to them exact obedience, and there is nothing they will not do, toiling like another Hercules in notable deeds. And similarly we must learn, by prayer and watching, the laws of the operation of the power of God; that we may adapt our lives and methods to benefit by each throb and pulse of it which may be within the reach of man.

We must remember also that spiritual power is not a separate entity, which we may possess independently of the Holy Spirit. The power of the spiritual world is the indwelling and inspiration of the Holy Spirit Himself. We cannot have it apart from Him. We diminish it when He is grieved or quenched. We are most evidently the subjects and vehicles of it, when He resides in his gracious fulness in yielded and loving hearts. We covet the gift, let us then make welcome the Giver. Let us no longer speak of it, but of Him.

THE POWER OF GOD IN THE ASCENSION LIFE. (Ephesians 1:19)

We are bidden to follow our Master in his upward track, and to sit with Him, in daily happy experience, where He is already seated at the right hand of God. But this is as impossible to our unaided energy, as for the swallow to follow the majestic flight of the golden eagle, soaring sunward. So strong is the gravitation that holds us to earth, so dissipating our cares, so fickle our resolution, that nought but the Divine power and grace can lift us to the level of the Divine life.

But God waits to realize in us all that He has prepared for us; and the third item in the apostle's prayer for his converts is that they might know "the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe."

It is power. It is his power. It is great power: nothing less would suffice. It is exceeding great power, beyond the furthest cast of thought (such is the literal rendering of the word, employed here). It is equivalent to "the energy of the strength of his might, which He energized in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at his own right hand in the heavenlies."

A marvellous lift was there! From the grave of mortality to the throne of the eternal God, who only has immortality; from the darkness of the tomb to the insufferable light; from this small world to the centre and metropolis of the universe. Open the compasses of your faith to measure this measureless abyss; and then marvel at the power which bore your Lord across it, and know that that same power is towards you, if you believe, waiting to do as much for you in your daily experience if you will but let it have its blessed way.

It is a matter of constant complaint with Christian people that they fall so far below their aspirations and hopes. They sigh at the foot of cliffs they cannot

scale. The fault is with themselves. As we step into the lifts which are attached to so many factories and offices, and expect them to bear us upward, never doubting for a moment that they will do it if only we keep in the line of their ascent; so, if we would keep in abiding fellowship with the Holy Spirit—i.e., if we would not wilfully step out of the range of his blessed help—we should find ourselves mounting with wings as eagles, and going from strength to strength.

THE POWER OF GOD IN THE COMMUNICATION OF SPIRITUAL GIFT. (Ephesians 3:7)

The apostle took a very lowly view of himself. He was but a minister, a deacon, a servant; like the Master, who, when none of his disciples essayed to wash the feet of the rest, put an end to the hesitation as to who should do it, by doing it Himself. Only the greatest can stoop to these menial offices without loss of position or self-respect.

But the position that the great apostle occupied was distinctly, in his judgment, the gift of the grace of God. And he never ceased magnifying the exceeding abundance of the grace which had not only saved him, but had given him an office in the church.

The grace of God which calls us into his blessed service is connected with the energy of his power; so that whatever the work may be to which we are called, there is ever sufficient power waiting within our reach for doing it. The grace of God permits us to be his fellow-workers in the salvation of men; and the power of God moves parallel with the line of our activities, to do that which would baffle our unaided efforts. Whatever you are called to do by the grace of God, you may be enabled to do by the power of God; and you will acquire the marvellous faculty of making men see the meaning of mysteries

long veiled from their view.

THE POWER OF GOD IN PRAYER. (Ephesians 3:20)

In this marvellous doxology the apostle seems to have come to the limits of human speech, though not of thought or conception. Here the two seem to be on the point of parting company. The speech remains below, while the thought goes forth on its glorious way.

He had a wonderful glimpse of what God would do in answer to prayer. For notice—the power of God without is always commensurate with his power that works within. It is the same Greek word in each case. He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above our prayer or thought, according to the power that worketh in us. As I write these words, I am passing up the great Hardanger Fiord; before me rise the mighty mountains, sheer from the edge of the still green water to the snows which cool the air; the steep slopes, seamed with water-courses and covered with firs; the rock, standing forth in its naked grandeur or covered with patches of fresh green grass. But lofty and overwhelming as the mountains are, it is probable that the depth below us is equal to the height above us. So the power of God that waits to answer prayer in yonder heights, is equivalent to the power of God the Holy Ghost, who makes intercession within us with groanings that cannot be uttered.

Conceive of all that the saints have asked. Think what John Knox asked for Scotland; Luther for Germany; Brainerd and Schwartz for the heathen. Compute the agony of supplication that has been made by parents for their children; by lovers for their beloved; by patriots for their fatherland. But the God who taught them to pray was able to do exceeding abundantly above all.

Conceive of all that the saints have thought. Imagine the unspoken prayers of the saints. Things that could not be uttered because speech failed; thoughts

that have flashed to and fro between the Father and his children, like love glances between those who can read each other's heart through the eyes. But God who inspired them, was able to do exceeding abundantly above all.

ABOVE ALL—He is not scanty in his gifts, eking out their measure by stretching them, just coming up to the brink of our emptiness, just topping the Himalayas of our sin. Where sin abounds his grace much more abounds. He not only feeds our hunger, but gives us twelve baskets full of fragments over and above.

ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL—We think of the profusion of spring flowers with which He carpets the glades; of the star-dust, collected in wreaths of light on the midnight sky; of the wealth of his creative fancy in every corner of the world around us. Ah, how prolific his thought, how rich his imagination, how fertile his power! Such is our Father in nature. Think, then, O child of his, what He will not be to thee, whom He loves as He loves his Son! Ask great things of Him for his work and his world; and believe that He will far exceed thy furthest reach of desire. Thy least word will stir and bring down a blessing, mighty as an avalanche, but as soft as summer rain.

EXCEEDING ABUNDANTLY—We will stay here. The words cease to mean more than we have already learned. Our faculties are too immature and limited to understand their depth of meaning. Only let us yield our hearts more to the power that waits to strive and yearn within them, that the depth within may cry to the depth above.

THE POWER OF GOD EQUIPPING US FOR CONFLICT. (Ephesians 6:10)

We are seated with Christ above the power of the enemy, but we are still assailed by it in our daily experience. We wrestle not against flesh and blood,

but against principalities and powers. The darkness of the world, and especially of heathen lands, is the veil beneath which malignant and mighty spirits set themselves against the Lord, and against his Christ. What are we, that we may hope to prevail, either in our own temptations, or in our efforts to dislodge them from human wills, unless we have learnt to be empowered in the Lord, and in the strength of his might?

By his own conflicts, and notably by the mighty act of his Ascension, our Lord Jesus has become, in his human and representative capacity, the storehouse of spiritual force, which has proved itself more than a match for all the power and craft of Satan. He holds in Himself a plenitude of spiritual power, which is destined finally to issue in the binding of Satan and the destruction of his realm. That power is not yet exerted to its full measure. But it is nevertheless in Him, and in Him for us. We may be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man (Ephesians 3:16). We may become strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; and able to do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us.

11—The Church^(TOC)

No congregation, or set of congregations, can realize the sublime conception of the Church that rises before our vision in Ephesians. It is as if the apostle had been able to anticipate the glorious spectacle which John beheld in apocalyptic vision. Though he had founded more churches in the great cities of the Empire than any man of the apostolic band, yet none of these alone, nor all of them together, could realize his fair ideal of that one mystical body, the Church, the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

This Epistle is pre-eminently the Epistle of the Church; and the view held by men of the conception of it here presented, will largely indicate their mental and spiritual attitude towards their fellow Christians. There is no test like this. We must enter into God's thought when we speak about the Church; not as she now is, in broken bits, like a number of squares of painted glass lying in heaps at the foot of what is to be a window of marvellous beauty; but as she is to be when the mystery of God is finished, and she is presented to his Son, worthy to "answer to" Him, according to the ancient word of the Creator, when seeking a bride for Adam (Genesis 2:18).

THE CHURCH IS A BODY OF WHICH CHRIST IS HEAD. (Ephesians 1:22)

We repeat such words without emotion now; but there was a time when they could not be uttered save at the cost of much that men hold dear. It is as if we were passing over a battle-field, once raked with shell and soaked with gore; or were handling a banner torn and ragged, around which the conflicting foemen fought for half a day. Let us not forget the brave hearts that were

harried to death amid the heather and gorse of Scotland, rather than confess that any but Christ might assume this august title.

The Church, as a whole, must take its commands for suffering or warfare from no other lips than Christ's. Whatever course may be dictated by expediency, policy, or human leadership, she dare not move until Christ gives the signal. But if He bids her advance, protest, or suffer, she has no option but to obey. Though every voice that can reach her may be raised in expostulation and warning, she dare heed none but his.

This position of our Lord is as much for each member of the Church as for the whole Body. Because as in the natural body each several muscle, nerve, and vein, as well as the more prominent members, have direct double communication with the head, from which they derive their unity, direction, and energy; so in the spiritual Body of which Christ is head, there is not one single redeemed spirit that is not connected directly with its Lord. It would not be in the Church at all if that relationship had not first been formed. We are related to one another, only because we are related to Him. We are first members of Christ, then members of each other in Him. First Christ, then the Church.

Each member is united to the head by the afferent nerves that carry impressions from the surface of the body to the head; and there is nothing which happens to any one of us which is not instantly communicated to our Saviour. In all our affliction He is afflicted; He bears our griefs and carries our sorrows; He is touched with the feeling of our infirmity. The glory with which He is surrounded does not act like an insulating barrier to intercept the thrill of pain or joy that passes instantly from the weakest and meanest of his members to Himself.

Each member is united to the head by the efferent nerves, that carry volitions from the imperial court of the brain to the extremities of the body, withdrawing the foot from the thorn, or compelling the hand to plunge into the flame. Thus should we receive the impulses of our life from Jesus Christ; not acting on self-prompted energy, or following our own plans, thinking our own thoughts, or doing our own works, but ever subordinated to his will.

In (Ephesians 5:23) the headship of Christ to his Church is compared to that between husband and wife; and we are reminded of one of those deep verses that reveal the unities of creation as they were present to the apostle's thought. As God is the head of Christ, the glorified Man, and as man is meant to be the head of woman, so is Christ head of each redeemed man, as an individual, and of all such together, in the Church. Thus amid the discord and anarchy of creation we are learning the Divine concords, and shall yet find harmony emanating from the Church to soothe, and still, and unify creation.

THE CHURCH IS ALSO A BUILDING. (Ephesians 2:21)

Deep in the weltering floods that surged around the Cross, God laid the foundation stone which none but He could lay, which is Jesus Christ. He had laid it in purpose before He set the foundations of the hills, but He laid it then in fact. On Him souls have been built through the ages, one by one. They were lifeless indeed when they first touched Him; but coming in contact with the Living Stone, though dead they began to live, and thus the building grew.

A building is for an inmate; and the Church is for God. Without Him it has no reason to exist. The universe itself cannot contain Him; but the spiritual house whose stones are redeemed souls is his pavilion, his habitation, his home.

IT IS THROUGH THE CHURCH THAT GOD'S WISDOM IS MADE

KNOWN. (Ephesians 3:10)

Men learn God's manifold wisdom in creation: in the limpet whose fragile shell may be pierced by a tiny insect, yet resists the blow of the mightiest wave; in the eye that is able to adjust itself immediately to the waxing or waning light; in the hand, so marvellously adapted to its myriad purposes, that the study of its manipulating dexterity has before now convinced infidelity of the being of God. But angels learn the manifold wisdom of God by studying the adaptation of his grace to the varied needs of his saints. As students discover the wonderful resources of the surgeon, who passes through the wards of the hospital adapting himself to the need of each sufferer; so do angels and the lofty spirits of heaven learn secrets they had never known, but for the infinite variety of sin and need and sorrow with which God has to deal, and which become so many prisms to break up the white ray of his character into its varied constituent hues.

THE CHURCH'S END IS THE GLORY OF GOD. (Ephesians 3:21)

At the close of this sublime doxology, in which the burning heart of the apostle rises to an almost unparalleled ecstasy of thought and expression, he seeks for voices that shall give utterance to the glory which is the due of such a God. And, according to the Revised Version, which accurately renders the best reading of the original Greek, he finds them in the Church and in Christ Jesus. "Unto Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus."

The juxtaposition of these two is very wonderful and suggestive. The thought seems to be passing from the comparison between the Church and a building or body, to trace a parallel between it and the bride, lifted by the love of the bridegroom to stand beside Him, on the same level with Himself. We know, of course, that glory must accrue to the Father, for ever and ever, from the

work of the Lord Jesus. A revenue of glory will ever ascend from the cradle, the cross, the grave. The ages are to see repeated harvests accruing from the sowing of his tears and blood. But we had not realized, except for these words, that a similar wealth of glory was to accrue from the Church of the Firstborn.

Nevertheless, though our thought staggers with the conception, let us accept with reverent joy the assurance that in that great life which is opening before us, the Church of the redeemed shall stand beside Christ, and raise her voice, in unison with his, as the voice of one ascribing glory to the Father. And as the ages pass, they shall not diminish, but increase, the sweetness of her song and the volume of her voice.

THE CHURCH IS ONE. (Ephesians 4:4)

A sevenfold bond of unity makes her so. One Head; one indwelling Spirit; one blessed Hope; one Lord; one Faith; one Baptism; one God and Father. She is therefore one. Her members are scattered through heaven and earth. They are to be found in many different Christian communities and sects, or belonging to none. They may ignore one another, or even refuse fellowship, because blinded to their true kindred; as two brothers may meet in a mist and not know each other. But they are one; and in the light of eternity they shall recognize the unity, for it shall be patent to all the universe of God.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST TO HIS CHURCH IS INEXPRESSIBLE, SAVE BY THE TENDEREST HUMAN RELATIONSHIP. (Ephesians 5:32)

Here is a mystery indeed. That scene in Eden is also a parable. It was not good for Christ to be alone. He needed one to love and to give love. But there was none among unfallen angels that could answer to Him. And therefore

God the Father sought a bride for his Son from among the children of men; yea, He took the Second Eve from the wounded side of the Second Man, as He lay asleep in the garden-grave.

Redeemed men compose that bride. The Saviour loves them, as a true man who for the first time loves a pure and noble woman. He does not love them because they are fair, but to make them so. He has approved his love by becoming man, and giving Himself to death. By his blood, and Word, and Spirit, He is sanctifying and purifying them for Himself. The process is long and severe; but He nourishes and cherishes them, as a man does his wounded flesh. And ere long, when the bride is complete in numbers and in beauty, the mystery that now veils her shall be flung aside, and amid the joy of creation, He will present her to Himself, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; bearing his name, sharing his rank, and position, and wealth, and power, and glory, for ever and ever.

Then the Church shall cleave to Him for ever, and He shall cleave to her. And they twain shall be one spirit. And his own prayer shall be realized, offered on the eve of his agony and passion, "The glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as We are one."

12—The Reciprocal Inheritance^(TOC)

THROUGHOUT the Old Testament there runs the double thought of our inheritance in God, and God's in us. And, as we shall see, this two-fold aspect of one deep conception interpenetrates the heart of the apostle's teaching in this Epistle (Psalm 16:5-6; Deuteronomy 32:9).

INHERITANCE AND INHERITED. (Ephesians 1:14)

In the opening paragraph of this epistle the apostle works up to this as his climax, that the Holy Spirit is given to us as the earnest of our inheritance. And, obviously, inasmuch as God is the earnest, nothing less than God can be the inheritance. In the same verse the apostle describes the saints as God's possession, which is not yet fully acquired by Him, though fully purchased; but which is awaiting its full occupation in that day of glory, when not a fragment of the purchase of Calvary shall be left in the power of the grave, but body, soul, and spirit shall be raised in the likeness of the glorified Saviour.

In the first clause of this verse, he therefore speaks of that inheritance which is ours as heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. In the second, he speaks of ourselves as that inheritance upon which the Son of God so set his heart, as to be willing to obtain it by the sacrifice of the glory that he had with the Father before the worlds were made. We are therefore in turn inheritors and an inheritance.

THE SAINTS' INHERITANCE IN GOD. (Ephesians 1:14, Ephesians 5:5)

When an emigrant first receives the title-deeds of the broad lands made over

to him in the far West, he has no conception, as he descends the steps of the Government office and passes into the crowd, of all that has been conveyed to him in the schedule of parchment. And, though acres vast enough to make an English county are in his possession, rich and loamy soil, or stored with mines of ore, yet he is not sensibly the richer. For long days he travels, towards his inheritance and presently pitches his flimsy shanty upon its borders. But even though he has reached it, several years must pass before he can understand its value, or compel it to minister, with all its products, to his need.

O child of God, thy estate has been procured at the cost of blood and tears; but thou didst not buy it! Its broad acres have been made over to thee by deed of gift. They became thine in the Council chamber of eternity, when the Father gave Himself to thee in Jesus. And they became thine in fact, when thou wast born at the foot of the cross. As soon as thou didst open thine eyes to behold the crucified Lord, thou didst all unconsciously become heir to the lengths and breadths, and depths, and heights of God!

No sooner has the emigrant reached his estate, than he commences to prospect it. He makes a circuit of its bounds; he ascends its loftiest hills; he crosses and recrosses it, that he may know all that has come into his ownership. And this is God's message to thee, O Christian soul! Look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all this land is given to thee! Precious things of the sun and of the moon, for God is light; of the ancient mountains of his faithfulness, and the everlasting hills of his truth; of the fountains and brooks of his love, that gush spontaneously forth to satisfy and enrich.

But next to this, the emigrant encloses some small part of his inheritance, placing around it a tentative fence or partition; and here he begins to expend

toil and skill. The giant trees are cut down; and their roots burnt out, or extracted by a team of horses. The unaccustomed soil is brought beneath the yoke of the plough. The grassland yields pasture to the cattle; and there is not a square inch of the enclosed territory that does not minister to the needs of the new proprietor. But not content with this, in the following year he pushes his fences back further into the depth of prairie or forest, and again renews his efforts to compel the land to yield him her secret stores. Year after year the process is repeated, until, perhaps when twenty years have come and gone, the fences are needed no longer, because the extent of occupation is commensurate with the extent of the original purchase.

Let every reader mark this, that supposing two men obtained a grant of an equal number of acres, if other things were equal, their wealth would be in exact proportion to the amount of use which each had made of his special acres. If one had learnt a swifter art of appropriating the wealth that lay open to his hand, he would be actually, though perhaps not potentially, richer than his neighbour. All of which is a parable.

The difference that obtains between Christians is not one of grace, but of the use we make of grace. That there are diversities of gift is manifest; and there always will be a vast difference between those who have five talents and those who have two, in the amount of work done for the kingdom of God. But as far as our inheritance of God's grace is concerned, there are no preferences, no step-children's portions, no arbitrary distinctions. It is not as under the laws of primogeniture, that one child takes all, while the younger children are dismissed with meagre allowances. Each soul has the whole of God. God gives Himself to each. He cannot give more; He will not give less than Himself.

If then you would know why it is that some of God's children live lives so

much fuller and richer than others, you must seek it in the differences of their appropriation of God. Some have learnt the happy art of receiving and utilizing every square inch if we may use the expression of that knowledge of God which has been revealed to them. They have laid all God's revealed character under contribution. They have raised harvests of bread out of the Incarnation; and vintages of blood-red grape from the scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary; and pomegranates and all manner of fruit out of the mysteries of the Ascension and the gift of the Holy Ghost. In hours of weakness they drew on God's power; in those of suffering, on his patience; in those of misunderstanding and hatred, on his vindication; in those of apparent defeat and despair, on the promises that gleam over the smoke of the battle, as the Cross before the gaze of Constantine; in death itself, on the life and immortality which find their home in the being of Jehovah.

The analogy that we have quoted, however, fails us utterly in its final working out. The emigrant at last covers his estate, its mines become exhausted, its forests levelled, its soil impoverished; but when a million years have passed, the nature of God will lie before us as utterly unexplored and unexhausted, as when the first-born son of light commenced like a Columbus in the spiritual realm to explore the contents of the illimitable continent, God.

When we were children, the map of Africa gave us a few scattered names around the coast line; but the great interior was blank. Modern maps containing the results Of the explorations of Livingstone, Stanley, Burton, tell another story of river, Savannah, tableland, and of myriads of inhabitants. Probably, ere long the whole will have been opened up to European civilization and commerce. But with God this shall never be. We shall never know the far-away springs of the Niles and Congo's of his nature; we shall never unravel the innermost secret of his being.

GOD'S INHERITANCE IN THE SAINTS. (Ephesians 1:18)

What an extraordinary combination! It is a mystery that God should find his inheritance and portion in the love of men and women like ourselves. But that he should find the riches of glory in them!—this passes thought. It may, however, be explained by a piece of farming that I learnt recently. The other day, when travelling in Scotland, I was introduced to some farmers whose soil was naturally of the poorest description; and yet, in answer to my inquiries, I found that they were able to raise crops of considerable weight and value. This seemed to me very extraordinary. Out of nothing, nothing comes, is the usual rule. But they unravelled the mystery by telling me that they put in, in enriching manure, all that they took out in the days of golden harvest.

Is not this the secret of any grace or wealth there is in Christian lives? Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thee, O Christ of God, be the glory! Whatever Thou dost get out of us, Thou must first put in. And all the crops of golden grain, all the fruits of Christian grace, are Thine from us, because Thou hast by thy blood and tears, by the sunshine of thy love, and the rain of thy grace, enriched natures which in themselves were arid as the desert and barren as the sand. Augustine therefore said truly, "Give what Thou commandest, and then command what Thou wilt."

But we must see to it that we keep nothing back. There must be no reserve put on any part of our being. Spirit, soul, and body must be freely yielded to the great Husbandman. We, who are God's tillage, must make no bargain with his ploughshare, and withhold no acre from the operations of his Spirit.

This is the curse of Christian living. Here is the reason why God is so little to us. We are mean enough to wish to make all we can of God, and to give Him

as little as possible of ourselves. We fence off a part of ourselves for God, excluding Him from all the rest. But it is a compact that will not hold. Love will only give itself to love. The shadows of secrecy or reserve on either side will blight a friendship in which all the conditions seem perfectly adjusted. And many a life that might grow rich in its heritage of God is dwindled and marred, because it sets a limitation on God's heritage of itself.

Give all thou hast to God. As He bought, so let Him possess, everything. He will occupy and keep thee. He will bring fruit out of thy rockiest nature, as the Norwegians raise crops on every scrap of soil on their mountain slopes. He will put into thee the grace that thou shalt give back to Him in fruit. He will win for Himself a great name, as He turns thy desert places into gardens, and makes thy wildernesses blossom as the rose.

13—Man in Christ^(TOC)

CHRIST is the ideal man. Once, in the course of the ages, the plant of human nature seemed to bear a perfect flower of stainless purity and ineffable loveliness. The black touch of the world's sin could not befoul it. The storms that swept over it might strike it for a moment down to the black soil out of which it sprang, but could not bemire it. It reared itself in peerless beauty, and grows to-day fair and strong in the universe of God.

The man Christ Jesus was before the first man Adam, so far as the thought and purpose of God are concerned. When the great Potter took in hand the red clay to make a man, He made it in his own image, and after his likeness. And what could these be but the nature and lineaments of that blessed Son of his love who was his fellow—Himself? The Incarnation and Ascension were only possible on these conditions. How could the Son of God have become incarnate unless the nature He was to assume had already been made after the model of Himself? And how could our human nature be taken into the ineffable glory of the Throne, unless, in a sense, it had belonged there before the worlds were made?

But Adam fell from his original type. He shared morally in that aptness to deteriorate which runs through nature. And in his fall we all fell. All who are one with him by the bonds of natural relationship shared in that sad act of disobedience and its results. How great that fall was may be judged when we consider the wizened babes, the wretched women, the blear-eyed, saddened victims of drink and sin which abound amid the most civilized and refined cities of the world, and compare them with the Man of Nazareth, that holy thing which was born of the virgin-mother.

But Jesus is more than type. He is the second Man, the life-giving spirit; and therefore capable of repeating Himself in myriads of souls—not in his Divine essence, but in his human beauty. This is the singular power of life, possessed in common by plant and animal—the marvellous gift of reproduction. Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image. And the second Man possesses the same glorious power, by which He is able to fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself.

"ONE NEW MAN." (Ephesians 2:15)

When this Epistle was written, the hatred of centuries had reached its climax. The Jew, able to trace his unbroken line of descent from Abraham, proud of the religious prerogatives of his race, magnifying his unique relationship to Jehovah, looked with scorn on the uncircumcised Gentiles around. They were Gentile dogs. He spat on the ground if they crossed his path.

As long as the Mosaic ritual was the prescribed method of approaching Jehovah, there was no way of removing this hostility. The Jew entrenched himself within its barriers, justifying his hatred by religious sanctions. The Gentile chafed and rebelled against its exactions. But our Saviour, in his flesh, and by his cross, broke down the middle wall of partition, and abolished the enmity even the law of commandments contained in ordinances. He fulfilled the law so perfectly, not for Himself, but for all, that it had no more to ask. Its claims were met and satisfied; and therefore the Jews could not insist on them, on the one hand, nor the Gentiles chafe beneath them on the other.

Moreover, by his death the Saviour has made an atonement and propitiation

for men as men. Not for the Jew in one way, or the Gentile in another; but for all on the same terms. By one death, in one body on the cross, which is common to the whole world of men, and by his intercession, through which both have access to the one Father, He has brought to an end the divisions of ages.

But He has done more. In his resurrection, He is constituted the origin and head of a new race. The race of regenerate men! The race of his resurrection-life and power! The race of the new heavens and the new earth. All who believe in Him are born into that new humanity. It is the one new man, which is composed of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues.

THE INNER MAN. (Ephesians 3:16)

Beneath the play of our outward life, and beneath the workings of our busy brains, there lies a deeper self, which the apostle calls "the inner man." There is an objective and there is a subjective self. The former occupies itself with collecting impressions and thoughts from the world around, and in action or speech; but the latter, veiled from observation, muses, arranges its stores, carries on long trains of thought, holds fellowship with itself, and God, and the unseen. It is this part of our nature which perceives truth—not by trains of argument, but by the flash of intuitive perception—and which receives those throbbing pulsation's of Divine power that wait around us seeking for admission.

This inner man is in us all; but many of us live in the outer courts of our nature, occupied with the mere externals of our life and the world. We give these inner chambers over to neglect and dust; seldom entering them, and hardly cognizant of their existence, save when in hours of unusual solemnity they assert themselves and compel attention.

It is in this inner man that the Spirit finds his home and seat. This is the Holy See. Here He elaborates his purposes, formulates and issues his decrees, and stirs to heroic action. And when all its avenues are open to Him, He so infills with his power, and indwells with Divine energy, that the inner man is strengthened with might, according to the riches of his glory.

THE FULL-GROWN MAN. (Ephesians 4:13)

From the hands of the Ascended Saviour, gifts are distributed to his Church. He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers. But to every member of the Church, the weakest and obscurest, some special grace was given, according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Every joint in the body has some function to perform to all the rest, and to the growth and perfectness of the whole.

But alas! too many of the saints are unaware of the possession of gift or gifts, or they leave them buried in a napkin in the earth, or they are out of joint, and so unable to do their specific work. The special function of the officers of the Church—the apostles, the prophets, the pastors—is to stir the saints to discover their gifts; and, if needs be, to put them into articulated union with the Lord, so that they may take up the work of ministering to the rest of the body.

This thought, which is somewhat obscured in the older version, is made abundantly clear in the Revised. "For the perfecting (the setting in joint) of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ"

As the piccolo may be missed out of a great orchestra; as each single joint is indispensable to the body's health and vigour; so each believer has a part to do, by thought or speech, by suffering or action, in building up the great

mystical body of the Lord. Some vision of his beauty received and passed on—some deep sweet word, some trait caught from fellowship with Him and reflected from the pallid brow of sickness, some unselfish act of which the world knows nothing—such are the contributions that we make to the upbuilding of the body. We may seem to do nothing else than minister to the particles just against us, but this re-acts on the whole.

And presently—it may be nearer than we suppose—the body will have reached its full growth, will have attained to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, and be worthy of its Head. All the saints with Jesus shall make together a full-grown perfect man, which shall realize in completeness the Divine ideal.

THE OLD MAN. (Ephesians 4:22)

The old man is the aggregate of habits and methods of life, which marked us before conversion. The phrase describes the impression which we produced as men and women upon our fellows. What we were wont to be, and say, and do. That form of character and life which was ours before the great change operated through faith in Jesus.

It is called the old man, as if there were but one, because the habits and tastes, the thoughts and acts of men, before conversion, have much in common. There is not much to choose between them. It is one evil nature; one likeness to fallen Adam; one type of evil, though its forms are slightly modified in different temperaments and by special circumstances.

It is under the control of deceitful lusts. In other words, it is shaped by the passionate desires which have their origin in the strong natural tendencies of our being. These were given us by God to be the motive-forces of our nature, but not to rule. For when once they are permitted to usurp this position,

corruption ensues, and the nature rots piecemeal before their insidious action—as the body of the leper beneath the living death that eats away his flesh. Ah, deceitful lusts! promising liberty, and happiness, and joy, but resembling the Syren sisters, whose upper form was fair, but whose lower extremities were foul; whilst whose sweet songs allured the unwary mariner only to ruin.

We must not defer this "putting off." The tense indicates the sudden resolve of the will, inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be no longer under the dominion of these terrible passions. Once and for ever let us divest ourselves of them; as the beggar his rags, or as Lazarus the cerements of death.

THE NEW MAN. (Ephesians 4:24)

This is the aggregate of blessed habits that mark the life of the converted the white robe of purity, the girdle of self-restraint, the silver of humility, the jewels of holy character. All through the Epistles we are bidden to don it. "Put on the armour of light." "Put on, as God's elect, a heart of compassion." "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ."

It is the new man, because the habits and character of the children of God are very similar. There is a family likeness common to all. It is after God, because it is created in his likeness. It is the fashion of God in human nature, perfectly exemplified once in Jesus Christ, and now waiting to be imparted by the Holy Ghost. It is righteous toward man. It is holy toward God. It is true, perfectly transparent and sincere. Put on this holy thing! Created in Jesus, and therefore not to be woven by human effort or spun by outward obedience to rites, but to be simply assumed.

Put it on by faith. Do not try to build up Christ-likeness by your repeated endeavours. Just assume it by faith. Believe it is yours. Reckon that it is so.

Go out believing that Christ's likeness is on you, and his beauty clothing you as a beautiful robe; and men shall increasingly realize that it is not you but Christ. The beauty of the Lord will be upon you; and the life of Jesus will be manifest in your mortal body, both in life and death.

14—Our Walk^(TOC)

Our walk is a synonym for our life. Life is a walk from the cradle to the grave. Our steps emerge from the jewelled gates of birth, traverse rock and sand, enamelled meadow and difficult mountain steeps, and ultimately pass within the portal of death, which, though sombre enough when seen from afar, is often found to be irradiate with light from the world beyond.

In this sense the word occurs in all parts of Scripture. In the opening chapters of Genesis it is said of Enoch that he walked with God. And in one of the last Epistles, we are bidden to walk even as Jesus walked. And between these extreme points, the pages of Holy Writ are strewn with similar references. Indeed, the comparison of life to a pilgrimage is based on the same conception. The race of man goes afoot, as a vast host.

A walk is made up of steps. Though a man circle the globe, yet he must do it by one step at a time; and the character of the steps will determine the character of the walk. So life is made up, for the most part, of trifles, of commonplaces, of the reiteration of familiar and simple acts. And what we are in these, that will be the colour and value of our lives in the verdict of eternity. Life is not made by the rapturous but brief moments which we spend on the transfiguration mount; but by the steps we take to and fro along the pathway of daily duty, and of sometimes monotonous routine.

THE WALK OF THE OLD LIFE. (Ephesians 2:2)

The apostle does not scruple to unveil the past of those whom he addressed. "Look," he cries, "to the rock whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye were digged. Ye were once dead in trespasses and sins." But

though in our unconverted state we were utterly dead to the claims of God and the life of the spiritual world, yet we were very much alive to the promptings of that malign trinity of evil, which is ever set upon the ruin of the souls of men. "Ye were dead...ye walked."

As the doctrine of the Divine Trinity is never expressly formulated in Scripture; though it may be derived from many an obvious inference, so there is no difficulty in showing that the world, the flesh, and the devil, are in essence one in their endeavour against the soul. Here, for instance, in successive sentences, the apostle speaks of "the course of this world"; of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the sons of disobedience"; and of "the lusts of the flesh and of the mind."

Here are several points that deserve our earnest thought.

(1) Those who live a worldly life are as much under the influence of the devil, and as much children of wrath, as those who give way to the lusts of the flesh. This is a very solemn thought. We make distinctions which are not recognized by God. We classify sinners after a fashion which will not stand the test of eternity. We pity the child of fashion, whose one thought is dress, rank, and amusement; flitting like a butterfly from flower to flower, and squandering the priceless hours in vanity and gaiety. But in the sight of God, such a one stands in the same category, is the prey of the same evil spirit, and is menaced by the same doom as the libertine or the sot. It may even be that a frivolous worldly life is more offensive to God than that which is swept by violent storms of passion.

(2) Beneath the shows of this world—its pageantry and pomp, its fascinations and ambitions, its round of amusement and engagement—

there lurks the disobedient spirit, who is set upon inducing disobedience to God, and whose seat is in the air.

It is difficult to understand precisely the meaning of these words. Is "the air" a different locality to the "heavenly places"? Has the seat of the devil's kingdom been shifted from the earth or the heavenlies to the air? Is the very atmosphere laden with the invisible microbes of Satanic influence? We cannot tell. But it is enough for us to know that, while Satan tempts some through their passions, he tempts others through the riches and baubles, the shows and lures, the cares and anxieties of worldliness, which is Godlessness. This explains why the apostle John said that the love of God was not compatible with that of the world.

(3) As the Spirit of God works in those who fear to grieve Him, so the spirit of the prince of the power of the air works in the unregenerate and unbelieving. There are secret passages to our souls by which influences, whether from heaven or from hell, may enter our most secret thoughts. By the one we are prompted to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, that we may live unto God; by the other to indulge the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and so to remain dead unto God, dead in trespasses and sins.

(4) It is as ruinous to the inner life to indulge the desires of the mind as those of the flesh. By the marvellous gift of imagination we may indulge unholy fancies, and throw the reins on the neck of the steeds of passion—always stopping short of the act. No human eye follows the soul when it goes forth to dance with satyrs or to thread the labyrinthine maze of the islands of desire. It goes and returns

unsuspected by the nearest. Its credit for snow-white purity is not forfeited. It is still permitted to watch among the virgins for the Bridegroom's advent. But if this practice is unjudged and unconfessed, it marks the offender a son of disobedience and a child of wrath. It is thus that we walked once. But God loved us, and lifted us out of these dark and dangerous paths, putting us on the Ascension track; may He keep us from choosing or treading them again. Hedge up those ways with thorns, dear Lord, and make fences against us, that we may not find them.

THE WALK OF GOOD WORKS. (Ephesians 2:10)

Before the vision of the evangelic prophet arose the conception of a highway that should intersect the desert. It was the way of holiness; the unclean should not pass over it. No lion or beast of prey would haunt it; none but the redeemed would tread it. As soon as they should touch it, gladness and joy would greet them like twin radiant angels; whilst sorrow and sighing, that had pursued them hitherto, would drop away disappointed, like dark angels of the pit.

That causeway was prepared for the ransomed before the foundation of the world; but it was fully opened and revealed by the work of Christ and the grace of the Holy Spirit. Directly we yield ourselves to these blessed influences, we begin to tread it. We find that each step has been prepared for us, so that we have but to put down our feet. As long as we keep it we are safe from alarm and molestation. Our hearts beat out the glad marching music to which our feet answer blithely. And sorrow and sighing flee away.

WALK WORTHILY OF YOUR CALLING. (Ephesians 4:1)

The simplest words are the deepest. Take, for example, the word call. It is constantly on our lips. The shepherd's call to his sheep, the herdsman's on the hills, the mother's to her child. And God appropriates it in his dealings with men. He calls them. From the throne of his glory He speaks to every soul of man once, twice, many times; as when He said "Samuel, Samuel," or "Saul, Saul." In some solemn hour of decision, in a moment of awful crisis, by human voice or written word, or by the pleading and remonstrance of conscience, God's voice may be heard calling men to Himself, to Heaven, and to a saintly life. On that call the apostle bases his argument for holiness. Act worthily of the love which summoned you, and of the goal to which you have been called. Stand still and ask yourself before you speak, or act, or decide—Is this worthy of that great ideal which God has conceived for me, when He called me from the rest of men to be his priest, his saint, his son? If not, eschew it!

WALK IN THE LIGHT. (Ephesians 4:17, Ephesians 5:8)

God is light; and when we live in daily, hourly communion with Him, in such a frame of mind as that his name is frequently in our hearts, or murmured softly by our lips, or spoken as a talisman when temptation is near, we may be said to be walking in the light. And it is just in proportion as our steps tread the crystal pathway of light, that our understanding becomes enlightened. In God's light we see light. When the heart is pure, the eye is single.

The contrary to this is also true. When we are alienated from the life of God, our understanding is darkened to the truth of God. The seat of infidelity is in the heart. Once let a soul become shut out from the life of God through the hardening of the heart; once let it give itself up to lasciviousness, and to make a trade of uncleanness with greediness: then the light of the knowledge of the

glory of God beats against a shuttered window, asking for admittance in vain.

If you would know God, you must resemble God. If you would learn God's secrets, you must walk with God. If you would know the doctrine, you must be willing to do his will.

But there is something even better than walking in the light; it is to become children of the light. What an exquisite conception! Dewdrops sparkling in the light of dawn; star-dust glittering on the vault of night; humming-birds flashing in the tropic sun; children dancing in light-hearted glee, none of these are so truly sons of light as they who have been begotten by the Father of Lights; who carry within them the Light that lights up hearts, and who, in goodness, righteousness, and truth, prove what is well-pleasing unto the Lord. Let us live as such.

WALK IN LOVE. (Ephesians 5:2)

We are to imitate God's love in Christ. The love that gives, that counts no cost too great, and, in sacrificing itself for others, offers all to God, and does all for his sake. Such was the love of Jesus—sweet to God, as the scent of fields of new-mown grass in June; and this must be our model.

Not to those who love us, but who hate; not to those who are pleasant and agreeable, but who repel; not because our natural feelings are excited, but because we will to minister, even to the point of the cross, must our love go out. And every time we thus sacrifice ourselves to another for the sake of the love of God, we enter into some of the meaning of the sacrifice of Calvary, and there is wafted up to God the odour of a sweet smell.

WALK CAREFULLY. (Ephesians 5:15)

Pick your way amid the pitfalls of the world. Gird up your flowing robes with dainty care, lest they be soiled by the filth of the street. Beware of any side paths that would lead your steps away from the narrow track. Watch and pray. Especially be careful to turn every moment of time into an opportunity of making progress in the Divine life. Take heed to the moments, and the hours will take heed to themselves.

All these injunctions, however, will baffle us, and leave us stranded on the shore, when the impulse of their stimulus ebbs, unless we blend with them the thought that God is willing to walk with us—nay, in us; for He saith, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them." Abide in God, and God will abide in you, and walk in you, till you walk with Him in white, being found worthy.

15—The Christian Armed^(TOC)

EACH Christian has to meet with the powers of hell, in his own life, and in his capacity as a soldier of the Gospel of Christ. It is with the latter aspect of the conflict that the apostle is specially concerned, in the last chapter of the Epistle we have been studying. We do not question that there is a reference to the personal conflict which each believer has to maintain with the principalities and powers of evil. But the stress laid on the fact that they are the world-rulers, or the rulers of the darkness of this world, is significant of that wider conflict which the Church, and each member of it, is called upon to maintain with the grim hosts of evil that lie unseen behind those systems of superstition, cruelty, and pride, which oppose the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is well for us to recognise this supernatural element in the evil by which our work for God is confronted, and often sorely pressed. We have to wrestle, not simply with the stupidity, barbarism, or intellectual acumen of flesh and blood, but with the spiritual hosts of wickedness which are in the heavenly places. (See Daniel 16)

There is no need, however, for us to abate one jot of courage, for in his Ascension all these principalities and powers were put under the feet of our Redeemer; and as we abide in Him, we share his conquest; we are more than a match for the mightiest forces of hell; we walk upon our high places.

But the apostle makes it clear that we must possess certain personal qualities before we can avail ourselves of the victory or power of the Captain of our Salvation. This is what he means by urging us to put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to

stand. Let us ponder this; for to neglect it is the cause of much of the failure of Christian workers. They are not careful enough as to their personal character, and so the devil laughs them to scorn; for by their inconsistencies they cut the sinews of their faith and dissociate themselves from the only source of victory that he dreads. (Compare 2 Peter 1:5-11)

THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR MUST BE TRUE. (Ephesians 4:14)

The loins are significant of strength; and girded loins represent the opposite of self-indulgence, slothful ease, or carelessness. Hence the need for the girded loin; and our Lord solemnly insists on it as a prime necessity for his servants. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning."

We must gird ourselves with truth. We must be true to the laws of our nature, never overstepping the limits of moderation, never using for self-indulgence the powers which were intended only for the maintenance of the fires of life; never yielding to that worse self which lurks in us all, as the miasma in the fairest landscapes of southern climes. We must be true to God who made and redeemed us; true to our best selves, our noblest ideals; true to those with whom we live, and who are certainly affected for good or evil by our self-restraint or the reverse.

There is the strongest obligation that we should often stand foursquare before the mirror of truth; which is Christ—Christ the Light that lighteth every man—Christ in conscience—Christ in the Word. There is no severer or straighter test than this. With unfailing accuracy we shall discover our true selves, as we come face to face with Him, who is girt with righteousness as the girdle of his reins, and faithfulness as the girdle of his loins. Let there be any obliqueness, or irregularity, or inconsistency, it will be at once and unerringly revealed. No distortion of the inner life can escape detection or condemnation

before the judgment-seat, whose decisions are ratified by each soul's secret convictions of justice. Would that we were all in the habit of submitting to that faithful scrutiny—not the greater matters only, but all the smallest details of our lives!

Then let us, in the name and by the power of Jesus, put away all that has been shown to be inconsistent with his character and claims, and let us submit in everything to his control. It will cost us something. We may have difficulty with our judgment, warped and injured by self-preference. We may have to contend with our will, reluctant to sign the death-warrant of some favourite habit. We may feel singularly powerless to carry into effect what we know, in our loftiest moments, to be our only safe and blessed policy. But happy are we, if we dare to catch up the trailing robes of self-indulgence, and restrain them under the cincture of inexorable truth and purity.

THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR MUST BE RIGHTEOUS. (Ephesians 6:14)

"Put on the breastplate of righteousness." This righteousness is not primarily that which is reckoned to us, so soon as we believe in Jesus, but rather that personal righteousness which is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, and in virtue of which our characters are conformed to that of Jesus Christ the Righteous. The apostle refers to it when he reminds Titus that the grace of God instructs us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and Godly, in this present world. It is the temper we should cultivate and manifest in all our dealings with men. The breastplate is worn upon the heart, the seat of our affections and emotions. In these especially we must be right.

It is very necessary to remember this. Of what use is it to speak of Jesus to those who are rankling under a sense of our injustice, or are sensible of some

glaring inconsistency in our character? The effect of our most eloquent entreaties is neutralized by our deeds, which speak even louder.

What a beautiful contrast there is between the laxity of too many of us and the scrupulous care of the apostle Paul! How watchfully he exercised himself to have a conscience void of offence toward man as well as God! How sensitive to the least appearance of self-seeking, that he might cut off occasion from them which desired an occasion! How gladly he went without what was in itself lawful, lest his ministry should be blamed!

It becomes the Christian to put it beyond the power of man or devil to point to some inaccuracy in life or conversation, and to say, "This man belies his profession, and contradicts his own teaching." Rather let us suffer wrong, and submit to overcharge, and give men even more than they can justly claim. Anything of loss or suffering may be cheerfully met, in order that night after night we may wash our hands in innocency, and feel that we have not put a stumbling-block in the path of any man.

This is only possible as we abide by faith in Christ our righteousness. And when we have done our best, we shall have nothing to boast of. We are always unprofitable servants, who have only done what they ought.

THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR MUST FOLLOW AFTER PEACE.

(Ephesians 6:15)

"Your feet shod with the preparedness of the Gospel of Peace." There is undoubtedly a reference in these words to Isaiah's vision of the messengers, who, with beautiful feet, speed across the mountains to proclaim the good tidings of the Gospel. But there is the further thought, that those who carry the Gospel of Peace must tread gently and softly.

If the Gospel of Peace is our message, the peace of God should mantle our face with a holy calm; breathe through our lips like a benediction; and diffuse itself like the dew of the Lord over the places of human rivalry and hatred. Ours should be the blessedness of the peace-makers. Our tread should be only in the paths of peace, except when the trumpet of God clearly calls us to war against the sins and wrongs around. "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. So then, let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another. The Lord's servant must not strive; but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves." Be it ours, then, always to be on the alert to promote peace and love amongst men; not incensed or irritated by their rancorous dealings with ourselves; not catching fire at the flame of their wrath and indignation.

THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR MUST BE VIGOROUS IN FAITH.
(Ephesians 6:16)

As each fiery dart, tipped with the flames of hellish hate, comes speeding to the soldier of the cross, deafened by the din and blinded by the smoke of battle, he must catch and quench it on the golden shield of faith, that it reach not his head or heart.

Sometimes a slander will be circulated, for which you have given no occasion; or a venomous speech or article will be hurled at you; or some horrible suggestion will be thrust between the joints of the armour; or some deadly reminder of the sins of the past, which you can never recall without burning remorse. At such times we are tempted to give back, to renounce our work, to withdraw from the battle. And those will certainly yield to the temptation, who are not inspired by the faith that can hand these things over to the compassionate and mighty Saviour, who knows all, but loves better

than He knows, and who interposes to cover our heads in the day of battle.

But faith like this is only possible to him whose hands are clean, and his heart pure; who is living in daily fellowship with Jesus, and whose soul is nurtured by daily feeding on the Word of God.

THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR MUST KNOW GOD'S SALVATION IN HIS OWN EXPERIENCE. (Ephesians 6:17)

He must be saved from the guilt and penalty of sin before he can proclaim the plentitude of God's forgiveness to the chief of sinners. He must know the Gospel as the power of God unto salvation from the dominion of sin in his own heart. He must be anticipating the consummation of God's purpose in the redemption of the body. As the helmet glistens in the sunshine, so must the crown of the Christian's experience point upward to heaven and onward to the glory yet to be revealed. He must speak that which he knows, and declare what he has seen and heard. It is when we are experiencing the power of God's salvation that we can declare it to others, with a freedom and a power that needs no further corroboration. And it is when men see the salvation of God exemplified in our own life and character, that they will be prepared to accept it as indeed the Word of God.

THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR MUST USE THE TWO ESSENTIAL MEANS OF GRACE—THE WORD OF GOD, AND PRAYER. (Ephesians 6:18)

Add to all the above the diligent use of the Word of God in the culture of our souls, in the preparation of our messages, and in dealing with the conscience of our hearers; and let there be besides the perpetual use of the weapon of All-prayer, and there is no enemy born of hell that shall be able to withstand

us, who, in the feebleness of human weakness, are strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Daily meditate on your union with the ascended Lord: reckon that in Him you have died to sin—and present your tempted members as instruments of righteousness unto Christ—and yours will be a course of unbroken victory.

Studies in the Epistle to the Philippians

LESSONS IN FAITH AND LOVE FROM ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

BY

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*"LET US PRAY TO GOD, THAT WE MAY SPEAK, THINK, BELIEVE,
LIVE, AND DEPART HENCE, ACCORDING TO THE WHOLESOME
DOCTRINE AND VERITIES OF HIS WORD."—THE HOMILIES, I, 1.*

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Preface^(TOC)

The plan and purpose of the following pages will be soon evident to the reader. The whole aim is towards edification. What is said in the way of historical introduction, what is done in the course of the chapters in the way of rendering and grammatical explanation, all has this aim in view. The Epistle is handled throughout with the firm belief that it is an Oracle of God, while that Oracle is conveyed through the mind and heart of one of the greatest of the sons of men; and the Expositor's aim accordingly is always, and above all things, to expound. To put it otherwise, his highest ambition is to call attention to the sacred text, and let it speak.

May the Lord of the Apostle, of the Philippians, of ourselves, only grant that His mercy may rest upon this poor contribution to the exegesis of His inexhaustible Word. May it be permitted to throw a quiet light upon some of the treasures of this apostolic casket, to the help, in any measures, of the disciples of our day. Then will the Expositor indeed give thanks to the Master at whose feet he lays his work.

RIDLEY HALL, CAMBRIDGE.

Introductory [\(TOC\)](#)

O Gracious GOD and most mercifull Father, which hast vouchsafed us the rich and precious iewell of thy holy worde, assist us with thy Spirit, that it may be written in our hearts to our euerlasting comfort, to reforme us, to renew us according to thine owne image, to build us up, and edifie us into the perfect building of thy Christ, sanctifying and increasing in us all heauenly vertues. Graunt this O heauenly Father, for Iesus Christes sake. Amen.

From the GENEVA BIBLE, 1557.

Chapter I_(TOC)

Introductory

*Characteristics of the Epistle The Bible is ever young—Littera Scripta Manet
—"This Same Jesus"—Philippi—How the mission church had grown—Where
was the Epistle written?—When was the Epistle written?—"The word
endureth"*

The Epistle of St Paul to the Philippians is, to careful and loving Bible-students, one of the fairest and dearest regions of the Book of God. It is true that the Christian who genuinely believes that "every Scripture is God-inspired" (2 Timothy 3:16), and who realizes that the "Divine **Library**" is nevertheless, and from a higher point of view, One **Book** all through, will be always on the guard against a mistaken favouritism in his Scripture studies. He will strive to make himself in some sense familiar with the whole Book, **as** a whole, and to recognize in all its parts the true Author's hand and purpose. Yet it is inevitable that in this supreme Book, as in other books, though all parts are "co-operant to an end," all parts are not equally important for the deepest needs of the reader. The reader therefore will have to be more familiar with some parts than with others. Acquaintance with the whole will indeed deepen insight into the part. But it will not supersede our study, loving and special, of the part which, in a degree and manner peculiar to itself, "is able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

The present simple Studies in the Philippian Epistle will accordingly be pursued with the desire to remember as we go the whole scriptural revelation

of God and salvation. But we shall also approach the Epistle as a peculiarly precious Scripture in itself, containing in its few short pages a rare fulness of messages and teachings, meeting the inmost wants of the heart and the life.

Amongst the Epistles of St Paul Philippians shines out with singular light and beauty. In such a comparison we scarcely need consider the great Epistles to Rome and Corinth; their large scale and wide variety of topics set them apart. Nor need we consider Hebrews, with its difficult problem of authorship. Looking at the other Epistles, each with its own divine and also deeply human characteristics, we find Philippians more peaceful than Galatians, more personal and affectionate than Ephesians, less anxiously controversial than Colossians, more deliberate and symmetrical than Thessalonians, and of course larger in its applications than the personal messages to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Meanwhile it is as comprehensive almost as it is brief. It presents more than one important passage of doctrine, some of these passages being revelations of the first order. It is full of pregnant precepts for Christian character and conduct, whether seen in the individual or in the community. It discloses in a way of the utmost interest and significance the circumstances and experiences of the writer, and also, in a measure, of the readers. And the whole is suffused with a singularly sweet light of "joy and peace in believing." It is written by one who was, as he wrote, at once resting and moving in the peace of God which passes understanding, and in the love of Christ which passes knowledge; and what is felt in his soul comes out inevitably on his page. The letter, written in a prison, and addressed to a mission-church always exposed to insult and assault, yet seems in a wonderful way to call us "apart, to rest awhile." "A glory gilds the sacred page," the glory of the presence of the Lord in all His majesty of Godhead and nearness of Manhood; in His finished work, and living power, and wonderful coming again. A peculiar sort of joy, which is impossible without

at least the experience, if not the presence, of sorrow, rests and shines over the whole. It is the joy of the heart which has found at length "the secret of the Lord," His hiding-place from the tyranny of circumstances and time; the way how always to be of good cheer, naturally yet also supernaturally, not by a hard-won indifference to life, but by living, amidst everything external, "hidden with Christ in God."

Let us approach the beloved pages once again. They can never wear out; there will always prove to be "more to follow." Perhaps we have loved and pondered them for long years ourselves. Perhaps we have heard them expounded by voices silent now, "in days that never come again," in chambers or in churches which we seem still to see, but which in fact have passed from us very far away. The heart is full and the eyes are wet as we look back. But the melancholy of the past has no permanent place in Bible-study. The Book is divine, immortal, and ever young. He who was in it for our fathers is in it for us. And since He is in it, as He is in no other literature in the world, (because no other literature is His Word Written,) therefore it springs up to us ever new; it is always contemporary with every generation of believers. Even so, come, Lord Jesus, and let us meet Thee in Thy Scripture now again.

A very simple "Introduction" will suffice for our present purposes. These chapters make no pretension to be, in the technical sense, critical. I say next to nothing, for example, about the Authenticity and Genuineness of the Epistle. Let me only remind the reader that from the early dawn of the literature of the Church we have unmistakable testimonies to its existence as an apostolic Scripture. Ignatius and Polycarp, quite early in the second century, shew us that they have read it. A little later, in the "Epistle of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne" (A.D. 177),^[1] it is quoted. Clement of

Alexandria, and Irenaeus, and Tertullian, all in the second century, use it as "the sword of the Spirit" to assert truth and confute error. So it floats down into the broad stream of the patristic literature at large. Not till the rise of an ultra-sceptical criticism in quite modern times was Philipians ever seriously questioned as the work, in its integrity, of St Paul. And Baur's objections, all due to an *à priori* theory, not to an impartial literary enquiry, have been repudiated even by critics even less orthodox than himself: Renan, for example. It is quite as certain, in a literary sense, that in Philipians we have the very words and heart of St Paul as that we have Addison in the papers signed C. in the *Spectator*, or Erasmus in the correspondence with Colet.

And what a thought of strength and joy this is to the believer of our latter day! *Littera scripta manet*. How impressive is the permanence of every written reflexion of the mind, and of the life! Who has not felt it, even in the reading of a private letter to himself, written years and years ago? We have St Paul speaking to us in this indelible page as really as if we were seated with him in "his own hired house," and were *listening* as he dictates to the friend beside him. And as we recollect this, we reflect that all he is saying, all he has thus left written, is just so much testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ, contemporary, direct, inspired. When the words we are about to read were written, scarcely thirty years had passed away since the Son of Man died outside the gate of Jerusalem, and rose again. Perhaps my reader cannot look back over thirty years, perhaps not over twenty, with conscious memory. But I can; and beyond the thirty I can see a long vista of the still earlier past. Thirty years ago^[2]—at that time the great conflict between Austria and Prussia was preparing, the issue of which was so long a step towards the unification of Germany. I was then a master in a public school. The discussions of the impending war in our common-room, and the men who joined in them, are very present still to my mind; certainly not the faintest

haze of mythical change or disproportion has had time to gather over those scenes in the interval. With some differences, no doubt, the world of this day is yet essentially the same as the world of that day; I certainly still, in my whole personal consciousness, am the man of that day, only somewhat developed in experience. Well, what the date of the battle of Sadowa (Königgratz) is to me, such was the date of the Crucifixion to St Paul, when he wrote from Rome to his dear converts at Philippi. And I venture to say that, while St Paul's tone about the Lord of Calvary is of course immeasurably different in the highest respects from what mine might be had I to speak of the makers of European history of 1866, it is in one respect just the same. It is as completely free from the tone of legend unreality, uncertainty. With the same entire consciousness of matter of fact with which I might write of the statesmen or generals of my early manhood, he writes of One who, in *his* early manhood, overcame death by death, and "shewed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs."

Only, there is this wonderful difference; that for St Paul the Jesus Christ of recent history is absolutely One with the Jesus Christ of his present spiritual experience. The Man of the Cross is also, for him, the Lord who is exalted to the throne of heaven, and is also so related to the writer that Paul is "in Christ Jesus," with a proximity and union which enters into everything. "In Him" are included the very actions of the disciple's mind and the experiences of his heart. He is the Lord who lives in the inmost being of His servant, and who yet is also expected to return from the heavens, to transfigure the servant's very body into glory. The Christ of history, the Christ of the soul—it was "this same Jesus" then; it is "this same Jesus" now.

"Can length of years on God Himself exact,
Or make that fiction which was once a fact?"

Fix'd in the rolling flood of endless years
The pillar of the eternal plan appears;
The raging storm and dashing wave defies,
Built by that Architect who built the skies." ^[3]

For me and for my reader may the two aspects of "this same Jesus," the historical and the spiritual, ever combine in one mighty harmony of certainty; faith's resting-place to the end, "the rock of our heart, and our portion for ever"; at once our peace and our power, in life and in death, and through the eternal day also, in which we shall need Him still in the experiences of heaven.

What shall we say of the place to which the Epistle was sent, and of that from which it was written; and of the writer, the bearer, the readers; and of the occasion and the time?

Philippi now, so travellers tell us, is a scene of beautiful and silent ruin. Near the head of the fair Archipelago, amidst scenery of exquisite beauty, near the range of Pangaeus, now Pirnari, on the banks of the quiet Gangas, lie the relics of the once busy city, visited only by the herdsman and the explorer. By it or through it ran a great road from West to East, called by the Romans the Egnatian Way. The double battle of Philippi, B.C. 42, when the Oligarchy fell finally before the rising Empire, made the plain famous. Augustus planted a *colonia* in the town. It thus became a miniature Rome, as every "colony" was. It had its pair of petty consuls (*duumviri*; the *strategoï* of Acts 16:20) and their lictors (A.V. "serjeants," *rhabdouchoi*). And it faithfully reproduced Roman pride in the spirit of its military settlers. It had its Jewish element, as almost every place then had; but the Jews must have been few and despised; their place of worship was but a "prayer-house" (*proseuchê*),

outside the walls, on the river's bank (Acts 16:13). We need not recount in detail the history of the first evangelization (A.D. 52) of the difficult place. We recollect sufficiently the address to the pious Jewesses and proselyte-women in the "prayer-house"; the conversion and baptism of Lydia; the rescue of the poor girl possessed with the "spirit of Pytho"; the tumult, and the trial before the duumvirs; the scourge, the inner prison, the hymn at midnight, the earthquake, and the salvation of the jailor's life and soul; the message sent through the lictors in the morning, then the respectful approach of the magistrates themselves, and the retirement of the Missionaries "to another city," along the Egnatian road. It is enough now to remember, what the very existence of the Epistle reveals to us, the growth and life of the little mission-church planted amidst such storms, and in a climate, so to speak, full of possible tempests at any hour. In the Epistle, we arrive at a date some nine years later than the first visit of St Paul. Twice during that period, and perhaps only twice, we find him at Philippi again; late in A.D. 57 (Acts 20:1) and early (it was the sweet spring, the Passover time) in A.D. 58; this last may have been a visit arranged on purpose (in Lightfoot's words: *Philippians*, p. 60) "that he might keep the Paschal feast with his beloved converts." No doubt, besides these personal visits, Philippi was kept in contact with its Missionary between A.D. 52 and A.D. 61 by messages and by the occasional visits of the Apostle's faithful helpers. But on the whole the Church would seem in a very large degree to have been left to its own charge. And what do we find as the issue when we come to the Epistle? A community large enough to need a *staff* of Christian ministers, "bishops and deacons," "overseers and working-helpers" (*episkopoi kai diakonoi*); full of love and good works; affectionately mindful of St Paul in the way of practical assistance; and apparently shewing, as their almost only visible defect or danger, a tendency to separate somewhat into sections or cliques—a trouble

which in itself indicates a considerable society. If we may (as we may, looking at the ordinary facts of human nature) at all estimate the calibre of Philippian Christianity by the tone in which the Apostle addresses the Philippians, we gather that on the whole it was a high tone, at once decided and tender, affectionate and mature. The converts were capable of responding to a deep doctrinal teaching, and also to the simplest appeals of love. Such was the triumph of the mysterious Gospel over place, and circumstance, and character; the lily flowered at its fairest among the thorns; grace shone and triumphed in the immediate presence of its "adversaries."

But the evil we indicated just above was present in the otherwise happy scene. When Epaphroditus crossed the mountains and the sea to carry a generous gift of money to St Paul, risking his life (2:27) somehow by dangerous sickness in the effort, he had to carry also news of differences and heart-burnings, which could not but cloud the Apostle's loving joy. The envoy found it needful to speak also of the emissaries of error who at Philippi, as everywhere, were troubling the faith and hope of the believers; "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness"; professing a lofty spirituality, and worshipping their appetites all the while. And side by side with them, apparently, might be found Pharisaic disputants of an older type (3:3, 18, etc.).

Such was the report with which Epaphroditus found his way from Macedonia to Rome. Where, in Rome, did he find St Paul, and at what stage of his Roman residence? Our answer must begin with affirming the conviction that it *was* to Rome, not elsewhere, that Epaphroditus went. The reader is aware that the Epistle itself names no place of origin; it only alludes to a scene of *imprisonment*. And this does not of itself decide the locality; for at Caesarea Stratonis, in Palestine, as well as at Rome, St Paul spent two years in

captivity (Acts 24:27). Some modern critics have favoured the date from Caesarea accordingly. They have noticed e.g. the verbal coincidence between Herod's *praetorium* (A.V. "judgment-hall") of Acts 23:35, and the *praetorium* (A.V. "palace") of Philippians 1:13. But Lightfoot^[4] seems to me right in his decisive rejection of this theory and unshaken adherence to the date from Rome. He remarks that the oldest Church tradition is all for Rome; that the Epistle itself evidently refers to its place of origin as to a place of first-rate importance and extent, in which any advance of the Gospel was a memorable and pregnant event; and that the allusion to "Caesar's household" (though it is not so quite decisive as it might at first sight appear to be) "cannot without much straining of language and facts be made to apply to Caesarea."

If now the Epistle was written from Rome, during the "two whole years" of Acts 28:30, at what point in that period may we think that the writing fell? Here again is a problem over which much thought and labour has been spent. A majority of opinions no doubt is in favour of a date towards the end of the imprisonment, so that Philippians would follow after Colossians and Ephesians. It is held that (1) the tone of the Epistle betokens the approach of a closing crisis for St Paul; and that (2) it seems to indicate an already developed Christian mission work at Rome, as if St Paul had worked there some while; and that (3) Epaphroditus' visit cannot be adjusted with any probability if we do not allow a good time for previous communications between Rome and Philippi. But here again Lightfoot's view commends itself to my mind decisively. He holds that Philippians was *the first* of the "Epistles of the Captivity," and was written perhaps within the first few months of the "two whole years." Two of his reasons seem adequate of themselves to make this likely. The first is, that St Paul's allusion to the profound *impression made on the Roman Christians* by his "bonds in Christ" (1:13, 14) goes well

with the hypothesis of his recent arrival as a prisoner for Christ's sake, but not with that of his having been long present on the scene. The other is that the great doctrinal passage (3:4-9), where he repudiates "his own righteousness" and commits himself to "the righteousness which is of God by faith," is evidently akin to the group of Epistles to which Romans belongs; and that it seems more likely that the divine Inspirer, in His order of revelation, led His servant so to write while the occasion for the writing of Romans was still comparatively recent, than long after, when the different (though kindred) sides of saving truth dealt with in Ephesians and Colossians had become prominent in his teaching. With reason, I think, Lightfoot "cannot attach any weight" to the argument from Epaphroditus' visit, which may well have been planned at Philippi before St Paul actually reached Rome, and planned thus early on purpose, so as to reach him promptly there with the collected gifts of love. Nor are the allusions to a probable impending crisis in the trial before the Emperor important for the date; for quite early in the imprisonment it may well have seemed likely that the case would be soon decided. As for the comparatively advanced state of Roman Christianity, the Epistle to the Romans is evidence enough that a vigorous and extensive mission-church, however it was founded, existed at Rome some years before St Paul arrived.

I will venture then to take it for granted that it was some time in A.D. 61, or at latest early in A.D. 62, that Epaphroditus came, with his collection and his reports, and struggled through his illness, and then prepared to return to Macedonia, carrying this precious Letter with him. We seem to see the scene as he converses day by day with St Paul, and as at length he takes his leave, in charge of this Message of "faith and love." We see a large chamber in one of those huge piles of building, storey over storey, of which imperial Rome was full. The window looks perhaps north-westward, up the stream of the Tiber, towards the distant hills of which Soracte is the most prominent. The

sentinel, perhaps himself a convert to the Lord, sits motionless at a little distance, chained to the Apostle. The saints pray, converse, and embrace; and then Epaphroditus descends to set out for Ostia, or for Puteoli, on his way home to Philippi.

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever." The graves of the blessed ones who worked for the heavenly Master then are more than eighteen centuries old now. But the Letter to Philippi is to-day as new as ever. It is addressed to us, that we too may "believe, unto life everlasting," on "that same Jesus."

"Man, like the grass of morning,

Droops ere the evening hour;

His goodliness and beauty

Fade as a fading flower;

But who may shake the pillars

Of God's unchanging Word?

Amen, Himself hath spoken;

Amen—thus saith the Lord.

—**BISHOP E. H. BICKERSTETH.**

Chapter II[\(TOC\)](#)

The Intimacy of Human Hearts in Christ

Philippians 1:1-11

"I learned without booke almost all Paules Epistles, yea and I weene all the Canonical! Epistles, save only the Apocalyps. Of which study, although in time a great part did depart from me, yet the sweete smell thereof I trust I shall cary with me into heaven."—BISHOP RIDLEY, 1555.

The Apostle and his converts one—The possible isolation of hearts—Union with and in Christ—Christ and the personality—Christ the secret of intimacy—Is the secret ours?—Reserve in Christian intercourse

Let us begin our verbal study of the Letter which Epaphroditus carried to Philippi. We attempt first a translation of its first main section, interspersed with an explanatory paraphrase. This will be followed by a brief meditation upon one of the main "Lessons in Faith and Love" suggested by the section.

Verse 1. **Paul and Timotheus, bondservants of Christ Jesus, to all the holy ones in union with Christ Jesus who are living at Philippi, Overseers, Workers, and all.**^[5]

Verse 2. **Grace to you, and peace**—all the free favour of acceptance and of divine presence, and all the repose which it brings, within you and around you—from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

Verse 3, 4. **I give thanks to my God** (He is mine, as I am His) **over my whole memory of you; always in each request of mine on behalf of you all forming and expressing** (*poioumenos*^[6]) **that (tên) request with joy;**

Verse 5. **On account of your participation with me in regard of the Gospel**, your active co-operation with me, by prayer, by work, by gifts, in the Gospel work,

Verse 6. **From the first day up to this present. For** (the thought of your long consistency suggests the assertion) **I am quite sure of just this, that He who inaugurated** (*enarkamenos*: the word has solemn, ceremonial connexions) **in you the**^[7] good work will perfect it, will evermore put His finishing touches to it (*epitelesei*), up to **Christ Jesus' Day**, the Day of His promised Return, and of our glorification with Him. But this is by the way; I return to my joy and my

Verse 7. Thanksgivings over you: **Even as it is just that I**, I above all men (*emoi*, emphatic, not *moi*), **should feel** (*phronein*) **like this over you all, on behalf of you all**,^[8] because of my having you in my heart, as those who, alike in my imprisonment (*desmois*) **and in the vindication and establishment of the Gospel**, the defence of it against its enemies, the developement of its truths and its power in the believing, **are copartners, all of you, of my grace**; my grace, the grace granted me, the glorious privilege of suffering and of doing as a Missionary of Christ. Your loving, working sympathy has inextricably united you and me, alike in my prison and in my apostolate.

Verse 8. Yes, I feel this in my inmost being. **For God is my witness, how I yearn**, as with a homesick affection (*epipothia*), **for you all, in the heart** (*splagchna*) **of Christ Jesus**; for to His members His heart is as it were theirs; our emotions are, by the Spirit, in contact with His.

Verse 9. **And** what are those "requests" which I make for you with joy? **This is my prayer, that your love**, in the fullest Christian sense, but above all in the sense of your love to one another, **may abound yet more and more** in the attendant and protective blessing of **spiritual knowledge** (*epignôsis*) and all needed

Verse 10. **Discernment; so that**, amidst life's many temptations to compromises of conviction or inconsistency of spirit, **you may test the things that differ** (*ta diapherona*), sifting truth and holiness from their counterfeits; **in order to be singlehearted** (*eilikrineis*^[9]) **and without a stumbling-block**, such as error and inconsistency so easily lay in our further path, **against**, in view of, **Christ's Day**; so that when that Day dawns you may be found to be not

servants whose time has been half lost for their Lord's work and will, but

Verse 11. Rather those **who have been filled with the fruit** (*karpon*, not *karpôn*) of righteousness—the result, in witness and service, of your reconciliation and renewal,^[10] fruit which is borne **through Jesus Christ**, the Procurer and the Secret of your fruit-bearing life, to **God's praise and glory**, the true goal and end of all our blessings and of all our labours.

So the Letter opens; with greeting, with benediction, and then with an outpouring, of sympathies full at once of the warmest and tenderest *humanity* and of the inmost secrets of divine truth and life. It is a preamble beautifully characteristic not only of St Paul but of the Gospel. It illustrates from many sides the happy fact that there is nothing which so effectually opens human hearts to one another as the love of Christ. We are all sadly familiar with the possibilities of isolation between heart and heart. Poets have written with eloquent melancholy of our personalities as islands which lie indeed near together, but in an unfathomable ocean, over whose channels no boat has ever passed. Schools of pessimistic thought have positively affirmed that never really has one *ego* found its way into another through the hermetic seal of individuality; all that we seem to know of others is but the action of our own mind within itself, occasioned by a blind collision with a something not itself, which we can strike upon but can never really know. Such lucubrations are artificial, not natural; a distortion of mysterious facts, not an exposition of them; the result of an arbitrary selection from the data of our consciousness, and then the treatment of the selection as if it were the whole. Quite apart from the Gospel, the facts of human intercourse are full of evidence to wonderful and beautiful possibilities of insight and intercourse between human spirit and spirit. But if we want to read the best possible negative to the gloomy dream of impenetrable isolation, we must come to the Lord Jesus Christ. We must make experiment of what it is, in Him, to know and love

others who are in Him too. Then indeed we shall find that we can, in the common possession of a living Lord who dwells in our hearts by faith, see as it were from heart into heart, in the warm light of His presence. We shall find how wonderful is the friendship with one another to which the friends of Jesus are called, and for which they are enabled in Him.

"IN HIM": those words are the key to this deep, tender, healthful union, and as it were fusion, of souls. We have the truth which they convey prominent already in the Philippian Letter. It is addressed (Verse 1) to "the holy ones in Christ Jesus." That is to say, it comes to men and women who, taken on their profession, assumed to be in fact what they were denoted to be in baptism, were separated from self and sin to God by their union in covenant and life with their Redeemer. It regards them as personalities so truly annexed by Jesus Christ, in the miracle of converting grace, so articulated spiritually into Him, that no language short of this wonderful "in Him" will worthily express their relation to Him. Later (Verse 11), they are regarded as so united to Him that "the fruit of righteousness" which they are to bear in rich abundance is to be borne only "**through** Him"; He, the Vine, is the one possible secret by which they, the branches, can possibly be productive of the sweet cluster of "the fruit of the Spirit." And between those two places comes a sentence (Verse 8) where, just in passing, in a mere allusion to his own experience, the Apostle takes for granted this profound "continuity with Christ" in a peculiarly impressive way:

"I long after you all in the heart of Jesus Christ." As we have seen above, he regards himself (not as an Apostle but simply as a believer) as so "joined unto the Lord" that, if I may dare so to expand the phrase, the heart of Jesus Christ is the true organ and vehicle of his own regenerate emotions. The whole Scripture, and particularly the whole Pauline Scripture, assures us what this

does **not** mean. It does not mean the least suspension or distortion of the humanity or of the personality of Paul. It means no absorption of his **ego**, and nothing whatever **un**-natural in either the nature or the exercise of his affections. His "homesick longing" to see the dear Philippian people again is quite as simple, natural, personal, as any longing he ever felt in his boyhood for his home at Tarsus when he was absent from it. Yes, but this personality, working so freely and truly in its every faculty, is now, by the Holy Ghost, so put into spiritual contact with the will and heart of Jesus Christ, who now "dwells in it by faith," that the whole action moves, so to speak, in the sphere, in the atmosphere, of HIM. The love which passes so freely through and out of the believer to his brethren would not be what it is if the believer were not "in Christ." He is still all himself; nay, he is more than ever himself, being in the Lord; for indeed that blessed union has a genial and developing power upon its happy subject. But such is that power that it deeply qualifies the mental and spiritual action of the being who enters into it; never violates but always qualifies.

The fact, the experience, of course transcends our analysis. But it is not beyond our faith, nor beyond our reception and inward verification.

"Thy love, Thy joy, Thy peace,

Continuously impart

Unto my heart;

Fresh springs that never cease,

But still increase."^[11]

Our immediate purpose meanwhile is not to discuss the believer's union with his Lord, but to remark on this one precious result of it, the opening of his

inmost sympathies to the sharers of the same blessing. We see that result displayed in all its brightness in this first paragraph of the Epistle; and we shall see it to the end. In the particular case of St Paul and the Philippians it was indeed a remarkable phenomenon. Here on the one side was a man who, not very many years before, had been the devotee of the Pharisaic creed, a creed which tended powerfully not to expand but to annihilate every sympathy which could touch "the Gentiles." Here on the other side were people whose life and thought had been moulded in the proud political and national ideas of a Roman *colonia*; no kindly atmosphere for the growth of affections which should be at once intense and comprehensive. But these two unlikely parties are now one, in the strongest and most beautiful union of thought and heart. If we may use again a word ventured just above, they are mutually (not confused but) fused together. Their whole beings have come into living touch, not on the surface merely but most of all in their depths. An interchange of idea, of sympathy, of purpose has become possible between them in which, while self-respect is only deepened and secured, reserve is melted away in the common possession of the life and love of Jesus Christ. The Apostle writes to his friends as one whose whole soul is open to them, is at their command. His memory and reflexion are full of them. He not only prays and gives thanks for them but delights in telling them that he is doing so. He says without difficulty exactly what he is sure of about them, and exactly what things he is asking for them as yet more developed blessings. Above all, the name of Him who is everything to himself and to them flows from his heart with a holy freedom which is impossible except where the parties in religious intercourse are indeed "one" in Him. Seven times in these eleven short verses "Christ Jesus" is explicitly named; as the writer's Possessor; as the Philippian saints' Life and Head; as the Giver to them, with His Father, of grace and peace; as the Lord of the longed-for "Day," that dear

goal of hope; as the mighty Sphere of regenerate family-love; as the Cause and Condition of the Christian's fruitfulness for God. His presence, as it were, moves in the whole message, in the whole intercourse of which the message is the expression. Writer and readers perfectly "understand each other," for they both know Christ, and are found in Him.

The same divine Cause tends always to similar effects. Unhappily it does not always act without obstruction—obstruction which need not be. There are no doubt obstructions to its action which are inherent in our mortality; things which have to do really with physical temperament, or again with external circumstances which we may be helpless to modify. But the Cause, *in itself, tends always* to the effects visible in this noble passage of Christian affection. The possession and knowledge of Jesus Christ, in spirit and in truth, tends always, by an eternal law, to warm and open as well as to purify the human heart; to anchor it indeed immoveably to God, but also to suffuse it with a gracious sympathy towards man, and first and most of all towards man who is also, in Christ, cognizant of the "free-masonry" of faith.

Let this be our first main Lesson in Faith and Love in our Philippian studies. The section which we have traversed is full of points of interest and importance otherwise; but this aspect of it is so truly dominant that we may rightly take it for the true message of the whole. Let us welcome it home. Let us question ourselves, in presence of it, and before our Lord, first about our personal possession of the Cause, and then about our personal manifestation of the effects. Let us put to our own hearts some very old-fashioned interrogations: *Am I indeed in Jesus Christ? Is He to me indeed Possessor, Lord, Giver of grace and peace? Is my life so lived and my work so done in contact with Him that through Him, and not merely through myself, "my fruit is found"? Is His promised Day the goal and longing of my heart, as I*

submit myself to Him that He may perfect His work in me by the way, and watch over myself that I may meet Him single-hearted and "without offence" at the end? Is He the pervading and supreme Interest of my life? Is He the inward Power which colours my thought and gives direction and quality to my affections?

No answer which a heart fully wakeful to God can give to such deliberate inward questionings can possibly be an easy or "light-hearted" answer. The gladdest and most thankful utterance of such a heart will carry along with it always the prayer, "Search me, O God, and try my heart"; "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant." Yet we are assuredly meant, if we are in Christ, so to know the fact as to rejoice in it, and to be strong in it; we are invited, without a doubt, so to know Him as to know we know Him, and to find in Him "all our salvation, and all our desire." Let us not rest till, in great humility but with perfect simplicity, we so see Him as to leave behind our doubts about our part and lot in Him, and, "believing, to rejoice."

And then let us covet the developement of those results of possession of Christ, of union with Christ, which we have specially studied in the opening section of our Epistle. Let us welcome the Lord in to "the springs of thought and will," with the conscious aim that He should so warm and enrich them with His presence that they shall overflow for blessing around us, in the life of Christian love. I do not mean for a moment that we should set ourselves to construct a spiritual mannerism of speech or of habit. The matter is one not of manufacture but of culture; it is a call to "nourish and cherish" the gift of God which is in us, and to give to it the humble co-operation of our definite wish and will that it may be ***manifested*** in the ways commended in His Word. It is a call to desire and intend to "***adorn*** the doctrine of God our Saviour," in the outcoming of His presence in us in our tone, temper, and converse, towards

those around us, and especially where we know that a common faith and common love do subsist.

If I mistake not, there is far too little of this at present, even in true Christian circles. A certain dread of "phraseology," of "pietism," of what is foolishly called "goody-goody," has long been abroad; a grievously exaggerated dread; a mere parody of rightful jealousy for sincerity in religion. Under the baneful spell of this dread it is only too common for really earnest Christians to keep each other's company, and even to take part in united religious work, and to be constantly together as worshippers, aye, perhaps as ministers of the Word and Ordinances of Christ, and yet never, or hardly ever, to exchange a word about HIM, heart to heart; still less to "speak often one to another," and share fully together their treasures of experience of what He is and what He has done for them. The very dialect of the Christian life has greatly lost in holy depth and tenderness, so it seems to me, since a former generation in which this over-drawn fear (it is a mere fashion) of "phraseology" was less prevalent. It ought not so to be.

Let us each for himself come closer to our eternal FRIEND, converse more fully with Him, "consider HIM" much more than many of us do. And then we too shall discover that "our mouth is opened, our heart enlarged," for holy converse with our fellow-servants, in that wonderful interchange of souls which is possible "in the heart of Jesus Christ."

"Oh days of heaven, and nights of equal praise,
Serene and peaceful as those heavenly days,
When souls, drawn upwards in communion sweet,
Enjoy the stillness of some close retreat;
Discourse, as if releas'd and safe at home,

f dangers past and wonders yet to come,
And spread the sacred treasures of the breast
Upon the lap of covenanted rest." [\[12\]](#)

Chapter III[\(TOC\)](#)

The Apostle's Position and Circumstances

Philippians 1:12-20

*"Yield to the Lord, with simple heart,
All that thou hast and all thou art,
Renounce all strength but strength divine,
And peace shall be for ever thine."*

—*MME DE LA MOTHE GUYON, translated by COWPER.*

Disloyal "brethren"—Interest of the paragraph—The victory of patience—
The Praetorian sentinel—Separatism, and how it was met—St Paul's secret—
His "earnest expectation"—"Christ magnified"—"In my body"

St Paul has spoken his affectionate greeting to the Philippians, and has opened to them the warm depths of his friendship with them in the Lord. What he feels towards them "in the heart of Christ Jesus," what he prays for them in regard of the growth and fruit of their new life, all has been expressed. It is time now to meet their loving anxieties with some account of his own position, and the circumstances of the mission in the City. Through this passage let us follow him now; we shall find that the quiet picture, full of strong human interest in its details, is suffused all over with the glory of the presence and the peace of Christ.

Verse 12. **Now I wish you to know, brethren, that my position and circumstances** (*ta kat eme, "the things related to me"*) **have come out**, have resulted, **rather for the progress of the Gospel** message and enter—

Verse 13. **Prise, than otherwise; so that my bonds**, my imprisonment, with its **custodia militaris, are become unmistakable** (*phanerous*) as being **in Christ**; as due to no social or political crime, but to the name and cause of

the Messiah of Israel, the Saviour of the world. This is the case in the **whole Praetorium**,^[13] in all ranks of the Imperial Guard, **and among other people in general** (*tois loipois pasi*^[14]). And

Verse 14. Another result is^[15] **that the majority** (*tous plaionas*) **of the brethren in the Lord**, the converts of the Roman mission, **feeling a new confidence in connexion with my bonds**,^[16] animated by the fact of my imprisonment, realizing afresh the glory of the cause which makes me happy to suffer, **venture more abundantly**, more frequently, more openly, **fearlessly to speak the Word**, the message of Christ, of the Cross, of Truth, of Life. There is a drawback in this

Verse 15. Welcome phenomenon: **some indeed actually** (*kai*) **for envy and strife, while others as truly** (*kai*) **for goodwill, are proclaiming the Christ**. The latter^[17]

Verse 16. Are at work thus **from** motives of love, love to the Lord and to me His captive Messenger, **knowing** that on purpose **for the vindication** (*apologian*) **of the Gospel I am posted** (*keimai*, as a soldier, fixed by his captain's order) here. The former from

Verse 17. Motives of **faction**, partizanship (*eritheia*) in a self-interested propaganda of their own opinions, **are announcing the Christ, not purely, thinking and meaning to raise up** (*egeirein*, so read) **tribulation for me in my bonds**; as so easily they can do, by detaching from me many converts who would otherwise gather round me, and generally by the mortifying thought of their freedom and activity in contrast to my enforced isolation. Shall I give way to the trial, and lose patience and peace? Must I? Need

Verse 18. I? Nay; **what matters it** (*ti gar*)? Is not the fiery arrow quenched in Christ for me? Is it not thus nothing to me? Yes—yet not nothing, after all; for it brings a gain; it spreads the Gospel so much further; so that to my "What matters it?" I may add, **Only, in every way, fair or foul, Christ is being announced; and in this I rejoice, aye, and rejoice I shall**; the future can only bring me fresh reasons for a joy which lies wholly in the triumphs of

my Lord, and can only bring fresh blessings to

Verse 19. Me His vassal. **For I know that I shall find** (*moi*) this experience **result in salvation**, in the access of saving grace to my soul, **through your supplication** for me, which will be quickened by your knowledge of my trials, **and** through a resulting **full supply** (*epichorêgia*: the word suggests a supply which is ample) **of the Spirit of Jesus Christ**; a developed presence in me of the Holy Ghost, coming from the exalted Saviour, and revealing Him, and applying Him. Such blessing will be exactly

Verse 20. **According to my eager expectation** (*apokaradokia*) and hope, that in no respect shall I be disappointed (*aiochunthêsomai*: with the "shame" of a miscalculation), **but that in all outspokenness** (*parrêsia*) of testimony, whether in word or deed, **as always, so also now, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by means of life or by means of death.**

The passage is full of various points of interest. It is interesting, as we saw in our first chapter, in regard of the historical criticism of the Epistle. It gives a strong suggestion (I follow Lightfoot in the remark) in favour of dating the Epistle early in the "two years" of Acts xxviii. For it implies that the fact of the Apostle's imprisonment was a powerful stimulant to the zeal of the Roman Christians; and this is much more likely to have been the case when the imprisonment was still a new fact to them, than later. St Paul's arrival and first settlement, in the character (totally new in Rome, so far as we know) of a "prisoner of Jesus Christ," would of itself give a quickening shock, so to speak, to the believing community, which had suffered, so we gather, from a certain decadence of zeal. But when he had been some time amongst them, and the conditions of the "hired house" had become usual and familiar in their thoughts, it would be otherwise; whatever else about St Paul might rekindle their ardour, the mere fact of his imprisoned state would hardly do so.

The passage is further interesting as it indicates one particular direction of the

Apostle's influence upon the pagans around him. It was felt, primarily, "in all the Praetorium," that is to say, in the large circle of the Imperial Life-guards. [18] We gather here, with reasonable certainty, that from the Life-guards were supplied, one by one, "the soldiers that kept him" (Acts 28:16); mounting guard over him in turn, and fastened to him by the long chain which clasped at one end the wrist of the prisoner, at the other that of the sentinel. It needs only a passing effort of imagination to understand something of the exquisite trial to every sensibility which such a custody must have involved, even where the conditions were favourable. Let the guardian be ever so considerate and civil, it would be a terrible ordeal to be literally never alone, night or day; and too often, doubtless, the guardian would be not at all complaisant. To many a man, certainly to any man of the refined mental and moral nature of St Paul, this slow fire of indescribable annoyance would be far worse to endure than a great and sudden infliction of pain, even to death. It is a noble triumph of grace when such a test is well borne, and turned by patience into an occasion for God. When Nicholas Ridley, for a long year and a half (1554-5) was committed at Oxford to the vexatious domestic custody of the mayor and his bigoted wife, Edmund and Margaret Irish, it must have been nothing less than a slow torture to one whose fine nature had been used for years to the conditions of civil and ecclesiastical dignity and of a large circle of admirable friends. And it was a spiritual victory, second only to that of his glorious martyrdom (Oct. 16, 1555), when the close of that dreary time found the once obdurate and vexatious Mrs Irish won by Ridley's life to admiration and attachment, and also, as it would seem, to scriptural convictions. [19] But it was a still nobler result from a still more persistent and penetrating trial when St Paul so lived and so witnessed in the presence of this succession of Roman soldiers that the whole Guard was pervaded with a knowledge of his true character and position, evidently in the sense of interest and of respect. It

must have been a course of **unbroken** consistency of conduct as well as of openness of witness. Had he only sometimes, only rarely, only once or twice, failed in patience, in kindness, in the quiet dignity of the Gospel, the whole succession of his keepers would have felt the effect, as the story passed from one to another. As a fact, the "keeping power of Christ" was always with him, and always used by him, and the men went out one after another to say that here was a prisoner such as never was before. Here was no conspirator or criminal; his "bonds" were evidently (Verse 13) due only to his devotion to a God whom he would not renounce, and whose presence with him and power over him were visibly shewn in the divine peace and love of his hourly life.

We can please ourselves if we will by imagining many a scene for the exercise of that influence. Sometimes the Saint would be left much alone with the Praetorian. Sometimes a long stream of visitors would flow in, and for a whole day perhaps the two would scarcely exchange a word; the Guardsman would only watch and listen, if he cared to do so. Sometimes it would be a case where ignorant and ribald blasphemies would have to be met in the power of the peace of God. Sometimes a really wistful heart would at once betray its presence under the Roman cuirass. Perhaps the man would attack the Apostle with ridicule, or with enquiries, after some long day of religious debate, such as that recorded in Acts 28. and the silent night would see St Paul labouring on to win this soul also.

"These ears were dull to Grecian speech;

This heart more dull to aught but sin;

Yet the great Spirit bade thee reach,

Wake, change, exalt, the soul within:

I've heard; I know; thy Lord, ev'n He,

JESUS, hath look'd from heaven on me.

* * * * *

"A Christian, yes—for ever now

A Christian: so our Leader keep

My faltering heart: to Him I bow,

His, whether now I wake or sleep:

In peace, in battle. His—the day

Breaks in the east: oh, once more pray!" ^[20]

The passage before us is interesting again because of the light it throws on the very early rise of a separatist movement in the Roman mission-church, and on the principles on which St Paul met it. Extremely painful and perplexing the phenomenon was, though by no means new in its nature to St Paul, as we well know. It was a trouble altogether from within, not from without. The men who "preached Christ of envy and strife" bore evidently the Christian name as openly as their sincerer brethren. They were baptized members of the community of the Gospel. And their evangelization was such that St Paul was able to say, "Christ is preached"; though this does not mean, assuredly, that there were no doubtful elements mingled in the preaching. Now for them, as for all the Roman Christians, he had every reason to regard himself as the Lord's appointed centre of labour and of order. There he was, the divinely commissioned Apostle of Christ, at once the Teacher and the Leader of the Gentile Churches; only a few short years before he had written to these very people, in his inspired and commissioned character, the greatest of the Epistles. Yet now behold a separation, a schism. That such the movement was we cannot doubt. These "brethren," he tells us, carried on

their missionary efforts in a way precisely intended to "raise up trouble" for him in his prison. The least that they would do with that object would be not only to teach much that he would disapprove of, but to intercept intercourse between their converts and him; to ignore him altogether as the central representative of the Church at Rome; to arrange for assemblies, to administer Baptisms, to practise the Breaking of Bread, wholly apart from the order and cohesion which he would sanction, and which he had the fullest right to enjoin. All this was a great evil, a sin, carrying consequences which might affect the Christian cause far and wide. Is it not true that no deliberate schism has ever taken place in the Church where there has not been grievous sin in the matter—on one side, or, on the other, or on both?

Yet how does the Apostle meet this distressing problem? With all the large tolerance and self-forgetting patience which come to the wise man who walks close to God in Christ. No great leader, surely, ever prized more the benefits of order and cohesion than did St Paul. And where a fundamental error was in view, as for example that about Justification in Galatia, no one could meet it more energetically, and with a stronger sense of authority, than he did. But he "discerned things that differ." And when, as here, he saw around him men, however misguided, who were aiding in the "announcement" of the Name and salvation of Christ, he thought more of the evangelization than of the breach of coherence, which yet most surely he deplored. He speaks with perfect candour of the unsound spiritual state of the separatists, their envy, strife, and partizanship. But he has no anathema for their methods. He is apparently quite unconscious of the thought that because he is the one Apostle in Rome grace can be conveyed only through him; that his authority and commission are necessary to authenticate teaching and to make ordinances effectual. He would far rather have order, and he knows that he is its lawful centre. But "the announcement of Christ" is a thing even more

momentous than order. He cannot stay to speak of that great but inferior benefit, while he "rejoices, aye, and is going to rejoice," in the diffusion of the Name and salvation of the Lord.

It is an instructive lesson. Would that in all the after ages the Church had more watchfully followed this noble precedent! The result would have been, so I venture to hold, a far truer and stronger cohesion, in the long run, than we see, alas, around us now.

What was the secret of this happy harmony of the love of order and the capacity for tolerance in the mind of St Paul? It was a secret as deep but also as simple as possible; it was the Lord Jesus Christ. Really and literally, Jesus Christ was the one ruling consideration for St Paul; not himself, his claims, position, influence, feelings; not even the Church. To him the Church was inestimably precious, but the Lord was more. And all his thoughts about work, authority, order, and the like, were accordingly conditioned and governed by the thought, What will best promote the glory of the Lord who loved us and gave Himself for us? If even a separatist propaganda will extend the knowledge of HIM, His servant can rejoice, not in the separatism, not in the unhappy spirit which prompted it, but in the extension of the reign of Jesus Christ in the human hearts which need Him. Surely, even in our own day, with its immemorial complications of the question of exterior order, it will tend more than anything else to straighten the crooked places and level the rough places, if we look, from every side, on the glory of the blessed Name as our supreme and ruling interest.

This view of the supremacy of the Saviour in the thoughts of St Paul about the Church leads us to a view, as we close, of that supremacy in all his thoughts about his own life. Our paragraph ends with the words which anticipate a great blessing, a new development of "salvation," in the writer's

soul, in answer to the believing prayers of the Philippians; and then comes the thought that this result will carry out his dearest personal ambition—"that Christ may be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death." Let us take up those final words for a simple study, before God.

"According to my eager expectation," my *apokaradokia*, my waiting and watching, with outstretched head, for some keenly wished—for arrival, or attainment. Such is this man's thought and feeling with regard to the "magnification" of Christ through his life and death. It is his "hope," it is his absorbing "expectation." It is to him the thing with which he wakes up in the morning, and over which he lingers as he prepares to sleep at night. It is the animating inner interest which gives its zest to life. What art is to the ambitious and successful painter, what literature is to the man who loves it for its own sake and whose books have begun to take the world, what athletic toil and triumph is to the youth in his splendid prime, what the fact of extending and wealth-winning enterprise is to the man conscious of mercantile capacity—all this, only very much more, is the "magnification of Christ in his body" to the prisoner who sits, never alone, in the Roman lodging. It is this which effectually forbids him ever to find the days dull. Its light falls upon everything; comforts, trials, days of toil, hours of comparative repose, prospects of life, prospects of death. It quickens and concentrates all his faculties, as a great and animating interest always tends to do; it is always present to his mind as light and heat, to his will as rest and power. It secures for him the quiet of a great disengagement and liberty from selfish motives; it continually drives him on, with a force which does not exhaust him (for it is from above) in the ambition and enterprise which is for Christ; giving him at once an impulse toward great and arduous labours, and a patience and loving tact which continually adjusts itself to the smallest occasions of love and service.

Reader, this is admirable in St Paul. But after all, the ultimate secret of the noble phenomenon resides not in St Paul but in Jesus Christ. "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me" (Galatians 1:15, 16). The man had seen his Saviour with his whole soul. And because of—not the man who saw but—the Saviour who was seen, behold, the life is lifted off the pivot of self-will and transferred to that of "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The same "revealing" grace can lift us also. We are not St Pauls; but the Jesus Christ of St Paul is absolutely the same, in Himself, for us. We will, in His name, place ourselves in the way of His working, that He may so shew us His fair countenance that we may *not be able not* to live, quite really, for Him as the enthralling Interest of life.

Let us look at the words again: "That Christ may be *magnified*," may be made great. In what respect? Not in Himself; for He is already "all in all"; "filling all things"; "higher than the heavens." Such is He that "no man knoweth the Son but the Father"; the mind of Deity is alone adequate to comprehend His glory. But He may be magnified—relatively to those who see Him, or may see Him. To eyes which find in Christ only a distant and obscure Object, however sacred, He may be made to occupy the whole field of the soul with His love and glory. As when the telescope is directed upon the heavens, and some "cloudy spot" becomes, magnified, a mighty planet perhaps, or perhaps a universe of starry suns; so it is when through a believer's life "Christ is magnified" to eyes which watch that life and see the reality of the power within.

Ah, have we not known such lives ourselves? Has not the Lord been made very near to us, and very luminous, in the face of father, mother, brother, sister, friend, or pastor? Have we not seen Him shining large and near us in their holy activities, and in their blessed sufferings, shedding His glory

through all they were and all they did? He has been magnified to us by saints in high places, whose dignity and fame have been to them only so much occasion for the exercise of their "ruling passion"—the glory of Christ. And He has been magnified to us also by saints in comfortless cottages, imprisoned upon sick-beds in gloomy attics, but finding in everything an occasion to experience and to manifest the power of their Lord. May He make it always our ambition to be thus His magnifiers. But may He keep it a really pure ambition. For even this can be distorted into the misery of self-seeking; an ambition not that Christ may be magnified, but that His magnifier may be thought "some great one" in the spiritual life.

"In my **body**." Because through the body, and only through it, practically, can we tell on others for the Lord. Do we speak to them? Do we write to them? Do we make home comfortable and happy for them? Do we "meet the glad with joyful smiles and wipe the weeping eyes"? Do we travel to those who want us? Do we nurse them? Do we think for them? All has its motives in the regenerate spirit, but all has its effect through the body. Without brain, eyes, ears, lips, hands, feet—how could we serve, how could we shine? Our life would have no articulation to others, nor our death.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present **your bodies** a living sacrifice." So be it, for writer and for reader. Then blessed will be our life, as day by day brings ceaseless occasions for the pursuit of our dear ambition—"that Christ may be magnified."

*** *En holô tô praitôriô* (Verse 13)—The word *praitôrion* occurs in e.g. Matthew 27:27. Acts 23:35, in the sense of the residence of a great official, regarded as *praetor*, or commander. The A.V. here evidently reasons from

such passages, and takes the word to mean the residence at Rome of the supreme *praetor*, the Emperor; the *Palatium*, the vast range of buildings on the Mons Palatinus which has since given a name to all "palaces." Bishop Lightfoot however has made it clear (*a*) that such a use at Rome, by Romans, of the word *Praetorium* was probably not known; (*b*) that the word *Praetorium* was a familiar word for the great body of the Imperial Life-guards; and that it would probably be often so used by the (praetorian) "soldiers who kept him." On the whole it seems clear that, at Rome, the word would denote a body, not a place. It never appears as a name for the great *camp* of the Praetorians, outside Rome at the east.

Chapter IV^(TOC)

The Christian's Peace and the Christian's Consistency

Philippians 1:21-30

"O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; Give unto Thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both our hearts may be set to obey Thy commandments, and also that by Thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen."

The Second Collect at Evening Prayer.

He will be spared to them—Spiritual wealth of the paragraph—Adolphe Monod's exposition—Charles Simeon's testimony—The equilibrium and its secret—The intermediate bliss—He longs for their full consistency—The "gift" of suffering

Verse 21. **For to me, to live is Christ**; the consciousness and experiences of living, in the body, are so full of Christ, my supreme Interest, that CHRIST sums them all up; **and to die**, the act of dying,^[21] **is gain**, for it will usher me in from an existence of blessing to an existence of more blessing still. **But**

Verse 22. **If living on, in the flesh**, be my lot; if the present suspense issues in my being acquitted at the Roman tribunal, **this will prove to me (touto moi) fruit of work**; it will just mean so much more work for the Lord, and so

much more fruit; I shall welcome it not as being the best thing in itself, as if I chose mortal life for its own sake, but because of its ceaseless opportunities for my Lord. **And which alternative I shall choose, I do not know**, I do not *recognize (gnôrizô*, as one who seeks to be sure of the face of

Verse 23. A friend amidst other faces). **Nay (de), I am held in suspense on both sides;**^[22] **my personal desire being**^[23] in the direction of departing, striking my tent, weighing my anchor (*analysai*),^[24] **and being with Christ** (for this is what "departing" means for us Christians, on its other side); **for it is far, far better**, by far more preferable, *pollô mallon kreisson*—aye even than a "life in the flesh" which "is Christ"! **But**

Verse 24. Then **the abiding by (epimenein) the flesh**, the brave, faithful, holding fast to the conditions of earthly trial, **is more necessary**, more obligatory, more of the nature of duty as against pleasure, **on account of you**, and your further need of me in the Lord. And **feeling**

Verse 25. **Confident of this, I know that I shall remain—aye and shall remain side by side (paramenô) with you all**, as your comrade, your helper, **in order to your progress and joy in your faith;**^[25] so as to promote your growth in the exercise of loyal reliance on your Lord, and in the deep joy which is the natural issue of such

Verse 26. Reliance; **so that your exultation may be overflowing in Christ Jesus**, in your living union with Him, **in me (en emoi)**, "in" whom you see a living example of your Lord's love, shewn to you **by means of my**

Verse 27. **Coming back to you again. Only**, whether I am thus actually restored to you or not, **order your life**^[26] in a way worthy of the Gospel of Christ (above all, worthy of the unifying, harmonizing power of the Gospel); **so that whether coming and seeing you, or remaining absent, I may hear**^[27] about your circumstances, your condition, **that you are standing firm in One Spirit,**^[28] in the power of the One Strengtheners, and, **with one soul**, one life and love, the resultant of the One Spirit's work in you all, **wrestling**

side by side, with enemies and obstacles, **for**^[29] the faith of the Gospel, for the maintenance and victory of that reliance which embraces

Verse 28. The truth of Christ; **and refusing to be (*mê*) scared out of that attitude in anything by your (*tôn*) opponents**, the unconverted world around you. **Such (*hêtis*) calm united courage is to them an evidence**, a sure token, an omen, **of the perdition** which awaits the obstinate foes of holiness, **but to you of the salvation** which awaits Christ's faithful witnesses. **And this, this condition of conflict and courage, is from God**; no mere blind result of accidents, but His purpose.

Verse 29. Yes, **because to you there has been granted**^[30] as an actual **boon**—for the sake of Christ not only the believing on Him but also the suffering for His sake,^[31] a sacred privilege when it is involved by

Verse 30. Loyalty to such a Master! So you will be **experiencing**^[32] (*echontes*) **the same conflict in kind (*oion*)** (as you wrestle side by side for your Lord against evil) **as that which you saw in me**, in my case, when I was with you in those first days (Acts xvi.), **and which you now hear of in me**, as I meet it in my prison at Rome.

The translation of our present section is completed. It has presented rather more material than usual for grammatical remark and explanation; constructions have proved to be complex, contracted, or otherwise slightly anomalous; and points of order and emphasis have claimed attention. But I trust that this handling of **the texture** has only brought more vividly into sight the holy richness and brightness of **the design**. Sentence by sentence, we have been reading a message of the first order of spiritual importance, as St Paul has spoken from his own experience of the Christian's wonderful happiness in life and death, and then, in his appeal to the Philippians, of the Christian's path of love and duty.

Let us listen anew to each part of that precious message.

I. The Christian's Happiness in Life and Death

In Adolphe Monod's volume of death-bed addresses, his *Adieux à ses Amis et à l'Eglise*, one admirable chapter, the second, is devoted to the passage before us, Philippians 1:21-26. From the borderland of eternity the great French Christian looks backward and forward with St Paul's letter in his hand, and comments there upon this divine possibility of "Happiness in Life and in Death." "The Apostle," he says, "is asking here which is most worth while for him, to live or to die. Often has that question presented itself to us, and perhaps we, like the Apostle, have answered that 'we are in a strait.' But I fear we may have used the words in a sense far different from St Paul's. When we have wished for death, we meant to say, 'I know not which alternative I ought most to dread, the afflictions of life, from which death would release me, or the terrors of death, from which life protects me.' In other words, life and death look to us like two evils of which we know not which is the less. As for the Apostle, they look to him like two immense blessings, of which he knows not which is the better. Personally, he prefers death, in order to be with Christ. As regards the Church and the world, he prefers life, in order to serve Jesus Christ, to extend His kingdom, and to win souls for Him. What an admirable view of life and of death!—admirable, because it is all governed (*dominée*), all sanctified, by love, and is akin to the Lord Jesus Christ's own view of life and death. Let us set ourselves to enter into this feeling (*sentiment*). Life is good; death is good. Death is good, because it releases us from the miseries of this life, but above all because, even were life full for us of all the joys which earth can give, death bids us enter into a joy and a glory of which we can form no idea. We are then to

consider death as a thing desirable in itself. Let us not shun what serves to remind us of it. Let all the illnesses, all the sudden deaths, all that passes round us, remind us that for each one of us death may come at any moment. But then life also is good, because in life we can serve, glorify, imitate, Jesus Christ. Life is not worth the trouble of living for any other object. All the strength we possess, all the breath, the life, the faculties, all is to be consecrated, devoted, sanctified, crucified, for the service of our Lord Jesus Christ. This crucified life is the happy life, even amidst earth's bitterest pains; it is the life in which we can both taste for ourselves and diffuse around us the most precious blessings. Let us love life, let us feel the value of life—but to fill it with Jesus Christ. In order to such a state of feeling, the Holy Spirit alone can transform us into new men. But observe; it is not only that *our spirit* must be sustained, consoled, fortified; *the Spirit of God* must come to dwell in us. We often set ourselves to work on ourselves, to set our spirit in order; this is well, but it is not enough. We want more. Jesus Christ Himself must dwell in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

"My friends, let us reflect upon the character of the promises of the Gospel, and we shall see how far we are from possessing and enjoying them. May God open the heavens above our heads; revealing all to us, filling us with all wisdom, granting us to see that even here below we may attain to perfect joy, while looking forward to possess hereafter the plenitude of bliss and of victory. May He teach us how to gather up the blessings which the heavens love to pour upon the earth which opens to receive them. And so may He teach us to know that if earth is able to bear us down and trouble us, it is unable to quench the virtues of heaven, to annul the promises of God, or to throw a veil, be it even the lightest cloud, over the love with which God has loved us in Jesus Christ."^[33]

"He being dead yet speaketh." On his bed of prolonged and inexpressible sufferings Monod, called comparatively early to leave a life and ministry of singular fruitfulness and rich in interests, found in Jesus the inexhaustible secret of this blessed *equilibrium* of St Paul. And what a cloud of witnesses have borne their testimony to that same open secret, as the most solid while most supernatural of realities! As I write, the memory comes up before me of a beloved friend and kinsman, my contemporary at Cambridge, called unexpectedly to die in his twenty-second year. Life to him was full of the strongest interests and most attractive hopes, alike in nature and in grace. He had no quarrel with life; it had poured out before him a rich store of social and mental blessings, and a large wealth of surrounding love, and the Lord Jesus, taking early and decisive possession of the young man's heart, had only augmented and glorified, not rebuked or stunted, every interest. But a slight fever, caught in the Swiss hotel, was medically mismanaged, and when perfect skill was summoned in, it was too late. His mother came to her son on his sofa to tell him that he was not only, as he knew, very poorly; he was about to die. In a moment, without a change of colour, without a tremor, without a pause, smiling a radiant smile, he looked up and answered, "Well, to depart and to be with Christ is far better!"

So the young Christian passed away, exchanging life which was sweet for death which, because of the life it would reveal, was sweeter. And "the veterans of the King" say just the same. If ever a man enjoyed life, with a vigorous and conscious joy, it was Simeon of Cambridge. And till the age of exactly seventy-seven he was permitted to *live* with a powerful life indeed; a life full of affections, interests, enterprises, achievements, and all full of Christ. Yet in that energetic and intensely human soul "the *desire* was to depart and to be with Christ." It was no dreamy reverie; but it was supernatural. It stimulated him to unwearied work; but it was breathed into

him from eternity. "I cannot but run with all my might," he wrote in the midst of his youthful old age, "*for I am close to the goal.*"

It is indeed a phenomenon peculiar to the Gospel, this view of life and death. It is far more than resignation. It is different even from the "holy indifference" of the mystic saints. For it is full of warmth, and sympathy, and all the affections of the heart, *in both directions*. The man who is the happy possessor of this secret does not on the one hand go about saying to himself that all around him is *maya*, is a dream, a phantasm of the desert sands counterfeiting the waters and the woods of Eden. He is as much alive in human life as the worldling is, and more. He cordially loves his dear ones; he is the open-hearted friend, the helpful neighbour, the loving and loyal citizen and subject, the attentive and intelligent worker in his daily path of duty. Time with its contents is full of reality and value to him. He does not hold that the earth is God-forsaken. With his Lord (Psalm civ.), he "rejoices in the works" of that Lord's hands; and, with the heavenly Wisdom (Proverbs viii.), "his delights are with the sons of men." But on the other hand, he does not banish from his thoughts as if it were unpractical the dear prospect of another world. He is not foolish enough to talk of "other-worldliness," as if it were a selfish thing to "lay up treasure in heaven," and so to have "his heart there also." For him the present could not possibly be what it is in its interests, affections, and purposes, if it were not for the revealed certainties of an everlasting future in the presence of the King. "He faints not," in the path of genuine temporal toil and duty, because "he looks at the things which are not seen."

But now, what is the secret of the equilibrium? We saw in our last chapter what was the secret of the unruffled peace with which St Paul could meet the exquisite trials occasioned by the separatist party at Rome. It was the Lord

Jesus Christ. And the secret of the far more than peace with which here he meets the alternative of life and death is precisely the same; it is the Lord Jesus Christ. He has no philosophy of happiness; he has something infinitely better; he has the Lord. What gives life its zest and charm for him? It is, that life "is Christ." What makes death an object of positive personal "desire" for him, matched, let us remember, against a "life" with which he is so deeply contented? It is, that "to depart" is to be with Christ, which is "far, far better." On either side of the veil, Jesus Christ is all things to him. So both sides are divinely good; only, the conditions of the other side are such that the longed-for companionship of his MASTER will be more perfectly realized there.

We might linger long over this golden passage. It would give us matter for more than one chapter to unfold adequately, for example, its clear witness to the conscious and immediate blessedness in death of the servants of God. We may ponder long what it implies in this direction when we remember that its "far, far better" means "better" not than our present life at its worst but than our present life at its holiest and best; for, as we have observed already, it is "far, far better" than a life here which "is Christ." Whatever mysteries attend the thought of the Intermediate State, and however distinctly we remember that the *disembodied* spirit must, as such, be circumstanced less perfectly than the spirit lodged again in the body, "the body of glory," yet this at least we gather here; the believer's happy spirit, "departing" from "this tabernacle," finds itself not in the void, not in the dark, not under penal or disciplinary pain, but in a state "far, far better" than its very best yet. It is, in a sense so much better in degree as to be new in kind, "with Christ."

"Yes, think of all things at the best; in one rich thought unite
All purest joys of sense and soul, all present love and light;
Yet bind this truth upon thy brow and clasp it to thy heart,

And then nor grief nor gladness here shall claim too great a part—

All radiance of this lower sky is to that glory dim;

Far better to depart it is, for we shall be WITH HIM." ^[34]

II. But even on this theme I must not linger now

Not only because "the time would fail me," but because we have to remember that *the main* incidence of the Apostle's thought here is not upon the blessedness of death but upon the joy of duty, the "fruit of labour," in continued life. He looks in through the gate, not to sigh because he may not enter yet, but "to run with all his might," in the path of unselfish service, "because he is close to the goal"—the goal of being with Christ, to whom he will belong for ever, and whom he will serve for ever, "day and night in His temple." He "knows that he shall remain, and that, side by side with" his dear converts at Philippi. And his "meat is to do the will of Him that sent him, and *to finish* His work."

The remainder of our chosen portion is altogether to this purpose. He has said enough about himself now, having just indicated how much Christ can be to him for peace and power in the great alternative. Now his thoughts are wholly at Philippi, and he spends himself on entreating them to live indeed, to live wholly for Christ; and to do so in two main respects, in self-forgetting unity, and in the recognition of the joy and glory of suffering.

"Only let them order their life in a way worthy of the Gospel of Christ."

"*Only*"; as if this were the one possible topic for him now. This will content

him; nothing else will. He "desires one thing of the Lord"—the practical holiness of his beloved converts; and he cannot possibly do otherwise, coming as he has just come from "the secret of the presence," felt in his own experience. Will they be watchful and prayerful? Will they renounce the life of self-will, and entirely live for their Lord's holy credit and glory? Will they particularly surrender a certain temptation to jealousies and divisions? Will they recollect that Christ has so committed Himself to them to manifest to the world that it is the "only" thing in life, after all, in the last resort, to be **practically** true to Him? Then the Missionary will be happy; his "joy will be fulfilled."

What pastor, what evangelist, what worker of any true sort for God in the souls of others, does not know something of the meaning of that "only" of the Apostle's?

Then he passes, by a transition easy indeed in the case of the Philippian saints, to the subject of suffering. In that difficult scene, the Roman **colonia**, to be perfectly consistent, must mean, in one measure or another, to suffer; it must mean to encounter "adversaries," such open adversaries, probably, as those who had dragged Paul and Silas to the judgment seat and the dungeon, ten years before. How were they to meet that experience, or anything resembling it? Not merely with resignation, nor even with resolution, but with a recognition of the joy, nay of the "**gift**," of "suffering for His sake."

Circumstances infinitely vary, and so therefore do sufferings. The Master assigns their kinds and degrees, not arbitrarily indeed but sovereignly; and it is His manifest will that not all equally faithful Christians should equally encounter open violence, or even open shame, "for His sake." But it is His will also, definitely revealed, that suffering in some sort, "for His name's sake," should normally enter into the lot of "all that will live godly in Christ

Jesus." Even in the Church there is the world. And the world does not like the allegiance to Christ which quite refuses, however modestly and meekly, to worship its golden image. To the end, pain must be met with in the doing here on earth of the "beloved will of God."

But this very pain is "a gift" from the treasures of heaven. Not in itself; pain is never in itself a good; the perfect bliss will not include it; "there shall be no more pain." But in its relations and its effects it is "a gift" indeed. For to the disciple who meets it in the path of witness and of service for his Master amongst his fellows, it opens up, as nothing else can do, the fellowship of the faithful, and the heart of JESUS.

"Lord, we expect to suffer here,

Nor would we dare repine;

But give us still to find Thee near,

And own us still for Thine.

"Let us enjoy, and highly prize,

These tokens of Thy love,

Till Thou shalt bid our spirits rise

To worship Thee above."

—*NEWTON*.

Chapter V [\(TOC\)](#)

Unity in Self-Forgetfulness: The Example of the Lord

Philippians 2:1-11

"Our glorious Leader claims our praise

For His own pattern giv'n;

While the long cloud of witnesses

Shew the same path to heav'n."

—**WATTS.**

Dissensions incident to activity—Arguments for heart-union—"No plunderer's prize"—"The name"—The tone of the great passage—What the "Kenôsis" cannot be—It guarantees the infallibility—Doctrine and life—"Only thou"

In the section which we studied last we found the Apostle coming to the weak point of the Christian life of the Philippians. On the whole, he was full of thankful and happy thoughts about them. Theirs was no lukewarm religion; it abounded in practical benevolence, animated by love to Christ, and it was evidently ready for joyful witness to the Lord, in face of opposition and even of persecution. But there was a tendency towards dissension and internal separation in the Mission Church; a tendency which all through the Epistle betrays its presence by the stress which the Apostle everywhere lays upon holy unity, the unity of love, the unity whose secret lies in the individual's forgetfulness of self.

Such dangers are always present in the Christian Church, for everywhere and always saints are still sinners. And it is a sad but undeniable fact of Christian history that the spirit of difference, dissension, antagonism, within the ranks

of the believing, is not least likely to be operative where there is a generally diffused life and vigour in the community. A state of spiritual chill or lukewarmness may even favour a certain exterior tranquillity; for where the energies of conviction are absent there will be little energy for discussion and resistance in matters not merely secular. But where Christian life and thought, and the expression of it, are in power, there, unless the Church is particularly watchful, the enemy has his occasion to put in the seeds of the tares amidst the golden grain. The Gospel itself has animated the disciples' affections, and also their intellects; and if the Gospel is not diligently used as guide as well as stimulus, there will assuredly be collisions.

Almost every great crisis of life and blessing in the Church has shewn examples of this. It was thus in the period of the Reformation, the moment the law of love was forgotten by the powerful minds which were so wonderfully energized as well as liberated by the rediscovery of eternal truths long forgotten. It was thus again in the course of the Evangelical Revival in the last century, when holy men, whose whole natures had been warmed and vivified by a new insight for themselves into the fulness of Christ, were betrayed into discussions on the mysteries of grace carried on in the spirit rather of self than of love. "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burthened." The words are true of the believing individual; they are true also of the believing Church. That which is perfect is not yet come. In the inscrutable but holy progress of the plan of God in redemption towards its radiant goal, it is permitted that temptation should connect itself with our very blessings, both in the person and in the community. And our one antidote is to watch and pray, looking unto Jesus, and looking away from ourselves.

It was thus in measure at Philippi. And St Paul cannot rest about it. He plies

them with every loving argument for the unity of love, ranging from the plea of attachment to himself up to the supreme plea of "the mind that was in Christ Jesus" when He came down from heaven. He has begun to address them thus already. And in the wonderful passage now before us he is to develop his appeal to the utmost, in the Lord's name.

Verse 1. **If therefore**, in connexion with this theme of holy oneness of love and life, **there is such a thing as comfort**, encouragement (*paraklêsis*), **in Christ**, drawn from our common union with the Lord, if **there is such a thing as love's consolation**, the tender cheer which love can give to a beloved one by meeting his inmost wish, **if there is such a thing as Spirit-sharing**,^[35] **if there are such things as hearts** (*splagchna, viscera*) **and compassions**, feelings of human tenderness and attachment, through which I may appeal to you simply as a friend, and a friend in trouble,

Verse 2. Calling for your pity; **make full my joy**, drop this last ingredient into the cup of my thankful happiness for you, and bring the wine to the brim, **by being**^[36] of the same mind (*phronma*, feeling, attitude of mind), **feeling** (*echontes*) **the same love**, "the same" on all sides, soul and soul together (*sympsychoi*) in a

Verse 3. **Mind which is unity itself**.^[37] **Nothing** (*muden*, implying of course prohibition) **in the way of** (*kata*) **personal or party spirit**;^[38] rather (*alla*), **as regards your** (*tu*) **humble-mindedness**, your view of yourselves learnt at the feet of your Saviour, **reckon**^[39] each other superior to yourselves; as assuredly you will do, with a logic true to the soul, when each sees himself, the personality he knows best, in the light of eternal holiness

Verse 4. And love. **Not to your own interests look** (*skopountes*), **each circle of you, but each circle**^[40] to those

Verse 5. **Of others also. Have this mind** (*phroneite*) in you, this moral attitude in each soul, **which** was, and is,^[41] **also in Christ Jesus**, (in that eternal Messiah whom I name already with His human Name, JESUS; for in the

will of His Father, and in the unity of His own Person, it was as it were His Name already

Verse 6. From everlasting,) **who in God's manifested Being**^[42] subsisting,^[43] **seeming** divine, because He *was* divine, in the full sense of Deity, in that eternal world, **reckoned it no plunderer's prize**^[44] to be on an equality with God;^[45] no, He viewed His possession of the fulness of the Eternal Nature as securely and inalienably His own, and **so** He dealt with it for our sakes with a sublime and **restful** remembrance of others; far from thinking of it as for Himself alone, as one who claimed it unlawfully would have done,

Verse 7. **He rather** (*alla*) made Himself void by His own act,^[46] void of the manifestation and exercise of Deity as it was His on the throne,^[47] **taking**^[48] Bond-servant's (*doulou*) **manifested being** (*morphê*), that is to say, the veritable Human Nature which, as a creaturely nature, is essentially bound to the service of the Creator, the *_bond_service* of the Father; **coming to be**, becoming, **genomenos, in men's similitude**, so truly human as not only to be but **to seem** Man, accepting all the conditions involved in a truly human **exterior**,

Verse 8. "pleased **as Man with men** to appear." **And** then, further, **being found**, as He offered Himself to view, **in respect of guise** (*schêati*), in respect of outward shape, and habit, and address, **as Man**, He went further, He stooped yet lower, even from Humanity to Death; **He humbled Himself, in becoming obedient**,^[49] obedient to Him whose Bondservant He now was as Man, **to the length**^[50] of death, aye (*de*), **death of Cross**, that death of unimaginable pain and of utmost shame, the death which to the Jew was the symbol of the curse of God upon the victim, and to the Roman was a horror of degradation which should be "far not only from the bodies but from the imaginations of citizens of Rome."^[51]

So He came, and so He suffered, because "He

Verse 9. Looked to the interests of others." **Wherefore also God**, His God (*ho*

theos), **supremely exalted Him**, in His Resurrection and Ascension, **and conferred upon Him**, as a gift of infinite love and approval (*echarisato*), **the Name which is above every name**; THE NAME, unique and glorious; the Name Supreme, the I AM; to be His Name now, not only as He is from eternity, the everlasting Son of the Father, but as He became also in time, the suffering and risen Saviour of sinners.^[52] In His whole character and work He is invested now with the transcendent glory and greatness of divine dignity; every thought of the suffering Manhood is steeped in the fact that He who, looking on the things of others, came down to bear it, is now enthroned where only the Absolute and Eternal King

Verse 10. Can sit; **so that in the Name of Jesus**,^[53] in presence of the revealed majesty of Him who bears, as Man, the human personal Name, Jesus, **every knee should bow**, as the prophet (Isaiah 45:23) foretells, **of things celestial, and terrestrial, and subterranean**, of all created existence, in its heights and depths; spirits, men, and every other creature; all bowing, each in their way, to the *imperium* of the exalted Jesus,

Verse 11. JEHOVAH-JESUS; **and that every tongue should confess**, with the confessing of adoring, praising, worship (*exomologêsêtai*), **that Jesus Christ is** nothing less than **Lord**, in the supreme and ultimate sense of that mighty word, **to God the Father's glory**. For the worship given to "His Own Son" (Romans 8:32), whose Nature is one with His, whose glories flow eternally from Him, is praise given to Him.^[54]

So closes one of the most conspicuous and magnificent of the dogmatic utterances of the New Testament. Let us consider it for a few moments from that point of view alone. We have here a chain of assertions about our Lord Jesus Christ, made within some thirty years of His death at Jerusalem; made in the open day of public Christian intercourse, and made (every reader must feel this) not in the least in the manner of controversy, of assertion against difficulties and denials, but in the tone of a settled, common, and most living certainty. These assertions give us on the one hand the fullest possible

assurance that He is Man, Man in nature, in circumstances and experience, and particularly in the sphere of relation to God the Father. But they also assure us, in precisely the same tone, and in a way which is equally vital to the argument in hand, that He is as genuinely Divine as He is genuinely Human. Did He "come to be in Bondservant's Form"? And does the word Form, *morphê*, there, unless the glowing argument is to run as cold as ice, mean, as it ought to mean, reality in manifestation, fact in sight, a Manhood perfectly real, carrying with it a veritable creaturely {98} obligation (*douleia*) to God? But He was also, antecedently, "in God's Form." And there too therefore we are to understand, unless the wonderful words are to be robbed of all their living power, that He who came to be Man, and to seem Man, in an antecedent state of His blessed Being was God, and seemed God. And His "becoming to be" one with us in that mysterious but genuine Bondservice was the free and conscious choice of His eternal Will, His eternal Love, in the glory of the Throne. "When He came on earth abased" He was no Victim of a secret and irresistible destiny, such as that which in the Stoic's theology swept the Gods of Olympus to their hour of change and extinction as surely as it swept men to ultimate annihilation. "**He made Himself** void," with all the foresight and with all the freewill which can be exercised upon the Throne where the Son is in the Form of the Eternal Nature. Such is the Christology of the passage in its aspect towards Deity.

Then in regard of our beloved Lord's Manhood, its implications assure us that the perfect genuineness of that Manhood, which could not be expressed in a term more profound and complete than this same *morphê doulou*, Form of Bondservant, leaves us yet perfectly sure that He who chose to be Bondservant is to us only all the more, even in His Manhood, LORD. Was it not His own prescient choice to be true Man? And was it not His choice with a prescient and infallible regard to "the things of others," to "us men and our

salvation"? Then we may be sure that, whatever is meant by the "made Himself void," *heauton ekenôsen*, which describes His Incarnation here, one thing it could never possibly mean—a "Kenôsis" which could hurt or distort His absolute fitness to guide and bless us whom He came to save. That awful and benignant "Exinanition" placed Him indeed on the creaturely level in regard of the reality of human experience of growth, and human capacity for suffering. But never for one moment did it, could it, make Him other than the absolute and infallible Master and Guide of His redeemed.

We are beset at the present day, on many sides, with speculations about the "Kenôsis" of the Lord which in some cases anyhow have it for their manifest goal to justify the thought that He condescended to be fallible; that He "made Himself void" of such knowledge as should protect Him from mistaken statements about, for example, the history, quality, and authority of the Old Testament Scriptures. I have said once and again elsewhere^[55] that such an application of the "made Himself void," *heauton ekenôsen*, of this passage (from which alone we get the word Kenôsis for the Incarnation) is essentially beside the mark. The Kenôsis here is a very definite thing, as we see when we read the Greek. It is just this—the taking of "Bondservant's Form." It is—the becoming the absolute Human Bondservant of the Father. And the Absolute Bondservant must exercise a perfect Bond-service. And this will mean, amidst all else that it may mean, a perfect conveyance of the Supreme Master's mind in the delivery of His message. "***He whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God.***" The Kenôsis itself (as St Paul meant it) is nothing less than the guarantee of the Infallibility. It says neither yes nor no to the question, Was our Redeemer, as Man, "in the days of His flesh," omniscient? It says a profound and decisive yes to the question, Is our Redeemer, as Man, "in the days of His flesh," to be absolutely trusted as the Truth in every syllable of assertion which He was actually pleased to make?

"He whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God. "

The dogmatic treasures of this wonderful passage are by no means exhausted, even when we have drawn from it what it can say to us about the glory of the Lord Christ Jesus. But it is not possible to follow the research further, here and now; this imperfect indication of the main teachings about Him must be enough.

But now, in closing, let us remember for our blessing how this passage of didactic splendour comes in. It is no lecture in the abstract. As we have seen, it is not in the least a controversial assertion. It is simply part of an argument to the heart. St Paul is not here, as elsewhere in his Epistles, combating an error of faith; he is pleading for a life of love. He has full in view the temptations which threatened to mar the happy harmony of Christian fellowship at Philippi. His longing is that they should be "of one accord, of one mind"; and that in order to that blessed end they should each forget himself and remember others. He appeals to them by many motives; by their common share in Christ, and in the Spirit, and by the simple plea of their affection for himself. But then—there is one plea more; it is "the mind that was in Christ Jesus," when "for us men and for our salvation He came down from heaven, and was made Man, and suffered for us." Here was at once model and motive for the Philippian saints; for Euodia, and Syntyche, and every individual, and every group. Nothing short of the "mind" of the Head must be the "mind" of the member; and then the glory of the Head (so it is implied) shall be shed hereafter upon the member too: "I will grant to him to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne."

What a comment is this upon that fallacy of religious thought which would dismiss Christian doctrine to the region of theorists and dreamers, in favour

of Christian "life"! Christian doctrine, rightly so called, is simply the articulate statement, according to the Scriptures, of eternal and vital facts, that we may live by them. The passage before us is charged to the brim with the doctrine of the Person and the Natures of Christ. And why? It is in order that the Christian, tempted to a self-asserting life, may "look upon the things of others," for the reason that this supreme Fact, his Saviour, is in fact thus and thus, and did in fact think and act thus and thus for His people. Without the facts, which are the doctrine, we might have had abundant rhetoric in St Paul's appeal for unselfishness and harmony; but where would have been the mighty lever for the affections and the will?

Oh reason of reasons, argument of arguments—the LORD JESUS CHRIST! Nothing in Christianity lies really outside Him. His Person and His Work embody all its dogmatic teaching. His Example, "His Love which passeth knowledge," is the sum and life of all its morality. Well has it been said that the whole Gospel message is conveyed to us sinners in those three words, "Looking unto Jesus." Is it pardon we need, is it acceptance, free as the love of God, holy as His law? We find it, we possess it, "looking unto Jesus" crucified. Is it power we need, victory and triumph over sin, capacity and willingness to witness and to suffer in a world which loves Him not at all? We find it, we possess it, it possesses us, as we "look unto Jesus" risen and reigning, for us on the Throne, with us in the soul. Is it rule and model that we want, not written on the stones of Horeb only, but "on the fleshy tables of the heart"? We find it, we receive it, we yield ourselves up to it, as we "look unto Jesus" in His path of love, from the Throne to the Cross, from the Cross to the Throne, till the Spirit inscribes that law upon our inmost wills.

Be ever more and more to us, Lord Jesus Christ, in all Thy answer, to our boundless needs. Let us "sink to no second cause." Let us come to Thee. Let

us yield to Thee. Let us follow Thee. Present Thyself evermore to us as literally our all in all. And so through a blessed fellowship in Thy wonderful humiliation we shall partake for ever hereafter in the exaltations of Thy glory, which is the glory of immortal love.

"Make my life a bright outshining
Of Thy life, that all may see
Thine own resurrection power
Mightily shewn forth in me;
Ever let my heart become
Yet more consciously Thy home."

—*MISS J. S. PIGOTT.*

Chapter VI^(TOC)

The Lord's Power in the Disciple's Life

Philippians 2:12-18

"O Jesus Christ, grow Thou in me,

And all things else recede;

My heart be daily nearer Thee,

From sin be daily freed.

"More of Thy glory let me see,

Thou Holy, Wise, and True;

I would Thy living image be

In joy and sorrow too."

—H. B. SMITH, from the German of C. LAVATER.

"Your own salvation"—Stars in the midnight sky—Truth and holiness—The atonement and the indwelling—Mystery and need of the indwelling—

Indifference in God—Spiritual power shewn in love—Aggression and witness—The witnesses and the martyr

We have just followed the Apostle as he has followed the Saviour of sinners from the Throne to the Cross, and from the Cross to the Throne. And we have remembered the moral motive of that wonderful paragraph of spiritual revelation. It was written not to occupy the mind merely, or to elevate it, but to bring the believer's heart into a delightful subjection to Him who "pleased not Himself," till the Lord should be reflected in the self-forgetting life of His follower.

In the passage now opening before us we find St Paul's thought still working in continuity with this argument. He has still in his heart the risks of friction at Philippi, and the need of meeting them in the power of the Lord's example. This will come out particularly in the fourteenth and fifteenth verses, where he deprecates "murmurings and disputings," and pleads for a life of pure, sweet light and love. But the line of appeal, though continuous, is now somewhat altered in its direction. The divine greatness of the love of the Incarnation has, during his treatment of it, filled him with an intense and profound recollection of the greatness of the Christian's connexion with his God, and of the sacred awfulness of his responsibility, and of the fulness of his resources. So the appeal now is not merely to be like-minded, and to be watchful for unity. He asks them now to use fully for a life of holiness the mighty fact of their possession of an Indwelling God in Christ. The details of precept are as it were absorbed for the time into the glorious power and principle—only to reappear the more largely and lastingly in the resulting life.

Verse 12. **So, my beloved ones**, (he often introduces his most practical appeals with this term of affection: see for example 1 Corinthians 10:14, 15:58; 2

Corinthians 7:1,) **just as you always obeyed**^[56] me, obey me now. **Not** (*mê*, the *imperative* negative) as in my presence only, influenced by that immediate contact and intercourse, **but now much more in my absence**, ("much more," as my absence throws you more directly on your resources in the Lord,) **work out**, develop, **your own salvation**, your own spiritual safety, health, and joy, **with fear and trembling**; not with the tortures of misgiving, not driven by a shrinking dread of your gracious God, but drawn by a tender reverence and solemn watchfulness, lest you should grieve the eternal Love. Yes, "work out **your own** salvation"; do not depend upon *me*; take **your own** souls in hand, in a faith and love which look, without the least earthly intermediation, straight to GOD and to Him alone.^[57] For indeed He is near to you; far nearer than ever a Paul could be; "a very present help," for

Verse 13. Your safety, and for your holiness. **For God it is who is effecting** (*energôs*) **in you**, in your very being, in "the first springs of thought and will," **both your (to) willing and your effecting**, your carrying out the willing, **for His (tês) good pleasure's sake**; in order to the accomplishment through you of all His holy purposes. Here, in this wonderful immanence, this divine indwelling, and in its living, operative power, you will find reason enough alike for the "fear and trembling" of deepest reverence, and for the calm resourceful confidence of those who can, if need be, "walk alone," as regards dependence upon even an apostolic friend beside them. Live then as those who carry about with them the very life and power of God in Christ. And what will that life be? A life of spiritual ostentation? Nay, the beautiful and

Verse 14. Gentle opposite to it. **Do all things without**, apart from (*chôris*), in a definite isolation from, **murmurings and disputes**, thoughts and utterances of discontent and self-assertion towards one another, grudgings of others' claims, and contentions for your

Verse 15. Own; **so that you may become** (*genêsthe*), what in full realization you scarcely yet are, **unblamable and simple** (*akeraioi*, "unadulterated"), single-hearted, because self-forgetting; **God's children** (*tekna*), shewing

what they are by the unmistakable *family-likeness* of holy love; **blameless** as such, true to your character; **in the midst of a race (*geneas*) crooked and distorted**, the members of a world whose will always crosses the will of God who is Love; **among whom you are appearing**, like stars which come out in the gloom, **as luminaries (*phôstêres*)**, light-bearers, kindled by the Lord of Light, **in the world**; in which you dwell; not of it, but in it, walking up and down "before the sons of men" (Psalm 31:19), that they may see, and seek,

Verse 16. Your blessed Secret; **holding out (*epechontes*^[58])**, as those who offer a boon for acceptance, **the word of life**, the Gospel, with its secret of eternal life in Christ; at once telling and commending His message; **to afford me**, even me (*emoi*), **exultation, in view of (*eis*) Christ's Day**, in anticipation of what I shall feel then; **because not in vain did I run, nor in vain did I toil.**^[59] But let me not speak of "toil" as if I sighed over a hard lot, or wished to suffer less on your behalf.

Verse 17. **Nay, even if I am being poured out as a drink-offering (*spendomai*) on the sacrifice and ritual (*leitourgia*) of your faith**—on you, so to speak, as you in faith offer yourselves a living sacrifice to God^[60]—I rejoice, and I congratulate (*sugchairô*) **you all**, on your faith and holiness, for which it was well worth my while to die as your helper and example. **And in**

Verse 18. **The same way (*to de aûto*) do you too rejoice, and congratulate me,**^[61] as true partners with me in the martyr-spirit and its joys.

Here let us pause in our paraphrasing version, and sit down as it were to gather up and weigh some of the treasures we have found.

I. We have had before us, in the whole passage

That ever-recurring lesson, Holiness in the Truth, as Truth—"the Truth as it is in Jesus"—is the living secret of Holiness. We have still in our ears the celestial music, infinitely sweet and full, of the great paragraph of the Incarnation, the journey of the Lord of Love from glory to glory by the way of the awful Cross. May we not now give ourselves awhile wholly to reverie, and feast upon the divine poetry at our leisure? Not so; the immediate sequel is—that we are to be holy. We are *to act* in the light and wonder of so vast an act of love, in the wealth and resource of "so great salvation." We are to set spiritually to work. We are to learn that all-important lesson in religion, the holy and humble energy and independence which come to the man who "knows whom he has believed," and is aware that he possesses "all spiritual blessing" (Ephesians 1:3) in Him. We are to rise up and, if need be, walk alone, alone of human help, in the certainty that Christ has died for us, and reigns for us, and in us. Our Paul may be far away in some distant Rome, and we may sorely miss him. But we have at hand Jesus Christ, who "took Bondservant's Form," and obeyed even unto death for us, and who is on the eternal throne for us, and who lives within us by His Spirit. Looking upon Him in the glory of His Person and His Work, we are not only to wonder, not only even to worship; we are to work; to "work out" our spiritual blessings^[62] into a life which shall be full of Him, and in which we shall indeed be "saved" ourselves, and help others around us to their salvation. In the "fear and trembling" of those who feel the blissful awfulness of an eternal Presence, we are to set ourselves, with the inexhaustible diligence of hope, to the business of the spiritual life. We are to bring all the treasures of a manifested and possessed Redeemer to bear upon the passing hour, and to let Him be seen in us, "Christ our Life," always formative and empowering.

II. We have here in particular that

deep secret of the Gospel

Unspeakably precious to the soul which indeed longs to be holy—the Indwelling of God in the believer. It here appears in close and significant connexion with the revelation of the love and work of the Incarnate and Atoning Lord; as if to remind us without more words that He who gave Himself for us did so not only to release us (blessed be His Name) from an infinite peril, from the eternal prison and death of a violated law, but yet more that He might bring His rescued ones into an unspeakable nearness in Him to God. His was no *mere* compassion, which could set a guilty captive free. It was eternal love, which could not be content without nearness to its object, without union with it, without a dwelling in the very heart by faith. As if it was a matter of course in the plan of God, St Paul passes from the Cross and the Glory of Jesus to the Indwelling of God in the Christian, and to all the rest and all the power which that Indwelling is to bring.

"It is God who is working in you, effecting alike your willing and your working; for the sake of His good pleasure." These are words of deep mystery. They contain matter which has exercised the closest thought of some of the greatest thinkers of the Church. *Operatur in nobis velle*; "He worketh in us to will." How is this to be reconciled with the reality, and in that sense the freedom, of the human will? What relation does it bear to human responsibility, and to the call to watch, and pray, and labour? Very soon, over such questions, we have, in the phrase of the Rabbis, to "teach our tongue to say, *I do not know*." But the words appear *in this context* with a purpose perfectly simple and practical, whatever be their more remote and hidden indications. They do indeed intimate to us a reality and energy in the divine sovereignty which may well correct those dreams of self-salvation

which man is so ready to dream. But their more immediate purpose is as simple as it is profound. It is on the one hand to solemnize the disciple with the remembrance of such an inward **Presence**, and on the other hand to make him always glad and ready, recollecting that such an inward **Power** is there, altogether for his highest good, and altogether in the line of the eternal purpose (**eudokia**). For the while at least let us drop out of sight all hard questions of theoretical adjustment between the finite will and the Infinite, and rest quite simply in that thought—God is in me, working the willing and the doing. The willing is genuine, and is mine. The working is genuine, and is mine. **My** will chooses Him, and **my** activity labours for Him; both are real, and are personally mine. But He is at the back; He is at "the pulse of the machine"; I, His personal creature, am held in no less a hold than His, to be moulded and to be employed; His implement, His limb.

Not very long ago I was in conversation with a young but deeply thoughtful Christian, who, placed on a difficult social height, was seeking with deep desire not only to "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth" but to lead others similarly circumstanced to do the same. I was struck with the strong consciousness which possessed that heart, that the religious life must inevitably be a weary and exhausting effort on any other condition than this—"God working in us, to will and to do." "Ah, they all say that it is so hard; no one can really do it; no one can keep it up. But we must speak to them about the indwelling Spirit of God, about the Lord's power in us; **then** they will find that it is possible, and is happy."

Chôris emou—"isolated from Me (John 15:5)—**ye can do nothing**"; and what seems our "doing" will, in such isolation, be only too sorely felt to be a weary toil. But let us accept it as true, at the foot of the atoning Cross, that the Indwelling of God in Christ is as much a fact as our pardon and adoption

in Him, and we shall know something of the blessed life. Only, we must not only accept it as true, but use it. "**Work out**—for it is God who is **working in** you."

And, let us remember it once more, we shall learn in that quiet School not only a restful energy but also that holy independence (*tên heautôn sôtêrian*) which is, in its place, the priceless gain of the Christian. Our spiritual life is indeed intended to be social in its issues—but not at its root. We accept and thankfully use every assistance given us by our Lord's care, as we live our life in His Church; yet our life, as to its source, is to be still "hidden with Christ in God." We are to be so related to Him, in faith, that our soul's health, growth, gladness, shall depend not on the presence of even a St Paul at our side, but on the presence of God in our hearts. Let us cherish this blessed certainty, and develope it into experience, in these strange days of unrest and drift. That secret independence will do anything but isolate us from our fellows. It will make us fit, as nothing else could make us, to be their strength and light, in truest sympathy, in kindest insight, in the fullest sense of loving partnership. But we must learn independence in God if we would be fully serviceable to man.

III. We have in this passage one of the richest and most beautiful expressions found in the whole New Testament of that great principle

That at the very heart of a true life of holiness there needs to lie the law of

holy kindness. The connexion of thought between Verse 13 and Verse 14 is deeply suggestive here. In Verse 13 we have the power and wonder of the operative Indwelling of God. In Verse 14 we have depicted the true conduct of the subjects of the Indwelling; and it shines with the sweet light of humility and gentleness. It is a life whose hidden power, which is nothing less than divine, comes out first and most in the absence of the grudging, self-asserting spirit; in a watchful consistency and simplicity; in the manifestation of the *child*—character, as the believer moves about "in the midst of" the hard and most unchildlike conditions of an unregenerate world. There is to be action as well as patience; this we shall see presently. The disciple is to be aggressive, in the right way, as well as submissive. But the first and deepest characteristic of his wonderful new life is to be the submission of himself to others, "in the Lord, and in the power of His might." We have this aspect of practical holiness presented to us often in the general teaching of the New Testament; but seldom is it so explicitly connected as it is here with that other spiritual fact, the presence in us of the divine *power*. Perhaps our best parallels come from the two other Epistles of the Roman Captivity, Ephesians and Colossians. In Ephesians, the third chapter closes with the astonishing prayer that the Christian (the everyday Christian, be it remembered) may be, through the Indwelling of Christ, "filled unto all the fulness of God"; and then the fourth chapter begins at once with the appeal to him to live "*therefore*" a life of "all lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, and forbearance in love." In Colossians we have the same sequence of thought in one noble sentence (Verse 11) of the first chapter: "Strengthened with all strength, according to the might of His glory, *unto all patience and longsuffering, with joy.*"^[63] In all three passages comes out the same deep and beautiful suggestion. "The Lord is not in the wind" so much as in "the still small voice." Omnipotent Love, in its blessed immanence in the believer's soul, shews its presence and

power most of all in a life *of love* around. It is to come out not only in self-sacrificing energy but in the open sympathies of an affectionate heart, in the "soft answer," in the generous first thought for the interests of others—in short, in the whole character of 1 Corinthians 13. The spiritual "power" which runs rather in the direction of harshness and isolation, which expends itself rather in censures than in "longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, and meekness," is not the kind of "power" which most accords with the apostolic idea. Nothing which violates the plain precepts of the law of love can take a true part in that heavenly harmony.

"On earth, as in the holy place,
Nothing is great but charity." ^[64]

IV. Meanwhile the "charity" of the saints is not by any means the mere amiability

Which makes itself pleasant to every one, and forgets the solemn fact that we who believe are the servants of a Master whom the world knows not, the messengers of a King against whom it is in revolt. The Philippian disciple was to renounce the spirit of unkindness, of self; he was to live *isolated* from (*chôris*) "murmurings and disputings." But he was not to hide the sacred Light, for the sake of so-called peace, from the world around. He was to "hold out the word of life"; confessing his blessed Lord as the life of his own soul, and so commending Him to the souls of his fellows. He was to make this a part of his very existence and its activities. As truly as it was to be his habit to live a life of sweet and winning consistency, it was to be his habit to

offer (*epechein*) the water of life to the parched hearts around him, the lamp of glory to the dark and bewildered whom he encountered upon the difficult road. The truth and beauty of a *life* possessed by Christ was to be the basis of his witnessing activities. But the witness was to be articulate, not merely implied; he was to "hold out *the word (logon)* of life"; he was to seize occasion to "give *a reason (logon)* of the hope that was in him, with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15). To be, in his way, an evangelist was to be one main function of his life. In benignant and gracious conduct he was to be as a "luminary" (*phôstêr*), moving calm and bright in the dark hemisphere of the world. But he was to be a voice as well as a star. He was not only to shine; he was to speak.

Here is one of the passages, by the way, in which the Apostle assumes, and stimulates, the "missionary consciousness" of the converts. It is remarkable that neither he nor his brethren have much to say in the Epistles about the duty of enterprises of evangelization, as laid upon all believers. The stress of their appeals is directed above all things on the supreme importance of holiness, at any cost, in common life. But a passage like this shews us how entirely they take it for granted all the time that the Churches would never concentrate themselves upon merely their own Christian life; they would go out continually, with the beauty of holiness and with "the word of life," to bring the wanderers in, and to extend the knowledge of the blessed Name. So, and so only, would their Apostle feel, in his prison at Rome, that his "running" (*edramon*) on the great circuit of his evangelistic journeys, and his pastoral "toil" (*ekopiassa*) for the souls of his converts, had not been thrown "into the void" (*eis to kenon*).

So, and so only, would his life and death of sacrifice for them be crowned with its perfect joy. Let him see his beloved converts living and speaking as

indeed the Lord's *witnesses*, and then with what inward "gladness" (*chairein*), with what a call for "congratulation" (*sugchairein*) on their part, would he go out to death as the Lord's *martyr*!

"O thou who makest souls to shine
With light from brighter worlds above,
And droppest glistening dew divine
On all who seek a Saviour's love,
"Do Thou Thy benediction give
On all who teach, on all who learn,
That all Thy Church may holier live,
And every lamp more brightly burn.

* * * * *

"If thus, good Lord, Thy grace be giv'n
Our glory meets us ere we die;
Before we upward pass to heav'n
We taste our immortality."

—*J. ARMSTRONG.*

Chapter VII^(TOC)

Timotheus and Epaphroditus

Philippians 2:19-30

*"Puisse la même foi qui consola leur vie
Nous ouvrir les sentiers que leurs pas ont pressés,
Et, dirigeant nos pieds vers la sainte patrie
Où leur bonheur s'accroît de leurs travaux passés,
Nous rendre ces objets de tendresse et d'envie
Qui ne sont pas perdus, mais nous ont devancés."*

—A. VINET

Epaphroditus—The variety of Scripture—Contrasts in context—Henry Martyn's letter—"The human element"—"His letters I have read"—The two aspects of Scripture—Divine messages in human context—"Together with them"

Verse 19. **But I hope in the Lord Jesus**, with an expectation conditioned by my union with Him in all things, and with you in Him, **promptly to send to you Timotheus,**^[65] that I too, I as well as you, who will of course be gladdened by his presence, **may be of good cheer, getting**, through him, **a knowledge (gnous) of your circumstances (ta peri humôn)**. I send him, and not

Verse 20. Another, **for I have**—at hand, and free to move—no one equal-souled with him,^[66] **one who (*hootis*) will genuinely take anxious care about your circumstances**; the "care" which is not a weary burthen, better cast upon the Lord (4: 6), but a sacred charge, undertaken in and for Him, and absorbing all the

Verse 21. Thought. **For all of them (*oi pantes*)**, all from whom I could in this case select, **are bent on (*xêtousi*: cp. Colossians 3:1) their own interests, not the interests of Jesus Christ**; they plead excuses which indicate a preference of their own ease, or reputation, or affections, to a matter manifestly and wholly HIS.

Verse 22. **But the test through which he**, Timotheus, **passed (*tên dokimên autou*)** you remember (*ginôskete*, "you recognize," as you look back); you know **that as child with father so he with me**, in closest companionship and sympathy, **did bondservice^[67] for the Gospel, *eis to euaggelion*, "unto it,"** for the furtherance

Verse 23. Of its enterprise and message. **So him then (*touton men oun^[68]*) I hope to send, immediately upon (*hôs an... exautês*) my getting a view of (*apidô*) my circumstances**, my position with regard to my trial

Verse 24. And its result. **But** (though I thus allude to external uncertainties) **I feel sure, in the Lord**, in the light of union and communion with Him, **that I too in person shall speedily arrive**, in the track of this my messenger and forerunner.

Verse 25. **But I count^[69] it obligatory (*anagkaion*)**, and not merely a matter for hopes and personal satisfaction, **to send to you**, as I now do, in charge of this Letter, another person, **Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow-worker**, and fellow-soldier, a man who has toiled and contended at my very side for the Lord and against the Enemy, **while he is also your missionary and ministrant^[70] for my need**. Yes, I feel that I **ought**

Verse 26. To send him, and to send him **now; since he has been suffering from home-sickness for^[71] all of you**, (all, without exception; his affection knows

no party or partiality,) **and from the distraction** (*adêmonôn*) of over-wrought feeling, because you have heard that he

Verse 27. Fell ill^[72] (*êsthenêse*). **And** so it was; **for he did fall ill, almost fatally** (*paraplêsion thanatô*). **But our (ho) God pitied him**, sparing him the grief of broken hopes and purposes in the Lord's work on earth, and the grief of being a cause of tears to you; **and not only him but also me, that I might not have**^[73] sorrow upon sorrow. For had he died, I should have had a sore bereavement, and the sad consciousness that you, in a loving effort for my benefit, had lost a beloved friend; and all this added to, heaped upon (*epi c. acc.*), the antecedent pain of my captivity and the trials which it involves.

Verse 28. **With the more earnestness therefore I have sent him**,^[74] that seeing him you may be glad again, and that I may feel less sorrow, finding my imprisonment, and also my loss of this dear friend's company, softened to my heart by the thought of your joy in

Verse 29. Welcoming him back. **Receive him therefore in the Lord**, in all the union and sympathy due to your common share in Him, **with all gladness, and**

Verse 30. **Hold in high value such men as he is; because on account of Christ's work he was at death's very door**,^[75] playing as it were the **gambler with his life**,^[76] that he might (lit., "may") **supply your lack**, do the service which you could not do, and so complete your loving purposes, in regard of **the ministration** you designed for me.

Our present section illustrates well the inexhaustible variety of Scripture. That pregnant Christian thinker, the late Dr John Ker, has some good sentences on this subject: "What varieties are in the Bible, side by side! The Book of Ruth, with its pastoral quiet after the wars of the Judges, like an innocent child which has crept between the ranks of hostile armies; the intense devotion of the Psalms after the speculative discussions of Job, and before the practical wisdom of Proverbs; the gloom of Ecclesiastes, and then the sweetness of the Song of Solomon, as sharply divided as the eastern

morning which leaps from the night, or, as an old Greek might have said, silver-footed Thetis rising from the bed of old Tithonus; Isaiah's majestic sweep of eagle pinion, with Jeremiah's dovelike plaint; the cloudlike obscurities of Ezekiel, to be solved, as one might expect, by piercing light from the sky; and the perplexities of Daniel, to be opened by the movements of the nations."^[77]

What a variety lies before us here!

"Into the heaven of heavens we have presumed,
And drawn empyreal air";

while the Apostle has told us (only fourteen verses above) how Christ Jesus, in the glory of the Throne, in the Form of God, cared for us men and for our salvation, and made Himself void, and took the creature-nature, and died; and how He is now on the Throne again in His Incarnation, to receive supreme and universal worship. And then again we came back to earth, yet so as to be led into the deep secrets of the Lord in the inner life of His saints below; "God is working in you, to will and to do, for His good pleasure's sake." And then we have seen this inner life expanding and shewing itself in the holy life without, which shines as a star in the dark, and speaks like a voice from the unseen. And then again we have watched the Apostle's martyr-joy as he thinks of dying for his Philippians, if need be. Close upon all these heights and depths now comes in this totally different passage about Timotheus and Epaphroditus, with its quiet, practical allusions to individual character, and to particular circumstances, and to personal hopes and duties; its words of sympathy and sorrow; the dear friend's agitated state of mind; his recent almost fatal illness; the mercy of his recovery; the pleasurable thought of his restoration to the loving circles at Philippi.

Nothing could be more completely different than this from the grand dogmatic passage traversed a little while before, nor again from the passages to follow in the next chapter, where the believer's inmost secrets of acceptance and of life are in view, and his foresight of glory. We are placed here not in the upper heaven, nor before the judgment-throne, nor in the light of the resurrection-morning. We are just in the "hired rooms" at Rome, and we see the Missionary seated there, studying the characters of two of his brethren, and weighing the reasons for asking them, at once or soon, to arrange for a certain journey. He reviews the case, and then he puts down, through his amanuensis, for the information of the Philippians, what he thinks of these two men, and what he has planned about them.

All is perfectly human, viewed from one side. I or my reader may at any time, in the course of life and duty, be called upon to write about Christian friends and fellow-workers of our own in a tone neither less nor more human and practical than that of this section. In any collection of modern Christian letters we may find the like. I open at this moment the precious volume of Henry Martyn's correspondence, published (1844) as a companion to the Memoir. There I read as follows, in a letter to Daniel Corrie, dated Shiraz, December 12, 1811: "Your accounts of the progress of the kingdom of God among you are truly refreshing. Tell dear H. and the men of both regiments that I salute them much in the Lord, and make mention of them in my prayers. May I continue to hear thus of their state; and if I am spared to see them again, may we make it evident that we have grown in grace.

Affectionate remembrances to your sister and to S. I hope they continue to prosecute their labours of love. Remember me to the people of Cawnpore who enquire. Why have I not mentioned Colonel P.? It is not because he is not in my heart, for there is hardly a man in the world whom I love and honour more. My most Christian salutations to him. May the grace of our

Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, dearest brother. Yours affectionately,
H. MARTYN."

What is the difference in quality and character between this extract and our present section of Philippians, or between it and many another passage in the Pauline Epistles? From one point of view, I repeat it, none—none that we either can, or should care to, affirm. Of the letters compared, one is as purely human as the other, in the simplicity of its topics, in its local and personal scope, in its natural and individual manner. I would add that, so far as we can tell, the one was written under just as much or little consciousness of a supernatural prompting as the other. I feel sure that when St Paul wrote thus (whatever might be his sense of an *afflatus* at other times, when he wrote, or spoke, or thought, abnormally) he "felt" exactly as we feel when writing a quiet letter; he was thinking, arranging topics, choosing words, considering the needs of correspondents, just as simply as we might do.

And all this is an element inestimably precious in the structure and texture of the Bible. It is that side or aspect of the Bible which, at least to innumerable minds, brings the whole Book, in a sense so genuine, *home*; making it felt in the human heart as a friend truly conversant with our nature and our life.

"Thy testimonies," writes the Bible-loving Psalmist (Psalm 119:24), "are the men of my counsel," *an'shêy 'atsâthî*; a pregnant phrase, which puts vividly before us "the human element" of the blessed Word, its varieties and individualities, its *living* voice, or rather voices, and the sympathetic confidence which it invites as it draws close to us to advise and guide. How perfectly in contrast are the Bible on the one side, with this humanity and companionship, and such a "sacred book" as the Koran on the other, with its monotonous oracles! Strange, that the man-made "sacred book" should be so little *humane* and the God-made Book so deeply and beautifully so! Yet not

strange, after all. For God knows man better than man knows himself; and when He prepares a Book of books for man, we may expect it to correspond to the deep insight of Him who is Maker of both the volume and the reader.

For now on the other part we have to remember that this Book, so naturally and humanly written, as to a very large proportion of its contents, is yet God-made all through. It is, in a sense quite peculiar to itself, divine. I quoted a passage from a letter of Henry Martyn's just now, on purpose to place it beside this letter of St Paul's, with a view to shewing the likeness of the two. But are they like in all respects? No; they present a radical difference from another side. It is just this, that the biblical letter is not only human as to its type and utterance; as to its message, it is authoritative, it is from God. Henry Martyn writes as a Christian man, and it helps us spiritually to be in contact with his affectionate and holy thoughts. Paul writes as a Christian man, but also as "a chosen vessel to bear the Name" of his Lord; as the messenger of the mind of Christ; as he who received "his Gospel" "not of man, nor by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:12). From his own days to these he has been known in the Church of God as the divinely commissioned prophet and teacher. Clement of Rome in the first century refers to him as having written to Corinth by divine inspiration.^[78] Simon Peter, earlier than Clement, refers to Paul (2 Peter 3:16) as the writer of "Scriptures," **graphai**: that solemn word, restricted in the language of Christianity to the oracles of God.

The simplest and seemingly most naturalistic passage occurring in a Pauline letter is a "Scripture"; and as such it speaks to me only not like the utterances of a Martyn but with the voice of the Lord of the Gospel. "Paul, Paul—his letters I have read, but not always I agree with him!" So, according to the story, said a German literary visitor in an Oxford common-room, fifty years

ago; the words shocked the Anglican company. Very many people think with the German now, whether or no they have really "**read** Paul's letters." But their thought is not that of the Church of God; and the soul that will indeed make experiment of what "Paul's letters" can be when they are read as divine, and before God, will surely find itself in harmony in this matter with the Church. It will be little disposed to take up the cry (true enough in itself), "Back to Christ," in that false sense which discredits the servant's words as if the Master was not committed to them. "If they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also."

In a passage like the present therefore we feel the two elements or aspects, the human and the divine, each real and powerful, and both working in perfect harmony. The human is there, not in the least as a necessary element of error; rather as an element of delicate and beautiful truth, the truth of justest thought and feeling. The divine is there, as the message from Christ Himself through His servant; sacred, authoritative, binding on belief, giving solid ground for the soul's repose. We study here St Paul's watchful and unselfish remembrance of the Philippians, in the case of Timothy and his mission, and still more in that of Epaphroditus. We recognize of course the actings of a noble human heart, and we are right to do so. But we find more than this; we see JESUS CHRIST informing us, in the concrete example of His servant, exactly how it behoves us, as His servants, to feel and act under our responsibilities. St Paul's thought and action is "written for our learning." True, the "learning" comes not as a mere code, or lecture. It takes the form of a living experience, recorded, in the course of correspondence, by the man who is going through it. But the man is a vehicle of revelation. He writes about himself; but his Master is behind him, and is taking care that his whole thought shall be the well-adjusted conveyance of a thought greater than his own.

As we come to the incidental details of the passage, we find the same double aspect of Scripture everywhere. St Paul speaks about people who are "seeking their own interests, and not the interests of Jesus Christ" (Verse 21). He says this quite naturally, and with a reference quite local and in detail. But on the other side the words are an oracle; they convey the message of the Master of His people; they implicitly claim *on His part* that we shall seek not our own interests, but His. Again, quite in passing, the Apostle speaks of this or that "hope" or "trust" as being formed "in the Lord." He does so with no conscious dogmatic purpose, surely; it is because it comes as naturally to him to do it as for an ordinary correspondent to say that he hopes to do this or that "if all goes well." But in the epistolary *Scripture* these brief phrases have another side; they are authority and oracle; they convey the mind of Christ about *our* right relations with Him; they tell *us*, from Him, that it is His will that we too, as His, should form our hopes and plans "in Him," in conscious recollection of our being His members.

St Paul speaks again of his human sensibilities. He tells us of his sorrows, and his longings for encouragement, and his thankfulness that an aggravation of trial, "sorrow upon sorrow," has been spared him. He speaks of Epaphroditus, and of his generous carelessness of his own health and life, and of the illness he had contracted, and of his merciful recovery, and of his home-sick longing for Philippi, and of his "bewilderment" of regret as he thinks of the Philippians' anxiety about him. All this is quite as naturally and "humanly" conceived and written on St Paul's part as anything that I or my reader ever wrote about joys and griefs, our own or of our friends. But not one whit the less is this all a message, an oracle, from our Lord Jesus Christ, in a sense in which no letter of ours could possibly be such. For it is a "Scripture." And so it tells me *from above* that the free and loving exercise of human sympathies is entirely according to the will of God; that human tears

and longings are in perfect harmony with holiness. It assures me that from one point of view it is right to speak of the prolongation of the believer's life as a "mercy," even though "to depart is to be with Christ, which is far better." It assures me, let me notice by the way, that bodily sickness is not by any means necessarily a direct result or index of sinfulness in the sufferer. There are those who think and say that it is. But this is not the view of the "chosen vessel." He sees no sin in Epaphroditus' "falling ill, nigh unto death," "drawing near, up to death." It is for him only an occasion for fresh gratitude and affection towards the sufferer, and for deep thanksgivings to Him who in His mercy has granted the recovery. All this is not only an experience, recorded with beautiful naturalness; it is a revelation, an oracle. We learn by it, as by the voice of Christ, that although "He took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses," His servants do not therefore of necessity fail in either faith or love when they suffer "in this tabernacle," and "groan, being burthened." Let them look indeed with great simplicity, in humble faith, for the healing power of their Lord, whether or not it may please Him to apply it through human agency. But do not let them think it an act of faith to dictate to Him, as it were, the necessity of their physical recovery. "If it be Thy will," is never out of place in such appeals. Faith can breathe its most absolute and restful reliance into that "If."

We close the section of Timotheus and Epaphroditus. We have given our main thought to the light which it throws upon the nature of the Scriptures, those blessed "men of our counsel." We have scarcely turned aside to think of the actual "men" of the passage; Timotheus, and his self-forgetting devotion to the Lord and to St Paul, overcoming the sensitiveness of a tender nature; Epaphroditus, at once brave and affectionate, yearning for the old friends in the old scene, restless in the thought of their trouble about him, yet ready to "throw his life down as a die" in the cause of God and of His people. But if

we have said little about them, it is not that we do not love their very names, and feel our union with them.

"Once they were mourning here below";

finding then, as we find now, that the day's burthen is no dream. But we shall see them hereafter, in the mercy of God, "changed and glorified," yet the same, where there will be leisure to learn all the lessons that all the saints can teach us from their experience of the love of Jesus.

Meanwhile let us pray, with the Moravians in their beautiful Liturgy:

Keep us in everlasting fellowship with our brethren of the Church triumphant, and let us rest together in Thy presence from our labours.

"One family we dwell in Him,
One Church, above, beneath,
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death.
"One army of the living God
To His command we bow;
Part of His host hath cross'd the flood,
And part is crossing now."

—**C. WESLEY.**

Chapter VIII^(TOC)

Joy In the Lord And Its Preserving Power That I May Know Him

Philippians 3:1-11

“O Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life; Grant us perfectly to know Thy Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life; that, following the steps of Thy holy Apostles, we may stedfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life; through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Collect for St Philip and St James.

Doctrinal perils at Philippi—"Be glad in the Lord"—The true Israel—An ideal legalist—Position and experience—The spiritual power of holy joy—Acceptance and holiness—Atoning Cross and Risen Life

With the section just closed the Epistle reaches its middle point and already looks towards its end. We may lawfully think of St Paul as pausing here in his dictation; he returns to it after some considerable interval, with new topics, or rather with one important new topic, in his mind. Hitherto, if we have read him aright, we have seen him occupied, from one side or another, with the thought of Christian Unity at Philippi. That thought has been either explicitly developed, as in the close of the first chapter, and in the opening of

the second, and again in the passage embracing 2:14-16; or it has been rather implied than expounded. The Apostle's assurances of love and prayer have been often worded so as to suggest it. The grand passage of doctrine, 2:5-11, has been occasioned directly by it, and is made to bear immediately upon it; the Lord's wonderful self-abnegation (if the word may be tolerated) is revealed and asserted there, not in an isolated way, but as it speaks to the believer of the spirit which should animate *him*, and which will preclude jealousies and separations as nothing else can. And even the paragraph where Timotheus and Epaphroditus are before us is tinged with the same feeling; what the Apostle says about both these dear friends is so said as *to unite* the sympathies of the Philippians.

But he has more to speak of than this sacred call to union of spirit and of life in Christ. We gather that Epaphroditus, talking over the condition of the Mission with his leader, had alluded to the presence there of serious doctrinal perils, which must ultimately affect Christian holiness. That ubiquitous difficulty, the propaganda of anti-Pauline Christian Judaism, had come on the scene, or was just coming. The teachers who affirmed, or insinuated, that Jesus Christ could be reached only through the ceremonial law, were now to be reckoned with. The converts were disturbed, or soon might be disturbed, by being told that proselytism to Moses, sealed by circumcision, was a *sine quâ non* in order to a valid hope of salvation through the Gospel; that the man awakened from his paganism must be at least something of a Jew to be anything of a Christian; that the door was *not* absolutely open between the sinner's soul and the Saviour, to be passed through by the one step of a living trust in the Promise.

Let us remember that assertions like these, which to Christians now may seem obviously futile, by no means necessarily seemed so then. Then, much

more than now, pagan enquirers after JESUS would be sure to be conscious that the true salvation offered was, in one sense, emphatically a Jewish salvation. It was the message which told of the life and death, the person and work, of One who *was*, "after the flesh," a Jew. It was the announcement that the long hope of *Israel* was fulfilled in Him. Its terminology was full of words and ideas altogether Jewish. And its messengers—above all, for the Philippians, St Paul—were Jews, of unmistakable nationality, training, and (doubtless) appearance. On a first view, on a hasty and shallow view certainly, it may have seemed a quite natural incident in such a message when some of its propagandists asserted that to reach this Hebrew Deliverer and King the enquirer must form a connexion in religion which should be definitely Hebrew.

It is conceivable that even yet, in the history of the Church, this phase of error may in some form assert itself again. We look in the future, it may be in the near future, for the keeping to the old Israel of promises which have never been revoked. We believe that Romans 11. shall yet find its fulfilment, and that the "receiving of them again shall be life from the dead" to the world. In that great period of blessing, the work of missions may (shall we not say, probably will?) be very largely taken up by Hebrew Christians. And if any of these, like some of their predecessors of the first age, should have only a distorted view of the Gospel of Christ, their intense national character may tell not a little on the form of their message. But this is by the way. All that is really before us here is the fact that—not the open hostility of unconverted Jews but—the sidelong counter-action of Judaistic Christians was threatening Philippi, and must be met by the Apostle.

Nor was this, if we explain rightly the close of chapter 3, the only such danger in the air. The antinomian traitor was also within the gates. There

were those who could assert that the Gospel, the Pauline Gospel, the wonderful message of Justification by Faith only, and of a life lived in the Spirit as its sequel, was the very truth they held and rejoiced in; but they taught it so as to reason from it that practical holiness did not matter; the justified, the accepted, the man of the Spirit, lived in a transcendental religious region; he was not to be bound in conduct by common rules. Was he not in grace? And was not grace the antithesis of works? Was not grace, before everything else, the condonation of sin? And the more it did that work, was it not the more glorious? "Shall we not continue in sin then, that grace may abound?" What does it signify, though the perishable and burthensome body defiles itself? The emancipated spirit of the "spiritual" man lives on another plane; the sensual and the mystical elements may approach, may run parallel, but can never meet. The body may sin; the spirit must be pure—if only the man is in grace.

Such assuredly were some of the conditions of error and evil to be considered when on that far-off day, in his Roman chamber, St Paul turned his soul again to Philippi, and asked his scribe to write. There is a solemn comfort in the thought. In our days of trial, when again and again it is as if "the foundations were destroyed," it is something to remember the awful mental and moral trials of the apostolic age. It was indeed an "age of faith"; but, as the other side of that very fact, it was an age of clouds and darkness, from the point not of "faith" but of "sight." It had a glorious answer to the tremendous questions that beset it. But that answer was not human reasoning, or material successes; it was the Lord Jesus Christ. And so it is for us to-day.

But now St Paul is at work; let us listen, and we shall hear how promptly he brings that answer to bear in his letter to Philippi.^[79]

Verse 1. For the rest (*to loipon*), my brethren, to turn now to another topic, as I draw

towards an end, let me give you this comprehensive watchword **Be glad in the Lord.**^[80] **To write the same things to you**, to reiterate that one thought, that CHRIST is our glory and our joy, "to me not irksome, it is safe for you."^[81] Safe, because there are spiritual dangers around you from which this will be the best preservative; false teachings which can only be fully met with the gladness of the truth of Christ. **Beware of**,

Verse 2. Keep your eyes open upon (*blepete*), **the "dogs,"** the men who would **excommunicate** all who hold not with their half-Christian Pharisaism and its legal burthens, but who are themselves thus self-excluded from the covenant blessing. **Beware of the evil workmen**, the teachers whose watchword is "works, works, works," a weary round of observances and would-be merits, but who are sorry **work-men** indeed, spoiling the whole structure of "Heaven's easy, artless, unencumber'd plan." **Beware of the concision**, the apostles of a mere physical wounding, which, as enjoined according to their principles, is nothing better than a mutilation (*katatomê*), a parody of what circumcision was meant to be, as the sacrament of a preparatory dispensation now terminated in its

Verse 3. Fulfilment. **For** not they but **we are the circumcision**, the true Israel of the true covenant, sealed and purified by our God; **we who by God's Spirit worship**,^[82] doing priestly service in a spiritual temple^[83] in a life, love, and power, which is ours by the presence in us of the Holy Ghost, the promise of the Father; **and who exult**, not in tribal, national, ceremonial prerogatives, but **in Christ Jesus**, our refuge and our crown, our righteousness and glory, with an exultation infinitely warmer than the legalist's can be, and meanwhile pure, for its source is altogether not ourselves; **and who**, in Him, **not in the flesh**,^[84] not in self and its workings, **are confident** (for confident we are, but it is a "confidence in self-despair," the confidence of those who have been driven by self-discovery to Christ alone).^[85] I speak with a general reference, of all true disciples; but let me instance myself as a case peculiarly in point. I speak thus,

Verse 4. **Though having** (*echôn*), I, myself (*egô*), from **their** view-point,

confidence even in flesh. Whoever else thinks of confiding in flesh, of building a legal standing-place on his privilege and merit, **I** may do so **more** than he; for I have reached the *ne plus ultra* in that

Verse 5. Direction. **As for circumcision,**^[86] I was an **eight**-day child; no proselyte, operated upon in later life, but a son of the Covenant; descended **from Israel's race**, one of the progeny of him who was a prince with God (Genesis 32:28); **of Benjamin's tribe**, the tribe which gave the first God-chosen king to the nation, and which remained "faithful among the faithless" to the house of David at a later day; **Hebrew offspring of Hebrew ancestors,**^[87] child of a home in which, immemorially, the old manners and the old speech were cherished; **in respect of the law,**^[88] **a Pharisee**—the votary of religious precision, elaborate devotion, exclusive privilege, and energetic prose-

Verse 6, lytism; **in respect of zeal**, intense and perfectly sincere, **persecuting the Church; in respect of the righteousness which resides in the Law**, as its terms are understood by the Pharisee, **found (*genomenos*) blameless.**^[89] Such was my position. I possessed an ideal pedigree; full sacramental position from the first; domestic traditions pure and strict; an absolute personal devotion to the cause of my creed; the most rigorous observance of its rules; the most energetic

Verse 7. Efforts to maintain and extend its power. **But the kind of things which (*hatina*) I felt (*moi ên*) so many gains,**^[90] **these things I have come to consider (*hegemai*, perfect), because of our (*ton*) Christ** (discovered at last in His glory, as the slain and risen Jesus), just one **loss**, one **deprivation**; not merely a worthless thing, but a ruinous one; a robbery of the true Blessing

Verse 8. From my soul. **Aye more, I actually (*kai*) now consider all things**, from all points of view, all possessions, all ambitions, **to be similarly loss**, deprivation, **because of the surpassingness of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord**, because of the immeasurable betterness of a spirit-sight of what HE is, in Himself, and as my own; **because of whom**—on account of what He now was to me—I suffered deprivation (*exêmiôthên*) **of my all (*ta***

panta), in the crisis of my change; **and I consider it only refuse**,^[91]
rubbish, that **I may gain**^[92] (in a blessed exchange of profit against loss, the
loss of what I thought my "gains") **Christ**, nothing less than HIM, my
boundless Wealth (*ploutos*

Verse 9. **Anexichniaston**, Ephesians 3:8), **and be found**, at any and every "time of
finding" (Psalm 32:7, Heb.) by the Holy One, **in Him**, one with Him, in His
precious merits and in His risen life, but now especially in His merits; **not
having a righteousness of my own, that derived from the Law**, a title to
acceptance drawn from my own supposed perfect correspondence to the
Law, **but that which comes through faith in**^[93] Christ, through reliance
wholly reposed in Him, **the righteousness which is derived** not from the
Law but **from God**, coming wholly out of His uncaused and sacred mercy,
on terms of our (tê) faith, conditioned^[94]

Verse 10. To us by simply our accepting reliance; **in order to know Him**, HIM, my
Lord, with an intuition possible only to the soul which accepts Him for its
All; **and the power of His Resurrection**, as that Resurrection assures His
people of their justification (Romans 4:24, 25), and of their coming glory (1
Corinthians 15:20), and yet more as He, by His life-giving Spirit, shed forth
from Him the risen Head, lives His "indissoluble life" (Hebrews 7:16) in His
members; and **the partnership of His sufferings**, that deep experience of
union with Him which comes through daily "taking up the cross," in His
steps, for His sake, and in His strength; growing into conformity
(*summorthi-xomenos*, a present participle) **with His Death**, drawn
evermore into spiritual harmony with Him who wrought my salvation out by
an ineffable surrender

Verse 11. Of Himself to suffer; if **somehow I may arrive**, along the appointed path
of the believer's obedience, **at the resurrection which is out from the dead**
(*tên exanastasin tên ex nekrôn*: so read); "that blessed hope" for all who
sleep in Him, when their whole existence, redeemed and perfected, shall
leave the world of "the dead" behind for ever.

Here is a piece of consecutive rendering and paraphrase longer than usual.

And meanwhile the passage before us is one of extraordinary fulness and richness, alike in its record of experience and its teaching of eternal truths. But it seemed impossible to break into fragments the glorious wholeness of the Apostle's thought and utterance. And then, the utterance is so rich, so detailed, so explanatory of itself, that I could not but feel that, for very much of it at least, my best commentary was the closest rendering I could offer, with a few brief suggestions by the way.

Drawing now to a close, I can only indicate, under one or two headings, some main messages to the mind and soul.

I. I gather from the connexion of the passage

As we have traced it, the supreme importance of a true joy in the Lord, a true personal sight of "the King in His beauty," in order to our spiritual orthodoxy. Let me quote again from the Prayer Book of the Moravians, from which I gave one short extract in the last chapter. In their "Church Litany," among the first suffrages, occur these petitions: "***From coldness to Thy merits and death. From error and misunderstanding, From the loss of our glory in Thee, Preserve us, gracious Lord and God.***" The words are the very soul of St Paul, as it conveys the Spirit's oracle to us here. St Paul dreads exceedingly for the Philippians the incursion of "error and misunderstanding"; the advent of a mechanical rigorism of rule and ordinance, and (as we shall see in later pages) the subtle poison also of the specious antinomian lie. How does he apply the antidote? In the form of an appeal to them to be sure to not to "lose their glory in the Lord"; and then he writes a record of his own experience in which he shews them how his own Pharisaic treasures had all been cast away,

or willingly given up to the spoiler; and why? Not for abstract reasons, but "because of the surpassingness of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord"; because of the irresistible and infinite *betterness* of His discovered glory, seen in the atoning Cross and the Resurrection power.

Let us "arm ourselves likewise with the same mind." We have countless perils about us in our modern Christendom, things which only too easily can trouble the reason and sway the will away from the one "hope set before us." Let us meet them, whatever else we do, with the Moravians' prayer. Let us meet them with obedience to the Apostle's positive injunction, "Rejoice in the Lord."

II. The passage bids us remember the profound connexion between a true "knowledge" of the Lord Jesus

As our Atonement and a true "knowledge" of Him as our Life and Power. Both are here. In Verse 9, so it seems to me, any unprejudiced reader of St Paul's writings must see language akin to those great passages of Romans and Galatians which put before us the supreme question of our Justification, and which send us for our whole hope of Acceptance before the eternal Judge, whose law we have broken, to the Atoning Death of our Lord Jesus Christ. In those passages, demonstrably as I venture to think, the word "Righteousness" is largely used as a short term for the Holy One's righteous way of accepting us sinners for the sake of the Sinless One, who, in our nature, was "made a curse for us," "made sin for us," "delivered for our offences," "set forth for a propitiation," that we might be "justified from all things" in our union with

Him by faith. If so, this is the purport of similar phrases here also. St Paul is thinking here first of the discovered glory of Christ as the propitiation for his sins, his peace with God, his refuge and his rest for ever against the accuser and the curse. That comes first, profoundly first.

But then we have also here the sequel truth, the glorious complement. Here is Acceptance, wholly for Jesus Christ's most blessed sake. But this is but the divine condition to another divine and transcendent blessing; it is revealed as the way in to a knowledge of this Lord of Peace, a deep and unspeakable knowledge of Him, such as shall infuse into His disciple the power of His Risen Life, and the secret of an inward assimilation of the soul to the very principle of His Death, and shall be the path whose end shall be His glory.

St Paul here bids us never put asunder what God hath joined together. "Never further than the Cross, never higher than Thy feet"; there may we be "found," "in Him"; unshaken by surrounding mysteries, and meekly resolute against fashions of opinion. Let us be recognized for those who truly know for themselves, and truly commend to others, that blessed "Justification by Faith" which is still, as ever, the Beautiful Gate of the Gospel.

"'Tis joy enough, my All in All,

Before Thy feet to lie;

Thou wilt not let me lower fall,

And who can higher fly?"

But then let us be known as those who, accepting Christ Jesus as our All for peace, (whatever we may have to "consider to be loss" that we may do so,) have clasped Him also as our Hidden Life, our Risen Power, our King within.

"O Jesus Christ, grow Thou in me,

And all things else recede;
My heart be daily nearer Thee,
From sin be daily freed." ^[95]

Always at the atoning Cross—yes, every day and hour; "knowing no other stand" before the face of the Holy One. Always receiving there the Risen Life, the presence inwardly of the Risen One, the secret power to suffer and to serve in peace—yes, for ever yes; "to the praise of the glory of His grace."

So, and only so, shall we live the life of real sinners really saved; "worshipping by the Spirit of God, exulting in Christ Jesus, and confident, but not in the flesh."

"We will dwell on Calvary's mountain
Where the flocks of Zion feed,
Oft resorting to that fountain
Open'd when our Lord did bleed;
Thence deriving
Grace, and life, and holiness."

—*From the Moravian Hymn-book.*

Chapter IX^(TOC)

Christian Standing and Christian Progress

Philippians 3:12-16

"I want that adorning divine

Thou only, my God, can'st bestow;

I want in those beautiful garments to shine

Which distinguish Thy household below.

"I want, as a traveller, to haste

Straight onward, nor pause on my way,

Nor forethought nor anxious contrivance to waste

On the tent only pitch'd for a day.

"I want—and this sums up my prayer—

To glorify Thee till I die,

Then calmly to yield up my soul to Thy care,

And breathe out, in faith, my last sigh."

—**CHARLOTTE ELLIOTT.**

Christian exultation—Christian confidence—"Not in the flesh"—"In Jesus Christ"—The prize in view—No finality in the progress—"Not already perfect"—The recompense of reward—What the prize will be

In a certain sense we have completed our study of the first section of the third chapter of the Epistle. But the treatment has been so extremely imperfect, in view of the importance of that section, that a few further remarks must be made. Let us ponder one weighty verse, left almost unnoticed when we touched it.

Observe then the brief, pregnant *account of the true Christian*, given in Verse 3: "We are the circumcision, we who by God's Spirit worship, and who exult in Christ Jesus, and who, not in the flesh, are confident." This is a far-reaching description of the true member of the true Israel, the man of the Covenant of grace.

Note first its positive lines. "**We worship,**" "**we exult,**" "**we are confident.**" Every affirmation is full of divine principles of truth. "**We worship**"; ours is a hallowed, dedicated, and reverent life. It is spent in a sanctuary. Whatever we have to be, or to do, as to externals; whether to rule a province, a church, a school, a home; whether to keep accounts, or sweep a room; whether to evangelize the slums of a city, or the dark places of heathenism, or to teach language, or science, or music; whether to be active all day long, or to lie down alone to suffer; whatever be our actual place and duty in the world, "**we worship.**" "We have set the Lord always before us." We have "sanctified Christ as LORD in our hearts" (1 Peter 3:15; so read). We belong to Him everywhere, and we recollect it. We owe adoring reverence to Him everywhere, and we recollect it. Let us reiterate the fact; ours is a hallowed life, for it belongs to a divine Master; it is a reverent life, for that Master in

His greatness is to us an abiding Presence. The fact of Him, the thought of Him, has expelled from our lives the secular air and the light and flippant spirit. We are nothing if not *worshippers*.

Then, secondly, "*we exult*." Ours is a life of gladness, so far as it is the true Christian life. Constantly and profoundly chastened by its worshipping character, it is constantly quickened and illuminated by this element of exultation. The word is strong, *kauchômenoi*, "exulting." We observe that the Apostle does not say that we are resigned, that we are at peace, that there is a calm upon us. This is true; but he says that "we *exult*." The "still waters," the *mêy m'nûchôth* of Psalm 23:2, are anything but stagnant. They are a lake; but it is a lake upon a river, like the fair waters of Galilee, receiving and giving, and therefore alive with pure movement, while yet surrounded by the "rest," *m'nûchâh*, which means repose not *from* action but *underneath* it. "We exult." Ours is not an autumn of feeling; not a state of the soul in which the characteristics are the sighs and starting tears of memory and apprehension. It is an everlasting spring, in which the mighty but temperate Sun of Salvation is shining, and will not set; not parching but quickening all day long. "We exult." It is a happy life, not only with the happiness of a cheerful contentment, beautiful as that is; ours is the happiness of wondering discovery, and rich possession, and ever-opening prospects; it is "quick and lively"; it is "exultation."

Then, "*we are confident*." If I traced the bearing of this clause aright, in the last chapter, we shall feel that the word *pepoithotes* is meant to carry a *positive* message. It is not only that "we do not rely on the flesh"; it is that "we are reliant, though not on the flesh." Even so, in the true idea of the Christian life. "*We are confident*." We are not wanderers from one peradventure to another; we are reliant, we are assured, we know where we

are, and what we are, and whither we are bound. True, we, are intensely conscious of the limits of our knowledge; it is only here and there that we can absolutely say, "We know." But then, the points where we *can* say so are points of supreme importance. "We know that the Son of God is come." "We know that our sins are forgiven us for His name's sake." "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; therefore we are always **confident**." And all this is summed up in the thought that "we know WHOM we have believed, and that HE is able to keep what we have committed unto Him." Our certainty is a confiding certainty. It does not reside in our courage, or our mental insight; it is lodged in a Person, who is such that He claims our entire reliance on His work, His word, Himself.

Then from its other side this wonderful verse gives us the cautions, the negatives, of the Christian life; though even here it speaks the language of the highest positive truth. "We worship **by God's Spirit**"; our reverence, our adoration, the hallowing and religiousness of our lives, is not a form imposed from without; it is a power exerting itself from within, having come to our poor hearts from above. Assuredly we do not neglect or slight actions and rites of worship; He who has made each of us soul and body, one man, does not mean us to despise the outward and physical in devotion. But we watchfully remember that no such actions or rites are, for one moment, the soul of worship, or its formative power. **That** soul and power is "God's Spirit" only; the Holy Ghost dwelling in the renewed being, and teaching the man "to cry Abba, Father," and "making intercession for him with groanings which cannot be uttered," and "taking of the things of Christ, and shewing it unto us." We pray, and it is "in the Holy Ghost." We worship, and it is "in Spirit, and in truth."

Again, "we exult *in Christ Jesus*." Our glad and animated happiness lies in nothing short of HIM as its cause. We are thankful for noble religious traditions and institutions, and for holy parentage, and for all which makes Christianity correspond in practice to its name. But we are watchful not to let even these blessings take the unique place of "Christ Jesus" in our "exultation." "In all things He must have the pre-eminence." Piety itself without Him, if it can be found, is not a body but a statue. All the privileges of the Church of God, without Him, though we reverently cherish every teaching and every ordinance that is Christian indeed, are but the frame without the picture, the casket without the stone.

Then again, "*not in the flesh* are we confident." We have learnt a deep distrust of everything which St Paul classes under that word "flesh." It is always offering itself to us, in one Protean shape or another, to be our comfort and our repose. Sometimes it takes the form of our supposed usefulness and diligence; sometimes of our strict and exemplary observances; sometimes, putting on a disguise still more subtle, it sets before the Christian the depth, or the length, of his spiritual experience. Or it grows bolder, and is content with coarser masks; it tempts us to a miserable reliance on some imagined betterness when we compare ourselves, forsooth, with some one else. I knew long ago an old shepherd, in my father's parish, who based a hope for eternity on the fact (if such it was) that he was never tipsy on a Sunday. We are amused, or we are shocked. But this was only an extreme type of a vast phenomenon, to be found lurking in countless hearts, when God lets in the light; the "reliance" on our being somehow, so we think, "not as other men are." And from this whole world of delusion, in all its continents and islands, the Lord calls us away here by His Apostle. He bids us migrate as it were to another planet, laying our *whole* confidence, not part of it, on HIM; let that other world, our old world, roll along without us.

Christ presents to us Himself (as we follow out this rich Philippian passage) as **all** our Righteousness, in His precious justifying Merit, offered for the acceptance of the very simplest faith. And He presents Himself as **all** our Power, for deliverance and for service, in His resurrection Life; coming to reveal Himself to us in the divine beauty of His sufferings, His death, through which he has passed for us into "indissoluble life" (Hebrews 7:16). Our Righteousness—it is HE, "the propitiation for our sins." Our Sanctification—it is still HE, in "the power of His resurrection, and fellowship with His sufferings, and assimilation to His death." Our Redemption, from the power of the grave—it is still "this same Jesus," in union with whom alone we "attain unto the resurrection which is out from the dead."

Even so, Lord Jesus Christ; let us thus be "found in Thee"; worshipping, exulting, confiding; resting on Thee, abiding in Thee, with an accepting faith which only grows more simple and single as the years move on and gather "since we believed."

"Help us, O Christ, to grasp each truth

With hand as firm and true

As when we clasp'd it first to heart

A treasure fresh and new;

"To name Thy name, Thyself to own,

With voice unfaltering,

And faces bold and unashamed

As in our Christian spring." ^[96]

But St Paul is again dictating, and we must follow. He has confessed and affirmed, once for all, his standing and fixity in the Lord, and in Him alone. Now he must emphasize another aspect of the living truth, his progress in the Lord; the non-finality of any given attainment in union with Him.

Verse 12. **Not as though I had already received** (*elabon*) the crown of accomplished glory, **or had been already perfected**, with the perfection which shall be when "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." **No, I am pressing on** (*diôkô de*), as on the racer's course, **if indeed**, if as a fact, in blessed finality, **I may seize** (*katalabô*) **that** promised crown **with a view to which**^[97] I was actually (*kai*) **seized by Christ Jesus**, when in His mercy He as it were laid violent hands upon me, to pluck me from ruin, and to constrain me into His salvation and His service. Yes, "I press on" to "seize" that crown, with the animating thought that it was on purpose that I might "seize" it that the Lord "seized" me; and that so every stage in the upward and onward course of faith runs straight in the line of His will whose mighty, gracious grasp is on me as I go. **Brethren,**

Verse 13. (I speak the word of pause and of appeal, as if I could stand by you, and lay my hand upon your arm,) **I** (*egô*), whatever others may think and do about *_them_selves*, **do not account myself** (*emauton*, emphatic like *egô*) **to have seized** the crown as yet; no, one thing (*en de*)—my thoughts, my purposes, are all concentrated on this **one** thing—the things behind forgetting, as one experience after another falls behind me into the past, **and towards the things in front stretching out and onward** (*epekteinomenos*), like the eager racer, with head thrown forward and body bent towards his object, seeking for more and yet more, in the grace and power of my unchangeable

Verse 14. Saviour, **goal-ward I press on** (*kata skopon diôkô*), "not uncertainly," with no faltering or divided aim, **unto** (*eis*), till I actually touch, **the prize** (*brabeion*, 1 Corinthians 9:24), the victor's wreath,^[98] the prize **of**, offered by, made possible through, **the high call of God**, the voice of His prevailing grace^[99] coming from **the heights** (*anô*) of glory and leading the believer at

length up thither, **in Christ Jesus**; for through Him comes the "call," and its blessed effect is to unite the "called," the converted, sinner **to** Him, so that he lives here and hereafter in Him. **So let all**

Verse 15. **Us perfect ones** (*hosoi oun teleioi*), with the perfection not of ideal attainment but of Christian maturity and entirety of experience, **be of this mind**; the "mind" of those who rest in Christ immoveably for their acceptance, and press forward in Christ unrestingly in their obedience, ever discovering fresh causes for humility and for progress, as they keep close to Him. **And if you are diversely** (*eterôs*) **minded in any thing**, if in any detail of theory or statement you cannot yet see with me, **this also God shall unveil to you**. Sure I am that "the Spirit of God speaketh by me," and that ultimately therefore you will, in submission to Him, see as I have taught you. But I am not therefore commissioned in this matter to denounce and excommunicate; I lay the truth before you, and in love leave it upon your reverent thoughts. **Only, as to**

Verse 16. **What we have succeeded in reaching**,^[100] so far as our insight into Christ has actually gone, up to our full present light in the Gospel, **let us step in the same path** (*tô autô stoichein*^[101]), on the unchanging principles of faith, love, and holiness, and with a watchful desire to cherish to the utmost a holy harmony of spirit and conduct.

Here, in suggestive contrast or complement to the section we studied last, the Christian appears in full and energetic movement, animated with a sacred discontent, repudiating all thought of finality in his conformity to his Lord, and in his actual spiritual condition; running, pressing on, remembering at every step that, although grace is present in power, and glory is in view, still this is the journey, not the home; the race, not the goal;

Nil actum reputans dum quid sibi restat agendum.

The passage contains of course much divine teaching in detail. But two main points come up conspicuously "for our learning."

I. We have here a strong, and at the same time a most tender

Warning against all approaches to a theoretical "perfectionism." Under that word, as I am well aware, many varieties of opinion in detail may be found. And again, few who hold opinions commonly called perfectionist like the word "perfectionism." But I speak with practical accuracy when I give that title to such views as on the whole affirm the attainableness here below of a spiritual condition in which man needs no longer confess himself as now a sinner, and in which his attention tends to be drawn more to his perfectness than to his imperfections of condition. That such views are held, and strongly held, by many earnest Christians, is a familiar fact. As far as my own observation goes, such views are not uncommonly attended, in those who hold them, by a certain oblivion to personal shortcomings and inconsistencies; by an obscuration of consciousness, and of conscience, more or less marked, towards the sinfulness of ordinary, everyday violations of the law of holiness in respect of "meekness, humbleness of mind, longsuffering," sympathy, and other quiet graces.

In the present passage the Apostle's whole spirit moves in just the opposite direction. His complete repose in Christ as the Righteousness of God for him, and then his deep nearness to his Lord as the Power of God in him, alike seem not so much to banish as utterly to preclude any thought about himself but that of his own imperfection. He writes as one whose very last feeling is that of complacency in his spiritual condition. I deliberately do not say "self-complacency"; for all Christians would repudiate that word; I say, complacency in his spiritual condition. His spiritual *position*, in Christ, as he

is "found in Him," fills him with much more than complacency; it is his glory and his boast. But when he comes to speak of his spiritual **condition**, the possessing thought is that all is imperfect and progressive. He has a perfect blessing; but he is an imperfect recipient of it; he has "not attained." He is deeply happy. But he is thoroughly humble. As we read the passage, we feel very sure that the man who wrote it would lie very tenderly and candidly open to reproofs, and to painful truths told him about himself. For his Lord, he is ready to bear rejoicing witness to the whole world. For himself, even as in Christ, he holds no brief; nay, he takes the other part.

He has had a vision of absolute holiness which has completely guarded him from the delusion of thinking that he is himself absolutely holy, even in the fullest state of grace. He is so genuinely "perfect" in the sense of mature knowledge of his Lord that he is incapable of thinking himself "perfected."

All the while, this does not for a moment leave him in the miserable plight of acquiescing in sin because he knows he is still a sinner. If he were merely going by a theory, it might be so. But he is going by the Lord Jesus Christ; he is using HIM, daily and hourly, as not only his always abasing standard, but as "all his salvation, and all his desire"; as the infinitely blissful Object of his affections and of his knowledge; as his **Summum Bonum**. While Christ is fully this to the Christian, he will be little likely on the one hand to say, "I am perfect" (Job 9:20); on the other he will be always seeking, in the most practical of all ways, watching, praying, believing, for a closer conformity and yet closer (**summorphixomenos**) to his Lord's bright image.

And at the back of all his thoughts about defect and progress will lie the restful certainties to which no ideas of defect attach, and from which the idea of progress is absent, because it is out of place—the certainties of the Righteousness of God, "of peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ";

the being "found in Him."

II. The passage puts very distinctly before us the thought of the Reward of Grace

The writer is living, loving, working, in view of a "prize," *brabeion*: he looks forward to the Master's hand as it will extend the wreath of victory, and to His voice as it will utter the longed-for words, "Well done, good and faithful Servant." This same man has laboured, in many an hour of public and private teaching, and in many an inspired page, to emphasize the magnificent truth that grace is grace; that God owes man nothing; that "all things are of God"; that "to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness." He well knows that there is a side of truth from which the one possible message is the Lord's own solemn question and answer (Luke 17:9), "Doth he thank that servant? I trow not." The most complete and laborious service cannot possibly outrun the obligation of the rescued bondservant to the Possessor, of the limb to the blessed Head. But then, this absolute servitude is to One who is, as a fact, eternal Love. The work is done for a Master who, while His claims are absolute, is such that He personally delights in every response of love to His love, of will to His will. His servant *cannot* serve Him with a grateful heart without thereby pleasing the heart of his Lord. And so, at the close of the day's work, while, from the side of law and claims, the Lord "doth not thank that servant," from the side of love and of moral sympathy He will welcome him in with "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of

thy Lord." And that holy "prize" does, and must, prove a magnet to the Christian's will and hopes. What is he looking for? Not an accession of personal dignity in heaven, but a word from his beloved Master's heart. There is nothing mercenary in this. True, it "has respect unto the recompense of reward." But the "reward" is what only love can give, and only love can take. It is love's approval of the service of love.

Much discussion has been spent upon the theory of reward, in the matter of our service rendered to "our King who has saved us." The theme no doubt is one which admits of much interesting and important enquiry; and it has many sides. But after all the true philosophy of it lies in "the truth as it is *in Jesus*." Let the Christian be seeking the reward of personal aggrandizement in heaven, "to sit on His right hand, or on His left, in His glory"; and the motive is as earthly as if the scene of its fulfilment were to be an earthly palace. Let him be seeking the "well done" of Jesus Christ, because Jesus Christ has redeemed him, and is dear to him; and he is in the line of the will, and of the love, of God.

"Sovereign Lord and gracious Master,
Thou didst freely choose Thine own,
Thou hast call'd with holy calling,
Thou wilt save, and keep from falling;
Thine the glory, Thine alone!
Yet Thy hand shall crown in heaven
All the grace Thy love hath given;
Just, though undeserv'd, reward

From our glorious, gracious Lord."

—*F. R. HAVERGAL.*

Chapter X[\(TOC\)](#)

The Blessed Hope and Its Power

Philippians 3:17-21

*"We are waiting, we are yearning for Thy voice
Through the long, long summer day and winter night;
We are mourning till Thou bid'st our souls rejoice,
Till Thy coming turns our darkness into light:
Come, Lord Jesus, come again;
We shall see Thee as Thou art,
Then, and not till then,
In Thy glory bear a part;
Then, and not till then,
Thou wilt satisfy each heart."*

—**J. DENHAM SMITH.**

The problem of the body—Cautions and tears—"That blessed hope"—The duty of warning—The moral power of the hope—The hope full of immortality—My mother's life—"He is able"—The promise of his coming

The Apostle draws to the close of his appeal for a true and watchful fidelity to the Gospel. He has done with his warning against Judaistic legalism. He has expounded, in the form of a personal confession and testimony, the true Christian position, the acceptance of the believer in "the righteousness which is of God by faith," and the sanctification of the believer through union with

his Lord and in an always growing communion with Him. Throughout this deep and most tender argument has run everywhere the truth with which it began, that the sure antidote to the spiritual errors in question is "joy in the Lord." The glad use of Jesus Christ in His personal glory and perfection, as He merited for us, and as we abide in Him—this is the way.

Already another class of mistake and danger has risen before his mind, and occupies it now exclusively. From Verse 12 onward, if I read the passage aright, he has been thinking not of the legalist only, who opposed and denounced his doctrine of grace and faith, but of the school or schools which rather would applaud it—and then distort it. There was the teacher who would assert a premature and delusive personal perfection, proclaiming himself so close to Christ that he had already reached the holy goal. And there was the teacher who would reason so upon the perfectness of the atoning merits as to disclaim the need of seeking with all his soul a personal conformity to the Lord of the Atonement. Such a man would conceivably affirm for himself an experience of intense spiritual insight, a communion with God profound and direct, an exaltation into a celestial atmosphere of consciousness; while yet, and on his own avowed theory, he was living a life in which sin was allowed to reign in his mortal body, What did it matter? The spirit soared and expatiated in a higher region. The true man lived in the world above, "commercing with the skies"; it was but the body, soon to perish, which went its own way, and might be allowed to do so, for it could never be other than the uncongenial burthen of the real man.

Such theories, as all are aware, were largely developed and widely spread in the sub-apostolic age. The word Gnosticism, so familiar to the reader of the early history of thought in and around the Church, reminds us of this; for while many Gnostics were severe ascetics, others were practical libertines;

and the divergent practices sprang from one deep source of error, dishonour of the body. To both schools, spirit was good, matter was evil. By both therefore the body was viewed not as a subject of redemption, but as a barrier in its way. The one aimed to wear out the barrier, to help it to disappear. The others left it, as they thought, alone; leapt, as they thought, over it; as if they could pursue a spiritual life which should be irrespective of the body's hopeless evils.

The embryo, at least, of this latter type of thought was beyond doubt apparent in St Paul's day, and had begun to be felt at Philippi. There, in that loving and beloved community, the plague had begun, or at least the infection was imminent. "Many walked" (perhaps not actually at Philippi yet, but they might soon come) in the foul broad road which they asserted to be clean and narrow. Very probably they used the terms of the Pauline Gospel, and said much of grace, and faith, and the Spirit, and the things above. But none the less they were the victims of an awful self-delusion; teachers whose doctrine led downwards to the pit. To them he comes at length, explicitly and finally. In view of them he places before the Philippians once more the fact of his own and his brethren's examples, and then the sanctifying power of that blessed hope, the Redemption of the Body.

Verse 17. **United imitators of me become ye, brethren;** taking me, your long-known guide in the Lord, for your moral pattern, and strengthening your mutual cohesion (*summimêtai*) by so doing (an appeal prompted not by egotism or self-confidence, but by single-hearted certainty about my message and my purpose); **and mark,** watch, in order to tread in their steps, ^[102] **those who so walk as you have us,** me and my missionary-brethren, **for a model;** those whose practical conduct in human life and intercourse (*peripatein*), seen among you day by day in its wholesomeness and truth, plainly reproduces what you remember of ours. There is need for this attention, and for this

Verse 18. Discrimination. **For there are many men walking**, pursuing a line of conduct and practice, **whom I often used to tell you of**, in the days of our direct intercourse, **but (de) now tell you of actually (kai) with cries and tears (klaiôn)**, (so much has the evil grown, in extent and in depth, so awfully apparent are its issues, for this world and the world to come,) **as the enemies, the personal enemies (tous echthrous)**, as if in a bad pre-eminence, **of the Cross of our (tou) Christ**, that Cross of whose virtues they can say much, but whose power upon the soul they utterly ignore; **of**

Verse 19. **Whom the end is perdition**, ruin of the whole being,^[103] final and hopeless; **of whom the god is the belly**, (the sensual appetites, the body's degradation, not its function,) while they claim an exalted and special intimacy with the Supreme; **and their (he) glory**, their boast to see deeper and to soar higher than others, **is in their shame; men whose mind is for (phronouten) the things on earth**, not, as they dream, or as at least they say, for the things of an upper and super-corporeal world. No; their subtle doctrine of spirit and body—what is it when tested in its issues? It is but a philosophy of sin; a gossamer robe over the self-indulgence which has come to be the real interest of the theorist, the real occupation of his will. All is really, with them, of the earth, earthy. Far other is the doctrine we have learned, and have striven to exemplify, at the feet of Christ.

Verse 20. For our city-home, the seat of our citizenship, and of the conduct which it demands and inspires,^[104] **subsists in the heavens**, is always there, an antecedent and abiding fact (*huparchei*), on which we are to act in life; in that heavenly world, where the Lord is, and for which He is training us; the eternal Country of this eternal City and Home; **out of which (city)^[105] we are actually (kai) waiting for, as our Saviour**, in the full and final sense, the **Lord Jesus Christ, who will**

Verse 21. **Transfigure**—not annihilate, not cast away as essentially evil, but wonderfully change in its conditions, and so in its guise, in its semblance (*schêma*)—the body of our humiliation, this body, now inseparably connected with the burthens and abasements of our mortality, **humbling** us continually in the course of its necessities, and of its sufferings, but not

therefore, in its essence, other than God's good handiwork; **to be conformed**, with a resemblance based on an essential assimilation (*summorphon, morphê*), **to the body of His glory**, as He resumed His blessed Body when He rose, and as He wears it now upon the Throne, and in it manifests Himself to the happy ones in their bliss; **according to**, in ways and measures conditioned only by, **the forth-putting (*energeia*) of His ability actually to subdue to Himself all things that are (*ta panta*)**.

So the great passage, the pregnant chapter, ends. As it began so it closes—with Jesus Christ. With Him His servant can never have done; "Him first, Him midst, Him last, and without end." Jesus Christ is the present joy, and the everlasting hope. His perfected righteousness is the believer's actual deep safety and repose. His unsearchable riches of personal grace and glory are the constant animation and ever-rising standard of the believer's spiritual progress. He is the eternal Antidote to our fears, and also to our sins. He is the infinite Contradiction to the least compromise, under any pretext, with evil; and He is this, among other ways, by being Himself "that blessed Hope"; "the Lord Jesus Christ, which is our Hope" (1 Timothy 1:1); so that the prospect of His Return, and of what He will do for us, and for Himself (*eaútô*), when He returns, is to be our mighty motive in the matter of practical, eye of bodily, cleanness and holiness of life.

The whole passage now before us is strongly characteristic of the New Testament way of dealing with sin. In the first place, there is no lack of urgent and explicit warning. The moral and spiritual evil is labelled unmistakably. It is pointed out as a danger not hypothetical but actual; not floating in the air, but embodied in lives and influences: "**Many persons walk** whom I tell you of with tears as the enemies of the cross of Christ." And of these persons, as such, it is unflinchingly said that their end is *atôleia*, "ruin," "perdition"; dread and hopeless word. In all this lies a lesson for our day. In many quarters the solemn utterance of warning is now almost silent; it is

regarded as almost unchristian to warn sinners, even open sinners, to do anything so much out of the fashion as "to flee from the wrath to come," "the wrath which is coming upon the children of disobedience." But this is not the apostolic way, nor the Lord's way.

Yet this passage, this heart-searching appeal, while it deals with warning, does not end with it. Its strongest and chosen argument is not fear but hope; not perdition but "the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him." St Paul has to guard the Philippians against a most subtle form of sensual temptation, a masterpiece of the Enemy. In passing, and with bitter tears, he points to the gulph where that path ends. In closing, and with his whole heart, he points to the coming Lord in His benignant glory, and to the unutterable joy of our being then, finally and even in our material being, transfigured for ever into His likeness.

For our own blessing, and for that of others, let us follow this example. Whether in the pulpit to a listening throng, or in more individual approaches to other men, or when we turn in upon ourselves, and, like the Psalmists, speak to our own souls, in the most secret possible hour, let us seek to speak thus. Let us not take an opiate against the ideas of judgment, wrath, perdition—unless, with our Bibles quite open, we are quite sure that such things are only dreams of a past religious night. Let us take urgent heed, above all for ourselves, lest we **lose faith in the warnings** of God. But all the while let us present to ourselves, and to others, as the great argument of all for saying "No" to specious sin, "that blessed Hope." Let us consider Jesus Christ, till He shines upon us in something of the glory of His Person and His Work. Let us wait for Him from heaven. More and more, as the years roll, and the suns set, and "that day" is approaching, let us take our place among those who "love His appearing." And as for our bodies, and His call to be pure in body

as in spirit, let us continually remember that "the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body" (1 Corinthians 6:13). Let us not merely try to reason down temptation, or to order it down, in the name of abstract rightness, or of concrete peril. Let us recollect as a glorious fact that the body is the purchased property of the Lord Jesus; that He cares for it, as His dear-bought possession; that He can, by His own Spirit, sanctify it now, through and through; and that He is coming, perhaps very soon indeed, to "transfigure it to be conformed to the body of His glory."

The whole genius of the Gospel tends to connect together, as closely as possible, holiness and happiness. They are to act and react in manifold ways in the Christian life. Holiness lies at the root of happiness, as its deep condition. But also happiness, from another point of view, waters the root of holiness, and expands its flowers, and brings its sweet fruit to fulness. "The joy of the Lord is your strength"—your strength to say to temptation a "No" which shall be entirely willing and simple. Never shall we so tread down the tempter, and the traitor, as when we are "rejoicing in Christ Jesus," and "in the hope of the glory of God."

Then let us cultivate this blessed secret. Let us prove the power of Christ loved and looked for. In a very special sense let St Paul teach us here to apply to our present needs the force of a heavenly future, the future of His coming, and of our meeting Him and being transfigured by Him. In many directions, in the Church, this rule is being practised now with great earnestness, and with happy issues; the looking for the Lord's Return is indeed a reality to many. But in many directions it is otherwise. Christian thought and labour too often seem to limit themselves to the sphere of the present, and to forget that the goal of the Gospel is not a state of social *bien-être* developed by philanthropy under the auspices, so to speak, of Christ, but an immortality of

holy power and service, won for us by His merits, prepared for us by His exaltation, while we are prepared for it by His Spirit working in us. Again and again we need to remember this. The Gospel showers along its path, upon the mortal life of man, personal and social blessings of the philanthropic kind which nothing else can possibly bring down. It makes to-day infinitely important by connecting it with the eternal to-morrow. But the path is towards that to-morrow. "We look at the things not seen, for the things which are not seen are eternal." We "desire a better country, that is, an heavenly." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

Much current Christian teaching practically tends to drop immortality very nearly out of sight. The Lord's Return, the heavenly Life, "the liberty of the glory of the sons of God"—these topics are either little mentioned, or treated too much as luxuries and ornaments of the Gospel. But it was not so for the Lord Jesus, and for His Apostles. And we shall find that to follow Him and them in this, as in other things, is best. It "hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Their doctrine of the future is much more than an antidote to death. It is the mighty animation of life. It makes altogether for present purity, and righteousness, and self-sacrificing love, in the concrete circumstances of this generation. It is the thought in which alone man can live his true life *now*, as a being who is made "to glorify God—and to enjoy Him fully *for ever*."

As a matter of fact, no human life is so true, full, and beautiful as that which is at once assiduously attentive to present duty and service, and full of the everlasting hope. Such lives are being lived all around us. Which of my readers has not known at least one such? For me, one among many shines out in my heart radiant with a brightness all its own; it is the life of my blessed

Mother. She has now been a great while with the Lord, on whom she so long believed. But the impression of what that "conversation" was is not only indelible; it lives and moves, as fresh to-day as ever. It was a busy life—the life of a wife, a mother of many sons, a friend of many friends, the pastor's help-mate in a poor parish. It was a life of minute and devoted attention to every duty, large and little. It was a life of warm and ready sympathies, and manifold interests. But it was a life all the while of divine communion, and of an unwavering "hope full of immortality." Dear to that heart indeed were husband, children, friends, neighbours, suffering and sinning world. Very fruitful was that life for individual and social blessing, just such as the philanthropist seeks to convey. Side by side with my Father, who laboured incessantly through a long life for God and man, and for men's health as well as their salvation, my Mother lived for others in all their present needs. But the springs of what she was, and did, were within the veil. And the choice and the longing were always, in perfect harmony with every strong human affection, directed towards heaven. She did indeed "wait, as for her Saviour, for the Lord Jesus Christ." And the whole result, for those whom that life affected, was a deep, strong evidence of Christianity. In her we saw the Gospel beautify the present by lifting the veil of the blessed future. We recognized the reality of Jesus Christ now by converse with one who so much desired the sight of His glory *then*.

As we draw to an end, let us take up the closing words of our paragraph, and read them as a special "lesson of faith." St Paul is telling us of a change yet to pass over us, over these our bodies, altogether inconceivable in kind and degree. They are to be "transfigured into conformity to the body of our Saviour's glory." Yes, it is inconceivable; in modern parlance, it is "unthinkable." "How can these things be?" Well, Scripture does not invite us to "conceive" it, to "think" it, in the sense of thinking it out. It helps us indeed

elsewhere (1 Corinthians 15) with intimations and illustrations, up to a certain point; but this is not to explain, or to ask us to explain. What it does is something better; it invites us to trust a personal Agent, who understands all that He has undertaken, and who is able. "How can these things be?" Not according to this or that law, principle, or tendency, which we can divine. No; but "according to the mighty working whereby HE is able to subdue all things unto Himself."

The method of the Bible is to give us ample views of what Jesus Christ is, and then (not before) to ask us to trust Jesus Christ to DO what he says He can. He says, "I will raise you up at the last day." And He does not go on to explain. He says nothing in detail of His *modus operandi*. We are in absolute ignorance of it, as much as the Christians of five, or ten, or eighteen centuries ago. We do not know how. But we know Him. And He has said, "I will"—and has died and risen again.

Shall we not rest here? It is good ground. "I know whom I have believed; and am persuaded that He is able."

And what is true of His power and promise in this great matter of our resurrection and our glory, is true of course all round the circle of His undertakings. "He can subdue all things." And therefore, not only death, and the grave, and the mysteries of matter, but also our hearts, our affections, our wills. He can "bring every thought into captivity" to the holy rule of His thought. He can "subdue our iniquities." And he can subdue also all that we know as circumstance and condition; making the crooked straight, and the rough places plain. How, we may be wholly ignorant beforehand; only, "according to the mighty working."

Lastly, it is *heautô*,^[106] "unto HIMSELF." What a word of rest and power!

Our expectation of His victories in us and for us does not terminate upon ourselves; it is never safe to terminate things there. It rises and rests in Himself. Our glorification, body and soul, is, ultimately, "unto Him"; therefore the prospect, and the desire, are boundlessly right and safe. "To subdue all things *unto Himself*"; so as to serve Him, to promote His ends, to do His will. Our absolute emancipation from all the limitations of both moral and material evil is "unto Himself." Emancipation on this side, it is an entire and eternal annexation on the other. The being will be fully liberated that it may fully serve—"day and night in His temple."

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Come, to our full and final salvation. Come, that we, the beings whom Thou hast made, and remade, may enjoy "the liberty of the glory" (Romans 8:21) for which we were destined in Thy love. Come, that we may be for ever happy, and strong, and free, in that wonderful world of the resurrection. Come, that we may meet again with exceeding joy the beloved ones who have gone before us, and all Thy saints, and may with them inherit the everlasting kingdom. But oh come yet more for Thyself, and for Thy glory, and to take Thy full possession. "Subdue all things," Lord Jesus, "unto Thyself." Subdue our death for ever, that our endless life may be, in all its fulness, spent for Thee.

"For Thou hast met our longings

With words of golden tone,

That we shall serve for ever

Thyself, Thyself alone;

"Shall serve Thee, and for ever,

Oh hope most sure, most fair;

The perfect love outpouring

In perfect service there." [\[107\]](#)

Chapter XI[\(TOC\)](#)

Purity and Peace in the Present Lord

Philippians 4:1-9

"Now the Christians, O King, as men who know God, ask from Him petitions which are proper for Him to give and for them to receive; and thus they accomplish the course of their lives. And because they acknowledge the goodnesses of God towards them, lo! on account of them there flows forth the beauty that is in the world."—Apology of Aristides, about A.D. 130; translated by MRS RENDEL HARRIS.

Euodia and Syntyche—Conditions to unanimity—Great uses of small occasions—Connexion to the paragraphs—The fortress and the sentinel—A golden chain of truths—Joy in the Lord—Yieldingness—Prayer in everything—Activities of a heart at rest

Verse 1. **So, my brethren beloved and longed for, missed** indeed, at this long distance from you, **my joy and crown** of victory (*stephanos*), **thus**, as having such certainties and such aims, with such a Saviour, and looking for such a heaven, **stand firm in the Lord, beloved ones.**

The words are a link of gold between the passage just ended and that which is to follow. They sum up the third chapter of the Epistle into one practical issue. In view of all that can tempt them away to alien thoughts and beliefs St Paul once more points the converts to Jesus Christ; or rather, he once more bids them remember that in Him they are, and that their safety, their life, is to stay there, recollected and resolved. There is the point of overwhelming advantage against error, and against sin; and only there. "Standing in the Lord," in remembrance and *in use* of their vital union with Him, they would be armed alike against the pharisaic and the antinomian heresy. Counterfeits and perversions would be seen, or at least *felt*, to be such while they were

thus in living and working contact with the REALITY. There, with a holy instinct, they would repudiate utterly a merit of their own before God, and a strength of their own against sin. There, with equal inward certainty, they would detect and reject the suggestion that they "should not surely die," though impurity was cloaked and loved.

But the words we have just rendered look forward also. St Paul is about to allude, for the last time, and quite explicitly, to that blot on the fair Philippian fame, the presence in the little mission Church of certain jealousies and divisions. One instance of this evil is prominent in his thoughts, no doubt on Epaphroditus' report. Two Christian women, Euodia^[108] and Syntyche, evidently well-known Church members, possibly officials, "deaconesses," like Phoebe (Romans 16:1), were at personal variance. Into their life and work for Christ (for workers they were, or however had been; they had "wrestled along with Paul in the Gospel,") had come this grievous inconsistency. Somehow (modern experiences in religious activity supply illustrations only too easily) they had let the spirit of self come in; jealousy and a sense of grievance lay between them. And out of this unhappy state it was the Apostle's deep desire to bring them, quickly and completely. He appeals to them personally about it, with a directness and explicitness which remind us how homelike still were the conditions of the mission Church. He calls on his "true yoke-fellow," and on Clement, and on his other "fellow-labourers," to "help" the two to a better mind, by all the arts of Christian friendship. But surely first, in this verse, he leads not only the Philippians generally but Euodia and Syntyche in particular up to a level where the self-will and self-assertion must, of themselves, expire. "Stand firm in the Lord." In recollection and faith surround yourselves with Jesus Christ. The more you do so the more you will find that so to be in Him is to "be of one mind in Him." In that PRESENCE self is put to shame indeed. Pique, and petty

jealousies, and miserable heart-burnings, and "just pride," die of inanition there, and heart meets heart in love, because in Christ.

It is not guaranteed to us, I think, that we shall certainly be brought here on earth to perfect intellectual agreement by a realized union with Christ all round. Such agreement will certainly be promoted by such a realization; we all know how powerfully, in almost all matters outside number and figure, feeling can influence reasoning; and to have feeling rightly adjusted, "in Him that is true," must be a great aid to just reasoning, and so a great contribution to mental agreement. Thomas Scott, in his *Force of Truth*, (a memorable record of experience,) maintains that vastly more doctrinal concord would be attained in Christendom if all true Christians unreservedly and with a perfect will sought for "God's heart" (and mind) "in God's words."^[109] But it is a law of our present state, even in Christ, that "we know in part"; and while this is so, certain discrepancies of inference would seem to be necessary, where many minds work each with its partial knowledge. It is otherwise with "*the spirit* of our mind," the attitude of will and affection in which we think. In the Lord Jesus Christ *this* is meant to be, and can be, rectified indeed, as "every thought is brought into captivity" to Him. If so, to "stand firm in Him" is the way of escape out of all such miseries of dissension (whether between two friends, or two Churches, or two enterprises) as are due not to reasoning but to feeling. "In Him" there is *really* no room for envy, and retaliation, and "the unhappy desire of becoming great," and the eager combat for our own opinion *as such*. "Standing firm in Him" the Euodias and Syntyches of all times and places *must tend* to be of one mind, one attitude of mind (*phronein*). So far as they are, in a sinful sense, not so "minded," it is because they are half out of Him.

But now St Paul comes to them, name by name. What must the tender weight

of the words have been as they were first read aloud at Philippi!

Verse 2. **To Euodia I appeal** (*parakalô*),^[110] **and to Syntyche I appeal, to be of the same mind, in the Lord;** to lay aside differences of feeling, born of self, in the power of their common union in Christ.^[111] **Aye** (read

Verse 3. **Nai**, not **kai**), **and I beg thee also**, thee in **thy** place, as I seek to do in mine, **thou genuine yoke-fellow**,^[112] help them (*autais*)—these sisters of ours thus at variance, **women who** (*aitines*) **wrestled along with me**, as devoted and courageous workers, **in the** cause of the **Gospel**, when the first conflicts with the powers of evil were fought at Philippi; yes, do this loving service, **with Clement**^[113] too, and my other fellow-workers, whose names are in the Book of Life; the Lord's own, "written in heaven," His for ever.
^[114]

Wonderful is the great use of small occasions everywhere in Scripture. Minor incidents in a biography are texts for sentences which afford oracles of truth and hope for ever. Local and transitory errors, like that of the Thessalonians about their departed friends, give opportunity for a prophecy on which bereaved hearts are to rest and rejoice till the last trumpet sounds. The unhappy disagreement of two pious women at Philippi is dealt with in words which lead up to the thought of the eternal love of God for His chosen; as if the very unworthiness of the matter in hand, by a sort of repulsion, drove the inspired thought to the utmost height, without for one moment diverting it from its purpose of peace and blessing. And now, in the passage which is to follow, the thought still keeps its high and holy level. It says no more indeed of the Book of Life. But it unfolds in one sentence after another the manifestation here below of the eternal life in all its holy loveliness. It invites Euodia, and Syntyche, and us with them, to the sight of what the believer is called to be, and may be, day by day, as he rejoices in the Lord, and recollects His presence, and tells Him everything as it comes, and so lives "in

rest and quietness," deep in His peace; and finds his happy thoughts occupied not with the miseries of self-esteem and self-assertion, but with all that is pure and good, in the smile of the God of peace.

The passage now to be translated has surely this among its other precious attractions and benefits, that it stands related to what has gone just before. The precepts and promises are not given as it were in the air; they are occasioned by Euodia and Syntyche, or rather by what they have suggested to St Paul's mind, the crime and distress of an unchristian spirit in Christians. It is with this he is dealing. And he deals with it not by an elaborate exposure of its obvious wrong, but by carrying it into the sanctuary of holiness and peace, there to die.

With this recollection let us read the words now before us.

Verse 4. **Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say (*erô*), Rejoice;** I have said it above, as my antidote-word to every subtle error; I come back (*palin*) to say it again, as my antidote to self-will. Your

Verse 5. **Yieldingness**, your selflessness, the spirit which will yield in *anything* that is only of self, for Christ's sake, **let it be known to all men**, let it be proved a reality in real life, by all and sundry who have to do with you; **the Lord is near**, always beside you, to

Verse 6. Know, to love, to elevate, to calm.^[115] **About nothing be anxious (*merimnate*); never** let yourselves be burthened and distracted **as those who are alone from your Lord; but in everything**, however great, however little, **by your (*tê*) prayer**, your whole worshipping approach to Him, **and your (*tê*) supplication**, your definite petitions of Him, **with thanksgiving**, thanks at least for this, that you have Him to speak to and to trust, **let your requests be made known towards our God (*pros ton Theon*)**, with perfect simplicity of detail, putting aside all the mysteries of prayer in the

Verse 7. Recollection that He bids you pray. **And**, and thus, not anyhow, but thus, in

adoring, trusting communion with Him, **the peace of God**, the innermost tranquillity caused by contact with Him, breathed by His Spirit into ours, the peace **which transcends all mind**, for no reasoning can explain and define its nature and its consciousness, **shall** (it is nothing less than a promise) **safeguard**, as garrison, as sentinel (*phrouresei*), **your hearts**, in all their depths of will, affection, and reflexion, **and your thoughts**, the very workings of those hearts in detail, **in Christ Jesus**. In Him you are, as your Fortress of rest and holiness; and, while there you rest, this sacred keeper watches the door; the peace of God is sentinel.

Such was to be the condition for the true play of the inner life; such, not in a dream but at Philippi, were to be their "hearts and thoughts, in Christ Jesus"; thus happy, gentle, unanxious, prayerful, thankful, all the day. And now, what is to be the matter for such conditions, the food for such thinking and such willing? There is to be no vacuum, called peace. These "hearts and thoughts" are to be active, discursive, reflective; "reckoning," "calculating," "reasoning out" (*logixesthai*) innumerable things—all with a view, of course, to the life-long work of serving God and man.

Verse 8. For, **finally, brethren, all things that are true, all things that are honourable**, serious, sacred, venerable, self-respectful, **all things that are righteous**, as between man and man in common life, **all things that are pure**, clean words, clean deeds, **all things that are amiable**, gracious, kindly; for manner as well as matter falls under the will of God; **all things that are sweet to speak of**, things prompting a loving and noble tone of conversation; **whatever virtue there is**, truly so called, not in the pagan sense of self-grounded vigour, even in right directions, but in that of the energy for right which is found in God; **and whatever praise there is**, given rightly by the human conscience to deeds and purposes of good; **these things think out**, reckon, reason on (*logixesthe*). Let **right** in all its practical, all its noble forms, be the subject-matter of your considering and designing activities within. Strong, not in yourselves but in your Lord's presence and His peace, use His strength in you to work out every precept of

His Word, every whisper of His Spirit, every dictate of the conscience He has given.

Then follows one word of a more personal kind; it is no egotism, but as if he would remind them amidst these great generalities of principle that they well knew a human life which strove to realize them in practice.

Verse 9. **The things you learnt** of me, **and received** as revealed truth from me, and **heard and saw in me, these things practise** (*prassette*), make them the habits of your lives; and so **the God of peace**, Author and Giver of peace within, and of harmony around, **shall be with you**; your Companion and Guardian, "Lord of the Sabbath" of the soul, secret of the true unity of the group, and of the Church.

Thus we read over again this golden chain of "commandments which are not grievous" and "exceeding precious promises." Few passages of equal length, even in St Paul's Epistles, at once invite more attention to details of language and convey richer spiritual messages. Very passingly and partially I have noted the more important details of word and phrase, in the course of the translation. It remains to say not what I would but what I can, in brief compass, upon the messages to the Christian's soul.

Let us be quite practical, and let our study take the simplest form. In this wonderful paragraph let us not only wonder; let us take its sentences as revelations of fact. Here the Holy Spirit through the Apostle sets before us some of the intended facts of the normal Christian life. These precepts were not meant to dissolve into bright dreams; they were to be obeyed in Philippi then, and in England now; they were spoken for not ideal but actual human beings, the rank and file of the followers of the Lord. These promises were not meant to be met with an aspiration, followed by a sigh. They were to be received and used, as certainties of the grace of God, "before the sons of men."

Come then to the paragraph once again, to study it with real life in immediate view, and in the full consciousness of our own sin and weakness. Here are some of the normal "possibilities of grace," not for the strong and holy but for the very weak, for those who know that "in their flesh dwelleth no good thing," but who come to Jesus, and (if only for very fear and need) stay by Him.

Here then is the fact, first, that the Christian life, as such, is to be, and may be, a life of "joy in the Lord always." Such is "the Lord" that He is indeed able to be a perpetual cause of joy. The believer has but to recollect HIM, to consider HIM, to converse with HIM, to make use of HIM, in order to have in himself (not *of* himself) "a well of water, springing up unto eternal life." "In joy and sorrow, life and death, His love is still the same"; for HE is still the same; and the believing man is His.

He will henceforth covet, and cultivate, this life of holy "joy in the Lord always." It is not a boisterous mirth; it is pure and chastened; but it *is joy*. It is an unfigurative happiness, a deep practical cheerfulness, full of health for him who has it, and a most powerful secret for influence over those who have to do with him. Think of the track of light left behind by lives of holy joy which we have watched! It was good to be near them. The very things and places round them were warmed and beautified by them. And their source and strength lay, not in the believer, but in "the Lord"; therefore the way is open for us too; we may be bearers of such sunshine too, happy and making happy.

"By influence of the light divine
Let thy own light to others shine;
Reflect all heaven's propitious rays
In ardent love and cheerful praise." ^[116]

Again, here is the fact that the normal Christian life is, as such, a life of "moderation known unto all men," in the controlling calm of the nearness of the Lord. The meaning of this "moderation" (*to epieikes*) we have seen; it is that blessed facility, that unselfish yieldingness, which is not weakness at all but the outcome of the meekness of a heart which Christ has overcome. It is the instinctive spirit, where He is in full command of thought and will, when personal "grievances" cross us, when our personal claims are slighted, our feelings disregarded, and even our legitimate rights overridden. Of course more considerations than one have to be taken as to our action when our rights are overridden. We have to ask whether our yielding will be helpful or hurtful *to others*; we have even to ask whether to yield may not do harm to the invader. But these questions, if honestly asked, stand clear of the spirit of self; they regard others. And wherever they can be so answered as to leave us free to yield in view of others, we, if Christians indeed, living really our Christian life, shall find it quite possible, in the Lord Jesus, to let our "yieldingness be known unto all men," in the deep calm of "the Lord at hand." Yes, this can be so, in the most complicated life, and with the most irritable character, if we will fully "receive the grace of God" (2 Corinthians 6:1). And the "all men" who "know" it will note it, and will recognize, sooner or later, the Master in the servant.

Yet again, the normal Christian life is given here as a life free from care, from that miserable anxiety, *merimna*, which blights and withers human happiness far and wide, whether it comes in the form of a weight of large responsibilities or of the most trifling misgivings. "Be careful for nothing"; "care-ful" in the antique sense of the word; "burthened with care." In the modern sense of careful, no one should be more careful than we; "faithful in the least," "shewing all good fidelity in all things," "walking circumspectly," accurately, *akribôs* (Ephesians 5:15), "pleasing the neighbour for his good

unto edification," "whether we eat or drink, doing all to the glory of God," "watching and praying always." But in the other sense we are, we positively are, enjoined to live "without carefulness"; to take pains, but in peace; to work and serve, but at rest within; to "provide," to think beforehand (*pronoeisthai*, Romans 12:17), but in the repose of soul given by the fact that with the morrow will come the Lord, or rather that He will walk with us and lead us into it. It is a great triumph to live such a life; but it is His triumph, not ours. Let us leave Him free (may the word be used in reverence?) to win it; to "do this mighty work," to "bear our burthen daily" (so we may render Psalm 78:19). Nothing will much more glorify Him in eyes that notice our daily walk than to see us always taking care, yet always unanxious while we take it.

"In the calm of sweet communion

Let thy daily work be done;

In the peace of soul-outpouring

Care be banish'd, patience won." ^[117]

The sweet hymn leads us straight to the next point. The normal Christian life, according to this paragraph, is a life of perpetual, habitual, converse with God, converse about everything. And such converse has everything to do with the unanxious life. The man who would be unanxious is to cultivate the practice of reverent, worshipping (*proseuchê*), thankful, *detailed prayer*; so shall he enter into peace. Here is a large subject; it is inexhaustible; from every aspect prayer is wonderful; and there are many kinds and types of prayer, as regards the act and exercise of it. But the all-important thing to remember here is that we are called *to pray* as the great means to a divine unanxious peace; and that we are called to pray in the sense of "making our

requests known *in everything*." Shall we, in the grace of God, set ourselves to do it? Shall we remember the presence of the Hearer, and "practise the Presence"? Shall we act upon it? More, and more, and always more, shall we really "*in everything*" turn to Him, and tell Him? Thought is good, but prayer is better; or rather, thought in the form of prayer is, in ten thousand cases, the best thought. Let us make it a rule, God helping, "in everything" which calls for pause, for consideration, for judgment, to pray first and then to think. Innumerable futile thoughts will thus be saved, thoughts made fruitless by a hurry of spirit, or a heat, or a hardness, which puts all our view out of order. We shall indeed need to take pains. For while nothing is simpler in idea than the act of speaking to the unseen Friend, nothing is more easy, alas, to let slip in practice. But the pains will be infinitely worth the while; it will be all applied at the right point. Wonderful result, guaranteed here by the Hearer of prayer; His "peace shall safeguard our hearts and our thoughts, in Christ Jesus," in the living Sanctuary of security and strength. There all our powers shall be active, yet at rest; dealing with a thousand things, yet always conditioned by Him who is "the One Thing Needful." Unity will lie at the heart of multiplicity; Christ will rule life from the centre.

Lastly, the normal Christian life, thus conditioned, is a life whose mental energies (*logixesthe*) are fully at work, always gravitating towards purposes and actions true, pure, gracious, virtuous, commendable; "sowing the fruit of righteousness in peace," at the side of "the God of peace." True, the man may have many things to think of which are either perfectly secular in themselves (he may be a servant, he may be a man of business, he may be a physician, he may be a minister of state); or which are evil in themselves (he may be an investigator, or a judge, of crime). Nevertheless, this will not deflect the true current of the mind. These "thinkings" will all find place and direction in the "thought" which remembers that the thinker is the Lord's, and that in his

whole life he is to be true to the Lord's glory and the good of man. "The God of peace will be with him" wherever he goes, whatever he does; deep below the surface, but so as to control the whole surface all the while.

Such is the Christian life, where the Christian "stands firm in the Lord." It was thus at Philippi. In the early generations of the Church (let the *Apology of Aristides* alone be adequate witness) it was thus, to a degree and to an extent most memorable, in at least very many Christian circles. It is thus still, in many an individual life. But is it in any sense whatever thus in the rule and average or even earnest Christian lives? Is it thus in ours?

"Henceforth, let us **live**—not unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us, and rose again." To Him, in Him, by Him, we are bound to live so (Romans 8:12, *opheileta*), we are able to live so. Let us "present ourselves to God" (Romans 6:13), watching and praying, and it shall be.

"Two arms I find to hold Thee fast,
Submission meek and reverent faith;
Held by Thy hand that hold shall last
Through life and over death.

"Not me the dark foe fears at all,
But hid in Thee I take the field;
Now at my feet the mighty fall,
For Thou hast bid them yield." ^[118]

Chapter XII[\(TOC\)](#)

The Collection for St Paul: The Farewell

Philippians 4:10-23

"Is thy cruse of comfort wasting? rise and share it with another,

And through all the years of famine it shall serve thee

and thy brother.

"Is thy burthen hard and heavy? do thy steps drag wearily?

Help to bear thy brother's burthen; God will bear both it and thee.

"Is the heart a living power? self-entwin'd, its strength sinks low;

It can only live in loving, and by serving love will grow."

—E. RUNDLE CHARLES.

The Philippian alms—His sense of their faithful love—He has received in full—A passage in the Scriptural manner—The letter closes—"Christ is preached"—"Together with them"

The work of dictation is nearly done in the Roman lodging. The manuscript will soon be complete, and then soon rolled up and sealed, ready for Epaphroditus; he will place it with reverence and care in his baggage, and see it safe to Philippi.

But one topic has to be handled yet before the end. "Now concerning the collection!" Epaphroditus, who had brought with him to Rome the loving alms of the Philippian believers, must carry back no common thanks to them.

All honour shall be done by the Lord's great servant to those who have done the Lord this service in him; they shall know how it has rejoiced and warmed his heart; they shall be made very sure that "inasmuch as they have done it to" their Missionary "they have done it to" their KING.

We do not know how much the money amounted to. It was not improbably a substantial sum. Among the contributors might be Lydia, whose means may well have been comfortable; and the Keeper of the Prison would be by no means a beggar: what gratitude to St Paul glowed in both those hearts! But not in theirs only; the rank and file of the mission would do all that love could do for the man who had manifested JESUS to them. And when that is the spirit, the liberality will often be surprising. Not long ago in one of our North American missions a small meeting of poor Christian Indians apologized for the scantiness of their collection for *missionary objects*; it was worth only £7; they would do better the next time!

But small or large, the Philippian gift was precious with the weight of love. And no doubt it was exceedingly useful practically. It would secure for the imprisoned missionary many alleviating personal comforts, and part of it would probably be spent upon the work of evangelization in Rome and its neighbourhood; for then as now work inevitably meant expense.

Verse 10. **But**, to turn now from teaching to thanking—I rejoice (*echarên*: the English present best gives the point of the "epistolary" aorist) **in the Lord**, in our union of heart and life with Him, **greatly, that now at length**, after an interval which was no fault of yours, **you have blossomed, out**^[119] into loving **thought on my behalf. With a view to this** (*eph ô*), this effort to aid me, you **were, I know** (*kai*), **taking thought** (*ephronente*), even when you made no sign; **but you were at a loss for opportunity** for the transmission; no bearer for your bounty could be spared, or found.

Verse 11. **Not that I speak thus in the tone of need** (*kath usterêsin*), as if I had

been wondering, and fretting, and suspecting you of forgetfulness or of parsimony; no, I have been in a happier mood than that; **for I, for my part** (*egô*: slightly emphatic), have learnt (*emathon*: our perfect tense best gives this aorist) **to be, in my actual circumstances, self-sufficing** (*autarkês*); "carrying with me all I have"; independent, not of grace, but of surroundings.

Verse 12. **I know both** (*kai*, not *de*) **how to run low,**^[120] and how to run over, as I do now, with your bounty; and both experiences need a teaching from above if they are to be rightly borne. **In everything and in all things**, in the details and in the total, I have been let into the secret, I have been initiated into the "mystery,"^[121] **of being full fed and of being hungry, of**

Verse 13. **Running over and of coming short. For all things I am strong in Him who makes me able.**^[122]

But not even this joyful testimony to the enabling presence of his Lord must divert his thought from the loving act of the Philippians. He seems about to dilate on the glorious theme of what he can be and do in Christ; the wonder of that experience on which he entered at the crisis detailed in 2 Corinthians xii. is surely powerfully upon him; the "My grace is sufficient for thee"; the sense of even exultation in weakness and imperfection, "that the power of Christ may overshadow" him. But all this leaves perfectly undisturbed his delicate sympathy with the dear Macedonian converts. And so he will assure them that no spiritual "sufficiency" can blunt the sense of their generous kindness.

Verse 14. **Yet you did well**, you did a fair, good deed, **when you joined together** (*sunkoinônêsantes*) **in participating in my tribulation**, with the partnership of a sympathy which feels the suffering it relieves. **But you**

Verse 15. **Know**, (to add a thought on your previous bounties, which may as it were correct (*de*) the thought that I needed this last bounty to assure me of your love,) you know, **Philippians,**^[123] that in the beginning of the Gospel, in the

early days of the mission in your region, **when I left Macedonia**, parting from you on my way south, in order to quit Macedonia (Roman Northern Greece) for Achaia (Roman Southern Greece), **viâ** Thessalonica and Beroea, ^[124] **no church participated with me**, helped me in my labours, **in the matter of giving and taking**, (they giving and I taking the needed monetary aid,) **but you alone**. But

Verse 16. You did so; **because even in Thessalonica**; even when I was still there, in a place which was but ninety miles away, ^[125] and in the same province still; twice over (**kai hapax kai dis**) **you sent aid to my need**, within the few weeks which I spent at Thessalonica.

Again he will not be misunderstood. This warmly expressed gratitude may conceivably be mistaken for an indirect petition, "thanks for favours to come." So with sensitive delicacy he pursues:

Verse 17. **Not that I am in quest of** (*epizêtô*: almost, "I am hunting for") **the gift**, the mere sum of money, in and for itself; **but I am in quest of the interest that is accumulating to your account**, ^[126] I am bent upon just such a development of your generosity as will win from the heavenly Master more and yet more of that supreme reward, His own "Well done, good and

Verse 18. Faithful." **But** (he is still anxious, lest this too should be mistaken for a personal bid for more) **I have received in full** (*apechô*); you have amply discharged love's obligations, in the gift now sent; **and I run over**; the largeness of your bounty makes an overflow. **I have been filled full, in accepting from Epaphroditus what came from you; an odour of fragrancancy, a sacrifice acceptable, pleasing to God**, to whom you have really presented what you have sent to the man who serves Him—this evidence of your sacrifice to Him of yourselves and your possessions, a burnt offering (Leviticus 1:9) of surrender, a peace offering (Leviticus 2:2, 3:5) of thanksgiving. ^[127] I cannot

Verse 19. Requite you; **but my God shall fill up every need of yours** (*pasan chreian*, not *p. tèn chr.*), making up to you in His own loving providence

the gap in your means left by this your bounty, and enriching you the while in soul, **according to**, on the scale of, **His wealth, in glory, in Christ Jesus**. Yes, He will draw on no less a treasury than that of "His glory," His own Nature of almighty Love, as it is manifested to and for you "in Christ Jesus," in whom "all the

Verse 20. Fulness dwells."^[128] **But now to our God and Father**, to Him of whom I and you are alike the dear children, **be the glory**, the praise for this and for all like acts of His children's love, **for ever and ever**; "to the ages of the ages," the endless cycles of eternal life, in which shall it be fully seen how He was the Secret of all the holiness of all His saints. **Amen**.

So the utterance of thanks for a loving and liberal collection closes. Here is another case of the phenomenon we have seen already—the beautiful skill with which a local and personal incident is used as the occasion for a whole revelation of grace and truth. We can easily imagine a gift like that which came from Philippi acknowledged with a few cordial words which would adequately express gratitude and pleasure, but would otherwise terminate wholly in themselves. How different is this paragraph! Throughout it, side by side, run at once the most perfect and delicate human courtesy and considerateness, and suggestions of eternal and spiritual relations, in which "the gift" touches at every point the heart of the Lord, and the promises of grace, and the hope of glory. This message of thanks gives us, just in passing, such oracles of blessing as, "I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me," and "My God shall supply all your need." It is on one side a model of nobility and fineness of human thought and feeling, on the other an oracle of God. This is just in the manner of Scripture. "Never book spake like this Book."

Now the close comes. The greetings which those who are one in the Lord cannot but send to one another in His name, have to be spoken, and then the

scribe's pen will rest.

Verse 21. **Salute every saint in Christ Jesus**, every holy one of your circle, holy because in Him; pass the greetings round from my heart to each member of the Church. And as I write, the Christians now around me, my personal friends upon the spot, must send their message too; **there salute you all the brethren who are with me**. And not they only, but all the believers of the Roman mission, represented around me in my chamber as I dictate, do the same; and among them one class asks to join with special warmth; **there**

Verse 22. **Salute you all the saints, but particularly those who belong to (*oi ek*) the household of the Emperor (*kaisaros*)**; the Christians gathered from the retainers of the Palace; peculiar in their circumstances of temptation, and quickened thereby to a special warmth of faith and love.^[129]

Nothing is left now but the final message from the Lord Himself; the invocation of that "grace" which means in fact no abstract somewhat but His living Self, present in His people's inmost being, to vivify and to bless.

Verse 23. **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.**^[130] Amen.

The voice is silent; the pen is laid aside. In due time the papyrus roll, inestimable manuscript, is made ready for its journey. And perhaps as it now lies drying the Missionary and his brethren turn to further conversation on the beloved Philippian Church, and recall many a scene in the days that are over, and which are now gliding far into the past of the crowded years; and they speak again of the brightness of Philippian Christian life, and the shadows that lie on it here and there; and then, while the Praetorian sentinel looks on in wonder, or perhaps joins in as a believer, they pray together for Philippi, and pour out their praises to the Father and the Son, and anticipate the day of glory.

It is all over now; it all happened very long ago. But though that blessed

group of our elder brethren "are all gone into the world of light" these many more than eighteen hundred human years, that Letter is our contemporary still. "The word of God *liveth* and *abideth for ever*" (1 Peter 1:23); it is never out of date, never touched by the pathetic glamour of the past, with the suggestion of farewells, and waxings old, and vanishings away. To us to-day, so near the twentieth century, the Epistle to the Philippians is immortal, modern, true for our whole world and time.

And what is its secret, its elixir of undying life? It is the Name of Jesus Christ. It is that these pages are the message of "the chosen Vessel" about that Name.

Our studies in the Epistle shall close with that reflexion. The incidental topics and interests of the document are numerous indeed; but the main theme is one, and it is Jesus Christ. From first to last, under every variety of reference, "Christ is preached."

Let me quote from a Sermon preached many years ago, the last of a series in which I attempted to unfold the Epistle to a Christian congregation in the beloved Church of Fordington, Dorchester, then my Father's cure and charge.

"The mere number of mentions of the Saviour's name is remarkable. More than forty times we have it in this short compass; that is to say, it occurs, amidst all the variety of subjects, on an average of about once in every two or three verses. This is indeed perfectly characteristic, not of this Epistle only but of the whole New Testament. What the Apostles preached was not a thing but a Person; Christ, Christ Jesus, Christ Jesus the Lord.

"But let us not look only on this frequency of mention. Let us gather up something of what these mentions say 'concerning the King.'

"The writer begins with describing himself and his associates as the servants, the absolute bondmen, *of Jesus Christ*. And truly such servants witness to the worthiness of their Master.

"He addresses those to whom he writes as saints, as holy ones, *in Jesus Christ*. Their standing, their character, their all, depends on Him; on union with Him, on life in Him. Without Him, apart from Him, they would not be saints at all.

"The writer speaks of his imprisonment at Rome; the subject is full of Jesus Christ. 'My bonds *in Christ*' is his remarkable description of captivity. And the result of that captivity was, to his exceeding joy, just this, amidst a great variety of conditions in detail, including some exquisite trials to patience and peace: '*Christ* is being preached'; 'that *Christ* may be magnified in my body, whether by life or death.' He is kept absolutely cheerful and at rest; and the secret is Jesus Christ.

"He has occasion to speak of his trial, with its delays, and its suspense between life and death. The whole is full of Jesus Christ. 'To me to live is *Christ*'; He fills, and as it were makes, life for me. 'And to die is gain'—why? Because 'to depart and to be with *Christ* is far, far better.' The dilemma in which he stands (for he is 'in a strait betwixt the two') is a dilemma between Christ and Christ, Christ much and Christ more, Christ by faith and Christ by sight.

"He dwells, in various places, on the life and duties of the Philippians. His precepts are all this, in effect—Christ applied to conduct. 'Let your life-walk be as it becometh the Gospel of *Christ*'; 'Filled with the fruit of righteousness which is through *Jesus Christ*'; 'It is granted to you not only to believe in *Christ* but also to suffer for His sake.'

"In particular, he has to press on them the homely duty of practical self-forgetfulness. He takes them for model and motive to the heaven of heavens, and shews them 'Christ Jesus' there, as for us men and for our salvation He prepares to come down, and comes. 'Let this mind be in you,' as you contemplate the original Glory, the amazing Incarnation, the atoning Death, of *Christ Jesus*.

"He expresses hopes, intentions, resolutions, as to his own actions. All is still 'in Jesus Christ.' 'I trust in *the Lord Jesus* to send Timotheus,' 'I trust in *the Lord* to come myself shortly.'

"Does he speak of the believer's joy? 'We rejoice in *Christ Jesus*,' 'Rejoice in *the Lord* alway, and again I say, Rejoice.' Does he speak of pardon and of peace? 'I counted all things but loss that I might win *Christ*, and be found in Him, having the righteousness which is of God by faith.' Does he speak of knowledge, and of power? 'That I might know *Christ*, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death'; 'I can do all things in *Christ* which strengtheneth me.'

"He speaks of a holy immortality, of eternal glory, and of pleasures for evermore. It is no vague aspiration; it is a sure and certain hope; and it is altogether in Jesus Christ. 'Our home, our citizenship, is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord *Jesus Christ*, who shall change the body of our humiliation into likeness to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto—Himself.'

"He bids his beloved converts stand fast; it is 'in *the Lord*.' He bids them be of one mind; it is 'in *the Lord*.' He bids them be always calm, always self-forgetting; '*the Lord* is at hand.' He assures them of an all-sufficient resource

for their every need; 'My God shall supply all, according to His riches, in glory, in *Christ Jesus*.'

"His last message of blessing brings together their inmost being and this same wonderful Person; 'The grace of our Lord *Jesus Christ* be with your spirit. Amen.'...

"What a witness it all is to the glory of our beloved Redeemer; to the majesty of His Person; to the fulness and perfection of His Work; to the solidity, the sobriety, the strength, of the faith which is in Him! There is no inflation or rhetoric in the language of the Epistle about Him. Glowing with love, it is all clear and calm. Yes, for Christ Jesus is not a phantom of the fancy; a hope floating on the thick waves of a wild enthusiasm. He is an anchor, sure and steadfast. Blessed are they who ride secure on the deep, held fast by Him.

"The Epistle witnesses to Him as to a Treasure worth all our seeking, at any cost; infinitely precious to our joyful finding; infinitely deserving of our keeping, of our holding, our 'apprehending,' as He in His mercy has laid hold of us, and will keep hold of us, even to the end; 'unto the day of Jesus Christ.' As then, so now;

'He help'd His saints in ancient days

Who trusted in His name;

And we can witness to His praise,

His love is still the same.'

"May the Spirit bring home to our spirit this great witness of the Epistle; it has its perfect adaptation to each heart, to every life, to every hour.

"Then hereafter we shall give God thanks yet better for 'Philippians,' as we

too enter, late or soon, into that world where the Apostle, and Timotheus, and Epaphroditus, and Euodia, and Syntyche, and Clement, and the saints of Caesar's household, have so long beheld the Lord. In that land of light we, who have believed, shall rest with them. We shall know them. In the long leisure of endless life we shall enjoy their company, amidst the multitudinous congregation of the just made perfect. There we shall understand how, under the infinite differences of our earthly conditions, the one Hand led them and led us along the one way of salvation to the one end of everlasting life. Above all, we there, with them, shall know JESUS CHRIST, even as we are known. There we, with them, shall realize how to Him, and to Him alone, from all His servants, from Hebrew, and Roman, and Philippian, and Englishman, and African, from ancients and moderns, wise and ignorant, of all kinds and times, was due the whole praise of their whole salvation.

'Conflicts and trials done

His glory they behold,

Where JESUS and His flock are one,

One Shepherd and one fold.'"

The Praetorian and the Apostle^(TOC)

Acts 28:16, 31

*"Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him....
preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the
Lord Jesus Christ."*

(THE SOLDIER loquitur)

Father, the dawn is near! the shield

Of Luna sinks remote and pale

O'er Tiber and the Martial field;

The breeze awakes; the cressets fail:

This livelong night from set of sun

Here have we talk'd: thy task is done.

But yesterday I smil'd or frown'd

To watch thy audience, soon and late,

With scroll and style embattl'd round

In barbarous accents ply debate;

While this would chide, and that would start

Sudden, as sword-struck in the heart.

I laugh'd aside, or, tir'd, withdrew
From the strange sound in waking dreams
To Umbrian hills—the home I knew—
The cottage by Mevania's streams:
'Twas hush'd at length: the guests were flown,
And thou wast left and I alone.
Thou hast forgiven (I know thee now)
The insults of this heathen tongue;
The taunting questions why and how;
The songs (oh madness!) that I sung:
Thou hast forgiv'n the hateful strain
Of dull defiance and disdain.
Thy gaze, thy silence, they compell'd
My own responsive: aw'd I stood
Before thee; soften'd, search'd, and quell'd;
The evil captive to the good:
Half conscious, half entranc'd, I heard
(While the stars mov'd) thy conquering word.
These ears were dull to Grecian speech,
This heart more dull to aught but sin;

Yet the great Spirit bade thee reach,
Wake, change, exalt, the soul within:
I've heard; I know; thy Lord, ev'n He,
JESUS, hath look'd from heaven on me.
Thou saw'st me shake, and (spite of pride)
Weep on thy hand: so stern thy truth:
I own'd the terrors that abide
Dread sequel to a rebel's youth:
But soon I pour'd a happier shower
To learn thy Saviour's dying power.
Ah, speechless, rapt, I bent, to know
Each wonder of that fateful day
When midst thy zeal's terrific glow
He met thee on the Syrian way:
I saw, I felt, the scene: my soul
Drank the new bliss, the new control.
Father, the dawn is risen! the hour
Is near, too near, when from this hand
Thy chain must fall—from yonder tower
Another guard must take my stand:

The City stirs: I go, to meet
The foe, the world, in camp and street;
A Christian—yes, for ever now
A Christian: so our Leader keep
My faltering heart: to Him I bow,
His, whether now I wake or sleep:
In peace, in battle, His—the day
Breaks in the east: oh, once more pray!
1869.

[1] Preserved by Eusebius, *Hist.* Ecclesiastes 2.

[2] Written early in 1896.

[3] Cowper, *Conversation*.

[4] *Philippians* (ed. i), p. 30, note.

[5] *Sun episcopois kai diakonois*. I render the words as literally as possible, not to discredit the distinctive functions of the Christian ministry, but to remind the reader of the natural origin of the titles by which Christian ministers are designated. And it is important here to remember that our word *bishop*, while derived from *episkopos*, cannot properly translate it *as it is used in the New Testament*. For *episkopos* is not used there as the special title of a superintendent pastor set over other pastors. Such superintendents, however the office originated, are found in the New Testament, and early in the second century are called distinctively *episkopoi*: but the term so used is later, on any theory, than the origin of the office. But I do not purpose in these devotional chapters to discuss at length such a question as that raised here. The reader should by all means consult Bishop Lightfoot's Excursus in his Commentary on this Epistle, *The Christian Ministry*. The views advanced in that essay were, as I personally know, held by the writer to the

last.

[6] The middle suggests a certain fulness of action.

[7] I think the definite article should be supplied in English; the reference is to the work of works.

[8] I give both the possible renderings of *huper*. Both would certainly be in place, as he thought of them and prayed and gave thanks for them.

[9] The derivation is doubtful, but the idea of the word in usage is clearness, freedom from complication.

[10] With some hesitation I assign to *dikaiosune* here the meaning of the righteousness of justification, as in 3:9.

[11] F. R. Havergal.

[12] Cowper, *Conversation*.

[13] See note at the end of this chapter.

[14] The A.V. rendering "in all other *places*" is obviously due to the belief that *praitôrion* signified a place, not a body of men.

[15] I thus convey the force of *hoste*, across the break we have made in the original sentence.

[16] Literally perhaps, "relying on my bonds," as a new *ground* for their assurance of the goodness of the cause—It is possible to render here, "the brethren, *having in the Lord confidence*, are, in view of my bonds, much more bold," etc. But the rhythm of the Greek is in favour of our rendering (which is essentially that of A.V. and R.V).

[17] I adopt here the order of the Greek clauses which is best attested.

[18] See note at the end of this chapter.

[19] I venture to refer to my book, *Bishop Ridley on the Lord's Supper* (Seeley), pp. 54, 55, 72.

[20] See the close of the volume.

[21] Observe the aorist infinitive, *to apothanein*, of *the crisis*, dying, contrasted with the present infinitive, *to zên*, of *the process, living*—It may be noticed that the renderings of Luther, *Christus ist mein Leben*, and Tindale, *Christ is to me lyfe*, are untenable, though expressing as a fact a deep and precious truth. The Apostle is obviously dealing with the characteristics, not the source, of "living."

[22] *Sunechomai*: literally, "I am confined, restricted from the two (sides)"; as if to say, "I am hindered as to my choice, whichever side you view me from."

[23] Literally, "having the desire"; not "a desire," which misses the point of the words. He means that his *epithymia* lies in one direction, his conviction of call and duty in the other. *The* desire, the element of personal longing in him, is for "departing."

[24] The Vulgate renders here, *cupio dissolvi*, as if *analysai* meant, so to speak, to "analyse" myself into my elements, to separate my soul from my body. But the usage of the verb, in the Greek of the Apocrypha, is for the sense given in our Versions, and above; to "break up," in the sense of "setting out."

[25] Literally, "your progress and joy of the faith." The Greek suggests the connexion of both "progress" and "joy" with "faith." And St Paul's general use of the word *pistis* favours its reference here not to the objective *creed* but to the subjective *reliance* of the holder of the creed.

[26] *Politeuesthe*: literally, "live your citizen-life." But in its usage the verb drops all *explicit* reference to the *politês*, and means little more than "live"; in the sense however not of mere existence, or even of experience, but of a course of principle and order. See Acts 23:1, the only other N.T. passage where it occurs; and 2 Macc. 6:1, 11:25.

[27] The words suggest to us that the Apostle might have written, more fully and exactly, *hina idô, ean elthô, kai hina akousô, ean apô*. But it is best to retain in translation the somewhat lax grammatical form of the Greek.

[28] The parallels, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 2:18, strongly favour the reference of *pneuma* here to the Holy Spirit of God.

[29] It is of course possible to translate *synathlountes tē piotei*, "wrestling side by side with the faith," as if "the faith" was the Comrade of the believers. But the context is not favourable to this; the emphasis seems to lie throughout on the believers' fellowship *with one another*.

[30] *Echaristhê*: the English perfect best represents here the Greek aorist.

[31] The Greek may be explained as if the Apostle had meant to write, *echaristhn to uper Christou paschein*, and then freely inserted the antecedent fact of *to pioieuein*.

[32] *Echontes*: the nominative participle takes us back grammatically to the construction previous to the sentences beginning *hêtis eotin k.t.a.*; which sentences may be treated as a parenthesis. I have attempted to convey this in a paraphrase.

[33] *Adieux*, ed. 1857, pp. 10-12.

[34] From the writer's volume of verse, *In the House of the Pilgrimage*.

[35] *Koinônia pneumatos*: "participation in the Spirit"; sharing and sharing alike in the grace and power of the Holy Ghost. I venture to render *pneumatos* as if it were *tou Pneumatos*, having regard to the great parallel passage, 2 Corinthians 13:14, *he koinônia tou hagiou Pneumatos*. With a word so great and conspicuous as *pneuma* it is impossible to decide by the mere absence of the article that the reference is not to *the* (personal) Spirit. *Kurios, Theos, Christos*, are continually given without the article where the reference is definite; because they are words whose greatness tends of itself to define the reference, unless context withstands. *Pneuma* in the N. T. is to some extent a parallel case with these.

[36] *Ina... phronute*: my English is obviously a mere paraphrase here. More exactly we may render, "make full my joy, so as to be," etc.; words which come to much the same effect, but are less true to our common idioms.

[37] *To en phronountes*: a difficult phrase to render quite adequately. We may paraphrase it either as above, or, "possessed with the idea, or sentiment, of unity." But the paraphrase above seems most satisfactory in view of the

similar phrase just before, *to auto phronête*. This phrase seems to echo that, only in a stronger and less usual form. The thought thus will be not so much of unity as the object of thought or feeling as of unity as (so to speak) the substance or spirit of it.

[38] *Kata eritheian*: my long paraphrase attempts to give the suggestion that the *eritheia* might be either purely individual self-assertion or the *animus* of a clique.

[39] *Hêgoumenoi*: the participle practically does the work of an imperative. See Romans xii. for a striking chain of examples of this powerful and intelligible idiom.

[40] *Hekastoi*, not *hekastos*, should probably be read in the first clause here, and certainly in the second. By Greek idiom, the plural gives the thought of a *collective* unity under "each."

[41] The Greek gives no verb. I have written "was, and is," in the paraphrase, because the *limitation* of the reference of our blessed Lord's *phronêma* to the pre-incarnate past is not expressed in the Greek.

[42] *En morphê*: *morphê* is imperfectly represented by our common use of the word "form," which stands often even in contrast to "reality." *Morphê* is *reality in manifestation*.

[43] *Uparchôn*: R.V. margin, "originally being." The word lends itself to such a reference, but not so invariably as to allow us to press it here.

[44] *Arpagmon*: the word is extremely rare, found here only in the Greek Scriptures, and once only in secular Greek. Strictly, by form (*-mon*), it should mean, "*a process* of plunder" rather than "an object of plunder" (*-ma*). But parallel cases forbid us to press this. The A.V. rendering here suggests the thought that our Lord "thought it no usurpation to be equal with God, *and yet* made Himself void," etc. But surely the thought is rather, "*and so* made Himself void." So sure was His claim that, so to speak, with a sublime *un-anxiety*, while with an infinite sacrifice, He made Himself void.

[45] *Isa Theô*: the neuter plural calls attention rather to the Characteristics than to the Personality—Through this whole passage we cannot too distinctly

remember that it occurs in the Scriptures, and in the writings of one who was trained in the strictest school of Pharisaic Monotheism. **St Paul** was not the man to use such terms of his Saviour and Master had he not seen in Him nothing less than the very "Fellow of JEHOVAH" (Zechariah 13:7).

[46] **Eauton ekeôse: Heauton** is slightly emphatic by position; I attempt to convey this by the words "by His own act."

[47] See further below, pp. 98, etc. [Transcriber's note: page 98 is indicated in this text with "{98}"].

[48] **Labôn:** the aorist participle, in Greek idiom, unites itself closely in thought with the aorist verb **ekenôse** just previous. The resulting idea is not "He made Himself void, and then took," but "He made Himself void **by taking.**" The "Exinanition" was, in fact, just this—**the taking the form of the doulos:** neither less nor more.

[49] Note again the aorist verb and aorist participle: **etapeinôse... genomenos.**

[50] The Greek, **mechri thanatou,** makes it plain that the Lord did not **obey death** but **obeyed the Father** so utterly as even to die.

[51] Cicero, **pro Rabirio,** c. 5.

[52] Bishop Lightfoot has well vindicated this reference of the **onoma** here. I venture to refer the reader also to my commentary on Philippians, in **The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges.**

[53] Not "the Name Jesus," but "the Name of, belonging to, Jesus." The grammar admits either rendering, but the context, if I explain it aright, is decisive. "The Name" is still the Supreme Name, JEHOVAH, as just above—" **In** the Name" should be explained, in view of the context, not of worship **through** but worship yielded **to** the Name. See Lightfoot for examples of this usage.

[54] Chrysostom brings this great truth nobly out in his homiletic comments here (**Hom.** vii. on Philippians, chapter 4): "A mighty proof it is of the Father's power, and goodness, and wisdom, that He hath begotten such a Son, a Son nowise inferior in goodness and wisdom... like Him in all things,

Fatherhood alone excepted." Nothing but the orthodox Creed, with its harmonious truths of the proper Godhead and proper Filiation of the Lord Christ, can possibly satisfy *the whole* of the apostolic language about His infinite glory on the one hand and His relation to the Father on the other.

[55] In my *Veni Creator* and *To my Younger Brethren*, and more recently in a University Sermon quoted at the close of a little book published Easter, 1896, by Seeley: *Prayers and Promises*.

[56] *Upêkousate*: the aorist. It gathers into one thought the whole recollection of his work at Philippi.

[57] "There is not the slightest contradiction here to the profound truth of the Justification by Faith only; that is to say, only for the merit's sake of the Redeemer, appropriated by submissive trust; that justification whose sure issue is glorification (Romans 8:30). It is an instance of independent lines converging on one goal. From one point of view, that of justifying merit, man is glorified because of Christ's work alone, applied to his case through faith alone. From another point, that of qualifying capacity, and of preparation for the Lord's individual welcome (Matthew 25:21; Romans 2:7), man is glorified as the issue of a process of work and training, in which in a true sense he is himself operant, though grace lies below the whole operation." (Note on this verse in *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*).

[58] It is possible to render *logon xôeê epechontes*, "serving as life (to the world)." But it is unlikely. See Philippians in *The Cambridge Greek Testament*, Appendix.

[59] The aorists obviously are anticipatory; giving the review of the past as he will then make it. Cp. e.g. *kathôs epegnôsthên*, 1 Corinthians 13:12.

[60] "He views the Philippians, in their character of consecrated believers (cp. Romans 12:1), as a holocaust to God; and upon that sacrifice the drink-offering, the outpoured wine, is his own life-blood, his martyrdom for the Gospel which he has preached to them. Cp. Numbers 15:5 for the Mosaic libation, *oinon eis spondên... poisête epi tês holokautôseôs*. Lightfoot thinks that a reference to pagan libations is more likely in a letter to a Gentile mission. But surely St Paul familiarized all his converts with Old Testament

symbolism. And *his own* mind was of course full of it (Note here in *The Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools*)—This and Romans 15:16 are the only two passages where St Paul connects the language of "sacerdotalism" with the distinctive work of the Christian ministry; and both passages speak obviously in the tone of figure and, so to say, poetry.

[61] *Chairete: sugchairete*. The form leaves us free to render either *indicative* or *imperative*. But the latter is most likely in the context.

[62] *Sôtêria* must here include not only final glory but the whole blessing possessed now and always in the *Sôtêr*.

[63] "Observe the holy paradox of the thought here. The fulness of divine power in the saints is to result primarily not in 'doing some great thing' but in enduring and forbearing, with heavenly joy of heart. The paradox points to one deep characteristic of the Gospel, which prepares the Christian for service by the way of a true abnegation of himself as his own strength and his own aim." (Note on Colossians 1:11 in *The Cambridge Bible*).

[64] A. Vinet, *Hymn on the Crucifixion*, translated by C. W. Moule.

[65] *Timotheon* is slightly emphatic by its place in the Greek; as if to say, "Though I must still be absent, *he* will soon be with you."

[66] Not "equal-souled *with myself*"; which would demand rather, in the Greek, *oudena allon echô isopsychon*.

[67] Possibly, "*entered on* bondservice," "*took up* the slave's life," with a reference to Timothy's earliest connexion with St Paul (Acts 16:1-3). But the reference to the memories of *Philippi* is much more likely. The aorist, *edouleusen*, will in this case gather up into one the whole recollection.

[68] The *touton* is slightly emphatic by position, for St Paul is about to speak of other persons also, himself and Epaphroditus.

[69] *êgêsamên*: I render the epistolary past by a present tense, which is the English idiom.

[70] So I render *apostolon*, to represent something of the *sacredness* attaching by usage to the word. If I read aright, we have here an instance of gentle

pleasantry, quite in harmony with the gravity of the Epistle at large. He takes the Philippians' message of love and gift of bounty as a sort of *gospel* to himself, and so regards their messenger as a *missionary* to him. So also with the word *leitourgos*: its usual associations in New Testament Greek are sacred, or at least solemn; and so St Paul seems to employ it here. Epaphroditus was no mere agent; he was a "*ministrant*," commissioned from a high quarter—the Philippians' love.

[71] *epeidê epidothôn ên*: the epistolary past (*ên*) is rendered in accordance with English idiom. *Epipothôn* is perhaps too *heavily* rendered above; but the phrase is certainly a little stronger than *epepothei* would have been.

[72] Perhaps it was an attack of Roman fever.

[73] *Ina mê... schô*: lit., "that I *may* not." But the English idiom asks for "might." The Greek puts the past intention into what *was* its present aspect.

[74] *Epempsa auton*: the epistolary aorist.

[75] Quite literally, "up to death he drew near." It is as if St Paul had been about to write, *mechri thanatou êsthense*, and then varied the expression by writing *êggise*.

[76] *Parableusamenos tê psychê*: so read, not *parableusamenos* (which would mean, "taking evil counsel for his life," neglecting its interests). *Parableusamenos* is a well-attested reading; the verb is not found elsewhere, but the form is abundantly likely. It would be developed from the adjective *parabolos*, "reckless," connected with the verb *paraballesthai*, "to cast a die."

[77] *Thoughts for Heart and Life*, by John Ker, D.D. (1888), p. 92.

[78] See Ephesians. 1. *ad. Cor.*, § 47: "Take up the Epistle of the blessed Paul, the Apostle.... He wrote to you in the Spirit (*pneumatikôs*) about himself, and Cephas, and Apollos."

[79] The reader may be aware that Bishop Lightfoot's theory of the connexion of thought at the beginning of chapter 3. is different from that advocated here. He thinks that St Paul dictated on continuously *till the close of* 3.1, and was

interrupted there, and then began *de novo* with 3:2, entirely on another line. In this view, the words about "writing *the same things* unto you" refer still to *Christian unity*, on which St Paul was going to dilate further, but a sudden pause occurred, and the theme was dropped. With reverence for the great expositor, I cannot but think this unlikely. It assumes that St Paul was curiously indifferent to the sequence of thought in an important apostolic message, which assuredly he would *read over again* before it was actually sent. A theory which fairly explains the passage, and meanwhile avoids the thought of such indifference, seems to me far preferable.

[80] The words obviously may be rendered, "*Farewell* in the Lord"; and so some take them, explaining that St Paul was intending to close immediately, and so wrote his "Adieu" here; but then changed his plan. This is very unlikely however. See below, iv. 4: *Chairete en Kuriô pantote*. The "always" there scarcely suits a formula *of farewell*, while it perfectly suits an injunction *to be glad*. And that passage is the obvious echo of this—A.V. and R.V. both render "rejoice," though R.V. writes "or, *farewell*" in the margin. St Chrysostom in his comments here explains the passage as referring to the Christian's joy (*chara*). The ancient Latin versions render *Gaudete* (not *valete*) in *Domino*.

[81] I thus render *rhythmically* the rhythmical Greek (it is an iambic trimeter): *emoi men ouk oknêron, humin d asphales*. It is probable that the words are a quotation from a Greek poet, perhaps a "comic" poet; the "comedies" being full of neatly expressed reflexions. For such a quotation, probably from the "comedian" Menander, see 1 Corinthians 15:33: *phtheirousin êthê chrêsth homiliai kakai: "Ill converse cankers fair morality."*

[82] The reading *pneumati Theou* (not *Theô*) *latreuontes* is to be preferred.

[83] *Datreuïen* means first to do servants' work, then to do religious "service" (so almost always in LXX. and N.T) and sometimes specially *priestly* duty (see e.g. Hebrews 13:10). This latter may be in view here: we Christians, born anew of the Spirit, are the true *priests*, and we little need to be made Jewish proselytes first.

[84] The *sarx* in St Paul is very fairly represented by the word "self" as used popularly in religious language. It is man taken as apart from God, and so

man *versus* God; then by transition it may mean, as here, the products of such a source, the labours of the self-life to construct a self-righteousness. It is hardly necessary to say that, in such contexts as this, where it stands more or less distinguished from the *pneuma*, it is not a synonym for "the body." Sins of "the flesh" may be sins purely of the mind, as e.g. "emulation" (Galatians 5:20).

[85] I thus attempt to convey the emphasis of the words *ouk en sarki pepoithotes*, which is not precisely as if he had written *en sarki*.

[86] *Peritouê*: a dative of reference, a frequent construction with St Paul. See Romans 12:10-12 for several examples together.

[87] See Trench, *Synonyms*, § xxxix., for the special meanings of *Israêlitês*, the member of the Covenant-people; *Ebraios*, the Jew who was true to his inmost national traditions; and *Ioudaios*, the Jew merely as other than the Gentile.

[88] The article is absent; but context leaves no doubt of the special reference here.

[89] In solemn contrast but with perfect consistency, from another point of view—that not of the Pharisee but of GOD—he can point out elsewhere that "no flesh" can possibly claim "righteousness" on the ground of fulfilment of code and precept. See especially Romans 3:19, 20. But his business here is to meet the legalist on the legalist's own ground.

[90] Notice the *plural*; as if, miser-like, he had counted his bags of treasure. And then see the contrasted *singular, Xêmian*: he finds them all *one mass of loss*.

[91] *Skubala*: the Greek etymologists derived the word from *kusi balein*, "to cast to dogs." Otherwise it is traced to a connexion with *skôr*, "excrement."

[92] Practically, he means "that I *might* gain," in the past transaction of conversion and surrender. He thinks the past over again.

[93] Lit., "faith of," *pisteôs Christou*. This use of the genitive with *pistis*, to denote its object, is frequent. Cp. e.g. Mark 11:22; Galatians 2:16, 20.

[94] Even as the benefit of food is conditioned to us by our (not buying but) eating it.

[95] See the whole hymn (rendered from Lavater's *O Jesu Christe, wachs in mir*) in *Hymns of Consecration*, 295.

[96] Dr H. Bonar.

[97] *Heth ô katelêphthên*: grammatically we may render, "inasmuch as I was seized"; cp. the Greek of Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 5:4. But the connexion of thought seems to be best met by the above rendering, which is practically that of A.V. and R.V.

[98] *Stephanos*, as in 1 Corinthians 9:25, Revelation 3:11, and often. *Stephanos* is properly the victor's wreath, *diadêma* the king's crown (Revelation 19:12)—For a short essay on St Paul's use of athletic metaphors see this Epistle in *The Cambridge Greek Testament*, Appendix.

[99] *Klêsis, kalein, klêtoi*, in the Epistles will be found regularly to refer not to the general *invitations* of the Gospel, but to the actually prevailing power of God over the wills of His people. See particularly 1 Corinthians 1:23, 24, where the "call" is clearly distinguished from the general proclamation, which alas so many "Greeks" and "Jews" heard, but only to reject it.

[100] *Hephthasamen*: the verb seems always to indicate not merely reaching, but reaching *with some difficulty*. I attempt to express this in the translation.

[101] There is good evidence for omitting the words *kanoni, to auto phronein*—*Stoichein* is more in detail than *peripatein*: "to *step*," not only "to walk." See the Greek of Romans 4:12.

[102] *skopeite: skopein* usually has reference to the attention which results in avoidance; so Romans 16:17: *parakalô skopein tous ta skandala poiountas kai ekkline k.t.l.* But here obviously the "looking" is for imitation—The Philippians knew St Paul's teaching, and in his attached leading disciples among them they could *see* it embodied.

[103] Cp. Matthew 7:13; Romans 6:21; 2 Corinthians 11:15; Hebrews 6:8; 1 Peter 4:17.

[104] I thus attempt to give the meaning of *politeuma*, so far as I understand it. The R.V. renders it "**citizenship**," and "**commonwealth**" in the margin. The usage of the word in Greek literature amply justifies either, and either well suits the general context. The Apostle means that Christians are citizens of the heavenly City as to their *status*, and are therefore "obliged by their nobility" to live, however far from their home, as those who belong to it, and represent it. What seems lacking however in the rendering of the R.V. is the idea of *locality*, which (to me) was clearly present to St Paul's mind in his use of *politeuma* here. The proof of this lies in the words *ex ou* just below; not *ex ôn* (*ouranôn*) but *ex ou* (*politeumatos*): I can find **no proof** of the assertion (Moulton's *Winer*, p. 177) that *ex ou* is a mere equivalent for *hothen*, and so may refer to the plural *ouranoi*. The rendering "**seat of citizenship**" seems fairly to represent *politeuma* thus—The A.V. "**conversation**" (Lat. *conversatio*, "intercourse of life") probably represents an impression of the translators that the Apostle is as it were echoing 1:27, *axiôs tu euaggeliou politeuesthe*. But the imagery here is different, and definite.

[105] See note just above on *ex ou*.

[106] Perhaps read *auta*. But the translation must remain the same.

[107] F. R. Havergal.

[108] So certainly read, not *Euodias*, which would be a man's name, a contraction of Euodianus. Euodias as a fact is not found in inscriptions. Euodia on the other hand is a known feminine name; and the words just following ("help these women") make it practically certain that the two persons just named were both female converts. (*Euodian* of course may be the accusative of either *Euodias* or *Euodia*)

[109] *Cor Dei in verbis Dei*; Gregory the Great's noble description of the Bible, in a letter to the courtier Theodoras, begging him to study daily "the Letter of the heavenly Emperor."

[110] "I exhort," R.V. A slightly tenderer word seems better to represent *parakalein* in this personal connexion. "I beseech" (A.V) is *perhaps* rather too tender.

[111] "As a curiosity of interpretation, Ellicott (see also Lightfoot, p. 170) mentions the conjecture of Schwegler, that Euodia and Syntyche are really designations of **Church-parties** [the imagined Petrine and Pauline parties], the names being devised and significant [Euodia=**'Good-way,'** Orthodoxy; Syntyche=**'Combination,'** of Gentiles and Jews on equal terms]. This theory of course regards our Epistle as a fabrication of a later generation, intended as an **eirenicon**. 'What will not men affirm?'" (Note on Verse 2 in ***The Cambridge Bible for Schools***).

[112] We know nothing for certain of this person. Lightfoot suggests that it was Epaphroditus, whom St Paul would thus commission not only orally but in writing, as a sort of credential. One curious and most improbable conjecture is that it was **St Paul's wife**. Renan (***Saint Paul***, p. 148) renders here ***ma chère épouse***.

[113] Perhaps the bishop of Rome of a later day. So Origen and Eusebius. But we cannot be certain of the identity.

[114] "Cp. Revelation 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 15, 21:27; and Luke 10:20. And see Exodus 32:32, 33; Psalm 69:28, 87:6; Isaiah 4:3; Ezekiel 13:9; Daniel 12:1. The result of the comparison of these passages with this seems to be that St Paul here refers to the Lord's 'knowledge of them that are His' (2 Timothy 2:19: cp. John 10:27, 28), for time and eternity. All the passages in the Revelation, save 3:5, are clearly in favour of a reference of the phrase to the certainty of the ultimate salvation of all true saints... so too Daniel 12:1 and Luke 10:20. Revelation 3:5 appears to point in another direction (see Trench on that passage). But in view of the other mentions of the 'Book' in the Revelation the language of 3:5 may well be only a vivid assertion that the name in question ***shall be found*** in an indelible register.... Practically, the Apostle here speaks of Clement and the rest as having given illustrious proof of their part and lot in that 'life eternal' which is 'to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent' (John 17:3)—The word '***names***' powerfully suggests the individuality and speciality of divine love." (Note in ***The Cambridge Bible for Schools***)

[115] I think the Apostle has in mind Psalm 119:151, where the Septuagint version has ***su eggus ei, Kurie***. He is thinking of "the secret ***of the Presence***"

(Psalm 31:20). We need not shut out the calming thought of the Lord's approaching **Return**; but it does not seem to be the leading thought here.

[116] Bishop Ken.

[117] G. M. Taylor, in *Hymns of Consecration*, 349.

[118] *In the House of the Pilgrimage*.

[119] *Anethalete to huper emou phronein*. Literally, "**you shot forth** (as a branch) **thought in my behalf**." (The English perfect best represents this aorist) The phrase is unmistakably pictorial, poetical. If I read it aright, it is touched with **a smile** of gentle pleasantry; the warm heart comes out in a not undesigned quaintness of expression.

[120] *tapeinousthai* is used in classical Greek of the falling of a river in drought. Perhaps such an image is present in the language here.

[121] *Memuêmai*: the verb whose root is that of **mysterion, mysterium**, "mystery." In the Greek world "mysteries" were systems of religious belief and practice derived, perhaps, from pre-Hellenic times, and jealously guarded from common knowledge by their votaries. Admission into their secrets, as into those of Freemasonry now, was sought by people of all kinds, from Roman consuls and emperors downwards; with the special hope of freedom from evil in this life and the next. St Paul's use of this phenomenon to supply language for Christian experience is beautifully suggestive. The knowledge of the peace of God is indeed an **open** secret, open to "whosoever will" "learn of Him." But it is a secret, a mystery, none the less.

[122] The word **Christô** should be omitted from the reading, though perfectly right as a note or explanation—The **iochus** is the forth-putting of the **dunamis**—the **action** of the **faculty**. He is ready to act (or to bear) in a power always latent, always present, through his union with his Lord. The "all things" so met are, of course, the all things of the will of God, the choice of the Master for the servant in the way of circumstance and trial; not the all things of the mere wish or ambition of the servant.

[123] *Philippêsioi*: the Greek form represents a Latin **Philippenses**, by which the residents in the **Roman "colony"** would call themselves. So

Corinthiensis means not a born Corinthian but a settler at Corinth—Greek tends to represent a Latin syllable—*ens* by—*ês*: so **Klêmês, Clemens**.

[124] See Acts 17:1-15.

[125] On the Egnatian road. He made three stages of the distance; Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica.

[126] **Ton karpon ton pleonazonta eis logon hymôn**. I venture to render these words as above, as a monetary phrase, relating to principal and interest. It is true that **karpos** is not found used in the sense of interest, for which the regular word is **tokos**. But it would easily fit into the language of the money-market. And St Chrysostom's comment here seems to show that he, a Greek, understood it thus: **horas hoti ekeinois ho karpos tiktetai (tokos)**.

[127] For **osmê euôdias** see Ephesians 5:2. The phrase is common in the Septuagint to render the Hebrew "savour of rest," the fume of the altar pictorially represented as smelt by the Deity.

[128] This reference of **doxa** seems better than that which would connect it only with the eternal future, the glory of heaven, and make the sentence mean that He would hereafter requite them there. He would indeed do so. But the phrase **plêroun pasan chreian** hardly suggests that thought here.

[129] "Bishop Lightfoot... (**Philippians**, pp. 171-178) has shewn with great fulness of proof that 'the household of Caesar' was a term embracing a vast number of persons, not only in Rome but in the provinces, all of whom were either actual or former slaves of the Emperor, filling every possible description of office more or less domestic. The Bishop illustrates his statements from the... burial inscriptions of members of the 'Household' found... near Rome.... These inscriptions afford a curiously large number of coincidences **with the list in Romans xvi**.... Amplias, Urbanus, Apelles, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Patrobas, Philologus.... Bishop Lightfoot infers from this whole evidence the great probability that the 'saints' greeted in Romans 16. were, on the whole, the same 'saints' who here send greeting **from** Rome.... Their associations and functions, not only in the age of Nero but in the precincts of his court, and probably (for many of them) within the chambers of his palace, give a noble view in passing of the power of grace to

triumph over circumstances, and to transfigure life where it seems most impossible" (Note in *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*). See also the writer's commentary on the Ep. to the Romans (*Expositor's Bible*), pp. 423-425.

^[130] Read *meta tou pneumatou huôn*, not *m. pantôn humôn*.

HUDSON TAYLOR IN THE EARLY YEARS VOLUME 1 & 2

BY

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Volume 1^(TOC)

The Growth of a Soul

Introduction

I feel it a great privilege to respond to the invitation to write a brief introduction to this, the first volume of the life of the Founder of the China Inland Mission. In doing so I venture, first, to draw attention to the latter part of its title: "The Growth of a Soul." It will be found that this volume brings before the reader an account of the influences which, in various ways and in different degrees, contributed to the formation of the personal character of Mr. Hudson Taylor. At first sight it might appear to some that to devote not less than half of the biography of one who did a great public work, to a description of his preparation for that work, evidences some lack of the sense of due proportion. The authors were fully alive to this aspect of the subject; but as they studied and pondered over the materials at their disposal, it was impressed upon them, with growing force, that the experience and the career Mr. Taylor furnished a notable illustration of the truth that when God raises up a man for special service He first works in that man the principles which later on are, through his labours and influence, to be the means of widespread rising to the Church and to the world.

Hence, this book has been written not so much as a literary production, likely to be read with an interest such is excited by the biography of a man of distinction in any walk of life, but with the earnest hope that it may of

practical service, in illustrating and emphasising the fact that, for the purposes of Christian work, personal character formed on truly Christian lines is the most important factor; further, that the formation of such a character largely depends upon the choices made by the individual concerned in the opening years of life. The important part which the influences of heredity and early environment had in moulding the personality of Mr. Taylor is ably brought out in this work. The narrative makes it quite clear, however, that these influences in themselves would have been inadequate without a moral response on his part to the claims of truth and duty as they presented themselves to him in his youth.

Led by Divine grace, when still a boy, to see in a Crucified Redeemer the Divinely provided answer, to the problem of his guilt as a sinner, it was not long before he was further led, in a very simple and direct way, to accept the teaching of that Redeemer as his supreme rule of life. It may seem a truism to say that the conduct of the Christian is to be governed by the precepts of Christ; and yet how many there have been, and it is to be feared still are, who having, in the first flush of new-born faith and love, taken the New Testament as the one and only standard of discipleship, have either broken down under the tests and difficulties of such a course, or have gradually yielded to the deadening influences of conventional standards taught and practised around them. Through the grace of God it was not so with Mr. Hudson Taylor. Having accepted the Holy Scriptures as his rule of life, it was not long before he was led into circumstances that, in various ways, severely tested his fidelity to them; and it becomes apparent in the biography, that the manner in which he held on his way in spite of great difficulties and the spirit in which he accepted not a little severe discipline were, under God, the main factors in producing a strength and a quality of character, without which the work to which he was called could never have been accomplished.

A good deal is written in the present day as to the need of living our lives and doing our work in a scientific manner. It is to be feared that much weakness and failure in Christian life and service may be traced to a lack of the scientific spirit in our treatment of the Holy Scriptures. We hear much, for instance, of the need of a fuller endowment of spiritual power for the Church and her representatives in the mission-field, if the responsibilities involved by present opportunities are to be adequately met. Is it sufficiently realised, however, in practice, that such endowment, the outstanding instance of which is recorded in the opening chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, was bestowed upon people who during the preceding three years, whatever their faults and limitations, had counted the cost and had, without any reservation, responded, in intention at all events, to the conditions of discipleship laid down by their Lord: so much so that He was able at the close of that time to say to them, "Ye are they who have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a Kingdom." Just as the ministry of John the Baptist was antecedent and preparatory to that of our Lord, so the period of personal discipleship-involving as it did an unreserved placing of life and all it included at the disposal of the Divine Master-was essential and led up to Pentecost: nor is there any other path at the present time. Outward circumstances alter with each succeeding age, bringing with them a corresponding modification in the external application of the principles and practice of our Lord; similarly, their application in the life of each individual will also have a character of its own. But the fact remains eternally true that the path of discipleship is the only road to spiritual power.

I venture to dwell upon this point as illustrated in the life of Mr. Taylor, because experience shows that nothing is easier than, in the words of the Prophet Isaiah, for the "wine to become mixed with water"; that is to say, for the essential teachings as to conduct given us by Christ, and subsequently by

His Apostles in the Epistles, to be toned down and adulterated by the admixture of ideas and maxims, not only foreign to, but repugnant to the spirit of Christianity.

The great truth which is complementary to the fore-going, that it is only in union with Christ by the Holy Ghost that the Christian has the power to carry into practice the precepts of His Lord, also receives powerful illustration in this biography. A single-hearted, unreserved intention to follow the Lord, whilst essential, is by itself as fruitless as the efforts-of Sisyphus. But it is also true that the inworking of Divine grace will never be known in its victorious fulness where there is not such an intention.

It is perhaps the highest tribute to the character of Mr. Hudson Taylor that it is the recollection of what he was, almost more than what he accomplished, which is most treasured by those who were privileged to know and work with him. He possessed qualities both of heart and mind not often found highly developed in the same individual. Whilst it is no exaggeration to say he was literally consumed with a self-sacrificing zeal for the spread of the Gospel, yet he was never hard or unsympathetic towards those who, through various causes, were unable to toil and to suffer as he did: on the contrary, his tenderness and sympathy endeared him to his brethren, and ever cheered those who were disheartened in the fight, or laid aside by illness. His gracious, unassuming manner, his habitual kindness and gentle courtesy, his tact and patience under opposition and ill-treatment, combined to bestow a peculiar charm to his personality.

Though gifted with more than ordinary powers both of thought and action, his true humility, as well as his practical wisdom, were evidenced by his readiness to confer with his brethren, and by the deference with which he weighed the wishes and judgment even of those many years younger than

himself. Never perhaps was there a man who, as he went on in life, was more free from the disastrous mistake of despising "the least of his brethren." There can be no doubt that to his habit of carefully weighing the views of younger men was due the receptivity and elasticity which his mind retained to the end of his service.

The fact that Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor are the authors of this book would seem in itself to render a reference to its workmanship superfluous. It seems well, however, to mention that they have bestowed upon it far more than ordinary care and labour, such as a work of this kind would naturally call for, as the sense has deepened in their minds, and in those of others, that there were features in this biography which, if truthfully and adequately presented, were eminently calculated, with the Divine blessing, to convey lessons of deep and permanent import both to the Christian community at large and also to individuals.

Hence, not only have exceptional pains, involving often much laborious research, been taken to secure the strictest fidelity to truth in every detail of the record, but also no labour has been spared to present in their right proportion and their true light the guiding principles of this remarkable life. It is the sober truth to say that every page, and even every sentence, has been the subject of many earnest prayers for the Divine blessing, and it may be added that the one desire of the authors has been that they may be the means of conveying a message of God which shall touch hearts and alter lives.

D. S. HOSTE

CHINA INLAND MISSION, LONDON, October 19, 1911.

Part I^(TOC)

Antecedents, Home and Early Years^(TOC)

1776-1849. AET. 1-17

Chapter I

As for Me and My House

1776-1786

It was James Taylor's wedding-day, a wintry morning long ago in the north country. The sun had not yet risen over Brierley Common, and in the snowy valley Royston still lay in shadow. But on Staincross Ridge the young stonemason was up betimes, making ready for his bride. Was there not water to carry from the well and wood to prepare for the fire, as well as wheat to thresh and take to the mill to provide for her first baking?

Full of life and good spirits, "a noted singer and extremely fond of dancing."

^[1] Taylor had hardly given a serious thought to the step he was about to take. He had fallen in love with bright little Betty, one of the Johnsons of Royston, in the fine old church of which he was a bell-ringer and member of the choir. There he had heard the Banns of Marriage published, with much satisfaction, on three successive Sundays after the New Year. And now the auspicious day had come, Thursday the 1st of February, and all was ready for the festivities. There would be music dancing, feasting and merry-making, and he and Betty

would be gayest of the gay. But beyond this they anticipated little save the cosy fireside in the home that was to be.

Now, however, as the young man went out into the frosty air to carry his sheaves to the barn,^[2] a new line of thought began to present itself. Was it the familiar cottage next door to his own that suggested it, the home of Joseph and Elizabeth Shaw, well known throughout the country-side? Was it the music of some hymn Dame Betty was singing as she plied her morning tasks?

Not long ago, as he could well remember, there had been more sighing than singing in this good woman's lot. Crippled by an acute attack of rheumatism, she had been confined to bed month after month in weariness and pain. But since that memorable day when all alone in the house she had "trusted the Lord," as they put it, for immediate healing, great indeed had been the change. How astonished her husband must have been when he came back a little later and found her not only up but sweeping the kitchen, as well and happy as could be.^[3] It had made much stir in the neighbourhood, and Taylor, like every one else, was at a loss to account for what had happened—every one, that is, except the Methodists, who seemed to think it simple and natural enough. But what credulity could surprise one in people of such extreme religious notions?

Those notions seemed to haunt him this morning, however, strange as it might seem. For what had he to do with religion! he, the leader rather in all that was opposed to the "revival" that had invaded the neighbourhood of late. Surely it was enough that Farmer Cooper and the Shaws had turned Methodist, bringing from Wakefield preachers of the new-fangled doctrines, who terrified people with their earnestness about "the wrath to come." Had not John Wesley himself appeared, one Mapplewell "Feast Monday," boldly addressing the crowds in the Market Place while the Midsummer Fair was

going on?^[4] It was a courageous thing to do in that Yorkshire town, where "bating the Methodists" had become a favourite pastime with those of the rougher sort. But the white-haired preacher had so discoursed, that day, that all else had been forgotten, and he was allowed to pass unmolested to the Shaw's cottage on the Ridge, there to rest till the cool of the day.^[5] Perhaps it was from his lips young Taylor had caught the words that returned to him now so persistently, as he worked away in the barn:

"As for me and my house ... me and my house ... we will serve the Lord."

Yes, he knew what it meant to serve the Lord. His neighbors lived that sort of life. But he was no narrowminded Methodist! Besides, it was his wedding-day. He was threshing wheat for Betty's home-coming. It was no time to be thinking of religion.

"As for me and my house."

Yes, he was about to establish a new household that day. It was a serious step, a great responsibility. How careless had been his attitude hitherto, how unthinking! But now the words would not leave him:

"We will serve the Lord."

Hour after hour went by. The sun rose high over the hills, lighting the white-roofed village where the bride was waiting. Taylor was due there long before noon, and had yet to don wedding apparel. But all, all was forgotten in this first, great realisation of eternal things. Alone upon his knees among the straw the young stone-mason was face to face with God. "As for me" had taken on new meaning. The fact of personal responsibility to a living though unseen Being-Love infinite and eternal, or justice as a consuming fire-had

become real and momentous as never before. It was the hour of the Spirit's striving with this soul, the solemn hour when to yield is salvation. And there alone with God James Taylor yielded. The love of Christ conquered and possessed him, and soon the new life from above found expression in the new determination:

"Yes, we will serve the Lord." ^[6]

Thus the critical moments of life come with little warning, silently as the sunrise often, shedding Divine illumination upon things unseen. All unexpectedly, one day, we see as we have never seen before. Duty becomes plain in the light of eternity. Then we have reached a turning-point indeed, and everything depends upon the response of the soul to the claims and promises of God. Had young Taylor decided otherwise that winter morning how different the sequel must have been! It was the little beginning, the tiny spring from which was to flow blessing not for himself only and his house from generation to generation, but for an ever-widening circle in England, China, and throughout the Church of God. Such a moment may come for us to-day, fraught with far-reaching issues. What is our response to be?

"Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

Were the church bells ringing over the valley when James Taylor returned to consciousness of earthly things? It was almost noon. The wedding-guests must be in consternation as to what had become of him. Never surely the two miles to Royston seemed so endless as when, fearing he could not be in time, he ran down the long hill from Staincross Ridge, a new man in a new world.

Where the cross-roads met in the heart of the village he came in sight of the church at length. Glancing apprehensively at the clock by the oriel window, [This beautiful window high up beside the clock is one of the distinctive

features of Royston Church. There is said to be only one other like it in England. Built by the monks of Bretton not far from their monastery, the church is provided with a chamber in the tower, designed apparently for meditation and prayer. Sunny and silent, lighted by the oriel window, it was probably a favourite resort of the monks through many generations.] what was his surprise to find that it had come to a standstill, as if in sympathy with his dilemma. Possibly it might not yet be too late!

Somewhere the bridal party was waiting. It was no moment for explanations. To church they went as speedily as possible. The Vicar asked no questions, unaware perhaps of the ruse whereby his bell-ringers had saved the day for their favourite. The service duly proceeded, the Register was signed in the vestry, and James Taylor and Betty Johnson were man and wife.

Very interesting it was more than a hundred years later to hunt up the old calf-bound volume and come upon the entry made that day-February 1, 1776. Much of the writing was faded on the discoloured page, but one signature stood out with startling clearness, vividly recalling the handwriting of another who long after was to bear the bridegroom's name. There was the same familiar shape of each if carefully formed letter, the same firm, characteristic style, as though the quill had been guided by the very hand that so often wrote in recent years:

*"Affectionately yours in Christ,
JAMES HUDSON TAYLOR."*

And not the signature only is noteworthy in connection with this old-time story; the later experiences of the stonemason and his wife reveal traits of character that also appear, by the blessing of God, in the great-grandson whose life we trace. There is the same singleness of purpose, strength of principle, love for the Lord Jesus Christ and faithfulness in His service: a rich

inheritance, bringing with it the blessing promised "to the third and fourth generation."

To begin with, there was no compromise about the James Taylor of long ago. Up to the hour of his wedding he had been as far from religious impressions as the most thoughtless of his companions. Now as they left the church he did not hesitate to confess all that had taken place. Simply and earnestly with his young wife on his arm he explained that he had enlisted in the service of a new Master. This meant among other things no dancing at his wedding or unseemly jollification. Hearing which the bride exclaimed in dismay:

"Surely I have not married one of those Methodists!"

But that was just what she had done, little as either of them expected it. For the warm love and living faith of the Staincross Society soon drew James Taylor into its membership. From the Shaws, Coopers, and others he learned more of what it really means to serve the Lord. His voice and fiddle, formerly much in request for revels throughout the country-side, were now used only for his Master, and before long he was gladly telling what great things had been done for his soul.

And meanwhile what about Betty? Well, she was far from happy. Her heart told her James was right, but she was most unwilling to share with him the reproach of Christ. So she grumbled and scolded, and managed to make things generally uncomfortable. From the first day of their life together James had commenced "family prayers," but Betty refused to join him and busied herself ostentatiously about other things. At last one evening she was more trying than usual, and more unreasonable in her reproaches. James bore it as long as he could, and then before she knew what was happening Betty found herself lifted in his strong arms and carried to the room upstairs. There he

knelt down and keeping her still beside him poured out all his sorrow and concern in prayer. She had not realised before how much he cared. His earnestness solemnised and impressed her, and though she would not show it she began to be troubled by a sense of sin. All next day her distress deepened. How willingly, then, would she have been as her husband was! In the evening the Bible was brought out as usual and Betty was glad enough to listen. The prayer that followed seemed just what she was needing, and that night while James was still on his knees she entered into peace with God.^[7]

Thus at the outset of their married life these two were united in the best of ways, and as the years went on they became increasingly happy and helpers of one another's faith.

It was a wonderful movement of the Spirit of God into which James Taylor and his wife were thus introduced in a remote corner of Yorkshire. All over Great Britain and Ireland similar conversions were taking place. Breaking in upon the darkness of the eighteenth century, a glorious Revival swept the land, saving it from threatened destruction. In the Established Church, dead though it was for the most part, mighty men of God were raised up-Whitfield, the Wesleys, Grimshaw, Rowlands, Berridge, and many another, with whom wrought a multitude of unlettered evangelists, proclaiming in humble spheres the saving grace of God.

How terrible was the state of things before this work began it is hard for us now to realise. In town and country alike, people were abandoned to vice and irreligion well-nigh incredible in our day, "for the most part," as the Churchman Southey records, "in a state of heathen or worse than heathen ignorance." The immorality of the wealthy classes and the indifference of the clergy were no less menacing than "the rudeness of the peasantry, the brutality of the town populace, the prevalence of drunkenness, the growth of

impiety, and the general deadness to religion."^[8]

Men who in the face of such conditions, with the pulpits of the land closed against them, fearlessly took their stand for God and righteousness, "stormed the strongholds of Satan, plucked thousands like brands from the burning, and altered the character of the age," needed an enduement of the Holy Spirit no less mighty than that of the first evangelists who "turned the world upside down." Like them too they had to be prepared to "die daily," that they might fill up that which was lacking of "the afflictions of Christ." For only through lives laid down could such regenerating work be done. And not the leaders only, men whose names are honoured now the wide world over—the strength of the Revival lay in the great host of men and women, unknown to fame, who everywhere rejoiced to share their apostolic labours, sufferings, and success.

Amongst these came to be numbered James and Betty Taylor, in a peculiarly dark and needy corner of the dark and needy England of those days. And who shall say that the courage, steadfastness and dependence upon God developed by the conditions they had to face do not lie at the foundation of much that is recorded in this book?

A serious accident some years after his marriage obliged James Taylor to face the fact that he must give up his work as a stone-mason and find other means of supporting his family. It was a gloomy outlook, for there were fewer ways of earning a livelihood in those days than at present, and country occupations to which he was accustomed were all beyond his strength. The only course open to him was to leave the little home on Staincross Ridge and seek in some manufacturing centre the lighter employment factory or workshop might afford.

Barnsley was the nearest place of the kind, a notoriously wicked, mining town, just across the valley of the Dearne. "Drunkenness, licentiousness, and gambling, the three great sins of the nation," were there especially rife, and "scarcely any people," William Bramwell tells us, "raged against the Methodists or persecuted them with such ferocity as the people of Barnsley." The churches were deserted and the ale-houses overflowing, with what results may be judged from notices such as the following which were only too common:

"Drunk-a penny: dead-drunk-two-pence: clean straw for nothing."

It must have been hard for James and Betty Taylor to bring their children into the atmosphere of a place like this, but when employment was offered him in the linen-warehouse of Joseph Beckett, a local magistrate, at a wage of thirteen shillings and sixpence weekly they could no longer hesitate. At the top of Old Mill Lane on the outskirts of the town stood a four-roomed cottage from which might be seen the wooded hills of their childhood. It was a busy corner, for the cross-roads met at their door, and the London coach coming up from the Market Place paused there to adjust its brakes before turning down the steep lane on its way to Wakefield and Leeds. Travellers were constantly passing on the Sheffield highway, and so frequent were the inquiries as to various destinations that the occupant of the mansion opposite went to considerable expense to settle the questions once and for all. The obelisk he erected is useful still, with its modern lamps and full directions, and when the sun is setting its shadow falls upon the site once occupied by James Taylor's modest dwelling.^[9]

Here then the new arrivals settled, finding it a great change from their old surroundings. Living was more expensive than in the country, and though the

father was earning what was then good wages it was far from easy to make both ends meet. Besides rent and taxes, there were two sons and three little daughters to provide for, and all they had to live on was the small sum of twelve shillings a week. But what of the remainder of the father's earnings, the extra one and sixpence he received weekly? Was it reserved for special comforts, tobacco, tea, or snuff? Was it set aside for winter clothing, or against "a rainy day"? No, it was given, sacrificed rather, for love of One dearer to them than their children, more considered than themselves. Poor as they were in this world's goods, they had learned the secret of being "rich toward God."

In Betty's kitchen stood a corner-cupboard containing a special cup into which, as James brought home his earnings, one shilling and sixpence always found their way. This was consecrated money, never to be touched save for "the support of God's cause and the relief of the poor."^[10] Thus they always had something ready for the Master's use; and the remainder of their little income proved sufficient and unfailing, because the blessing of God rested on it. It was the old story of the widow's meal and oil, for the Lord will be no man's debtor. Oh, that cup in the corner-cupboard, that faithful giving of a ninth of everything (a tenth could not suffice them) to the Lord, how much it explains of blessing in the lives of their children's children!

The loss of Christian fellowship was the change they felt most keenly during those early days in Barnsley. The beautiful church of St. Mary's a few steps from their door offered no substitute for the meetings in Betty Shaw's cottage, and of helpful, spiritual ministry there seems to have been none. True, the Friends had a Meeting House a mile or two from the town, and the Independents were building on Crow-well Hill the first Nonconformist place of worship. But there was little to choose between church and chapel in those

days. Deadness and indifference paralysed both alike, so that as Bishop Ryle puts it they: "seemed at last agreed on one point, ... to let the devil alone and do nothing for hearts or souls."^[11]

This state of things became a heavy burden on the new arrivals, and they longed unspeakably for some voice to tell the glad tidings that had set them free. But preachers rarely came from more favoured localities, and when they did it was a sorry welcome they found in Barnsley. Year in and year out James Taylor and his family were distressed to see "the Sabbath profaned and all kinds of brutal, ferocious, and licentious games practised."^[12] It was little they could do to stem the torrent of iniquity, but it was better than nothing, and they could not hold their peace.

And so it came to pass that Betty's kitchen was swept and garnished, and a few neighbours gathered in for informal meetings. The singing no doubt was an attraction, and both James and his wife were among "the people that do know their God" and so can be a help to others. Some evidently received blessing, for in time a Class was formed which met regularly in the little cottage.^[13] Eventually a Methodist Society was fully organised, and James Taylor appointed as the first Class Leader and Local Preacher in Barnsley.

Long before this, however, he had been privileged to "make full proof" of his ministry in truly apostolic ways. Down on the Old Bridge and in the Market Place he had been in danger of his life once and again while preaching in the open air. Pelted with stones and refuse, struck down and dragged through the mire, he had been rescued at the last moment-only to preach again.

Returning from a meeting on one occasion he was accosted by a couple of men who appeared to be friendly. Engaged in conversation with one of them he did not notice the movements of the other, who suddenly rubbed into his

eyes a mixture of pounded glass and mud calculated to blind him for life. Sightless and in desperate pain Taylor was wholly at their mercy, and there is no knowing what might have happened had not Joseph Beckett coming down Church Street at the time hastened to his assistance. Seeing the magistrate the ruffians made off, but not before Mr. Beckett had recognised one of them, a professed infidel and no friend to the Methodists in Barnsley. Poor Taylor was taken home in great suffering, and it was fully three months before he could return to work again. His employer urged him to take out a summons, having himself witnessed the occurrence. But James would not hear of it.

"No," he said, "the Lord is well able to deal with them. I would rather leave it in His hands."

This did not satisfy the magistrate, however, who decided to carry the Prosecution through on his own account. In the witness-box the culprit denied the charge, calling upon God to strike him blind if he had had anything to do with the outrage. Shortly after, all Barnsley knew that he had lost his sight. For the rest of his life he had to be led by a dog through the familiar streets, and ultimately sunk into extreme poverty. His accomplice also was obliged to confess that nothing ever prospered with him from the time of their cruel attack upon James Taylor.

Such experiences in common with others of a less serious character afforded abundant opportunity for putting into practice the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, opportunities not lost upon James Taylor and his fellow-Methodists.

It was an eloquent sermon he preached in Eastgate, for example, when an angry woman ran after him, frying-pan in hand. She had seen the good man go by wearing a light-coloured overcoat, and thought it an excellent

opportunity of provoking him into a quarrel. Coming up behind, she vigorously rubbed the greasy, sooty utensil all over the back of his tidy garment, using her tongue meanwhile to the amusement of onlookers. But it was her turn to be discomfited when Taylor turned round with a smile, suggesting that if it afforded her satisfaction she might grease the front as well. Covered with confusion the woman retired, but the incident was not easily forgotten.

It is said that on his deathbed the infidel above-mentioned sent for the man he had injured, hoping to find comfort in his prayers. But eager as he was to help his former enemy, James Taylor could not pray. He tried and tried again, but his cry seemed to return from an unanswering heaven. The solemn words then came to mind: "He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be cut off, and that without remedy." To see an unrepentant soul pass into eternity was far more terrible to him than all the persecutions he had endured.

For none of these things moved him. He found that it was a safe thing and a blessed to trust in the living God. The little home at the top of Old Mill Lane was increasingly happy and a centre of blessing to others. Dame Betty in spite of her household cares found time to be useful as a Class Leader among the women. Their children grew up a joy and comfort to them, and in all that makes for true prosperity they were enriched of God. Attempts to do them harm were so manifestly overruled that they helped rather than hindered their influence. And one is not surprised to learn that as time went on they with others of these early Methodists, by their meekness, uprightness, and consistent conduct, lived down opposition and took their place among the most respected inhabitants of the town."^[14]

A like change was becoming apparent all over England. The close of the

century that overwhelmed the land of Voltaire with the unspeakable horrors of the French Revolution witnessed, in the home of Whitfield and the Great Revival, a peaceful transformation of national life and character.^[15] Long surviving his own generation, Wesley eighty years of age could look out upon a revived and purified Church leading a people's progress toward righteousness, liberty and enlightenment, and welcome the dawning of the day of Modern Missions that was to extend these blessings to a waiting world. His evangelistic journeys were now "religious ovations," and he himself, "the best known man in England," was honoured and beloved for his work's sake where so long he had been hated and despised.^[16]

This was the period of his long-expected visit to Barnsley, the first and only recorded occasion of his preaching there. Great must have been the joy of James Taylor and his friends as they prepared to welcome this father in the faith. In numbers the little Society had not made much progress, for those had been difficult years, but in knowledge of God and influence with those around them great headway had been won. They were able to look forward to the coming of the great evangelist without anxiety as to the reception that awaited him, and could even arrange with the landlord of the Old White Bear to make use of his spacious yard near the Market Place for an open-air meeting.

Wesley came to them from Epworth, the home of his childhood, having recently celebrated his eighty-third birthday. How unusual was the vigour he enjoyed both of mind and body may be judged from the following entry in his Journal, penned two days before he reached Barnsley.

Wednesday, June 28, 1786: I am a wonder to myself. It is now twelve years since I have felt any such sensation as weariness. I am never tired, such is the goodness of God, either with

writing, preaching, or travelling.

Thursday night was spent at Doncaster, and from thence he drove over the Hickleton Hills and through the lovely valley of the Dearne. Somewhere on the road no doubt the Barnsley friends would meet him, but it is hardly likely that James and Betty Taylor were among their number. For them the morning hours would be busy, as theirs was to be the honour of entertaining the distinguished guest.

Picture then the preparations in the little cottage that was to shelter John Wesley that night beneath its roof. Thousands of homes he had visited, in which his chamber may have been finer and the table spread before him more ample in its provision, but it is doubtful whether he ever met with warmer welcome or more genuine love for himself and for his Master.

"Methodism had no truer friends than this worthy couple," writes a well-known citizen of Barnsley.^[17] "Their devotion increased with their difficulties. Persecution did but sharpen the edge of their attachment to Wesley and his cause. Their home seems to have been the chief resort of preachers who came from Wakefield and other places. What more fitting than that they should entertain the great evangelist himself, and so receive a distinction not soon to be forgotten."

That June day of a hundred and twenty years ago has left its mark on Barnsley. The arrival and progress of Mr. Wesley through the crowded streets, the scene in the yard of the Old White Bear with its stone stairway from which his discourse was delivered, the excitement and eager attention of the multitude, the appearance of the venerable speaker, his earnestness and power in setting forth eternal things these and many other recollections are treasured on the library shelves of that Yorkshire town and in the warm hearts

of its people.

But our present concern is chiefly with the close of the day when, the great meeting over, the preacher was escorted to the home of his humble friends. It had been a notable address, lengthened and increasingly earnest as the response of the audience was evident; and now the simple meal was welcome and fellowship with the inner circle around Dame Betty's hearth. Interested in all that concerned them Wesley would soon make his sympathy felt, winning the hearts of the children and the confidence of the older people. He may even have heard the story of James Taylor's conversion on his wedding-day, and the consternation of the bride on learning that she had actually "married one of those Methodists!"

And then as twilight deepened one can well imagine the earnestness with which he would seek to strengthen and encourage those he might never meet on life's pilgrimage again.

"Remember," we can almost hear him say, "remember, you have nothing to do to compare in importance with saving souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. Observe, it is not your business to preach so many times a week, or to take care of this or that Society, but simply to save as many souls as you can, to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which no man can see the Lord.

"Only through unwearied labour and perseverance can we really be 'free from the blood of all men.' Go into every house and teach every one therein, young and old, if they belong to us, to be Christians inwardly and outwardly. Make every particular plain to their understanding, fix it in their memory, write it on their hearts. In order to do this there must be line upon line, precept upon precept. I remember to have heard my father say to my mother, 'How could you have the patience to

tell that child the same thing twenty times over?' 'Why,' she answered, 'if I had told him but nineteen times, I should have lost all my labour.' What patience indeed, what love, what knowledge, is requisite for this!

"Oh, why are we not more holy!" he would exclaim with loving insistence. "Why do we not live in eternity, walk with God all the day long? Why are we not all-devoted to God, breathing the whole spirit of missionaries?"

"Alas, we are too much enthusiasts, looking for the end without faithfully using the means. Do we rise at four or even five in the morning to be alone with God? Do we fast once a week, once a month? Do we even know the obligation or benefit of it? Do we recommend the five o'clock hour for private prayer, at the close of the day? Do we observe it? Do we not find that 'any time' is no time?"

"Oh let us stir up the gift of God that is in us. Let us no more sleep as do others. Let us take heed to the ministry that we have received in the Lord, that we fulfil it. 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.'"^[18]

In some such helpful intercourse the hours would fly, until candles had to be lighted and the guest who was to depart on the morrow escorted to his chamber under the cottage eaves. Was it that night, beneath James Taylor's roof, he penned the entry in his journal that seems so pertinent to the story of this book?

Friday, June 30, 1786: I turned aside to Barnsley, formerly famous for all manner of wickedness. They were then ready to tear any Methodist preacher in pieces. Now not a dog wagged its tongue. I preached near the Market Place to a very large congregation, and I believe the truth sank into many hearts. They seemed to drink in every word. Surely God will have a people in this place.

Chapter II^(TOC)

Unto Children's Children

1786-1824

"FOR myself and for the work I have been permitted to do for God I owe an unspeakable debt of gratitude to my beloved and honoured parents who have entered into rest, but the influence of whose lives will never pass away."

Thus wrote many years later the child who came to gladden James Taylor's home in Barnsley in 1832. This was not of course the first James Taylor, who had long since passed to his reward, nor was it even the son who had grown up to take his place. Two generations had come in between the visit of John Wesley to Barnsley and the birth of the child whose experiences we are to trace, in whose life the character-building of those early days was to bear rich fruit.

That at fifty years of age, amid all the responsibilities of a great mission in China, he should look back with "unspeakable gratitude" upon the training of his childhood, shows that there must have been right influences at work in that quiet home, What were they? Wherein did these parents lay their son under such indebtedness? What had they received themselves that was to prove of so much value to others? These are important questions, the answers to which reveal the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God, whose blessing is promised "unto children's children."

James Taylor the stone-mason, with whom our story opened, had the joy of seeing the beginning of this blessing before he passed away. The little

Society he had been the means of founding seems to have grown rapidly after Wesley's visit. Dame Betty's kitchen was no longer able to accommodate the services, and step after step they were led into building for themselves a modest Chapel on Pinfold Hill, near the busiest part of the town.^[19] Among the first to be received into fellowship in the newly completed building was young John Taylor, the stone-mason's eldest son. This double joy must have been the crowning experience in his father's life, which only a few months later drew to its unexpected close. Nothing is known about his passing away, save that it took place in 1795, and even his resting-place cannot now be traced. His was a lowly life, and he waits the resurrection in an unrecorded grave; but in the family he founded and the cause he loved there remain, to this day better memorials of his faithful service than any the recognition of man can raise.

Well it was for Dame Betty and the younger children that John was able in some measure to take his father's place. He was now seventeen and in regular employment, having learned the trade of a reed-maker, at which he ultimately achieved success. Linen-weaving was then as it still is one of the principal industries of Barnsley, and many were the hand-looms needing the slender reeds between which the shuttles flew. John Taylor worked hard and conscientiously, and by degrees became "of great consequence to the staple trade of the town."^[20] He was able from the first to take his share in the support of the family, and ere long began to look forward to a home of his own on a very simple scale.

For hardly had he grown to manhood before he came to know and love Mary the daughter of William Shepherd of Bradford, who happily returned his affection. The parents seem to have been of Scotch extraction, and one cannot but be interested in them because of this union which was to bring into the

Taylor family qualities of inestimable value. All researches hitherto have failed in discovering much about William Shepherd, save that he was Governor of a gaol, probably in Yorkshire, "the best tempered man in the world" and a consistent Christian. Tradition adds that he was one of Wesley's earliest preachers and occupied a position of influence among the Methodists. Be that as it may, he certainly handed on to his daughter unusual strength of mind and body as well as principles of sincere and simple godliness.

It was not in Bradford, apparently, that the Shepherds were living at the time of the engagement. That would have been a far cry for busy people—twenty miles' coachride from Barnsley. In the Register still preserved in the beautiful Church at Darfield, the bride is entered as "Mary Shepherd of this Parish," and Darfield is within easy reach of Old Mill Lane. There it was at any rate that the young folks did their courting, when Mary was a tall, stately lassie with a warm heart under a quiet exterior, and John with all his practical qualities was a music-loving, merry lad of only twenty-one.

But young as they were, he was able to provide for the girl he loved. On Pinfold Hill near the Chapel a little home was waiting, and Mary was fitted to make it all a home should be. And so in All Saints' Church overlooking the valley where the Dove runs into the Dearne they were married one May morning in 1799, and thence through blossoming hedgerows wended their way together to the neighbouring town.

It still stands, that quaint old cottage, with its sunny kitchen and hospitably open door: the last house in a quiet court that ere long was to resound with children's merry laughter.^[21] Across the street, also, may still be seen the outside stairway leading to John Taylor's workshop. It was a steep climb for little feet, but doubtless they helped to wear the stones so smooth with many a journey to call father when he stayed away too long. For the cottage

overflowed with boys and girls and the factory with business, till the reed-maker must often have been conscious of the blessing of his father's God.^[22]

In the Chapel, too, an overflowing blessing had been given. There John and Mary were both Class Leaders among the younger people, and his voice and musical ability were greatly valued. "Instead of the fathers shall be the children" was a promise so abundantly fulfilled that the premises, amply sufficient in James Taylor's day, were all too small for the succeeding generation. John Whitworth the young architect increased the difficulty when he started an excellent innovation known as the "Sunday School." Following the example of Mr. Raikes of Gloucester, he set about gathering in the untaught children of the streets. Few could be found to encourage, and even he had no idea of the magnitude of the work he was undertaking. But when on the day of opening no fewer than six hundred children crowded in, all eager to be taught, it was evident not only that the school was needed but that it must have larger premises.

And soon even opposers were surprised into approval. The changed demeanour of the children impressed the town so much that the landlord of a well-known tavern went in search of Mr. Whitworth and handed him a guinea with the request that he would never overlook the White Hart Inn when calling for subscriptions. Others helping in the same way it was soon possible to erect a suitable building near the Chapel, which gave the name of School Street to the hitherto quiet lane on which the Taylors lived.

Not long after, it became necessary to enlarge the Chapel also, which was so much altered and improved that James Taylor would hardly have recognised it had he come back again. The reopening just after Christmas, 1810, was a great occasion, when curly-headed little James, the grandson who bore his name, was not yet four years old. Young as he was, however, the rejoicings

of that day, the decorations, singing and crowded meetings, made an impression that never passed away, and long years after he loved to recall the joy with which the Chapel his grandfather had helped to build was rededicated to the service of God.

From the first, the Divine hand was upon this little lad in the reed-maker's home, preparing him for usefulness. Educationally, he and his brothers had advantages unknown to the older generation, for their parents were able to keep them at school and let them choose their own line of life within reasonable limits. One took up the father's business, another became a stockbroker and a third a minister. James wished to be a doctor, and would have studied medicine had circumstances permitted. This being beyond his reach he went in for chemistry as the next best thing, and was indentured to a friend in a neighbouring town.

Seven years' apprenticeship away from home made a man of him before he was twenty-one, and the even tenor of a country business gave opportunities for study. He was quick and painstaking, an omnivorous reader and methodical in all his habits. Next to the Bible, theology was his favourite study. Sermons he read extensively, as well as good biographies. In order to make the most of his reading, he developed a system of shorthand on his own account, which he improved and made much use of in later years. He had some aptitude for music as well as mathematics, and was devoted to the study of birds, plants, and nature generally. Though not tall in figure he was strong and active, and with a bright smile and pleasant manner was decidedly prepossessing.

At least so thought his mother, when occasional holidays brought him home. And from the course of events it would appear that she was not alone in this opinion. "Home" was no longer the cottage near the Chapel to which Mary

Shepherd had come as bride. Prospered in business, John Taylor had built a plain but substantial stone house at the corner of Pitt and York Streets. The situation was good and the property large enough for the erection of workshops and other premises. Thither the family had moved some years previously, and a brighter spot it would have been hard to find when all the young folk gathered home.

Though the Manse near by need not have feared comparison. This was another roomy, pleasant home, on the opposite side of Pitt Street, occupied about this time by a family with the same number of girls and boys. Naturally there was a good deal of intercourse between the households. The eldest daughter of the Manse had a voice so sweet that John Taylor called her "the nightingale." The minister himself and Mrs. Hudson were among the reed-maker's warmest friends, and many were the Sunday evenings when they walked home together from Chapel and joined forces at the corner house for an informal service of song.

It was in 1824 that the minister's family was transferred to the Barnsley Circuit. To the parents it must have seemed like coming home, for their native place, the little town of Holmfirth, lay only a few miles westward on the edge of the great grouse moors. There both Benjamin Hudson and his wife had been born and bred, and from that Yorkshire valley, running back into the Peak country and many a mile of mountain, dale and moor, had come the artistic temperament and courageous spirit of their children, enriched by a heritage of godliness.

Mr. Hudson, though not a gifted speaker, was a faithful and devoted minister of the Gospel. He was an artist, with a decided talent for portrait-painting, inherited by three at least of his children. But his most prominent characteristic, and one that gave him difficulty at times, was an irrepressible

fund of humour. Happily this also was passed on in measure to his descendants. Reproved in the Methodist "Conference" on one occasion for not sufficiently restraining this tendency, he apologised in a reply so witty that the whole assembly was overcome with laughter. But in Barnsley he was on his native heath. Yorkshire folk could appreciate his dry, droll speeches and pointed exhortations. There and in many other places he exercised a helpful ministry, and was valued not for his own sake merely, but also on account of his family.

As for Mrs. Hudson, one look at her face was enough to inspire confidence and esteem. The accompanying portrait painted by her daughter Hannah gives some idea of what she was in later years, though it reveals but little of the strength and sweetness of spirit that made the minister's wife a blessing to many. Three boys and four girls completed the family, Amelia the eldest being only fifteen when they first came to Barnsley.

Young as she was, however, this daughter was a comfort to her parents in no ordinary degree. In addition to careful home-training, she had had the benefit of several years in the Friends' School at Darlington. Sincerity, thoroughness, and love of industry had become as natural to her as the thoughtfulness for others that made her everywhere beloved; and all she was and did told of a heart wholly given to the Lord.

Had it been financially possible Amelia would have continued her studies at Darlington. But younger sisters needed education, and with cheerful courage she took it for granted that she must make way for them and obtain remunerative employment. It was the only way to lighten home-burdens. And if her parents never knew how much she felt the sacrifice, Amelia on her part could little realise the mingled feelings of regret and thankfulness with which they saw her set to work before she was sixteen to earn her living. The right

thing is not always the easiest; but God has His schools for training, and a life left in His hands will never fail of its highest development here and hereafter.

So Amelia went to Castle Donnington as governess to three little children in the family of a gentleman-farmer. Her pupils were devoted to her and her surroundings congenial. But though happy in her work and gifted for it, she could not but long at times for home, and the holidays that enabled her to visit Barnsley seemed few and far between.

Thus it was that although a special favourite with John Taylor and his family she was rarely able to join the Sunday evening gatherings at the corner house. Like James in his apprenticeship, she was early feeling the discipline of life. Perhaps this very fact helped to draw them together. He was her senior by about a year, and prepared through what he had seen of the world to appreciate her brave, beautiful character. For as was purposed by the Heart that planned, those welcome holidays sometimes brought the young governess to the Manse just when James Taylor was also able to visit Barnsley. Short indeed would seem the ten miles' walk when he was homeward bound. And more than usual eagerness winged his feet when he came to know for himself the sweet singer of whom he had heard so much. To his delight he found Amelia to be lovely in disposition as well as in appearance, and that she thought and felt as he did about the deeper things of life.

The result was inevitable. A warm affection sprang up between these two, so suited to each other, and before the minister left Barnsley, an engagement had been hallowed by the love and prayers of both families that from that day united the names—Hudson Taylor.

Chapter III^(TOC)

Set apart unto the Lord

1824-1832

IT was long, however, ere the young people were to see much of one another. James had his way to make in the calling he had chosen, and Amelia's holidays came no oftener than before, though more eagerly desired. But at sixteen and seventeen a long engagement is inevitable, and brings with it so much of hope and happiness that it is comparatively easy to bear.

When the young apprentice returned to Rotherham, it was with stronger incentives than ever to do well. There was new zest in business and study, and the blessing of the Lord so filled his heart that it could not but overflow to others. His employer perceiving his reliability, decided to put him in charge of a branch-establishment in the neighbouring town of Conisborough. Here James Taylor found, as others before him, that "prayer and pains with faith in Jesus Christ will do anything." The business prospered, and better still he prospered in it, according to the suggestive promise of the first Psalm.

[23]

With comparatively little leisure in the years that followed he had a growing love for study, especially of a kind that would throw light upon the word of God. The Bible was his chief delight, and he longed to share the wealth he found in it with others. At no great distance from Conisborough were many neglected villages to which he made his way Sunday by Sunday, telling in out-of-the-way places the wonderful love of God. He could not but speak, for his own heart was brimming over, and not a few among his hearers were

awakened and blessed. Seeing which, the authorities of the Church to which he belonged recognised that the lad was called to this much-needed ministry, and at nineteen years of age his name was added to the list of Barnsley local preachers, of whom his grandfather had been the first.

Meanwhile his fiancée was still at Castle Donnington gaining health and experience for days to come. Constant reading kept her mind bright, and regular correspondence cultivated a habit of rapid, easy writing, of more value than she could suppose at the time. Her letters were full of interest and did much to encourage the one who received them as he took up on his own account the responsibilities of life.

His apprenticeship over James Taylor had returned to Barnsley, and with money advanced by his father rented one of the best shops in town. It was a step of faith, for 21 Cheapside was a serious undertaking for so young a man. But the premises were in a good situation, right on the busy Market Place, and large enough to afford a permanent home. One of his sisters took charge as housekeeper for the time, leaving him free to devote his energies to business six days a week and to his preaching appointments on Sunday. At least as much work and prayer were given to the shop as to his sermons, with the result that he succeeded in both and became known as a reliable man of affairs as well as a helpful, popular preacher throughout the Circuit. At length after years of uphill work the way seemed clear before him. He was able to repay his father's loan, and with a home and sufficient income of his own, felt he might claim his bride.

It was in the quaint old town of Barton-on-Humber that the Hudsons were living when the long engagement drew to a close. Seven years' friendship had done much to develop the boy and girl into earnest manhood and womanhood and to prepare them for the union to which they now looked forward. James

had learned to pray his way through difficulties and was full of confidence in God, and Amelia at twenty-three more than fulfilled the promise of her girlhood. Her father, whose ministry had taken him to Chesterfield and elsewhere since Barnsley days, was still in the North country, in charge of the Barton Circuit, and had it all been planned on purpose, nothing could have been more delightful under the circumstances than the Manse and its surroundings. No little comfort this, amid the varying fortunes of an itinerant preacher's life.

For a something indescribable of old-world loveliness pervaded the little town, seen at its best no doubt through lovers' eyes that sweet spring-tide in 1831. From the famous Ferry of the Doomsday Book to the fine old churches on the Green, dating back to Norman and even Saxon times, the cosy, straggling place breathed an air of comfort and repose. About it lay an undulating country noted for its corn, malt, bricks and tiles. The spacious Market Place and numerous windmills bore witness to a measure of commercial activity; but the quaint, irregular streets and picturesque houses, half hidden among trees and flowering creepers, were more in keeping with the spirit of a bygone time.

In the very heart of the town, the preacher's house near the Chapel seemed specially a bower of greenery and bloom. "Maltby Cottage, Maltby Lane," was an address with which James Taylor was familiar, but even he can hardly have anticipated the charm of that sheltered home. Within the high, old-fashioned wall lay a spacious garden with its lawn and flowers, its fruit-trees all in blossom, and a green field beyond, where quiet cattle fed. Looking out upon this pleasant scene stood the square, red-brick house covered with creepers, whose wide windows welcomed the sunshine and almost made the lower rooms seem part of the out-of-doors. A sweeter spot could hardly be

imagined for a homelike, happy wedding, nor a more charming bride than the minister's daughter whom James Taylor had loved so long.

Here then they were married on April 5, 1831, in the beautiful church of St. Mary's just beyond the trees.

Busy and happy were the days that followed when Amelia found herself again in Barnsley. The John Taylors were still living in the house on Pitt Street, and both there and in the Chapel the welcome she received was warm and true. And the more she became known among her husband's friends the more she was beloved for the sweet spirit that seemed to have no thought or consciousness of self. Intelligent and attractive as she was, there was no desire to shine or make an impression on others. Her voice alone would have brought her notice, but there was a shrinking from display of this or any other gift. Yet she enjoyed society, loved to see others admired, and was so good a listener that men and women alike found her companionship delightful.

But it was the chemist's home on the Market Place that really saw her shine. There the qualities that made her an ideal wife could not be hidden, and James Taylor must often have realised at his own fireside the truth of that word "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord."

In all his work and interests she bore a cheerful part, while caring for domestic matters with a thoroughness and perfection of detail that characterised all she did. His "Class" of forty or fifty lads felt the influence of her sympathy and prayers only less than the girls who became her special care, and one of the joys of their early married life was an old-time revival in the Chapel that resulted in the conversion of many of these young people.^[24]

In his preaching engagements throughout the Circuit she also proved an

unexpected help. Preparing his sermons was no longer the solitary task it had been. Together they prayed and studied, and when James Taylor's heart was full and his pen could not keep pace with the thoughts he longed to utter, his wife would take rapid notes and write out for him many a sermon delivered as he paced the little room behind the shop. He was a gifted speaker, and gave much care to the preparation of his discourses.^[25] In this work Amelia's pen proved invaluable through many a long year, and the joy of seeing souls brought into blessing through his ministry more than repaid the sacrifice of time and strength.

And then the young wife had the happiness of finding her expectations more than realised in the character her husband sustained as a business man. He was an excellent chemist and highly respected for his influence in the town. So scrupulous was he in financial matters that he made it a rule to pay every debt the very day it fell due.

"If I let it stand over a week," he would say, "I defraud my creditor of interest, if only a fractional sum."

In dealing with his customers he was upright to a farthing or a grain, and full of genuine sympathy. He never sued for a bill, and did not think it desirable for Christians even to press for the payment of an account. On the contrary, he frequently returned in whole or part sums that his customers could ill afford to spare. More than one neighbour barely able to settle an account was cheered by his generosity.

"It's all right, John," he would exclaim. "We'll send that bill up to heaven and settle it there."

Genial and kindly to all he was specially so to the poor and to strangers in sickness or trouble. A foreigner or traveller far from home could always find

a friend in the busy chemist.

"Come again, come again," he would say if he thought they needed help.

"Bring the bottle back when the medicine is done and I will gladly fill it."

Yet he was a keen man of affairs and made his business successful. This was partly on account of skill in the management of money-matters, and partly through careful attention to detail. His fellow-townsmen recognising his financial ability appointed him Manager of their "Building Society," an office he continued to fill for two-and-twenty years. That he did not regard lightly the duties of such a position may be judged from the fact that he worked out lists of interest at various rates to four or five places of decimals, and compiled tables of logarithms to assist his calculations. Public funds were to him a sacred trust, demanding the greatest care and fidelity in their administration.^[26]

But it was to God above all James Taylor sought to be faithful, and he was possessed by a profound conviction of His infinite faithfulness. He took the Bible very simply, believing it was of all books the most practical if put to the test of experience. In this too he met with fullest sympathy from the young wife who was herself so loyal to the Lord.

On a day they could never forget, in their first winter together, he sought her Bible in hand to talk over a passage that had impressed him. It was part of the thirteenth chapter of Exodus, with the corresponding verses in Numbers:

"Sanctify unto me all the firstborn ..."

"All the firstborn are mine ..."

"Mine shall they be ..."

"Set apart unto the Lord."

Long and earnest was the talk that followed in view of the happiness to which

they were looking forward. Their hearts held back nothing from the Lord. With them it was not a question of how little could be given, but how much. Did the Lord claim the best gift of His own giving? Their child was more their own for being His. To such parents what could be more welcome than the invitation, nay command, to set apart their dearest thus to Him? And how precious the Divine assurance, "It is Mine," not for time only but for eternity. Together they knelt in the silence to fulfil as literally as possible an obligation they could not relegate to Hebrew parents of old. It was no ceremony to be gone through merely but a definite transaction, the handing over of their best to God, recalling which the mother wrote long after:

"This act of consecration they solemnly performed upon their knees, asking for the rich influence of the Holy Spirit," that their firstborn might be "set apart" indeed from that hour.

And just as definitely the Lord responded, giving them faith to realise that He had accepted the gift; that henceforth the life so dear to them was their own no longer, but must be held at the disposal of a higher claim, a deeper love than theirs.

Thus spring-time came again touching with tender loveliness those Yorkshire hills and valleys, and on May 21, 1832, this child of many prayers was born, and named after both parents, James Hudson Taylor.

Chapter IV (TOC)

Nurture and Admonition

1832-1839

HE was a sensitive, thoughtful little fellow from the first, though bright and winsome as any heart could wish. It almost seemed as though he brought more love than usual into the world, with his great capacity for loving and the frailty of health that drew forth all the tenderness of those about him. For he was delicate, unusually so, as his parents soon discovered. This was no little sorrow, and added difficulty to the task of bringing him up to be a brave and faithful follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. As time went on he was often so far from well that it seemed almost impossible to insist upon obedience and self-control. Yet the very difficulty only made it the more necessary. For nothing in after-life, his parents realised, could ever compensate for the injury of an undisciplined childhood. But they knew where to turn for strength and grace. Were they not workers together with God in moulding this little life for His holy service? If they lacked wisdom for so high a task, as indeed they did, would He not give it liberally according to His promise?

So the child grew under a watchful care that could not in present happiness forget its responsibility to coming years. And his parents grew with him. The young mother, lovely as she had always been, developed new depth of character in dealing with this son, and into the father's life came added sympathy and strength.

It was around his grandfather's figure, strange to say, and the Chapel on Pinfold Hill that his earliest recollections centred. Taken almost from infancy

to the House of God, he retained a distinct remembrance of the old-fashioned gallery as it then was, and his father's pew right opposite the pulpit. Immediately behind was the seat occupied by John and Mary Taylor, whose presence usually inspired a wholesome sense of awe. But Hudson only remembered the smile that lighted his grandfather's face. For when he had been specially good he was sure to be handed over the back of the pew, at the close of the long proceedings, to receive his grandfather's commendations and be carried home to sit on his knee by the fireside and at the well-filled table. This was a regular custom as long as the reed-maker lived and kept open house on Pitt Street. That dizzy transit from pew to pew and the clasp of his grandfather's arms bringing a consciousness of duty well done were the first memories of his childhood.

And with them came another, of the last time he saw that dear, familiar face. His grandfather was lying very quiet then, and the wondering child was told that he had gone to be with Jesus. There was no fear in the impression, only surprise that he should be so cold and still. It was his first sight of death, and never to be forgotten, although at the time he was only two and a half years old.

There were other childish memories also of an unusual kind. One was of learning the Hebrew alphabet as he sat on his father's knee, and another his first attempt at authorship a little later. By this time he was four, and could read and write a little, for he embarked courageously on this literary effort.

"Was it a fairy-tale or story of adventure?" we inquired when he spoke of this recollection.

"No, it was a serious recital of a matter that was burdening my mind. It was about an old man of eighty, who had led a very improper life and had not

truly repented. His chances were growing small. I only finished one chapter, laboriously inscribed in large print. It was not very long."

From which it will be seen that this child of quick susceptibilities entered more perhaps than was good for him into the life of older people, until little playfellows grew up to claim their share of attention. This happily was the case before long, and by the time he was five years old a younger brother and sister were quite companionable. They were a merry trio, and kept each other busy all day long. Teaching Amelia^[27] to walk became a great interest to the boys, as Hudson recalled long after, when writing from China for her nineteenth birthday. Another performance into which they put their whole hearts was the Sunday evening "meeting" in which one of the brothers was audience and the other speaker. The father's chair was pulpit in the little sitting-room behind the shop, and it was doubtless his example and the stories told them of James Taylor and the days of Wesley that fired their imagination and made them want to be "brave preachers" too.

For at no time is there greater capacity for devotion or more pure, uncalculating ambition in the service of God than in early childhood, when the heart is full of love to Christ. Little Hudson, for example, was deeply impressed at four or five years of age by what he heard about the darkness of heathen lands.

"When I am a man," He would often say, "I mean to be a missionary and go to China."

It was only a childish impulse? Yes, but he meant it with all his heart, and meant it because he loved the Lord and wanted to please and follow Him. In the same spirit was the prayer of another little one of five years old:

"Lord Jesus, help us to be good brothers to You, and to do

some of Your hard work in Africa and in China." [28]

The first sorrow that overshadowed Hudson's life was the death of his brother, called after their great-grandfather, William Shepherd. This was a loss indeed, for they had been inseparable companions, and there was no one to fill the empty place. Theodore was still a baby, and he too was taken before long to be with Jesus. Hudson from this time onward was an only son; but two little sisters were spared to grow up, the elder of whom was near enough in age to become his special friend. These early bereavements, following the loss of their grandfather, could not but make him feel the reality of unseen things and develop his thoughtful tendencies.

But though he took life seriously from the first, he was sunny and bright by nature and dearly loved boyish fun. He had eyes and a heart for everything, and retained to the end a capacity for enjoyment that was remarkable. Nature was his great delight, and he had the patience, sympathy and power of observation needed for entering into her secrets. He would take any amount of trouble to cultivate a little fern or flower brought home from the woods, or to learn about the ways of birds, animals and insects. All living, growing things seemed to possess a charm for him that years only increased.

On one occasion in his early childhood a fair of unusual interest was held in the town. The open space behind St. Mary's Church was covered with stalls and shows of every kind, and the usual attractions of circus, music, and merry-go-round were not lacking. But this fair was specially fascinating to Hudson on account of an exhibition of stuffed birds and animals, in which their natural habitats were reproduced as far as possible. Nothing could exceed the expectation with which he set out for the Green, the proud possessor of a penny, that open-sesame of all delights.

Now it was a rule of the family that pennies could be had if they were earned, but not otherwise. The parents recognised the importance of teaching their children the value of money, and that honest work is necessary if it is to be obtained. Simple tasks suited to their capacity were devised, such as hemming dusters, cleaning windows, or helping in the shop. When they were too young to do anything but play, small coins might be earned by what was called "a game of still," which meant just sitting perfectly quiet for a measured time by the clock, five or ten minutes or longer as the mother might decide. And Mother had more in view than the children thought, having discovered how much good was accomplished by these resting-times for mind and body. Of course all this was much more troublesome than the ordinary methods of obtaining pocket-money, but it had the desired effect, and the pleasure of giving and receiving pennies genuinely earned was sufficient reward for parents and children alike. Thus the unfortunate habit of teasing for money was entirely obviated. "Work for it and you shall have it" proved a much more satisfactory basis.

Well, this particular fair came just when Hudson was rejoicing in the possession of his first whole penny, obtained at what had been to him no little cost. Of course it seemed a fortune. The largest, most precious coin he had ever possessed, what would it not purchase of delight?

Joyfully he climbed the hill to St. Mary's, ran along the lane to Church Fields, and sought among the bewildering variety of attractions for the birds and animals of his dreams. It was disconcerting to find a fence around the enclosure, and at the gate an imposing personage of doubtful disposition toward little boys. But producing his penny he summoned up courage to ask admission. To his surprise this was denied, the man gruffly intimating that the entrance fee was "tuppence."

In a moment the child's mind grasped the unreasonableness of the situation. No doubt the man would like to have two pennies. So would he himself. But that was out of the question. There was only one.

"I haven't got another penny," he explained timidly. "But I will give you this one, if you will let me in; and wouldn't it be better for you to have one penny than none at all?"

But the man in uniform was not able to see the point.

Nothing daunted, the curly-headed little fellow continued his attempt. Reasonableness and perseverance were among the strongest traits in his character, and surely even a grown-up person would see, in time, what a mistake it was to refuse one penny just because you could not have two at once. But alas, the gate-keeper was obdurate.

At length the failure of his arguments and the inaccessibility of the treasures beyond that closed door were too much for the sensitive child. Turning away with tears in his eyes, he ran home sobbing as if his heart would break.

Happily his mother found him and was able to understand. Taking him in her arms she said quietly, "But the man was doing his duty, my son. He didn't mean to be unkind. Every one has to pay two pennies to see those lovely birds and animals. You have been so good and industrious lately that Mother will give you another penny as a reward. Run off again, now, and the man will be glad to let you in."

This unexpected turn of events put everything right, and sent such gladness thrilling through the little heart that seventy long years after it had not died away.

The mother's gentle discipline had much to do with the happiness of his

childhood, and gave rise to more than one situation that was long remembered. Such, for instance, was the company dinner when in attending to her guests she overlooked the needs of her little son. The meal went on and still the child said nothing, knowing he must not ask for things at table. At length, however, an expedient suggested itself, and a little voice was heard requesting for salt. That at any rate was permissible.

"And what do you want the salt for?" questioned his neighbour, seeing the empty plate.

"Oh," he replied, "I want to be ready. Mamma will give me something to eat by-and-by."

On another occasion he called attention to his needs by inquiring in a pause in the conversation "Mamma, do you think apple-pie is good for little boys?"

It was not often he attempted to evade home-regulations, partly no doubt because he knew it would be useless, and partly for fear of giving his mother pain. In all her dealings with the children she was reasonable and consistent. She made few rules, and avoided unnecessary commands. But they well knew that what she said she meant, for she never gave instructions she was not prepared to see carried out. Sometimes Hudson was tempted, like other boys, to see how far he could go in taking his own way; but one distressing experience taught him a lesson that was not soon forgotten.

He was intensely fond of reading, and was absorbed one winter in a delightful book. He was all eagerness to finish it, but daylight hours were short and full of other occupations, and bed-time could not be postponed. If only he might read at night! But Mother always came to tuck him up and take the light away. The story grew in interest, and at length a plan suggested itself. He knew, as every one did in that orderly household, just where the

candle-ends were kept for use in kitchen or cellar. It would never be noticed if he took a few of these. Then he could light them, one by one, and lying cosily in bed make progress with his book. At first the thought was startling and not to be entertained for a moment. But it came again and again, until conscience was silenced and he decided to carry it out.

A visitor came to spend the evening with his parents just when this stage was reached, and perceiving his opportunity the child filled his largest pocket with the coveted candle-ends and went in earlier than usual to say good-night. In the drawing-room the older people were gathered round the fire. The visitor was fond of children, and taking the little fellow on his knee asked if he would like to hear a story. Dearly as Hudson loved stories, however, especially at bed-time, the warmth of the fire made him anxious to escape. He was painfully conscious that the pocket full of candle-ends was on the fire side, and eagerly explaining that it was time to go to bed, tried to slip off the too-friendly knee.

But his mother's voice detained him. It was early yet, and as a special treat he might stay a little longer to hear the story. But instead of being delighted, the poor child was restless and miserable. The candles must be melting. He knew they were! What if Mother should smell the tallow, or it should trickle down upon the carpet? At the first pause in the recital, he urged again, more earnestly than before, that it really was bed-time and he ought not to stay up any longer. The gentleman was disappointed and the parents greatly puzzled. But still the story went on.

Finally, after what seemed hours of suspense, he was released and hurried away to his room. His mother quickly followed, to find him weeping bitterly over a pocketful of melted tallow and a story of his own that he was only too glad to pour forth without extenuation. Needless to say her sorrow over it all

impressed the lesson for which in afterlife he could not be too thankful.

One chief advantage of his childhood was that he was so continually under his mother's care. This in itself was sufficient compensation for the limited means that made it necessary. The father's business prospered and brought in more than enough for present needs. But with the welfare of his family at heart, he felt it desirable to lay by for the future, as well as to purchase the premises in which they lived and other properties. This necessitated careful economy in everyday matters. Household expenditure was reduced as far as possible, luxuries were unknown, and active, practical habits were the order of the day. The children learned to be independent and were well drilled in thoughtfulness for others. But above all they grew up in close contact with their parents, as children never can in a house with many servants, or if they are sent to school. The mother was their companion from morning till night. She it was who worked with them, taught them, did everything for them, and was the sun and centre of their little system, radiating light and love without end.

This accounted largely for the influence she exerted over her little people. It was second nature to obey her, and she was always there to encourage or restrain. She was a woman of few words and unusual tact, with a quiet way of saying and doing things that was very effective. A mere suggestion from her lips went further than repeated injunctions from some people.

"My dear, it is nearly time for dinner," or "for tea." This meant clean hands, fresh pinafores, tidy hair, and a race to see who would be first at table before Father appeared.

How she managed it no one could tell; but with the entire care and education of the children, cooking to attend to, washing to be done at home, and all the

housework, sewing and mending necessary, and the help of only one maid, she invariably kept her surroundings neat and attractive, down to the brightly burning fire and cleanswept hearth. The little parlour behind the shop, though constantly in use for meals and lessons, needlework and play, was a picture of comfort and good order; and this not by virtue of the distracting process known as "setting-to-rights" so much as by a happy knack of never letting things go wrong or stray far out of place.

It was a cosy spot, this family sitting-room, and well in keeping with the simple life to which Hudson Taylor owed so much. Entering from the shop, a long, old-fashioned couch occupied the wall to the right, beyond which a chinacupboard filled the corner with shining rows of crockery and glass. Next came the fireplace at a right angle with the sofa, making that end of the room attractive on winter evenings. The other end. was taken up with a window and door, leading to the little yard, across which was the warehouse where the father's stores were kept. This window, facing west, let in the sunshine when the children were busy in the afternoon with needlework and lessons. A spacious bookcase filled the wall between the fireplace and window, and opposite stood a chest of drawers used as a sideboard, between two doors, one leading upstairs and the other down to the kitchen premises. A square table in the middle of the room was protected from draughts by a folding screen in the corner farthest from the fire. And last, but not least in the estimation of the children, a little window over the sofa afforded interesting glimpses into the shop and Market Place beyond.

The chief feature in the room, undoubtedly, was the bookcase, and it had also much to do with the order that prevailed. Over the lower shelves hung a curtain, concealing a characteristic device of the mother's household management. Everything in use for meals or lessons, work or play, had its

appointed place in sideboard or cupboard, while magazines, books, and papers found hospitality upon the ample shelves. But one shelf behind the crimson curtain was unappropriated. Clean and empty, it stood ready for emergencies. Was the room needed for unexpected visitors? The work in hand, whatever it might be, was laid away without embarrassment and just as easily brought out again. Were the older people busy with letters or accounts when the table was wanted for a meal? A place was ready in which ink and papers would be accessible and out of danger. It was a convenient receptacle at tea-time for the mother's sewing or the children's toys. But whatever its uses in the day-time, it was always cleared and dusted before night. Simple as such a plan may seem, it was effective because of the orderly mind that carried it out, and went far toward solving the problem of how to turn one room to so many uses without litter or confusion.

Not that a litter was objected to at the right time and in the proper place; but the little hands that made it were expected to put things straight, before turning to other work or play. The children came to feel that their amusements must never give other people trouble, and that it is wiser to do at once what has to be done, rather than leave it to another time. "A place for everything and everything in its place" was the working rule of the household; and that extra, empty shelf behind the curtain was more effective than many exhortations. One thing only made a deeper impression in this connection, and that was the fact that Mother's belongings never needed tidying. Other people's possessions might be more or less topsy-turvy on occasion, as bright eyes had not failed to discover. But Mother's drawers and cupboards stood the test. They never needed setting to rights, because, strange as it might seem, they were never out of order.

Personal neatness she taught them in the same practical way, until it became

second nature to feel that one must be clean and tidy, however simply dressed. A fresh apron was ready for their father's use in the shop every morning, and the mother's print gown and closely fitting cap were just as pretty for breakfast, six days in the week, as her black satin and white crepe shawl reserved for Sunday. She was very pleasing in appearance, and the children were like her. The muslin cap tied under the chin, with its soft tulle edging and white ribbons, well became her calm, sweet face. She had donned it on her wedding-day according to the custom of the times, when a dainty cap was always waiting the bride's return from church. Mother would hardly have seemed Mother without that modest headgear. But whether it were the Sunday cap, its gauze ribbons edged with satin, or the more durable muslin for daily use, it was equally fresh and becoming.

Slovenliness in dress under any circumstances she could not endure. Pretty washing frocks were prepared for the little girls, with black alpaca aprons piped at the edges, and they were trained to feel that it was just as important to be neat and attractive for household work before breakfast as for entertaining friends at tea. A work-basket was always ready on their dressing-table, and stitches were put in as soon as needed. Even if it meant getting up ten minutes earlier on a winter morning, clean tuckers must be sewn in to everyday dresses just as carefully as to best ones. And their brother too was made to realise that clean hands and shoes, nicely kept nails, and well-brushed garments were quite as necessary at home as in any company. It was a question of thoroughness and self-respect, and those were essentials their parents required in everything.

In the same way the servant, probably an inexperienced little maid when she came to them, was taught to leave the kitchen in order before she went upstairs to other duties. The mother herself undertook most of the cooking,

and it was while dinner was preparing that the morning's lessons were done. But thanks to careful management, the kitchen was just as pleasant as the parlour. The stone floor was well scoured, and a white border made on all four sides to match the spotless hearth. The kitchen range was clean and bright, no matter what might be cooking, and Mother's rocking-chair made the whole room look cosy. Here at a table reserved for the purpose, the little girls worked at their lessons, while Hudson was similarly employed under his father's supervision upstairs. There was no shirking work or playing truant if their parents were called away. Lessons had to go on just the same, and did with wonderful regularity.

Then in the afternoon, their mother had the older children with her while she was busy with her needle. A great deal of sewing had to be done, but she was able to go on with it while they read aloud or wrote from dictation. Many were the hours thus spent over history, literature and travels. Hard names or unfamiliar words they might not hurry over. No, the dictionary had to be brought and each difficulty mastered as they came to it. A real lover of books herself, she early inspired them with a taste for reading, and to her accuracy and thoroughness may be traced the unusual power of attention to detail that characterised her son in later years. Industry and perseverance also the children could not but learn from her example. So busy was she that it was the rarest thing to see her take time to enjoy a book, but she often had one propped up before her while her needle flew, that she might catch a sentence now and then without interrupting her work.

And the father in his department was just as busy. Through the little window over the sofa, he might be seen hard at work in the shop, morning, noon and night. The children lived in touch with him almost as much as with their mother, and he felt himself no less responsible for their training.

Though stern and even quick-tempered at times, the influence James Taylor exerted in the life of his son can hardly be overestimated. He was decidedly a disciplinarian. But without some such element in his early training who can tell whether Hudson would ever have become the man he was, by the grace of God. Do we not suffer in these days from too great a tendency to slackness and easy-going? Even Christian parents seem content if they can keep their children moderately happy and good-tempered. But with James Taylor this was not the point. Life has to be lived. Work must be accomplished. People may be consecrated, gifted, devoted, and yet of very little use, because undisciplined. He was a man with a supreme sense of duty. The thing that ought to be done was the thing he put first, always. Ease, pleasure, self-improvement had to take whatever place they could. He was a man of faith, but faith that went hand in hand with works of the most practical kind. It was not enough for him that his children were happy and amused, well-cared-for and obedient even. They must be doing their duty, getting through their daily tasks, acquiring habits that alone could make them dependable men and women in days to come.

The importance of punctuality, for example, he impressed both by teaching and example. No one was allowed to be late for meals or any other engagement. The mother called the children herself, at seven every morning. No bells were rung, but when the clock struck eight every one had to be at table.

"If there are five people," he would say, "and they are kept waiting one minute, do you not see that five minutes are lost that can never be found again?"

Dinner was at half-past twelve and tea at half-past four; but if these meals were delayed five minutes it would mean nearly an hour wasted out of one

little day. And what would that amount up to in a week, a month, a year?

Dilatoriness in dressing or undressing, or in beginning when the time came to begin, he also reprehended as a serious waste of time. "Learn to dress quickly," he would say, "for you have to do it once, at least, every day of your life. And begin promptly whatever the work in hand. To loiter does not help, it only makes the task more difficult."

"See if you can do without" was another of his maxims. This of course applied, among other things, to the simple pleasures of the table. Porridge with bread and butter for breakfast, meat once a day, and bread and butter or toast for tea was the usual routine. But sugar and preserves were allowed in moderation, and extra-nice cakes or puddings occasionally found a place. As a rule the children shared whatever was provided, their parents delighting to give them pleasure no less than other fathers and mothers the wide world over. At the same time they fully realised the lifelong influence of little habits. At any cost to themselves and within wise limits to the children, they felt they must secure to them the power of self-control.

"By-and-by," the father would explain, "you will have to say 'No' to yourself when we are not there to help you; and very difficult you will find it when you want a thing tremendously. So let us try to practise now, for the sooner you begin the stronger will be the habit."

It was a principle difficult of application, no doubt, when a favourite dish was in question. But though it was at least as hard for him as for them, he would encourage them to go the whole length on occasions, saying cheerfully:

"Who will see if they can do without today?"

The children were not blamed if they could not respond as he desired, but

were commended if they did, the mother generally arranging some little surprise at night—a few almonds and raisins, or an orange, with an extra-loving kiss.

Sweets or confectionery they never thought of buying for themselves. Pennies honestly earned were far too precious to be squandered thus. Each one had a little brown earthenware jar in the sitting-room cupboard, in which their savings were kept. Whenever eleven pennies could be produced, their father would add one, giving in exchange a bright new shilling. This was a transaction much looked forward to, and encouraged the children in thoughtfulness about the use of money. These may seem trivial details, scarcely worth recording, but it is just such little habits that in the long run strengthen character and make all the difference between weakness and power to do and be one's best.

The spiritual life of his children was equally the father's care. Family worship he conducted regularly, after both breakfast and tea. Every member of the household had to be present, and the passage read was explained in such practical fashion that even the children could not fail to see its application. He was very particular about giving them the whole Word of God, omitting nothing. The Old Testament as well as the New was taken in regular course, and at the close of every day's reading the date was carefully entered in the family Bible. On Sundays he gave even more time to this home-ministry, in spite of the services for which he was responsible, and that often involved a considerable journey on foot. While thoroughly approving of Sunday Schools for those who needed them, he did not consider his own children to be among the number, and would relinquish to no one the privilege of teaching them in the things of God.

He gave time also to earnest, detailed prayer on their behalf, and taught them

to pray. From infancy, the little happenings of every day were made occasions for drawing near to God. Nothing was too trivial to interest Father and Mother, because the little folk were dear to them, and nothing was too small to bring to Him who loved them better still. If there were something to thank their parents for, or obtain help in, they would not wait till the end of the day to do so. And in the same way they learned to come "without ceasing," with thanksgiving and prayer, to the greater Father in heaven. It was just as natural to Amelia at three years old to say reverently, "O Lord, take away my naughty temper and give me a new heart," as to ask pardon of the mother she had grieved; and, baby as she was, she felt it no less important.

At one time the father made it a practice to take the older children to his room everyday for prayer. At the big four-post bed, all three would kneel beside him while with his arm about them he poured out his heart to God for each in turn in a way they never could forget. It was not much he could give them of wealth or worldly advantage, but he could and did imbue them with a strong, simple faith like his own. He taught them to reverence the Bible as the Word of God from cover to cover, trusting every promise to mean at least all it says. "God cannot lie," he would exclaim with intense conviction, "He cannot mislead you, He cannot fail." And instinctively the children began to trust in the same way.

As they were able to understand, he explained to them the necessity for maintaining the life of the soul by prayer and Bible study, as the life of the body is maintained by exercise and food. To omit this was to neglect the one thing needful. He spoke of it frequently as a matter of vital importance, and arranged for every one in the house to have at least half an hour daily, alone with God. The result was that even the little ones began to discover the secret of a happy day. Before breakfast in the morning, and again as evening was

drawing in, they went up to their own rooms for reading and prayer. They needed it just as much as older people, and in their childish way came to realise that no one can be good and happy all day long without heart-to-heart fellowship with the Lord. But it was example that impressed these things upon them more than precept. "Let them see thee talking to thy God" was golden counsel these parents did not fail to improve.

Thus the children grew in body, mind, and spirit as the days went on. Hudson was still too delicate to go to school, but the education he received at home more than made up for this loss. Not only were his studies systematic and his general intelligence developed, but the conversation of his parents and their visitors awakened thought and purpose to which the average schoolboy is a stranger, and his father's daily life, as he grew old enough to share it, in no wise weakened these impressions.

James Taylor was sociable and talked freely in congenial company. He was gifted with warm sympathies and sound common sense; so much so indeed that few men in Barnsley were more sought after for advice in temporal as well as spiritual things. Over the counter and in the little room behind the shop, many an hour was spent with those who came to him in trouble. On Market Days another class of visitors would drop in—friends from the country, to many of whom he was indebted for Sunday hospitality, and brother local preachers sure of a welcome. A cup of tea by the fireside gave opportunity for many a "dish of chat," seasoned with kindly humour, in which the children could not fail to be interested.

But Quarter Day was looked forward to with still more lively expectation. For then fellow-workers came in from every part of the circuit, bringing the contributions of those they represented toward the support of the ministry. In the Chapel on Pinfold Hill their business was transacted. Arrangements for

the following quarter were considered, missionary meetings planned, and financial matters settled; after which, luncheon was served in the vestry by the Circuit stewards and their wives. Then came an opportunity for private hospitality, which James Taylor frequently improved by inviting one and all to tea at 21 Cheapside. This was a favourite rendezvous, and at five o'clock the drawing-room over the shop would be well filled with guests. Those were times when conversation was at its best; good, homely Yorkshire talk, as racy as it was profitable. And how the children listened! Half a century later the remembrance had not faded from their minds.

I used to love to hear them talk-those local preachers gathered round our table for high tea. Theology, sermons, politics, the Lord's work at home and abroad, all were discussed with so much earnestness and intelligence. It made a great impression upon us as children. ^[29]

It was on these occasions, chiefly, that the subject of Foreign Missions came up, and the little folk were delighted by many a story from far-off lands. China still held, as it always had, the first place in their father's sympathies, and he used often to lament the indifference of the Church to its appalling need. It specially troubled him that the denomination to which he belonged should be doing nothing for its evangelisation. Methodists, who in the days of Thomas Coke had been foremost in sending missionaries to the heathen, still gloried in Wesley's motto, "The world is my parish." A hundred years had passed since the birth of the great Revival, and in the summer of 1839 (when Hudson was seven years old) the "Centenary jubilee" was celebrated on both sides of the Atlantic in a spirit worthy of the memories it recalled. Methodists everywhere exceeded themselves in liberality and zeal for the cause of God. Thank-offerings filled their treasuries, world-wide prayer resulted in a great increase of spiritual blessing, and notable advance was made in evangelistic

labours both at home and abroad. But among the new Missions projected and the new workers sent out, none were destined for China. It seemed to be taken for granted that nothing could be done or even attempted there.

Morrison, the lonely pioneer of Protestant Missions in that land, had passed away five years previously, and no one had been able to take his place.

Canton was still the only mission station, recently manned by a few American workers, including Dr. Peter Parker, who had just opened the first hospital on Chinese soil. But beyond the narrow limits of that one settlement lay the whole vast empire with its four hundred millions, amongst whom no one was living and preaching Christ.^[30a] These things pressed as a burden on the heart of Hudson Taylor's father.

"Why do we not send our missionaries there!" he would exclaim. "That is the country to aim at, with its teeming population, its strong, intelligent, scholarly people."

He could not understand the apathy of the Church about this magnificent field, the Gibraltar of heathenism. And the listening children were confirmed in their conviction that this was indeed the greatest, the most neglected and most promising of missionary lands.

Later on their interest was increased by Peter Parley's *China*, a little book they read and reread until they knew it almost by heart. It had many illustrations, tiny pictures of the old-fashioned kind, and so impressed Amelia that she decided to cast in her lot with Hudson, who had long ago made up his mind to go to China as a missionary. The parents did not fail to notice these childish purposes, though with some sorrow of heart. It had been their chief desire that Hudson might be called to just such service, but on account of his continued delicacy the hope had been gradually abandoned. He, at any rate, would never be strong enough for such a life.

It was manifest, however, that the Holy Spirit was working in his heart, for nothing interested him so deeply as the things of God. He loved to go with his father to the country chapels in which he was preaching Sunday by Sunday. The quickening impulse of the great Centenary was being felt in that Yorkshire district, and James Taylor's ministry was in power and blessing. Even his little son entered into the spirit of the time. Love for Christ, the master-passion of his life, and the unquenchable longing to bring others to know and love Him too, evidently had their beginning as early as the jubilee of 1839; for it was of those days his mother wrote:

When about seven years of age, Hudson frequently accompanied his father into the country, when he was going to preach. It was a time of religious revival, and an after-meeting was usually held at the conclusion of the service to pray for blessing upon the Word and for the conversion of sinners. On such occasions persons deeply convinced of sin and desiring to obtain peace with God were invited to come forward to be prayed with and pointed to "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." In these meetings his devout and prayerful earnestness were often remarked; and when, as was frequently the case, burdened souls found comfort by resting on Jesus and His atonement, and believers sang "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," he would join as heartily as any, while his face glowed with delight.

But this spirit of joy in the Lord and concern for the welfare of others did not depend upon revival meetings. It was fostered by the influence of his parents and the daily atmosphere of home. Much of their conversation was about spiritual things, and of a kind that made salvation and living for God appear, as indeed they are, the most important matters under the sun. And the children could easily see that this was no mere talk, but that their parents

were consistent in putting God first and in seeking to help others to do the same. The mother was for many years too delicate to carry on her weekly class or attempt much outside work. Her hands were more than full with household duties. But in her own circle her heart still burned with love for souls that could not rest till all within its reach were won. The children knew how she thought of and prayed for the servants that came under their roof and for the successive assistants in the shop. Did they not share her joy when these young people were brought, as sooner or later they always were, to a living faith in Christ? Mother's closed door in the middle of the busy day had a world of meaning for the household. Those were the seasons of quiet waiting upon God that renewed her strength, and enabled her to make so attractive to others her unseen Friend. Happy the son whose every remembrance of his mother affords fresh inspiration to a life of Christlike love and service.

Happy too the children so trained in habits of obedience to their earthly parents that they learn almost instinctively to obey and honour God. To James Taylor this was a matter of supreme importance. He felt with a deep sense of responsibility that Christian parents are placed at the head of the family as the direct representatives of Him "from whom every fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named." To permit disobedience would be not only unfaithfulness to God, but cruel injustice to the children, wholly misleading them as to the character of the Heavenly Father with whom through life they have to do. His duty on the contrary was to train them to such prompt and loyal obedience to their earthly parents that they would be prepared to render like submission to the will of God. He showed them that such obedience requires the exercise of the highest powers, faith, love, patience, self-control, and is a faculty not easily acquired. Unless they learned the lesson in childhood, they would grow up with unyielded wills, too wayward and

undisciplined to be of use in the service of God. The sorrow and danger of such a position he showed them from many passages of Scripture, dwelling especially on Eli's failure in governing his sons, the sin and misery it entailed, and the dishonour brought upon the name of God.

So much did he dread the consequences of over-indulgence that he went, perhaps, too far in the opposite extreme. But even when he seemed most severe and the children were tempted to rebel, their mother's voice quickly recalled them, "My dear, he is your father. Not a word! Remember, 'Honour thy father.'"

But there were aching hearts, at times, over what seemed a reproof or punishment of needless asperity, as when Amelia was sent to bed one Sunday afternoon for leaving a morsel on her plate at dinner, unfinished. But though it cost tears at the time, she came to feel that Father had erred on the safe side, if he had erred at all, and that he and Mother sacrificed themselves in this as in everything else for the good of those entrusted to their care.

For the children's pleasures too their parents thought and planned, and many were the red-letter days that dotted the calendar throughout those early years. Saturday afternoon was always much looked forward to, for then visits might be paid to their friends across the Green, to the Neatbys, or the Cope cousins whose beautiful garden offered endless attractions. Or better still, Hudson and Amelia would take their hoops in spring and summer, and run off alone to the Lunn Woods down the Cudworth Road. Perfectly happy in each other's company, they would wander for hours up and down those shady glades, chasing butterflies and gathering flowers to their hearts' content. They never thought of quarrelling. Hudson was his sister's protector rather, and considered himself responsible to take care of and keep her happy, though he could not always overcome a boyish tendency to tease.

"Now, my child, don't be teased, and he will soon leave off," the mother would say with a smile, well knowing that Hudson's teasing was never more than fun.

As a matter of fact there was nothing he would not have denied himself for the good of this dearly loved sister. While she was still little and afraid to be left in the dark, he would frequently sacrifice an hour with his book-by the fireside to keep her company. When it was cold he would sit beside her on the pillow with his feet under the bedclothes, telling the most fearsome, fascinating stories, until she drifted happily into the land of dreams.

Their enjoyment of the country was greatly increased by the companionship of their father, who often went with them on Saturday afternoon for long, delightful walks. How they loved the butterflies, birds, and flowers about which he told them! It was better to wander with him in such company than even to visit the wonderful fairs on the Green. Twice every year these great occasions came, with all the excitement of shows, menageries, and merry-go-rounds, to say nothing of stalls passing description. But though they enjoyed the bewildering scene, keeping close to their father's side as he led them through the crowds, it was a different and doubtful joy, not to be compared with the other. The green woods never palled, or left one jaded and dissatisfied.

And then at home one could pursue the subject still. Careful and orderly as she was, the mother fully entered into the feelings of her little naturalists, and afforded every facility for the wonderful collections that grew from these country walks. Their father encouraged them too, and subscribed for a magazine of Natural History that coming month by month did not a little to deepen intelligent interest.

One thing the parents specially inculcated was thoughtful consideration for living creatures. To wilfully hurt a fly would have been an offence severely punished; and from babyhood the children were made to realise that all cruelty to dumb, helpless creatures was a sin against God Himself.

"What you sow in this way," the father would assure them, "you will certainly reap. You will be made to suffer for all the suffering you inflict, as God is God and knows everything."

Even flowers they might not gather unless they really wanted to keep them, and over their collections of insects and butterflies the greatest care was exercised. Hudson, who was intensely interested in these beautiful creatures, fully shared the solicitude of his parents that they should not be made to suffer. Pill-boxes large and small were supplied him from the shop, in which air-holes were carefully pricked, so that he might bring home his treasures "comfortably," and then a little chloroform precluded the possibility of pain.

Other happy memories for children and parents alike centred round the festivities that once a year gathered the family circle at "Grandmamma's." On Christmas Day her sons and daughters dined with her in state, and on New Year's Day she resigned possession to the younger generation. Tall and stately as she was, Mary Shepherd of the long-ago days inspired only gratitude and affection among her numerous grandchildren. Troops of merry boys and girls played hide-and-seek all over the house, and revelled in the good things her hospitality provided. They were quite a clan by this time, though the invitation extended to first cousins only; and certainly none among them had more capacity for enjoyment than the unspoiled little people from the chemist's home on the Market Place.

But to them the happiest days of all were not those high days and holidays.

Through the mists of childhood the brightest associations lingered about one dear figure in the repose that always seemed to accompany a white crepe shawl and satin gown. Sunday was the day on which Mother gave herself to them as she could not through the week, and if there was one thing she cared about, it was that that day should be to every member of the household the happiest and most helpful of the seven. In the morning the children went with her regularly to the House of God, and there was more leisure to enjoy companionship at home on Sunday. But in addition, Mother had ways and means for making that day different from all others and much to be desired. The nicest toys and picture-books belonged to Sunday, as well as the prettiest frocks and a cosy fire in the drawingroom because the piano was there. Mother's sweet voice made hymn-singing a delight. No talks were like her talks over the Bible, not to speak of *Pilgrim's Progress* and other books that only appeared that day. Then she always had a basket of fruit for her little people in the afternoon. And just to see her looking so sweet and restful as she shared their enjoyments was not the least part of the happiness of the day.

Yes, home was home indeed and the nearest place to heaven, because it held that mother in whose heart was shed abroad the very love of God.

Chapter V^(TOC)

The Finished work of Christ

1843-1849. AET. 11-17

Upon a life I did not live,

Upon a death I did not die,

Another's life, Another's death,

I stake my whole eternity.

THUS childhood's years passed by, and all unconsciously Hudson Taylor was drawing near the crisis of his life.

Outwardly he was now a bright lad of seventeen, with few anxieties or cares, but inwardly he was passing through a period of trial. Events that had transpired since the close of the preceding chapter had brought him into contact with the world as it is beyond the shelter of a Christian home. Under the stress of new experiences he had begun to think for himself and live his life more or less independently of others, and a difficult business he found it, until he learned to trust a higher strength than his own.

His troubles seem to have begun when at eleven years of age he was first sent to school, though it was only a dayschool, conducted by Mr. Laycock, a friend of the family. After John Taylor's death and the removal of the reedmaking business to larger premises, Mr. Laycock had rented the long, low factory near the corner of Pitt and York Streets and had turned it into class-rooms for the accommodation of fifty or sixty lads. The situation was

good, and his able management attracted the best pupils in town. Here then, close to the home in which his grandmother still lived, Hudson began his brief career as a schoolboy.

It was brief for several reasons, one of which was the continued delicacy of health that made it impossible for him to be regular in attendance. Hardly a week passed without his having to miss one or more days on account of illness, and at other times it was difficult to avoid over-study. Still, association with boys of his own age was felt to be so desirable that every effort was made to continue it.

He intensely enjoyed study, and was so eager to work that the arithmetic master often handed over to him problems that he had hardly time for himself. "See that you bring them back in the morning," he would say with a smile. And Hudson, who knew why they were wanted, worked with a will, falling back upon his father's help if they proved too intricate. He was not sufficiently a lover of boyish sports to become a general favourite, but some enduring friendships were made, and the pursuits of the playground, though not for him specially attractive, had their valuable effect on character.

On the whole, however, his school-life seems to have been neither happy nor helpful. It was a great change from home, and he missed the spiritual atmosphere to which he had been accustomed. Needing more than ever the resource of prayer, he allowed the busy days to pass without taking time to be alone with God.

*"His religious earnestness began to abate," his mother tells us,
"and gradually declined, until he lost peace with God."*

The joyous faith of childhood passed away, and he awoke to find the world a very different place without the sunshine of the Presence he had loved in

earlier days. His mother's concern was deep and prayerful, but do what she would, nothing seemed to restore that lost God-consciousness.

For six years altogether he was in an unsettled state spiritually, trying hard to "make himself a Christian," but finding it of all efforts the most discouraging, and sure to end in failure if not despair. He was early proving the truth of the profound though simple warning: "Without Me ye can do nothing."

Yes, those are difficult years, from eleven to seventeen. The young heart finds itself assailed by perplexing problems, attracted by undreamed-of possibilities, disturbed by unreasoning hopes and fears. They are often lonely years, for we outgrow the associations of childhood and do not quickly find our own real friends; years in which God is more than ever needful to us, and yet the first force of temptation, the first glamour of the world, the first suggestion of doubt, reinforced it may be by love, or sin, or sorrow, obscure the shining of His face. Many a seemingly careless lad and-schoolgirl carries an aching heart, a heart just hungry for the touch of sympathy older people often fail to give, because they do not understand. But often, too, that touch can come from God alone. Surely, did we see but deep enough, the spiritual needs and longings of childhood would drive us to our knees in earnest prayer. For only God can make us wise to speak the "word in season" to the soul whose very existence perhaps we hardly realise, because it dwells in the boy or girl to whose noise and merriment we are so accustomed. Pray, pray! These young souls are awake, and moving rapidly for good or ill beyond our care.

Such a word in season came to Hudson Taylor in his first year at school, and was never forgotten. It was the summer of 1844, and he went with older people to a Camp Meeting in a park near Leeds. Among the speakers was Mr. Henry Reed of Launceston, Tasmania, who in the course of his address told

the story of a man named Gardener whom he had known in the Colonies years before. His subject was the sin and peril of resisting the Holy Spirit, and upon the little lad from Barnsley it made an impression that never passed away.^[30]

Gardener was one of six convicts under sentence of death, with whom Mr. Reed spent the last, terrible night before their execution. Condemned for murder, he had long denied the charges brought against him, but finally through his own confession the truth was brought to light. It then appeared that shortly before the crime was committed he had been conscious as never before of the pleading of the Holy Spirit, and of the nearness of God.

Walking up Cataract Hill, a beautiful spot near Launceston, he had even been startled by a voice behind him, earnestly saying:

"Gardener, give Me thy heart."

He turned to face the speaker, but no one was in sight. He was alone under the open sky, alone with an awakened conscience and the all-seeing God.

"My son, give Me thy heart."

His Maker must have spoken. No other voice could stir the soul like that. What should he do? Yes, that was the question.

Long and troubled were his ponderings, for the call was unwelcome. He did not want, just then, to be a Christian. It would upset his plans, interfere with his prospects of success. No, he must make money first, come what might. Later on, at another time, a "more convenient season," he would reconsider the matter. God was merciful. There would be another chance. And so, deliberately resisting the Holy Spirit, he went on up the hill—went on to meet the tempter in his own strength.

That night alone in their shack he saw his partner begin to count a little store of savings as he sat over the fire. Seven one-pound notes lay in his hand. Gardener became interested. Then all at once an overwhelming desire to obtain that money took possession of him. Never before had he felt such a passion for gold. All restraints of conscience were swept away. His one, his only thought became:

"I must and will have it. But how?"

Then followed the awful suggestion, "Dead men tell no tales."

Though it meant murder, this aroused neither fear nor compunction. A few hours before he had been powerfully drawn toward God and happiness and heaven. Now he seemed given up to evil. Three days and nights went by, while he waited his opportunity. It came at last, and Gardener's hands were stained with the blood of one who had trusted him as a friend.

As Mr. Reed described that last, long night, when at their request he had been locked up with this man and five others about to be ushered into the presence of God, a profound impression was made on many a listener besides young Hudson Taylor. Returning to Barnsley, and for long after, he was deeply troubled about spiritual things. Amid all his waywardness he was conscious of that inward pleading, "My son, give Me thy heart." But the change went no further while he remained at school.

This was two years in all, a period that transformed the open-hearted child into a boy of thirteen with some experience of the sadder side of life. His education had made progress, but on account of changes in the school that were not satisfactory it was decided he should leave. His father needed assistance in the shop, and Hudson was delighted to be earning his own

living, in part at any rate, while carrying on his studies at home. Thus ended, just before Christmas 1845, his first and only experience of school-life.

The new arrangement worked well. In his white apron behind the counter, the curly-headed boy with his bright face and pleasant ways soon became a favourite among the customers. He was keenly interested in compounding and dispensing medicines and everything to do with doctor's work. His father's library afforded all the books he required, and in the helpful companionships of home the troubles of his inner life began to pass away.

To this time he himself attributed^[31] the first conscious surrender of his heart to God. A leaflet published by the Religious Tract Society brought him blessing. It was the story of a poor, half-witted fellow who was only able to grasp one great truth, but rested his soul upon it as he passed into the unseen.

"Yes, Joseph is the chief of sinners," he kept repeating. "But it is 'a faithful saying' that Jesus Christ, the great God who made all things, 'came into the world to save sinners.' And why not poor Joseph?"

The question brought its own answer.

While reading this little tract, the simplicity of faith was made clear to him as never before, and then and there he took the sinner's place and came back to God.

The days that followed were quiet and happy. He was busy with his lessons and work in the shop, and resumed the habits of prayer and Bible study in which he had been trained from childhood. But another testing-time awaited him, a further experience of the weakness of his own heart, out of which he was to be brought into a life of stedfast dependence upon the Lord for keeping as well as saving grace.

For though real and true as far as it went, this improvement in his spiritual condition was more or less evanescent. There were the ups and downs so characteristic of childhood, and from the point of view of later years he seems hardly to have considered it a true "conversion" at all. At any rate it did not stand the test when, a little later, he found himself plunged into an atmosphere of worldliness and unbelief.

This unlooked-for experience began in 1847, when at fifteen years of age he went as junior clerk into one of the best banks in Barnsley. An opening having occurred, his father was anxious that he should avail himself of it, feeling that whatever the future might bring he would always be thankful for a thorough business training. Out of many applicants Hudson was chosen, and after eighteen months at home entered with high hopes upon the duties of his new position.

The daily routine in which he was now engaged did undoubtedly prove of value in preparing him for responsibilities as yet unforeseen. He was well drilled in accountkeeping and business correspondence, and in the absolute necessity for promptness and accuracy in financial matters. He also found his level in a little corner of the busy world, and learned to do his part as a man among men. But he was not ready, spiritually, to stand alone. Indeed he was not standing firm in Christ at all, and was easily carried away by the ungodliness of those around him.

For most of his new associates were thoroughly worldly. Sceptical views to which he was a stranger were freely discussed among them, and religion seldom spoken of without a sneer. To add to these dangers, the lad came under the influence of an older clerk who, though handsome and popular, was anything but a desirable friend. He took every occasion to laugh at what he called Hudson's "old fashioned notions," and did all he could to make him as

light-minded as himself.

"I well remember," Hudson wrote a few years later, "how I used to wish for money and a fine horse and house when I was in the Bank. Then my whole heart was set on this world's pleasures, and I longed to go hunting as some did who were about me. What a mercy that I had to leave that place!"

It was weary work, with a heart set on this world's pleasures, to try to keep up the outward forms of Christian life. Yet he struggled to do so for a time. "Religious duties," however, could not satisfy, and were a poor substitute for the living Christ. He longed for gaiety and distraction; ambitions that could not be realised made him miserable, and the sceptical views of his companions for a time carried him away. But the faithfulness of God did not fail.

In another letter he wrote of this period:

I began to set too great a value on the things of this world, and to neglect private prayer. Religious duties became irksome to me, and I fell from grace. But God in His infinite mercy caused my eyesight to fail, and I had to leave the Bank.

This was no doubt a bitter disappointment to the lad himself if not to his parents. Overtime-work by gas-light had brought on serious inflammation of the eyes. Nothing seemed to relieve them, and after nine months at bookkeeping he was obliged to resign his position and return to the more varied duties of assistant in his father's shop.

But the unhappy state into which he had fallen continued long after he left the bank. His sight recovered and outwardly all went well, for the restraining grace of God kept him from open evil. But inwardly he was rebellious and full of unbelief. At times he knew himself to be in "a sinful and dangerous

state" from which he struggled in vain to be free. At other times he tried to believe that his friends in the bank were right, and there really was no God and no hereafter.

There is something deeply touching about his own reference to these experiences, revealing as it does the exercise of soul through which an apparently careless lad may pass unknown to those around him

Often had I tried to make myself a Christian, and failing of course in such efforts, I began to think that for some reason or other I could not be saved, and that the best I could do was to take my fill of this world, as there was no hope for me beyond the grave. While in this state of mind I came in contact with persons holding sceptical and infidel views, and quickly accepted their teachings, only too thankful for some hope of escape from the doom which if my parents were right and the Bible true awaited the ungodly.

He had certainly travelled far in those difficult years from the love and faith of childhood. And there had yet to be sad revelations of his own heart ere he was to know that wonderful rest of faith into which he was privileged to lead so many others. Meanwhile the unrest deepened, and he began to prove how little the world has to give in exchange for the presence and blessing of God.

Needless to say, this state of things marred the happiness of home and overclouded his naturally sunny disposition. He was all wrong, and his parents could not but see it. The father tried to help him, but found it hard to be patient with the phase through which he was passing. The mother understood him better, and redoubled her tenderness and prayers. But it was his sister Amelia, now thirteen years of age, who was nearest to him and best able to win his confidence.

To her he could speak more freely than to grown-up people and his indifference and unhappiness so affected her that she determined to pray for him three times everyday until he was really converted. This she did for some weeks, going alone to plead with God for the salvation of her brother, and even making a note in her journal that she would never cease to pray for him until he was brought into the light, and that she believed her petitions would be answered before long.

Thus wearied by failure, harassed by doubt, disappointed in all he had most wished to do and be, Hudson Taylor drew near the crisis of his life, held by the faith and prayers of a few loving hearts that did know their God.

"It may seem strange," he said in later years, "but I have often felt thankful for this time of scepticism. The inconsistencies of Christian people who while professing to believe the Bible were yet content to live just as they would if there were no such book, had been one of the strongest arguments of my sceptical companions; and I frequently felt at that time, and said, that if I pretended to believe the Bible I would at any rate attempt to live by it, putting it fairly to the test, and if it failed to prove true and reliable, would throw it overboard altogether. These views I retained when the Lord was pleased to bring me to Himself. And I think I may say that since then I have put God's Word to the test. Certainly it has never failed me. I have never had reason to regret the confidence I have placed in its promises, or to deplore following the guidance I have found in its directions.

"And now let me tell you how God answered the prayers of my mother and of my beloved sister, now Mrs. Broomhall, for my conversion.

"On a day I can never forget, ... my dear mother being absent from home, I had a holiday, and in the afternoon looked through my father's library to find

some book with which to while away the unoccupied hours. Nothing attracting me, I turned over a basket of pamphlets and selected from amongst them a Gospel tract that looked interesting, saying to myself: 'There will be a story at the commencement and a sermon or moral at the close. I will take the former and leave the latter for those who like it.'

"I sat down to read the book in an utterly unconcerned state of mind, believing indeed at the time that if there were any salvation it was not for me, and with a distinct intention to put away the tract as soon as it should seem prosy. I may say that it was not uncommon in those days to call conversion 'becoming serious'; and judging by the faces of some of its professors it appeared to be a very serious matter indeed! Would it not be well if the people of God had always tell-tale faces, evincing the blessings and gladness of salvation so clearly that unconverted people might have to call conversion 'becoming joyful' instead of 'becoming serious'?

"Little did I know at the time what was going on in the heart of my dear mother, seventy or eighty miles away. She rose from the dinnertable that afternoon with an intense yearning for the conversion of her boy; and feeling that, absent from home and having more leisure than she could otherwise secure, a special opportunity was afforded her of pleading with God on my behalf. She went to her room and turned the key in the door, resolved not to leave the spot until her prayers were answered. Hour after hour that dear mother pleaded, until at length she could pray no longer, but was constrained to praise God for that which His Spirit taught her had already been accomplished, the conversion of her only son.

"I in the meantime had been led in the way I have mentioned to take up this little tract, and while reading it was struck with the phrase: 'The finished work of Christ.'

"Why does the author use this expression?' I questioned. 'Why not say the atoning or propitiatory work of Christ?'

"Immediately the words 'It is finished' suggested themselves to my mind."
'What was finished?'

"And I at once replied, 'A full and perfect atonement and satisfaction for sin. The debt was paid for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.'

"Then came the further thought, 'If the whole work was finished and the whole debt paid, what is there left for me to do?'

"And with this dawned the joyful conviction, as light was flashed into my soul by the Holy Spirit, that there was nothing in the world to be done but to fall down on one's knees and accepting this Saviour and His salvation praise Him for evermore."

Nothing either great or small,

Nothing, sinner, no:

Jesus died and did it all,

Long, long ago.

'It is finished,' yes, indeed,

Finished every jot.

Sinner, this is all you need,

Tell me, is it not?

When He from His lofty throne

Stooped to do and die,
Everything was fully done
Listen to His cry.
Weary, working, burdened one,
Wherefore toil you so?
Cease your doing, all was done,
Long, long ago.
Cast your deadly doing down,
Down at Jesus' feet;
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete.

Thus while my dear mother was praising God on her knees in her chamber, I was praising Him in the old warehouse to which I had gone alone to read at my leisure this little book.

Several days elapsed ere I ventured to make my beloved sister the confidante of my joy, and then only after she had promised not to tell any one of my soul-secret. When Mother returned a fortnight later I was the first to meet her at the door and to tell her I had such glad news to give. I can almost feel that dear mother's arms round my neck as she pressed me to her heart and said:

'I know, my boy. I have been rejoicing for a fortnight in the glad tidings you have to tell.'

'Why,' I asked in surprise, 'has Amelia broken her promise? She said she would tell no one.'

My dear mother assured me that it was not from any human source she had learned the tidings, and went on to tell the incident mentioned above. You will agree with me that it would be strange indeed if I were not a believer in the power of prayer.

Nor was this all. Some time after, I picked up a pocket-book exactly like my own, and thinking it was mine, opened it. The lines that caught my eye were an entry in the little diary belonging to my sister, to the effect that she would give herself daily to prayer until God should answer in the conversion of her brother. One month later the Lord was pleased to turn me from darkness to light.

Brought up in such a circle and saved under such circumstances, it was perhaps natural that from the commencement of my Christian life I was led to feel that the promises were very real, and that prayer was in sober matter of fact transacting business with God, whether on one's own behalf or on the behalf of those for whom one sought His blessing."

Chapter VI^(TOC)

Here am I; Send Me!

June to Christmas 1849. AET. 17

IT was the month of June 1849, when this definite apprehension of the atoning work of Christ changed the whole of life for Hudson Taylor. Henceforward he rejoiced in conscious acceptance with God, not on the ground of anything he could do or be, but simply because of what the Lord Jesus is and has done. "Not I, but Christ," brought freedom, joy and rest. It was the turning-point in his experience, the commencement of a new order of things that little as he realised it at the time meant for him—China.

And now became apparent the unspeakable value of early training such as he had received, and years of steady discipline in a Christian home. He was in a position to make rapid progress. The Bible was no strange book to him, but familiar territory, a land of promise waiting to be possessed. Prayer was no unwonted effort, but the natural outgoing of a heart long accustomed to turn to God. There was much yet to learn, but mercifully there were few habits or memories of evil to erase. The Holy Spirit had, comparatively, a free field in his heart. And at seventeen years of age, all life was yet before him in which to spend and be spent for the Lord he loved.

It is a little difficult at this point to determine the exact order of the spiritual experiences that follow. They were such importance, however, in the light of after-events, that nothing has been omitted, and it will readily be seen how true to life the record is and how encouraging to other far from perfect people.

Very manifest for one thing is the joy that overflowed those summer days, as Hudson Taylor realised himself to be indeed a child of God. He was happy. He found it a glad life, full of heart-rest and satisfaction. For "the Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." And the sweetness of this fellowship could never be forgotten. It embraced all who were dearest to him on earth. For he found that being right with God put things right with those around him. It restored the happiness of home, made him a better son and more useful assistant to his father, and deepened especially the love that bound him to the dear sister whose prayers for him had been unflinching. Well may we doubt the reality of any blessing that does not make us easier to get on with, sweeter and more loving, especially at home.

Another outcome of the change that had taken place was a longing every true child of God must know, the longing to give all in return for all that has been given. In the spirit of the Hebrew bondman this young heart cried: "I love, I love my Master, I will not go out free." He longed for some work to do for God, some service that might prove his gratitude, some suffering even that might bring him into deeper fellowship with the Lord he loved. A leisure afternoon gave opportunity for prayer, and with this desire filling his heart he went up to his room to be alone with God. And there in a special way the Lord met him.

"Well do I remember that occasion," he wrote long after, "how in the gladness of my heart I poured out my soul before God, and again and again confessing my grateful love to Him who had done everything for me-who had saved me when I had given up all hope and even desire for salvation-I besought Him to give me some work for Him, as an outlet for love and gratitude; some self-denying service, no matter what it might be, however trying or however trivial; something with which

He would be pleased, and that I might do for Him who had done so much for me. Well do I remember, as in unreserved consecration I put myself, my life, my friends, my all upon the altar, the deep solemnity that came over my soul with the assurance that my offering was accepted. The presence of God became unutterably real and blessed, and I well remember ... stretching myself on the ground, and lying there before Him with unspeakable awe and unspeakable joy. For what service I was accepted I knew not. But a deep consciousness that I was not my own took possession of me, which has never since been effaced."

It was an hour that left its mark on life; an hour in which the soul began to apprehend "that for which also" it "was apprehended by Christ Jesus." The lad who closed his door that day to be alone with God was a very different being from the lad who rejoined the family-circle some hours later. A purpose and a power possessed him, unknown before. He had given himself to God. His offering had been accepted. And though he knew not for what special service the Lord had need of him, he knew that he was no longer his own, and must be ready for the call whenever it might come.

One result of this definite consecration was that he began to care about the welfare of others. Hitherto he had been concerned chiefly with his own growth in grace; now he must be about his Master's business, which was the salvation of those around him. He was not deterred by the fact that he could do but little, nor did he excuse himself on the ground of unworthiness. If he could not preach or lead a class as yet, he could at any rate give away tracts and invite people to the House of God. Busy from morning till night in the shop, it was not easy to make time for this work. But he found that by denying himself one of his chief pleasures on Sunday, he could gain a few hours just when people would be most accessible. The enjoyment that had to be forgone was the Sunday evening service to which he had been accustomed

from childhood. But much as he loved those helpful seasons, he could no longer be satisfied to feed his own soul continually and do nothing to carry the Bread of Life to the perishing around him. It was "a day of good tidings." He was rejoicing in wealth and blessedness untold. And like the lepers in the Syrian camp, he and his sister Amelia felt as they talked it over, "we do not well to hold our peace."

Instead of attending chapel therefore on Sunday evenings, they went out as soon as tea was over and made their way the poorest parts of the town. In Wilson's Piece behind their own home and Kingston Place toward the race-course, they became familiar figures, passing from door to door with bright faces and kindly words. Tracts were handed to all who would receive them, and the message of salvation simply given as opportunity offered. Even the poorest lodging-houses were not passed over. And though it cost an effort to go down those dark, narrow passages into the crowded kitchens, they were more than rewarded by a sense of His approval whose they were and whom they sought to serve.

But joy in the Lord and in His service was not the only experience as summer passed away. There were also "times of painful deadness of soul and much conflict." The heart that had so gladly accepted the finished work of an all-sufficient Saviour, now knew what it was to be "wearied and disappointed in its struggles with sin." Somehow there seemed a gap between the power of the Lord Jesus to save "to the uttermost" and the needs of everyday life in shop and home. He found himself yielding to temptation, ease-loving, self-indulgent, and often disinclined for private prayer and study of the Word of God. Nothing can have been more real than his consecration; nothing plainer than the disappointment that followed when he discovered his inability to do and be what he would. It even seemed to make matters worse instead of

better. For things that before would not have troubled him were now intolerable. He had given himself to God without reserve, longing to be always and only His. And yet he could not maintain that attitude. Coldness of heart crept in, forgetfulness, indifference. The good he longed to do he did not, and the evil he hated too often had the mastery. He did delight in the law of God after the inward man, but there was that other law bringing him into captivity to sin with all its deadening influences. And he had not yet learned to cry: "Thanks be to God. ... The law of the Spirit of *life in Christ Jesus* hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

At such times two courses are open to the perplexed and troubled soul. One is to abandon, the ideal, and gradually sink down to a low-level Christian life in which there is neither joy nor power. The other is just to go on with the Lord, and because of His "exceeding great and precious promises" to claim complete deliverance not from the guilt only, but also from the mastery of sin; just to go on with the Lord, trusting His strength and faithfulness to pardon, loose and cleanse, to sanctify us wholly, and make our own every blessing promised in the eternal covenant.

Nothing less than this could satisfy Hudson Taylor. Conversion with him had been no easy-going assent of the mind to an abstract creed. No, it was a change deep and real. The cross of Christ had cut him off forever from the old life, and from rest in anything the world could give. Nothing could satisfy him now but genuine holiness, unbroken fellowship with God who was his life, his all. Hence times of spiritual lethargy and indifference were alarming. Deadness of soul was painful beyond endurance. He could not take backsliding easily. Thank God, even the beginnings of backsliding were worse to him than death.

Moreover he recognised that he was saved to serve, and that a work was

waiting for which a life of inner victory and power would be essential. He had had his unsatisfactory experiences, and deeply knew how little a man has for others who is not himself walking at liberty within. During his sceptical days he had seen that the only logical position for the Christian is to go all lengths with God. He had then determined to throw off religion altogether, unless it were possible to obtain in actual reality the promises held out to simple faith. There could be no middle course for him. If his life were to be of any use to God or man he must have that "love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned" which is sanctification indeed. This was the only power to make even the most wholehearted consecration practical and enduring.

And this was a gift from above, like the fire that fell in answer to Elijah's prayers; the supernatural, Divine response to a heart that having laid all upon the altar would not be denied the cleansing, sanctifying power.

It is not to be wondered at that in seeking this promised blessing the Barnsley lad should have times of conflict and defeat. In comparing his experience with that of other men of God one is surprised, rather, that he did not suffer more from the opposition and assault of the devil. For it was nothing less than full deliverance upon which he had set his heart: that was the point—real holiness, and daily victory over sin.

The conflict lasted all through the autumn, apparently, and outward circumstances were not wanting to increase his sense of failure and need. For September brought the first break in the family circle, when Amelia went from home to complete her education, and her place was taken by a lad of his own age who was not a Christian. At Bartonon-Humber their mother's sister, Mrs. Hodson, had an excellent school for girls and received a few resident pupils under her own roof. Her eldest son, John, was apprenticed to his uncle

in Barnsley, and it was arranged that the cousins should exchange homes for the time being, without additional expense to either family. To the brother and sister who had never been parted before it was a painful separation, and Amelia was hardly more lonely during those first few weeks in Barton than Hudson was in the old home without her. The cousin who shared his room, though bright and attractive, was no help spiritually, so that with less privacy for prayer and Bible study Hudson had also less fellowship in the things of God. There was more provocation to exuberance of spirits in the presence of such a companion, and more tendency to friction in business hours, especially as the busy season drew on. With all his excellent qualities the father had a somewhat hasty spirit, and as Hudson grew to manhood it was a discipline that called for constant grace. All this combined to make things difficult, until early in December it would seem a crisis was reached.

Outwardly things were much as usual, but inwardly he was almost driven to despair. A terrible deadness of soul had begun to steal over him. Prayer was an effort and the Bible devoid of interest. Christmas was close at hand and business correspondingly pressing. There seemed no time for quiet waiting upon God, even had the desire been present. But it was not. And at times a terrible fear assailed him, that he was drifting he knew not whither and might "fall away from grace," missing the purpose of God for his life now, if not hereafter.

Just how and when he was recalled from this dangerous state does not appear, but there are indications of some providential happenings that could not but be helpful. His attention was arrested, for example, by an article in the November *Wesleyan Magazine*, setting forth in glowing terms the very experience he needed. It was entitled "The Beauty of Holiness," and quickened again the longing of his heart for victory over self and sin. Then,

in the Pitt Street Chapel,^[32] a mission was held that resulted in so real a revival of spiritual blessing that within a few days more than a hundred converts were gathered in. This was encouragement indeed, and Hudson as he sought to lead others into blessing found himself drawing nearer the One for whom his heart longed supremely and through all. And finally a definite promise from the Word of God came home to him with power.

I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.^[33]

Sunday morning came, December 2, 1849. He was not able to go out as usual, and was glad rather than otherwise of the cold that gave him time to be quiet and alone. The Lord was consciously with him, and yet things were far from right. He rejoiced as he remembered one after another entering a few days previously into the rest of faith, but mourned his own inability to possess to the full his possessions in Christ. His thoughts turned naturally to the beloved sister far away, and taking up his pen he poured out his heart to her in the following simple, earnest letter.

BARNSLEY, December 2, 1849.

MY DEAR SISTER

"Grace to you and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ": "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world." ... "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of

our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

*Pray for me, dear Amelia. Thank God, I feel very happy in His love, but I am so unworthy of all His blessings. I so often give way to temptation. I am apt to be frothy and giddy, and I sometimes yield to my teasing disposition. Pray for me, dear Amelia, pray for me. I am seeking entire sanctification. Oh that the Lord would take away my heart of stone and give me a heart of flesh! Mr. Simmons gave us our tickets last Sunday. The verse is: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean" (Ezekiel 36:25 etc.). Oh that I could take hold of the blessed promises of God's Holy Word! My heart longs for this perfect holiness. I have read a very interesting paper on the beauty of holiness in the **Wesleyan Magazine** for November. What a happy state it must be!*

Oh, for a heart to praise my God!

A heart from sin set free;

A heart that always feels Thy blood,

So freely shed for me.

A heart in every thought renewed,

And full of love divine;

Perfect, and right, and pure, and good,

A copy, Lord, of Thine!

Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;

Come quickly from above;

Write Thy new name upon my heart,

Thy new, best name of Love.

I never can sufficiently praise God for all His mercies to me. He has striven with me times without number, and I have resisted Him. And yet after all, He has pardoned all my sins. The earnest desire of my heart is that He will sanctify me wholly and make me useful in His cause.

When Mr. Greenbury was here, in only four nights the names of more than one hundred persons were taken who had found peace. I went to the prayer-meeting on Wednesday night after shutting up shop. I sat in the free seats as there was no room elsewhere, and asked several to go to the penitent form. One went. He told of it afterwards in the Class Susan attends, and said he had found peace. I was very thankful to hear it. It shows the necessity for doing all the good we can. I went again on Thursday night, after eight o'clock, and got a place on the pulpit stairs. There was no standing room in either pews or aisle. I took down the names of those who found the Lord. On Friday John and I were both there. I got six names and addresses. Mr. Keeling told me to go inside the communion rail to talk to the inquirers better. Oh we had a gracious time of it!

Our cousin John is deeply impressed. He is not far from the Kingdom. I believe he would have gone to Class with me if I had been able to go today. I have been so poorly that I have not been out. But the Lord has been with me. God bless you, my dear sister. I cannot help wishing that instead of a slight cold I had some sickness that would take me to heaven. For though to me to live is Christ, still, to die is gain, eternal gain. I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far, far better....

We all unite in love to you

*Believe me, your very loving brother,
J. H. TAYLOR.*

That night upon going to bed he was deeply troubled. His soul was athirst for God, and yet an intense realisation of failure and unworthiness almost overwhelmed him. "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you" is a promise always fulfilled to the sincere and humble spirit, but how often the vision granted calls forth the cry, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips."

Nor was this all.

Absorbed in his own need the lad was longing for true holiness, the life that is "no longer I, but Christ" in everything. The Lord with wider needs in view was seeking him for this, but not for this only. In His great purposes the time had come when the Gospel could no longer be withheld from the "uttermost parts of the earth." China even must be opened, and its most distant provinces gladdened with tidings of a Saviour's love. There it lay in agelong darkness, its teeming millions—a quarter of the human race—living, dying without God. It was of China the Lord was thinking, may we not say it reverently, as well as of Hudson Taylor. But the lad was not ready yet to hear the call, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" The work of the convicting Spirit must go deeper ere he could be fully blessed and brought into harmony with the mind of God. Thus his sense of sin and need became more intense as he wrestled for the deliverance without which he could not, dared not go on.

What was it that kept him from the life for which he longed? What was the secret of his frequent failure and backsliding in heart? Was there something not fully surrendered, some disobedience or unfaithfulness to light? Fervently he prayed that God would show him the hindrance whatever it might be, and enable him to put it away. He had come to an end of self, to a place where

only God could deliver, where he must have His succour, His enlightenment, His aid. It was a life and death matter. Everything seemed at stake. Like one of old he was constrained to cry, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me."

And then, alone upon his knees, a great purpose arose within him. If only God would work on his behalf, would break the power of sin and save him, spirit, soul and body, for time and for eternity, he would renounce all earthly prospects and be utterly at His disposal. He would go anywhere, do anything, suffer whatever His cause might demand, and be wholly given to His will and service. This was the cry of his heart; nothing held back—if only God would deliver him and keep him from falling.

Instinctively we pause and turn aside from a scene so sacred. The place is holy ground. Of what transpired further we know no more, save for a few lines written when occasion required it in the following year. For he rarely referred to this experience, though all life lived it out.

"Never shall I forget," he wrote, "the feeling that came over me then. Words can never describe it. I felt I was in the presence of God, entering into covenant with the Almighty. I felt as though I wished to withdraw my promise, but could not. Something seemed to say 'Your prayer is answered, your conditions are accepted.' And from that time the conviction never left me that I was called to China."

For distinctly, as if a voice had spoken it, the command was given: "Then go for Me to China."^[34]

Silently as the sunrise over a summer sea dawned this new day upon his waiting soul. China? Yes, **China**. That was the meaning of his life—past, present, and to come. Away beyond himself, outside the little world of

personal experiences, lay the great, waiting world, those for whom no man cared, for whom Christ died. "***Then go for Me to China.***" Your prayer is answered: your conditions are accepted. All you ask and more, far more, shall be given. There shall be deeper knowledge of the Lord; fellowship in His sufferings, His death, His resurrection; a life of inner victory and power. "For to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

A little slip of paper tells the rest-all, that is, that can be told; a brief postscript to his letter written that very night, the outpouring of a heart so full that it must overflow.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me shout His praise! Glory to God, my dear Amelia. Christ has said "Seek and ye shall find," and praise His name, He has revealed Himself to me in an overflowing manner. He has cleansed me from all sin, from all my idols. He has given me a new heart. Glory, glory, glory to His ever blessed Name! I cannot write for joy. I open my letter to tell you.

Yes, it was done. From that day onward life was on another plane. The Lord had met him, satisfied his soul, and spoken again the sweet, compelling word "Follow Me." Outwardly it was manifest that a great change had come over him.

"From that hour," the mother wrote, "his mind was made up. His pursuits and studies were all engaged in with reference to this object, and whatever difficulties presented themselves his purpose never wavered."

For inwardly there was a deep subjection to the will of God, resting upon a profound and unalterable sense of what that will was for him. And with this came new purity and power, a steady growth in grace, and fulness of blessing that carried him through all the testing and preparation of the next few years.

"Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

That was what made him and kept him, the real beginning of his walk with God as a man set apart.

Part II_(TOC)

Preparation for China, in Barnsley and in Hull

1850-1852. AET. 17-20

Chapter VII

The New Starting-Point

1850. AET. 17

THUS closed the old year and the old life, and with the dawn of 1850 came a new beginning of things for Hudson Taylor. He was seventeen and a half years of age, and employed as we have seen in his father's shop. Good prospects were opening before him as a chemist, and the powers he afterwards displayed in the development of a great mission would have made him successful in this or any other line of business. But now all was changed. A work of which he knew next to nothing claimed him; a work that must absorb every energy of his being, and might require the sacrifice of life itself. How to set about it he had no idea; how even to make preparation was difficult to discover. But the call of God had come, and there could be no looking back. Whatever might be involved, the future held but one thing for him—to do his Master's will in and for China.

But what problems faced him as he thought of it! He, a mere lad, a chemist's assistant in a provincial town, what could he do for China? Wrapped in the proud exclusiveness of centuries, there it lay, that mightiest empire of the East—vast in size and population, shrouded in mystery, fascinating, repellent, appalling in its need, inaccessible in its seclusion. How could he hope to forward there the coming of the Kingdom of God? "***Then go for Me to China.***" That was definite and final. So he began at once to pray for guidance to learn all he could as to his future field.

And here it is necessary to remind ourselves how very little was known about

missionary work and lands even so recently as the middle of last century. China especially was *terra incognita*. True, five ports had been opened along the coast to the residence of foreigners,^[35] and the London Missionary Society, for nearly forty years the only British Mission at work in that land, had been reinforced by several newly organised efforts.^[36] But they were all in their infancy; and beyond the Treaty Ports practically nothing was being attempted. In the absence of definite knowledge about the interior, exaggerated rumours were afloat. The wealth and learning of the people and the wonders of their ancient civilisation, as reported by some travellers, were only exceeded by the cruelty and ignorance enlarged upon by others. But travellers of any kind who had penetrated beyond the coast were few and far between.

Of course, no one familiar with the far East was to be found in Barnsley. The circle in which Hudson Taylor had been brought up had no connections there, and even for books upon the subject he hardly knew where to turn. One friend might be able to help him, and that was Mr. Whitworth, the founder and superintendent of the Sunday School, who had recently become connected with the British and Foreign Bible Society. He would know something at any rate about the circulation of the Bible in China, and might possess a copy of the Chinese Scriptures in whole or part. So to Mr. Whitworth he went.

The visit was encouraging, for his old friend was able to give him a copy, in the Mandarin dialect, of the writings of St. Luke. This was a treasure indeed. And from him too he may have heard that Medhurst's standard work on China was to be found in Barnsley, in the library of the Congregational minister.

Moved by desires he could not put into words, the eager lad called upon the

gentleman in question. It is interesting to have his own account of the visit, accompanied as it is with a glimpse into his deeper feelings at the time and the earnestness with which he sought to prepare for the future before him.

*"It seemed to me highly probable," he said long after, "that the work to which I was thus called might cost my life. China was not open then as it is now. Few missionary societies had representatives there, and few books on the subject were accessible to me. I learned, however, that a minister in my native town possessed a copy of Medhurst's **China**, and calling upon him ventured to ask a loan of the book.*

This he kindly granted, inquiring why I wished to read it. I told him that God had called me to spend my life in missionary service in that land.

'And how do you propose to go there?' he inquired.

I answered that I did not at all know; that it seemed to me probable that I should need to do as the Twelve and the Seventy had done in Judea, go without purse or scrip, relying on Him who had sent me to supply all my need.

Kindly placing his hand on my shoulder, the minister replied, 'Ah, my boy, as you grow older you will become wiser than that. Such an idea would do very well in the days when Christ Himself was on earth, but not now.'

I have grown older since then, but not wiser. I am more and more convinced that if we were to take the directions of our Master and the assurance He gave to His first disciples more fully as our guide, we should find them just as suited to our times as to those in which they were originally given.

Medhurst's book on China emphasised the value of Medical Missions there, and this directed my attention to medical studies as a mode of preparation.

My beloved parents neither disapproved nor encouraged my desire to engage in missionary work. They advised me, with such convictions, to use all the means in my power to develop the resources of body, mind and soul, and to wait prayerfully upon God, quite willing, should He show me that I was mistaken, to follow His guidance, or to go forward if in due time He should open the way to missionary service. The importance of this advice I have since had occasion to prove. I began to take more exercise in the open air to strengthen my general health. My feather bed was soon dispensed with, and as many other comforts as possible, in order to prepare for a rougher sort of life. I began also to do what Christian work was in my power, in the way of tract distribution, Sunday-school teaching, and visiting the poor and sick as opportunity afforded. ^[37]

His purpose went deep, and from the first he realised that a call to missionary work in China involved the beginning of true missionary-life at home. "A voyage across the ocean," he often said in later years, "does not make any man a soul-winner." So to humble, loving efforts for the good of those around him he gave himself with renewed diligence, and especially to the practice of his life-calling as a fisher of men."

Another form of preparation entered upon with ardour was the study of Chinese, that formidable task requiring, as Milne put it, "bodies of iron, lungs of brass, heads of oak, hands of spring-steel, eyes of eagles, hearts of apostles, memories of angels and lives of Methuselah."^[38] Courageous in his inexperience Hudson Taylor set to work, despite the fact that he had neither teacher nor books with the exception of that one little volume of the writings of St Luke. A grammar would have cost no less than four guineas, and a dictionary could hardly have been purchased for fifteen. Needless to say he had neither. But hard work and ingenuity accomplished wonders, as may be

judged from the fact that within a few weeks he and the cousin who was with him in the shop had found out the meaning of over five hundred characters.

"The method we pursue is as follows," he wrote to his sister on February 14. "We find a short verse in the English version, and then look out a dozen or more (also in English) that have one word in common with it. We then turn up the first verse in Chinese, and search through all the others for some character in common that seems to stand for the English word. This we write down on a slip of paper as its probable equivalent. Then we look all through the Chinese Gospel for this same character in different connections. It occurs as a rule pretty frequently. And if in every case we find the same word in the English version, we copy the character in ink into our dictionary, adding the meaning in pencil. Afterwards, if further acquaintance shows it to be the true meaning, we ink that over also. At first we made slow progress, but now we can work much faster, as with few exceptions we know all the most common characters. In our dictionary we have four hundred and fifty-three put down as certain, and many others that are not fully proved. About two hundred more we know as certain that we have not copied into the dictionary yet, and many besides that are only probable.

"I have begun to get up at five in the morning," he continued, "and so find it necessary to go to bed early at night. I must study if I mean to go to China. I am fully decided to go, and am making every preparation I can. I intend to rub up my Latin, to learn Greek and the rudiments of Hebrew, and to get as much general information as possible. I need all your prayers."

But in preparing for the future Hudson Taylor did not neglect present opportunities. With his practical turn of mind he saw that something might be done without delay, even in Barnsley, to forward the cause to which his life

was given. Go himself he could not, perhaps for years to come; but he was none the less responsible here and now for the salvation of perishing souls in China. He could pray and lead others to pray, give and encourage others in giving. And just at this juncture a new movement set on foot by Dr. Gutzlaff of Hong-Kong came to his Knowledge that seemed to afford the very channel needed.

For hitherto he had hardly known how to communicate with China. Large as was the field, the Wesleyans had no mission there. Work in the Treaty Ports was being carried on by other societies; but even then Hudson Taylor longed after the unreached interior-that vast waiting world, still destitute of the Gospel. If only some one were seeking to carry the light farther afield! But every way seemed blocked. Missionaries were restricted to the coast-board provinces, and the Chinese Christians were so few and far between that even had they been fitted for it none could be spared for this pioneering work.

What was the joy therefore with which Hudson Taylor learned of this new movement, through papers lent him by Mr. Whitworth, and that a society had been organised in London to do the very work on which his heart was set. Interdenominational in character "The Chinese Association," as it was called, aimed at employing native evangelists to co-operate with any existing missions, but chiefly with Dr. Gutzlaff of Hong-Kong in an enterprise that bid fair to solve the problem of how to send the Gospel to the unreached interior. Quite a number were already working under his supervision, and great was the success that seemed to attend their efforts.

Burning with love to Christ and zeal for the advancement of His cause Dr. Gutzlaff had returned from Hong-Kong a few months previously,^[39] and had commenced in London as a starting-point a missionary crusade of the most remarkable kind. From Ireland to Hungary he passed, proclaiming in all the

leading capitals of Europe the duty of the Christian Church toward the unevangelised millions of China. For the first time the need and claims of that great land came home to many a heart, with the result that multitudes were on their knees praying as never before. It was prayer for which Gutzlaff primarily appealed, prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon China in its age long darkness. But true prayer, potent in itself, is sure to bring about practical results, and in this case quite a number of organised efforts grew up in London and on the Continent that resulted in permanent blessing.

Gutzlaff's piety was deep and real, his schemes were large and his optimism unbounded. He was a man of unusual gifts, and as Interpreter to the British Government in Hong Kong occupied a position of influence. So great was his enthusiasm for the spread of the Gospel that he had risked his life repeatedly in daring attempts to reach the interior, as well as in voyages along the entire coast.^[40] With considerable experience as a sailor he even engaged himself as mate on a Chinese junk, and at another time as cook, in order to visit places to which no foreign vessels sailed and obtain opportunities for making known the truth as it is in Jesus.^[41] Though not strictly speaking a missionary, he lived for one thing only-the extension of the Kingdom of God. To this he devoted his large salary, his remarkable powers of mind and body and all his available time. He wrote and published eighty works in no fewer than eight different languages, including a translation into Chinese of both the Old and New Testaments. He founded "The Chinese Union," a native missionary society whose members were to carry the Gospel far and wide to every part of the eighteen provinces, and he awakened Europe one may almost say with enthusiasm in support of this cause, everywhere organising prayer-meetings and associations to carry on the work. The new society in London was one of these, and immediately claimed the sympathy of Hudson Taylor.

According to tabulated reports brought home by Dr. Gutzlaff, the evangelists of "The Chinese Union" inaugurated six years previously had met with amazing encouragement. They now numbered a hundred and thirty men, engaged in systematic preaching throughout the interior and in the distribution of Christian literature. They had circulated over ten thousand New Testaments, besides many Bibles and countless books and tracts. They wrote long and detailed letters from almost all the provinces of China, telling of journeys even to the borders of Mongolia and Tibet. And last but not least, they had baptized, "upon examination and satisfactory confession of their faith," no fewer than 2871 converts. Such results, within so short a time, could not but arouse the deepest interest.

All through the spring and summer these developments were delighting the earnest lad in Barnsley. An excellent magazine, quite above the average of religious papers, was commenced in March of this year to supply the latest tidings from Dr. Gutzlaff's workers, as well as missionary information from other parts of the world. Hudson Taylor took it in from the first, and the careful study with which he followed it for years formed in itself a valuable education in missionary principles and practice. From its pages he learned of many on the Continent as well as in Great Britain who were engaged in active efforts for the evangelisation of China. The undertakings represented at Barmen and Cassel, the Pilgrim Missionary Institution of St. Chrischona, John Evangelist Gossner and his devoted workers, the Moravians of Herrnhut, and the Missionary Societies of Basel and Berlin all became familiar to him as the months went by. It informed him also of the varied labours of George Muller of Bristol, who during this and the previous year had expended more than £2500 on missionary work in Roman Catholic and heathen lands. This well-directed magazine, in short, was used of God to introduce Hudson Taylor into a new world of Christian enterprise,

unsectarian in its character and international in its interests, preparing him while still in his teens for the far-reaching associations of coming years.^[42]

By means of ***The Gleaner*** also he was enabled to follow the operations of the new society in London. Its character so impressed him that he ventured after a time upon the following letter, little realising to how much its modest overtures would lead.

21 CHEAPSIDE, BARNSELEY,
July 29, 1850.

To Mr. George Pearse, Secretary of the Chinese Association.

SIR

*Some time ago, Mr. Whitworth, the respected Local Treasurer of the Bible Society, directed my attention to the Chinese Association, as advertised in **The Watchman**, and in **The Gleaner in the Missionary Field**. I have seen several notices of its usefulness.*

Feeling deeply interested in the spread of Christianity among the Chinese, and having determined as soon as Providence shall open my way to devote myself to that extensive and almost unbounded field of Christian enterprise, I wish during the interval to promote the work as much as possible. I have therefore taken the liberty of addressing you as Secretary. I shall be much obliged if you will forward at your earliest convenience a few circulars or collecting cards, as well as any information, rules, etc., calculated to assist me in introducing the work to my friends.

Praying the great Head of the Church, without whose blessing nothing can prosper, greatly to forward your efforts,

*I remain, Sir, yours respectfully,
JAMES H. TAYLOR.*

But reports had begun to reach England by this time of the doubtful character of Dr. Gutzlaff's organisation, and the reply from Mr. Pearse was evidently discouraging. Further developments tended only to confirm the fear that, with all his brilliant gifts and rare devotion, Gutzlaff sadly lacked common sense and that "discernment of spirits" so necessary in dealing with an oriental people. In a word, he had been systematically swindled, as the German missionary acting as his *locum tenens* in Hong Kong discovered. Few of his so-called evangelists had travelled beyond Canton, and many of their glowing reports had been concocted in opium-dens a few minutes only from his own door. It was a painful and almost incredible exposure, and no one suffered more from grief and disappointment than the noble-minded leader, who did not long survive the failure of his work.^[43]

And yet—had Gutzlaff failed? His plans miscarried grievously and his projects came to nothing. But prayer and faith cannot fail. More perhaps than any man in his day he had seen the commanding vision-China won for Christ-and had given himself, his all, to bring it to pass. "God buries His workmen, but carries on His work." Gutzlaff died in faith, entering, as was said of him, the presence of the Lord with the millions of China on his heart. And the aims he had never been able to realise, the ideals that seemed to fail-of a native agency and widespread evangelistic work-fell as good seed into other hearts, to bear fruit at last in every part of China.

Long years after, when the China Inland Mission had become a fact in all the inland provinces, its founder loved to refer to Dr. Gutzlaff as in a very real sense the father of the work. It was in any case a remarkable providence that brought this burning spirit with its prophetic vision across the orbit of Hudson Taylor's life just at this time. It could not but be that he was disappointed and in a measure discouraged by the turn events had taken.

Among the friends and supporters of Gutzlaff's enterprise, whose interest had been aroused chiefly by his own enthusiasm, there was naturally a swing of the pendulum in the other direction when these disclosures came to light. A strong reaction set in, and for a time it seemed as though the whole movement would flicker out and leave no permanent results. But those whose hearts God had touched felt only the more responsible for the enlightenment of a people so obviously in need of the Gospel. It was a period of sifting that revealed the true character of many in the homelands as well as in China. But out of it all grew clearer knowledge, stronger faith, and a few undertakings of the right sort. Among these were the Moravian Mission to Tibet, with other German efforts, and in London the work with which Mr. Pearse was connected, the society that ultimately sent Hudson Taylor to Shanghai.

And lastly Hudson himself came out of it by the grace of God, more than ever determined to give his life to China. It was a test that might well have turned back one whose "call" depended chiefly on emotion. But, as the following letter shows, it only stirred the Barnsley lad to deeper earnestness and prayer, and served to teach him lessons of inestimable value.

21 CHEAPSIDE, BARNSELEY,
August 7, 1850.

To Mr. George Pearse.

DEAR SIR

I write to acknowledge your kindness in answering my note, to thank you for the Report and to avail myself of your permission to write again for further information.

I think, though the aspect of the Institution is at present in many respects discouraging, we may hope for better days. Notwithstanding that the character of the Chinese seems very

unfavourable for the reception of the Gospel, we have the promise that all shall know Him, whom to know is life eternal. We know not what we might have been, had it not been for Christianity. Christ has died that all might turn, repent and live. We who do know the advantage, and experience the renovating influence of religion are bound to propagate the Gospel among all peoples. I think with you that under the supervision of European and American missionaries much good may be done by native agency.

"The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few." We cannot be too much in earnest in the prosecution of this great work. The missionaries should be men of apostolic zeal, patience and endurance, willing to be all things to all men. May the Lord raise up suitable instruments, and fit me for this work.

On Dr. Gutzlaff's return to China, will the Institution be remodelled, or can further frauds be prevented in any way? Have you any collecting books or cards? If you will kindly forward me a few, or otherwise authorise me to collect, I will endeavour to gather a few pounds if possible. Apologising for troubling you,

*I remain, dear Sir, yours respectfully,
J. HUDSON TAYLOR.*

Thus amid all the discouragements of a peculiarly difficult time, we see his steadfast figure pressing on.

Chapter VIII^(TOC)

No Good Thing will he Withhold

1850-1851. AET. 17.5-19

BUT disappointment in the work was not the only thing that came to test the reality of Hudson Taylor's call to China. Even before his eyes were opened, through the failure of Gutzlaff's plans, to the darker side of missionary experience he was overtaken by trial of a very different kind, that went with him through long months and years, bringing the strongest influences to bear against unquestioning obedience. It was a test of faith, a call to sacrifice, perhaps the hardest that can come in a young man's life. And it began so soon with that same Christmas of 1849.

For then it was, almost immediately after he had come to know the will of God for his future, that a countercurrent set in, as powerful as it was unexpected. He had just received a wonderful baptism of love and power, and was entering with unreserved consecration upon his lifeservice. And at that very point the tempter met him, met him with suggestions so natural and attractive that it seemed hardly possible they could be contrary to the mind of God. And yet those suggestions, had he followed them, would have led far away from China and effectually hindered the Lord's first, best plan for his life.

It was as will be anticipated a question of "falling in love," seriously, tremendously, and for the first time. But why not draw a veil over matters so intimate, especially if they were to end in disappointment? That certainly would be the easier course and one we would willingly pursue but for the

constant recurrence of the same danger in other lives. For many a young, intending missionary has made shipwreck upon the rocks that threatened Hudson Taylor now, and it may be that his experience will be used of God to safeguard some whose peril is known to Him alone.

It all began with the Christmas holidays and an ordinary friendship arising out of his sister's return from school. For Amelia did not come alone. The young music-teacher to whom she had become much attached during the term accompanied her, and added not a little to the brightness of the family-circle that already included their cousin from Barton-on-Humber.

To Hudson and his sister this reunion was delightful after their first long parting, and many were the hours spent in fellowship and prayer such as only young hearts know. To no one else could he speak so freely of the things that mattered most, and there was much to talk over concerning his new-found joy in the Lord as well as his call to China. And when the little sister discovered that some one else was beginning to take a first place in his affections she rejoiced unselfishly. Life would not be so lonely far away from home.

But Hudson saw difficulties ahead. True it had not occurred to him that the one he loved might be quite unsuited for the life he hoped to live in China. She was a Christian, a Methodist, and so bright and gifted that he could not imagine her to be lacking in missionary devotion. As a matter of fact Miss V. was decidedly attractive, and in addition to some musical training had a voice so sweet that it was a constant pleasure to those around her. She was happy among her new friends, and interested especially in the son of the household. But while sympathising to a certain extent with his feelings about China, there was a something lacking, and she would gladly have held him back.

This of course he did not realise, or if he felt it intangibly from the first he

was far from admitting even to himself that it might prove a serious obstacle. No, the difficulties he felt, and felt increasingly as time passed on, arose from the uncertainties of his position and his lack of means, prospectively, to support a wife. Had there been any opening before him he might have had more hope. But how he was to go to China he had no idea, nor how he would be supported there. He knew of no society that sent out unordained men, unless perhaps the Chinese Association, and that soon came into such low water financially that it seemed doubtful whether it could continue to exist. The collapse of Dr. Gutzlaff's enterprise was seriously affecting missionary interest in China. On the whole it seemed more than likely that he would have to be a self-supporting missionary, or go in simple faith, trusting the Lord who sent him to provide. But that precluded any thought of marriage, at any rate for a long time to come. And meanwhile his lips were sealed. Someone else was sure to love her. Every one must who was near her and free to win her love. No one could care as he did! That was beyond question. And yet, with such prospects or lack of prospects before him he must be silent.

This was the ground, then, on which the conflict commenced: not so much a struggle between love and duty, though it came to that at last, as a long fight of faith with questionings and fears. "***No good thing will He withhold.***" Would it prove really true? Surely his heart's desire was a good thing: yet how was it to be accomplished? Could he leave all in the hands of God and simply trust-nothing but uncertainty ahead?

The year that followed was full of perplexity and pain, in the midst of which his spiritual life was deepening, as may be seen from frequent letters to his sister who had returned to school.

"Dear Amelia," he wrote in September, "remember me in all your prayers. Never did I feel a greater need of watchfulness and prayer than at present.

Praised be God, I know that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin; but I feel my own weakness, my own nothingness. Without His aid I cannot stand for one moment; but I look to the Strong for strength; and though he that trusteth in man shall be disappointed, blessed are all they that put their trust in the Lord. I realise this blessedness. I feel that I can trust Him with all my concerns. I can and do 'praise Him for all that is past, and trust Him for all that's to come.' He has promised to withhold 'no good thing' from those that walk uprightly. I do love Him, and am determined to devote myself, body, soul and spirit, to His work.

"I have a stronger desire than ever to go to China. That land is ever in my thoughts. Think of it—three hundred and sixty million souls, without God or hope in the world! Think of more than twelve millions of our fellow-creatures dying every year without any of the consolations of the Gospel. ... Barnsley including the Common has only fifteen thousand inhabitants. Imagine what it would be if all these were to die in twelve months! Yet in China hundreds are dying, year by year, for every man, woman and child in Barnsley. Poor, neglected China! Scarcely any one cares about it. And that immense country, containing nearly a fourth of the human race, is left in ignorance and darkness.

Shall we whose souls are lighted

With wisdom from on high;

Shall we to men benighted

The lamp of Life deny?...

"Pray for me, dear Amelia, that I may have more of the mind of Christ; that I may be guided in all things by His Spirit and made very useful. Pray for the cause of God and expect an answer. Pray on for China. ...

"You say 'let us leave all in the hands of God.' You are right. 'The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.' But remember His own word, 'I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them.' Make it a matter of prayer, Love, and then leave it in the hands of God our Father. I have prayed about it, and I am sure I can trust God. He will do all things well. God knows what is best, and we must learn to welcome His will, which is 'good, acceptable and perfect.'"

He was very busy at this time, rising early every morning for study. Latin, Greek, theology and medicine occupied every available moment even during business hours, and Sunday brought opportunities of ministry to others. Sharing a room with his cousin made it difficult to obtain much privacy, but

"I go into the warehouse, stable, or anywhere," he wrote, "to be alone with God. And some most precious seasons I have. ... Do your best to keep hold of Jesus. And if in an unguarded moment you should fall, humble yourself before God. 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' We cannot be perfect as angels who have never sinned, nor as Adam before he fell. Sin always has had and always will have a power over us, if we look not to the Lord for strength. Yet, though we are vile in ourselves, we may be made 'pure in heart' through the all-prevailing blood of Jesus. Washed in His blood we are even now 'whiter than snow.' But it must be constant washing. Grace we every moment need. Oh seek this grace, strive for it, and may God bless you with 'a pure heart' for Christ's sake."

As the unstudied correspondence of a lad of only eighteen with a sister several years younger the above quotations have a special interest, and so

also has the following letter bearing more directly upon the matter that was exercising his heart.

BARNSLEY, November.11, 1850.

My DEAR AMELIA

I have to write to you at sundry times and in divers places, here a little and there a little. ...

In your last note you suggest that it might be a good plan to write to the Chinese Association and ask whether they could send me out as a married man. You must excuse my differing from you in opinion. I think that to do so would be to effectually prevent them. They would naturally conclude that I wanted to get married without means, and that I hoped they would insure me from the consequences of such conduct. It would not do to write to them at all at present.

I have not, as you know, the slightest idea how I shall go. But this I know, I shall go, either alone or married. ... I know God has called me to the work, and He will provide the means. But as you see I cannot send the information you desire. It is not reasonable to suppose that Miss V. would be willing to go and starve in a foreign land. I am sure I love her too well to wish her to do so. ... You well know I have nothing, and nothing (financially) to hope for. Consequently I can enter into no engagement under present circumstances. I cannot deny that these things make me very sad. But my Father knows what is best. "No good thing will He withhold." I must live by faith, hang on by faith, simple faith, and He will do all things well.

Think not I am cold or indifferent. But what can I do? I know I love her. To go without her would make the world a blank. But I cannot bring her to want. Oh, pray for me! It is enough to distract me. May God bless and enable me to trust Him fully.

Through waves, and clouds, and storms,

He gently clears thy way

Wait thou His time, so shall this night

Soon end in joyous day.

I trust it will be so: God grant it may!

You say you are sure I might win her if I could see my way to provide for her. But you see I cannot. And if I could, how do you know that I might have her? Do let me know, for I am so anxious about it. You say I should ensure this best by being sent out. Very true. But who is to send me? The Wesleyans have no station in China. ... The Established Church have one or two, but I am not a Churchman ... and would not do for them. The Baptists and Independents have stations there, but I do not hold their views.... The Chinese Association is very low in funds. So God and God alone is my hope, and I need no other.

Except the Lord conduct the plan,

The best-concerted schemes are vain

And never can succeed.

With you I could wish, were it possible, that the matter should be decided at Christmas. But what reason have you for thinking it might if circumstances were favourable? Do you suppose she thinks or knows that I love her? Or does she, think you, care about me? Do answer these questions plainly.

*Your affectionate brother,
J. H. TAYLOR.*

A reply seems to have come from his sister that perplexed while it

encouraged him.

"I wonder how often I have read and reread your letters," he wrote a fortnight later, "especially the last. As I do so, my mind is filled with conflicting hopes and fears. But I am determined to trust in God."

Thus winter passed slowly by, and with early spring came a first step toward China. It was now more than a year since the purpose of God had been made known to him, and he felt the time had come for more definite preparation for his life-work. Five years in his father's business had made him quite at home in dispensing medicines and even prescribing for ordinary ailments. He needed still to earn his own living, but felt that as assistant to a doctor in good practice he might at the same time make progress with his medical studies. It seemed but a small step in the direction desired, but it was all that was open to him, and the Lord would guide as to what was to follow.

"I am determined," he wrote to his sister, "to be more than ever His, and to redouble my diligence to make my calling and election sure. Continue to pray for E. Pray in faith and leave the results with God... I am determined not to waste time any more in writing letters as I have done, but to endeavour in all things to be about my Master's work. May He help me. ... It is my desire in all my ways to acknowledge Him: and He shall direct my path.

"Now that I have decided to leave home, I want you to ask that the Lord will guide me into a suitable situation, where I may get and do good and become fitted for China. ..."

Shortly after this he had occasion to write again to Mr. Pearse in London. The letter is worth quoting, as illustrating his careful attention to detail, and sense of stewardship in connection with money given for the Lord's work, even the smallest sums.

21 CHEAPSIDE, BARNSELEY,
March 31, 1851.

Mr. George Pearse.

DEAR SIR

You will almost think I have forgotten the Chinese Union and have not its interests at heart, on account of my long silence. Such, however, is not the case, although from pressure of business I have not been able to devote to it the attention it deserves. I have collected rather more than two pounds. Please send me word as to how I shall remit this sum to you. If I send a post office order it will cost sixpence; but I can get it placed to your credit at Glynn & Co. or any other London banker's for two or three pence. Meanwhile I will do all in my power to get a few more subscribers, as the interests of China lie very near my heart. May I be fitted to engage in this great work. Please excuse haste, and

*Believe me, yours in our Risen Lord,
J. H. TAYLOR.*

Had Mr. Pearse replied that the money might be sent by post office order, as the difference of two or three pence was a small matter, it is doubtful whether he would have heard much more from Hudson Taylor. To him every penny was a trust to be used for his Master. "A little thing is a little thing," he often quoted in later life, "but faithfulness in little things is a great thing." Mr. Pearse, however, appreciated his inquiry, and wrote mentioning a bank through which the money might be forwarded; to which the Barnsley lad replied,

"I have paid through our Bankers £2:5 to your credit at Messrs. Jones, Lloyd & Co., Lothbury, according to your directions, and you will receive it on Monday. Please acknowledge the receipt of this sum, that I may be able to

show the subscribers that it has been remitted. Have you a Report, or any other publication telling of the work done by your Society, and how the funds are applied? ... I enclose a list of the contributors. The amounts are small, but I have no doubt that when more is known about the Society and its operations I shall be able to collect more."

The field truly is great, and the means at present employed for its cultivation appear very inadequate. But ... it is "not by might nor by power" but by the influence of the Holy Spirit alone that good can be accomplished, and God often makes the weak things of this world to confound the mighty. He and He only can raise up and qualify suitable labourers and own and bless those already on the field....

I have devoted myself to missionary work in China in obedience I believe to His call, and am at present studying medicine and surgery that I may have more opportunities of usefulness and perhaps be able to support myself when there. This, however, I leave in His hands, believing that if I seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness all these things shall be "added" according to His promise.

Any suggestions you may be able to give me as to means for promoting the cause or fitting myself for more extensive usefulness would be thankfully received by

*Yours in our Risen Lord,
J. H. TAYLOR.*

Mr. Pearse was evidently interested. He seems to have consulted his Committee and to have written intimating that the Society might be willing to help in the expense of a medical education if they considered Mr. Taylor a suitable candidate for China. This letter with its inquiries as to his religious views, education, etc., called forth the following reply. Though long, it is

given in full, as manifesting the spirit that actuated the young intending missionary, a spirit at once appreciative, dignified, independent and humble.

21 CHEAPSIDE, BARNSELEY,
April 25, 1851.

To George Pearse, Esq., Hackney.

DEAR SIR

I have not been able hitherto, from press of business, to answer your kind favours of the 17th and 21st inst., and am sorry:hat, in haste, I neglected to enclose the list of contributors. Herewith you will receive it.

I feel obliged to you for mentioning the work on China, which I shall endeavour to procure; and am grateful to your Committee for their kindness in promising access to a London hospital and lectures. I fear, however, that I shall not be able to avail myself of these privileges, as I have no means of supporting myself in London, and may not be able to obtain a situation there that would allow sufficient time to make use of them.

I have for some time past been looking out for employment in a Surgery, as I think that would afford better opportunities than I at present enjoy for acquiring medical and surgical knowledge. My present position is perhaps as favourable as most with regard to opportunities for self-improvement. It consists chiefly in prescribing and dispensing, and we have the privilege of reading during business hours if all the work is done. But the number of anatomical and similar works that I have access to is limited, and their price is very high, placing many altogether beyond my reach. So that apart from the benefit to be gained from practical surgery, the acquirement of the theory would be facilitated by the situation I am seeking.

As you are so kind as to interest yourself in my case, I may now perhaps state the reasons that make me think myself called to the work of evangelisation in China.

From my earliest childhood I have felt the strivings of the Holy Spirit, and when about fourteen years of age I gave my heart to God. About six months after that time I went into a bank as clerk, and remained about nine months, when I had to leave on account of my sight, which was injured through much writing by gas-light. The others in the bank were worldly men, and religion was seldom spoken of without a sneer. I began to place too great a value on the things of this world and to neglect private prayer. Religious duties became irksome to me and I fell from grace. But God in His infinite mercy caused my eyes to fail, and I was obliged to leave.

I continued in a state of religious unconcern until June 1849, when God was pleased to strike home a conviction of my sinful and dangerous state while I was reading a tract accidentally left by a friend. I have not the slightest doubt but that this was in answer to the prayers of my parents, and of my sister, who had even made a memorandum a month or two previously to the effect that she would never cease praying for me until I was saved, and that she believed her prayers would be answered before long. I thank God that through His grace I was enabled to resolve never to rest until I found peace with Him through our Lord Jesus Christ. Shortly afterwards it pleased Him again to cause His face to shine upon me, and I was enabled by faith to realise the merit of His atonement.

About Christmas 1849, I am sorry to have to say, that notwithstanding all the love the Saviour had manifested to me, I began to slacken in my closet duties. A spiritual lethargy seemed to have crept over me. I did not enjoy communion with God as heretofore, and felt something was wrong, so wrong that I feared I might fall away from grace and be finally lost.

Earnestly I cried to God to show me the hindrance and take it away, promising Him, if He would only save me completely, that I would do anything in His cause He might direct.

Never shall I forget the feeling that came over me then. Words can never describe it. I felt that I was in the very presence of God, entering into covenant with the Almighty. I felt as though I wished to withdraw my promise, but could not. Something seemed to say "Your prayer is answered, your conditions are accepted." And from that time the conviction has never left me that I was called to China.

I obtained all the works I could on that interesting country, and read them as I was able. I see there an unbounded field of usefulness, and there by the grace of God I mean to go. I feel my own salvation depends on it. May I be made the humble instrument of much good.

Mr. Whitworth, the respected Local Treasurer of the Bible Society, lent me several numbers of The Watchman in which were papers on China. There I first saw a notice of your Society. Afterwards, seeing more about it in The Gleaner, I ventured to write to you in the hope of being able to do a little to forward the cause.

I obtained through Mr. Whitworth a copy of the writings of St. Luke in Chinese, and discovered the meaning of many characters by comparing passages with the aid of an English Concordance. I also procured a copy of Marshman's Clavis Sinica. Medhurst's Grammar was ordered but could not be procured. But I found I could not with advantage continue the study of the language without a Dictionary, which I was not able to afford. So I thought I should do more good by studying necessary subjects such as Anatomy, Physiology, Medicine and Surgery, which accordingly I have done.

I will now endeavour to answer your questions:

I. Some of the reasons that make me think, nay, make me sure (for I have no doubt on the matter) that I am truly converted to God are as follows:

The things I used formerly to delight in now give me no pleasure, while reading the Word, prayer and the means of grace, which were formerly distasteful to me, are now my delight.

Once the world was all my treasure,

And the world my heart possessed

Now I taste sublimer pleasure

Since the Lord has made me blest.

I know I have passed from death unto life because I love the brethren. The Spirit of God bears direct witness with my spirit that I am His child. My mind is kept in perfect peace because I trust in Him. And I feel no doubt that should I be called hence, when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. I feel I am but a stranger here. Heaven is my home ... I know that in myself there is nothing that can merit Heaven. I am a poor, helpless, hell-deserving sinner. But in Him all fulness dwells. I am, praised be God, a sinner saved by grace.

II. My age will be nineteen on the 21st of May 1851. Of course I am unmarried.

III. As to the general state of my health: I have never had any serious illness, but cannot be called robust. I have never been better than at present, and intend to take more care of my health than I have previously done, having often neglected exercise for weeks together in order to have more time for study.

IV. My occupation has been, since Christmas 1845, with the exception of nine months spent in the bank, that of assistant to my father, who is a chemist and druggist.

V. My education was carried on at home until I was eleven years of age. Then I went to school, and continued there until I was thirteen, when the master resigning without arranging for an efficient substitute, I left at the Christmas vacation and came into the shop. Besides the regular routine of study, I worked at Latin, Euclid and Algebra, in which I took great interest. Since then I have had access to a tolerably good library, and have acquired the rudiments of Greek as well as of Anatomy and Physiology.

VI. With regard to denominational views: at first I joined the Wesleyan Methodists, as my parents and friends were members of that body. But not being able to reconcile the late proceedings with the doctrines and precepts of Holy Scripture, I withdrew, and am at present united to the branch Society.

Apologising for thus intruding upon your time

*I remain, dear Sir, yours in our beloved Redeemer,
JAMES HUDSON TAYLOR.*

Meanwhile his prayers for guidance were being answered through an opening that occurred in Hull for an assistant to one of the busiest doctors there. An aunt on his mother's side was married to a brother of this Dr. Hardey, and it was probably her influence that secured the position for her nephew in Barnsley. In many ways it seemed the very thing he needed, and from his point of view was none the less desirable for being within easy reach of Barton, where Amelia and the young music-teacher were still in Mrs. Hodson's school. It was not London, nor did it enable him to avail himself of the aid Mr. Pearse and his Society had offered. But it was the way providentially opened after much prayer, and as such was thankfully

accepted.

On one of the last days before leaving Barnsley, Hudson spoke for the first time in public. This was at Royston, within sight of the fine old church in which James and Betty Taylor had been married. There on his wedding-day the stone-mason had first confessed his allegiance to a new Master, and there seventy-five years later came the great grandson who bore his name to give his first public testimony to that Master's saving grace.

"On Tuesday I went to preach at Royston," he wrote to his sister the following day. "The room was crowded; there would be from fifty to sixty present. I never was so blessed in my life. We had a prayer-meeting afterwards in which ten or twelve took part. One little girl of about thirteen came to the penitent-form and professed to find peace. She is young, but Jesus can keep her."

Thus the quiet years of life at home drew to a close, and early in May the separation came that meant so much for both Hudson and his mother. Full well they knew it was but the beginning of that longer parting toward which their faces were set. But they spoke much of the joy and privilege of suffering for Jesus' sake and trusted Him about the sorrow.

It was on his nineteenth birthday that after a brief visit to his grandparents in Hull the new apprentice took up his duties with Dr. Hardey. The day was naturally a busy one, not till nearly midnight did he find time for the few lines to his sister that could not be omitted.

"From what I have seen of my situation: he wrote. I think I shall like it exceedingly. Of course I felt very strange and awkward at first, but I have begun to be more at home now and to know better where to find things and what to do."

And then his thoughts carried him away from his new surroundings and across the Humber to the quiet, old-world township in which his dear ones lived. How near he was to them at last! His heart beat quick with hope as he realised that almost any day he might see them.

"I am to have an hour to myself at dinner and another at teatime," he continued eagerly. "I almost think I shall be able to run over to Barton sometimes in the evening, by a little arrangement and being willing to stay over-time when needed. ..."

"Go on praying for me and all the others. You cannot think how happy I feel in my Saviour's love. Oh, He has loved me, the chief of sinners! I love Him for it. He has hitherto granted all my prayers and He will grant me more before midsummer. 'The crooked shall be made straight.' You understand, Love. Farewell."

Chapter IX^(TOC)

That I May Win Christ

May-December 1851. AET. 19

DR. ROBERT HARDEY of 13 Charlotte Street was widely esteemed in the city of Hull as a reliable medical man and a consistent Christian. He was very busy, having in addition to a large, general practice the surgical oversight of a number of factories and a lectureship in the School of Medicine. Tall and vigorous in appearance he was unusually gentle and full of fun, and was beloved by little children and the poor who crowded his dispensary no less than by wealthy patients in their beautiful homes. His humour seems to have been irresistible, and in spite of themselves those under his care had to look on the bright side of things. Often indeed he made people laugh so much that they were cured of their ailments without recourse to medicine at all. And better still, in troubles medicine could not touch, he knew how to bring help and healing to the soul.

His home of which Hudson Taylor was now an inmate was the city doctor's house of the old-fashioned type. The broad thoroughfare, like Harley Street in London, was a centre for the profession in those days and quite aristocratic. Number 13 stood on the sunny side and was specially attractive for the Virginia creeper that framed the windows in a wealth of green. To the right of the hall as one entered was the consulting-room, beyond which the dining-room overlooked a narrow strip of garden with the dispensary at its farther end. This garden, much traversed by the doctor and his assistant, consisted mainly of a lawn, on one side of which a pathway overarched with roses led

to what had been the stables but was now an out-patient department, conveniently accessible from a back street.

Here then in what was called the Surgery Hudson Taylor found himself at home. Mrs. Hardey's supervision had not extended apparently to this branch of the establishment, but the new assistant was equal to the occasion and soon had everything in apple-pie order, after the fashion to which he had been accustomed at home. His knowledge of book-keeping also proved of value to Dr. Hardey, who had much work of that sort on hand and was glad to leave it to so competent a helper. Thus the doctor's relations with the Barnsley lad soon came to be of a cordial character. He was so bright and eager to learn, so willing and goodtempered, that to work with him was a pleasure, and before long the busy doctor found that it was a help to pray with him too. Many were the quiet times, after that, from which the older man came away refreshed and strengthened. Needless to say there was no familiarity or presuming on these relations. The young assistant respected himself and his employer far too much for that. He did his work faithfully, as in the sight of God, and Dr. Hardey showed his appreciation by giving him opportunities for study and by directing his reading as much as possible.

But there were drawbacks to the life at Charlotte Street, of which Hudson Taylor himself was largely unconscious. For one thing it was too comfortable, too easy-going in certain ways, and failed on that account to afford some elements needed in a missionary's training. Quite in another part of Hull amid very different surroundings was a little "prophet's chamber," bare in its furnishings and affording neither companionship nor luxury, where a stronger if a sterner life could be lived, apart with God. Moses at the backside of the wilderness, Joseph in Pharaoh's prison, Paul in the silence of the Arabian desert lived that sort of life, and came out to do great things for

men in the power of God. That was the life Hudson Taylor needed and to which he was being led. He did not choose it for himself, at any rate not at first or consciously. The Lord chose it for him, and so ordered circumstances that he was brought to see and to embrace it, finding in self-denial and the daily cross a fellowship with his Master nothing else can yield.

So there came a day, providentially, when the young assistant could no longer be domiciled at Dr. Hardey's. His room was needed for a member of the family, and as the Surgery was not provided with sleeping accommodation he had to seek quarters elsewhere. But it was too much, perhaps, of a transition to that other, better life which awaited him, without some intermediate experience, and for the time being Hudson Taylor found himself welcomed by his aunt, Mrs. Richard Hardey, into her pleasant home.

This was in some ways more congenial than the first arrangement, and quite as convenient for his daily work. The Richard Hardeys lived on Kingston Square, opposite the Medical School at which Hudson was attending, lectures and within two minutes of the Surgery. They were not wealthy people, indeed Mrs. Hardey's skilful brush supplied the larger part of their income. But they were generous and warm-hearted, and having no children of their own were glad to entertain a sister's son. Mrs. Hardey inherited the family gift for portrait-painting,^[44] and her attractive personality in addition to her husband's genial spirit gathered about them a large circle of friends. All this Hudson enjoyed to the full, especially when his sister came over from Barton to spend a Sunday with them.

But though happy in outward circumstances he was anything but free from anxiety and unrest. Life was opening before him, and away from the scenes of childhood, dependent for the first time upon his own earnings, he was feeling the seriousness of his position as never before. He had taken as he

thought a step toward China, and yet his hope of getting there, his ideal of a life devoted to its evangelisation seemed more and more remote as time went on. He had come to Hull eager to fit himself for medical work, but his busy days with Dr. Hardey left little time for study, while they showed him with increasing clearness how far he was from the end in view. Though he said little about it, the call of God was as a fire burning within him. The thought of perishing souls in China was ever present. Day and night he pondered the problem of how to prepare for and enter upon his life-work. To his youth and inexperience no answer seemed forthcoming; yet how hard it was to wait in patience, to wait for God alone. In the main he did, as before leaving Barnsley, rest in the Lord and count upon His working. Yet the quiet Surgery witnessed many an hour of anxious thought as well as many an hour of prayer, and all through that summer and autumn there was a good deal of unnecessary exercise of heart.

Perhaps also there was another reason for those months of trouble and unrest, just as another fire was consuming within him not a little spiritual strength. For he was out of harmony with God in the matter of his deepest affections, that inner citadel of being so often the last stronghold yielded to His control. Unconsciously it may be he was holding something back-something, the best thing in his manhood not recognising that in that realm also "every: thought" must be brought into subjection to "the obedience of Christ." He was giving far too much of himself to the one who had come as a bright, beautiful vision into his life a year and a half before. It was one thing, he discovered, to think of her in Barnsley out of reach, and quite another in Hull, where any day they might meet. His love was growing too strong for him, quickened by hopeful indications of its being returned on her part.

And yet he had begun to feel instinctively that her life was not fully yielded

to God. Though there was no engagement between them they understood one another without words, and he could not but be conscious that her influence was all against a future she was unwilling to face.

"Must you go to China?" she questioned at times, her tone clearly implying, "How much nicer it would be to stay and serve the Lord at home!"

Fervently he prayed that she might come to feel as he did; for nothing, not even the loss of her love, could alter his call from God. But how could he go forward at such a cost? How face the anguish of losing her just when it seemed she might be won? Oh the struggle of those autumn days when he could no longer escape the fear that their paths must lie apart! Older people may pass on, perhaps, with little perception of what such a situation means; but young hearts understand, and there is one infinite Heart that is always young, always touched with the feeling of our griefs. That Friend did not fail Hudson Taylor.

And so it came to pass that helpful experiences found their way into his life at this time. He was strengthened by association with fellow believers who were able to lead him into a deeper knowledge of God; he was encouraged in work for others, simple efforts to help the poor and suffering and to win the most degraded to a new life in Christ; and the way opened, strange to say, for a visit to London, just when the first International Exhibition was attracting thousands to the far-famed Crystal Palace: all providential happenings, no doubt, in view of the trial through which he had yet to pass.

It was no small mercy, for example, that led him during this sojourn in Hull into fellowship with a company of Christians exceptionally fitted to meet his need. Shortly before leaving home he had for conscientious reasons resigned his connection with the denomination in which he had been brought up.

During the progress of a widespread Reform Movement he and his parents had felt obliged to side with the minority, at no little sacrifice of personal interests. This had led Hudson to the study of Church history and government, and opened his eyes to the limitations of all human systems, even the best. He had followed his parents in joining "the Reformers," afterwards known as the Methodist Free Church, but personally had begun to feel himself something more than a Wesleyan, bound by more important ties to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. While still in Barnsley he had enjoyed the meetings of the so-called Plymouth Brethren, ministered to by Mr. William Neatby, and now in Hull was glad to renew associations that had already proved helpful.

The Hull Meeting at that time was a strong, united body, profiting greatly from the ministry of Mr. Jukes, a man of culture and spiritual illumination.^[45] Their quiet gatherings on Sunday morning were specially suited to help young Hudson Taylor. He was hungry for the Word of God, and their preaching was for the most part a thoughtful exposition of its truths. He needed a fresh vision of eternal things, and the presence of Christ was often so real on these occasions that it was like heaven on earth to be among them. He was facing a difficult future, and they set before him an example of faith in temporal as well as spiritual things that surpassed his utmost thought. For this meeting was in close touch with George Muller of Bristol, whose work was even then assuming remarkable proportions. He had already hundreds of orphan children under his care, and was looking to the Lord for means to support a thousand. But this did not exhaust his sympathies. With a deep conviction that these are the days in which the Gospel must be preached "for a witness unto all nations," he sustained in whole or part many missionaries, and was engaged in circulating the Scriptures far and wide in Roman Catholic as well as heathen lands. All this extensive work, carried on by a

penniless man through faith in God alone, with no appeals for help or guarantee of stated income, was a wonderful testimony to the power of "effectual, fervent prayer." As such it made a profound impression upon Hudson Taylor, and encouraged him more than anything else could have in the pathway he was about to enter.

And then his work helped him, not only the daily round of duties in the Surgery but the service he had undertaken in addition for the Lord. A little to the west of Dr. Hardey's stood the Royal Infirmary, the largest hospital in the city, about which lay a network of squalid streets culminating in the Irish quarter. Here drinking saloons and tramps' lodging-houses abounded, and the police hardly ventured to appear in less force than three or four at a time. Riots and drunken brawls were of frequent occurrence, and nothing was more common than for the priest to be called in to thrash his tipsy parishioners. Garden Street, one of the larger thoroughfares through this district, and West and Middle Streets close to the Infirmary seemed specially the haunts of misery and vice. It required courage, as Hudson Taylor found, to go among that bigoted population as a preacher of the Gospel, but a little knowledge of medicine with a great deal of love and prayer opened the way and gave access to many a heart.

"The people seemed pleased to see us," he wrote of one sultry evening in July, "and received the tracts willingly. We went to several lodging-houses. In one, Kester read the story of the Prodigal Son and said a little about it, and in another I read the fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. People kept dropping in until we had forty or fifty listeners. I spoke a little and so did Kester. Last Sunday I went again and felt very happy."

"I think it is very difficult," he continued in a later letter, "to set our affections wholly on things above. I try to be a 'living epistle' of the Lord's, but when I look within, I wonder many a

time He does not cast me off. I seek to subdue my will, to blend it with His, and say and feel in all things 'Thy will be done.' But even while I try, I can scarcely keep back the tears. For I seem to have an impression that I shall lose my Dear One, and God only knows the struggle it is to say, 'Nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done.'

"Do you think I should be justified in going to London shortly? If it were only for pleasure, I could decide at once; for much as I should like to go, my pleasures must not stand in the way of duty. But sometimes I think that Lobscheid might give me information worth going for. I shall be glad to hear from you and have your advice."

That idea about going to London certainly came at the right time. The German missionary Lobscheid, to whom he referred, had recently returned from China and was one of the few people who could speak from experience of the practicability of missionary work away from the Treaty Ports. Possessing some medical knowledge he had been enabled to travel repeatedly in what was then considered "the interior," a populous district on the mainland, north of Hong-kong; and now that he was for a short time in England Hudson Taylor was anxious to profit from his advice.

His parents approving the idea, and Dr. Hardey giving him a week's holiday, he decided to take advantage of a special train running up to the Exhibition, and (at his expense) it was arranged that his sister should accompany him. This seemed almost too good to be true, until they were actually speeding southward in the express bearing hundreds of excursionists to London. Never had they visited the great Metropolis before, and he was just as eager to meet Mr. Pearse and the missionary from China as she was to explore the wonders of the Crystal Palace. An artist uncle arranged accommodation for them in his Soho lodgings, and proved a delightful cicerone for his niece when Hudson

was otherwise occupied.

That was a memorable time in London, from the moment they caught sight of its lights shining like stars in the distance to the journey home together when they lived it all over again.

Amelia remembered best, perhaps, the glittering Palace as it broke upon their sight from Piccadilly, the sun shining on its crystal dome amid the greenery of Hyde Park. It was her sixteenth birthday, and Hudson was free to spend it with her, which made their happiness complete. Together they went to the Exhibition and wandered among the ferns and flowers in which its fairy-like scenes were set. They lunched at a restaurant in proper style, investing in a pineapple, a rare luxury in those days. Then they traversed the gay, crowded city to the Bank of England, where a rendezvous had been arranged with Mr. Pearse.

A busy member of the Stock Exchange as well as Secretary of the Chinese Evangelisation Society, Mr. Pearse had not much time for visitors in office hours. He was glad, however, to meet his correspondent from Barnsley, and as he talked with the bright earnest lad whose face bore unmistakable testimony to the spirit within, and the little sister as modest and lovely in appearance as she was in heart, interest soon deepened to a warmer feeling. Tottenham-yes, he must take them to Tottenham and the Brook Street meeting. There they would be sure to find a welcome and a real spirit of prayer on behalf of China. So to Tottenham they went with him the following Sunday.

And this to Hudson at any rate was the most delightful of all their experiences. For the Tottenham friends, once seen, could never be forgotten. He was familiar already with the names of John Eliot Howard and his brother

Robert Howard of Bruce Grove, who since the visit of Dr. Gutzlaff to England had been on the Committee of the C.E.S. He knew from *The Gleaner* also of the activity of the ladies in their Auxiliary Society, and that they were considerable donors to the work. But how little could he have anticipated the charm and culture, the gracious spirit and generous hospitality of their homes!

If anywhere on earth ideal Christian families were to be found in surroundings as nearly perfect as wealth and refinement could make them, it was in the pleasant suburb of Tottenham in those days. Not that there was lavish expenditure on luxury, for they came of a Quaker stock with simple tastes and habits; but the beauty of the inward life imparted to it all a something money could not buy. About the parents—still young or in the prime of life, large families were growing up, trained in an atmosphere of Christian courtesy. All was cheerful, orderly, unostentatious. Homelike rooms, beautifully furnished, opened on lawns shaded by spreading cedars. Friends from far and near gathered around the 'ample board, where quiet talk flowed freely on the deepest interests of the Kingdom of God. And best of all, the love of Christ possessed and permeated everything.

The Brook Street meeting that gathered these families on Sunday was also exceptional in its ministry and spirit. Many well-known Brethren were among the speakers in those days, including the heads of the Howard family, men greatly beloved for their works' sake. What it must have been to Hudson Taylor to be welcomed in such a circle, words are poor to express. It was a new world to him then, full of help and inspiration, but a world of which he was to become a part. For the friendships begun that day endured throughout a lifetime, strengthening his hands in God until his work on earth was done.

"I love Tottenham," he wrote from China a few years later. "I

love those I know there dearly. Of no other place can I say that my every recollection is sweet and profitable, marred by no painful thought or circumstance, save that I see it no more."

And the Tottenham friends on their part, what did they think of him? They saw a simple, Yorkshire lad quiet and unassuming. Introduced by their friend Mr. Pearse as an intending missionary, he was observed more closely than he might otherwise have been, and the conclusions come to by some of the younger people are remembered to this day. He did not fit in exactly with their idea of a missionary, for he looked young and delicate and was evidently full of fun. But they liked him none the less for that, and felt his earnestness and absorbing interest in China. In a word, he won their confidence just as his little sister won their hearts. These also were conclusions confirmed in the case of parents as well as children by lifelong fellowship in service for the Lord.

With the missionary they had come so far to see, their intercourse seems to have been less encouraging. He too must have visited Bruce Grove that day, for one still living in the dear old home recalls a conversation that took place. Mr. Lobscheid, besides being bright and forceful, was full of information about his field. He may have been superficial in matters of judgment, and at any rate formed no favourable impression of the north-country lad who asked so many questions.

"Why, you would never do for China," he exclaimed at length, drawing attention to his fair hair and grey-blue eyes. "They call *me* 'Red-haired Devil,' and would run from you in terror! You could never get them to listen at all."

"And yet," replied Hudson Taylor quietly, "it is God who has called me, and He knows all about the colour of my hair and eyes."

It was during this visit to London, as Hudson long remembered, that he gained his first impression of the Society of Friends. Passing Devonshire House in the City, he was struck by the calm and gracious bearing of both men and women as they passed out from "Yearly Meeting," in their old-time Quaker dress. Could they be really denizens of this lower sphere? The ladies especially, in snowy kerchiefs, with silk or satin gowns, perfect in their simplicity, looked to him like "the Host of the Shining Ones" coming to welcome the pilgrim of Bunyan's immortal dream. Later on he found that the Howards of Tottenham had been brought up as Friends, and learned from their beautiful lives the value of much that is distinctively "Friendly" in thought and spirit.

Refreshed and encouraged by these experiences, Hudson Taylor resumed his duties with Dr. Hardey at the end of September, and shortly after this it was that the nest began to be stirred up about him. He was again settled in the home of his relatives on Kingston Square, where every want was anticipated and pleasant companionship afforded out of working hours. The neighbourhood was one of the nicest in Hull, and as far as circumstances were concerned nothing could have been more desirable. But this was not all His love had planned who was moulding this young life in view of China. Already, through discipline of heart, the lad was learning lessons of patience and submission to the will of God. But something more was needed, something even of outward trial to prepare him for the life-work that was to be. Away in an unfrequented suburb that little home was waiting—a single room in which he could be alone as never before, alone with God. The steps by which he was led to it were very simple, beginning, as he himself records, with a conscientious difficulty about remaining where he was.

"Before leaving Barnsley," he wrote, recalling this experience, "my attention was drawn to the subject of setting apart the

firstfruits of all one's increase and a certain proportion of one's possessions for the service of the Lord. It seemed to me desirable to study the question Bible in hand before one went from home and was placed in circumstances that might bias one's conclusions by the pressure of definite wants and cares. In this way I was led to the determination to set apart not less than one-tenth of whatever moneys I might earn or become possessed of, for the Lord.

"The salary I received as medical assistant in Hull would have allowed me to do this without difficulty, but owing to changes in the family of my kind friend and employer it was necessary for me to reside out of doors. Comfortable quarters were secured with a relative, and in addition to the sum I had previously received, the exact amount was allowed me that I had to pay for board and lodging.

"Now arose in my mind the reflection, 'Ought not this also to be tithed? 'It was surely a part of my income, and had it been a question of government income tax would certainly not have been excluded. But to take a tithe from the whole would have left me insufficient for other purposes, and for a time I was embarrassed to know what to do.

"After much thought and prayer, I was led to leave the comfortable home and pleasant circle in which I resided, and engage a little lodging in the suburbs, a sitting-room and bedroom in one, undertaking to board myself. I was thus enabled to tithe the whole of my income; and while one felt the change a good deal, it was attended with no small blessing. More time was given in my solitude to the study of the Word of God, to visiting the poor and to evangelistic work on Sunday evenings than would otherwise have been the case. Brought into contact in this way with many who were in distress, I soon saw the privilege of still further economising, and found it possible to give away much more than I had at first intended."

It all reads so simply and naturally that one can hardly imagine any special sacrifice to have been involved. Let us hunt up this "sitting-room and bedroom in one," however, and find out what were in actual fact the surroundings for which he had given up his home on Kingston Square. The change could scarcely have been more complete.

"Drainside," as the neighbourhood was termed, could not under any circumstances have been considered inviting. It consisted of a double row of workmen's cottages facing each other across a narrow canal, connecting the country district of Cottingham with the docks and estuary of the Humber. The canal was nothing but a deep ditch into which Drainside people were in the habit of casting their rubbish, to be carried away in part whenever the tide rose high enough. It was separated from the town by desolate spaces of building-land, across which ran a few ill-lighted streets ending in makeshift wooden bridges. The cottages, like peas in a pod, were all the same size and shape down both sides of the long row. They followed the windings of the Drain for half a mile or more, each one 'having a door and two windows, one above the other. The door opened straight into the kitchen, and a steep stairway led to the room above. A very few were double cottages with a window to right and left of the door and two rooms overhead.

On the city side of the canal, one of these larger dwellings stood at a corner opposite The Founder's Arms, a countrified public-house whose lights were useful as a landmark on dark nights, shining across the mud and water of the Drain. The cottage, known as 30 Cottingham Terrace, was tenanted by the family of a seafaring man, whose visits home were few and far between. Mrs. Finch and her children occupied the kitchen and upper part of the house, and the downstairs room on the left as one entered was let at a rental of three shillings a week. It was too high a charge, seeing the whole house went for

little more. But the lodger in whom we are interested did not grudge it, especially when he found how much it meant to the good woman whose remittances from her husband came none too regularly.

Mrs. Finch was a true Christian and delighted to have "the young Doctor" under her roof. She did her best no doubt to make the little chamber clean and comfortable, polishing the fireplace opposite the window and making up the bed in the corner farthest from the door. A plain deal table and a chair or two completed the appointments. The whole room was less than twelve feet square and did not need much furniture. It was on a level with the ground and opened familiarly out of the kitchen. From the window one looked across the narrowest strip of "garden" to the Drain beyond, whose mud banks afforded a playground for the children of the neighbourhood.

Whatever it may have been in summer, toward the close of November, when Hudson Taylor made it his home, Drainside must have seemed dreary enough, and the cottage far from attractive. To add to the discomforts of the situation, he was "boarding himself," which meant that he lived upon next to nothing, bought his meagre supplies as he returned from the Surgery, and rarely sat down, with or without a companion, to a proper meal. His walks were solitary across the waste, unlighted region on the outskirts of the town; his evenings solitary beside the little fire in his otherwise cheerless room; and his Sundays were spent alone, but for the morning meeting and long hours of work in his district or among the crowds that frequented the Humber Dock.

And more than this, he was at close quarters with poverty and suffering. Visiting in such neighbourhoods he had been accustomed to for a few hours at a time, but this was very different. It belonged to him now in a new way, and outwardly at any rate he belonged to it. He had cast in his lot with those who needed him, and needed all the help and comfort he could bring. This

gave new purpose to his life and taught him some of its most precious lessons.

"Having now the twofold object in view," he wrote, "of accustoming myself to endure hardness, and of economising in order to be able more largely to assist those amongst whom I spent a good deal of time labouring in the Gospel, I soon found that I could live upon very much less than I had previously thought possible. Butter, milk and other luxuries I ceased to use, and found that by living mainly on oatmeal and rice, with occasional variations, a very small sum was sufficient for my needs. In this way I had more than two-thirds of my income available for other purposes, and my experience was that the less I spent on myself and the more I gave to others the fuller of happiness and blessing did my soul become."

For the Lord is no man's debtor; and here in his solitude Hudson Taylor was learning something of what He can be to the soul that leaves all for Him. In these days of easygoing Christianity is it not well to remind ourselves that it really does cost-to be a man or woman God can use? One cannot obtain a Christ-like character for nothing; one cannot do a Christ-like work save at great price. And is there not a sense in which even Christ Himself is to be won? It is easy to pray a little, help a little, love a little; but the missionary apostle meant more than this when he said:

"What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him: ... That I may know-Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto

His death; if by any means I might attain unto the out-resurrection from among the dead: ... If I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. ^[46]

Much prayer, as we have seen, was going up for China, and countless hearts were stirred more or less deeply for its evangelisation. But when disappointment came and unexpected failure the great majority ceased to help or care. Prayer meetings dwindled to nothing, would-be missionaries turned aside to other callings, and contributions dropped off to such an extent that more than one society in aid of the work actually ceased to exist. But here and there in His own training-schools were those the Lord could count upon: little and weak perhaps, unknown and unimportant, but willing to go all lengths in carrying out His purposes, ready through His grace to meet the conditions and pay the price.

Here in his quiet lodging at Drainside was such a man. With all his youth and limitations, Hudson Taylor desired supremely a Christ-like character and life. As test came after test that might have been avoided he chose the pathway of self-emptying and the cross, not from any idea of merit in so doing, but simply because he was led by the Spirit of God. Thus he was in an attitude that did not hinder blessing.

"Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.

A great door and effectual ... and there are many adversaries." ^[47]

Adversaries there certainly were to oppose Hudson Taylor's progress at this time. He was entering upon one of the most fruitful periods of his life, rich in blessing for himself and others. Is it any wonder that the tempter was at

hand? He was alone, hungry for love and sympathy, living a life of self-denial hard for a lad to bear. It was' just the opportunity for the devil, and he was permitted for a while to do his worst, that even that might be overruled for good.

For it was just at this juncture, when he had been a few weeks at Drainside and was feeling his position keenly, that the dreaded blow fell, and the one he loved most in all the world seemed lost to him for ever. For two long years he had hoped and waited. The very uncertainty of the future had made him long the more for her presence, her companionship through all changes. But now the dream was over; and how bitter the awakening! Seeing that nothing could dissuade her friend from his missionary purpose, the young music-teacher made it plain at last that she was not prepared to go to China. Her father would not hear of it, nor did she feel herself fitted for such a life. This could mean but one thing, though the heart that loved her best was well-nigh broken.

It was not only an overwhelming sorrow, it was a tremendous test of faith. The tempter, naturally, did everything in his power to call in question the love and faithfulness of God. Only break down his trust, make him give up the struggle now, and the usefulness of all his after life would be marred.

Sunday morning came, December 14. It was cold and cheerless in the little room at Drainside. The lad was benumbed with sorrow, for instead of turning to the Lord for comfort he kept it to himself and nursed his grief. He did not want to pray. The trouble had come in between his soul and God. He could not, would not go as usual to the morning meeting. He was too full of bitter questionings and pain. Then came the cruel, insidious suggestion.

"Is it all worth while? Why should you go to China? Why toil and suffer all

your life for an ideal of duty? Give it up now, while you can yet win her. Earn a proper living like everybody else, and serve the Lord at home. For you can win her yet."

Love pleaded hard. It was a moment of wavering and peril. The enemy came in like a flood. But enough! The Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him.

"Alone in the Surgery," he wrote the following day, ^[48] "I had a melting season. I was thoroughly softened and humbled and had a wonderful manifestation of the love of God. 'A broken and a contrite Heart' He did not despise, but answered my cry for blessing in very deed and truth. May He keep me softened, and thoroughly impress on me the seal of His own nature. I see this to be my privilege. Oh may I be filled with His Spirit, and grow in grace until I reach 'the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'

"I am happy: not without trial, anxiety or care; but by the grace of God I no longer bear it all myself. 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.' ...

We will praise Him for all that is past,

And trust Him for all that's to come.

"Trusting God does not deprive one of feeling or deaden our natural sensibilities, but it enables us to compare our trials with our mercies and to say, 'Yet, notwithstanding, I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.' It enables us to see ... the Refiner watching the fire, and be thankful.

"'Our fathers trusted in Thee ... and Thou didst deliver them.' In Thee, O God, put I my trust."

To his sister he opened his heart more freely. It is to be regretted that the earlier part of the letter has not been preserved. It is dated December 16, 1851, and begins in medias res:

For some days I was as wretched as heart could wish. It seemed as if I had no power in prayer nor relish for it; and instead of throwing my care on Him I kept it all to myself until I could endure it no longer.

Well, on Sunday I felt no desire to go to the Meeting and was tempted very much. Satan seemed to come in as a flood and I was forced to cry: "Save, Lord; I perish." Still Satan suggested, "You never used to be tried as you have been lately. You cannot be in the right path, or God would help and bless you more," and so on, until I felt inclined to give it all up.

But, thank God, the way of duty is the way of safety. I went to the Meeting after all, as miserable as could be; but did not come away so. One hymn quite cut me to the heart. I was thankful that prayer followed, for I could not keep back my tears. But the load was lighter.

In the afternoon as I was sitting alone in the Surgery I began to reflect on the love of God; His goodness and my return; the number of blessings He has granted me; and how small my trials are compared with those some are called to endure. He thoroughly softened and humbled me. His love melted my icy, frost-bound soul, and sincerely did I pray for pardon for my ungrateful conduct.

Yes, He has humbled me and shown me what I was, revealing Himself as a present, a very present help in time of trouble. And though He does not deprive me of feeling in my trial, He enables me to sing, "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Thus I do rejoice by His Grace, and will rejoice, and praise Him while He lends me breath

*And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures.*

*Now I am happy in my Saviour's love. I can thank Him for all,
even the most painful experiences of the past, and trust Him
without fear for all that is to come.*

Chapter X^(TOC)

From Faith to Faith

January-March 1852. AET. 19

"I NEVER made a sacrifice," said Hudson Taylor in later years, looking back over a life in which to an unusual extent this element predominated. But what he said was true. For as in the case in point, the first great sacrifice he was privileged to make for China, the compensations that followed were so real and lasting that he came to see that giving up is inevitably receiving when one is dealing heart to heart with God.

It was so, very manifestly, this winter. In the hour of trial, a step of faith had been taken and a victory won that made it possible for the Holy Spirit to lead him on. Not outwardly only but inwardly he had accepted the will of God, giving up what seemed his best and highest, the love that had become part of his very life, that he might be unhindered in serving and following Christ. The sacrifice was great, but the reward far greater.

"Unspeakable joy," he tells us, "all day long and every day was my happy experience. God, even my God, was a living, bright Reality, and all I had to do was joyful service."

A new tone is perceptible about his letters, which are less introspective from this time onward and more full of missionary purpose. China comes to the front again in all his thinking, and there is a quickened longing for likeness to Christ and unbroken fellowship with Him. Jesus Himself was filling the empty place and drawing His servant on to deeper love and closer following.

"I feel my need of more holiness," he wrote to his sister early in the New Year, "and conformity to Him who has loved us and washed us in His blood. Love so amazing should indeed cause us to give our bodies and spirits to Him as living sacrifices.... Oh, I wish I were ready! I long to be engaged in the work. Pray for me, that I may be made more useful here and fitted for extended usefulness hereafter."

And again a few weeks later:

I almost wish I had a hundred bodies. They should all be devoted to my Saviour in the missionary cause. But this is foolishness. I have almost more than I can do to manage one, it is so self-willed, earthly-minded, fleshly. Constantly I am grieving my dear Saviour who shed for me His precious blood, forgetting Him who never has relaxed His watchful care and protection over me from the earliest moment of my existence. I am astonished at the littleness of my gratitude and love to Him, and confounded by His long-suffering mercy. Pray for me that I may live more and more to His praise, be more devoted to Him, incessant in labours in His cause, fitted for China, ripened for glory.

But though he was happy and full of blessing, his mother at home was not a little troubled. She had a good idea by this time of his surroundings at Drainside, and read between the lines of his own cheery letters. It distressed her to think of what seemed unnecessary privations, especially when she learned from others that he was looking pale and thin.

"I am sorry you make yourself anxious about me," he wrote in January. I think it is because I have begun to wear a larger coat that everybody says, 'How poorly and thin you look!' However, as you want to know everything, I have had a heavy cold ... that lasted a week. But since then I have been as well as ever in my life. I eat like a horse, sleep like a top and have

the spirits of a lark. I do not know that I have any anxiety save to be more holy and useful.

"I was in Garden Street on Sunday. We seemed welcome and were heard with great attention. When there, it would save me ten or fifteen minutes' walk if I came home by Drainside. ^[49] But I always go round at night, though ever so tired, because you wish it. So I am sure you need not be concerned about me. As to my health, I think sometimes I have too much; for I have such a flow of spirits! and often have to restrain myself from idle conversation and jokes. 'In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.'

"Praise God, I have much to be thankful for. 'The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places.' Dr. Hardey talks to me more like a friend than an employer. Of course I know how to keep my place. And I can truly say I am thankful for the reading habits you implanted in me that make me more or less independent of companions."

But the one he sought to comfort was far from satisfied. He was well apparently for the moment, and happy in the Lord, but if this were the line he was taking up what would it mean for the future? Yes, the future—that was the trouble. In the light of present privations she saw with painful clearness all that life in China might bring. And he was her only son.

Ah, that shrinking of mother-hearts! God only who made us fully, understands. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all," how shall He not fathom the depth of even that anguish. Yes, He has borne it too. God Himself suffered most for a sinning, sorrowing world, and He does not forget. He knows all it costs to give up home and loved ones and go alone to earth's dark places to lay down life itself, it may be, in seeking souls for whom the Saviour died. And He knows too the sacrifice of those who cannot go, but send their dearest—life of their life, soul of their soul—and

with bleeding, thankful hearts look up into His face saying, and saying truly, "I have nothing too precious for Jesus."

He did not blame this mother that for a moment she seemed to waver. It is only "through the Eternal Spirit" such sacrifices can ever be unreservedly offered. And for the passing hesitation we may well be thankful, seeing it called forth the following, that might not otherwise have been written.

Do not let anything unsettle you, dear Mother. Missionary work is indeed the noblest mortals can engage in, and angels would be proud, if I may use such an expression, if they could be permitted to share so glorious an undertaking. We certainly cannot be insensible to the ties of nature, but should we not rejoice when we have anything we can give up for the Saviour? You would be far more unsettled if I were to turn away from this work, and if the Lord were to withdraw His restraining grace and I fell into sin in consequence, would you not? It is all of His mercy that I am preserved from many of the pitfalls that ensnare other young men.

As to my health, I think I never was so well and hearty in my life. The winds here are extremely searching, but as I always wrap up well I am pretty secure. ... The cold weather gives me a good appetite, and it would be dear economy to stint myself. So I take as much plain, substantial food as I need, but waste nothing on luxuries. In going to my lodgings I have somehow got into one particular route, and always go the same way and cross at the same place. I have never passed the gate once, and at night the reflection of the lamps and windows opposite are always shining on the Drain.

I have found some brown biscuits which are really as cheap as bread, eighteen pence a stone, and much nicer. For breakfast I have biscuit and herring, which is cheaper than butter (three for a penny, and half a one is enough) with coffee. For dinner

I have at present a prune-and-apple pie. Prunes are two or three pence a pound and apples tenpence a peck. I use no sugar but loaf, which I powder, and at fourpence halfpenny a pound I find it is cheaper than the coarser kind. Sometimes I have roast potatoes and tongue, which is as inexpensive as any other meat. For tea I have biscuit and apples. I take no supper, or occasionally a little biscuit and apple. Sometimes I have a rice pudding, a few peas boiled instead of potatoes, and now and then some fish. By being wide awake, I can get cheese at fourpence to sixpence a pound that is better than we often have at home for eightpence. Now I see rhubarb and lettuce in the market, so I shall soon have another change. I pickled a penny red cabbage with three halfpence worth of vinegar, which made me a large jar-full. So you see, at little expense I enjoy many comforts. To these add a home where every want is anticipated, and "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," and if I were not happy and contented I should deserve to be miserable.

I am enlarging on these trifles, though they are not worth writing about, because I know they will interest you and perhaps help you to feel more settled about me. If not, please tell me and I will not do so any more....

Continue to pray for me, dear Mother. Though comfortable as regards temporal matters, and happy and thankful, I feel I need your prayers. ... Oh Mother, I cannot tell you, I cannot describe how I long to be a missionary; to carry the Glad Tidings to poor, perishing sinners; to spend and be spent for Him who died for me. I feel as if for this I could give up everything, every idol, however dear.

Think, Mother, of twelve millions-a number so great that it is impossible to realise it-yes, twelve million souls in China, every year, passing without God and without hope into eternity, Oh, what need for earnestness in the Church and in individual believers! Do we not deserve, by our worldly-

mindfulness, our indolence, our apathy, our ingratitude and disobedience to the Divine command, "Go teach all nations," do we not deserve to experience little of the love of God and the peace of Christianity?

Oh, it is a noble, an honourable calling I feel my utter unworthiness and unfitness for it. I want more of the Divine life, more of the Spirit of God to make me a faithful servant and witness. Oh for more grace, love, faith, zeal, holiness!

Please tell Father that I have been going to write to him several times this week to say, If he will only go to China and preach the Gospel, I will work like a slave, and live cheap, and send him twentyfive or thirty pounds a year myself until he gets established. Or if he prefers it I will give up my situation and come home and manage the business for him for five or six years. Tell him the voyage would probably lengthen his life. He has a gift for languages. The Rev. William Burns preached his first sermon in Chinese only six months after landing. Does he not think there are plenty of Christians in Barnsley? But who cares for China? They are dying, dying, dying, 250,000 every week, without the knowledge of God, of Christ, of salvation. Oh, let us look with compassion on this multitude! God has been merciful to us: let us be like Him. The cry comes "Help us, Help us! Will no man care for our souls?" Can we refuse?

Shall we whose souls are lighted

With wisdom from on high;

Shall we to men benighted

The lamp of Life deny?

*I must conclude. Would you not give up **all** for Jesus who died for you? Yes, Mother, I know you would. God be with you and*

comfort you.

Must I leave as soon as I can save money enough to go? I feel as if I could not live, if something is not done for China.

What a glimpse is here afforded into his deeper life during that winter at Drainside! "I cannot tell, I cannot describe how I long to be a missionary, to carry the Glad Tidings to poor, perishing sinners. ... For this I could give up everything, every idol, however dear ... ***I feel as if I could not live if something is not done for China.***"

This was no mere emotion, no superficial interest that might give place to considerations of personal advantage. It was not that he had taken up missionary work as a congenial branch of Christian activity, but that the need of the perishing in heathen lands, the need and longing of the heart of Christ—"them also I must bring"—had gripped him and held him fast. He believed that the heathen are perishing, and that without a knowledge of the one and only Saviour they must be eternally lost. He believed that it was in view of this, and because of His infinite love, that God had given "His only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And these convictions pledged him to the only life possible in view of such stupendous facts—a life wholly given to making that great redemption known, especially to those who had never heard.

Yet much as he longed to go, and go at once, there were considerations that held him back.

"To me it was a very grave matter," he wrote of that winter, "to contemplate going out to China, far from all human aid, there to depend upon the living God alone for protection, supplies, and help of every kind. I felt that one's spiritual muscles required strengthening for such an undertaking. There was no doubt that if faith did not fail, God would not

fail. But what if one's faith should prove insufficient? I had not at that time learned that even 'if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself.' It was consequently a very serious question to my mind, not whether He was faithful, but whether I had strong enough faith to warrant my embarking in the enterprise set before me.

"When I got out to China, I thought to myself, 'I shall have no claim on any one for anything. My only claim will be on God. How important to learn, before leaving England, to move man through God by prayer alone.'"

He knew that faith was the one power that could remove mountains, conquer every difficulty and accomplish the impossible. But had he the right kind of faith? Could he stand alone in China? Much as he longed to be a missionary, would such faith as he possessed be sufficient to carry him through all that must be faced? What had it carried him through already, here at home?

He thankfully realised that faith, the faith he longed for, was a "gift of God," and that it might "grow exceedingly." But for growth, exercise was needed, and exercise of faith was obviously impossible apart from trial. Then welcome trial, welcome anything that would increase and strengthen this precious gift, proving to his own heart at any rate that he had faith of the sort that would really stand and grow.

And here it should be remembered that in taking this attitude before the Lord, Hudson Taylor was wholly earnest and sincere. He was bringing "all the tithes into the storehouse," a most important consideration; living a life that made it possible for him to exercise faith to which God could respond in blessing. In a word, there was no hindrance in himself to the answer to his prayers; and experiences followed that have been made an encouragement to thousands the wide world over.

The story though well known will bear repeating here, illustrating as it does the only principle of growth in spiritual things, "From faith to faith"; the law reiterated by our Lord Himself, "He that hath, to him shall be given."

"To learn before leaving England to move man through God by prayer alone," this and nothing less was the object Hudson Taylor had before him now, and it was not long before he came to see a simple, natural way of practising this lesson.

At Hull my kind employer, always busy, wished me to remind him whenever my salary became due. This I determined not to do directly, but to ask that God would bring the fact to his recollection, and thus encourage me by answering prayer.

At one time as the day drew near for the payment of a quarter's salary I was as usual much in prayer about it. The time arrived, but Dr. Hardey made no allusion to the matter. I continued praying. Days passed on and he did not remember, until at length on settling up my weekly accounts one Saturday night, I found myself possessed of only one remaining coin, a half-crown piece. Still, I had hitherto known no lack, and I continued praying.

That Sunday was a very happy one. As usual my heart was full and brimming over with blessing. After attending Divine Service in the morning, my afternoons and evenings were taken up with Gospel work in the various lodging-houses I was accustomed to visit in the lowest part of the town. At such times it almost seemed to me as if heaven were begun below, and that all that could be looked for was an enlargement of one's capacity for joy, not a truer filling than I possessed.

After concluding my last service about ten o'clock that night, a poor man asked me to go and pray with his wife, saying that she was dying. I readily agreed, and on the way to his house asked him why he had not sent for the priest, as his accent told

me he was an Irishman. He had done so, he said, but the priest refused to come without a payment of eighteen pence which the man did not possess, as the family was starving.

Immediately it occurred to my mind that all the money I had in the world was the solitary half-crown, and that it was in one coin; moreover, that while the basin of water-gruel I usually took for supper was awaiting me, and there was sufficient in the house for breakfast in the morning, I certainly had nothing for dinner on the coming day.

Somehow or other there was at once a stoppage in the flow of joy in my heart. But instead of reproving myself I began to reprove the poor man, telling him that it was very wrong to have allowed matters to get into such a state as he described, and that he ought to have applied to the relieving officer. His answer was that he had done so, and was told to come at eleven o'clock the next morning, but that he feared his wife might not live through the night.

"Ah," thought I, "if only I had two shillings and a sixpence instead of this half-crown, how gladly would I give these poor people a shilling! "But to part with the half-crown was far from my thoughts. I little dreamed that the truth of the matter simply was that I could trust God plus one and-sixpence, but was not prepared to trust Him only, without any money at all in my pocket.

My conductor led me into a court, down which I followed him with some degree of nervousness. I had found myself there before, and at my last visit had been roughly handled. My tracts had been torn to pieces and such a warning given me not to come again that I felt more than a little concerned. Still, it was the path of duty and I followed on. Up a miserable flight of stairs into a wretched room he led me; and oh, what a sight there presented itself! Four or five children stood about, their sunken cheeks and temples all telling unmistakably the story—of slow starvation, and lying on a wretched pallet was a poor,

exhausted mother, with a tiny infant thirty-six hours old moaning rather than crying at her side, for it too seemed spent and failing.

"Ah!" thought I, "if I had two shillings and a sixpence, instead of half-a-crown, how gladly should they have one-and-sixpence of it." But still a wretched unbelief prevented me from obeying the impulse to relieve their distress at the cost of all I possessed.

It will scarcely seem strange that I was unable to say much to comfort these poor people. I needed comfort myself. I began to tell them, however, that they must not be cast down; that though their circumstances were very distressing there was a kind and loving Father in heaven. But something within me cried, "You hypocrite! telling these unconverted people about a kind and loving Father in heaven, and not prepared yourself to trust Him without a half-a-crown."

I was nearly choked. How gladly would I have compromised with conscience, if I had had a florin and a sixpence! I would have given the florin thankfully and kept the rest. But I was not yet prepared to trust in God alone, without the sixpence.

To talk was impossible under these circumstances, yet strange to say I thought I should have no difficulty in praying. Prayer was a delightful occupation in those days. Time thus spent never seemed wearisome and I knew no lack of words. I seemed to think that all I should have to do would be to kneel down and pray, and that relief would come to them and to myself together.

"You asked me to come and pray with your wife," I said to the man, "let us pray." And I knelt down.

But no sooner had I opened my lips with "Our Father who art in heaven," than conscience said within, "Dare you mock God? Dare you kneel down and call Him Father with that

half-crown in your pocket?"

Such a time of conflict then came upon me as I have never experienced before or since. How I got through that form of prayer I know not, and whether the words uttered were connected or disconnected I cannot tell. But I arose from my knees in great distress of mind.

The poor father turned to me and said, "You see what a terrible state we are in, sir. If you can help us, for God's sake do!"

At that moment the word flashed into my mind, "Give to him that asketh of thee. "And in the word of a King there is power.

I put my hand into my pocket and slowly drawing out the halfcrown, gave it to the man, telling him that it might seem a small matter for me to relieve them, seeing that I was comparatively well off, but that in parting with that coin I was giving him my all; what I had been trying to tell them was indeed true-God really was a Father, and might be trusted. The joy all came back in full floodtide to my heart. I could say anything and feel it then, and the hindrance to blessing was gone-gone, I trust, forever,

Not only was the poor woman's life saved; but my life, as I fully realised, had been saved too. It might have been a wreck-would have been, probably, as a Christian life-had not grace at that time conquered, and the striving of God's Spirit been obeyed.

I well remember how that night, as I went home to my lodgings, my heart was as light as my pocket. The dark, deserted streets resounded with a hymn of praise that I could not restrain. When I took my basin of gruel before retiring, I would not have exchanged it for a prince's feast. I reminded the Lord as I knelt at my bedside of His own Word, "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord"; I asked Him not to let

my loan be a long one, or I should have no dinner next day. And with peace within and peace without, I spent a happy, restful night.

Next morning for breakfast my plate of porridge remained, and before it was finished the postman's knock was heard at the door, I was not in the habit of receiving letters on Monday, as my parents and most of my friends refrained from posting on Saturday, so that I was somewhat surprised when the landlady came in holding a letter or packet in her wet hand covered by her apron. I looked at the letter, but could not make out the handwriting. It was either a strange hand or a feigned one, and the postmark was blurred. Where it came from I could not tell. On opening the envelope I found nothing written within; but inside a sheet of blank paper was folded a pair of kid gloves, from which, as I opened them in astonishment, half-a sovereign fell to the ground.

"Praise the Lord," I exclaimed. "Four hundred percent for twelve hours' investment—that is good interest! How glad the merchants of Hull would be if they could lend their money at such a rate." Then and there I determined that a bank that could not break should have my savings or earnings, as the case might be—a determination I have not yet learned to regret.

I cannot tell you how often my mind has recurred to this incident, or all the help it has been to me in circumstances of difficulty in afterlife. If we are faithful to God in little things, we shall gain experience and strength that will be helpful to us in the more serious trials of life.

But this was not the end of the story, nor was it the only answer to prayer that was to confirm his faith at this time. For the chief difficulty still remained. Dr. Hardey had not remembered; and though prayer was unremitting, other matters appeared entirely to engross his attention. It would have been so easy

to remind him. But what then of the lesson upon the acquirement of which Hudson Taylor felt his future usefulness depended—"to move man through God, by prayer alone."

"This remarkable and gracious deliverance," he continued, "was a great joy to me as well as a strong confirmation of faith. But of course ten shillings however economically used will not go very far, and it was none the less necessary to continue in prayer, asking that the larger supply which was still due might be remembered and paid. All my petitions, however, appeared to remain unanswered, and before a fortnight elapsed I found myself pretty much in the same position that I had occupied on the Sunday night already made so memorable. Meanwhile I continued pleading with God more and more earnestly that He would Himself remind Dr. Hardey that my salary was due.

"Of course it was not the want of money that distressed me. That could have been had at any time for the asking. But the question uppermost in my mind was this: 'Can I go to China? or will my want of faith and power with God prove so serious an obstacle as to preclude my entering upon this much-prized service?'

"As the week drew to a close I felt exceedingly embarrassed. There was not only myself to consider. On Saturday night a payment would be due to my Christian landlady, which I knew she could not well dispense with. Ought I not, for her sake, to speak about the matter of the salary? Yet to do so would be, to myself at any rate, the admission that I was not fitted to undertake a missionary enterprise. I gave nearly the whole of Thursday and Friday, all the time not occupied in my necessary employment, to earnest wrestling with God in prayer. But still on Saturday morning I was in the same position as before. And now my earnest cry was for guidance as to whether I should still continue to wait the Father's time.

As far as I could judge I received the assurance that to wait His time was best, and that God in some way or other would interpose on my behalf. So I waited, my heart being now at rest and the burden gone.

"About five o'clock that Saturday afternoon, when Dr. Hardey had finished writing his prescriptions, his last circuit for the day being taken, he threw himself back in his arm-chair, as he was wont, and began to speak of the things of God. He was a truly Christian man, and many seasons of happy fellowship we had together. I was busily watching, at the time, a pan in which a decoction was boiling that required a good deal of attention. It was indeed fortunate for me that it was so, for without any obvious connection with what had been going on, all at once he said

'By the by, Taylor, is not your salary due again?'

"My emotion may be imagined. I had to swallow two or three times before I could answer. With my eye fixed on the pan and my back to the doctor, I told him as quietly as I could that it was overdue some little time. How thankful I felt at that moment! God surely had heard my prayer and caused him in this time of my great need to remember the salary without any word or suggestion from me. He replied,

"Oh, I am so sorry you did not remind me! You know how busy I am. I wish I had thought of it a little sooner, for only this afternoon I sent all the money I had to the bank. Otherwise I would pay you at once."

"It is impossible to describe the revulsion of feeling caused by this unexpected statement. I knew not what to do. Fortunately for me the pan boiled up and I had a good reason for rushing with it from the room. Glad indeed I was to get away and keep out of sight until after Dr. Hardey had returned to his house, and most thankful that he had not perceived my emotion.

"As soon as he was gone I had to seek my little sanctum and pour out my heart before the Lord for some time before calmness, and more than calmness, thankfulness and joy were restored. I felt that God had His own way, and was not going to fail me. I had sought to know His will early in the day, and as far as I could judge had received guidance to wait patiently. And now God was going to work for me in some other way.

"That evening was spent, as my Saturday evenings usually were, in reading the Word and preparing the subject on which I expected to speak in the various lodging-houses on the morrow. I waited perhaps a little longer than usual. At last about ten o'clock, there being no interruption of any kind, I put on my overcoat and was preparing to leave for home, rather thankful to know that by that time I should have to let myself in with the latchkey, as my landlady retired early. There was certainly no help for that night. But perhaps God would interpose for me by Monday, and I might be able to pay my landlady early in the week the money I would have given her before had it been possible.

"Just as I was about to turn down the gas, I heard the doctor's step in the garden that lay between the dwelling-house and Surgery. He was laughing to himself very heartily, as though greatly amused. Entering the Surgery he asked for the ledger, and told me that, strange to say, one of his richest patients had just come to pay his doctor's bill. Was it not an odd thing to do? It never struck me that it might have any bearing on my own case, or I might have felt embarrassed. But looking at it simply from the position of an uninterested spectator, I also was highly amused that a man rolling in wealth should come after ten o'clock at night to pay a bill which he could any day have met by a cheque with the greatest ease. It appeared that somehow or other he could not rest with this on his mind, and had been constrained to come at that unusual hour to

discharge his liability.

"The account was duly receipted in the ledger, and Dr. Hardey was about to leave, when suddenly he turned and handing me some of the banknotes just received, said to my surprise and thankfulness

"By the way, Taylor, you might as well take these notes. I have no change, but can give you the balance next week.'

"Again I was left, my feelings undiscovered, to go back to my little closet and praise the Lord with a joyful heart that after all I might go to China. To me this incident was not a trivial one; and to recall it sometimes, in circumstances of great difficulty, in China or elsewhere, has proved no small comfort and strength."

Chapter XI^(TOC)

If It be Thou, Bid me Come

March-September 1852. AET. 19-20

IT is perhaps hardly to be wondered at that in the light of these experiences the importance of something higher far than money, in relation to the service of God, began to impress Hudson Taylor. His quiet life at Drainside was working a change in his attitude toward many things. There were memorable hours that winter in which he saw from the divine standpoint as never before, and a spirit shines out in his letters of the early spring that is clearly traceable to the trials into which he had been brought and the faith and prayer that overcame them.

"I feel I have not long to stay in this country now," he wrote to his sister on March 1. "I do not know what turn Providence is about to take, but I think some change is coming, and I am forewarned that I may be prepared. Pray for me that my faith fail not ... I am so unworthy, so unfit for the Lord's service! But that will only make the glory more entirely His. Oh to be instrumental in bringing many to His fold!

"I feel the Lord is saying, 'If I open the door or bid thee go, wilt thou go, even if thou canst not see the way clearly? Wilt thou trust in Me? The very hairs of your head are all numbered. Ye are of more value than many sparrows.' I do not feel sure that He does not intend me to give up my situation and work my passage out to China to go in faith, nothing doubting, I am waiting patiently on Him for guidance. In due time He will manifest His will, and then He, and He alone, can give me grace to fulfil it."

Only two weeks previously he had written to his mother. "Must I leave as soon as I can save money enough to go?" "Now it was no longer a question of money. It was the far more important question of souls.

"Oh Amelia," he continued, "my heart is bound to you by ten thousand ties! But if my Saviour calls, shall I not obey? If He has left His throne in glory to come and bleed and die for us, shall we not leave all, all, and follow Him? If I stay here another two years and save fifty or sixty pounds to pay my expenses to China, I shall land there no better off than if I go at once and work my passage out. In two years there will die in that land at least twenty-four million people. ... In six or eight months I should be able to talk a little Chinese. And if I could instruct in the truths of the Gospel one poor sinner, and the Spirit accompanied the word with power to his soul and he were saved—to all eternity he would be happy, praising the Redeemer. Then what would the hardships of a four or five months' voyage weigh in comparison? These 'light afflictions which are but for a moment' work out 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory'"

To his mother also he wrote a characteristic letter about this thought of working his passage out to China. His idea was, failing a berth as assistant to a ship's surgeon, to go as a sailor before the mast, and he had fully informed himself as to all that would be involved. Captain Finch especially had warned him of the hardships of a five months' voyage under the latter conditions, assuring him that he could never stand either the work or the companionship that must fall to his lot. But upon examining into details Hudson Taylor found nothing to daunt his faith or courage, and the very fact that it would mean sacrifice to the point of suffering made it seem all the more worth while, for Jesus' sake.

But of this he said little to his mother, dwelling rather upon the rich compensations both in this life and in the life to come.

*"I am deeply thankful," he wrote, referring to one of her recent letters, "that you do not wish to recall the offering you made of me to the Lord. Perhaps He means to try our sincerity in this respect sooner than either of us anticipated. If I do not know the intensity of a mother's love, I feel so much the strength of a son's love, a brother's love, of love to friends and brethren in the Lord, that the thought of leaving all seems like tearing away part of one's very self. But, praise God, I know something also of a Saviour's love, though but little yet. He is to me a **satisfying** portion, and I can truly say—*

I all on earth forsake,

Its wisdom, fame and power,

And Thee my only portion make,

My Shield and, Tower.

"Oh Mother, I cannot tell you how unspeakably happy I was on Sunday afternoon while singing those words! My soul was overwhelmed with heavenly joys. I felt I had nothing to give up worthy of mention, compared with what I had to receive. I could not refrain from tears of joy as I dedicated myself afresh to the service of Him who has loved us and washed us from our sins in His own precious blood.

"Oh how strong I felt in the joy of the Lord! ... He soon, however, made me realise that my strength is in Him and of Him only. I was feeling as if, for Him, I could leave all. But this thought followed quickly: 'It is no use talking and thinking about what you could do. What will you do? Peter thought he could do this and that, but when the test came he denied his

Lord.' Yes, I should fail as he did if I tried in my own strength. But the Holy Spirit can work in us 'to will and to do.' Our sufficiency is of Him. I feel I am helpless in myself, but' God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.'"

That he was deeply feeling the reality of all this is evident from a second letter to his sister that accompanied the above, dated March 12.

"We dwell too much on the things that are seen and temporal," he wrote, "and far too little on those that are unseen and eternal.... Only let us keep these things in view, and the cares and pleasures of this world will not affect us much. ... Oh, my dear Sister, let us live for eternity! Let us seek to be near the throne. What if for this we have to pass, as we undoubtedly shall, through great tribulation? Does He not promise, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee'? So that we may boldly say 'The Lord is my helper: I will not fear what man shall do unto me.' Praise His holy name! ..."

"Oh for more grace and love, a love like His, who counted not His life dear unto Himself that He might redeem us! He sought not ease and comfort, that He might secure eternal happiness and heavenly rest for us. The value of a soul-how immense, incalculable! The precious blood of Christ was the only price at which it could be purchased, and that was not withheld. If we really believe these things and have received the blessings that flow from His sacrifice, shall we withhold ourselves, our loved ones from Him? ... Shall we fear to enter on His service because it will lessen our comforts? Shall we count even our lives dear, if we may perchance win souls for Jesus? No, a thousand times no! If we do, how dwelleth the love of God in us? ..."

"Dear, dear Sister, let us live for God and for Him only. Let us seek to know all His will and to do it, whatever the cost. And may God, from whom all good desires arise and through

whom alone they can be carried out, pour on you and on me' the healthful spirit of His grace,' that having no desire save to do His will we may be enabled to perform it, and that in us He may be glorified."

But ready though he was for the sacrifice involved, Hudson Taylor was not to work his way out to China before the mast. "He was not to be tried thus far," wrote his mother, recalling with thankfulness the guidance given in answer to their prayers. For it was evident to those whose opinion he valued most that the time had not yet come for him to go forward. He was too young as yet. Further training was needed and experience in the things of God. It was well, no doubt, that it was in his heart to leave all and follow wherever the Master led. But was He leading just at that time to China? To his parents and friends it seemed not. He had been much in prayer that if it were the Lord's will for him to go without delay, they might recognise it and bid him God-speed. But all advised against it. He could not have taken the step without disregarding the counsel of Christian friends in Hull as well as of his own circle in Barnsley. And this he would not do; for he was dealing with God, who can overrule second causes.

He gathered therefore that the Lord's time had not yet come. It might be that He was leading to some other step in preparation for the future, but evidently it was not His purpose that he should leave immediately for China. The conclusion was not come to lightly. It was hard to give up his carefully thought-out plans, and he learned that there may be self-will even in what looks like devotion. It was an opportunity, however, for putting into practice the important principle, "To obey is better than sacrifice," and he embraced it cheerfully, handing over all results to the Lord. After taking time to assure himself that he was being led of God, he wrote to his mother on March 22:

As to my going to China-in accordance with the unanimous

advice of those I have consulted here and with your own opinion, I intend, D.V., to remain in Hull another year and wait upon the Lord for guidance. I was much pleased with your judgment, as I had prayed the Lord, to whom all hearts are open, to bring us definitely to one mind. If it be His will for me to go sooner, He can thrust me out or open the way unmistakably, The Lord does answer prayer and make good His promises. I long to see you all again, and do not anticipate a lengthened delay now.

Sunday last was, I think, the happiest day I ever spent, and still I feel the peace that passes all understanding: peace flowing like a river, deep and still, ... perfect rest in Him who is the Rock of Ages. Praise the Lord, He is ever near us!

His presence makes our paradise,

And where He is, is heaven.

A week spent at home in the lovely month of April, while it brought untold refreshment, made the dreariness of Drainside on his return all the more apparent. But inwardly he was rejoicing in the Lord, and though "rather unhinged at first," as he wrote to his sister, soon settled down to hard work and solitude once more. It was like him, as the days lengthened, to turn to good account the strip of waste land in front of the cottage for the benefit of Mrs. Finch and her family. His love of plants and nature generally was so great that even mustard and cress growing outside his window was better than nothing, and his efforts at gardening, though confined within utilitarian limits, afforded him much satisfaction.

That was a precious summer, spent in working, thinking, praying, and in diligent study of the Word of God. Time seemed all too short for the many duties crowded into it, and he was learning how much more can be

accomplished in a day from which an hour is deliberately taken for prayer, than in the same time wholly given to one's ordinary occupations.

"I am finding it a good plan," he wrote to his sister in July, "not to attempt anything in my own strength, but to look to the Lord for all... I would earnestly recommend you never to read your Bible, much less any other book, ... nor even attempt to write a letter, without first lifting your heart to the Lord, that He may guide, enlighten, and teach you ... delivering you from the snares of the evil one and in all things giving you His blessing. Try it, and you will find it no vain thing to wait upon the Lord."

He was deeply feeling at this time his need of a wisdom higher than his own, his friend and employer having put before him proposals of a generous nature with regard to the completion of his medical studies. Twelve months' work together had convinced Dr. Hardey that he had found no ordinary assistant. He valued his services highly, and was interested in the lad not merely on his own account but because of the missionary future he kept so stedfastly in view. The plan he suggested, however, involved a contract of the nature of an apprenticeship for several years. This was a serious consideration with Hudson Taylor, and finally led to his declining the offer. It was not easy to take this step, eager as he was to become a medical man; but the more he prayed over it the more he felt he dared not bind himself by any such agreement, not knowing when or how the Lord might open his way to China.

Ever since his visit to Barnsley the conviction had been growing upon him that the time had come for some step in that direction. He was now twenty years of age, and realised the importance of making the best use of the little while that might remain to him in England. London attracted him because of its advantages for medical study. He had not forgotten the help proffered by

Mr. Pearse and the Chinese Evangelisation Society, before he came to Hull. They had then been willing to bear the expense of his fees at the London Hospital if he could obtain employment that would leave him time for study, or otherwise provide his board and lodging. Did that offer still hold good, he wondered, and, if so, could he avail himself of it?

Gradually as he prayed over the matter it became clear to him that he ought not to remain in Hull much longer. He had learned all he could from Dr. Hardey under present conditions, and to stay on meant loss of time, as far as preparation for China was concerned. Yes, go he ought and must, in faithfulness to his future service. But how was it to be accomplished?

And just then a test of faith was permitted that, coming suddenly, found him unprepared. His father at home in Barnsley had for some time been more or less unsettled in his business. He was still an active man of only five-and forty, and something, it may be his son's missionary spirit, had stirred in him longings for a wider field of usefulness. He had no doubt thought and prayed over Hudson's suggestion that he should go as an evangelist to China, but many circumstances combined to make this impracticable. A further thought had grown out of it, however, that for a time influenced him strongly. Might there not be in the new world of Canada or the United States opportunities for carrying on his business, and even bettering the family fortunes, in a far more needy sphere than Barnsley and its neighbourhood afforded? The more he considered it the stronger became his desire to go and see; and the mother was deputed accordingly to find out from Hudson what he would think of taking charge at home for the next two years.

Filled with surprise and almost consternation, the latter hardly gave due weight to the wishes of his parents. Gladly would he have gone home for two years, or ten, to liberate his father for work in China. But a business journey

to America, even though combined with an evangelistic purpose, seemed to him a very different proposition. To his mother he wrote freely, dwelling on all that it would mean to abandon at such a time the little preparation he could make for his life-work. Did he forget for the moment that that life with all that concerned it was in the hands of God? If so he was quickly recalled to the real rest of his soul, and made to realise that his point of view had been selfish and wrong. How true was his repentance may be seen from the following

HULL, July 9, 1852.

MY DEAR FATHER

I cannot come to you, and so write to say in the language of the prodigal, "I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Conscience has repeatedly troubled me about the answer I sent to your inquiry as to whether I was willing to come home for two years, should you go abroad, and I can no longer rest without ... entreating your forgiveness.

Though I mentioned the sacrifices I should have to make in coming home, I said nothing about those you have so willingly made for me the sleepless hours, the anxious thoughts, the expense to which you have been put, the education you have given me by which I am able to procure all the comforts I now enjoy. And this is the return I have made for all these kindnesses. I have written of the sacrifices I should have to make in undertaking to manage for a short time the business at which you have toiled for twenty years for my benefit. Father, I have been an ungrateful son. I am deeply sorry. Will you forgive me?

I will earnestly endeavour, by the grace of God, to be more dutiful in future, and if you still wish me to come home for two

years I will do so willingly, nay with pleasure, as it will give me an opportunity of showing the sincerity of my repentance. Then afterwards, if the Lord will, I shall hope to engage in His work in China...

*Believe me, dear Father, your affectionate son,
JAMES HUDSON TAYLOR.*

But again in the providence of God the sacrifice he was ready to make was not required. For the father abandoned the idea of going abroad, and soon settled down as before to his useful, honoured life in Barnsley. Thus Hudson was free to reconsider his own movements and the question of going to London.

And now came a time long to be remembered in his experience, a time that would have been one of painful anxiety had not the grace of God turned it all to joy and peace. For the clearer became his conviction of what the Lord would have him do, the greater seemed the difficulties in the way of carrying it out. He felt quite sure that the right thing was to give notice to Dr. Hardey without delay, and go forward to his medical studies in London. But all his efforts to find suitable employment proved unavailing. With no means to fall back upon, save the small sum laid by to provide an outfit for China; with few friends in the great city, and no home open to him there, he might well have been discouraged. But the very reverse was the case. Instead of wasting time and strength in anxious thought, he was enabled to leave it all in the hands of God, praying with childlike trust, "Make **Thy** way plain before my face." How things would work out for him he could not tell; but he gave himself the more to prayer, confident that at the right time guidance would be given.

All through July and August this faith was growing stronger, and he was delighting in the promises of the thirty-seventh Psalm.

Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. ... Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him. ... The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delighteth in his way.

As he thought upon these assurances, so full and so explicit, an unlooked-for change came over everything, and he began to see in the light that only shines from the Unseen. What was he really waiting for? He was not poor and in difficulties, but rich-rich as all the promises of God. Was it his duty to go forward? What though there seemed no solid ground to tread upon! Was his Master there upon the unknown sea before him? Was it His voice heard across the waters? Then he could leave the little boat without hesitation and go to Jesus. If it be Thou, Lord, "if it be Thou, bid me come." And the answer was in tones he could not doubt.

"I think I have never enjoyed such peace of mind as lately," he wrote to his mother on August 27." And the reason is that instead of looking at circumstances I leave myself in the hands of God. What a wonderful Psalm the 37th is. Oh, the rich feasts laid up for us in the precious Word!...

"With regard to London: when I returned here from Barnsley, I began prayerfully to consider why I desired to take the step contemplated; and I believe my only object is that I may be enabled to serve the Lord better and be more useful in the advancement of His Kingdom. This step I have every ground for thinking will be a valuable preparation for China. Then why do I not take it? Simply because I am in doubt about the wherewithal. If my earthly father had offered to send me five or ten pounds in case of need, I should have resigned my

position here without hesitation. How much more should I go forward trusting in Him who says: 'Take no thought saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed? ... Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.' 'Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed.'"

To go on depending on circumstances seems to me like doubting the Lord. Consequently I gave notice to Dr. Hardey on Saturday last, and shall go up to London whether I obtain a situation or not, trusting in the Lord. I have heard of one to-day and shall write about it, though I do not think it will suit me on account of distance from the Hospital. As to getting a salary, that is quite out of the question. If I can find a position that will allow six or eight hours a day for lectures, that is all I can expect.

"I am indeed proving the truth of that word: 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.' My mind is quite as much at rest, nay more than it would be if I had a hundred pounds in my pocket. May He keep me ever thus, simply depending on Him for every blessing, temporal as well as spiritual, for Jesus' sake."

This decision arrived at, Hudson was not afraid to burn his bridges behind him. He wrote at once to his cousin who was still in Barnsley, suggesting that he should apply to Dr. Hardey for the post he was himself vacating. John Hodson had been truly converted during his apprenticeship through the helpful influence of his relatives, and was now seeking a situation that would facilitate his medical studies. He had been in considerable anxiety about the future, and no one rejoiced more when Dr. Hardey gave him the appointment than the cousin whose place he was taking. But Hudson's interest in his welfare went deeper than these outward things, and very earnestly he sought to make use of the position in which they found themselves to strengthen his

faith in God.

"Forgive me, dear John," he wrote, "if I urge you to study the Bible more and pray more for the Holy Spirit ... to give you more light and love and more faith in it day by day; then the unsettledness you have been feeling with regard to your future prospects will pass away. If you have had enough to make you unsettled, what about me? And yet through the grace of God my mind has been and is kept 'in perfect peace' because stayed upon Him...."

"You ask what I shall do if no situation turns up. I shall go, D. V., to London; endeavour to 'trust in the Lord and do good' and in all my ways to acknowledge Him, ... and He will care for my needs. At the same time He expects us to pray about these things. 'Ask, and it shall be given you.'

"Dear John, it is sweet to depend on Jesus only. I have not heard of a likely situation yet, nor am I anxious to do' so if He would have me wait. I received a note from Uncle Benjamin yesterday, offering to take me in as his guest until I can find suitable employment and I shall probably go there. You and I see a providence in these things."

A few lines to his sister written the same day, September 4, show that he was not insensible to the difficulty of his position. He was feeling the uncertainty keenly, but was willing to be tried in this or any other way that was for his good and the glory of God.

*No situation has turned up in London that will suit me. But I am not concerned about it, as He is "the same, yesterday, to-day and forever." His love is unchanging, His word is unchangeable, His power is ever the same; therefore the heart that trusts in Him is kept in **perfect peace**. ... I know He only tries me to increase my faith, and that it is all in love. Well, if He is glorified I am content. Pray for me, dear Sister, that He*

who alone can keep us from falling ... may strengthen my faith and perfect me in love.

Shortly after these letters were written, the way began to clear before him. His uncle in London had already offered a temporary home; the Chinese Evangelisation Society renewed their arrangement with regard to his hospital fees; and the meeting he attended in Hull gave him introductions to a few Christian friends who would be accessible from his Soho quarters. Other offers of help reached him which though not accepted confirmed his assurance that he was being guided aright. Full of thankfulness he wrote to his sister in the middle of September:

Oh the love of God, the goodness of my Father and your Father, my God and your God! How kind of Him to keep me in such perfect peace and full of joy and happiness when outwardly in the most difficult position. Had I left the question "Shall I go or stay?" to be settled by circumstances, how uncertain I should have been, and how uncertain John would have been. But as the Lord enabled me to take the step without hesitation, because it was for His glory, leaving everything in His hands, my mind has been just as peaceful as it would otherwise have been unsettled. In all probability I should not have been able to sleep properly, and what with that and my business, which fully occupies time and strength, I should have been thoroughly knocked up.

Praise the Lord for His goodness! He has provided, so far, all that is necessary. Now I have a home to go to, money to pay the fees of the Ophthalmic Hospital as well as the course at the London ... and some Christian friends. When He sees fit, if He sees fit, He will find me a suitable situation, and if not, He will provide for and occupy me as seems best to Him. I leave it all in His hands, for I see plainly that it is the best way for peace and safety. He can manage these matters much better

than we can. Last autumn I was fretting and stewing, reckoning and puzzling about how to manage this and that like a person in water who cannot swim, or a fish out of it. But it all came to nothing. Now, when the Lord opens the way, though everything seems adverse, He first removes one difficulty and then another, plainly saying "Be still and know that I am God."

"Thou art my King, O God: command deliverance for Jacob.... I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.... In God we boast all the day long, and praise Thy name forever."

I know I cannot guide or keep myself, even in temporal matters, but I know that He will guide me by His counsel and afterwards receive me to glory.... Why should we be anxious, and for what? For temporal blessings? He knows that we have need of "all these things." For spiritual blessings? In Him there is fulness for every need. Poor, weak, failing as we are, Jesus is ours. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily": and we are "complete in Him."

And now, Lord, what wait I for?

My hope is in Thee.

Part III[\(TOC\)](#)

Preparation For China, in London and on the Voyage[\(TOC\)](#)

1852-1854: Chapters 12-15

Chapter XII

The New Starting Point

September and October 1852. AET.20-21

FOG-HORNS were sounding on every hand when a coasting steamer plying between Hull and London made her way slowly up the Thames. It was Saturday evening, September 25, and Hudson Taylor amongst others was expecting to land that night. But the pall of mist only gathered more and more heavily over the great city, until there was nothing for it but to cast anchor and wait till morning. By noon, it was possible to reach the Tower, and most of the passengers went ashore. A quiet Sunday followed for those who remained on board, of which Hudson Taylor was specially thankful in view of the new phase of life opening before him.

How new it was and how great his need of the strength that comes from God alone no one had any idea but himself. Not to his mother, nor even to the sister who spent the last days with him at Drainside had he spoken of the decision taken before leaving Hull that now filled his mind as he paced the deck. His friends and parents knew that he was going up to London to support himself, if possible, while completing his medical studies. They knew that the Chinese Evangelisation Society had offered financial help, and concluded that as he had declined similar offers from home he must be sufficiently provided for. And so he was by nothing more and nothing less than all the promises of God. He had a little money in his pocket and a few pounds bid by toward an outfit for China. He had a promise also of help with his hospital fees, and an invitation to be the guest for a few days or weeks of

his bachelor uncle, while looking for a situation. But beyond this there was nothing, humanly speaking, between him and want in the great city in which he was almost a stranger.

Yet this caused him no anxiety as he faced the coming winter. For the future, near as well as distant, he had one all-sufficient confidence. If that could fail, it were better to make the discovery in London than far away in China. Deliberately and of his own free will he had cut himself off from possible sources of supply that he might make full proof, under difficult circumstances, of the promised care of God alone. It was God, the living God he needed; a stronger faith to grasp His faithfulness, and more experience of the practicability of dealing with Him directly about every need. Comfort or discomfort in London, means or the lack of means, seemed to him a small matter compared with deeper knowledge of the One on whom everything depended. And now had come an unexpected opportunity for putting that knowledge to the test, and he was going forward strong in the assurance that the Lord who had already responded so graciously to his little faith would see and would provide.

Of the way in which he had been led to this position just before leaving Drainside the following is his own account

By-and-by the time drew near when it was thought desirable that I should leave Hull to attend the medical course of the London Hospital. A little while spent there, and then I had every reason to believe that my life-work in China would commence. But much as I had rejoiced at the willingness of God to hear and answer prayer and to help His half-trusting, half-timid child, I felt that I could not go to China with out having still further developed and tested my power to rest upon His faithfulness; and a marked opportunity for doing so was providentially afforded me.

My dear father had offered to bear all the expense of my stay in London. I knew, however, that, owing to recent losses, it would mean a considerable sacrifice for him to undertake this just when it seemed necessary for me to go forward. I had recently become acquainted with the Committee of the Chinese Evangelisation Society, in connection with which I ultimately left for China, and especially with its secretary, my esteemed and much-loved friend Mr. George Pearse, then of the Stock Exchange, but now and for many years himself a missionary. Not knowing of my father's proposition, the Committee also kindly offered to bear my expenses while in London. When these proposals were first made to me, I was not quite clear as to what I ought to do, and in writing to my father and the secretaries, told them that I would take a few days to pray about the matter before deciding any course of action. I mentioned to my father that I had had this offer from the Society, and told the secretaries also of his proffered aid.

Subsequently, while waiting upon God in prayer for guidance, it became clear to my mind that I could without difficulty decline both offers. The secretaries of the Society would not know that I had cast myself wholly on God for supplies, and my father would conclude that I had accepted the other offer. I therefore wrote declining both, and felt that without any one having either care or anxiety on my account I was simply in the hands of God, and that He who knew my heart, if He wished to encourage me to go to China, would bless my effort to depend upon Him alone at home.

Enough, that God my Father knows!

Nothing this faith can dim

He gives the very best to those

Who leave the choice with Him.

And so Hudson Taylor was to find it, although his London experiences were not to be unmingled with trial.

It was with a brave heart, therefore, that he presented himself at Mr. Ruffles' boarding-house near Soho Square, early on Monday morning. Here lived his uncle, Benjamin Hudson, and a cousin from Barton-on-Humber who was apprenticed to Mr. Ruffles, a builder and decorator by trade. The uncle, a bright, genial man, was not only a skilful portrait-painter, he was something of a poet also, and a clever *raconteur* with a remarkable memory for "good stories."^[50] He was decidedly popular in the boarding house and among a large circle of acquaintances, including more than one medical man to whom he was willing to introduce his nephew with a view to an apprenticeship. The cousin too was friendly, offering to share his room with the new-comer and so lessen expenses, if he decided to remain in Soho. This arrangement Hudson gladly availed himself of, for it was a comfort to belong to some one, and Tom seemed almost like a breath of home.^[51] Three long flights of stairs led to this attic-chamber, for part of which he had to pay as much as for the little room at Mrs. Finch's that now seemed so quiet and homelike by contrast. But it was a footing in London, a shelter in the big, busy city that he might call his own.

What a drop in the ocean he felt amid the tides of life now surging around him. All was so new and strange! He was in anything but a religious circle, surrounded by people who moved in a world of which he knew next to nothing. Business, politics and pleasure-seeking absorbed their attention, and his uncle and cousin did their best to draw him into the same sort of life. They had quite approved his coming to London to study medicine, and were ready in their own way to give him a helping hand. But his point of view annoyed while it perplexed them.

"Talk about trusting God," his cousin would exclaim, "one must trust one's own exertions too!" Which meant, "Do as everybody else does, and lose no time about it."

Then his unwillingness to bind himself by an ordinary apprenticeship on account of a call to missionary work in China was something they could not understand, especially when it seemed that the Society to which he was looking was more than indifferent about the matter. And this to Hudson Taylor was the most painful surprise of all.

From his own relatives he had not expected sympathy in these things, but Mr. Pearse, with whom he had been in correspondence for more than two years, understood his position and would be ready with counsel and aid. As soon, therefore, as possible he set out from Soho to find the office of the Society, little anticipating the disappointment that awaited him.

For the Hon. Secretary, as it happened, was much occupied that day and could with difficulty spare time to see him.^[52] No, nothing definite was arranged as yet. They were awaiting his arrival. Now that he was ready to begin work at the hospital the matter must be laid before the Committee. This would take time of course. Would he not come to Hackney for a Sunday before long, and talk over things more at leisure?

Well was it for Hudson Taylor as he returned to his lodgings that he really was depending on God and knew something of His unfailing care. From a helper in the office he had learned that nothing definite could be done until a formal application was laid before the Committee. In all probability the Society would help, as he had been led to expect, but everything must be done in a certain order. The best thing if there were any urgency would be to send in his application at once, so that it might not miss the next Committee

meeting on October 7, for they only gathered once a fortnight.

October 7! and it was not yet the end of September. If his case could not be dealt with at the first meeting, he would have to wait another two weeks, and perhaps another. Meanwhile he could take no position; his store of savings was diminishing; and what would they say at the boardinghouse where his indefiniteness was a source of amusement already?

If he had known all this in Hull! And yet what difference did it really make? He had not come to London depending on his own resources or on the help of man. If the winds and waves were boisterous, was there not One beside him whose hand was strong to uphold as His word to bring peace? He knew the end from the beginning; and since He had been Alpha would surely be Omega, and everything between.

So the application was sent in, and while waiting the issue Hudson Taylor settled down to study as well as he could in the room shared with his cousin. The latter's occupation allowed him to be frequently at home, and his criticisms however good-natured were not a help to quietness of mind. But there is something better than outward ease and comfort, and in entirely new surroundings Hudson Taylor was learning the old lesson—to rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him.

"As to your inquiries," he wrote to his mother on October 5, "I will try to answer them as well as I can, But really you know almost as much of my plans as I do. 'For there is nothing certain yet, except—'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'

"I have no situation and am not seeking one. I question whether I shall for some months at any rate. But I have commenced study at home. In accordance with Mr. M.'s advice I have written to the Committee formally requesting them to authorise me to attend the London Hospital practice

and lectures. But they will have to meet in regular course before I can know the result...

"London seems to me a trying place. There is so much noise and bustle, so much to distract one all the time. You can have no idea of the difference it makes to be among light, thoughtless, worldly minded people after the quiet I have enjoyed lately. But it is sweet to realise that we are 'kept by the power of God'; to be enabled to say with the Apostle, 'Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.'

"I am altogether in the Lord's hands, and He will direct me."

But the uncertainty was not over when the Committee met. Strangely enough, they seem to have considered it necessary to inform themselves further about him; and all the action taken was the passing of a resolution requesting him to procure an elaborate set of testimonials to be laid before them at their next meeting. It was Hudson Taylor's first experience of the working of a fully organised Society, and though he subsequently came to understand the need for a certain amount of "red tape" in such affairs it was an experience he never forgot in his own dealings with would-be missionaries.

That he was feeling the position keenly may be judged from a letter to his mother on hearing of the above requirements

How sweet it is to be dependent on the Lord for everything... All, all is best as He sees fit to guide. And He does guide and provide, both in temporal and spiritual matters, as long as we trust in Him...

*Never mind results... Let us leave them all to Him. Never mind if like Abraham of old we have to go out, not knowing whither. **He** knows. While unbelief sees only the difficulties, faith sees God between itself and them. ...*

As to my prospects, I cannot tell you much as yet. The Committee met on Thursday and considered my application, and on Friday night I received a note from Mr. Bird containing a resolution desiring me to procure certain testimonials by next Thursday week for their further consideration. Now this is a very serious delay, and I intend to see Mr. Pearse to-day, if possible, and talk with him about it. The required testimonials I do not quite understand, and if they are all considered necessary I shall thank the Committee for their kindness and trouble them no further, as I do not see them consistent with my views, Thank God, I am quite as willing to lose as to gain their assistance. If I have time after seeing Mr. Pearse I will add a few lines, if not I will write by a later post.

"Let not your heart be troubled," dear mother. He who has hitherto provided for, protected and guided me, still keeps my mind in perfect peace ... and will do all things well. How sweet it is to be enabled to trust in Him for all. May He ever use us for His glory.

Surely his faith was growing, under these searching tests! Apart from the Chinese Evangelisation Society what hope had he, humanly speaking, of completing his medical studies or entering upon his life-work? No other door was open to him, after long years of prayer and waiting. To have been dropped by the Society or compelled to "trouble them no further" might have meant being stranded in London with nothing before him but to take a situation and indefinitely defer going to China. Yet he was "quite as willing to lose as to gain their assistance," if that were the will of God.

He had decided, however, to see Mr. Pearse and come to an understanding about the testimonials. Accordingly he was up early the following morning and went over to Hackney in time to catch the busy Secretary before he left for the Stock Exchange. As he explained his difficulties, Mr. Pearse seems to

have understood at last. The result was that the testimonials were seen to be superfluous and only a letter or two required from those who knew him best.

Even so another ten days had to elapse before the meeting of the Committee, and during that time an opening that must have had many attractions was put before him. His father, concerned at the ordeal through which he was passing, wrote offering to take him into partnership with himself that he might have a home and "something to depend on." How easy it would have been, with the justification of this letter, to turn aside to an easier pathway. But his purpose never wavered. Holding simply to what he believed to be the guidance of God, he waited as those alone can whose expectation is from Him And before the end of the month faith was richly rewarded.

*"I am happy to say that things seem to be assuming a more settled appearance," he wrote on October 24, "and I expect all being well to commence work at the hospital to-morrow... Please thank Father for his generous offer ... but those whose trust is in the Lord **always have something to depend on.**"*

This was not the only answer to his prayers, however, that filled his heart with thanksgiving. Studying as well as he could in that little attic-chamber, he was unconscious that the one who shared it with him was being drawn in spite of himself to the only source of abiding joy and peace. Yet so it was. Tom Hodson, keenly watching his cousin's experiences, found himself face to face with conclusions he could neither escape nor gainsay. Nothing else, perhaps, would ever have made him feel his own distance from God and need of something more real and satisfying than he had ever possessed. But this did. And before the close of the year Hudson had the joy of seeing him brought to "like precious faith" in Christ, and openly taking his stand in the boarding-house as a Christian.

Chapter XIII^(TOC)

The Lord will Provide

October-December 1852. AET. 20

THE hospital at last! It was now the end of October 1852, three years almost from the December day that had brought Hudson Taylor his definite call to China. Ever since that time he had had medical study in view as the best preparation he could make for future usefulness. With little help and in spite of many obstacles he had persevered, making considerable progress with the practical side of his work. But now the broad highway lay open before him—the lectures, the wards, and all the advantages of a city hospital.

Not that "The London" of those days, on its broad expanse of Mile End Waste, was anything to compare with the noble institution that stands there now. Still, it could accommodate even then from three to four hundred inpatients, and its students had the benefit of an unusually large practice among the teeming population of the East End. It was a new world indeed to the north-country lad, and one in which no little courage was needed to maintain the standing of a consistent Christian.

But it is not so much with his outward experiences we are concerned, during this period in London, as with the development of his inward life—the growth of both faith and faithfulness amid the circumstances of his providential way.

That his temporal needs were met is manifest, for he was able to live on at Soho even after his little store of savings had been expended.

"I must not now attempt to detail," he wrote, "the way in which

the Lord was pleased, often to my surprise as well as delight, to help me from time to time."

Many answers to prayer were given that are not recorded, and from this point of view the winter was a rich one, although we have it on his own authority that his spiritual life was not as bright as it had been in Hull. But, though there was less joy in the Lord, apparently, and less consciousness of His presence, the wonderful reality did not fail.

Owing to heavy rains, the season was specially depressing. Much of the East End was flooded, with serious results for those who lived near the river or whose employment kept them in the damp, foggy streets. And Hudson Taylor, for a considerable part of every day, was among their number. Lodging at Soho for the sake of remaining with his cousin, he was fully four miles from the hospital in which most of his work was done. This meant a walk of at least two hours daily, from Oxford Street to Whitechapel, and back across the City to Oxford Street again. There was no "Tube" or "Underground" available. The only public conveyance was the old-fashioned omnibus with its three penny fare each way, a price that was quite prohibitive. So there was nothing for it but to walk.

For the young medical student was economising very strictly. How far this was necessary or desirable, it is not for us to say. He was inexperienced as yet in a life of faith, and felt it a matter of conscience to deny himself everything that could be done without, partly with a view to helping others.

"To lessen expenses," he wrote, "I shared a room with a cousin, four miles from the hospital, providing my own board; and after various experiments I found that the most economical way was to live almost exclusively on brown bread and water. Thus I was able to make the means that God gave

me last as long as possible. Some of my expenses I could not diminish, but my board was largely in my own control. A large twopenny loaf of brown bread, purchased daily on my long walk from the hospital, furnished me with supper and breakfast; and on this diet with a few apples for lunch I managed to walk eight or nine miles a day, besides being a good deal on foot attending the practice of the hospital ..."

Remember it was winter, the month of November, just the most cheerless time of all the year. Trudging home long after dark, how tempting the restaurants would look to the tired, hungry student who had had no dinner for many a day! Did the baker guess, who sold that large twopenny loaf of brown bread, why his customer always waited to have it cut in half? Only half could be taken that night for supper: the remainder had to suffice for the morrow, and experience had proved how very hard it was to make such a division impartially. When at first he tried it for himself, supper had so much the advantage of breakfast that the lad often went hungry the following day. The baker, however, was disinterested, and laid him under obligation by settling the question on the spot.

Brown bread, apples and water, at a cost of threepence a day—a diet worthy of a Bedouin Arab, minus the fragrant coffee, and more suited to his tranquil surroundings. But for a delicate lad amid the stress and strain of London life it left much to be desired.

And all the while it was the greatness of the inward way that told upon him most. Hunger and weariness of body were of little moment compared with the longing of his soul. It was the end in view that meant so much—China in its unutterable need, and what he could do to meet it; God and His purposes of blessing, to be apprehended only by faith and prayer.

Meanwhile he was getting on well with his work in the hospital.

"No," he wrote in reply to his mother's inquiries, "my health does not suffer. On the contrary, every one says how well I look, and some even that I am getting fat! Though this, I believe, can only be perceived by rather a brilliant imagination. The walks do not fatigue me as they did at first. But the profane conversation of some of the students is utterly sickening, and I need all your prayers.

"How precious the assurance,' Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end'! He never forgets, He never tires.... The future, as you say, is all in His hands, and where else would we wish it?"

Yet even as he wrote the words he was in a position that might well have given rise to anxiety, and was entering on a period of trial more severe than any he had previously known. As a background to this experience with which the year terminated, and of which he wrote as follows, precious indeed was the assurance, "He never forgets, He never tires."

One incident I cannot but refer to, that took place about this time. The husband of my former landlady in Hull was chief officer of a ship that sailed from London, and by receiving his half-pay monthly and remitting it to her I was able to save her the cost of a commission. This I had been doing for two or three months, when she wrote requesting that I would obtain the next payment as early as possible, as her rent was almost due, and she depended upon that sum to meet it, The request came at an inconvenient time. I was working hard for an examination, in the hope of obtaining a scholarship which would be of service to me, and felt that I could ill afford the time to go during the busiest part of the day to the city and procure the money. I had sufficient of my own in hand to enable me to send the required sum, and made the remittance therefore, purposing as soon as the examination was over to go and draw the regular allowance with which to refund

myself.

Before the time of examination the medical school was closed for a day on account of the funeral of the Duke of Wellington, and I had an opportunity of going at once to the office, which was situated in a street off Cheapside, and applying for the due amount. To my surprise and dismay the clerk told me that he could not pay it, as the officer in question had run away from his ship and gone to the gold diggings.

"Well," I remarked, "that is very inconvenient for me, as I have already advanced the money and I know his wife will have no means of repaying it."

The clerk said he was very sorry, but could of course only act according to orders. So there was no help for me in that direction! A little more time and thought, however, brought the comforting conclusion to my mind that-as I was depending on the Lord for everything, and His means were not limited, it was a small matter to be brought a little sooner or later into the position of needing fresh supplies from Him. So the joy and peace were not long interrupted.

Very soon after this, possibly the same evening, while sewing together some sheets of paper on which to take notes of lectures, I accidentally pricked the first finger of my right hand, and in a few moments forgot all about it. The next day at the hospital I continued dissecting as before. The body was that of a person who had died of fever, and was more than usually disagreeable and dangerous. I need scarcely say that those of us who were at work upon it dissected with special care, knowing that the slightest scratch might cost our lives. Before the morning was far advanced I began to feel weary, and while going through the surgical wards at noon was obliged to run out, being suddenly very sick-a most unusual circumstance with me, as I took but little food and nothing that could disagree with me. After feeling faint for some time, a

draught of cold water revived me and I was able to rejoin the students, I became more and more unwell, however, and during the afternoon lecture on surgery found it impossible to hold the pencil and continue taking notes. By the time the next lecture was over, my whole arm and right side were full of pain and I was both looking and feeling very ill.

Finding that I could not resume work, I went into the dissecting room to bind up the portion I was engaged upon and put away my apparatus, and said to the demonstrator, who was a skilful surgeon

"I cannot think what has come over me," describing the symptoms.

"Why," said he, "what has happened is clear enough. You must have cut yourself in dissecting, and you know that this is a case of malignant fever."

I assured him that I had been most careful and was quite certain that I had no cut or scratch.

"Well," he replied, "you certainly must have had one"; and he closely scrutinised my hand to find it, but in vain,

All at once it occurred to me that I had pricked my finger the night before, and I asked him if it were possible that a prick from a needle at that time could have been still unclosed. His opinion was that this was probably the cause of the trouble, and he advised me to get a hansom, drive home as fast as I could and arrange my affairs forthwith:

"For," said he, "you are a dead man,"

My first thought was one of sorrow that I could not go to China; but very soon came the feeling, "Unless I am greatly mistaken, I have work to do in China and shall not die." I was glad, however, to take the opportunity of speaking to my

medical friend, who was a confirmed sceptic, of the joy that the prospect of soon being with my Master gave me, telling him at the same time that I did not think I should die, as unless I were much mistaken I had work to do in China, and-if so, however severe the struggle, I must be brought

That is all very well," he answered, "but get a hansom and drive home as fast as you can. You have no time to lose, for you will soon be incapable of winding up your affairs."

I smiled a little at the idea of driving home in a hansom, for by this time my means were too exhausted to allow of such a proceeding, and I set out to walk the distance if possible. Before long, however, my strength gave way, and I felt it was no use to attempt to reach home by walking. Availing myself of an omnibus from Whitechapel Church to Farringdon Street, and another from Farringdon Street onwards, I reached, in great suffering, the neighbourhood of Soho Square, behind which I lived. On going into the house I got some hot water from the servant, and charging her very earnestly-literally as a dying man-to accept eternal life as the gift of God through Jesus Christ, I bathed my hand and lanced the finger, hoping to let out some of the poisoned blood. The pain was very severe. I fainted away, and was so long unconscious that when I came to myself I found I had been carried to bed.

An uncle of mine who lived near at hand had come in, and sent for his own medical man, an assistant surgeon at the Westminster Hospital. I assured my uncle that medical help would be of no service to me, and that I did not wish to go to the expense involved. He quieted me on this score, however, saying that he had sent for his own doctor and that the bill would be charged to himself. When the surgeon came and learned all particulars, he said,

"Well, if you have been living moderately you may pull through, but if you have been going in for beer and that sort of

thing there is no manner of chance for you."

I thought that if sober living was to do anything, few could have a better chance, as little but bread and water had been my diet for a good while past. I told him I had lived abstemiously and found that it helped me to study.

"But now," he said, "you must keep up your strength, for it will be a pretty hard struggle." And he ordered me a bottle of port wine every day and as many chops as I could consume.

Again I smiled inwardly, having no means for the purchase of such luxuries. This difficulty, however, was also met by my kind uncle, who sent me at once all that was needed.

I was much concerned, notwithstanding the agony I suffered, that my dear parents should not be made acquainted with my state. Thought and prayer had satisfied me that I was not going to die, but that there was indeed a work for me to do in China. If my dear parents should come up and find me in that condition, I must lose the opportunity of seeing how God was going to work for me now that my money was almost come to an end. So, after prayer for guidance, I obtained a promise from my uncle and cousin not to write to my parents, but to leave me to communicate with them myself. I felt it a very distinct answer to prayer when they gave me this promise, and I took care to defer all communication with Barnsley until the worst was over. At home they knew that I was working hard for an examination and did not wonder at my silence.

Days and nights of suffering passed slowly by; but at length, after several weeks, I was sufficiently restored to leave my room; and then I learned that two men, though not from the London Hospital, who had had dissection wounds at the same time as myself, had both succumbed, while I was spared in answer to prayer to work for God in China.

One day the doctor coming in found me on the sofa, and was

surprised to learn that with assistance I had walked downstairs.

"Now," he said, "the best thing you can do is to get off to the country as soon as you feel equal to the journey. You must rusticate until you have recovered a fair amount of strength, for if you begin your work too soon the consequences may still be serious."

When he had left, as I lay very exhausted on the couch, I just told the Lord all about it, and that I was refraining from making my circumstances known to those who would delight to meet my need in order that my faith might be strengthened by receiving help from Himself in answer to prayer alone. What was I to do? And I waited for His answer.

It seemed to me as if He were directing my mind to the conclusion to go again to the shipping office and inquire about the wages I had been unable to draw. I reminded the Lord that I could not afford to take a conveyance, and that it did not seem at all likely I should succeed in getting the money, and asked whether this impulse were not a mere clutching at a straw, some mental process of my own rather than His guidance and teaching. After prayer, however, and renewed waiting upon God, I was confirmed in my belief that He Himself was directing me to go to the office.

The next question was, "How am I to go?" I had had to seek help in coming downstairs, and the place was at least two miles away. The assurance was brought vividly home to me that whatever I asked of God in the name of Christ would be done, that the Father might be glorified in the Son; that what I had to do was to seek strength for the long walk, to receive it by faith, and set out upon it. Unhesitatingly I told the Lord that I was quite willing to take the walk if He would give the strength. I asked in the name of Christ that the strength might immediately be given; and sending the servant up to my room

for my hat and stick, I set out, not to **attempt** to walk, but to **walk** to Cheapside.

Although undoubtedly strengthened by faith, I never took so much interest in shop windows as I did upon that journey. At every second or third shop I was glad to lean a little against the plate glass, and take time to examine the contents of the window before passing on. It needed a special effort of faith when I got to the bottom of Farringdon Street to attempt the toilsome ascent of Snow Hill; but there was no Holborn Viaduct in those days, and it had to be done. God did wonderfully help me, and in due time I reached Cheapside, turned into the by-street in which the office was found, and sat down much exhausted on the steps leading to the first floor, which was my destination. I felt my position to be a little peculiar, sitting there on the steps so evidently spent, and the gentlemen who rushed up and downstairs looked at me with an inquiring gaze. After a little rest, however, and a further season of prayer, I succeeded in climbing the staircase, and to my comfort found in the office the clerk with whom I had hitherto dealt in the matter, Seeing me looking pale and exhausted he kindly inquired as to my health, and I told him that I had had a serious illness and was ordered to the country, but thought it well to call first and make further inquiry, lest there should have been any mistake about the mate having run off to the gold diggings.

"Oh," he said, "I am so glad you have come, for it turns out that it was an able seaman of the same name that ran away. The mate is still on board; the ship has just reached Gravesend and will be up very soon. I shall be glad to give you the half-pay up to date, for doubtless it will reach his wife more safely through you. We all know what temptations beset the men when they arrive at home after a voyage."

But before giving me the sum of money, he insisted, on my coming inside and sharing his lunch. I felt it was the Lord

indeed who was providing for me, and accepted his offer with thankfulness. When I was refreshed and rested, he gave me a sheet of paper to write a few lines to the wife, telling her of the circumstances. On my way back I procured in Cheapside a money-order for the balance due to her, and posted it; and returning home again felt myself now quite justified in taking an omnibus as far as it would serve me.

Very much better the next morning, I made my way to the surgery of the doctor who had attended me, feeling that although my uncle. was prepared to pay the bill it was right for me now that I had money in hand to ask for the account myself; The kind surgeon refused to allow me as a medical student to pay anything for his attendance, but he had supplied me with quinine which he allowed me to pay for to the extent of eight shillings; When that was settled, I saw that the sum left was just sufficient to take me home; and to my mind the whole thing seemed a wonderful interposition of God on my behalf.

I knew that the surgeon was sceptical, and told him that I should very much like to speak to him freely, if I might do so without offence; that I felt that under God I owed my life to his care, and wished very earnestly that he himself might become a partaker of the same precious faith that I possessed. So I told him my reason for being in London, and about my circumstances, and why I had declined the help of both my father and the officers of the Society in connection with which it was probable that I should go to China. I told him of the recent providential dealings of God with me, and how apparently hopeless my position had been the day before when he had ordered me to go to the country, unless I would reveal my need, which I had determined not to do; I described to him the mental exercises I had gone through; but when I added that I had actually got up from the sofa and walked to Cheapside, he looked at me incredulously and said,

"Impossible! Why, I left you lying there more like a ghost than a man."

And I had to assure him again and again that, strengthened by faith, the walk had really been taken.

I told him also what money was left to me and what payments there had been to make, and showed him that just sufficient remained to take me home to Yorkshire, providing for needful refreshment on the way and the omnibus journey at the end.

My kind friend was completely broken down, and said with tears in his eyes,

"I would give all the world for a faith like yours."

I on the other hand had the joy of telling him that it was to be obtained without money and without price,

We never met again. When I came back to town restored to health and strength I found that he had had a stroke and left for the country, and I subsequently learned that he never rallied. I was able to gain no information as to his state of mind when taken away, but I have always felt very thankful that I had the opportunity, and embraced it, of bearing that testimony for God. I cannot but entertain the hope that the Master Himself was speaking to him through His dealings with me, and that I shall meet him again in the Better Land. It would be no small joy to be welcomed by him when my own service is over.

The next day found me in my dear parents' home. My joy in the Lord's help and deliverance was so great that I was unable to keep it to myself, and before my return to London my dear mother knew the secret of my life for some time past. I need scarcely say that when I went up again to town I was not allowed to live, as indeed I was not fit to live, on the same economical lines as before my illness; I needed more now, and

the Lord did provide.

Chapter XIV^(TOC)

Light at Last

January-June 1853. AET. 20-21

THE joy of these experiences was very great and had much to do with Hudson Taylor's return to a fuller consciousness of fellowship with God. His early months in London had not been helpful spiritually, but now as winter passed away a springtide of blessing seemed to awaken in his soul.

"I do not need to be told that you have been praying for me," he wrote to his mother in February. "I have been sure of it. For though at times the heavens have seemed as brass and I have felt myself left and forsaken, I have been enabled to cling to the promises by simple, 'naked faith,' as father calls it x and never have I enjoyed more happy seasons than of late."

He had been passing through deep waters since his return to London, not in connection with financial matters, but through the mistakes and suffering of some dear to him that cost him more than words can say. But by Easter these troubles were beginning to pass away, and he was rejoicing once more in inward and outward deliverance.

His Sunday visits to Tottenham were very helpful at this time, especially the hours spent at Bruce Grove and with Miss Stacey. The latter had a way all her own of finding out what people needed, and the young medical student with his bright face, spare figure, well-worn clothes and burning love for China told a story that touched her heart.

In her garden stood a fine old cedar, a landmark in the neighbourhood and a

delightful retreat on sunny days, and the library indoors was of the same restful character, a place seemingly apart from the hurry and care of life. Miss Stacey lived alone, and was quite mistress of the situation even when surrounded as she frequently was with visitors. Hudson Taylor needed rest: she would have him left quiet. So it became an understood thing whenever he was in the house that the library and cedar tree were not invaded save by this privileged but most unconscious guest.^[53]

A change in his circumstances too proved helpful, when after six months at Soho he obtained a position as assistant to a surgeon in the City.

It was good to be at work again under experienced supervision, and a matter for thankfulness to have only a mile and a quarter to walk to the hospital, instead of four. He seems to have been living with his employer, Mr. Thomas Brown of St. Mary Axe, near Finsbury Circus, and it is comforting to read of family meals, including tea and supper. His life was necessarily a strenuous one-attending the hospital all the morning and working for Mr. Brown until nine o'clock at night, after which the time was his own for study. But his heart was at rest in God. The depression of spirits from which he had been suffering passed away, and after fifteen months of "boarding himself" on next to nothing, the change was in every way beneficial.

China was much on his heart this spring, and his outlook upon the life-work awaiting him there was becoming more definite. Previously, in Barnsley and in Hull, he had rather taken it for granted that the difficulties connected with his future would all vanish if some Society could be found to send him out. It was a youthful way of looking at things, and' now with more experience he began to see that the very opposite might be the case. In London he had come to understand something of the working of a Society with its necessary rules and regulations, and he could not but see that to be under the direction of a

Committee, while it would secure him a salary and other advantages, might greatly curtail his freedom of action, and in this way increase rather than lessen his trials.

At the same time events were transpiring in China that deepened his longing to give himself to work in the interior. This had always been his desire, in spite of the fact that inland China was inaccessible to foreign missionaries. Gutzlaff's effort to send the Gospel to the distant provinces had proved a signal failure, and Protestant Missions were still confined, and that very strictly; to the Treaty Ports. But for Hudson Taylor, the vast, dark, waiting interior, with its millions who had never heard of a Saviour's love, called with a claim and insistence that could not be disregarded. And now, through the amazing trend of events within that great Empire itself, it seemed as though his desire might be nearer accomplishment than he could ever have anticipated.

For wonderful news was slowly filtering its way from the inland provinces, news that filled the Western world with astonishment. The Tai-ping Rebellion, first recognised in 1850, had not only attained remarkable 'proportions under the leadership of Hung Siu-ts'uen. Arising in southern China, it had swept over the central provinces and was now in possession of the larger part of the Yangtze Valley, including the famous city of Nanking. There, in the former capital of the Empire, the new ruler had established his seat of government, and with a conquered country behind him had rallied his forces for the march upon Peking. But it was not only the success attending this movement that made it a matter of such extraordinary interest in Christian lands. There was about it a character such as no analogous events in history had ever before possessed.

Arising among a heathen people, entirely apart from foreign influence, this

mighty upheaval, as far as it had yet developed, appeared to be a crusade upon distinctively Christian lines. Its basis, was the Bible-but little understood, alas, in its spiritual teachings! The Ten Commandments formed the moral code of the new kingdom. Idolatry in all its phases was abolished with unsparing hand, and the worship of the true and living God substituted, in purpose at any rate. The Christian Sabbath was recognised as a day of rest and prayer, and all restrictions were removed from the preaching of the Gospel.

"I have promulgated the Ten Commandments," wrote the Taiping leader to the only missionary of his acquaintance, ^[54] "throughout the army and the rest of the population, and have taught them all to pray, morning and evening. Still those who understand the Gospel are not many. Therefore I deem it right to send the messenger in person to wish you peace, and to request you, Elder Brother, if you are not disposed to abandon me, to (come and) bring with you many teachers to help in making known the Truth and to administer the ordinance of baptism...."

"Hereafter, when my enterprise is successfully terminated, I will disseminate the Doctrine throughout the whole Empire, that all may return to the one Lord and worship the true God only, This is what my heart earnestly desires."

Scarcely less surprising was their attitude toward Western nations. Opium-smoking was utterly prohibited, and T'ienteh^[55] made no secret of his purpose to stop the importation from abroad. But for foreigners as such, their Christian "brothers" from across the seas, they expressed a cordiality of feeling wholly contrary to Chinese pride and prejudice.

"The great God," they said, "is the universal Father of all under Heaven. China is under His government and care."

Foreign nations are equally so. There are many men under heaven, but all are brethren. Many women are under heaven, but all are sisters. Why should we continue the selfish practice of regarding a boundary here or a limit there? Why indulge the wish to devour and consume one another?"

In a word, it seemed as though the hoary exclusiveness of China as well as its heathen systems would soon be swept away before Christian light and teaching, and the whole country thrown open to the influence of the Gospel.

[56] From every standpoint the prospect was inspiring, and Christian hearts could not but beat high with hope and expectation. No wonder Hudson Taylor with many others saw in all this the moving of God's providence. What kings and governments could never have accomplished, was not He in His own wonderful way rapidly bringing to pass? But how immense the responsibility thus imposed upon the Church, and how little prepared was she to meet it!

No wonder' also, in view of all these happenings, that though he was studying medicine Hudson Taylor felt no inclination to tie himself down to distinctively medical work. His desire was to use his knowledge rather as an aid to evangelisation in districts that had never yet been reached. This was the work to which the Lord had called him; deep down in his own soul he knew it beyond a doubt. But whether the Chinese Evangelisation Society would approve was quite another question.

To judge from their Rules and Regulations they would expect, at any rate, to maintain absolute control over the movements of their representatives. These were spoken of as Agents, and were expected to subscribe to by-laws that perplexed him with their detailed requirements; and over against all this was his growing conviction about the work to which he personally was called. The hand of God was upon him. So far as he was concerned, this was the

great fact, the chief consideration. And if the rightful authority of the Committee in London had to be considered as well, how would the two fit in?

"There is one point about which I have not yet made up my mind," he wrote to his mother on April 5. "If at the expense of the Society I pass my examinations, take one or more degrees, go out to China and commence hospital work, how could I feel myself at liberty to sever the connection and go into the interior if called to do so?"

"It certainly does not seem to me that permanent work in one place, medical or otherwise, has been the way most used of God in the conversion of multitudes, Paul and the apostles of old, Wesley, Whitfield, and others largely used in modern times have been travelling preachers and I do not feel at all sure that I should be right in binding myself to a different course of action. I shall be thankful to have your opinion on these points, and your prayers for Divine guidance in all my ways.

"That the Rules I mention," he continued a little later, "are reasonable and necessary for the Society, I do not doubt. I see also that after three years and a half I might be legally free to act independently, if I so desired. But I put it to you, Mother, would it be honourable, would you like me to take advantage of such a situation? After the Society had borne the expense of my medical education and of sending me to China, and I had been there long enough to begin to be useful, would you approve my leaving them just as soon as I could do so legally?"

"And since it is my decided opinion that such would be my course, how can I honestly accept their aid? Where is the probability that I should ever be able to refund such an expenditure? These difficulties seem to me insurmountable."

He was acting, certainly, on principles the Master commended; sitting down

to count the cost before beginning to build. Well would it be if all intending missionaries would do the same to-day. And as he prayed and pondered he began to see that even his present position was compromising. The Society was already bearing, in part, the expense of his medical education. If he went on and completed it, it would cost them over a hundred pounds. Already he was letting himself be involved in obligations he might not be able to discharge without unfaithfulness to the most binding thing in all his life, the will of God.

This was a serious matter, and one that called for immediate consideration. Should he go on as he was, allowing the Society to misunderstand to some extent his intentions? Or should he explain all, and run the risk of losing their aid? Must he abandon his medical studies now, when he really seemed on the way to completing them, and work his way out to China as a self-supporting missionary?

It is easy enough in these very different days to smile at what may seem over-conscientious scruples, but to Hudson Taylor it was a more perplexing position than we can readily understand. Missionary agencies were comparatively few and far between, and he knew of only this one with which he as an unordained man could become connected. Individuals did not then send out and support their own representatives, nor was he in fellowship with any Church that could sustain him. Practically it meant that he must either become an agent of the C.E.S., subject to all their regulations, or else go out in faith, looking to the Lord to supply his needs or provide him with employment in which he could be self-supporting. And the choice had to be made immediately.

From early April till the end of May these problems exercised his mind. He could not let things drift, but still less could he act before he was sure of the

guidance of God. Full many a prayer in those lovely spring days might have been measured by the mile, as he went up and down between the hospital and St. Mary Axe, but when the time came to go forward he did so without hesitation.

"With regard to my passing the College of Surgeons," he wrote to his mother in May, "I have written to Mr. Bird stating the reasons that appear to me as obstacles to my entering at their expense. It is necessary for the well-being of the Society that its missionaries should be subject to the Board of Management.... Their rules are no doubt reasonable and essential for such an organisation. But to me, to be educated at their expense and of course subject to these regulations would be like removing myself from the direct and personal leading of God, because I should become the servant of the Society; Having no money I could not release myself honourably, and in any case, for nine months at least (the period required as notice) I should be unable to act. Now, it is possible to pay too dearly even for great advantages, and this is more than my conscience allows me to do.

"If I am guided by God in going out, He will open the way and provide the means required. If a degree is necessary, He will supply the means for that also. If it is not necessary, it will be better for the time and money to be otherwise employed. And if I am not called to go, far better for all concerned that I should not leave England.

"But do not think from my using this form of expression that I am at all doubtful, for I never have had a doubt on the subject. My mind is kept in perfect peace, stayed on Him who is the Rock of Ages; and I am willing either to take a degree or not, as He sees fit to order. ... I have been enjoying great rest of heart lately and often feel the goodness of God in a way that cannot be expressed. ...

'If in the time required to make me an M.D. or M.R.C.S., or both, I am instrumental in leading any poor Chinese to the feet of Jesus, how much better would that appear in the eternal ages I Oh for grace really to live out that beautiful verse:

*I all on earth forsake,
Its wisdom, fame and power;
And Him my only Portion make,
My Shield and Tower.*

"How very little many considerations that weigh with us now will appear as we look back upon them from the eternal ages! Then we shall reckon indeed that 'the sufferings of this present time' were 'not worthy to be compared' with the glory that was to follow. Would that we always did so here and now."

But all this preoccupation with important matters was not allowed to interfere with daily duties and with thoughtfulness for those around him.^[57] Like Dr. Hardey in Hull, Mr. Brown soon discovered that he had a valuable assistant, and among the patients for whom Hudson Taylor cared more than one had reason to thank God for his solicitude for soul as well as body. For he did not attempt to evade or to defer the supreme duty of leading men to Christ.' The unsaved at home were just as much a burden on his heart as the unsaved in China. Always and everywhere' he was a soul-winner.

One among Mr. Brown's patients, for example, caused him no little concern at this time. He had been a hard drinker, and now in middle-life was suffering the bitter, consequences of sin. His condition was serious, and his hatred of everything to do with religion so intense that it seemed hopeless to try to influence him.

"The Lord had given me the joy of winning souls before,"

wrote Hudson Taylor, recalling this experience, "but never in surroundings of such peculiar difficulty. With God, however, all things are possible, and no conversion ever takes place save by the almighty power of the Holy Ghost. The great need of every Christian worker is to know God I was now to prove His willingness to answer prayer for spiritual blessing under most unpromising circumstances, and thus to gain an increased acquaintance with the prayer-answering God as One' mighty to save.'

"A short time before leaving for China it became my daily duty to dress the foot of a patient suffering from senile gangrene. The disease commenced as usual insidiously, and the patient had little idea that he was a doomed man and probably had not long to live. I was not the first to attend him, but when the case was transferred to me I naturally became very anxious about his soul. The family with whom he lived were Christians, and from them I learned that he was an avowed atheist and very antagonistic to anything religious. They had without asking his consent invited a Scripture reader to visit him, but in great passion he had ordered him from the room. The Vicar of the district had also called, hoping to help him, but he had spit in his face and refused to allow him to speak. His temper was described to me as very violent, and altogether the case seemed as hopeless as could well be imagined;

"Upon first commencing to attend him I prayed much about it, but for two or three days said nothing of a religious nature. By special care in dressing his diseased limb I was able considerably to lessen his sufferings, and he soon began to manifest appreciation of my services. One day with a trembling heart I took advantage of his grateful acknowledgments to tell him what was the spring of my action, and to speak of his solemn position and need of God's mercy through Christ. It was evidently only a powerful effort of

selfrestraint that kept his lips closed. He turned over in bed with his back to me, and uttered no word;

"I could not get the poor man out of my mind, and very often through each day I pleaded with God, by His Spirit, to save him ere He took him hence. After dressing the wound and relieving the pain, I never failed to say a few words to him which I hoped the Lord would bless. He always turned his back looking annoyed, but never made any reply.

"After continuing this for some time my heart sank. It seemed to me that I was not only doing no good but perhaps really hardening him and increasing his guilt. One day after dressing his limb and washing my hands, instead of returning to the bedside, I went to the door and stood hesitating a moment with the thought in my mind, 'Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone.' Looking at my patient I saw his surprise, as it was the first time since opening the subject that I had attempted to leave without saying a few words for my Master.

"I could bear it no longer. Bursting into tears, I crossed the room and said: 'My friend, whether you will hear or whether you will forbear, I must deliver my soul,' and went on to speak very earnestly, telling him how much I wished that he would let me pray with him, To my unspeakable joy he did not turn away, but replied

""If it will be a relief to you, do.'

"I need scarcely say that falling upon my knees I poured out my soul to God on his behalf. Then and there, I believe, the Lord wrought a change in his soul. He was never afterwards unwilling to be spoken to and prayed with, and within a few days he definitely accepted Christ as his Saviour.

"Oh the joy it was to me to see that dear man rejoicing in hope of the glory of God! He told me that for forty years he had never darkened the door of a church or chapel, and that then,

forty years ago, he had only entered a place of worship to be married, and could not be persuaded to go inside when his wife was buried. Now, thank God, his sin-stained soul I had every reason to believe was washed, was sanctified, was 'justified, in the Name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.' Often in my early work in China, when circumstances rendered me almost hopeless of success, I have thought of this man's conversion and have been encouraged to persevere in speaking the Word, whether men would hear or whether they would forbear.

"The now happy sufferer lived for some time after this change, and was never tired of bearing testimony to the grace of God. Though his condition was most distressing, the alteration in his character and behaviour made the previously painful duty of attending him one of real pleasure. I have often thought since in connection with this case and the work of God generally of the words, 'He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.' Perhaps if there were more of that intense distress for souls that leads to tears, we should more frequently see the results we desire. Sometimes it may be that while we are complaining of the hardness of the hearts of those we are seeking to benefit, the hardness of our own hearts and our own feeble apprehension of the solemn reality of eternal things may be the true cause of our want of success."

Very shortly after this the way cleared suddenly for Hudson Taylor. All had seemed uncertain before him, and especially since his letter to Mr. Bird about discontinuing his studies he had scarcely been able to see a step ahead. Very earnestly had he been in prayer for guidance, longing with all his heart to know and do the will of God. And now the light shone suddenly, and in the way. he had least expected: because the time had come, and there is behind

events, as the old prophet tells us, "a God ... which worketh for him that waiteth for Him."^[58]

In the room of the C.E.S. sat one of the secretaries writing a letter. It was June 4, and events had succeeded one another in China with startling rapidity. Since their conquest of Nanking in March, the Tai-pings had carried all before them, sweeping over the central and northern provinces until Peking itself was almost within their grasp. Nothing, it seemed, could save the tottering dynasty, unless foreign powers could be persuaded to intervene. Sir George Bonham, the British Representative, after a visit to Nanking had brought back a report very favourable to the Tai-pings. "The insurgents are Christians," wrote the *North China Herald for May 7*; and the religious aspect of the movement seemed to keep pace with the increase of their power.

^[59]

This could mean but one thing: if Peking surrendered, the seclusion of ages was at an end and China would forthwith be thrown open to the Gospel. The very possibility, imminent as it was, proved a powerful stimulus to missionary effort. Christian hearts everywhere were aflame. Something must be done and done at once to meet so great a crisis. And for a time, money poured into the treasuries.^[60]

In the light of these new developments the Committee of the C.E.S. had been reconsidering their position. The only representative they had in China was the German missionary Lobscheid, labouring near Canton. They had long wished to supply him with a fellow-worker, and now decided to send two men to Shanghai also, to be ready for pending developments. Money was not the difficulty, their income having considerably increased within the last few months, but men, suitable men, would not be easy to find.

Thus it was that early in June, as we have seen, Mr. Bird sat in his office

writing as follows to one in whom they had every confidence, the young medical student, Hudson Taylor.

*17 RED LION SQUARE,
June 4, 1853.*

MY DEAR SIR

As you have fully made up your mind to go to China, and also not to qualify as a Surgeon, I would affectionately suggest that you lose no time in preparing to start. At this time we want really devoted men, and I believe your heart is right before God and your motives pure, so that you need not hesitate in offering, I think you will find a difficulty in carrying out your plan [of selfsupport], as even Mr. Lobscheid could not get a free passage. It is a very difficult thing to obtain. The expense for a single man is about £60. Might not the time you want to spend in acquiring a knowledge of Ophthalmics be spent more profitably in China? If you think it right to offer yourself, I shall be most happy to lay your application before the Board. It is an important step, and much earnest prayer is needed. But guidance will be given. Do all with thy might, and speedily.

*I am, my dear sir, very truly yours,
CHARLES BIRD:*

It was Saturday afternoon and the letter still lay on the desk, when a knock came, and the young man to whom it was addressed quietly entered.

"Why," exclaimed the Secretary, "I have just been writing to you! The letter is not yet posted."

Long and earnest was the conversation that followed, for the suggestion made was a great surprise to Hudson Taylor. Constantly as China had been before his mind for three and a half years, it seemed rather overwhelming to think of

sailing as soon as a vessel could be found. Besides, there were all those questions about the future and his uncertainty as to whether he ought to connect himself with any Society. Mr. Bird was evidently sympathetic and helpful, and the younger man went home with much to lay before the Lord.

How strange the difference that had come over everything as he retraced his steps toward St. Mary Axe. The same June sunlight shone on London streets, the same birds twittered in the open spaces, but he walked as in a new world—that far vista opening before him. Could it be possible that all that had hitherto blocked his way to China had indeed vanished; that the Society was not only willing but anxious to send him out? Then God's time surely must have come, and he could not hold back.

"Mr. Bird has removed most of the objections and difficulties I have been feeling," he wrote to his mother the following day, "and I think it will be well to comply with his suggestions and at once propose myself to the Committee. I shall await your answer, however, and rely upon your prayers. If I should be accepted to go at once, would you advise me to come home before sailing? I long to be with you once more, and I know you would naturally wish to see me; but I almost think it would be easier for us not to meet, than having met to part again forever. No, not forever!"

A little while: 'twill soon be past!

Why should we shun the promised cross?

Oh let us in His footsteps haste,

Counting for Him all else but loss

Then, how will recompense His smile

The sufferings of this little while!

"I cannot write more, but hope to hear from you as soon as possible. Pray much for me. It is easy to talk of leaving all for Christ, but when it comes to the proof—it is only as we stand 'complete in Him' we can go through with it.

*"God be with you and bless you, my own dear, dear mother, and give you so to realise **the preciousness of Jesus** that you may wish, for nothing but 'to know Him' ... even in 'the fellowship of His sufferings.'"*

""Pray for me, dear Amelia,' he continued later, 'that He who has promised to meet all our need may be with me in this painful though long-expected hour.'

*"When we look at ourselves—at the littleness of our love, the barrenness of our service, and the small progress we make toward perfection—how soul-refreshing it is to turn and gaze on Him; to plunge afresh in 'the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness'; to remember that we are 'accepted in the Beloved' ... 'who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.' Oh the fulness of Christ: **the fulness of Christ!**"*

Chapter XV^(TOC)

I will never leave Thee

September 1853—March 1854. AET. 21

MOORED at her landing in a Liverpool dock lay the doublemasted sailing-ship *Dumfries*, bound for China. A little vessel of barely four hundred and seventy tons, she was carrying but one passenger, so there were few well-wishers to see her off. Repairs that had delayed her sailing had just been hurried to completion, and the crew were still busy getting the cargo on board. But in the stern cabin, amid the din and hubbub, all was peace as Hudson Taylor knelt in prayer for the last time with his mother.

Hardly could they realise that it was indeed the last time for so long. Since the decision of the Committee there had been much to do and think of, and they had had little time to dwell upon the meaning of it all. And now the parting had come. After a visit to Barnsley where he took leave of his sisters, and meetings at Tottenham and in London commending him to God,^[61] the outgoing missionary had come on to Liverpool, where he had been joined by his mother. His father too had been there, and Mr. Pearse representing the Chinese Evangelisation Society, but on account of delays in the sailing of the ship they had been obliged to return. So the mother and son were much alone as the time drew near, and her account of the parting written for those at home is of special interest.

On Sunday, September 18, Hudson was much blessed through the services of the day. His soul was filled with the love of God, and in the evening he wrote a few farewell letters to relatives and friends, full of affection, and bearing such

testimony to the sustaining power of grace as made it evident that he could freely and cheerfully leave all, to carry the light of the knowledge of God to those regions of spiritual darkness so long the object of his desires, and for which he had studied, laboured and prayed.

Seeing me in tears, he said:

"Oh mother, do not grieve! I am so happy, I cannot! I'll tell you what I think is the difference between us. You dwell on the parting; I look on to the meeting:" alluding to their reunion in the Better Land.

Before retiring for the night he read aloud part of the fourteenth chapter of John, "Let not your heart be troubled," and engaged in prayer. The throne of grace was easy of access; and while offering thanks for mercies received and imploring continued blessings for himself, for those he was leaving, for the Church and for the world yet lying in the arms of the wicked one, it was evident that to him this was no strange work.

Next morning he went to breakfast at the house of a friend with Mr. Arthur Taylor (no relative) who was to embark a fortnight later for Hong-kong-a fellow-missionary also sent out by the Chinese Evangelisation Society. About ten o'clock we met in the cabin of the Dumfries, and were shortly afterwards joined by Mr. Plunkett, an aged minister with whom we had become acquainted during our stay in Liverpool.

After a little conversation, singing and prayer were proposed, and Hudson gave out in a firm, clear voice, the beautiful hymn;

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

In a believer's ear!

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,

And drives away his fear.

The good old tune "Devizes" was struck up, and he sang with the utmost composure through the whole hymn. Mr. Plunkett prayed for us all as believers in one common Saviour, and for his two young friends in particular, just going out as ambassadors for the Prince of Peace.

Dear Hudson then engaged in prayer, and a stranger would little have thought that the firm tone, composed manner and joyous expressions were those of a youth who in a few minutes was to bid adieu to parents, sisters, friends, home and country. But his heart was strong in the mighty God of Jacob, therefore his spirit quailed not. Only once was there a slight falter, while commending the objects of his love to the care of his Heavenly Father—a momentary struggle, and all was calm again. Yet he did not forget that he was entering upon a course of trial, difficulty and danger; but looking forward to it all he exclaimed, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." It was a time ever to be remembered.

After Mr. Arthur Taylor had offered prayer, we rose from our knees and Hudson read a Psalm. Soon after we went on deck, intending to go ashore, when to our surprise we found that the vessel had left her moorings and was nearly out of dock....

Then came my moment of trial—the farewell blessing, the parting embrace. A kind hand was extended from the shore. I stepped off the vessel, scarce knowing what I did, and was seated on a piece of timber lying close at hand. A chill came

over me and I trembled from head to foot. But a warm arm was quickly round my neck and I was once more pressed to his loving breast. Seeing my distress he had leaped ashore to breathe words of consolation.

"Dear Mother," he said, "do not weep. It is but for a little while, and we shall meet again. Think of the glorious object I have in leaving you. It is not for wealth or fame, but to try to bring the poor Chinese to the knowledge of Jesus."

*As the vessel was receding he was obliged to return, and we lost sight of him for a minute. He had run to his cabin, and hastily writing in pencil on the blank leaf of a pocket Bible, "**The love of God which passeth knowledge—J. H. T.**" came back and threw it to me on the pier.*

By-and-by the vessel neared again to receive the Mate, who shook us warmly by the hand:

"Keep a brave heart," he said, "I will bring good news back again."

Once more our Dear One reached out his hand which was eagerly grasped. Another "Farewell, God bless you" was reciprocated, and the deep waters of the Mersey became a separating gulf between us.

While we still waved our handkerchiefs, watching the departing ship, he took his stand at its head and afterwards climbed into the rigging, waving his hat, and looking more like a victorious hero than a stripling just entering the battlefield. Then his figure became less and less distinct, and in a few minutes passenger and ship were lost to sight.

His own recollections of that parting, recorded long after, show how deeply the son too shared its cost.

After being set apart with many prayers for the ministry of

God's Word among the heathen, I left London for Liverpool, and on the 19th of September, 1853, a little service was held in the stern cabin of the Dumfries which had been secured for me by the Chinese Evangelisation Society, under whose auspices I was going to China.

My beloved, now sainted mother, had come over to Liverpool to see me off. Never shall I forget that day, nor how she went with me into the cabin that was to be my home for nearly six long months. With a mother's loving hand she smoothed the little bed. She sat by my side and joined in the last hymn we should sing together before parting. We knelt down and she prayed—the last mother's prayer I was to hear before leaving for China. Then notice was given that we must separate, and we had to say good-bye, never expecting to meet on earth again.

For my sake she restrained her feelings as much as possible. We parted, and she went ashore giving me her blessing. I stood alone on deck, and she followed the ship as we moved toward the dockgates. As we passed through the gates and the separation really commenced, never shall I forget the cry of anguish wrung from that mother's heart. It went through me like a knife. I never knew so fully, until then, what "God so loved the world" meant. And I am quite sure my precious mother learned more of the love of God for the perishing in that one hour than in all her life before.

Oh how it must grieve the heart of God when He sees His children indifferent to the needs of that wide world for which His beloved, His only Son suffered and died.

The voyage thus begun proved a time of blessing to the solitary passenger on board the **Dumfries**. It was long and tedious in some ways, five and a half months during which they touched nowhere and heard no tidings of the rest of the world. But it was a health-giving, enjoyable experience on the whole,

after the first terrible days were over.

For never surely did vessel weather worse perils than this little sailing ship before she could reach the open sea. It almost seemed as though the great enemy, "the prince of the power of the air," knowing something of the possibilities enfolded in one young life on board, were doing his utmost to send her to the bottom. For twelve long days they beat about the Channel, alternately sighting Ireland and the dangerous Welsh coast. During the first week they were almost continuously in the teeth of an equinoctial gale, until driven into Carnarvon Bay they were within two boats' length of being dashed to pieces on the rocks. That midnight scene amid the foaming breakers, and the way in which they were delivered when all hope seemed gone made so profound an impression upon Hudson Taylor that some account of this part of the voyage must be culled from his journal and letters.

"With heartfelt gratitude," he wrote on Monday, September 26, "I record the mercy of God. He and He alone has snatched us from the jaws of death. May our spared lives be spent entirely in His service and for His glory.

"All day on Saturday [the 24th] the barometer kept falling, and as darkness came on the wind began to freshen. The sailors had a hard night of it, so the Captain did not call them aft as is his custom to read prayers on Sunday morning. At noon it was blowing hard and we took in all possible sail, leaving only just as much as would keep the ship steady. I distributed some tracts among the crew and then came down to my cabin, as the increased motion was making me sick....

"The barometer was still falling, and the wind increased until it was a perfect hurricane. The, Captain and Mate said they had never seen a wilder sea. Between two and three in the afternoon I managed to get on deck, though the pitching made it difficult.... The scene I shall never forget. It was grand

beyond description. The sea, lashing itself into fury, was white with foam. There was a large ship astern of us and a brig to our weather side. The ship gained on us, but drifted more. The waves, like hills on either side, seemed as if they might swamp us at any moment—but the ship bore up bravely. On account of the heavy sea we were making little or no headway, and the wind being from the west we were drifting quickly, irresistibly, toward a lee-shore.

'Unless God help us,' said the Captain, 'there is no hope.'

I asked how far we might be from the Welsh coast.

'Fifteen to sixteen miles,' was his reply. 'We can do nothing but carry all possible sail. The more we carry the less we drift. It is for our lives. God grant the timbers may bear it.'

He then had two sails set on each mast.

It was a fearful time. The wind was blowing terrifically, and we were tearing along at a frightful rate—one moment high in the air and the next plunging head foremost into the trough of the sea as if about to go to the bottom. The windward side of the ship was fearfully elevated, the lee side being as much depressed; indeed the sea at times poured over her lee bulwarks.

Thus the sun set, and I watched it ardently.

'To-morrow thou wilt rise as usual,' I thought, 'but unless the Lord work miraculously on our behalf a few broken timbers will be all that is left of us and our ship'

"The night was cold, the wind biting, and the seas we shipped continually, with foam and spray, wet us through and through."

Earlier in the afternoon he had had a remarkable experience of "great joy and

peace," in spite of their desperate situation, but now as the sun went down a sense of loneliness and desolation began to come over him, so that for a time he was "much tried and very anxious." He thought of the sorrow involved to his loved ones should the *Dumfries* be lost; of the expense to the Society, his passage and outfit having cost little short of a hundred pounds; of the unprepared state of the crew, as well as of "the coldness of the water and the struggle of death." About his eternal happiness he had not a moment's doubt. Death itself was not dreaded. But death under such circumstances! No one who has not faced it can realise its terrors.

"I went below," the journal continues simply, "read a hymn or two, some Psalms and John 8:15, and was comforted; so much so that I fell asleep and slept for an hour. We then looked at the barometer and found it rising. We had passed the Bardsey Island Lighthouse, between Cardigan and Camarvon Bays (running up the Channel) and I asked the Captain whether we could clear Holyhead or not.

'If we make no lee-way,' he replied, 'we may just do it. But if we drift, God help us!'

And we did drift—

First the Holyhead light was ahead of us, and then on our outside. Our fate now seemed sealed, I asked if we were sure of two more hours. The Captain could not say we were. The barometer was still rising, but too slowly to give much hope, I thought of my, dear father and mother, sisters and special friends—and the tears would start... The Captain was calm and courageous, trusting in the Lord for his soul's salvation. The steward said he knew that he was nothing, but Christ was all. I felt thankful for them, but I did pray earnestly that God would have mercy on us and spare us for the sake of the unconverted crew ... as well as for His own glory as the God who hears and answers prayer. This passage was then

brought to my mind: 'Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me': and very earnestly I pleaded the promise, in submission to His will.

*Our position was now truly awful. The night was very light, the moon being unclouded, and we could just see land ahead. I went below. The barometer was improving, but the wind in no way abated. I took out my pocket book and wrote in it my name and home-address, in case my body should be found. I also tied a few things in a hamper which I thought would float and perhaps help me or some one else to land. Then commending my soul to God my Father, and my friends and **all** to His care, with one prayer that if it were possible this cup might pass from us, I went on deck.*

Satan now tempted me greatly and I had a fearful struggle. But the Lord again calmed my mind, which from that time was so stayed upon Him that I was kept in peace.

I asked the Captain whether boats could live in such a sea. He answered, 'No.' Could we not lash the loose spars together and make some sort of raft? He said we should probably not have time.

The water was now becoming white. Land was just ahead—

'We must try to turn her and tack,' said the Captain, 'or all is over. The sea may sweep the deck in turning and wash everything overboard ... but we must try.'

This was a moment to make the stoutest heart tremble, He gave the word and we tried to turn outwardly, but in vain. This would have saved us room. He then tried the other way, and with God's blessing succeeded, clearing the rocks by not more than two ships' length. Just as we did so, the wind most providentially veered two points in our favour, and we were able to beat out of the Bay.

"Had not the Lord thus helped us, all our efforts must have been in vain. Truly His mercy is unfailing. 'Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men.'"^[62]

Safe for the present, it was with unspeakable thankfulness they saw the sun rise on Monday morning and the storm gradually pass away.

A week later they were in the Bay of Biscay and there also came in for rough weather, one heavy sea carrying away the fore skylight and seeming almost to swamp the ship. Three weeks from the day of sailing, however, saw them in calmer waters, the worst of their dangers past. During all that time it had been cold and wet, and everything on board seemed either damp or soaking, which meant constant discomfort.

"These things make one long for fine, dry weather," runs the journal for October 5. "Most of my belongings are damp, the floors are wet, and all our boots and shoes are saturated with water. The poor steward's cabin is soaking, the sea having poured into it, and now mine is the only one that has not been flooded... But how thankful I ought to be that it was not the after skylight that gave way, for then all my clothes, books and papers would have been deluged."

"And they had no means of drying them."

It was with no little satisfaction, therefore, that favourable winds were welcomed, bearing them to warmer latitudes. But the earlier stages of the voyage had not been lost. Even in the Bay of Biscay, Hudson Taylor had discovered that there was one more earnest Christian on board, the Swedish carpenter, and assured of his help had asked the Captain's permission to commence regular services among the crew. And now in the hot, still days that found them becalmed near the Equator these were continued with much

acceptance.

Whole-heartedly the young missionary threw himself into this work. He had been reading the life of Hewitson since coming on board, and had found it stimulating both to faith and zeal.

"How he seems to have fed on the Lamb," he wrote, "and to have ministered the Spirit. Oh for more of the love of God, that out of a full heart I might proclaim it!"

"This evening [Sunday, October 9] we had a good attendance at our little service. We began with a hymn, and good it was to hear them sing! Then I asked the Lord's blessing with great liberty, for He was indeed present. After a short address, I read the fourth chapter of Romans, and explained the way of salvation by faith, dwelling on the love of the Father and the Son, the value of a soul, and the necessity for flying at once for mercy to 'the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.' Then the steward prayed and we concluded the meeting.

"It was encouraging afterwards to hear that some of the men had been much affected, tears chasing down the weather-beaten faces of one or two. May God, who alone giveth the increase, bless His Word and use it for His glory."

Sixty times during the remainder of the voyage such meetings were held, Hudson Taylor giving unwearied prayer and preparation to this ministry. It was a great blessing to him personally and did much to save him from the spiritual declension that so often accompanies life at sea with its lack of helpful influences. To him the journey was a time of marked blessing, his only sorrow being that so little permanent change was found in the lives of the men. They were interested, and would come to him at times for private talk and prayer. But though some were very near the Kingdom, none of them

came out fully on the side of Christ. This was a keen disappointment and cast him much on God. No doubt in some ways the experience was useful, preparing him to "sow beside all waters," even when for a long time no fruit appeared.

Much more might be said about that five months at sea, did space permit.^[63] The journal is full of the variety and interest, the occasional excitements and more frequent monotony of twenty-three consecutive weeks on a sailing ship without touching land. There are glimpses of moonlit nights in the tropics; of illuminated seas, gemmed with trails of light from innumerable Acepalaee; of exciting situations over the capture of a shark or albatross, and perilous ones when becalmed in southern waters they were borne by unseen currents towards sunken reefs or more dangerous cannibal islands.

Still more the journal is taken up with the inner life that meant so much more than outward surroundings. Side by side with his prayers and efforts for the good of the crew went deepened longings for a closer walk himself with God, and entries such as the following abound:

October. 30: Have been much blessed to-day, The Lord is indeed precious to me. Oh that I loved Him more!

November. 1: Another month has been spent, how unprofitably! How little to the honour of that glorious Being in whom we live and move and have our being. May the next be used more faithfully in His service and to His glory.

December. 26: Enjoying sweet fellowship with the Lord Jesus, and great liberty of access to the throne of grace.

What is earth with all its treasures

To the joy our Saviour brings?

Well may we resign its pleasures,

Satisfied with better things.

All His people

Draw from Heaven's eternal springs.

Oh to be ever seeking "the things that are above," as risen indeed with Christ; ever standing on the watch-tower, ready to welcome the glad word, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh."

December. 31: On reviewing the mercies of the year and the goodness of God to me in it, I am lost in wonder, love and praise. ... Here then I raise my "Ebenezer": Hitherto hath the Lord helped me....

And since my soul hath known His love,

What mercies He has made me prove!

Mercies that do all praise excel

My Jesus hath done all things well.

Spent the last moments of the year in prayer ... and found the Lord present and very precious.

There were times in his solitude when home seemed far away and the longing for those he loved became intense.

"How widely we are separated," he wrote, "who last year were so near.... Praised be God, He is unchangeable; His mercy never fails...."

"Found in a book lent me by Captain Morris, The Hebrew Mother, and was much affected by it. Never shall I forget the last time I heard it. Mother was present; my dearest played it;

and when we came to the lines:

I give thee to thy God,

The God that gave thee

Mother broke down, and clasping me in her arms wept aloud at the thought of parting. May the Lord bless her and comfort her heart day by day....

"Jesus is precious. His service is perfect freedom. His yoke is easy and His burden light. Joy and peace His people have indeed. Absent from home, friends, and country even, Jesus is with me. ... He is all, and more than all. Much as my heart yearns to see them, the love of Christ is stronger, more constraining."

This love then for the souls of men, the love of Christ in him, did not fail under the test of pain and loss. If anything it was deepening, face to face with facts that had been only hearsay before. The lonely inhabitants of many an island, for example, between Java and the Philippines drew forth his compassion. They had already sighted land some weeks before, in rounding the Cape of Good Hope, but not until the nearest point to Australia was reached did they begin to enter the Archipelago lying between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. This proved a region of fascinating interest, though not without its special dangers. For almost a month from January 12, when they first hailed with delight the green hills and valleys of Sandal Wood Isle, until they looked their last on the sandy beach of Angour (Pelew Group) shining in the sun, they were hardly ever out of sight of beautiful, fertile, populous islands, in which no witness for the dying, undying love of Calvary was found.

"Oh what work for the missionary!" wrote Hudson Taylor.

"Island after island, many almost unknown, some densely

peopled, but no light, no Jesus, no hope full of bliss! My heart yearns over them. Can it be that Christian men and women will stay comfortably at home and leave these souls to perish? Can it be that faith has no longer power to constrain to sacrifice for His sake who gave His life for the world's redemption?—

Shall we whose souls are lighted

With wisdom from on high;

Shall we to men benighted

The lamp of Life deny?

"Shall we think ourselves free from responsibility to obey the plain command, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature'? Is that word of our Saviour no longer true, 'As My Father hath sent Me ... even so send I you'? Oh that I could get to them! Oh that I had a thousand tongues to proclaim in every land the riches of God's grace! Lord, raise up labourers, and thrust them forth into Thy harvest."

A little later no small stir was occasioned when, in passing close to one of these islands at night, a light was seen ashore. More than sixteen weeks had elapsed since the beacons of St. George's Channel had faded from sight, and in all that time no sign had been seen of a human habitation. But that light, that little moving light in Dampier Strait told of fellow-men near at hand, and aroused sensations that were indescribable.

Becalmed next day within reach of Waygion, they attracted the attention of a few poor islanders who put off in their canoes to make trade with the foreign ship. But the fresh cocoa-nuts, shells, parrots, and even the bird-of-paradise they offered had little interest for the missionary compared with the sight of

those faces-gentle, intelligent, appealing-and the sound of their soft speech in, an unknown tongue.

"The men seemed very poor," he wrote, "and those in the last two boats, timid. They had probably been taken in by previous travellers. They were a little lighter in colour than burnt coffee-bean, and but for a narrow cloth around their loins were entirely naked. Their faces, however, were intelligent and pleasing...."

"What would I not have given to be able to tell them of a Saviour's love! I longed to go and live among them, poor and degraded as they are, and lead them to that blissful home where sin and sorrow are no more. ... Let us pray the Lord to send them missionaries who shall be willing to sacrifice earthly comforts that they may win souls to Christ."

But with all its interests the voyage seemed tedious toward the close, especially in the frequent calms of this Eastern Archipelago. Only for a single day during that month among the Islands had they a steady wind, and more than once their log did not exceed seven miles in the twentyfour hours. Such experiences were more than trying, they were accompanied with serious danger.

"Never," as Hudson Taylor put it, "is one more helpless than in a sailing ship with a total absence of wind and the presence of a strong current setting toward a dangerous coast. In a storm the ship is to some extent manageable, but becalmed one can do nothing; the Lord must do all."

One definite answer to prayer under such circumstances was a great encouragement to his faith. They had just come through the Dampier Strait but were not yet out of sight of the islands. Usually a breeze would spring up after sunset and last until about dawn. The utmost use was made of it, but

during the day they lay still with flapping sails, often drifting back and losing a good deal of the advantage gained at night.

This happened notably on one occasion when we were in dangerous proximity to the north of New Guinea. Saturday night had brought us to a point some thirty miles off the land, and during the Sunday morning service which was held on deck I could not fail to see that the Captain looked troubled and frequently went over to the side of the ship. When the service was ended I learnt from him the cause a four-knot current was carrying us toward some sunken reefs, and we were already so near that it seemed improbable that we should get through the afternoon in safety. After dinner the long-boat was put out and all hands endeavoured, without success, to turn the ship's head from the shore.

After standing together on the deck for some time in silence, the Captain said to me:

"Well, we have done everything that can be done. We can only await the result."

A thought occurred to me, and I replied:

"No, there is one thing we have not done yet."

"What is that?" he queried.

"Four of us on board are Christians. Let us each retire to his own cabin, and in agreed prayer ask the Lord to give us immediately a breeze. He can as easily send it now as at sunset."

The Captain complied with this proposal. I went and spoke to the other two men, and after prayer with the carpenter we all four retired to wait upon God. I had a good but very brief season in prayer, and then felt so satisfied that 'our request was granted that I could not continue asking, and very soon

went up again on deck. The first officer, a godless man, was in charge. I went over and asked him to let down the dews or corners of the mainsail, which had been drawn up in order to lessen the useless flapping of the sail against the rigging.

"What would be the good of that?" he answered roughly.

I told him we had been asking a wind from God; that it was coming immediately; and we were so near the reef by this time that there was not a minute to lose.

With an oath and a look of contempt, he said he would rather see a wind than hear of it.

But while he was speaking I watched his eye, following it up to the royal, and there sure enough the corner of the topmost sail was beginning to tremble in the breeze.

"Don't you see the wind is coming? Look at the royal!" I exclaimed.

"No, it is only a cat's paw," he rejoined (a mere puff of wind).

"Cat's paw or not," I cried, "pray let down the mainsail and give as the benefit."

This he was not slow to do. In another minute the heavy tread of the men on deck brought up the Captain from his cabin to see what was the matter. The breeze had indeed come! In a few minutes we were ploughing our way at six or seven knots an hour through the water ... and though the wind was sometimes unsteady we did not altogether lose it until after passing the Pelew Islands.

Thus God encouraged me ere landing on China's shores to bring every variety of need to Him in prayer, and to expect that He would honour the name of the Lord Jesus and give the help each emergency required.

Part IV (TOC)

Shanghai and Early Itinerations

1854-1855. AET. 22-23

Chapter XVI

Arrival and First Experiences

March 1854. ART. 21

IT was a foggy Sunday off Gutzlaff Island, cold with occasional rain, as might be expected at the end of February, and the *Dumfries* lay at anchor waiting for a pilot to take her up to Shanghai. Through stormy weather she had held her way up the China Sea, driven out of her course by westerly gales, caught in a cyclone and blinding snow storms, but now the last stage of her long journey was reached, and the yellow, turbid water surging around her told that they were already in the estuary of a great river.

Muffled in his heaviest wraps Hudson Taylor paced the deck, doing his best to keep warm and be patient. It was a strange Sunday, this last at sea. For days he had been packed and ready to leave the ship, and hindered by storm and cold from other occupations had given the more time to thought and prayer.

"What peculiar feelings," he wrote, "arise at the prospect of soon landing in an unknown country, in the midst of strangers—a country now to be my home and sphere of labour. 'Lo, I am with you always.' 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' Sweet promises! I have nothing to fear, with Jesus on my side.

"Great changes probably have taken place since last we heard from (Mina. And what news shall I receive from England? Where shall I go, and how shall I live at first? These and a thousand other questions engage the mind. ... But the most important question of all is, 'Am I now living as near to God

as possible—?' Alas! I am not. My wayward heart, so easily occupied with the things of time. and sense, needs continually leading back to the fold from whence it strays. Oh! that my 'rejoicing' may be 'more abundant in Christ Jesus,' and my 'conversation' ever 'as becometh the Gospel of Christ.'"

As afternoon wore on, what were those boats in the distance-looming toward them through the mist? One beat its way up before long, eagerly watched from the Dumfries. Yes, there was no mistaking that picturesque sail and curiously painted hull, nor the faces of the men as they came into sight. There they were, twelve or fourteen of them, blue-garbed, dark-eyed, vociferating in an unknown tongue-the first Chinese Hudson Taylor had ever seen. And how his heart went out to them! Behind the strange, uncouth exterior he saw the treasure he had come so far to seek-the souls for which Christ died.

"I did long," he wrote, "to be able to tell them the Glad Tidings."

A little later the English pilot came on board and received a hearty welcome. There was no hope of reaching Woosung that day, still less Shanghai, fifteen miles farther up the tidal river; but there was much he could tell them, while waiting for the fog to clear, of the long winter's doings since they had left England.

From him they learned, for example, of the troubles between Russia and Turkey that within a few weeks were to lead to the Crimean War.^[64] The allied fleets of England and France had already reached the scene of conflict, and nothing it was feared could avert the serious issue. But startling though it was to hear of war-clouds hanging over Europe, it was scarcely as great a shock as the news from China itself, and especially from the port at which they were about to land. Not only was the Tai-ping Rebellion still devastating province after province in its progress toward Peking; Shanghai close at

hand, both the native city and the foreign Settlement, was plunged in all the horrors of war. A local band of rebels known as the "Red Turbans" had obtained possession of the city, around which was now encamped an Imperial army of forty to fifty thousand men, the latter proving a more serious menace to the European community than even the rebels themselves.

For the rest, bad as their passage had been they had arrived ahead of vessels that set out before them, but just too late for the February mail. They must be prepared, moreover, to find everything at famine prices, for the dollar had risen from four shillings, its ordinary value, to six or seven, and would soon be higher: a discouraging outlook for one with a small income in English money!

All this and more the pilot told them, and they had time to think over his communications. Monday was still so foggy that they could not proceed, and though they weighed anchor on Tuesday morning it was only to beat up against the wind a few miles nearer to Woo-sung. But that night the fog lifted, and the young missionary pacing the deck caught sight of a low-lying shore, running far to north and south, that was **no island**. How it arrested him! His prayers were answered; the dream of years come true. He was looking on China at last, under the evening sky.

Not until 5 P.M. next day, however (Wednesday, March 1), was he able to land in Shanghai; and then it was quite alone, the **Dumfries** being still detained by adverse winds.

"My feelings on stepping ashore," he wrote, "I cannot attempt to describe. My heart felt as though it had not room and must burst its bonds, while tears of gratitude and thankfulness fell from my eyes."

Then a deep sense of the loneliness of his position began to come over him;

not a friend or acquaintance anywhere; not a single hand held out to welcome him, or any one who even knew his name.

Mingled with thankfulness for deliverance from many dangers and joy at finding myself at last on Chinese soil came a vivid realisation of the great distance between me and those I loved, and that I was a stranger in a strange land.

I had three letters of introduction, however, and counted on advice and help from one especially, to whom I had been commended by mutual friends, whom I knew well and highly valued. Of course I inquired for him at once, only to learn that he had been buried a month or two previously, having died of fever while we were at sea.

Saddened by these tidings I asked the whereabouts of a missionary to whom another of my introductions was addressed, but only to meet with further disappointment. He had recently left for America. The third letter remained; but it had been given me by a comparative stranger, and I expected less from it than from the others. It proved, however, to be God's channel of help.

This letter then in hand, he left the British Consulate near the river to find the London Mission compound at some distance across the Settlement. On every side strange sights, sounds and smells now greeted him, especially when the European houses gave place to Chinese shops and dwellings. Here nothing but Chinese was to be heard, and few if any but Chinese were to be seen. The streets grew narrower and more crowded, and overhanging balconies above rows of swinging signboards almost hid the sky. How he found his way for a mile or more does not appear; but at length a mission-chapel came in sight, and with an upward look for guidance Hudson Taylor turned in at the ever-open gateway of *Ma-ka-k'iu*.^[65]

Several buildings stood before him, including a hospital and dwelling-houses, at the first of which he enquired for Dr. Medhurst to whom his letter was addressed. Sensitive and reserved by nature, it was no small ordeal to Hudson Taylor to have to introduce himself to so important a person, the pioneer as well as founder (with Dr. Lockhart) of Protestant missionary effort in this part of China, and it was almost with relief he heard that Dr. Medhurst was no longer living on the compound. He too, it seemed, had gone away.

More than this Hudson Taylor was unable to make out, as the Chinese servants could not speak English, nor could he understand a word of their dialect. It was a perplexing situation until a European came in sight, to whom the new arrival quickly made himself known. To his relief he found he was talking with Mr. Edkins, one of the junior missionaries, who welcomed him kindly and explained that Dr. and Mrs. Medhurst had moved to the British Consulate, as the premises they had occupied were within sight and sound of constant fighting at the North Gate of the city. Dr. Lockhart, however, remained; and while he went to find him, Mr. Edkins invited the stranger into one of the Mission-houses.

It was quite an event in those days for an Englishman and especially a missionary to appear in Shanghai unannounced. Most people came by the regular mail-steamers once a month, whose arrival caused general excitement. None was expected then, and even the Dumfries was not yet in port; so that when another of the L.M.S. people came in, during Mr. Edkin's absence, Hudson Taylor had to explain all over again who and what he was. But Alexander Wylie soon set the shy lad at ease, and entertained him until Mr. Edkins returned with Dr. Lockhart.

It did not take long for these new friends to understand the situation, and then there was nothing for it but to receive the young missionary into one of their

own houses. They could not leave him without a home, and the Settlement was so crowded that lodgings were not to be had at any price. Dr. Lockhart, happily, had a room at his disposal. He was living alone, Mrs. Lockhart having been obliged to return to England, and with genuine kindness welcomed Hudson Taylor as his guest, permitting him to pay a moderate sum to cover board-expenses.

This arrangement made, Mr. Edkins took him to see Mr. and Mrs. Muirhead, who completed the L.M.S. staff in Shanghai, and introduced him also to Mr. and Mrs. Burdon of the Church Missionary Society, who had rented an unoccupied house (belonging possibly to Dr. Medhurst) on the same compound. The Burdons invited him to dinner that evening. They were young and newly married, having only been a year or two in China, and from the first were drawn to Hudson Taylor in a sympathy he warmly reciprocated.

"The fireside looked so homelike, their company was so pleasant and all the news they had to tell," he wrote, "so full of interest that it was most refreshing. After prayer at ten o'clock I returned to Dr. Lockhart's, who kindly gave me a room and made me quite at home to enjoy once more a bed on shore."^[66]

Here then was an answer to many prayers, the solution of many ponderings. For the moment he was provided for under favourable circumstances, and though he could not long trespass upon the doctor's hospitality, it would afford him at any rate a little while in which to look about and make permanent arrangements. With good courage, therefore, he arose next morning to see what could be done. The Dumfries would be coming in and he must have his luggage brought ashore, then procure necessary books and a teacher to commence as soon as possible the study of the language. It was his first whole day in China.

"My pleasure on awakening," he wrote to his sister, "and hearing the cheerful song of birds may be better imagined than described. The green corn waving in the fields, budding plants in the garden, and sweetly perfumed blossoms on some of the trees were indeed delightful after so long at sea."

Breakfast over he went to the Consulate, and though disappointed to find only one letter (on which he had to pay no less than two shillings postage) it was a letter from home, containing enclosures from both mother and sisters.

"Never. did I pay two shillings more willingly in my life," he assured them, "than for that letter."

Soon the **Dumfries** was reported, and with a Chinese helper he managed to get his things brought up to Dr. Lockhart's. It was a peculiar sensation to be marching at the head of a procession of coolies through the crowded streets, all his belongings swinging from bamboo poles across their shoulders, while at every step they sang or shouted "Ou-ah Ou-ay" in varying tones, some a third above the rest. They were not really in pain or distress, although it sounded like it; and by the time some of the copper cash he had received in exchange for a Mexican dollar had been distributed amongst them, he had had his first lesson in business dealings with the Chinese.

Then came the daily service in the hospital, conducted on this occasion by Dr. Medhurst, and Hudson Taylor listened for the first time to Gospel preaching in the tongue with which he was to become so familiar. In conversation afterwards, Dr. Medhurst advised him to commence his studies with the Mandarin dialect, the most widely spoken in China, and undertook to procure a teacher. Evening brought the weekly prayer-meeting, when Hudson Taylor was introduced to others of the missionary community, thus ending with united waiting upon God a day full of interest and encouragement.

But before the week closed he began to see another side of Shanghai life. The journal tells of guns firing all night, and the city wall not half a mile away covered with sentry lights; of sharp fighting seen from his windows, in which men were killed and wounded under his very eyes; of a patient search for rooms in the Chinese part of the Settlement, only emphasising the fact that there were none to be had; of his first contact with heathenism; and of scenes of suffering in the native city which made an indelible impression of horror upon his mind.

Of some of these experiences he wrote to his sister ten days after his arrival:

On Saturday [March 4] I took a walk through the Market, and such a muddy, dirty place as Shanghai I never did see! The ground is all mud; dry in dry weather, but one hour's rain makes it like walking through a clay-field. It scarcely is walking-but wading! I found that there was no probability of getting a house or even apartments, and felt cast down in spirit.

The following day, Sunday, I attended two services at the L.M.S., and in the afternoon went into the city with Mr. Wylie. You have never seen a city in a state of siege, or been at the seat of war. God grant you never may! We walked some distance round the wall, and sad it was to see the wreck of rows upon rows of houses near the city. Burnt down, blown down, battered to pieces-in all stages of ruin they were! And the misery of those who once inhabited them, and now at this inclement season are driven from house, home and everything, is terrible to think of.

At length we came upon a ladder let down from the wall, by which provisions were being conveyed into the city. We entered also ... and had a little conversation with the soldiers on guard who offered us no opposition. For a long time we

wandered through the city, Mr. Wylie talking with people here and there, and giving them tracts. We went into some of the temples and had conversation with the priests, who also received tracts from us. Everywhere we seemed welcome. ...

As we passed the West Gate, we saw that the mud with which it had been blocked was cleared away. Hundreds of the Rebel soldiery were assembled there, and we met many more going in that direction. They were about to make a sally upon the Imperialists, who would not be expecting it from that quarter.

We then proceeded to the L.M.S. Chapel, and found it crammed with people. Dr. Medhurst was preaching, after which six bags of rice were distributed among the poor creatures, many of whom must perish but for this assistance, rendered daily, as they can do nothing now to earn a living. Some of the windows smashed in the Chapel, and the lamps broken by passing bullets tell of the deadly work that is going on....

By the time we came to the North Gate they were fighting fiercely outside the city. One man was brought in dead, another shot through the chest, and a third whose arm I examined seemed in dreadful agony. A ball had gone clean through the arm, breaking the bone in passing. We could do nothing for him unless he would come to the hospital; for, as Dr. Lockhart said, who came up just at the moment, they would only pull our dressings off.

A little farther on we met some men bringing in a small cannon they had captured, and following them were others dragging along by their tails (queues) five wretched prisoners. The poor fellows cried piteously to us to save them, as they were hurried by, but, alas, we could do nothing! They would probably be at once decapitated. It makes one's blood run cold to think of such a thing.

Dr. Medhurst, who left the city first, waited a little while for us to overtake him, and as we did not come, went on alone. Shortly after, a cannon-ball struck two men on the very spot where he had been standing, and wounded them so seriously that I fear one if not both will die. When we reached home we found they had been brought to the hospital, and traces of blood seen on the way were thus explained. It makes one sad indeed to be surrounded by so much misery; to see poor creatures so suffering and distressed, and not be able to relieve them or tell them of Jesus and His love. I can only pray for them. But is not He all-mighty? He is. Thank God we know He is! Let us then pray earnestly that He may help them.

All this was intensely painful to a sensitive nature, and Hudson Taylor doubtless felt it the more that it was so unexpected. Trial and hardship he had looked for, of the kind usually associated with a missionary's lot, but every thing was turning out differently from his anticipations. External hardships there were none, save the cold from which he suffered greatly; but distress of mind and heart seemed daily to increase. He could hardly look out of his window, much less take exercise in any direction, without witnessing misery such as he had never dreamed of before. The tortures inflicted by the soldiery of both armies upon unhappy prisoners from whom they hoped to extort money, and the ravages perpetrated as they pillaged the country for supplies, harrowed him unspeakably. And over all hung the dark pall of heathenism, weighing with a heavy oppression upon his spirit. Many of the temples were destroyed in whole or part and the idols damaged, but still the people worshipped them, crying and praying for help that never came. The gods, it was evident, were unable to save. They could not even protect themselves in these times of danger. But in their extremity, rich and poor, high and low, turned to them still, for they had nothing else.

Seeing which, it can be easily imagined how Hudson Taylor longed to tell

them of One mighty to save. But not a sentence could he put together so as to be understood. This enforced silence was a keen distress, for he was accustomed to speaking freely of the things of God. Ever since his conversion five years previously he had given himself as fully as possible to the ministry' of the Gospel. And now for the first time his lips were sealed, and it seemed as if he never would be able in that appalling tongue to tell out all that was in his heart. This again could not but react on his own spiritual life. The channels of outflow to others were sealed, and it was a little while before he realised that they must be kept all the more clear and open toward God. His eagerness to get hold of the language made him devote every moment to study, even to the neglect of prayer and daily feeding upon the Scriptures. Of course the great enemy took advantage of all this, as may be seen from early letters to his parents in which he unburdened his heart

"My position is a very difficult one," he wrote soon after his arrival. "Dr. Lockhart has taken me to reside with him for the present, as houses are not to be had for love or money. ... No one can live in the city, for they are fighting almost continuously. I see the walls from my window ... and the firing is visible at night. They are fighting now, while I write, and the house shakes with the report of cannon.

"It is so cold that I can hardly think or hold the pen. ... You will see from my letter to Mr. Pearse how perplexed I am. It will be four months before I can hear in reply, and the very kindness of the missionaries who have received me with open arms makes me fear to be burdensome. Jesus will guide me aright... I love the Chinese more than ever. Oh to be useful among them!"

To Mr. Pearse he had written about his arrival, and continued on March 3:

I felt very much disappointed on finding no letter from you, but I hope to receive one by next mail. Shanghai is in a very

unsettled state, the Rebels and Imperialists fighting continually, This morning a cannon fired near us awoke me before daybreak, shaking the house and making the windows rattle violently.

There is not a house to be obtained here, or even part of one; those not occupied by Europeans are filled with Chinese merchants who have left the city. The Pilot told me they will give for only three rooms as much as thirty dollars a month, and in some instances more. The missionaries who were living in the city have had to leave, and are residing with others here in the Settlement at present; so that had it not been for the kindness of Dr. Lockhart I should have been quite nonplussed. As it is I scarcely know what to do. How long the present state of things may last it is impossible to say. If I am to stay here, Dr. Lockhart says that the only plan will be to buy land and build a house. The land would probably cost from a hundred to a hundred and fifty dollars, and the house three or four hundred more. If peace were restored, Dr. Lockhart thinks I could rent a house in the city at from two to three hundred dollars per annum. So that in any case the expense of living here must be great. I do not know whether it would be less at Hong-kong or any other port? ...

Please excuse this hasty, disconnected letter with all its faults. It is so cold just now that I can scarcely feel pen or paper. Everything is very dear, and fuel costs at times an almost fabulous price. Owing to new arrivals, coal is now at thirty dollars [nearly £10] a ton. Once more I must beg you to excuse this letter, ... and please reply with all possible expedition that I may know what to do.

May the Lord bless and prosper you. Continue to pray much for me, and may we all, sure of Jesus' love when everything else fails, seek to be more like Him.... Soon we shall meet where ... sorrow and trial shall be no more. Till then may we be willing to bear the cross, and not only to do but to suffer

His will;

"The cold. was so great and other things so trying," he continued to his parents a week later, "that I scarcely knew what I was doing or saying at first. Then, what it means to be so far from home, at the seat of war, and not able to understand or be understood by the people was fully realised. Their utter wretchedness and misery, and my inability to help them or even point them to Jesus, powerfully affected me. Satan came in as a flood; but there was One who lifted up a standard against him. Jesus is here, and though unknown to the majority and uncared-for by many who might know Him, He is present and precious to His own."

Chapter XVII^(TOC)

Make it a Place of Springs

April-August 1854. AET. 21-22

IT was April 4, a day long to be remembered in Shanghai on account of "the battle of Muddy Flat," an engagement between foreign troops and the Imperial soldiery. And a regular battle it was, the Chinese force amounting to fifty thousand men.

For some time the attitude of the latter had been increasingly menacing toward Europeans, several of whom, including Dr. Medhurst, had narrowly escaped with their lives. Under cover of operations against the native city, the Imperial Camps had been moved nearer and nearer to the Settlement, until the foreign community with all they possessed was well within range of Chinese guns. Startled by the danger of their position, the Consuls agreed to require the removal of the camps to a greater distance, and when the time-limit having expired-their demand was not complied with, felt there was nothing for it but to open fire.

And then it was only too evident that the Chinese were prepared to resist. A sharp return fire poured upon the attacking force, many of whom fell before it. Still, superior discipline and arms carried the day, and the handful of Europeans, volunteers and marines from the gun-boats, succeeded in scattering the astonished army and setting fire to the deserted camps.

After this, relations were so strained that it was hardly safe for Europeans to venture beyond the protection of their own guns. At first, indeed, it seemed as

though retaliation would be attempted, and the Settlement was barricaded and an extra gun-boat sent up. But no attack was made. The dislodged soldiery vented their rage upon the poor, defenceless villagers instead, and there the matter ended.

All this was not only a keen distress of mind to Hudson Taylor; it did not a little to add to the trial of his position. For just before the battle of Muddy Flat the way had seemed more hopeful. He had made several excursions with older missionaries in the populous plain around Shanghai, and had been much impressed with the friendliness manifested. Everywhere the foreigners and their message seemed welcome, the distracted villagers finding in their presence some hope of escape from the cruelty of both Rebel and Imperial soldiers. This had encouraged the thought that away altogether from the Settlement he might find a home of his own right among the people. The danger involved would not have deterred him for a moment, and hardships would have been welcome that enabled him to live within his income and be independent. Besides, he longed to be more in touch with the suffering poor around him, and to do what little he could to help them. With his teacher, he might be useful medically and in other ways, and still give a large part of his time to study. His hopes had risen with each fresh visit to the country, and he had been on the lookout for a suitable place in which to settle.

But now all this was at an end, and even preaching excursions had to be discontinued. Foreigners were obliged to remain strictly within the limits of the Settlement, and missionary work was much hampered in consequence. A journey Mr. Edkins had planned, in which Hudson Taylor was to have been his companion, had to be given up, greatly to the disappointment of both missionaries.

"Had we started as we intended," wrote the latter, "or had this

affair happened a day or two later, we should probably have been seized and beheaded by the Imperialists in revenge. But God is ever with us. On His watchful protection we rely. He never forgets, never changes....

"It is of course impossible to go at. all into the country now, so there seems no chance of my getting a place of my own at present.... I would give anything for a friend with whom to consult freely. My position is so perplexing that if I had not definite promises of Divine guidance to count upon, I do not know what I should do. There is, I fear, no probability of my being able to keep within my salary under present circumstances. If I had quarters of my own I could live on rice (not bread, that would be too expensive) and drink tea without milk or sugar, which is cheap enough here. But that I cannot do now. Things are increasing in expense all the while and dollars are getting dearer. They were at six and a penny when last I heard, and if we are involved in further hostilities may rise to double that price and yet have no more purchasing value. Well, He will provide....

"They are building barricades in the Settlement to-day [April 8], and instead of seven roads into it are going to have only three or four. I think we are safe ... but the poor people round us are in a sad state. My teacher said yesterday

"I have great fear. Turning to the right hand I fear the Rebels, and on the left the Mandarin soldiers fill me with alarm. Truly these are hard times to live in.'

"What the poor man says is indeed true.... I tried to comfort him as well as I could. Nothing gives me so much delight as speaking even a few words for Jesus, and I hope I shall soon be able to do so more freely."

It may seem exaggerated, at first sight, to dwell much upon the trials of Hudson Taylor's position. True he was at the seat of war, but as far as

circumstances permitted he was living in safety and even comfort. He was so well off, apparently, that one wonders at the undertone of suffering in his letters, until a little consideration reveals another side of his experiences. The assistance received from Dr. Medhurst and other L.M.S. missionaries was of the greatest value, and yet it gave rise to a distressing situation. If he had belonged to their Society and had been preparing to work with and for them, nothing could have been better. But as it was, he felt almost like an unfledged cuckoo-an intruder in another bird's nest. That his companionship at every meal in solitary tete-a-tete was somewhat wearisome to his generous host, he could not but feel. Not that he received anything but kindness from Dr. Lockhart and his associates. But he was not as they were, highly educated and connected with a great denomination and important work. The preparation providentially ordered for him had been along different lines, and his religious views made him singular, while his position as a missionary was isolated and open to criticism.

He had been sent out, hurried out almost by his Society, before his medical course was finished, in the hope of reaching the Rebels at Nanking. Misled by optimistic reports about the Tai-ping Movement, the Secretaries of the C.E.S. had taken a position that to practical men on the field seemed wholly absurd. It is just as natural for missionaries to be critical, apart from restraining grace, as for others, and it was not long before Hudson Taylor discovered that the Chinese Evangelisation Society, with its aims and methods, was the butt of no little ridicule in Shanghai. It was keenly painful as *The Gleaner* came out month by month to hear it pulled to pieces in this spirit, although he could not but acknowledge that many of the strictures were deserved. This did not make it easier, however, for the Society's representative in that part of China, especially when for the time being he was dependent upon those who spoke and felt so strongly.

He realised the weaknesses of the C.E.S., or was coming to, no less clearly than they did; but he knew and respected many members of the Committee, and to some (including the Secretaries) he was attached with grateful love. This put matters in a very different light. Fellowship with them in spiritual things, at Tottenham and elsewhere, could never be forgotten, and even when feeling their mistakes most keenly he longed for their atmosphere of prayer, their love of the Word of God and earnest zeal for souls.

The influence of the world was tremendously strong in Shanghai, even in missionary circles. It was the heyday of the Settlement, as regards financial and commercial opportunities. True, a temporary check had been imposed by the local rebellion, and it was still a question as to how long the disturbed state of things might continue. But the native city once again in the hands of the Imperialists, business would boom and the price of land go up, carrying all commercial undertakings forward on a flood-tide of success. And so it proved before twelve months were over. Many a fortune was to be made in Shanghai in those days, and lavish expenditure on luxury, with its attendant evils, were to be found on every hand. Among the Europeans hardly a man of advanced age was to be seen, for it was a new world to Western enterprise, entered only within the last twelve years.^[67]

Those were the good old times when every Englishman in China was youthful, the great firms princely, the hospitality unbounded, and the prospect of achieving fortune with ordinary industry and luck appeared to every young fellow as assured.^[68]

Such a state of things was not without its effect on the missionary community. The great expense of living necessitated increased salaries; and it was unavoidable that there should be a good deal of intercourse with government officials, to whom the missionaries were useful as interpreters,

and with officers from the gun-boats stationed-, at Shanghai for the protection of the Settlement. Without finding fault with anything or any one in particular, there was a general spirit of sociability that surprised Hudson Taylor a good deal. It was not what he had expected in missionary life, and fell far short of his ideal.

He himself, on the other hand, did not entirely accord with the current conception of what a missionary should be. He was bright and fairly educated, but had no university or college training, had taken no medical degree, and disclaimed the title Reverend given him at first on all hands. That he was good and earnest could easily be seen; but he was connected with no particular denomination, nor was he sent out by any special Church. He expected to do medical work, but he was not a doctor. He was accustomed, evidently, to preaching and an almost pastoral care of others, and yet was not ordained. And strangest perhaps of all, though he belonged to a Society that seemed well supplied with funds, his salary was insufficient and his appearance shabby compared with those by whom he was surrounded.

That Hudson Taylor felt all this, and felt it increasingly as time went on, is not to be wondered at. He had come out with such different expectations! His one longing was to go inland and live among the people. He wanted to keep down expenses and continue the simple, self-denying life he had lived at home. To learn the language that he might win souls was his one ambition. He cared nothing, nothing at all about worldly estimates and social pleasures, though he did long for fellowship in the things of God. With a salary of eighty pounds a year, he found himself unable to manage upon twice that sum. So he was really poor, poor and in serious difficulty before long; and there was no one to impress the fact upon the Committee at home or make them understand the situation.

Then too he was lonely, unavoidably lonely. The missionaries with whom he lived were all a good deal older than himself, with the exception of the Burdons who were fully occupied with their work. He could not trespass on their kindness too frequently, and having no colleague of his own found it impossible to speak of many matters connected with the Society and future developments that were on his heart. Soon he learned to mention such affairs as little as possible, but he did long for some one with whom to bring them before the Throne of Grace.

Much as he felt his position, however, it was well for the young missionary that he could not hive off just then or attempt to live on rice and tea minus milk or sugar. He would have done it had he been his own master. He would have done anything along lines of self-sacrifice to make the money given for missionary purposes go as far as possible. But in that unaccustomed and trying climate it would have been a dangerous experiment during the hot season. And more than this-were there not higher purposes in view in the providential limitations imposed upon him at this time? He longed to be free and independent, and the Lord saw fit to keep him in the very opposite position, letting him learn from experience what it is to be poor and weak and indebted to others even for the necessaries of life. For His own, His well-beloved Son there was no better way; and there are lessons still that only can be learned in this school.

But for such circumstances early in his missionary career, Hudson Taylor would never have been able to feel for others as it was necessary he should. By nature he was resourceful and independent to a fault. He had sacrificed, as we have seen, the hope and ambition of years, breaking off his medical curriculum before he could obtain a degree, simply that he might be free to follow the guidance of the Lord as it came to him personally, untrammelled

by obligations even to the Society with which he was connected. And now at the very opening of his new life in China, he found himself cast upon the generosity of strangers, shut up to a position as little welcome, possibly, to them as to himself, and from which there seemed for a long time to come no hope of escape.

As spring advanced, his journal gave evidence of more trial and depression of spirits than could be attributed to the climate. His eyes, never strong, became inflamed through the sunshine and excessive dust, and he suffered also a great deal from headache. In spite of this he worked at Chinese on an average five hours every day, besides giving time to necessary correspondence. To Mr. Pearse he wrote as fully as possible, trying to supply information that would interest readers of *The Gleaner*, as well as detailed statements of the condition of things around him with a view to the future conduct of the work.

From these letters one sees how much he was beginning to feel the monotony of a young missionary's life, occupied mainly with study. There was little of interest to write about, now that he was practically restricted to the Settlement, and it is clear that he was passing through that stage of weariness and disillusionment in which so many, drifting away from the Lord, lose spiritual usefulness and power. What, missionary does not know the temptation at such a time to let go higher ideals and sink to the level about one? Prayer becomes an effort and Bible reading distasteful, and the longing creeps in for stimulus of some kind-if it be only that of gossip or novel-reading. Then the way is open for a fault-finding, critical spirit, for dissatisfaction and irritability, and gradually for worse backsliding still. And all this, so often, has its first beginnings in the almost unendurable monotony from which the young missionary finds it difficult if not impossible to escape.

"Pray for me, pray earnestly for me," wrote Hudson Taylor to

his mother early in April, "you little know what I may be needing when you read this."

And to Mr. Pearse a few days later:

May the Lord raise up and send out many labourers into this part of His vineyard and sustain those who are already here. No amount of romantic excitement can do that. There is so much that is repugnant to the flesh that nothing but the power of God can uphold His servants in such a sphere, just as His blessing alone can give them success.

Thanks to good judgment and sensible home-training, Hudson Taylor was in less danger than many young missionaries during those months of language study. From early childhood he had been encouraged, as we have seen, to take an interest in "nature study," his butterflies and insects being always housed with consideration though at some cost to his parents in their limited surroundings. This stood him in good stead, for now he not only knew the value of such recreation, but also how to take it up.

"Ordered a cabinet for insects," runs the journal for April a5, "and worked at Chinese and photography.

"April 28: Very warm again. Worked at Chinese five hours. Had a bad headache all day. Caught a few insects as a commencement of my collection.

"April 29: At Chinese six hours. After dinner took a walk in search of nocturnal insects. Had some difficulty in getting into the Settlement again, the gates being closed."

"To-day," he wrote to his mother in May, "I caught sight of a large black butterfly with swallow-tail wings, the largest living butterfly I have ever seen. ... At first I thought it must be a small bird, although it seemed to fly so strangely. But when it settled on a tree and I saw the splendid creature, it nearly took

my breath away ... it was so fine!

"I intend also to collect botanical specimens, but at present have no convenience. ... There are some trees here that have a strange look to our eyes, being covered with blossoms before a single leaf appears. Among the wild plants I see many old friends-the violet, forget-me-not, buttercup, clover, chickweed, dandelion, hemlock, and several common herbs. There are also wild flowers that are new to me and very pretty."

In addition to working hard at Chinese this summer he was diligently keeping up other studies, medicine and chemistry especially, that he might not lose the benefit of his hospital course. The classics he gave as much time 'to as possible, and he seems always to have had some useful book on hand dealing with history, biography, or natural science. The following is a typical entry in a journalletter to his sister

Before breakfast read Medicine, then Chinese nearly seven hours. After dinner, Greek and Latin exercises, each an hour. After poring over these things till one can scarcely see, it is a comfort to have a fine, clear, large-type Bible, such as Aunt Hardey gave me, It is quite a luxury. Well, all these studies are necessary. Some of them, the classical languages of Europe, ought to have been mastered long ago; so it is now or never with me. But the sweetest duties of the day are those that lead to Jesus-prayer, reading and meditation upon His precious Word.

Summer was now upon them-those hottest months of the year when one lives in a perpetual Turkish bath, and mosquitoes, prickly-heat, and sleeplessness have to be reckoned with, as well as a temperature that for weeks together scarcely falls below 80°F. at night. It is easy to write about it, but who that has not lived through such days and nights can imagine how much grace it takes to bear the discomfort and distress without. irritability, and keep on

steadily with work when all one's courage seems needed just to endure.

All through this trying season, however, Hudson Taylor kept up his studies, never falling below his average of five hours at Chinese every day. Once or twice he went into the country with Mr. Burdon, risky as it was to attempt it.

"These are troublous times," he wrote, "but we must do something."

And their faith that the Lord would help them was rewarded by the welcome met with from the village people, who were only too glad to see them out again.

"I think I may say I have one friend now," he added, telling of a happy evening with Mr. and Mrs. Burdon after one such excursion. "But I do not want to go over there too often, as I am only one of his circle and he has a wife for company. I feel the want of a companion very much. The day is spent with my teacher, but my evenings generally alone in writing or study."

Letters, of course, were a great comfort, and much time was given during his first year in China to correspondence. Strangely enough the months of June and July brought him the peculiar trial of hearing nothing from home mail after mail when he was especially longing for news. How this happened never quite appeared, for he had been written to regularly, but the letters never reached him, or if they did it was out of their proper order and long after they were due. This, combined with the great heat and the effects of a brief but serious illness, tried him to a degree that can only be understood by those who have been in similar circumstances.

"When last mail came in," he wrote to his mother in the middle of June, "after walking a mile and a half to the Consulate on a broiling hot day and waiting nearly two hours, which lost me my 'tiffin' or midday meal, I had the pleasure of bringing up letters and papers for every one at the Mission except myself."

When I found there really was nothing for me, the disappointment was so great that I felt quite sick and faint and could scarcely manage to walk home, for it was reported that we should have no other mail for six or eight weeks."

Another trial of those summer months, and one he felt still more keenly, was his financial position, overlooked apparently by the Society. The first quarter since his arrival in China was now at an end, and on making up his accounts he was more than troubled. His balance in hand was so small that it would be necessary to draw again very soon, and he had already spent more than a hundred and thirty dollars. At that rate his salary would be exhausted before half the year was over, and what would the Committee say and think?

With anxious care he explained to Mr. Pearse every item in these accounts, the first he ever sent home from China, revealing touching details as to needs he had not supplied because of his desire to save expense as far as possible.

"I feel quite oppressed when I think of what a cost I am to the Society," he wrote, "and yet how little good I am able to accomplish."

And just then, to add to his perplexity, news reached him in a round-about way that seemed a climax to his troubles. The Society was sending another missionary to Shanghai, and not a bachelor like himself, but a married man with a family. Dr. Parker, a Scotch physician who had applied to the C.E.S. before Hudson Taylor left England, was already on his way to join him and might be expected in a few months. Glad as the young missionary would have been of such tidings under other circumstances, with Shanghai in the condition in which it was the outlook was cause indeed for concern. Dependent himself for shelter upon the generosity of others, what arrangements could he make for a married couple with three children? He hardly dared mention it to those with whom he was living, and yet the news

would soon be the talk of the Settlement whether he kept silence or not.

Anxiously he awaited letters from the Committee explaining the situation. Surely they would send him notice, in view of all he had written, of such an addition to their staff, and instruct him fully how to act. But mail after mail came in with no reference to Dr. Parker's coming. Repeated requests for directions as to how to arrange for himself had as yet received no answer, and before summer was over Hudson Taylor saw that he must act on his own initiative.

Meanwhile comments and questions were not wanting that made the position more trying. "Is it true that a medical man is about to join you, with a wife and family? When did you hear it? Why did you not tell us? Have you bought land? Why do you not begin to build?" And so forth! To all of which no satisfactory reply was forthcoming. At first in his perplexity Hudson Taylor suffered as only a sensitive nature can; but when the talk was at its worst and the summer heat almost unbearable, the Lord himself drew near and comforted him.

"As you know," he wrote to Mr. Pearse in July, "I have been much tried since coming here, 'pressed beyond measure' almost at times. But the goodness of God is never-failing; and the last few days I have enjoyed such a sweet sense of His love, and such a personal application of some of the promises as though they were written or spoken directly to me, that the oil of joy has indeed been given me for mourning. I feel sure that dear friends in England have been specially remembering me in prayer, and I am truly grateful. Oh, continue to pray for me! I am so weak that difficulties seem overwhelming, and oftentimes I have to cry with Peter, 'Save, Lord; I perish.' But never does that cry go up in vain. He has a balm for every wound, and is always ready to calm the troubled waters of the soul. I long much for the time when I shall be able to spread

the knowledge of His grace among this people in their own tongue. May that time be hastened and an effectual door opened before me:

"I hope I may be able to find a home of some kind for Dr. and Mrs. Parker on their arrival, though I cannot see how or where it will be. All the houses seem more than filled already, and new missionaries are expected out. I think it seems necessary that you should at once consider and decide upon the question of building. If we are to establish a Mission in Shanghai there is no alternative. No one can have a greater objection to building than I have, or see its disadvantages more clearly. But the question lies at present within narrow limits. There is only a given space in which we are permitted to live, i.e. the Settlement, and in it all the houses are occupied or shortly will be. We may or may not find those who, having been at the expense of building for themselves, are willing to accommodate us for a time, to their own inconvenience; but this cannot be a permanent state of things, Those who are best able to judge see no hope of a restoration of peace for years to come; but we are all very shortsighted when we look into futurity."

The more he thought over the situation, the more he felt that there was nothing for it but to seek a native house in the Chinese part of the Settlement, in which to receive the travellers who were drawing nearer every day. So in spite of overpowering heat and his lack of a sedan-chair, he set about the weary search once more. It was four or five months now since he had hunted for quarters on his first arrival without finding even a room available, and if anything the conditions seemed worse than before. Nothing he could begin to think of was to be found, and but for a growing rest of heart in God, Hudson Taylor would have been almost in despair. As it was, he was learning precious lessons of his own helplessness-and of Almighty strength.

To Miss Stacey in Tottenham he wrote during those August days:

How sweet is the thought that we have not an High Priest who cannot be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," but One who was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Nothing is more sure than that we are wholly unable to sympathise with those in whose circumstances we have never been placed. How delightful then is the reflection that though our friends can only in part enter into our joys and sorrows, trials and discouragements, there is One ever ready to sympathise to the full; One to whom we have constant access, and from whom we may receive present help in every time of need.

This has been such a comfort to me when thinking and perplexed as to a residence not for myself only but for Dr. and Mrs. Parker. In the present state of Shanghai this is no easy problem, there being neither native nor foreign houses unoccupied. But I have much to be thankful for. Our dear Redeemer had not where to lay His head. I have never yet been placed in that extremity.

One who is really leaning on the Beloved finds it always possible to say, "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." But I am so apt, like Peter, to take my eyes off the one Object and look at the winds and waves. As in that scene, however, the grace and tenderness of Jesus are as apparent as Peter's little faith, so with us to-day as soon as we turn to Him, "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." While we depend entirely on Him we are secure, and prosper in circumstances apparently the most unfavourable. ...

Oh for more stability! The reading of the Word and meditation on the promises have been increasingly precious to me of late. At first I allowed my desire to acquire the language speedily to have undue prominence and a deadening effect on my soul.

You see from this how much I need your prayers. But now, in the grace that passes all understanding, the Lord has again caused His face to shine upon me.

And to his sister Amelia he added, two days later:

I have been puzzling my brains again about a house, etc., but to no effect. So I have made it a matter of prayer, and have given it entirely into the Lord's hands, and now I feel quite at peace about it. He will provide and be my Guide in this and every other perplexing step.

"Quite at peace about it"—with such serious difficulties ahead? A situation he could not meet, needs for which he had no provision and no possibility of making any, a problem he had puzzled over until he was baffled, and to no effect! "So I have made it a matter of prayer," is the simple, restful conclusion, "and have given it entirely into the Lord's hands. He will provide and be my Guide in this as in every other perplexing step."

Yes, that is how it ever has been, ever must be with the people of God. Until we are carried quite out of our depth, beyond all our own wisdom and resources, we are not more than beginners in the school of faith. Only as everything fails us and we fail ourselves, finding out how poor and weak we really are, how ignorant and helpless, do we begin to draw upon abiding strength. "Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee"; not partly in Thee and partly in himself. The devil often makes men strong, strong in themselves to do evil—great conquerors, great acquirers of wealth and power. The Lord on the contrary makes His servant weak, puts him in circumstances that will shew him his own nothingness, that he may lean upon the strength that is unfailing. It is a long lesson for most of us; but it cannot be passed over until deeply learned. And God Himself thinks no trouble too great, no care too costly to teach us this.

Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee and to prove thee and to know what was in thine heart... that He might make thee know...

Yes, "all that long, wearisome, painful experience, infinitely well worth while in the sight of the Eternal, if it produced one moral, spiritual trait in the people He was educating—what a scale of values!"

At which point in our meditation, fresh light was thrown upon all this from the eighty-fourth Psalm, by an aged saint drawing upon the fulness of his own experience.^[69]

"Speaking to my students one day," he said, "I asked them 'Young men, which is the longest, widest, most populous valley in the world? 'And they began to summon up all their geographical information to answer me.

"But it was not the valley of the Yangtze, the Congo, or the Mississippi. Nay, this Jammerthal, as it is in our German, this valley of Baca, or weeping, exceeds them all. For six thousand years we trace it back, filled all the way with an innumerable multitude. For every life passes at some time into the Vale of Weeping.

"But the point for us is not what do we suffer here, but what do we leave behind us? What have we made of it, this long, dark Valley, for ourselves and others? What is our attitude, as we pass through its shadows? Do we desire only, chiefly, the shortest way out? Or do we seek to find it, to make it, according to His Promise, 'a place of springs': here a spring and there a spring, for the blessing of others and the glory of Our God?

"Thus it is with the man 'whose strength is in Thee.' He has learned the preciousness of this Jammerthal, and that these

dry, hard places yield the springs for which hearts are thirsting the wide world over.

"So St. Paul in his life. What a long journey he had to make through the Valley of Weeping!

"In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils of the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.'

"A long journey indeed through the Valley of Weeping; but oh, what springs of blessing! What rain filling the pools! We drink of it still today."

And is not this the meaning, dear reader, of your life and mine in much that is hard to be understood? The Lord loves us too well to let us miss the best. He has to weaken our strength in the way, to bring us into the Valley of Weeping, the empty, humble and prove us, that we too may know that our strength, every bit of it, is in Him alone, and learn as Hudson Taylor did to leave ourselves entirely in His hands.

So your Valley of Weeping shall become "a place of springs." Many shall drink of the living water, because you have suffered, trusted, conquered through faith in God. You go on your way as He has promised, to appear at last in Zion, rejoicing before God; and in the Valley of Weeping remains for those that follow many a well, still springing up in blessing where your feet

have trod.

Chapter XVIII^(TOC)

Building In Troublous Times

August-November 1854. Aet. 22

It must have seemed almost too good to be true when only two days after the preceding letter was written Hudson Taylor heard of a house, and before the month was over found himself in possession of premises large enough to accommodate his expected colleagues. Five rooms upstairs and seven down seemed a spacious residence indeed; and though it was only a native house, build of wood and very ramshackle, it was right among the people, near the North Gate of the Chinese city.

It did not all come about, however, as easily as the statement is made. Between August 9 and 21 he learned many a lesson of patience, for in China these arrangements are compassed with difficulty. The house first heard of was not the only finally obtained, nor was the price first demanded one that he could or would give; and between the two lay much weary negotiation that had to be carried on through interpreters and deepened the debt he was already under to his missionary friends.

So much labor and difficulty in accomplishing so ordinary a transaction opened his eyes to what really constitutes a large part of the trial of missionary life. He was reading at the time *The Hand of God in History*, and wrote to his sister who had given it him:

What a very different thing it is to review the aggregate success of Missions and missionaries over many years from taking part in the process itself with all its trials and

discouragements. But let us be comforted. So will it be for us too at last. One smile from Him we love will repay all the sorrows, and leave a clear balance to the good of whatever has been accomplished.

"Oh Amelia," he continued when difficulties were at their worst, "one needs an anchor for one's faith ... and thank God we have it! The promises of God stand sure. 'The Lord knoweth them that are His.' How easy it is to talk about economy, the high salaries of missionaries, and all the rest. But there is more than one missionary here who hardly knows how to manage to make both ends meet. Well, if we want a city, there is one we can turn back to. But no, we will be pilgrims and strangers here, looking for a better home, 'that is an heavenly,' 'whose builder and maker is God.' Oh that those around us had the same hope! ...

"You ask how I get over my troubles. This is the way... I take them to the Lord. Since writing the above, I have been reading my evening portion. The Old Testament part of it happens to be the 72nd to the 74th Psalms. Read them as I have if you want to see how applicable they are. I don't know how it is, but I seldom can read Scripture now without tears of joy and gratitude....

"I see that to be as I am and have been since my arrival has really been more conducive to improvement and progress than any other position would have been, though in many respects it has been painful and far from what I should have chosen for myself. Oh for more implicit reliance on the wisdom and love of God!"

But even when the agreement was signed and sealed, much yet remained to be accomplished.

"My house has twelve rooms," he wrote doors without end, passages innumerable, outhouses everywhere, and all covered

with dust, filth, rubbish and refuse. What all the outhouses have been for I cannot imagine. There are no less than thirty-six of them, none of which I want or shall use. I have been getting a whole batch of doors fastened up, for however well it may suit a Chinaman to have six or eight ways into his house, it does not please me at all just now. I see how to arrange it so that with one pair of gates I can shut off the dwelling itself from all the outhouses. Indoors there are two staircases of a sort. One of these I am having removed and the trap-door screwed down.

"The five upstairs rooms are side by side, each communicating with the others by double doors ... so that the middle rooms have not much privacy. This set of apartments I shall whitewash and fumigate thoroughly ... taking one for a bedroom and another for dining-room and study. Once there I must dig away at this fearful Shanghai dialect with its eight tones, for which I shall need a new teacher. He will probably occupy some of the downstairs rooms, which not being raised above the ground are of little use for foreigners."

But it was one thing to talk about cleaning the house and going into residence, and quite another to accomplish it, as Hudson Taylor was to prove. He had had no experience so far of the unsupervised Chinese workman, and the discovery of his characteristics was discouraging. On August 22 for example, in spite of overpowering heat, he got a few men to clear the place and remove rubbish enough, as he said, "to have bred a pestilence." Early next day he was on the scene again and discovered his men absorbed in watching the bricklayers, never dreaming of setting to work themselves. Having found them plenty to do, he went to inquire about a box expected from Hong-kong. Returning in an hour, what was his surprise to find one man writing, another smoking and the rest asleep. The third time he came it still seemed as though nothing had been done.

"So I have brought over my desk and a chair," he wrote that afternoon, "to remain on the premises ... and even so they perpetually relapse into idleness. I say, for instance, 'Now this must be thoroughly washed.' For a while there is a noise of splashing, but soon all is still. I go to see ... and the man looks quite astonished when I remark that only the outside has been cleaned. 'Oh,' he replies, 'you want within-and-without washing.' 'Yes,' I say, 'I do,' and return to my letter for a few minutes. Amusing though it may seem at first, this kind of thing becomes wearisome, especially when one can get nothing else."

Though trying enough in its way, all this was the least serious part of the new life he was undertaking. The unavoidable outlay weighed on his mind far more. Furnish as sparingly as he might and live as frugally, he seemed to be spending a great deal on himself. At home he had been a collector for Missions, and knew what it was to receive the hardly-earned pence of the poor. And now, against all his own inclinations, to be using missionary money in ways that seemed to him so lavish was indeed a trial. He would not have felt it so keenly had he been directly engaged in missionary work, but when he could do nothing but study it was almost more than he could bear.

"To save the expense of a sedan," he wrote to his mother, "I have tried staying indoors altogether during the great heat, or walking out only in the evening; but several attacks of illness as well as threatenings of ague have warned me to desist. ... No one, I am sure, can be more anxious to avoid expense than I am; but if we are to live here at all we must accommodate ourselves to circumstances...."

"These things, sometimes make me cry with David, 'My flesh and my heart faileth.' But that is not his last word; and by grace I too can add, 'God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.' Though often cast down ... I am where I

would be and as I would be-save for more likeness to Christ and more familiarity with the language."

Still more serious than the question of expense, however, was the danger involved in his intended move. Not only was he leaving the Settlement, to live entirely alone among the Chinese, he was going to a house very near the Imperial camp and within range of the guns of both parties. It was a position as he well knew of considerable danger, but no other residence had been procurable and the time had come when something must be done.

"The Chinese house to which I am removing," he wrote to a friend, "is in a dangerous position, being beyond the protection of the Settlement and liable to injury from both Imperialists and Rebels. The former have threatened to bum the street, and the latter have two cannon constantly pointing at it. My teacher who comes from a distance dare not go there, and as I cannot get another who speaks Mandarin at present I shall have to commence the study of the Shanghai dialect. ... As I can talk with my present teacher tolerably well, it is a trial to lose him and commence again from the beginning. But as there is no hope of being able to go to Mandarin-speaking districts for several years, and the Shanghai dialect I can use as I learn it, this too no doubt is wisely ordered. At any rate I am thankful that my way is hedged up on every side, so that no choice is left me. I am obliged to go forward. ... And if you hear of my being killed or injured, do not think it a pity that I came, but thank God I was permitted to distribute some Scriptures and tracts and to speak a few words in broken Chinese for Him who died for me."

In this spirit, then, Hudson Taylor bade farewell to the kind host who for six months had afforded him a home, and on August 30, near the North Gate of the native city, set up housekeeping on his own account. In spite of trouble, expense, loneliness and danger, it was good to feel that he could begin a little

work on his own account. And the Lord who knew the heart of His servant, responded to his longings after usefulness and blessing, meeting him at the outset of this new pathway with rich compensations of His grace. In the solitude that was now his lot, the soul began to revive again and grow. The blessing of the far-away days at Drainside seemed to come back. He lived his own life as then, the simple self-denying life that made brighter spiritual experience possible.

It was now September, almost a year from the time he had left home, and his joy in being able to do something for the people round him was very great. His new teacher, happily, was an earnest Christian, and able to conduct morning and evening worship to which all who came were made welcome. After this there were patients to see, visitors to entertain and housekeeping to attend to, in all of which Mr. Si was indispensable. But his pupil was rapidly learning useful terms and polite phrases, as well as carefully chosen sentences in which to convey the Gospel. On Sundays they went out together to distribute tracts and preach in the crowded streets. The dispensary was making many friends, and when a day-school was added both for boys and girls they had no lack of occupation. Before long, Si had to give all his time to these operations, and another teacher was engaged for the language. And then, with everything in working order and his heart full of the blessing of the Lord, Hudson Taylor began to taste some of the real joys of missionary life.

To this period belongs a letter to his parents which shews the cheerful, natural spirit in which he was working.

*NORTH GATE, SHANGHAI,
September 20, 1854.*

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER

Whether you weary of my letters or not, I cannot but write

them, ... and I will take it for granted that this one at any rate will be welcome, as it is to inform you that the experiment made in coming to this house has been so far successful, and that now though not doing much I am at any rate doing something. I am glad also to say that I get on with the Shanghai dialect much better than I at first expected. ^[70] ... The only thing that has really troubled me has been the outlay I have had to make and that my current expenses are so great. But this is unavoidable. On first coming here I was disposed to economise at the risk of usefulness and health, but I see now that one cannot do this with impunity; and as I have no desire to be sent home useless within two or three years, with considerable doubt as to my ever being able to return, I have been led to consider that proper care on these points is in the long run the truest economy.

The Chinese house I am occupying is as good as can be obtained, and though the neighbourhood is undesirable one gets accustomed to it. If I feel lonely or timid at night, I recall some sweet promises of Divine protection, turning them into prayer, and invariably find that they compose my mind and keep it in peace. I do not neglect any precaution for safety; but keep a light burning all night and have my swimming belt blown up, so that at a moment's notice I could take to the water if necessary-the planks forming the bridge between me and the Settlement being removed at dark...

And now I must tell you what I am doing. First then, I have commenced a day-school with ten boys and five girls. Three more boys are promised and will be coming shortly. The teacher, Si, is a Christian and very useful, as he preaches well in the local dialect. The school opens and closes with a Scripture lesson and prayer. At present I cannot do much with the children, but every day increases my power to make myself understood. As I sit in my study and hear their voices chanting over their lessons, it fills me with thankfulness I cannot begin

to express. ... I often wish Amelia were here to take charge of the girls and gather in others. There are plenty to be found who are by no means improved by being at liberty in this neighbourhood, young as they are, for it is a bad one. On this account, if I have to go out after dark, I always take a servant and lantern.

Secondly, the dispensary. I have not laid myself out for medical work, but every day brings some patients. To-day for example, being wet, only ten have come. I am gradually learning Chinese terms for ordinary diseases, symptoms, etc., and the expressions needed in questioning patients and telling them how to take our medicines; and I find that though the amount of work I get through may seem small, the labour attending it is considerable.

Thirdly, our services. From the very first day in this house, I have had family prayers night and morning. At these times the servants, teachers, Si's family and any others who like to come in are present. We have had as many as twenty. To-day we had nine in the morning and ten at night. Those who can read do so, verse about, and yesterday (the anniversary of my sailing from Liverpool) I commenced joining them. Of course I make blunders, and so do one or two others, but the teachers are there to correct, and by and by I shall do better. On several occasions also, Si has accompanied me into the city to distribute tracts and Scriptures. At these times, when we have gathered a few people together, Si has read a portion and explained it in a way that all could understand, ... so you see he is very useful.

All these engagements take time, and with Chinese study occupy most of the day. I also find it necessary to do some reading in medicine, surgery or materia medica every day ... and what with domestic matters and keeping a careful watch over everybody and everything, I can assure you I do not spend much time in bed-as I never go till I can keep awake no

longer.

The other day I had an interesting excursion to Woo-sung with Mr. Edkins and a young American missionary named Quaterman. We went by boat ... arriving there at noon, with a large supply of Scriptures and tracts. These we distributed on many junks going northward, receiving promises from not a few captains and others that they would read them and pass them on to friends in the ports to which they were travelling.

Returning home in the evening well pleased with our excursion, we were puzzled to know how we should pass the Imperial fleet in safety. They are somewhat random with their fire after dark, and might easily have taken us for natives if not Rebel spies. Mr. Edkins came to the rescue, proposing that we should sing as we passed them, that they might know we were foreigners. The suggestion seemed good and the boatmen were pleased with the idea, the only objection being that as we had already been singing a good deal we had exhausted all the hymns and tunes we had in common and were more than ready for a rest.

Having perfected our arrangements, we approached some ships we took to be the fleet, and passed them singing lustily. But just as we were about to congratulate one another on our success, the boatmen shouted to us to recommence, as we had been mistaken in what we supposed to have been the fleet and were just coming within range of their guns.

So we had to tune up again without delay, and sang "The spacious firmament on high," to that beautiful tune Creation. Unfortunately we concluded just opposite the largest ship of the fleet. It was now quite dusk.

"What next?" cried Mr. Edkins, as the alarm-gong struck on board the ship, "there is not a moment to lose."

He then commenced singing I know not what. Quaterman

struck up a truly American tune to "Blow ye the trumpet, blow!" while I at the same moment raised a third with all the voice I could command. The men on the warship were shouting loudly, our boat's crew outdoing them if possible, and the whole thing was so ludicrous that I could control myself no longer and burst into a fit of laughter most inappropriate to the occasion.

"Who goes there?" was shouted from the Imperial ship.

"Peh-kuei" (white devils), yelled our men, while we cried simultaneously, "Ta Ing-kueh" (Great English Nation) and "Hua-chukueh," which means Flowery Flag Country, or America.

After a little further explanation we were allowed to pass, upon which my companions began to lecture the boatmen for having called us "White Devils." The poor men who had not yet received their day's pay were very penitent, and explained that they had been so frightened that they really did not know what they were saying and would be most careful to refrain from such expressions in future. As soon as we landed I set off for home, and found them just going to draw the last plank across the creek. Happily I got over in time, for I was fearfully hungry and tired.

My eyes, the lamp and paper alike inform me that I must be drawing to a close. But I must not forget to tell you that the other day a Sung-kiang man presented me with a couple of valuable crickets in a glass box. They require two freshly boiled grains of rice daily, and are kept on account of their song, which is quite different from the sound made by English crickets, and very pleasant.

And now Good-night, or rather Good-morning

*Ever my dear Parents, your affectionate son,
J. HUDSON TAYLOR.*

Mingled with joy in his new work, however, came unexpected trials, great and small difficulties of household management, quarrels between his servants and the neighbours, anxiety about his cook who was laid up with typhus fever, disappointment with the second teacher who had to be dismissed, great discouragement about the language, and repeated attacks of illness that left him low-spirited and unfit to bear the strain of constant skirmishing so close at hand.

"There has been a great deal of fighting for several days," he wrote in the middle of September, "and the Rebels have been gathering at the bottom of this street. Of them I have little fear, but I hope there may be no counter-move on the part of the Imperialists.... Several cannon-balls have passed so near these premises as to make me feel some trepidation for the moment. It is easy to tell whether a gun is loaded or not, as the ball makes a whizz which once heard is not likely to be forgotten."

He was in real sorrow too over the illness of Mrs. Burdon, who had suffered a great deal since the birth of her little daughter three months before. Her husband was worn out with anxiety and nursing, and for them both Hudson Taylor felt deeply concerned. Mrs. Burdon had been his chief counsellor in beginning housekeeping. The very last time she went out she had helped him with necessary purchases, full of interest in all that concerned his moving to the North Gate. And now it seemed that she could not recover. Her love for those she was leaving and perfect submission to the will of God touched him unspeakably; and as often as possible he went over to relieve Mr. Burdon, entering with a brother's sympathy into the anguish through which he was passing.

Beside all this, he was increasingly burdened about money matters, not

knowing even yet how the Society would respond to his letters. Obligated to exceed his salary for the necessaries of life, he had made use of a Letter of Credit provided against emergencies, but was still uncertain as to how far his bills would be honoured. It was a painful position, and one that cost him many a wakeful night as well as many a prayer.

Thus September ended, and looking back upon it he could say:

Though in some ways I never passed a more anxious month in my life, I have never felt before so conscious of God's presence with me. I begin to enjoy the sweet, peaceful rest in the Lord and in His promises experienced first in Hull. That was the brightest part of my spiritual life, and how poor at the best! Since then I have been in a declining state, but the Lord has brought me back; and as there is no standing still in these things, I trust to go on to apprehend heights and depths, lengths and breadths of love divine far exceeding anything I have yet entered into. May God grant it, for Jesus' sake.

One cannot but be impressed in reading the letters of this period with the sacred ambition of Hudson Taylor's prayers; a subject worth pondering, if it be true that prayer moulds the life and not circumstances, and that as are our deepest desires before God so will the trend of our outward experiences be. Certainly nothing is more significant in the life before us than the longing for usefulness and likeness to the Lord he loved. Not honour or success, but usefulness, "widespread usefulness," was his constant prayer. Would he have drawn back could he have foreseen that the only way to its fulfilment was through the furnace seven times heated?

For much preparatory work had yet to be done. His prayers were indeed to be answered beyond anything he asked or thought; but he must pray with yet fuller meaning, and go through with all the training needed at the Master's

hands. The iron must be tempered to steel, and his heart made stronger and more tender than others, through having loved and suffered more, with God. He was pioneering a way in China, little as he or any one else could imagine it, for hundreds who were to follow. Every burden must be his, every trial known as only experience can teach it. He who was to be used of God to dry so many tears, must himself weep. He who was to encourage thousands in a life of child-like trust, must learn in his own case deep lessons of a Father's loving care. So difficulties were permitted to gather about him, especially at first when every impression was vivid and lasting, difficulties attended by many a deliverance to cheer him on his way.

As much of his usefulness later on was to consist in helping and providing for young missionaries, it is not to be wondered at that a large part of his preparation at this time had to do with financial matters and the unintentional mismanagement of the home Committee. He had to learn how to do and how not to do for those who on the human side would be dependent on him; a lesson of vital importance, lying at the very foundation of his future work. Hence all this trial about a small, settled income and large uncertain needs; about irregularity of mails and long-unanswered letters; about rapidly-changing opportunities of service on the field, and the slow-moving ideas and inaccessibility of Committees at home. He did his best, and the inexperienced Secretaries in London did their best also, as faithful men of God. But something, somehow, was wanting; and just what it was Hudson Taylor had to discover, and later on to remedy. Seen in this light it need hardly be said a special significance attaches to his financial cares; and the letters in which he tells at times so touchingly of the exercise of mind through which he was passing have an interest all their own. The iron-one sees it-was entering into his very soul; but from this long endurance was to spring heart's-ease for many another.

At the risk of some repetition, the following letter is quoted for its value in this connection, and as showing how keenly he continued to feel the circumstances in which he was placed

NORTH GATE, SHANGHAI,
October 17, 1854.

MY DEAR PARENTS

You wish to know all about my pecuniary as well as other affairs, so I am enclosing a copy of a list of expenses I am just forwarding to Mr. Pearse. As you will perceive, they so largely exceed the sum we were led to suppose would be sufficient (80 sterling pounds per annum) that I am sending full details, so that the Secretaries can see for themselves. I shall have to draw again this year, probably next month. I am not sure that I can get credit, for my authorisation from the Society does not exceed forty pounds a quarter, and if the agents here knew that I had just received a copy of the Committee's Resolution stating that they will not accept bills for more than that amount, of course it would be refused.

You will not wonder that anxiety about expenses and as to whether my bills will be honoured or not, added to the dangers of my present position, has proved rather much for me lately. ... I have been very poorly for a fortnight ... but am better now, though distressingly weak as yet. My cook has been ill with typhus fever for three weeks or more. I hope he is improving. He was better some days ago, but threw himself back by going contrary to explicit orders.

You will wonder what all those "discounts" in my list of expenses mean. They were paid on the Ferdinand dollars with which I was supplied in England, and that are not in regular circulation here. Chair-coolies, another item, are indispensable in the hottest weather. Their services were

mostly required in seeking a house, and running to and fro from Dr. Lockhart's before I could get one. The water jars are for drinking-water, which has to be fetched from the river and being very muddy has to settle and have the organic matter precipitated by alum before it is fit for use. Of chairs I have only six, the cheapest usable ones I could get. The tables are secondhand. New, they would have cost much more. Crockery is the dearest item. The whole lot in England would hardly fetch ten shillings, for they are of many different patterns. The cups and saucers do not match, nor do the dishes and plates, while the vegetable dishes are again dissimilar. I had to take what I could get, and was thankful they were odd, for no one would have broken into a set.... As to fuel, how would you like to be paying six and sixpence a week for barely enough for the simplest cooking, the fire being put out as soon as done with, and have the prospect of the thermometer going down to 5°F. within two months?

Everything is dear in Shanghai now, Chinese as well as foreign goods. Just to think that in seven months I have spent more than a hundred pounds! Is it not frightful? Two hundred pounds per annum will barely cover my expenses, unless the exchange falls, and other things too. The Church Missionary Society allows single men seven hundred dollars (about £210 at the present rate of exchange) beside paying rent, medical expenses, and a sum sufficient for Chinese teacher and books....

Saturday, October. 21. It is very cold to-day. I am better than I was earlier in the week, but still far from well.... Fortunately I have been able to buy a second-hand stove for ten dollars that will burn wood. A new one would have cost thirty. And now having had another month's expenses to settle, I have only twelve dollars left. What can I do? I must draw soon. And even if I can get a bill accepted here, I am in terror of its being refused by the Committee, which would put me in a pretty fix. I

think and study night and day, and cannot tell what to do.

Last Wednesday night, a fire that seemed very near awoke me at three o'clock in the morning. Dressing hastily, I climbed on to the roof to ascertain if it were coming this way. Chinese houses like these, built only of wood, burn very quickly on a windy night. It was an anxious moment, for in the darkness I fancied the burning building was only four or five doors away. Just then, as I was praying earnestly for protection, it began to rain. The wind fell, for which I was most thankful, and gradually the fire smouldered down. But it was after five before I dared go to bed again.

While there on the roof, several bullets struck the buildings around me, and two or three seemed to fall on the tiles of my own house. At last a heavy ball struck the ridge of the opposite roof, carrying away a lot of tiles, the fragments of which fell around me, and itself flew off obliquely. You may be sure I did not wait up there for another. The day before a ball of that size, evidently spent, struck the roof of this house, broke some tiles, and fell at the feet of my teacher's child who was standing in a doorway. Had he been half a yard further out, it must have killed him. That was at noon.

I have never passed, as you will well believe, such a trying time in my life. But it is all necessary, and I feel is being made a blessing to me. I may have to leave here suddenly. ... But whatever happens, I do not regret coming to this house, and would do it again under similar circumstances. Our Society must provide better, however, for its missionaries. This sort of thing will not do.

I must now conclude, trusting that the Lord, who is precious to me in my extremity, is proving Himself near also to you

*With love ... Believe me, your ever-affectionate son,
J. HUDSON TAYLOR.*

That Resolution. of the Committee not to honour bills exceeding forty pounds a quarter caused more pain and perplexity to their solitary representative in Shanghai than they could at all realise.^[71] Crisp, sharp autumn weather had now set in, forecasting the bitter cold of winter. His Chinese house was not only unwarmed but unwarmable, draughts sweeping through it mercilessly, from unnumbered cracks and crevices. His blankets, only two in number, were fit for nothing but summer use, and all the clothing he had brought from home was now so shabby that he was ashamed to be seen amongst other foreigners. Yet he had far exceeded his allowance, and dared not spend a penny save for actual necessities. And to add to his perplexity he was driven to see that the house he had secured with so much difficulty in view of the arrival of the Parkers would not be a place they could come to even for a night.

"As to my position," he wrote on October 2, "it certainly is one of great peril. On two successive nights, recently, bullets have struck the roof over my head. How little difference in the direction of the gun might have rendered them fatal to me. But 'as the mountains are round about Jerusalem 'so the Lord is on every side to protect and support me and to supply all my need, temporal as well as spiritual. I can truly say my trust is in Him. When I hear guns fired near me and the whizz of the balls as they pass the house, I do feel alarmed sometimes; but a sweet, still voice says inwardly, 'Oh thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? 'Awakened suddenly in the darkness by the thundering report of guns from the North Gate which shake the house, and hearing gongs sounding and firearms discharging close at hand I have felt lonely, and my heart has palpitated painfully at times, not knowing whether my own house might not be the object of attack. But 'Lo, I am with you always,' has quieted the troubled waters and restored peace to my soul. One night I was roused from sleep by a strong smell of burning, and finding the rooms full of smoke

was not a little alarmed, for I knew the Imperialists had threatened to burn all the suburbs as far as the creek. But it was only stubble burning in a field near by, and the windows being open the smoke had drifted in. Thoroughly ashamed of my fears I returned to rest with a very sweet sense of the presence of my Protector, the 'Watchman of Israel.'"

Three weeks later matters were even worse, and he wrote again to the Secretaries:

There is a great deal of firing going on here now, so much so that I am seldom able to get half a night's sleep. What Dr. Parker and his family are to do, I do not know. Their coming here as things are now is out of the question. This constant anxiety for them as well as myself, together with another still more trying (the expense I am unable to avoid) is by no means a desirable addition to the difficulties of language and climate....

We have heard nothing of the Swiftsure, but she is hardly due as yet. I shall be thankful when Dr. Parker is here and we are able to consult together about the future. You will find this a much more expensive Mission, I fear, than was anticipated. ... I shall have to draw again this month, and with all possible economy cannot alter the high rate of prices. The total expense of my first year will be little under two hundred pounds, and even so I feel confident that there is no other missionary in Shanghai who will not have cost considerably more....

Pray for me, for I am almost pressed beyond measure, and were it not that I find the Word of God increasingly precious and feel His presence with me I do not know what I should do.

But the Lord knew, and He had not forgotten His tried servant. At that very moment, when the Swiftsure was nearing the end of her long and perilous

voyage, the Lord had a home in view into which to receive the Parkers and their children. He was not shut up to the house on the North Gate Street, though Hudson Taylor was; and just in time, when lessons had been learned that He saw to be needed, the way was opened to a safer residence.

On the London Mission Compound, through the coming of a great sorrow, a little house stood empty that in comparison with Hudson Taylor's quarters offered a haven of security and peace. Shadowed as it was with the suffering of his dearest friends in China, he had not thought of it as other than their home. There he had found them in their early married life, rejoiced with them in the gift of a precious child, and shared the bereavement that in so short a time left her motherless. Then he had helped Mr. Burdon to leave the home from which the light had fled, and take his infant daughter to the care of the Chaplain's household. And still the little house at Ma-ka-k'iiien stood empty.

Chapter XIX^(TOC)

A Way of Escape

November-December 1854. AET. 22

IT is put before us as an evidence of the faithfulness of God that for those who trust Him He always has "a way of escape," that no trial may be greater than they can bear. Strong consolation this for the troubled soul! And Hudson Taylor was to make full proof of it now in his extremity.

For extremity it really was, just after the foregoing letter had been written. Where to go and what to do he knew not, and the Parkers were drawing nearer every day. Without authorisation from the Committee or instructions from Dr. Parker himself, how could he venture upon the expense of Mr. Burdon's house? And yet it was just what they needed, and might be lost by delay. He had no money to furnish, nor did he know where the rent was coming from; but at the end of October, looking to the Lord for help and guidance, he obtained at least the refusal of the premises.

Meanwhile the situation of the native city was becoming desperate. The French, in defiance of international law and treaty obligations, were openly taking part in the siege. Their soldiers, "bloodthirsty as tigers," seemed bent on slaughter, and the house at the North Gate daily witnessed scenes of almost fiendish cruelty. It became unendurable at last. The premises next door were deliberately set on fire, with intention to drive the foreigner out, and just at this juncture another offer was made for Mr. Burdon's house. Word was sent to Hudson Taylor that if he wanted it he must take it at once. And so, paying the rent out of his own meagre resources, a home was secured

for the family so soon to arrive in the Settlement.

And then, providentially no doubt, he was urged to sublet half the premises. Another missionary was in distress, not knowing where to take his wife and children with safety, and for three rooms was thankful to pay half the rent. True the house was very small for two families, but it was a relief to have his financial obligations lessened and a comfort to be able to help somebody else. So with many regrets at parting from his school-children and neighbours, Hudson Taylor left the scenes in which he had commenced his first direct missionary work, and on Saturday, November 25, returned to a house shared with others on the familiar compound of the London Mission.

Two days later he was again at the North Gate to remove the last of his belongings, when he was recalled by a message from Dr. Lockhart. Hurrying back with many conjectures as to what the summons might mean, he found the doctor at lunch with a pleasant-looking stranger-none other than his own long-expected colleague Dr. Parker. So they had come at last! And he was only just in time with arrangements for their accommodation.

At first in the joy of meeting and all the excitement of bringing up their belongings from the ship, Hudson Taylor had hardly time to realise how the narrowness of their quarters would strike his new-found friends. But when they were all in them, including the baby whose first appearance had been made at sea, the three rooms seemed even more crowded than he had feared they would be. Strong, sensible Scotch people, the Parkers were quite prepared to put up with hardships, and accommodated themselves to the situation as well as could be expected. But to Hudson Taylor it was a painful experience to have to reveal the pitifulness of his preparations.

If the rooms had been suitably furnished it would have been another matter;

but his Chinese bed, two or three square tables, and half a dozen chairs seem to have been all that he possessed. He had only just moved in on Saturday night, and had not had time to get into working order, and now the sudden advent of a family with all their paraphernalia made confusion worse confounded, and the despair of a thrifty housewife with three little children to provide for may be better imagined than described.

Oh, the trying, difficult days that followed, could they ever be forgotten! For to make matters worse, the Shanghai community began to call upon the new arrivals, and those with whom Hudson Taylor was acquainted were not sparing in their comments upon what seemed his negligence.

It was all very well for him to live in Chinese style if he liked, and put up with a hundred and one discomforts. But people who knew what was what could not be expected to fall in with such ways. Why had he not furnished their rooms properly, and provided warm carpets and curtains? Did he not know that children must be protected from the bitter cold of winter? Had he no stoves in readiness, no proper supply of fuel? Had he not written to tell them that they would need warm clothes and bedding on their arrival in November? And as to unpacking and getting settled, how could it be done without shelves or cupboards, chests of drawers or book-cases in which to bestow their belongings?

All of which was true, no doubt, and unanswerable; for how could the young missionary let it be known that he had gone far beyond the limits of authorised expenditure in taking the house at all; that he had done it entirely on his own responsibility, and that after paying the first instalment of rent he had been left with only two or three dollars in hand, not enough to cover a week's expenses?

His hope was, of course, that Dr. Parker would be supplied with all that was necessary, and would be the bearer of instructions from the Society about Missionheadquarters in Shanghai or elsewhere, as well as some more satisfactory arrangement for financial transactions in the future. The very reverse, however, was the case. Dr. Parker had nothing with him but a few dollars for immediate use. He was expecting a Letter of Credit to be awaiting him in Shanghai, understood to have been sent off before he left England. As to supplies, they had abundance of clothing for the Tropics, but had not been at all prepared for cold weather, so that the children were in immediate need of winter outfits. And for the rest, nothing had been said about how they were to live and work in Shanghai, or in what way their salary was to reach them. All this they seem to have taken, for granted that Hudson Taylor would be able to arrange.

No special anxiety was felt as yet, however. A large mail was waiting their arrival, and among the letters would doubtless be one containing the document on which so much depended. The Secretaries had assured Dr. Parker while he was still in London that his Letter of Credit, if not already on its way to Shanghai, would be there long before his own arrival. But on going through his mail no trace of it appeared. Carefully they read and reread the letters, but although it was taken for granted that he would be at the end of his journey when they reached him, there was no mention whatever of money-matters, or how his needs were to be supplied. The Letter of Credit had evidently been overlooked and forgotten.

Happily another mail was due within a day or two, and that no doubt would put matters right. In the meanwhile, they were thankful for the little preparation Hudson Taylor had been able to make, and with his few dollars and their own laid in a small supply of what was indispensable.

The mail came in. Yes, there were letters from the Secretaries dated September 15, more than three months after the Parkers had left London. There seemed to be no enclosures; but perhaps they had sent the Letter of Credit direct to their Shanghai Agents, and would mention having done so. No, nothing was said about it. There was positively no allusion to the matter. What could be the meaning of such an omission? To Dr. Parker it seemed inexplicable. But Hudson Taylor, with more experience of the working of things, was not altogether surprised, and found it less easy to be hopeful, though he acceded to the only suggestion that could be made, that they should go at once to the Agents and enquire. Dr. Parker was satisfied that this must bring a conclusion to their difficulties, so with a light heart as far as he was concerned they presented themselves at the office of Messrs. Gibb, Livingston and Co.

Hudson Taylor had had dealings before with the manager of this firm, and though he had found him a friend in need on more than one occasion, it was not possible to forget the sarcasm of some of his remarks, nor the emphasis with which he said, "the management or rather mismanagement of your Society is very bad." It was with some trepidation, therefore, he introduced Dr. Parker and asked if any advice had been received as to his Letter of Credit.

"No," answered the manager promptly, "none."

"Was it possible," queried Dr. Parker, "that they had heard nothing from the Society as to the amount he was entitled to draw?"

"It was more than possible," replied the manager, "to judge by past experiences"; though when he saw how this information was received, he was inclined to be more sympathetic.

Painful as the position was in itself, it was rendered still more so by the necessity they were under of explaining matters to this comparative stranger, with his prompt, efficient, business-like ways, upon whom for the time being they were dependent. If he had not seen fit to advance them money upon such evidence of their genuineness as they could afford, they would have been reduced to sore straights indeed. But his friendliness, both then and after, was the Lord's way of answering their prayers, and providing for them in the absence of the Letter of Credit that for long months did not make its appearance.

Dr. Parker said little about all this, but he must have felt it keenly, and probably all the more so as he came to realise the tempting possibilities opened to him as a medical man in China. How easily he could have supported his family in comfort, had he been willing to turn aside from missionary work. But in spite of poverty and many privations, prolonged all through the winter, spring, and following summer, he and Mrs. Parker held on their way with quiet self-sacrifice that never wavered.

From the first Sunday after landing, he went out regularly with Hudson Taylor to evangelise in the city or surrounding villages, and frequently made longer excursions, giving away tracts and attending to simple ailments, while others more familiar with the language did the talking. And at home in their crowded quarters, he devoted himself assiduously to study. How difficult it was in that small house, shared by another family, no one who has not laboured at Chinese under similar circumstances can begin to imagine. Poor Mrs. Parker did her best to keep the children quiet. But there were three of her own, besides those of the American missionaries, and she often had to go downstairs to attend to household affairs or receive visitors. The lower apartment being necessarily devoted to the uses of drawing-room and dining-

room in one, there was nowhere for the doctor to study, a difficulty that could only be met by his sharing Hudson Taylor's room next to the nursery. What they did with their Chinese pundits does not appear. But if both teachers had to work with their respective pupils in that one small chamber, separated only by a partition from a busy mother and three little children, one can well understand Hudson Taylor's difficulty in preserving an unruffled spirit.

"No one who has not experienced it," he wrote, "can understand the effect of such incessant strain on mind and body. ^[72] It makes one so nervous and irritable that we sorely need your prayers as well as our own to enable us at all times to manifest a proper spirit.

How gracious of God thus to keep us from being deluded into supposing that we are free from the evils that belong to fallen nature, and to make us long the more earnestly for the time when we shall see our blessed Master and be perfected in His likeness. Thank the Lord, there does remain a rest for us. I am so apt to grow weary and selfishly wish I were there, instead of desiring only to do His will and wait His time; to follow the footsteps of Jesus and finish all that He will give me to do. Indeed, the work of grace seems only just begun in my heart. I have been an unfruitful branch, and need no small amount of pruning. May these present trials result only in blessing, preparing me for more extensive usefulness here and a crown of rejoicing hereafter."

"The continued strain to which I have been subjected of late," he wrote in another letter, ^[73] "has caused a degree of nervous irritability never before experienced, requiring the greatest watchfulness to prevent the manifestation of an unsuitable spirit before those by whom I am surrounded. What a solemn thing it is to be a witness for God, sent into the midst of heathen darkness to show forth in our lives all that by our words we teach. ... Pray for me that I may have more grace,

humility and reliance on the power of God, that I may prove henceforth more efficient, by His blessing, in this holy service."

Somewhat different in tone though not less humble in spirit was the first letter addressed to Mr. Pearse after the arrival of Dr. Parker and his family. In addition to their own difficulties about which he had to write, Hudson Taylor was suffering from imprudent statements in *The Gleaner* calculated to give serious offence to the L.M.S. missionaries in Shanghai; "men who," as he put it, "however much you may differ from them in judgment, are more thoughtful for the shelter and support of your missionaries than the Society that sends them out ... if not more wishful."

"I trust you will not deem it unkind or disrespectful of me," he continued, "to write thus. For though I feel these things and feel them keenly, were it not for the sake of others and the good of the Society I would pass over them in silence. To do this, however, would be unfaithfulness on my part. For not only is it morally wrong and thoughtless in the extreme to act as the Society has acted towards Dr. Parker, but you must surely see that men who can quadruple their salary by professional practice, or double it by taking a clerk's berth will not be likely, if they find themselves totally unprovided for, to continue in the service of the Society. I do not make these remarks with respect to Dr. Parker, who seems thoroughly devoted to the work and by his spirit has encouraged me not a little. But they are true none the less. And I may add that a vacant post at £200 a year, the whole duties of which would not occupy two hours in the evening, did look inviting to me at a time when I had been obliged to incur a responsibility of £120 for rent, and a Resolution upon my last letter to the Committee informed me that missionaries drawing more than was authorised would not have their bills honoured by the Society.

"Dr. Parker arrived on Monday, a week ago to-day, calling forth true gratitude to God for deliverance from the many dangers that had beset their path. Of course he found our half of the house nearly empty, as my few things did not go far in furnishing. The missionaries, when they discovered this lack of preparation, blamed me very much. Could' I. tell them that having paid nearly twenty pounds for rent I had only three dollars left ... a sum not sufficient to purchase provisions for a week at the present high rate of prices?"

"Fortunately Dr. Parker had a few dollars, for which, however, we had to give twenty to thirty per cent discount to get them into cash. He was not a little surprised to find that Mr. Bird's communication contained no Letter of Credit nor allusion to one. And when I learned that he had none with him, I was no less astonished that my last letter from the Society did not bring it, as you expressed the expectation that by the time of its arrival he would be here.

"The following day we were cheered by receiving another letter from you, dated September 15, but the ... expectation that it contained the all-important document was soon turned to dismay when it proved that hope deferred was all there was to live on. Now you cannot but see, I am sure, what evidence this is of gross neglect. We do, at any rate. And while we both cherish the warmest and most affectionate regard for many members of the Committee personally, and especially for its Secretaries, we cannot but feel that the Society had acted disgracefully.

"We went to Messrs. Gibb, Livingston and Co., for Dr. Parker felt sure that you had communicated with them, as Mr. Bird promised to do (if it were not already done) when he asked for his Letter of Credit. But they had heard nothing of it, and we could get no money. I asked if any alteration had taken place in my Letter of Credit since the Society augmented my quarterly allowance, but was informed that they had heard

nothing of it. To relieve us of our painful embarrassment, Mr. offered on his own responsibility to cash a Bill for my extra £20, if I would write requesting him to do so, enclosing a copy of that part of your letter which authorised it, and get the extract signed by two merchants. This I have done. He also promised on our producing evidence from the Society's letters or magazines, to cash a Bill for Dr. Parker, endorsed by me, if I would assure him that it was right to do so. But when we went with the necessary papers we found them so busy that they could not attend to us until Tuesday (to-morrow).

"The weather is now exceedingly cold, and not having been led to expect it the Parkers needed an immediate supply of warm clothing. Beds and other articles of furniture were also necessary, as well as food and firing, all of which run into a considerable sum. Though he has said little, I am sure Dr. Parker has felt it keenly. I do trust that you will avoid such occurrences in future, that your missionaries may be spared unnecessary suffering."

Difficulties notwithstanding, they tackled their work bravely, and between long, busy Sundays among the people, settled down as well as they could to study. It was almost impossible to concentrate attention upon the language at this time, for the condition of the people around them was heart-rending. Hundreds were dying of cold and starvation, and there seemed no hope of relief until one side or other could win a decisive victory.

For still the Rebels would not yield, although the French in violation of their promised neutrality were taking sides more and more against them. A French frigate and steamer stationed opposite the native city deliberately cut off supplies that might have come to it by water, while on land the same end was served by a massive wall built and guarded by French forces. All this, it was becoming evident, was part of a Jesuit policy bent on supporting the reigning

dynasty. For the Tai-pings and other insurgents were confessedly hostile not only to idolatry in all its forms, but to Roman priestcraft and image-worship, and to the growing habit of opium-smoking. If success crowned their long and desperate struggle, Romanism as well as opium and idolatry were bound to fall before them, and this was known at the Vatican as well as at the Court of St. James. First the French, therefore, and later on the English lent efficient aid to the Imperial cause, and the activity of the former in Shanghai at this time was the beginning of the foreign interference which ultimately led to the suppression of the Tai-ping movement. Whether this was on the whole a benefit to China is a question beyond the scope of these pages, but what does concern us here is the added misery and suffering that Hudson Taylor and his colleagues were compelled to witness:

"From the present aspect of affairs," wrote the former, "I think it all but certain that the French will shell and take the city before long.... If they do it will be an awful affair, for there are thousands of innocent people in the city who will suffer with the guiltiest of the Rebels. It is heart-rending to see and hear what we must from day to day; and to think of the horrors yet to be endured makes one sick and faint. Oh, when will Jesus come and put an end to all this sin and misery!"

One opportunity Hudson Taylor had of trying to avert the final catastrophe. He had gone into the city to obtain permission for his teacher Si to bring out some members of his wife's family, and was talking with the Rebel leader, Chin A-lin, when a letter was brought in from the English and American Consular authorities. The letter was read aloud and interpreted to the general in the young missionary's presence. It urged upon him the duty of saving the lives of the helpless and innocent people for whom he was responsible, and offered to undertake to have matters peaceably settled on condition of an immediate capitulation upon the best terms the Imperial party could be

prevailed upon to make. Hudson Taylor seems to have been the only foreigner present, and realising the issues at stake he did his best to persuade the irate general to consider the letter favourably.

"I had a great deal of conversation with him," he wrote on the day in question, December 11, "and endeavoured to induce him to accept the mediation proposed.... But he seemed desperate, and would not hear of capitulation, declaring that he would fight to the last and die if need be, but not alone. Dusk compelled me to leave the city, as there seemed no hope of influencing him for the better."

Ever since the arrival of Dr. Parker, this open interference on the part of the French had been rousing the hatred of the Rebel soldiery. Their attitude was becoming menacing, and the Chinese who favoured their cause, both in and around the Settlement, were plotting revenge upon the whole European community. This made evangelistic work both difficult and dangerous, and might not unreasonably have formed an excuse for lessened activity for the time being. But as far as the missionaries on the L.M.S. compound were concerned it had no such effect. Dr. Medhurst and his-colleagues still planned and carried out their excursions to the interior, as well as constant evangelisation in the neighbourhood of Shanghai; and Dr. Parker made many visits in company with Hudson Taylor to towns and villages within a radius of ten or fifteen miles. Down the Hwang-pu River they went, and up the creeks and canals where shipping congregated, everywhere searching out serious and intelligent persons with whom to leave Scriptures and tracts. In this way in the month of December alone they distributed many hundreds of New Testaments and Gospels, together with a still larger number of tracts explaining the way of life.^[74]

"These have been given with all possible care," wrote Hudson Taylor to the Committee, "and in most cases to men whom we

knew were able to read. A considerable number were taken on junks travelling to the northern provinces."

But before the year closed an opportunity came for more aggressive efforts. Mr. Edkins was about to pay his long-deferred visit to Ka-shing, and renewed the invitation to his young friend to accompany him. Eight months previously they had been stopped by the Battle of Muddy Flat, but now the way seemed open, and in spite of the threatening aspect of Shanghai affairs they determined to set out at any rate, and see what could be done.

Chapter XX^(TOC)

The First Evangelistic Journey

December 1854. AET. 22

IT was with no little interest, as may well be imagined, that Hudson Taylor made preparation for this first inland journey. In addition to clothes and bedding, a good supply of drugs and instruments had to be packed, for there was no knowing what demands might be made upon him as a medical man. Then there were food-baskets to be stored with provisions; a stove, cooking utensils, and fuel to be provided; and last but not least, an ample assortment of books and tracts. The native house-boat engaged by Mr. Edkins was happily large and clean. It had one tall mast with a sail in proportion, and a cabin capable of affording considerable shelter from wind and rain, without causing its occupants any concern as to want of ventilation." Here, then, their belongings were arranged as conveniently as possible, and commending themselves to the care and blessing of God an early start was made on Saturday, December 16.

They were absent the whole of the following week, and in city after city had wonderful opportunities for preaching the Gospel. Everything about their experiences, it need hardly be said, was memorable to Hudson Taylor—from the crowds that thronged them to the least detail of life upon the water, and the look of the low-lying country as it glided by, with its innumerable homes of the living and grave-mounds of the dead.

But that first night on the river had an interest all its own. Anchored amid a fleet of other boats, for mutual protection, they were out among the people at

last as he had so often longed to be. Each boat had its family as well as crew, and cheerful was the clatter that went on while the evening meal was in preparation. Then came the little service in their cabin, when the dim light fell on faces full of interest in the old, old story. Born, brought up and married on the water, many among the boat-people never live ashore, and three generations may well have been represented in that evening meeting. Of the talk that followed we know nothing, save that it cannot have been much prolonged. Rising before daylight means retiring early, and soon the young missionary would hear nothing on all the boats around them but an occasional voice or movement and the gong of the night-watchman above the soft lapping of water along the shore.

With the turn of the tide after midnight, a stir began on the boats. Anchors were drawn up, sails hoisted, and junks got under way. As it was still dark our travellers slept on, awakening to find themselves within sight of Sungkiang, a Fu city^[75] some forty miles south of Shanghai.

Of their work in this place and others *en route* for Kashing we must not attempt to tell much in detail. A few scenes, however, may be touched upon as showing how the busy days were passed.

In a Buddhist monastery in the first city visited a poor recluse was living, a "holy man," walled up in a tiny chamber in which he had been practically buried alive for years. In the temple-courtyard a great crowd was gathered, listening to some strange religious teachers in the dress of Western lands. They were giving away books as well as preaching, and not until their supply was exhausted did they make a move to pass on. Some of the brotherhood then pressed forward, inviting them to rest awhile in the monastery, and especially to visit the "holy man."

Thus it was that Hudson Taylor saw for the first time one of these unhappy beings. Surrounded by the yellowrobed, shaven-headed priests, the missionaries were escorted to the cell. The only access to the poor devotee was a small opening left when the wall was in process of building, through which a man could scarcely pass his hand. There, almost without light or motion, unwashed, unkempt, and alone, the "holy man" passed his days and nights of silence. How strange must have seemed to him those voices with their foreign accent, and the pale faces of which he caught a glimpse through that little opening, his one point of contact with the outer world. Mr. Edkins, happily, could speak a dialect with which he was familiar, and very earnest were their prayers that the "glad tidings of great joy," heard under these circumstances for the first time, might bring light and salvation to his soul.

In the same city a very different experience awaited them, and one that made them appreciate the eighty-nine stone bridges to be found within its walls. Followed by a noisy rabble as they were seeking their boat, the visitors turned down a side street leading to a landing-stage, which they took to be that of the public ferry. To their dismay it was a private wharf protected by a pair of gates they had hardly noticed in passing. To return by the way they had come was impossible, for the narrow street was filled with an uproarious crowd, who, to prevent escape in that direction, swung to the gates and swarmed all over them, watching between the bars for the next move of the strangers. The position was far from pleasant in an unknown city, with the crowd growing larger and more noisy all the time, and no bridge in sight. But the missionaries quietly looked to the Lord in prayer, and kept their wits about them.

"There were plenty of boats at hand," wrote Mr. Taylor, "but none of them would take us. We called to several, to the great amusement of the crowd, but in vain.... At length seeing that

something must be done I took 'French leave,' jumped into a boat that was passing, and pulled it to the side for Mr. Edkins. Taken by surprise the men made no objection, and off we went to the chagrin of our tormentors who opened the gates and rushed to the waterside shouting tumultuously."

A first experience of trying crowds; and he was to meet so many

Before leaving the city that night, a second or third supply of literature being all distributed, a turn in the road brought them suddenly on the base of the Square Pagoda. Grey and imposing the massive structure rose before them that for nine hundred years had been the glory of Sungkiang. The priest in charge consented to admit them, and soon the crowding of the streets gave place, to the sombre quiet of the old pagoda and the view to be seen from a gallery near the top.

Long and silently they stood looking down upon the myriad homes outspread before them. Far reached the ancient wall enclosing its hundreds of thousands, and beyond it the tent-like roofs still stretched away toward the setting sun. And this was only one great centre. All about it lay the rich, level country, dotted as far as eye could see with villages and hamlets, while distant pagodas and temples told of other cities within easy reach.

It was the first time Hudson Taylor had looked out on such a scene, and the fact of China's immense population began to assume new meaning from that hour. In the quiet of their boat that evening he was thinking of it still, pen in hand,

"I think you will join me sooner or later," he wrote to his friend Mr. Broomhall. "Consider the use you could be out here. Oh, for the sake of Him who loved you even unto death, leave all, follow Him, come out and engage in this all-important work."

More important than ever did their work appear next morning when the city of Ka-shan was reached. Could the young missionary ever forget the crowd that awaited them in one of its temple courts? Having unintentionally disturbed a group of ladies engaged in idol-worship, the missionaries had retired to the pagoda, and upon returning found a sea of faces filling the courtyard, men of all sorts and ages eager to see and hear. For a long time Mr. Edkins held their attention, reasoning with them of sin, righteousness and judgment to come, while Hudson Taylor beside him laboured fervently in prayer.

The address finished and their books distributed, Mr. Edkins asked the crowd to make way for them to leave the temple, and they had just reached the main entrance when an imposing cavalcade arrived. To their surprise it soon transpired that the handsome, dignified official who stepped from his chair, and came down the avenue of soldiers to meet them, was no less a person than the Mayor of the city, intent upon turning back the foreigners. An anxious hour followed, but by explaining their object fully and promising not to go beyond the next prefectural city, the missionaries obtained permission to continue their journey.

"Your books are good," he admitted, "and you may take them as far as Ka-shing, provided some of my attendants accompany you."

And to this requirement he held firm, pointing out the men who were to "shadow" the foreigners. But it does not appear that their presence proved any drawback to the work in hand.

The sun was setting on the fourth day of their journey when at length the city for which they were bound came in sight. Far reached its suburbs along the river-bank, following the grey line of the turreted wall. Informed already as to

its history, the travellers knew that Ka-shing Fu was far more ancient and important than any of the places yet visited. Dating from a dynasty that flourished twenty centuries before the Christian era, it had been contemporaneous in its early history with the cities of Abraham's time. Not until A.D. 888, however, had its present wall been built, four miles in circumference, with the moat that surrounds it still.

Despite its long history and many changes, Ka-shing at the time of this visit was a notable centre of wealth and learning. Printing and publishing employed many of its people, but the manufacture of silk and cotton, and a variety of articles in copper and brass, were also among its special industries. The population was vast, but in common with all other places removed by any distance from the Treaty Ports, it was wholly destitute of the Gospel.

Unspeakably thankful to have been able to reach a point so far in the "interior," the missionaries realised that great tact and caution would be needed in making the most of their opportunity. They had learned something already of the difficulties that might arise from showing themselves too freely on the crowded streets, and determined to work in the extensive suburbs rather than enter the city itself. Their presence would soon become known, and those who wished to obtain books or see them personally would have no difficulty in finding out their junk.

Immediately upon arrival, therefore, they went ashore, and before people had awakened to the fact that foreigners had appeared outside the West Gate, they had distributed a large number of tracts. But even so,

"Returning to our boat," wrote Mr. Taylor, "we unintentionally gratified hundreds of spectators ... including many ladies, elegantly dressed. But soon the gathering shades of evening emptied the windows and closed the doors. Boats

ceased coming for tracts, the people went home for the night, and we ourselves were glad of a little rest."

Next morning they were up betimes, and even before breakfast made a good beginning in the Liu-li-Kiai, or TwoMile Street, bordering the Grand Canal. Whenever a crowd collected they passed on in their boat to another part of the river-bank, their movements being so quick that they were able to leave tracts along the whole length of this suburb before it became prudent to absent themselves for a time. This they did by poling round to the south side of the city, where a wide expanse of water and some picturesque islands formed a favourite pleasureresort. Here they were accessible to any who wished to follow them, and even if the crowds were large business would not be interrupted, nor the shopkeepers annoyed.

Little were they prepared, however, for the invasion of the Yen-yu Leo (Mansion of Smoke and Rain) that followed. Out in the middle of the lake, this attractive island was the place chosen by the Emperor K'ien-lung of the present dynasty for a summer residence, and the beautiful building and gardens preserved a romantic interest, though falling somewhat into decay. Mooring their boat near the palaces now used as a temple, Mr. Edkins and his companion went ashore to see what was to be seen. But they themselves were the sight of supreme interest, as they soon discovered.

Before we had finished looking round we observed a number of boats putting off in our direction, and soon a regular ferry was established between the island and the opposite suburb. The people came in multitudes, and those who could read were quickly supplied with tracts. When a large number had collected, Mr. Edkins preached, and afterwards I had a long talk with some who gathered round me for books. By this time the numbers who had come were so great that we were obliged to go on board our boat, from which Mr. Edkins again

addressed the people, to many of whom tracts were given.

As the crowd was continually receiving accessions, we thought it wiser to put off a little from the island, to prevent those who 'were behind from pushing the foremost into the water in their eagerness to see and hear. Immediately, however; the people followed us, and in the middle of the lake we were surrounded by boats and kept hard at work supplying the newcomers with portions of Scripture and tracts. As fast as one boat was supplied it pushed off and another took its place. It must have been a paying business for the boatpeople! The boats were a better class than those commonly seen about Shanghai, and almost without exception they were sculled by women. Supplying tracts and talking without intermission proved tiring work as the afternoon wore on. But what joy it was to remember the promise that cannot be broken, "My Word shall not return unto Me void," and to think that not a few around us might shine forever like the stars of heaven in the Kingdom of our Lord.

Later in the day visits were received from several intelligent men who wanted to know more about the contents of the books they had received. Some were strangers from a distance, others Mandarins awaiting office, and one an Inspector of Grain in the Ka-shing district. These persons engaged Mr. Edkins in prolonged conversation, while Hudson Taylor continued supplying tracts from the deck. Not until evening was there any cessation in this work, and then boat-people and foreigners were alike weary and thankful for rest.

The following morning found them again near the Two Mile Street, as the island would not have been a safe anchorage for the night. After breakfast, and united prayer for blessing, they visited several smaller suburbs before moving off to the South Lake as before. Here the people began coming at once, and much of the day was occupied in preaching and seeing patients as

well as in supplying literature, for which there was a great demand.

"We found no difficulty," wrote Mr. Edkins of the entire journey, "in distributing a full share of the Million Chinese Testaments."

In the course of the afternoon they spent an hour or two in a famous temple containing several idols of twenty to thirty feet in height. A most impressive view was obtained from the pagoda near at hand, and the brief respite for prayer that it afforded sent them back refreshed to the crowd below. Until evening they were again the centre of a busily-plying ferry-system on the South Lake, for only when dusk was falling did the last of their visitors row away.

A stormy night followed, ushering in a change of weather that put a stop to their work for the time being; but not before one rainy day had been spent in conversation with specially-interested callers.

"Your words are true and your books are true," said some of these on leaving. "It is a good doctrine."

Chapter XXI^(TOC)

Our Plans of Usefulness Including Second, Third, and Fourth Journeys

December 1854-March 1855. AET. 22

USEFULNESS was what they desired most of all, and it was natural that as the year drew to a close they should consult together and work out careful plans to this end. Dr. Parker, an able, experienced man, had a family to think of, and Hudson Taylor, young as he was, was becoming an efficient missionary. Nothing had yet been heard of the missing Letter of Credit, so that their perplexity with regard to money matters was extreme, and tidings that new missionaries of the L.M.S. were about to sail for China reminded them that even the premises they now occupied would have to be vacated before long. This it was that gave urgency and definiteness to their consultations, and resulted in several letters setting forth "plans of usefulness," that for the next few months largely occupied their thoughts.

"We who are on the field," wrote Hudson Taylor at the end of December, "desire to be as efficient as possible; and while relying on the blessing of God alone for success, we wish to employ every means in our power to attain it. In this I know you are heartily with us, and I trust that by united prayer and effort and above all through the influence of the Holy Spirit we shall not be disappointed."

And then he went on to outline to the Committee the thoughts they had worked out.

To begin with, a permanent centre was needed and must be obtained without

delay. Of the five Treaty Ports open to the residence of foreigners, none was more suitable than Shanghai-within reach of many important cities, and holding a strategic position with regard to mid-China. In Shanghai, therefore, their headquarters should be located. And the next step was equally plain: in Shanghai they must have suitable premises, and that at once.

This again necessitated a certain adequacy of method and equipment, for other missions were there before them, and had established precedents that could not be ignored. Plan as simply as they might, they would at least require a doctor's house and a school-building, in addition to hospital and dispensary. For a chapel they could wait, using meanwhile the receiving-room of the hospital, specially adapted for meetings. From this central station, their plan was to visit the surrounding country and establish branch-schools and dispensaries wherever possible. These would be regularly supervised by one or other of the missionaries, and would become in their turn centres of Christian effort.

It was all admirable no doubt, and the estimate of a thousand pounds for land and buildings was not immoderate. But it was based upon conclusions that in their case were misleading, and just because the good is often the enemy of the best would have thwarted their real life-usefulness, fore-ordained in the purposes of God.

But the letters were sent off, and the New Year given to prayer with these thoughts specially in mind. It was now the depth of winter and exceptionally cold. Hudson Taylor had bought a native boat for half its value, and on frequent excursions to the country was able to purchase fuel and provisions at a lower rate than in Shanghai. This with Mrs. Parker's thrifty housekeeping made such means as they had last as long as possible, but even so it was with difficulty that they could keep one room warm enough for study. Hudson

Taylor was working hard at two dialects, a Shanghai teacher coming to him in the daytime, and his Mandarin-speaking pundit at night. He was also carrying on a school, encouraged to find himself well understood by the children.

"I trust that by the time I have been here a year," he wrote, "I shall be able to preach both in Mandarin and in the Shanghai dialect. ... I should have been further advanced in the latter, of course, had I commenced it on arrival. But I begin to think that I was directed by a higher Wisdom in taking up Mandarin first, and trust that though some delay has been occasioned in getting into work, I shall in the end be fitted for more extensive usefulness."

Eager as he was to make progress with his studies, it was all the more remarkable that the need of the unevangelised regions round about should press so heavily upon his heart. Certainly it was not the season, of the year that tempted him to another journey, nor was it pleasant companionship, for he had to go alone. The condition of affairs, politically, might in itself have been sufficient to hold him back, for a crisis could not long be delayed in the siege of the native city. But little as he realised what it foreshadowed, Hudson Taylor found himself unable to disregard the appeal of the unreached. The ice was broken. He had been on one evangelistic tour already, and had seen how such work could be done. Perhaps it was this that drew him on? Perhaps it was something deeper, more significant.

Second Journey: January 1855

At any rate he set out on January 25, travelling in his own boat. A few miles south of Shanghai, a tributary stream was reached, leading to a district little known to foreigners. Lying between the Hwang-poo river and the coast, the region was one infested with smugglers, and even its larger centres of population had rarely if ever been visited with the Gospel. It was a favourite resort of desperate characters throughout that borderland between two provinces,^[76] and might well have been avoided by the solitary evangelist had he desired an easy task. Travelling oil far into the night, however, he was conscious of a Presence that precluded fear, and robbed the unknown of its possible terrors.

Far from promising must have seemed the awakening when they found themselves next morning frozen in between high, snow-covered banks, the water covered with a thick coating of ice. To the uninitiated it may sound interesting enough to pole one's way along such a river, breaking a channel for the boat a foot at a time. But any one who has spent long days and nights on a leaky junk, under similar conditions, will not be anxious to repeat the experiment, except for the ends Hudson Taylor had in view.

And these ends were in no wise hindered by the slow progress that was all they could make. Accompanied by a servant to carry books, the young missionary went ashore and walked from hamlet to hamlet. His dress, speech and occupation everywhere aroused the intensest interest, and great was the eagerness to obtain his beautifully bound and printed books.^[77] That he was giving these away was not the least part of the wonder, and as village after village turned out to meet him, the schoolmaster or some promising student was put forward to secure as many as possible. It was casting bread indeed

"upon the waters," but very definite was his faith in the promise, "It shall accomplish that which I please and ... prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Two governing cities were visited on this journey, besides many villages, and a market-town whose population equalled that of both cities combined. It was lonely, trying work, for the people were rough, and the crowding dangerous, and in reading the journal one is surprised at the thoroughness with which it was done. Every street in Chwan-sha was visited, for example, and in each of the suburbs; all the reading men he could find being supplied with Gospels and tracts. In several temples also addresses were delivered. There was no companion to fall back upon, and unless he preached himself the people might never hear. So looking to the Lord for help, Hudson Taylor made the most of his few sentences, following up long days ashore with hours of medical work and private conversation on the boat at night.

In Nan-hwei,^[78] the crowds were especially turbulent, and a Sunday spent there was memorable both to himself and the local authorities. Alarmed at the news that a foreigner was approaching, orders had been issued to close the principal gate of the city, and keep it locked and barred until after he had withdrawn. Knowing nothing of this defensive movement, Hudson Taylor spent the night outside a gate of secondary importance, unnoticed in his little boat, and early on Sunday morning passed in and went about his work. Meanwhile a sharp look-out was kept on the opposite side of the city, and it was a crestfallen messenger who bore tidings to the Ya-men^[79] that the foreigner was already within its walls. Greatly taken aback, the Mandarin sent to learn all he could about the intruder; and when it proved that he was alone and unarmed, a well-behaved person whose stay would be of short duration, his fears were dispelled, and the East Gate shortly after was reopened to traffic.

The excitement of the people, however, was not so easily allayed, and after a brave attempt at preaching Hudson Taylor had to retire before overwhelming crowds. Knowing that those who were interested would follow him, he took refuge on his boat at a little distance from the city. And a busy day he had of it-receiving the hundreds who came, supplying all who could read with Christian literature, giving medicines to the sick, telling over and over again the main facts of the Gospel, and answering endless questions as to personal matters. Several educated men paid him a visit, two of whom warned the boatmen that it was not safe for a foreigner to be in that district alone and unprotected. But Hudson Taylor, overhearing the conversation, assured them that he had no fear, for the Great God, Creator and Upholder of Heaven and earth, never fails to keep watch over those who put their trust in Him.

So real was this faith that he did not even hesitate, the following day, when urged to go he knew not whither to visit a dying woman. He had just completed a morning's work in the city, and upon reaching the boat found several men from a distance, one of whom had brought a chair and bearers to carry him back to see his suffering wife. They were all earnest in their entreaties that he would accompany them, so in spite of the risk involved in going off with entire strangers, the young missionary set out.

Mile after mile they hurried over the frozen paths until almost benumbed with cold he wondered whether it would be possible to get back that night. Even so he seems to have had no fear. Yet how easily the whole thing might have been a trap! In that lawless part of the province, with the country in the disturbed state in which it was, nothing was more likely than that he should be seized and held to ransom, or even tortured and killed as a hated foreigner. But, as he had written home the night before:

I knew that I was where duty had placed me, unworthy as I am

of such a position, and felt that though solitary I was not alone.

The visit proved interesting when their destination was reached. The poor woman was suffering from dropsy, and though great relief could have been afforded under suitable circumstances, it was not possible to operate where she was. Mr. Taylor urged her husband to take her to Shanghai, regretting that he had no hospital into which he could promise to receive her; and after making what arrangements he could for her comfort, he explained to them simply and fully the message he had come so far to bring. Of course all the village and surrounding hamlets turned out to look and listen, so that his audience was considerable, nor had they ever heard the tidings of redeeming love.

As he was leaving, the husband came up with a fine fowl tied by the legs, which he presented to the "foreign doctor," with many apologies for the insufficiency of his offering. And it was his turn to be surprised when the stranger begged him to set it free, saying with many thanks, that his medicine, like his message, was "without money and without price." Tired though he was on reaching the boat, he had the joy of knowing that in one more home and district the name of Jesus was as ointment poured forth—a sweet fragrance at any rate to God.

Two days later, on the last of January, he was leaving the market-town of Chow-pu, anxious to reach Shanghai that night. But though the boatmen travelled on till nearly morning, it was not until late on February 1 they dropped anchor at their starting-point. Then there were provisions to unload and carry home to replenish Mrs. Parker's supplies before Hudson Taylor could give attention to a matter that was specially on his heart.

A few weeks previously, three men of his acquaintance had been seized in

the North Gate house, dragged out of bed in the middle of the night, and handed over as rebels to the local authorities. Upon hearing of it the young missionary had at once sought their release. But though assured that they would soon be at liberty, no charge having been proved against them, the poor fellows were only hurried from prison to prison, everywhere starved and tortured to make them confess alleged crimes. Again and again Hudson Taylor had appealed on their behalf, but as long as there was any chance of extorting money the case seemed hopeless. Now, returning encouraged from his journey, he went once more and to his great joy was successful. The men still lived, and before long he had the satisfaction of seeing them in such comfort as their homes could afford.

But how small a thing it seemed to relieve the sufferings of one group of people amid all the horrors that were going on! Shanghai was in a worse condition than ever, if that were possible. After more than a year of desultory fighting, the Imperial forces seemed roused at length to take the city. A large new camp quite near the Settlement had cut off the last hope of relief on the landward side, and among the beleaguered garrison famine and disease were doing their deadly work. Terrible indeed was the strain of those days for foreigners and natives alike, for it was only too evident that a wholesale massacre would be the end of the tragedy before their eyes.

Even in the Settlement the position was one of danger. The attempts of the French to take the city had been unsuccessful, and by their manifest futility had impaired the prestige of all the European forces.

"It is openly announced," wrote Hudson Taylor on February 3, "that foreigners are no longer to be feared.... Added to this, the Imperial soldiers are nearer and more numerous than ever, their new Camp being hardly more than a stone's throw from this house. Dr. Parker has already told you of a ball and

shell thrown into our compound. ... So you see we are safe only as protected by Him who is the Shield as well as Sun of His people."

Still more threatening in some ways was the attitude of the rebel party. Their indignation at French interference knew no bounds, and had resulted in a Secret Society for purposes of revenge in which no distinction would be possible between one nationality and another. Alarming rumours were afloat of an attack to be made on the Settlement, and it was well known that should such plans be carried out no help could be relied upon from the Government soldiery, who would gladly see the foreigners massacred that they might share the spoils.

So they were anxious times indeed after Hudson Taylor's return from this second journey, and might well have hindered further aggressive work. But in the midst of it all he was quietly planning another preaching tour, to be taken in company with older missionaries.

Third Journey: February to March 1855

Proceeding in a westerly direction, the little party seems to have travelled as far as Tsing-pu on their way to the Soochow Lake. Only the briefest record remains of this itineration, probably because it was curtailed by the fall of the doomed city. For they had not been absent many days when they saw from the top of a hill the smoke of an immense conflagration. So great a fire in that direction could mean but one thing. Shanghai was in flames! And what of their families in the foreign Settlement?

Setting out at once to return, their apprehensions were confirmed by Rebel soldiers who came seeking protection. This, of course, the missionaries, themselves defenceless, were unable to afford; and shortly after the poor fellows were taken and beheaded before their eyes. Sadly continuing their journey, they soon came upon abundant traces of the catastrophe that had taken place, and as they passed the native city had to turn away from sights of horror on every hand. But the Settlement was in peace. The uprising of the Triad Society had been averted, and the Imperialists, satiated with slaughter, were too exultant over their achievements to pay much attention to foreigners.

Thus ended in a holocaust of human lives the sufferings of the siege that had been in progress ever since Hudson Taylor's arrival in China, twelve months previously.

"Shanghai is now in peace," he wrote on March 4, "but it is like the peace of death. Two thousand people at the very least have perished, and the tortures some of the victims have undergone cannot have been exceeded by the worst barbarities of the Inquisition. The city is little more than a mass of ruins, and many of the wretched objects who have

survived are piteous to behold...

"How dreadful is war! From the South to the North Gate of Shanghai, on one side only, sixty-six heads and several bodies are exposed by the sanguinary Imperialists, including those of old men with white hair, besides women and children. ... These terrible sights are now so common that they do not upset one as they did at first. But it is impossible to witness them without feelings of intense abhorrence for the Government that permits and even perpetrates such atrocities."

Still the worst was over, and relieved from the strain of that terrible winter the missionaries looked forward to largely increasing their work. Surely now had come the moment for advance. Before the energy of the population round them, a new Shanghai would soon arise upon the ruins. Thousands of people would be flocking in to share the prosperity that enterprise and commerce would create. As far as possible they must purchase land before it was taken up, enlarge their schools, open preaching halls, found hospitals, and take a front rank among the builders of the new time.

All this, it goes without saying, stirred the hearts of Hudson Taylor and his colleague, still anxiously waiting the reply of the Committee. Three months had now elapsed since their plans had been laid before the Society, and communications that had crossed their own had not been encouraging. Old objections had been raised against building in the Treaty Ports, and arguments reiterated in favour of opening new fields to the Gospel. But how they were to live and work until this was possible the letters did not suggest. The missionaries themselves could not believe that this point of view was unalterable. They had stated the case so clearly that its importance must be felt, and surely when their well-considered scheme was laid before the Committee it would be seen to forward the very ends they had themselves in

view.

Meanwhile it was more and more difficult to wait on in uncertainty. The American missionary who shared their little house was building premises of his own, but with no hope of completing them before summer. Dr. Parker's Letter of Credit had not come, nor did the Society seem to remember that he had any financial needs. If their privations through the winter had been severe, what would the hot season mean-the dreaded months of summer-in those crowded rooms?

When all these circumstances are considered, and it is further taken into account that missionaries, even the most devoted, are only human after all, it will not be wondered at that some things were said and felt that hardly seem in keeping with Hudson Taylor's simple faith in God. He was passing through a period of peril for his spiritual usefulness, and was under the influence of friends called to a line of things entirely different from his own. But though carried away for the time, as may be seen from his letters, he was not allowed to involve himself in responsibilities that would have hindered his life-work.

*"You **are** going to have a fine Chapel in Barnsley!" he wrote to his parents in March. "I wish some wealthy friend would send us a thousand pounds to put up our hospital, school, and other premises, for we are in a shocking position now. With only three rooms to live in, we are obliged to set apart one for callers ... so that my bedroom has to do duty as study for both Dr. Parker and myself, and I have no place to which I can retire for a moment's privacy from morning till night. ... What we are to do when the hot weather comes, I cannot imagine.*

"We have written to the Society laying a definite plan before them, and if they do not take it up we mean to try and carry it through without their aid. If they oppose it, as contrary to their principle of not working in the Ports, we must try to have

the principle modified. And if they will not alter and we cannot find other better means of working, it may become a question as to which we shall dispense with—the Society, or our plans of usefulness.

"But you need be under no apprehension on this score. Our plans will be formed with prudence, in the fear of the Lord, and not without seeking His direction, But useful we must and will be, if the Lord bless us, at any cost.

"Do you think a Bazaar could be got up anywhere, to assist us in the purchase of ground and erection of suitable buildings? ... If you could get the ladies interested, it would be sure to succeed. The sum we want is really so trifling that a few good collections would soon raise either the whole or the greater part."

But side by side with this, which one cannot but see was unlike him, went another, very different development. Strangely the currents mingled at this time—one drawing him to the settled life of the Ports, the other carrying him far afield, to regions beyond any that had yet been reached. He could not even wait for the expected reply of the Committee, so eager was he to set out upon another evangelistic journey. The local Rebellion was at an end, Dr. Parker needed change from study, their boat was lying in the Creek was it not just the opportunity for a preaching-tour which should include a good deal of medical work?

Fourth Journey: March 1855

Deeply interesting was the week that followed. Leaving Shanghai by the Soochow Creek they travelled north and west to the county-town of Kia-ting. Many busy places were passed *en route*, and remarkable openings found for the Gospel; but limits of space will only admit of our dwelling upon the visit to the *Hsien* itself, where a novel experience awaited them.

Accustomed as they were to large, excited crowds, they hardly knew what to make of it when grown-up people as well as children fled in terror, so that the streets were literally cleared at their approach. Yet this was what happened in Kia-ting. No one would venture near them, and it was strange to see people of all classes hurrying to the nearest buildings as if for protection from imminent danger.

"Even men," remarked Dr. Parker with grave amusement, "took refuge in their houses as we drew near, hastily shutting the doors; to which, however, they crowded to look after us as soon as we had passed."

So strong were these unreasoning fears, due to the "bogy stories" in circulation about foreigners, that it is doubtful whether any entrance could have been gained for more favourable impressions but for the influence of the medical work. They were there to heal the sick as well as preach the Gospel, and were wise enough to put it in this order until the hearts of the people were won.

Realising that in all probability they were the first foreigners to visit the city, Dr. Parker and his companion let themselves be seen as much and as openly as possible. They made it known that they were physicians, "able to prescribe for both external and internal complaints," and that on the morrow they

would k'an ping, or "investigate diseases," providing each patient gratuitously with the appropriate remedy. This seemed to turn the tide of popular feeling, and as they went about the streets and made the circuit of the city-wall they heard many remarks as to their being span-yen, or "doers of good deeds." The crowds that followed them, still at a respectful distance, so increased that shop-fronts were in danger and the goods exposed for sale were trampled under foot. By retiring to more open parts of the city they were able to save the business-people annoyance, and at the close of a tiring day had the satisfaction of feeling that not a little prejudice had been overcome.

"Long before breakfast," wrote Dr. Parker of the following morning, "the banks of the river were crowded with persons desiring medical aid.... After working hard until 3 P.M., finding we could not possibly see them all, Mr. Taylor selected the more urgent cases and brought them on board the boat. No sooner were those attended to than we were taken to see patients in their own homes who were unable to come to us, and were much gratified to find that we had access to and were welcomed in some of the very houses the doors of which had been shut against us the day before."

What a turning of the tables in favour of the missionary and all due to ointments, pills, and powders, prescribed with sympathy and prayer. After this there was nothing but friendliness as they walked through the city, and they had all they could do during the remainder of the day to supply books to those who came for them. In a temple near the West Gate, a parting address was given to a large concourse of people, many of whom would gladly have detained the visitors. But time and experience alike warned them to leave while they were still welcome, in the hope of repeating the visit later. Even then they were not too weary to land at a neighbouring village before nightfall and seek out those who could read; after which, travelling slowly on

till morning, they were lulled to, sleep by the monotonous rhythm of the oar.

Throughout the remainder of their journey the value of the medicine-chest as an aid to evangelisation was still further proved in a variety of ways. This encouraged Dr. Parker not a little, as did also the eagerness of the people to obtain books and the relative number of those who could read. At one important city the missionaries were kept busy all day long handing Gospels and tracts from the boat to a steady stream of applicants.

"Never have I seen or imagined," wrote the Scotch physician, "such opportunities for giving the Word of Life to those who seem anxious to obtain it."

Amongst others who came to them in boats were not a few scholarly men and officials, drawn through interest in the medical work. These visitors were in many cases friendly, and stayed long enough to gain a clear idea of what the missionaries were teaching.

In his report of this journey Mr. Taylor stated that with Dr. Parker's help he had distributed since the beginning of the year,^[80] three thousand New Testaments and Scripture portions, and more than seven thousand other books and tracts.

"The excursion from which we have just returned," he continued, "was particularly interesting on account of unusually good opportunities for seeing patients as well as scattering the good seed of the Kingdom, and for the illustration it afforded of the scarcely to be exaggerated value of medical work as an aid to missionary labour...."

"The crying need for a hospital was brought home to us afresh by cases in which life or limb could have been saved and chronic diseases relieved had we been able to care for the sufferers.... I sincerely trust that funds for this purpose, and

instructions to purchase land and build without delay, are on the way to us; for we could easily carry on efficient medical work without interfering with our present operations. ... The door is widely open and no man can shut it. ... May our united prayers and efforts result in abundant blessings."

But though these accounts and others of later journeys aroused much interest at home, the thousand pounds needed was not forthcoming. Great indeed was the trial of this long waiting and uncertainty. But the Lord Who understood all that it meant to His servants did not leave them without tokens for good, two of which taking the form of financial help were especially encouraging.

Of these gifts in aid of the work, one was handed to Dr. Parker by a resident, and consisted of fifty dollars toward the purchase of land for a hospital. The other, received by Hudson Taylor himself, had a special interest as being the first that ever came to him apart from the Society for the cause so dear to his heart.

And when one records the name of the donor, Mr. W. T. Berger of Saint Hill, near London, what a vista is opened up into the providence of God. Mr. Berger, a frequent visitor at the Tottenham Meeting, had met the young missionary on one or more occasions before he sailed for China. From his friends the Howards of Bruce Grove and from Miss Stacey he would hear sufficient to awaken interest in the Yorkshire lad, an interest Hudson Taylor's letters from Shanghai could not fail to deepen. The result was this gift of ten pounds, thankfully appropriated toward the support of a child the missionaries were anxious to adopt; a first step, as they hoped, toward a permanent boarding-school.

But how much more was in the plan of the Great Giver Could Hudson Taylor have foreseen how many hundreds, even thousands of pounds would come to

him through the same channel, and the still more important gifts of counsel, sympathy, and brotherly love in the work he and Mr. Berger were to do together for the Lord, how amazed and overwhelmed he would have been! But all this, and far, far more was being brought to pass by Him Who even then was working out His own purposes in the life of His servant, as in our lives to-day.

Chapter XXII^(TOC)

Not where Christ was Named

April 1855. AET. 22

SPRINGTIME was drawing on apace, a season to be made the most of for evangelistic purposes, and the travellers had hardly reached home before Hudson Taylor was planning another journey. In the estuary of the Yangtze distant only thirty miles from Shanghai, lay the great island of Tsung-ming. Sixty miles long by fifteen or twenty broad, it was the home of more than a million people, covered at this time of year with blossoming peach-orchards amid a sea of early wheat. But though so near the foreign Settlement it was off the beaten track, and had never yet been visited by Protestant missionaries. Little wonder it attracted the young evangelist, about to set out with Mr. Burdon on a longer itineration than any he had yet attempted.

Fifth Journey: April 1855

Interesting as it would be to follow them as they crossed the rough waters of the Yangtze, ran up a creek on the landward side of the island, and in spite of alternate deluges of rain and overwhelming crowds carried on their work in the capital and other places, we must content ourselves with a mere outline of those busy days to dwell more at length upon the latter part of the journey.

Their plan on this occasion was to penetrate as far inland as possible, testing what could be done in a good many places rather than spending much time in any one; and the direction chosen was the estuary of the Yangtze river.

Tsung-ming they found singularly open. In the chief city, bearing the same name as the island, they spent several encouraging days. All the principal streets and suburbs were visited, and in four large temples Mr. Burdon addressed the crowds. As inquiries had been made about them from the Yamen, they felt it desirable to call upon the Mandarin who had probably anything but a favourable impression of foreigners. This official proved to be a grave though rather young man, who received them with courtesy. He accepted copies of the New Testament and other books, and listened attentively while they explained their contents, putting before him the way of salvation through faith in Christ. He made no objection to their visiting the island, and very thankfully they felt that this interview alone would well have repaid their coming to Tsung-ming.

The temple of the city-god was a busy scene during the remainder of that day. Mud or no mud the people came; and while Hudson Taylor did his best to attend to patients in one of the side rooms, Mr. Burdon occupied the crowd with books and preaching in the open courtyard. Only when his voice gave out was the medical work interrupted; for the greater part of his audience

surged over to the improvised dispensary, and no more doctoring was possible.

Then it was Hudson Taylor's turn to take the field, and not being as tall as his companion he looked about for some sort of pulpit from which to see and be seen. The only place that presented itself was a bronze incense-vase of large dimensions, into which he clambered, without apparently giving offence to the temple authorities.

"At the lowest computation," he wrote, "five or six hundred persons must have been present, and I do not think it would be over the mark to say a thousand. As they quieted down, I addressed them at the top of my voice, and a more orderly, attentive audience in the open air one could not wish to see. It was most encouraging to hear one and another call out ... puh-ts'o, puh-tso, 'not wrong, not wrong,' as they frequently did when something said met with their approval."

But when it came to distributing literature the missionaries had a more difficult task. They adhered to their principle of giving only to those who could read, though many illiterate persons were bent on getting books. This rougher element in the crowd gave them no little trouble, and both tact and patience were needed to avoid an unpleasant scene. Public opinion was on their side, however, and though some tracts and Gospels were snatched away, they succeeded in getting most into the right hands.

Heavy and continued rains made it difficult to keep on with such work. One whole day had to be spent in the little boat shared with their teachers-the mat roof leaking all over, and the low, windowless cabin affording neither room to stand nor even sit in comfort. It would have been useless to go ashore, for streets are empty and doors all shut during such a downpour. Yet a few people waded through mud and slush to get to them, carrying back a clearer

understanding of the Gospel than they would have been likely to obtain but for this persistent rain.

Before leaving Tsung-ming city, one interesting morning was spent in looking up the principal schools, to leave Christian literature with both scholars and teachers. Thirteen schools and a college were visited, the pupils varying in number from nine to twenty-five. The teachers were in many cases intelligent men, able to give information as to the chief centres of population on the island. Followed as usual by a noisy crowd, one of the visitors had to stay outside to keep the excitement within bounds. But the other, seated in the place of honour within, had a comparatively quiet opportunity for laying the main facts of the Gospel before a small but influential audience.

After this it was a comfort as they went on their journey to fall in with an empty boat willing to travel with them. To this they transferred their books and Chinese helpers, which gave them room to take a little rest between excursions on shore wherever people were to be found. One busy place named K'iao-t'eo had 'an unusually large proportion of reading men, and in several schools and temples they were helped in delivering their message.

Rounding the north-west corner of the island a little later, they put into a creek in time for a quiet walk before nightfall. It was a beautiful evening, and the freshness and silence about them were grateful after the experiences of the past few days. Scattered homesteads here and there stood among cypress and willow trees, the park-like country stretching away without wall or fence to the horizon. Even the grave-mounds, usually so marked a feature of a Chinese landscape, were few and far between, being replaced by simple earthenware jars containing human bones. A million living. How many millions dead? And yet Tsung-ming, as far as they could learn, had never before heard the glad tidings of Salvation.

"We went back to our boats," wrote Hudson Taylor, "rejoicing that we had been privileged to bring the word of God ... to the people of this fertile island... We determined also to sail round it, to ascertain as much as we could as to the facilities for missionary work, and to leave New Testaments if possible in every important place."

With these ends in view, they instructed the boatmen to proceed next morning in an easterly direction, following the line of the shore. But this to their surprise met with the strongest disapproval. The further side of the island might have been beset with unimaginable dangers, from all the boatmen had to say of it; and soon their employers gathered that it would be necessary to keep a sharp lookout if they intended to have their orders obeyed. Accordingly when the anchor was weighed before daybreak Hudson Taylor roused himself to speak to the men, and for some time watched the compass to see that they kept the right course.

And then a very Chinesey thing happened. The boatmen, alarmed at the prospect before them, had made up their minds that the east coast of Tsung-ming should remain an unexplored region as far as they were concerned. Opium was a necessity of their lives, and in those out-of-the-way places who could tell at what price it was to be had. The foreigners were tired, and soon would sleep again. They would follow their instructions to begin with, and when all was quiet-please themselves. Accordingly the coastline was kept well in sight for an hour or more; after which, there being no remonstrance from within, the boat's head was turned northward, and with the help of a good breeze Tsung-ming soon faded from sight.

Still the weary missionaries slept on, and it was not until they were nearing what is now the north shore of the Yangtze that Hudson Taylor awoke in a double sense to the situation.

"It was no use then to be angry or scold the men," he wisely concluded, "for they would only have enjoyed that the more. The island we had left was already thirty or thirty-five miles behind us, and we should have lost a day in endeavouring to beat back to it. We therefore entered the first stream that presented itself ... and learning that there were plenty of towns and villages on this island also, determined to do what we could in a short time."

Tuh-shan on which they thus found themselves is not to be seen on any of the maps of to-day. Great areas of alluvial deposit have long since united it with the mainland, where the city of Hai-men now appears. At that time, however, it was cut off by water; an island reproducing on a smaller scale the natural features of Tsung-ming, which it also resembled in the primitive state of its roads, and its wholly unevangelised condition.

Inquiring for some sort of conveyance by which to visit as many places, as possible, the missionaries found the only means of transportation to be the heavy, cumbersome wheelbarrow whose strident squeak is still measured by the mile in almost every part of China. Engaging two of these vehicles they set out, their books on one and themselves on the other, carefully balanced on either side of the wheel.^[81]

A couple of miles of this laborious travelling brought them to the village of U-kioh-shan, a place of a thousand or more inhabitants, many of whom seemed intelligent and were able to read. Here it was a joy to give their message, and it was not until many books had been distributed that they passed on to the neighbouring town of Huang-shan.

The demand for books at this latter place exhausted their supply, and the attention with which they were listened to made them forget weariness and hunger. The only drawback was that they were obliged to return to their boats

for more literature before proceeding to Hai-men itself, the capital of the island.

The sun was almost setting when the latter place was reached, but the long spring evening gave time for a good deal of work in the principal streets, which proved to be those of a large and busy city. Here to their surprise the missionaries were taken for Chinese from one of the southern provinces, Fukiensien men and probably rebels, which roused a good deal of excitement. But when Mr. Burdon explained that they were from a far western country, religious teachers who had come to heal the sick, and bring a message of love and pardon from the one true God, against Whom all have sinned, the people were satisfied and listened with attention.

"Before leaving," wrote Mr. Taylor, "I addressed the crowd, asking if we should come again. ... The reply was an eager affirmative, and many wanted to know when they might expect us."

Candles and lanterns having now appeared, the missionaries set out on their return journey. Every book they had brought with them had been given away, and ten times as many might easily have been disposed of. Thus their visit, though brief, had accomplished something, and' tired as they were they trundled cheerfully through drenching rain to reach their boats at ten o'clock at night, thankful for the openings found on this large island also. ^[82]

Before daylight next morning a favourable wind and tide had carried them far up the Yangtze, and when the sun rose upon a cloudless sky they found themselves nearing the sacred mountains that command the north and south banks of the river, just where its estuary narrows away from the sea. It was a day of unusual beauty, and their voices being sadly in need of rest they decided to make the ascent of the northern range, and learn all they could of

the lie of the land around them. Directing the boatmen therefore to enter the nearest tributary stream and await their return in the latter part of the day, the young men set out full of expectancy.

"The country was delightfully fertile," wrote Hudson Taylor, it and the breeze fragrant from blowing over fields of peas and beans in flower. As we approached the hills,^[83] the scene became beautiful beyond description. Of the five summits the central one was the highest, crowned by a fine pagoda, evidently newly painted and repaired. At the foot of this hill and running up its side was the T'ai-shan t'ang, a Buddhist temple and monastery so extensive that at a little distance we mistook it for a village.

"The hill itself was steep, with bare declivitous rocks, and soil sparsely covered with grass and flowers. The ascent was by means of stone steps here and there among the trees ... some of which were very fine and had seen many summers. Varying shades of foliage, from the deep, gloomy cypress to the light, graceful willow, mingled with orange, tallow, and other trees, gave a lively and interesting variety to the scene, and each turn of the path, revealing new shrines and pavilions, only increased the charm.... Anything more beautiful I have never seen.

"Entering the temple itself, we found it undergoing repairs. Some parts, apparently just finished, were in process of painting and gilding. Scores if not hundreds of men were at work, and from the amount and style of the decorations the expense must have been and will be enormous. Strangely enough, nothing-could have been more timely than our visit, for the day happened to be a festival, and thousands of persons of all classes were gathered to join in the ceremonies. ... Here were the rich and learned as well as the poor and wretched, here the gaily-apparelled and the meanly-clad, all victims of the same heathen superstitions, servants of the same

master. Nothing could be more evident than that idolatry was here a living system, flourishing unmolested by soldiers of the Cross. ... Here was one single institution, swarming with priests and those in training for that office, its idols to be numbered by hundreds... all richly painted, as was every part of the establishment, and gilding in profusion lavished upon them. Nothing was omitted and no expense spared that the eye might be charmed and the beholder captivated, and to the thousands present, no doubt, the idolatrous ritual was of the most imposing kind...

"Ascending from height to height, we passed shrine after shrine, and everywhere the same scene was repeated-idols, priests, worshippers. Heavy fumes of incense filled the air; and the clinking of cash, as the passers-by threw their coins into baskets placed before the idols mingled with strains of music, the buzz of conversation and tramp of passing feet. Upon reaching the summit we entered the halls connected with the pagoda, named from the temple T'ai-shan tah, the hideous figures of the idols, seen through smoke and flames from burning paper, ^[84] making it seem like ... a place where Satan's seat is.

"Turning sadly away we mounted the pagoda, and what a contrast was the scene outspread before our eyes! Here nature seemed to be offering that worship to her Creator which man refused, and with surprise and delight we involuntarily exclaimed, 'How beautiful!' No words can describe the landscape, and the more one looked the more fresh beauties lay revealed. The day was so clear that with the telescope the most distant objects were well-defined, and the brilliant sunlight threw an air of gladness over everything. The hill on which we stood was between four others ... two on our right and two on our left, presenting innumerable objects of interest to our view. The country below, covered with early crops and tended like a garden, was of the brightest hue, owing to recent

rains. Streams intersected it in every direction, bordered with drooping willows. Farm-houses with their fruit trees and neat willow-fences, cemeteries here and there, cypress-shaded, and numerous villages and hamlets dotted the foreground. Beyond these lay the magnificent Yangtze, fifteen to twenty miles broad, its great northerly sweep looking calm as a lake and bearing on its sunny waters many a boat and junk with graceful sails, some snowy white, some brown or black with age. Beyond again rose the 'sacred mountains' of the southern shore, crowned with their monasteries and temples, ... and other ranges of more distant hills. The opposite side of the square pagoda presented an entirely' different view. There to the north-west lay the great city of Tung-chow surrounded by a populous plain; and several little lakes shining like molten silver put a finishing touch to the beauty of the scene."

With hearts greatly moved by this panorama, they stood long and silently-looking out as Moses over the promised land. Yes, this was China, seen at last, away from the narrow limits of a Treaty Port. How great it was, how farreaching. And here at their very feet what darkness, superstition, and sin! Shanghai and its surroundings began to dwindle in importance, in view of all this. So many lights seemed gathered there, as they thought of all the Missions. After the appeal of unreached Tsungming, unreached Hai-men—this told. It was a sight to change a life, and Hudson Taylor's life was changed. From this time onward he swung free from influences that had held him, returning more and more in heart to his earlier position, his first sense of call to preach the Gospel, "Not where Christ was named. ... But, as it is written, they shall see to whom no tidings of Him come, and they that have not heard shall understand."

Still throbbing with great though unspoken longings, they came down from the pagoda to make their way back to the boats, when in one of the courts

below Hudson Taylor was stopped by a priest who requested him to bow before his Buddha and burn incense, with the usual offering of money. Stirred to the depths he could refrain no longer, and mounting the stool he had been desired to kneel on he addressed the throng about him in Mandarin, setting forth "the folly and sin of idolatry and the love of God in Christ which passes knowledge."

"When I had concluded," his journal continues, "Mr. Burdon followed in the Shanghai dialect. ... It was evident that we were understood and that many felt the force of our message, amongst whom were some of the priests. When they saw the turn things were taking, however, they requested us to leave. This we would not do until we had finished, and when they began to go away themselves Mr. Burdon requested one or two to remain, that they might reprove us if we advanced anything contrary to the truth. I believe we were much assisted from above, and also that we were guided here by Providence to reach these multitudes who had never heard the precious truths of the Gospel. They gave us the most patient hearing, and listened with remarkable attention.

"Descending the hill we passed some stalls at which we purchased a few curiosities. We also witnessed scenes the very mention of which would outrage propriety, but were glad that we had thus an opportunity of seeing what tendencies these Buddhist festivals really have. While such iniquities are practised in the face of heaven and on the very ground belonging to the temples, who will say that despite all its moral teachings and fair outward profession Buddhism is not polluting?

"After leaving the temple we distributed the Scriptures and tracts we had with us, and feeling sincerely thankful that we had been permitted to bear testimony against these abominations and to dispense the Word of Life, we set off for

our boats, a walk of two or three miles. It was not until we reached them and had time to rest that we found our sore throats, which in the excitement of the day had been forgotten, had not particularly benefited by the strain they had unexpectedly sustained."

But tired throats could not deter them from the work of the following day. Their purpose now was to visit Tungchow, the city seen from the pagoda, whose unenviable reputation had already reached them. It might be months, years even, before other evangelists would reach it, and they could not bear the responsibility of leaving its vast population any longer in ignorance of the way, of Life. If nothing more were possible, they could at any rate distribute their remaining Scriptures within its walls, praying that the good seed might bring forth fruit to life eternal.

"After breakfast we commended ourselves to the care of our Heavenly Father," wrote Mr. Taylor, "and sought His blessing before proceeding to this great city. The day was dull and wet, the very opposite of yesterday. We both felt persuaded that Satan would not allow us to assail his kingdom without raising serious opposition; but we were also fully assured that it was the will of God that we should preach Christ in this city and distribute the Word of Truth among its people. We were sorry that we had but few books left for such an important place. The result, however, proved that this also was providential.

"Our native teachers did their best to persuade us not to go, but we determined that by God's help nothing should hinder us. We directed them to remain in their boat, and if we did not return to learn whatever they could respecting our fate, and make all possible haste to Shanghai with the information. We also arranged that the other boat should wait for us, even if we could not get back that night, so that we might not be detained for want of a boat in case of returning later. We then put our books in two bags, and, with a servant who always

accompanied us on these occasions, set off for the city, distant about seven miles. Walking was out of the question from the state of the roads, so we availed ourselves of wheelbarrows, the only conveyance to be had....

"We had not gone far before our servant requested permission to go back, as he was thoroughly frightened by reports concerning the native soldiery. Of course we at once consented, not wishing to involve another in trouble, and determined to carry the books ourselves and look for physical as well as spiritual strength to Him who had promised to supply all our need.

"At this point a respectable man came up and earnestly warned us against proceeding, saying that if we did so we should find to our sorrow what the Tung-chow militia were like. We thanked him for his advice, but could not act upon it, as our hearts were fixed. Whether it were for bonds, imprisonment, and death, or whether to return in safety we knew not, but we were determined, by the grace of God, not to leave Tung-chow any longer without the Gospel....

"After this my wheelbarrow man would proceed no farther and I had to seek another, fortunately not difficult to find. As we went on the ride was anything but agreeable in the mud and rain, and we could not help feeling the danger of our position-though wavering not for a moment. At intervals we encouraged one another with promises from Scripture and verses of hymns ... which were very comforting.

"On our way we passed through one small town of about a thousand inhabitants, and here in the Mandarin dialect I preached Jesus to a good number of people. Never was I so happy in speaking of the love of God and the atonement of Jesus Christ. My own soul was richly blessed and I was enabled to speak with unusual freedom. And how happy I was afterwards when one of our hearers repeated to the

newcomers, in the local dialect, the truths upon which I had been dwelling. Oh, how thankful I felt to hear a Chinaman, of his own accord, telling his fellow-countrymen that God loved them, that they were sinners, but that Jesus had died instead of them and paid the penalty of their guilt. That one moment repaid me for all the trials we had passed through, and I felt that if the Lord should grant His Holy Spirit to change the heart of that man, we had not come in vain.

"We distributed a few Testaments and tracts, for the people were able to read. It was well we did so, for when we reached Tung-chow we had quite as many left as we had strength to carry.

"Nearing the western suburb of the city, the prayer of the early Christians when persecution was commencing came to my mind, 'And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto Thy servants that with all boldness they may speak Thy Word': a petition in which we most heartily united. Before entering the suburb we laid our plans so as to act in concert, and told our barrow-men where to await us, that they might not be involved in trouble on our account. Then, looking up to our Heavenly Father, we committed ourselves to His keeping, took our books and set off for the city.

*"For some distance we walked along the principal street leading to the West Gate unmolested, and were amused at the unusual title **Heh-kwei-tsi** (black devils) which was applied to us. We wondered about it at the time, but afterwards found that it was our clothes, not our complexions, that gave rise to it. As we passed several of the soldiers, I remarked to Mr. Burdon that these were the men we had heard so much about, and that they seemed willing to receive us quietly enough.*

"Long before we reached the gate, however, a tall powerful man, made tenfold fiercer by partial intoxication, let us know that all the militia were not so peaceably inclined, by seizing

Mr. Burdon by the shoulders. My companion endeavoured to shake him off. I turned to see what was the matter, and in almost no time we were surrounded by a dozen or more of his companions, and were being hurried on to the city at a fearful pace.

"My bag now began to feel heavy. I could not change hands to relieve myself, and was soon in a profuse perspiration and scarcely able to keep up with them. We demanded to be taken before the chief magistrate, but were told, with the most insulting epithets, that they knew where to take us and what to do. The man who first seized Mr. Burdon soon afterwards left him for me, and became my principal tormentor, for I was neither so tall nor so strong as my friend and was less able to resist him. He all but knocked me down again and again, seized me by the hair, took hold of my collar so as almost to choke me, and grasped my arms and shoulders, making them black and blue. Had this continued much longer I must have fainted. All but exhausted, how refreshing was the remembrance of a verse quoted by my dear mother in one of my last home letters

We speak of the realms of the blest,

That country so bright and so fair,

And oft are its glories confessed:

But what must it be to be there!

To be absent from the body ... present with the Lord ... free from sin. ... And this is the end of the worst that man's malice can ever bring upon us.

"As we were being hurried along, Mr. Burdon tried to give away a few books that were under his arm, not knowing whether we might have another opportunity. But the fearful

rage of the soldier ... and the way he insisted on manacles being brought, which fortunately were not at hand, convinced us that in our present position it was useless to attempt such work. There was nothing to be done but quietly to submit and go along with our captors.

"Once or twice a quarrel arose as to how we should be dealt with, the more mild of our conductors saying that we ought to be taken to the Ya-men, but others wishing to kill us at once without appeal to any authority. Our minds were kept in perfect peace, and when thrown together on one of these occasions we reminded each other that the Apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer in the cause of Christ. Having succeeded in getting a hand into my pocket, I produced a Chinese card (if the large red paper bearing one's name may be so called) and after this was treated with more civility. I demanded that it should be given to the chief official of the place, and that we should be led to his office. Before this we had been unable, say what we would, to persuade them that we were foreigners, although we were both in English attire.

"Oh the long weary streets we were dragged through I I thought they would never end; and seldom have I felt more thankful than when we stopped at a place where we were told a Mandarin resided. Quite exhausted, bathed in perspiration and with my tongue cleaving to the roof of my mouth, I leaned against the wall, and saw that Mr. Burdon was in much the same state. I requested them to bring us chairs, but they told us to wait, and when I begged them to give us some tea, received only the same answer. Round the doorway a large crowd had gathered, and Mr. Burdon, collecting his remaining strength, preached Jesus Christ to them. Our cards and books had been taken in to the Mandarin, but he proved to be one of low rank, and after keeping us waiting for some time referred us to his superior in office.

*"Upon hearing this and finding it was their purpose to turn us out again into the crowded streets, we positively refused to move a single step and insisted on chairs being brought. After some demur this was done, and we were carried off. On the way we felt so glad of the rest the chairs afforded and so thankful for having been enabled to preach the Gospel in spite of Satan's malice, that our joy was depicted on our countenances, and as we passed along we heard some say that we did not look like bad men, while others seemed to pity us. When we arrived at the Ya-men I wondered where we were being taken, for though we passed through some great gates that looked like those of the city wall, we were still evidently within the city. A second pair of gates suggested that it was a prison into which we were being carried. But when we came in sight of a large tablet with the inscription **Min-chi fu-mu** (the Father and Mother of the people) we felt more at ease, for this is the title assumed by civil magistrates.*

"Our cards were again sent in, and after a short delay we were ushered into the presence of Ch'en Ta Lao-ie (The Great Venerable Grandfather Ch'en), who, as it proved, had formerly been Tao-tai in Shanghai and knew the importance of treating foreigners with civility. Coming before him some of the people fell on their knees and bowed down to the ground, and my conductor motioned me to do the same, but without success. This Mandarin who seemed to be the highest authority in Tung-chow and wore an opaque blue button on his cap, came out to meet us with every possible token of respect. He took us to an inner apartment, a more private room, followed by a large number of writers, runners, and semi-officials. I explained the object of our visit and begged permission to give him copies of our books, for which he thanked me. As I handed him the New Testament with part of the Old (from Genesis to Ruth), and some tracts, I tried to say a little about them, and also to give him a brief summary of our teachings.... He listened very attentively, as of course did

all the others. He then ordered refreshments to be brought, which were very welcome, and himself partook of them with us.

"After a long stay, we asked permission to see something of the city and to distribute the books we had with us before returning. To this he kindly consented. We then mentioned that we had been most disrespectfully treated as we came in, but did not attach much importance to the fact, being aware that the rough soldiery knew no better. Not desiring, however, to have such experiences repeated, we requested him to give orders that we were not to be further molested. This also he acceded to, and, with every possible token of respect, accompanied us to the door of his ya-men, sending several 'runners' to see that no trouble arose. ... We distributed our books well and quickly, and after visiting the Confucian temple left the city quite in state. It was amusing to see the use the 'runners' made of their tails. When the way was blocked by the crowd they turned them into whips and laid them about the people's shoulders to right and left!

"We had a little trouble in finding our wheel-barrows, but eventually succeeding, we paid off the chair-coolies, mounted our humble vehicles and returned to the river, accompanied for fully half the distance by an attendant from the Ya-men. ... Early in the evening we got back to the boats in safety, sincerely thankful to our Heavenly Father for His gracious protection and aid."

Thus the vision was clenched with suffering, and Hudson Taylor's first sight of the great unreached interior was immediately followed by his first experience of danger to life itself at the hands of those he sought to help and bless. What could be more calculated to deepen, while at the same time it tempered his life-purpose? Love first, then suffering, then a deeper love-thus only can God's work be done.

Chapter XXIII^(TOC)

A Vision of his Life-Work

Sixth Journey. May 1855. AET. 23

THE joy of preaching Christ where He had never before been named had now laid hold of Hudson Taylor. Of the five journeys hitherto undertaken, the last two at any rate had been over untrodden ground. Both with Dr. Parker and Mr. Burdon he had found willing hearers for the Gospel where, as far as they could tell, it had never yet been proclaimed. It was a new experience, and to the young, devoted missionary a great experience, weaning his heart away from other, less-important things. Plans and hopes as regards settled work in Shanghai that for months had occupied him began to take a secondary place. He had tasted the wondrous sweetness of bringing tidings of the Saviour's love to those who but 'for him might never have heard, and this henceforth was the work that claimed him more and more.

Not that he no longer wished to settle somewhere. The 'strain of such frequent journeys made him increasingly conscious of the need for suitable headquarters. But he was beginning to hope that it might be away from a Treaty Port, among those who had no one else to lead them in the heavenward way.

It was now early summer in Shanghai, and beginning to be hot. No answer had yet been received from the Committee as to the plans laid before them, so that, as far as the Society was concerned, matters were somewhat at a standstill. This made it all the more natural that Hudson Taylor should be drawn in the one direction that was providentially open, that of evangelistic

journeys. His fitness for this work was becoming so evident that the British and Foreign Bible Society was willing not only to supply him with as many Scriptures as he could distribute but also to meet the larger part of his travelling expenses. Thus while his hands were tied in one way, and plans for local work kept in abeyance, openings 'of an important kind were not lacking in other directions.

"I hope to go inland again in a few days," he wrote to Mr. Pearse scarcely a week after his return from Tung-chow. "You will join us in thanking the Lord for His protection in recent dangers. The Rebellion, especially since foreigners have enlisted themselves on both sides, has made access to the interior no easy matter. But the Word of God must go. And we must not be hindered by slight obstacles in the way of its dissemination...."

"I trust you will be much in prayer for us. We have many trials, and Satan does not let off easily those who attack his strongholds. Pray that we may be kept from harm spiritually as well as physically, and that the one intense desire of our hearts may be granted, that we may be made useful."

Sixth Journey: May 1855

Ten days at home had barely given time to write up his journal, attend to letters and prepare for another journey, before the young evangelist set out upon a longer absence than any he had previously undertaken. This time he was alone, and with growing experience was able to, strike out on lines more characteristically his own. He seems to have had in view a long-cherished hope, the purpose in fact with which he had been sent to China, of penetrating inland as far as Nan-king, the headquarters of the Tai-ping Rebellion. Be that as it may, he steered his course up the Yangtze, exploring the southern shore with its principal tributary streams about two hundred miles. He was absent altogether twenty-five days, during which time he made known the Gospel in no fewer than fifty-eight cities, towns and larger villages, ***fifty-one*** of which had never before been visited by a Protestant missionary.

Starting on May 8 he did not reach home again until June 1, having made a careful investigation of the openings for such work up to within sixty miles of Chin-kiang, where the rebel forces were established, travelling in all a distance of four or five hundred miles.

It was a lonely journey and a courageous one with Tungchow experiences fresh in mind. At any point he might have been seized, tortured, and even put to death as a rebel or foreign spy. And short of this he was exceeding the most liberal interpretation of treaty rights, and could claim no protection either from his own Consul or from the local authorities. Serious indeed was the possible danger from excited crowds in places where European dress had never yet been seen. But these and all other complications he handed over to the One best able to deal with them, in the consciousness of whose presence

he could be calm and free from care.

And the Lord was not only with him amid those lonely labours. He did more than protect His servant, and supply needed grace. It was, if one may say so reverently, His opportunity. And He drew very near revealing Himself and His purposes as He only can perhaps when one is much alone.

Long, long years after, on another journey-the last he ever took up that great river-pacing the deck of the steamer in company with the writers, he paused again and again, looking with misty eyes towards the hills that here and there break the level of that southern shore. It was somewhere near Green Grass Island that he said at length, "I wish I could tell you about it. It was over there. But I cannot remember just the spot."

Seeing him moved by some recollection, we waited silently to hear more. But fifty years had passed since that day-the remembrance of which still brought so deep a joy and awe. He could not put it into words. He tried, but could tell us little of what had been between his soul and God. But there, over there on those more distant heights, it had come to him. Some revelation of his future work perhaps. Some call to utmost self-surrender for the life to which the Lord was leading. And its influence remained.

Time would fail to follow in any detail the varied activities of this journey, but some idea of its general character must be given. On the banks of tidal rivers running into the wide estuary of the Yangtze, the traveller found himself within reach of numerous towns and villages. The more important of these were visited as he worked his way up the main river. Here and there cities were found, and busy market-places, in which many Scriptures could be distributed. But in the countless villages between the reading population was small, and Hudson Taylor began to realise how large a part in the

evangelisation of China must be taken by simple preaching and individual instruction in the Truth.

The first three days after leaving Woo-sung were spent opposite Tsung-ming Island, where the boat, overtaken by a storm, was nearly wrecked before they could reach the shelter of the Liu river. Putting into this stream they found themselves in the neighbourhood of a city and several towns, one of which had a population of forty thousand. Here Hudson Taylor could not have desired better opportunities for the work he had at heart, and in the temple of the "Mother of Heaven" as well as among the junks crowded along the waterfrontage many listeners were eager to obtain books and learn more about his message.

His journal for the days that followed spent on another tributary stream gives an impression of unremitting labour, and reveals also something of what it meant to be alone amid such overwhelming needs.

Friday, May 11, 1855: Got off at 6 A.M., and with the tide ran up the Yangtze till we reached the Pah-miao kiang or Creek of the Eight Temples, which we entered. Here, after seeking the Lord's blessing, I landed, and was quickly surrounded by sixty or eighty people who had never seen a foreigner before. To them I preached the glad tidings of salvation before proceeding to a town called Liu-ho-chen. The road was miserably dirty, and though the distance was only two miles it seemed like four at least.

On arrival I found that it contained a good many respectable shops and intelligent people. As usual the demand for books was great. ... The population of this place cannot be less than twenty thousand, and they had never heard before of the Word of the Living God. Here I distributed many portions of Scripture and tracts, and would willingly have stayed longer but that time did not permit.

*On the way to the next town, Huang-king, I could not help feeling sad and downcast. Wherever one goes-cities, towns and villages just teeming with inhabitants, few of whom have ever heard the only Name "under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Just to visit them, give away portions of Scripture and tracts, and after preaching a few times pass on to other places, seem almost like doing nothing for the people. And yet unless this course is adopted **how are those further on ever to hear at all?** It is the Word of God we leave behind us, living seed that cannot be fruitless, for He from whom it comes has said, "My word ... shall not return unto Me void," but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."*

We see no fruit at present, and it needs strong faith to keep one's heart from sinking; besides which I have felt a degree of nervousness since we were so roughly treated in Tung-chow which is quite a new experience, a feeling that is not lessened by being quite alone. I remember, however, His faithful promise, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy," and "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Faint and weary, having had no food since breakfast, I arrived at Huang-king at 4 P.M., and prayed God to enable me to distribute my books to the best advantage and to give me a word to speak to the people.

The prayer was indeed answered, and I found' the place so large that had I had four times as many books with me they would have been barely enough to supply all the applicants who could read. ... When I had finished the work of distribution I went into the temple in which the pagoda stands and found it full of cases of newly-made incense laid out to dry. Connected with the temple is a nunnery, and one of the

nuns, 'a superior-looking woman, came out to meet me and seemed vastly amused at my costume. People followed me into the courtyard, and when some hundreds were assembled I asked them if they would like me to address them; upon which a stool was brought, and mounting it I preached "Jesus, and Him crucified." They listened with the utmost attention, and when I concluded many asked for books containing these doctrines and eagerly inquired when I would return and bring more. I could only recommend them to borrow from one another and pray that God would enable them to understand and believe in what they had already heard.

As I left the place many persons accompanied me with every manifestation of friendly feeling. I could not but be struck with the contrast between my arrival and departure, for when I first entered the town, people ran away as from a wild animal! ... It was gratifying to see a friendly feeling so soon established, and to know that two towns now possessed the Gospel of the grace of God which until that morning had never received it. As we repassed Liu-ho-chen, a good many people came out and we had a little conversation, after which we went on, reaching our boat about 8 P.M. very tired and ready for dinner.

Saturday, May 12: One of the hottest days we have had this year. Having arranged my books and prepared a good selection to take with me, I set out to visit several more towns in the neighbourhood. The first place I went to was the "Dragon Emperor's Temple," a little town in which I was told a Mandarin resided. I found it quite a small place, consisting of a few houses, the largest of which was occupied by a Revenue Officer of the name of Li. Calling upon him I was courteously received, and left in his possession a New Testament, part of the Old, and several tracts. After this we went on and in due time reached the "Shrine of the Chang Family" (Chang-kia-si), a town of about four thousand

inhabitants, where for the first time the Word of God was distributed and a foreigner seen and heard.

At first the people were frightened, but this soon wore off, and men, women and children seemed to be intensely interested. Their astonishment was great when they found that I could understand their language, and it was most amusing to hear their remarks about many things. When I took out my watch to look at the time, one grown-up person exclaimed that never before had he seen such spectacles! Another promptly corrected him, informing the company that it was nothing less than a telescope I had in my pocket, and that western men were celebrated for making them. Upon which a third chimed in: No, he knew better than that; the wonderful object they had seen was a clock, which told the hour by striking a bell; and what I was wearing on my nose was a telescope, and not a pair of spectacles as some had ignorantly suggested!

A short distance beyond this place was a group of houses looking like the beginning of another little town, to which I next directed my steps. I found it to be a private residence, the home of a fine old gentleman, eighty years of age, who had formerly been a Mandarin at Soo-chow. Taken to the guest-hall, I noticed over the entrance this inscription, "Act morally and you will obtain Happiness." I took the lowest chair of course, nearest the door, but in a little while the master of the house appeared and with much ceremony insisted on my moving to a higher seat.

When I offered him a selection of our books, he told me he also had books to give, and made me a present of three works of his own, in ten volumes, beautifully' got up and treating of almost every imaginable subject. There was a little astronomy, a little meteorology, a little geography, some mathematics, and so on. But he said he had one superlative idea which he was delighted to have the opportunity of imparting to me.

Three great kingdoms existed in the world he said, England, Russia and China, but his discovery was as yet unknown in any of them. Confucius himself was ignorant of it, and likewise all the Sages. In short it was known to but one person-himself; and he was now eighty years of age. This long prelude and the importance of his manner made me wonder what could be coming, and it was hard to repress a smile when it proved to be that the sun stood still and the earth travelled round it...

This gentleman seemed to be a close observer of nature, for amongst other things he wrote out for me a list of climbing plants arranged in two columns according as they turned to the right hand, in growing, or to the left. After an interesting visit I went a few miles further and found another town (Teng-chow-si) of about a thousand inhabitants. Here also I distributed Scriptures and tracts, and preached to about two hundred people in the open air. Then as the sun was low we set off for our boat with all speed, but were caught in torrents of rain and did not arrive till long after dark.

Sunday, May 13: Enjoyed some quiet hours of reading and prayer in my boat, after which ... I distributed Scriptures and tracts in the Town of the "Eight Temples." Thence we went on to the "Shrine of the Heng Family," a place of some eight thousand inhabitants. There in the principal temple I preached to two or three hundred people, distributing afterwards many Testaments and other books.

We then made our way again to the "Chang Family Shrine," and after conversation with several others I revisited the old Mandarin seen yesterday. When our talk took a religious turn he made the common remark, "Jesus is your Sage, Confucius ours," and was much astonished when I told him that the Lord Jesus was not an Englishman; that though born a Jew He was no mere man, but perfect God and perfect man in one; and in proof of His deity adduced His miracles and the fact of the resurrection. He told me he intended coming to Shanghai in a

few weeks and would return my call, promising in the meanwhile to look into my books and desiring me to read those he had given me. After this we returned to our boat, again arriving long after dark; and having supplied medicine to a man who had followed us four miles to get it, I closed another Lord's day with prayer to God for His blessing.

Thus he worked his way up the main river until on May 15 the hills of Langshan and Fu-shan again came in sight. The temples crowning the former he had visited already, so it was to the latter, the sacred mountain of Fushan with the city of the same name at its base, that Hudson Taylor now turned his attention. In and around this city several days were spent and in ascending the tributary stream to another famous pilgrim resort, the city and hills of Changshu. Very interesting is his account of work done in these places, in which his preaching was so well understood that people said "The foreign-devil language is almost the same as our own."

One more Sunday on a creek still farther up, and the young missionary reached Green Grass Island, lying in the first, great westward bend of the Yangtze., Here on his birthday (May 21) two towns and a large village were visited and the Gospel preached to many willing hearers. As evening was drawing in he was taken to see a sick person, to whom he gave some simple remedies. The news soon spread, and before he could reach his boat, a hundred or more people had assembled, fully half of whom were suffering in ways he could relieve. Tired and hungry though he was he gladly set to work to dispense medicines, and before supper that evening had treated between forty and fifty patients.

This, of course, opened his way to many homes and hearts, and the rest of the week was fully occupied either on the island itself or on the mainland opposite. Of the day following his birthday he wrote

Tuesday, May 22: Left the island early this morning, and after a pleasant sail of seven miles entered a creek running in toward some high hills. Here I landed, took as many books as our bags would hold and set off for the country. On the way we passed through a small town, in which I distributed a few Testaments and other books, and was as usual an object of wonder to the people, who had never seen a foreigner before.

Thence we went on to the city of Yang-shae, entering by the North Gate, and distributed a good many Scriptures and tracts. I then addressed the people in the temple of the City-God, but the noise was so great that only those nearest me can have heard. After this, and a walk on the wall which gave one a good view of the city, we left by the South Gate and continued our work of distribution in the suburb.

Though only small in size, Yang-shae might well be called a model city. Its walls are in perfect repair, not a brick wanting nor a battlement injured.... Its houses and shops are good, its streets clean and people respectable, though they can make a hubbub! a thing not to be wondered at when the exciting cause is remembered. An Englishman in foreign dress, distributing religious books and preaching in the very temple of the presiding deity of the city, was enough to upset their composure....

From Yang-shae I walked out to the "Pebble" or "Gravel Mountain," the highest elevation I have yet seen in China. The view from the top was very fine. With the aid of the telescope I counted no fewer than fifty-four distinct hills, some at a distance of quite as many miles. In an easterly direction, north of the Yangtze, rose the Lang-shan group with their pagodas and temples, and opposite across the river the heights of Fushan and Chang-shu. South of the hill on which I stood was the large town of Hwa-shYh with its pagoda in excellent repair, and south-by-west the hill and city of Wu-sih on the Grand Canal. Southward still, quite in the distance, were the

mountains near the Great Lake and beyond Soo-chow. Westward lay the hill and city of Kiang-yin, some distance up the Yangtze. To the north Green Grass Island was well in sight, and the mighty river hidden here and there by the hills along its bank ... completed a view well worth the toilsome ascent it had cost.

How long he stayed there in the welcome silence the journal does not say, nor what were the thoughts and feelings that filled his mind. It was a wonderful outlook, and could not but draw forth his sympathies for the great land that lay beyond on every side. Was it at this time and in this place the vision of his life-work came, to him? We do not know: the records do not tell us. But he was quite alone, only just twenty-three, and already launched on pioneering labours the trend of which he often longed to understand. It was an occasion at any rate for fresh consecration to the work and to the Lord he loved; and it is more than likely that in view of needs so overwhelming, deeper longings and more earnest prayer would rise within him—"great thoughts, calm thoughts, thoughts lasting to the end."

Certainly many of the principles of later years can be seen in embryo on this journey, and the spirit of it all is specially characteristic, read between the lines of his brief, simple journal. Of two long, hot days on Green Grass Island, for example, he wrote as follows

Thursday, May 24: Set off early this morning with books, and spent the whole day going from house, hamlet and village, to house, hamlet and village. In this way more than a dozen schoolmasters were supplied with books, and readers wherever they were found... On this island the towns seem to be neither large nor numerous. The people live mostly in hamlets of from one to three hundred, with here and there a larger village. In the afternoon we reached one place, Nian-feng-kiai, with about six hundred inhabitants. Here I finished

the distribution of my books, and visited one or two sick people who were unable to come to us. We then set off on the return journey and reached our boat at about 5 P.M. very tired with the long walk. Many persons, however, had followed us, wanting medicines either for themselves or their friends, some indeed having come two, three or more miles. So I told them of Jesus, found out about their symptoms and supplied them with medicines, removed a tumour from a young man's neck, and was thus employed till some time after dark. Then my visitors left me. I got my things put away, had some dinner, for which I was more than ready, and finished the day with writing.

Friday, May 25: Saw a few patients, then left for the mainland, where we went ashore with books for distribution. After supplying the little town of K'ian-t'u we visited not a few villages, and put the Word of God into the hands of every teacher we could find. Getting back to the boat again at 6 P.M. I saw several patients, after which we left with the tide. During the day while walking from place to place, tired and bathed, in perspiration, I was much refreshed in spirit by the thought that the Lord Jesus, doubtless, had often felt the same; for He too went about in a hot country. We made good progress after leaving, wind and tide both favouring us, and shortly after dark anchored out on the river.

Yes, He too lived amid crowds of sick and suffering people, and could not escape dirt, discomfort, weariness, and all the monotony and discouragement of a missionary's lot. And He knew loneliness, the solitude of a life that had no sympathy as regards its deepest needs, its highest aspirations. Not one tear you shed, not one pang you feel is unknown to Him. It is all, every ache of it, "fellowship with His sufferings." Does not that transfigure the darkest moment, rob the bitterest humiliation of its sting? Think, He has felt the same: and to all eternity there shall be that closer sympathy between your

heart and His. He shares with you something deeper, more wonderful than His glory, His joy. He shares with you just all that these experiences mean, all that it ever must mean to be the Saviour of the World: and is there anything more sacred even in the heart of God than this?

And then the Lord who knows His servant's need brings in some moment of relief—a day of tropical rain it may be, when it is useless to go out; an attack of illness, giving time for rest and prayer; a swollen river that cannot be crossed, or a Sunday in some quiet spot upon your journey—and in the brief respite comes soul-renewing fellowship with Him.

Thus it was for Hudson Taylor the day after the above entry in his journal. Passing the extremity of Green Grass Island the wind turned against them and the channel was too narrow to admit of tacking. For nine hours they had to wait, the wind meanwhile increasing to a perfect hurricane. Travelling late on Saturday in consequence, they were again obliged to anchor in mid-stream. There Sunday morning found them (May 27), a lovely summer day after the storm, and who can tell the refreshment to the weary missionary of a few quiet hours before they went ashore?

"Very much enjoyed reading and prayer," he wrote, "in my cabin, and felt renewed confidence in Him who, has brought us hitherto."

Whatever may have been his intention on leaving Shanghai, he seems to have felt it wiser not to continue his journey much beyond this point. It may be that the boatmen were unwilling to venture farther up the Yangtze on account of the Insurgents at Chin-kiang. It may be he himself thought it better to be satisfied with what was already accomplished, without running into needless danger. He had been wonderfully preserved so far, and was now nearly two hundred miles from home. Three weeks was an unusually long absence from

a foreign Settlement in those days, and he was coming to an end of his supplies. He distributed his remaining books, therefore, in Kiang-yin with its extensive suburbs and in a city seen from the neighbouring hill-, (Tsing-kiang), and on Tuesday, May 29, commenced the return journey.

Two days later, about midnight,' they succeeded in reaching Shanghai in spite of serious gales, very thankful for renewed preservation from shipwreck, and for having been enabled to distribute in peace and safety over two thousand seven hundred Scripture portions and tracts.

Chapter XXIV^(TOC)

Emptied from Vessel to Vessel

Including Seventh Journey—June-August 1855, AET. 23

SUMMER was now in possession of the Settlement, and it was a warm welcome Hudson Taylor received in more ways than one on his return to Ma-ka-k'uen. The little house was still as crowded as ever, and there seemed no prospect of relief for this season at any rate; but grace was found sufficient for the daily needs, even when these extended into long, breathless nights, when sleep was well-nigh impossible for the heat. If only the rats had not been so lively the nights would have been less trying. But whether the temperature excited them or not, they were aggressive in the extreme, running all over the room and even jumping on the beds in their nocturnal carousals.

Yet, how thankful Hudson Taylor and his fellow-workers were for the shelter of even these indifferent quarters! Anything better, indeed anything they could live in at all I was still unattainable, in spite of the reconstruction that was going on apace. So that worse than staying on in those three rooms all summer would be having to leave them when they were needed for reinforcements expected by the L.M.S. This could not be for several months however, and meanwhile provision would surely be made for mission-premises of their own. Hope deferred, they found, was but poor diet for cheerfulness under the circumstances; but the Committee was slow in replying to their communications of the previous December, and there was nothing for it but to wait on, working in such ways as were open to them

through the hot season. All through July and August, while travelling was impracticable, Hudson Taylor carried on a daily service in the Shanghai dialect for their teachers, servants and others who wished to join them. This opportunity of giving regular instruction to the same set of people was a great joy to him, and all the more so when it seemed to be bearing fruit. A sudden death occurring in the neighbourhood from cholera, he made the most of the opportunity to urge the importance of immediate salvation from sin and its eternal consequences. A few days later he alluded to the circumstances again, asking if any of his hearers had definitely come to God for pardon through faith in Jesus Christ. Pausing a moment, perhaps hardly expecting an answer, what was his thankfulness when Kuei-hua the young cook said earnestly, "I have."

This open confession before his fellow-servants meant a great deal.

"I do hope," wrote Hudson Taylor, "that he is under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Though not without faults, he is greatly changed for the better. For some months we have not detected him in falsehood or dishonesty of any kind, which is saying a good deal." [85]

The school meanwhile was also doing well, though their adopted pupil was still the only boarder. On his return from the Yang-tze Mr. Taylor had found a room to let in the native city, in a quarter where no missionary work was being carried on. This he gladly rented, moving the school from the Settlement early in June. Now, with an excellent teacher, it was exercising an influence for good amid the large population of the South Gate and its busy suburb.

On Sunday, when the ordinary routine was suspended, the schoolroom was well filled for a Gospel service, and several times through the week Dr.

Parker came down to see patients and dispense medicines. Both there and in a room he had secured across the river,^[86] the medical work brought large numbers of people round them and afforded excellent opportunities for preaching. These Mr. Taylor supplemented with excursions to the surrounding country, often walking many miles from village to village and preaching four or five times in the open air. All this in addition to language-study made it necessary somewhat to curtail his correspondence as compared with the previous summer, but on Sunday evenings when the work of the day was done he still found time for letters that revealed much of his inner life.

"I have been spending an hour," he wrote one close evening in August, "in happy communion with Him whose wondrous grace has called and numbered me with His people. The more I see of myself and the more I learn of Him, the more I am astonished that He can ever have given me a place among His children. It is only at the foot of the cross we see ourselves, the world, and God in the true light: There alone can we form true impressions ... and how far short they still fall of the reality! But I must conclude. My walking to-day (about six miles) and three services, with the thermometer at 90° F. in the shade, has made me feel worn out."

And on a later Sunday: "I do indeed need your prayers. To work on without seeing results takes much faith, and mine is so weak. What a beautiful hymn that is of Wesley's,

Give to the winds thy fears;

Hope and be undismayed:

God hears thy sighs, and counts thy tears;

God shall lift up thy head.^[87]

"What I need is more faith, more intimate communion with

God... We can impart that only which we first receive. The disciples could make the people sit down, but Jesus must bless the bread and give it to them ere they could break it to the multitude. Oh that we may be much with Jesus; may be enabled to feed many with the Bread of Life, and finally have an abundant entrance into the abode where holiness ever reigns."

But all the while he was carrying on this settled work in and around Shanghai, Hudson Taylor was longing to be farther afield. Only the heat of summer that made travelling dangerous kept him so in Shanghai, for all he had seen and experienced on recent journeys was calling with the claim of a greater need.

One itineration indeed had been attempted since the beginning of June, which though cut short by illness was to have an important bearing on his future as well as on that of Dr. Parker. Accompanied by Mr. Burdon they had set out on a preaching tour that was to include a visit to Ning-po for partial rest and change. Missionaries of several societies were at work in that important city, and the blessing of God was manifestly resting upon their labours. Hudson Taylor and his colleague looked forward therefore to much help from this visit, far though they were from realising all it was to bring into their lives.

Seventh Journey: June 11-25

On the way down to Ning-po, four governing cities and a number of towns were visited. Forty miles south of Shanghai they reached the coast at Che-lin, a deserted ***Hsien***. Pirates swarmed in the neighbourhood, and people had taken refuge further back from the seashore.

Next day, at the border of the Cheh-kiang province, Mr. Taylor separated from his companions in order to visit on foot several places to which the boat could not take them. This gave him an opportunity of climbing the Cha-pu bills, from which an extensive view was obtained over Hangchow Bay, with its beautiful islands. Reaching the city of Cha-pu some hours before sunset, he preached in the temple of the Mother of Heaven, the sailor's special divinity, and distributed his remaining books.

A comfortless night followed, for he missed his friends and was not able to get back to the boat. Having no bedding or luggage, he might have hunted in vain for an inn that would receive him, and it is more than likely that he and his servant would have had to spend the night in the streets but for the kindness of an elderly woman who had compassion on them. It was already late when she took them into her house, the first Chinese home to welcome the young missionary, and glad enough he was of the rice-gruel and straw bed that was all it could afford.

After a long hunt, his missing companions were found the following morning, and together they spent the day in preaching and tract-distribution throughout the city. Cha-pu, a large and busy place, was protected from pirates by a garrison of Manchu soldiers, and the trade carried on in salted fish and such-like commodities was considerable. It was the point of embarkation also for Ning-po and other great cities, and was well supplied in

consequence with seagoing junks.

Engaging one of these to take them across the Bay, the missionaries went on board in the evening to find the cabin they had expected to occupy full already with passengers, and that more were crowding in. This was disconcerting, and it did not mend matters when the captain, siding with the majority, declared that his boat was a passenger-boat, although the missionary party had paid for all the accommodation. Finally a compromise was arranged. As many as could find room enough to lie down were allowed to remain, including the foreigners, and the rest were turned away without compunction. It was Hudson Taylor's first night on a passenger-boat-first of so many!

Starting at midnight, they found themselves at Ha-pu the following morning, and all that day was spent in rowing up one of the many streams by which Ning-po is reached. Twilight fell upon the guardian hills as the travellers made their way through the multitudinous craft that line the chief approaches to the city, and from the darkness of the narrow streets it was good to be welcomed in the hospitable mission-house to which Mr. Burdon led the way.

Here as guests of Mr. and Mrs. Cobbold the next few days were spent, days which to the visitors were full of interest, introducing them to a peculiarly united community in which they were received with great kindness. Eleven foreigners in all represented several English and American Societies, and there was in addition an excellent school carried on by a lady of independent means,^[88] assisted by the orphan daughters of the Rev. Samuel Dyer. His had been a much-loved name among the earliest group of missionaries to the Chinese, and these young ladies though only eighteen and twenty years of age were already fluent in the language and very useful in the work to which their lives were given.

One thing only seemed lacking to the all-round development of the Ning-po Missions. There was no hospital. The missionaries felt this drawback keenly, and as they came to know something of Dr. Parker a new hope sprang up which resulted in a unanimous invitation to the Scotch physician to join them. But this was not until he and his companions had returned to Shanghai, greatly benefited by their change, and linked for the future, little as they suspected it, with lives in Ning-po that had touched their own.

The return journey was to have been given to further evangelisation; but hardly had they left the city when a messenger overtook them, bringing news of the serious illness of Mr. Burdon's only child. It was not yet a year since the young mother had been taken, and the thought of the little one suffering and perhaps dying in his absence was too much for the father's heart. He felt he must hasten back at once, and his friends decided to accompany him. It was well they did, for Hudson Taylor had already been very poorly in Ning-po, and further illness was only warded off until Shanghai was reached, showing that he was in no condition for travelling during the hot season.

The next two months were spent, therefore, as we have seen, in and around the Settlement. But though this temporary work was encouraging and full of promise, it was accompanied by no little trial as to their position and prospects. Gradually it was becoming evident that the Society was not prepared to endorse their suggestion with regard to mission headquarters in any of the Treaty Ports. It was a matter of principle with the Committee not to put money into bricks and mortar, even though it seemed that their representatives could be housed in no other way. But their veto upon the carefully thought-out scheme laid before them did not come all at once; and meanwhile the far-away missionaries were not forgotten by Him who sees the end from the beginning.

It is easy enough now for us to realise that the Shanghai idea, as far as they were concerned, was a mistaken one, but it was anything but easy for them. Dr. Parker had not yet received the invitation to Ning-po, and Hudson Taylor, eager though he was to go inland, knew all too well the seriousness of such an undertaking and the need for a good home base.

"It is hard to be ever on the move," he had written to his sister after their return from Ning-po, ^[89] "and to have no settled dwelling. I have some thought of buying a set of Chinese garments soon, and seeing how I could get on with them. If I could get a little place somewhere in the interior, perhaps I might settle down and be useful. As things are at present, we cannot hope to see much fruit-for we have no station, no chapel, no hospital, no house even of our own...."

"The future is in the hands of God... There we must leave it. ... Pray for me, for I am very weak and unworthy, and have been a good deal tried of late."

And no wonder, when one considers the conditions under which they were living, and the exhausting heat of summer. But the point specially worthy of notice is the changed attitude of the writer since his last letter on the subject three months previously. ^[90] Then it had been-Our plans are laid before the Society: if they do nothing, we mean to try and carry them out ourselves: if they oppose, it may become a question as to which we shall dispense with, the Society, or our plans of usefulness. Now it was Chinese dress, a little place somewhere in the interior, and, above all, a future left in the hands of God. How great a difference! The Lord had had time to work. And as always in His providence, the moulding force came not only from outward circumstances, but from the development of His life within.

Do we not need to remind ourselves in these days especially in connection with His service, of the danger of impatience and taking things too much into

our own hands? If we are really waiting on God and doing His will, hindrances that are not removed are safeguards, keeping us from mistaken courses, and bringing about the preparation of spirit necessary in ourselves before His best can be given.

It does not always seem so. How little could Hudson Taylor have imagined that, even before the answer to those January letters could be received, his own outlook would be so changed that he would no longer cling to what had then seemed desirable? How little could Dr. Parker have foreseen that before summer was over he would be called to a more important and congenial sphere? And how little can we tell all we are being delivered from by our very limitations, or the wider service to which the Lord is leading in ways beyond our ken? So let us thank God from our hearts for trials that are not removed, though brought before Him in believing prayer, and praise Him for answers that seem long in coming, knowing the delay is needed to make us ready to receive them.

Thus Hudson Taylor and his colleague were being really led of God, though August only seemed to bring a climax to their difficulties. What was the Lord's guidance in it all? That was the question.

"Many reasons," wrote Hudson Taylor, A letter to his parents dated July 24. 1855. "make me desire to go to Ning-po with the Parkers, but there are also many against it. There are already fourteen missionaries there, ... and they are working the field well and in much peace and unity. Shanghai is not nearly so well worked, with more than double the number of missionaries. The Ning-po dialect, I must confess, is no attraction, though once learned it would no doubt increase my opportunities of usefulness. There may be something of laziness in it, but I do feel this is an objection against going to a new district... Expenses are less there than in Shanghai. If I

stay here I shall certainly have to move, for our co-tenants are leaving in about a month (their new house is just finished), and the whole rent of these premises would be far more than I can afford.

"So you see that I am as unsettled as to my future prospects as the first day I landed in China. I am waiting on the Lord for guidance. Meanwhile, my thought is to stay on here in Shanghai if possible, at any rate for the present. I feel as if my work here were not done. But eventually I may go to Ning-po, if my efforts to obtain a footing in the interior should fail in this district. It does seem as if I never should be settled! I do long for a helpful companion with whom I could take counsel and have real sympathy of mind and feeling, and to be fixed somewhere in good, regular work."

But there was something more important still, if his prayers for usefulness were to be answered as fully as the Lord was able and willing to answer them. Moab, we are told, was "at ease from his youth, ... settled on his lees, ... not emptied from vessel to vessel"—a poor, inferior quality of wine of which nothing could be made." Therefore, his taste remained in him and his scent is not changed."^[91] But the life that was to be made a blessing the wide world over must pass through a very different process, including much of that emptying and re-emptying "from vessel to vessel," so painful to the lower nature, from which we are being refined.

Leave to His sovereign sway

To choose and to command;

So shalt thou wondering own His way,

How wise, how strong His hand.

Far, far above thy thought

His counsel shall appear,
When fully He the work hath wrought
That caused thy needless fear.

It was August 6 when the long-expected came at length, and Hudson Taylor and his colleague received notice that the house they were occupying must be vacated by the end of September. Two new missionaries were on the way from England and would require the premises.

And just then, strangely enough, further letters from their own Committee put a final veto upon their plans for Shanghai as a permanent centre. No, they were not to build, though permission was given Dr. Parker to rent rooms for a dispensary. How or where they were to live was left a matter of uncertainty, the Committee apparently having no suggestion to make.^[92] Well was it for the much-tried missionaries that the Lord had not overlooked this important detail, but was caring for His workers as well as for the best interests of His work.

Another letter, also received early in August, gave full proof of this. Several weeks previously the unanimous invitation of the missionaries in Ning-po had reached Dr. Parker, earnestly requesting that he would go and settle among them. He had replied that he could not feel justified in doing so unless assured that it would open to him a wider door of usefulness. For a home and practice of his own, no matter how attractive, he could not sacrifice missionary work. But if in connection with such a position he could see his way to the support of a hospital for the Chinese, the expense of which would be at least eight hundred dollars per annum, the matter might look very different. And now the answer reached him. Just when he was ready for it—eight months in the country having given him some familiarity with the

people and language-then, and not before, the opening came that was to determine his life-work.

"You will be glad, I am sure, to learn," he wrote to his Committee on August 22, "that the friends in Ning-po have become surety for the amount required, and rejoice in the prospect of a missionary hospital there-the only Treaty Port without one.

"This, of course, shuts me up to taking this step, unless I set at nought the plain indications of Providence. And as I believe it to be God's will, I have resolved to go, and to do so at once."

The resolution came to thus opportunely, while it cleared the way for Dr. Parker and his family, only left Hudson Taylor the more cast upon God. Now he would be lonely indeed, bereft of companionship as well as home. Feeling, as he did, so definitely that his work in Shanghai was not yet finished, he had at once to set about seeking quarters to which he might remove his belongings. But, as before, the search proved useless. Nothing was to be had at a price within his means.

Day after day went by in weary trappings up and down the city, and at the end of three weeks the hope of finding what he needed seemed farther off than ever. Many thoughts had been in his mind during this time, some idea of which may be gathered from a note to his sister of August 19:

Dr. Parker has accepted the invitation to Ning-po, and will be going down in a few days to arrange accommodation for his family. Nearly the whole of last week I spent in seeking a house to move into here myself, but I have not found one. They all want heavy deposits that I am not able to pay. It is wearisome work, and if I do not succeed soon I shall adopt Chinese dress and seek a place in the country.... These changes are not easy, Do pray much for me.

Chinese dress and a home somewhere in the country—the thought was becoming familiar. But it was an expedient almost unheard of in those days. Sometimes on inland journeys a missionary would wear the native costume as a precautionary measure, and Dr. Medhurst himself had suggested to Hudson Taylor that he might find it helpful. But it was invariably discarded on the traveller's return, and he would have been careless of public opinion indeed who would have ventured to wear it always, and in the Settlement.

But it was nothing less than this that the young missionary was meditating, driven to it by his longing to identify himself with the people and by the force of outward circumstances. If he could not find quarters in Shanghai he must go to the interior, and why add to his difficulties and hinder the work he most desired to accomplish by emphasising the fact that he was a foreigner?

Another week went by in almost incessant house-hunting, and the time drew near when Dr. Parker was to leave for Ning-po. Hudson Taylor had promised to escort him as far as Hang-chow Bay, to see him through the more difficult part of the journey. They were to start on Friday morning the 24th, and up to Thursday afternoon the search for premises had been in vain.

Yes, it was growing clearer. For him, probably, the right thing was a closer identification with the people; Chinese dress at all times and the externals of Chinese life, including chop-sticks and native cookery. How much it would simplify travelling in the interior! Already he had purchased an outfit of native clothing. If, after all the prayer there had been about it, he really could not get accommodation in Shanghai, it must be that the Lord had other purposes. He would send his few things down to Ning-po with Dr. Parker, who had offered to store them, and living on boats would give himself to evangelistic work until his way opened UP somewhere in the interior.

Thursday night came, and Dr. Parker was to leave the following morning. It was useless to seek premises any longer, so Hudson Taylor went down to engage the junk that was to take them to Hang-chow Bay with their belongings. His Chinese dress was ready for the following morning when he expected to begin a pilgrim life indeed.

And this, apparently, was the point to which it had been necessary to lead him. He had followed faithfully. It was enough. And now on these new lines could be given the answer to weeks and months of prayer.

As he was on his way to make arrangements for their journey, a man met him. Did he want a house in the Chinese city? Would a small one do, with only five rooms? Because near the South Gate there was such a house, only it was not quite finished building. The owner had run short of money and hardly knew how to complete the work. If it suited the Foreign Teacher, no deposit would be asked it could be had in all probability for an advance of six months' rent.

Feeling as though in a dream, Hudson Taylor followed his guide to the southern quarter of the city, and there found a small, compact house, perfectly new and clean, with two rooms upstairs and two down, and a fifth across the courtyard for the servants-just the very thing he needed, in the locality that suited him best, and all for the moderate sum of ten pounds to cover a half-year's rent.

What it must have been to him to pay the money over that night, and secure the premises, is more easily imagined than described. The Lord had indeed worked on his behalf. Prayer was being answered. He had not missed or mistaken the guidance for which he had waited so long. It almost seemed as if the Lord had broken silence, to confirm and encourage His servant at this

critical time. And best of all was the wondering consciousness that He Himself had done it when, humanly speaking, it seemed impossible: "I being in the way, the Lord led me."

That night he took the step he had been prayerfully considering-called in a barber, and had himself so transformed in appearance that his own mother could hardly have known him. To put on Chinese dress without shaving the head is comparatively a simple matter; but Hudson Taylor went all lengths, leaving only enough of the fair, curly hair to grow into the queue of the Chinaman. He had prepared a dye, moreover, with which he darkened this remaining hair, to match the long, black braid that at first must do duty for his own. Then in the morning he put on as best he might the loose, unaccustomed garments, and appeared for the first time in the gown and satin shoes of a "Teacher," or man of the scholarly class.

Chapter XXV (TOC)

Some Better Thing

Including Eighth Journey—August-October 1855. AET.

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How it all opened up after this step had been taken! Returning alone from Hang-chow Bay, Hudson Taylor hardly knew himself for the same person who had so often been tried by the petty annoyances and more serious hindrances to his work by curious and excited crowds. Plenty of people still followed him whenever he became known as a foreigner, and it was not difficult to gather an audience to listen to the Gospel. But the rowdy element seemed somehow to have disappeared with his European dress, and if he wished to pass unnoticed he was able to do so, even in the busiest streets. This, of course, greatly lessened the strain of being much alone among the people, and at the same time gave him access to a more respectable, serious-minded class.

Not suspected even of being a European until his speech betrayed him, he had a far truer, more natural point of view from which to study conditions round him, and found himself coming into touch in a new way with people and things Chinese. It was natural now to adopt their point of view as he could not before, and instinctively he began to identify himself with those toward whom he had hitherto occupied the position of a foreigner. Now he was one of them in all outward respects—dressing, living, eating as they did, and greatly lessening the cost and difficulty of providing for his needs by doing so. Altogether the change was one for which he found himself increasingly thankful, and that made this August journey of peculiar interest.

Eighth Journey: August 24-31

Working his way back by places he had not hitherto visited, he saw a good deal of new country, and was able to observe more closely its character and needs.

"I parted from Dr. Parker last night," he wrote on August 28, ^[93] "and am now alone for the first time in the interior in Chinese costume. ... I have been travelling through beautiful scenery to-day, and among some rough people. How I wish you could have seen their gratitude for medical aid! Men and women, old and young, all seemed thankful to receive it, and much groundless suspicion against foreigners must have been removed. Of course I am known to be a foreigner by my accent as soon as I begin to speak...

"As you may suppose I am not yet quite at home in my new dress ... the turned-up shoes being especially uncomfortable; but I shall get used to them soon. The worst inconvenience is the head being uncovered, as the Chinese wear no cap at this time of year...^[94]

"I do not think I told you that the very evening before we left Shanghai I obtained a house in the native city for quite a moderate rent. From repeated disappointments I had quite given up the hope of getting one, ... when just as I was preparing to send my things to Ning-po with Dr. Parker, the Lord providentially opened my way. I have every reason to be thankful for this, for I thought I was going to be houseless and homeless for the time being. How true it is that 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity.' ...

"The change from a large household, two families besides myself, to living quite alone will no doubt have its trials, but I hope to be rewarded by increasing fluency in the language, leading to greater usefulness. Will you join me in constant

prayer for more close and abiding communion with Him who never forsakes His own? May He fulfil His gracious promise, and bless my efforts to the conversion of sinners. Oh, to walk blameless in love before Him myself, and to be used in turning many from their idols 'to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven.'"

As to the discomforts of Chinese dress, of which he was fully conscious, he was enabled from the first to make light of them, as may be seen from a letter to his sister written just after parting from Dr. Parker

*HAI-YEN CITY,
August 28, 1855.*

MY DEAR AMELIA

By way of surprise I mean to write you a letter-for I know you have never received one before from a man with a long tail and shaven head! But lest your head should be bewildered with conjectures, I had better tell you at once that on Thursday last at 11 P.M. I resigned my locks to the barber, dyed my hair a good black, and in the morning had a proper queue plaited in with my own, and a quantity of heavy silk to lengthen it out according to Chinese custom. Then, in Chinese dress, I set out with Dr. Parker, accompanying him about a hundred miles on his way to Ning-po. This journey we made an occasion for evangelistic work, and now that I am returning alone I hope to have even better facilities for book-distribution and preaching.

But I have not commenced the recital of my tribulations, and as there is some doubt as to whether they will all go into a single letter, the sooner I begin the better.

First then, it is a very sore thing to have one's head shaved for the first time, especially if the skin is irritable with prickly heat. And I can assure you that the subsequent application of

hair-dye for five or six hours, (Litharge x part; quick lime, freshly slaked, 3 parts; water enough to make a cream) does not do much to soothe the irritation. But when it comes to combing out the remaining hair which has been allowed to grow longer than usual, the climax is reached! But there are no gains without pains, and certainly if suffering for a thing makes it dearer, I shall regard my queue when I attain one with no small amount of pride and affection.

Secondly, when you proceed to your toilet, you no longer wonder that many Chinese in the employ of Europeans wear foreign shoes and stockings as soon as they can get them. For native socks are made of calico and of course are not elastic ... and average toes decidedly object to be squeezed out of shape, nor do one's heels appreciate their low position in perfectly flat-soled shoes. Next come the breeches but oh, what unheard-of garments! Mine are two feet too wide for me round the waist, which amplitude is laid in a fold in front, and kept in place by a strong girdle. The legs are short, not coming much below the knee, and wide in proportion with the waist measurement. Tucked into the long, white socks, they have a bloomer-like fulness capable, as Dr. Parker remarked, of storing a fortnight's provisions! No shirt is worn. But a white, washing-jacket, with sleeves as wide as ladies affected twenty years ago, supplies its place. And over all goes a heavy silk gown of some rich or delicate colour, with sleeves equally wide and reaching twelve or fifteen inches beyond the tips of one's fingers-folded back of course when the hands are in use. Unfortunately no cap or hat is used at this season of the year, except on state occasions, which is trying as the sun is awfully hot.

Wednesday, August 29—I do not know, dear Amelia, whether you are weary of these details. But I have no time for more upon the subject, so will dismiss it with only a mention of the shampooing I got from the barber the other day. I thought I

had better go in for it as part of the proceedings, for I might be in difficulty some day if found to be uninitiated. So I bore with an outrageous tickling as long as I could, and then the beating commenced! And my back was really sore in places before it was over. On the next occasion, however, I stood it better, and I hope to acquit myself creditably in time with regard to this phase of the barber's art.

While still with Dr. Parker on the way to Hang-chow Bay I was frequently recognised as a foreigner, because of having to speak to him in English, but to-day in going about Hai-yen City no one even guessed that such a being was near. It was not until I began to distribute books and see patients that I became known. Then of course my men were asked where I came from, and the news soon spread. Dressed in this way one is not so much respected at first sight as one might be in foreign clothing. But a little medical work soon puts that all right, and it is evidently to be one's chief help for the interior. Women and children, it seems to me, manifest more readiness to come for medical aid now than they did before ... and in this way too, I think the native costume will be of service.

Thus he returned to Shanghai as summer merged into autumn, to take up in the old surroundings a very different life. For the change he had made after so much prayer was soon found to affect more than his outward appearance. The Chinese felt it, Europeans felt it, and above all he felt it himself-putting an intangible barrier between him and foreign associations, and throwing him back as never before upon the people of his adoption. This, while he rejoiced in it for his work's sake, was not without its sting.

The covert sneer or undisguised contempt of the European community he found less difficult to bear than the disapproval of fellow-missionaries. But this also had to be faced, for he was practically alone in his convictions, and certainly the only one to carry them into effect. The more he suffered for

them, however, the more they deepened; and the more he gave himself to the Chinese in consequence, the more a new and wonderful joy in the Lord flooded his soul.

"The future is a ravelled maze," he wrote to his mother early in September, "but my path has always been made plain just one step at a time. I must wait on God and trust in Him, and all will be well. I think I do love Him more than ever, and long increasingly to serve Him as He directs. I have had some wonderful seasons of soulrefreshing lately, unworthy of them as I have been."

And to his sister a few days later:

The love of God is indeed wonderful to contemplate. His longsuffering how unbounded! If ever there was one who deserved eternal banishment from His presence, it is I; and yet I have had such melting seasons in prayer, such manifestations of His love, and such strong faith and confidence in Him of late that I have been quite astonished at His abounding grace to one so lukewarm and unfaithful. His grace, even exceeds our unworthiness. Can we say more than this? What a happy day it will be when, seeing Him as He is, we shall be made like Him-free from sin and perfect in purity!

And these experiences only deepened when he left the Settlement, parting from the friends with whom he had lived for months.

*"Dr. Parker is in Ning-po," he wrote a little later, ^[95] "but I am not alone. I have such a **sensible** presence of God with me as I never before experienced, and such drawings to prayer and watchfulness as are very blessed and necessary."*

Yet his surroundings were far from attractive within the walls of the native city, and his arrangements of the simplest, providing only for the bare necessities of life. Chinese food and cooking were something of a trial at

first, especially while the weather continued warm, and so were the sights and smells that could not be avoided amid that teeming population devoid of the most elementary ideas of sanitation. But the principal remains the same throughout the ages: "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ": and the consolation, or "encouragement," as it may be read, far exceeds the loneliness and sacrifice.

It was Monday, September 17, when he resumed upon moving into his new quarters a solitary life, and only three weeks later he wrote to tell his mother of the sweetest joy he had ever known. For those three weeks had told. It is always "overflow that blesses," and a heart so full of the love of God could not but awaken in others a hunger for more than they had known. The boys in the school felt it; the enquirers felt it, coming daily to the meetings; patients crowding the little dispensary felt it, and stayed to hear what "the foreign doctor" had to say; and above all Kuei-hua felt it, his own faithful servant and friend.

Fully instructed in the truths of the Gospel, the latter had for some time been a sincere believer, but now he could no longer refrain from confessing his master's God. Early one morning, therefore, he sought the young missionary, with the earnest request that he might be baptized. The day that followed was a busy one, but Hudson Taylor could not let it pass without communicating so great a joy.

"This morning," he wrote just as the mail was leaving, "my heart was gladdened by the request of Kuei-hua (my adopted pupil's brother) to be baptized. The Lord has been working a manifest change in him of late ... but not until to day has he asked to be admitted into church membership. I cannot tell you the joy this has brought me. ... 'My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.' Were

my work ended here, I feel I could say with Simeon, 'Lord now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace ... for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.' If one soul is worth worlds, mother, am I not abundantly repaid? And are not you too?"

But this was not the only encouragement of which he had to tell before the month was over. For that October mail brought another letter from Mr. Berger. Satisfied with the use made of his first gift of ten pounds, this kind friend now repeated it, undertaking to do so every half year, and thus provide entirely for Han-pan's education. But more than this, he wrote "a very affectionate letter," urging the young missionary to expect great things from God, and enclosing a further sum of forty pounds to be used as he thought best in the interests of the work.

It seems to have been with an almost solemnised sense of the goodness of God that Hudson Taylor pondered all this in the light of the past, and in its relation to the future. How long he had looked forward to the joy of winning his first convert among the heathen. How keenly he had felt lack of means properly to develop the work! Now souls were being given, not Kuei-hua only, but one or two other promising enquirers; and this generous friend in England was being drawn more and more into sympathy with the line of things to which he felt himself called. It was all so wonderful, so like God!

What the future held he could not tell. But already the Lord was more than making up for plans they had had to abandon, and for all the trials undergone. And straight to his heart came the message of Mr. Berger's letter

"Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." Oh yes! God is not straightened. If we expect much from Him, He surely will not disappoint us.

Part V (TOC)

Seven Months with William Burns

1855-1856. Aet. 23-24

Chapter XXVI

A Parish of a Million

October-November 1855. AET. 23

COULD it be really true? A home of his own in the interior, and he himself in Chinese dress quietly living among the people, a day's journey from the nearest Treaty Port? Often during those autumn days it must have seemed like a dream. Yet the dream lasted, with most encouraging results.

It was all in answer to prayer no doubt, but the Chinese dress he was wearing had had a great deal to do with it. As soon as he could leave the South Gate house in charge of Teacher Six he had set out on another evangelistic journey, which was to include a second visit to the island of Tsungming. But he had got no further than the first place at which he landed, for there within two or three days of his arrival he found himself in possession of this little house of his own.

The people simply would not hear of his leaving. Clothed like themselves and living much as they did, he did not seem a foreigner; and when they heard that he must have an upstairs room to sleep in, on account of the dampness of the locality, they said, "Let him live in the temple, if no other upper room can be found."

And quite willingly the young missionary would have done so, if the semi-discarded idols could have been cleared out of one of the silent, dusty chambers looking down upon the court. But in this the priests foresaw a difficulty. Most of the idols, they said, were old and unimportant; but there

were some, even upstairs, that it would not do to interfere with. Could not the Foreign Teacher allow them to remain? But when he explained that it was a question of his God—the true and living God, Creator of earth and Heaven, who could not be asked to company with idols, the work of men's hands, and dependent for power, if they had any, upon the presence of evil spirits—both priests and people saw the reasonableness of his position. But even so they dared not dispossess certain of those idols.

What made them want so much to have him does not appear. Perhaps it was the medicine chest. Perhaps it was the preaching. At any rate there was nothing in his outward appearance to frighten them away, and the difference between this experience and anything he had met with on previous journeys taught him afresh the value of Chinese dress.

The second day of his stay there was a Sunday, and already a house had been discovered with some sort of an upper story whose owner was quite willing to receive the missionary. Indeed he could rent the entire premises, if they pleased him, for a moderate sum. But keen as he was to secure the place Hudson Taylor would not go to see it on Sunday, and the people watching him received their first impressions of the day God calls His own.

The delay did but forward Hudson Taylor's interests, however; and before Monday was half over the agreement was concluded that gave him possession of his first home in "inland China."

Busy indeed were the days that followed—one of the hardest-worked and happiest times the young missionary had ever known in his life. The house needed cleaning, not to speak of furnishing, before it could be considered habitable even from a Chinese point of view. But more important than all this was the stream of visitors who had to be received with courtesy—gentlemen

from the town and country, patients eager for medicine, and neighbours who seemed never weary of dropping in to watch and listen to all that was going on. His servant Kuei-hua and an earnest inquirer from the South Gate named Ts'ien were invaluable in helping him to preach the Gospel, morning, noon and night. But even so he finished up the week with an attack of ague, due to over-weariness and the change to autumn weather.

All that was necessary, however, had been accomplished. The curiosity of the neighbourhood was satisfied, visitors had for the most part carried away favourable impressions, the house was whitewashed and sufficiently set in order, forms were ready for "the Chapel," and best of all, the conviction had gone abroad that the young missionary had come to Tsung-ming not for pleasure and comfort merely,^[96] but to do good, to relieve suffering and to tell them something everybody ought to know.

After that things settled down to a regular routine. Patients were seen and daily meetings held, and to the thankfulness of the missionary and his helpers a few inquirers began to gather about them. One of these was a blacksmith named Chang, and another an assistant in a grocery store, men of good standing in the town "whose hearts the Lord opened." Ts'ien was invaluable in helping these beginners and in receiving guests, and both he and Kuei-hua were so eager to learn more themselves that they made the most of the little while Mr. Taylor could give them at night when outsiders had all gone home.

And all about them stretched the populous island—a parish of a million, every one of whom he longed to reach. The town itself contained only twenty to thirty thousand, but villages were numerous in every direction, and the medical work was making friends. Wherever Mr. Taylor and his helpers went they found somebody ready to welcome them, and as frequently as possible they spent a day in the country preaching the Gospel.

"It is almost too much to expect," he wrote at the beginning of this work, ^[97] "that I shall be allowed to remain on without molestation, so I must use every effort to sow the good seed of the Kingdom while I may, and be earnest in prayer for blessing. Should it please the Lord to establish me in this place and raise up a band of believers, it seems to me that by making a circuit somewhat on the Wesleyan plan we should be enabled to do the greatest amount of good...."

"Pray for me. I sometimes feel a sense of responsibility that is quite oppressive-the only light-bearer among so many. But this is wrong. It is Jesus who is to shine in me ... I am not left to my own resources. The two native Christians are a great comfort. May I be enabled to help them by life as well as teaching, and see them continually grow in grace."

It seemed a matter for regret that after three weeks of this happy work supplies began to run short and Mr. Taylor had to return to Shanghai for money and medicines. Not anticipating a long absence, he arranged for the meetings to go on without him, and leaving Ts'ien in charge sailed for the mainland on Tuesday evening, November 5. Next day he wrote from the South Gate

MY DEAR MOTHER

I have returned here in safety, and the mail leaving to-day gives me an opportunity for answering your welcome letters....

Last week on the island, to which I return as soon as possible, I saw more than two hundred patients and frequently preached the Gospel. But for a slight cold I am quite well, and am also very happy. ... Kuei-hua is with me, but Ts'yen is left on the island to preach daily and carry on meetings with the inquirers. ... The Lord be with and bless him. I hardly liked to leave so young a Christian in such a responsible position: But what was to be done? ... Do pray that he may be kept faithful

and may be much used in the dissemination of the Truth.

Eager though Mr. Taylor was to go back at once he found it necessary to wait while a fresh outfit of Chinese clothing was prepared for the winter season. So far he had only used unlined garments, but now it was a question of wadded coats, shoes and trousers, not to speak of a gown lined with lamb-skins and a big red hood to cover head and shoulders. All this took time, and while the things were being made Mr. Taylor found he could fit in a visit to Sung-kiang to look up an inquirer in whom Ts'ien was interested. Sunday, November 11, was spent in his company, and then the young missionary hastened back to Shanghai on his return journey.

He had been absent little more than a week from the island, but much may happen in that time as he learned from the news awaiting him. A storm was brewing at Sin-k'ai-ho. Ts'ien had come over hurriedly, and finding no one at the South Gate had returned to his post leaving letters to explain the situation. Amid many exciting rumours one clear fact emerged: a proclamation had been issued to the effect that the foreigner who had unwarrantably taken up his abode on Tsung-ming was to be sent back to Shanghai at once where he would suffer the severest penalty, and that all persons who had aided his presumptuous action would also be punished after the strictest letter of the law.

All this seemed very serious, and it was with a heavy heart Mr. Taylor returned to the island as quickly as possible.

"I left my things on board the junk," he wrote to his parents a fortnight later, ^[98] "and went up to see what was happening. After hearing all Ts'ien had to say I concluded to dismiss the junk, and now must tell you what has taken place as far as I have been able to gather it.

"Well, it seems that the two doctors and four druggists of this town have begun to find me rather a serious rival. Bad legs of many years' standing have been cured in a few days. Eye-medicine exceeding theirs in potency can be obtained for nothing. A whole host of itch cases, regular customers for plasters (!) have in some way disappeared. Ague patients are saying that the doctors are without talent, and asthmatics are loud in praise of foreign cough-powders. What was to be the end of it all? That was the question.

"So the fraternity met together, took tea, tobacco and counsel, and sent twelve dollars to the Mandarin to have the intruder expelled. I believe, however, that none of it ever reached him. It is much more likely to have been seized by rapacious underlings who forthwith took the matter into their own hands. But of this I have no positive proof. Here was a foreigner anxious to settle on the island; the landlord, middle-man, and Elder of the town who had received him would doubtless be squeezable by threats of punishment; while the doctors and druggists would be sure to give more, if necessary, to get rid of their rival. So down they came and 'soon managed to frighten the parties concerned, but not to get any money....

"Again they came, hoping I might have returned, this time bringing a writ sealed with the Mandarin's seal, though I believe from subsequent events that this also was without his knowledge. The tenor of the document was that I was to be handed over at once to the Taotai in Shanghai, who with the British Consul would most severely punish me; and that the Chinese, one and all, were to be brought before the Mandarin in Tsung-ming city and made to suffer according to their deserts.

"Ts'ien, fearing this might be serious, made a copy of the writ and came over to Shanghai, but as I was not to be found he went back at once. The messengers then came a third time, saying they had discovered my objects to be wholly virtuous,

and if I would pay expenses (a sum of thirteen dollars) they would hush up the matter and there would be an end of it.

"On my return I felt a little anxious, not for my own sake but on account of those who would be implicated if trouble were to arise. But finally the 'runners,' after lowering their demand to ten dollars and then to three, finding that I would not give them a cash, managed to squeeze thirteen dollars out of the doctors and druggists and came no more. All then seemed over. I continued to see patients as before, going every alternate day to preach in neighbouring towns and villages till Monday the 26th instant, which with yesterday have been days of intense anxiety.

"On Monday morning while we were at breakfast the Mandarin from Tsung-ming city passed by, his attendants making it known that he had come for the double purpose of seizing some pirates at a town below and of examining into our affairs. Ts ien and Kuei-hua were to be dragged before him, the landlord also, and an old man of over seventy who had acted as go-between; and unless their replies were 'satisfactory' they' would be beaten from three hundred to a thousand blows each. We had morning worship, specially praying for protection, and then preached and saw patients as usual.... Toward the close of the afternoon we were told that the Mandarin had gone to seize the pirates first, and would deal with our matters on his return journey.

"Next day I kept all who were concerned in the house, that none might be taken without my knowledge. We saw patients, some having come many miles, ... and preached as usual. In the afternoon, as I was operating on the eye of a woman, who should pass but the Mandarin with all his followers. It was well that the operation was over, or I should have found it difficult to complete it, for I was trembling with excitement. It was not until two hours later that we definitely learned that he had gone on to the capital without stopping. Then our prayers

were turned into praise indeed! It may be that he is not even aware of my presence and that the whole story was a further attempt to extort money on the part of his underlings. If so, finding it unsuccessful, I hope they will not repeat it.

"From that time to this, November 29, we have had no trouble. To-day I have been at a village seven miles away containing about four hundred inhabitants. We preached at some length and left a few tracts and Gospels, but I doubt whether more than one person in the place is able to understand what he reads. ... The truth is China must be evangelised like other heathen countries by the Word preached as well as written. So we need men, more men willing to deny themselves the pleasures of society and of the table, to live among the people and make the Gospel widely known. There is a blacksmith here who as far as I can judge is truly converted, thank God!"

Thus in spite of persecution and threatened danger, the good work went on. Six weeks was a long time to have been enabled to reside in one place, preaching the Gospel daily, forty miles from the nearest Treaty Port. And now that the storm had blown over, the young missionary was more than ever earnest in making the most of his opportunities. To see the inquirers growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord was a joy no words could express. The blacksmith, Chang, now closed his shop on Sundays, and both he and Sung openly declared themselves Christians. The change that had come over them awakened not a little interest among their fellow-townsmen, several of whom were attending the services regularly. So that the blow when it fell was all the more painful for being unexpected and it came from an unforeseen quarter.

It was December 1, and Hudson Taylor had gone over to Shanghai to obtain money and send off letters. To his surprise an important-looking document was awaiting him at the South Gate, which read as follows

BRITISH CONSULATE, SHANGHAI,
November 23, 1855

British Consul to Mr. J. H. Taylor.

SIR

I am directed by Her Majesty's Consul to inform you that information has been lodged at this office by His Excellency the Intendant of Circuit, to the effect that you have rented a house from a Chinese named Si Sung-an, at a place called Sin-k ai-ho in the island of Tsung-ming, and opened this house as a physician's establishment in charge of one of your servants named Lew Yang-tsuen,^[99] you your self visiting it occasionally. His Excellency refers to a former complaint lodged against you for visiting Ts'ing-kiang, upon which subject you appeared before Her Majesty's Consul.^[100] His Excellency also reports that Lew Yang-tsuen, Si Sung-an and Ts'ien Hai-yae have been arrested.^[101]

Her Majesty's Consul has therefore to call upon you to appear at this office without delay, in order that he may investigate the matter above referred to

*I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,
FREDERICK HARVEY (Vice-Consul).*

Of course he went at once and explained the true facts of the case, which were listened to with interest. But his plea to be allowed to remain on at Sin-k'ai-ho where all now seemed peaceful and friendly was in vain. The Consul reminded him that the British Treaty only provided for residence in the five ports, and that if he attempted to settle elsewhere he rendered himself liable to a fine of five hundred dollars.^[102] But there was a supplementary treaty, as the young missionary well knew, in which it was stipulated that all immunities and privileges granted to other nations should apply to British

subjects also. Roman Catholic priests, Frenchmen, were living on the island supported by the authority of their Government, and why should he be forbidden the same consideration?

Yes, replied the Consul, that was undoubtedly a point, and if he wished to appeal for a higher decision, Her Majesty's representative (Sir John Bowring) would be arriving in Shanghai before long. But as far as his own jurisdiction went, the matter was at an end. Mr. Taylor must return to Tsung-ming at once, give up his house, remove his belongings to Shanghai, and understand that he was liable to a fine of five hundred dollars if he again attempted residence in the interior.

Well was it that next day was Sunday and he had time to lay it all before the Lord. Little by little as it came over him, and he began to realise that all the happy, encouraging work at Sin-k'ai-ho must be suddenly abandoned, it seemed almost more than he could bear. Those young inquirers, Chang, Sung and the others, what was to become of them? Were they not his own children in the faith? How could he leave them with no help and so little knowledge in the things of God? And yet the Lord had permitted it. The work was His. He would not fail nor forsake them. But for himself, the sorrow and disappointment were overwhelming.

"My dear mother," he wrote that evening (December 2), "My heart is sad, sad, sad. I came over to Shanghai last Friday ... and found a letter awaiting me from the Consul, dated a week or more previously. I lost no time in seeing him, and have been prohibited from residing any longer on Tsung-ming. I do not know what to think. If I disobey, I incur a fine of \$500, and may bring my Chinese friends into trouble. All I can do is to give up the house and pray over my future course...."

"I leave to-night at 1 A.M. for the island.... Pray for me. I

*need more grace, and live far below my privileges. Oh to feel more as Moses did when he said, 'Forgive their sin; forgive it, ... and if not, blot me I pray thee out of Thy book' (Conquest's Version) ... or as the Lord Jesus when He said, 'I lay down my life for the sheep.' I do not want to be as a hireling who flees when the wolf is near, nor would I lightly run into danger when much may be accomplished in safety. I want to know the Lord's will and have grace to do it, even if it results in expatriation.' Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? ... **Father, glorify Thy Name.**' Pray for me that I may be a follower of Christ not in word only, but in deed and in truth."*

The last days on Tsung-ming, however, were not wholly sad. It was hard to pack up and send everything to the boat; hard to answer the interrogations of neighbours and bid farewell to the old landlord and many friends. But the very parting brought with it elements of comfort.

Could he ever forget, for example, that last evening spent with the inquirers?

"My heart will be truly sorrowful," said the blacksmith, "when I can no longer join you in the daily meetings."

"But you will worship in your own family," replied his friend. "Still shut your shop on Sunday, for God is here whether I am or not. Get some, one to read for you, and gather your neighbours in to hear the Gospel."

"I know but very little," put in Sung, "and when I read I by no means understand all the characters. My heart is grieved because you have to leave us; but I do thank God He ever sent you to this place. My sins once so heavy are all laid on Jesus, and He daily gives me joy and peace."

"Come again, come again, Tai Sien-seng," the neighbours called the following morning. "The sooner you return the better! We shall miss the good doctor and the Heavenly Words."

"It is hard indeed to leave them," he wrote in the freshness of his sorrow, "for I had hoped a good work would be done there, Much seed has been sown, and many books are in the hands of the people. It rests with the Lord to give the increase. May He watch over them, for Jesus' sake."

Chapter XXVII^(TOC)

As Rivers of Water in a Dry Place

December 1855. AET. 23

"AND a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Spoken primarily of the Lord and wholly true of Him alone, yet how often these words find a limited and human but very blessed fulfilment in an earthly friendship through which He comes to us in time of need. Thus it was for Hudson Taylor in the friendship of William Burns.

Alone, perplexed and disappointed, he had indeed come to a time of need. The restrictions imposed upon him as a Protestant missionary, compared with the liberty granted to priests of the Romish Church, opened up a difficulty he had not anticipated in his evangelistic work. And how formidable it might prove.

"Forbidden to reside on the island," he had written to Mr. Pearse on his return journey from Tsung-ming," and finding that even travelling into the country and remaining for a short time is an infringement of the Treaty which may be visited by a fine of five hundred dollars, I have thought it best to write privately and enquire whether, in case I should be fined ... the Society would be responsible for the sum? Also whether, if circumstances should make it possible for me to go to the interior, giving up all claim to Consular protection, you would approve my doing so? Should I be left free to follow this course? Or would the Society object to one of their missionaries adopting such a position?

"Although the attempt to rent a house and reside in Tsung-ming has met with failure, we must be very thankful for what has been accomplished. I have every reason to hope that three of those who profess to believe in the Lord Jesus are sincere, and if so the results will last to all eternity. May God watch over them and bless them. At the same time it makes it all the harder to give up the work. Also I cannot hide from myself that the results to the landlord and others for having received us may be serious in the extreme. ... All we can do is to pray for their protection. 'It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.' God grant that in this we may not be confounded, for should any who are not believers suffer on our account, it would indeed be grievous.

*"Pray for me-pray for me! I greatly **need** your prayers. I do not want on the one hand to flee from danger, nor on the other to court troubles, or from lack of patience to hinder future usefulness, I do need more grace, more of the spirit of my Master, more entire resignation to the will of God, and greater boldness too. These Mandarins are for the most part treacherous and cruel in the extreme. ... It will need no small faith to go amongst them without hope of protection, save from Him to Whom 'all power' is given. I know we ought to desire no more. Would I were living in that state of grace."*

The British Minister was expected shortly, but Hudson Taylor was in uncertainty about bringing the case before him. Sir John Bowring was not likely to be in sympathy with aggressive missionary effort, and should he confirm the Consul's. action it would only add to the difficulties of a situation already trying enough. And yet what was to be done? Stay in Shanghai he could not, where so many, comparatively, were occupying the field. But to travel or attempt to live in the interior had become a serious matter.

"I shall probably appeal against the Consular decision," he

continued a few days later. ^[103] "I feel the importance of this case in many respects. It will test the footing on which Protestant missionaries really stand, and if I am still forbidden to reside in the interior will at any rate prevent its being said that while Romish priests deny themselves the pleasures of society, etc., to live among the Chinese, we are not willing to do so.

*"The Gospel **must** be preached among this people, and if owned of God the opposition of Satan is sure to be roused. May the Lord give us grace and boldness to do our duty regardless of consequences, and at the same time wisdom to avoid unnecessary dangers."*

But Sir John Bowring was unaccountably delayed just then. He did not arrive by the mail-steamer on which he was expected, nor by the next. This gave time for further thought and prayer; and meanwhile Hudson Taylor was brought into contact with the one prepared of God to help him.

Beloved all over Scotland by those to whom he had been made a blessing, the name of William Burns was in the best sense a household word. For where in town or country was there a Christian family that did not recall with thankfulness the Revival of 1839? The young evangelist of those days, moving in Pentecostal power from place to place, everywhere accompanied by marvellous tokens of the divine presence and blessing, had become the toil-worn missionary-his hair already tinged with grey, his spirit more mellow though no less fervent, his sympathies enlarged through experience and deeper fellowship with the sufferings of Christ.^[104]

Just returned to China after his first and only furlough, Mr. Burns had not resumed, as might have been expected, his former successful work. Others were caring for the little flock in the neighbourhood of Amoy, and prayerful interest would never be lacking for so encouraging a field. If difficulties arose

he could at once return; but failing any special need, he felt strongly drawn to the Yang-tze Valley and a service no one had as yet been able to render.

Nan-king was on his heart, and the unknown leaders of the Tai-ping movement in whose hands the future of China still seemed to lie. No missionary had hitherto succeeded in reaching them, though the rebel king had earnestly pleaded for Christian teachers to aid in the great work of national regeneration upon which he thought himself embarked. Certainly if any one in China could have strengthened him for this hopeless task it would have been William Burns, with his easy mastery of the language, intense force of character and deeply prayerful spirit. But as events had already proved, this was not the purpose for which he had been brought to central China.

Unsuccessful in his attempt to reach Nan-king, Mr. Burns had returned to Shanghai by the southern reaches of the Grand Canal, much impressed with the need and accessibility of that part of the country. With the concurrence of the local missionaries, all too few to meet the overwhelming needs, he had devoted himself for several months to its evangelisation—living on boats in very simple style, and travelling up and down the endless waterways spread like a network over the vast alluvial plain. Thus it was that in the providence of God he was still in that locality when Hudson Taylor returned from Tsung-ming, and engaged in the very work so dear to the younger missionary's heart.

Where and how they met does not appear, but one can readily believe that they were drawn together by sympathies of no ordinary kind. The grave, keen-eyed Scotsman soon detected in the English missionary a kindred spirit, and one sorely in need of help that he might give. The attraction was mutual. Each was without a companion, and before long they had arranged to join

forces in the work to which both felt specially called.

In a little house at the South Gate or on Mr. Burns's boat almost the first subject they would discuss would be the difficulty about Tsung-ming with its bearing on the future, and it was not long before the spiritual point of view of the older man seemed to change the whole situation. It was not a question really of standing on one's rights, or claiming what it might be justifiable to claim. Why deal with second causes? Nothing would have been easier for the Master to Whom "All power" is given than to have established His servant permanently on the island, had He so desired it. And of what use was it, if He had other plans, to attempt' to carry the thing through on the strength of Government help? No, "the servant of the Lord must not strive," but must be willing to be led by just such indications of the divine will, relying not on the help of man to accomplish a work of his own choosing, but on the unfailing guidance, resources and purposes of God.

And so, very thankfully, Hudson Taylor came to realise that all was well. A measure of trial, had been allowed, over which perhaps he had felt unduly discouraged. But all was in wise and loving hands. Nothing the Lord permitted could lastingly hinder His own work. And all the while had He not been preparing for His servant this unexpected blessing, by far the most helpful companionship he had ever known?

Tenth Journey: December January 1856

It was the middle of December when Hudson Taylor left Shanghai once more, setting out on his tenth evangelistic journey, the first with Mr. Burns. ^[105] Travelling in two boats, each with their Chinese helpers and a good supply of literature, they were at the same time independent and a comfort to one another. ^[106] Practical and methodical in all his ways, Mr. Burns had a line of his own in such work that his companion was glad to follow.

Choosing an important centre, in this case the town of Nan-zin, just south of the Great Lake, in Cheh-kiang, they remained there eighteen days, including Christmas and the New Year. Every morning they set out early with a definite plan, sometimes working together and sometimes separating to visit different parts of the town. Mr. Burns believed in beginning quietly on the outskirts of a place in which foreigners had rarely if ever been seen, and working his way by degrees to the more crowded quarters. Accordingly they gave some days to the suburban streets, preaching whenever a number of people collected and giving away Gospels and tracts. This was repeated in all the quieter parts of the town, gradually approaching its centre, until at length they could pass along the busiest streets without endangering the shopkeepers' tempers as well as their wares.

Then they visited temples, schools and tea-shops, returning regularly to the most suitable places for preaching. These were usually tea-shops on quiet thoroughfares, on open spaces left by demolished buildings. Announcing after each meeting when they would come again, they had the satisfaction of seeing the same faces frequently, and interested hearers could be invited to the boats for private conversation.

Of those busy days, always begun and ended with prayer with their Chinese

helpers, many details are given in Mr. Taylor's letters, including the following glimpse into a tea-shop, showing how their evenings were spent.

It was December 28, and after addressing large, attentive audiences in the earlier part of the day, the afternoon had been given to visitors who sought them out on their boats. Darkness had fallen before they could think of supper, after which lighting their lanterns they sallied forth into the winter night. It was not far to the tea-shops at which they were expected, and an unseen Friend must have been present with them, for Mr. Taylor's journal simply records "We were greatly blessed."

"I wish I could picture the scene," he continues. "Imagine a large dimly lighted room, on a level with the ground, filled with square tables and narrow forms, so arranged that eight persons might be seated at each table. ... Scattered about the room, a number of working men were drinking tea and smoking long bamboo pipes with brass heads, while a boy with a copper kettle went to and fro from the fire place with boiling water.

"Hardly had we entered before Mr. Burn's lantern began to attract attention. It was an ordinary lantern such as one often sees in England, with glass on three sides and a plated mirror to reflect the light, but quite a curiosity here. Around us soon gathered a group of questioners, some of whom were educated, and the rest workmen of more or less intelligence. ... I was in native dress of course, and Mr. Burns had on a Chinese gown that hid all but his collar, shoes, and a cap the peak of which he had taken off, so there was not much about him to look at.

"Before long the conversation became interesting. We did not have to make a way so to speak for the Gospel, it was drawn from us by their own questions. One asked, 'Are all the idols false?' and another, 'What benefits arise from believing in

Jesus?' 'If Jesus is in heaven, how can we worship Him here?' was a very natural question; while one who had not understood much said earnestly, 'Take me to see God and Jesus, and then I can believe on them.' The boy, too, as he went about filling the cups, would put his kettle down upon the table, and folding his arms over it listen to what was being said.

"Some present urged Mr. Burns to have his head shaved (in front) and wear a Chinese cap as I did. They were sure he would look much better so! And one man who has followed us from place to place insisted on paying for our tea, a sum equal nearly to a penny....

"We were enabled to speak plainly on many topics, and best of all our Master was with us."^[107]

The hint given in the tea-shop was not without effect, though other more important considerations decided Mr. Burns upon the step of which he tells in the following letter. Ever since leaving Shanghai he had not failed to notice the benefit derived by his companion from wearing Chinese dress. Although so much younger and in every way less experienced, Mr. Taylor had the more attentive hearers and was occasionally asked into private houses, he himself being requested to wait outside, as the disturbance occasioned by his presence would make attention impossible. The riff-raff of the crowd always seemed to gather round the preacher in foreign dress, while those who wished to hear what was being said followed his less noticeable friend. The result was a conclusion come to that night if not previously, and communicated to his mother a few weeks later

*TWENTY-FIVE MILES FROM SHANGHAI,
January 26, 1856.*

Taking advantage of a rainy day which confines me to my boat, I pen a few

lines in addition to a letter to Dundee containing particulars which I need not repeat.

It is now forty-one days since I left Shanghai on this last occasion. An excellent young English missionary, Mr. Taylor of the Chinese Evangelisation Society, has been my companion, he in his boat and I in mine, and we have experienced much mercy, and on some occasions considerable assistance in our work....

I must once more tell the story I have had to tell more than once already, how four weeks ago, on the 29th of December, I put on Chinese dress, which I am now wearing. Mr. Taylor had made this change a few months before, and I found that he was in consequence so much less incommoded in preaching, etc., by the crowd, that I concluded that it was my duty to follow his example....

We have a large, very large, field of labour in this region, though it might be difficult in the meantime for one to establish himself in any particular place. The people listen with attention, but we need the power from on high to convince and convert. Is there any spirit of prayer on our behalf among God's people in Kilsyth? Or is there any effort to seek this spirit? How great the need is, and how great the arguments and motives for prayer in this case! The harvest here is indeed great, and the labourers are few and imperfectly fitted, without much grace, for such a work. And yet grace can make a few, feeble instruments the means of accomplishing great things-things greater even than we can conceive.

This change into Chinese dress was found to have so many advantages that Mr. Burns never again resumed European clothing. Among the people of Nan-zin it was received with cordial favour. Returning from the tea-shop a

few days later, both the missionaries were invited by one who had been present to go with him to his home and repeat there the wonderful Story. It was evening, and they had already been preaching for a couple of hours, but such invitations were none too frequent and they gladly accompanied him.

"It was very interesting," wrote Hudson Taylor to one of his sisters, "to see all the family collected ... that we might speak to them of Him Who died to atone for the sins of the world. Close to me was a bright little girl about ten years of age, her arms crossed upon the table and her head resting on them. Beside her was her brother, an intelligent boy of fourteen. Next came Mr. Burns and on his other side a young man of twenty, and so on. The men sat round the table, while the mother, two older daughters and another woman kept in the background, half out of sight. While I was speaking, as I did on their account, of the prayers of my mother and sister before my conversion, I noticed that they were attending closely. Oh, may God give China Christian mothers and sisters before long! Returning to our boats, I could not help tears of joy and thankfulness that we had been induced to adopt this costume, without which we could never have such access to the people."

Of the comfort of the dress there could be no doubt.

"It is real winter now," wrote Mr. Taylor on New Year's eve, "and the north wind is very cutting. But instead of being almost 'starved to death 'as I was last year, I am now, thanks to the Chinese costume, thoroughly comfortable and as warm as toast.

"Indeed, we have many mercies to be thankful for. A good boat, costing about two shillings a day, gives me a nice little room to myself, one in front for my servant to sleep in, used in the day-time for receiving guests, and a cabin behind for my teacher, as well as a place for cooking, storing books, etc. My tiny room has an oyster-shell window that gives light while it

prevents people from peeping in, a table at which I write and take meals, ... a locker on which my bed is spread at night, ... and a seat round the remaining space, so that two visitors, or even three, can be accommodated. For family worship we open the doors in front and behind my cabin, and then the boatpeople, teachers, servant and Mr. Burns can all join in the service....

"How very differently our Master was lodged! 'Nowhere to lay His head.' And this for my sins-amazing thought. ... Then I am no longer my own. Bought with His precious blood ... Oh, may I be enabled to glorify Him with my whole spirit, soul and body, which are His."

Deep as his longing had ever been for likeness to and fellowship with the Lord, Hudson Taylor was increasingly conscious of this heart-hunger in companionship with William Burns. He too had found how sadly possible it is to be professedly a witness for Christ amid the darkness of a heathen land, "and yet breathe little of the love of God or the grace of the Gospel." Nothing was more real to him than the fact that a low-level missionary life can, and too often does, make even "the cross of Christ ... of none effect." But great and many though the dangers may be, and the pressure brought to bear on every missionary to lower his spiritual standards and draw him away from living contact with the Lord, Mr. Burns had proved the faithfulness of that divine Master in coming to the help of His own.

"I was preaching last Sabbath day," he wrote on one occasion, "from Matthew 24:12, 'because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold'; and alas! I felt they were solemnly applicable to my own state of heart. Unless the Lord the Spirit continually uphold and quicken, oh how benumbing is daily contact with heathenism! But the Lord is faithful, and has promised to be 'as rivers of water in a dry ace, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' May you and all

God's professing people in a land more favoured, but alas! more guilty also, experience much of the Lord's own presence, power and blessing; and when the enemy comes in as a flood, may the Spirit of the Lord-nay, it is said 'the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him:'"

Upon such promises he counted, and he had not found them fail. The presence of the Lord was the one thing real to him in China as it had been at home. "He did not consider that he had a warrant to proceed in any sacred duty," his biographer tells us, "without a consciousness of that divine presence. Without it, he could not speak even to a handful of little children in a Sunday School; with it he could stand unabashed before the mightiest and wisest in the land."

Ruled by such a master-principle, it was no wonder there was something about his life that impressed and attracted others even while it inspired a sense of awe. The brightest lamp will burn dim in an impure or rarefied atmosphere, but William Burns was enabled so to keep himself "in the love of God" that he was but little affected by his surroundings. Prayer was as natural to him as breathing, and the Word of God as necessary as daily food. ^[108] He was always cheerful, always happy, witnessing to the truth of his own memorable words:

I think I can say, through grace, that God's presence or absence alone distinguishes places to me.

Simplicity in living was his great delight. "He enjoyed quietness and the luxury of having few things to take care of," and thought the happiest state on earth for a Christian was "that he should have few wants."

"If a man have Christ in his heart," he used to say, "heaven before his eyes, and only as much of temporal blessing as is just needful to carry him safely through life, then pain and

sorrow have little to shoot at... To be in union with Him Who is the Shepherd of Israel, to walk very near, Him Who is both sun and shield, comprehends all a poor sinner requires to make him happy between this and heaven." ^[109]

Cultured, genial and overflowing with mother-wit, he was a delightful companion, and the contrast-for those who knew him in China-was very marked between "the mind and thoughts so trained to higher things and the heart so content with that which was lowly." A wonderful fund of varied anecdotes gave charm to his society, and he was generous in recalling his experiences for the benefit of others. Many a time his life had been in danger in Ireland and elsewhere at the hands of a violent mob, and the stories he had to tell could not but encourage faith and zeal, although at times they might provoke a smile.

"***The devil's dead,***" shouted one Irish voice above the uproar of a crowd determined to put an end to his streetpreaching. It was a perilous moment, for the shower of mud and stones was increasing and there was no possibility of escape should the rougher element prevail. But the quick-witted reply, touched with sarcasm, "***Ah then, you aye a Poor fatherless bairn!***" not only won the day, but carried home a deeply solemn lesson.

Sacred music was his delight, greatly to the satisfaction of his young companion. Many were the hymns they sang together both in English and Chinese, Hudson Taylor no doubt appreciating Mr. Burns's rendering of these into colloquial words and phrases, for the use of the illiterate. Their intercourse with one another was carried on almost entirely in the language of their native helpers. Mr. Burns "lived by choice and habitually in a Chinese element," and with this line of things and the courtesy it indicated toward those around them, Hudson Taylor was in fullest sympathy. The fact that they did not belong to the same missionary society, the same denomination, the

same country even, made no difference in their relations. Burns was far too large-hearted to be narrowed by circumstances or creeds. "He was at home with all Protestant Christians," and co-operated with missionaries of many societies, German, English and American, with the greatest goodwill and the most Catholic spirit, aiming at the advancement of the Kingdom of God rather than of his own particular cause.

Yet his faithfulness to conviction was unflinching, and his testimony against wrong-doing never withheld. His denunciations of sin could be terrible, strong men cowering before them, pale and trembling, under an overwhelming sense of the divine presence. He did not hesitate, for example, on this very journey, to mount the stage of a Chinese theatre in the presence of thousands of people and stop an immoral play in full swing, calling upon the audience gathered under the open heavens to repent of their iniquities and turn to the living God.

But it was toward himself he was most of all severe, in the true apostolic spirit, "We suffer all things, ***lest we should hinder*** the Gospel of Christ." There are glimpses in his journal of many a day or night spent in prayer" seeking personal holiness, the fundamental requisite for a successful ministry." Yet he felt himself wholly unworthy to represent the Lord he loved. "Oh, that I had a martyr's heart," he wrote, "if not a martyr's death and a martyr's crown."

And this man, the friendship of this man with all he was and had been, was the gift and blessing of God at this particular juncture to Hudson Taylor. Week after week, month after month they lived and travelled together, the exigencies of their work bringing out resources of mind and heart that otherwise might have remained hidden. Such a friendship is one of the crowning blessings of life. Money cannot buy it; influence cannot command

it. It comes as love unsought, and, only to the equal soul. Young and immature as he was, Hudson Taylor had the capacity to appreciate, after long years of loneliness, the preciousness of this gift. Under its influence he grew and expanded, and came to an understanding of himself and his providential position that left its impress on all after-life. William Burns was better to him than a college course with all its advantages, because he lived out before him right there in China the reality of all he most needed to be and know.

But to come back to their first journey together on the waterways of Cheh-kiang. The front room in Mr. Taylor's boat was made good use of during the eighteen days of their stay at Nan-zin, many, a conversation being held there with interested guests. Early in their stay, a young man named King called one evening, with a book he had received elsewhere from other foreigners. He was evidently impressed, and told them that he wished to become a Christian. He knew very little of the truth, however, and was surprised to learn that the God of Thunder must be abandoned as well as other idols. Not worship the God of Thunder? Why, that had seemed so obvious a divinity. He remained to evening worship, kneeling for the first time in prayer to the true and living God. The following day was Sunday, and the missionaries were encouraged to see him at both services. But on Monday business called him away from the town, and they could but commend him to God and the Word of His Grace, hoping that sometime, somewhere, he might again be brought into touch with Christians.

Hardly had he left them when several visitors came on board, two of whom seemed specially interested. They made particular enquiries about prayer and the proper forms of Christian worship. But when after a good deal of conversation Mr. Taylor proposed to pray with them, one of the two looked very uneasy and declined, saying he was really too ignorant, and moreover

was expecting to eat pork on the morrow.

On Christmas eve, a few days later, Mr. Taylor was explaining to some guests the folly and sin of worshipping idols when it is to the one, true and living God we are indebted for every good gift.

"But," said one of his hearers, "surely you are too general in your statement. There are good idols as well as many that are good-for-nothing."

"And which are the good idols?" asked the missionary with interest.

Pointing through the window of the little cabin in the direction of a temple near at hand, "They are in there," he said. "Many years ago two men came to our town with a boat-load of rice to sell. It happened that the time was one of famine. There had been no harvest and the people were in much distress. Seeing this, the strangers took the rice and gave it away among the poorest. Then, of course, they had no face to go home again."

"And why not?" questioned the listener.

"Oh, because they had given away the rice instead of selling it."

"Then it was not their own?"

"No, it belonged to their master. And as they dared not meet him again they both drowned themselves here in the river, and the people said they were gods, made idols to represent them, and built this temple in which they have been worshipped ever since."

"Then your 'good idols,'" said the missionary, "are men, only men to begin with, who stole their master's property and then sinned yet further by taking their own lives."

It was a good starting-point from which to tell of the true and living God

Who "gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Again on the last Sunday in the year they were encouraged by really interested enquirers. Returning to their boats in the twilight after a long day's work ashore, Mr. Taylor found a young man waiting who had called several times previously. He seemed specially earnest that evening, and said

"I have read seventeen chapters in 'the first book of the New Testament, and find it very good."

He was soon joined by a friend who had also heard a good deal of the Gospel, and together they listened seriously while Mr. Taylor applied the truth to their own lives. Before leaving they knelt in prayer, and the first of the two at any rate seemed not far from the Kingdom.

On New Year's day a good opportunity was found in the tea-shop of emphasising the difference between Buddhism and Christian faith and experience. Seated as usual at one of the little tables, Mr. Taylor was speaking with a good deal of liberty when a superior sort of man came and sat down beside him.

"Ah," he put in, "your doctrines-as to truth, they are true enough. But these people are Buddhists, and worship their meaningless idols. They will never believe you. Their hearts are in the midst of their internals; who is able to turn them about? It is a pity to waste time and strength on the *u-min*, the stupid populace."^[110]

"Alas," replied the missionary, "what you say is but too true. The religion of Jesus is indeed good, but you are wedded to your idols and cannot turn your hearts about, neither can I change them for you."

He then dwelt for a time upon the evils of Buddhism which taught men to give to the work of their own hands the adoration due to God alone; which made it meritorious, as in the case of priests, to cease to care about their parents even if they were aged and in want; which forbade the eating of pork, but not the use of opium; prevented marriage, but not adultery; and taught that a bad man's soul might be released from hell if his friends would pay for the performance of certain rites, while a good man would be left to suffer if his family happened to be poor and could not give all the priests demanded.

"But though our sins are heavy," he continued, "and we can do nothing to put them away, the Lord Jesus is able to save to the uttermost, and the Holy Spirit can not only turn but *renew* our hearts. Confucius cannot do this; Buddha cannot do this; but the Lord Jesus can. And this is the religion that not only scholars but the poor and unlearned need."

"True, true," said the listeners, many of whom had been following every word, and the self-satisfied first speaker moved silently away.

It was the following day that returning to their boats after dark they met with unexpected encouragement. Accompanied by a group of friendly people Mr. Burns paused on the river-bank, talking with them long and earnestly before parting for the night.

"What do you think of it all?" said one man quietly to another. "Do you believe in this doctrine of Jesus?"

"Believe? I certainly believe!" replied his friend, little thinking of the joy with which Hudson Taylor overheard his answer.

Thus day after day the good seed was scattered, and though there was no immediate ingathering such as Mr. Burns had seen previously in the

neighbourhood of Amoy, he and his companion could not but feel that their prayers were being answered for Nan-zin.

"I wish I could tell you of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on this place," wrote Hudson Taylor to his sister. "The Lord has not been pleased to grant this. But there are many who have learned a good deal of the way of salvation, and some have bowed the knee with us in prayer, confessing that they believed in the truth of our teachings. As yet we have seen no deep conviction of sin, nor evidence of real change of heart. The seed when it is sown, however, rarely springs up at once. It often lies a winter, but harvest comes. So here, though we see not all we could wish at present, we know that our labour is 'not in vain in the Lord.'"

Chapter XXVIII^(TOC)

Under the Shadow of the Almighty

January 1856. AET. 23

BLACK TOWN would have been the last place to include in their itinerary had they been considering personal comfort or safety. Half-way between two great cities^[111] and near the border of the province it was a refuge for the unruly, many of whom were salt-smugglers of desperate character. But it was close at hand, only one day's journey from Nan-zin, and it had never yet been visited by messengers of the Prince of Peace. This in itself was sufficient to take our travellers thither, and though their visit was cut short by reason of serious danger, they were enabled to learn as well as teach important lessons.

Dropping anchor on Monday, January 7, near this busy market-town (Wu-tien), they commenced work by distributing several hundreds of sheet-tracts in the outlying streets. This aroused considerable interest, and of the crowds that gathered round them Mr. Taylor was able to write: "I never spoke to more attentive audiences, nor saw such seriousness among the Chinese before."

Following the same plan as at Nan-zin, they visited the suburbs on the farther side of the town next morning, and selected a tea-shop for the purposes of a street-chapel. Not far from the boats a great concourse of people was addressed later in the day.

"The Lord graciously helped us," wrote Mr. Taylor, and we were heard with marked attention. In the evening we went to the tea-shop and found several persons waiting who had come

expressly to meet us. Our lips were opened, and people listened with evident interest... Some even seemed to believe, and nearly all approved, or seemed to approve, what we were teaching."

Encouraged by this good beginning the missionaries were looking forward to much blessing, when all unexpectedly troubles arose from which they were delivered only by a series of remarkable providences.

It began quite suddenly through the annoyance of a group of men, afterwards found to be salt-smugglers, who could not obtain all the books they wanted. Tracts and Gospels were given freely to those who could read, but, as elsewhere, they were withheld from wholly unlettered persons. This resulted in an attack upon the boats in which happily no one was injured, though one of the cabins was battered in.

As soon as quiet was somewhat restored, we all met in Mr. Burns' boat and joined in thanksgiving for our preservation, praying for the perpetrators of the mischief and that it might be over-ruled for good. After lunch we went ashore, and but a few steps from the boats addressed a large concourse of people. We were conscious of being specially helped. Never were we heard with more attention, and not one voice was raised in sympathy with those who had molested us. In the evening the same spirit was manifested in the tea-shop, and some seemed to hear with joy the tidings of salvation through a crucified Redeemer.

Again on the following day (January 11) the Word was in power. Visited by two northern men, Mr. Taylor was greatly helped in telling them of Jesus. One did not pay much attention but the other did, asking question after question that showed the interest he was feeling. After they left him, the young missionary went on shore and in a garden full of mulberry-trees found

a company of people to whom Kuei-hua had been speaking.^[112]

"The sun was just setting," he wrote, "and supplied me with a striking simile of life.... As I spoke of the uncertainty of its duration and the nearness of the Lord's return, deep seriousness prevailed. A Buddhist priest who was present was constrained afterwards to confess that Buddhism was a system of delusions and could give no peace in death. When I engaged in prayer all were silent and impressed, and my own soul was deeply moved with the solemnity of the scene."

Trouble was at hand, however, for the salt-smugglers were intent on getting more than a few books from the foreigners. On Saturday the 12th, fifty of these desperate characters assembled in a tea-shop near the river and sent one of their number, professing to be a constable, with a written demand for ten dollars and a pound of opium. If this were forthcoming the boats would be left in peace; if not, fifty men were determined to destroy them before morning.

The day was already drawing in, and the missionaries had gone ashore to visit the farther end of the town. Sung, the teacher, was alone with the boat-people and, like them, not a little alarmed at the turn events were taking. Having no money and of course no opium, all he could do was to go in search of his employers, giving a hint to the boatpeople to make the most of any opportunity to get away. Knowing that the missionaries had planned to preach in a tea-shop at the east end of the town, he set off on a walk of two miles or more to find them; and the constable, quite willing to let him go alone, returned to report progress to those who had sent him.

Meanwhile Mr. Burns and Mr. Taylor had been led to change their plans. As they were going eastward it occurred to them that some interested inquirers might be expecting them at the usual meeting-place, and, under a strong

impression that they should return at once, they retraced their steps to the tea-shop nearer the river. Thus Sung was not able to find them, and while he was occupied in the search the boat-people had an opportunity to move quietly away.

For the night which had been fine and clear now became intensely dark. Knowing it would be some time before Sung could return, the men who were awaiting the missionaries called for more tea, for which the foreigners were to pay to the extent of three hundred cash, and settled themselves down to smoke and play cards. Unobserved for the moment, and aided by the welcome darkness, the boats weighed anchor and moved off, one in one direction and one in another, so that if either were discovered and attacked the other might afford a refuge for the missionaries. This done the captain went ashore, and, keeping out of sight among the shadows, watched anxiously for his passengers.

And strange to say he had not long to wait. No one had come to the tea-shop to meet the missionaries, and the few people they found there were singularly inattentive. Earlier than usual Mr. Burns proposed returning to the boats, and, leaving Ts'ien and Kuei-hua to talk with any who desired it, they set out for the river, hoping to distribute their remaining tracts by the way. But the night was so dark that few people were on the streets, and for the first time since they arrived in Black Town no one followed them.

Thus when Mr. Burns' lantern appeared, the boatman found to his relief that the missionaries were alone. Going up to them he took the light and blew it out, instead of carrying it on in front as they expected. Surprised at the strangeness of his manner they would have relighted it, seeing which he removed the candle, threw it into the canal, and walked down in silence to the water's edge. Fearful lest he had lost his reason and might drown himself, Mr.

Taylor ran forward to restrain him; but with a manner that effectually silenced them the captain said that a number of men were intent on destroying the boats which had moved away to avoid them. He then cautiously led the way to where one of the boats were waiting. Before long Ts'ien and Kuei-hua were brought on board, and Sung also joining them they were able to move off in safety.

The meaning of the mystery was then explained, and with thankfulness each one of the little party realised that the Lord had been thinking upon them in that hour of danger. Sung especially was conscious of His providential care, for on reaching the place where the boats had been moored when he left them, he found a dozen or twenty men searching among the trees, and heard them asking with astonishment what could have become of the foreigners. They even inquired of him, not recognising who he was, and he was just as puzzled as they were to know where the boats could be. Happily he met one of the boatmen a little farther on, who without word or sign led him to his companions.

"After a while the boats joined company," wrote Mr. Taylor, "and rowed together quite a distance. It was already late, and to travel by night in that part of the country was not the way to avoid dangers, so the question arose as to what should be done. This we left the boat-people to decide. They had moved off of their own accord, and we felt that whatever we personally might desire, we could not constrain others to remain in a position of danger on our account. We urged them to do quickly whatever they thought of doing, as the morrow was the Lord's Day and we should not wish to travel. We also reminded them that wherever we were we must fulfil our mission, to preach the Gospel. It would make but little difference where we stayed, for even if we passed the night unperceived we were sure to be found out the following

morning. Upon this the men concluded that they might as well return to the place from which we had started, a decision with which we fully agreed, and they turned back accordingly. But whether by accident or on purpose, they got into another stream, and rowed on for some time they knew not whither. At last as it was very dark they dropped anchor for the night.

We then called them all together with our native assistants and read the ninety-first Psalm...

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High

Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress

My God, in Him will I trust. ...

Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day. ...

Because He hath set His love upon me, therefore will I deliver him.

I will set him on high, because he hath known My name.

He shall call upon Me and I will answer him.

I will be with him in trouble:

I will deliver him and honour him.

With long life will I satisfy him, and show him My salvation.

Then committing ourselves to His care and keeping, Who had covered us with thick darkness and enabled us to escape the hand of violent men ... we passed the night in peace and quietness, realising in some measure the truth of that precious Word, 'He is their help and their shield.'

The following morning I was awakened about 4 A.M. by violent pain in the knee-joint. I had bruised it the day before, and severe inflammation was the result. To my great surprise I heard the rain pouring down in torrents, the weather having previously been particularly fine. On looking out we found ourselves so near our former stopping-place that had nothing happened to prevent it we should have felt it our duty to go into the town to preach as usual. But the rain was so heavy all day long that no one could leave the boats, and much inquiry about us was also prevented. We thus enjoyed a delightful day of rest, such as we had not had for some time. Had the day been fine we should most likely have been discovered even if we had not left the boats; but as it was we were left to think with wonder and gratitude of the gracious dealings of our God, who had indeed led us apart into a desert-place to rest awhile.

Monday was a cloudless morning and Mr. Burns was preparing to go ashore when one of the assistants, who had been early to fetch some clothing left with a laundress, returned with serious tidings. In spite of the drenching rain of Sunday the salt-smugglers had been seeking them in all directions, and unless they made good their escape the boats would certainly be found and broken to pieces.

Thoroughly alarmed, the boat-people would remain no longer in the neighbourhood of Wu-tien, and Mr. Taylor being quite unable to walk, the missionaries had no choice but to leave with them. This also seemed providential, for by evening it was evident that he was really ill and must return to Shanghai for rest and treatment. They had been absent already more than a month, and much as he regretted leaving Mr. Burns to continue the work alone, he did so in the assurance that:

Ill that God blesses is our good,

And unblest good is ill

And all is right that seems most wrong,

If it be His sweet will.

Chapter XXIX^(TOC)

Stedfast, Unmovable

February-April 1856. AET. 23

IT was the middle of February, and Mr. Burns and Mr. Taylor were again in Shanghai after some weeks' absence. It had been a keen disappointment to them to leave the neighbourhood of Wu-tien where the openings had seemed so promising, and now they had returned from another journey^[113] to obtain fresh supplies and go back if possible to that part of the country. But the Lord had other plans in view.

"He was leading us," wrote Mr. Taylor, "by a way that we knew not: but it was none the less His way."

O Lord, how happy should we be

If we would cast our care on Thee,

If we from self would rest;

And feel at heart that One above

In perfect wisdom, perfect love,

Is working for, the best.

Glad to be once more among fellow-missionaries, Mr. Burns and Mr. Taylor had come up from their boats that wintry night to the prayer-meeting at Dr. Medhurst's near the British Consulate. This weekly gathering was a rendezvous for all in Shanghai who cared about the Lord's work, and on this

occasion a Christian captain was present whose vessel had just arrived from Swatow.

His heart was unspeakably burdened with the condition of things in that southern port to which he carried cargo and passengers from time to time. An important and growing centre of commerce, it was the resort of increasing numbers of people greedy of gain and wholly unscrupulous in their ways of obtaining it. The opium trade and the equally iniquitous "coolie traffic" were carried on with shameless activity. Piracy flourished to such an extent that even Chinese merchants had taken to shipping their goods in foreign vessels that they might obtain the protection of British and other flags. Thus, although Swatow was not an open port and foreigners had no business to be there as far as treaty rights were concerned, quite a European settlement had sprung up, connived at by the local authorities. On Double Island, five miles out of Swatow, captains of opium-ships and other foreigners had bought land and built houses just as they might at Hong-kong, their presence, sad to say, only increasing the vices of this notoriously wicked place. And neither there nor in Swatow itself was there any witness for Christ or any influence that made for righteousness. No missionary, minister, or foreign lady was to be found nearer than Amoy, a hundred and fifty miles away; and in the absence of family life, as well as the restraints of law and order, the condition of things was as bad as it could be.

From this place Captain Bowers had just come, and he could not but seek prayer on its behalf in the meeting at Dr. Medhurst's. In conversation afterwards, especially with Mr. Burns and Mr. Taylor, he urged the importance of Swatow as a centre for missionary operations. If merchants and traders could live there, of all nationalities, why should not ministers of the Gospel? But the missionary who would pioneer his way amid such

darkness must not be afraid, he said, to cast in his lot with "the off-scourings of Chinese society, congregated there from all the Southern ports." It was Wu-tien truly, but on a more desperate scale.

Silently that evening the friends returned to their boats, thinking of what they had heard. To Hudson Taylor, at any rate, the call of God had come while Captain Bowers was speaking, and he was struggling against rebellion of heart in view of the sacrifice involved.

"Never had I had such a spiritual father as Mr. Burns," he wrote long after; "never had I known such holy, happy intercourse; and I said to myself that it could not be God's will that we should separate."

Thus several days passed by, and he could not escape the conviction that Swatow was where the Lord would have him.

"In great unrest of soul," he continued, "I went with Mr. Burns one evening to visit some American friends near the South Gate of Shanghai. ^[114] After tea, Mrs. Lowrie played over to us 'The Missionary Call.' I had never heard it before, and it greatly affected me. My heart was almost broken before it was finished, and I said to the Lord in the words that had been sung:

And I will go.

I may no longer doubt to give up friends and idol hopes,

And every tie that binds the heart ...

Henceforth then it matters not if storm or sunshine be my earthly lot, bitter or sweet my cup;

I only pray, God make me holy, and my spirit nerve for the stern hour of strife.

Upon leaving, I asked Mr. Bums to come to the little house that was still my headquarters, and there with many tears I told him how the Lord had been leading me, and how rebellious I had been, and unwilling to leave him for this new sphere, He listened with a strange look of surprise and pleasure rather than of pain, and replied that he had determined that very night to tell me that he had heard the Lord's call to Swatow, and that his one regret had been the severance of our happy fellowship."

Thus the Lord not only gave, but gave back, the companionship that meant so much in the life of Hudson Taylor. Together they went next morning to Captain Bowers and told him that the way seemed clear for them both to go to Swatow. So overjoyed was the captain to hear it that he offered them forthwith a free passage on his ship which was returning in a few days. This was gratefully accepted, and on March 6, two years from Mr. Taylor's first arrival in Shanghai, they sailed for their new field of labour.

Anchored in a fog that night off Gutzlaff Island, everything must have recalled to Hudson Taylor the February Sunday when he first reached that spot.^[115] Then he had never seen the shores of China nor looked into the face of any one belonging to that land. Now how familiar it had grown. Many and varied had been his experiences, transforming the lad fresh from the old country into a useful missionary. At home in two dialects, one of which was the language of four-fifths of China, he was about to learn a third as an incident of his service. Seasoned as a good soldier of the Cross by many a trial and hardship, he was ready to stand alone in a peculiarly difficult sphere. War, with all its horrors, prolonged distress through insufficient supplies, the discipline of indebtedness to others, even for a home, and then of loneliness in his own quarters, sickness, change, uncertainty, and great discomfort as to material surroundings—all these had schooled his heart to quietness and

patience, and brought a deeper dependence upon God. And then evangelistic journeys, alone or with other missionaries, had greatly widened his outlook. Eleven such itinerations now lay behind him within these first two years. How much each one had meant, with its necessary exercise of mind and heart, its strain upon endurance, dangers by land and water, "perils in the city, ... perils of robbers, labour and travail," and all its secret springs of faith and prayer.

And now encouragement had come all the more precious for many a disappointment: some souls brought into endless blessing through his ministry, nearness to the people that made up for all the trial involved in wearing native dress, and a friendship richer and deeper than any he had given up or ever hoped to know. Freedom also as to funds was a new and welcome experience. Friends whom the Lord had raised up now helped so liberally that for a good many months he had not needed to draw at all upon the Letter of Credit from his society. Apart from them, his needs were all supplied in a way that greatly strengthened his faith in God.^[116]

In one thing only the years since he came to China seemed to have made no advance: he had still no home, no permanent work, no settled plans ahead. Where or how he was ultimately to labour was no more clear than it had been at the beginning. But the way of faith was clearer, and he had learned to leave the future in the hands of God. One who knew the end from the beginning was guiding and would guide. So a great rest had come about it all, and he was not concerned to make everything fit in. How this visit to Swatow would eventuate for him personally, how it would affect his life-work he could not tell. He only knew the Lord had set before him this open door, and he was growingly content to walk a step at a time.

And feel at heart that One above

In perfect wisdom, perfect love,

Is working for the best.

"As to Swatow," he wrote just before leaving, "we go looking to the Lord for guidance and blessing.... As we are led, we shall return sooner or later or not at all.... Having no plans, we have none to tell. May the Lord be with us, bless us abundantly, and glorify His own great name.... Pray for us; pray for us. You little know where or how we may be when you receive this note. Oh, pray that we may be kept from sin and used of God in the conversion of sinners."

Thus in prayer and faith they drew near the great province of Kwang-tung, and on March 12 anchored off Double Island a few miles from their destination. It would have been quite possible to settle here among other Europeans, and from comfortable headquarters to visit the mainland for their missionary operations. But such a plan had no attractions for either William Burns or Hudson Taylor. Avoiding even proximity to the vice and luxury of the Settlement, they went on to Swatow itself, to seek a footing among the people they had come to reach. In this their Chinese dress was of great assistance; and though at first it seemed that not a corner could be found, prayer was again answered and their faith strengthened by one of those "chance providences" so often prepared for the children of God.

Situated on the delta of the Han between two of its principal channels, Swatow has little room to extend save by banking out its water-frontage, an operation in which hundreds of workmen were engaged. Houses were running up as rapidly as possible, for the supply was altogether unequal to the demand; and meanwhile the missionaries almost despaired of finding quarters.

After two days' fruitless search during which they were thankful for Captain

Bowers' continued hospitality, they "happened" to meet a Cantonese merchant whom Mr. Burns addressed in his mother-tongue. Delighted at hearing excellent Cantonese from a foreigner, and a foreigner wearing Chinese dress, this gentleman interested himself on their behalf, and through a relative who "happened" to be the highest official in the town succeeded in securing them a lodging. It was not much of a place, it is true, just a single room over an incense-shop in a crowded quarter, but how glad they were to take possession before Captain Bowers had to sail for Singapore.

That it did not meet with their kind friend's approval is hardly to be wondered at. Great was his love and admiration for Mr. Burns, and he could not bear to leave him in such surroundings. Of his visit to the incense-shop he wrote to a mutual friend, Mrs. Barbour of Bonskeid:

Seeking out his wretched lodging in Swatow amongst the degraded of every class, I remarked, "Surely, Mr. Burns, you might find a better place to live in." He laughingly told me that he was more content in the midst of this people than he would be at home surrounded with every comfort. He said his expenses amounted to ten dollars a month. "Mr. Burns," I exclaimed, "that would not keep me in cigars!" He said it was sufficient for him.

But to the missionaries themselves, ten dollars a month and a single room, into which they had to climb through an opening in the floor, did not seem so bad. It was in touch with the people, that was the chief thing, and they were very conscious that the Lord was with them. The single room they divided as well as they could into three tiny apartments-two running east to west, and one north and south, which included the hole in the floor.

"My bedroom is on the south," Mr. Taylor explained in his first home-letter. "Mr. Burns takes the north side, and the strip on the west we use as our study. The partitions are made of

sheets and a few boards... We have only just obtained exclusive possession,^[117] a passage having been needed for the landlord's family until alterations were made in the house. We are promised a trap-door next week, and then shall have more privacy.

"Our beds are a few deal boards, and our table the lid of a box supported on two bags of books. We may get a better some day, but nothing of that sort is to be bought ready-made in Swatow. So for the present, at an outlay of two hundred and thirty cash [one shilling and a penny], we have completely furnished the house-with two bamboo stools and a bamboo easy-chair."

Here, then, amongst the worst and lowest, the little seed was planted that was to result in the abundant harvest seen to-day.^[118] Years before, a solitary missionary had laboured there in face of overwhelming odds. Driven from place to place he had widely itinerated in the surrounding country, living a life of Christlike patience and love.^[119] But from the time that Mr. Lechler had been driven back to Hong-kong, no one had taken his place, and Swatow had remained without testimony to the Gospel.

His knowledge of Cantonese enabled Mr. Burns to make himself understood from the first, and greatly helped him in acquiring the local speech. For his companion this was a much more serious matter. They had not been long in Swatow, however, before they both felt that so important a centre must never again be left unoccupied, and as the only way to usefulness was to be able to talk freely with the people, Mr. Taylor set himself once more to study.

"There is plenty of work to be done," he wrote to his mother soon after their arrival, "but I cannot do it. It is a great trial after being able to speak freely to begin again in a place where one cannot understand a single sentence. But if only we are used here, what a privilege is ours. All my previous

experience I find of the greatest value, for one without knowledge of Chinese, dressed as a foreigner, and unaccustomed to living as we do among the people would not be able to stay on at all.... How gracious the Lord is and how wonderful His ways. Pray for me, and do not be uneasy about me. The Lord will undertake."

If his mother and friends could have realised the conditions under which he was living, they would have felt more concern at this time than probably they did. For Swatow was a dangerous as well as difficult field. Two great evils already mentioned flourished under the protection of foreigners, and made the very sight of a European odious to the people.

"About two hundred boxes of opium are imported monthly," Mr. Taylor stated in the same letter; "each box contains forty balls of about four pounds in weight. Thus not less than thirty-two thousand pounds weight of opium enter China every month at this port alone, the cost of which is about a quarter of a million sterling. After this you will not be surprised to learn that the people are wretchedly poor, ignorant, and vicious.

"A cruel slave trade also is carried on under the name of the 'coolie traffic.' The men are engaged (nominally) for a certain term of years, but few live to return. A bounty is paid them, and they are told that they are going to make their fortunes, or they are entrapped by worse means. Once on the ship the agent receives so much a head for the poor fellows who soon find themselves in captivity of the most horrible kind. Some jump overboard in their efforts to escape, but they are generally retaken and flogged.' Some ships carry a thousand and others three or four hundred, and very many die before reaching their destination-Cuba, Havanna and Callao. ... Of one ship with several hundreds on board, I heard the surgeon say that not more than two-thirds would survive the voyage.

Poor people! ONE only is able to help them. Oh, for His blessing!"

It was little wonder under such circumstances, and with many of the traders of Double Island living lives worse than those of the heathen, that the missionaries endeavouring to obtain a foothold in Swatow should be regarded with hatred, suspicion, and scorn. But it was a painful experience none the less, and as new to Mr. Burns as to Hudson Taylor.

"The people have no love for foreigners," wrote the latter, "and we never go out without being insulted and laughed at. [120] ... I think I never was in such a wicked place Pray much for us, that we may have grace and patience, and strength of body and mind to pass through all unharmed and even find it a blessing."

In towns and villages at a little distance a more friendly spirit was manifested, but the same poverty and degradation prevailed, and the people were so turbulent that those who went amongst them had to face constant danger. In their visits to the country the missionaries were liable to be seized at any moment and held to ransom, and they frequently heard the saying that the whole district was without Emperor, without rulers and without law." One small town in which they were preaching had recently captured a wealthy man belonging to a neighbouring clan. Refusing to pay the exorbitant sum demanded for his release, he had been subjected to cruel tortures, his ankle-bones finally being smashed with a club, after which his tormentors succeeded in obtaining all they desired.

"There was nothing but the protection of God," wrote Hudson Taylor, "between us and the same sort of treatment. The towns were all walled, many of them containing ten or twelve thousand people who might be and frequently were at war with a neighbouring town. To be kindly received in one place

was often a source of danger in the next. But amid such circumstances the preserving care of our God was the more manifest."

Trusting in His unfailing presence, the missionaries were enabled to go on steadfastly through all, embracing many opportunities for bringing light into the darkness. Mr. Burns frequently visited Double Island, holding services in English that were well attended, and Mr. Taylor, whenever he could spare a day from study, joined him in expeditions to the surrounding country.

One such journey together toward the end of March brought them to a busy place called Hwa-wu, where they came across an old farmer who could read intelligently. Failing any other teacher, they were glad to secure his services, and for the local dialect could hardly have wished a better. Talking and reading with him for several hours daily, Mr. Taylor made such rapid progress that by the middle of April he was able to undertake a little work on his own account.

"The country is very beautiful," he wrote. "Fine ranges of hills enclose fertile valleys, watered by many channels through which the Han empties itself into the sea. I have been out to-day (April 17) with my servant for a little air and exercise.... After climbing several hills and getting a good idea of the neighbourhood we went to the first village I have visited alone. Great is the change that has taken place in three and a half weeks. When we first came into this district, I could understand nothing. Now, by the blessing of God, I am able to talk a little as well as understand a good deal. As we had books with us, I asked if there were a teacher in the village and a school.

"'No,' said an elderly man who had just left his work in the fields to join us. 'Last year we had one, but now we are too poor. We have scarcely clothes to cover us.' And he pointed to

the only garment he was wearing, a very small and scanty pair of trousers.

"If you would not smoke opium,' I answered, 'and spend so much money worshipping dead relatives, and the Queen of Heaven and other idols, you would be far better off than you are at present. You hope to be preserved, enriched, and prospered, but evidently you are disappointed. Your idols have eyes, but do they see? They have ears, but can they hear when you pray? They have mouths, but do they speak? Can they preserve you from robbers, from quarrels, sickness, or disaster?'

"True! True!" some replied. 'They are certainly not much use.'

*"I then went on to tell them of the living God, the great Father they ought to worship, who had made heaven, earth, man, and all things, and would forgive their sins, for Jesus' sake, if they would turn to Him. Believing in this precious Saviour, I told them, they would find peace in life or death, and possess a **satisfying** portion.*

"Some thirty or forty people, besides children, listened under the shade of a magnificent banyan tree, and seemed friendly. But very few could read. So that had it not been for junks on the river most of my stock of books would have returned with me."

These visits to the country were helpful and refreshing in spite of attendant danger, especially as the heat of summer came on. Even in May it was intensely hot, and Mr. Taylor wrote that sitting quietly at study he had to keep a towel by him to wipe the perspiration streaming from face and hands. Oh, those little rooms under the naked tiles, how they did glow in the pitiless glare of the sun! They would have been unbearable during the daytime but that Mr. Taylor rigged up a sort of punkah to stir the air a little and give

relief. Mr. Burns, already acclimatised to a southern summer, was able to be out at all hours without danger, but his companion suffered seriously. Still, right on into June, he worked with unremitting diligence, eating hardly anything till evening came, when, with the help of a breeze that usually sprang up, they made their evening meal.

But more distressing than the heat, harder to bear than sleepless nights and all the weariness their work involved, was the sin and suffering that surged around them.

"If ever there were a place needing the blessings of the Gospel," Hudson Taylor wrote to his sister, "it is certainly this place. Men are sunk so low in sin as to have lost all sense of shame, ... lower even than the beasts that perish. The official classes are as bad as the rest, and instead of restraining evil are governed themselves by opium and love of money. And if it be possible to live worse lives than the heathen, then the sailors and others who frequent Double Island carry off the palm. There may be exceptions, so I had better say at once that there probably are, but I do not know of any save Dr. De la Porte^[121] who is there just now....

"Sin does indeed reign here, and, as always, those most to be pitied and whose case seems most hopeless are the women. However low men sink in heathen lands, women sink lower. Looked upon as hardly having' any soul, girls are sold here for wives or slaves, and are left entirely without education. Married women and families are not numerous in proportion to the population, but the number of unfortunate women is very great. I say unfortunate advisedly, for they are bought and brought up for this very purpose. They are the absolute property of their owners, and have no escape from that which many of them abhor. Only a few nights ago I was distressed by heart-rending screams from two female voices, and, on inquiring, was told that they were most likely newly bought

women in a house near by, who were being tortured into submission. 'And that,' added my informant, 'is very common here.' The cries went on for about two hours. Poor things 1 poor things!

"This is hardly a fit subject to write to you about, but, unless you know, how can you pity and pray for them? English women little realise all they owe to the Gospel. And how few have love enough for Christ to come out here and seek to save the perishing. It does mean sacrifice; but low as they would have to stoop, Jesus stooped lower."

Here, then, amid such surroundings, he quietly endured week after week, month after month, drawing his strength from God. Frequently separated from Mr. Burns for the work's sake he was much alone. Keenly the people watched him coming and going from the incense-shop, and inquired into every detail of his life and doings. It was an open life, lived within sight of his neighbours all day long—a life whose love and purity told on their sad, dark hearts far more than he had any idea. Three years later in London, at the Annual Meeting of the Society to which Mr. Taylor belonged, Dr. De la Porte from Double Island was one of the speakers.

He had had the pleasure and honour, he said, of an intimate acquaintance with one of the agents of the Society, labouring at the time in Swatow—a Mr. Hudson Taylor, to whose zeal and devotion he could bear the most cordial testimony.

He had seen that young man come home at the close of the day footsore and weary, his face covered with blisters from the heat of the sun, and throw himself down to rest in a state of utter exhaustion, only to rise again in a few hours to the toil and hardship of another day. It had been very evident that he enjoyed the highest respect from the Chinese, and was doing a great amount of good among them, His influence was like that of a fragrant flower, diffusing the sweetness of true

Christianity around him.

Among the bright spots in his life at Swatow this summer were the red-letter days when the mail arrived from home. Always eagerly welcomed it had now an added value, cut off as they were in large measure from the outside world. Some mails even there would come in without any tidings from those he loved, but others made up for the disappointment by spreading before him a feast that made him forget his surroundings. Such for example was the April day on which he wrote to his sister:

The mail has just arrived from Shanghai, bringing amongst others your letters of two months, one from Mr. Broomhall, two from mother, and one with an enclosure from Mr. Berger.

All letters of special interest.

Those from his mother and sister, as it happened, brought their first comments on his adoption of the native dress, and to his surprise they did not like it. So conscious had he been of its advantages, that he had almost forgotten how it might appear to them. They could not bear to think of his shaven head, blue cotton gown, and Chinese appearance.

"I am sorry that the change is disagreeable to you," he wrote in answer, "but you will regret it very little when you learn that without it we could never have gained a footing in this important place...."

"A little thought will, I am sure, enable you to realise that if the Chinese costume seems so barbarous to us, our English dress must be no less so to them, and that it cannot but be a hindrance in going amongst them in the friendly way necessary to securing their confidence and affection.... Without it we could not stay on here a single day. That Miss does not like it I am very sorry to hear, but that does not make me regret that I have adopted it. It is one of those matters

about which I and my devoted companion, Mr. Burns, thank God almost every day."

But his disappointment over their feeling in this matter was soon lost sight of in the all-important news contained in these letters. Could it be his own dearest sister and friend, in a sense going from him to another, a deeper love? And yet the thought was not new to him, and there was no one to whom he would more gladly have given her. A letter from Mr. Broomhall made it pretty clear that matters would soon be settled between them, and all the far-away brother could do was to write his heartfelt congratulations.

A little later, he learned that they were not only engaged, but thinking of China, and the hope grew strong that they might become his fellow-workers. He had written to Mr. Broomhall several times already on the subject, and now mentioned it again in a June letter to his sister. The prospect was a delightful one, but knowledge of his own heart taught him how easily they might be misled by natural inclinations.

"I long for you to be working here," he wrote, "not for my sake only, but for Jesus' sake, and for the sake of the poor Chinese. Look to the Lord for guidance, and see your way very clearly as to the will of God before you leave dear mother. If you do come, let it not be to live with or near me. If God grant it we shall be very thankful; if not we must be submissive. What He is training me for I cannot tell. May it be for His glory. You will not imagine from this that my love to you is in any way lessened. What I do want you to do is-to give up all to the Lord. And the more fully you do that the more He will give you back again, yes, more by far than you ever gave up for Him. May He guide and bless you for Jesus' sake."

To a friend in need of guidance he also wrote in a similar strain:

Light will no doubt be given you. Do not forget, however, in

seeking more, the importance of walking according to the light you have. If you feel called to the work, do not be anxious as to the time and way. He will make it plain... I desire increasingly to leave all my affairs in the hands of God, who alone can, and who assuredly will, lead us aright if humbly and in faith we seek His aid....

I am sure you will forgive me if I urge on you, as I have on Amelia, the importance of seeking guidance from God for yourself personally, apart from the movements of others. Each one of us has an individual duty and responsibility toward Him. The conduct of others cannot make duty, for me, of that which is not so; nor can the claims of duty be lessened because of the action, right or wrong, of others. We may and should thank God for all the help He gives us through others in the performance of duty. But let us seek to see our own way clearly in the light of His will, and then in trial and perplexity we shall be "stedfast, unmovable," not having trusted to an arm of flesh. The Lord guide and bless you, and give you ever to lean unshaken on His faithfulness.

Chapter XXX^(TOC)

On whom the Mantle Fell

June-July 1856. AET. 24

Six months of intercourse with William Burns had now gone by, and little as either of them expected 'it they were nearing the close of their helpful, happy fellowship. To them it seemed on the contrary that their work together was only just beginning. The needs around them were so great and the help they were to one another so evident that they could not but look forward to doing something really adequate together by the blessing of God for the important region to which He had called them. But Swatow was only one needy field out of the vast whole of unreached China. For that wider work to be done the Lord was making preparation, as well as for widespread blessing in the region He had specially laid upon their hearts. William Burns for Swatow and other strategic points in the great seaboard provinces, and Hudson Taylor, by and by, for far-reaching inland China—such' was the purpose of Him who sees the end from the beginning. So the days of their pilgrimage together drew to a close, filled as all that went before had been with helpful fellowship in the Lord.

By this time it was the middle of June, and more than ever trying in the little rooms over the incense-shop. It seemed really imperative to get other quarters; and as this was out of the question in Swatow, they extended the search to neighbouring towns and villages.

"It is much more difficult to itinerate here than it was around Shanghai," Hudson Taylor wrote to his father on June 16."

There the boat one travelled in supplied a home. Here it is not so, excepting in places so near at hand that we should naturally return at night. You must go in most cases on foot, not knowing where or how you will pass the night, and ready to take such accommodation as may offer. It is, of course, an entirely new line of things to me and requires far more faith and self-denial than anything I have hitherto known. But we have the promise that His grace shall be sufficient for us, and we know that in our weakness He will perfect His strength."

All this was of the greatest importance for one who was to be the leader of an evangelistic, pioneering mission. It was needful that he should have a practical, intimate knowledge of many phases of life and work; and to this end his Swatow experiences were "well and wisely chosen," difficult as they seemed at the time.

On one of these overland journeys, for example, he was brought to the point of having nowhere at all to shelter for the night, a serious position in China. It was in the little town of T'o-p'u, whither he had gone on May 20 to take possession of a cottage they had been enabled to rent. One room below and one above, in the more open surroundings of this country place, promised welcome relief from their overcrowded city quarters. But all unwittingly they were reckoning without their host. For the landlord who had been willing to have them the day before met Mr. Taylor on his arrival saying

"Go back, go back at once I My neighbours will not allow me to let you have the house."

A moment's prayer, however, satisfied Mr. Taylor that he must not go back, and dismissing his boat accordingly he went about his Master's business. His servant, who knew the character of the Tie-chin^[122] people, kept asking anxiously:

"What will you do? Where shall we go when darkness comes on? We cannot stay out all night."^[123]

Never fear," was the quiet answer; "the Lord knows and He will provide."

So in temple and tea-shop and along the busy streets, the young missionary gave books to all who could read them and delivered his message. Rarely had his heart been so filled with the joy of the Lord in this work, and the people noticed it.

"Where are you going to sleep," they asked, as the inwardness of the situation became generally known.

"That I cannot tell you," he frankly replied. "But my Heavenly Father knows. He is everywhere present, and never forgets the needs of His people. Nor does He ever leave them unsupplied."

"Are you not anxious lest you should get into trouble?"

"No, I am not anxious," he was able to say with a smile. "My heart is in perfect peace, because the Lord will provide."

"And so it proved," his own letter continued. "I went on distributing books and talking with the people until dark, and then was invited to sleep over a barber's shop the owner of which was a Ha-ka man. Some congee (rice and water gruel) was prepared, and of this we made our supper...."

"In the evening a great many people came to see me, one man bringing a present of two very pretty, fragrant flowers. I pointed out to my visitors that the beauty and sweetness of these flowers was given them by God; that birds and insects are all cared for by Him; that the many blessings enjoyed even by those who know Him not and sin against Him by worshipping idols, the work of their own hands, are still given

and continued by His grace; and how much more may the children of this Heavenly Father look to Him with confidence, knowing He will supply their every need in life, in death, and in the world to come? I was much blessed in soul and greatly helped in testifying to the love and care of God.

"It is curious,' one man remarked, 'how he speaks of God in connection with all things.'

"Poor people! Truly of them it may be said, 'God is not in all their thoughts.'"

But the little town of T'o-p'u had the opportunity at this time of really understanding the message that had awakened so much interest. For Mr. Burns came over the next day and stayed almost a fortnight, though his companion had to return to Swatow.

Later in the month (June) two Chinese Christians joined them, sent by a missionary friend at Hong-kong. They were natives of the Tie-chiu district, and after a brief visit to their homes up-country were to remain with and assist Mr. Burns who was greatly needing such helpers. And the first work with which he entrusted them was the search for a room that could be used for a "street-chapel." As natives of the place he knew they were more likely to be successful than foreigners; but do what they would, no premises of any kind could be obtained.

Realising afresh through this unsuccessful search the value of the footing they had already, Mr. Burns and his companion were more than ever thankful for their little home over the incense-shop, in spite of discomforts that only seemed to multiply with the heat of summer. Some idea of these minor trials may be obtained from a lively passage in a letter from Hudson Taylor to his younger sister, written about this time.

SWATOW, June 9, 1856.

My DEAR Louisa

I must try to answer your note by this mail, or run the risk of leaving it undone. And this I hope to accomplish, if the mosquitoes, flies, cockroaches (two inches long and flying about in all directions), centipedes, lizards, crickets, fleas and all the rest of the tormentors will allow.

While writing these few lines, I have made one successful and two unsuccessful attacks upon as many fleas, so you may imagine how plentiful they are. Sometimes I stop in the middle of a sentence, catch three or four of these unwelcome visitors, kill a few cockroaches and then go on again. The other night I felt something very strange inside my Chinese garments, and on looking to see what it was, found a centipede two or three inches long. It bit me severely before I could eject it, and the place swelled up and was very painful; but I applied carbonate of ammonia with immediate relief. The people of the house made a great stir about it (these bites are very venomous) and soon brought in a hen 1 for what purpose I do not know.... But I sent the poor creature away, explaining the virtues of my white powder, at which they looked respectfully enough. It was well that I had some. Father's medicine-chest has been about the most valuable thing I brought to China. ...

The rest of the letter is in a more serious strain, for the spiritual welfare of this dear sister was much upon his heart. She was just leaving school to take up the more leisurely life of home, and as he thought of the opportunities and special dangers this would present, he longed to safeguard her as well as at that distance he was able.

*"If you want blessing," he had written in an earlier letter,
"seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," and
you will be on the high road to all other good, Some people*

forget this and seek happiness in the world, but it eludes their grasp.... They think, plan, contrive, and try this means and that, but get no nearer the mark. While there are others who, seeking nothing for themselves, have joy and peace poured into their hearts. For they put first 'the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,' and 'all these things' are 'added to them: This I have proved by my own experience, and I can assure you that so it is.

"Pray earnestly, perseveringly, till your prayers are answered, to be truly made a child of God. Then remember you are His ... but still a child, Your Father knows best where you should be and how, So ask to do His will as the true, the only way to happiness and content. Remember too, when saved you are His servant. All you possess is His. Use it as such. ... If as His servant you are true to Christ, He as your Master will provide for you and that liberally, It is the Principal of any concern who has the burden of responsibility. So avoid seeking to be head. ... Be the servant and child in all things. ... Look for guidance, and commit your way unto the Lord. Thus you will prosper in temporal as in spiritual things, and avoid those grinding cares which wear one down more than actual labour, and sometimes make life itself a burden; And remember to pray for your absent brother, who finds it much easier to tell you what to do than to act it out himself. But he does try to do so, and can tell you that he has never tried altogether in vain; for if he has not come up to the mark he is always blessed in his own soul for trying."

Another paragraph from the same letter is well worth quoting.

There is one thing I would specially warn you against ... one of the greatest curses I believe of the present day-the practice of novelreading. If you value your mind and soul, avoid it as you Would a dangerous serpent. I cannot tell you what I would give to be able to forget certain novels I have read and

to efface their influence from my memory. And I firmly believe, though some would deny it, ... that no Christian ever did or ever will read them without injury, ... very serious injury too, if the habit is indulged in. It is like opium smoking, and begets a craving for more that must be supplied. Better books are neglected, and no one can estimate the mischief that results. Few, I believe, could honestly ask God's blessing upon the reading of a novel, and few would venture to assert that they read them to the glory of God. I dread them for you especially as a temptation to which you are constitutionally disposed ... for you and I resemble one another very much as to temperament. ... The only safety lies in avoiding them as one of Satan's most subtle snares.

I often fear that while I may be remembered by you as your brother the missionary in China, you will not feel towards me as to one who has a deep, a constant, and increasing interest in your welfare... May God bless you, my dearly-beloved and often prayed-for sister, and make you all that He Himself would have you be. Good-night, my oil is done. Once more, God bless you.

This was the summer of the disastrous floods, when in the low-lying parts of the Tie-chin district several cities were inundated and more than two hundred towns and villages. The rice crop, just ready for reaping, was swept away in many places by the tremendous rush of water, that even unearthed coffins and carried them out to sea. Not a few lives were lost, and the distress among all classes was very great. Mr. Burns returned in the middle of June from the neighbouring town of Am-po, where he had been living for ten days. He only came just in time, for the house he had been enabled to rent was flooded breast-high the following day.

He had had an encouraging stay in this busy, important place, a larger town than Swatow though not so crowded. Not only was there a constant stream of

visitors coming for books and conversation, but several interested neighbours were regularly attending morning and evening worship. The change back to Swatow was not a little trying, especially as the continued downpour prevented outside work. But it gave a welcome opportunity for prayer and conference over many problems connected with their position.

By the close of the week Mr. Taylor was far from well. The close confinement to their narrow quarters was telling upon him, especially when with their servants and two native helpers—they were "so thick on the ground" as he, expressed it.

"The dark, rainy weather has a depressing effect on one's spirits," he wrote. "I do not feel very well, but trust that in a few days a change of weather will put things right and let me go on with my work again."

Brighter days came and Mr. Bums was able to return to Am-po with his Chinese helpers, but not until it had become evident that he must bid farewell to his English companion for a time. The greatest heat of summer was still before them, and Mr. Taylor was in no condition to meet it under existing circumstances. Providential indications also were not lacking that for the good of the work he ought to pay a visit to Shanghai.

Disappointed as they were about premises for a chapel, their thoughts had naturally turned to other methods of evangelisation. The people of Swatow were far too suspicious of foreigners to let them have a room for nothing but preaching. How could any one be willing to pay the rent of a shop merely to have a place for talking in about religious doctrines? Clearly there must be something behind such a proceeding. But premises for medical work would be quite another matter. The foreign doctor was always *persona grata*, and if he must tell more or less about his religion—well, his medicines were so

good that the preaching could be tolerated.

This being so even in Swatow, Mr. Burns and Mr. Taylor had almost decided to begin hospital work, or at any rate to open a dispensary. They were still praying about it, wondering whether the latter should take the long journey to Shanghai to fetch his instruments and medicines, when the chief Mandarin of the place was taken ill and the native doctors were unable to relieve him. Hearing from a friend that one of the foreigners in native dress was a skilful physician, he sent for Hudson Taylor and put the case into his hands. The treatment proved beneficial, and, no sooner was he well himself than he strongly advised his benefactor to commence medical work in Swatow for the assistance of other sufferers. This seemed very like the guidance they were seeking, especially when the Mandarin, in the grateful spirit so characteristic of his people, under-took to help them about premises. Backed by his approval they were soon enabled to rent the entire house in which they had hitherto occupied a single room, which gave them the advantage of beginning in a neighbourhood in which they were already known and respected.

As though the shadow of a longer parting lay upon his heart, Hudson Taylor was very reluctant, even then, to leave his loved and honoured friend. But when just at this juncture a free passage was offered him all the way to Shanghai by an English captain, the matter seemed taken out of his hands. Mr. Burns would not be left alone or without fellow-workers. One of the native Christians would assist him in Swatow, and one at Am-po and in the country districts. It really seemed, at last, as though the way were opening before them, and all they needed was the medical outfit waiting in Shanghai to enable them to enter upon fruitful labours.

And so early in July the parting came; and full of thankfulness for the past and hope for greater blessing in the days to come they committed one another

to the care and keeping that had never failed them hitherto.

"Those happy months were an unspeakable joy and comfort to me," wrote Hudson Taylor long after, looking back upon the companionship thus ended with William Burns. "His love for the Word was delightful, and his holy, reverential life and constant communings with God made fellowship with him satisfying to the deep cravings of my heart. His accounts of revival work and of persecutions in Canada, Dublin, and Southern China were most instructive as well as interesting; for with true spiritual insight he often pointed out God's purposes in trial in a way that made all life assume quite a new aspect and value. His views especially about evangelism as the great work of the Church, and the order of lay-evangelists as a lost order that Scripture required to be restored, were seed-thoughts which were to prove fruitful in the subsequent organisation of the China Inland Mission."

For, in the providence of God, they never met again. All unexpectedly Hudson Taylor found his path diverging from that of his friend. Dark clouds were gathering over Southern China, soon to lead to war. On a boat near Swatow Mr. Burns was taken prisoner and sent under escort, by river and canal, a journey of thirty-one days to Canton and the nearest British authorities. Returning to Swatow some months later he was enabled to take advantage of the growing feeling in his favour to establish a permanent work. Known as "The Man of the Book," he was allowed to go in and out freely, the trusted friend of the people, when all other Europeans were confined to their houses and in considerable danger on account of the iniquities of the coolie traffic; and the Swatow Mission of the English Presbyterian Church flourishes to-day as an outcome of those early labours.

Passing on to other fields when initial difficulties were conquered, Mr. Burns was led to Peking at length, and there spent four years in literary and

evangelistic work. And then, true to the commanding vision of his life, the veteran missionary turned his face once more to the "regions beyond." North of the Great Wall and stretching far away—an almost unknown world—lay the fair and fruitful plains of Manchuria. A few foreigners were living at the Treaty Port, but as yet no minister or missionary was among their number.^[124] Alone, with a single native helper, Mr. Bums set out for Newchwang, his life and teachings so impressing the captain of the junk on which they travelled that he would take no fare from the man whose very presence seemed a blessing.

Then came the closing days, setting the seal of God's own benediction upon this life of singular devotion. Four months of earnest, pioneering work—preaching in English on Sundays to the handful of fellow-countrymen in the Settlement, and in Chinese all through the week in the native quarter in which he lived—and after that an illness, the result as it seemed of chill, brought the quiet, unexpected end.^[125]

Alone among the Chinese to the last, planting with his dying hand the standard of the Cross far afield amid the darkness, gathering round it those whose hearts the Lord had opened—a little company, loved, prayed for, taught, and comforted almost to his latest breath, who watching beside him as he passed through the valley learned not only how a Christian should live, but also how he can die—what could be more after the pattern of his whole life, more in keeping with his heart's desire?

As gazed the prophet on the ascending car,
Swept by its fiery steeds away, afar,
So with the burning tear and flashing eye,
I trace thy glorious pathway to the sky.

Lone like the Tishbite, as the Baptist bold,
Cast in a rare and apostolic mould
Earnest, unselfish, consecrated, true,
With nothing but the highest ends in view;
Choosing to toil in distant fields, unsown,
Contented to be poor and little known,
Faithful to death: Oh, man of God, well done!
Thy fight is ended and thy crown is won.
God shall have all the glory. Only grace
Made thee to differ. Let us man abase.
Deep with emphatic tone, thy dying word,
Thy last was this: "Thine is the kingdom, Lord,
The power and glory." Thus the final flame
Of the burnt offering to Jehovah's Name
Ascended from the altar. Life thus given
To God, must have its secret springs in heaven.
Oh, William Burns, we will not call thee dead!
Though lies thy body in its narrow bed
In far-off China. Though Manchuria keeps
Thy dust, which in the Lord securely sleeps,
Thy spirit lives with Jesus; and where He
Thy Master dwells, 'tis meet that thou shouldst be.

There is no death in His divine embrace;
There is no life but where they see His face.
And now, Lord, let Thy servant's mantle fall
Upon another. Since Thy solemn call
To preach the Truth in China has been heard,
Grant that a double portion be conferred
Of the same spirit on the gentler head
Of some Elisha—who may raise the dead
And fill the widow's cruse, and heal the spring,
And make the desolate of heart to sing;
And stand, though feeble, fearless, since he knows
Thy hosts angelic guard him from his foes;
Whose life an image fairer still may be
Of Christ of Nazareth and Galilee,
Of Thine, oh, spotless Lamb of Calvary!
China, I breathe for thee a brother's prayer,
Unnumbered are thy millions. Father, hear
The groans we cannot. Oh, Thine arm make bare,
And reap the harvest of salvation there.
The fulness of the Gentiles, like a sea
Immense, oh, God, be gathered unto Thee.

Then Israel save, and with His saintly train,
Send us Immanuel over all to reign.

H. GRATTAN GUINNESS, D.D.

Part VI[\(TOC\)](#)

Ning-Po and Settled Work

1856-1860. AET. 24-28

Chapter XXXI

My Thoughts are not your Thoughts

July-August 1856. AET. 24

A BRIEF absence was all that Hudson Taylor anticipated when he parted from Mr. Burns in Swatow. He was badly needing change while the hot season lasted, and this journey to fetch his medicines fitted in very well with the plans they had in view. What was his surprise and distress, therefore, to learn upon reaching Shanghai that the premises of the London Mission had been visited by fire and that his medical outfit left there for safety was entirely destroyed.

What could it mean? Why had it been permitted? Never had he needed these belongings more. Everything in Swatow seemed to depend upon the medical work they were now in a position to undertake-and Mr. Burns was alone waiting for him.

But what was the use of returning without medicines? And where was a new supply to come from, or the means to obtain them? Purchase in Shanghai he could not, on account of the extravagantly high prices of imported articles, and six or eight months might be required before they would reach him from home. It was a difficult position, and the young missionary, as he tells us, was more disposed to say with Jacob, "All these things are against me," than to recognise with cheerful faith that "All things work together for good to them that love God."

"I had not then learned," he records, "to think of God as the One Great Circumstance in whom we live and move and have

our being, and of all lesser circumstances as necessarily the kindest, wisest, best, because either ordered or permitted by Him. Hence my disappointment and, trial were very great."

The only thing was to write and tell Mr. Burns what had happened, and to put off his return until he could go to Ning-po and see what Dr. Parker could do to help them. If he could spare a small supply of medicines to go on with, they might still be able to begin work as soon as the great heat was over. So in the hope of retrieving his losses, Hudson Taylor set out for the neighbouring city.

And then a whole set of new difficulties began. Three or four days under ordinary circumstances would have taken him to Dr. Parker, but on this occasion he found himself ***three weeks after he first started*** no nearer his destination than at the beginning. True he had made the trip as much of an evangelistic journey as possible, preaching and distributing literature along the first part of the way. But this was not the reason of his ending up where he began, penniless and destitute, without having reached Ning-po at all or communicated with Dr. Parker.

"It is interesting to notice," he wrote long after, "the various events which united in the providence of God in preventing my return to Swatow and ultimately led to my settling in Ning-po and making that the centre for the development of future labours."

But during this trying summer and the many unsettled months that followed, the young missionary was sorely perplexed to understand the way divine providence was taking in the ordering of his affairs. Life turns at times on a small pivot, and in looking back one is startled to realise the importance of what seemed a very little thing.

How could Hudson Taylor have imagined, for example, that the robbery that

left him in such distress upon this journey was to result in the deliverance of the entire Mission he was yet to found, during a period of financial danger? How could he suppose that the upset of all his plans and the severance of a partnership in service more precious than any he had ever known was to prove the crowning blessing of his life on the human side, bringing him into association and at last union with the one of all others most suited both to him and his work?

But so it is God leads. His hand is on the helm. We *are* being guided, even when we feel it least. The closed door is as much His Providence as the open, and equally for our good and the accomplishment of His own great ends. And one learns at last that it is not what we set ourselves to do that really tells in blessing so much as what He is doing through us, when we least expect it, if only we are in abiding fellowship with Him.

"There was no water beyond Shih-mun-wan," he wrote in relating the latter part of this journey, ^[126] "so I paid off my boat, hired coolies to carry my things as far as Ch'ang-an, and before sunrise we were on the way. I walked on ahead leaving my servant to follow with the men, who made frequent stoppages to rest, and on reaching the city of Shih-men I waited for them in a tea-shop outside the North Gate. The coolies came on very slowly and seemed weary when they arrived. I soon found that they were opium-smokers, so that although they had only carried between them a load that a strong man would think nothing of taking three times the distance they were really tired.

"After rice, tea and an hour's rest, including, I doubt not, a smoke of the opium-pipe, they were a little refreshed, and I proposed moving on that we might get on to Ch'ang-an before the sun became too powerful. My servant, however, had a friend in the city and proposed that we should spend the day

there and go on the following morning. To this of course I objected, wishing to reach Hai-ning (the point of embarkation for Ning-po) that night if possible. ... We therefore set off, entered the North Gate, and had passed through about a third of the city when the coolies stopped to rest saying they would be unable to carry the burden on to Ch'ang-an. Finally they agreed to take it to the South Gate, where they were to be paid in proportion to the distance they had travelled, and my servant undertook to call other coolies and come along with them.

"I walked on before as in the first instance, and the distance being only about four miles soon reached Ch'ang-an and waited their arrival, meanwhile engaging coolies for the rest of the journey to Hai-ning. Having waited a long time I began to wonder at the delay, and at length it became too late to finish the journey to Hai-ning that night. I felt somewhat annoyed, and but that my feet were blistered and the afternoon very hot I should have gone back to meet them and urge them on. At last I concluded that my servant must have gone to his friend, and would not appear until evening. But evening came, and still there was no sign of them.

"Feeling very uneasy, I began diligently to inquire whether they had been seen.

"'Are you a guest from Shih-mun-wan,' a man at last responded."

"I answered in the affirmative.

"'Are you going to Hai-ning?'

"'That is my destination.'

"Then your things have gone on before you. For I was sitting in a tea-shop when a coolie came in, took a cup of tea, and set off for Hai-ning in a great hurry, saying that the bamboo box

and bed he carried, just such as you describe yours to have been, were from Shih-mun and he had to take them to Hai-ning to-night, where he was to be paid at the rate of ten cash a pound.'

"From this I concluded that my goods were on before me; but it was impossible to follow them at once, for I was too tired to walk and it was already dark.

"Under these circumstances all I could do was to seek a lodging for the night, and no easy task I found it. After raising my heart to God to ask His aid, I walked through to the farther end of the town, where I thought the tidings of a foreigner's being in the place might not have spread, and looked out for an inn. I soon came to one and went in, hoping that I might pass unquestioned. ... Asking the bill of fare, I was told that cold rice-which proved to be more than 'rather burnt'-and snakes fried in lamp-oil were all that could be had. Not wishing any question to be raised as to my nationality, I ordered some and tried to make a meal, but with little success.

"While thus engaged I remarked to the landlord,

"I suppose I can arrange to spend the night here?"

To which he replied in the affirmative. But bringing out his book, he added

"In these unsettled times we are required by the authorities to keep a record of our lodgers. May I ask your respected family name?"

"My unworthy name is Tai,' I responded;

"And your honourable second name?"

"My humble name is Ia-koh' (James)."

"What an extraordinary name! I never heard it before. How

do you write it?"

"I told him, and added, 'It is quite common in the district from which I come."

"And may I ask whence you come and whither you are going?"

"I am journeying from Shanghai to Ning-po, by way of Hangchow."

"What may be your honourable profession?"

"I heal the sick."

"Oh! you are a physician,' the landlord remarked, and to my intense relief closed the book. His wife, however, took up the conversation.

"You are a physician, are you? I am glad of that; for I have a daughter afflicted with leprosy, and if you will cure her you shall have your supper and bed for nothing."

"I was curious enough to inquire what my supper and bed were to cost if paid for, and to my amusement found they were worth less than three-halfpence of our money.

"Being unable to benefit the girl I declined to prescribe for her, saying that leprosy was a very intractable disease and that I had no medicines with me.

"But the mother brought pen and paper, urging, 'You can at least write a prescription, which will do no harm if it does no good.'

"This I also declined to do, and requested to be shown my bed. I was conducted to a very miserable room on the ground-floor where on some boards raised upon two stools I passed the night, without bed or pillow save my umbrella and shoe and without any mosquito netting. Ten or eleven other lodgers

were sleeping in the same room, so I could not take anything off for fear of its being stolen. But I was by no means too warm as midnight came on."

TUESDAY, August 5.

Early in the morning I rose, cold, weary and footsore, and I had to wait a long time ere there were any signs of breakfast. After this there was another delay before I could get change for the only dollar I had with me, in consequence of its being chipped in one or two places. More than three hundred cash also were deducted from its price on this account, which was a serious loss in my position.

I then sought throughout the town for tidings of my servant and coolies, as I thought it possible that they might have arrived later or have come on in the morning. The town is large, long and straggling, being nearly two miles from one end to the other, so this occupied some time. I gained no information, however, and footsore and weary set out for Hai-ning in the full heat of the day. The journey (about eight miles) took me a long time, but a half-way village afforded a resting-place and a cup of tea, of which I gladly availed myself. When about to leave again a heavy shower of rain came on, and the delay thus occasioned enabled me to speak a little to the people about the truths of the Gospel.

The afternoon was far spent before I approached the northern suburb of Hai-ning where I commenced inquiries, but nothing could I learn of my servant or belongings. I was told that outside the East Gate I should be more likely to hear of them, as it was there the sea-junks called. I therefore proceeded thither, and sought for them outside the Little East Gate, but in vain. Very weary I sat down in a tea-shop to rest, and while there a number of persons from one of the Mandarin's offices came in and made inquiries as to who I

was, where I had come from, etc. On learning the object of my search one of the men in the tea-shop said,

"A bamboo box and a bed, such as you describe, were carried past here about half an hour ago. The bearer seemed to be going toward either the Great East Gate or the South Gate. You had better go to the *hongs* there (business houses) and inquire."

I asked him to accompany me in my search, promising to reward him for his trouble, but he would not. Another man offered to go, however, and we set off, and both inside and outside the two gates made diligent inquiries, but in vain. I then engaged a man to make a thorough search, promising him a liberal reward if he should be successful. In the meantime I had something to eat and addressed a large concourse of people who had assembled.

When my messenger returned, having met with no success, I said to him:

"I am now quite exhausted. Will you help me find quarters for the night, and then I will pay you for your trouble?"

He was willing to befriend me, and we set off in search of lodgings. At the first place or two the people would not receive me, for though on our going in they were ready to do so, the presence of a man who followed us, and who I found was engaged in one of the Government offices, seemed to alarm them, and I was refused. We now went to a third place, and being no longer followed by the Mandarin's messenger we were promised quarters. Tea was brought and I paid the man who had accompanied me for his trouble.

Soon after he had left some official people came in. They did not stay long, but the result of their visit was that I was told I could not be entertained there that night. A young man present blamed them for their heartless behaviour and said

"Never mind: come with me, and if we cannot get better lodgings you shall sleep at our house."

I went with him, but we found the people of his house unwilling to receive me. Weary and footsore so that I could scarcely stand, I had again to seek quarters, and at length got a promise of some but a little crowd collecting about the door they desired me to go to a tea-shop and wait till the people had retired, or they would be unable to accommodate me. There was no help for it, so I went accompanied still by the young man and waited till past midnight. Then we left for the promised resting-place, but my conductor could not find it. He led me about to quite another part of the city, and finally between one and two o'clock he left me to pass the rest of the night as best I could.

I was opposite a temple but it was closed; so I lay down on the stone steps in front of it, and putting my money under my head for a pillow should soon have been asleep, in spite of the cold, had I not perceived a person coming stealthily towards me. As he approached I saw he was one of the beggars so common in China, and had no doubt his intention was to rob me of my money. I did not stir, but watched his movements, and looked to my Father not to leave me in this hour of trial. The man came up, looked at me for some time to assure himself that I was asleep (it was so dark that he could not see my eyes fixed on him), and then began to feel about me gently. I said to him in the quietest tone, but so as to convince him that I was not nor had been sleeping,

"What do you want?"

He made no answer, but went away.

I was thankful to see him go, and when he was out of sight put as much of my

cash as would not go into my pocket safely up my sleeve, and made my pillow of a stone projection of the wall. It was not long ere I began to dose, but I was aroused by the all but noiseless footsteps of two persons approaching; for my nervous system was rendered so sensitive by exhaustion that the slightest sound startled me. Again I sought protection from Him who alone was my stay, and lay still as before, till one of them came up and began to feel under my head for the cash. I spoke again, and they sat down at my feet. I asked them what they were doing. They replied that, like me, they were going to pass the night outside the temple. I then requested them to take the opposite side as there was plenty of room, and leave this side to me. But they would not move from my feet. So I raised myself up and set my back against the wall.

"You had better lie down and sleep," said one of them, "otherwise you will be unable to work to-morrow. Do not be afraid; we shall not leave you, and will see that no one does you harm."

"Listen to me," I replied. "I do not want your protection. I do not need it. I am not a Chinese, and I do not worship your vain idols. I worship God. He is my Father, and I trust in Him. I know well what you are and what are your intentions, and shall keep my eye on you and not sleep."

Upon this one of them went away, only to return with a third companion. I felt very uneasy but looked to God for help. Once or twice one of them came over to see if I was asleep.

"Do not be mistaken," I said, "I am not sleeping."

Occasionally my head dropped and this was a signal for one of them to rise. But I at once roused myself and made some remark. As the night slowly wore on, I felt very weary, and to keep myself awake as well as to cheer my mind I

sang several hymns, repeated aloud some portions of Scripture, and engaged in prayer ... to the annoyance of my companions, who seemed as if they would have given anything to get me to desist. After that they troubled me no more, and when shortly before dawn of day they left me I got a little sleep.

WEDNESDAY, August 6.

It was still quite early when I was awakened by the young man who had so misled me on the previous evening. He was very rude and insisted on my getting up and paying him for his trouble, even going so far as to try to accomplish by force what he wanted. This roused me, and in an unguarded moment, with very improper feeling, I seized his arm with a grasp he little expected and dared him to lay a finger on me again or to annoy me further. This quite changed his manner. He let me quietly remain till the guns announced the opening of the gates of the city, and then begged me to give him something to buy opium with. Needless to say this was refused. I gave him the price of two candles that he said he had burnt while with me last night, and no more. I afterwards learned he was connected with one of the Mandarin's offices.

As soon as possible I bought some rice gruel and tea for breakfast, and then once more made a personal search for my things. Some hours thus spent proving unavailing I set out on the return journey, and after a long, weary and painful walk reached Ch' ang-an about noon. Here also my inquiries failed to bring any trace of the missing goods; so I had a meal cooked in a tea-shop, got a thorough wash and bathed my inflamed feet, and after dinner rested and slept until four in the afternoon. I

Much refreshed I then set off to return to the city at the South Gate of which I had parted with my servant and coolies two days before. On the way I was led to reflect on the goodness of God, and recollected that I had not made it a

matter of prayer that I might be provided with lodgings last night. I felt condemned too that I should have been so anxious for my few things, while the many precious souls around me had caused so little concern. I came as a sinner and pleaded the blood of Jesus, realising that I was accepted in Him-pardoned cleansed, sanctified-and oh the love of Jesus, how great I felt it to be! I knew something more than I had ever known of what it was to be despised and rejected and have nowhere to lay one's head, and felt more than ever I had before the greatness of the love that induced Him to leave His home in glory and suffer thus for me-nay, to lay down His very life upon the Cross. I thought of Him as "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." I thought of Him at Jacob's well, weary, hungry and thirsty, yet finding it His meat and drink to do His Father's will, and contrasted this with my littleness of love. I looked to Him for pardon for the past and for grace and strength to do His will in the future, to tread more closely in His footsteps and to be more than ever wholly His. I prayed for myself, for friends in England and for my brethren in the work. Sweet tears of mingled joy and sorrow flowed freely; the road was almost forgotten; and before I was aware I had reached my destination. Outside the South Gate I took a cup of tea, asked about my lost luggage and spoke of the love of Jesus. Then I entered the city, and after many vain inquiries left it by the North Gate.

I felt so much refreshed both in mind and body by the communion I had on my walk to the city that I thought myself able to finish the remaining six miles back to Shih-mun-wan that evening. First I went into another tea-shop to buy some native cakes, and was making a meal of them when who should come in but one of the identical coolies who had carried my things the first stage. From him I learned that after I left them they had taken my luggage to the South Gate. There my servant went away, saying on his return that I had

gone on, that he did not intend to start at once, but would spend the day with his friend and then rejoin me. They carried the things to the friend's house and left them there. I got him to go with me to the house, and there learned that my servant had spent the day and night with them and next morning had set off for Hang-chow. This was all I could gather, so unable to do anything but proceed on my return journey to Shanghai with all expedition, I left the city. It was now too late to go on to Shih-mun-wan. I looked to my Father as able to supply all my need, and received another token of His ceaseless love and care being invited to sleep on a hong-boat, now dry in the bed of the river,

THURSDAY, August 7.

The night was again very cold and the mosquitoes troublesome. Still I got a little rest, and at sunrise was up and able to continue my journey. I felt very ill at first and had a sore throat, but reflected on the wonderful goodness of God in enabling me to bear the heat by day and the cold by night for so long, I felt also quite a load taken off my mind. I had committed myself and my affairs to the Lord, and knew that if it was for my good and for His glory my things would be restored. If not, all would be for the best, I hoped that the most trying part of my journey was now drawing to a close, and this helped me, footsore and weary, on the way.

When I got to Shih-mun-wan and had breakfasted, I found I had still eight hundred and ten cash in hand. I knew that the fare by passenger-boat to Ka-shing was one hundred and twenty cash, and thence to Shanghai three hundred and sixty, which would leave me just three hundred and thirty cash (twelve pence and a fraction) for three or four days' provisions. I went at once to the boat-office, but to my dismay found that goods had been delayed owing to the dry state of the river, and that no boat would leave to-day and

perhaps none to-morrow. I inquired if there were no letter-boats for Ka-shing, and was told that they had already left. The only remaining resource was to ascertain if any private boats were going in which I could obtain a passage. My search, however, was in vain; and I could get no boat to take me all the way to Shanghai, or my difficulty would have been at an end.

Just at this juncture I saw before me, at a turn in the canal, a letterboat going in the direction of Ka-shing. This I concluded must be one of the Ka-shing boats that had been detained, and I set off after it as fast as hope and the necessities of the case would carry me. For the time being weariness and sore feet were alike forgotten, and after a chase of about a mile I overtook it.

"Are you going to Ka-shing Fu?" I called out.

"No," was the only answer.

"Are you going in that direction?"

"No."

"Will you give me a passage as far as you do go that way?"

Still "No," and nothing further.

Completely discouraged and exhausted, I sank down on the grass and fainted away.

As consciousness returned some voices reached my ear, and I found they were talking about me.

"He speaks pure Shanghai dialect," said one and from their own speech I knew them to be Shanghai people.

Raising myself I saw that they were on a large hong-boat on the other side of

the canal, and after a few words they sent their small boat to fetch me and I went on board the junk. They were very kind and gave me tea, and when I was refreshed and able to partake of it some food also. I then took off my shoes and stockings to ease my feet, and the boatman kindly provided hot water with which to bathe them. When they heard my story and saw the blisters on my feet they evidently pitied me, and hailed every boat that passed to see if it was going my way. Not finding one, after a few hours sleep I went ashore with the captain intending to preach in the temple of the God of War.

Before leaving the junk I told the captain and those on board that I was now unable to help myself; that I had not strength to walk to Ka-shing Fu, and having been disappointed in getting a passage to-day I should no longer have sufficient means to take me there by letterboat, an expensive mode of travelling; that I knew not how God would help me, but that I had no doubt He would do so, and that my business now was to serve Him where I was. I also told them that the help which I knew would come ought to be an evidence to them of the truth of the religion which I and the other missionaries in Shanghai preached.

On our way to the town, engaged in conversation with the captain, we saw a letter-boat coming up. The captain drew my attention to it, but I reminded him that I had no longer money enough to pay for my passage. He hailed it nevertheless, and found that they were going to a place about nine miles from Shanghai, whence one of the boatmen would carry the mails overland to the city.

"This gentleman is a foreigner from Shanghai," he then said, "who has been robbed and has no longer the means of returning. If you will take him with you as far as you go, and then engage a sedan-chair to carry him the rest of the way, he will pay you in Shanghai. You see my boat is now lying aground

for want of water and cannot get away. I will stand surety, and if this gentleman does not pay you when you get to Shanghai I will do so on your return."

Those on the letter-boat agreeing to the terms, I bade farewell to my kind friend and was taken on board as a passenger. As I lay down in the bottom of the boat how soft the planks felt, and how thankful I was to be on the way to Shanghai once more!

Long and narrow in build, these letter-boats are very limited as to their inside accommodation, and one has to lie down all the while they are in motion, as a slight movement might upset them. This was no inconvenience to me, however. On the contrary, I was only too glad to be quiet. They are the quickest boats I have seen in China. Each one is worked by two men who relieve one another continuously day and night. They row with their feet and paddle with their hands, or if the wind is quite favourable, row with their feet and with one hand manage a small sail, while steering with the other.

The ninety *li*^[127] to Ka-shing Fu were soon passed, and shortly after dark we again left the city-letters having been received and delivered by one of the men, while the other prepared our evening meal.

FRIDAY, August 8.

Morning found us at Ka-shan, and while letters were being attended to I went on shore, had my head shaved, and addressed the people who assembled. We then Breakfasted and got off. In the afternoon we reached Sung-kiang, and here again I had a good time preaching in an unfrequented quarter.

SATURDAY, August 9, 1856.

About 8 A.M. reached Shanghai and the hospitable abode of Mr. Wylie of the

London Mission, completing a journey full of mercies though not unmixed with trial. Never since I have been in China have I had such opportunities for preaching the Gospel, and though the termination was far from what I desired it has been greatly blessed to me, and I trust the Word preached and distributed may bear fruit to the glory of God.

Chapter XXXII^(TOC)

Who Shutteth and no Man Openeth

August October 1856. AET. 24

AND now the question arose as to what was to be done about the servant who had made off, apparently, with Mr. Taylor's belongings. There was just a possibility that official interference might lie at the root of the matter, and that Yoh-hsi was in detention in one of the Yamens. Before concluding therefore that he had acted dishonestly a messenger was sent to make careful inquiries. But it soon transpired that the case was one of deliberate robbery, Yoh-hsi's own letters bringing the final proof. For the recovery of the property it would not have been difficult to institute legal proceedings, and Mr. Taylor was strongly urged to secure the punishment of the thief; but the more he thought about it the more he shrank from anything of the sort.

Yoh-hsi was one whose salvation he had earnestly sought, and to hand him over to cruel, rapacious underlings who would only be too glad to throw him into prison that he might be squeezed of the last farthing would not have been in keeping, he felt, with the spirit of the Gospel. Finally concluding that his soul was worth more than the forty pounds worth of things he had stolen, Mr. Taylor decided to pursue a very different course.

"So I have sent him a plain, faithful letter," he wrote in the middle of August, "to the effect that we know his guilt, and what its consequences might be to himself; that at first I had considered handing over the matter to the Ya-men, but remembering Christ's command to return good for evil I had not done so, and did not wish to injure a hair of his head.

"I told him that he was the real loser, not I; that I freely forgave him, and besought him more earnestly than ever to flee from the wrath to come. I also added that though it was not likely he would give up such of my possessions as were serviceable to a Chinese, there were among them foreign books and papers that could be of no use to him but were valuable to me, and that those at least he ought to send back.

"If only his conscience might be moved and his soul saved, how infinitely more important that would be than the recovery of all I have lost. Do pray for him."

In course of time, and far away in England, this letter came into hands for which it had never been intended. Mr. George Muller of Bristol, founder of the well-known Orphan Homes, read it with thankfulness to God, finding in the circumstances an exemplification of the teachings of the Lord Himself. His sympathies were drawn out to the young missionary who had acted in what he felt to be a Christ-like spirit, and from that time Hudson Taylor had an interest in his prayers.

But more than this. As soon as the incident became known to him, he sent straight out to China a sum sufficient to cover Mr. Taylor's loss, continuing thereafter to take a practical share in his work, until in a time of special need he was used of God as the principal channel of support to the China Inland Mission. And all this grew out of one little act, as it might seem, of loyalty to the Master at some personal cost. Only there are no little acts when it is a question of faithfulness to God. And it was just his simple adherence, in every detail, to Scriptural principles that gradually inspired confidence in Hudson Taylor and his methods, and won for the Mission the support of spiritually minded people in many lands.

This matter settled, it only remained to set out once more to obtain from Dr.

Parker the supplies needed for the medical work at Swatow. This time the journey was accomplished in safety; and, just before setting out Mr. Taylor was encouraged by an unexpected letter that relieved him of what might have been financial embarrassment. For he had declined the generous offer of fellow-missionaries in Shanghai to subscribe towards replacing the most necessary things he had lost. Their own resources as he knew were none too ample, and he felt sure the Lord would provide without drawing upon the little they could spare. The sale of furniture left at the South Gate brought in something, and then-how wonderful it seemed-just as he was starting came this letter that had been eight or ten weeks on the way

"Please accept the enclosed," it said, "as a token of love from myself and my dear wife." Arm the enclosed was a cheque for no less than forty pounds from Mr. and Mrs. Berger.

Posted long before Mr. Taylor had left Swatow, it arrived by the very first mail after the robbery: for the promise still holds good, "It shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear."^[128]

"The City of the Peaceful Wave" in which the young missionary now found himself proved even more interesting on this occasion than on his previous visit.^[129] Then an attack of illness had obliged him to seek the cooler air of the hills. Now though it was again summer he was able to throw himself heartily into all that was going on, prepared by the experiences of another year in China more fully to appreciate both the missionaries and their work. Never before had he realised the comfort and advantage of labouring among comparatively friendly people, not embittered against the missionary simply on account of his being a foreigner. Although there was of course the usual ignorance and superstition in Ning-po, and at times much anti-foreign

feeling, there was also a large element of interest and even inquiry about the Gospel. And then the missionaries themselves-how delightful to be in the midst of so united and efficient a community!

In point of time the two American Missions had the priority, as well as in strength of numbers; and an interesting feature in connection both with them and with the Church Missionary Society was that the pioneers were all still on the field, men rich in experience and devotion.

Dr. Macgowan, for example, of the American Baptist Union, was still the leader of their important mission, and with Miss Aldersey divided the honour of having been first to settle permanently in Ning-po. With him were now associated Dr. Lord and the Rev. M. J. Knowlton. Living outside the city wall, these brethren carried on wellorganised and extensive operations, extending as far as the island of Chusan, in which they had several converts.

Across the river from this group lived Dr. Parker and his friendly neighbours the American Presbyterians. Splendidly manned from the first, this mission was still represented by its founder, Dr. McCartee, and a group of younger men destined to make their mark in China—including Messrs. Way and Rankin, Dr. W. A. P. Martin,^[130] and the late beloved Dr. Nevius.

Within the city itself, enclosed by the five-mile circuit of its ancient wall, lived the pioneers of the Church Missionary Society, and Miss Aldersey, with her young companions. From the Taoist Monastery, with its surrounding moat, Messrs. Cobbold and Russell had moved as occasion required into school and chapel buildings in various parts of the city, and with their colleague the Rev. F. F. Gough had established themselves in the affections of the people.

So also had Miss Aldersey and her fellow-workers, the only unmarried ladies

in that missionary circle. In a large native house in the southern part of the city they were carrying on, it will be remembered, the first girls' school ever established by Protestant missionaries in China.^[131]

"It was a model institution," wrote Dr. W. A. P. Martin, with the interest of a contemporary and friend.^[132] For three years at her request I ministered to the Church in her house, and I cherish a vivid impression of the energy displayed by that excellent woman, notwithstanding a feeble frame and frequent ailments. The impression she made on the Chinese whether Christian or pagan was profound, the latter firmly believing that as England was ruled by a woman so Miss Aldersey had been delegated to be the head of our foreign community. The 'British Consul, they said, invariably obeyed her commands.

"Several shocks of earthquake having alarmed the people, they imputed the disturbance to Miss Aldersey's magic power, alleging that they had seen her mount the city-wall before dawn of day, and open a bottle in which she kept confined certain strong spirits which proceeded to shake the pillars of the earth.

No wonder they thought so! The only wonder is that they did not burn or stone her as a witch. Her strange habits could not but suggest something uncanny. The year round she was accustomed to walk on the city-wall at five o'clock in the morning, and with such undeviating punctuality that in winter she was preceded by a man bearing a lantern. A bottle she carried in her hand did really contain 'strong spirits,' spirits of hartshorn, which she constantly used to relieve headache and as an antidote for ill odours. In summer, unwilling to leave her school for the seaside, she would climb to the ninth storey of a lofty pagoda and sit there through the long hours of the afternoon, sniffing the wind that came from the sea. At such times she was always accompanied by some of her pupils, so that her work was not for a moment suspended. So

parsimonious was she of time that she even had them read to her while she was taking her meals.

"Many indeed ... are the households that call Miss Aldersey blessed, and I can truly say that in the long list of devoted women who, have laboured in and for China, I know no nobler name than hers."

Scarcely less interesting than Miss Aldersey, if one may venture to say so, were the young sisters Burella and Maria Dyer who so ably filled their place as self-supporting workers in the school. Born under the tropical sun of the Straits Settlements and brought up in a missionary home, theirs had been an inheritance of no ordinary kind. Their father, one of the earliest agents of the London Missionary Society, came of a family in Government service,^[133] and was educated at Cambridge for the English Bar. Burning with love to Christ he had left all to go as a missionary to China, "The Gibraltar of Heathenism," almost as unknown in those days as it was inaccessible. Unable to effect a landing upon its shores, he had devoted himself for sixteen years to work among the Chinese in and near Singapore, and especially to the perfecting of a process by which the Word of God might go where the missionary could not, and the printed page be produced with a facility impossible before.^[134] In this task he had been prospered, and though cut off by fatal illness just after the opening of the Treaty Ports when he with many another was rejoicing in freedom to enter the land for which they had so long prayed and laboured—Samuel Dyer possesses more than a missionary grave upon its shores, the first to mark that great advance.

Acting as Secretary to the General Missionary Conference, the first ever held on Chinese soil, Mr. Dyer spent a week or more at Hong-kong in August 1843.

"From my windows," he wrote to his wife in Singapore,^[135] "I

*look across to the lofty summits of the Chinese hills.... The sight is almost overwhelming. In my happiest moments just two thoughts seem to concentrate every longing of my heart. One is that the name of Jesus may be glorified in China, and the other that you and I and each of our dear children ... may live only to assist in bringing this to pass.... Cease to feel the intensest interest in the spiritual prosperity of China I never can, while this bosom has a heart to feel. Cease to serve the cause of Christ among the Gentiles I never may, while I have head and hands to work. ... I am as happy as I can be without you, though nothing can compensate for the absence of one who is the joy of my heart.... Still, I am about my Father's business. And if I may but do something for the evangelisation of that benighted land, come sorrow, come joy, come grief, come delight, ally **all** shall be welcome for the love I bear to Him Who bled on the mount of Calvary."*

And though even then his work was done, and a few weeks later he was laid to rest beside Morrison in the little lonely churchyard at Macao, that spirit still lived on—both in the son, whose life was subsequently given to China, and in the daughters who had already been several years with Miss Aldersey. With an exceptionally good knowledge of the Ning-po vernacular these young missionaries were as efficient as they were beloved, and added not a little to the brightness of the foreign community.

Such then was the circle into which Hudson Taylor was introduced for the second time by this visit, and greatly must he have rejoiced to see the value set upon his former colleague by its members. Welcomed in a most generous spirit, Dr. Parker had been successful in building up a practice among the foreign residents, the proceeds of which he devoted entirely to his Medical Mission. Rapidly acquiring the local dialect, in spite of every hindrance to study, he had made the spiritual care of the patients his first work. In this he was assisted by both English and American missionaries, who took in turn to

preach in the dispensary (in which nine thousand patients received treatment within the first twelve months) and to visit the temporary hospital.

When as was not infrequently the case these labours resulted in blessing, the converts were free to join any of the Churches, Dr. Parker declining to influence them and making it very clear that his sympathies were with all. At the time of Mr. Taylor's visit he was rejoicing in the conversion of a man whose baptism in connection with the C.M.S. had taken place the week before, and was full of thankfulness also for a forward step in the interests of his projected buildings.

With money contributed in Ning-po he had been enabled to purchase a site on the city-side of the river. And such a site—open, central, commanding, on the brink of the great water-way and close to the Salt Gate with its constant stream of traffic. A better position could hardly have been found for the permanent hospital, and already the energetic doctor was having the ground levelled for building operations.

All this, of course, was deeply interesting to the visitor from Swatow who was expecting to return to such very different scenes.

"I am now enjoying a season of rest with the friends here," he wrote early in September. "It must be of short duration, however, for long repose begets indolence and weakness, and ill becomes a soldier of the Cross. To me it would be very pleasant to remain on here or at Shanghai, among more civilised and friendly people than we have in Swatow. But my call is to a more arduous post; and, in my dear devoted brother Mr. Burns I have an inestimable companion whom I shall rejoice to meet again.

"I sometimes wonder whether I shall ever be settled, and long for permanent work and a partner to share all my joys and

sorrows. I think in His own time I shall be so circumstanced. The Lord knows. But the only true rest is in following Jesus 'whithersoever He goeth'; the only satisfaction is in labouring for and with Him. And while one longs for quiet, even now after a week of it I am eager to be at work again, telling of His surpassing love, His glorious redemption."

And work he did with all his usual energy in spite of summer heat. Careful attention to the peculiarities of local speech soon enabled him to make himself understood even by Ning-po people, and there were so many strangers settled there from other 'places that he found all the dialects he knew of service.

"The weather is very warm," he continued a little later, "nevertheless I have been twice in the country, once with Mr. Jones to Tse-ki and once with Mr. Quarterman to Chin-hai Hsien, ... To-day I have been to a small village a mile or two away with Mr. Jones. He took some Portuguese Testaments and found three men able to read them, a Singapore man also who could read English and to whom he gave a Bible; while I had an attentive audience to whom I told of pardon, peace and heaven through the once-offered sacrifice of Jesus, leaving with them a number of Chinese tracts and Scriptures.

"Oh what an abundant harvest may soon be reaped here! The fields are white ... and so extensive round us ... but the labourers are few! I do thank God that he has given me such opportunities.... I have met with a good many even from Formosa with whom I have been able to speak of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I sometimes wish I had twenty bodies, that in twenty places at once I might publish the saving Name of Jesus."

The place where the need was greatest, however, had for him the strongest claim, and before the month was over he was ready to return to Mr. Bums at

Swatow. Dr. Parker had fitted him out' with medicines, the cost of which had no doubt been covered by Mr. Berger's recent gift, and much benefited by his change of work and surroundings Mr. Taylor was just setting out for Shanghai when a delay arose. Mr. and Mrs. Way of the Presbyterian Mission had to take the journey too. They would have little children with them, and travelling is always so precarious if Mr. Taylor could wait a day or-two, they would hurry their preparations for the sake of joining his party. He was already escorting Mr. Jones and his little son, newlyarrived members of his own Mission, and it would mean a great deal to the Ways to travel in their company.

Regretting the delay but having no reason against it Hudson Taylor waited, and almost a week went by before the final start could be made. And when they did get away the journey proved specially trying. For the winds were against them, which made the actual travelling tedious, and serious illness in the party caused Mr. Taylor much anxiety. His colleague Mr. Jones, to whom he had become sincerely attached during the weeks spent together at Dr. Parker's, developed a painful malady, and as the child was ill too it meant constant nursing.

Early in October they reached their destination, and thankfully exchanged the draughty boat for a missionary home in which they were received as paying guests. And then, having discharged his commissions and handed over the patients to the care of Dr. Lockhart, it only remained for Hudson Taylor to put his things on board the vessel that was taking him to Swatow.

Recent letters from that port made him feel afresh how much he was needed. Though not expecting him back till the great heat was over, Mr. Burns had been sorely missing him, and was now daily awaiting news of his return to take up the work they had planned for the winter. Providentially as it seemed

Captain Bowers was again in Shanghai, on the eve of sailing, and cordially welcomed the young missionary as his passenger. So with as little delay as possible Hudson Taylor sent his belongings on board the Geelong and prepared to leave Shanghai, it might be permanently.

And then the unexpected happened. A letter from the South coming to one of the members of the London Mission made him go hurriedly in search of Hudson Taylor.

"If he has not started," wrote Mr. Burns, "please inform him at once of this communication."

It was to the effect that all they had looked forward to in Swatow was at an end for the time being, Mr. Burns having been arrested in the interior and sent to Canton. Happily he had escaped summary punishment at the hands of the Chinese, but in all probability it would be long before he could return to the district from which he had been ejected.

It was Thursday morning, October 9. The Geelong was sailing in a few hours for Swatow, and all his things were on board. What could be the meaning of these tidings? Mr. Burns imprisoned and sent to Canton? The native helpers still in confinement, wearing the terrible cangue and in danger of their lives? The mission-premises empty? The British authorities unwilling that they should return?

Almost dazed, it all came over him. First one check and then another; medicines destroyed, robbery and all it had entailed, visit to Ning-po, delay in getting away, tedious return journey, and now at the last moment a closed door, nothing but a closed door and a dear, sick brother waiting to be taken back to the city from which they had come.

Yes, there was no question but to go. But what about Mr. Burns? Could it be

that all they had looked forward to was not of the Lord?

"Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, This is the way, walk ye in it" ...

But for the moment the path that had seemed so clear before them was lost in strange uncertainty.

Chapter XXXIII^(TOC)

By a Way that they Knew Not

October 1856-May 1857. ART. 24-25

IT still stands, that little house on the Wu-Family Bridge Street in which Hudson Taylor made his Ning-po home. To reach this somewhat retired spot one crosses the broad river from the Settlement, and enters the city by the Salt Gate on the east. Thence a walk of rather over a mile through the principal streets leads to the neighbourhood of the Lakes, between the ancient Pagoda and the southwest corner of the city wall. Here a small stone bridge over one of the many canals gives access to a narrow thoroughfare, at the end of which another bridge spans the junction of two large sheets of water, the Sun and Moon Lakes respectively. From the slightly elevated arch of either of these bridges one can look down the little street, and watch the tide of life that eddies in and out of its temple, shops, and homes.

And there on the left, after crossing the canal, stood and still stands the low two-storied building-just an ordinary shop in front and a little yard behind-destined to become the first home and preaching-station of the China Inland Mission. Dr. Parker was using the premises that winter for a boys' school and a dispensary, and was glad to let his former colleague do what he could with the spacious attic above.

"I have a distinct remembrance," said Hudson Taylor many years later, "of tracing my initials on the snow which during the night had collected on my coverlet in the large barnlike

upper room, now divided into four or five smaller ones each of which is comfortably ceiled. The tiling of a Chinese house may keep off the rain, if it happens to be sound, but does not afford so good a protection against snow, which will beat up through crannies and crevices and find its way within. But however unfinished may have been its fittings, the little house was well adapted for work among the people, and there I thankfully settled, finding ample scope for service, morning, noon, and night."

The only other foreigners in the southern part of the city were Miss Aldersey with her helpers, and Mr. and Mrs. Jones of his own Mission. The latter had rented an unoccupied house belonging to the American Presbyterians, semi-foreign in style, and were doing their best to acquire the language and adapt themselves to the life of the people. ^[136]

Upon making their home at ***Fu-zin*** they had been visited by quite a number of Mandarins and other persons of influence, as well as by hundreds of poorer neighbours. These visits had to be returned as far as possible, and with three little children to take care of as well as the language to study, Mrs. Jones found her hands more than full.

Busy as he was in his own comer, almost a mile away, Hudson Taylor made time to go over, frequently to the help of his friends, and the more he saw of them the more he was impressed by their devotion and sweetness of spirit. With his assistance, Mr. Jones was soon able to begin regular meetings, and many were the preaching excursions they made both in and around the city.

Meanwhile Mrs. Jones, too, had found a helper in the younger of the sisters associated with Miss Aldersey at ***Siao-kao-tsiang***. When the new family came to settle near them, this bright attractive girl laid herself out to be useful to the busy mother. As often as possible they went visiting together, Miss

Dyer's perfect fluency in the language enabling her to make the most of such time as they could give to this work. Young as she was (not yet twenty), and much occupied with her school-classes, *Da-yia Ku-niang*^[137] could not be satisfied with anything less than soul-winning. With her, missionary work was not teaching the people merely, it was definitely leading them to Christ.

"That was what drew out my interest," said Hudson Taylor long after. "She was spiritually-minded, as her work proved. Even then she was a true missionary."

For it could not but be that the young Englishman living alone on Bridge Street should meet Miss Dyer from time to time at the house of his friends, and it could not but be also that he should be attracted. She was so frank and natural that they were soon on terms of good acquaintance, and then she proved so like-minded in all important ways that, unconsciously almost to himself, she began to fill a place in his heart never filled before.

Vainly he strove against the longing to see more of her, and did his utmost to banish her image from his mind. He was deeply conscious of his call to labour in the interior, and felt that for such work he should be free from claims of wife and home. Besides, all was uncertain before him. In a few weeks or months the way might open for his return to Swatow. Was he not waiting daily upon the Lord for guidance, with the needs of that region still in view? And if it were not to be Southern China, it was his hope and purpose to undertake pioneering work nearer at hand, work that might at any time cost his life. No, it was not for him to cherish thoughts such as would rise unbidden as he looked into the face he loved. And yet he could not but look, strange to say, and long to look again.

And then arguments were not wanting along other lines that would array

themselves before him. What right had he to think of marriage, without a home, income, or prospect of any that he could ask her to share. Accredited agent of the C.E.S. though he was, it did not at all follow that they were to be depended upon for financial supplies. For months he had not drawn upon his Letter of Credit, knowing the Society to be in debt. Chiefly through the ministry of Mr. Berger, the Lord had supplied his needs. But this might not continue. It could not at any rate be counted on. And what would she say, and those responsible for her, to a life of faith in China, faith even for daily bread?

Yes, it was perfectly clear: he was in no position to think of marriage, and must subdue the heart-hunger that threatened at times to overwhelm him. And to a certain extent he was helped in turning his thoughts to other matters by events transpiring in the South.

For like a bolt out of the blue had come the sudden tidings that England was involved again in war with China. On the spot and on the spur of the moment we had fanned a tiny spark into a blaze, and the Chinese, all unconscious of results, had dared to disapprove and even resent our high-handed conduct. But this meant war, if war it could be called between combatants so unequal, and within fortyeight hours British guns were thundering at the gates of Canton.^[138]

All this had taken place earlier in the autumn, but it was only in the middle of November that the news began to reach the northern ports. When he first heard of it, and saw from the revengeful spirit of the Cantonese in Ning-po how they regarded the attack upon their native city, Hudson Taylor's first thought was for Mr. Burns. What a comfort that he was no longer at Swatow, exposed to the rage of that hot-headed southern people. Now at last a reason was manifest, not only for the removal of his friend, but also for his own

detention on the very eve of returning.

*"As you are aware," he wrote to his sister on November 16, "I have by various circumstances been detained in Ning-po, and a sufficient cause has at length appeared in the disturbances that have broken out in the South. The latest news we now have is that Canton has been bombarded for two days, a breach being made on the second, and that the British entered the city, the Viceroy refusing to give any satisfaction. We are anxiously waiting later and fuller accounts... I know not the merits of the present course of action ... and therefore forbear writing my thoughts about it. But I would just refer to the goodness of God in removing dear Mr. Burns **in time**, ... for if one may judge of the feelings of the Cantonese in Swatow by what one sees here at present, it would go hardly with any one at their mercy."*

But following on feelings of thankfulness for the escape of his friend would come sadder reflections as to the motive and the meaning of the war. He could not but know that for fourteen uneasy years^[139] England had been pressing China by every argument that could be devised, to legalise the importation of opium; that in spite of the refusal of the Emperor Tao-kwang to admit at any price "the flowing poison," the smuggling-trade had gone on growing in defiance of treaty rights; that one war having failed to bring the Chinese to our point of view, there had long been an inclination in certain quarters to bring on a second; and that although for the moment the British Admiral had suspended hostilities, the inevitable outcome of so one-sided a conflict must be the humiliation of China and the triumph of our opium-policy.

As to immediate results, they appeared for the moment to be in the other direction. The Cantonese, in the elation of their supposed victory over the British fleet, were trying high-handed measures against the hated foreigner.

They could not know that although Admiral Seymour had withdrawn from Canton, evacuating the dismantled forts along the river, Sir John Bowring had sent home for reinforcements, and that in spite of the condemning voice of a large majority in the British Parliament, the war would be adopted by the nation. They only saw their chance of retaliation, and very naturally made the most of it. Thus the British factories were set on fire at Canton, and a price put on the head of every foreigner. The chief baker at Hong-kong thought to help on the cause by introducing into his bread sufficient arsenic to poison the European community. Happily he miscalculated the amount required, and though four hundred of his victims suffered more or less seriously, in only one case was the result fatal.

All this of course raised a serious question: To what lengths would the revengeful spirit run? How about others ports and Settlements, and especially Ning-po with its large proportion of Cantonese? Hitherto they had contented themselves with threatenings merely; but would it, could it, continue so much longer?

Up to the end of the year all was quiet, and on Christmas Day Mr. Jones was able to write:

"The disturbances in the South do not appear to affect the people here in any evil way against us, though there are rumours among them that the Emperor has ordered us all to be expelled. This is probably without foundation, but it makes us realise what it would mean if we were suddenly required to leave. We are just beginning to feel at home amongst the people. Our hearts are drawn out to them in proportion as we know them, and we are longing to enter fully upon our work. Oh, that these threatened hindrances may be averted!"

Early in January, however, the hatred of the Cantonese began to take definite

form, and a plot was hatched for the destruction of all the foreigners in the city and neighbourhood. It was well known that in the C.M.S. house (Mr. Russell's), not far from the Salt Gate, a meeting was held every Sunday evening, attended by a large proportion of the European community, Consuls, merchants and missionaries. They were of course unarmed; and the plan was to surround the place on a given occasion and make short work of all present. A Mohammedan teacher who had once been employed by one of the missionaries was bought over to lead the assailants, and any foreigners who were not in the habit of attending the service were to be attacked and cut off simultaneously by the other parties.

"The sanction of the Tao-tai, the chief magistrate of the city," wrote Mr. Taylor, "was easily obtained; and nothing remained to hinder the execution of the plot, of which we were of course entirely in ignorance. A similar design against the Portuguese community was actually carried out a few months later, between fifty and sixty being massacred in open daylight.

"It so happened, however, that one of those in the conspiracy was anxious for the safety of a friend engaged in the service of the missionaries, and went so far as to warn him of coming danger and urge his leaving the employ of the foreigners. The servant at once made the matter known to his master, and thus the little community became aware of their peril. Realising the gravity of the situation, they determined to meet together at the house of one of their number to seek protection of the Most High, and to hide under the shadow of His wings. Nor did they thus meet in vain.

"At the very time we were praying the Lord was working. He led an inferior Mandarin, the Superintendent of Customs, to call upon the Tao-tai, and remonstrate with him upon the folly of permitting such an attempt, which he assured him would arouse foreigners in other places to come with armed forces,

avenge the death of their countrymen, and raze the city to the ground. The Tao-tai replied that when they came for that purpose he should deny all knowledge of or complicity in the plot, and so direct their vengeance against the Cantonese, who would in their turn be destroyed.

"'And thus,' he said, 'we shall get rid of both Cantonese^[140] and foreigners by one stroke of policy.'

"The Superintendent of Customs persistently assured him that such attempts at evasion would be useless; and finally the Tao-tai withdrew his permission and sent to the Cantonese prohibiting the attack.

"This took place, as we afterwards discovered, just at the time we were met together for special prayer and to commit the matter to the Lord. Thus again were we led to prove that:

Sufficient is His arm alone,

And our defence is sure.

But the Cantonese were not pacified. Prayer had for the moment prevailed; but such machinations might recur at any time, and the foreign community was so scattered and unprotected that the situation seemed one of special danger.

"The peril that threatened us," wrote Dr. Parker on the Both of January, "was so great, especially last week and this, that the merchants of the Settlement prepared for flight by keeping at single anchor the vessel on which their valuables had been stored. They and some others had their houses guarded by armed men; and after much prayer several missionaries, including Mr. Jones and myself, were led to send our wives and children to Shanghai."

One reason for this was that the great cold of winter was coming on, and, if

flight were left till the last moment, it might mean fatal exposure, especially to delicate children. The wildest rumours were everywhere afloat; and in the event of a general war with China, Shanghai might be the only port held by foreigners. It seemed desirable to secure accommodation there at once. And as it was accessible by regular steamer service, the removal could be accomplished without difficulty, and the return in the spring or summer would be equally simple.

Thus it was that Hudson Taylor, three months after settling in Ning-po, found himself called to move again. No one else seemed so free to escort the party, and his knowledge of the Shanghai dialect made it easy for him to do so. He could be just as useful in Shanghai as in Ning-po, an important consideration when the stay might be a long one.

Personally he would have given a good deal to have remained in Ning-po just then, if only to watch over the safety of the one he loved. For Miss Aldersey would not leave, and her young helpers decided to stay with her. She was just handing over her school, from the superintendence of which she felt it wise to retire, to the American Presbyterian Mission. A connection of the Misses Dyer had come over from Penang, and into her hands the sixty girls with all the school affairs had to be committed. It was no time for unnecessary changes; and, taking what precautions she could for her own safety and that of her charges, Miss Aldersey stayed to complete her work.

But to leave them then and so was no easy matter to Hudson Taylor. The elder of the sisters had recently become engaged to his friend Mr. Burdon, and seemed in consequence to have a special protector; but the younger was left all the more lonely, and claimed for that very reason a deeper love and sympathy from his heart. Of course, he dared not show it. He had no reason to think that it would be any comfort to her, and—was he not trying to forget?

So he suffered keenly as he left his little home on Bridge Street, not knowing if he would ever see it or her again.

Four and a half months followed, in which the young missionary was engrossed in work in his old surroundings. Living as before in one of the London Mission houses, he might almost have imagined himself back in the old days with Dr. Parker and his family. Only Chinese dress, seven months with William Burns, and the great love that had come to him changed everything for Hudson Taylor. Then, too, he was by this time quite an efficient missionary. Three years in China had given him a good hold of several dialects and considerable experience in work of various kinds. One of the chapels of the London Mission placed at his disposal gave him important opportunities for preaching, besides which he daily addressed large and changing audiences in the Temple of the City God. Returning regularly to these places he and Mr. Jones came to be known and expected, and many were the conversations held with interested inquirers.

"When I first heard you preach," said a young incense-maker, "I found what I was longing for." Illness and desperate troubles had almost driven him to suicide, and he had tried by becoming a devout vegetarian to obtain the consolations of "religion." This involved the recitation of endless prayers to Buddha, and burning incense before many idols.

"It did me no good, however," he continued. "I got no better, until in the temple-garden I heard about Jesus. But He just suits my case! ... If you had instructed me to be immersed in fire instead of in water, I should have desired it with all my heart."

During the first three months of their stay in Shanghai (February to April) Mr. Jones and his colleague gave away in connection with such work more

than seven hundred New Testaments, besides large numbers of Gospels and tracts. This meant hours and hours of conversation daily, for books were given only to those who could appreciate them, and they were keeping mainly to these two preachingstations, learning to value increasingly the steady, settled line of things that maintains its influence over the same hearers.

Meanwhile letters were reaching Hudson Taylor from Swatow, telling of the return of his dear and honoured friend, and the recommencement of work there with many tokens of encouragement. Mr. Burns wrote with all the old affection, anticipating a renewal of their partnership in service. But while rejoicing that Swatow was again occupied, and that Dr. De la Porte had undertaken the medical side of the work, Hudson Taylor had no longer any doubt as to his own relation to it. For him that door was closed. Again and again, while making it a matter of special prayer, hindrances had been put in the way of his return, until he had come to see that it was not of the Lord. That was enough. With him a question once settled in the faith and fear of God there was no reopening it. Throughout life it was one of his outstanding characteristics that he never went back on what had once been made clear to him as Divine guidance.

So the Swatow question was settled, hard though it must have been not to reconsider it in the light of Mr. Burns' letters, and the absence of any personal attraction toward remaining where he was.'

For their way was anything but easy at this time. During the whole period of their stay in Shanghai they were surrounded by suffering and distress of the most painful kind. Famine refugees from Nanking had poured into the city until there were thousands of destitute and starving persons added to the ranks of beggary. This meant that one never could go out without seeing

heart-rending scenes, which the conditions of life around them made it almost impossible to relieve.

Returning from the city one evening Mr. Jones and his companion, were distressed to find the body of a dead beggar lying by the roadside. The weather was bitterly cold, and he had slowly perished for lack of food and shelter. No one seemed to notice, no one seemed to care. It was a sight too common, alas! But the missionaries could bear it no longer.

"We took food with us," wrote Mr. Jones, "and sought out others. Many of these poor creatures ... have their dwelling literally among the tombs. Graves, here, are often simple arches, low, and from ten to twelve feet long. One end being broken through, they creep inside for shelter, specially at night... We found them in all stages of nakedness, sickness and starvation."

This led to earnest work on their behalf, to the comfort of many.

"In our search," wrote Mr. Taylor, "we came upon the remains of a house bearing witness to the troublous times through which Shanghai had passed. ... Affording some little shelter from the weather, it had been taken possession of by beggars, and in it we found a large number collected, some well and able to beg, others dying of starvation and disease. From this time we made regular visits to these poor creatures, and helped those who were unable to help themselves. We found, as is always the case, how difficult it is to care for body and soul at the same time. We did, nevertheless, as far as we were able, and I trust the seed sown was not without fruit in the salvation of souls."^[141]

Inwardly, too, it was a time of trial. A debt of over a thousand pounds burdened the Society to which they belonged, and burdened still more the consciences of Hudson Taylor and his companions. For some time he had

been corresponding with the secretaries on the subject, feeling that, unless a change could be made in the home-management, he would be obliged to withdraw from the service of the Society. This he was most reluctant to do, although the term of years agreed upon in his engagement had expired. He had even suggested that remittances should only be sent when there was money in hand, as he would far rather look to the Lord directly for supplies than draw upon borrowed money. But it seemed as though the Committee could not see anything wrong in their position, and for this reason especially he was much exercised about continuing his connection with them.

Not that he wished then or at any time to be "a free lance," independent of the support and control of others. But as he considered the practical working of things on the field, it was hard to see in what connection he could labour, seeing he was unordained and without a medical degree.

"I am not sanguine as to any other Society taking me," he wrote to his mother early in the spring: "but, as always, the Lord will provide."

It was in more personal matters, however, that the young missionary was specially cast upon God, through his deep and growing love for the one who he still felt could never be his. He had thought, he had in a sense hoped, that absence would enable him to forget; that his love for her would be more under control when she was out of sight. And now quite the reverse was the case. Silently but steadily it gained a stronger hold upon his inmost being. He had loved before in a more or less boyish way; but this was different. A light beyond the brightness of the sun had risen upon him. It flooded all his being. Everything he thought, felt and did seemed permeated with the sense of that other life—so much a part of his own. He could not separate himself in thought from her; and when most consciously near to God he felt the communion of her spirit, the longing for her presence most.

In everything she satisfied his mind and heart; not only embodying his ideal of womanly sweetness, but being herself devoted to the work to which his life was given. As one who having put his hand to the plough dared not look back, he could rest in the assurance that she would help and not hinder him in his special service. And yet the old question remained: How could he marry—with such prospects, such a future? And, if anything, more serious still—what would she say to it all?

Of her thoughts and feelings about him, if she had any, he knew nothing. She had always been kind and pleasant, but that she was to every one, with a sweetness of spirit that was unfailing. Apparently she did not wish to marry. Far more eligible men than he had failed to win her! What chance then could there be for one so poor and insignificant?

If any one had known, if there had been any one with whom he could have shared the hopes and fears within him, those first months in Shanghai would have been easier to bear; but it was not until the end of March, and through most unexpected circumstances, that the friends with whom he was living began to perceive the trouble of his heart. They had loved him from the first, and had been drawn very closely to him through their Shanghai experiences, but it was not until Mrs. Jones contracted smallpox among the people she was seeking to relieve, and had to hand over the care of household and children to their young fellow-worker, that they fully realised what he was. Devoted in his care of the little ones, he earned the parents' deepest gratitude, and in the weeks of convalescence that followed they were so united in prayer and sympathy that—how he could not tell—the love he had meant to hide was a secret no longer from his nearest friends.

And then he was even more surprised at the satisfaction they expressed. Far from discouraging him, they were full of

thankfulness to God. Never had they seen two people more suited to each other. As to the outcome—his duty was perfectly clear: the rest must be left with Him to whom both their lives were given.

So the question was committed to writing that had been burning in his heart for months. Mr. Gough was just returning to Ning-po, and kindly undertook to place the letter in the right hands. And then Hudson Taylor could only wait: a week, ten days, two weeks, how long it seemed until the answer came!

But little was he prepared, in spite of all the prayer there had been about it, for the tone and purport of this communication. It was her writing surely; the clear, pretty hand he knew so well. But could it, could it be her spirit? Brief and unsympathetic, the note simply said that what he desired was wholly impossible, and requested him if he had any gentlemanly feeling to refrain from ever troubling the writer again upon the subject.

Could he have known the anguish with which those words had been penned, his own trouble would have been considerably lessened. But the one he loved was far away. He could not see her, dared not write again after such a request, and had no clue to the painful situation. Then it was that the tender, unspoken sympathy of his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Jones, became so great a solace. He could hardly have borne it without them, and yet the sight of their mutual happiness reminded him constantly of the blessing he had lost.

Meanwhile, far away in Ning-po, that other heart was even more desolate and perplexed. For the love that had come to Hudson Taylor was no mistaken infatuation: it was the real thing, given of God. Impossible as he would have felt it, it was a love whole-heartedly returned on the part of the one who had always seemed so far above him. Maria Dyer's was a

deep and tender nature. Lonely from childhood, she had grown up longing for a real heartfriend. Her father she could hardly remember, and from the mother whom she devotedly loved she was parted by death at ten years of age, just as she and her brother and sister were leaving Penang to complete their education. After this the doubly-orphaned children had been brought up under the care of an uncle in London, most of their time being spent at school.

Then came the call to China, through Miss Aldersey's need of a helper in the Ning-po school. In offering for this post the sisters were influenced not so much by a desire to take up missionary work as by the knowledge that it was what their parents would have desired. Young as they were they had had some training as teachers (after several years in the Friends' School at Darlington), and as they were self-supporting and did not wish to be separated Miss Aldersey invited both to join her instead of only one.

To the younger sister the voyage to China was memorable as the time of her definite entrance into peace with God. Previously she had striven to be a Christian in her own strength, feeling all the while that she lacked the "one thing needful" and seeking vainly to obtain it. Now her thoughts were turned to Christ and His atoning work as the only ground of pardon and acceptance; the allsufficient ground to which our prayers and efforts can add nothing at all. Gradually it dawned upon her that she was redeemed, pardoned, cleansed from sin, because He had suffered in her stead. God had accepted Christ as her substitute and Saviour, and she could do no less. Simply and trustfully as a little child she turned away from everything and every one else, content to take God at His word. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," and to prove that "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are "here and now children of God." [142]

This true conversion with all that flowed from it made her entrance upon missionary work very different from what it would otherwise have been. No longer a philanthropic undertaking to which she 'devoted herself out of regard for her parents' wishes, it had become the natural and even necessary expression of her great and growing love to Him who was her Saviour, Lord and King. He had changed everything for her, for time and for eternity, and the least she could do was to give herself entirely to His service. So with a peace and joy unknown before she took up her busy and often difficult life in Miss Aldersey's school.

It was a lonely post for a girl in her teens, and especially one of so thoughtful and loving a spirit. Her sister's companionship no doubt was precious, and the missionary circle in Ning-po gave her several attached friends. But her heart had never found its mate in the things,, that mattered most.

And then he came—the young missionary who impressed her from the first as having the same longings after holiness, usefulness, nearness to God. He was different from everybody else; not more gifted or attractive, though he was bright and pleasing and full of quiet fu! but there was a something that made her feel at rest and understood. He seemed to live in such a real world and to have such a real, great God. Though she saw little of him it was a comfort to know that he was near, and she was startled to find how much she missed him when after only seven weeks he went away. ^[143]

Very real was her, joy, therefore, as well as surprise, when from Shanghai he had to turn back again. Perhaps it was this that opened her eyes to the feeling with which she was beginning to regard him. At any rate, she soon knew, and with her sweet, true nature did not try to hide it from her own heart and God. There was no one else to whom she cared to speak about him; for others did not see in him, always, just what she

saw. They disliked his wearing Chinese dress, and did not approve his making himself so entirely one with the people. His Chinese dress—how she loved it! or what it represented, rather, of his spirit. His poverty and generous giving to the poor—how well she understood, how much she sympathised. Did others think him visionary in his longing to reach the great Beyond of untouched need? Why, that was just the burden on her heart, the life she too would live, only for a woman it seemed if anything more impossible. So she prayed much about her friend though to him she showed but little. For the love of her life had come to her, and nobody knew but God.

And then he went again, went in the interests of others, and she did not know it cost him anything to leave her. But all the while he was away she prayed to be more like him, more worthy of his love, if that should ever be hers.

Month after month went by, and then, at last—a letter! Sudden as was the joy, the great and wonderful joy, it was no surprise, only a quiet outshining of what had long shone within. So she was not mistaken after all. They **were** for one another; "two whom God hath chosen to walk together before Him."

When she could break away from her first glad thanksgiving she went to find her sister, who was most sympathetic. The next thing was to tell Miss Aldersey, then living on the north side of the city with her former ward and fellowworker, Mrs. Russell. Eagerly the sisters told their tidings, hoping she would approve this engagement as she had Burella's. But great was the indignation with which she heard the story.

"Mr. Taylor! that young, poor, unconnected Nobody. How dare he presume to think of such a thing? Of course the proposal must be refused at once, and that finally."

In vain Maria tried to explain how much he was to her. That

only made matters worse. She must be saved without delay from such folly. And her kind friend proceeded, with the best intentions, to take the matter entirely into her own hands. The result was a letter written almost at Miss Aldersey's dictation, not only closing the whole affair but requesting most decidedly that it might never be reopened.

*Bewildered and heartbroken, the poor girl had no choice. She was too young and inexperienced, and far too shy in such matters, to withstand the decision of Miss Aldersey, strongly reinforced by the friends with whom she was staying. Stung to the quick with grief and shame, she could only leave it in the hands of her Heavenly Father. He knew; He understood. And in the long, lonely days that followed, when even her sister was won over to Miss Aldersey's position, she took refuge in the certainty that **nothing**, nothing was too hard for the Lord. "If He has to slay my Isaac," she assured herself again and again, "I know He can restore."*

To Hudson Taylor in his sorrow, sympathising hearts were open, but for her there was none. And she did not know that he would ever cross her path again. After such a refusal, if he really cared, he would surely stay away from Ning-po, especially in view of the recommencement of work at Swatow which she knew he longed to share. Nothing was more probable now than that he would return to his friend Mr. Burns. And this, no doubt, he would have done had he been acting on impulse and not holding steadfastly to the guidance of God. As it was, though he knew nothing of her feelings and had little if any hope of a more favourable issue, he was winning in the depths of his sorrow just the blessing it was meant to bring.

"We have need of patience," he wrote to his sister in May, "and our faithful God brings us into experiences which, improved by His blessing, may cultivate in us this grace. Though we seem to be tried at times almost beyond endurance,

we never find Him unable or unwilling to help and sustain us; and were our hearts entirely submissive to His will, desiring it and it only to be done, how much fewer and lighter would our afflictions seem.

"I have been in much sorrow of late; but the principal cause I find to be want of willing submission to, and trustful repose in God, my Strength. Oh, to desire His will to be done with my whole heart ... to seek His glory with a single eye! Oh, to realise more of the fulness of our precious Jesus, ... to live more in the light of His countenance; to be satisfied with what He bestows, ... ever looking to Him, following in His footsteps and awaiting His glorious coming. Why do we love Him so little? It is not that He is not lovely. 'Fairer than the children of men!' It is not that He does not love us: ... that was for ever proved on Calvary. Oh, to be sick of love for Jesus, to be daily, hourly longing, hungering, thirsting for His presence! ... May you find your love to Him ever increasing, and His likeness in you be apparent to all... Continue to pray for me ... that God will supply all my need, Jesus be all my delight, His service all my desire, rest with Him all my hope."

It is perhaps not surprising that one book in the Bible, that had never meant much to him before, should have opened up at this time in undreamed-of beauty. His deep understanding of the Song of Solomon seems to have begun in these days, when the love that welled up so irresistibly within him could only be given to God. Never had he understood before what the Lord can be to His people, and what He longs to find in His people toward Himself. It was a wonderful discovery, and one that only grew with all the glad fruition that lay beyond this pain. To those who knew Hudson Taylor best in later years, nothing was more characteristic than his love for the Song of Solomon and the way in which it expressed his personal relationship to the Lord.^[144] Here is the beginning of it all, culled from letters to his mother and sister in that sad

spring of 1857.

My dear Amelia, it is very late, but I cannot retire without penning a few lines to you. All below is transitory; we know not what a day or an hour may bring forth. ... One thing only changes not-the love of God. Our precious Jesus is the same and ever will be, and soon He will come and take us to Himself.

*What will it be to see Him with unclouded vision, and be ravished with His transcendent loveliness? ... And not only shall we be with Him; we shall be **His**. "My Beloved is mine and I am His" is true for us even now. But then He will share with us not only His power and glory, but the very beauty of His character and person. When we see Him "we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Precious Jesus, oh, to be more like Thee now! to manifest Thy grace as Thou didst the Father's.*

*Have you thought much about the Song of Solomon? It is a rich garden to delight in, and so is the forty-fifth Psalm. To think that even the sweetest, dearest of earthly ties but faintly shadows forth the love of Jesus to His redeemed ... to me ... is it not wonderful? ... Oh, how can we love our precious Jesus enough, how do enough for Him! ... Soon will He call us to a wedding-feast, the marriage supper of the Lamb. Not as guests, but as **the bride** shall we take our place with joy, arrayed in the spotless robe of His righteousness. The time is short. May we live as those who wait for their Lord, and be ready with joy to meet Him.*

And again, in connection with the happiness of her engagement to Mr. Broomhall:

These feelings are implanted by God Himself, and all the circumstances connected with them are ordained or permitted by Him for our highest spiritual good as well as temporal

*happiness... In nearly every book in the Bible they are used by the Holy Spirit to illustrate the relationship between God and His people, and very specially do they belong to those who have been "espoused ... as a chaste virgin to Christ." With the love with which you love your husband (in fact or in anticipation) you are to love the Lord Jesus, nay more. Are you lonely when he leaves you? So you should be while Jesus is absent. Do you long for the time when you can always be together? So you should for the return of Jesus to take you to Himself. Is service for your loved one freedom? "No," you will say, "that is far too cold a word. Freedom! It is joy, delight, the desire of my heart." So should you serve Jesus. Would you do what you could to remove the obstacles and hasten the day of your union? Then look for and hasten the day of **His** return... See Jesus in everything, then in everything you will find blessing. Keep looking to Jesus. Do nothing but for Him, but as in Him and by His strength and direction. Christ all and in all! And may He abundantly and personally manifest Himself to you."*

God's plans ever go forward, though to us they may appear at times to retrograde. That is due to our imperfect point of view. May we ever grow in grace, and be made vessels such as our Master can use. We have our portion-the "chiefest among ten thousand," and the "altogether lovely."

All that my soul has tried

Left but an aching void;

Jesus has satisfied,

Jesus is mine.

*May we daily see more of Him, daily see more **in** Him...*

I have been much tried of late. Seeking to do all to the glory of

God, I do nothing that is not mixed with self and sin. Oh, how fit is our Jesus for us I perfect righteousness for ruined sinners, a glorious robe for the tattered and filthy, gold, fine gold for the poor, sight for the blind-all, all we need or could desire. Precious Jesus, may we love Thee more, and more manifest our love by deadness to the world. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

Chapter XXXIV [\(TOC\)](#)

The God that is Enough

May-September 1857. AET. 25

WINTER was over, summer was drawing on, and with the first hot days came a change in the conditions that had detained Hudson Taylor and his colleagues in Shanghai.' For one thing the famine refugees began to disappear. Spring harvests drew them back to country villages all over the plain, and for the few who could not leave a local missionary undertook to care.

Then, a lull in the war with England made aggressive work in Ning-po and the neighbourhood more possible; and though the house Mr. and Mrs. Jones had previously occupied was no longer available, other and even better premises were. The retirement of Mr. Cobbold for health reasons had left one of the C.M.S. buildings vacant, and this Mr. Jones was able to rent for a moderate sum. Dr. Parker also was glad to hand over the entire premises on Bridge Street part of which Hudson Taylor had formerly occupied. Thus without any effort on their part they were provided with a dwelling-house and a street-chapel in the busiest parts of the city.

With growing experience Hudson Taylor was increasingly drawn, it should be said, to the more settled forms of missionary work. The war with England made it out of the question to attempt to live at any distance from the Treaty Ports. Itinerations were still possible, but speaking generally the interior was more inaccessible than ever. Believing, however, that the time was near for a change in this respect, Mr. Taylor and his colleague realised the importance

of labouring in some one, settled spot, until a native church could be raised up that should afford them, by the blessing of God, pastors and evangelists for the wider opportunity of coming days.

With this hope in view, therefore, they turned their faces to Ning-po again, but not before they had taken a step of great importance in its bearing on the future.

For it was in the month of May, three years and three months after his arrival in China, that Hudson Taylor felt the time had come to resign his connection with the Chinese Evangelisation Society. Not all the difficulties under which he had laboured would have led him to this step. He loved the Secretaries and many members of the Committee known to him personally, and valued their sympathy and prayers. But the Society, as we have seen, took a very different position from his own in the matter of debt, a position in which he felt he could no longer participate.

"Personally," he wrote in recalling the circumstances, "I had always avoided debt, and kept within my salary, though at times only by very careful economy. Now there was no difficulty in doing this, for my income was larger, and the country being in a more peaceful state, things were not so dear. But the Society itself was in debt. The quarterly bills which I and others were instructed to draw were often met with borrowed money, and a correspondence commenced which terminated in the following year by my resigning from conscientious motives.

"To me it seemed that the teaching of God's Word was unmistakably clear: 'Owe no man anything,' To borrow money implied, to my mind, a contradiction of Scripture—a confession that God had withheld some good thing, and a determination to get for ourselves what He had not given. Could that which was wrong for one Christian to do be right for an association

of Christians? Or could any amount of precedents make a wrong course justifiable? If the Word taught me anything, it taught me to have no connection with debt. I could not think that God was poor, that He was short of resources, or unwilling to supply any want of whatever work was really His. It seemed to me that if there were lack of funds to carry on work, then to that degree, in that special development, or at that time, it could not be the work of God. To satisfy my conscience I was therefore compelled to resign my connection with the Society ...

"It was a great satisfaction to me that my friend and colleague, Mr. Jones, ... was led to take the same step, and we were both profoundly thankful that the separation took place without the least breach of friendly feeling on either side. Indeed, we had the joy of knowing that the step we took commended itself to several members of the Committee, although the Society as a whole could not come to our position. Depending on God alone for supplies, we were enabled to continue a measure of connection with our former supporters, sending home journals, etc., for publication as before, so long as the Society continued to exist.

"The step we had taken was not a little trying to faith. I was not at all sure what God would have me do, or whether He would so meet my need as to enable me to continue working as before. ... I was willing to give up all my time to the service of evangelisation among the heathen if, by any means, He would supply the smallest amount on which I could live; and if He were not pleased to do this, I was prepared to undertake whatever work might be necessary to support myself, giving all the time that could be spared from such a calling to more distinctly missionary efforts.

"But God blessed and prospered me, and how glad and thankful I felt when the separation was really effected! I could look right up into my Father's face with a satisfied heart,

ready by His grace to do the next thing as He might teach me, and feeling very sure of His loving care.

"And how blessedly He did lead me I can never, never tell. It was like a continuation of some of my earlier experiences at home. My faith was not untried; it often, often failed, and I was so sorry and ashamed of the failure to trust such a Father. But oh! I was learning to know Him. I would not even then have missed the trial. He became so near, so real, so intimate. The occasional difficulty about funds never came from an insufficient supply for personal needs, but in consequence of ministering to the wants of scores of the hungry and, dying around us. And trials far more searching in other ways quite eclipsed these difficulties, and being deeper brought forth in consequence richer fruits. How glad one is now not only to know, with dear Miss Havergal, that

They who trust Him wholly

Find Him wholly true,

but also that when we fail to trust fully He still remains unchangingly faithful. He is wholly true whether we trust or not. "If we believe not, He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself." But oh, how we dishonour our Lord whenever we fail to trust Him, and what peace, blessing and triumph we lose in thus sinning against the Faithful One. May we never again presume in anything to doubt Him."

What the more searching trials were that brought forth richer blessing it is not difficult at this point to divine. Twice daily in his walks to and from Bridge Street, Hudson Taylor had to pass very near Miss Aldersey's School. Carried on now by Mrs. Bausum and her young relatives it was still the home of the being dearest to him on earth. He had seen her again since returning to Ningpo in June, but a barrier had been raised between them that was hard to pass.

Kind and gentle as she still was, he could not forget that she had charged him never again to trouble her upon a certain subject; and Miss Aldersey had so spoken her mind to the friends with whom he lived that the position was doubly trying.

For soon after their return from Shanghai Mrs. Jones had invited Miss Dyer to go out visiting with her as before. There was no one else to whom she could look for help, and the need was very pressing. Besides it was the best, the only way in which the young people could see more of each other. To the girl herself she said nothing, nor did Maria allude to the matter of which their hearts were full. But Miss Aldersey knew no such reticence, and seeking Mrs. Jones after the Ladies' Prayer Meeting, in another part of the city, poured out the vials of her wrath. She had good reason, she felt, to be indignant. Miss Dyer belonged to a different social circle from that of Mr. Taylor, and had a small but reliable income of her own. She was educated, gifted, attractive, and had no lack of suitors far more eligible in Miss Aldersey's eyes. It was unpardonable that this person should presume upon her youth and inexperience, and still more so that he should return to Ning-po after its having been made plain that he was not wanted.

In the course of such a conversation many things come out, and before it ended Mrs. Jones could see pretty clearly how the land lay. Miss Aldersey's object was to obtain from her a promise that she would do-nothing to forward Mr. Taylor's suit, and that the latter would never see or speak to Miss Dyer in their house. While not committing herself as far as this, Mrs. Jones felt it desirable to state that she would refrain from throwing the young people together, and that Mr. Taylor would not take advantage of Miss Dyer's visits to attempt to see her alone. At the same time she earnestly put before Miss Aldersey the other side of the matter, trying to make her feel how serious a

thing it is to tamper with such affections. But the older lady would hear no good of Hudson Taylor, and deeply pained by her criticisms Mrs. Jones came away.

After this, of course, Hudson Taylor felt himself bound by Mrs. Jones' promise. He could not write to Miss Dyer or seek an interview in the house of his friends; and yet as the days went by he found it impossible to let matters drift indefinitely. Having learned that Miss Aldersey was not related to the Dyers and was not even their guardian, he determined to call on the sisters both together and ask whether he might write to their uncle-in London for permission to cultivate a closer acquaintance. More than this he dared not venture at present, nor was it necessary after his Shanghai letter.

Taking a sedan-chair, therefore, as the etiquette of Chinese dress demanded, Hudson Taylor went over to the school, only to meet the young ladies going out. So without waiting for the ceremony of sending in his card, he requested the privilege of a few minutes' conversation.

"Come in," responded the elder sister, "and we will ask Mrs. Bausum."

But when Mrs. Bausum appeared he found that both girls had gone over to see Miss Aldersey. Burella divining the purpose of his visit had insisted upon her sister's leaving the house at once, and for the sake of avoiding an open rupture Maria had consented.

It was hard just then not to look at second causes. But though everything and every one seemed against him Hudson Taylor was enabled to leave it all with God, confident that He understood best how to manage such matters. If an interview were necessary He could and would bring it about, and cause it, moreover, to accomplish the desired results. Personally there seemed nothing he could do. But the Lord has ways of working beyond our ken; and in spite

of everything he could not help a growing impression that his love was returned and that, in the way he hoped, faith would be rewarded.

Meanwhile the trial through which he was passing was not allowed to interfere with daily duties. Situated on a crowded thoroughfare the house at **Kuen-kiao-teo** was within a stone's throw of the main street of the city. "By day and far into the night the clink and ring of smiths' and tinkers' hammers close by and the busy hum from neighbouring tea-shops could be heard." The air was close and oppressive, a population of half a million being gathered within and around the city wall. But from a summerhouse on the roof an extensive view could be obtained of the surrounding hills, and many an early hour the young missionary must have spent there alone with God. For he had learned that only in such communion could freshness of spirit be maintained both for work and burden-bearing.

Street-chapel preaching is far from easy, and both at **Kuen-kiao-teo** and in the little house across the city Hudson Taylor was carrying on daily services as well as medical work. Nothing but the attraction of the Lord's own love and presence in the speaker's heart could hold the changing audiences or turn argumentative conversations into blessing. But the young missionary kept on, always patient and pleasant, always ready with some helpful word or kindly act, until the neighbours could not but be impressed by such a message delivered in such a spirit.

"Next door to our premises on Bridge Street," wrote Mr. Jones, "there is an opium den. The men who keep it are southerners and ... at first looked upon us with little favour. But one and another dropped in to our services, Brother Taylor sometimes addressing them in their own dialect, until they became quite friendly. One of them who was suffering much from his eyes was cured by careful treatment, and now

they often shew us little attentions of one sort or another. People also who frequent their house are constant in attendance at our meetings, and one at any rate has a good understanding of the Gospel."

Thus the Friend of publicans and sinners was able to come very near even to these poor, unhappy opium-smokers, through a life made attractive by much fellowship with Him.

The evening meeting at Kuen-kiao-teo was perhaps the most important of the day's proceedings. People were more willing to come out after the sun went down, and the big bell soon filled the hall with an audience willing to listen for an hour or two. All this, of course, meant hard work for the young missionary on whom most of the speaking devolved. It was his fourth hot season, and one's powers of resistance seem to lessen with each succeeding summer, But not the intense heat nor yet the work kept up with unremitting vigour were the chief strain upon Hudson Taylor. The trial of suspense meant more, far more, involving as it did the dearest hopes of his heart.

But in this also he was wonderfully sustained. The matter had been left entirely in the hands of God, and though Hudson Taylor had no means of communicating with the one he loved it was not difficult for the Lord to bring them together. He who can use ravens, if need be, or angels to do His bidding was answering His children's prayers, and on this occasion He seems to have employed a waterspout!

It was a sultry afternoon in July, shortly after Hudson Taylor's unsuccessful visit to the school, when in regular rotation the Ladies' Prayer Meeting came to be held at **Kuen-kiao-teo**. The usual number gathered, representing all the Societies, but as the sequel proved it was easier to come to the meeting that day than to get away. For with scarcely any warning a waterspout, sweeping

up the tidal river, broke over Ning-po in a perfect deluge, followed by torrents of rain. Mr. Jones and Mr. Taylor were over at Bridge Street as usual, and on account of the flooded streets were late in reaching home. Most of the ladies had left before they returned, but a servant from the school was there who said that Mrs. Bausum and Miss Maria Dyer were still waiting for sedan-chairs.

"Go into my study," said Mr. Jones, to his companion, "and I will see if an interview can be arranged."

It was not long before he returned saying that the ladies were alone with Mrs. Jones and that they would be glad of a little conversation.

Hardly knowing what he did Hudson Taylor went upstairs, and found himself in the presence of the one being he supremely loved. True others were there too, but he hardly saw them, hardly saw anything but her face, as he told much more than he would have ever thought possible in public. He had only meant to ask if he might write to her guardian for permission. ... But now it all came out; he could not help it. And she?—Well, there was no one present but those who loved them and understood, and it might be so long before they could meet again! Yes, she consented, and did much more than that. With her true woman's heart she relieved all his fears, as far as they could be relieved by knowing that he was just as dear to her as she to him. And if the others heard—were there not angels too? And presently Hudson Taylor relieved the situation by saying:

"Let us take it all to the Lord in prayer."

So the letter was written about the middle of July upon which so much depended, and they had to look forward to four long months of prayer and patience before the answer could be received. Under the circumstances they

did not feel free to see one another or even communicate in writing, for they had as far as possible to mitigate Miss Aldersey's displeasure. Maria of course informed her that Mr. Taylor had written to her uncle asking permission for a definite engagement. That matters should have come to such a pass in spite of all her precautions seemed incredible to the older lady. But they should proceed no farther. She would at once communicate with Mr. Tam herself, and he of course would see the impropriety of the request. Se with the keenest desire for her young friend's happiness she set to work to bring the distant relatives to her own point of view.

This of course made it very hard for the lovers, especially as Miss Aldersey observed no reticence on the subject Impressions she had gained about Hudson Taylor, happily as unfounded as they were unfavourable, were soon made known to the rest of the community. Her object was to alienate the affections of Miss Dyer from one whom she considered unworthy of her, and she did not hesitate to encourage the attentions of other suitors with the same end in view. The Chinese dress worn by Hudson Taylor was one strong point against him, and seemingly awakened not aversion only, but contempt. His position also as an independent worker, upon the uncertain basis of "faith," was severely criticised; and he was represented as "called by no one, connected with no one, and recognised by no one as a minister of the Gospel." Had this been all it would have been bad enough, but other insinuations followed. He was "fanatical, undependable, diseased in body and mind," and in a word "totally worthless." And the two most concerned could not tell how far all this would influence Mr. Tam in London, to whom Miss Aldersey had written in a similar strain.

As month after month went by and these strange misrepresentations came to be believed in certain sections of the community, Hudson Taylor had to learn

in a new way what it was to take refuge in God. It was a fiery furnace seven times heated; for he knew how his loved one must be suffering, and he could not explain anything or reassure her even of his devotion. And what was to be the outcome? What if her guardian in London were influenced by Miss Aldersey's statements? What if he refused his consent to the marriage? If there was one thing of which Hudson Taylor had no doubt it was that the blessing of God rested upon obedience to parents or those in parental authority. Nothing would have induced him to act contrary to a command from his own parents, nor could he encourage the one he loved to disregard her guardian's wishes. Years after, when experience had confirmed these convictions, he wrote upon this important subject

I have never known disobedience to the definite command of a parent, even if that parent were mistaken, that was not followed by retribution. Conquer through the Lord. ^[145] He can open any door. The responsibility is with the parent in such a case, and it is a great one. When son or, daughter can say in all sincerity, "I am waiting for you, Lord, to open the door," the matter is in His hands, and He will take it up.

But at this time it was theory more than experience; his conviction of what must be rather than his knowledge of what was; and the test was all the more severe.

No wonder he needed to be very still in those days before the Lord. Never before had he had to walk so carefully, or so felt his helplessness apart from sustaining grace.

*"It is not sufficient," he wrote to his sister early in August, "to have the every road pointed out merely, to be prevented from straying to the right hand or to the left, though this is no little blessing. ... We need Him to direct our **steps** ... step after step. Nay more, we need to pass through this wilderness leaning,*

always leaning on our Beloved. May we in reality do this, and all will be well."

Meanwhile in another part of the city another lonely, suffering heart was learning the same lessons. Deeply 'she too felt the sacredness of parental authority, and that the divine blessing could not rest upon a step taken in defiance of its control. She would have waited if need be for years had her guardian disapproved the marriage, and as the slow months went by times of desolation could not but come over her in view of all he was likely to hear.

She was visiting Mr. and Mrs. Gough of the C.M.S. on one such occasion, who entertained a warm regard for Hudson Taylor. He may have been spoken of with appreciation: at any rate the longing for him that was always there filled and overflowed her heart. It was a summer evening, and going to her room alone the poor child knelt long in silent grief. But her Bible was at hand, and as she turned its pages the precious words shone out: "Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your hearts before Him: God is a refuge for us." And that just met her need.

"I marked it at the time," she wrote to her loved one seven years later, "and the light-coloured ink still remains to remind me of that night."

"My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him." He only, He alone; always ***El-Shaddai***—"The God that is Enough."

Chapter XXXV [\(TOC\)](#)

Ebenezer and Jehovah Jireh

September and October 1857. AET. 25

IT was about this time that a pair of scrolls made their appearance in the sitting-room at Kuen-kiao-teo that were as new as they were perplexing to the little company of Christians and inquirers gathered there on Sunday mornings for worship. Beautifully written in Chinese each character in itself was intelligible, but what could be the meaning of the strange combination, *I-pien-i-seh-er; Je-ho-hua I-la?*

The young missionary who had been ill and confined to his room for a month could have explained. For it was there in quiet communion with God those inspired words had come to him in such fullness of meaning as to make them for ever memorable. *Ebenezer* and *Jehovah Jireh* "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," and for all coming need "The Lord will provide"—how he rejoiced as strength came back to unfold to his Chinese friends their precious message, leading them on to a deeper knowledge of the infinite God they too were learning to trust.

That little inner circle, small though it was in numbers, was the joy and rejoicing of Hudson Taylor's heart, and the illness that laid him aside during the whole of September was made the most of for prayer on their behalf. Taken out of the busy round of preaching and medical work he was able to give more time, to individual inquirers, amongst whom Mr. Nyi, a business man in the city, was perhaps the most encouraging.

Passing the open door of the mission-house one evening soon after Mr. Jones and his colleague had settled there, he observed that something was going on. A big bell was ringing, and a number of people were passing in as if for a meeting. Hearing that it was a "Jesus Hall," or place where foreign teachers discoursed upon religious matters, he too turned in; for as a devout Buddhist there was nothing about which he felt more concern than the pains and penalties due to sin, and the transmigration of the soul on its long journey he knew not whither.

A young foreigner in Chinese dress was preaching from his Sacred Classics, and this was the passage he read:

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.

It is scarcely possible to imagine much less describe the effect upon such a man of such a message, heard for the first time. To say that Nyi was interested scarcely begins to express all that went on in his mind. For he was a seeker after truth, one of the leaders of a reformed sect of Buddhists devoted to religious observances. The story of the brazen serpent in the wilderness, illustrating the divine remedy for sin and all its deadly consequences; the facts of the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and the bearing of all this upon his own need, brought home to him the power of the Holy Spirit-well, it is the miracle of the ages, and thank God we see it still. "I, if I be lifted up ... will draw all men unto Me."

Nyi came into the hall that evening one of the vast, the incredibly vast multitude who "through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage"; and as he sat there listening, hope dawned in his heart, old things for ever passed away and he was conscious of the sunrise that makes all things new.

But the meeting was drawing to a close; the "foreign teacher" had ceased speaking.' Looking round upon the audience with the instinct of one accustomed to lead in such matters, Nyi rose in his place and said with simple directness:

"I have long sought the Truth, as did my father before me, but without finding it. I have travelled far and near, but have never searched it out. In Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, I have found no rest; but I do find rest in what we have heard to-night. Henceforward I am a believer in Jesus."

The effect of this declaration was profound, for Nyi was well known and respected. But no one present was more moved than the young missionary to whom he specially addressed himself. Many interviews followed, and Hudson Taylor experienced the joy no words can express as he saw the Lord working with him and claiming this soul for His own.

Shortly after his conversion, a meeting was held of the society over which Mr. Nyi had formerly presided, and though he had resigned from its membership he obtained permission to be present and to explain the reasons for his change of faith. Mr. Taylor, who had the pleasure of accompanying him, was deeply impressed by the clearness and power with which he set forth the Gospel. One of his former co-religionists was led to Christ through his instrumentality, and with Nyi himself became of great value to the Kuen-kiao-teo church. Nyi, as a dealer in cotton, frequently had time at his

disposal, which he now devoted to helping his missionary friends. With Mr. Jones he went out almost daily, taking no payment for his services, and everywhere winning an entrance for the message he was so keen to bring.

He it was who, talking with Mr. Taylor, unexpectedly raised a question the pain of which was not easily forgotten.

"How long have you had the Glad Tidings in England?" he asked all unsuspectingly.

The young missionary was ashamed to tell him, and vaguely replied that it was several hundreds of years.

"What," exclaimed Nyi in astonishment, "several hundreds of years! Is it possible that you have known about Jesus so long, and only now have come to tell us?"

"My father sought the truth for more than twenty years," he continued sadly, "and died without finding it. *Oh, why did you not come sooner?*"

Hardly had Hudson Taylor recovered from his illness and resumed his former activities when a call came to very different service, as difficult as it was unexpected.

Over on the compound of the Presbyterian Mission his friend Mr. Quaterman was taken seriously ill. A devoted pioneer evangelist, he had remained unmarried during the ten years of his life in China, finding a congenial home with his sister Mrs. Way. His brother-in-law, one of the Presbyterian missionaries, was absent on a journey, and with little children to care for Mrs. Way discovered that her brother was suffering from smallpox. It proved, indeed, to be that dread disease in its most malignant form. The patient had to be isolated, and to her great distress Mrs. Way could not undertake the

nursing.

No one else seemed in a position to do so, and the sufferer would have been left to the care of native servants had not Hudson Taylor heard of it. But to him the circumstances were a clear call to go to the help of his friends. He was unmarried, and knew that could he have consulted the one he loved she would not have held him back. As it was he had to leave it to others to tell her, and almost at a moment's notice hastened across the river to take up his sorrowful task.

Night and day he tended the dying man, with no thought of self, doing duty as doctor and nurse in one, that others might be spared the risk of infection.

"He has been taken home to be with Jesus," he wrote a week later, "and great was my privilege in being permitted to minister to the Lord in his person, and to see the power of sustaining grace."

But he did not say how cast upon God he had been all through those terrible nights and days, nor how he felt the strain now that it was over. For the moment, indeed, more pressing considerations occupied him, and he was reminded in a practical way of the scrolls at Kuen-kiao-teo with their precious message.

For hardly had he performed the last offices for his friend before he found himself in an unforeseen dilemma. In his attendance night and day upon the patient he had been obliged to change his clothing frequently, and now all the garments used in the sick room had to be discarded for fear of spreading the infection. A Chinese tailor could soon have provided others, but as it happened the young missionary could not afford a fresh supply. It was not that he had been suffering from shortness of funds. On the contrary, ever since leaving the C.E.S he had received from other sources more than he

personally required. But he was sharing all that came to him with Mr. Jones and his family, and recently had sent thirty-seven pounds to a brother-missionary in need.

Thus he had nothing laid by to fall back upon, and now the infected garments had to be destroyed he would have been in serious difficulty, but for the resource of prayer.

And just then, strange as it may seem, a long-lost box arrived containing among other belongings all the clothing he had left in Swatow fifteen months previously. For God is a real Father, and still knows His children's needs before they ask Him.

A little incident? Yes, but one that added meaning to the motto of the Mission that was yet to grow out of the growth of his soul;

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

The Lord will provide."

Chapter XXXVI^(TOC)

Joy Cometh in the Morning

October and November 1857. AET. 25

IT is hardly to be wondered at that his attendance upon Mr. Quaterman should have proved too much for Hudson Taylor at this time. But for recent vaccination the illness that followed might have been much more serious, for it was undoubtedly smallpox, and the fever ran high. As it was, it was chiefly memorable for the mercy that averted worse developments, and for an experience toward the close that brought him untold comfort.

It was early on October 20, before day-dawn indeed, when some noise in the street awoke him with a sudden start. He could not sleep again, and though outwardly quiet was distressed by palpitation due to his exhausted condition. And then, with the fatal ease of disordered nerves, one misgiving led to another, until he was overwhelmed with painful apprehensions.

All the suspense and anguish of the long months of his love for the one who might never be his seemed to come back like a flood, gathering itself up in a great fear of what was yet to come. They had suffered so much; their love for one another was so intense, and the opposition it awakened so persistent that it seemed more than he could bear. In a few weeks now the letter would come that must decide their future. Unreasoning anxiety laid hold upon him, and though he tried to quiet his distress of mind by handing it all over to the Lord, the very effort added to his sufferings.

But "underneath," all the while, were "the Everlasting Arms." One Whose

comprehension is infinite was watching over His suffering child; and in the way of all others most sure to help, relief was given.

"All at once," he wrote to his sister later in the day, "I became conscious of dear Maria's presence. She came in silently as a breath of air, and I felt such a tranquillity steal over me-I knew she must be there. I felt spell-bound for a short time, but at length without opening my eyes I put out my hand, and she took it in such a warm, soft grasp that I could not refrain from a look of gratitude. She motioned me not to speak, and put her other hand on my forehead, and I felt the headache which had been distracting and the fever retire under its touch and sink as through the pillow. She whispered to me not to be uneasy ... that she was mine and I was hers, and that I must keep quiet and try to sleep. And so I did, awaking some hours later well of the fever though very weak.

"A sweet dream, I would call it; only I was as wide awake as I am now, and saw and felt her touch as plainly as I do now pencil and paper. All my fear in the fever had been that our love would come to nothing, so you may guess how it soothed me."

It was with pleasure Hudson Taylor found on recovering from this illness that his friend Mr. Burdon of Shanghai was again in Ning-po, this time to arrange for his wedding. He had been engaged to the elder Miss Dyer for almost a year, and now on November 16, they were to be married. Without in the least grudging them their happiness, he could not but feel the contrast with his own circumstances very keenly, especially in view of Miss Aldersey's growing dislike. For as time went on she seems, if anything, to have increased her opposition to the younger's sister's engagement. Not content with having written fully to Mr. Tam in London, she continued to bring accusations of a 'serious nature against Hudson Taylor. It came to such a pass at length that

Maria herself almost wondered that her confidence did not waver in the one of whom she knew so little. But their love was too deep, too God-given. She suffered none the less, however, especially during these weeks of illness, his own and Mr. Quaterman's, when she could neither come to him nor do anything to show her sympathy. Yet she had come, although she knew it not.

It was rarely the young people could meet even in public at this time, for the school in which the Misses Dyer were teaching had been moved across the river to the compound of the Presbyterian Mission. Living with Mrs. Bausum in the brown, gable-roofed house adjoining the school-building they were near neighbours of the Ways, whose love and admiration of Hudson Taylor must have been a comfort to the your sister. He would be frequently spoken of with gratitude as one who had risked his life in ministering to their brother, ^[146] and Maria's fingers may have lingered on the keys of the harmonium that had belonged to Mr. Quaterman and was now to be given to her friend.

Not that Hudson Taylor felt free to accept the gift. Much as he would have valued it, he dared not lay himself open to further misrepresentation.

"I could not have taken pit," he wrote to his mother, "without its having been considered by some as a sort of payment, and that of course I guard against. For I would not have anyone imagine that I desire payment in this life for service to the Lord's people."

For this same reason—that he might avoid causes of offence—he refrained from visiting Mr. and Mrs. Way on the Presbyterian compound, and waited as patiently as he might without communication of any kind with the one who was in all his thoughts until the letter should arrive on which so much depended.

Meanwhile with returning strength he was more than ever busy in the city.

The work both in the home he shared with Mr. and Mrs. Jones and in their preaching station was full of encouragement, and they had added to it "free breakfasts" for the very poor that were a special source of satisfaction to Hudson Taylor. The Lord was supplying his needs more bountifully than ever before, and in the spirit of the words "freely ye have received, freely give," he rejoiced to pour out all that he was and had in the service of others.

Feeding sixty to eighty people every day was a considerable tax on their resources however, and once and again they had actually come to the last penny before fresh supplies were received. This very naturally was misunderstood in some quarters, as may be seen from Dr. Martin's interesting recollections.^[147] But both Hudson Taylor and his colleague were walking prayerfully before God in the matter, and He honoured their faith while allowing it also to be tested.

"Many think I am very poor," wrote the young missionary in the middle of November. "This certainly is true enough in one sense, but thank God it is 'As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.' ... I would not if I could be otherwise than as I am—entirely dependent myself upon the Lord, and used as a channel of help to others."

An instance was before him at the moment of the care and faithfulness of God that he could not but share with his home-circle. For only a few days before they had found themselves in "sore straits" at **Kuen-kiao-teo** through their work of love and mercy. Seventy hungry people, the poorest of the poor, had had their breakfast that morning, and had listened for an hour or more to the story of Redeeming Love. Nyi, who had just been baptized, and others of the native Christians were very helpful on these occasions, and no doubt found their own faith strengthened by the experience they witnessed.

"Well, on that Saturday morning," continued Hudson Taylor,

*"we paid all expenses and provided for the morrow, after which we had not a single dollar left... How the Lord would care for us on Monday we knew not, but over our mantelpiece hung two scrolls in Chinese character—**Ebenezer** and **Jehovah Jireh**—and He kept us from doubting for a moment.*

And then, that very day, letters that had travelled half across the world reached Ning-po when no mail was expected. Posted in England two months previously, they had been brought in safety over land and sea, and so prospered on their journey that the prayer "Give us this day our daily bread" was answered before the sun went down.

"That very day," concluded Hudson Taylor, "the mail came in a week before it was due, and Mr. Jones received a bill for two hundred and fourteen dollars. So once again we thanked God and took courage.

"The bill was taken to a merchant, and though there is usually a delay of several days before we can get the money, this time he said 'Send down on Monday and I will have it ready.' We sent, and though he had not been able to buy all the dollars he let us have seventy on account. So all was well.

"Oh it is sweet to live thus in direct dependence upon the Lord who never fails us!

"On Monday the poor had their breakfast as usual, for we had not told them not to come, being assured that it was the Lord's work and that He would provide. We could not help our eyes filling with tears of thankfulness as we saw not only our own needs supplied, but the widow and orphan, the blind, lame and destitute together provided for by the bounty of Him who feeds the sparrows....

"Oh taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. Oh fear the Lord, ye His saints: for there

is no want to them that fear Him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing 'and if not good, why want it?'"

Very soon after this Hudson Taylor found that the Lord had been working for him in other ways also. For it was toward the end of November the long-looked-for letters came-and were favourable! After careful inquiry in London, Mr. Tam had satisfied himself that Hudson Taylor was a young missionary of unusual promise. The Secretaries of the Chinese Evangelisation Society had nothing but good to say of him, and from other sources also he had the highest references. Taking therefore any disquieting rumours he may have heard for no more than they were worth, he cordially consented to his niece's engagement, requesting only that the marriage should be delayed until she came of age. And that would be in little more than two months' time.

Oh China, China! How the said young missionary longed, after that, to see what some one else would say, and how distractingly difficult it was to arrange an interview. To cross the river forthwith and present himself at Mrs. Bausum's would have outraged all proprieties. Anywhere on the compound where she lived, indeed, they could not have met under the circumstances; and his own home was still more out of the question. But news of this sort flies fast, and in some way Mrs. Knowlton of the American Baptist Mission heard of the situation. She was in favour of the engagement, and lived in a quiet place outside the city-wall and close to the river. She would send a note to the school. Miss Dyer could come to see her at any time; and if somebody else were there-well, such things will happen, even in China.

So it was in Mrs. Knowlton's drawing-room he waited while the messenger went slowly, slowly across the river and seemed as if he never would return.

Let us hope that the windows overlooked the ferry, and that Hudson Taylor had not to keep up the form of conversation. At last, at last! The slender figure, quick step, bright young voice in the passage-then the door opened, and for the first time they were together alone.

More than forty years later the joy of that moment had not left him: "We sat side by side on the sofa," he said, "her hand clasped in mine. It never cooled-my love for her. It has not cooled now."

Chapter XXXVII^(TOC)

Perfect in One

December 1857-January 1858. AET. 25

AFTER this they were openly engaged, and could meet from time to time in the company of friends: and how those happy winter days made up for all that had gone before!

"I never felt in better health or spirits in my life," wrote Hudson Taylor. "To God who alone doeth wondrous things, who raiseth up those that are bowed down and has caused every effort to injure me to work only for good ... to Him be praise and glory."

The engagement was not to be a long one, for on January 16 Miss Dyer would be twenty-one years of age and free to follow the dictates of her heart. So the closing weeks of the year were full of joyous anticipation.

It is good to know that in a life so serious as regards its outward surroundings there were still times when they could be young and gay. One refreshing glimpse into this side of things is afforded by an intimate friend of those days, now the widow of the devoted and beloved Dr. Nevius."

"To those who only knew Mr. Taylor in later life," wrote Mrs. Nevius, "it may be a surprise to learn that when he 'fell in love 'it ways a headlong plunge, and by no means a slight or evanescent passion. And his fiancee with her strong, emotional nature was in this respect not unlike him. My husband was rather a special friend of both, and he sometimes indulged his propensities for good-natured teasing at their

expense. I was in America, sent home on account of ill-health, when the following little 'passage at arms,' or rather hands, took place.

"One evening the young people were seated round a table playing a game that required their hands to be hidden beneath it. To his surprise Mr. Nevius received an unexpected squeeze. Guessing at once that it was a case of mistaken identity, and enjoying the situation, he returned the pressure with interest. In a moment 'Maria' his next neighbour discovered her mistake, but when she would have withdrawn her hand it was held fast by its captor's strong fingers. Not until flushed cheeks and almost tearful eyes warned him that the joke had gone far enough did he release her. Those were days when to laugh was easy, and not such very funny things were sufficient to evoke much merriment.

"Perhaps still another person whose name is known round the world was sitting at that table, for Mr. (now Sir Robert) Hart was a frequent visitor in our home. And it is quite possible that the now venerable and even then learned Dr. W. A. P. Martin was also a guest that evening. How little we imagined in those days the remarkable careers in store for some of those bright, merry young people! But cares and responsibilities were to come upon them soon enough; and what could have been better, in the midst of more serious preparation, than just such times as these? They were hard students even then, every one of them, and probably erred on the side of overwork."

A very different experience and one that might well have given the young girl pause, had her character been other than it was, occurred on the eve of their marriage a few weeks later.

*"It was the 6th of January," said Mr. Taylor, recalling the circumstances in conversation with the writers, "and the bride-elect was coming to tea at **Kuen-kiao-teo** in company*

with Mrs. Bausum. This had been arranged some time previously, when we were under no anxiety as to supplies. But when the time drew near we found ourselves in serious difficulty. Expenses had been heavy on account of our work among the poor, and mail after mail had come in bringing nothing from home. At last on the morning of the day in question one solitary cash, the twentieth part of a penny, was all that we had left between us. But though tried we looked to the Lord once again to manifest His gracious care.

"Enough remained in the house to supply a modest breakfast; after which, having neither food for the rest of the day nor money to obtain any, we could only betake ourselves to Him who is a red Father, and cannot forget His children's needs. And you may be sure that what was to me the most painful element in the situation, our unpreparedness for the guests who were coming that evening, was specially remembered before Him.

After prayer and deliberation Mr. Jones agreed with me that we ought to try to dispose of some saleable article in order to supply our immediate needs. But on looking round we saw nothing that could well be spared, except perhaps a clock, and little that the Chinese would purchase for ready money. Credit to any extent we might have had, but that would not have been in accordance with our principle in the matter of debt. So the clock was taken to a neighbouring merchant who proved a willing purchaser.

"'But of course you must leave it for a week,' he said, 'that we may see how it goes. No one would think of paying money down for an untried clock.'

"This was so reasonable from the Chinese point of view that there was no gainsaying it, and we saw there was no help for us in that quarter.

"One other article remained, an American stove that could have been sold for old iron, but we much regretted parting with it. Still, it seemed necessary, so we set out for the foundry which was at some distance. On the way, however, our path was unexpectedly closed. The bridge of boats, by which we had intended crossing the river, had been carried away in the night, and all that remained was a ferry, the fare for which was two cash each. As we only possessed one cash between us our course was clearly to return and await God's own interposition on our behalf,

"Upon reaching home again we found that Mrs. Jones and the children had gone to dine with a friend. The invitation, accepted some days previously, had included Mr. Jones, but under the circumstances he would not hear of leaving me. So we set to work and carefully searched the cupboards, and though there was nothing to eat we found a small packet of cocoa which with a little hot water somewhat revived us.

"Our Chinese cook then came and begged his master to make use of the small sum left of his wages. But to this Mr. Jones could not agree, as he explained to the man, adding that although we could not go into debt, even for necessary food, our Heavenly Father knew all about it, and would soon supply His children's needs.

"But though he spoke with confidence, our faith was not a little tried as we went into his study and gave ourselves to waiting upon God. We cried indeed unto the Lord in our trouble, and He heard, and delivered us out of all our distresses.

"For while we were still on our knees, the cook came to the door. 'Oh Teacher, Teacher,' he exclaimed, 'here are letters! 'Once again a mail had arrived from home several days before it was expected, bringing, as we found to our thankfulness, a generous gift from Mr. Berger. 'Whoso is wise and will

observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.' Who that ever trusted in Him was put to shame?"

Over a happy tea-table that evening the whole story came out, for their hearts were so filled with joy and praise that they could not keep it to themselves. The wedding had been arranged for January 20, just two weeks later, but in the light of what had taken place Hudson Taylor felt that he must put before his loved one the more serious aspects of the step she was taking. Very fully he told her, when they were left alone, just what the trial had been.

"I cannot hold you to your promise," he continued, "if you would rather draw back. You see how difficult our life may be at times"—

"Have you forgotten? "the sweet voice interposed. "I was left an orphan in a far-off land. God has been my Father all these years; and do you think I shall be afraid to trust Him now?"

"My heart did sing for joy," he said as he told the story. And well it might! For the price of such a woman is "far above rubies."

So the preparations for the wedding went on—outwardly with the kind help of many friends, and inwardly with the blessing of God. Some of the lessons he was learning at this time may be gathered from the last letters Hudson Taylor penned before the happy event.

I can scarcely realise, dear Mother, what has happened; that after all the agony and suspense we have suffered we are not only at liberty to meet and be much with each other, but that within a few days, D.V., we are to be married! God has been good to us. 'He has indeed answered our prayer and taken our part against the mighty. Oh may we walk more closely with Him and serve Him more faithfully. I wish you knew my Precious One. She is such a treasure! She is all that I desire.

Yet the first place in his heart was truly given to Him "whose love exceeds all human affection," as he wrote in another letter, "and who can fill the soul with gladness to which all other joy is unworthy to be compared."

*Now I know what it is to have my name written on His heart ... and why He never ceases to intercede for me ... His love is so grey that He **cannot**. It is overwhelming, is it not? Such depths of love, and for me!*

The Wedding Day was perfect, setting a crown on all that had gone before.

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In brilliant sunshine Hudson Taylor crossed the river and made his way to the old temple, near the Presbyterian compound, that did duty as a Consulate. The Rev. F. F. Gough was there already in his office as Chaplain, with friends from all the different Missions, officers from the British gunboat and a few other foreigners. Mr. Robert Hart represented the absent Consul, and Mr. Way the father of the bride.

Very sweet and fair she looked in more than Hudson Taylor's eyes that day, in her simple grey silk gown and wedding veil. He was wearing ordinary Chinese dress, and to some the contrast between them must have seemed remarkable. But to those who could see below the surface the noteworthy thing about this wedding was the way in which bride and bridegroom were already "perfect in one."

The reception afterwards in the hospitable home of Mr. and Mrs. Way, the speeches and all the kind congratulations passed like a dream; but it began to seem more real when early sunset found them alone together among the Western Hills. And the days that followed were better far than any dream.

From the guest-room of the Nioh wang monastery Hudson Taylor wrote a

week later:

January. 28. We are so happy! The Lord Himself has turned our sorrow into joy, giving us "the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." ...

January. 29. He has answered all our prayers; overruled the opposition of those who would have separated us; justified the confidence He enabled us to place in Him, and made us very, very happy indeed.

And from Ning-po, when six weeks had gone by:

*Oh, to be married to the one you **do** love, and love most tenderly and devotedly ... that is bliss beyond the power of words to express or imagination conceive. There is no disappointment **there**. And every day as it shows more of the mind of your Beloved, when you have such a treasure as mine, makes you only more proud, more happy, more humbly thankful to the Giver of all good for this best of earthly gifts.*

Chapter XXXVIII^(TOC)

Our Joy and Crown of Rejoicing

1858-1859. AET. 26

A NEW home, especially if it is to receive a bride, is just as interesting in China as elsewhere; and Hudson Taylor found himself quite popular on Bridge Street when in the early spring he remodelled the barn-like attic in which he had formerly dwelt alone. Not only was he married, a change that in itself entitled him to consideration, but he had married the well-known *Da-ya Ku-niang* who for five years had lived and worked in that part of the city. In addition to being a bride she was the trusted friend of many a woman and girl throughout the neighbourhood, so that visitors were numerous when the young couple came into residence, as they did toward the end of April.

This was three months after their marriage, and in the interval they had broken ground in a country district eight or ten miles from the city. From the quiet of the Nioh-wang monastery they had moved to a busy little town (*Moh-tz-in*) on the shores of the Eastern Lake. Surrounded by a large fishing population they had spent a happy month living and preaching Christ among those who had never heard. Love and joy, it seemed, were a wonderful talisman with which to open hearts, and it was a real sorrow when illness obliged them to abandon the native cottage in which they had been living and return to more suitable quarters in the city.

Long weeks of nursing followed, for the fever was nothing less than typhoid, which attacked them one after the other. It was evident that it would not do to return to Moh-tz-in for the summer; so while continuing to visit it as an

outstation Mr. Taylor decided, as we have seen, to occupy the premises on Bridge Street, where it would not be necessary to sleep on the ground floor.

So it was there over the chapel, between the narrow street in front and the canal behind, in the little rooms that were to form the cradle of the China Inland Mission and are now its oldest home, that the young missionaries began settled work. Downstairs everything remained as before, but a few small chambers were fashioned above, with inexpensive partitions. Chinese furniture was easily to be had, and housekeeping was a simple matter to one so familiar with the language and ways of the people.

Then it was that Hudson Taylor, like his father before him, discovered that "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord." Missionary life was no longer a one-sided, bachelor affair, but rounded out and complete in all its relations. He began to feel in touch with the people in a new way, and was able to understand and serve them better at every point. And the gentle presence that made the sunshine of his home was loved and welcomed by the neighbours all about them. Quite freely she went in and out of their courtyards, seeking pupils for her little school, chatting with the children, delighting the women with her understanding of their everyday affairs, and cheering the old people with ready sympathy. There was something about her bright face and pleasant ways that made them want to know the secret of the peace she possessed, and many came to the meetings in the Mission-house to hear more from her lips of the Saviour who made her life so different from their own. Thus a light began to shine from the new home on Bridge Street that brightened many a heart in that great heathen city, and both husband and wife realised how much marriage may help the missionary in his work when it is not only "in the Lord," but "of Him, through Him, and to Him."

They were not without their anxieties, however, in common with all others in Ning-po this summer, for it was a time of painful excitement both in and around the city. The Tai-ping Rebellion, still at the height of its power, was moving rapidly toward the rich province of Cheh-kiang, upon the conquest of which its leaders had determined; and the inhabitants of Hang-chow, Shao-hing, Ning-po and other important places saw themselves powerless to avert a calamity that defied imagination.

Little or no assistance could be expected from Peking. Worst of all in the unequal conflict with England, the brokenhearted Emperor had witnessed the collapse of all his hopes as to protecting his country from foreign opium, and the capital was about to surrender before the might of European arms. With such affairs on hand what help could be given to a distant province over which were hovering the harpies of civil war? And as to self-defence, the experience of eight terrible years had taught the people only too well that success lay with the Rebels and there was no safety but in flight. And for flight the panic-stricken inhabitants of Ning-po were already preparing.

"Great alarm has been felt in this city," wrote Mr. Taylor early in June, "on account of the approach of the Rebels.... Many wealthy men have moved their families and effects into the country, and pawn brokers have been fortifying their places of business. You will be aware that the latter are a wealthy class in China, something like bankers at home, and are therefore the most likely to be attacked in the event of serious disturbance. Passing along the street, making purchases in shops and even when one is preaching, people stop one to ask if the Rebels are coming; and though the excitement is less than it was, this still continues." ^[149]

Even the capture of the forts at Tien-tsin, guarding the approach to the capital, aroused, but little interest. It was too far off to make much difference.

But here close at hand were the dreaded "long-haired Rebels." And Heaven itself seemed indifferent to the calamities of the people.

For, to add to their distress, the spring and autumn crops were largely ruined through an unusual rainfall all over this part of China. Day after day, week after week, the clouds poured out their torrents. Rich and poor were alike filled with consternation, and large sums of money were lavished at the shrine of many an idol.

"The Mandarins, great and small, have been to the principal temples to pray for fair weather," Mr. Taylor continued, "but of course in vain. When will this poor people cease to lean on them, and turn to the only living and true God? Never, I suppose, until He comes whose right it is to reign, and to whom shall' the gathering of the nations be."

All this, of course, seriously affected missionary work at Bridge Street as well as in other parts of the city. Sometimes the preaching-hall was almost empty, and hardly a passer-by was to be seen on the streets. This was when the rain was specially heavy. Again at other times Mr. Taylor had all he could do to keep the crowds in order, and the preaching was constantly interrupted by questions as to the troubles that engrossed the thoughts of the people.

There were not wanting difficulties also in the work itself that called for faith and patience, chief of which was the lack of native helpers. Mrs. Taylor, happily, had succeeded in obtaining one or two servants, although they were wont to disappear on the least provocation, or even without any. But Christian fellow-workers they had none. Preaching, teaching, prescribing and dispensing medicines, as well as entertaining visitors by the hour, Mr. Taylor had to manage single-handed, in addition to business affairs, correspondence, and evangelistic excursions with Mr. Jones.

It would have been possible, of course, to employ a heathen teacher in the school to which Mrs. Taylor gave six or seven hours daily; and they might also have taken on some of the inquirers with a view to training them for positions of usefulness. But either of these courses would have been a hindrance, they considered, rather than a help. To pay young converts, however sincere, for making known the Gospel must inevitably weaken their influence if not their Christian character. Later on the time might come when their call of God to such service would be evident to all; but in their spiritual infancy, at any rate, they should be left to grow naturally in the circumstances in which God had placed them, strengthened by the very trials with which they found themselves surrounded.

Meanwhile special faith and devotion were needed to enable the missionaries to do so much themselves. And in their insufficiency, God worked, bringing them in contact with hearts ready to receive the Gospel, and giving them as their children in the faith men and women who should become *soul-winners* and in the fullest sense their "joy and crown of rejoicing."

One of the first of these after their marriage was the basket-maker, Fang Neng-kuei. Introduced at Bridge Street by his friend Mr. Nyi, there was a something about the Christians that greatly attracted him. Long had he been seeking peace of heart, but neither in the ceremonies of Buddhism nor the philosophy of Confucius had he found any help. He had even attended for a time the services of the Roman Catholics, but not until he joined the little circle at Bridge Street did he begin to understand the rest of faith. Then nothing would satisfy him but to be there every night as soon as his work permitted, following eagerly all that was said and done.

It was about this time that Mr. Taylor, finding his audiences diminishing, bethought him of a plan to arouse fresh interest. He had at hand a set of

coloured pictures illustrating the Gospel stories, and put up a notice to the effect that these would be on view at the evening services, when they would also be' fully explained. The result was all he had hoped, for the Chinese dearly love pictures and stories.

One night the subject was the Prodigal Son, and the young missionary preached with more than ordinary freedom. With the crowded room before him and eager faces peering in from the street, one can well imagine how he would speak on the experiences of the wanderer and all the father's love. The thought of God as such a Father was strangely new to most of his hearers, and when at the close Mr. Taylor invited any who wished to hear more to stay behind for conversation, almost the whole audience remained. Among the most interested were Neng-kuei and two friends whom he had brought to the meeting. Others drifted out by degrees, but these three stayed on, and seemed much in earnest when they said they wished to become followers of Jesus.

Mr. Taylor had recently started a night-school in which inquirers might learn to read the New Testament by means of Roman letters. This exactly suited Neng-kuei and his friends, and for some time they were regular in their attendance. Then it began to be rumoured abroad that the basket-makers were becoming Christians, and they had a good deal of persecution to put up with. This of course tested the reality of their faith, and to the sorrow of the missionaries first one and then another ceased to come. Would Neng-kuei too drift away? But in his case the work proved deep and real. Persecution only brought him out more boldly as a "good soldier of Jesus Christ," and ridicule taught him to defend his new-found faith in such a way that he became a most effective preacher of the Gospel.

But Neng-kuei's earnestness in making known the truth as it is in Jesus was

due to something deeper than external opposition. He was a man called of God to a special service, and placed by divine providence in a special school. In spite of more than one fall like Peter's, whom he closely resembled in character, Neng-kuei was to be widely used in winning souls to Christ. Wherever he went in later years, he was enabled to raise up little churches that continued to thrive and 'grow under the care of others. Neng-kuei was not one who could long minister to them himself; but he realised this, and was always ready to pass on to new fields when his special work was done. And the zeal and devotion that characterised him must be attributed, under God, to the influences by which his Christian life was formed and nurtured.

Few though they were in number, Hudson Taylor gave himself to the young converts at this time, as if the evangelisation of China depended upon their future efforts. In addition to all his other work he devoted several hours daily to their instruction. Mr. Jones was the recognised Pastor of the church, and the Sunday services were held in his house,^[150] but the older Christians, several of whom were already baptized, were just as eager to attend the Bridge Street classes as were the most recent inquirers.

First came the public meeting every evening, when the hall would be filled with more or less regular attendants; and when that was over, and outsiders had for the most part withdrawn, three periods were given to regular and carefully considered study.

To begin with, a lesson was taken from the Old Testament, the young missionary delighting to dwell upon the spiritual meaning of its matchless stories; then a chapter was read from some important book, frequently the *Pilgrim's Progress*; and finally a passage from the New Testament was talked over, the version used being the Romanised colloquial.

Nor was this all. Sunday with its special meetings, morning, afternoon and evening, was made the very most of for the inner circle. It cost the Christians a great deal to leave their regular employments, sacrificing the practical possibilities of one day in seven. It was perhaps the hardest thing their Christian faith required of them. Yet the command was plain, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy"; and Mr. Taylor and his fellow-missionaries were convinced that no strong, self-propagating church could be built on any other basis. So they constantly enjoined upon the native Christians, by teaching and example, the requirements of Scripture in this connection.

And as due compensation, if it may be so expressed, they felt it incumbent upon them to make the sacrifice worth while, as far as in their power lay, by filling the hours thus given to God with profitable occupation. In addition, therefore, 'to the regular meetings, they had two periods of teaching after the fashion of the American Sunday School, when old and young—Christians, inquirers, patients, schoolchildren and servants—were divided into classes and taught in a helpful, personal way. This made Sunday a heavy day for the missionaries, of whom there were only four, but if it cost some toil and weariness they were the better able to appreciate the sacrifices made by the converts.

Some had to walk long distances and go without food for the greater part of the day, and others had to face persecution and financial loss. Neng-kuei, for example, found that it cost him a full third of his weekly wages to attend the meetings on Sunday. He was a skilled workman, and his master was quite willing that he should get through all there was to be done in six days, provided he went without pay on the seventh. If it gave him satisfaction to waste four days in every month he was 'at liberty to do so, only he must of course provide his food on those occasions and draw wages only for the time

in which work was done. It was a clever arrangement as far as the master was concerned, but one that told heavily on the poor basket-maker. Two pence a day and his food had been little enough before, but now out of only twelve pence a week (instead of fourteen) he had to spend two or three on provisions for Sunday, which meant a total lessening of his hard-earned income by a third. But he was willing, quite willing for this, if only he could have the Lord's Day for worship; and there could be no doubt that he was richly repaid in the strength and blessing it brought him all through the week.

Another element of great importance in the training of these young converts was the emphasis placed on reading for themselves the Word of God. This it was that brought out the exceeding value for the uneducated among them of the Romanised version of the Ning-po New Testament. For the local dialect differed greatly from the written language, and hence the more literary versions were unintelligible to the majority. But there was no one who could not understand the Romanised version. It was a very fair translation, direct from the original language, into the vernacular in everyday use, and as such had a special charm for the women, who could soon read it easily and found that what they read was understood by others.^[151]

Mrs. Taylor was fully one with her husband as regards the importance of teaching every inquirer to read, including women and children, and gave a good deal of time to preparing and even printing on her own printing-press suitable literature in the Romanised colloquial. She found that by the use of this system a child of ordinary intelligence could read the New Testament in a month. Older people with 'less time at their disposal might take longer; but even for busy women it was no difficult task; and experience proved that those who accomplished it rarely if ever failed to become Christians.

Mrs. Tsiu, the Teacher's mother, was a case in point. When her son was first

employed at Kuen-kiao-teo she was angered and distressed by his interest in the Gospel. Reading the Scriptures daily with Mrs. Jones and other foreigners, he had a good opportunity for studying the practical effects as well as the teachings of Christianity, and before the missionaries had any idea that a deep work was going on in his heart, the young Confucianist had become a humble follower of Jesus.

"May I purchase a New Testament?" he inquired one day. "I want the easy kind, printed in Roman letters."

"But you can read Wen-li," replied his pupil. "Would you not rather have it in the scholarly character?"

"It is not for myself," said the young man earnestly, but for my mother. And will you not pray that she may learn to read it, and obtaining heavenly influences may have her heart changed and her sins forgiven?"

Full of thankfulness over the conversion of the son, the missionaries joined him in earnest prayer for his mother, sharing also his conviction that if only she would learn to read the Gospels she too would love and believe in Jesus.

And so it proved. For though Mrs. Tsiu refused for a long time to have anything to do with the religion of the foreigners, her desire to be able to read at last won the day. She was flattered by her son's assurance that she would soon master the new system and be as fluent a reader as those who had long studied character, and that moreover everybody would understand the meaning of what she read. With his help she made rapid progress, and meanwhile the message of the book was doing its work in her heart.

Taking her stand boldly as a Christian, Mrs. Tsiu was a great cheer to the little company of believers all through those summer months. For she was

full of joy and courage. She opened her house for a weekly prayer-meeting which became a centre of blessing in the neighbourhood, and was never so happy as when reading and explaining to her neighbours the precious Book and its story.^[152]

This was of course a great encouragement to the missionaries, and quickened their zeal for the instruction of all over whom they had any influence. The burden on their hearts increasingly was that of raising up, as workers together with God, a band of native evangelists for the as yet unreached interior of China. To go themselves seemed for the time being out of the question, and yet the country was accessible as never before. The Treaty of Tien-tsin signed during the summer had opened the way at last to all the inland provinces.^[153] Foreigners had now the right to travel freely, under the protection of passports, and it only remained to make use of the facilities for which they had prayed so long.

Lord Elgin's report of his official journey with a view to testing the new order of things was deeply interesting. No hindrance had been put in his way as he steamed slowly up the Yangtze, six hundred miles to the newly-opened Port of Hankow, the commercial metropolis of central China. Nothing was to prevent foreigners from settling there now ministers of the Gospel as well as Government officials and merchants—and many were the missionaries who longed to enter that open door.

"You will have heard before this all about the new Treaty," wrote Mr. Taylor in November. "We may be losing some of our Ning-po missionaries ... who will go inland. And oh, will not the Church at home awaken and send us out many more to publish the Glad Tidings?"

"Many of us long to go—oh how we long to go! But there are duties and ties that bind us that none but the Lord can

unloose. May He give 'gifts' to many of the native Christians, qualifying them ... for the care of churches already formed, ... and thus set us free for pioneering work."

Nothing else, nothing less would have kept Hudson Taylor and his young wife from proceeding at once to the interior. But the claims of that little band of believers could not be set aside. They were their own children in the faith, and though not a large family as yet were just at the stage when they most needed watchful care. It was to **their** love, **their** prayers, these souls had been committed, and to leave them now, even for the good of others, would have been to disregard that highest of all trusts, parental responsibility. And they were right in this conviction, as the blessing of God abundantly proved.

For these Christians, Nyi, Neng-kuei and the rest, were men whom the Lord could use. Poor and unlearned like most of the first disciples, they too were to become "fishers of men." No less than six or seven, indeed, of the converts gathered about Mr. and Mrs. Taylor this winter were to come to their help in later years as fellow-workers in the China Inland Mission.^[154] But for them the nurture of that little seed amid so many difficulties would have been almost impossible and much of its promise might never have come to fruition.

Already in the winter of 1858-1859 there were signs that rejoiced the missionaries in the midst of much to try both faith and love. But, even so, they little realised the importance of the influence they were exercising, directly and indirectly. What they were themselves, in the deepest things, this to a large extent their children in the faith' became; and there is no better, surer way of passing on spiritual blessing.

"Imitators of us and of the Lord."

"Those thing which ye have both learned, and received, and seen, and heard

in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."

Thus it was the Lord trained His own disciples in the three wonderful years;
and thus it must be still to-day.

Chapter XXXIX^(TOC)

Fishers of Men

1858-1859. AET. 26

AMONG all the characteristics caught by the converts from their missionaries at this time, none was more important in its results than love for souls, that sure evidence of a heart in fellowship with the Lord Himself. When this is not found in the missionary is it ever developed in his native helpers? And can anything make up for its absence in either the one or the other? Learning, eloquence, natural gifts, all, all go up in the balances as lighter than nothing, if not permeated with this supreme endowment.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or as a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.

But in the little home on Bridge Street, in spite of all that may have been deficient on less important lines, there was no lack of love—love for God and love for man—the essential qualification for leading men to God. Nyi was a soul-winner, Neng-kuei was a soul-winner, and to go no farther Mrs. Tsiu and her son were soul-winners, in the good, old-fashioned meaning of the term. They believed in heaven and they believed in hell, and longed to bring those around them to the Saviour whose blood alone cleanses "from all sin."

No sooner had Mrs. Tsiu learned to read, as we have seen, than she longed to

share with her neighbours the blessings of the Gospel. Taking her precious Testament wrapped in a coloured handkerchief, many were the hours she spent in going from courtyard to courtyard, reading to women at their sewing, and telling the old, old story to all who would listen. She was a welcome visitor, and made the most of her opportunities for being useful. But there was one old woman who seemed beyond her reach. Very deaf and almost blind, she could think of nothing but her troubles, and had long ago given up hope of better things. Yet there was love and rest for her in Jesus; and with earnest prayer the Teacher's mother set about winning this poor, dark soul to Him. But what a difficult task it was, when every word had to be shouted into her ear, and she could not catch the love-light in the speaker's eyes.

This only made it the more wonderful, when the darkened mind at length was penetrated with some gleam of light from above. She consented then to go to the Mission house, and was conscious in its very atmosphere of a peace she had never known.

"Why does my heart feel so much **wider**," is the oft-repeated question, "when I come inside these doors?"

"Mrs. Tsiu taught her syllable by syllable," wrote Mr. Taylor, "to repeat verses of hymns and passages of Scripture.... and the Holy Spirit made the Word effectual to her conversion. Much prayer and many persevering efforts were rewarded as new light, new love, sprang up within her. Now she had found something to think of, now she had a Friend to converse with, now she had comfort both for time and for eternity. A happier Christian than that old woman I have seldom if ever met. She loved the house of God, she loved the people of God. In fair weather or in wet, in hot weather or in cold, she was to be found leaning on the shoulder of her grandchild, and winding her way to the meetings, some of which were more than a mile

from her home. She could see nothing and hear nothing, but she met with God and He blessed her; she met with His people, and their hearty salutations did her good.

"After a time she was taken ill, and all believed that she was about to die. She was very happy, especially in the thought that she would be neither blind nor deaf in heaven. One day, however, some neighbours, to whom she had been talking about the Lord, jeeringly replied that she should pray to Him, since He was such a wonderful Saviour, to raise her up to health again. Left alone, she pondered the matter until convinced that her recovery in answer to prayer would be to the glory of God; and upon Mrs. Tsiu and another friend coming in she told them about it, and requested them to kneel down and pray that she might be raised up.

"This they willingly did, asking God for the honour of His own great Name to make her well; and the old woman added her Amen to the prayer she knew had been offered though she heard it not. Within a few days she was in her usual health, and to my astonishment took her accustomed place in one of the meetings. And not until a year later did she finish her course with joy."

Meanwhile Mrs. Tsiu and her son were rejoicing over another soul they had been permitted to win for Jesus. He was an old man and had seen many sorrows, for his sons had turned out badly and through evil ways had ruined the family fortunes. Dying early, they had left their parents to the sorrow and disgrace of a childless, poverty-stricken old age. Scarcely can there be in China a sadder lot, and old Dzing as he peddled his wares thought bitterly of the days when he had been well-to-do and respected. Now he must travel the streets with a pack on his back, depending for a livelihood upon the odds and ends he could sell for women's embroidery and children's caps and shoes. Only at night when every door was shut could he turn homeward to the

miserable room where little of comfort awaited him.

Persuaded by Mrs. Tsiu and her son to accompany them to Bridge Street, a new interest had found its way into his once dreary existence. So this was the meaning of the change he had noticed in the very faces of his friends. They had something worth living for; something that could turn sorrow into joy and brighten even the shadows of the tomb. It was a great discovery.

Many an evening was now spent in the inquirers' classes, the old intelligence waking up in response to their helpful influences. It restored his self-respect to be addressed as "Teacher Dzing," on account of his knowledge of the classics, and appealed to from time to time for the name or meaning of a character. But a deeper work was going on within him, under the touch of a Hand that brought deeper healing.

"As a poor, helpless sinner," Mr. Taylor wrote, "he cast himself upon God's forgiving mercy, and found peace in believing."

His love for the Bible was great, and he spent every available moment over its pages. Perhaps it was this that made his Christian life so restful. Wherever he went he carried a blessing with him, and many a woman on a back street first heard the message of salvation from his lips.

Neng-kuei, too, from the very first was a soul-winner. Not unlike Peter in his fervent, devoted spirit, he also was used to bring the message of salvation to seeking souls whose prayers were known to God alone. One such was daily traversing the streets of Ning-po at this time, in search of a religion of which he knew nothing save that it would bring him peace; and but for a great trial coming into Neng-kuei's life, he might have been long without finding it.

It was the busy season for basket-makers, and Nengkuei's master insisted that

he must work on Sunday. It was no use reminding him of his agreement, or suggesting that he should call in additional help. No, this idea of resting one day in seven was all very well for foreigners, but now there was work to be done Neng-kuei must be broken of it.

"Come to-morrow, or not at all," was his ultimatum. And the Christian basket-maker knew himself dismissed.

Nor was this the worst of it. For on Monday; morning, when he set about seeking other employment, every door was closed. No one wanted workmen, busy season though it was, and Neng-kuei tramped the city in vain.

"The devil is having hard at me," thought he at last; "but I must and will resist him. If he will not let me have other employment, I will give my time to plucking souls from his kingdom."

And this he did by spending the rest of the day in distributing tracts, and talking in the streets and tea-shops with all who were inclined to listen.

Far away from Ning-po, in the beautiful valley of the Feng-hwa river, lay the farming district from which Nengkuei himself had come. There he had learned his trade and married the young wife from whom he had been parted in little more than a year. Her death had been terrible a death in the dark, like so many thousands, alas, in China every year! Poor Neng kuei could speak no word of comfort as she was passing from him in anguish and fear. And still there was no voice to tell among all those hills and valleys of Jesus and His redeeming love.

The basket-maker drifted to Ning-po a little later, and there found, as we have seen, the Light of Life; but who was to care for Wang the farmer, in the little village of O-zi, when he became concerned about eternal things?

Not far from Neng-kuei's former home he lay ill and apparently dying, alone in the empty house. The family were all out in the fields, having supplied his needs as well as they could, and there was no one to whom he could turn for help in the great distress of his soul. For Wang regarded death with terror, as introducing the dreaded day on which he must "reckon up accounts."

Somehow, somewhere, he must meet the gods his sins had angered; and the balance to his credit was pitifully small. Whether his heart went out in a longing cry for mercy we cannot tell. At any rate his need was great, and he was dimly conscious of it.

And then a strange thing happened. In the silence of the empty house he heard himself called. The voice though unknown was so real that he got up and made his way to the door, but on opening it could see no one. Painfully he crept back to bed, only to hear the same voice a little later calling more urgently. Again he rose, and supporting himself by the walls and furniture managed to reach the door. But again no one was in sight. Greatly alarmed, he buried his face beneath the coverlet. This was none other than the approach of death!—the dreaded summons of the King of Hell, at whose bar he must shortly appear.

And now the voice spoke a third time, and told him not to be afraid. He was going, it said, to recover. An infusion of a certain herb would cure his sickness, and as soon as he was able he was to go into Ning-po, where he would hear of a new religion that would bring him peace of heart.

All this was so reassuring that Wang determined to do exactly as he was instructed. He persuaded his wife to prepare the medicine, and to the surprise of all began forthwith to recover. Going to Ning-po, however, was another matter. The city was thirty miles away, and Wang had nothing to live on while seeking the new religion. His farm-produce he could not carry with

him, and besides it was all needed at home. The only plan would be to work for his living; and finally the farmer set out to support himself by cutting grass along the wayside and selling it to people who had cattle.

Thus he had managed to earn a scanty subsistence in Ning-po for some time, without finding anything that met the longings of his heart. Under the city-wall and amid the many grave-mounds he gathered a supply of grass day by day, which he sold in the city, but no one paid much attention to his questions about religious matters. Still, Wang was sure that what the voice, had told him would come true.

At length one day in a tea-shop-what was that he heard? A simple working-man like himself was leaning across one of the tables, talking with those nearest him. Something about "the Jesus-doctrine" he said, and about sins being forgiven. Greatly interested Wang drew nearer, and listened for the first time-try to imagine it-to the glad tidings of salvation.

Neng-kuei's heart was full that day, and he spoke long and earnestly. Some went out and some came in, but the O-zi farmer never lost a word. When Neng-kuei had finished, he introduced himself and asked many questions. Seeing his interest Neng-kuei said:

"You must draw water yourself from the fountain. There is a book God has given us in which everything is made plain. You shall have a copy and study the matter fully."

"Alas," replied the farmer, "I do not know how to read, and I am now too old to learn."

"Far from it!" exclaimed his new-found friend. "For with the Glad Tidings an easy method of reading has been brought to us. I did not know a single character when I became a Christian, but now I can read the New Testament

quite easily. If you like I will be your teacher. Let us begin at once."

Wang needed no second invitation. It did not take long to move his few belongings to the house in which the basket-maker lodged, and before the sun went down he had mastered the first six letters of the alphabet, besides acquiring a much fuller knowledge of spiritual things. And how happy they were over the lesson! It is doubtful whether anywhere in the city there were more thankful hearts, for had not the farmer found the treasure he had been seeking, and Neng-kuei a new jewel to lay at his Master's feet?

No doubt they prayed together that evening over Nengkuei's difficulty in obtaining employment, for which a sufficient reason was found the following day. His former master, angered by his adherence to Christian principles, had sent round to all the basket-makers of the city asking that if this particular workman applied to them on Monday morning they would turn him away. As members of the same Guild they had thought it best to comply. But the promise was for Monday, not for subsequent days; and the first employer to whom he went on Tuesday was glad enough to engage the clever workman. So Neng-kuei's troubles, too, came to a happy end; and his new master living not far from Bridge Street, he was able to run in during the breakfast-hour and tell his missionary friends all about it.

Introduced in this way to the farmer from O-zi, Mr. Taylor hardly knew at first what to make of his story. But as time went on the sincerity of the man became apparent to all. He remained in Ning-po for some months, still supporting himself as a grass-cutter, and when he returned to O-zi it was to set apart the best room in his house as a little chapel, in which for fifty years he lovingly and faithfully made known the Gospel.

But this was not the only occasion on which Neng-kuei was enabled, through

fidelity to Christian principle, to win a soul destined to become specially useful in winning others. Another man named Wang was living in Ning-po at the time who was to be numbered among the Bridge Street Christians, and to exceed them all in the fruitfulness of his labours. But as yet he knew nothing of the Master he was to love and serve.

A busy workman, employed from morning till night in painting and decorating houses, how was he to come under the influence of the Gospel? He had no time to listen to preaching, though he seems to have been religiously inclined, and was no frequenter of tea-shops, his own home being at hand with the attractions of wife and infant child. So the Lord, who had chosen him for His service, sent across his pathway one whom He could trust to be faithful in little things, and who "in season and out of season" would deliver His message.

It was a beautiful house young Wang was in that day, decorating one of the guest-halls. Presently a stir began—servants came hurrying from the inner apartments, a man with a load of baskets was ushered in, and several ladies, richly dressed, came out to give their orders. Of all this the painter on his scaffolding took little notice, but when the ladies began to speak in tones of some annoyance he pricked up his ears to listen.

What! Not make baskets for holding incense? Refuse an order for anything to be used in the service of the gods?"

"Do not be angry, ladies," replied the simple basketmaker. "I am sorry not to comply with your wishes, but I cannot make or sell anything for the worship of idols."

"And pray, why not?" was the astonished question.

"I am a believer in the Lord Jesus," Neng-kuei answered respectfully; "a worshipper of the true and living God." And he went on to put before these ladies, who might never hear again, the way of pardon and peace through a dying, risen Saviour.

"What was that you were saying?"

The ladies had grown tired of listening, and had tottered away on their tiny feet, but Neng-kuei's attention was arrested, as he was about to leave, by a man in working clothes, who went on earnestly

"You did not see me. I am painting up there," indicating his ladder. "What was it you were saying? I heard, but tell me again."

That conversation, too, we are left to imagine. We only know that Wang Lae-djun took the first step that day in a lifetime of devoted service to the Master.

Chapter XL^(TOC)

What Hath God Wrought

February-August 1859. AET. 26-27

IT was February 9, and in a darkened room Hudson Taylor knelt beside the bed-side of his dying wife. Only a few weeks had elapsed since the New Year dawned upon their perfect happiness, and now-was she to be taken from him, and his life shadowed with irreparable loss? Internal inflammation, the result apparently of chill, had brought her so low that life seemed ebbing fast away, and every remedy the physicians could suggest had proved unavailing.

Elsewhere in the city the united prayer-meeting was going on, and the knowledge that others were praying with him upheld the lonely watcher as nothing else could have done. Noting with anguish the hollow temples, sunken eyes and pinched features, all indicating the near approach of death, Hudson Taylor was indeed "shipwrecked upon God." Faith was the only spar he had to cling to; faith in the Will that even then was perfect wisdom, perfect love.

Kneeling there in the silence-how was it that new hope began to possess his heart? A remedy! They had not tried it. He must consult Dr. Parker as quickly as possible. But would she, could she hold out until he came back again?

"It was nearly two miles to Dr. Parker's," he wrote, "and every moment appeared long. On my way thither, while wrestling mightily with God in prayer, the precious words were brought with power to my soul, 'Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.' I was enabled at once to plead them in faith, and the result was deep, deep

unspeakable peace and joy.

"All consciousness of distance was gone. Dr. Parker approved the use of the means suggested; but upon arriving at home I saw at a glance that the desired change had taken place in the absence of this or any other remedy. The drawn aspect of the countenance had given place to the calmness of tranquil slumber, and not one unfavourable symptom remained to retard recovery."

The Great Physician had been there. His Presence had rebuked the approach of death. His touch had once again brought healing.

This experience of what the Lord could and would do for His people in answer to believing prayer was one of the most wonderful Hudson Taylor ever had, and strengthened him for many an emergency, including those of the summer near at hand. Never could he forget those days and hours in which it seemed as though the Lord were saying: "Son of man, I take from thee the desire of thine eyes at a stroke." But it was not on his home the sore affliction fell.

Very refreshing, after this dangerous illness, was a visit to the new hospital outside the city. For Dr. Parker's building operations were finished, including chapel, dispensary, and dwelling-house, and he had accommodation for European as well as Chinese patients and guests. Everything was new, fresh, and attractive, and the house itself, standing back a little from the river, was crowned with a watch-tower commanding a view of unusual interest.

"The situation of Dr. Parker's new hospital," wrote Dr. W. A. P. Martin about this time, "is the best that could have been selected in the vicinity of this port. Separated on the one hand from the impure atmosphere of the city by the city-wall, and removed on the other from the noisome exhalations of the paddy-fields by the breadth of the river, it enjoys the best air

that blows over the plain of Ning-po. Close to one of the city gates, near a much-frequented ferry, and overlooking, too, a river which is the main thoroughfare from the sea-coast to many large cities in the interior, its handsome and commodious buildings daily attract the notice of thousands of passers-by.

"The number of in-patients is already so large as nearly to fill the neat little chapel which the doctor has erected as a dispensary for the soul. They form the nucleus of a very interesting congregation, to which I have preached several times; and the probability of their obtaining permanent good is the greater as they remain many weeks together, receiving daily instruction in divine truth."

It was delightful to see how much had been accomplished by the courage and perseverance with which the Doctor had worked at his long-cherished plan, raising within three years, without help from his Society, this well-equipped medical mission.

May the Lord who has aided me thus far," he wrote, "now use all for the advancement of His cause and the glory of His Name."

Four years had now elapsed since the beginning of 1855, when Dr. Parker and his young colleague had been writing home about their "plans of usefulness." How differently everything had turned out from their expectations! And yet, with these commodious buildings round them representing so important a work, Dr. Parker must have felt thankful that he had not remained in Shanghai. And as Hudson Taylor thought of the Christians in the city, and the loved one given and spared in answer to prayer, his heart could not but overflow with gratitude and praise. It was all they had hoped or dreamed, only better; "our plans of usefulness," but with added elements of blessing they could never have devised, much less brought to

pass.

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him. ... Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

"Yesterday (February 28) was a glad day for us," wrote Mr. Taylor while still at Dr. Parker's, "for our servant who has been with us almost ever since our marriage was received into the Church by baptism, as well as a woman who works for Mrs. Jones. We have now eight native Christians in communion with us, of whom the second (Mr, Tsiu) was baptized a year ago yesterday. Truly we may say with thankfulness, 'what hath God wrought!'"^[155]

"I am very busy," he continued after their return to the city. "So many patients, meetings, and other matters need attention that I am puzzled which to take up first.... Our work here is becoming more important day by day, as God is adding to our numbers.... May His great work go on, and the multitudes of China yet see a glorious day when in every part of this populous empire ... the saved of the Lord shall be many."

Thus spring-time came again, and in April a little holiday was taken, that proved most beneficial in view of the difficult summer before them. Travelling in houseboats with Dr. Parker and his family, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor spent a week among the Western Hills, covered at this season with azaleas, hawthorn, dwarf lilac, wistaria and violets.

"The quiet retirement," wrote one whose name has long been associated with Ning-po, "the blue heavens above and the green hills around, the sound of rippling brook or singing bird, the flash of summer lightning, the echoing storm, the cry of roaming deer at night, the indescribable beauty of the carpet of flowers in spring-time are pleasant and refreshing sights and sounds indeed after the toil, dust, and oppressiveness of a great city."^[156]

Leaving their boats the little party explored some of the side streams, tracing one almost to its source by means of light rafts of bamboo.

"The scenery was very beautiful," Mr. Taylor wrote to his mother. "Waterfalls abound, one of which leaps seven hundred feet in a sheer descent, and another that we saw about six hundred...The views above, below, and around were wonderful ... something to be remembered for a lifetime."

Great was the contrast on their return to Ning-po with the heat and manifold distresses of that summer. Following upon the floods of the previous year came an unusually hot season, and at the same time a wave of anti-foreign feeling swept over the city, due to daring outrages perpetrated in connection with the coolie-traffic, which was "rapidly assuming all the features of the African slave-trade." Hitherto its ravages had been confined to the Southern provinces, but now men and lads were disappearing from this region also, carried off on foreign ships to the plantations of Cuba and South America, most of them never to return. And these outrages were the more alarming because of the connection in the minds of the people with the renewal of hostilities between China and the Allied Powers.^[157]

"You will not be surprised to hear," wrote Mr. Taylor in the middle of August, "that while God is granting us blessing, Satan is Manifesting his malice. Owing to the kidnapping villainies of those engaged in the coolie traffic-forcibly seizing villagers, and carrying them off in sacks to their vessels-public excitement has reached a very high pitch. Rumours have been circulated that these persons are being seized at the instance of the 'defeated British,' who wish to reinforce their numbers and again attack Tien-tsin. Violent incendiary papers have been posted up, and our lives and property have been in imminent danger. The excitement is decreasing a little now, and we hope the worst is over, as the people know that

measures are being taken by the foreign authorities to search to the bottom of this disgraceful affair."

But before this letter was written and a measure of tranquillity restored, the missionary household in Bridge Street had passed through some anxious hours. As many Europeans as possible had left the city, taking shelter in the Settlement or on foreign vessels, but Mr. and Mrs. Taylor would not leave the native Christians, whose danger was little less than their own.

Those were days in which the young husband could not but long for quiet and the blessed sense of security that would have meant so much to the one dearer to him than life. Protect her he could not from the knowledge of surrounding danger, but taking such precautions as were possible he stayed his heart on God. It was not much that could be done to facilitate escape, should it be necessary. A boat lay in readiness at the back door, and a rope was strongly fastened in their bedroom window by means of which it might be possible to reach the canal under cover of darkness. But full well he knew the complications that might arise, and it would have been a time of agonising suspense but for the peace of God.

For it was then, and under those circumstances, the hopes of many a long month were fulfilled, and the little daughter came to them for whom they could find no sweeter, truer name than Grace.

"My dear Parents," wrote the father a week later, "though this is the Lord's Day I find myself able to pen a few lines, which will not doubt surprise you as much as it does myself. The reason is that I am at home taking care of my wife and baby-girl—your first grand child! Oh, my dear Parents, God has been so good to me, to us all! better far than my fears, 'O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His Name together!'"

The thermometer was at 104°F. in the coolest part of the house when on July 31 this little one was born, and once only in the week that followed did it drop as low as 88—at midnight, during a thunderstorm. So that this period was not without its trials. But the worst had been averted, although for a few hours it came very near.

Surging crowds about the mission-house had almost broken into a riot a few days previously, while cries of "Beat the foreigner," "Kill the foreign devils," rent the air. In some wonderful way, however, a restraint was on the people, and no attempt was made to batter in the doors, easy as it would have been.

And, if anything, more wonderful still was the peace in which the mother's heart was kept, both before and after. Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me and strengthened me," was indeed true in her experience. Nothing retarded her recovery, and so conscious was she of the inflow of divine grace for every need that she would not have been without the trials that revealed to her new depths of the heart of God.

The dangers did not pass away for some time, and combined with the intense heat might well have proved overwhelming.

"We feel that we are living only from night to day and day to night," wrote Mr. Jones, who also remained in the city. "The people are thirsting for revenge.... They mix up together missionaries, traders, and the government, the war and the coolie traffic.... and say that the kidnapped Chinese are Pat in the front of the fight against their own Emperor. ... They have placarded the streets calling for our blood; one of the foremost in all this being a man who supplies the Mandarins with buckets to contain the heads of the decapitated, a fearfully large trade here.

"We are now, as I write, in the midst of all this, our wives and

our little ones in the same danger. But we are resting on Him who restrains our enemies with 'Thus far, but no further'; and who to us is saying, 'I will never leave thee.' He has made His Word very precious to our hearts, ... and even in these trying times we have been encouraged by some inquiring the way of salvation."

For the work of God went on, and was more deep and real for the testing through which the converts had to pass. Wang the grass-cutter, for example, who was accepted for Church-membership in August, was frequently upbraided on the streets for casting in his lot with the Christians. His simple faith, however, was proof against all attacks. When told that foreigners were at war with his country, and were carrying off people to make them fight against their own Emperor, he would say

"There must be a mistake somewhere. Satan surely has blinded your eyes. These missionaries do not fight at all. They heal the sick, relieve suffering, and show us the way of eternal happiness. Nothing but good can come of joining them."

And from this position he was not to be moved.

That he really knew the Lord was very evident to those who watched his life at this time.

"I think much of heaven and Jesus," he said to Mr. Taylor one day, "the weather is so hot."

"Indeed," replied his friend, waiting to hear more.

"You see," he continued, "I have to cut grass out in the burning sun, and sometimes I hardly know how to keep on. And then I think of Jesus-Jesus and heaven-and my mind becomes peaceful and my body so much rested that I

can do twice as much as before. Oh, it is wonderful the difference it makes when you just think of Jesus!"

And so the missionaries found it too.

Chapter XLI^(TOC)

A Wealthy Place

August-December 1859. AET. 27

SPARED thus in the mercy' of God the loss of his own loved one, Hudson Taylor felt the more deeply for Dr. Parker when the angel of death visited his home. With scarcely any warning, on August 26, Mrs. Parker was stricken with dangerous illness, and passed away at midnight leaving four little ones motherless. The young missionaries at Bridge Street did what they could to come to the help of their friend, and others were ready with practical sympathy, but the shock proved too much for the bereaved husband. One of the children was seriously ill, and amid the difficulties of his changed position the doctor began to realise how much his own health was impaired by five years spent in China. He had neither heart nor strength for added burdens and decided before long to take his family home to the care of relatives in Scotland.

But what about the medical mission, outcome of so much prayer and labour? The hospital was full of patients, and the dispensary crowded day by day with a constant stream of people, all of whom needed help. No other doctor was free to take his place, and yet to stop the work seemed out of the question with the winter coming on. How would it be, in default of better arrangements, to ask his former colleague, Hudson Taylor, to continue the dispensary at any rate? He was quite competent for this, and with the hospital closed would not have much financial responsibility.

The suggestion, it need hardly be said, came as a great surprise to Mr. and

Mrs. Taylor, and sent them to their knees in earnest prayer. All they wanted was to know the Lord's will in the matter, and as they waited upon Him for guidance it was clearly given, but in a direction they little anticipated.

Yes, the dispensary must be kept open; and more than that, the hospital must not be closed. The Lord had given them helpers just suited for such an emergency—a band of native Christians who would rally round them and make the most of the opportunities which the hospital especially afforded. And as to funds, or lack of funds—for Dr. Parker had very little to leave—the work was not theirs but the Lord's. To close it on account of the small balance in hand would practically mean that prayer had lost its power; and if so they might as well retire from the field. No, for the good of the native Christians, the strengthening of their own faith and the comfort and blessing of many, ***they must go forward***, and above all for the glory of God.

"After waiting upon the Lord for guidance," wrote Hudson Taylor, "I felt constrained to undertake not only the dispensary but the hospital as well, relying solely on the faithfulness of a prayer-hearing God to furnish means for its support.

"At times there were no fewer than fifty in-patients, besides a large number who daily attended the dispensary. Thirty beds were ordinarily allotted to free patients and their attendants, and about as many more to opium-smokers who paid for their board while being cured of the habit. As all the wants of the sick in the wards were supplied gratuitously, as well as the medical appliances needed for the out-patient department, the daily expenses were considerable. A number of native attendants also were required, involving their support.

"The funds for the maintenance of all this had hitherto been supplied by the proceeds of the doctor's foreign practice, and with his departure this source of income ceased. But had not

God said that whatever we ask in the name of the Lord Jesus shall be done? And are we not told to seek first the kingdom of God—not means to advance it—and that "all these things" shall be added to us? Such promises were surely sufficient."

Strong therefore in the Lord and in the inward assurance of His call to this enlarged service, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor prepared to move over to Dr. Parker's. The care of the Bridge Street Christians remained in the hands of their beloved colleague Mr. Jones, who from the first had been Pastor of the little Church, and cordial indeed was the prayer and sympathy with which all its members endorsed the action of their missionaries.

To Mrs. Taylor, as she thought over it all, it must have seemed very wonderful, this sudden change that brought her husband into a position of usefulness he was so well qualified to fill. They had sought nothing for themselves, but in going about their work had quietly lived down misunderstandings, leaving their reputation in the hands of God. And now He had led them out into "a wealthy place," putting them in charge of a work second to none in Ning-po in its importance, and the common meeting-ground of all the other missions.

Looking across the river to the Presbyterian Compound, Mrs. Taylor could not but recall a conversation of the previous summer, to which she alludes in the following letter.

NING-PO, September 30, 1859.

MY DEAR MOTHER

Hudson has again been prevented from writing to you, which makes the fourth fortnightly mail since he was able to send off a letter. I hope you will not ... I know you will not ... begin to think that his dear little daughter is

winning his heart away from his beloved parents. If he could steal some hours from the night he would do so, as he often has before, but his occupations leave him none to steal. He comes upstairs usually between ten and eleven o'clock, tired out with the long day's work, and after resting a little down he goes again to see some of his patients or make up medicine for others.

You will no doubt be surprised at my speaking of patients in this way, but perhaps still more so when I mention that Dr. Parker is leaving his hospital in dear Hudson's care. A few months ago I was walking with a friend (Mrs. M'Cartee) in one of the gardens of the Presbyterian Mission, when she said:

"Do you know what I prophesy? That in a few years Dr. Parker will be taking his family home, and that you and Mr. Taylor will come to live in his large house and carry on the work."

I reminded her that Hudson was not a qualified medical man, and said I did not, think we should ever live outside of the city.

Little could we have imagined that in a few short months Dr. Parker would be on his way home with his motherless children, and that we should be in his house and Hudson taking charge of his work.

She herself, far though she was from supposing it, was one of the most important elements in his success at this time. For God works through human means, and but for his wife and Chinese helpers this winter could never have been what it was in Hudson Taylor's experience and in the annals of the Ning-po hospital. Thoroughly competent to undertake the direction of their enlarged establishment, Mrs. Taylor relieved him of account-keeping, correspondence and all household cares, managing the servants and to a certain extent the staff so admirably that his strength was conserved for the

medical and spiritual part of the work. She even found time to do a good deal in the wards herself, especially among the women patients, and spent many an hour caring both for body and soul in the dispensary.

"Her influence over the patients," wrote her husband, "was great and most beneficial. They saw and felt that there must be something deserving of attention in the religion that led an English lady to labours so peculiar and naturally repulsive. Over her domestics, too, she exerted an influence only to be won by genuine sympathy and continuous efforts for their good. She looked upon them not so much as persons paid for serving her, but as persons brought under her care that she might seek to lead them to Christ. She encouraged and helped them to learn to read and had some of them taught to write, and not a few who for longer or shorter periods were connected with her in this way came to know and love the Master she so faithfully served...."

"She was accustomed to take real comfort from a heart-felt belief in the overruling providence of God in small as well as great matters. If His Word said 'The very hairs of your head are all numbered,' she did not, could not doubt it. She was accustomed, too, to seek His counsel in all things, and would not write a note, pay a call, or make a purchase without raising her heart to God."

In the same way he too drew upon divine resources. Outwardly he was carrying on a great work; inwardly he was conscious of a great cry to Him without whom it could not be sustained for a moment. Had he been depending upon man for help, he would have waited until the need could be made known before assuming such heavy responsibilities. But it had come about so suddenly that no one at any distance was aware of the position or could be more prepared than he himself.

"Eight days before entering upon the care of the Ning-po

hospital," wrote Mr. Taylor, "I had not the remotest idea of ever doing so; still less could friends at home have foreseen the need."

But the Lord had anticipated it, and already His provision was on the way, as events were happily to prove.

The first step taken by the young missionary upon assuming independent charge of the hospital was to call together the assistants and explain the real state of affairs. Dr. Parker, as he told them, had left funds in hand for the expenses of the current month, but little more. After this provision was used up they must look to the Lord directly for supplies; and it would not be possible to guarantee stated salaries, because whatever happened he would not go into debt. Under these circumstances, any who wished to do so were at liberty to seek other employment, though he would be glad of their continued service if they were prepared to trust the simple promises of God.

This condition of things, as Mr. Taylor had expected, led all who were not decided Christians to withdraw and opened the way for other workers. It was a change Dr. Parker had long desired to make, only he had not known how to obtain helpers of a different sort. But Mr. Taylor did; and with a greatly lightened heart he turned to the little circle that at this critical juncture did not fail him. For to the Bridge Street Christians it seemed quite as natural to trust the Lord for temporal as for spiritual blessings. Did not the greater include the less? And was He not, as their "Teachers" so often reminded them, a *real* Father, who never could forget His children's needs? So to the hospital they came; glad not only to strengthen the hands of their missionary friends, but to prove afresh both to themselves and all concerned the loving-kindness of God.

Some worked in one way and some in another; some giving freely what time

they could spare, and others giving their whole time without promise of wages, though receiving their support. And all took the hospital and its concerns upon their hearts in prayer.

No wonder a new atmosphere began to permeate dispensary and wards. Account for it the patients could not—at any rate at first—but they enjoyed none the less the happy, homelike feeling, and the zest with which everything was carried on. The days were full of a new interest. For these attendants—Wang the grass-cutter and Wang the painter, Nyi, Neng-kuei and others—seemed to possess the secret of perpetual happiness, and had so much to impart. Not only were they kind and considerate in the work of the wards, but all their spare time was given to telling of One who had transformed life for them, and who they said was ready to receive all who came to Him for rest. Then there were books, pictures and singing. Everything indeed seemed set to song! And the daily meetings in the Chapel only made one long for more.

There are few secrets in China, and the financial basis upon which the hospital was now run was not one of them. Soon the patients knew all about it, and were watching eagerly for the outcome. This too was something to think and talk about; and as the money left by Dr. Parker was used up and Hudson Taylor's own supplies ran low, many were the conjectures as to what would happen next. Needless to say that alone and with his little band of helpers Hudson Taylor was much in prayer at this time. It was perhaps a more open and in that sense crucial test than any that had come to him, and he realised that the faith of not a few was at stake as well as the continuance of the hospital work. But day after day went by without bringing the expected answer.

At length one morning Kuei-hua the cook^[158] appeared with serious news for his master. The very last bag of rice had been opened, and was disappearing

rapidly.

"Then," replied Hudson Taylor, "the Lord's time for helping us must be close at hand."

And so it proved. For before that bag of rice was finished a letter reached the young missionary that was among the most remarkable he ever received.

It was from Mr. Berger, and contained a cheque for fifty pounds, like others that had come before. Only in this case the letter went on to say that a heavy burden had come upon the writer, the burden of wealth to use for God. Mr. Berger's father had recently passed away, leaving him a considerable increase of fortune. The son did not wish to enlarge his personal expenditure. He had had enough before, and was now praying to be guided as to the Lord's purpose in what had taken place. Could his friends in China help him? The bill enclosed was for immediate needs, and would they write fully, after praying over the matter, if there were ways in which they could profitably use more?

Fifty pounds! There it lay on the table; and his far-off friend, knowing nothing about that last bag of rice or the many needs of the hospital, actually asked if he might send them more. No wonder Hudson Taylor was overwhelmed with thankfulness and awe. Suppose he had held back from taking charge of the hospital on account of lack of means, or lack of faith rather? Lack of faith—with such promises and such a God!

There was no Salvation Army in those days, but the praise-meeting held in the chapel fairly anticipated it in its songs and shouts of joy. But unlike some Army meetings it had to be a short one, for were there not the patients in the wards? And how they listened—these men and women who had known nothing all their lives but blank, empty heathenism.

"Where is the idol that can do anything like that?" was the question upon many lips and hearts. "Have they ever delivered us in our troubles, or answered prayer after this sort?"

Chapter XLII^(TOC)

Above all that Ye ask or Think

January-July 1860; and Onwards

NOTHING is more contagious than spiritual joy, when it is the real thing, and of this there was abundance in the Ning-po hospital that winter. For answers to prayer were many, in connection with other than financial needs. There were critical cases of illness in which life was given back when every hope seemed gone; there were operations successfully performed under unfavourable conditions, and patients restored from long and hopeless suffering. And best of all there were dead souls brought to life in Christ Jesus, and slaves of sin set free, so that within nine months sixteen patients had already been baptized and more than thirty others were enrolled as candidates for admission to one or other of the Ning-po Churches.

This did not come all at once, it need hardly be said but only as the result of unremitting prayer and labour. One man from the hospital was desiring baptism by the end of October. In November there were four new candidates for Church-membership. More than six hundred out-patients were treated before the end of the year, and sixty in-patients had been for longer or shorter periods under the influence of the Gospel. A new glow of spiritual life and love pervaded everything. All felt it, and Mr. Taylor was able to write

Truly the Lord is with us, and is blessing us abundantly. ^[159]

And in the midst of it all came the home-going of the first of that little group to be called into the presence of the Lord-the first death, one may almost put it, in connection with the China Inland Mission, or at any rate with its

forerunner. And when one thinks how many thousands shine and shall yet shine in eternal glory through the labours of that widened circle, a quite peculiar interest invests this first passing-over.

It was dear old Dzing to whom the summons came, and the closing days of the year were bright with his beautiful end.

*"He was upwards of sixty years of age," wrote Mr. Taylor,
"and it was only during the last twelve months of his life that
he found the Saviour."*

But it was a good year, and going about with his pedlar's pack he was a messenger of glad tidings to many who but for him would never have heard.

In the chilly days of December he fell ill with bronchitis, and Mr. Taylor had him brought to the hospital. There in a warm, dry room, very different from his own quarters, he was encompassed with kindness. His gratitude was touching, and as the end drew near, the spirit in which he met it made a profound impression on those about him.

His difficulty in breathing was great at times, and it was hard not to be impatient.

"If only the Lord would take me!" he exclaimed again and again.

"He will," replied his missionary friend, "just as soon as you are ready. He loves you better far than we do, and will not let you suffer a moment longer than He sees needful. He wants you to trust Him, and be willing to wait His time. Will you show your love for Him by being patient, even in this?"

It was a difficult lesson, but he was given grace to learn it, and, wonderful to say, never again showed any sign of impatience.

"To-morrow is the Lord's Day," he said on New Year's Eve, "but I shall not

be able to join in worship." When reminded that the Lord was just as near him on his bed of sickness, and that he could praise Him there in a way specially to His glory, he seemed comforted and said

"Yes, it is so. He promised never to leave me, and He never has; and soon will take me to Himself."

During the day-New Year's Day-he was failing fast, but enjoyed passages of Scripture read to him at his own request, including the twenty-third Psalm. Hymns also gave him pleasure, especially a translation of

Who are these in white array,
Brighter than the noonday sun?

"I shall soon shine too," whispered the dying saint, "but all the praise will belong to Jesus."

After the evening service he received with much affection some of the Christians who came to see him, and pleaded earnestly with his wife to turn to the Lord. Then losing consciousness a little he seemed to be seeking something.

"What do you want, Elder Brother?" inquired one of those beside him. Opening his eyes with a smile he slowly but distinctly said, "Jehovah my Shepherd," and soon after fell asleep in Jesus.

But it all told, this blessed work, upon those whose hearts were in it.

"Nothing without the cross" is true above all in spiritual things, and for Hudson Taylor the price that had to be paid was that of health, almost of life itself. Six years in China, six such years, had left their mark; and now, under the strain of day and night work in the hospital, entailing much exposure to wintry weather, strength was failing fast.

But in a sense his work was completed-or the preparation, rather, for which he had been sent to China. "Whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever of you will be chiefest, shall be servant of all." "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." "Faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many."

Not that any thought of large developments was in Hudson Taylor's mind as he faced the probability that he must return to England before long. He was conscious only of two things-great and growing opportunities on the one hand, and rapidly failing health on the other; so that while longing to multiply himself into a hundred missionaries he was increasingly unequal to the work of one.

It is deeply interesting to notice, at this juncture, the means the Lord was using to bring about purposes of His own in connection with this little Ning-po Mission of which those most interested in it never dreamed. Poor, uninfluential and without what would ordinarily be regarded as training or talent for leadership, how unlikely that Hudson Taylor should ever become the founder and director of a world-wide organisation embracing missionaries from all evangelical denominations and every Protestant land. Yet this was indeed to be the case, for He who is the great, the only Worker still delights to use what has been well called "God's five-rank army of weakness."

Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, have part therein: ^[160] but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound (or put to shame) the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence.... According as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

A beginning was to be made even now along the lines of that future development, and how were Hudson Taylor and his colleague to be launched upon it but by a constraining sense of the greatness of the need and their own insufficiency to meet it. Fellow-workers they *must* have to enter doors of opportunity that never before had seemed so open. And all unconscious of what lay beyond the step to which he felt himself led, Hudson Taylor wrote home early in the New Year:^[161]

Do you know any earnest, devoted young men desirous of serving God in China, who not wishing for more than their actual support would be willing to come out and labour here? Oh for four or five such helpers! They would probably begin to preach in Chinese in six months' time; and in answer to prayer the necessary means would be found for their support.

Had he gone on living quietly at Bridge Street it might have been long before the young missionary would have been driven to such a step. There he and Mr. Jones were able to overtake the work, and with the help of the native brethren might have carried it on for years. But removed suddenly from that position and entrusted with larger, more fruitful labours, the result was very different. Here was something too great for him; and as the Lord wrought with them, confirming His own Word "with signs following," the outlook and possibilities were overwhelming.

If souls had not been saved in the hospital and the Christians had not developed in usefulness and promise, the situation would still have been other than it was. But with a growing family manifesting no little gift for spiritual ministry, Hudson Taylor was impressed as never before by the need of watchfulness in utilising the resources of the native church. This it was that brought him to the point of appealing for fellow-missionaries. The converts must have supervision; as yet they could not stand alone. The fall

through pride and even dishonesty of the basket-maker, their most devoted worker, had burned this upon his heart. Prayer and loving personal influence alone could restore him and safeguard others; and all needed, as he had learned from experience, the most painstaking instruction in spiritual things.

And beside all this, the care of the hospital was proving too much for his strength. With sixteen members in fellowship and a dozen or more awaiting baptism; with work opening up in the villages round about, and native Christians fitted to undertake it if only they could have supervision; with no difficulty as to funds, for the Lord was abundantly supplying their need, both he and Mr. Jones were so run down that it was with difficulty they could get through present duties. Had any of these elements been lacking the effect produced might have been less definite, but taken all together one conclusion only was possible. Help they must have, the help of fellowmissionaries willing for their own simple line of things. So the appeal went home that was to result in the coming out, to begin with, of just the workers prayed for, two of whom are still labouring in China as the senior members of the Inland Mission.^[162] But there was no thought in Hudson Taylor's mind that he would have to be their leader, indeed there was no immediate thought at all, save that he must seek in one way or another to meet the claims of the ever-growing work.

"I have this morning sent out forms and tables," he wrote in February, "to a house in a neighbouring village that we have been enabled to rent for a school, and we have engaged Mrs. Tsiu and her, son, the Teacher, to commence work both among boys and girls.... Their home will I trust be an influence for good in the neighbourhood and a centre from which we may preach the Gospel."

And then, thinking of all that might be done if his suggestions about five

new missionaries were carried out, he continued:

I do hope father will take up the idea... The people are perishing, and God is so blessing the work. But we are wearing down and must have help... Pity poor China 1 You have given your son, give your influence too.

But month after month went by bringing no response from home. There was sympathy of course in his desires, but no encouragement to expect that helpers would be forthcoming.

Hoping much from a brief holiday, Mr. Taylor closed the dispensary as spring came on, and went with his wife and child to the neighbouring hills. They were away ten days, and he seemed greatly benefited; but the heavy work of the hospital soon bore him down on their return. Then it was he first wrote to his parents about the precarious state of his health, and that he had reason to suppose his lungs were affected with tubercular trouble.^[163]

"It is a comfort under these circumstances," he concluded, "to have no doubt it was God who guided us into the position we now hold; and the supply of funds for the work as well as the blessing that has rested upon it confirms one in this conviction. Here at any rate is my present post of duty, and I trust that by His Grace who has led me hitherto I shall not leave it before, nor remain in it longer than it is His will...."

"Dearly as I should love to see you all ... may I never, never be permitted to turn back from the Gospel plough, or to lay down my works save as He directs who has called me to so honourable, if in some respects so trying a post."

Yet at the very time this letter was written, tokens for good were not wanting to cheer them on their way. It was a time of wonderful blessing in the homelands, and the rising tide of revival was sweeping many into the kingdom of

God. Prayer and sympathy, in consequence, were steadily on the increase for missionary work.

"A kind friend has been raised up," wrote Mr. Pearse in a communication received at the end of March, "who sends a hundred pounds each to Brother Jones and yourself.... You will be glad to hear that the revival has reached London and hundreds are being converted."

And only two weeks later a letter was received in Mrs. Berger's handwriting containing a bill for fifty pounds.

"My husband is very anxious," she said amongst other encouraging things, "that the hospital should be sustained. It appears to be such a means of blessing. And as other openings occur he hopes you will be able to follow them up."

*"Surely this is a day calling for no ordinary activity. People are beginning to wake up. You doubtless see **The Revival** and other papers. Stirring meetings have been held all over London and in many parts of England, arising out of the week set apart for prayer at the invitation of Christians in India (the second week in January), to plead for the mighty working of the Holy Spirit in the Church and in the world."*

"Such a week this earth never before witnessed. Oh that glorious results may follow! I feel so cold and lifeless, and long to be in the heart of these mighty workings. But such is not my privilege. One has to learn to deal with the Lord alone, and not to limit His power to seasons or even places. Ask and have, is His way of it. Believe, and the blessing is ours."

Into the prepared soil at home a little seed was to fall that would take root and grow all the more surely because the time was so opportune. Hudson Taylor's life, past, present and to come, was needed in the providence of God to foster that little seed. He must be taken home, and that before long, So the trial of

failing health continued until it was evident that a voyage to England was the only hope of saving his life.

"What I desire to know is how I may best serve China," he had written early in May. "If I am too ill to labour here and by returning home might re-establish health, if only for a time, or if I might rouse others to take up the work I can no longer continue, I think I ought to try."

But now in June his letters took another tone:

"I trust, if it is the will of God," he wrote to his parents, "that ... I may be spared to labour for China. If not, all is well. I am very happy in Jesus. Never before have I felt Him to be so precious a Saviour, Lover, Friend. Sometimes I think I may not live to see you; sometimes I hope to be spared to labour long and more earnestly than ever for China. All, all is known to Him who needs to know all ... and He will do all things well.

"Do not think me selfish. I do sorrow for the grief my removal would be to you and to my dear, so dear wife. I would fain live for your sakes. But Jesus is so lovely, so precious! All must sink in comparison with Him."

Still there seemed a probability that the voyage might prolong his life, if nothing more, and closing the hospital with great reluctance the Hudson Taylors set out for Shanghai toward the end of June. And they did not go alone. Means having been abundantly supplied by recent gifts, Mr. Taylor felt justified in accepting the services of the young painter Wang Lae-djun, who saw that his beloved missionaries were unfit to travel alone. Immense as was the distance between China and England in those days, Lae-djun was willing to leave his wife and child in his father's home and go to the ends of the earth with those to whom he owed so much. And they-well they never

could have managed the journey without him. His presence also was a precious link with the past they were leaving behind, and encouraged the hope that fellow-workers might be given them in England to whom he could be useful as a teacher of the language.

Many arrangements had to be made in Shanghai, and they were thankful for the two weeks that elapsed before they could sail for home. It was providential that they were able to secure passages at all, for the jubilee, bound for London, was the only vessel by which they could have travelled for a long time to come.

"The Captain has his wife with him," wrote Mr. Taylor, "and seems to be a gentlemanly though unconverted man. He looks irritable, and I fear may make it hard for us at times. But we look to God as our stay.... The season is against us. We shall have to beat down the China Sea, and may expect typhoons. But winds and waves obey Him still, and

... The worst that can come

But shortens the journey and hastens us Home."

One great mercy remained to fill their cup to overflowing. A much-loved sister in the home-circle had not yet given herself to the Lord, and during all the years of their separation Hudson Taylor had daily cried to God on her behalf. Many were the letters he had written pleading with her to decide the question of her soul's salvation, but as far as he was aware she was still putting it off. And then, the very day before they sailed, a mail came in bringing glad tidings. His prayers were answered! They were united at last, an unbroken family in the Lord.

Unable to write to her before nightfall, the brother roused himself at three o'clock next morning, and in spite of great weakness traced a few lines in

pencil, the last he was to write from China for several years.

"In view of my ill-health," they read, "and the possibility of my removal, a burden has been on my mind, now thank God removed. Cleave to the Lord, my doubly dear sister, with full purpose of heart, and you will indeed find your joy to be full."

Daybreak that summer morning-and as the brown waters of the Yangtze were left behind them, how the travellers' hearts would go up to God! With what thankfulness they looked back over long years of "goodness and mercy" in China; with what confidence they looked forward to "goodness and mercy" still through all the untried way.

He cannot have taught us to trust in His Name,

And thus far have brought us, to put us to shame

Each sweet Ebenezer we have in review,

Confirms His good pleasure to help us right through.

The voyage, though not prolonged beyond four months, was an unusually trying one, on account of illness and the awful temper of the captain, and the little party had no comfort but in one another. Often they prayed together in Chinese, and talked over Ning-po days and the way in which the Lord had led them. Often too they thought of the future, and dwelt on the time when with restored health and fellow-workers given in answer to prayer they might be returning to China by the blessing of God. But never on quiet nights in the prow, never under the shining stars, never in moments of most earnest prayer or appropriating faith did they imagine what really was to be.

What dream or desire could reach to it? China open, open from end to end; an "Inland Mission," working in its most distant provinces; a thousand stations

and outstations manned by hundreds of missionaries-what! more than nine hundred, when they were praying for five? Yes, and the converts! How could they picture the thirty members of the Church so dear to them multiplied to more than thirty thousand, and the little company of native workers increased to more than two thousand-pastors, teachers, evangelists, Bible-women, all following in the steps of Nyi and Tsiu and Wang Lae-djun? And as to money, what flight of imagination could have suggested a million and a half sterling given in answer to prayer within the next fifty years? A million five hundred thousand pounds, not dollars, put into their hands for the spread of the Gospel in China, and that without a collection or a single appeal for financial help. Impossible indeed would it have seemed, even with all their knowledge of Him with whom they had to do

"A God that worketh for him that waiteth for Him."

No, they only prayed and trusted, the future veiled from their eyes. All that Hudson Taylor saw was the great need and the unutterable privilege of giving oneself, one's all, to meet it, in fellowship with Christ. Going home, invalided though he was, few if any expecting to see him return, one longing only filled his heart, one prayer—with his remaining strength to do something more for China, whether by life or by death.

"Oh there is such a boundless sphere of usefulness," he had written in one of his last letters, "but the labourers are few, weak, worn and weary. Oh that the Church at home were awake to its duties, its privileges! How many would then come and labour here...."

"I have not given up hope of seeing you and your dear husband join us. [Written to his sister Amelia, recently married to Mr. Broomhall.] I believe you will yet come. I believe you will be sent by God. And a happy work you will find it. We have only the Lord to look to for means, for health,

for encouragement-and we need no other. He gives us all, and He best knows what we need.

Dear Brother and Sister, do come.... 'Come over and help us.' ... Had I a thousand pounds China should have it. Had I a thousand lives China should claim every one. No, not China, but Christ! Can we do too much for Him? Can we do enough for such a Saviour?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,

That were an offering far too small;

Love so amazing, so divine,

Shall have my life, my soul, my all."

And as they followed faithfully, living out the spirit of their prayers, the reality of their consecration, God in His infinite faithfulness did the rest.

Volume 2 (TOC)

The Growth of a Work of God

Foreword

"THE founder of the China Inland Mission was a physician J. Hudson Taylor, a man full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, of entire surrender to God and His call, of great selfdenial, heartfelt compassion, rare power in prayer, marvellous organising faculty, energetic initiative, indefatigable perseverance, and of astonishing influence with men, and withal of childlike humility."

PROFESSOR WARNECK.

"Surely never was man better fitted for his work than he for the difficult undertaking of founding and conducting a great interdenominational and international mission in million-peopled China. The China Inland Mission was conceived in his soul, and every stage of its advance sprung from his personal exertions. In the quiet of his heart, in deep unutterable communings with God, the mission had its origin, and it remains his memorial. On that noble monument, not of perishable marble, and in characters not of man's inditing, his name is written. His dust sleeps now in China. Silence has fallen on the lips which long pleaded China's cause, but the effects of the plea remain in the conversion of thousands called out of heathen darkness into God's marvellous light, and the existence of a mission whose present influence and future growth are beyond our powers to estimate. To God be all

the glory.

The missionary spirit is the spirit of Jesus, the spirit of the Incarnation and the Cross. Not then to the instrument of the Master, however dear, however noble, but to the Master Himself be all the praise, Who lives to carry on by His own unfailing resources and chosen instrumentalities His work of the redemption of a fallen world, to the high and glorious issues of His eternal Kingdom."

H. GRATTAN GUINNESS, D.D.

Part I_(TOC)

The Backside of the Desert

1860-1866. AET. 28-34

Chapter I

If Thou Forbear to Deliver

September. 1865. AET. 33

IT was an anxious moment for the young missionary—fraught with possibilities of which he was keenly conscious, From an early hour that morning he had been alone with God, pleading for abiding results from this meeting. Now the great hall with its sea of faces lay before him but how weak he felt, how inadequate to the opportunity! And no one was expecting his message. A stranger at Perth and indeed in Scotland, it had only been with difficulty he had persuaded the leaders of the Conference to give him a few minutes in which to speak on China—that vast empire with its four hundred millions, a fourth of the entire human race, about which his heart was burdened.

"My dear sir," the Convener had exclaimed, scanning first introductions of this unknown Hudson Taylor, "surely you mistake the character of the Conference! These meetings are for ***spiritual edification.***"

But the missionary was not to be denied, nor could he see that obedience to the last great command of the risen Saviour was out of keeping with spiritual edification. To him it seemed rather to lie at the root of all true blessing, and to be the surest way to a deepened experience of fellowship with God. It was at no little cost, however, that he went to urge this point of view; for those were not days when foreign missions occupied a place of much importance, his dread of public speaking was only less than his sensitiveness about putting himself forward.^[164] But the facts, the great unseen realities, burned as a fire within him. He could not be at Perth in the midst of the Conference and see those multitudes of Christian people, intelligent, influential, and caring deeply about spiritual things, without longing that they should see and feel needs incomparably greater than their own.^[165]

And now the moment had come. Trembling from head to foot as he rose, Hudson Taylor could only grasp the rail of the platform and command voice enough to ask his hearers to unite with him in prayer to God. To Him it was easy to speak; and unusual as this beginning was, even for a missionary address, it arrested attention and opened the way to many a heart. For there was about that prayer a peculiar reality and power. More simple it could not have been, and yet it revealed a sacred intimacy that awakened longing for just such confidence in and certainty of God. A strange hush came over the people before the prayer ended, and then all else was forgotten in scenes to which they found themselves transported.

For the missionary came at once to the heart of his message. Back again in thought in the land of his adoption, he was travelling by native junk from Shanghai to Ningpo. Among his fellow-passengers, one Chinese, who had spent some years in England and went by the name of Peter, was much upon his heart, for, though not unacquainted with the Gospel, he knew nothing of its saving power. Simply he told the story of this man's friendliness and of his own efforts to win him to Christ. Nearing the city of Sung-kiang, they were preparing to go ashore together to preach and distribute tracts, when Mr. Taylor in his cabin was startled by a sudden splash and cry that told of a man overboard. Springing at once on deck he looked round and missed Peter.

Yes," exclaimed the boatmen unconcernedly, "it was over there he went down!"

To drop the sail and jump into the water was the work of a moment; but the tide was running out, and the low, shrubless shore afforded little landmark. Searching everywhere in an agony of suspense, Mr Taylor caught sight of some fishermen with a drag-net-just the thing needed.

"Come," he cried as hope revived, "come and drag over this spot. A man is drowning!"

"**Veh bin**," was the amazing reply: "It is not convenient."

"Don't talk of convenience! Quickly come, or it will be too late."

"We are busy fishing."

"Never mind your fishing! Come—only come at **once!** I will pay you well."

"How much will you give us?"

"Five dollars!^[166] only don't stand talking. Save life without delay!"

"Too little!" they shouted across the water. "We will not come for less than thirty dollars."

"But I have not so much with me I I will give you all I've got."

"And how much may that be?"

"Oh, I don't know. About fourteen dollars."

Upon this they came, and the first time they passed the net through the water brought up the missing man. Hat all Mr. Taylor's efforts to restore respiration were in vain. It was only too plain that life had fled, sacrificed to the callous indifference of those who might easily have saved it.^[167]

A burning sense of indignation swept over the great audience. Could it be that anywhere on earth people were to be found so utterly callous and selfish! But as the earnest voice went on, conviction struck home all the more deeply that it was unexpected:

"Is the body, then, of so much more value than the soul? We

condemn those heathen fishermen. We say they were guilty of the man's death-because they could easily have saved him, and did not do it. But what of the millions whom we leave to perish, and that eternally? What of the plain command, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,'and the searching question inspired by God Himself; 'If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul doth not He know it? And shall He not render to every man according to his works?'"

China might be far off and little known; we might silence conscience by saying that its vast population was largely inaccessible; but every one of those men, women, and children was a soul for whose salvation an infinite price had been paid; every one of them had a right to know that they had been ransomed by the precious blood of Christ, and to have the offer of eternal life in His Name. While we were busy about other things, quite profitably occupied it may be, they were living, dying without God and without hope—a million every month in that one land passing beyond our reach.

Rapidly, then, Hudson Taylor arrayed before his hearers facts that recent prayer and study had burned afresh upon his soul. Not the coast-board provinces only, to which the little band of Protestant missionaries was confined, but the great unreached interior, every part indeed of the mighty empire passed in review. To most if not all present it was a revelation. Millions upon millions of their fellow-creatures, unknown, unthought of, were brought out of the dim mists of forgetfulness, and put before them in such fashion that their claim upon Christian hearts could never again be disregarded. Missionary addresses were not wont to be of that order. It was not speaking, so much, about these startling facts as letting the light of God fall upon them making those present see as the speaker saw, hear as the

speaker heard, GOD'S view, GOD's verdict upon the matter.

And what a verdict that was!

In Scotland, with its population of four millions, several thousand ministers were needed to care for the spiritual interests of people already flooded with Gospel light. China, with a hundred times as many precious, immortal souls, had not even one Protestant missionary, on an average, to every **four millions**. Moreover, its ninety-one missionaries of all societies were not by any means evenly distributed. They were gathered in a few, a very few, centres near the coast. Confined to the treaty ports, they were in touch with a mere fringe of the population of the provinces in which they were found; while beyond lay the vast interior, inhabited by two hundred millions of our fellow-creatures, amongst whom no voice was raised to tell of salvation, full and free, through the finished work of Christ. Yet we believe that the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Amazing inconsistency, appalling indifference to the 'revealed will of Him Whom we call Master and Lord, and to the deepest needs of the human soul!

It was for these inland provinces and dependencies the speaker pleaded—populous regions as large as all the countries of Europe put together, in which no Protestant missionary was yet to be found.

"Do you believe that each unit of these millions has an immortal soul," he questioned searchingly, "and that there is none other name under heaven given among men' save the precious name of Jesus 'whereby we must be saved'? Do you believe that He and He alone is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life,' and that 'no man cometh unto the Father' but by Him? If so, think of the condition of these unsaved souls, and examine yourself in the sight of God to see whether you are doing your utmost to make Him known to them or not.

"It will not do to say that you have no special call to go to China. With these facts before you, you need rather to ascertain whether you have a special call to stay at home. If in the sight of God you cannot say you are sure that you have a special call to stay at home, why are you disobeying the Saviour's plain command to go? Why are you refusing to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty? If, however, it is perfectly clear that duty-not inclination, not pleasure, not business detains you at home, are you labouring in prayer for these needy ones as you might? Is your influence used to advance the cause of God among them? Are your means as largely employed as they should be in helping forward their salvation?"

Recalling an experience, the pain of which could never be forgotten, Mr. Taylor went on to tell of a Ningpo convert who, full of joy in his new-found faith, had, inquired

"How long have you known this Good News in your country?"

"We have known it a long time," was the reluctant answer; "hundreds of years."

"Hundreds of years," exclaimed the ex-Buddhist leader, "and you never came to tell us!"

"My father sought the Truth," he added sadly, "sought it long, and died without finding it. Oh, why did you not come sooner?"

"Shall we say that the way was not open?" continued the speaker. "At any rate it is open now. Before the next Perth Conference twelve millions more, in China, will have passed forever beyond our reach. What are we doing to bring them the tidings of Redeeming Love? It is no use singing as we often do:

'Waft, waft ye winds the story.'

The winds will never waft the story; but they may waft **us**.

"The Lord Jesus commands us, commands us each one individually—'Go,' He says, 'Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.' Will you say to Him, 'It is not convenient'? Will you tell Him that you are busy fishing have bought a piece of land, purchased five yoke of oxen, married a wife, or for other 'reasons cannot obey? Will He accept such excuses? Have we forgotten that 'we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ,' that every one may receive the, things done in the body. Oh, remember, pray for, labour for the unevangelised millions of China, or you will sin against your own soul! Consider again whose Word it is that says:

"If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it,? And shall not He render to every man according to his works?"

So deep was the impression that the meeting broke up almost in silence. Many sought the speaker afterwards, to inquire about the work in which he was engaged and to offer such help as they could give. Far and wide reports were carried, both of the address and that Hudson Taylor was, about to return to China. With no denomination at his back, no Committee even or promise of supplies, he was taking with-him a party of fellow-workers to attempt nothing less than the evangelisation of the inland provinces of that great empire. And he was so calm about it, so sure that God had called them to this seemingly impossible task and would open the way before them! Amazed at his faith and vision, men felt almost as if a prophet had risen up among them, and one of the larger churches was filled with an audience eager to hear more of the projected mission. ^[168]

Further openings resulted; as it was found that Hudson Taylor was no visionary though he had his God-given vision. Quiet, practical, steeped in prayer, his words had weight and influence. Reports of his addresses appeared in not a few religious journals. Friends made at these meetings were among his faithful helpers through all the after-years, and to this day there are those who remember with thankfulness the coming of this servant of God into their lives at the Perth Conference of 1865.

What was it that lay **behind** the faith and vision, making them far other than a Utopian dream? What had been the life, the character, the heart-experiences that led to the launching in this unexpected way of the China Inland Mission?

Chapter II_(TOC)

Hidden Years

1860-1864. AET. 28-32

IN the heart of the East End of London, among the toilers of Whitechapel, Hudson Taylor had made his home. Invalided from China in 1860, it had been like a death-sentence to be told that he must never think of returning unless he wished to throw his life away. Six and a half years of strenuous work in Shanghai, Ningpo, and elsewhere had taken heavy toll of a constitution none too strong at the outset, and, with a delicate wife and child it looked for a time as though he would never see China again.^[169]

His one consolation in leaving the converts in Ningpo, had been that he could serve them in England. A hymnbook and other simple works in their local dialect were much needed, and above all a more correct translation of the New Testament with marginal references. Immediately on landing, the young missionary had thrown himself into the task of getting the Bible Society and the Religious Tract Society to undertake these publications, and so engrossed was he with meetings, interviews, and correspondence that almost three weeks elapsed before he could visit his beloved parents in Barnsley.

Then came the question as to where to settle. If he should be detained at home but a year or two, Mr. Taylor was anxious to make the most of the time. No thought of a holiday seems to have entered his mind. Furlough to him simply meant an opportunity for finding fellow-labourers and fitting himself and them for future usefulness. His colleagues in Ningpo, Mr. and Mrs. J. Jones, whose work (unconnected with any society) had been the means of much blessing, were no longer equal to the burdens pressing upon them. Even before Mr. Taylor left, five additional helpers had been appealed for, and much prayer was being made in the faith that they would be given. Meanwhile tidings were none too good from the little mission.

"You know what it is to have a sick child at a distance," Mr. Taylor wrote to his parents, after two months in England," and we are feeling separation from children in the Lord who are spiritually sick. But what can we do? We can scarcely go back at once. I know how we are needed, but the object sought in our coming home does not yet seem gained. It is true that our friends (Mr. and Mrs. Jones) are apt to look on the dark side of things; so we must hope for the best, and join our prayers with yours for God to work in the hearts of the dear but feeble lambs of His flock, redeemed with His own precious blood. Oh, yes I He will bear the lambs in His bosom. He loves them more than we do."

Curbing his eagerness to be back in China, Mr. Taylor had decided to complete his medical studies and take his diplomas. Facing the broad thoroughfare of Whitechapel stood his old Alma Mater, the London Hospital. Its doors were open to him, and turning resolutely from an easier line of things he brought his wife and children to East London, renting a house on a side street near the hospital, that no time might be lost in going to and fro to attend his lectures, etc.

Here, then, at No.1 Beaumont Street, began the discipline that was to lengthen out, little as Hudson Taylor expected it, until he was ready for the wider vision that was yet to dawn upon him. Four years were to elapse-quiet, hidden years-in which little apparently was to be accomplished, while God was doing the real, the inner work which was to bear fruit not in Ningpo only but in every part of China.

Well was it that the young missionaries could not foresee all that lay before them. At twenty-nine and-twenty-four, long patience is not easy. They were in England truly, but with every thought, every breath, loving China, living for China! In addition to his medical studies, they had undertaken the

important task of revising the Ningpo Testament, the Bible Society having agreed to publish a new edition. They were in correspondence also with candidates for the mission, and as health improved their hope brightened that a couple of years might set them free—medical degrees obtained, Romanised publications in hand, and the fellow-workers given about whom they were waiting upon God. And it was to be **four** years before the Pillar of the Cloud moved for them even a little; four years that were to bring them but **one** missionary, and in which, though Mr. Taylor's medical studies were completed, the revision was to prove a task that grew upon their hands. Yet it was right, all right, and the one way to answer their deepest prayers.

A glimpse into the daily life of that little home in Beaumont Street, so different from the sordid scenes about it, is afforded by the recollections of the Barnsley candidate who came up during the first year Mr. Taylor was in London. Through his Class Leader, Mr. Henry Bell, he had been interested in China, though without for a moment supposing that he could himself become a missionary.

"James," said Mr. Bell one day, "I have a job for you. Will you undertake it?"

"What is it, sir?"

And the unexpected reply had been, "Go to China."

Hudson Taylor's appeal for workers had reached Barnsley before his return to England, and often was the matter remembered in prayer in the old home on the Market Place. Dropping in to tea, the good old-fashioned Yorkshire meal, Mr. Bell had learned that spiritual qualifications were needed rather than high educational attainments. This turned his thoughts to the young mechanic who was his right-hand helper in open-air meetings and wherever a soul was to be won. Telling him all he knew of the opening, Mr. Bell repeated his question:

"Will you go?"

"I will," replied Meadows, "if God is calling me. But I must have time to pray over it."

The faith principles of the mission caused him no apprehension, nor did the difficulties of the language. He was ready to give up good business prospects, and go out looking to the Lord alone for supplies. But he must know assuredly that he was being led of God.

"So I fasted," he wrote long after, "and going into my workshop one dinner-hour, knelt down and definitely asked the Lord, 'Shall I go?'

"The answer that came then and there was, 'Go, and the Lord be with thee,' and I have never regretted from that day to this (nearly fifty years later) that I acted upon it."

When the time came for his first visit to London, it was with immense interest he looked forward to being in Mr. Taylor's company. To see something of a missionary's life at close quarters had more attraction for him than all the wonders of the great city. Making his way to the address given, he was scarcely surprised to find himself in a poor neighbourhood. Mr. Taylor, he knew, was studying medicine at the London Hospital, and it was natural he should live near at hand. But the poverty of the little house itself did somewhat take him aback, when he got over the surprise of being welcomed by a Chinese in native gown and **queue**. The cottage he had left in Barnsley possessed more of comfort, as he soon discovered, than the scantily furnished rooms which contented the missionaries. They and their Chinese helper (none other than Wang Lae-djun of Ningpo)^[170] seemed to have little time for housekeeping, so keen were they on the chief work in hand, the revision of the New Testament. In a study devoid of all but actual

necessaries, he found Mr. Taylor engrossed with Mr. Gough over a knotty point of translation,^[171] and it was some time before they could do more than give him a cordial welcome. So interested was he, however, in all that was going on that he forgot the bareness of the room, the low fire in the grate, though the day was bitterly cold, and the well-worn dress of the man whose spirit seemed in such contrast with his surroundings!

And at table it was the same. Las-djun was both cook and laundryman, and the table linen no less than the provisions told of the secondary place given to such details. But the conversation made him oblivious of the cooking, and he was surprised to find himself unruffled by things that would have upset his peace of mind at home. The "gentle, earnest piety" of the missionaries deeply impressed him, as did their absorbing devotion to the work they had left, which was never far from their thoughts. The appalling fact of a million precious souls, month by month, perishing in China for lack of the Gospel was *real* to them, and found some adequate, corresponding reality in their daily life. Poor as they were—and it was not long before he discovered that they had no means in hand, or even in prospect, with which to send him to China—he was glad to accept such leadership, and to go out simply as a "Scripture-reader" when before long funds were provided.^[172]

And Hudson Taylor's care of his one missionary was not unworthy of this confidence. He had known what it was to be alone, in need, and apparently forgotten during his first years in China, and nothing that could be done by correspondence and attention to business details should be omitted to further the efficiency and well-being of his fellow-workers. Careful though he was of every penny, he invested in a good account-book and a file for letters, and the clear entries in his own handwriting testify to the faithfulness with which he discharged these responsibilities. Mr. Meadows's only complaint, indeed, in

his early correspondence illustrates the regularity with which he was cared for.

"James Meadows speaks of being well and regularly supplied with money," Mr. Taylor wrote to his mother a year after the young couple had gone out. "His only dissatisfaction is that his friends, knowing him to be looking to God only, would be anxious, while he is receiving remittances as regularly as though had a salary. He seems distressed, in fact, at their being so regular and sufficient, as though such a state of things were incompatible with leaning upon God alone. I have explained in my reply that this is not the case, and that as neither he nor I have any promise of another farthing from any one, we need to look to the Lord constantly to supply us as He sees fit."

By this time Mr. Taylor's medical studies were completed and his diploma taken. He had worked hard for them, gaining valuable experience in hospital practice; and now, the strain of examinations over, he was more free to look ahead.

*"We have many difficulties before us," he had written home some months earlier. ^[173] "I do not see my way at all; but it is enough that He does Who will guide, and supply all our need... I wish Barnsley were not so far away. But when we get **Home** we shall be all together... We must not see our rest here, must we? We must press forward, counting everything (and that includes a great many things) but loss, that we may 'win Christ and be found in **Him**.'"*

Of these hidden years of work and waiting little would have been known in detail but for the preservation of a number of brief journals whose very existence was unsuspected. Providentially brought to light while these pages were being written, they fill a gap hitherto passed over in silence. Here they

lie upon the table, twelve thin paper-covered notebooks, worn with years, but not one of them missing. Beginning soon after Mr. Taylor's medical degrees were taken, they cover a period of three years, up to and a little beyond the Perth Conference.^[174] Daily entries in his small clear writing fill the pages, which breathe a spirit words are poor to express.

Scarcely a day is recorded in which he did not have correspondence, visitors, meetings, lessons in Chinese to give to intending missionaries, medical visits to pay to friends or suffering neighbours, attendance at committees, or other public or private engagements in addition to the revision of the Ningpo Testament. That the latter was his chief occupation, and one to which he devoted himself with characteristic thoroughness, is evident from the journals. Every day he noted the number of hours spent in this work alone, and one frequently comes across such entries as the following:

April 13, 1863: Commenced with Mr. Gough at 10 A.M. and worked together about eight hours. Revision, total nine hours.

April 14: Revision nine hours.

April 15: Revision ten and a half hours.

April 16: Revision eight hours.

April 17: Revision eleven and a half hours.

April 18: Revision eleven hours.

April 19, Sunday: Morning, wrote to James Meadows ... had service with Lae-djun.^[175] Afternoon, took tea with Mr. John Howard, having walked to Tottenham to inquire after Miss Stacey's health. Evening, heard Mr. Howard preach. Proposed to Miss Howard, as subjects for prayer, that we should be helped in revision—to do it well and as quickly as is consistent with so doing. Walked home.^[176]

April 20: Revision twelve hours.

April 21: Revision: eleven hours.

April 22: Revision: ten hours.

April 23: Revision: twelve hours.

April 24: Revision: nine and a half hours.

April 25: Revision: thirteen and a half hours.

Several answers to prayer to-day. ... Thanks be to Him.

Thus the record runs on, putting to shame our easygoing service by its intensity and devotion. And this was a returned missionary, detained at home on account of seriously impaired health through equally strenuous labours in China!

April 26, Sunday: Morning, heard Rev. T. Kennedy on "Do thyself no harm." (Appropriate surely!) Afternoon, lay down, having headache and neuralgia. Evening, with Lae-djun on Heb.11., first part. Mr. Gough promised to begin to-morrow not later than 10.30. May God prosper us in our work this week, and in all other matters be our help and guide.

April 27: Revision seven hours (evening at Exeter Hall).

April 28: Revision nine and a half hours.

April 29: Revision eleven hours.

April 30: Revision five and a half hours (B.M.S. meetings).

May 1: Revision eight and a half hours (visitors till 10 P.M.).

May 2: Revision thirteen hours.

May 3, Sunday, at Bayswater: In the morning heard Mr. Lewis, from John 3:33; took the Communion there in the

afternoon. ^[177] Evening, stayed at home and engaged in prayer about our Chinese work.

May 4: Revision four hours (correspondence and visitors).

May 5: Revision eleven and a half hours.

May 6: Revision seven hours (important interviews).

May 7: Revision nine and a half hours.

May 8: Revision ten and a half hours.

May 9: Revision thirteen hours.

May 10, Sunday: Morning, with Lae-djun on Hebrews 11., first part-a happy season. Wrote to James Meadows.

Afternoon, prayer with Maria about leaving this house, about Meadows, Truelove, revision, etc. Wrote to Mr. Lord. ^[178]

Evening, heard Mr. Kennedy on Matthew 27:42: "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." Oh to to be more like the meek, forbearing, loving Jesus. Lord, make me more like Thee."

But it was not work only, it was faith and endurance under searching trial that made these years so fruitful in their after-results. The testing permitted was chiefly along two lines, those of the Ningpo Testament and the supply of personal needs. Mr. Taylor, it should be recorded, never at any time received financial help from the funds of the Mission. Even in these early days he felt it important to be entirely independent, in this sense, of the work. He had long been looking to the Lord in temporal matters as in spiritual, proving in many wonderful ways the truth of the promise, "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." These years, however, in East London were marked by very special exercise of mind in this connection, and some periods of extremity never afterwards repeated. Such, for example,

were the autumn days in 1863, of which we read as follows:

October 5, Monday: Our money nearly spent. Paid in faith, however, what was owing to tradesmen and servants. Found a very sweet promise for us in our revision work, 1 Chronicles 28:20. Revision seven hours.

October 9: Our money all but gone. O Lord, our hope is in Thee! Revision six and a half hours. Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Lord, May Jones and Baby came from Bristol. (So they were responsible for quite a party.)

October 10: Revision nine and a half hours. ... Went with Mrs. Jones to see Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson, who kindly refused to take any fee. Only 2s. 51d. left, with the greatest management.

*I must have all things and abound;
While God is God to me.*

October 11, Sunday: Morning, with Lae-djun. Afternoon, engaged in prayer. Evening, went to hear Mr. Kennedy. We gave 2s. today to the collections, in faith and as due to the Lord.

It is not surprising to find, as the week wore on, special evidences of the Lord's watchful care. He was permitting their faith to be tested for sufficient reasons, but He was not unmindful of them in the trial. Early in the week Mrs. Jones' sister came up from the country, bringing "a goose, a' duck, and a fowl," with other good things, for the house hold; and a day or two later a relative called with more than thirty pounds for Mr. and Mrs. Taylor's personal use.

Once, and once only, was there a liability that could not be met, for they sedulously obeyed the injunction, "Owe no man anything, save to love one another." It was the summer of 1864, the close sultry season so trying in East

London. Ever since the beginning of August supplies had been running low, and on the 12th a brief entry closed with the words:

The tax-gatherer called, and I was obliged to defer him. Help us, O Lord, for Thy Name's sake.

Next day was Saturday, and there was little or nothing in hand. Seven and a half hours were given to revision just as usual, though the children's nurse had to be told the situation in case she might wish to leave.

Sought to realise that it is in weakness and need the strength of Jesus is perfected is the entry that shows how deeply their hearts were exercised.

That night, though late, a friend who had left the house returned, and putting seven pounds into Mr. Taylor's hand begged him to accept it. Five pounds reached him by post on Monday, and thirty-five during the course of the week. Thus he was confirmed in the confidence that, for them at any rate, to give all their time and strength to the Lord's work and quietly wait His supplies was the right way.

On yet another occasion that little home in Beaumont Street witnessed some hours of anxious suspense. A quarter's rent was due immediately after a summer holiday in Yorkshire, and the day before the landlord was to call for it Mr. Taylor returned from Barnsley (where he had left his family) and went to the desk in which he had placed the money in readiness. To his surprise, instead of finding the amount expected, it was a pound short, and a moment's reflection assured him that the mistake was due to carelessness on his own part, which he had now no means of rectifying. For how to make up that missing pound he knew not, and the landlord—a quick-tempered, hard-spoken man—was to call the following morning.

There was more prayer than sleep that night, but the early post brought no relief. Slowly the minutes wore on, Mr. Taylor listening for the knock that did not come. After an hour or two he began to breathe more freely, though in intervals of work all day the anxiety returned, and when night came he gave himself again to prayer. Next morning, in a more friendly spirit than usual, the landlord appeared. He had been hindered, he explained, in starting for business the day before, and had been too late to call. Such a thing was most unusual, he could not account for it.

"But I can," interposed his tenant thankfully; "for only by this morning's post have I received a sovereign needed to make up the rent!"

Meanwhile, what of the bright hopes with which Mr. Taylor had entered upon the work entrusted to him by the Bible Society? To obtain a correct version of the New Testament-not in Chinese character but in Roman letters, representing the sounds of the local dialect, and thus comparatively easy both to read and understand-was an object worthy of considerable sacrifice. With the help of Wang Lae-djun and Mrs. Taylor, who was as much at home in the Ningpo dialect as in English, he hoped to accomplish it in reasonable time. After a beginning had been made, he was joined also by the Rev. F. F. Gough of the C.M.S., whose knowledge of Greek as well as Chinese enabled him to translate with confidence from the original. They were thus well qualified for the work, and progress was not hindered by lack of diligence. But the task itself proved far more laborious than they had anticipated, extended as it was to include the preparation of marginal references.

Moreover it met, strange to say, with the strongest opposition. Persons whose position gave them weight criticised the undertaking at the Bible House to such an extent that, once and again, 'it seemed as if it must be abandoned, and this not at the beginning, but after months and years of toil, during which Mr.

Taylor's friends and the Mission circle had become interested in the matter. To fail after having sacrificed so much, delaying even his return to China, was a possibility that cost him keen distress. Yet he had to face it, especially when Mr. Gough seemed on the point of giving way. For two or three months the situation was painful in the extreme. Brief entries in the little journal show how keenly Mr. Taylor felt it, though working on in the faith that all would yet be well.

September. 21 (1863): Spent the morning in fasting and prayer. ... Mr. Gough went to see Mr. Venn,^[179] and I began a letter to the Secretary of the Bible Society.

September. 27, Sunday: Morning, with Lae-djun. Afternoon, engaged in prayer with Mr. Gough. Evening, heard Mr. Kennedy on Hosea 6:1, a very valuable sermon. ("Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up.") May we turn to Him again, and again find His favour in our revision work.

Forty-three hours were given to revision that week, in spite of much distress.

October. 4, Sunday: Morning, with Lae-djun on Romans 2. Afternoon, read Hebrews, in Conybeare and Howson. Evening, took the lead at Mr. Scott's "Twig Folly" Meeting. Determined by God's help to live nearer to Him, and thus ensure His blessing in our work.

But the difficulties only increased, until Mr. Gough could go on no longer.

*"Humanly speaking there is little hope of the continued aid to either the C.M.S. or the Bible Society," Mr. Taylor wrote to his mother on October. 7. "For **this** I care but little, as the Lord can easily provide the funds we need. But the help of Mr. Gough in the remainder of the work is very desirable, and under these circumstances it is improbable that we should*

have it. I should ask special prayer then.

"I. That the C.M.S. and the Bible Society may be brought to that conclusion which will be most for the glory of God and the real (not apparent) good of the work.

"II. That, if, as is almost certain, they throw up the revision, and if it be most for the good of the dear converts of Ningpo, Mr. Gough may be induced to continue his share in it.

"III. That if he should not do this, we may be guided aright as to our path-whether simply to reprint the Epistles and Revelation, or in some measure to revise them, correcting where we can any glaring errors; or whether to give up the work altogether.

"My present full conviction, not a little confirmed by the character of the opposition to our work, is that it is of the Lord, and that He is saying to us, 'Be strong and of good courage and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed; for the LORD GOD will be with thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord.' If this is really His will, by His grace I will go forward. May He teach me if it be not so.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that, the Father may be glorified in the Son.' Plead this promise, dear Mother, in behalf of our work. And may He, whose we are and whom we serve, guide us aright."

Nothing is more striking in the records of the period than Mr. Taylor's dependence upon prayer, real dependence for every detail, every need. He leaned his whole weight on God, pleading the promises. Was it Lae-djun's affairs, the wife and child who needed him, or the difficulties of their long task; was it a question of health, their own or the children's, of house moving, money for daily bread, or guidance as to their return to China? All, all was

brought to their Heavenly Father with the directness of little children, and the conviction that He could and would undertake, direct, and provide. It was all so real, so practical!

Equally characteristic was the faithfulness with which he followed when the Lord's way was made plain. Barely two weeks after the above letter was written, the Bible Society reached a decision which bound him more than ever to the revision.

"There is no intention of taking it out of your hands," wrote his friend Mr. Pearse, forestalling the letter of the Committee. They are evidently satisfied with what you are doing, and the way you are doing it."

This meant that the Romanised Testament would be completed, and greatly rejoiced Mr. Taylor as a definite answer to prayer; but it meant also that he was pledged more than ever to his part of the work-and the years were passing on. With returning strength the longing grew upon him to be back in China, especially when the death of Mr. Jones left the Bridge Street converts almost without pastoral care. Great changes had swept over Ningpo with the devastations of the Tai-ping Rebellion. After indescribable sufferings the population had largely lost faith in idols which could not protect even themselves, and many were ready as never before for the consolations of the Gospel. Mr. Meadows, bereaved of wife and child, was in sore need of companionship, and the native Christians of spiritual help. Everything pointed, humanly speaking, to Mr. Taylor's return, and increased his longing to be in direct missionary work once more. Important as the revision was, he was young and craved activity and the joy of winning souls to Christ. Yet did not the very answers to prayer that had been so marked bind him to continue the work that was detaining him, and carry it to completion?

But all the while another longing was taking possession of his soul, looming large and ever larger with strange persistence. Do what he would, he could not escape the call of inland China, the appeal of those Christless millions for whom no man seemed to care. On his study wall hung the map of the whole vast empire; on the table before him lay the ever-open Bible and between the two how close and heart-searching the connection! Feeding, feasting, upon the Word of God, his eye would fall upon the map and oh, the thought of those for whom nothing was prepared!

"While on the field," he wrote, "the pressure of claims immediately around me was so great that I could not think much of the still greater need farther inland, and could do nothing to meet it. But detained for some years in England, daily viewing the whole country on the large map in my study, I was as near the vast regions of the interior as the smaller districts in which I had personally laboured-and prayer was the only resource by which the burdened heart could obtain any relief."

Laying aside their work, for Mr. Gough in measure shared this experience, they would call Mrs. Taylor and Lae-djun, and unitedly pour out their hearts in prayer that God would send the Gospel to every part of China. And they did more than pray. Alone, or together, they interviewed the representatives of the larger missionary societies, pleading the cause of those unevangelised millions. Everywhere they were met with sympathy, for the facts were their own argument; but everywhere also it was evident that nothing could, or rather would be done. The objections raised were twofold: in the first place, financially, any aggressive effort was impossible. Neither the men nor the means were forth r coming. And were it otherwise, those remote provinces were practically inaccessible to foreigners. True the treaty of 1860 provided for journeys and even residence inland, but that was merely on paper, and

everywhere the conclusion was the same: "We must wait until God's providence opens the door; at present we can do nothing."

These objections, however, did not lessen the need or bring any lightening of the burden. Returning to the East End and his quiet study, Hudson Taylor found himself still challenged by the open Bible, the ever-accusing map. The Master had said nothing about politics or finance in His great commission. "Go ye ... Lo, I am with you." "All the world ... all the days"—so read command and promise. Was He not worthy of trust and utmost allegiance?

And there were others who thought as he did, friends and candidates of the Mission who gathered weekly for 'prayer at Beaumont Street. Ever since the outgoing of Mr. and Mrs. Meadows this meeting had been held on Saturday afternoons. Few though they were in number, the spirit of prayer was so outpoured that for a couple of hours at a time those fervent hearts went up in continued supplication. Thus as the silent years drew to a close, with their restraining providences and all their deepening and development, to the man upon his knees came at length some apprehension of that for which also he was apprehended of God.

Chapter III[\(TOC\)](#)

There Wrestled a Man with him

1865, AET. 33

AMONG those who attended the prayer meeting at Beaumont Street, none were more interested in the Ningpo Mission than the tall silent merchant and his wife who came up from their beautiful, home in Sussex. As the owner of large starch works Mr. Berger was a busy man, but his chief interest lay in the extension of the Kingdom of God. Brought up in the Church of England he had been converted early in life under unusual circumstances. At an evening party he was talking with a girl of his own age when, to his surprise, she introduced the subject of religion. So evident was her sincerity, and the joy she found in Christ as a personal Friend and Saviour, that the young man was deeply moved. In the midst of that gay company he realised the emptiness of all the world can give, apart from the one thing needful. No special sense of sin seems to have come to him till later, but then and there he received the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, "and went behind the drawing-room door to hide his tears of thankfulness."

He was still under forty when he met Hudson Taylor for the first time, then a lad of twenty-one on the eve of sailing for China, and was attracted by his spirit.^[180] Correspondence increased the interest, and when the missionary was invalided home seven years later, no warmer welcome awaited him, outside his family circle, than the welcome of Mr' and Mrs. Berger to Saint Hill.^[181] From that time their house was open to him and his, and the prolonged task that kept him in London-served to deepen the friendship.

With more experience of the world as well as in spiritual things, Mr. Berger was fitted to be just the adviser Hudson Taylor needed, and in his gentle wife Mrs. Taylor found almost a mother's sympathy. Saint Hill, indeed, became a

real oasis to all the family at Beaumont Street. How good it was to escape at times from the squalid surroundings of Whitechapel to the hills and lanes of Sussex I The fine old house and grounds, sloping down to a little lake with meadows beyond, were a paradise to the children, quite apart from the good cheer Mrs. Berger's hospitality provided. It was a perfect friendship; and with no family of their own, the Bergers had room in their hearts for all the interests of the Mission.

As time went on and Mr. Taylor became increasingly burdened about the need and claims of inland China, Mr. Berger shared with him much of the exercise of heart involved. He knew of Mr. Taylor's efforts to induce various societies to extend their operations to those waiting provinces, and was in sympathy with his thought of utilising a class of labourers hitherto little drawn upon. But it was in the growing sense of personal responsibility that the chief bond of union lay. Accompanying Mr. Taylor to a farewell meeting for a young worker, about to join Mr. Meadows, he was surprised to find a small poor church, without a single influential member, undertaking the whole of his support. The joy with which they were making sacrifices brought to Mr Berger a new sense of the privilege of giving and suffering for Jesus' sake, and the earnestness of Mr. Taylor's address moved him to a definite resolve. Rising at the close of the meeting he said that what he had seen and heard overwhelmed him with shame because he had done so little, comparatively, for the cause of Christ. It filled him with joy also; and he had determined that night to do ten times more, yes, by the help of God, a hundred times more than he had hitherto attempted.^[182]

Thankful as Mr. Taylor must have been for this step forward, how little either he or Mr. Berger can have anticipated the developments for which provision was thus being made 1 Yet they were near at hand. For to himself also

matters were assuming a new urgency. Added to the consciousness ever present with him of passing souls in China, had come another thought:

"They perish—a thousand every hour of the day and night—and this while to me, as to every believer, is given power to ask in prayer whatsoever we will; to ask without limit in the name of Jesus."

Little wonder the burden was intolerable!

By this time a change had come in his immediate surroundings. A growing interest in the Ningpo Mission and an increasing number of candidates made it necessary to seek larger quarters. A home had been found in Coborn Street, a couple of miles farther east, where Mile End merges into the more residential neighbourhood of Bow, and side streets aspire to modest gardens shaded by welcome trees. One would hardly have thought that number 30, with its one window beside the hall-door, could have offered any serious difficulty through excess of size; but the entry in Mr. Taylor's journal was as follows:

September. 28 (1864): Revision five hours. Went with Mr. Gough to seek a house:, found the way closed in all but one direction. The house seemed too large for us, but Mr. Gough offered to pay the difference between it and our present rent.

A week later the result was recorded:

October. 5: Revision two and a half hours.... We prepare for moving to-morrow. Prayer was answered in our finding a man who would help us to remove reasonably.

October. 6: Came to 30 Coborn Street, Bow. Paid eighteen shillings for removing. Took Truelove to Bryanstone Hall, and lectured on China.

Eighteen shillings for the transport of all their worldly belongings! And not only so: a day sufficed for packing, it would seem, and even less for settling into the new home. For Mr. Taylor "lectured on China" within a few hours of taking possession, and thereafter, as may be seen from the journal, the revision and other work proceeded just as usual. What a light it casts upon the largeness of his aims and the lowliness of his spirit!

Here, then, a fresh start had been made in October 1864, the sitting-room, extending from front to back on the groundfloor, being much appreciated for the prayer meeting which was increasing in numbers. The revision of the Ningpo Testament was still the main task, though Mr. Gough was expecting to complete it single-handed, as the time seemed near for Mr. and Mrs. Taylor's return to China. Candidates were coming and going, and new cycles of interest, were opening up.

"We need your prayers," Mr. Taylor wrote to his mother at the beginning of 1865. "The responsibility resting upon us is increasing very much. I must have more grace and wisdom from above or shall utterly fail. May He Who giveth 'more grace' grant me to live increasingly in His light. We have received a hundred pounds toward the expense of outfit, etc.; pray for what more may be needed, perhaps nine hundred or a thousand pounds"

—for he was hoping to take with him six or seven new missionaries.

And then, just as all seemed ready for advance, an unexpected happening changed the current of events and closed the way again indefinitely. A fine new steamer was about to sail for China, and the owner, hearing of Mr. Taylor's party, offered free passages to a couple of missionaries. Two of the young men were ready in time and embarked at Glasgow; but a stormy voyage down the Irish Channel so upset one of them that he turned back from

Plymouth, fearing he had mistaken his calling. This was of course, a keen disappointment to Mr. Taylor, who was concerned also that the passage and outfit should be lost. Right nobly a young farmer from Aberdeenshire stepped into the gap, putting off his marriage, which was about to take place, that he might redeem the situation. He had been long engaged, and it was naturally felt that his fiancée, also-an accepted candidate, should follow him as soon as possible. Funds and a suitable escort being provided in answer to prayer, she sailed a fortnight later, and Mr. Taylor was left minus four of his prospective party. Of the remainder, strange to say, one wanted more time for preparation, a second was unable to free himself from home claims, and a third had not fully made up his mind about going; so there was nothing for it but to pray and wait until the way should open.^[183]

Meanwhile, moreover, Mr. Taylor had been drawn into a new undertaking, which was absorbing time and thought. Early in the year the pastor of the church to which he belonged (who was editor also of the *Baptist Magazine*) had asked for a series of articles on China with a view to awakening interest in the Ningpo Mission. These Mr. Taylor had begun to prepare, and one had even been published, when Mr. Lewis returned the manuscript of the next. The articles, he felt, were weighty, and should have a wider circulation than his paper could afford.

"Add to them," he said earnestly; "let them cover the whole field and be published as an appeal for inland China."

This seemed incompatible with Mr. Taylor's many engagements, but when his departure was unexpectedly delayed he saw the opportunity and set himself to take advantage of it. Even before his party had been broken up, the study necessary for these papers was bringing to a crisis the exercise of mind through which Mr. Taylor had been passing. Compiling facts as to the size

and population of every province in China, and making diagrams to show their neglected condition, stirred him to a desperate sense of the sin and shame of allowing such a state of things to continue. Yet what was to be done? The number of Protestant missionaries, as he had discovered, was diminishing rather than increasing. Despite the fact that half the heathen population of the world was to be found in China, the missionaries engaged in its evangelisation had actually been reduced, during the previous winter, from a hundred and fifteen to only ninety-one. This had come to light through his study of the latest statistics, and, naturally, added fuel to the fire that was consuming him. But he had done all that was possible. No one would move in the matter He must leave it now, until the Lord But somehow that was not the final word.

Leave it, when he knew that he, small, weak, and nothing as he was, might pray in faith for labourers and **they would be given?** Leave it, when there stood plainly in his Bible that solemn word, "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but **his blood will I require at thy hand**"!

"I knew God was speaking," he said of this critical time. "I knew that in answer to prayer evangelists would be given and their support secured, because the Name of Jesus is worthy. But there unbelief came in.

"Suppose the workers are given and go to China: trials will come; their faith may fail; would they not reproach you for bringing them into such a plight? Have you ability to cope with so painful a situation?"

"And the answer was, of course, a decided negative.

"It was just a bringing in of self, through unbelief; the devil

getting one to feel that while prayer and faith would bring one into the fix, one would have to get out of it as best one might. And I did not see that the Power that would give the men and the means would be sufficient to keep them also, even in the far interior of China.

*"Meanwhile, a **million** a month were dying in that land, dying without God. This was burned into my very soul. For two or three months the conflict was intense. I scarcely slept night or day more than an hour at a time, and feared I should lose my reason. Yet I did not give in. To no one could I speak freely, not even to my dear wife. She saw, doubtless, that something was going on; but I felt I must refrain as long as possible from laying upon her a burden so crushing-these souls, and what eternity must mean for every one of them, and what the Gospel might do, would do, for all who believed, if we would take it to them."*

The break in the journal at this point is surely significant. Faithfully the record had gone on for two and a quarter years; but now-silence. For seven weeks from the middle of April, lovely weeks of spring, there was no entry. First and only blank in those revealing pages, how much the very silence has to tell us! Yes, he was face to face with the purpose of God at last. Accept it, he dare not; escape it, he could not. And so, as long ago, "there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."

It was Sunday, June 25, a quiet summer morning by the sea. Worn out and really ill, Hudson Taylor had gone to friends at Brighton, and, unable to bear the sight of rejoicing multitudes in the house of God, had wandered out alone upon the sands left by the receding tide. It was a peaceful scene about him, but inwardly he was in agony of spirit. A decision had to be made and he knew it, for the conflict could no longer be endured.

"Well," the thought came at last, "if God gives us a band a of

men for inland China, and they go, and all die of starvation even, they will only be taken straight to heaven; and if one heathen-soul is saved, would it not be well worth while?"

It was a strange way round to faith-that if the worst came to the worst it would still be worth while. But something in the service of that morning seems to have come to mind. God-consciousness began to take the place of unbelief, and a new thought possessed him as dawn displaces night:

*Why, if we are obeying the Lord, the responsibility rests **with Him**, not with us!*

This, brought home to his heart in the power of the Spirit, wrought the change once and for all.

*"**Thou**, Lord," he cried with relief that was unutterable, "**Thou** shalt have all the burden! At Thy bidding, as Thy servant I go forward, leaving results with Thee."*

For some time the conviction had been growing that he ought to ask for at any rate two evangelists for each of the eleven unoccupied provinces, and two for Chinese Tartary and Tibet. Pencil in hand he now opened his Bible, and with the boundless ocean breaking at his feet wrote the simple memorable words: "Prayed for twenty-four willing skilful labourers at Brighton, June 25, 1865."

"How restfully I turned away from the sands," he said, recalling the deliverance of that hour. "The conflict ended, all was joy and peace. I felt as if I could fly up the hill to Mr. Pearse's house. And how I did sleep that night! My dear wife thought Brighton had done wonders for me, and so it had."

Chapter IV_(TOC)

The Mission that Had to be

1865. AET. 33

NEW life, evidently, had come to Hudson Taylor with the decision taken that June Sunday On the sands at Brighton, for he was up with the lark next morning and off to London at 6.30 A.M. NO record remains of that day, save that Mrs. Taylor was cheered to see him better, and that he went to have special prayer with one who was wishing to join the mission, whose way was beset with difficulties. But next day brought just the practical step that might have been expected:

*June 27: Went with Mr. Pearse to the London & County Bank, and opened an account for the **China Inland Mission**. Paid in £10:0:0.*

It is the first appearance of the new name.

Thereafter the little journal scintillates with its repetition, as though writing it in full were in itself a satisfaction Thus, after the prayer meeting of the following Saturday, July 1:

Gave Miss Faulding a receipt for a pound for the China Inland Mission.

July 3: Breakfasted with Lady Radstock. ... Mr. Berger took tea with us and stayed till 7 P.M. He promised £80 to £100 for printing-press and type, and £150 towards the China Inland Mission.

July 4: Miss Faulding brought 3/6 from Regent's Park Chapel for the China Inland Mission.

It is all so sweet and natural-the overflowing of a young heart just as full as a mother's with her first-born!

And then came days of activity in striking contrast with the silence of

preceding weeks. Complete surrender to the will of God not only set the joy-bells ringing, it gave the clue to much that before had seemed perplexing, and started the suspended energies on a clear course. Delays and difficulties explained themselves, and how thankful Mr. Taylor felt for the restraining Hand that had kept him from leaving England previously, and had returned that unpublished manuscript for a purpose he little anticipated. Now he had something to write about, something definite to lay before the Lord's people, new power in pleading the cause of inland China, and an object worthy of highest endeavour. He had found himself at last, found life's best and deepest, not in the way of his own choosing, but in the "good works which God had before ordained" that he should walk in them.

The change soon made itself felt, and the little house at Coborn Street was more than ever busy. An unexpected introduction to Lady Radstock led to interesting developments, and all through the summer and autumn Mr. Taylor had a succession of engagements that brought him into touch with influential circles. He was preparing also for the outgoing of Mr. J. W. Stevenson, who for some months had been with him in London, and of a newer candidate from Scotland, Mr. George Stott. In the midst of outfitting and business details it was not easy to run off for luncheon with titled people, and drawing-room meetings at which everybody appeared in evening dress. It rather took away Mr. Taylor's breath at first. But it had come about entirely apart from his seeking, and in such a way as to leave no doubt that the One Who had led him to settle in East London was opening to him also the drawing-rooms of the West.

A week only after his visit to Brighton he had gone to spend Sunday with his sister at Bayswater, doubtless to seek her prayerful sympathy and that of her husband, Mr. Benjamin Broomhall, in the step just taken. As the hour for

public worship drew near, instead of going as usual to the chapel of which he was a member, Mr. Taylor sought definite guidance as to where he should worship that morning. Passing down Welbeck Street, it came to him to join the little company of "Open Brethren" who had a meeting there. This he did, finding much refreshment in fellowship with them at the Table of the Lord.

It so happened that among the requests for prayer read out toward the close of the meeting was one that seemed in danger of being forgotten. Nobody took it up, and Mr. Taylor feared the service might close without united remembrance of this special need. The circumstances were quite ordinary—a case of illness, involving long-continued suffering but, stranger though he was, he could not let the appeal for spiritual help pass unnoticed.

"Who was that?" inquired the Dowager Lady Radstock afterwards, deeply impressed by the simplicity and helpfulness of his prayer.

On learning that the visitor was Hudson Taylor, a missionary from China, she desired to see more of him. The outcome was an invitation to breakfast at Portland Place the following morning, and the commencement of a friendship with several members of the Waldegrave family that became fruitful in blessing for China.

Staying with Lady Radstock at the time was a married daughter, who on returning to her Norfolk home arranged for a visit from Mr. Taylor. It was not easy to get away from all there was to be done, but Lady Beauchamp was planning a series of meetings to occupy several days, and Mr. Taylor felt the importance of the opportunity. It was only by working all night he finally completed arrangements for the outgoing party (Mr. Stott and the Stevensons), and even then he had to write on the train a farewell letter full of suggestions and messages. Almost bewildering must it have been to turn

from these preoccupations to the programme before him at Langley Park. But Sir Thomas and Lady Beauchamp and their family were thoroughly in sympathy with the aims and spirit of their guest. Even the children were drawn to him, and loved to hear his stories about China. One indeed, who as a member of the Mission was to be Mr. Taylor's chosen companion in China and elsewhere, remembers to this day "the pig-tail and chop sticks" and much beside that came with that welcome visitor to Langley Park.^[184]

So warm was the sympathy of the parents that they desired to help the Mission financially, though no appeal had been made for money and no collections taken. All the more, perhaps, for this reason, Mr. Taylor's host and hostess wished to give as a matter of privilege; but their generosity in other directions had left them little in hand for the purpose. After praying over it, however, the thought suggested itself

Why not trust the Lord about the conservatories, and contribute the amount almost due for insurance?"

Langley Park possessed extensive greenhouses, and winter storms were apt to be serious near that east coast. But, definitely committing the matter to Him Who controls wind and wave, the cheque was drawn and the premium paid into the Mission treasury. The sequel Mr. Taylor never heard till long after, nor indeed that the gift had been made possible in this way. But the Lord knew; and when a few months later a storm of exceptional violence broke over the neighbourhood, He did not forget. Much glass was shattered for miles around, but the conservatories at Langley Park entirely escaped.

The little leather-bound account-book that shows the receipt of this gift on the day of Mr. Taylor's return to London shows also many contributions from the Portland Place circle. The late Lord Radstock, Lady Beauchamp's brother,

became a warm supporter of the Mission, and was frequently in correspondence with Mr. Taylor at this time. Meetings arranged by him in his town house and elsewhere laid the needs of China on many hearts, and it was a wonderful encouragement in launching the new enterprise to have such an accession of sympathy.

It was not all talk and meetings, however, in those early days. Though the branches were spreading out, the roots were striking deeper in quiet hours of thought and prayer. With Mr. Berger especially, many were the consultations held upon practical questions, and as responsibilities increased it was an untold comfort to have his help in bearing them.

*"When I decided to go forward," said Mr. Taylor of this summer, "Mr. Berger undertook to represent us at home. The thing grew up gradually. We were much drawn together. The Mission received its name in his drawing-room. Neither of us asked or appointed the other: it just **was so.**"*

And what shall be said of the still more intimate help of the life nearest of all to his own—the tender love, the spiritual inspiration and practical wisdom of the one who shared his every experience? To Mrs. Taylor, necessarily, the new departure meant more than to any other; for, young as she was, not yet thirty, she had to mother the Mission as well as care for a growing family. To take four little children out to China was no light matter, and when the object in view is remembered—nothing less than to plant messengers of the Gospel in every one of the unopened provinces—a mother's heart alone can realise what hers must often have felt. It was not her husband's faith, however, upon which she leaned, great as were her joy and confidence in him. From girlhood, orphaned of both parents, she had put to the test for herself the Heavenly Father's faithfulness. Family burdens and the pressure of need might come, and this immense responsibility be superadded, but her

resources did not fail, for she drew moment by moment upon "all the fulness of God."

The chief work that claimed Mr. and Mrs. Taylor after the decision at Brighton was that of completing the manuscript returned by Mr. Lewis. It may have been easy to say, "Add to it, let it cover the whole field and be published as an appeal for inland China," but to carry out the suggestion was another matter. Little information was to be had about that great closed land, and to make its needs real and appealing needed a touch other than they could give. The writing meant much study, thought, and prayer. Too busy during the week to obtain quiet, they gave what time they could on Sunday, without neglecting public worship, to this important task. Together in the little sitting-room at Coborn Street they prayed and wrote, wrote and prayed. ***China's Spiritual Need and Claims*** was the outcome.

"Every sentence was steeped in prayer," Mr. Taylor recalled. It grew up while we were writing—I walking up and down the room and Maria seated at the table."

Turning the pages thoughtfully, one feels again the power that touched and moved readers of that book for more than a generation. There is evidence in every paragraph not only of painstaking study, but of the spirit of prayer in which it was written. It is skilfully adapted to its purpose, and, what is more, one stands from first to last in the light of God. His word it is that comes to one, His point of view from which there is no escaping. There is no self about it, no turning of the thought to man. The writer scarcely appears in the whole book. Mr. Berger is referred to by name, and so are the members of the Mission already in China or on the way thither, but Hudson Taylor is absent to a remarkable degree.

First, very briefly, the reader is reminded that every act in this life and every

omission too has a direct and important bearing on the future-his own and that of others. It is pointed out that we are to pray not as the heathen who use vain repetitions, nor as the worldly-minded who ask principally if not solely for their own benefit. "After this manner therefore pray ye," putting the kingdom of God first, and His righteousness.

How this is to be done is set before us in the example of our Lord Himself: "Let *this mind* be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." How did HE act in view of the sin and suffering of a lost world, in view of His knowledge of the will of God? Was it not these things, the very conditions we too have to meet, that brought Him out of His Heaven to limitless depths of self-emptying, even to "the death of the cross"? Grievously have His people failed in following that example. With the large majority of our fellow-men still destitute of the knowledge of salvation, how can we, owing everything to the sacrifice of the Son of God, remain comfortable and unconcerned in a life of self-pleasing?

Then, turning from other fields, attention is centred upon China-its antiquity, extent, population, early efforts to introduce Christianity among its people, and the history of, Roman Catholic propaganda. A survey of Protestant missions is given, showing great progress since the days of Morrison, but bringing out the startling fact that even in the seven provinces in which such work had been begun there were still *a hundred and eighty-five millions* "utterly and hopelessly beyond the reach of the Gospel." What this meant, and further, that beyond these again lay the eleven inland provinces—*two hundred millions more* without a single witness for Christ—is emphasised by comparisons and diagrams prepared with the very heart's blood of the writer. As one reads, the mind almost reels before such a situation. No wonder this man is burdened. No wonder he cannot get away from the awful

sense of responsibility. And he looks upon it all, makes the reader look upon it all, with God. That is where the deep solemnity comes in. One is standing in the light of eternity, in the presence of the crucified, risen Lord of Glory. His unconditional command, "Go ... I am with you always," is sounding on and on, while with it mingles the low wail of thousands, passing hour by hour into Christless graves. It is profoundly, unutterably real. A million a month in China are dying without God," and we who have received in trust the Word of Life, we are responsible. It was not China's need alone that called the Inland Mission into being, it was *China's claim*.

The overwhelming greatness of the task before the Mission is felt rather than dwelt upon, for yet another Reality shines out from these pages, preoccupying mind and heart. Than the greatness of the need, one thing only is greater—the fact of God: His resources, purposes, faithfulness, His commands and promises. "All power is given unto Me ... go ye *therefore*." That is enough; that alone could be enough. The need is great, immensely great; but God is greater, infinitely greater. And this God the writer knows, has proved, trusts.

Hence it follows that the principles of the new Mission are simply an adjustment of these two considerations—the need to be met and GOD. HE stands behind the work He has called into being. The writer has no other resources, absolutely none, and he desires no other. Every problem resolves itself into a fresh appeal to God, for there can be no need unmet in Him.

We have to do with One Who is Lord of all power and might, Whose arm is not shortened that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear; with One Whose unchanging Word directs us to ask and receive that our joy may be full, to open our mouths wide that He may fill them; and we do well to remember that this gracious God, Who has condescended to place His

almighty power at the command of believing prayer, looks not lightly on the blood-guiltiness of those who neglect to avail themselves of it for the benefit of the perishing...

Feeling, on the one hand, the solemn responsibility that rests upon us, and on the other the gracious encouragements that everywhere meet us in the Word of God, we do not hesitate to ask the great Lord of the Harvest to call forth, to thrust forth twenty-four European and twenty-four native evangelists, to plant the standard of the Cross in the eleven unevangelised provinces of China proper and in Chinese Tartary. To those who have never been called to prove the faithfulness of the Covenant-keeping God in supplying, in answer to prayer alone, the every need of His servants, it might seem a hazardous experiment to send twenty-four European evangelists to a distant heathen land, "with **only God to look to**"; but in one whose privilege it has been through many years to put that God to the test in varied circumstances, at home and abroad, by land and sea, in sickness and health, in dangers, in necessities and at the gates of death, such apprehensions would be wholly inexcusable.^[185]

Instance after instance is given from Mr. Taylor's experience of direct, unmistakable answers to prayer, and the deduction drawn is that with such a God it is safe and wise to go forward in the pathway of obedience-is indeed the only safe and wise thing to do.

When he comes to touch upon the practical working of the Mission, the application of Scriptural principles is just as direct. Not much is said, for the organisation is of the simplest, but Bible precedents cast light on every problem. The writer is dealing with an unchanging God, and confidently expects Him to work in the same way still. The very greatness of the need, considered in the light of Divine not human resources, called for methods as

new and distinctive as the proposed sphere of the Mission itself.

How could the work be limited, for example, to any one section of the Church of Christ? No denomination, however generous its support, could be equal to it, just as no one class in society could provide the labourers needed. The Mission must be free to accept "willing, skilful workers," no matter what their Church connection or previous training, provided they were wise to win souls, men and women who knew their God and could sink lesser differences in the one great bond of union.

Then as to funds: how could the Mission, possessing nothing, promise stated salaries to its members? How could Mr. Taylor let them look to him for support? All that was sent in answer to prayer he would gladly use for or distribute among his fellow-workers, but more than that he could not promise, except' that under no circumstances would he go into debt for the Mission any more than for himself. Each individual member must know that he or she was sent of God, and must be able to trust Him for supplies-strength, grace, protection, enablement for every emergency, as well as daily bread. No other basis would be possible. If the Mission were to be fruitful, were to continue at all amid the perils that must be faced, it could only be as each one connected with it contributed his quota of faith in the living God.

"We had to consider," Mr. Taylor said of this period, whether it would not be possible for members of various denominations to work together on simple, evangelistic lines, without friction as to conscientious differences of opinion? Prayerfully concluding that it would, we decided to invite the co-operation of fellow-believers irrespective of denominational views, who fully held the inspiration of God's Word, and were willing to prove their faith by going to inland China with only the guarantee they carried within the covers of their pocket Bibles.

"That Word had said, 'Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things (food and raiment) shall be added unto you.' If any one did not believe that God spoke the truth, it would be better for him not to go to China to propagate the faith. If he did believe it, surely the promise sufficed. Again, 'No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.' If any one did not mean to walk uprightly, he had better stay at home; if he did mean to walk uprightly, he had all he needed in the shape of a guarantee fund. God owns all the gold and silver in the world, and the cattle on a thousand hills. We need not be vegetarians.

"We might indeed have had a guarantee fund if we had wished it; but we felt it was unneeded and would do harm. Money wrongly placed and money given from wrong motives are both to be greatly dreaded. We can afford to have as little as the Loin chooses to give, but we cannot afford to have unconsecrated money, or to have money placed in the wrong position. Far better have no money at all, even to buy food with; for there are plenty of ravens in China, and the Lord could send them again with bread and flesh...

"Our Father is a very experienced One. He knows very well that His children wake up with a good appetite every morning, and He always provides breakfast for them, and does not send them supperless to bed at night. 'Thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure.' He sustained three million Israelites in the wilderness for forty years. We do not expect He will send three million missionaries to China; but if He did, He would have ample means to sustain them all. Let us see that, we keep God before our eyes; that we walk in His ways and seek to please and glorify Him in everything, great and small. Depend upon it, GOD's work done in GOD'S way will never lack GOD's Supplies."

It was men and women of faith, therefore, who were needed for the Inland

Mission, prepared to depend on God alone, satisfied with poverty should He deem it best, and confident that His Word cannot be broken.

Much else comes out in these earnest pages, and much that is not said is significant by its absence. There is no mention even of a Committee, no reliance upon organisation or great names. The entire direction of the Mission was to be in the hands of its founder, himself the most experienced of its members, who like a General on active service would be with his forces in the field. So natural does this arrangement seem that one hardly recognises the greatness of the innovation, or that in this as in other new departures Hudson Taylor was making a contribution of exceeding value to the high politics of missions. He had simply learned from painful experience how much a missionary may have to suffer, and the work be hampered, if not imperilled, by being under the control of those who, however well-intentioned, have no first-hand knowledge of its conditions, and are, moreover, at the other side of the world.

Another striking absence is that of any pleading for financial help. It is mentioned that an annual expenditure of five thousand pounds might be anticipated when the outgoing party of ten or twelve should be added to those already on the field. Mr. Berger's address is given as Mr. Taylor's representative in England, to whom gifts might be sent by any desiring to have fellowship with the work. And for the rest, the quiet words express a sense of wealth rather than need, "although the wants are large, they will not exhaust the resources of Our Father."

Finally, there is not a word about Government protection or dependence upon treaty rights. Many instances are given of Divine protection in the dangers inseparable from pioneering work such as the Mission looked forward to. Unarmed, in native dress, and claiming no aid from Consular authorities, the

writer had found times of peril to be always times of proving the watchful care of One Who is a refuge better than foreign flag or gunboat. It is God who looms large, not man.

"He can raise up, He will raise up 'willing, skilful men' for every department of our service," was the quiet conclusion.

*All we are now proposing to do is to lay hold on His faithfulness Who has called us into this service, and in obedience to **His** call and reliance on **His** power to enlarge the sphere of our operations, for the glory of His name Who alone doeth wondrous things.*

*The question, however, might be raised as to whether the interior of China, though evidently needing the Gospel and nominally open to us by treaty-right, will in point of fact prove accessible? We would answer this question by another: When the Lord Jesus gives a definite command, is it our place to ask whether it can be obeyed or not? The terms of His command are explicit ... and He answers every objection, meets every difficulty at the very outset by assuring us that **all power** is given unto Him in heaven and on earth; that He Who is true, and therefore can neither fail nor forget, Who hath the key of David to open or to shut as pleaseth Him, is with us always, even unto the end of the world.*

The dangers and difficulties will be neither few nor small, but with Jesus for our Leader we may safely follow on. These dangers, difficulties and trials, while leading to a deeper realisation of our own weakness, poverty and need, will constrain us also to lean more constantly, to draw more largely, to rest more implicitly on the strength, the riches, the fulness of Jesus. 'Irk the world ye shall have tribulation,' but 'in Me ... peace,' will be the experience of those engaged in the work. If it be for God's glory, for the benefit of His cause and the true interest of those concerned, the times of greatest

trial and danger will be the times when His delivering power will shine forth most conspicuously; and if otherwise, His sustaining grace will prove sufficient for the weakest servant in the conflict...

"Let but devoted labourers be found, who will prove faithful to God, and there is no reason to fear that God will not prove faithful to them. He will set before them an open door, and will esteem them of more value than the sparrows and the lilies that He clothes and feeds. He will be with them in danger, in difficulty, in perplexity; and while they may be utter weakness, He will work through them in power. They may cast their bread upon the waters, but His Word shall not return unto Him void: it shall accomplish that which He pleases, and prosper in the thing whereto He sends it. ... It is upon past Ebenezers we build our Jehovah-Jireh. 'They that know Thy Name will put their trust in Thee.'"

Little wonder that faith of this sort, so uncalculating and withal so practical, made a strong appeal to Christian hearts! Finished by the middle of October, the manuscript was first of all submitted to Mr. and Mrs. Berger at Saint Hill.

"The Lord caused them to be interested", we read in Mr. Taylor's journal.

Interested they certainly were! for Mr. Berger forthwith undertook to meet the expense of publication, and urged that the pamphlet should be ready for the Mildmay Conference, to be held ten days later. The earlier sheets were already in the press, and the goodwill of the printer was not lacking. By sitting up all night to correct proofs, Mr. Taylor managed to return the last batch in time, and had the satisfaction of receiving a consignment for distribution on the opening day of the meetings.

Only six weeks previously he had been in Scotland and had found himself at Perth, as we have seen, during a similar Convention. The deep impression

made by his address on that occasion had affected Mildmay circles, for the latter was the mother-conference with which Perth was in close connection. Convened by the Rev. W. Pennefather, Vicar of St. Jude's, it had a definite Church of England element, but its platform included ministers and laymen of other connections, and from the Continent as well as Great Britain and America. Deeply spiritual in tone, it attracted the leaders of the young evangelistic movements that had sprung out of the Great Revival, to whom Mr. Taylor's line of things made naturally a strong appeal. With Mr. Pennefather's cordial approval, the pamphlet was distributed among the many hundreds who attended the Conference, and few went away from those days of waiting upon God without a quickened sense of responsibility in view of China's need.

Many were the letters that reached Mr. Taylor during the weeks that followed, showing that the book was doing its quiet work, and that in widely differing circles the C.I.M. was hailed with thankfulness as a Mission that had to be. Offers of service came from the students' hall, the business counter, and the mechanic's shop. Invitations for meetings were numerous, and so great was the demand for literature that *China's Spiritual Need and Claims* had to be reprinted within three weeks.

"I have read your pamphlet on my way down here," wrote Lord Radstock from the Isle of Wight, "and have been greatly stirred by it... I trust you may be enabled by the Holy Ghost to speak words which shall thrust forth many labourers into the vineyard. Dear Brother, enlarge your desires! Ask for a hundred labourers, and the Lord will give them to you."

Reinforced by a cheque for a hundred pounds, this characteristic letter was doubly welcome, though its "ask for a hundred labourers" must have been rather startling in that day of small things!

Meanwhile preparations for a party of ten or twelve were going forward, and in the midst of other engagements proved almost more than Mr. Taylor could manage. The Coborn Street house, far from being too large, was now wholly inadequate, and the next-door premises falling vacant, they were glad to rent them also, thus doubling their accommodation.

"The revision is now going on," he wrote to his mother in November. "We have reprinted the pamphlet, and have missionary boxes on the way. I am preparing a magazine for the Mission, furnishing a house completely, setting up two fonts of type for China, teaching four pupils Chinese, receiving applications from candidates and lecturing or attending meetings continually-one night only excepted for the last month. I am also preparing a New Year's address on China, for use in Sunday Schools, and a missionary map of the whole country. ... Join us in praying for funds and for the right kind of labourers, also that others may be kept back or not accepted, for many are offering."

Was there a need just then for a reminder that work cannot take the place of prayer? Overwhelmingly busy, it certainly would not have been surprising if that little circle had been tempted to curtail quiet times of waiting upon God. It was in love, in any case, that the closing year was shadowed by an anxiety so distressing as to bring them to their knees as never before. In one of the houses, strangely quiet now, Mrs. Taylor lay in a critical condition. Serious illness had so reduced her strength that when an operation became necessary there was little hope that she could live through it.

"It is very solemn to feel that all our married happiness may be so near its close," Mr. Taylor wrote to his parents in Barnsley. "She is resting happily in Jesus.... Ask grace for me to mean and say, 'Thy will be done.'"

Three weeks later, his loved one spared to him, Mr. Taylor was reviewing the progress made since that memorable Sunday at Brighton with all that it had brought. Besides the eight fellow-workers already in China, twenty or thirty others were desiring to join the Mission.

"How much we need guidance both for them and for ourselves," he wrote to the wider circle of his prayer-helpers. "We have undertaken to work in the interior of China, looking to the Lord for help of all kinds. This we can only do in His strength. And if we are to be much used of Him, we must live very near to Him."

The last day of December was set apart, therefore, as a day of fasting and prayer at Coborn Street, fitly closing the year that had witnessed the inauguration of a Mission so completely dependent upon God.

Chapter V_(TOC)

According to his Working

1866. AET. 34

To understand aright the fruitfulness of this period it should be borne in mind that Mr. Taylor, among others, was reaping the aftermath of the great Revival of 1859. That wonderful spiritual awakening had not only swept thousands into the Church of Christ; it had prepared the way for a new order of things, an up-springing of individual faith and effort, characterised by love for souls and new resourcefulness in seeking their salvation. It was a day of new departures in the development of lay agency, and a striking fulfilment might be seen in many directions of the prophecy of Joel: "Also upon the servants and the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit."

To mention a few only of the evangelical movements that had their beginnings in that formative time: Mrs. Ranyard was pioneering a way for the work of Biblewomen, and Mrs. Bayley for that of Mothers' Meetings; Miss Macpherson had just commenced Gospel services in Bird Fair, and the rescue of little waifs from the lowest slums of London; Miss Robarts, Mr. (afterwards Sir George) Williams, and others, were laying the foundations of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations; Mrs. Daniels and her helpers were developing work for soldiers, with their special needs; and Mr. and Mrs. Pennefather, at Mildmay, were launching out in the training of Deaconesses for all manner of home missions. All these were making use of the consecrated energies of young converts in their first love, many of them comparatively unlearned and ignorant men," but no opening had as yet been found for a similar employment of lay agency on the foreign field.

"When travelling in England, Scotland, and the north of Ireland in 1859 and '60," wrote a Christian leader from the Continent, "I repeatedly asked myself, 'Where is the channel through which simple-hearted labourers brought to Christ

through these remarkable Revivals, wishing to devote themselves to missionary work in foreign lands may reach their object? 'But I found no such channel. All the colleges for missionary training require a preliminary education which one would seek in vain in youths of this sort. To raise a missionary agency of a humbler kind seems to me to be a special design of our Lord at this juncture, for the carrying out of which He has prepared His instruments in different countries, independently of each other.' ^[186]

Into this prepared soil the seed-thought of the China Inland Mission was providentially cast. It could not have come at 'a better time. Christian hearts were kindled to fresh devotion, drawn together in a new sense of oneness, and awakened to the fact that God by His Holy Spirit was using a class of workers hitherto largely excluded from the spiritual ministries of the Church. Manifestly the Mission was suited to meet an urgent need. New fields must be entered, new gifts called forth, and here came an organisation embodying these very ideas with a quiet faith and simplicity that commended itself to the spiritually minded.

"The very thing, come let us help it I" was the response awakened in many a heart.

Young people in workshop and office heard of it and were encouraged. Perhaps in such a mission, place might be found for faith and love even without much learning of the schools? So thought Rudland, for example, at his forge in a Cambridgeshire village, when a printed report of Mr. Taylor's address at Perth came to him as a call from God, In a neighbouring farmhouse lived Mr. Merry, his Sunday School teacher, who with Mrs. Merry and her sister, Miss Annie Macpherson, had been the means of blessing to many in the neighbourhood. They had visited London to see something of the Revival movement, and through them its quickening influences had reached

Eversden and the surrounding villages. Meetings had been held in the farmhouse kitchen at which Rudland and several of his companions were converted, and great was the joy with which they gathered round the open Bible with Mr. Merry as their teacher, beside the big log-fire. When the young man wanted to know more about China and the Inland Mission it was to these friends he turned. But the Merrys could tell him nothing, Miss Macpherson could tell him nothing, and even a minister in Cambridge whom he walked miles to consult was unable to supply information. Still, Rudland could not forget the appeal of those Christless millions; and when Miss Macpherson, on her return to London, sent him a ticket for the Mildmay Conference (1865) it immediately came to him that there he might meet Mr. Taylor.

But his employer had also a great desire to go to the Conference. He and Rudland could not both be spared from the forge. It cost a struggle—but the younger man, feeling it was what the Lord would have done in his place, gave up his cherished hope and offered his master the ticket. Before leaving, the latter promised to write 'about the meetings and bring back a full report, but for reasons best known to himself he said nothing about China or the Inland Mission. Unable to learn even whether Mr. Taylor had been at the Conference, and not knowing where or how to reach him, Rudland was much perplexed. He could not get away from the burden of souls in China—a thousand every hour of the day and night perishing "without God." On the wall of the forge two passages of Scripture daily confronted him, "Quench not the Spirit" and "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Yet what could he do but pray?

Meanwhile his master, loath perhaps to lose so good an assistant, sought to discourage the ambition Rudland had at heart.

"See," he said one day with a Chinese book in his hand, "this is the language they talk over there! Do you think you could ever learn it?"

"Has anybody else learned it?" was the quiet reply.

"A few."

"Then why not I?"

And the yellow pages with their strange hieroglyphics only made him pray the more that the Lord would open his way to China.

After that it was not long before another book reached him with a letter from Miss Macpherson. Settled now in East London she had found the answer to Rudland's question. The pamphlet was *China's Spiritual Need and Claims*, and the letter asked him to join her the following Saturday in going to the prayer meeting at Coborn Street. Too thankful for words, the young man put the letter before his master.

"Yes, you must take a day or two," said the blacksmith. But as sure as you cross this threshold you are on your way to China!"

With what interest the pamphlet was studied as Rudland travelled up to London, and how eagerly he drank in every impression of the missionary circle at Coborn Street! That prayer meeting—could he ever forget it? The crowded room, the map on the wall, the freedom of spirit, the unceasing flow of prayer and praise all deeply impressed him. But it was the manifest presence of God and earnestness of all concerned that drew to the Mission that day one of its most successful labourers.^[187] In Mr. Taylor he found a man of absorbing purpose, to whom perishing souls in China were real, and who lived for one thing only, to fulfil the purpose of God in their salvation. Reality, simplicity, intensity it was the same impression everywhere, the very

essence of the new Mission.

But how easy with such a spirit to overlook the consideration due to the work of others! Mr. Taylor had now many openings. He was a man with a message, and a message Christian people wanted to hear irrespective of the denomination he or they might represent. The Mission drew its friends and workers from church and chapel alike, and the proposed sphere of its operations was so vast as to call forth unusual interest.

It might have been, as Mr. Taylor felt from the first, quite possible to rob Peter to pay Paul, or in other words to deflect interest and gifts from previously existing channels. Every effort on behalf of China and other heathen lands was more than needed, and he longed that the new work should, by the blessing of God, be helpful to all and a hindrance to none. But how to avoid trespassing, in this sense, on the preserves of others was a problem not easy of solution.

To cut at the root of the difficulty, he and Mr. Berger, his chief adviser, saw that the faith-principles of the Mission must be carried to the point of making no appeals for money nor even taking a collection. If the Mission could be sustained by the faithful care of God in answer to prayer and prayer alone, without subscription lists or solicitation of any kind for funds, then it might grow up among the older societies without the danger of diverting gifts from their accustomed channels. It might even be helpful to other agencies by directing attention to the Great Worker, and affording a practical illustration of its underlying principle that God Himself, God alone, is sufficient for God's own work."

Was money after all the chief thing, or was it really true that a walk that pleases God and ensures spiritual blessing is of more importance in His

service? But for the quiet years in Beaumont Street in which, like Paul in Arabia or Moses at the backside of the desert, Hudson Taylor had been shut in with God, he might have given a different answer to this and many other questions.

"In my shortsightedness," he wrote of that period largely occupied with work on the Ningpo Testament, "I had seen nothing beyond the use that the book with its marginal references would be to the native Christians. But I have often realised since that without those months of feeding and feasting on the Word of God I should have been quite unprepared to form, on its present basis, a mission like the China Inland Mission. In the study of that Divine Word I learned that to obtain successful labourers, not elaborate appeals for help, but first, earnest prayer to God 'to thrust forth labourers,' and second, the deepening of the spiritual life of the Church, so that men should be unable to stay at home, were what was needed. I saw that the Apostolic plan was not to raise ways and means, but to go and do the work, trusting in His sure promise Who has said, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.'"

The chief need, as he saw it, was faith in God for such an increase of spiritual life among His people as to produce the missionary spirit. Not money, not the collection was to him the object of a meeting, but to get people under the power of the Word and into fellowship with God.

"If our hearts are right," he often said, we may count upon the Holy Spirit's working through us to bring others into deeper fellowship with God-the way the work began at Pentecost. We do not need to say much about the C.I.M. Let people see God working, let God be glorified, let believers be made holier, happier, brought nearer to Him, and they will not need to be asked to help."

And the satisfaction of that way of working was that people would be sure to help their own missions first, the Church work for which they were responsible. They would probably increase their gifts, indeed, to those' objects, for there is no heart as generous as one that is "satisfied with favour and full with the blessing of the Lord." And if they wanted, over and above, to help the China Inland Mission, such gifts would be given with prayer and followed by prayer that would immeasurably increase their value. It was no figure of speech with Mr. Taylor when he said, as he often did, that he would rather have a consecrated shilling, representing real spiritual fellowship, than an unconsecrated pound; and gifts given spontaneously, apart from solicitation or the pressure even of a collection, were more likely to have that quality: It was a strange sort of deputation work, perhaps, but it left the speaker free in spirit, occupied with God rather than man, and more eager to *give* than to get.

Then there were other problems, many of them-such as how to test and train candidates, how to organise the Mission in China and carry on the work at home. But though these were duly considered among the friends who met at Saint Hill, Mr. Berger's illustration of the tree was manifestly in point.

"You must wait for it to grow," he said, "before there can be much in the way of branches. First you have only a slender stem with a few leaves or shoots. Then little twigs appear. Ultimately these may become great limbs, all but separate trees but it takes time and patience. If there is life, it will develop after its own order."

Thus they were content with little to begin with in the way of organisation. Essential, spiritual principles were talked over with the candidates, and clearly understood as the basis of the Mission. A few simple arrangements were agreed to in Mr. Berger's presence, that was all.

"We came out as God's children at God's command," was Mr. Taylor's summing up of the matter, "to do God's work, depending on Him for supplies; to wear native dress and go inland. I was to be the leader in China, and my direction implicitly followed. There was no question as to who was to determine points at issue."

In the same way Mr., Berger was responsible at home. He would correspond with candidates, receive and forward contributions, publish an **Occasional Paper** with audited accounts, send out suitable workers as funds permitted, and keep clear of debt. This last was a cardinal principle with all concerned.

*"It is really just as easy," Mr. Taylor pointed out, "for God to give **beforehand**; and He much prefers to do so. He is too wise to allow His purposes to be frustrated for lack of a little money; but money wrongly placed or obtained in unspiritual ways is sure to hinder blessing.*

*"And what does going into debt really mean? It means that God has not supplied your need. You trusted Him, but He has not given you the money; so you supply yourself, and borrow. If we can only wait **right up to the time**, God cannot lie, God cannot forget: He is **Pledged** to supply all our need."*

But upon the many conferences on these and kindred' subjects at Saint Hill we must not linger. Time was getting short. It was hoped that Mr. Taylor and his party would sail in May, and much had to be got through in the way of preparation. In answer to all inquiries as to how many would be going with him, the leader of the Mission could only reply

If the Lord sends money for three or four, three or four will go; but if He provides for sixteen, we shall take it as His indication that sixteen are to sail at this time.

Not that this meant uncertainty in his own mind. He had little doubt that the larger number would be provided for, and though no solicitation was made for money, the matter was not left to drift. He believed that to deal with God is at least as real as to deal with man; that when we get to prayer we get to work, and work of the most practical kind. Two thousand pounds, as nearly as he could tell, would be needed if the whole party were to be sent out; and in preparing the first *Occasional Paper* of the Mission, early in the new year (1866), Mr. Taylor mentioned this sum. The MS. went to press on the 6th of February, and that very day a noon prayer meeting was begun at Coborn Street for funds. Faith did not mean inaction. From twelve to one the households gathered for daily united waiting upon God, the would-be missionaries realising that their first work was to obtain-from Him Who was so ready to give-whatever would be necessary for as many of their number as He was sending forth.

Mr. Taylor was not able to be present, himself, on many of these occasions. Invitations for meetings were so pressing that, the Bible Society having released him from his long task,^[188] he was giving as much time as possible to deputation work. Day by day he was with the little group at Coborn Street, however, in spirit, and they rejoiced to hear how their prayers for him were being answered.

For in the midst of many responsibilities he was kept wonderfully free from anxiety, and ready to take advantage of every opportunity for deepening interest in China. With little experience in such matters, he was scarcely conscious, perhaps, of the way in which he was gaining the confidence of spiritually minded people wherever he went. He only knew that in answer to prayer many were moved to help; that one opening led to another, and that the Lord seemed to have prepared hearts in all the Churches, upon which He

was laying the burden of China's perishing millions.

Meeting in Liverpool, for example, the young evangelist H. Grattan Guinness, Mr. Taylor accepted his invitation to Dublin to address the members of a theological class Mr. Guinness was teaching in his own house. Going ahead to make preparations, the latter had much to tell about the new Mission, and especially its leader, who, in faith, was attempting no less a task than the evangelisation of inland China. Needless to say, the young men' assembled at the hour of Mr. Taylor's arrival were on the tip-toe of expectation. John McCarthy was there, and Charles Fishe and his brother, little thinking they were that night to hear the call of God to their life-work. Tom Barnardo was there also, a bright lad of twenty whose interest in China, dating from that evening, was to bring him to his own among the waifs and strays of East London.^[189] Mr. and Mrs. Guinness, too, were unconsciously waiting the touch that was to lead first themselves, then all their children, into the work of foreign missions and thus to result in the training of more than a thousand evangelists for the dark places of the earth.^[190] It was a company worth coming over to meet; hidden though these developments were in the unknown future.

But what a shock of surprise, not to say disappointment, the members of the class experienced when the door opened and their visitor appeared! Or, had he not come after all? What—that young, slender, fair-haired man, so small in contrast with their teacher's familiar figure! Surely there must be some mistake? But no, Mr. Guinness was undoubtedly introducing Hudson Taylor: and taking it all in in a flash, Barnardo—who was less in stature, even, than the stranger—whispered to McCarthy, "Good, there's a chance for me!" and was all attention.

Oh, the riveted interest, the burning hearts of that hour, as the young men

listened to all Mr. Taylor had to tell!

"I think I see him now," wrote John McCarthy after nearly forty years in China, "so quiet, so unassuming in manner and address, but so full of the power of God! I found that night not only the answer to many prayers as to my sphere of service, but the God-given leader in the work to which the Lord had called me. The little talk in his room after the meeting, and the simple prayer to God for guidance, are among the most treasured memories of my life. The bond then formed between us has only grown and strengthened: it has never known a strain. And the blessing his love and prayers have been to me, eternity alone can reveal."

Ten or more promising candidates for the Mission resulted from that Irish visit, and permanent friendships were made with Henry Bewley, William Fry, and other leaders in Christian work. In Belfast Mr. Taylor had remarkable openings among the Presbyterians. He had recently given several days in Liverpool and Manchester to meetings of the English Presbyterian Synod, speaking by request on his association in China with their beloved missionary, the Rev. William Burns. To stimulate ministers and people to more generous support of their own Swatow mission was his object, and he rejoiced in the successful issue no less than when gifts and prayers were called forth for the Inland Mission.

"I feel little doubt," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor from Belfast, "that this effort to stir up the Presbyterians here will result in their sending several additional missionaries to China. If the English Presbyterian Mission will only follow up the interest awakened in Liverpool, etc., they will easily obtain funds for the support of three or four men."

Long long after, impressions made by this work were still fresh in the minds of many with whom Mr. Taylor then came in contact. A man burdened,

deeply burdened, a man God-conscious had moved from place to place, everywhere awakening longing for the same God-consciousness. It made no difference whether meetings were large or small, influential or apparently otherwise; he gave the best he had to give, and so earnestly that other hearts could not but come to share the burden. At Birmingham, for example, the night was so stormy that it seemed as if there could be no meeting at all. Mr. Taylor was tired, and the fireside at Spark Hill looked specially attractive as the rain poured in torrents. No one could get to the Severn Street School-room, his kind hostess assured him, and it would be taken for granted that the meeting would not be held.

"But was it not announced for to-night?" asked Mr. Taylor quietly. "Then I must go, even if there is no one but the doorkeeper."

And there, in that almost empty schoolroom, the presence of the Lord was so real that both speaker and hearers felt it to be one of the best meetings they ever attended. Half the little audience of eight or ten, as Mr. Taylor often mentioned, either became missionaries themselves or gave one or more of their children to the foreign field, while the remaining half were from that day earnest and prayerful supporters of the C.I.M.

On his return to London, Mr. Taylor took the opportunity of going over the Mission cash-book to see how far the daily prayer for funds had been answered. In the first five weeks of the year, up to the 6th of February, when the noon meeting was begun, a hundred and seventy pounds had been received. Another five weeks had now elapsed, and eagerly he made the reckoning necessary to compare the periods.' Only the day before he had received from Liverpool, as a result of his recent visit, a gift of no less than six hundred and fifty pounds, from a gentleman who upon reading Mr. Taylor's pamphlet was impressed with the importance of making sacrifices

that the Gospel might be preached to the Christless millions of inland China. Deeply interested, Mr. Taylor was anxious to see how far other hearts had been moved in the same direction, and what was the surprise and thankfulness with which he discovered that all they were praying for—not the smaller but the larger sum—was actually in hand I Mr. Richard Houghton's generous gift had made up the contributions of that second period of five weeks to almost two thousand pounds; so that not only was prayer answered, it was manifest also that all the praying band were to go forward without delay to China.

The question then was what to do with the *Occasional Paper*, which had not yet been sent out. Delayed by a fire at the printing office, it had only been received that very day (March 12), and already the need of fifteen hundred to two thousand pounds of which it made mention had been supplied. Some explanation must be made to this effect; and so it came about that the first issue of the magazine which was to represent the Mission had to have an inset slipped into each number saying that the whole sum needed for passages and outfits was already in hand—"the response of a prayer-hearing God through His believing people."

"We were reminded of the difficulty of Moses," wrote Mr. Taylor some years later, "and of the proclamation he had to send throughout the Camp to prepare no more for the building of the Tabernacle, as the gifts in hand were more than sufficient. We are convinced that if there were less solicitation for money and more dependence upon the power of the Holy Ghost and the deepening of spiritual life, the experience would be a common one in every branch of Christian work."

One more campaign of meetings was fitted in after this, in response to urgent invitations from the western counties. Mr. Taylor was specially glad to be

going in that direction, as it gave the opportunity of paying a farewell visit to Bristol. In spite of many responsible and pressing occupations in caring for a family of over eleven hundred orphans,^[191] Mr. Muller followed with keen interest the development of the China Inland Mission. He gave time whenever Mr. Taylor visited him to careful consideration of matters connected with the work, his judgement being no less valued than his helpful spirit. Only a few months previously Mr. Taylor had taken an outgoing party to Ashley Down, that they might have the privilege of meeting this man of God.

"Had an hour with Mr: Muller," he wrote on August 2." He spoke most preciously on the call and spirit of the missionary; on the consecutive reading of the Scriptures; on prayer and faith in God; on obstacles and thorn hedges."

And again next day:

Mr. Muller spoke on communion with God being before work for God; on the need of not acting uncertainly; on mixing freely with the people, and restraining the speaking of English among ourselves (in the presence of Chinese who could not understand); and finally promised to pray for the party.

How much his prayers meant the outgoing missionaries could not but realise when they went over the Orphan Houses and saw those hundreds of children, sheltered and provided for without a penny of endowment, without an appeal of any kind for help, or even making their wants known. From the very commencement of his Christian life Mr. Taylor had been profoundly influenced by this quiet consistent testimony to the faithfulness of God; and now that he was himself being led out along similar lines, he valued more than ever Mr. Muller's prayerful sympathy.

In Malvern, Bath, and other places no little interest was aroused by the story

Mr. Taylor had to tell and the spirit in which he came. Rising early to travel, and speaking once, twice, and three times a day, he found his strength taxed to the utmost; but in spite of a large correspondence which kept him busy even in the train, he managed to write a pencilled line to his mother as he was nearing Exeter (April 18, 1866):

It is joy to work for such a Master! My soul is often filled to overflowing, and it is an honour to be spent in such a cause. If the labour is great, and the difficulties numerous and formidable, the strength—"all might, according to His glorious power"—is greater, and the reward will be so too. No service can be happier even now, but the reward is not yet, and it is eternal.

To the young people with whom he came in contact this joy in the Lord was no less attractive than to their elders. The missionary was young himself, and his burning words had the more power.

"They gave several of us a sleepless night," recalled Miss H. E. Soltau, whom Mr. Taylor met on this visit for the first time, "and linked myself and dear Agnes (then about to be married to Mr. Richard Hill) with the Mission from that hour." ^[192]

When one remembers how much that one life has meant to China, and the love and veneration with which the writer of those lines is regarded by the women of the Inland Mission, one cannot but realise that Mr. Taylor's brief visit to Exeter, difficult though it had been to fit in, resulted in one of the best gifts God ever gave to the work of foreign missions.

Back again in London, for we must not dwell upon his intercourse with the saintly Robert Chapman and others,^[193] a Mr. Taylor found himself plunged in a very vortex of business and farewell meetings. It was the end of April, and in May the party was to sail for China. Apart from Mrs. Taylor, who was

slowly convalescing from her recent illness, there was no one who had any experience of the conditions to which they were going. Everything had to pass through Mr. Taylor's hands; yet, as the candidates from Dublin noticed, he was ready with helpful sympathy to meet the endless requests with which he was greeted and followed.

"Whatever needed doing, he seemed to know just how to do it," wrote Mr. McCarthy. "Questions as to printing (lithographic or common), engraving, purchase of materials for outfits or supplies, and the thousand-and-one things that come up in connection with a large party setting out for a foreign land, all were found to have light thrown upon them by a reference to the leader who was supposed to know everything, and who really did seem to have learned something about any and every matter however remotely connected with the work."

But all this time, strange to say, they had no ship in view to take them to China. Avoiding the expensive "overland" route, via Suez, Mr. Taylor wished to travel round the Cape, and was seeking a sailing-vessel of which they might engage the entire accommodation. As the party was to consist of eighteen adults and four children, the cabin space of an ordinary three-master would be none too much, and there were decided advantages for so long a voyage in being the only passengers. But here was already the beginning of May and a suitable ship had not been found. Daily the matter was remembered in the noon prayer meeting at Coborn Street, the out-going missionaries not only asking for a Christian captain, but for a crew every one of whom might find blessing through the voyage. Mr. Taylor was not anxious; he was sure the Lord would meet the need in good time, though he would have been glad to have it settled.

Just then, on the 2nd of May, he was due in Hertfordshire for an important

meeting, Colonel Puget, brother of the Dowager Lady Radstock, being his host and Chairman. To this new friend it seemed a peculiar arrangement to have a missionary meeting without a collection, but understanding it to be Mr. Taylor's wish the announcement had been made accordingly. When the time came, however, and the speaker proved unusually interesting, Colonel Puget realised that people would give generously if only they had the opportunity.

Rising therefore at the close of the address, he said that interpreting the feelings of the audience by his own, he took it upon himself to alter the decision about the collection. Many present were moved by the condition of things Mr. Taylor had represented, and would go away burdened unless they could express practical sympathy. Contrary therefore to previous announcements, an opportunity would now be given. But at that point Mr. Taylor interposed, asking to be allowed to add a few words.

It was his earnest desire, he said, that his hearers *should* go away burdened. Money was not the chief thing in the Lord's work, especially money easily given, under the influence of emotion. Much as he appreciated their kind intention, he would far rather have each one go home to ask the Lord very definitely what He would have them do. If it were to give of their substance, they could send a contribution to their own or any other society. But in view of the appalling facts of heathenism, it might be much more costly gifts the Lord was seeking; perhaps a son or daughter of one's own life-service. No amount of money could save a single soul. What was wanted was that men and women filled, with the Holy Spirit should give themselves to the work in China and to the work of prayer at home. For the support of God-sent missionaries funds would' never be lacking.

"You made a great mistake, if I may say so," remarked his host at supper.

"The people were really interested. We might have had a good collection."

In vain Mr. Taylor explained the financial basis of the Mission and his desire to avoid even the appearance of conflicting with other societies. Colonel Puget, though sympathetic, was unconvinced.

Next morning, however, he appeared somewhat late at breakfast, explaining that he had not had a good night. In the study, after handing Mr. Taylor several contributions given for the Mission, he went on to say:

*"I felt last evening that you were wrong about the collection, but now I see things differently. Lying awake in the night, as I thought of that stream of souls in China, a thousand every hour going out into the dark, I could only cry, 'LORD, what wilt Thou have **me** to do?' I think I have His answer."*

And he handed Mr. Taylor a cheque for five hundred pounds.

"If there had been a collection I should have given a five-pound note," he added. "This cheque is the result of no small part of the night spent in prayer."

It was Thursday morning the 3rd of May, and at the breakfast-table, a letter had reached Mr. Taylor from his shipping agents offering the entire accommodation of the *Lammermuir*, about to sail for China. Bidding farewell to his now deeply interested host, he returned to London, went straight to the docks, and finding the ship in every way suitable, paid over the cheque just received on account. This done, with what joy he hastened to Coborn Street with the tidings!

So the time came at length for the quiet; unostentatious start. To see God working—to look up to Him moment by moment, conscious of "His arm" to enfold, "His right hand" to protect and guide, and "the light of His countenance"—was more to that little band than thousands of gold and silver.

"Utter weakness in ourselves," Mr. Taylor wrote before setting out, "we should be overwhelmed at the immensity of the work before us, were it not that our very insufficiency gives us a special claim to the fulfilment of His promise, 'My grace is sufficient for thee; My strength is made perfect in weakness'"

Part II[\(TOC\)](#)

Launching Out into the Deep

1866-1868. Act. 34-36

Chapter VI

My Presence shall go with Thee

1866. AET. 34

HUMAN nothingness, divine sufficiency—the one just as real as the other—was the atmosphere of those last days at Coborn Street. None could come and go without feeling it. Among packing-cases and bundles the Saturday prayermeetings were held, friends from far and near, crowding the room, sitting up the staircase and on anything that came to hand. Upon the wall still hung the great map; on the table lay the open Bible; and all else was lost sight of.

"Our great desire and aim," Mr. Taylor had written in his pamphlet, "are to plant the standard of the Cross in the eleven provinces of China hitherto unoccupied, and in Chinese Tartary."^[194]

A foolhardy business! said those who saw only the difficulties.

"A superhuman task!" sighed others who wished them well. And many even of their friends could not but be anxious.

"You will be forgotten," was the chief concern of some. "With no Committee to represent you at home you will be lost sight of in that distant land. Claims are many nowadays. Before long you may find yourselves without even the necessaries of life!"

"I am taking my children with me," was Mr. Taylor's reply, "and I notice that it is not difficult for me to remember that the little ones need breakfast in the morning, dinner at mid-day, and something before they go to bed at night. Indeed, I could not forget it. And I find it impossible to suppose that our Heavenly Father is less tender or mindful than I."

Little wonder that the quietness and simplicity of it all, combined with such

aims, such faith, drew out the sympathy of many hearts!^[195]

Over the dark blue sea, over the trackless flood,

A little band is gone in the service of their God:

The lonely waste of waters they traverse to proclaim,

In the distant land of Sinim, Immanuel's Saving Name.

They have heard from the far-off East the voice of their
brother's blood:

A million a month in China are dying without God. ...

No help have they but God: alone to their Father's hand.

They look for the supply of their wants in a distant land.

The fulness of the world is His—'All power' in earth and
heaven;

They are strong tho' weak, and rich tho' poor, in the
promise He has given.

'Tis enough! they hear the cry, the voice of their brother's
blood:

A million a month in China are dying without God.^[196]

Never surely were travellers more prayed for, as the long months of the voyage wore on, and none could have more needed such aid. Sailing from London on the 26th of May, it was the end of September before they reached Shanghai; and very determined were the onslaughts of the enemy, first to wreck the unity and spiritual power of the missionary party, and then to wreck the ship on which they travelled, sending them all to the bottom. But

from the hour of parting, when they were commended to God in the stern-cabin of the Lammermuir by Mr. Berger and a company of those nearest to them, they were daily sustained in this most important way.^[197]

And prayer was wonderfully answered on board that little sailing-ship tossed on the mighty deep. Most of Trinity Sunday, their first 'whole day at sea, they were anchored awaiting a favourable breeze. Freedom from much motion gave opportunity for morning and evening services and for rest which was greatly needed. Next day was occupied with putting things in order and steadying the heavy baggage, piled up in the corners of the saloon upon which the cabins opened.^[198] On Tuesday regular studies were begun, Mr. Taylor taking a class in Chinese every morning and Mrs. Taylor another in the afternoon.

"I should like you to have a peep at us when we are gathered together," she wrote to Mrs. Berger, "just to see how happy we all are! God ever keeps us so.... The Captain and crew number thirty-four, which with our own party makes fifty-six souls on board."

After that came rougher weather, when many were down with sea-sickness and Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, in the absence of of a stewardess, had their hands full. By the time Madeira was reached almost all "had their sea-legs," and great advance had been made in getting into touch with the crew. From that time on, all across the Atlantic (for their course took them westward almost to Brazil) round the Cape of Good Hope and up to the East Indian Islands, the weather, was wonderfully fine-few gales and no distressing heat. Eleven and a half weeks were occupied in this part of the voyage, weeks chiefly memorable for the change they brought to many a life on board.

For the sailors had been watching these unusual passengers, whose company

they had looked forward to with anything but satisfaction. One missionary would have been bad enough, but a whole ship's load of them! It was "a pretty go," as the first mate told his wife before leaving, and more than he "wished they were out of it." For the *Lammermuir* carried a godless crew, though the Captain was a Christian. This was a great help, as he gave permission for Sunday services and put no hindrance in the way of intercourse with the men. But the latter held aloof for some time, and the missionaries were wise enough to give them plenty of line.

There are some things, however, that cannot be hid, chiefest of which is the fragrance of Christ in a spirit made loving and helpful by His presence. This was not lacking on board the *Lammermuir*, and before long it began to be strangely attractive. Hardly knowing what it was that drew them, the men found their hearts open to spiritual influences as never before. The missionaries, after all, were not such a bad lot! When a difficult piece of forging had to be done, Nicol, the Scotch blacksmith, was better at it than any of themselves. Jackson and Williamson, the carpenters, were always ready to lend a hand; and in the absence of a ship's doctor Mr. Taylor's surgical skill, gladly placed at their disposal, was invaluable. Then he gave capital lectures—talks on the eye, the circulation of the blood, first aid to the injured, etc., which helped to pass the time. And there was more than that. Seen at close quarters, these people were downright happy—always busy, always kindly, and given to singing.

It was queer, that part of it I for what could there be in the life they had chosen to make them want to sing? Yet morning, noon, and night, in the stern-cabin with their harmonium or out on deck, whether two or three alone or the whole company together, they seemed never to tire. True it was only hymns they sang, but what could touch deeper chords? "Yes, we part, but not

for ever," "Jesu, Lover of my soul," "Rock of Ages, cleft for me"—to them it all seemed so real!

Thou, O Christ, art all I want,

More than all in Thee I find. ...

Yes, it was plain enough: religion meant something to these people. And little by little not a few on board, instead of wishing themselves out of it, began to wish they were in it in any real sense.

"The Captain, officers, and crew are most kind to us," Mr. Taylor wrote at the beginning of the 'voyage. "The cabin steward is a Christian. May God give us to see many conversions ere we leave the vessel."

"The friendly feeling only increases," he added a week later. "Continue to pray for us: God is answering. ... What we need is more of His grace, more faith, more devotion to Him, more love for souls. May these be given us for Jesus' sake."

Before ever they had seen the **Lammermuir**, or the crew had been engaged for the voyage, much prayer had been made for those with whom they were to travel all the way to China. Very definitely they had asked for a ship's company to whom the Lord would bless His Word. That prayer was still going up, both on board and at home, and they were eagerly looking for the answer. "A voyage across the ocean will not make any one a soul-winner," as Mr. Taylor often said; but these fellow-workers, whatever they may have lacked in some directions, possessed that personal knowledge of God which makes men keen about bringing others to know Him too.

And Mr. Taylor's example helped them not a little. Soul-winning was to him as it had always been, the very object of his existence as a Christian. For this he lived, prayed, laboured; and amid the many responsibilities that had come

upon him he was still, in this sense, the true missionary. He encouraged his fellow-workers also in putting prayer, definite, believing prayer, before any other means to bring about conversion, and in seeking to live the life that makes such prayer possible. Well he knew how easy it is on board ship to drift into an unhelpful spirit, and lose all influence for good over others. Novel-reading, waste of time, and self-indulgence at table were carefully watched against, and the daily prayer-meeting kept up which registered unerringly the spiritual temperature of the little company. Chinese study and useful reading occupied a good part of the day; Mr. Taylor himself having a Greek Grammar on hand, and Wordsworth's Commentary on Leviticus. But the eternal welfare of those with whom they travelled was sought directly, as well as in these indirect but potent ways.

The conversion of the second officer, twenty-five days out from Plymouth, was a welcome answer to prayer, and was quickly followed by that of two of the midshipmen. This was the beginning of an awakening among the crew which continued for some time. Concern about spiritual things began to lay hold of them, and there was great joy among the missionaries as one after another came out into the light.

"I can give you but little idea," Mr. Taylor wrote to Mr. Berger, "of the precious answers to prayer we have received, and of the blessed change wrought in some of these men. Four of them were Romanists; now they are resting on the finished work of Christ and prizing His words.... We hope to see others brought in before long for did we not ask God to gather a crew to whom He would bless His Word, and will He not continue to answer? Dear Mr. Berger, I do wish you could have been with us some times when we have received special answers to prayer. Our joy has literally overflowed, and we have longed that our friends at home could know of the blessing poured out upon us.

"As is often the case, God has singled out some who seemed most unlikely, and who at first manifested the greatest opposition to the Gospel. ... Others again being foreigners with little knowledge of English seemed difficult to reach, but the Lord has opened their hearts...."

"We commenced by having service on Sunday morning in the saloon, with Captain Bell's permission. A few of the sailors came. Then the young men started an afternoon meeting in the forecastle, held thrice weekly. Nor were our sisters less active. Mary Bell began a Bible Class, which soon grew into a meeting for reading the Scriptures and for prayer every night, Mrs. Nicoland others joining her. Some were converted, and these meetings became general.... Miss Desgraz undertook reading with the four Swedes, Miss Faulding. with a German, Miss Bausum with the cook and a South Sea Islander. Miss Barnes holds a reading-class for all who wish to improve themselves in English, and has been blessed to the conversion of several; while the other brethren and sisters have taken part in personal conversations and public meetings."

High-water mark was reached early in August, when the first mate, who had been a savage bully among the men, experienced a real change of heart. For a month or more his wretchedness had been pitiable; but though under deep conviction of sin, it was not without a desperate struggle he was able to break with the old life and enter into peace in believing.

"Had a special prayer-meeting for the conversion of Mr. Brunton," is the entry in Mr. Taylor's journal for August 3.

And the following morning:

"Could not retire without seeing Mr. Brunton. Read to him at 12.30, when he came from his midnight watch, part of Mackintosh on Exodus 12. (the Passover). After much conversation and prayer, the Lord brought him into liberty.

First, told my dear wife and Miss Blatchley (their friend and secretary), then Mr. Williamson, who rose and joined me in praise and thanksgiving to God. Then I went to awake Mr. Sell, though it was 2.30 A.M. Oh, how glad our hearts were!"

[199]

The news was quickly known all over the ship, and deep was the impression next day when this officer called out his watch and told them personally what God had done for his soul. One young midshipman to whom he spoke gave his heart to the Lord, and several of the crew who had been halting between two opinions were brought to decision.

August 4: A day of great things: Carter, Dixon, and the steward (Russell) professed to find peace through believing. Had a protracted meeting, till midnight, to praise the Lord and seek the conversion of all binds. At midnight, Mr. Brunton, Carter, and Dixon joined us, and we gave thanks together.

At the request of the crew, the daily meetings were now moved from the steward's cabin to their own quarters, where a larger number could be accommodated.

"Our first meeting in the fore-castle was held the night before last," Mr. Taylor wrote on August 22. "Many of our own number and most of the sailors were present. It was truly a pleasant sight! Card-playing had for some time given place to Bible reading, and foolish songs to hymns. But now they and we were met as believers-brothers and sisters from various parts of the new and old world and from the islands of the sea-all journeying toward the same blessed home. Some were seated on sea-chests, some on planks, some on chairs that we had brought, some on various parts of the ship's fittings, while a few-halfshamed to be seen, yet drawn by something they themselves, perhaps, did not understand-were hiding

behind the capstan or hanging about the doors. The meeting commenced with the hymn:

Come let us join our cheerful songs—

With angels round the throne.

Mr. Sell then engaged in prayer, and was followed by a converted West Indian, who in broken English poured out his heart to God. A passage in John was read and conversed about. Another hymn was sung; prayer followed; and Miss Barnes, who had just come in, gave thanks for the conversion of one of the men who had been in the deepest distress for some time, and with whom she had been speaking on deck where his duty detained him. Then one of the sailors asked for, 'O happy day, that fixed my choice.' Prayer was again offered and the meeting closed with

Come, ye that love the Lord,

And let your joys be known—

Then followed such a shaking of hands, such mutual exhortations and expressions of Christian love as did one good to see and hear. Truly, the Lord is wonderfully answering the prayers of His dear people who are bearing us up at the throne of grace."

"August 23: Such a happy meeting again last night! The second of the four Swedes has found peace, and three others present were seeking Jesus. The first mate (Mr. Brunton) led us in prayer, as did also three of the sailors; and the joy was so great that it was with difficulty I could get the meeting concluded half an hour after the time had come for doing so."

Among themselves, also, the missionaries had helpful meetings, and several days were given entirely to' waiting upon God, in view of all that lay before

them.

*"On Saturday afternoons we join in Spirit with friends in China and at home," Mr. Taylor continued to Mr. Berger, "praying for the good of the mighty empire toward which we are journeying. Our minds are kept in peace as to the future. Were we never to reach China, we should all rejoice in the work God has done on the **Lammermuir**; and if permitted to reach our destination, He Who has led hitherto will be with us and will guide us by a plain path."*

Gladly would one leave the record of the voyage at this point, telling only of the wonderful deliverance from ship wreck in the China Sea with which it ended. But to do so would be untrue to facts, and untrue moreover to universal experience. Who does not know, with any spiritual life at all, that where God is working the devil is sure to be busy; and that the nearer one seeks to live to the Lord Himself, the more painful are the consequences of grieving Him? They were only little things that had come inbetween one and another of the party. Big temptations would have defeated their own end; but little criticisms, little coldnesses, little jealousies had brought in disunion that led to serious results. Prayer was hindered; and to the grief of all concerned, the work of the Holy Spirit was so checked, that for one whole month no souls were saved, and some who had been anxious remained sinburdened and undecided. It was a startling experience, and deeply searching: a whole month without conversions, at a time when already many of the men had come over the line and others seemed ready to do so! And in their troubled hearts the missionaries themselves knew what was hindering.

Yet it was so hard to get right, to get right and to keep right with one another! It was painful light on the inspired words, "Behold, how good and how' pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity ... for **there** the Lord

commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." The fact that they were living, most of them, in true fellowship with God made the grief of failure the more distressing. It made it also the more needful for the Lord to let that grief be felt. Evidences of the self-life in those who had not come so near to Him might be less disastrous in their results; but "whom the Lord *loveth* He chasteneth." It is the fruitful branch He purges, that it may bring forth "more fruit."

To Mr. Taylor, needless to say, these developments caused deep concern. Could he by more watchfulness have safeguarded his fellow-workers and prevented misunderstandings? Could he now, prevailing first with God, bring them to a better mind, and restore "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"?

"This morning," runs a note in his journal early in July, "had some conversation with Mr. Nicol about the present state of matters. Sell joined us and afterwards Williamson, and we decided on holding a special meeting for confession and prayer for the increase of love and unity. Spoke to most of them privately, and affectionately urged the need of a better spirit. We met in the evening, and the Lord was with us indeed. I trust He gave to all present a real desire to be united in love."

But the danger was a recurring one, and a couple of months later a spirit of discord again crept in. It was on different grounds this time and with other members of the party, but the outcome was the same—criticism, discontent, loss of power and blessing.

"Almost all the party deploring the want of more unity and love," is the record for September 8. "The Lord make bare His arm on our behalf."

The notable thing is that they *did* deplore it; that they saw and felt the danger; could not go on in such a condition, even on ship-board, and gave themselves to heart-searching, before the Lord. Prayer and fasting again turned the tide: I for to those who humble themselves before Him it is still," true, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, they Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."

Then the adversary changed his tactics. Unsuccessfully in wrecking the spiritual usefulness of the party, it seemed as though "the Prince of the Power of the Air" let loose his fiercest legions, determined on the destruction in one way or another of the infant mission. For fifteen days and nights the stress of storm and tempest lay upon them. Caught in one typhoon after another they beat up the China Sea all but a wreck-sails gone, masts gone, everything gone but their steadfast hope in God. Of the beginning of this terrible experience Miss Blatchley wrote:

On Monday morning (September 10) the sun rose as usual and the wind was fair, but in the afternoon the weather became squally. The wind increased, the glass was steadily falling, and before night it was but too clear that we were on the edge of a typhoon. The night was fearfully rough, with a wild sea. The rain descended as if the clouds were coming down bodily, while the raging of the wind made it exceedingly difficult to pass orders. More than once all the men on duty were nearly swept overboard by heavy seas. In the darkness little could be done. We could only watch, and commend ourselves and more especially the crew to God's keeping. ...

All Tuesday the glass continued to fall, and the wind and sea were unabated. But we were beginning to hope from the direction of the wind that we were on the outer edge of the typhoon.

On Wednesday the sun was visible, the rain ceased and the glass was no longer falling. We were safe; we had a fair wind, and toward noon sighted Formosa.... So we renewed hope of reaching Shanghai on the Saturday following. But on Thursday, a strong gale blew right ahead, with a tremendous sea on, so that we were driven out of our course. This gale continued all Friday. Moreover, we were now among shoals and breakers. Heavy seas were sweeping the decks, loosening things from their lashings. Many of the sailors were ill, and the storm we had already passed had weakened the ship, rendering her very unfit to meet another gale. We were all feeling worn out with want of rest, with the perpetual tossing, our wet clothes, etc., and were longing to reach our desired haven. We were, indeed, within a couple of days' good run of it: but the wind continued adverse, and we had constantly to tack, with the prospect of having to beat all up the China Sea in the teeth of a N.E. simoon.

At last with longing eyes we sighted Fu-kien on Tuesday the 18th of September. The waters were becoming pale, earnest of our approach to the Yangtze. But we were still beating to windward, and continued to do so all Wednesday, not only making nothing, but not even holding our own, for we lost some twenty knots or more. It was tedious work, but we kept up courage and cheered our weariness by constant communion with Him Who is our hope and our salvation. The old, familiar hymns had now new meaning. While the winds' raged, we sang "Jesu, Lover of my soul," "Rock of Ages," "O God, our help in ages past," and others. We could not always raise our voices above the storm, but at least they mingled with it, they and it praising God.

*In the night especially we had prayer, because the darkness prevented much from being done or attempted about the ship. Of course **rest** was out of the question. When the tempests were upon us we were tossed up and down as if our iron ship*

were nothing-now on the crest of a wave, now in a deep valley, now thrown on her port, now on her starboard side, almost dipping her yard-ends into the sea, and again plunging forward, her forecastle right under water. In this condition we were wearying for land ... and it would have been with despairing feelings we watched the wind increase. ... but for the assurance that God's arm was closely round us, and at the same time ruling all powers.

Twelve days the storm had been upon them, but the worst was yet to come.

"It is useless to attempt to describe," wrote Miss Faulding, "what passed on Saturday, Sunday and Monday" (September. 22-24). "The sea washed our lea bulwarks away, and seemed as if it would carry everything before it. Our mainsail was torn to ribbons; the jib-boons and fore, main and mizen masts were carried away, and it seemed impossible we should weather it. I am glad to say we were all kept calm, ready for life or death. We were making water fast. The broken masts were hanging over our heads as if by a thread, swinging about fearfully and threatening every moment to fall which if they had done, the deck or side of the vessel must have been staved in, and we should have gone down in a few minutes. I did feel so thankful that you could not know; for I had the strongest conviction that our lives would not be lost."

But for the courageous example of Mr. Taylor,^[200] and indeed all the missionary party, things would have gone very differently however. In outward prosperity, during the earlier part of the voyage, they had been learning something of their spiritual foes and "the need," as Mr. Taylor wrote, "of having our souls stayed upon God, and of clinging to Him in ceaseless prayer"; now it was His purpose to teach them in a different way, "the blessedness of trusting Him in the hour of human helplessness and danger." Of those last, worst days he wrote:

Friday, September. 21: The gale increasing and having all the appearance of another typhoon, we had prayer together from time to time during the afternoon and night. The decks were swept by the sea in a manner I have never before witnessed.

Saturday, September. 22: The jibs and stay-sails gave way early this morning. So fearful was the sea that the men refused to go out and secure them. The Captain and first Mate went on the forecastle ... the men followed, but soon all had to be recalled as the vessel was driving into the sea. Soon after this the lea, upper bulwarks, began to give way, and before long all this side was overboard. Next, the jib-boom and flying jib-boom gave way, followed immediately by the foretop and top-gallant masts and the maintop-gallant mast. They hung by the wire shrouds, swinging about most fearfully, owing to the heavy rolling of the ship.

The appearance of things was now truly terrific. The decks full of water, which poured over both sides as she rolled, were encumbered with floating spars, tubs, buckets, 'casks, etc. Besides the danger of being washed overboard, there was no small risk of having one's limbs 'broken by moving timbers, torn from their moorings. Prayer to God was our only resource. The sailors, paralysed, gave up work. The probability seemed that our hours, if not minutes, were numbered. I kissed the dear children, and With the young men of our party went out and set to work, hoping to encourage others. Commending ourselves to God, we began to secure the floating things and cut away the wreckage. This stimulated some of the crew to help us. Many of the smaller things washed overboard, and the larger we secured from time to time, for the fury of the waves was such that no lashings would stand long. The water-casks having been swept away no fresh water was procurable, for we dared not open the tanks in the gale. Cooking was out of the question, and we had to eat a little biscuit and cheese or butter from time to time. Through

God's blessing the wreck of the fore masts and jib-booms was safely got over the side. The main mast was swinging fearfully, and water was going down into the hold in large quantities by the foot of the mast and by the anchor pipes, the covers of which had been washed away. These places were now secured, and as the afternoon was far advanced no more could be attempted.

We were still in very bad shape. Rolling fearfully, the masts and yards hanging down were tearing our only sail (the main lower top-sail) and were battering like a ram against the main yard. The deck from fore-castle to poop was one scarcely broken sea. The roar of the water, the clanging of chains, the beating of the dangling masts and yards, the sharp smack of the torn sails made it almost impossible to hear any orders that might be given.

Providentially the moon was bright and the night light. Though all were tired out, there was little sleeping. About 10 P.M. the mizen top-gallant royal mast gave way, and with the royal yard hung swinging about. The rain and spray beat desperately, and the force of the wind was such that it was impossible to stand on the poop without holding on. Captain Bell kept moving about, though so unwell-half his face paralysed.

Sunday, September. 23: Very weary in body we recommenced at 6 A.M. ... The pumps were got to work, and ropes being carried into the saloon the ladies helped in pumping.... The rolling continued to be very heavy, and at times the decks were one sheet of water, rushing and roaring in a way to appal the stoutest heart. The ship began to labour very heavily, leading us to think that she was taking water, but of this we could get no certainty. Worn out after a hard day's work, we did not attempt a service, but lay down for a little rest. This was often disturbed by unusually heavy seas and rolls, when it seemed as though we must be going down at once. But after a while she would get more quiet, and moonlight and lessening wind gave rise to hope.'

Although the storm was blowing over, this second Monday was the most anxious day of all. Every one on board was worn out; the pumps would not work, and they were shipping water fast. What it must have been to Mrs. Taylor with the little ones about her may be better imagined than described.

"But it was sweet to rejoice in God through all," she wrote; "to rest in past proofs of His love, independently of present circumstances and I entered into Habakkuk's song as never before, 'Yet will I rejoice in the Lord,; I will glory in the God of my salvation.'"

Chapter VII[\(TOC\)](#)

To Search out a Resting-Place

1866. AET. 34

IT was a bright September Sunday, five days after the storm passed away, when the *Lammermuir* at length came to anchor off the foreign settlement of Shanghai. Her broken, dismantled condition made her an object of general curiosity among the gaily-painted junks and foreign shipping; but when it became known that she only carried missionaries, albeit the largest party that had yet come to China, interest soon subsided, and beyond a few facetious remarks in the papers little notice was taken of the new arrivals.

To themselves that quiet Sunday was specially grateful. They did not go ashore, and out on the river were protected from many visitors. Their hearts were full of thankfulness for recent deliverances-more wonderful, even, than they realised at the time. A vessel coming in soon after their own proved to have lost sixteen out of a ship's company of twenty-two, while on the *Lammermuir* none were missing or seriously injured; and no sooner had they reached a place of safety than terrific gales again swept the coast, which in their disabled condition' they could not possibly have weathered.

"God grant that having been brought so near to eternity and then spared for awhile," wrote one of the party, "our lives may be more entirely devoted to Him and to the work before us. Through all I never felt the, least regret, or anything but joy in the thought that I had come."

The voyage over, Mr. Taylor's difficulties were in a sense begun. Looking out on that familiar scene-the crowded river, the European houses along the Bund, and the wall of the Chinese city beyond-he realised in a very practical way the responsibilities that had come to him. Where was he to find accommodation for so large a party that would afford the facilities required? Boxes from the hold, more or less soaked with sea water, and all the baggage

from the cabins had to be unpacked, dried, and rearranged. Much must be left in Shanghai for a time, as in addition to personal belongings they had with them household goods from Coborn Street, a considerable quantity of stores, printing and lithographic presses, and a large supply of drugs and medical apparatus. All these, after careful examination, needed safe dry storage, and the washing machines, mangle, and ironing-stove must be unpacked and set to work, for there was the clothing of more than twenty people to be laundered after a four months' voyage. Little wonder he was tempted to feel anxious, remembering the difficulty of obtaining even temporary accommodation in the Settlement.^[201]

For those were not the days of Missionary Homes and Agencies. Foreign hotels were few and Very costly; Chinese inns were out of 'the question for such a party; and the native boats to which they might have been transferred would not have met the case. Furnished houses were rarely to be had, even if expense were no consideration, and the hospitality of European residents could not reasonably be counted on. The missionary community in Shanghai at the time consisted of only nine married and three single men; and who among them would be able, however willing, to receive so many visitors? Then again, if the party had to be divided, some in one home and some in another, how 'was the work to be attended to? Altogether the situation was complicated and would have given rise to anxiety, had it not been that, both from the *Lammermuir* and from friends at home, prayer had been going up for months past that the Lord would Himself see and provide.

Meanwhile, unknown to Mr. Taylor, a friend of Ningpo days had moved up to Shanghai, bringing with him the printing-press of the American Presbyterian Mission. In a semi-foreign house he was living near the Chinese city (East Gate), and with a view to future needs had purchased a disused

building intended for a theatre, which formed a 'convenient warehouse or "go-down" connected with his premises. Large and empty, this building immediately suggested itself when the *Lammermuir* appeared in the river and he learned that it carried Mr. Taylor's party. How they must need the cheer of a friendly welcome, and some place in which to dispose their belongings! If nothing better offered, his home was open to them, such as it was, with the "go-down" in addition. So taking a *sampan*^[202] that very afternoon, William Gamble sought out his friends to put at their disposal a bachelor's hospitality.

Almost too good to be true must it have seemed when, three days later, Mr. Taylor returned from Ningpo to remove his family and fellow-workers to the quarters thus provided. Captain Bell had insisted on their remaining on the *Lammermuir* meanwhile; and though absent so short a time Mr. Taylor had been greatly prospered. Escorting Miss Rose to her future home, he had been enabled to come into touch with all the senior members of the Mission, save Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson, who were some distance inland.^[203] The church at Bridge Street, amid their rejoicing, had come to his help in a practical way, for which he was most thankful-sending back with him the evangelist Tsiu, one of the fruits of his own early labours, and a Christian woman as well as two men to help in caring for the new arrivals.

"HE gently clears our way," wrote Mrs. Taylor the following Sunday. "On the morning of this day last week (September. 30) we knew not where we should store our goods, and had it not been that Captain Bell arranged for us to stay on board, we should not have known where to lay our heads. That any missionary would be able to receive us all seemed impossible; and here God had in readiness one who not only can accommodate our party, but whose views concerning missionary work coincide in large measure with Hudson's. All

our goods, with the exception of a few boxes not yet brought out of the hold, are safe in Mr. Gamble's 'go-down,' where Hudson and I and four of the young men sleep. The others are in Mr. Gamble's house, where we all take our meals; and he has kindly promised, though somewhat reluctantly I believe, to allow us to remunerate him for our board."

At the end of the "go-down" the floor of the stage remained, and on this were extemporised sleeping compartments-sheets being pinned together for walls and a stepladder doing duty as staircase.

"There is no lack of ventilation," wrote one of those billeted there, "the windows being unglazed, square openings, supplemented by plenty of crevices in the roof. The wind makes noises ghostly enough for any romance; and the rats keep up a perpetual scuffle among our boxes and the loose straw. On windy nights our linen walls are very restless indeed; but there is not much difficulty in sleeping after a long day's work."

"We had our two stoves put up," recalled another, who with her Swiss training was a competent laundress, "and with washing, mangling, and ironing going on at the same time ... the warehouse was as busy as a beehive. We often wished friends at home could have looked in upon us, just to see how happy we all were! It would have rejoiced their hearts to see how lovingly, how kindly the Lord was dealing with His children."

"Missionary work under the most favourable conditions," was Miss Faulding's impression of it all! "Mr. Taylor does manage so nicely for us; he thoroughly understands how to go about everything."

In the midst of many occupations he had little time for writing, and little thought to give to the criticisms that buzzed about the foreign community.

That ladies should be brought out to wear Chinese dress and live in the interior roused indignation in certain quarters. It was freely hinted that Mr. Taylor must be a madman or worse, and that Bedlam would have been a safer destination for himself and his companions than Shanghai. "But he went quietly on, as Mr. Rudland remembered, "saying little or nothing about it; always letting discourtesies drop out of sight so graciously, without affecting his own friendliness."

One of the few letters Mr. Taylor did manage to write from Shanghai was to his mother.

"The Lord is with us," he said, "and we are all, I trust, enjoying fellowship with Jesus. We have and may expect to have some trials:

But with humble faith to see

Love inscribed upon them all,

This is happiness to me.

*Our Father not only **knows**, but **sends** them all in love."*

The next stage of their journey was to be a leisurely one, via the Grand Canal to Hang-chow, the far-famed capital of the neighbouring province. Here it was hoped they might be enabled to commence operations and, with Mr. Stevenson between them and Ningpo, complete a chain of C.I.M. stations a hundred miles into the interior.^[204] At one or other of the cities *en route* Mr. Taylor expected to leave some of the young men with the evangelist. They were to travel by native house-boats, giving regular hours to study, and waiting upon God as to their ultimate location.

To take so large a party inland at all was a step of faith, especially as it

included an English nurse and four little children, besides six 'unmarried ladies. In the whole of China, at that time, there was not **one** unmarried lady missionary to be found away from the treaty ports; and the entire staff of such workers, including these new arrivals, numbered only seventeen. Seventeen missionary women free to devote their time to schools, hospitals, and evangelisation it was a mere nothing, even for the ports! And away from those few, coast-board cities, scarcely a voice was raised to tell of Redeeming Love to the women and children of half the heathen world. "The Lord giveth the word the women that publish the tidings are a great host."^[205] To add to their number in China and facilitate their all-important work was one of Mr. Taylor's chief objects in the formation of the Inland Mission, and he was prepared to let devoted women make the sacrifices necessary and to take upon himself the responsibility of helping them in every way possible.

For their protection as well as to lessen difficulties he considered the wearing of native dress essential, with a large measure of conformity to Chinese manners and customs.

"In my judgment," he wrote on this subject, "the adoption of the Chinese costume would be desirable even were we residing in the treaty ports; but for work in the interior such as we contemplate I am satisfied that it is an absolute prerequisite. No foreign missionary to the best of my knowledge ever has, in European costume, carried on such a work; and my strong conviction is that, at present, no foreign missionary could do so. He may travel under the protection of his passport almost anywhere; but quietly to settle among the people, obtaining free and familiar communication with them, conciliating their prejudices, winning their esteem and confidence, and so living as to be an example to them of what Chinese Christians should be, requires the adoption not merely of their costume but of their habits also to a very

*considerable extent. Merely to put on their dress, and act regardless of their thoughts and feelings, is to make a burlesque of the whole matter, and will probably lead the person so adopting it to conclude, before long, that it is of very little value 'to him. But I have never heard of any one, after a **bona fide** attempt to become Chinese to the Chinese that he might gain the Chinese, who either regretted the course taken or wished to abandon it."*

The grounds upon which this sacrifice was advocated were so important that we venture to give further extracts.^[206]

Had our Lord appeared on earth as an angel of light, He would doubtless have inspired far more awe and reverence, and would have gathered even larger multitudes to attend His ministry. But to save man He became man, not merely like man. And further, the immediate objects of His personal ministry being under the law (the lost sheep of the house of Israel) He likewise was born "under the law," not a mere proselyte but a real Jew; "for it became Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren." In language, in appearance, in everything not sinful He made Himself one with those He sought to benefit. Had He been born a noble Roman rather than a Jew, He would perhaps, if less loved, have commanded more of a certain kind of respect, and would assuredly have been spared much of the indignity He suffered. This, however, was not His aim: He "emptied Himself." Surely no follower of the meek and lowly Jesus will be likely to conclude that it is "beneath the dignity of a Christian missionary" to seek identification with this great though benighted people, in the hope that he may see them washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. ...

I am not alone in the opinion that the foreign dress and carriage of missionaries (to a certain extent affected by some of their pupils and converts), the foreign appearance of

chapels, and indeed the foreign air imparted to everything connected with their work has seriously hindered the rapid dissemination of the Truth among the Chinese. And why should such a foreign aspect be given to Christianity? The Word of God does not require it; nor, I conceive, could sound reason justify it. It is not the denationalisation but the Christianisation of this people that we seek. We wish to see' Chinese Christians raised up-men and women truly Christian, but withal truly Chinese in every right sense of the word. We wish to see churches of such believers presided over by pastors and officers of their own countrymen, worshipping God in the land of their fathers, in their own tongue, and in edifices of a thoroughly native style of architecture. "It is enough that the disciple be as **His Master.**" If we really wish to see the Chinese such as we have described, let us as far as possible set before them a true example. Let us in everything not sinful become Chinese, that we may by all means "save some." Let us adopt their dress, acquire their language, seek to conform to their habits and approximate to their diet as far as health and constitution will allow. Let us live in their houses, making no unnecessary alteration in external form, and only so far modifying their internal arrangements as health and efficiency for work absolutely require.

This cannot but involve, of course, a certain measure of inconvenience, such as the sacrifice of some accustomed articles of diet, etc. But will any one reflecting on what HE gave up Who left heaven's throne to be cradled in a manger; Who, having filled all things and wielded omnipotence, became a feeble infant wrapped in swaddling clothes; Who from being the loved one of the Father-never misjudged, never unappreciated, and receiving the ceaseless adoration of all the hierarchies of heaven-became a despised Nazarene, misunderstood by His most faithful followers, neglected and rejected by men who owed Him their very being and whose salvation He had come to seek, and finally, mocked, spit upon,

crucified and slain with thieves and outlaws, will any follower of Christ, reflecting on these things, hesitate to make the trifling sacrifice indicated above?

We give you credit, dear friends, for being prepared to give up not these little things only, but a thousand times more for Christ's sake. ... Let there be no reservation. Give yourself up wholly and fully to Him Whose you are and Whom you wish to serve in this work, and there can be no disappointment. But once let the question arise, "Are we called to give up this or that?" once admit the thought, "I did not expect such and such inconvenience or privation," and your service will cease to be that free and happy one which is most conducive to efficiency and success. "God loveth a cheerful giver."

Mr. Taylor's companions of the **Lammermuir** party being one with him in these convictions, the change into native dress was effected without delay. They did not remain long enough in Shanghai to complete the ladies' outfits, but the young men submitted to the somewhat trying process of shaving the front part of the head and donning the queue and loose-fitting garb of the country, Mr. Taylor doing the same. Mrs. Taylor also appeared in Chinese costume at Mr. Gamble's table. To her it meant no little sacrifice. She had not worn it during her previous residence in China, and experience enabled her to realise something of the restrictions it must involve.'

"Things which are tolerated in us as foreigners, wearing foreign dress," she wrote to Mrs. Berger, "could not be allowed for a moment in native ladies. I do not at all mean to imply a doubt as to the desirability of the change; but the nearer we come to the Chinese in outward appearance, the more severely will any breach of propriety according to their standards be criticised. Henceforth I must never be guilty, for example, of taking my husband's arm out of doors! And in fifty or a hundred other ways we may, without great watchfulness,

shock the Chinese by what would seem to them grossly immodest and unfeminine conduct Pray much for us in respect to this matter."

To avoid giving unnecessary offence in Shanghai, the step was not taken until after the meeting in which, at Mr. Gamble's invitation, a number of missionaries and others came together to commend the new enterprise to the guidance and blessing of God. Although Mr. Taylor and his fellow-workers were regarded none too cordially in certain quarters, they could not but feel on this occasion a real brotherliness of sympathy which was most encouraging.^[207] And Mr. Gamble's interest had deepened into the warmest friendship. Indeed he was more than reluctant to part from his adopted family, many though their claims had been upon his time and resources. Accompanying them to the river on Saturday evening, the loth of October, he hardly knew how to say good-bye. The junks on which they were to travel were moored out in the stream, and all the party had left the jetty save Mr. Taylor and Rudland. Busy with helpful services to the last, Mr. Gamble quietly laid a package on the seat of the *sampan*, stepped ashore, and was gone amid the shadows. It was the roll of dollars he had reluctantly accepted in payment for their board, and on a slip of paper he had written, "For the good of the Mission."

It was "the fairest night imaginable," and dropping down-stream in the moonlight the travellers were soon alongside the dear old *Lammermuir*.^[208] The sailors saw them coming and were all on deck to meet them. In the forecastle a last, brief service was held. "Yes, we part, but not for ever," was sung on the well-remembered deck. Then with a last look at their cabins, hallowed by sacred memories, and with many a farewell, the missionaries left for their boats. "Whither, pilgrims, are you going?" was struck up by the ship's company.

"But that tells nothing apart from the singing," Miss Blatchley wrote, "of all the associations brought to mind that made many of the voices unsteady. As we pushed off, they stood along the bulwarks and, raising their caps, gave us three hearty English cheers. In the, moonlight and stillness we glided round the stem—sailors and midshipmen following on to the poop, where they repeated the cheers and stood looking after us till we passed out of sight."^[209]

Four weeks later it was a company thoroughly Chinese as to outward appearances that drew near the famous city of Hang-chow. The gipsy-life so romantic at first had become wearisome enough in their slow-going boats. Happily the days were fine with the crisp freshness of autumn, but the nights were bitterly cold, and it had become an urgent matter to find more adequate shelter. Nowhere on the way, however, had it been possible to rent premises. Again and again, just when it seemed they had succeeded, negotiations had fallen through, and from place to place they had been obliged to move on, an unbroken party.

Bravely they had kept up their studies and used every opportunity, with the help of their Chinese companions, for making known the Way of Life. But crowded quarters, repeated disappointments, and growing concern with regard to the reception that might be expected at their destination made the journey a trying one, bringing out both the strength and weakness of individual characters. All were suffering from the cold; several, including the children, were more or less ill; and the Ningpo servants began to talk about going home for the winter. The boat-people, needless to say, were full of complaints. Far from their accustomed waters, in a district dangerously unsettled through the Rebellion, they too were feeling the stress of anxiety, and were clamouring to be set free to return to Shanghai. Altogether the situation was a critical one, and prayer was the only resource of much-tried

hearts.

*"We were of ourselves just **helpless**," wrote one of the party, "but we knew that we were being led by the Hand that opens and no man shuts; the Hand that had prepared for us at Shanghai a hospitable roof and storage for our goods; so we prayed and moved forward, nothing doubting."*

It was upon Mr. Taylor the burden pressed most heavily, as he left the boats in an unfrequented place near the city and set out with the evangelist to seek the home it was so necessary to find. When he was gone and they were left in a good deal of suspense, Mrs. Taylor gathered, all the party for united prayer. The circumstances affected her in quite a special way, for before long she was to lay in little Gracie's arms the baby-sister for whom the child was daily asking in her prayers. Yet that mother-heart, so tender in its solicitude, was perfectly at rest. "Who will bring me into the strong city?" had come in her Psalm for that morning, "Who will lead me into Edom? Wilt not Thou, O God? ... Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly." Quietly she read the passage now, and none who were present could ever forget the prayer that followed. It changed an hour of painful suspense into one of soul-outpouring, preparing the young missionaries as nothing else could have done for whatever news Mr. Taylor might bring.

And very soon he came. Before they could have expected it his voice was heard near' the boats—and with radiant face he was among them. Yes, all was well. The Lord had indeed gone before. Just as in Shanghai, a home was ready, waiting!

Knowing that a friend of Ningpo days, belonging to the same Mission as Mr. Gamble, had recently moved to Hangchow, Mr. Taylor called on him first of

all to acquaint him with their arrival.'

"We have been expecting you," was Mr. Green's kindly welcome, "and I have a message you may be glad to receive."

A young American missionary, it appeared, had just left the city to bring his wife and child from Ningpo to the home he had prepared for them. His house, furnished and ready, would be empty for a week at least, and he had bethought him of Mr. Taylor's party.

"Tell them," he said to Mr. Green, "to go straight to my place when they come. It is at their disposal for the time being."

The house wag on a quiet street and could be reached 'in boats without observation. Mr. Kreyer was not expected back for several days, and all they had to do was to take possession. Well can one imagine the praise meeting that was held then and there, before the boats moved on!

"Who will bring me into the strong city? Who will lead me into Edom? Wilt not *Thou*, O God?"

Chapter VIII[\(TOC\)](#)

O that Thou wouldst Bless me Indeed

1866-1867. AET. 34-35

IT was no time for resting on their oars, however. Under cover of darkness the whole party had entered Hang-chow without causing any excitement, and had taken up their abode in Mr. Kreyer's premises. But the latter was returning shortly, and the question of a home of their own was urgent. Where in the great city, still suffering from the ravages of the Tai-ping Rebellion, they were to find quarters large enough for themselves and the work they hoped to do was indeed a problem. But in this again the Lord had gone before them "to search out a resting-place."

Nothing could have been more suitable, as Mr. Taylor soon discovered, than the very first house to which he was directed. Large and well built, it had been a Mandarin's residence, but was sadly dilapidated now, and a regular rabbit-warren occupied by a number of families. The situation was excellent, in a quiet corner, near the city wall and busy streets. The upper storey offered sleeping accommodation for the whole party, a second staircase making it possible to shut off a separate wing for the young men. This was so manifest an advantage that it decided Mr. Taylor to obtain the premises if possible-the downstairs' rooms being adaptable for guest-halls, chapel and dispensary, printing-press, dining-room, servants' quarters, etc.

Almost with fear and trembling, after hearing the rent demanded, he made an offer which was not accepted. The landlord, perceiving that the matter was urgent, hoped by prolonged negotiations to drive a better bargain. Sunday, however, intervened-putting a stop as far as the missionaries were concerned to business transactions-and to the surprise of the landlord he saw no more of his would-be tenants. But though they had nothing to say to him apparently, they had much to lay before the Lord. The day was given to prayer, and when

on Monday morning his decision was asked it was much more favourable.

"They must have other houses in view," he said to himself. "If I am not careful I shall lose good tenants."

With surprising alacrity, after this, he came to terms, so that by Tuesday evening the necessary documents were signed and sealed. Some of the occupants had already moved out to liberate the upper storey. Five families remained, but there was plenty of room, the landlord urged, for Mr. Taylor's household. Let them only move in, and before long they should have the entire premises. On Wednesday morning accordingly, November 28-the very day Mr. Kreyer was to return-so early that the sleeping city knew nothing of what was happening, the Lammermuir party made their way through the silent streets and entered upon a home of their own after six months of travelling and unsettlement.

"Here then for the present," wrote Miss Blatchley, "Mr. Taylor intends us to remain as quietly and as little seen as possible, the study of the language affording sufficient occupation. By the time any of us are ready for work among the people it will be known that a number of foreigners are living in the city, and that no disturbance or mischief has resulted, and we shall gain access to them, D.V., with less difficulty, exciting less suspicion than could otherwise have been the case. We trust also to find an advantage from coming direct to the capital of the province, as a footing gained here will pave our way, to some extent, in less important places." ^[210]

For already the thought of extension was occupying their minds. So great, indeed, was Mr. Taylor's desire to spread the light, that the very first Sunday in their Hangchow home found him not there at all but away in the neighbouring city of Siao-shan. Messrs. Meadows and Crombie had come over from Ningpo to see if they could be of service, and Mr. Taylor was glad

to avail himself of their help in this evangelistic effort. Two days spent in the neighbouring city, during which they had 'excellent opportunities for preaching the Gospel, so convinced them of its importance as a centre for missionary work that they were thankful to be enabled to rent a small house before leaving, with a view to settling out some of the new arrivals as soon as possible.

"Had not the Lord specially helped us, in answer to special prayer," Mr. Taylor wrote on his return, "we should have failed both in Hang-chow and in Siao-shan, as we had failed in other places previously."

His heart beat high with hope, and it is interesting to notice that he had not been in Hang-chow three weeks before he was informing Mr. Berger about postal and banking communication with the inland provinces.

"You will be glad to learn," he wrote before the middle of December, "that facilities for sending letters by native post and transmitting money through native banks to various points in the interior are very good. I do not think there will be any difficulty in remitting money to any province in the empire which will not be easily overcome. In the same way letters from the most distant places can be sent to the ports. Such communication is slow and may prove rather expensive, but is tolerably sure. Thus we see the way opening before us for work in the interior."

Meanwhile there was no lack of work immediately around him. Happily a spell of milder weather favoured the process of getting their premises somewhat into order. To the uninitiated, the latter looked more like a collection of outhouses and barns, in, deplorable condition, than the handsome residence Mr. Taylor assured them it once had been. In any case, the work of settling-in involved scraping thick dirt from the floors of the

upper rooms—and they were clean compared with the downstairs quarters.

"It is pretty cold weather," Mr. Taylor wrote on returning from Siao-shan (December. 4), "to be living in a house without any ceilings and with very few walls and windows. There is a deficiency in the wall of my own bedroom six feet by nine, closed in with a sheet, so that ventilation is decidedly free. But we heed these things very little. Around us are poor dark heathen large cities without any missionary; populous towns without any missionary; villages without number, all destitute of the means of grace. I do not envy the state of mind that would forget these, or leave them to perish, for fear of a little discomfort. May God make us faithful to Him and to our work."

Well was it that the party were in Chinese dress, for they lived at close quarters for a month or more with the families who shared their rambling abode. Although the house took on by degrees a measure of cleanliness, it had little acquaintance with "foreign" things and ways that could prove disquieting. Knives and forks, together with English crockery and cooking, had been left behind in Shanghai, and the simplest of Chinese furniture was found to meet all requirements. There were the regulation chairs and tables in the guest-hall, for the proper reception of visitors, but for the rest-boards and trestles, wooden benches, and beds consisting of a wooden frame strung with cocoanut fibres sufficed. At meal-times a Chinese company, to all appearances, gathered round the table minus a cloth, set with basins and chopsticks, and the food served was equally familiar to the neighbours who were looking on. Perhaps it was this that disarmed prejudice and made a way for friendly intercourse. There was nothing to be afraid of.

"These people are like ourselves," was the conclusion soon come to. "They eat our rice and wear our dress, and their words we understand."

So from the first one and another began to drop in to Chinese prayers attracted by the singing, and before the new arrivals had been a week in the house one woman was openly interested in the Gospel. Miss Faulding, who had made good progress with the language, was welcomed as a daily visitor in her room and among the other tenants, and the reports, that went out proved reassuring to relatives and friends.

"We have been getting the house a little more comfortable," wrote this bright member of the party (December. 12), "though there is plenty still to lie done. Mr. Taylor and the young men have contrived paper ceilings fixed on wooden frames, which keep out some of the cold air; for the upstairs rooms have roofs such as you find in chapels at home. They also have papered some of the walls or wooden partitions between the rooms. Of course we are as yet in confusion, but we are getting on and I hope shall be settled some day.

"The lodgers are to leave next week; they occupy principally the ground floor.... I am so glad for them to have been here, for many come to Chinese prayers and listen attentively. We could not have visited out of doors just yet ... but I read and talk with these women every day, and they seem to like it. One woman I have great hope of. She has given up burning incense, and says that since we came she has begun to pray to God. They are all employed in making imitation money out of silver paper, to be burnt for the use of dead relatives—a great trade here. While I am reading to them, they often take out their pipes and have a few whiffs, almost choking me with smoke. Of course I don't say anything, for every woman seems to smoke. They ask plenty of questions about ourselves, and sometimes such things as, 'Where must we go to worship God?' ... Yesterday we had a congregation of ten neighbours gathered in by the woman who is so interested, besides our lodgers and servants."

Thus the good work began, and before Christmas we read of attentive audiences of fifty or sixty at the Sunday services.

"You would be amused at many things we see," Miss Faulding wrote again in February: "a man nursing an immense dog all through the service; a woman mending a large man's shoe; and another, close by me, giving me a lesson in the approved style of dressing children's hair, using her thin fingers as a comb. She evidently thought she could do two things at a time, for she certainly listened to what was being said."

With what interest the young missionaries watched these developments, and how fervently in their noon prayer meetings they sought the life-giving touch of the Holy Spirit for one and another who seemed impressive! Among these a soldier, for example, reading for the first time a Gospel and a copy of the book of Acts, gave cause for encouragement.

"What a difference there was," he remarked, "between Judas and Paul I the one a disciple who betrayed his Master; the other a persecutor who became the most devoted of His followers."

A Buddhist priest, too, hearing Mr. Taylor preach at a street-corner, rejoiced the evangelist, Tsiu, by coming daily with intelligent questions. A third, who dropped in out of curiosity and was welcomed by one of the young men, was so touched by the kindly spirit behind the poor attempt at Chinese that he came again, and soon joined the little group who every morning were to be found in the guest-hall, reading the Scriptures.

"I was going into the city the other day," wrote Mr. Sell as early as the 1st of January, "when a man called out: 'I am coming to worship the true God to-morrow,' referring to our Sunday services. Thus, you see, we are already known and our work talked about."

As the house began to take on a more habitable appearance, two texts in Chinese found a place on the walls of the dining-room:

"I must work the works of Him that sent me."

"Even Christ pleased not Himself."

That "**must**" was very, real to the missionary household. It was work, real earnest, self-sacrificing work, that filled the busy days, crowding chapel and guest-hall with friendly hearers.

With the Chinese New Year, early in February (1867), came golden opportunities. A dispensary had by that time been opened, precursor of all the medical work for which Hang-chow has become famous. With much else upon his hands, it was not easy, for Mr. Taylor to attend to scores of patients daily, but there was no other doctor nearer than Ningpo or Shanghai, and his heart went out to the people in their sufferings. From far and near the patients came with every variety of complaint both of body and soul; and when holiday-makers were added at the New Year season, the doctor and his helpers were overwhelmed with, guests.

"How I should have liked some of our home-friends to have been with us to-day," Miss Faulding wrote at this time. ^[211]
"We have had such good services (Sunday); at least two hundred present, sitting as quietly as an English audience, and having the Truth so forcibly put before them. Many this afternoon were shut out for want of room. I think we shall soon have to enlarge our borders. One woman who had heard of us from her neighbours came three miles to the service. Some tell us that they have given up burning incense to their idols; and several, both men and women, say they believe, and are asking for baptism. The medical side of the work is invaluable. I cannot tell you what a thrill of joy one constantly feels at the sight of so many heathen listening to the Gospel.

Mr. Taylor's illustrations in preaching are so good and varied, and his words seem to come with a power that would be astonishing did one not know how many are praying that God's blessing may rest upon our work."

Mr. Taylor has over two hundred patients daily," she continued a fortnight later (March 16). "People bring their wares and stay near our door, in the hope of getting more custom from, the numbers that gather here than they could elsewhere. Sedanchairs with their bearers are generally waiting, to carry those who cannot walk. The evangelist spends most of his time talking to the patients, and Mr. Taylor generally gives a short address. We have some most hopeful inquirers."

When reinforcements arrived from England (February 23), the first sent out after the sailing of the Lammermuir, Mr. Taylor was too busy to see anything of them until some hours later He was standing on a table at the time, preaching to a crowd of patients in the courtyard, and could only call out a hearty welcome as the party entered, escorted by Mr. Meadows. The new arrivals were more than satisfied with this state of affairs, however, and it was not long before John McCarthy was at Mr. Taylor's side, soon to become his principal helper in the medical work. Those were days in which, amid external hardships, his fellow-workers had at any rate the privilege of close and constant association with the leader who embodied to so remarkable a degree their ideals of missionary service.^[212]

"If only Mr. Taylor could be in three or four places at the same time it would be a decided advantage," Miss Faulding continued in May. He is wanting to visit the governing cities of this province, to look out the most eligible places for stations he and, Mr. Duncan have been on the point of starting several times. Then there is Ningpo where he is needed, and here he is overwhelmed with work. He wants to go to Shao-hing too (Mr.

Stevenson's stations) that he may give further help with the colloquial dialect, there is hardly any knowing what his movements may be; yet he goes on so quietly and calmly always just leaning upon God and living for others-that it is a blessing merely to witness his life."

All this, needless to say, was a great joy to Mr. Berger and the friends at home. That within six months of their arrival the **Lammermuir** party should not only be settled in the interior, but that they should be cheered with so much of blessing in their rapidly growing work, was a wonderful answer to the prayers that had been going up on their behalf. No less strenuous than their own was the life Mr. and Mrs. Berger were living in the service of the Mission Already advanced in years, it was not easy for them to turn their quiet home into a Mission-centre, using as offices both dining-room and study; to encumber the billiard-room with packing-cases; to receive at their table candidates for China and friends of the missionaries; to direct wrappers, and send out with their own hands the Occasional Paper; to attend to a large correspondence, keep accounts, transmit money, arrange for the outgoing of new workers, help with their preparations, fit up their cabins, see them off from any port at any hour of the day or night, and correspond with those already on the field. Yet all this they did with the loving interest of a father's and mother's heart. When it became necessary they went further, and adapted a cottage on their grounds for the young men candidates and another for a tutor who gave secretarial help.

"Mr. Aveline and I seldom' get more than half an hour's exercise a day, which is insufficient for health," Mr. Berger wrote in February 1867. "Still we are very happy and rejoice in the work."

How he could find time amid the claims of business as well as these self-imposed tasks to write regularly and freely to Mr. Taylor as he did is a

marvel. He seems never to have missed a mail. A whole volume of his letters—thin foreign paper stitched into a leather binding—has been preserved, covering a period of about two years from the sailing of the *Lammermuir*. Reflecting the sympathy and eager interest with which mail after mail was received, this correspondence deals with varied questions, from important spiritual principles to details concerning individual workers. Penned in joy and sorrow, as the tidings from China were cheering or otherwise, these letters breathe a faith and love that were unchanging, and form a veritable storehouse of wisdom, helpfulness, and encouragement.

For all was not, invariably, as Mr. Berger could have wished, and there were hours of painful exercise of mind at Saint Hill as well as in Hang-chow. Even on the voyage out, as we have seen, Mr. Taylor had had cause to regret the spirit of certain members of the party, and as time went on their presence became an increasing difficulty. Among the letters, most of which brought only joy to the home-circle, were others of a very different nature. Complaints and criticism awakened Mr. Berger's concern, and plainly revealed an attitude on the part of some that threatened the harmony and indeed the very existence of the Mission. It was only one or two at first, who were not prepared to go all lengths in wearing native dress and adapting themselves to their surroundings in accordance with the principles of the Mission. But their disaffection went so far as to permit of their carrying exaggerated reports to outsiders, one of whom, with the best intentions, took them up seriously and considered them sufficient ground for strenuous opposition to the work. So prejudiced was he, indeed, by what he heard against Mr. Taylor, that he would not inquire from him, or the members of the Mission who felt with him, as to the charges made. Without letting them even know of the course he was taking, this influential missionary wrote the strongest accusations to Mr. Berger and others, attacking not only the

methods of the C.I.M. but Mr. Taylor's fitness for the position he occupied. Having heard nothing of the other side, these painful letters came as a bolt out of the blue to the friends at Saint Hill. Never suspecting that the disaffected members of the Mission were writing home in a bitter spirit, far less that they had stirred up a comparative stranger to do so, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were saying nothing to the disparagement of any fellow-worker. They were seeking by prayer and patience to remove difficulties and conquer opposition, determined that none should be prejudiced in Mr. Berger's eyes by any word from them, as long as there was the least hope of improvement. But the restraint was costing them dear in more ways than one. As early as February (1867) Mrs. Taylor had longed to pour out her heart to her beloved friend Mrs. Berger, but refrained in accordance with Mr. Taylor's judgement.

"We yesterday received your loving letters written on the arrival of our first mail from China," she wrote on the second of that month. "They are so sweet to us; and at a time like this, when Satan seems desiring to have us that he may sift us as wheat, they are peculiarly helpful.

"Oh, if you were here, how your hearts would grieve I But we must not be surprised, must we, at troubles and offences coming, and severe sorrow too? This work was not undertaken with the expectation that it would be free from difficulties. And our God Who has hitherto helped us and has brought us thus far, Who was with us in the typhoon and delivered us from the jaws of death, will surely be with our Mission in the storm, delivering it too from shipwreck.

"But you will be anxious to know what the present sorrow is. In my last letter I mentioned that Mr. and Mrs. had gone to Siao-shan, and that Mr. Williamson was there to help make their house comfortable—

"I had written to the middle of the last sentence when my dear husband desired me not to enter into details by this mail. He intends, I believe, writing to Mr. Berger and showing the letter to the persons concerned, so as to give an opportunity for explanation on the other side. So, though it does seem hard to be unable to tell you all about this heavy burden, I must obey the injunction, 'Wives, submit yourselves.' This I think I may mention-we are for the present driven out of Siao-shan."

In defiance of Mr. Taylor's wishes the missionaries in question had gone back to English dress, to the serious detriment of their interests in that inland city. The Mandarin, who had left them in peace before, then determined upon their ejection. With his soldiers and underlings he had come upon them suddenly on the evening of January the 28th, and had ordered them to leave the city before morning. To put them in fear he seized the evangelist, Tsiu, whom at great sacrifice Mr. Taylor had spared from Hang-chow, and had him cruelly beaten-six hundred stripes on the back with rods, and a hundred more on the face with a strip of leather. Sorely bruised and shaken, there was nothing for it but for Tsiu to make his way as, best he could to the capital and he was quickly followed by the rest of the party, who had to be accommodated in Hang-chow while the matter was being adjusted.

Those were months of extreme trial to all the household at ***Sin-kai-long***. Mr. Taylor was overwhelmingly busy with medical work and the throngs of holiday-makers brought by the New Year season. In a reasonable and patient spirit he sought to draw the ejected missionaries into all that was going on, and to conquer causes of difficulty. With another influence was at work; and instead of responding to his efforts, they kept apart, openly wearing English dress, refusing to come to the meetings, and seeking to foment opposition to Mr. Taylor's authority and arrangements. In this, unhappily, they were encouraged by the afore-mentioned missionary, who was just leaving for

furlough. Believing their reports to be true, he felt it his duty not only to write as we have seen, but personally to discredit the new methods of the C.I.M among its supporters.

When one remembers the circumstances, it is easy to see that there may have been, in the practical. working of the Mission, some cause for complaint. At thirty-four years of age there still remains much to learn, and Mr. Taylor's fellow-workers were all younger than himself. "The man who never makes a mistake," as Mr. Spurgeon said, "never makes anything"; and they were striking out, it will be borne in mind, on a new and confessedly difficult line of things. But oh, how true and deep the longing that filled their hearts to walk before God and be well-pleasing to Him! If only the older missionary could have known all, and used' his experience to safeguard where he apprehended danger, how different the result might have been! As it was, he came very near accomplishing his avowed object, which was nothing less than to put a stop to the entire work.

Under these painful circumstances, Mr. Berger was wonderfully helped, although his letters of that spring and summer show the distress through which he was passing. Taking the course of true friendship, he wrote freely to Mr. Taylor, sending him copies. of the correspondence.

"My earnest prayer to God," he said with the first detailed accusations, "is that you may not be further moved by the letter than the Lord would have you be; and may He give the right spirit and the wisdom that will enable us both to do that which will please Him.

"The difficulties at home are neither few nor slight, but yours are truly mountainous. You need our every sympathy and prayer; and be sure, my dear Brother, whatever Mr. may have penned, you hold the same place in our hearts as before. That

God will supply you and me with increasing wisdom and ability for the work to which He has called us, we need neither fear nor doubt. All that is required on our part is to lay aside everything we discover to be either faulty or erroneous, and constantly to be adding to our stock of both wisdom and love. Oh yes I we will commit this matter to the Lord Who knows that we did our best. He is very pitiful, and will never leave nor forsake us in this our time of trial."

How serious the trial was to be, and how long continued, the writer could not realise at the time.

"Were we not sure," he wrote on May 8, "that God has given us this work to do, I fear we should be disposed to question whether it was right to continue it; but as it has not been entered upon without counting the cost and feeling sure of our calling, we are enabled to cry to the Lord for the needed help in this time of deep trial: and if we feel this, you must feel both the sorrows and the assurance of God's calling in tenfold force.

"Let us then strengthen our hands in God, by examining ourselves solemnly before Him to ascertain where we are failing, or have failed, when we shall be better fitted to determine where those linked with us have also failed. The Lord graciously enable us to do this in very truth.

"I am in receipt of two letters from ... May God enable you, my dear Brother, to keep in very close and holy fellowship with Jesus, so that your loving manner may melt them and eventually restore confidence. As you have not stated in what they have gone astray, I feel I cannot enter into details. ... Whatever you decide upon, I am sure you will act only after much quiet prayer, and I shall not feel hurt in any degree though you may not see with me or be able to carry out your own wishes...."

"I have written under very great pressure of various kinds, and beg you will forgive me if I have in any way expressed myself in an unlovely spirit. You know the deep and true affection I have for you and your dear wife, and it will, I trust, never be disturbed."

So courteous in every word and thought! in the long series of his letters there is not one deviation from this humble, Christlike spirit. And in spite of all that he himself was going through, he was steadfastly encouraging.

May 19: That you may be enabled to cast upon God the terrible trial resulting from Mr—'s conduct, and from those acting with him, I earnestly pray. Let us not fear, dear Brother, anything but our own failings; and these may we ever be discovering, confessing, and putting away. I quite expect God will appear for us in the right time.

Occasional Paper number eight will contain the cash account for twelve months, and judging from the contributions in the year (£2800, of which I have contributed little more than £100) I think we ought to give unfeigned thanks, take courage, and go forward, though with great caution and prayerfulness of spirit.

May 21: My hope and confidence are in God, and I seek to roll the burden of all upon Him. You and I have our lessons to learn; and if we will learn them, I doubt not God will still further use us in His service.

It seems to me, dear Brother, we must enlarge our field of vision in regard to this work; that you must not undertake so much of the detail, but a more enlarged oversight; that you must not have so many immediately depending upon you.... Oh what need for wisdom in every step of this work! ...

I have now £1700 in hand, and would gladly put £1000 to the Mission if we can employ it wisely. I wish to continue aiding

the work. SO I think you must pray about how we had best proceed. I merely make suggestions, and you will canvass them with your dear wife and any others whose judgment you value.

June 7: As regards your headship in China, I consider it is beyond being questioned, and that you must not allow the thought of appealing to me on the part of any; and I would advise you to act, as I am sure you would, calmly, lovingly, but firmly and unflinchingly for the Lord, in all cases where immediate action is needed. I think you will see that I must act in the same way in England, respecting candidates for China.

I am exceedingly rejoiced to notice that with the exception of none have sympathy with Mr. and his doings.... The Lord will bring all these things to a calm in due time, I quite think. He will teach you the best method to adopt, and us at home. May we only be careful to be found in a teachable spirit.

August 5: 'I' do trust the many tokens from our Father's hand, though so afflictive, are effecting in us a more quiet and chastened spirit, leading us to dwell more "in the secret place of the most High." I think I can truly say, "None of these things move me." I am happier than ever, and more sure that the work we have set our hands to is indeed the Lord's work. May we therefore expect it to prosper.

August 24: It is not our mistakes but our refusing to correct them when discovered that will prove baneful: of course it would be better not to make mistakes. We have much to learn in order to carry on this work to the glory of God.

It is to be regretted that Mr. Taylor's part in this correspondence has not been preserved, but the spirit in which both he and Mrs. Taylor met these trials may be judged from letters written by the latter to Mrs. Berger, many of which remain. From the quiet of her room early in February she wrote-a little

daughter five days old lying beside her:

I have been listening to my beloved husband and others playing and singing in the chapel some of our favourite hymns. One in particular, "Oh for the robes of whiteness, Oh for the tearless eye," seemed to take me away in thought to happy Saint Hill, and I was almost tempted to wish myself back in that home of rest and love. But it is not for the soldier on the battlefield., however sorely pressed or wounded, to wish himself back in safety and ease. And then, it was sweet to look forward to:

The no-more weeping, within that land of love;

*The endless joy of keeping the bridal feast
above.*

Oh, beloved Sister! if the Lord will only work by us, and set His seal upon our efforts, we will endeavour to rejoice in tribulation.

"Do pray for us very much," she continued a few weeks later (March 19), "for we do so need God's preserving grace at the present time. We have come to fight Satan in his very strongholds, and he will not let us alone. What folly were ours, were we here in our own strength! But greater is He that is for us than all that are against us. One is sometimes tempted to feel overwhelmed with the sense of Satan's power here; but our God will not fail nor forsake us. I should be very sorry to see discord sown among the sisters of our party, and this is one of the evils I am fearing now. ..."

"What turn Mr. matters will take I cannot think. One thing I know, 'the Hope of Israel' will not forsake us. One is almost tempted to ask, 'Why was permitted to come out?' 'Perhaps it was that our Mission might be thoroughly established on right bases early in its history."

April 15: God can in His all-wise providence utterly frustrate the designs of our great adversary to bring us and our work into disrepute. I feel encouraged, too, by looking back on our own experience in many sad months of the year before our marriage. It was a marvel that my mind even was not poisoned against my dear husband; and we could have no communication with one another, so as to hear the other side. ^[213] Yet God mercifully kept us from being influenced by the aspersions; and the remembrance of His past dealings must reassure us now.

*He cannot have taught us to trust in His Name,
And thus far have brought us, to put us to
shame.*

And all the while souls were being saved, and the prayer answered with which the **Lammermuir** party had entered the New Year: "O that Thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that Thine hand might be with me, and that Thou wouldest keep me from evil that it may not grieve me."^[214] Before the end of March there were twelve candidates for baptism, "a little, green oasis," as Miss Blatchley wrote, "amid the clouding of manifold troubles." The weekly Enquirers' Meeting had to be begun that month, in spite of a wave of popular excitement which resulted in serious danger and persecution, and many of the converts gave evidence of a real change of heart.^[215] In May came the first baptisms, amid the joy of which Mrs. Taylor wrote to the friends at Saint Hill:

*Perhaps our dear Lord sees that we need sorrows to keep us
from being elated at the rich blessing He is giving in our work.*

For at the same time the unhappy spirit of the Siao-shan party seemed only to increase, and Mr. Berger's difficulties at home had reached a climax. These

complications greatly hindered Mr. Taylor in taking the, pioneering journeys necessary if younger workers were to be planted out. All around them, even in that coast-board province, were millions upon millions to whom "no tidings came" of the one, the only Saviour. To these in their sin and need His heart went out, moving those other hearts of the little missionary community with His own constraining love. No fewer than **sixty cities** in that one province were still without preachers of the Gospel, native or foreign, nine of these being capitals of prefectures, or Fu cities from which the rest were governed. To open stations of the Mission in these centres was a purpose Mr. Taylor was prayerfully considering. In a journey round the Ningpo district he had taken counsel with his more experienced fellow-workers, finding Mr. Meadows and Mr. Stott ready to move on to places as yet unreached. Two important Fu cities in the east and south—Tai-chow and Wen-chow—were now allocated to them, Mr. Jackson of the Lammermuir party volunteering to accompany Mr. Meadows. This left the north and west more particularly to the Hang-chow workers, several of whom were anxious to get out alone among the people, so as to make more progress with the language.

Freeing himself, therefore, with no little difficulty from headquarters, Mr. Taylor turned his face northward at the end of April, with Duncan, the stalwart Highlander, as a companion. Years before he had had some memorable experiences in the region of the Great Lake, when evangelising with the Rev. William Burns. Little or no progress had been made in that turbulent district since then, and it was with thankfulness the travellers found, even in the Fu city of Hu-chow, an open door for the Gospel. Mr. Taylor was not able to remain long, but so much was he impressed with the importance of this centre that he almost decided, a few months later, to make it his own headquarters. Meanwhile it was visited from time to time by his fellow-workers, one earnest convert giving them great joy, and becoming on his own

account a real soul-winner.

Into the broad estuary of the Hang-chow river flows the beautiful Tsien-tang from the mountains in the west of the province. To this district Mr. Taylor next turned his attention, when the temporary closing of the dispensary in June afforded him respite from medical claims. Duncan, who was developing gifts as a pioneer, was again his companion, and Mr. McCarthy, the evangelist Tsiu, and a couple of Hang-chow Christians made up the party.

Picture then the flat-bottomed boat with its arched roof of matting in which they took their place among other passengers. It was a cheerful scene—for there was little sleeping, although they did not set out till after dark. The magnificent river, three miles wide, was flooded with moonlight, and a strong favourable wind kept away mosquitoes. Under the bamboo-matting the travellers were lying about in the flicker of little lamps, some eating, some smoking, almost all chatting, the foreigners in Chinese dress being the main subject of conversation. Toward morning, after the approved ablutions in hot water, Mr. Taylor and his companions had prayers together at the front of the boat, the music of "There is a Happy Land" floating out over the water. Having asked the blessing of God, a passage from the Bible was read and explained, their fellow-travellers listening with attention.

Changing into a smaller boat farther up the river, they found themselves crowded in with a strange assortment of passengers, "I had often heard of lying 'heads and tails,'" wrote Mr. McCarthy, who was having his first experience of things purely Chinese, "but now we had to practise it!" Next to Mr. Duncan was an unhappy prisoner with chains around his legs, sentenced to banishment from his own province for murder. Opposite were a couple of opium-smokers with their lighted lamps. Farther on, packed very closely, were five or six Mandarins' runners, a few soldiers, and other people

occupying the remaining space.

Rolling up their bedding in the morning, the missionaries again had a brief service, Mr. Taylor speaking from the fifth of Matthew. This opened the way for conversation with one and another as they slowly tracked on all day. Here and there picturesque temples and pagodas stood out against the ever-changing background of magnificent hills. Towns and villages told of a dense population, and every opportunity was taken of preaching in the streets and teashops when the boat came to a standstill. Provisions had to be purchased as they went, and Mr. McCarthy retained a lively recollection of Duncan's tall figure in a white summer gown, his shaven head with its platted *queue* protected by a huge straw hat lined with blue calico, in one hand a palmleaf fan, and in the other a live chicken carried by the legs.

At Yen-chow, a Fu city a hundred miles above Hangchow, a stay of several days was made, and there Mr. McCarthy remained with one of their Chinese helpers, while Mr. Taylor and the others went on. Still farther up the river, they left their boat at a busy suburb of Lan-chi, where Mr. Duncan hoped to stay for a time. A Ningpo man in a tea-shop, hearing them speak his own dialect, was attracted and helped to find a lodging. A teacher also was given in answer to prayer, and in their large upstairs rooms the missionaries were kept busy with visitors.

"I left Duncan in what we consider comfortable lodgings for travellers," Mr. Taylor wrote on his return journey: "a roof over his head, more or less leaky of course, but still a roof; a floor under his feet, and not a floor only but rich accumulations of well-trodden dirt, which could only be partially removed by considerable exertion. Having a shutter at one end of the room, if no window, it would be ungrateful to complain of the absence of both door and window-shutter at the other end-the more so as in event of rain beating in beyond

endurance it is easy to nail up a few pieces of matting which lie ready to hand, awaiting such an emergency."

The meagre furnishing of the room, consisting of little but boards and bamboo trestles, had tempted Duncan to the "lavish expenditure of sixpence" for the purchase of a chair, with which, and his travelling rug, pillow, and mosquito netting, he felt well set up.

In a letter to his mother on this journey Mr. Taylor referred to the boards of a boat as harder to lie on than they once were, though he could still pass a night very contentedly if not very comfortably on such a bed. He tells of getting up before daylight wakened the other passengers, for quiet waiting upon God, and of the joy of pouring out his heart for every member of the Mission as the sun rose over the summer land. He gives a little picture too of travelling on after dark, another boat lashed to their own for company, and all the passengers gathered together to hear the message of Redeeming Love.

"I preached to them till I was tired," he wrote, "and I supposed they would be too. After a short prayer, I concluded, but no one moved to go away; they seemed to want to hear more. So I began again and talked for a long time, and again stopped. Still no one moved. A few leading questions were asked, and once more I spoke to them at great length. At last, wearied out, it was I who, after urging on them the immediate importance of turning to Christ, had to remind them of the lateness of the hour and suggest that it was time to retire."

These were the important things, the things that mattered; and "to realise more steadily," as he expressed it in this letter, "the fulness we possess in Jesus." Trials he expected and did not shrink from, if they might but work out the deeper purposes of God.

*"More than a year has elapsed," he had written to Mr. Berger (May 30), "since we parted on the deck of the **Lammermuir**,*

but both you and I can still say—of the past, 'Ebenezer,' of the present, 'Jehovah-nissi,' and of the future, 'Jehovahjireh,' thanks be to His grace! Burdens such as I 'never before sustained, responsibilities such as I had not hitherto incurred, and sorrows compared with which all my past sorrows were light have been part of my experience. But I trust I have, in some feeble measure, learned more of the blessed truth that

Sufficient in His arm alone,

And our defence is sure.

"I have long felt that our mission his a baptism to be baptized with. It may not be past yet. It may be heavier than we can foresee. But if, by grace, we are kept faithful, in the end all will be well."

Chapter IX[\(TOC\)](#)

And Enlarge my Coast

1867-1868. AET. 35-36

LITTLE reference has hitherto been made to an element that entered largely into Mr. Taylor's experience; he was the tenderest of fathers. His children meant more to him than is usually the case with a very busy man, and his delight in them from their infancy was second only to his sense of responsibility for their training. It had cost him much to bring them to China; and journeys that involved an absence from home of weeks at a time, with no means of communication save by special messenger, were a real test both to him and to those left behind.

"It is an easy thing to sing, 'I all on earth forsake,' "he wrote to his mother on the first of these occasions (January 1867)."
*It is not very difficult to think, and honestly though ignorantly say, 'I give up **all** to Thee and for Thee.'* But God sometimes teaches one that that little word 'all' is terribly comprehensive. Thank God He has left me much, very much; and above all, He never leaves us."

A tiny sheet of pink notepaper with a flower painted in one corner followed Mr. Taylor on this journey. The single word "Papa" in large round hand on the envelope showed from whom it came, but the worn travel-stained condition of the little missive, as one handles it now, is more eloquent than the loving words:

Dear Papa, I hope God has helped you to do what you wanted, and that you will soon come back. I have a nice bead-mat for you when you come home ... dear, **dear** Papa.

Carried in her father's pocket-book for many a long year, Gracie's little letter, probably the first she ever wrote, tells of the hard life he led no less than of his tender love for her. She was the eldest of his flock, the precious link with

early years when he had first met, loved, and married her mother in Ningpo. Three sons had been given them in England, followed by the baby sister, whose arrival brought special joy to Gracie's heart. But though all were equally dear to their parents, there was about the little maiden of eight years old a peculiar charm. On the Lammermuir, the wonderful change in some of the sailors when they came to know and love the Lord. Jesus had so impressed her, that she too gave her heart to the Saviour as never before. Her deeply spiritual nature had developed like a flower in the sunshine, under the consciousness of His love, so that toward the end of this first summer in Hang-chow her father could write to the grandparents:

I do wish you had seen her lately. Since her conversion she had become quite another child. Her look was more soft, more sweet, more happy.

That first summer was intensely hot, and when the thermometer stood at 103 indoors it seemed time to seek relief. The children were all suffering, and Mrs. Taylor was so ill that it was with difficulty she could be got out of the city. A boat trip of six miles brought them to the hills, where amid the ruins of a once famous temple accommodation had been found. A' couple of sheds, or long narrow buildings, were still habitable, in addition to the hall that held idols, and in the former-the priests being willing to turn an honest penny-the Hang-chow party established themselves. The hills were lovely, though the glory of azaleas, wistaria, and other spring flowers had passed away. Pines, oaks, and elms afforded welcome shade, while mountain streams made music, and as far as eye could see there was one unbroken sweep of higher or lower ranges, canals, and rivers, with the Hang-chow Bay and the open sea beyond. It would have been a paradise as compared with the city, but for the illness of several of the party, and the sorrowful sights and sounds of idol worship close at hand.

As they left their boats the first day and were going up the steep stone path made for pilgrims, little Gracie noticed a man making an idol.

"Oh, papa," she said earnestly, "he doesn't know about Jesus, or he would never do it! Won't you tell him?"

Her hand clasped in his, Mr. Taylor did so, the child following with eager interest. Farther on they came to a shady place and sat down to rest. Gracie's thoughts were still full of what had happened, and she seemed relieved when her father suggested that they should pray for the man they had been trying to help.

"We sang a hymn," he recalled when every memory of her was precious, "and then I said, 'Will you pray first?' She did so, and never had I heard such a prayer. She had seen the man making an idol: her heart was full, and she was talking to God on his behalf. The dear child went on and on, pleading that God would have mercy upon the poor Chinese and would strengthen her father to preach to them. I never was so moved by any prayer. My heart was bowed before God. Words fail me to describe it."

And now, a week later, how dark the shadow that had fallen on that father's heart!

"Beloved brother," he wrote to Mr. Berger on the 15th of August, "I know not how to write or how to refrain. I seem to be writing, almost, from the inner chamber of the King of kings. Surely this is holy ground. I am trying to pen a few lines by the couch on which my darling little Gracie lies dying. Her complaint is hydrocephalus. Dear brother, our flesh and our heart fail, but God is the strength of our heart and our portion for ever."

"It was no vain nor unintelligent act when, knowing this land,

its people and climate, I laid my wife and children, with myself, on the altar for this service. And He Whom so unworthily, with much of weakness and failure, yet in simplicity and godly sincerity, we are and have been seeking to serve, and not without some measure of success-He has not left us now."

"Who plucked this flower?" said the gardener.

"The Master," answered his fellow-workman. And the gardener held his peace.

It was not that there was any questioning of the dealings of God with them or their precious child. But the loss was so great, so overwhelming!

"Except when diverted from it by the duties and necessities of our position," he wrote to his mother in September, "our torn hearts will revert to the one subject, and I know not how to write to you of any other. Our dear little Gracie! How we miss her sweet voice in the morning, one of the first sounds to greet us when we woke-and through the day and at eventide! As I take the walks I used to take with her tripping at my side, the thought comes anew like a throb of agony, 'Is it possible that I shall never more feel the pressure of that little hand, never more hear the sweet prattle of those dear lips, never more see the sparkle of those bright eyes? 'And yet she is not lost. I would not have her back again. I am thankful she was taken, rather than any of the others, though she was the sunshine of our lives.... But she is far holier, far happier than she could ever have been here.

"I think I never saw anything so perfect, so beautiful, as the remains of that dear child. The long, silken eyelashes under the finely arched brows; the nose, so delicately chiselled; the mouth, small and sweetly expressive; the purity of the white' features; the quiet composure of the countenance-all are

deeply impressed on heart and memory. Then her sweet little Chinese jacket, and the little hands folded on her bosom, holding a single flower-oh, it was passing fair I and so hard to close for ever from our sight. [216]

"Pray for us. At times I seem almost overwhelmed with the internal and external trials connected with our work. But He has said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,' and 'My strength is made perfect in weakness.' So be it."

"He makes no mistakes!" was the unshaken conviction of these hearts; and it was with thankfulness they saw, as their bereavement became known, the chastening effect it was having upon others besides themselves. Tidings of the goodness of God in this respect were no little cheer to Mr. and Mrs. Berger amid their difficulties at home.

"HE is keeping Satan altogether under just now," Miss Blatchley was able to write in October, "and I am sure will never let him work against us so as to prevail. How devoutly grateful we ought to feel for the state of things in the Mission now as compared with a few months ago-when our lute seemed too full of rifts for harmony ever to come back again."

In His own way, as they prayed and trusted, God was bringing it back. In His own way, too, He was leading to fresh developments.

For, meanwhile, the great, waiting land, in all its need and darkness, was not forgotten. Difficulties had been more and trials heavier than had been anticipated, but even as Mr. and Mrs. Taylor gave back the little one they so tenderly loved to Him Whose loan she had been, they consecrated themselves afresh to the task of reaching inland China with the Gospel. At the bedside of their dying child in the temple, Duncan, the steadfast Highlander, Mr. Taylor's chief companion on pioneering journeys, had been keeping watch. Nanking was upon his heart—the famous city twice capital of China, with its

ancient wall twenty miles in circumference, and its large population still without any witness for Christ. Duncan was not specially gifted or cultured, but he possessed grit and perseverance and a great love for souls. He it was who had toiled at Chinese with the man at the wash-tub while waiting a better teacher, sitting beside him for hours, repeating sentences as he said them or verses that he read from the Gospels, and winning him to Christ at length by his very earnestness in seeking to make the Saviour known.^[217] It was something of a risk, no doubt, to let Duncan go forward in such an undertaking. But he could be spared; he was a man who, his resolution once formed, never wavered; and the burden of those souls was on his heart.

The early autumn, therefore, saw this solitary pioneer on his way northward, a letter written the day before he reached his destination giving some impression of the spirit he brought to bear upon his task.

September. 17, 1867: On Sunday we had a good deal of rain, and I could not get into the city (Chin-kiang). I had a fine quiet day, did a good deal of reading, and had time for meditation on the Word and the matchless grace of the Lord Jesus. Oh, to be always in a humble, devout, and consecrated spirit, drawing richly from the fountain of infinite grace, being filled with the fulness of "Him that filleth all in all, continually realising that Christ is made unto us "wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption," and that we are "complete in Him." I feel I want this so much I I have often to say with the Psalmist, "Thou did'st hide Thy face, I was troubled." Nothing can ever substitute for the presence of Christ. "Whatever else may be denied, Thy presence, Lord, be given." I am sure a real Christian cannot be but miserable without it. Other helpers soon fail, apart from Him, and comforts flee. All our springs are in Him. He must be all in all, the paramount object of our soul's affection, or we cannot be happy ourselves or make others happy around us. Oh that I

might be satisfied, filled with His fulness! The ambitious man may take the honours of the world, so I may but have Christ. He shall be enough for my soul! To hear Him say "I am thy salvation" is more to us than anything the world can give.

Needless to say, the young missionary received no welcome at Nanking. Up and down its long streets he and his Chinese helper searched in vain for any lodging that would take them in. Immediately on hearing of a foreigner's arrival, word had been sent from the Prefect to every hostelry that they were on no account to receive him, and as night fell the outlook was far from cheering. Apparently, however, the priest in charge of the Drum Tower had not been included among possible hosts, and when the weary strangers sought his aid he was not unwilling to render it. He had no proper room, he said, for visitors, but if they liked to sleep in the Drum Tower at night and be out all day, so as not to frighten people who came to worship, he would share with them his accommodation.

It was a miserable place! Few, very few Europeans, would have thought it possible to live there at all.

But "we gladly accepted it," wrote Duncan, "and managed very nicely,, though we have rather more rats than I like. At night they want to devour everything!"

Between the depredations of these marauders and the solemn sound of the drum, beaten at intervals, it was not possible to get much sleep, and at day-dawn they had to roll up their bedding and turn out on the streets of the city. The tall figure of the missionary soon became familiar in the tea-shops and frequented thoroughfares, and the neighbourhood of the Drum Tower must have known him well before he succeeded in finding another residence. A carpenter at last had courage to receive him, dividing off a strip of his single upstairs' room for the use of the foreigner. On the other side of the matting

lived the Chinese family, while below was the shop and kitchen, so that the new arrivals had every opportunity for picking up colloquial conversation. After a time Duncan persuaded his landlord to share with him the lower room as well. A slight partition was put up, giving the missionary a long but very narrow street chapel, the first ever opened in Nanking; and there he sat, like Judson in his zayat, receiving and conversing with all who would turn in.

"I am not able to talk much," he wrote, "but God helping me, I will say what I can, and T'ien-fuh (the Chinese evangelist) makes them understand. Oh, to make everything conduce to the gathering in of precious souls and the glory of our Master!"

Thus was commenced permanent missionary work in the great city that is now one of the strongest centres of the Christian Church in China. Duncan may not have been able to do much; but he held the fort with quiet courage, and one soul at any rate was saved in that first street chapel. "This self-denying work was not in vain. One man who first heard him there became interested, convinced, converted. After due probation he was baptized; and being early removed, left his dying as well as living testimony to the grace of Him Who is mighty to save." See *China's Millions* for September 1875, article by J. Hudson Taylor. A remarkable answer to prayer, also, was given which it is good to recall.

Soon after his arrival in Nanking Duncan had inquired about banks through which money could be remitted to him, and had sent Mr. Taylor the names of two that had representatives in Hang-chow. But one of these had failed, it appeared, while the other had left the city. This information was communicated to Duncan as soon as possible, and he set about seeking other agencies, but without success for a time. The situation did not disquiet him. He was sure that the Master Who had sent him there, and was giving him

acceptance with the people, would not fail in some way or other to provide. Still, his last piece of silver had to be changed; the strings of cash disappeared one by one; and the cook who was really anxious came and said:

"What shall we do when the money is all gone?"

"Do?" was Duncan's quiet reply; "we will 'trust in the Lord and do good'; so shall we 'dwell in the land,' and verily we shall be fed."

To go back to Hang-chow himself would have been possible; but Duncan well knew that if once he left the city it would be ten times more difficult to get in again. His hardly won position was too precious to be endangered. So he wrote that he would trust in God and hold on.

Matters were in this position when, to Mr. Taylor's relief, Rudland arrived unexpectedly, ready for any service. He was more than willing to carry supplies to Nanking, and set off at once by boat for the ten or twelve days' journey. Wind and weather, the condition of embankments and the temper of the boat-people all seemed favourable, until he came to a place where the water was so low in the Canal that they could go no farther. Repairs were needed somewhere, and would be put through in time. Meanwhile the Foreign teacher must make up his 'mind to wait!

But this was just what Rudland could not do. So far he had been wonderfully prospered in answer to prayer, and though surprised at the hindrance being permitted, he was sure the Lord had some way of helping him on. All was explained, however, when he found that by abandoning the boat and striking off overland he could shorten the journey by four days. This meant sixty miles on foot, with only Chinese shoes, or on a springless wheelbarrow; but eagerly he pressed on.

And what of Duncan and his companions? The cook had saved five dollars from his wages, and when his master's supplies came to an end he revealed this little store and begged him to accept it.

"But you know I do not borrow," said Duncan simply.

"No, sir," urged the man, "it is a gift—a gift to the Lord."

That being evidently his intention, Duncan took it thankfully, and they were of one mind in making it go as far as possible. But five dollars, however economically used, will not last indefinitely, and the morning came when there was not enough to provide another meal. It was Saturday too; and the cook had to stop his master, who was going out to preach as usual, with the question:

"What shall we do now?"

"Do?" was still the answer; "we will 'trust in the Lord and do good'; so shall we 'dwell in the land,' and verily we shall be fed."

But Chu-meo watched his friend and teacher down the street with a sinking heart. ***Verily thou shalt be fed***—it was a promise from God's Word, he knew, and they were fulfilling the conditions; but would it, would it ***prove true***, now they had nothing else to depend upon?

Twelve miles from the city, that very morning, Rudland, limping painfully along, fell in with a donkey-boy looking for a job.

"Oh, yes, he had heard of the foreigner living in Nanking! For a few tens of cash he would take this friend to his door."

As the sun set that evening, returning from a long day's work, what was Duncan's surprise to see his faithful servant running with a joyous face to

meet him.

"It's all right, it's all right," he cried, panting for breath;" Mr. Rudland—the money—a good supper!"

"Did I not tell you this morning," he replied, laying a kindly hand on his shoulder, "that it is *always* 'all right 'to trust in the living God?"

This experience, tidings of which Rudland carried back to Hang-chow, was a great encouragement both to the missionaries and native Christians. There too the Lord was working, and the sorrowful days of summer were giving place to the joy of harvest. To Mr. Taylor's great thankfulness, he had been joined by his old friend Wang Lae-djiin of Ningpo, who was by this time an experienced Christian worker. An engagement with another mission had detained him;' but no sooner was he free than he came over to see if he could be of use to those to whom he owed everything spiritually. Twice already baptisms had taken place at Hang-chow, and there was quite a group of believers who needed pastoral care. This Mr. Taylor was little able to give, with all the other claims upon him, and it was with great thankfulness he recognised in Wang Lae-djiin the very helper needed.

And now the little church inaugurated in July with nineteen members was growing rapidly under the helpful oversight of its native, pastor. Mr. Taylor himself was keeping in close touch with them, preaching on Sundays whenever he could, and seeking to develop a missionary spirit among the Christians. Many glimpses are given in the correspondence of the period of this side of his activities, the more directly missionary work in which he delighted; but upon these we must not dwell. Of the October baptisms Mrs. Taylor. wrote:

When I went down to the afternoon service I saw such a sight

as would have rejoiced the hearts of dear friends at home. Our courtyard in front of the main part of the house is a large one, and it was more than filled with a quiet, attentive audience. One hundred and sixty persons were seated. Dear Lae-djiin baptized three men and three women, and the service was held there as being more convenient than the chapel.

And this brings us to one of the important discoveries Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were making along the lines of women's work. For the new departure of going to the people in their own homes, dressed as they were, and with nothing that could make them feel the Gospel message to be foreign to their own life and surroundings was justified by-results.

"I think if you could see how the people love and trust us you would rejoice," Miss Faulding wrote that autumn. "It does so please them to see us liking to be like themselves in outward things. They express the greatest satisfaction, and are delighted especially that our shoes and style of hair-dressing should be the same as theirs. Instead of having difficulty in getting access to the people, they come here day after day saying,

*"' **Fuh Ku-niang,** ^[218] we want you to come to our house and teach us about the religion.'*

"A woman said to me the other day, 'Do come, my mother wants to hear. ...

"I sometimes long that my whole time could be spent in visiting, at others that at least half could be given to the school for I do so long to see native preachers raised up there, and the boys want training. Then again, we need books so much that if I could spend several hours daily with the teacher I should be glad, The work just seems overwhelming taking this city alone, and how much more so when one looks beyond to provinces full of ties in which there is no missionary I And

look beyond we must.

"My heart does so well up with joy that I am here, and here among the people to a great extent as one of themselves. Nothing could be more encouraging than our position-so almost more than willingly the people listen. I should think when I go out I often speak to more than two hundred persons. ... Yet I am never treated in any way rudely, but with all kindness. Sometimes, indeed, it is with difficulty I get out of having to smoke a pipe, while tea and lunch I frequently have to take."

Rich and poor alike welcomed this gentle visitor; and it was not a passing curiosity, for the more she became known the more was she invited into homes of all sorts. Ladies in Mandarins' families sent for her, and she was welcomed even to a Buddhist nunnery, but as of old it was the common people "who gave most heed to the message.

I have now been out of each of the city-gates (ten of them)," she wrote after fifteen months in Hang-chow, "and am widely known in every part of the city, but still find it difficult to overtake all the visits I am asked to make. Fuh Ku-niang often wishes she could make herself into two or three, or else accomplish two or three times as much as she can in a day. I am very glad I can speak to the people in the Hang-chow dialect; it pleases them, and I believe brings the Truth home more than the most fluent Ningpo would do.

"I sat down the other day beside a peasant girl and said, with my hand on hers

"If you want to be happy you should worship God. Your rice is the gift of Heaven. It is Heaven that creates and preserves life, is it not? (Quoting two well-known Chinese proverbs.) I want to tell you about true happiness which the Lord of Heaven will give you, if you worship Him.'

"I had not time to say more before she got up, and standing in the door of her little hut, bowed herself three or four times in worship of Heaven. So simply and eagerly did she express her longing for happiness I Then she sat down again by my side and listened attentively while I told her of God and heaven and hell, and the wonderful way of salvation.

"As I came home it was raining and not very pleasant, but this and other receptions I had just had made me feel' Would that others might know the joy of this work, and come and carry the Truth to every Chinese home!"

This spirit won its way, and it was largely due to such visiting that new faces were always to be seen in the chapel at Sin-kai-long.

"I wish you could have been with me the other day," Miss Faulding continued a week later, "as I went to one and another of the straw huts among the ruins. The people had mostly seen or heard of me before, and apologising for their wretched homes (which are wretched indeed!), they received me cordially. As so often happens, my dress met with high approval, which led me to say

"I have come here to be a Hang-chow woman. I eat your rice, wear your dress, speak your words, and I desire your happiness. You see, we are all sisters.'

"This last specially pleased the woman to whom I was speaking.

"'Ah,' she said, 'you call me your sister! That is good! Then I may call you my Great (or Elder) Sister.'

"'But your years are more than mine.'

"'Yes,' she replied, taking my hand in hers, 'but you have come to teach us; so you are my Great Sister.'

"It seemed as if, in finding a little sympathy, new springs in her nature had been touched. Putting her arm round my shoulder as we were leaving, she said

*"I **will** come on Sunday; I will come on Sunday."*

And come they did—men, women, and children, whether to school or sewing-class, dispensary or public meetings. The medical work had done much to attract; but Mr. Taylor as he watched it all could not but be profoundly impressed with this new line of things, new at any rate in China.

*"No mightier power has been entrusted to us," he wrote that first autumn, "than the true sympathy that identified itself with those it seeks to benefit. It carried **the heart** captive; and to get close to the hearts of the people is our great aim; to win their confidence and love our daily object.*

"In its actual influence on the people at large," he continued with regard to such work as the ladies were doing, "I am strongly inclined to consider it the most powerful agency at our disposal." [219]

And fuller experience only justified the conclusion. Yet of all the innovations connected with the. Mission none met with stronger opposition. The presence of unmarried ladies in the interior at all was, with many, a sufficient ground for condemning. the whole work, and determined efforts were made to secure their recall to the coast. It was strongly stated in letters home that to send unmarried ladies to inland stations was a waste of life and energy, as there was no opening for their labours. This moved Mrs. Taylor deeply, and quite early in the summer she had written to Mrs. Berger:

Oh, how can any one who knows the love of Christ look round upon these groping, perishing heathen and call any expenditure "a waste" which brings about their conversion! Had we the right people and suitable accommodation, I

believe that twenty Sisters could easily find work in Hangchow to-morrow. I feel pretty sure I could find work for ten Miss Fauldings and ten Miss Bowyers. The Lord ever keep them as simple and true-hearted as they are!

I have always found that the great difficulty in the way of female agency has been location. So few married couples (and I do not wonder at it, or blame any for it) are prepared to give up the retirement and privacy which are so pleasant, and to receive comparative strangers into their family. My dear husband and I have at times discussed the feasibility of establishing some of the Sisters in a house by' themselves, and perhaps after a time this might be done.... But may the Lord direct. It is His work we are doing, and He can and will raise up helpers. Mr.'s assertion about their being very little opening, etc., stirs me to hope and pray that God will show his instrumentality, feeble though it be in itself.

Thus they were grappling with big problems, and obtaining, even. then, glimpses of developments to which God was leading in His own way. And in the process He was developing **them**, preparing one and another for the special work that lay before them. How little Rudland, for example, or any one else in those early days, could have foreseen the usefulness for which he was being fitted. Of all the Hangchow party he was the one who seemed, at any rate to himself, least likely to do much in China. He could not get hold of the language; and the more he tried to study the worse became the headaches, that left him utterly discouraged. But Mr. Taylor was developing as a leader no less than his fellow-workers along other lines.

"I wonder could you spare time to help **me** a little?" he said to Rudland one day, after prayerfully considering how to meet the difficulty.

Gladly would I," responded the young man, "but what is there I can do?"

"Well, I am troubled about the printing-press. The workmen seem to get through so little when left to themselves, and I really have not time to look after them. You managed so well in putting the press together; do you not think you could superintend it for me now?"

In vain Rudland protested that he knew nothing about printing.

"If you will just go in and begin at the beginning," said Mr. Taylor, "the men will be pleased to show you how to set up type, etc., and the fact of your being there will keep them to their work."

So Rudland left his books for the cheerful activity of the printing-room. The workmen were glad to have his company and proud to display their superior knowledge. Listening to their conversation by the hour together, he found himself picking up words and phrases more quickly than he could discover their English equivalents. It was the Gouin system to perfection and all his spare time he was fain to spend over the dictionary to make out what he had been learning. The headaches were soon conquered, and the lines laid down for a life service, that was to include the translation and printing of almost the entire Scriptures in a dialect spoken by millions to whom the Word of God was thus made accessible.

Resourcefulness was one of the characteristics Mr. Taylor was developing to the advantage of those associated with him. They were learning to know that if anything could be done to meet a case of need he was pretty sure to see it, and not likely to be hindered by difficulties that grit, grace, and gumption could overcome. None who were in Hang-chow at the time would forget his arrival one night, for example, long after the city gates were shut and they had given up hope of seeing him. One of the party was seriously ill, and in Mr. Taylor's absence no medical help was available. A messenger was sent

after him, and he turned back from an important journey only to find himself too late to enter the city. Darkness had fallen, and the gates were closed and barred. There seemed nothing for it but to spend the night on the river, while a precious life might be at stake.

But who was this coming up behind him who seemed confident of getting in? A Government messenger with despatches I then the gate would be opened surely? But no: a basket, he saw, was being let down over the wall, in which the messenger was to be drawn up. It was no use asking for a passage in that uncertain craft, but Mr. Taylor's quick eye caught means of steadying it. Hanging from the basket was a rope, which it was the work of a moment to seize as it was ascending. It required pluck and determination, however, to hold on and face the angry guards at the top.

"I gave them two hundred good reasons," said Mr. Taylor on reaching home, "why they should allow me to proceed."

"Two hundred I how had you time?"

"They came out of my cash-bag," was the smiling reply, "so it did not take very long."

Among all the mercies that crowned the year 1867—the first complete year for the Lammermuir party in Chinanone was greater than the answer to the prayer with which it had opened, "O that Thou wouldest bless me indeed and enlarge my coast." The stations occupied by the Mission had doubled in number in that short period.^[220] At its commencement, the distance between the most widely separated had been only four days' journey; but at its close, Duncan in Nanking was as much as twenty-four days, by ordinary means of travel, from Stott in Wen-chow—a considerably enlarged sphere of labour when one remembers that, with the exception of Hang-chow, no Protestant

missionaries save those of the G.I.M. were settled anywhere away from the coast or the treaty ports. And the earnest spirit at Sin-kai-long was just as marked an answer to prayer.

"Oh! that we may be made capable of bearing much blessing," wrote one of the young workers to Mrs. Berger in November. "Do pray that we may each be drawn close to the Saviour, and kept walking with Him in such sweet fellowship that for us to live may be Christ. Then, what wonders should we see! ... The destitution in the light of eternity is awful. It stares us in the face. Human effort cannot meet it; nothing can, short of divine power. So do pray. Oh! we need to lay hold upon God about it. May He make us really in earnest. How can we trifle, how can we be listless in view of His unfailing promise that what we ask in faith we shall receive? ... Why are we not Israels? God grant that we may learn how to pray."

For the great land around them, as well as for their own spiritual needs, the last day of the year was again set apart for prayer and fasting. From eleven in the morning till 3 P.M. one meeting lasted,

*"without weariness," Miss Blatchley wrote, "God's Holy Spirit wrapping us round in renewed dedication and truly baptizing us: 'He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.' At 8.30 we again met for united prayer, and still that **power** gathered and increased. Mr. Taylor read the 90th Psalm. We continued in prayer and singing till, the year ended, and at twelve partook of the Lord's Supper. A holier time I have never known."*

And there was need for such inward strengthening. In spite of success—**because**, indeed, of the footing gained in some places, there was great and increasing opposition in others. From his sick-bed, only a few weeks earlier, Mr. Taylor had been carried to the Governor's **ya-men** to report in person the

ill-usage of Mr. McCarthy's helpers, who had been set upon and almost beaten to death in Hu-chow. As soon as he could travel, he had gone direct to the scene of the riot, living himself in a boat within the turbulent city, and giving two weeks of careful, patient effort to smoothing matters over, only to find that for the time being foreigners must retire. No sooner had the new year dawned than Mr. Williamson was driven out of another important city, through attacks on those who had befriended him; and Mr. Taylor, who was making a tour of the older stations, was overtaken with the tidings that Kin-hwa-fu had had to be given up.

"I went to see the poor fellow in prison," Mr. Williamson wrote of the middleman who by order of the Mandarin had suffered three thousand blows. "His back and legs were severely swollen and bruised. He was shut up in a den with a number of criminals, confined like so many wild beasts in a cage. The weather was very cold, and there seemed every probability of the poor fellow losing his life from the treatment he had received. ... Next morning the landlord was sent for to the ya-men, while the mother and wife of the imprisoned man were threatening to commit suicide, blaming us for bringing all this trouble upon them. The same day, in order to save these poor people from further ill-usage, we left the house ... returning to Hang-chow."

It was proving harder even than had been anticipated, this pioneering work—yet how Mr. Taylor's heart went out to the Christless multitudes around them! Crossing the beautiful district of Tai-chow-fu for the first time, he was profoundly impressed with its countless villages and hamlets among the mountains as well as the towns and cities of its populous plains.

"Are there no servants of our common Lord rusting away at home," he wrote to Mr. Berger, "or at least doing work that others would do if they left it, who might be out here among

these numberless towns and villages?

"As we passed the gate of one little town, a coffin was being borne to its last resting-place.

"'Alas! 'said the native Christian with me, 'if the Gospel were preached in this place to-day, it would be too late for that poor man.'

"Yes, and for how many more will it be too late! My thoughts were busied, now with the untold need of the unoccupied provinces, now with the neglected districts of this province, until I was compelled to roll the burden on the Lord, and cry to Him for wisdom to dispose aright of those He may send to help me, and to plead for more native and foreign workers."

Very easily, as one can see, might the whole, Mission have become absorbed in that one coast-board province, small though it was among all the provinces of China. But, providentially, door after door was closed. Riots, disturbances, sickness, and other troubles hindered developments that would have tended in this direction, and gradually, almost insensibly, Mr. Taylor's own way seemed guided northward.

"If you will not smile at my planning in our dining-room," Mr. Berger had written in a letter that crossed Mr. Taylor's quoted above, "I will tell you my musings concerning your future movements. I fancy you will some day transfer your headquarters to some desirable city or town very near the Yangtze River, perhaps within' easy reach of Hang-chow. Thus you would, I suppose, have access to a Consul, and facilities for going to Shanghai and up the river, so as to reach many provinces. The LORD guide you in all things: 'He that believeth shall not make haste.'"

It was not easy after sixteen months in Hang-chow to face the thought of leaving the work that had become so dear to them for "some desirable city

near the Yangtze "in which to begin all over again. Fifty baptized believers were, gathered already in the little church under Pastor Wang's care, and there were many inquirers. But Mr. and Mrs. McCarthy and Miss Faulding would remain in charge of the station and be quite able to receive and help new workers. Duncan at Nanking was sorely needing relief, and Mrs. Taylor was ready to go either there or anywhere else as the work seemed to require. But much had to be considered as spring came on, and the noon prayer meetings were times of real drawing near to God.

To Mr. and Mrs. Judd, who had recently arrived from home, all this was very memorable.

"It really was building the wall in troublous times," he wrote of those days: "one never knew what friends who were away might be suffering. Scarcely any station was opened without a riot. The noon meetings were solemn hours often prolonged, because there was so much to pray about. One feels the thrill of them still."

The quiet courage of Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, taking up themselves the pioneering work in which experience was so needed, specially impressed Mrs. Judd.

"One always felt braver when with them," she recalled, "more able to endure hardness. One seemed to catch something of their spirit. Those solemn hours of waiting upon God when we first reached Hang-chow can never be forgotten. The powers of darkness seemed so real, as one stronghold after another was attacked by our small band of workers. But the presence of the Lord was more real, as Mr. Taylor pleaded that 'with all boldness 'we might speak His Word, and that the Name of Jesus might be glorified; and we were confident that victory would be the Lord's and ours."

But the leader of the Mission, conscious only of weakness in himself, was taken up with Another.

"I am sure you never forget us at the Throne of Grace," he had written to his mother, thinking of what the coming summer might mean to wife and children. "I try to live a day at a time, and even so have enough to do; but though I try, I do not always succeed. Pray for more faith, more love, more' wisdom for me. ... What could I do without the promise, 'Lo, I am with you always'?"

Part III[\(TOC\)](#)

Treasures of Darkness

1868-1870. AET. 36-38

Chapter X

An Open Door ... A Little Strength

1868. AET. 36

PLEASANT enough for the first few weeks was that spring journey up the Grand Canal. Hang-chow was left behind on the loth of April, Mrs. Taylor and the children travelling by house-boat in a measure of comfort.^[221] After long confinement within city walls,' the freedom and freshness of the country were delightful. Extensive mulberry plantations bordered the Canal, with plum, peach, and apricot orchards in bridal array. Wheat and barley covered the valleys, interspersed with great tracts of peas and beans in flower. The Canal itself, alive with boat traffic, was an endless interest to the children, while the background of hills refreshed their elders with ever changing loveliness. And there were many opportunities for coming into friendly relation with other, travellers and the people whose homes they were passing day by day.

The little boys spinning their tops were a great source of interest.

"One man asked if he might take the foreign toy and show it to a Mandarin's lady in a boat close at hand," wrote Miss Blatchley. "In a few moments the lady invited us to come and see her. Tea was offered, and the servants were told to boil some eggs for the children. In the afternoon this lady called upon us in our boat. We were glad she did, as it gave Mrs. Taylor an opportunity for putting the Gospel clearly before her."

On Sunday they did not travel. The boat was moored to the shore, and a service held with open doors and windows.

"A few came on board and sat with us," continued the journal. "A Mandarin's wife living just opposite came across and stayed till the service was over. Before she left, Mrs. Taylor explained the way of salvation to her more fully. She seemed

to. drink in every word. Our Christian servant called at her house in the afternoon."

At one great city en **route**—Soo-chow—workers of the Mission had recently obtained a settlement, and a stay of three weeks enabled Mr. Taylor, who there caught up the party, to give considerable help in medicall and other ways.^[222] Beyond this point all was unbroken ground. Save for Duncan at Nanking and the L.M.S. and Wesleyan workers in the treaty port of Hankow, not a Protestant missionary was resident northward or westward anywhere in the interior. To join the former in his lonely post was Mr Taylor's intention, unless some more important opening should detain him by the way.

And this was just what happened when Chin-kiang was reached—that busy centre of population and commerce at the junction of the Grand Canal and the mighty flood of the Yangtze. Being a treaty port, a few foreigners, including the British Consul, were living in the Settlement outside the native city, and in one of the suburbs the L.M.S. had a chapel in charge of a native preacher. No missionary, however, was to be found nearer than Shanghai, at a distance of twenty-four hours by steamer. Much impressed with the strategic importance of this place, Mr. Taylor set on foot inquiries with a view to renting premises, and was soon in treaty for a house inside the 'city, which was ultimately obtained, though not without serious difficulty and danger. Meanwhile, seeing that the negotiations were likely to be prolonged, he continued his journey across the Yangtze and a few miles up the northern section. of the Grand Canal.

And now the travellers were nearing the far-famed city of Yang-chow, of which Marco Polo was once Governor. Rich, proud, and exclusive, it contained a population of three hundred and sixty thousand, still without any witness for Christ. Life on the water by this time was losing its charm. Spring

had given place to summer, and with the intense heat the rainy season had come on. Day and night it poured incessantly, and the children, cooped up in the leaky boat, where nothing could be kept dry, were exposed to serious risks. Waiting upon God very definitely for guidance, it was with no little thankfulness that Mr. and Mrs. Taylor saw the way open before them much more readily than could have been anticipated. Within the city, their native helpers had come into friendly touch with an inn-keeper able and willing to receive the whole party. The accommodation he offered, moreover, was not on the ground floor—always more or less malarious at such a season—but five rooms forming an upper story which they could have to themselves. This was so unusual from every point of view that they could not but feel it providential, and, thankfully leaving the crowded junks on the Canal, they took possession of their new quarters.

"Were it not that you are old. travellers yourselves," Mrs. Taylor wrote to Mrs. Berger (June 18), "I should think it impossible for you to realise our feelings last Monday week, when we exchanged the discomforts of a boat, into every room of which the heavy rain had been leaking, for a suite of apartments in a first-rate Chinese hotel—such a place as my husband who, as you know, has seen a good deal of Chinese travellers' accommodation, never before met with; and that hotel, too, inside the city of Yangchow."

"An open door ... a little strength" and "many adversaries"—it was no new situation for heralds of the Cross, though it was to prove more serious in its outcome than Mr. Taylor at first anticipated. For to begin with, the people seemed friendly. The presence of the mother and children disarmed suspicion. Evidently this foreigner in "civilised" (i.e. Chinese) dress was no commercial or political agent, and curiosity attracted many visitors. The inn-keeper, indeed, who had been a little anxious, offered his services as "F

middleman," if Mr. Taylor wished to rent premises and settle in the city.^[223]

It was not easy when matters had reached this point for Mrs. Taylor to leave her family in their temporary quarters and go down alone to Shanghai. But one of the servants was ill with what threatened to be smallpox—a disease very prevalent in the city—and the baby was not vaccinated. She was now their only little daughter, and months of whooping-cough had sadly reduced her strength. There were mission matters in Shanghai that needed attention, and Mr. Duncan's fiancée had to be met and escorted inland. No one could undertake these duties and care for the sick baby as well as Mrs. Taylor, and there seemed no reason why the boys should not be left with Miss Blatchley and the nurse. Under these circumstances, Mr. Taylor concluded that she should take the journey, and saw her off in the middle of June by steamer from Chin-kiang.

In the latter city negotiations about the house were making progress, and he was able to get the deed signed soon after Mrs. Taylor left. Possession was promised in a fortnight, if the Governor granted a favourable proclamation. Applied for by the British Consul this also was promised, "if all were straightforward." Feeling reasonably sure of one home at any rate, Mr. Taylor then sent for the Rudlands, who were waiting at Hang-chow to bring his printing-press and family belongings. "If all were straightforward" covered a good deal, however, in the Mandarin's mind, and left a loophole that unfriendly subordinates were not slow to appreciate. Endless were the difficulties and complications that arose in consequence, fostered by the district official, who proved to be intensely anti-foreign.

Meanwhile Mr. and Mrs. Taylor in their separation were facing unexpected troubles. The infection caught by the Chinese helper proved to be measles, and one by one the children at Yang-chow sickened, until all were down with

it-the youngest desperately ill with bronchitis as a complication. Mr. Taylor could only be thankful that the baby at any rate might escape, and that her mother was spared some of the anxiety and nursing. When they had parted, it was fully expecting that ten days or a fortnight would see her home again; but now, every post seemed to bring either business to be attended to in Shanghai, or calls for help from one and another of the stations. Mr. Taylor could not leave Yang-chow under the circumstances, and was obliged to put unwonted responsibilities upon the one he would fain have relieved could he have known her circumstances.

For at the coast Mrs. Taylor all the while was fighting a brave fight for the life" of their youngest child. Kindly received by Mr. Gamble, she had had the baby vaccinated without delay, hoping to get through her business and be ready to return as soon as the *Hindustan* should bring Mr. Duncan's expected bride. The vaccination proved effective, but never had she seen a child so ill with it before. Medical help had to be called in, and before long it was evident that the baby was suffering from a severe attack of measles in addition to vaccination and whooping-cough. And Mrs. Taylor herself was, far from well.

Even before the letters came from Yang-chow telling of the illness of the boys, her mother's heart had anticipated it, and all that their father would be suffering. Her one comfort was that he would not know about little Maria, or about the distressing home mails she was receiving. For there had been a revival of the painful opposition which had already caused Mr. Berger so much anxiety, and the letters from Saint Hill, while gracious and loving as ever, had much that was painful to communicate. It was under these circumstances that her indomitable spirit shone out, and the faith that made her, as her fellow-workers were not slow to realise, "the backbone of the

Mission." Yet she was clinging and sensitive to an unusual degree, depending upon her husband, and loving him—if that were possible—even more than she was loved.

"The Lord give us a single eye to do His will," she wrote on June 29, after expressing her readiness to go on to Tai-chow, "and then guide us just where He would have us...."

"I have received a packet of letters from Hang-chow this morning, enclosing the last mail from home. I am afraid some of the contents of the latter may distress you, but 'our Father knoweth.' Let us cast all our burdens, and they are many and weighty, upon our omnipotent, all-wise, loving Father. They are but feathers to Him! As to Mr—'s continued opposition, that too is in God's hands, and surely He will stand by us.

He cannot have taught us to trust in His Name

And thus far have brought us to put us to shame.

"Let us remember how He worked for us with regard to Mr. L—; yes, how He has appeared for us again and again. 'Thou hast been my help; leave me not neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.'"

"Do pray that God will give me wisdom and a clear head," she added with regard to business matters, as well as singleness of eye."

A few days later the doctor's visit was far from reassuring.

Perhaps his manner, more than what he actually said, made me feel that possibly we might be called to give up this little one too. The Lord is our stay, and He will not leave us now.

"My own Treasure," she continued on July 10, "is it that our

*tender Father is endeavouring to teach us by His present dealings lessons which He **might** take sterner methods to impress? Oh I may He Himself help us to learn them, giving us docile, teachable spirits. How much we lean upon each other for comfort or counsel we only find out when long separated, and perhaps He is trying to teach us to lean in the same way, and to a yet fuller extent upon Himself-our heavenly Husband Who is so thoroughly competent to undertake for us in every perplexity, difficulty or danger. Satan sometimes says, 'Yes, He is fully competent in any other difficulty but the present. You can hardly expect Him to manage this particular matter for you-it is too trivial,' or 'too complex.' And how ready we are to believe him!—instead of honouring God with unwavering confidence."*

It was a comfort to hear about this time that the little patients in Yang-chow were better, though she seemed as far as ever from being able to return to them. The vessel she was awaiting was much overdue, and no word had been received as to its whereabouts. Moreover, as soon as the baby could be left with her Chinese nurse, Mrs. Taylor was expecting to go on to Ningpo at any rate—little realising that it was in Yang-chow she was now needed most.

For the intense-heat of summer, combined with many anxieties, had tried Mr. Taylor more than his letters showed. Houses had been offered him in plenty, but just when all seemed propitious the negotiations would break down, and promises of a favourable proclamation "to reassure the people" were unfulfilled, until hope deferred made the heart sick. At last, however, about the middle of July, the proclamation appeared; the house—then in question was at once handed over to them, and the little party moved in, thankful for the greater liberty thus afforded. Six weeks in the inn after two months of boat-life had prepared them to appreciate a home of their own again, if home it could be called with the mother so far away.

But the letter that told the good news brought her strange sinking of heart. A few pencilled lines, written evidently in great weakness-written from Chin-kiang-what could it mean?

I think I told you we had got the proclamation for Yangchow. We have not yet got the one for this place-hope to do so tomorrow. But I 'must return, I am so ill. Would you write Meadows and ask if he can come and help me? ... God bless you. Go to Ningpo, darling, if you think well, and may God go with you. If our hearts are to be rendered up a sacrifice, the will of the Lord be done. Soon we shall never part again. ..."

The words were faint and wavering; as must have been the hand that traced them. Alone in a boat, and so ill! And she could not know whether he had got back to Yangchow, or how he was being cared for.

It was Sunday the 26th of July. The up-river steamer would be starting in a few hours that would land her at Chinkiang the following evening. There was no question in Mrs. Taylor's mind as to whether she ought to go. Mr. McCarthy had come to Shanghai and would wait for the long-delayed **Hindustan**. She saw her way to arranging for help at Ningpo, and the baby was well enough to travel. But what about the steamer? If it had not been Sunday how gladly would she have taken it! As it was she did not hesitate to let it go without her, although the alternative was a journey by foot-boat of at least two days and nights. With a heart that cried to God she quietly made her preparations, waiting until evening before engaging her boat.

That boatman, surely, had a tale to tell when he came back from taking the foreign lady with her nurse and child to Chin-kiang! Starting before dawn on Monday morning, they had travelled steadily on via the Grand Canal until he was obliged to drop the oar from very weariness. But while he slept they travelled still. Hour after hour by day or night, whenever he was obliged to

rest, the lady had taken his place, plying the oar as naturally as she spoke his Ningpo words, caring little for heat or backache if only they could press forward—and all because her husband was ill and she wanted to get to him as quickly as possible. Much as he wondered at the unusual proceeding, the boatman little knew what it was that gave strength to that mother's heart as well as to her fragile form. It was prayer that carried them through, despite heat and weariness—prayer how abundantly answered when upon reaching Yang-chow she found her loved ones an unbroken circle and was able to nurse Mr. Taylor back to his usual health.

Happy though they were to be together again in a home of their own, it was not long that the missionary household was to enjoy even a measure of security. The big wandering premises had from the first been besieged with visitors, so much so that Miss Blatchley had had no choice but to make it a rule that none might come upstairs but the ladies of Mandarins' families. This was before Mrs. Taylor's return, and her presence did but attract more interest. There was much to be done between whiles to make the new home habitable, as well as to prepare at Chin-kiang for the arrival of the Rudlands. Preaching at Yang-chow on Sundays, Mr. Taylor had to go frequently to the other city where the house matter was still, unsettled, the Governor withholding the proclamation without which the landlord could not be kept to his bargain. It was generally known that the deeds had been signed and the deposit paid over, and the way in which the missionary and his Consul were being worsted was the laugh of tea-house and restaurant.

Nor was this all. Exaggerated reports reaching the neighbouring city naturally suggested in certain circles that the visitors might be treated with as scant courtesy in Yangchow. Why allow them to make friends and settle down, when by carrying things with a high hand they could be ejected? Upon the

strength of the Chin-kiang situation, a meeting was held among the literati and a decision arrived at to stir up trouble. This was done by means of anonymous hand-bills, attributing the most revolting and unnatural crimes to foreigners, especially those whose business it was to propagate "the religion of Jesus." Early in August, the missionaries began to realise the change that was coming over the attitude of the people. Friendly visitors had given place to crowds of the lowest rabble about the door, and a fresh set of posters, quite unfit for translation, was as fuel to the fire.

"On Saturday the 15th," wrote Mr. Reid who had come over from Nanking, "Mr. Taylor received an anonymous letter, advising him to use all possible precautions, as on the following day there was to be a riot. ... We had but one source of comfort, and that a well-tryed one; and meeting together that evening we poured out our hearts to the Lord, Who did not fail us. Next morning (Sunday) the people assembled at an early hour, and began knocking and battering upon our door ... until we thought it best to go out and try to pacify them.... I think I never felt more the power and value of speaking gently than on that day. Dear Mr. Taylor spoke often to those assembled in a very kind manner; and while we watched, those inside the house prayed, and God graciously brought us through, confirming to our hearts the promise, 'Lo, I am with you alway.'"

The trouble went on, however, and on the 18th Miss Blatchley wrote:

For the last few days we have been almost in a state of siege. Mr. Taylor, just up from a sick-bed and weak as he is, has hardly dared to leave the gate, Messrs. Reid and Rudland with him 'and on Saturday night Mr. Duncan opportunely arrived.' Happily, before the disturbance became very serious, we were able by pressing on the workman to get the many entrances into our wandering premises contracted into one.... But our

trust is not in the walls we build, which an infuriated mob could easily overthrow ... but under the shadow of His wings.

The most calumnious hand-bills against us have been posted about the city. In one of them the Name of Jesus is blasphemed in the vilest terms, and the paper professes to emanate from the god of war, Kwan-ti. Today (Tuesday) was placarded as the day for attacking our house and setting it on fire, regardless of native or foreign occupants. Once or twice the mob has seemed inclined to break in by force, but the disturbance is less than on Sunday. God is with us, we do not fear. ... We know that whatever happens will be by His permission, for we have put ourselves into His hands. He will not leave us. As I write He is sending thunder and the threatening of rain, which will do more for us, Mr. Taylor was saying, than an army of soldiers. The Chinese shun rain; the most important matters they will postpone on account of it. May God forgive these poor blind people, and defeat Satan, by making these disturbances the means of more widely diffusing the truth among them. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee; and the remainder of wrath Thou shalt restrain." Any attempt' to set the place on fire now would be vain indeed, for the rain is coming down in torrents.

After this, it looked as though the worst was over. In spite of all that had been said against them, the quiet, friendly demeanour of the missionaries was winning its way, and the storm seemed to have spent itself without disaster. From Wednesday to Saturday the wearied household had a little respite, and glad indeed were they that none of them, not even the women and children, had fled from the threatening danger.

But, strange to say, before the close of the week an opportunity occurred for reviving the agitation. A couple of foreigners from Chin-kiang, wearing not the native costume adopted by Mr. Taylor's party, but undisguised "foreign

dress," came up to visit Yang-chow, and were seen in various parts of the city. This was too good a chance to be lost, and no sooner had they left with the impression that all was quiet, than reports began to be circulated that children were missing in all directions, entrapped by the "foreign devils." The weather was intensely hot, which always predisposes to excitable foregatherings. Children had disappeared, so the people believed-twenty-four at least had fallen a prey to the dreaded foreigners. And on their premises, as was well known, vast stores of treasures were accumulated Boat-loads of goods had been brought in only a few days previously.^[224] Courage! Avenge our wrongs! Attack-destroy! Much plunder shall be ours.

Forty-eight hours later, in a boat nearing Chin-kiang, the letter quoted above was bravely finished.

"We have had to flee from Yang-chow," Miss Blatchley continued to Mrs. Berger. "I cannot stop now to describe the last few days, if indeed they are describable—for we must send off our notes, such as we have ready. Next mail must bring further particulars. Meanwhile you will join us in praise to God for saving our lives and limbs, and our most valuable property. The rioters sacked every room excepting mine, in which were all our most important papers and the bulk of our money—a considerable sum, three hundred dollars, having reached us from Chinkiang only an hour before the breaking into the house.

"Poor Mr. Reid is the most severely hurt of all; a brick-bat struck his,, eye while he was standing ready to catch Mrs. Taylor and me—as we had to escape for our lives by jumping from the verandah roof over the front of the reception hall. Dear Mrs. Taylor hurt her leg very much. I, whose fall was not broken (as Mr. Reid was wounded, and so disabled from helping me), came down on my back on the stones, and it is only by God's great loving-kindness that I have not a broken

spine or skull. I have only 'a wound on my arm, and that the left arm. It is getting very painful, as it is ulcerating, and I am tolerably bruised all over; but there is so much to be thankful for that this seems as nothing, except that it makes one rather awkward, for I feel so stiff. We have not had time yet to change our blood-stained clothes."

And Mrs. Taylor wrote to the same beloved friend:

I do not know whether I shall be able to give you much idea, by this opportunity, of the perils through which we have passed within the last forty-eight hours. Our God has brought us through: may it be to live henceforth more fully to His praise and glory. We have had, so to speak, another typhoon—not of so long duration as the literal one we experienced nearly two years ago; but at least equally dangerous to our lives, and more terrible while it lasted. ... I believe God will bring His own glory out of this; and I hope it will tend to the furtherance of the Gospel ...—ours in a present Saviour,

"A **present** Saviour"—how little could the rioters understand the secret of their calmness and strength! Awed by something, they knew not what, the infuriated mob had been restrained from the worst excesses. Murder, though intended, had been averted again and again; and both Mr. Taylor, exposed to all the fury of the populace on his way to seek help of the authorities, and those he had to leave, who faced the perils of attack and fire in their besieged dwelling, were alike protected by the wonder-working hand of God.

But they were hours of anguish—anguish for the mother as she gathered her children and the women of the party in the upper room that seemed most sheltered; anguish for the father, detained at a distance, hearing from the Mandarin's ya-men the yells of the rioters bent on destruction.

"After they were gone (Mr. Taylor and Mr. Duncan) we feebler ones could do nothing," wrote Mrs. Taylor, "assembled

*in my room to plead for God's protection, both for ourselves and for those who faced the fury of the storm without. Mr. Rudland and Mr. Reid were doing their best to keep the crowd from entering our premises. I do not know that the Throne of Grace ever seemed so near to me as that night and the following morning. Not that the closeness of communion with God was greater than at any other time; but I felt able in an especial manner to lay hold of God's **strength**. And earnestly did we plead with Jim to raise as it were a wall of fire around my dear husband and Mr. Duncan, and to give His angels to encamp round about them. I specially needed His sustaining grace to keep me quiet and calm and to give me soundness of judgment, that no rash step might be taken, for naturally all looked to me to say what was to be done."*

Outwardly as calm as if there were no danger,^[225] Mrs Taylor went through those terrible hours, more than once saving the life of a fellow-worker by her presence of mind and perfect command of the language,^[226] her heart, meanwhile, torn with anxiety for the loved one it seemed more than likely they might never see again.

*"But for the protection afforded us by the darkness," Mr. Taylor wrote of that desperate effort to summon aid, "we should scarcely have reached the **ya-men** alive. Alarmed by the yells of the people the gate-keepers were just closing the doors as we approached, but the momentary delay gave time for the crowd to close in upon us: the as yet unbarred gates gave way to the pressure, and we were precipitated into the entrance hall. Had the gates been barred, I am convinced that they would not have been opened for us, and we should have been torn to pieces by the enraged mob.*

*"Once in the ya-men, we rushed into the judgment hall, crying '**Kiu-wing! Kiu-wing!**' (save life! save life!), a cry the Chinese Mandarin is bound to attend to at any hour of the day or*

night.

"We were taken to the room of the Chief Secretary, and kept waiting three-quarters of an hour before we had an audience with the Prefect, all the time hearing the yells of the mob a mile or more off, destroying, for aught we knew, not only the property, but possibly the lives of those so dear to us. And at last when we did get an audience, it was almost more than we could bear with composure to be asked as to what we really did with the babies; whether it was true we had bought them, and how many; what was the cause of all this rioting? etc., etc.

"At last I told His Excellency that the real cause of all the trouble was his own neglect in not taking measures when the matter was small and manageable; that I must now request him first to take steps to repress the riot and save any of our friends who might still be alive, and afterwards make such inquiries as he might wish, or I would not, answer for the result.

"Ah,' said he,' very true, very true! First quiet the people, and then inquire. Sit still, and I will go to see what can be done.'

"He went out telling us to remain, as the only chance of his effecting anything depended on our keeping out of sight; for by this time the number of rioters amounted to eight or ten thousand. The natives estimated them at twenty thousand.

*"We were kept in this torture of suspense for two hours, when the Prefect returned with the **Ts'ao-fu** (Governor of the military forces of the city, some three thousand men) and told us that all was quiet; that the **Ts'ao-fu** himself, the Sheo-pe (Captain of the soldiers who guard the gates), and two local Mandarins had been to the scene of the disturbance; that they had seized several of those who were plundering the premises, and would have them punished. He then sent for chairs, and*

we returned under escort. On the way back we were told that all the foreigners we had left were killed. We had to cry to God to support us, though we hoped this might prove exaggerated or untrue.

"When we reached the house, the scene was such as baffled description. Here, a pile of half-burned reeds showed where one of the attempts to fire the premises had been made; there, debris of a broken-down wall was lying; and strewn about everywhere were the remains of boxes and furniture, scattered papers and letters, broken work-boxes, writing-desks, dressing-cases, and surgical instrument cases, smouldering remains of valuable books, etc—but no trace of inhabitants within."

After a long and agonising search it was with unspeakable thankfulness he learned that some at any rate of the party were hiding in a neighbour's house. The darkness of the night had favoured their escape from their own burning premises. Taken from one room to another as the danger of discovery increased, they had finally been left without a glimmer of light in the innermost apartments.

"Mr. Reid lay groaning with pain," wrote Miss Blatchley, the poor tired children wanted to sleep and we dared not let them, as at any moment we might have to flee again. Mrs. Taylor was almost fainting from loss of blood; and I now found that my arm was bleeding from a bad cut, and so painful that I could not move it, while most of us were stiff and sore with bruises."

Then it was that suspense about Mr. Taylor was hardest to bear. In the darkness and silence, the uncertainty as to his fate as well as their own was terrible.

"I cannot attempt to describe to you our feelings," Mrs. Taylor

continued to Mrs. Berger. "How my dear husband and Mr. Duncan were faring or had fared we could not tell. Where they were, why they had not yet returned, whether we ourselves would live till morning, or what would become of us we knew not. ... But God was our stay, and He forsook us not. This confidence He gave me, that He would surely work good for China out of our deep distress.

"At one time we were told that soldiers had arrived from the Governor and were driving the rioters away, but still no tidings of my husband! Poor Mr. Reid was laid on the floor of an inner room, and nurse with baby (who happily slept) and Mr. and Mrs. Rudland were there too. The older children were with Miss Desgraz, Miss Blatchley, and myself in the outer room. We did our best to keep them quiet and awake, for we did not know at what moment we might have to flee again.

"'Mamma,' said one of them, 'where shall we sleep to-night as they have burned up our bed?'

"I assured him that God would give them somewhere to sleep, little thinking it would be—that very night—in their own nursery.

"At last, after a much shorter time than it appeared to us, we heard my dear husband's voice outside the door, which had been barred for greater safety. He had had difficulty in finding us, and on his way back from the ya-men had heard various reports as to what had happened during his long detention. Some said we were all killed, others that we had fled, and his heart sickened on nearing the house as he distinguished a smell that proved to be fur-lined garments burning.... He told us that the rioters had all been driven out, and he thought we might venture back to our own rooms (which had not been burned down) ... for there would be a guard around the premises. How our hearts went up to God in thanksgiving that He had spared us to each other! ... A short time before we

heard my husband's voice, I had felt encouraged to hope that help was at hand, by the fact that my own strength was rapidly ebbing away from loss of blood. I was anxious not to let any one know how much I was hurt, as I felt it would alarm them, and it seemed most important that all should keep calm.

"It was after midnight when we returned. My heart was too full for me to pay much heed to the scene of ruin through which we passed, but at the foot of the stairs my eye fell on a bead mat worked for me by our little Gracie before leaving England. The sight of it at that moment seemed to speak of our Father's love and tenderness in a way that perhaps it would be difficult for another to understand." (It was a year that very day since their little daughter had been taken Home from the temple at Panshan.) "I asked some one to pick it up and give it to me. We found the floor of my room strewn with clothes, etc., which had been turned out of boxes in the search for gold and silver. The leaves of my poor Bible, which I had been unable to take with me, were scattered about in every direction. Kind, loving hands collected them for me. Some, I was told, were found downstairs, and not a leaf is missing.

*"For the remainder of the night we were in quiet, though for some of us there was no sleep. Early in the morning the guard retired, and as there was no relay the, people began to come in again to plunder, for now there were many entrances. Again my husband had to go to the **ya-men**, and again commenced a season of anxiety similar to though in some respects more trying than the night before. Once more my room became our sanctuary ... till, just when it seemed as if in another minute the crowd would be upstairs, the alarm was given that the Mandarin had come, and his soldiery soon dispersed the people.*

"In the afternoon of that day we left the city ... under an escort of soldiers to see us safely to the Yangtze. I have been much struck by the way in which God used these men—who would

*have been quite as ready to take our lives as to protect them-
for His people's help. As we passed out of the city in chairs,
Miss Blatchley heard some of the people say derisively, 'Come
again! Come again!'*

*"'Yes,' I thought, 'GOD will bring us back again, little as you
expect it.'"*

Chapter XI[\(TOC\)](#)

The Darkest Hour

1868-1869. ART. 36-37

IT was **thankfulness** more than anything else that filled the hearts of that little company, wounded and suffering as they were, on the boats that took them to Chin-kiang. The Mandarins had insisted on their leaving for a time, that the house might be repaired and the people quietened, and with no thought of compensation, still less of revenge, the missionaries looked forward to a speedy return. Homeless and despoiled of almost everything, they rejoiced in having been counted worthy to suffer." for the sake of the Name," and their hearts were cheered as they recalled the protecting care of God. Had not their lives been spared as by a miracle? Were not the children well and happy? And even the money and more important Mission papers were safe, though the room in which they lay had been open to the rioters.

Upon reaching Chin-kiang, homeless and in urgent need of succour, great was the kindness received from the foreign residents. Though the community was small, they managed to put up all the refugees, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor taking a room on the ground floor which, being damp, they considered undesirable for others. Here, in the midst of debris from the riot they set to work at once on the business and correspondence of the Mission, having nine or ten stations and many fellow-workers to think of as well as the party with them.

"How you are, where you are, and in what circumstances, we know not!" wrote Mr. McCarthy from Hang-chow. "We can only seek to lay hold on the living God, in believing prayer, and commit you all to His safe keeping. How precious is His Word now, how powerful, how suitable! May you indeed find it so. Oh, may you find that 'out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong, sweetness.' The Lord will not forsake you; He cannot. ... Let nothing turn us from His purpose to

bless China through our feeble means. ... 'Who is sufficient for these things? 'No one but He Who has said, 'Lo, I am with you alway.' In His Name, for His sake, take courage; the darkest hour is just before the dawn.'

It was a dark hour indeed that was coming upon the, 'leader of the Mission, a period so painful in some of its aspects that even the sufferings of the riot seemed little in comparison. To begin with, the troubles at Yang-chow were made public in a way Mr. Taylor would least have desired. A resident at Chin-kiang, with the kindest intentions, wrote stirring accounts to the Shanghai papers, and public feeling demanded that action, prompt and decisive, should be taken by the British authorities. This brought the Consul-General, Mr. M. H. Medhurst, and later on the Ambassador himself, Sir Rutherford Alcock, into the matter. A gunboat-was sent up to Chin-kiang, and there was much coming and going of British officers and bluejackets. All this so impressed the authorities, that they seemed about to recognise their treaty obligations and yield to the not unreasonable demands of Mr. Medhurst, when—the gunboat going down-river on account of the illness of her commander—they changed their tactics and became openly overbearing. Long and difficult negotiations were the result, and it was not until a flotilla of gunboats anchored off Nanking, and war seemed imminent, that the Viceroy gave way and put matters right.

These proceedings, it need hardly be said, caused grave concern to Mr. Taylor. While grateful for Mr. Medhurst's desire to help, how much rather would he have gone back at his own risk to live down unfriendliness and opposition by patient continuance in well-doing. Detained in Chinkiang week after week, he saw the difficulty grow only more serious, and meanwhile was faced with distressing complications of another sort in his own circle. For the painful spirit persisted in by certain members of the Mission had reached a

climax. A little group of five, having gone back from its principles, after causing endless trouble, were themselves unhappy in association with it. One of these had now to be dismissed for conduct "utterly inconsistent with the position of a Christian missionary."^[227] For more than two years Mr. and Mrs. Taylor had done everything in their power to help this particular brother and his wife to live and work happily in the Mission. The suffering they had endured from discourtesy, disloyalty, and untrustworthiness could never be told, and not the least part of it was to see the harmful influence exerted upon others. In severing their connection with the C.I.M. Mr. Taylor realised that he might be opening the door for the retirement of three ladies who from the first had been their confidantes—and so it proved, to the relief of all who had been associated with them, and who had marvelled at Mr. Taylor's patience in bearing so long.^[228] But the sorrow of his heart was very real over the loss of these workers, and he was conscious of the questions to which it must give rise among the friends of the Mission at home.

A letter to Mr. Berger written even before the Yang-chow riot showed how the true character of the work was more and more unfolding itself to his mind. With Mrs. Taylor away in Shanghai, bearing so bravely her share of the burdens, it had meant much to him when he wrote (July 3):

*It is most important that married missionaries should be **double** missionaries—not half or a quarter or eight-part missionaries. Might we not with advantage say to our candidates: "Our work is a peculiar one. We aim at the interior, where the whole of your society will be Chinese. If you wish for luxury and freedom from care ... **do not join us.** Unless you intend your wife to be a true missionary, not merely a wife, home-maker, and friend, **do not join us.** She must be able to read and be master of at least one Gospel in colloquial Chinese before you marry. A person of ordinary ability may accomplish this in six months, but if she needs*

*longer there is the more reason to wait until she has reached this point before you marry. She must be prepared to be happy among the Chinese when the duties of your calling require, as they often will, your temporary absence from home. You, too, must master the initial difficulties of the language and open up a station, if none be allotted to you, before you marry. With diligence and God's blessing you may hope to do this in a year or so. If these conditions seem too hard, these sacrifices too great to make for perishing China, **do not join our Mission.** These are small things to some of the crosses you may be permitted to bear for your dear Master!"*

*China is not to be won for Christ by self-seeking, ease-loving men and women. Those not prepared for labour, self-denial, and many discouragements will be poor helpers in the work. In short, the men and women we need are those who will put Jesus, China, souls first and foremost in everything and at all times: life itself must be secondary—nay, even those more precious than life. Of **such** men, of **such** women, do not fear to send us too many. Their price is far above rubies.*

The riot and all that grew out of it did but emphasise these considerations and deepen Mr. Taylor's thankfulness for many of the fellow-workers already given him. 'He rejoiced in the devotion to Christ which had led them to cast in their lot with such a Mission; in their love for the Chinese and willingness to live in close touch with them, and in the practical way they were adapting themselves to their surroundings. It could not but be obvious to him, as it was to them, how helpful Mrs. Taylor's quiet, unconscious influence was in this direction. Happy the younger workers like Mr. and Mrs. Judd—first to volunteer for Yang-chow after the riot—who on their arrival in China had early been moulded by her strong though gracious personality.

"How impressed I was," recalled Mr. Judd in this connection, "with her calm, holy, happy appearance, as well as her

Christian carriage! She, with Mr. McCarthy and a native helper, had come seven days' journey from Hang-chow to meet our party. She gave us the warmest welcome and every assistance possible, but it was evident that she had no mercy on fastidiousness as to food or any other matters. As soon as we were settled on our boats (in Chinese dress, of course) dinner was served, and Mrs. Taylor politely handed me a pair of chopsticks and a basin containing soup with some sort of little turn-overs floating in it.

"Will you take puppy-dumplings, Mr. Judd?" she said with a smile.

"Immediately, all I had heard about the Chinese eating dogs, etc., rushed into my mind. But I dare not question the contents of a dish handed me by such a lady! Making the best of it, therefore, I began to eat-and found nothing worse than little bits of pork nicely covered with dough."

Mrs. Judd also, who was scarcely more than a bride, had reason to remember that journey. Dismayed she may well have been to see, as night drew on, cockroaches creeping out of crevices in the boat! She had always had a horror of these creatures, and felt she could not endure to have them crawling over her in the night.

"Oh, Mrs. Taylor," she exclaimed, "I really cannot go to bed with all these cockroaches about!"

With another new arrival she prepared a light by which to sit up all night, keeping watch against their unwelcome visitors. But Mrs. Taylor quietly said

"Dear child, if God spares you to work in China, you will have many nights like this, and you will not be able to afford to lose your sleep. Can you not lie down quietly, and trust Him to keep you? I should advise you to."

Ashamed, and longing for such control over her feelings, the young missionary watched Mrs. Taylor go to rest, and after a real conflict did the same and had a good night's sleep.

"This may seem a trivial circumstance," she recalled long after, "but many a night when threatened by sterner foes and far greater dangers, I looked back on that simple lesson of trust and was strengthened."

Mrs. Taylor's one desire now, in spite of all that had happened at Yang-chow and her own immediate expectations, was to return to that city and win a way to darkened hearts for the saving love of Christ. Such a development seemed very improbable, for Mr. Medhurst was involved in what looked like endless difficulties. Even the premises in Chin-kiang rented weeks before the riot could not be obtained, and the C.I.M. party had to crowd into two little foreign houses in the Settlement for which a high rental was demanded. All September and October the weary negotiations went on, until finally in November, Sir Rutherford Alcock sent five gunboats up the river to Nanking.

Mr. Taylor all the while, in spite of a suffering illness, was planning and attempting fresh efforts for the evangelisation of districts yet unreached. His certainly was no ease-loving spirit. As soon as strength permitted he was away on a pioneering journey, with Williamson as his companion, to Tsing-kiang-pu, a city a hundred miles north of Yang-chow, which he hoped might form a base from which to reach the northern provinces. Honan was on his heart, and distant Shan-si, and at the same time he was meditating advance toward western China. His old friend Mr. Wylie had just returned from an extensive journey in the interests of the Bible Society, and, eager to learn all he could of conditions in the interior, Mr. Taylor had gone down to Shanghai to see him. All that he heard of the great province of Sze-chwan, in which Mr. Wylie had been severely handled, made him long to go himself without

delay to commence more permanent work.^[229] Nothing deterred by the Yangchow difficulties, the same spirit was animating many of the members of the Mission, and Mr. Meadows had left his home and work to others that he might lead an advance into the first inland province westward from Chinkiang-An-hwei with its twenty millions, among whom there was not a single Protestant missionary.^[230]

All this increased the thankfulness with which the news was at last received of an amicable settlement of the Yangchow matter. Patience and determination had conquered or was it the unceasing prayer that had reinforced Mr. Medhurst's efforts? His reasonable demands were all conceded, even to the placing of a stone tablet at the entrance to the Yangchow house, stating that the foreigners were there with the full recognition of the authorities. Quite a function was arranged to reinstate the party; and on November 18 Mr. Taylor was able to write from Yangchow once more, with a grateful heart, "the result of this case will probably be greatly to facilitate work in the interior."

But it was the family life and friendly spirit of the missionaries that disarmed suspicion and gradually won its way among the people. They could not but be touched when the children were brought back after all that had taken place, and when it appeared that Mrs. Taylor had not hesitated to return under conditions which made peace and quietness specially desirable.

"In this again," she wrote to her beloved friend at Saint Hill, "God has given me the desire of my heart. For I felt that if safety to my infant permitted, I would rather it were born in this city, in this house, in this very room than in any other place your own beautiful home in which I have been so tenderly cared for, the comforts and luxuries of which I know well how to appreciate, not excepted."

So it was there the happy event took place, calling forth the congratulations of their Chinese neighbours on the arrival of a fourth son! This in itself could not fail to make a favourable impression, as did also the perfect recovery of all who had suffered injury in the riot. The landlord of the inn (a Mr. P'eng) and two others who had befriended the missionaries in that terrible experience were by this time candidates for baptism; and when before the end of the year the Chin-kiang house was also in their possession, Mr. Taylor might well write: "Once again we raise our Ebenezer 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.'"

But the Yang-chow difficulties were far from ended with this satisfactory settlement. The devil's growl," as Mr. Spurgeon called it, had yet to come, and an angry growl it was, that upset not a few friends of the Mission. For the action of the Consular authorities gave rise to a storm of indignation at home. Missionaries were making trouble as usual, demanding the support of gunboats in their ill-judged crusade against ancestral worship. The country would be involved in war before the Government had even time to consider the matter! It seems almost incredible as one looks back upon it, 'that so much misrepresentation could have found its way into the daily papers, and that for a period of four or five months Mr. Taylor and his doings could so largely have occupied the public mind. China, of course, was farther off then than now, and there was far less understanding of its problems. But, even so, the attention the subject evoked and the prejudice displayed were extraordinary. From the "connected narrative "in the Times of December 1, "explaining" the whole situation, to the discussion in the House of Lords on March 9—in which, after a heated declamation, the Duke of Somerset urged that all British missionaries should be recalled from China—the matter seems hardly to have been absent from the public mind. The vigorous attitude enjoined upon the British Representative at Peking by a former Government

was utterly repudiated now, and there was not much to choose between the accusations heaped upon the Consular authorities and upon the missionaries. ^[231] But Mr. Taylor it was, all through, who had brought the country to the verge of war by his irresponsible conduct. Needless to say, the brunt of all this fell upon Mr. Berger.

*"The excitement, indeed I may almost say storm, seems bursting over us now," he wrote on December 17. "The **Times** is very severe, and incorrect in some things. Whether to reply to the false statements I scarcely know. ... At present the Yang-chow outrage is the all-absorbing subject. Our letters to-day, I think, number from twenty to thirty."*

December 31: The ____ Editor is so unscrupulous and unfair, and I am so unable to say how, or how far, you called upon the Consul in the matter, ^[232] that I greatly question the wisdom of replying at all. 'God is a refuge for us, "A very present help in time of trouble." Though we have much trial and perplexity in various ways, God has greatly blessed His Word to me, so that my joy abounds over all the sorrows.

January 13, 1869: It rejoices our hearts that you are again at Yang-chow. The late riots have led to such an immense increase of correspondence and claims upon me, that I must guard against breaking down entirely.

January 28: Through Christ, I am kept in great peace and quiet of soul, though the storm has raged terribly of late. Gleams of brightness are not withheld ... so do not be cast down, dear Brother. Hope in God, Who will never leave nor forsake those who seek to please Him.

February 25: We are just back from Bristol, where we spent a happy and profitable week, and found many dear friends who remembered and inquired most affectionately after you and Mrs. Taylor. The sympathy expressed for you and those with

you in the late trial was great and very sweet; and none spoke more warmly of you than dear Mr. Muller. ...

I asked for his opinion respecting the appeal to the British Consul, and you would have rejoiced to have heard him repudiate the spirit of judging you, or of fault-finding. He said he would never have spoken to me on the subject, had I not asked him for his judgment: after which he said that, had poor George Muller been in such circumstances, he cannot tell what he might have done; still he thought the more excellent way would have been to trust in God. ... That we must not set up what we think the more excellent way, as a rule for others, he quite agreed with me. ... Finally, Mr. Muller only allowed me, upon my request, to refer to his opinion with the understanding that it was that we might help each other in serving the Lord, and not in any spirit of fault-finding or condemning you.

*March 11: The Yang-chow matter is before the House of Lords. and I hope to send you a copy of the **Times** ere long. You can scarcely imagine what an effect the matter has produced in the country. Thank God I can say, "None of these things move me." I believe He has called us to this work, and it is not for us to run away, from it, or allow difficulties to overcome us. Be of good courage, the battle is the Lord's.*

March 24: I have not had a moment in which to look at the accounts sent me in your last two letters; indeed I have never been so pressed before, both in my business and the. affairs of the Mission. Still I hope in God, and believe He will bring us safely out of this tremendous storm. What to do for the best, I know not.

April 8: I think I can say I never felt prayer to be so real as I do now. God has graciously given me more faith, and I feel greatly helped heavenward.

One result of all these difficulties was, not unnaturally, a falling off in the income of the Mission, so that for the first time Mr. Taylor was faced with serious shortness of funds in China. This would have been much more the case if the Lord had not laid it upon the heart and put it into the power of Mr. George Muller largely to increase his gifts. He had been sending regularly to several members, of the Mission sometimes as much as twenty-five pounds a quarter; and now, within a day or two of the Yang-chow riot (long before he heard of it), he wrote to Mr. Berger asking for the names of others who were thoroughly satisfactory in their work whom he might add to his list. Mr. Berger sent him six names from which to choose, and his choice was to take them all. This was not only a substantial help, it was a great encouragement, for it meant added sympathy and prayer on the part of one who knew the way to the Throne. And more and more Mr. Taylor was feeling the need of just such fellowship.

"I am in strange ups and downs," wrote the saintly Rutherford, "and seven times a day I lose ground: I am put often to swimming, and again my feet are set on the rock that is 'higher than myself. ... I have seen my abominable vileness; and if I were known, there is none in this kingdom would ask how I do." [233]

Little as those nearest to him could have supposed it, this was very much Mr. Taylor's own experience. "Emptied" as he was "from vessel to vessel," constantly under pressure of strain and stress, his spiritual life had hardly kept pace with the demands upon it. Outwardly it may not have seemed so.

"Our hearts were much drawn to Mr. Taylor," said one of the fellow-workers constantly with him, "by seeing his gentle, humble, tender spirit under the administrative trials of those early years."

"I have known him under all circumstances," wrote another

before the Yang-chow riot, "and I feel that if you could see him daily you would indeed admire his self-abnegation, humility and never-flagging earnestness. Very few in his case would have shown the forbearing, loving spirit he has shown. No one knows how much he has felt our troubles, nor how he had suffered from depression. If he were not in the habit of casting his burdens on the Lord, he must have sunk under them. Grace, not natural temperament, has supported him."

But "the heart knoweth its own bitterness," and the load Hudson Taylor was carrying was almost more than he could bear. It was not the work with all its difficulty and trial: when consciously in communion with the Lord these seemed light. It was not shortness of funds, nor anxiety about those dearest to him. It was just-himself: the unsatisfied longing of his heart; the inward struggle to abide in Christ; the frequent failure and disappointment. So bitter was this experience that even when it was left far behind he could never forget it. This it was that made him always sympathetic with younger workers in their spiritual conflicts, quick to see and make the most of every opportunity to help them. Fellowship with God was to him a great reality, a great necessity. He had known much of it; much too of the terrible void of losing it. "Like a diver under water without air, or a fireman on a burning building with an empty hose," he found himself face to face with heathenism and all the claims that pressed upon him, but alas! too often out of touch with Christ. Had he been responsible for himself only this would have been bad enough, but with all the demands upon him it was unbearable especially in view of the subject to which his thoughts in common with those of his fellow-workers were being directed.

For just at this time the pages of the **Revival** (now the **Christian**) were largely occupied with a genuine holiness movement destined, in the providence of God, to lead to the Keswick Convention with its world-wide influences for

good. Finding its way to all the stations of the Mission, this paper was bringing the subject of a deeper spiritual life prominently before its readers, and not a few, like Mr. Taylor himself, were hungering for a fuller experience of the possibilities it set forth, which they saw to be in accordance with the Word of God. It was the life of habitual victory over sin, the life that is in deep reality "Not I, but Christ" for which their hearts longed. All through the summer and autumn of 1868 these articles were appearing, one series entitled "The Way of Holiness" being specially helpful.

"Surely the words 'Christ liveth in me,' 'For me to live is Christ,' cannot mean less than habitual victory over sin," said the writer. "None are so manifestly, pitiably weak as the 'little children' of the Kingdom when without the presence of Christ; but none so strong as those who abandon self to Him, that He may live in them, perfecting His strength in their weakness.... You have failed, not Christ. I feel confident that the point of your failure is in not having committed, unreservedly, everything to Him, in perfect self-abandonment.

"The Holy Spirit never creates hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, but in order that Christ may fill the longing soul.

"Faith in Jesus crucified is the way of peace to the sinner; so faith in Jesus risen is the way of daily salvation to the saint.

You cannot be your own Saviour, either in whole or in part.

***'Purifying their hearts by faith':** how my soul leaped up at those words, seeing in a moment the possibility of deliverance!*

If then it is by faith,' I exclaimed, 'I will trust Jesus for a pure heart, and now!' ...

"Can we trust Jesus too fully for everything His Word sets before us?"

"Who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people (peculiarly His own) zealous of good works.' When is this redemption? Now. From what? From all iniquity. What else does His sacrifice propose? To purify you unto Himself. When ought you to receive this redemption? Now. And this purification? Equally now, and with the same simple faith. [234]

"The Lord gives me to drink of His love as out of a river,' Thomas Walsh testified. 'I laid me down but could not sleep, through a deep and comfortable sense of the love of Christ. His Spirit rested on me, and made my heart flame with love to my God, my all. It never entered into my soul to conceive of thus loving Him with all the heart, until He revealed it to me by His Spirit. The fire of divine love burned incessantly in my soul.'"

To know **that** redemption, that love, in fuller measure was Mr. Taylor's. deepest longing; but oh, how different were the actual experiences of his soul! With the growth of the Mission his way seemed ever more beset with inward and outward perplexity, and with a need for the exercise of faith and grace which he had not faith and grace to meet. Sometimes he was buoyed up by hope, sometimes almost in despair.

Life was too busy as a rule for his correspondence to reveal much of the crisis through which he was passing, but early in 1869 he found himself alone on a journey which gave opportunity for one of the old-time letters to his mother Leaving Mr. Judd in charge at Yang-chow and Mr. Rudland at Chin-kiang, he had brought his family to Ningpo for' the time being, while he went to and fro among' the older stations of the Mission. Danger of riots detained him in Tai-chow-fu for a month, while the city was full of students for the yearly examination. Both there and in Wen-chow, where Mr. Stott had weathered persistent storms of opposition, the work was already bearing fruit, and Mr.

Taylor had the joy of baptizing the first believers. In a more recently opened station, Ning-hai, he found five candidates for baptism and a general willingness to hear the Gospel, where thirteen months previously there had been neither convert nor preacher. His heart had been so burdened about the place on his former visit that he had definitely prayed that the Gospel might be brought there before long, and now it was cheering to see the answer. But while, writing from that very city, he gave his parents the good news, it was their help he sought in those personal matters of which he could hardly have spoken so freely to any other.

*"I have often asked you to remember me in prayer," he said (March. 13, 1869), "and when I have done so there has been much **need** of it. That need has never been greater than at the present time. Envied by some, despised by many, hated perhaps by others; often blamed for things I never heard of, or had nothing to do with; an innovator on what have become established rules of missionary practice; an opponent of mighty systems of heathen error and superstition; working without precedent in many respects, and with few experienced helpers; often sick in body, as well as perplexed in mind and embarrassed by circumstances; had not the Lord been specially gracious to me, had not my mind been sustained by the conviction that the work is His, and that He is with me in what it is no empty figure to call 'the thick of the conflict,' I must have fainted and broken down. But the battle is the Lord's: and He will conquer. We may fail, do fail continually; but He never fails. Still I need your prayers more than ever before.*

"My own position becomes continually more and more responsible, and my need greater of special grace to fill it; but I have continually to mourn that I follow at such a distance and learn so slowly to imitate my precious Master. I cannot tell you how I am buffeted sometimes by temptation. I never

knew how bad a heart I had. Yet I do know that I love God and love His work, and desire to serve Him only and in all things. And I value above all things that precious Saviour in Whom alone I can be accepted. Often I am tempted to think that one so full of sin cannot be a child of God at all; but I try to throw it back, and rejoice all the more in the preciousness of Jesus, and in the riches of that grace that has made us 'accepted in the Beloved.' Beloved He is of God; beloved He ought to be of us. But oh, how short I fall here again I May God help me to love Him more and serve Him better. Do pray for me. Pray that the Lord will keep me from sin, will sanctify me wholly, will use me more largely in His service."

Chapter XII

The Exchanged Life

1869. AET. 37

IN the old home at Hang-chow Mr. McCarthy was sitting writing. The glory of a great sunrise was upon him-the light whose inward dawning makes all things new. To tell his beloved friend and leader about it was his longing, for he knew from his own experience something of the exercise of mind through which Mr. Taylor was passing. But where to begin, how to put it into words he knew not, 'and the day was full of pressing duties.

*"I do wish I could have a talk with you **now**," he wrote, "about the way of Holiness. At the time you were speaking to me about it, it was the subject of all others occupying my thoughts-not from anything I had read, not from what my brother had written even, so much as from a consciousness of failure; a constant falling short of that which I felt should be aimed at; an unrest; a perpetual striving to find some way by which I might continuously enjoy that communion, that fellowship at times so real, but more often so visionary, so far off! ... Do you know, dear brother, I now think that this striving, effort, longing, hoping for better days to come, is not the true way to happiness, holiness or usefulness: better, no doubt far better, than being satisfied with our poor attainments, but not the best way after all. I have been struck with a passage from a book of yours left here, entitled **Christ is All**. It says*

*"The Lord Jesus received is holiness begun; the Lord Jesus cherished is holiness advancing; the Lord Jesus **counted upon as never absent** would be holiness complete.*

"This (grace of faith) is the chain which binds the soul to Christ, and makes the Saviour and the sinner one... A channel is now formed by which Christ's fulness plenteously flows down. The barren branch becomes a portion of the fruitful stem.... One life reigns throughout the whole.

"Believer, you mourn your shortcomings; you find the hated monster, sin, still, striving for the mastery. Evil is present when you would do good. Help is laid up for you in Christ. Seek clearer interest in Him. They who most deeply feel that they have died in Christ, and paid in Him sin's penalties, ascend to highest heights of godly life. He is most holy who has most of Christ within, and joys most fully in the finished work. It is defective faith which clogs the feet, and causes many a fall.

*This last sentence I think I now fully endorse. To let my loving Saviour work in me His will, my sanctification is what I would live for by His grace. Abiding, not striving nor struggling; looking off unto Him; trusting Him for present power; trusting Him to subdue all inward corruption; resting in the love of an almighty Saviour, in the conscious joy of a complete salvation, a salvation 'from all sin' (this is **His** Word); willing that His will should truly be supreme—this is not new, and yet 'tis new to me. I feel as though the first dawning of a glorious day had risen upon me. I hail it with trembling, yet with trust. I seem to have got to the edge only, but of a sea which is boundless; to have sipped only, but of that which fully satisfies. Christ literally all seems to me now the power, the only power for service; the only ground for unchanging joy. May He lead us into the realisation of His unfathomable fulness."*

August 21: How then to have our faith increased? Only by thinking of all that Jesus is, and all He is for us: His life, His death, His work, He Himself as revealed to us in the Word, to be the subject of our constant thoughts. Not a striving to have faith, or to increase our faith, but a looking off to the Faithful One seems all we need; a resting in the Loved One entirely, for time and for eternity. It does not appear to me as anything new, only formerly misapprehended.

Life was, if anything, specially full and busy, for Mr. Taylor at this time. He

had returned from his journey round the older stations to an endless succession of duties that kept him on the move between Yang-chow and Chinkiang. Both were in a sense the headquarters of the Mission, and the growing church in the former and the demands of the printing-press in the latter filled every moment that could be spared from account keeping, correspondence, and directorial matters. There had recently been baptisms in Yang-chow, and Mr. Judd was glad of all the help Mr. Taylor could give in caring for the young converts. The heat of summer had told upon all the party, and Mr. Taylor himself had been laid aside by severe illness in the middle of August. Now, early in September, he was recovering, and trying to overtake the work that had accumulated. The Cordons had come over from Soo-chow to consult him about their movements; the Duncans were on their way from Nanking for special conference; others were coming and going on various matters, and there was a good deal of proof-reading on hand. Mrs. Judd also-was dangerously ill, and required Mr. Taylor's attention as a doctor. It was no time, surely, for an outstanding crisis in spiritual things!

Yet, oh, how deep the heart hunger, in and through all else! *That* did not diminish. It seemed to increase, rather, with all the need there was to minister to others. Leaving a full house in Chin-kiang, Mr. Taylor had run up to Yangchow to see his patient, and was returning now alone by a little boat chosen less for comfort than for speed. It was early in the morning, and he was eager to be in Chin-kiang, where Mrs. Taylor was, in time for breakfast, so as not to lose a moment of the day for work. Coming down the Grand Canal and crossing the Yangtze (two miles wide) he had quiet for thought—thought and prayer. Were it not recorded in his own words it would be difficult to believe, certainly impossible to imagine, such conflict, suffering, almost despair in spiritual things in one who had long and truly known the Lord. Ah, was it not that very fact that made it possible? Nearness to Christ

had been to him so real and blessed that any distance was unbearable. So deeply did he love that any clouding of the Master's face was felt, and felt at once with anguish of heart. It is the bride who mourns the absence of the bridegroom, not one who has been a stranger to His love.

Reaching the little crowded house at Chin-kiang, Mr. Taylor made his way as soon as possible to his room to attend to correspondence. There, amid a pile of letters, was one from Mr. McCarthy. We do not know if he was alone as he read it: we do not know just how the miracle was wrought. But—"as I read, I saw it all. I looked to Jesus and when I saw, oh how joy flowed!"

It was Saturday the 4th of September; the house was full, and others were coming; somehow they must be put up and kept over Sunday, for this great joy could not but be shared.^[235] As soon as he could break away from his glad thanksgivings. Mr. Taylor went out, a new man in a new world, to tell what the Lord had done for his soul. He took the letters, Mr. McCarthy's and one from Miss Faulding in the same strain, and, gathering the household together in the sitting-room upstairs, told out what his whole life was telling from that time onward to the glorious end. Other hearts were moved and blessed; the streams began to flow. From that little crowded home in Chin-kiang city they flowed on and out, and are flowing still—"rivers of living water." For "whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him," Jesus said, "shall never thirst but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

And he did more than tell. Pressed though he was with business matters, his correspondence took on a new tone. Here is one of the first letters written with that tide of joy and life more abundant sweeping through his soul. Books and medicines were needed from Yang-chow, and in sending for them Mr. Taylor gave directions so detailed that all needless trouble would be spared.

The pencilled lines on half a sheet of notepaper show that he was very busy-but how at leisure in spirit!

CHIN-KIANG, September 6, 1869.

MY DEAR SISTER

We had a very happy day here yesterday.

I was so happy! A letter from Mr. McCarthy on this subject has been blessed to several of us. He and Miss Faulding also seem so happy! He says: "I feel as though the first glimmer of the dawn of a glorious day had risen upon me. I hail it with trembling, yet with trust."

The part specially helpful to me is: "How then to have our faith increased? Only by thinking of all that Jesus is, and all He is *for us*: His life, His death, His work, He Himself as revealed to us in the Word, to be the subject of our constant thoughts. Not a striving to have faith, or to increase our faith, but a looking off to the Faithful One seems all we need."

Here, I feel, is the secret: not asking how I am to get sap *out* of the vine into myself, but remembering that Jesus is the Vine—the root, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, fruit, all indeed. Aye, and far more too! He is the soil and sunshine, air and rain—more than we can ask, think, or desire. Let us not then want to get anything out of Him, but rejoice in being *ourselves in Him*—one with Him, and, consequently, with all His fulness. Not seeking for faith to bring holiness, but rejoicing in the *fact* of perfect holiness in Christ, let us realise that—inseparably one with Him—this holiness is ours, and accepting the fact, find it so indeed. But I must stop.

Returning to Yang-chow to see his patient, Mr. Taylor became the bearer of his own glad tidings.

"When I went to welcome him," recalled Mr. Judd, "he was so full of joy that he scarcely knew how to speak to me. He did not even say, 'How do you do?' but walking up and down the room with his hands behind him, exclaimed

"Oh, Mr. Judd, God has made me a new man! God has made me a new man!"

That midnight conversation and the change that had come over his beloved leader greatly impressed the younger missionary. He too had seen these things theoretically, as so many do, without really apprehending them.

*"I have not got to **make** myself a branch," he could never forget Mr. Taylor saying. "The Lord Jesus tells me I am a branch. I am **part of Him**, and have just to believe it and act upon it. If I go to the bank in Shanghai, having an account, and ask for fifty dollars, the clerk cannot refuse it to my outstretched hand and say that it belongs to Mr. Taylor. What belongs to Mr. Taylor my hand may take. It is a member of my body. And I am a member of Christ, and may take all! need of His fulness. I have seen it long enough in the Bible, but I **believe** it now as a living reality."*

Simple as it was, the new point of view changed everything.

"He was a joyous man now," added Mr. Judd, "a bright, happy Christian. He had been a toiling, burdened one before, with latterly not much rest of soul. It was resting in Jesus now, and letting Him do the work-which makes all the difference! Whenever he spoke in meetings, after that, a new power seemed to flow from him, and in the practical things of life a new peace possessed him. Troubles did not worry him as before. He cast everything on God in a new way, and gave more time to prayer. Instead of working late at night, he began to go to bed earlier, rising at five in the morning to give two hours before the work of the day began to Bible study and

prayer. Thus his own soul was fed, and from him flowed the living water to others."

Six weeks after these experiences, when Mr. Taylor was rejoicing in the abiding fulness of this new life, a letter reached him from England that specially touched his heart. It was from his sister, Mrs. Broomhall, the intimate friend and correspondent of his early years, who now with a growing family round her was sore pressed, as he had been himself, by outward responsibilities and inward conflict rather than rest in spiritual things. With a great longing to help one so dear to him, Mr. Taylor took up his pen to reply. As he wrote, the whole 'story of his own extremity and deliverance was poured out in a letter so precious that it is given in full, despite the risk of some repetition:

October 17, 1869: So many thanks for your long, dear letter...: I do not think you have written me such a letter since we have been in China. I know it is with you as with me you cannot, not you will not. Mind and body will not bear more than a certain amount of strain, or do more than a certain amount of work. As to work, mine was never so plentiful, so responsible, or so difficult; but the weight and strain are all gone. The last month or more has been perhaps, the-happiest of my life; and I long to tell you a little of what the Lord has done for my soul. I do not know how far I may be able to make myself intelligible about it, for there is nothing new or strange or wonderful-and yet, all is new! In a word, "Whereas once I was blind, now I see."

Perhaps I shall make myself more clear if I go back a little. Well, dearie, my mind has been greatly exercised for six or eight months past, feeling the need personally, and for our Mission, of more holiness, life, power in our souls. But personal need stood first and was the greatest. I felt the ingratitude, the danger, the sin of not living nearer to God. I

prayed, agonised, fasted, strove, made resolutions, read the Word more diligently, sought more time" for retirement and meditation-but all was without effect. Every day, almost every hour, the consciousness of sin oppressed me. I knew that if I could only abide in Christ all would be well, but I could not. I began. the day with prayer, determined not to take my eye from Him for a moment; but pressure of duties, sometimes very trying, constant interruptions apt to be so wearing, often caused me to forget Him. Then one's nerves get so fretted in this climate that temptations to irritability, hard thoughts, and sometimes unkind words are all the more difficult to control. Each day brought its register of sin and failure, of lack of power. To will was indeed present with me, but how to perform I found not.

Then came the question, "Is there no rescue? Must it be thus to the end—constant conflict and, instead of victory, too often defeat?" How, too, could I preach with sincerity that to those who receive Jesus, "to them gave He power to become the sons of God" (i.e. God-like) when it was not so in my own experience? Instead of growing stronger, I seemed to be getting weaker and to have less power against sin; and no wonder, for faith and even hope were getting very low. I hated myself; I hated 'my sin; and yet I gained no strength against it. I felt I was a child of God: His Spirit in my heart would cry, in spite of all, "Abba, Father": but to rise to my privileges as a child, I was utterly powerless. I thought that holiness, practical holiness, was to be gradually attained 'by a diligent, use of the means of grace. I felt that there was nothing I so much desired in this world, nothing I so much needed. But so far from in any measure attaining it, the more I pursued and strove after it, the more it eluded my grasp; I till hope itself almost died out, and I began to think that, perhaps to make heaven the sweeter, God would not give it down here. I do not think I was striving to attain it in my own strength. I knew I was powerless. I told' the Lord so, and asked Him to give me

help and strength; and sometimes I almost believed He would keep and uphold me. But on looking back in the evening, alas! there was but sin and failure to confess and mourn before God.

I would not give you the impression that this was the daily experience of all those long, weary months. It was a too frequent state of soul; that toward which I was tending, and which almost ended in despair. And yet never did Christ seem more precious-a Saviour who could and would save such a sinner! And sometimes there were seasons not only of peace but of joy in the Lord. But they were transitory, and at best there was a sad lack of power. Oh, how good the Lord was in bringing this conflict to an end!

All the time I felt assured that there was in Christ all I needed, but the practical question was how to get it out. He was rich, truly, but I was poor; He strong, but I weak. I knew full well that there was in the root, the stem, abundant fatness; but how to get it into my puny little branch was the question. As gradually the light was dawning on me, I saw that faith was the only pre-requisite, was the hand to lay hold on His fulness and make it my own. But I had not this faith. I strove for it, but it would not come; tried to exercise it, but in vain. Seeing more and more the wondrous supply of grace laid up in Jesus, the fulness of our precious Saviour-my helplessness and guilt seemed to increase. Sins committed appeared but as trifles compared with the sin of unbelief which was their cause, which could not or would not take God at His word, but rather made Him a liar! Unbelief was, I felt, the damning sin of the world-yet I indulged in it. I prayed for faith, but it came not. What was I to do?

When my agony of soul was at its height, a sentence in a letter from dear McCarthy was used to remove the scales from my eyes, and the Spirit of God revealed the truth of our oneness with Jesus as I had never known it before. McCarthy, who had

been much exercised by the same sense of failure, but saw the light before I did, wrote (I quote from memory):

"But how to get faith strengthened? Not by striving after faith, but by resting on the Faithful One."

As I read I saw it all! "If we believe not, He abideth faithful." I looked to Jesus and saw (and when I saw, oh, how joy flowed!) that He had said, "I will never leave you." "Ah, **there** is rest! "I thought. I have striven in vain to rest in Him. I'll strive no more. For has **He** not promised to abide with me-never to leave me, never to fail me?" And, dearie, **He never will!**

But this was not all He showed me, nor one half. As I thought of the Vine and the branches, what light the blessed Spirit poured direct into my soul! How great seemed my mistake in having wished to get the sap, the fulness out of Him. I saw not only that Jesus would never leave me, but that I was a member of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. The vine now I see, is not the root merely, but all-root, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, fruit: and Jesus is not only that: He is soil and sunshine, air and showers, and ten thousand times more than we have ever dreamed, wished for, or needed. Oh, the joy of seeing this truth! I do pray that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, that you may know and enjoy the riches freely given us in Christ.

Oh, my dear sister, it is a wonderful thing to be really one with a risen and exalted Saviour; to be a member of Christ! Think what it involves. Can Christ be rich and I poor? Can your right hand be rich and the left poor? or your head be well fed while your body starves? Again, think of its bearing on prayer. Could a bank clerk say to a customer, "It was only your hand wrote that cheque, not you," or, "I cannot pay this sum to your hand, but only to yourself"? No more can your prayers, or mine, be discredited **if offered in the Name of Jesus** (i.e. not

in our own name, or for the sake of Jesus merely, but on the ground that we are His, His members) so long as we keep within the extent of Christ's credit—a tolerably wide limit! If we ask anything unscriptural or not in accordance with the will of God, Christ Himself could not do that; but, "If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us, and ... we know that we have the petitions that we desire of Him."

*The sweetest part, if one may speak of one part being sweeter than another, is the rest which full identification with Christ brings. I am no longer anxious about anything, as I realise this; for He, I know, is able to carry out **His will**, and His will is mine. It makes no matter where He places me, or how. That is rather for Him to consider than for me; for in the easiest positions He must give me His grace, and in the most difficult His grace is sufficient. It little matters to my servant whether I send him to buy a few cash worth of things, or the most expensive articles. In either case he looks to me for the money, and brings me his purchases. So, if God place me in great perplexity, must He not give me much guidance; in positions of great difficulty, much grace; in circumstances of great pressure and trial, much strength? No fear that His resources will be unequal to the emergency! And His resources are mine, for He is mine, and is with me and dwells in me. All this springs from the believer's oneness with Christ. And since Christ has thus dwelt in my heart by faith, how happy I have been! I wish I could tell you, instead of writing about it.*

I am no better than before (may I not say, in a sense, I do not wish to be, nor am I striving to be); but I am dead and buried with Christ—aye, and risen too and ascended; and now Christ lives in me, and "the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." I now believe I am dead to sin. God reckons me so, and tells me to reckon myself so. He knows best. All my past experience may have shown that it was not so; but I dare not

say it is not now, when He says it is. I feel and know that old things have passed away. I am as capable of sinning as ever, but Christ is realised as present as never before. He cannot sin; and He can keep me from sinning. I cannot say (I am sorry to have to confess it) that since I have seen this light I have not sinned; but I do feel there was no need to have done so. And further—walking more in the light, my conscience has been more tender; sin has been instantly seen, confessed, pardoned; and peace and joy (with humility) instantly restored: with one exception, when for several hours peace and joy did not return—from want, as I had to learn, of full confession, and from some attempt to justify self.'

*Faith, I now see, is "the substance of things hoped for," and not mere shadow. It is not less than sight, but **more**. Sight only shows the outward forms of things; faith gives the substance. You can rest on substance, **feed** on substance. Christ dwelling in the heart by faith (i.e. His Word of Promise credited) is **power** indeed, is **life** indeed. And Christ and sin will not dwell together; nor can we have His presence with love of the world, or carefulness about "many things."*

*And now I must close. I have not said half I would, nor as I would had I more time. May God give you to lay hold on these blessed truths. Do not let us continue to say, in **effect**, "Who shall ascend into heaven, that is to bring Christ down from above." In other words, do not let us consider Him as afar off, when God has made us **one with Him**, members of His very body. Nor should we look upon this experience, these truths, as for the few. They are the birthright of every child of God, and no one can dispense with them without dishonour to our Lord. The only power for deliverance from sin or for true service is **CHRIST**.*

And it was blessing that stood the test as the busy days went by. Well might Mr. Taylor have said with George Miller of Bristol at this time: "If I had

strength to work twenty-four hours every day I could not half accomplish what is ready for my hands and feet and head and heart." With him, too, he could have added: Yet with all this, I consider my first business to be, and my most important business every day, to get blessing in my own soul-for my own soul to be happy in the Lord, and then to work, and to work with all diligence." A few extracts from the correspondence of one fortnight will show how many and varied were Mr. Taylor's occupations, and that the joy of the Lord was indeed his strength. "Now He makes me happy all day long," he had written to Mr. Berger a little earlier, "makes my work light, and gives me joy in seeing Him blessing others. How can I but rejoice! I have no fear now of our work being too heavy for Him, either out here or in the home department."

To Mr. Reid at Nanking, October. 18: "My heart warms towards you as I sit down to write. Business is very pressing, but it does not hinder my joy in the Lord.... I enclose the first six pages of your valuable little book, and am buying Chinese type to print it."

Same day, to Mr. Cordon: "My soul is so happy in the Lord! and as I think of the blessing He gave me on the happy day when we all met here together, I know not how sufficiently to thank and praise Him. Truly Jesus is the great need of our souls. And He is the great gift of our Father's love-Who gave Him for us, and makes us one with Him in resurrection life and power.... The mission funds are lower than they were before."

From Yang-chow, October. 27: "Our work here is very encouraging at present. We cannot too much thank God for this. Five persons have been baptized ... eight others are about ready to be received, and several more will, I trust, follow after a little time. It is the Provincial Examination at present, and the daily congregations are large and attentive."

... I quite think we shall see great things here, for we are one with Jesus."

To Mr. Jackson at Tai-chow-fu, October. 30: "I would ask you to remember funds in prayer: they are lower than they have ever been. Yet we are not and have not been forsaken, or lacking really: and we assuredly shall not be, if we have faith as a grain of mustard seed... The precious truths we talked over together (at Ningpo) make me happy all the day. I hope you find it so too."

*Postscript to a letter to An-king, October. 31: "It occurs to me to add that some of the members of the Mission may be unaware of the amount of labour involved in serving them. It is a real **Pleasure**, but it is none the less onerous. For instance, I have to write to Mr. Muller to thank him for your cheque; to Mr. Lord asking him kindly to sell it as he gets a better price than the Shanghai Banks will give; then to enter it in his account and in my cash account; then to send the amount to Mr. Hart, with a note requesting him kindly to forward it. Of course, I must also advise you of it, but this may not involve special writing. I thank God for permitting me to be a hewer of wood and drawer of water in His glorious work, and do cheerfully what little I can to help, only regretting the impossibility of doing all that all wish. Just now I have seven different portions of Old and New Testament (whole books) and long tracts sent me in several dialects, with requests to revise them. This, if possible at all, is the work of weeks if not months. Yet I am praying for guidance as to whether I may not have to leave to-night for one of our most distant stations, on account of a case of sickness."*

It was a serious test in November when tidings came of an uprising in An-king, the newly opened station which was their farthest point inland. Mr. Taylor was on a journey at the time, and out of reach of letters, and the first he heard of it was a rumour that Mr. and Mrs. Meadows and Mr. Williamson

had all been killed.

"What shall we say? "he wrote in suspense that would have been anguish, as he travelled with all haste to Chin-kiang." 'Father, glorify Thy Name," though the flesh is weak and trembles. Jesus is our strength; and what we cannot do or bear He can both do and bear in us. ... We are not our own, nor is the work ours. He Whose we are and Whom we serve will not prove unequal to the emergency."

To his relief he found that the report had been exaggerated. The riot was indeed a 'serious affair, but the missionaries had escaped with their lives, even the little children being uninjured. Judging by the troubles that had grown out of the Yang-chow riot, however, this might be far from the end of the matter. Already adverse criticism at home had resulted in a lessening of funds, so that in four months May to September-less had been received by a thousand pounds than in the corresponding period of the previous year. This would have caused Mr. Taylor considerable anxiety, especially in view of the new complications, but for the reality of the blessing that had come to him.

"You will have heard from other quarters," he wrote to Mr. Berger in December, "of An-king affairs. The Lord has kept my soul in peace about the whole thing. From the first I could not but see that the opponents of missions, especially those opposed to us, might make an unfavourable use of it. But the Lord reigns. We are serving Him, He knows at what cost and in Whose strength. He will not leave His own work..."

"I see no objection to your referring to the state of funds in writing to various members of the Mission; you would not seek to depress their spirit, but rather to turn them from man to God, the almighty, unfailing One.

*"Oh! dear Brother, **the one thing** we need is to be brought into more vivid realisation of our nearness to, oneness with*

*Him. Almost all our difficulties would have been either obviated or better met had we had this more truly in our hearts. Difficulties greater and more serious than I have ever had crowd around me. The last few months have been of unparalleled pressure and constant movement; but I have enjoyed more leisure of soul and rest of spirit than ever before, and more joy in the Lord. If satisfied with His will and way, **there is rest.***

"Should there be another typhoon over the An-king riot do not be cast down. The Lord will strengthen you and us by His own might to bear much more than this..... When Jew and Roman combined to oppose, God carried through His cause; and He will still carry it through."

To his mother he wrote also:

*I am more happy in the Lord than I have ever been, and enjoy more leisure of soul, casting more fully every burden on Him Who alone is able to bear all. To be content with God's will and way is rest. Things may not be in many respects as I would wish them; but if God permits them to be so, or so orders them, I may well be content. Mine is to obey, His to direct. Hence I am not only able to bear up against the new trial at An-king but to be **fully** satisfied about it, not to wish it otherwise, but to thank God for it. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in **Thy** sight." Still, you will pray much for us all, will you not? ^[236]*

Christmas that year was a very happy season, spent by Mr. and Mrs. Taylor with their family in, Yang-chow. That its festivities did not centre around roast beef and plum pudding may be judged from the recollections of Mr. C. T. Fishe, who had recently arrived from home.

"I was very young at the time," he wrote, "and was much touched by Mr. Taylor's amiability. He was very kind to me. I

helped him in his dispensary and medical work, and was with him a good deal whenever he was in Yang-chow. He guided my studies, and was keen on the aspirates. He was, of course, exceedingly busy, and appeared quite a young and lively man. He loved playing with his children, and did not seem burdened with care. He was fond of music and singing, and used to play the harmonium for the Chinese on Sunday evenings for an hour at a time, and have them sing hymns. ...

*"His favourite theme in those days was the fifteenth chapter of John. We had many helpful times of prayer and study. He seemed to be growing much in spiritual things, and that passage was his special delight. The noon prayer meeting was held daily. **Times of Refreshing** was our favourite hymn-book, and we often sang 'Praise the Saviour' and 'Immanuel's Land.'"*

As to the household arrangements:

*"They lived exclusively on Chinese food," he continued, and I well remember the difficulty we had in hunting up a knife, fork and spoon when a foreigner unskilled in the use of chopsticks came to Yang-chow. Condensed milk was not yet on the market, and they used few if any foreign stores. There was one luxury, however—a big barrel of treacle that had recently come out on the **Lammermuir**. This was eaten with rice and much appreciated."*

That they were feeling the shortness of funds and doing all they could to lessen personal expenses, so as to be able to help their fellow-workers, is evident from a letter written at the end of December in which Mr. Taylor said:

I am thankful to be able to send you seventy-five dollars for your own use, and the same sum for the school. You must husband the latter to the utmost. More than a thousand pounds

less have been contributed during the first half of this (financial) year than last year. I do not keep a cook now. I find it cheaper to get cooked food brought in from outside at a dollar a head per month. Miss Faulding's school at Hangchow costs her a trifle more than this, with a cook in the house. Let us pray in faith for funds, that we may not have to diminish our work.

To diminish one's comforts seemed to him of small account; but "to diminish our work"—well, thank God, that was something he never had to do. Four shillings a head per month for board expenses, and food brought in ready cooked from an eating-house, might be regarded by some as "missionary hardship." But they were thoroughly happy in their Chinese surroundings, living very much in touch with the people and very near the Lord.

And then, on New Year's Eve, a beautiful thing happened—a token for good reached them that was as cheering as it was unexpected.

My dear Brother," Mr. George Muller had written in October, "the work of the Lord in China is more and more laid on my heart, and hence I have been longing and praying to be able to assist it more and more with means, as well as with prayer. Of late I have especially had a desire to help all the dear brethren and sisters with you with pecuniary means. This I desired especially that they might see that I was interested in them all. This my desire the Lord has fulfilled, and I now send you a cheque for £10 for Miss Blatchley, £10 for Miss Bowyer, £10 for Miss Desgraz, £25 for Mr. Harvey, £25 for Mr. C. T. Fishe, £25 for Mr. Reid, £25 for Mr. Jackson, £25 for Mr. Stott, £25 for Mr. Ed. Fishe, £25 for Mr. Rudland, £25 for Mr. Cordon. Be pleased to convey these cheques to each, with the request to acknowledge the receipt of the amount.

"Likewise I enclose a letter for all the dear brethren and sisters connected with the China Inland Mission. May I ask

you, dear Brother, to let it be read by all who are now with you; and would you kindly have it copied out for those who are not with you, to send it to them with their money. I feel how I burden you; but I think it would be a service to the Lord to let the dear brethren and sisters see, individually, how interested I am in them."

The eleven cheques enclosed were for all the members of the Mission to whom Mr. Muller had not previously been ministering. Writing by the same mail Mr. Berger said:

Mr. Muller, after due consideration, has requested the names of all the brethren and sisters connected with the C.I.M., as he thinks it well to send help as he is able to each one, unless we know of anything to hinder. ... Surely the Lord knew our funds were sinking, and thus put it into the heart of His honoured servant to help. ^[237]

But it was not money only; it was the loving sympathy of such a man of God, and the prayerful interest with which his gifts were followed that made them so precious.

"My chief object," he wrote in his letter to the missionaries, is to tell you that I love you in the Lord; that I feel deeply interested about the Lord's work in China, and that I pray daily for you. I thought it might be a little encouragement to you in your difficulties, trials, hardships and disappointments to hear of one more who felt for you and who remembered you before the Lord. But were it otherwise, had you even no one to care for you, or did you at least seem to be in a position as if no one cared for you, you will always have the Lord to be with you. Remember Paul's case at Rome (2 Timothy 4:16-18). On Him then reckon, to Him look, on Him depend; and be assured, if you walk with Him and look to Him, and expect help from Him, He will never fail you. An older brother who has known the Lord forty-four years, who writes this, says to

you for your encouragement that He has never failed him. In the greatest difficulties, in the heaviest trials, in the deepest poverty and necessities, He has never failed me; but, because I was enabled by His grace to trust in Him, He has always appeared for my help. I delight in speaking well of His Name."

Chapter XIII [\(TOC\)](#)

Jesus does Satisfy

1869-1870. AET. 37-38

To Mrs. Taylor the new life that had come to her husband and many of their fellow-workers was a joy not unmixed with wonder. The experiences they were finding as something new and further had long been her secret of victory and peace. "It was just resting in Jesus," as she expressed it, "and letting Him do the work"—a little sentence, but one that really lived out made her life the strength to the mission that Mr. Taylor had often realised it to be. And now husband and wife were one in a new way, and helpers of each other's faith. During their first separation after that time of blessing, he wrote from Hang-chow (November 9, 1869):

*It is a bright, sunny morning, but the sunshine without is as nothing to the sunshine within. He has taught me something of what is meant by "Rejoice in the Lord"; and rejoice I must, and rejoice I do. I want you too to have fellowship, partnership in this joy. It is not that I have anything new to tell you, but I am feeling it all anew. I have hitherto used the words "Rejoice in the Lord "as meaning in our oneness with Him, or in the measure of His grace imparted to us or working in us. Of course it is not this. At other times it has been more the thought of rejoicing in fellowship with Him-in that which gives Him joy, or which is ensured to us in Him. ... Yet, clearly, it is not this either. I now see it is not in what He is to me, not in what He is working, or has worked, or may work in, for or by me, but **in Himself** I am to rejoice; in what He is and has in Himself absolutely.*

And this, it appears to me, is the only possible or even legitimate ground for constant, unchanging, full joy. We cannot but rejoice, when our oneness with Him is realised, in His preciousness, grace, love, holiness, indeed in all His perfections. He is "the same, yesterday, and to-day and for ever." If our joy be in His keeping down sin in us, a fall or two

destroys that; if it be in His working in or through us, we may not be conscious of the measure in which He is doing so, and may be puffed up or cast down without due reason; but if it be in Him as He is, this cannot change or fluctuate. ... Ah, my darling, what ground for changeless joy we have in JESUS!

The beauty of their life together was specially seen at Yang-chow, which was more home to them than any of the other stations. There the children were left with Miss Blatchley when Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were away on journeys, and there they had the joy of reunion, and happy fellowship with their colleagues Mr. and Mrs. Judd.

*"The Lord is greatly working in this city," Miss Blatchley wrote at the end of 1869: "The converts here are different from any others we have known in China. There is such life, warmth, **earnestness** about them."*

Noticing that Mr. Judd was suffering in health at this time, Mr. Taylor wished to secure his getting more exercise. Duncan, who was something of a farmer, was going up the Grand Canal on an evangelistic journey, and it was quite natural to ask him to purchase and bring back a nice little horse for riding if he came across one. Mr. Taylor was away when the horse arrived, but knowing it to be his intention to ride it, Mr. Judd obtained a good native saddle, bridle, etc., and kept the animal exercised. This was just what Mr. Taylor wished. Too busy on his return to go out himself, he asked Mr. Judd kindly to continue "doing good deeds" in this way, and when leaving again charged him to remember that the horse needed exercise.

"Did Mr. Taylor never ride it?" we asked on hearing the story.

"No, never! he was far too busy. But he was careful to pay its expenses. It was simply his way of providing horse exercise for one who could not otherwise have taken it. And it did me a world of good. I exercised that pony

not a little, going to villages to preach, and had some remarkable experiences with it. But he was just like that, all through. In doing kindnesses, he would scarcely let you know, much less feel, that you were under any obligation. And Mrs. Taylor was just the same, loving, unselfish, thoughtful of others."

"Was she really kept free from care amid the practical concerns of everyday life?"

"Wonderfully so! I never saw her worried."

"Not with Chinese servants, or with the children?"

"Not with servants, children, or anything else! I never recall any part of her conduct, in the few years I was privileged to know her, without seeing her face shining with the brightness that comes from the Holy Spirit's anointing."

*"How does the branch bear fruit?" asked Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe in her little booklet on **How to live in Christ.***

"Not by incessant effort for sunshine and, air; not by vain struggles for those vivifying influences which give beauty to the blossom, and verdure to the leaf: it simply abides in the vine, in silent and undisturbed union, and blossoms and fruit appear as of spontaneous growth.

"How, then, shall a Christian bear fruit? By efforts and struggles to obtain that which is freely given; by meditations on watchfulness, on prayer, on action, on temptation, and on dangers? No: there must be a full concentration of the thoughts and affections on CHRIST; a complete surrender of the whole being to Him; a constant looking to Him for grace. Christians in whom these dispositions are once firmly fixed go on calmly as the infant borne in the arms of its mother. Christ reminds them of every duty in its time and place, reproves them for every error, counsels them in every difficulty, excites them to every needful activity. In spiritual as in temporal

matters they take no thought for the morrow; for they know that Christ will be as accessible to-morrow as to-day, and that time imposes no barrier on His love. Their hope and trust rest solely on what He is willing and able to do for them; on nothing that they suppose themselves able and willing to do for Him. Their talisman for every temptation and sorrow is their oft-repeated child-like surrender of their whole being to Him.'

Nothing could more truly describe the experience into which Mr. Taylor was being brought, and which Mrs. Taylor so fully shared with him. ^[238]

That such blessing should be tested by increasing trials is not to be wondered at. Inwardly and outwardly the period upon which they were entering was to be one of unprecedented distress. In the work they were to experience the power of the adversary as never before, while in personal matters new and deep sorrows awaited them. But for the preparation of heart which unconsciously to themselves had thus been made, things would have gone very differently both with Mr. Taylor and with the Mission.

The shadow of a cross falls deep and broad;

With Thee I enter, tremblingly, the shade:

Whence this new light which brightens round me, Lord?

"The fellowship of suffering," He said. ^[239]

To begin with, the time had come for breaking up that happy family life which meant so much to Mr. and Mrs. Taylor. They dared not risk another summer for their elder children in China, and the delicate health of Samuel, who was only five years old, made it clear that he should go with his brothers and sister. This meant separation from four of their little flock, leaving only the baby born after the Yang-chow riot to ease the aching loneliness. For

some time it was a question as to whether the mother should not go herself, but the necessity for this seemed obviated when Miss Blatchley volunteered to take her place in caring for the children. To part from her was almost like giving up a daughter, so devoted had she been in sharing all their experiences. But she truly loved the children, and Mr. Taylor was ready to forgo her secretarial help in order that Mrs. Taylor might remain in China. Plan as he might, they could not see far ahead, and could only trust the little party to a care infinitely wiser and more tender than their own.

"God will provide. Oh, He is a Father!" Mr. Taylor wrote in this connection. "My precious Mother, you can enter somewhat into our feelings as this dark cloud draws near. Sometimes it seems, for awhile, to take all one's strength and heart away, but God does and will help us. It is so good of Him to have given us to know more than we ever have known of His heart, His love, His gift, His joy, before calling us to take this step. We know as we did not that we can do all things through Christ our Strengthener, and would not faint nor be ungrateful. And there are many mercies connected with this trial. Dear Miss Blatchley's love and self-sacrifice we can never repay. Next to ourselves, the children love her and she them. She knows just what our wishes are regarding them, in sickness and in health. I am sure you will do what you can to help her ... and you will specially pray for my dear Maria. When all the bustle of preparation and the excitement of departure are over, then will come the trying time of reaction. But the Lord, Whose work calls for the separation, can and will support her."

Very painful it was, as the time drew near, to see the parting begin to tell upon the child about whom they were most concerned. Or was it only that his chronic trouble had increased, and that with care the voyage would set him up again? Taking the opportunity of a decided improvement, the family set

out from Yang-chow, accompanied by Mr. Harvey and Mr. Fishe. The boats were delayed in starting, and hardly had they got clear of the city when the little invalid showed signs of a relapse. All night long they watched beside him, doing everything that could be done, under the circumstances. But at dawn the following morning he fell into a deep sleep, and from the turbid waters of the Yangtze passed without pain or fear to the Better Land.

Before a driving storm the parents crossed the river, there more than two miles wide, to lay their treasure in the little cemetery at Chin-kiang, and then went on with the others to Shanghai. A few weeks later, after taking them all on board the French mail which was to sail at dawn the following morning, Mr. Taylor wrote at midnight:^[240]

"I have seen them awake, for the last time in China ..." (He was returning to fetch Mrs. Taylor who was still on board.) Two of 'our little ones we have no anxiety about; they rest in Jesus' bosom. And now, dear Brother, though the tears will not be stayed, I do thank God for permitting one so unworthy to take any part in this great work, and do not regret having engaged and being engaged in it. It is His work, not mine nor yours: and yet it is ours-not because we are engaged in it, but because we are His, and one with Him Whose work it is."

This was the reality that sustained, and more than sustained them. Never had there been a more troubled summer in China than that on which they were entering.

*"Politically, we are facing a crisis," Mr. Taylor had written some weeks earlier. "If our Government continues their present, I had almost said **mad** policy, war must result. In the mean time our position is becoming always more embarrassing.... You can scarcely judge how intricate our path seems at times."*^[241]

And yet in the midst of it all, with a longing for their little ones that was indescribable, they never had had more rest and joy in God.

*"I could not but admire and wonder at the grace that so sustained and comforted the fondest of mothers," Mr. Taylor wrote as he recalled it afterwards. "The secret was that Jesus was **satisfying** the deep thirst of heart and soul."*

Mrs. Taylor was at her best that summer, borne up, it would seem, on the very tempest of troubles that raged about them. Sickness was rife in the Mission, and before they could reach Chin-kiang after parting from the children, news came to them of Mrs. Judd's being there and at the point of death. After days and nights of nursing, Mr. Judd was almost too weary to bear up, when in the courtyard below he heard sounds of an unexpected arrival. Who could it be at that hour of night, and where had they come from? No steamer had passed up-river, and native boats would not be travelling after dark. Besides it was a wheelbarrow that had been trundled in. A long day's journey on that springless vehicle a woman had come alone, and soon he saw the face of all others he could have longed to see. He had thought them far away, but Mr. Taylor, who could not leave the boat on account of another patient, had consented to Mrs. Taylor's pressing on alone to give what help she could.

"Suffering though she was at the time and worn with hard travelling," he recalled, "she insisted on my going to bed and that she would undertake the nursing. Nothing would induce her to rest.

"'No,' she said, 'you have quite enough to bear, without sitting up any more at night. Go to bed, for I shall stay with your wife whether you do or not.'

"Never can I forget the firmness and love with which it 'was

said, her face shining meanwhile with the tenderness of Him in Whom it was her joy and strength to abide."

Nothing but prayer brought the patient through, just as nothing but prayer saved the situation in many an hour of extremity that summer.

*"We had previously known something of trial in one station or another," Mr. Taylor wrote to the friends of the Mission, "but now in all simultaneously, or nearly so, a wide-spread excitement shook the very foundations of native society. It is impossible to describe the alarm and consternation of the Chinese, when first they believed that native magicians were bewitching them, or their indignation and anger when told that these insidious foes were the agents of foreigners. It is well known how in Tien-tsin they rose and barbarously murdered the Romish Sisters of Charity, the priests, and even the French Consul. What then restrained them in the interior, where our brothers were alone, far from any protecting human power? Nothing but **the mighty hand of God**, in answer to united, constant prayer, offered in the all-prevailing name of JESUS. And this same power kept us satisfied with Jesus-with His presence, His love, His providence."*

It is easy to read, but only those who have passed through like experiences can have any idea of the strain involved. The heat of the summer was excessive, which added to the unrest of the native population. Ladies and children had to be removed from several of the stations, and for a time it seemed as though the Chinese Government might insist on their leaving the country altogether. This necessitated much correspondence with officials, both native and foreign, and constant letters of advice and sympathy to the workers most in peril. The accommodation of the little house at Chinkiang was taxed to its utmost, and so great was the excitement, even there, that no other premises could be obtained.

"Old times seem to be coming round again," Mr. Taylor wrote to Miss Blatchley in June (referring to the Yang-chow riot), "but with this difference, that our anxieties are not as before confined to one place."

By this time it looked as though all the river-stations might have to be given up. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were making their home at Chin-kiang, to be more in the centre of things, he sleeping on the floor in sitting-room or passage that she, might share their bedroom with other ladies.

"One difficulty follows another very fast," he wrote to Hang-chow at the end of the month; "but God reigns, not chance. At Nanking the excitement has been frightful. ... Our people have met with no insult, even on the streets, but had the Roman Catholic place been sacked, they could hardly have escaped scot-free. We need to pray for them, for the three months' Examination have barely commenced (bringing tens of thousands of scholars to the city).

"Here the rumours are, I hope, passing away, but at Yangchow they are very bad. ... Pray much for us. My heart is calm, but my head is sorely tried by the constant succession of one difficulty upon another. I do not think we shall have to abandon this house (Chin-kiang)."

Yet the troubles of the time were not allowed to interfere with as much work among the people as 'was possible. Mrs. Taylor, especially, with fewer household and family cares, was seeking to help the little church at Chin-kiang. In the hottest days of June she wrote to Miss Blatchley:

We have been holding classes on Sundays and two or three evenings in the week, having two objects specially in view 'first, to interest the natives, those who can read, in searching the Scriptures, and those who cannot, in learning to do so; and secondly, to set an example to the younger members of the

Mission, who know pretty well that we have no lack of work. It may be a practical proof to them of the importance we attach to securing that the Christians and other natives about us learn to read and understand for themselves the Word of God.

The joy that had come to Mr. Taylor in a deeper apprehension of living, present oneness with Christ seems in nowise to have been hindered by the troubles of the time. The pages of his letter-book reveal, in fact, not so much the endless difficulties as the full tide of blessing that carried him through all. Though no detail is overlooked in the business part of the correspondence, letter after letter is taken up with that which was far more important. To Miss Desgraz, for example, he wrote in the middle of June after a careful letter about Yang-chow affairs:

And now, my dear Sister, I have the very passage for you, and God has so blessed it to my own soul! John 7:37-39 "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." Who does not thirst? Who has not mind-thirsts or heart-thirsts, soul-thirsts or body-thirsts? Well, no matter which, or whether I have them all—"Come unto ME and" remain thirsty? Ah, no! "Come unto ME and drink."

What, can Jesus meet my need? Yes, and more than meet it. No matter how intricate my path, how difficult my service no matter how sad my bereavement, how far away my loved ones, no matter how helpless I am, how hopeless I am, how deep are my soul-yearnings-JESUS can meet all, all, and more than meet. He not only promises me rest (Matthew 11:28-30)—ah, how welcome that would be were it all, and what an all that one word embraces! He not only promises me drink to alleviate my thirst. No, better than that!

"He who trusts me in this matter (who believeth on ME takes me at my word) out of him shall flow ..."

Can it be. so? Can the dry and thirsty one not only be refreshed, the parched soil moistened, the arid places cooled, but the land be so saturated, that springs well up, streams flow down from it? Even so! And not mere mountain torrents, full while the rains last, then dry again ... but "out of his belly shall flow rivers"—rivers like the mighty Yangtze, ever deep, ever full. In times of drought brooks may fail, often do; canals may be pumped dry, often are; but the Yangtze never. Always a mighty stream; always flowing, deep and irresistible!

*"Come unto me and **drink,**' he wrote in another June letter. "Not, come and take a hasty draught; not, come and slightly alleviate, or for a short time remove one's thirst. No! 'drink,' or 'be drinking 'constantly, habitually. The cause of thirst may be irremediable. One coming, one drinking may refresh and comfort; but we are to be ever coming, ever drinking. No fear of emptying the fountain or exhausting the river!"*

How sorely the lesson would be needed by his own heart, in days that were drawing near, he little knew when writing; but the blessed Reality did not fail him.

One of the beautiful things of this summer was the correspondence between Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Berger, which was growing, if anything, more helpful. Though four years had elapsed since they parted on the Lammermuir, there was rarely a mail that did not carry letters between them. Ninety-one of Mrs. Berger's letters remain, revealing a love and tenderness that are imperishable. And what labours, too, they disclose; what a life of prayer in the interests of the Mission! With all the duties of her position and the claim of hospitality, it is a mystery how Mrs. Berger could accomplish so much. If her husband was head of the home department, she certainly was its heart and hands; though her work was done so quietly that a visitor might have thought she was hardly busy at all. The results were felt, however, in every station of the

Mission. Like Mr. Muller in his Orphan Homes, this devoted friend carried all its workers on her heart. She not only loved and prayed for them, she thought about each one individually, making notes as to their probable needs. Her shopping expeditions to London were well prepared for in this way, and it came to be a common experience in China that Mrs. Berger's parcels brought answers to prayer in many a welcome form.

More precious than her gifts, however, was the spirit of this ministry, of which glimpses may be obtained in her letters to Mrs. Taylor.

"Oh, that our hearts were larger, more loving, more sympathising," she wrote after the Yang-chow riot, "and our heads wiser, so that you might get some little help through us!"

He will love you through all, and be to you what you most need in every trying hour.

He and you have had dealings in secret, and therefore He can use you in His service and make you a blessing in various ways.

Ah, beloved sister, we say little to either of you, but much do we ponder and pray over your accumulation of sorrows. You are living, dying for Him Who lived and died for you. I look forward to the day when my eyes shall see the smile of love He will give you. Even now you have the consciousness of His approval, and does it not suffice?

Who can teach like God? And do we not need to get alone with Him if we would be filled with the sunshine of heaven, and so become useful to those around us? Does not our strength to meet difficulties, perplexities, annoyances, sorrows of the way, largely depend on our having been much alone with Him?

The heart that trusts forever sings,

*And feels as light as it had wings;
A well of joy within it springs:
Come good or ill,
Whate'er to-day to-morrow brings,
It is His will.*

It was not easy to be much alone that summer, yet the loving sympathy that flowed out in constant help to others told of much inward fellowship with God. After a wakeful night in the middle of June, partly through the illness from which she was suffering and partly on account of the great heat, Mrs. Taylor managed, for example, to pen the following note to Mrs. Rudland, who had just lost a much-loved child.

MY DEAR MARY

*I cannot write much, but I send a line to tell you that our hearts grieve and our eyes weep for you. May you be enabled to realise your precious little one as safely nestling in Jesu's own arms, for that more than anything else will help to assuage, the bitterness of the painful separation. "Them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." They will be restored to us; they will be ours again-ours for ever. And **then** we shall be able to understand why they were taken from us here. **Then** we shall be able to say from the depth of our hearts, "Our Jesus has done all things well," Meanwhile let us **believe** this. By His grace we will not doubt either His love or His **wisdom**. Let us cling to Him when His waves and His billows go over us.*

Prayer was her very life at this time. It had long meant much to her, but with a consciousness of failing strength it came to be in a new sense her refuge.

"It often comforts me about, the children," Miss Blatchley wrote some months later, "to remember how much she prayed for them. I have seen her at night, when she thought all were sleeping, with head bowed, kneeling for a long, long time on the bare floor. And when I picture her so, I always feel that she was praying most especially for you and the dear children."

Far away were those little ones now, and she longed with all a mother's longing to know of their being safely sheltered somewhere in England. With thankfulness amid the trials of that hot season she thought of Saint Hill-the cool green walks and pleasant lake, the lawns around the house and the atmosphere of love within-and pictured the little travellers as welcomed to Mrs. Berger's motherly heart. Her own heart was filled with love and joy in receiving, meanwhile, a new gift from God. Born on the 7th of July, this little one was her fifth son, and called forth all the pent-up love of his parents' hearts.

"How graciously the Lord has dealt with me and mine," Mr. Taylor wrote home to Barnsley. "How tenderly did He bring my loved one through the hour of trial, and give us our last-born, our Noel. How I thanked Him as I stroked the soft, silky hair, and nestled the little one in my bosom! And how she loved him, when with a father's joy and pride I brought him to her for her first kiss, and together we gave him to the Lord."

But an attack of cholera had greatly prostrated the mother, and lack of natural nourishment told upon the child. When a Chinese nurse could be found, it was too late to save the little life, and after one brief week on earth he went back to the Home above, in which his mother was so soon to join him.

"Though excessively prostrate in body," Mr. Taylor wrote in the same letter, "the deep peace of soul, the realisation of the Lord's own presence, and the joy in His holy will with which

she was filled, and in which I was permitted to share, I can find no words to describe."

She chose herself the hymns to be sung at the little grave, one of which, "O holy Saviour, Friend unseen," seemed specially to dwell in her mind.

Though faith and hope are often tried,
We ask not, need not, aught beside;
So safe, so calm, so satisfied,
The souls that cling to Thee.
They fear not Satan nor the grave,
They know. Thee near, and strong to save;
Nor fear to cross e'en Jordan's wave,
While still they cling to Thee.

Weak as she was, it had not yet occurred to them that for her too the end was near. The deep mutual love that bound their hearts in one seemed to preclude the thought of separation. And she was only thirty-three. There was no pain up to the very last, though she was weary, very weary. A letter from Mrs. Berger had been received two days previously, telling of the safe arrival at Saint Hill of Miss Blatchley and the children. Every detail of the welcome and arrangements for their well-being filled her heart with joy. She knew not how to be thankful enough, and seemed to have no desire or thought but just to praise the Lord for His goodness. Many and many a time had Mrs. Berger's letters reached their destination at the needed moment; many and many a time had her loving heart anticipated the circumstances in which they would be received, but never more so than with this letter.

"And now farewell, precious Friend," she wrote. "The Lord

throw around you His everlasting arms."

It was in those arms she was resting.

At daybreak on Saturday the 23rd of July, she was sleeping quietly, and Mr. Taylor left her a few moments to prepare some food. While he was doing so she awoke, and serious symptoms called him to her side.

"By this time it was dawn," he wrote, "and the sunlight revealed what the candle had hidden-the deathlike hue of her countenance. Even my love could no longer deny, not her danger, but that she was actually dying. As soon as I was sufficiently composed, I said:

"My darling, do you know that you are dying?"

"Dying!" she replied. 'Do you think so? What makes you think so?'

"I said, 'I can see it, darling. Your strength is giving way.'

"Can it be so? I feel no pain, only weariness.'

Yes, you are going Home. You will soon be with Jesus.'

"My precious wife thought of my being left alone at a time of so much trial, with no companion like herself, with whom I had been wont to bring every difficulty to the Throne of Grace.

"I am so sorry,' she said, and paused as if half correcting herself for the feeling.

"You are not sorry to go to be with Jesus?"

"Never shall I forget the look with which she answered, 'Oh, no! It is not that. You know, darling, that for ten years past there has not been a cloud between me and my Saviour. I cannot be sorry to go to Him; but it does grieve me to leave you alone at such a time. Yet ... He will be with you and meet

all your need."

But little was said after that. A few loving messages to those at home, a few last words about the children, and she seemed to fall asleep or drift into unconsciousness of earthly things. The summer sun rose higher and higher over the city, the hills, and the river. The busy hum of life came up around them from many a court and street. But within one Chinese dwelling, in an upper room from which the blue of God's own heaven could be seen, there was the hush of a wonderful peace.

"I never witnessed such a scene," wrote Mrs. Duncan, a few days later. "As dear Mrs. Taylor was breathing her last, Mr. Taylor knelt down-his heart so full-and committed her to the Lord; thanking Him for having given her, and for the twelve and a half years of happiness they had had together; thanking Him, too, for taking her to His own blessed presence, and solemnly dedicating himself anew to His service."

It was just after 9 A.M. when the quiet breathing ceased, and they knew she was "with Christ, which is far better."

Chapter XIV [\(TOC\)](#)

Shall Never Thirst

1890-1871. AET. 38-39

"MY thirsty days are all past," Hudson Taylor had felt and said and written that very summer, rejoicing as never before in the Saviour's promise, "He that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." Would it prove true **now**—now that the joy of life on its human side was gone, and there was nothing left but aching loneliness and silence? Would it prove true now—when, under the pressure of continued difficulty on every hand, health began to give way, and, sleepless at night, he found himself scarcely able to face the suffering not to speak of the labours of each new day? If ever the reality of the power of Christ to meet the heart's deepest need was put to the test of experience it was in this life, swept clean of all that had been its earthly comfort—wife, children, home, health to a large extent—and left amid the responsibilities of such a Mission and such a crisis, far away in China.

Hastening to his side with stricken hearts, Mr. and Mrs. Judd, who had been at the coast for her convalescence, found the baby they had left in Mrs. Taylor's care so well and bonnie that his mother hardly knew him, but the one who had nursed him back to health laid with her own little one beneath the sod.

"I need not tell you how we loved her," Mr. Judd wrote to friends at home. "Our hearts are full to overflowing, but we feel unable to speak to dear Mr. Taylor about her. He is evidently so happy in the Lord Jesus that he needs no words of ours. God is at this time his refuge and strength, and for some months past has been teaching him more and more of His own fulness, thus preparing him for the stroke."

A few days only before his great bereavement, when there was no thought of

immediate danger, Mr. Taylor had written to his mother at home (July 11):

I find increasing comfort in the thought that all things are really in our Father's hand and under His governance. He cannot but do what is best.

God nothing does nor suffers to be done,

But we would do the same, could we but see

Through all the events of things as well as He.

And now, on August 4, he continued:

*I have just been reading over my last letter to you, and my views are not changed, though chastened and deepened. From my inmost soul I delight in the knowledge that God does or deliberately permits **all** things, and causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him.*

***He** and He only knew what my dear wife was to me. He knew how the light of my eyes and the joy of my heart were in her. On the last day of her life (we had no idea that it would prove the last) our hearts were mutually delighted by the never old story of each other's love, as they were every day, nearly; and almost her last act was, with one arm round my neck, to place her hand upon my head, and, as I believe, for her lips had lost their cunning, to implore a blessing on me. But He saw that it was good to take her; good indeed for her, and in His love He took her painlessly; and not less good for me who must henceforth toil and suffer alone-yet not alone, for God is nearer to me than ever. And now I have to tell Him all my sorrows and difficulties, as I used to tell dear Maria; and as she cannot join me in intercession, to rest in the knowledge of Jesus' intercession; to walk a little less by feeling, a little less by sight, a little more by faith.*

To Mr. Berger he had written some days previously:

*And now, dear brother, what shall I say of the Lord's dealings with me and mine? I know not! My heart is overwhelmed with gratitude and praise. My eyes flow with tears of mingled joy and sorrow. When I think of my loss, my heart—nigh to breaking—rises in thankfulness to Him Who has spared **her** such sorrow and made her so unspeakably happy. My tears are more tears of joy than of grief. But most of all I joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ—in His works, His ways, His providence, in Himself. He is giving me to prove (to know by trial) "What is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." I do rejoice in that will. It is acceptable to me; it is perfect; it is love in action. And soon, in that same sweet will, we shall be reunited to part no more. "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am."*

It was only to be expected that as the days wore on there should be some measure of reaction, specially when illness came and long wakeful nights.

"How lonesome," he recalled, "were the weary hours when confined to my room. How I missed my dear wife and the little pattering footsteps of the children far away in England! Then it was I understood why the Lord had made that passage so real to me, 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.'. Twenty times a day, perhaps, as felt the heart-thirst coming back, I cried to Him:

"Lord, you promised! You promised me that I should never thirst.'

"And whether I called by day or night, how quickly He always came and satisfied my sorrowing heart! So much so that I often wondered whether it were possible that my loved one who had been taken could be enjoying more of His presence than I was in my lonely chamber. ^[242] He had literally fulfilled the prayer:

*Lord Jesus, make Thyself to me
A living, bright Reality;
More present to faith's vision keen
Than any outward object seen;
More dear, more intimately nigh,
Than e'en the sweetest earthly tie."*

What more can be added to experiences so 'sacred? Were it not that the correspondence of the period is too precious to be passed over, one would hesitate to dwell upon the intimacies of this stricken soul with its God. But letters remain that have a message, surely, for such days as ours. Let them tell their own story.

To Mr. Berger, August 14:

It is Sunday evening. I am writing from Mr. White's bungalow. The cool air, the mellow, autumnal beauty of the scene, the magnificent Yangtze—with Silver Island, beautifully wooded, reposing, as it were, on its bosom—combine to make one feel as if it were a vision of dreamland rather than actual reality. And my feelings accord. But a few months ago my home was full, now so silent and lonely—Samuel, Noel, my precious wife, with Jesus; the elder children far, far away, and even little T'ien-pao in Yang-chow. Often, of late years, has duty called me from my loved ones, but I have returned, and so warm has been the welcome! Now I am alone. Can it be that there is no return from this journey, no home-gathering to look forward to! Is it real, and not a sorrowful dream, that those dearest to me lie beneath the cold sod? Ah, it is indeed true! But not more so, than that there is a home-coming

awaiting me which no parting shall break into, no tears mar. ... Love gave the blow that for a little while makes the desert more dreary, but heaven more home-like. "I go to prepare a place for you": and is not our part of the preparation the peopling it with those we love?

And the same loving Hand that makes heaven more homelike is the while loosening the ties that bind us to this world, thus helping our earth-cleaving spirits to sit looser, awaiting our own summons, whether personally to be "present with the Lord," or at "the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour." "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," come quickly! But if He tarry—if for the rescue, the salvation of some still scattered upon the mountains He can wait the full joy of having all His loved ones gathered to Himself—surely we, too, should be content, nay, thankful, a little longer to bear the cross and unfurl the banner of salvation. Poor China, how great her need! Let us seek to occupy a little longer.

*I have been very ill since I last wrote to you, through a severe attack of dysentery. My strength does not return rapidly. I feel like a little child. ... But with, the weakness of a child I have **the rest of a child**. I know my Father reigns: this meets all questions of every kind. I have heard to-day that war has broken out in Europe, between France and Prussia; that it is rumoured that England joins the former and Russia the latter. If so fearful doings may be expected; but, "the Lord reigneth."*

To Miss Blatchley, in July and August:

Nearly three weeks have passed since my last letter to you a little lifetime it has been. ... I cannot describe to you my feelings; I do not understand them myself. I feel like a person stunned with a blow, or recovering from a faint, and as yet but partially conscious, But I would not have it otherwise, no, not a hair's breadth, for the world. My Father has ordered it so—therefore I know it is, it must be best, and I thank Him for so

ordering it. I feel utterly crushed, and yet "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." Oft-times my heart is nigh to breaking ... but withal, I had almost said, I never knew what peace and happiness were before-so much have I enjoyed in the very sorrow....

I think I sent you a few weeks ago a copy of some notes on John 7:37 precious thoughts they have been to me, and needed and true. I now see more and deeper meaning in them than then. And this I know: only a thirsty man knows the value of water, and only a thirsty soul the value of the Living Water.

I could not have believed it possible that He could so have helped and comforted my poor heart.

*Thursday, Friday, and Saturday were all spent in bed, and part of yesterday-ague and affection of the liver this time. It throws me back very much, but the Lord's will be done. Yesterday ... in the cold stage of the ague, I was shaking until the bed shook under me; but I enjoyed such a vivid realisation that I was altogether the Lord's, purchased not with silver and gold-that I had not a particle of property, so to speak, in myself-that it filled my heart to overflowing. I felt, if He wanted me to shake, I could shake **for Him**; if to bum with fever, I could welcome it for His sake.*

Come joy or come sorrow, whatever befall,

His presence and love (more than) make up for it all.

By the end of the month (August) the youngest of Mr. Taylor's children, the motherless baby alone left, to him of his family, was hanging between life and death. As the only hope of saving him, his father took him with Mrs. Duncan's kind help to Ningpo and the island of Pu-du. A fortnight spent there, however, proved an anxious time, and to his parents in Barnsley Mr.

Taylor wrote (September 25):

T'ien-pao has not improved so much as I had hoped. May the Lord help me to be patient and trustful. Long-continued anxiety and weariness from want of rest, sorrow from repeated bereavements and trouble in the work, from the state of China and the timidity of the workers, and other trials from without and within do make one feel the need of a strong arm to lean upon aye, and a tender one too. And here, thank God, our great need is just met. "As one whom his mother comforteth," so He comforts us. Strengthened by His power, though troubled on every side, we are not forsaken, nor left to doubt either the wisdom or love of Him Who is at the helm.

There was much sickness in the Mission at this time. Mr. Meadows lay ill at Kiu-kiang, too far away for Mr. Taylor to reach him, and the Crombies near at hand were so seriously run down that arrangements had to be made for their leaving at once for England. While seeing them off at Shanghai, it became evident that Mrs. Crombie could not with safety be left. There was no doctor on board, and the Captain offered Mr. Taylor a free passage to Hongkong, in the hope that by the time they reached there she might be out of danger. He had no choice but to go, for the patient was in too serious a condition to be removed from the ship. The result was that all the month of October was taken up with the double journey. To set out at a moment's notice, leaving his sick child in the care of friends at Ningpo, was far from easy; but it proved the means of saving Mrs. Crombie's life, and gave Mr. Taylor the change and comparative rest he sorely needed. It afforded an opportunity, too, of sending home gifts to his children—the little daughter of three years old and the boys of eight and nine, who were constantly on his heart.

"You do not know how often Papa thinks of his darlings," he

wrote from Hongkong (October. 16), "and how often he looks at your photographs, till the tears fill his eyes. Sometimes he almost fears lest he should feel discontented when he thinks how far away you are from him: but, then, dear Jesus, Who never leaves him, says: 'Don't be afraid. I will keep your heart satisfied. You know it was your Father in heaven who took them to England, and who took Mamma to her little Noel, Samuel, and Gracie in the Better Land.' Then I thank Him, and feel so glad that Jesus will live in my heart and keep it right for me.

"I wish you, my precious children, knew what it was to give your hearts to Jesus to keep every day. I used to try to keep my own heart right, but it would be always going wrong; and so at last I had to give up trying myself, and accept Jesus' offer to keep it for me. Don't you think that is the best way? Perhaps sometimes you think: 'I will try not to be selfish, or unkind, or disobedient.'

"And yet, though you really try, you do not always succeed. But Jesus says, 'You should trust that to Me. I would keep that little heart, if you could trust Me with it.' And He would too.

"Once I used to try to think very much and very often about Jesus, but I often forgot Him: now I trust Jesus to keep my heart remembering Him, and He does so. This is the best way. Ask dear Miss Blatchley to tell you more about this way, and pray God to make it plain to you, and to help you so to trust Jesus."

To Miss Blatchley he wrote regularly, showing how fully he realised the responsibility of her charge and the importance of discipline in dealing 'with the children. Yet his heart craved tenderness for them too, and keenly felt their share in his great loss.

"You will love them all the more," he had written in August,

"now that they can never again know a mother's care. God will help you to bear with them, and to try to correct them, by lovingly pointing out the right way rather than by too frequent reproof—'Don't do this or that.' This I feel is where I most failed with them; and now, there is only you to make up for my deficiencies."

And in a later letter:

Do try to keep their confidence and love. Do try so to sympathise that they may learn to bring their troubles to you, assured of your willing ear and help; so that they may tell you their faults' and even their sins. If you can, by God's help, get this, the boys are safe from many a snare they might otherwise be led into.

To keep their confidence and love himself, even at so great a distance, he toiled many an hour long after body and mind craved rest. Returning to Shanghai, for example, amid other letters penned in his comfortless third-class quarters were the following:

MY DARLING TREASURES

It is not very long since my last letter, but I want to write again. I wonder if you will try to write me a little answer? ... I have been thinking tonight if Jesus makes me so happy by always keeping near me, and talking to me every minute or two though I cannot see Him, how happy darling Mamma must be! I am so glad for her to be with Him ... I shall be so glad to go to her when Jesus thinks it best. But I hope He will help me to be equally willing to live with Him here, so long as He has any work for me to do for Him and for poor China.

Now, my darling children, I want you to love Jesus very much, and to know that He really does love you very much. Don't you think your far-off, dear Papa would be very pleased to see you and talk to you, and to take you on his knee and kiss you? You

*know he would! Well, Jesus will always be **far more pleased** when you think of Him with loving thoughts, and speak to Him with loving words. Don't think of Him as some dreadful Being. Think of Him as very good and very great, able to do everything, but as very gentle and very kind. When you wake, say to Him, either aloud or in your hearts:*

"Good morning, dear Jesus. I am so glad you have been by me all night, and have taken care of me. Teach me how much you love me. Take care of my heart: make it think good thoughts. Take care of my lips: only let them speak kind, good words. Help me always to know what is right and to do it."

He likes us to talk to Him. When I am walking alone, I often talk aloud to Him. At other times I talk to Him in my heart. Do not forget, my darling children, that He is always with you. Awake or asleep, at home or elsewhere, He is really with you though you cannot see Him.' So I hope you will try not to grieve so constant and kind a Friend.

And to Miss Blatchley:

I have written again to the dear children. I do long for them to learn early, and, once for all, the precious truths which have come so late to me concerning oneness with and the indwelling of Christ. These do not seem to me more difficult of apprehension than the truths about' redemption. Both need the teaching of the Spirit, nothing more. May God help you to live Christ before these little ones, and to minister Him to them. How wonderfully He has led and taught us, has He not? How little I believed the rest and peace I now enjoy possible down here. It is heaven begun below, is it not? May we ever enjoy it! Compared with this union with Christ, heaven or earth are unimportant accidents. ...

Try to explain these most sweet and practical yet simple truths to the children, and to draw out their desire for these things.

... "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise." In all your intercourse with friends of the Mission, seek to deepen their realisation of the value of Christ, and of our union with Him. Should you succeed in interesting them in China or in the Mission, your efforts may end there; but if you minister blessing to their souls, they will the better enter into Christ's command and purposes toward China, and will be more likely to become helpers in prayer, and not less so pecuniarily. After all, what we want is not money but power. ... Doubtless it is in answer to many prayers that my own soul has been so sustained under sore trial. Seek prayer for us, and we shall have all things: let it be lacking, and our very blessings may become a snare.

"Oh! it is joy to feel Jesus living in you," he wrote on the same journey to his sister, Mrs. Walker; "to find your heart all taken up by Him; to be reminded of His love by His seeking communion with you at all times, not by your painful attempts to abide in Him. He is our life, our strength, our salvation; He is our wisdom and righteousness, our sanctification and redemption; He is our power for service and fruit-bearing, and His bosom is our resting-place now and for ever."

To Mr. Berger he wrote on October 13:

Ah! my dear brother, what a wonderful expression is that, "In Christ Jesus." And what a wonderful fact is our being in Christ Jesus and He in us. Day by day I am learning a little and a little more of it, and it is so sweet, so practical, so simple, so all-sufficient! And yet no truth makes one feel so utterly childlike. It is like playing in the shallows of a boundless ocean. ... Oh, the unsearchable riches of His fulness! and all is ours-for He is ours and we are His.

Hastening to Ningpo on his return, in the hope of being able to take his youngest child with him to Chin-kiang, he found him desperately ill with

croup, and scarcely expected to live. This was a sore trial. But Mission affairs were urgent, after an absence of a month or more, and as soon as there was decided improvement, leaving him in the care of Dr. Parker, Mr. Taylor pressed on to Hang-chow and the neighbouring stations. Long were those visits remembered with gratitude to God.

"He came to us full of the Spirit," wrote Mr. Cordon of Soochow, "and, though he has lately experienced such deep sorrow, spoke only of the wisdom and goodness of the Lord."

Both there and with Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson at Shaohing he had much spiritual fellowship, rejoicing especially in the progress of the work at the latter station.

At Hang-chow also there was much to encourage. The church was prospering under the faithful ministry of Pastor Wang, and seven evangelists were at work in the surrounding districts. Detained there by medical duty, it was a refreshment to Mr. Taylor to see something of old friends, including Mr. and Mrs. McCarthy and Miss Faulding, who had been almost a member of his own family from the time of their sailing for China. Four years of steady work in Hang-chow had developed in her rare sweetness of character and depth of spiritual experience. Though still only twenty seven, she was a most efficient missionary, a force for good and for God widely felt in that heathen city. Her schools, for which, in faith, she had assumed entire financial responsibility, were prospering both as regards numbers and results. Several of the boys had committed to memory the entire New Testament, with the exception of two Gospels, and not a few had become earnest Christians and gave promise of future usefulness.^[243]

And there it was home letters found him-the first from England after tidings of Mr. Taylor's sorrow had been received. Nothing could exceed the

tenderness of Mr. and Mrs. Berger's sympathy, or their sense of the loss the Mission had sustained.

"The contents of your letter dated Chin-kiang, July, 30," wrote Mr. Berger, have so stunned us that I feel even now, after two or three days' knowledge of the facts, quite unfit for writing, especially to yourself; still, you so well understand this feeling that I need not hesitate.

"Oh! that I could transport myself and my dear, wife to your side, to share in close fellowship your deep sorrow. For, however much you may be able to realise that the Lord has done it, and even to acquiesce in His will, the grief inseparable from the loss of one so deeply and deservedly loved must be most poignant, and probably your later feelings of desolation will be keener than those that immediately followed your bereavement.

"The blank would be too painful, but for the loving fellowship of Jesus: but it is just here one finds the glimmer of light and hope rising in the mind. He will not, cannot fail to pour in oil and wine to the wounded heart. 'In all our afflictions He was afflicted'; and if we were reconciled by His death, when enemies, how much more shall we be saved, cared for and ministered to as His own, seeing' He ever liveth.'

"Jehovah wounds and He heals. He even kills and makes alive; and may we not say advisedly, He afflicts for our profit. Out of this, the deepest sorrow and trial you have ever been called to pass through, shall surely flow some inconceivable blessing. It may unfold slowly, like the bud; but our Father never takes away to leave us poor."

While still in Hang-chow—home of so many memories—Mr. Taylor replied to these beloved friends, seeking to reassure them with regard to his experiences. To Mr. Berger, November 18:

*Many, many thanks for your loving sympathy in my bereavement—I cannot properly say loss. I feel it an inexpressible gain. She is not lost. She does not love me less now, nor do I love her less, or less rejoice in her. And I do from day to day and every day so delight in the love of Jesus, satisfy my thirsty heart when most desolate from His fulness, feed and rest in green pastures in the recognition that **His** will has been done and is being done, as no words can express. He only knows what her absence is to me. Twelve years and a half of such unbroken spiritual fellowship, united labour, mutual satisfaction and love, fall to the lot of very few. ... But were the blank less, I should know less of His power and sustaining love.*

And to Mrs. Bergen the same day:

No language can express what He has been and is to me. Never does He leave me; constantly does He cheer me with His love. He who once wept at the grave of Lazarus often now weeps in and with me. He who once on earth rejoiced in spirit and said, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight," daily, hourly, rejoices in spirit in me, and says so still. His own rest, His own peace, His own joy He gives me. He kisses me with the kisses of His love, which are better than wine. Often I find myself wondering whether it is possible for her, who is taken, to have more joy in His presence than He has given me. If He has taken her to heaven, He has also brought heaven here to me, for He is heaven. There is no night, no gloom, in His presence. In His presence there is "fullness of joy."

At times He does suffer me to realise all that was, but is not now. At times I can almost hear again the sweet voice of my Gracie; feel the presence of little Samuel's head on my bosom. And Noel and his mother—how sweet the recollection, and yet how it makes the heart ache! ... And then, He who will soon

come and wipe away every, tear comes and takes all bitterness from them ... and fills my heart with deep, true, unutter: able gladness. I have not to seek Him now; He never leaves me. At night He smooths my pillow; in the morning He wakes my heart to His love. "I will be with thee all day long thou shalt not be alone, nor lonely." I never was so happy, dear Mrs. Berger, I know you sympathise, and I feel I must tell you of His love. It is of JESUS I would speak:

He brings a poor, vile sinner

Into His house of wine.

Meanwhile there was no lessening of the pressure of outward difficulties. Politically, the aspect of affairs had for months been darker than Mr. Taylor had ever known it in China. The Tien-tsin massacre in which twenty-one foreigners had lost their lives, including the French Consul and Sisters of Mercy, was still unsettled, and the Chinese authorities, knowing that Europe was involved in war, took no steps to allay anti-foreign feeling.

"In the event of any riot now," Mr. Taylor had written in October, "not' only a few plunderers are to be feared: all the people are roused. ... Unless something is done about the Tien-tsin murders before long, I fear you will learn of even more serious troubles. The Chinese generally are satisfied that only consciousness of guilt, and 'weakness, have prevented vengeance from reaching the perpetrators of those crimes: in other words, that foreigners do really eat children, etc., and are now unable to defend themselves. ... But the Lord reigns."

[244]

It was scarcely to be wondered at that the long strain of excitement and danger should tell on the nerves, and even the spiritual life of lonely missionaries; but it was no little sorrow to Mr. Taylor when an inland station was abandoned that might have been held, and when some dear

fellowworkers seemed to fail in faith and courage. He knew the weakness of his own heart too well to be harsh toward others, and sought as far as in him lay to strengthen their hands in God. The last day of the year was set apart as usual for prayer and fasting, in arranging for which 'Mr. Taylor wrote to the members of the Mission

The present year (1870) has been in many ways remarkable. Perhaps every one of our number has been more or less face to face with danger, perplexity and distress'; but out of it all the Lord has delivered us. And some of us, who have drunk of the cup of the Man of Sorrows more deeply than ever before, can testify that it has been a most blessed year to our souls, and can give God thanks for it. Personally, it has been alike the most sorrowful and the most blessed year of my life, and I doubt not that others have to a greater or lesser extent had the same experience. We have put to the proof, His faithfulness, His power to support in trouble and to give patience under affliction, as well as to deliver from danger. And should greater dangers Await us, should deeper sorrows come than any we have yet felt, it is to be hoped that they will be met in a strengthened confidence in our God.

We have had great cause for thankfulness in one respect: we have been so placed as to show the native Christians that our position as well as theirs has been, and may be again, one of danger. And they have been helped, doubtless, to look from "foreign power "to God Himself for protection, by the facts that (1) the former has been felt to be uncertain and unreliable; both with regard to themselves and to us, and (2) that we have been kept in calmness and joy in our various positions of duty. If in any measure we have failed to improve for their good this opportunity, or have failed to rest for ourselves in God's power to sustain in or protect from danger, as He sees best, let us humbly confess this and all conscious failure to our faithful, covenant-keeping God....

*I trust we are all fully satisfied that we are God's servants, sent by **Him** to the various posts we occupy, and that we are doing **His** work in them. He set before us the open doors into which we have entered, and in past times of excitement He has preserved us in them. We did not come to China because missionary work here was either safe or easy, but because He had called us. We did not enter upon our present positions under a guarantee of human protection, but relying on the promise of His presence. The accidents of ease or difficulty, of **apparent** safety or danger, of man's approbation or disapproval, in no wise affect our duty. Should circumstances arise involving us in what may seem special danger, I trust we shall have grace to manifest the reality and depth of our trust in Him, and by our faithfulness to our charge prove that we are followers of the Good Shepherd who did not flee from death itself. ... But, if we would manifest this calmness then, we must seek the needed grace now. It is too late to look for arms and begin to drill when in presence of the foe.*

With regard to funds Mr. Taylor continued:

I need not remind you of the liberal help which, in our need, the Lord has sent us direct from certain donors, nor of the blessed fact that He abideth faithful, and cannot deny Himself. If we are really trusting in Him and seeking from Him, we cannot be put to shame: if not, perhaps the sooner we find the unsoundness of any other foundation, the better. The Mission funds, or the donors, are a poor substitute for the living God.

So great was the pressure on Mr. Taylor at this time that he wrote early in December that he had never known anything like it, save just before leaving England with the Lammermuir Party. Missing the efficient help of both Mrs. Taylor and Miss Blatchley, he was overwhelmed with correspondence, accounts and all manner of detail in addition to the general direction of the work. But for Mr. C. T. Fishe, who had now been twelve months in China, he

could not have got through at all, and it was with thankfulness he saw his way at the close of the year to appointing him Secretary to the Mission on the field.

Well was it that such help came when it did, for Mr. Taylor had borne all and more than he had strength for physically. Flooded though his soul had been with joy in the Lord, the poor body had suffered, and he had to learn more than ever before of the close and often humbling connection between the one and the other. A badly deranged liver made him sleepless and brought on painful physical depression. This was increased by lung-trouble which caused not only pain but serious difficulty in breathing. And time did not lessen the desolation. After the homelife in which he had delighted, it was a change indeed to be one of a bachelor household. But Mr. and Mrs. Rudland had been called to Tai-chow-fu; Mrs. Duncan had rejoined her husband at Nanking; and with his youngest child still in Ningpo, Mr. Taylor had only one or two young men for his companions. His suffering condition 'made him the more conscious of outward loneliness.

"Well, it is but one day at a time," he wrote to Mr. Berger at the close of the year. "To-day, by His grace, we can bear to-day's burden; tomorrow we may be with Him where there is no burden; or, if otherwise, He will be with us, and in His presence there is 'fullness of joy,' this world's tribulation not withstanding."

This experience continued for some time, so that six weeks later he was writing of "days of sorrow and nights of heaviness," but of his one unfailing Refuge also, as "wonderfully near, wonderfully real."^[245] And in it all he was proving the sustaining power of the Word of God.

"'In due season we shall reap if we faint not'—this has been to me the word in season I know not how often," he wrote to Mr.

Berger early in the New Year. "And the best of God's precious Word is that the more nourishment and savour we get out of it, the more we find in it. It does not fail nor weary us with sameness, however often we come to it.

Passages which already had meant much to him unfolded new depth and meaning, and in the very darkness permitted for a time, he was making more his own treasures which through coming years he was to pour out for others. Thus, to Mr. Muller, who in the recent death of his wife had lost his chief friend and helper, he wrote in March (1871):

*You **do** know, beloved Brother, what the cup is that I am daily called to drink—yes, many times every day. You **know** that it does not become less bitter, nor is the lack of help less felt as days run on into weeks and weeks into months. And you know too how His grace can make one glad to have **such** a cup from His hand, or any other cup He may be pleased to give. Yet the flesh is weak; and your sympathy and prayers I do prize and thank you for. They tell me of Him Who, when the poor and needy seek water and **there is none**—no, not one drop—opens rivers in high places and fountains in the midst of the valleys.*

It was under these circumstances he came to see fresh power and beauty in the promises from our Lord's own lips which had already been made so vital in his experience. "Whosoever drinketh of the water 'that I shall give him,'" stood out in letters of light as he saw the full bearing of the original. The force of continuous habit expressed by the present tense of Greek verbs flooded the passage with new meaning, over against his long-continued and increasing need.

"Do not let us change the Saviour's words," he often said in later years. "It is not 'Whosoever has drunk,' but 'Whosoever drinketh.' It is not of one isolated draught He speaks, or even of many, but of the continuous habit of the soul. Thus in John

6:35 the full meaning is, 'He who is habitually coming to me shall by no means hunger, and he who is believing on me shall by no means thirst.' The habit of coming in faith to Him is incompatible with unmet hunger and thirst."

"It seems to me," he had written to a friend at the time, that where many of us err is in leaving our drinking in the past, while our thirst continues present. What we need is **to be drinking**—yes, thankful for the occasion which drives us to drink ever more deeply of the Living Water."

Part IV [\(TOC\)](#)

The God of the Impossible

1871-1877. AET. 39-45

Chapter XV

Thou Remainest

1872. AET. 40

MARCH winds, tossing the big elms at Saint Hill and sweeping round the house that had so warmly welcomed Mr. Taylor on his return from China, did but make the fireside more home-like when at length he had time to sit down quietly and talk over with Mr. and Mrs. Berger all that was on their hearts. Six years almost had elapsed since the outgoing of the "Lammerrmuir Party," years of wonderful progress considering the initial difficulties. The mission which up to that time had had but two stations and seven members, now numbered more than thirty foreign and fifty native workers, in thirteen central stations at, an average distance of a hundred miles apart. Nothing could have exceeded, as we have seen, the devotion with which Mr. and Mrs. Berger had watched over its interests, giving their time and substance, their home, themselves indeed to its service. And now, all that must change. The love and prayers would continue, but to younger hands must be committed the task that had proved too much for their strength. Saint Hill was to be sold, its beloved owners finding it needful to winter abroad, and to them no less than to Mr. Taylor the parting was painful, and the position full of problems. For who was to take their place, and bear all the responsibility of the home-work of the mission? Who would edit its Occasional Paper, test and train its candidates, carry on its correspondence, keep in touch with its friends, and do all the thousand and one things they had done without expense to its funds, prompted by a love that felt it never could do enough? Such co-operation could no more be replaced than parental care in a family, and the need for the change had come so suddenly that Mr. Taylor had no plans in view. The work in China was now a large one, entailing an expenditure of about three hundred pounds a month. His own health was much impaired by those six strenuous years, and rest of mind and body would have been grateful in view

especially of a speedy return to the front. But the home base could not be neglected. Unequal as he felt to the task, there was nothing for it but to take up the entire responsibility himself, looking to the Lord to liberate him when and as He should see fit. "Thou remainest" was a certainty that meant much to Hudson Taylor in those days.

"My, path is far from easy," he had written in February. "I never was more happy in Jesus, and I am very sure He will not fail us; but never from the time of the foundation of the Mission have we been so utterly cast upon God. It is well doubtless that it should be so. Difficulties afford a platform upon which He can show, Himself. Without them we could never know how tender, faithful and almighty our God is. How much we may and ought to trust Him." ^[246]

"The change about Mr. and Mrs. Berger's retiring has tried me a good deal," he wrote a little later to the same correspondent. "I love them so dearly! And it seems another link severed with the past in which my precious departed one (who is seldom absent from my thoughts) had a part. But His word is, 'Behold, I make all things new.'"

The week spent at Saint Hill in March enabled Mr. Taylor to go through all the accounts of the mission, the balance handed over by Mr. Berger being £336: 1: 9. It is, interesting to note that the first entry in the cash-book after this transaction was a gift of fifty pounds from the retiring Home Director. To the friends of the mission" Mr. Berger wrote that same day (March 19, 1872):

It is difficult to describe the feelings with which I commence this letter.... You will gather from the notice on the face of this Number^[247] that the management of the home department of this Mission is about to pass into other hands. Failing strength on the part of myself and my dear wife, combined with increasing claims, unmistakably indicate the necessity for this step. Our sympathies for the work are as warm as ever, and

we would fain hope that our future efforts in China's behalf, if they should be of a less active nature, may not prove less serviceable.

*My relation with dear Mr. Taylor has been one of unbroken and harmonious fellowship, to which I shall ever look back with feelings of satisfaction and gratitude. Mr. Taylor purposes taking the management of the home department upon himself **pro tem**, to which I think there can be no objection, as none of the funds subscribed for the Mission are ever appropriated to his private use. It is sincerely to be hoped that in taking this responsibility he will not overtax his powers, and that ere long he may succeed in finding efficient and permanent helpers....*

Writing to his parents, a few weeks later, Mr. Taylor used note-paper bearing the modest heading,

*China Inland Mission,
6 Pyrland Road,
Newington Green, N.*

It was a far cry from Saint Hill to a little suburban street on the outskirts of London, such as Pyrland Road was in those days; and the change from Mr. Berger's library to the small back bedroom which had to do duty as study and office in one was equally complete. But how dear and sacred to many a heart is every remembrance of number six and the adjacent houses—numbers four and two—acquired as need arose. For more than twenty years the entire home—'work, of the Mission was' carried on from this centre, a few steps only from its present quarters. The weekly prayermeeting was held in the downstairs rooms, two of which could be thrown together; and many a devoted band of missionaries, including the Seventy and the Hundred, were sent forth from these doors, from which no suitable candidate for work in China was ever turned away. But we are running far ahead of the small

beginnings of 1872, when Mr. Taylor was himself the whole executive of the Mission, and it is well to be recalled by one who cherishes a vivid memory of those early days.

In the busy world of London, a bright lad full of life and spirits had given his heart to the Lord, and his life also, for whatever service He might appoint. Hearing an address from Mr. Meadows, recently returned from China, he had a strong desire to learn more about the Inland Mission, little thinking that he would one day be its chief sinologue as well as one of its most useful workers. ^[248]

"After a good deal of thought and prayer," he wrote, "I determined to seek an interview with Mr. Taylor; and in company with a friend started out one Saturday afternoon for the north of London, to find Pyrland Road, where the headquarters of the Mission were located. When we reached the place, we found that but half the street was built, and away to the north stretched open fields. Traces of this state of things still exist in the name 'Green Lanes' borne by a busy street close by.... The house we sought was number six, and on reaching it we were shown into the room where the meeting was to be held. Strictly speaking it was two rooms, divided by folding doors, but these were thrown open and the two rooms turned into one. A large harmonium stood at one side, and various Chinese articles were arranged in other parts of the room but beyond this there was little either of furniture or decoration. A large text, 'My God shall supply all your need,' faced the door by which we entered, and as I was not accustomed to seeing texts hung on walls in that way, decidedly impressed me. Between a dozen and twenty people were present, including the late Miss Blatchley.

"Mr. Taylor opened the meeting by giving out a hymn, and seating himself at the harmonium led the singing. His

appearance did not impress me. He was slightly built, and spoke in a gentle voice. Like most young men, I suppose I associated power with noise, and looked for great physical presence in a leader. But when he said, 'Let us pray,' and proceeded to lead the meeting in prayer, my ideas underwent a change. I had never heard any one pray like that. There was a simplicity, a tenderness, a boldness, a power that hushed and subdued one, and made it clear that God had admitted him into the inner circle of His friendship. He spoke with God face to face, as a man talketh with his friend. Such praying was evidently the outcome of long tarrying in the secret place, and was as a dew from the Lord. I have heard many men pray in public since then, but the prayers of Mr. Taylor and the prayers of Mr. Spurgeon stand all by themselves. Who that heard could ever forget them? It was the experience of a lifetime to hear Mr. Spurgeon pray, taking as it were the great congregation of six thousand people by the hand, and leading them into the Holy Place; and to hear Mr. Taylor plead for China was to know something of what is meant by 'the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man.'

"The meeting lasted from four to six o'clock, but seemed one of the shortest prayer-meetings I had ever attended. Most present took part audibly. There were no long, awkward pauses; but the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of liberty, was manifestly present. The meeting over, tea was served, giving an opportunity for friendly intercourse. I introduced myself to Mr. Taylor, who asked me to stay till others were gone, when he would see me alone. This he did, taking me upstairs to a room on the first floor. He was the soul of kindness—drawing me out, making me feel quite at home, and encouraging the hope that I might one day see China and labour there. This was more indeed than I had anticipated when I set out to seek him. My idea was that perchance I might some day go as a helper to a missionary: to be a missionary myself seemed too great an honour. ... Seeing I was young, scarcely twenty, Mr.

Taylor gave me some good advice as to what to do until the Lord's way should be made plain. The interview over, I went home with a light heart, filled with gratitude to God for His goodness in thus encouraging me to hope in Him."

Longing to press forward with the great task before the Mission, it must have been difficult indeed for Mr. Taylor to curb himself to the routine of office work as the days and weeks went by. He was not in haste to rush into new arrangements, having no indication as to what might be the mind of the Lord. But when prayer for the right helpers seemed to bring no answer, and the work to be done kept him busy morning, noon and night, it would have been so easy to be impatient or discouraged! But in the dark days of 1870 he had learned some deep lessons about waiting for, as well as waiting upon God.

"Beloved Brother," he had written in this connection to one with him in China, "you are passing through a time of trial—or to change the word to bring out the meaning more clearly, a time of testing, proving. The Lord make you to stand the test, and when proved enable you to approve yourself before God and man as a labourer who needeth not to be ashamed. I ought to be able to sympathise with you, and I am. ... This year has been by far the most painful of my life, but also by far the most blessed. In all these trials I have had the assured confidence that the work is His, not mine; that He had permitted, or ordered, the very things which my short-sightedness would fain have removed or prevented; that He could terminate our difficulties at any moment, and sooner or later would terminate them, if that should be for His glory....

"Then again, it is no small comfort to me to know that God has called me to my work, putting me where I am and as I am. I have not sought the position, and I dare not leave it. He knows why He places me here—whether to do, or learn, or suffer. 'He that believeth shall not make haste.' That is no easy

lesson for you or me to learn; but I honestly think ten years would be well spent, and we should have our full value for them, if we thoroughly learned it in them.... Moses seems to have been taken aside for forty years to learn it. ... Meanwhile let us beware alike of the haste of the impatient, impetuous flesh, and of its disappointment and weariness."

The deepened current of Mr. Taylor's own life could not but be felt throughout the circle of the Mission. His chief reason for settling in North London had been to be in touch with "Mildmay" and all it stood for—the far-reaching institutions founded by the Rev. W. Pennefather, Vicar of the parish, whose ministry he greatly valued. The annual Conference convened by him for Christians of all denominations was still the only one of its kind in England, and made the neighbourhood a gathering ground for spiritually-minded people to whom oneness in Christ was more than minor differences. Mr. Taylor had been in touch with the Conference from its early days at Barnet, and now that he was a near neighbour Mr. Pennefather soon discovered qualities that fitted him to take a leading place among its speakers. The meetings of 1872 were largely attended, visitors coming from the Continent as well as from all parts of the United Kingdom to be present. Two thousand five hundred people crowded the great hall daily, and among the ministers on the platform were D. L. Moody, and the leaders of the movement for Scriptural holiness which had already brought so much blessing through the pages of *The Revival*. It was a surprise to Mr. Taylor, and doubtless to many who heard him, that a missionary, comparatively young and little known, should be asked to give the opening address, but the promise he had learned to claim was fulfilled that day in his experience as never before—"from him shall flow rivers of living water."

Not the great meetings, however, or that address so full of blessing, made the

deepest impression on the young visitor from Barnstaple who was staying at Pyrland Road. Memorable as they were, she was more interested and even more helped by the family life she was sharing day by day. The place at Mr. Taylor's side that had been so empty was now taken by one fitted in every way to be a help and comfort. It had been his loved one's wish for his own sake, as well as that of the children and the Mission, that Mr. Taylor should marry again, and very unexpectedly his thoughts had been turned in that direction. Miss Faulding, the life by God's blessing of the women's work in Hang-chow, had been obliged to come home on furlough, and travelling by the same steamer-other arrangements having fallen through at the last moment-Mr. Taylor found the regard he had long felt for her developing into something more than friendship. The marriage had not been long delayed, and he was thankful for the children to see as much of her as possible before she returned with him to China. But though it was the home of a bride, the arrangements at Pyrland Road were just as simple as at Coborn Street in the early days, and Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were carefully economising in order to add to the funds of the Mission.

Miss Soltau, who had come up from Barnstaple with the earnest desire to give her life to China, was in no way deterred by the real self-sacrifice she saw at the heart of things. 'Hudson Taylor valued and sought after among the leaders of the Conference, and Hudson Taylor in the little office and daily prayer-meeting of the mission house hard by, might seem to be living two very different lives; but the reality of the one explained to her the growing influence of the other, and carried home many a lesson.

"I remember dear Mr. Taylor's, exhortation," she wrote long after, "to keep silent to all around and let our wants be known to the Lord only. One day when we had had a small breakfast and there was scarcely anything for dinner, I was so thrilled

to hear him singing the children's hymn:

Jesus loves me, this I know,

For the Bible tells me so.

Then he called us all together to praise the Lord for His changeless love, to tell our needs and claim the promises-and before the day was over we were rejoicing in His gracious answers."

Far from discouraged by the shortness of funds after Mr. Berger's retirement, Mr. Taylor was praying and planning more definitely than ever for advance to the unreached interior of China. During the week of the Conference a few special friends were at Pyrland Road between the meetings, and standing before the large map in the sittingroom their hearts were moved by the thought-How are these Christless millions to be reached? Miss Soltau was of the number, and well remembered Mr. Taylor saying:

"Have you faith to join me in laying hold upon God for eighteen men to go two and two to those unoccupied provinces?"

They knew what he meant, and then and there covenanted with one another to pray daily in definite faith for this, until the Lord should bring it to pass. Then all joined hands, and Mr. Taylor led in a prayer never to be forgotten.

It was about this time that, from unexpected quarters, guidance began to come as to the future management of the home side of the Mission. It was but natural that Mr. Taylor had, perhaps unconsciously, been looking for helpers who, like Mr. and Mrs. Berger, could assume the whole responsibility. But none such were forthcoming. The burden, meanwhile, of directing the work in China from a distance, as well as attending to all that had to be done at

home, was very heavy. He was toiling far beyond his strength. "The thing thou doest is not good," wrote two old friends, business men in London; "thou wilt surely wear thyself away; ... thou art not able to perform it thyself alone." They urged the advice of Jethro-to divide among a number such responsibility as could be delegated, offering themselves a measure of help with correspondence, accountkeeping, etc.

At Greenwich also, one evening in July, the matter was brought up still more definitely. Mr. Taylor was visiting Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hill, who would gladly have given themselves to the work of the Mission had family claims permitted. As it was, Mr. Hill suggested the formation of a Council of Christian friends, not to take any responsibility with regard to the management of affairs on the field, but to divide among 'themselves the home work of the Mission, thus setting Mr. Taylor free to return to China.

This suggestion, reinforced by Mr. Hill's offer to become Hon. Secretary to such a Council, proved a seed thought. The more Mr. Taylor considered it, the more he saw that it was simply an enlargement of the plan upon which the C.I.M. had been worked from the beginning. A Council, not a Committee of Management, could undertake many of Mr. Berger's former responsibilities. Mr. Taylor was purposing to leave Miss Blatchley in charge of his children at Pyrland Road. Intimately acquainted with the work both at home and in China, she would be of the greatest assistance to the Council, and would be able to keep up the prayer-meeting and provide a centre for returning missionaries. Passing through her hands the daily correspondence could be attended to, and only necessary letters forwarded to the Secretary, while the Council would deal with candidates and with funds, keeping in touch with the friends of the Mission through its Occasional Paper. After some weeks of thought and prayer, therefore, he wrote to Mr. Hill on the 1st of August

Could you take tea with us on Tuesday next about 6 P.M. and spend the evening? I would ask one or two friends interested in the work, and Mr. George and Mr. Henry Soltau, to join us, and we might have some quiet prayer 'and conversation about the Mission and those whose co-operation it would be well to seek; after which, perhaps, we might see our way to further action more dearly. It seems to me that a little time thus spent would be helpful, before asking many either to meet or to join us in the proposed Council.

Quietly, thus, the way opened. The meeting was held and the Council practically formed that night (August 6, 1872), which in the goodness of God has so faithfully stood behind the work for more than five-and-forty years. ^[249]

It was not a large balance Mr. Taylor was able to hand over to the Secretaries when he set out for China a couple of months later. A little over twenty-one pounds was all they had in hand; but there was no debt, and with all the 'promises of God for the future as in the past they were without carefulness. With regard to the new arrangements, Mr' Taylor wrote to the friends of the Mission:

We trust none will think that because the form of the homework is changed the character of the work itself is altered. Now that the Mission has grown, more workers are needed at home, as abroad. But the principles of action will be the same. We shall seek pecuniary aid from God by prayer, as heretofore. He will put it into the hearts of those He sees fit to use to act as His channels. When there is money in hand, it will be remitted to China; when there is none, none will be sent; and we shall not draw upon home, so that there can be no going into debt. Should our faith be tried, as it has been before, He will prove Himself faithful, as He has ever done; nay, should our faith fail, His faithfulness will not-for it is written, "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful."

Candidates for the Mission, he was glad to be able to announce, would have the benefit of practical training in London, in connection with the Lamb and Flag Schools and Mission carried on by Mr. George Soltau. Love radiated from that centre amid the slums of Clerkenwell-warm, practical Christian love, drawing young and old, men, women, and children, to the Source whence it came. This was the power Mr. Taylor longed to see at work all over China, and he was thankful that those who wished to join the C.I.M. should be tested and trained in such an atmosphere. On this important subject he continued:

One thing, and one only, will carry men through all, and make and keep them successful; the LOVE OF CHRIST, constraining and sustaining, is the only adequate power. Not our love to Christ, nor, perhaps, even Christ's love to us personally; rather His love to poor, ruined sinners in us. Many waters will not, quench that love, nor floods drown it. That love will seek the wandering sheep until they are found; and if, when found, they are but wayward, wandering sheep still, will yet love and care for them. Oh, beloved friends, pray that this love may be in us, abide in us, dwell richly in us all who are already on the field, and in those who join us. But this love will not be put into any one by a journey to China. If it be not there already, a change from a more to a less favourable sphere is not likely to produce or develop it. Our aim, therefore, must be to ascertain as far as possible whether it exists, and is combined-with the needful grace, ability, perseverance and tact, and is operative here in England in those who desire to go out.

In the work itself our aim will be, as heretofore, to encourage as much as possible the gifts of the native Christians, and to lead them on to an ever-deepening knowledge of and love for the Word of God, so that as soon as possible they may be able to stand alone. We shall seek, by God's help, to plant the

standard of the cross in new and unoccupied regions; to get as near to the people, and to be as accessible to them as possible, that our lives may commend the Gospel to the heathen whom we endeavour by word to instruct: and 'you will seek grace and wisdom from God, that it may really be so. Pray that we may daily follow Him Who took our nature that He might raise us to be partakers of the Divine nature. Pray that this principle of becoming one with the people, of willingly taking the lowest place, may be deeply inwrought in our souls and expressed in our deportment.

Chapter XVI[\(TOC\)](#)

Things will soon Look Up

1872-1873. AET. 40-41

AFTER an absence from China of a year and three months, Mr. Taylor was prepared to find matters needing a good deal of attention. It had not been possible to leave any one in charge of the whole work, none, of the members of the Mission having sufficient experience to fit them for such a position. Mr. C. T. Fishe, who had received and forwarded remittances and given much help in business matters, had been laid aside by a long, most serious illness, and others too had been incapacitated in a similar way. That there would be much to see to and put in order on his arrival Mr. Taylor well knew, and the voyage had been made the most of for preparation of spirit, soul and body. And now the yellow waters of the Yangtze were around them as they lay at anchor, waiting for the fog to clear before they could proceed up the river to Shanghai. Embracing the opportunity for letters, Mr. Taylor wrote to his mother that November day (1872):

*I should tremble indeed, had we not God to look to, at the prospect of being so soon face to face with the difficulties of the work. Even as it is, I can scarcely help feeling oppressed "Lord, increase my faith." Do pray earnestly for me. One more unworthy there could not be. And oh, how I feel my utter incapacity-to carry on the work aright! May the mighty God of Jacob ever be my help. ... I can form no conception as to what our course may be, or whether it will take us N., S., E., or W. I never felt so fully and utterly cast on the Lord but in due time He **will** lead us on.*

Met by Mr. Fishe on arrival, the travellers learned that although there was cause in the southern stations especially for encouragement, the need for Mr. Taylor's presence was even greater than they had anticipated. Duncan of Nanking had been obliged, through failing health, to relinquish the post he

had so bravely held; and even then was' on his way home, as it proved, to die. The absence of the Judds on furlough, and Mr. Fishe's illness, had left the work in the Yangtze valley with little supervision, and it was important to send some one to take charge without delay. Transferring themselves and their belongings to a native boat, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor set out forthwith for Hang-chow. Warm was the welcome that awaited them in the old home from Mr. and Mrs. McCarthy and the members of the church, many of whom owed their spiritual life, under God, to the one who returned to them now as a bride. Mr. McCarthy's six years in China qualified him for larger responsibilities, and leaving Hang-chow to Pastor Wang, with help from Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, he willingly undertook the difficult work on the Yangtze (in An-hwei).

And now commenced for the leader of the Mission an experience such as he had never known before to anything like the same extent. Not only were certain stations undermanned through the absence of senior workers, sickness and trial of various sorts had told on those who remained, while native leaders had grown cold, some having even lapsed into open sin. The tidings that came to him were to a large extent discouraging, and as he began to move from place to place Mr. Taylor found plenty of cause for humiliation before God.

I do not attempt to tell you how beset with difficulty the work is on every hand," he wrote to his mother early in the New Year (1873). "But I know you ever pray for me. And the difficulties afford opportunities for learning God's faithfulness, which otherwise we should not have. It gives me great comfort to remember that the work is His; that He knows how best to carry it on, and is infinitely more interested in it than we are. His Word shall not return unto Him void: we will preach it then, and leave results with Him....

Poor Yang-chow, it is not what it once was! I hear sad accounts of some of the members. But they are to be more pitied than blamed, for they have not been fed or watched over as young Christians need. May the Lord help me to seek out and bring back some of the wanderers."

In the wintry weather with snow deep on the ground, he set to work at once, leaving Mrs. Taylor at Hang-chow for a time. Lonely indeed must it have seemed to open the empty house at Chin-kiang, his once happy home, and gather the Christians together for little services with no companion but the evangelist. It was just by getting into close touch with the native helpers, however, that he hoped to cheer and strengthen them, and for this he laid himself out in centre after centre.

"I have invited the Church members and enquirers to dine with me tomorrow (Sunday) after the morning service," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor, who would so gladly have been with him. "I want them all to meet together. May the Lord give us His blessing. Though things are very sadly, they are not hopeless; they will soon look up, with God's blessing, if looked after." [250]

That was his practical; reasonable conviction: the work would soon look up, with God's blessing, if looked after. In this confidence he went on, prayerfully and patiently, taking up himself the hardest places, and depending on the quickening power of the Spirit of God. Joined by Mrs. Taylor, he spent three months at Nanking, giving much time to direct missionary work.

"Every night we collect large numbers by means of pictures and magic-lantern slides," he wrote to Mr. Berger from this centre, and preach to them Jesus. ... We had fully five hundred in the chapel last night. Some did not stay long, others were there nearly three hours. It was considerably after 10 P.M. before we could close the chapel. May the Lord bless our stay

here to souls. ... Every afternoon, women come to see and hear."

This was followed by a similar sojourn at Yang-chow and Chin-kiang, before he went on up-river to the newer stations. ^[251]

If you are ever drinking at the Fountain," he had written to Miss Blatchley as the New Year opened, "what will your cup be running over with? Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!"

That it was so in his own case is manifest. Amid much that was difficult and disappointing, amid cold, discomfort, weariness, it was a full cup he carried in this sense, and the overflow was just what was needed. It was so real and unmistakable, the joy of his heart in the Lord! and it did good like a medicine wherever he went. Most people need encouraging, not preaching at or an attitude of condemnation, and tired missionaries no less than Chinese converts responded to a loving spirit full of joy in an all-sufficient Saviour.

So the visits accomplished their object, and were continued until Mr. Taylor had been, once at any rate, to every station and almost every out-station in the Mission. Not content with this, he sought out the native workers in each place, so that the evangelists, colporteurs, teachers, and Biblewomen, almost without exception, came under his influence. It was, in measure, as with the prince of missionaries.

We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children; ^[252] so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. ... We exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory. ... For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye

are our glory and joy."

But it was work that cost, carried on under special difficulties, for Mr. Taylor had all his correspondence and directorial duties to attend to at the same time. It meant constant travelling, through summer heat as well as winter cold, and involved long separations from Mrs. Taylor, who could not always accompany him. At times they were together in stations that needed an extended visit; or she would stay on where there was sickness, to give help in nursing or among the women. How glad they were of his medical knowledge in those days! for it gave opportunity for really serving their fellow-workers as-well as the native Christians. Needless to say it added to Mr. Taylor's burdens, as when he reached a distant station on the Yangtze to find eighty-nine letters awaiting him, and took time to send, the very next day, a page or more of medical directions about "A-liang's baby"—A-liang being a valued helper at Chin-kiang. But whether it meant longer letters or extra journeys, or the strain of nursing and medical responsibility, he was thankful for any and every way in which he could help. Capacity for usefulness, the power really to serve others, was the privilege he desired most.

And such an outpouring of heart and life could not but tell.

"The Lord is prospering us," he was able to write to his parents in July; "and the work is steadily growing, especially in that most important department, native help. The helpers themselves need much help, much care and instruction; but they are becoming more efficient as well as more numerous, and the future hope for China lies, doubtless, in them. I look on foreign missionaries as the scaffolding round a rising building; the sooner it can be dispensed with the better—or rather, the sooner it can be transferred to other places, to serve the same-temporary purpose.

"As to difficulties and sorrows, their name is legion. Some

spring from the nature of the work, some from the nature of the workers. Here Paul and Barnabas cannot see eye to eye; there Peter so acts as to need public rebuke; while elsewhere exhortation is needed to restore a wanderer or quicken one growing cold. ... But it is the Lord's work, and we go on from day to day. HE is competent to meet all matters that may arise, as and when they crop up." ^[253]

Sorely was this faith needed when, after nine months in the Yangtze valley, Mr. Taylor turned his attention to the southern stations, in the province of Che-kiang. Not that the work was discouraging; on the contrary; there was much to cheer in some directions. But it was there the unexpected tidings reached him of the complete breakdown of Miss Blatchley's health. Apart altogether from sorrow in the thought of her removal was the serious question as to how her place was to be filled. Gifted, devoted, and with some experience, matters had tended more and more to come into her hands. Not only was she keeping the missionhouse going, and the weekly prayer-meeting; she was editing and sending out the ***Occasional Paper***, dealing with correspondence to a considerable extent, and caring for the children she had received as a sacred charge from their mother, the friend she had supremely loved. All this made it difficult indeed to see how her place could be filled; and Mr. Taylor, unable for the present to return home, could do nothing.

It seemed the last drop in a full cup; for already, in addition to the burdens upon him in China, he was tried and perplexed by the irregularity as well as diminution of supplies from home. It was but natural that Mr. Berger's retirement should continue to be felt in these and other ways. The work had grown up in his hands. To the friends and supporters of the Mission he seemed almost as much a part of it as Mr. Taylor himself. His extensive business had given him a familiarity with financial and practical matters that was invaluable, and the needs of the workers in China were upon his heart

day and night. This could not be so to the same extent with other friends, no matter how interested and anxious to help. The members of the C.I.M. Council, moreover, were all new to their responsibilities. They did what they could, with no little sacrifice and devotion, but they had experience to gain.

Meanwhile it was in China that the difficulties of the situation were most acutely felt. Mr. Taylor did what was possible by correspondence; and irregularities that could not be dealt with in that way had just to be taken to the Lord in faith and prayer. Small though the Mission was in those days comparatively, there were fifty buildings to be kept up and a hundred workers provided for, including missionaries' wives and native helpers. There were all the children besides, in families and schools, making fully a hundred and seventy mouths to feed daily. Travelling expenses were also a serious item, with a work extending to five provinces and furloughs involving the expensive journey to England. Altogether, Mr. Taylor's estimate of a hundred pounds a week as a working average could not be considered 'extravagant. Indeed it was only with most careful planning and economy that the work could be carried on vigorously upon that sum.

But there were many weeks and even months in which little or nothing was forwarded to him for the general purposes of the Mission. Funds were not coming in plentifully at home, and many gifts-such as those of Mr. Muller and Mr. Berger-were sent to the workers direct or to Mr. Taylor for transmission. This left but little for the general fund, from which home expenses had to be met as well as the current outlay for all but specially supported workers in China.

"When I arrived, I found it needful at once to dispose of the money I had brought, he wrote in his second letter to Mr. Hill," ^[254] and we are asking the Lord to incline His stewards to send you funds, for our present supplies will soon be

exhausted. What a comfort it is to know that though supplies may be exhausted our Supplier never can be so!"

"The exchange keeps against us," he mentioned a month later, "and there seems every likelihood of its remaining so for the present. We can only accept things as they are. 'The Lord will provide' whether the exchange be high or low."

And the Lord did provide, right through that year of testing (1873)—a period that would have been one of "constant and wearing anxiety from this cause alone, but for the privilege, the precious resource," as Mr. Taylor put it, "of casting the daily, hourly burdens on Him as they arose. As it was, His love made it one of much peace."

"May God make this year a year of much blessing to you," he wrote to a young worker who had recently joined the Mission. ^[255] "Do not be afraid of His training school. He both knows His scholars, as to what they are, and He knows for what service they are to be fitted. A jeweller will take more pains over a gem than over a piece of glass; but the one he takes most pains over is longest under discipline and most severely dealt with. Once finished, however, the burnish never tarnishes, the brightness never dims. So with us. If we are purified, at times, as in a furnace, it is not merely for earthly service, it is for eternity. May you so appreciate the plans of the Master that you can triumphantly glory in the love that subjects you to such discipline, though the discipline itself be sharp and to the flesh hard to bear...."

"Will you pray often for me? do pray earnestly. No one knows the many difficulties of my path and the deep needs I have which the Lord 'alone can meet. Ask, too, for funds for the many expenses of the Mission. I have had none at all, now, for some week or two past-but the Lord will provide. Our profession of looking to and of confidence in Him must not be a vain one, then it will not be put to shame."

And now, in addition to this long-continued shortness of funds and all the other difficulties of the work, had come the keen personal sorrow of Miss Blatchley's illness. Concern about his children, too, was very real. Who was caring for them, or how they would be provided for if their almost mother were taken, he did not know. And before he and Mrs. Taylor could be with them again, many months must elapse.

*"No words can express my sorrow," he wrote to his mother—a few pencilled lines as he travelled over the mountains to Feng-hwa—"for what I fear will be the end of this attack of illness. I feel it selfish to sorrow for what will be infinite gain to one so ready for the change: but, 'Jesus wept,' and He is unchanged, and can sympathise still in our grief and pain in bereavement. This has been long foreseen, but I did not expect it so suddenly. I thought the disease was so far quiescent that dear **Ai-mei**^[256] might be spared till we once more visited England, and that ours might have been the privilege, of ministering to her as long as human ministry could avail. The Lord seems to see it best otherwise, and we will trust Him. He cannot err, nor fail to do the kindest, the best thing every way—for her, for us, for ours. He will show His care for His own work."*

Reaching Ningpo a few days later, it was an added pain to learn, by cablegram, that Miss Blatchley was hoping against hope for his immediate return, that she might be able to resign her charges direct into his hands. How he longed to go to her and to the children! The difficulty as to funds alone would have made it impossible, however, for it was only by being on the spot he could divide the small supplies coming to him in such a way as to meet the most urgent needs as they arose. It meant much that he could say in the very next letter to his mother (December 2, '73)

The words, "God, my exceeding joy," have been constantly in my heart of late. He is making me in this deep sorrow to

rejoice in Himself "with joy unspeakable and full of glory"; making me trust Him, rest in Him, and feel an "Even so, Father" to it all.

To a fellow-worker in special trial he had written some months previously:

*The one thing we need is to know God better. Not in ourselves, not in our prospects, not in heaven itself are we to rejoice, but in the Lord. If we know Him, then we rejoice in what He gives not because we like it, if pleasing, not because we think it will work good, if trying, but because it is **His** gift, His ordering; and the like in what He withholds or takes away. Oh, to know Him! Well might Paul, who had caught a glimpse of His glory, count "all things" as dung and dross compared with this most precious knowledge! This makes the weak strong, the poor rich, the empty full; this makes suffering happiness, and turns tears into diamonds like the sunshine turns dew into pearls. This makes us fearless, invincible.*

*If we **know** God, then when full of joy we can thank our Heavenly Father, the Giver of all; when we feel no joy we can thank Him for that, for it is our Father's ordering. When we are with those we love, we can thank Him; when we yearn for those we love, we can thank Him. The hunger that helps us to feel our need, the thirst that helps us to drink, we can thank Him for; for what are food or drink without appetite, or Christ to a self-contented, circumstance-contented soul? Oh to know Him! How good, how great, how glorious—our God and Father, our God and Saviour, our God and Sanctifier—to know Him!*

*Pray on and labour on. Don't be afraid of the toil; don't be afraid of the cross: they will **pay well**.*

And now the year that had seen so much of trial in his own experience was to end in thanksgiving. "Don't be afraid of the toil; don't be afraid of the cross,"

he had written: "they will pay well"; and pay they did, in just the way he would most have desired.

Upon reaching Shao-hing early in December, he found Mr. Stevenson away visiting his out-stations. In a mountainous district seventy or eighty miles to the south, he was witnessing a remarkable work of the Spirit, and Mr. Taylor was only too glad to join him. Up the beautiful river he went, recalling the first time he had come over that way on a lonely journey from Tai-chow. Crossing the watershed, he had found just over on the Shao-hing side a populous district which interested him deeply. First one city and then 'another was visited, surrounded by numerous towns and villages accessible from this mountain stream, in none of which the gospel of the grace of God was being made known. From the steps of the principal temple in Cheng-hsien, he had looked down on the grey-roofed city at his feet, and had counted thirty or more towns and villages at no great distance. With a straitened heart he had realised something of what it meant that parents and children, old and young, in all those homes, should be living, dying, without God. To the crowd that gathered round him he had preached long and earnestly; and when from sheer weariness he could make himself heard no longer, he had gone on farther up the hill to pour out his heart in prayer to God.

And now those prayers were being answered. Often, had he thought of them, when following Mr. Stevenson's early efforts to settle an evangelist in the district. For some time they had met with nothing but opposition and discouragement, but now a very different day had dawned, largely through the conversion of one remarkable man in Cheng-hsien.

A leading Confucianist, proud of his learning and position, this Mr. Nying would have been the last to have anything to do with the foreigner who came from time to time to preach 'strange doctrines in his city. But he was

interested in Western science, and happened to have some translation of a work upon the subject which he did not fully understand. Taking advantage, therefore, of one of Mr. Stevenson's visits, he strolled along to the mission-house, and entered into conversation with the evangelist. Soon he was introduced to the young missionary, who talked with him of the matters about which he wished to inquire. Then turning to the New Testament lying on the table, Mr. Stevenson quite naturally went on:

"Have you also in your library the books of the Christian religion?"

"I have," replied the scholar; "but, to be quite candid, I do not find them as interesting as your works on science."

This led to a conversation in which it appeared that Mr. Nyng was sceptical as to the existence of God or the soul, and considered prayer manifestly absurd.

"If there *were* a Supreme Being," he urged, "He would be far too great and distant to take-any notice of our little affairs."

Patiently the missionary sought to bring him to a better point of view, but without success; and at length, seeing that argument was useless, he availed himself of a simple illustration.

"'Water and fire are opposing elements,' we say, 'and can never combine. Water extinguishes fire, and fire evaporates water.' Very well, so much for our argument! But while we are talking, my servant has put on the kettle, and see, here is water raised to the boiling point, ready to make you a cup of tea.

"You say there is no God, and that even if there were He would never condescend to listen to our prayers: but believe me, if you go home tonight

and take up that New Testament, and before opening it humbly and earnestly ask the God of Heaven to give you His Holy Spirit that you may understand it aright, that book will be a new book to you and will soon mean more than any other book in the world. Put it to the proof; and whether you pray for yourself or not, I will pray for you."

More impressed than he cared to show, the scholar went home.

"Well, here is a strange thing,' he thought. "Absurd as it seems, the foreigner was in earnest; and so concerned is he—about a man he never saw or heard of till today that he will *pray* for me—and I do not pray for myself."

That night when alone, Mr. Nying took up the book in question with a feeling almost of amusement. How could any intelligent person imagine that a few words addressed to some unknown Being, who might or might not exist, would turn a dull book into an interesting one, or make any change in one's outlook upon life? Yet, incredulous as he was, he somehow wanted to put it to the test.

"O God, if there be a God," he found himself saying, "save my soul, if I have a soul. Give me Thy Holy Spirit, and help me to understand this book."

Once and again as evening wore on, Mrs. Nying looked into the room, to find her husband engrossed in study. At length she ventured to remonstrate; reminding him of the lateness of the hour.

"Do not wait for me," was his reply; "I have important matters in hand.". And he went on reading.

The book had become a new book indeed, and hour after hour as he turned the pages a new spirit was taking possession of him. But for days he dared not confess the change to those nearest to him. His wife came of an

aristocratic family, and he thought much of her and of their children. He knew that as a Christian he would be despised if not cast out by their relatives, and that rather than endure such humiliation she would probably leave him. Yet his heart burned within him. The wonderful Saviour of whom he read was becoming real to him as he could never have believed it possible. The words He had spoken long ago were living and powerful still. Nying felt that they searched him through and through, and brought not only a new consciousness of sin, but peace and healing. And oh, the joy that began to well up within him!

"When the children are in bed," he said to his wife at length, "there is something I should like to tell you."

It was a desperate resort, for he had no idea what to say or how to begin. But it committed him to some sort of confession of his faith in Christ, though he trembled to think how she would receive it.

Silently they sat on either side of the table when evening came, and he **could** not open the subject." Is there not something you wanted to say to me? "she inquired.

Then it all came out, he knew not how! and she listened with growing wonder. The true and living God-not any of the idols in the temples; a way by which sins might be forgiven; a Saviour Who could fill the heart with joy and peace: to his surprise she seemed to be following eagerly.

"Have you really found Him? "she broke in before long." Oh, I have so wanted to know! For there must be a living God. Who else could have heard my cry for help, long, long ago?

It was when the Tai-ping rebels had come to the city in which her parents

lived, burning and pillaging everything. Their home had been ravaged, like the rest. Many people were killed; many committed suicide; and she, helpless and terror-stricken, had crept into a wardrobe to hide. She heard the soldiers ransacking the house, and coming nearer and nearer.

"Oh, Heavenly Grandfather," she cried in her heart "*save me!*"

None but the true and living God could have answered that prayer. The idols in the temples were helpless to protect *themselves*, even, from the terrible marauders. But though they had been in the very room, they had passed over the hiding-place where she was crouching, scarcely daring to breathe. And, ever since, she had so longed to know about *Him*—the wonderful God Who had saved her.

With what joy and thankfulness her husband assured her not only that there was such a Being—supremely great and good—but that He had spoken, had made Himself known to men! Did ever the story of Redeeming Love seem more precious, or heart rejoice to tell it forth more than that of the once proud Confucianist as he began to preach Christ in his home and city? So fervent was his spirit that it disconcerted those who thought to laugh him out of his new-fangled notions.

"You must control that disciple of yours," said the local Mandarin to the Chancellor of the University. "He is disgracing us by actually preaching the foreign doctrine on the streets. When I remonstrated with him he even began to preach to me! and said he was so full of the 'Good News,' as he calls it, that he could not keep it in."

"I will soon bring him to reason," was the confident reply. "Leave him to me!"

But the Chancellor fared no better than the Mayor, and was fain to beat a hasty retreat. Loving his Bible, and helped by visits to Shao-hing, Mr. Nying soon became a preacher of much power. Among the first converts he had the joy of winning was a man who had been the terror of the neighbourhood. Nothing was too bad or too heartless for Lao Kuen! What power had turned the lion into a lamb the villagers could not tell, but the old father whom he had formerly treated with cruelty and neglect could testify to the reality of the change, and, like his son, was soon a believer in Jesus.

In ever-widening circles the blessing spread, till it reached the keeper of a gambling-den and house of ill-fame in a neighbouring town. His conversion was even more notable than the others, for it banished the gaming-tables, emptied his house of bad characters, and turned his best and largest room into a chapel. It was his own idea to have it cleaned and whitewashed before offering it, free of cost, as a place of worship.

These and others formed the group of converts of whose baptism Mr. Stevenson had written. Ten altogether had followed Mr. Nying in confessing Christ, and there were not a few interested enquirers. Upon Mr. Taylor's arrival in the city they began to drop in, until he found himself surrounded by this bright, earnest company of believers. And oh the rejoicing, the greetings and conversations, the singing and prayers! It was a little bit of heaven below a precious foretaste of the hundredfold reward.

An afternoon meeting was held in Mr. Nying's house, at which his wife and daughter were present, and in the evening the Christians met again in the chapel.

"I could have wept for joy," Mr. Taylor wrote, "to hear what grace had done for one and another of those present; and most of them could tell of some relative or friend of whose

conversion they had good hope... I have never seen anything like it in China."

Chapter XVII[\(TOC\)](#)

Not Disobedient unto the heavenly Vision

1873-1874. AET. 41-42

IT would be little cause for wonder if, amid joy and encouragement such as we have just recorded, Mr. Taylor's heart had gone out in quickened longing after the multitudes yet unreached; but the really significant thing is that he had never lost the vision. Amid all that had gone before of trial and disappointment, amid all that was yet awaiting him of counter-attack on the part of the enemy and searching tests of faith, the vision never left him. It did but become, if anything, more commanding. To one of the Secretaries of the Mission he had written soon after landing:

I do so hope to see some of the destitute provinces evangelised shortly. I long for it by day and pray for it by night. Can HE care less?

And to Miss Blatchley (January 1, 1873):

*I want you to pray daily that God will direct us as to which provinces we should attempt, and how. We have the almighty God with us; the all-wise Counsellor to guide; the indwelling Spirit to give efficacy to the preached Word. Ask for me more simple trust in Him, and boldness to attempt great things... Try to get friends to promise and seriously endeavour to pray **daily** about the opening up of new provinces to the Gospel. Christ **must** speedily be proclaimed in them: how and by whom we must ask Him.*

Subsequent letters breathe the same spirit, though they necessarily touch upon financial difficulties and local problems.

Pray hard; trust undoubtingly; expect great things from God. If we have a few men of the right stamp we shall soon see more than one unoccupied province entered.

But the long year wore on, and little in the way of men or means was forthcoming.

Under these circumstances it was but natural that Mr. Taylor should value more than ever the co-operation of Chinese fellow-workers. He was giving himself, as we have seen, to encouraging the native leaders, and was full of plans for developing and using them to the utmost.

"I am aiming at such organisation of our forces as will enable us to do more work with fewer foreign missionaries," he wrote to his parents in April. "I hope I may be able, ere the year closes, to commence a college for the more thorough training of our native helpers. Long desired, there seems more probability of our attaining this than heretofore."

To place two native helpers in each governing city of a district, with colporteurs in centres of less importance, all under the supervision of an experienced missionary, was the plan kept steadily in view, beginning with the capitals of provinces and departments. Nothing if not orderly, his mind worked along these lines, pending special indications of divine guidance. These being given, he was ready at any time to throw his best men into positions of seemingly less strategic value, if only it were evident that the Spirit of God was at work. Apart from such indications, the above plan was adhered to as closely as possible. It was essential, therefore, to develop the Chinese workers, as well as obtain missionaries of the right kind. Men of faith, with a personal knowledge of God as the Hearer and Answerer of prayer; men of stamina to rough it, and to live as he did in closest contact with the people, were the missionary helpers he longed and prayed for.

"We are going on into the interior," he wrote to a member of the Council somewhat later. "There is great difficulty, in conveying much luggage, and the sight of it, in many places,

would ensure robbery. If any one is not prepared to rough it, he had better stay at home at once."

*And to another: "The only persons wanted here are those who will rejoice to work—really to labour, not to dream their lives away; to deny themselves; to **suffer** in order to save. Of such men and women there is room for any number, and God will support any number: they are His jewels, and **He** values and cares for them.*

Hastening to Shanghai to meet Mr. Judd with reinforcements, Mr. Taylor's mind was full of these things, and he was not altogether sorry for the lack of a receiving home, though it involved some inconveniences. It was his purpose to secure such a home on this visit, for the Mission was growing so large as to need a business centre at the coast.^[257] But in the meanwhile he put up at a native inn, glad of the opportunity of seeing in a natural way what the young men who accompanied Mr. Judd were made of.

Early that November morning the new arrivals had set out to enquire for Mr. Taylor. From friends of Mr. Judd's they learned that the leader of the Mission was in Shanghai, and had probably gone down to the steamer to meet them. They turned back therefore, and on the way Mr. Judd exclaimed, "There is Mr. Taylor!"

"We looked," wrote one of his companions, "but could only see a Chinaman on a wheelbarrow. The barrow stopped and the figure advanced toward us. It was a good thing that there was some one to do the introducing, for we should never have recognised Mr. Taylor. The weather was cold, and he had on a wadded gown and jacket. Over his head he wore a wind-hood with side pieces which fitted close to the face, leaving nothing but a medallion-shaped opening for nose, eyes and mouth. In his hand he grasped a huge Chinese umbrella, which he carried in true native style, handle 'foremost. In his

wadded clothes he looked almost as broad as he was long, and to our foreign eyes was the oddest figure we had ever seen. He said he had made arrangements for the ladies and Mr. Judd to stay with friends in the French Settlement, and, turning to Henry Taylor and myself, added:

"After we have been to the vessel, perhaps you will accompany me to my hotel'."

Little realising what was in store for them, the young men cheerfully agreed.

"It may be as well to say, for the sake of those who do not know Shanghai," Mr. Baller continued, "that it is divided into three Settlements, all situated on the banks of the Woo-sung River, and separated from each other by creeks. The English Settlement lies in the centre, between the Soo-chow Creek and a muddy ditch called the Yang-king-pang. On the north is the American Settlement, and on the south the French. Running parallel with the river is a broad 'boulevard called The Bund, edged by a strip of well-kept lawn (and beautiful Public Gardens now). Following Mr. Taylor along The Bund, we traversed its entire length, then crossed a bridge into the French Settlement, and so on and on to the point where it tails off into the suburbs of the Chinese city. Lines of junks lie along the river here, and trade and bustle are the order of the day. Here, too, are heaps of malodorous refuse, fish, vegetables, muck from the streets, filth of all sorts, while stench, massive and unrelieved, assail the fastidious foreigner...."

"Turning up a side street at right angles to The Bund, Mr. Taylor threaded his way among the crowds till he stopped at the door of a native post office. Passing through the front part of the office, he led the way to a small door secured by a Chinese lock. This he opened and invited us to follow him up the stair. It was pitch dark and very narrow, but we stumbled up till we came to a door which he entered. We followed him,

and found ourselves in the 'hotel.' It consisted of a room about twelve feet square, innocent of any adornment, and containing a square table, a small skin-covered box and a native foodbasket. Along one side was a raised dais, on which, if I remember aright, was spread a native coverlet. A window opened out on to the street, but it had paper of a grimy hue instead of glass, and did not count for much' in the way of illumination.

"Mr. Taylor very courteously asked us to be seated, and after making enquiries as to our voyage, produced a Bible. He read the 17th chapter of the Gospel by John, and asked what we thought was the meaning of the words, 'That the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.' I do not remember what we said, but I was distinctly impressed with the fact that he asked us. ... Reading over, we knelt down and had prayer together, when he commended us to the Lord who had brought us to China."

So far so good: but Mr. Taylor was beginning to feel confidence in the mettle of these young, missionaries, and was minded to introduce them himself, as far as possible, to things Chinese. Rather than return to the Settlement for breakfast, therefore, he decided to take them to a native restaurant. They had been out since 5 A.M., and it was now almost nine, so that they were equal to the occasion as far as appetite was concerned. But first he enquired whether they would care to wash their hands.

We replied in the affirmative; but as there was no trace either of washstand, soap, towel or basin, we wondered how the ablutions were to be performed. Mr. Taylor went to the door and called but something in Chinese, whereupon a man appeared who was, we understood, his servant. He went to the basket in the corner and fished out of its depths a wooden basin and what looked like a pocket handkerchief. Leaving the latter on the table he descended to the street, and going to a

hot-water shop bought enough hot water to fill the basin. On his return he placed it on the table, and, taking the rag, which was, we noticed, woven with a large mesh, he dipped it in the water, and wringing it out handed it to Mr. Taylor. We watched him use it with considerable interest. By the time he had gone over the area that needed cleansing, the cloth was nearly cold. This meant another dip, another and drier squeeze, and a renewed application to face and hands, this time more in the way of polishing than cleansing. The mystery was solved. Here was plain living and high thinking; here was multum in Parvo; here was economy and cleanliness combined. Sponge, soap, towel—all were included in the magic cloth! We followed suit, and found the operation very refreshing, partly from its novelty and partly from its effects. And no compunction of conscience that we were running up a hotel bill by living in luxury, troubled us. ... We began to realise that we were in a land where money could be made to go a long way.

"Now," said Mr. Taylor, "let us go and have breakfast."

Nothing loath we sallied forth, Mr. Taylor leading the way, and this time dived into the recesses of an adjoining street, far from the foreign quarter. After enquiry in one or two native cook-shops as to whether they had a certain kind of vegetable, Mr. Taylor finally led us into one and invited us to be seated. Four narrow forms were placed around a table. The cooking was being carried on in the front part of the shop, while customers sat at a number of square tables in the back. Our table had once been new, and probably had once been clean, but it must have been many years before we were born. However, what it lacked in purity' it made up in polish.... A pair of chopsticks was brought and placed before each of us, after having been carefully wiped on the shady cloth which dangled over the shoulder of our attendant. Happily for me and my companion, we had acquired some skill in the use of

these implements while crossing the Pacific. We had often fraternised with the Chinese passengers, imitating them in the use of chop-sticks till we could take up a bean without dropping it. But for this, the fable of the Stork and the Fox would have had an illustration in our case that morning.

*At last the supreme moment arrived, and the waiter brought in four basins of piled-up rice and placed them before us. This was followed by several basins of hot vegetables, and a large basin of chunks of fat pork, **the piece de resistance** of the meal. Mr. Taylor's servant, true to the courteous instincts of his race, fearing that in our inexperience we should not make a good meal, chose out the fattest and largest lumps and laid them in triumph, with a winsome smile, intended to hearten us to the task, on the top of our basins. It had some interest for us the first few times; but after steadily going through four or five pieces in succession, it began to pall, and we had to appeal to Mr. Taylor to ask him to desist. He, good man, took our feeble protest against any more chunks to be the natural outcome of a polite training, and was rather grieved when we declined any longer to feed upon the fat of the land.*

Such was our first meeting with Mr. Taylor in China, such our reception, such our first toilet and meal. Things have greatly altered since then, but I would gladly forgo all the improvements, if I could have the experiences of that morning over again. Our leader and director showed us how to do it by his own example, and stamped us at once, in all the freshness of our early zeal, with his own stamp. Hence we took to Chinese 'dress, Chinese food, Chinese ways as a duck to water. Personally, I can never be thankful enough for that experience. I have been in many dirtier inns since then, in many parts of China, and have had far rougher accommodation than that of Mr. Taylor's "hotel," but the remembrance of his example has made things easy and silenced murmuring.

Leaving the young men at Nanking to their studies, in charge of Mr. and Mrs. Judd, Mr. Taylor hastened back to the patients he was caring for and the stations he was visiting in Che-kiang. The twelve millions of that province, small though it was among the provinces of China, lay heavily on his heart. Far from overlooking, in his growing concern for the interior, needs more immediately around him near the coast, he was stirred with sorrow and shame over the great, waiting fields so easily accessible, that yet had no labourers. Writing to Mr. Hill from one of the southern stations in January (1874) he said:

*The work is now greatly extending, and I hope will yet do so.... If the Lord spare me, and permit me to labour here a year or two more, I trust there will be no county left in this province in which we have not preached Christ, either by located or itinerant labours. At present there are many such. Of the sixty-three Hsien cities in this province (each governing a county) fifteen have workers for Christ resident in them. Ten have been opened by us, five by others; forty-eight remain unopened. In one of them I have just rented a house; to another I hope to send a couple of men to-morrow. If they succeed in obtaining an opening, there will still be four Fus and forty-six Hsiens—**fifty** cities in all to be possessed for Christ. And in the meantime, how many precious souls will have passed beyond the reach of the Gospel! The Lord help us to be faithful. The claims of my family at home on the one hand, and the claims of the perishing heathen here on the other, cast me in an agony upon the Lord—"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" [258]*

The position was indeed a perplexing one. Miss Blatchley's serious illness, as we have seen, deprived the home-work of her invaluable services. To relieve her of the care of house and children, he had already sent home one of his best helpers; but Miss Desgraz, who was sorely needing furlough, could not

assume the many responsibilities Miss Blatchley had been obliged to lay down. And there was no one else who could, in his own absence. Fourteen months of patient, plodding work in China had done much to improve the situation he had found on arrival, but matters were still critical in several stations, and he longed to secure not only improvement but advance. Then again the state of funds was increasingly serious, and though this indicated a need for his presence in England it made it almost impossible for him to leave the workers on the field. Never had they been so long and severely tried, and it was only by keeping in closest touch with every station that he could tell how to pray and to help. And all the while his sense of responsibility, deepened for the multitudes around him, so dark, so needy, so accessible!

*"Last week I was at Tai-ping," he continued, in his letter of January 26, to Mr. Hill, "one of the unopened cities I have referred to.... My heart was greatly moved by the crowds that literally **filled** the streets for two or three miles, so that we could hardly walk-for it was market-day.... We did but little preaching, as we were seeking a place for permanent work, but I was constrained to retire to the city wall and cry to God to have mercy on the people, to open their hearts and give us an entrance among them.*

"Without any seeking on our part we were brought into touch with at least four anxious souls. An old man found me out, I know not how, and followed me to our boat. I asked him in, and enquired his name.

"'My name is Dzing,' he replied. 'But the question which distresses me, and to which I can find no answer, is-What am I to do with my sins? Our scholars tell us that there is no future state, but I find it hard to believe them.'

"'Do not believe any such thing,' I replied, 'for there is an

endless future before every one of us. One must either burn for ever in hell-fire, or rejoice for ever in heavenly bliss.'

'''Then what can I do; what am I to do with my sins?'

'How easy it would have been at home to say, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved'; but this would have had no meaning to him. He had never heard the words Jesus Christ, nor would he have had any idea as to their import.

'''Some say,' he went on, 'live on vegetable food alone (a popular method of fasting, supposed to be highly meritorious in China, as sparing animal life, and tending to keep under the body), 'Should I live on a vegetarian or a mixed diet?'

'''There is no merit in the one or sin in the other,' I replied, Both affect the stomach, not the heart.'

'''Ah, so it has always seemed to me! It seems to leave the question of sin untouched. Oh, Sir! I lie on my bed and think. I sit alone in the day-time, and think. I think and think and think again: but I cannot tell what is to be done with my sins. I am seventy-two years of age. I cannot expect to finish another decade. Today knows not tomorrow's lot, as the saying is; and if true of all, how much more so of me. Can you tell me what is to be done about my sins?'

'''I can indeed,' was my reply. 'It is to answer this very question I have come so many thousand miles. Listen-and I will explain just what you want and need to know.'

'Gladly then I told him of a living, loving God-our Father in heaven; pointing to various proofs of His fatherly love and care.

'''Yes!'' he interrupted, 'and what are we to do to recompense such favour, such goodness? I do not see how it is to be

recompensed. Our scholars say that if we worship Heaven and Earth and the idols at the end of the year, it is enough. But that does not satisfy me.'

"And you do not yet know half there is to give thanks for.'

"I then went on to speak of sin and its consequences, of God's pity, and the incarnation and death of Christ as a substitute the innocent for the guilty, that He might bring us to God.

"Ah! 'he exclaimed, 'and what can we do to recompense such grace?'

"Nothing,' I replied, 'absolutely 'nothing but receive it freely, as God's free gift-just as we do the sunlight, wind and rain.'

"The poor old man told me of all the idols he worshipped, and was quite overwhelmed to think that in doing so he was sinning against the true and living God. It takes time for the mind to grasp such a total reversal of all it has believed for well-nigh seventy years. When my companions returned he listened again to the wonderful story of the Cross, and left us soothed and comforted-yet evidently bewildered-to think over all he had heard, more than glad to know that we had rented a house and hoped soon to have Christian colporteurs resident in the city-,

Little wonder such an experience brought to a crisis the exercise of mind through which Mr. Taylor had been passing. Two women in the same city, and a young man, had shown similar earnestness in learning from his native companions the Way of Life. Multitudes from the surrounding towns and villages would come on market-days to the little "Gospel Hall," and there the enquirers would be taught until they in their turn could become teachers of others. Just the same work needed doing in all the fifty cities throughout the province that still remained without the message of salvation. And oh, the

great Beyond! Must he hold his hand, and refrain from going forward as the way opened, on account of financial straitness, or the needs that seemed to call him home? All the winter he had been definitely waiting upon God, and specially since Mr. Judd's return with reinforcements, to know "whether He would have us prepare to work in some of the new provinces or not, and also whether we should occupy more stations in Che-kiang?" His mind was increasingly assured that they ought to do both; that God's resources were equal to the occasion, and that they must lay hold of His strength and "honour Him with a **full** trust."

How definite was the step of faith to which Mr. Taylor was led at this juncture has only come to light while these pages are being written. In a Bible in the possession of his son in London,^[259] an unsuspected record was found—just a few pencilled lines that obviously had a close connection with his visit to Tai-ping and conversation with the old man on the boat. It was written the day after the letter to Mr. Hill just quoted, when his mind was still full of what he had seen and heard.

Tai-chow, January 27, 1874: Asked God for fifty or a hundred additional native evangelists, and as many foreign superintendents as may be needed, to open up the four Fus and forty-eight Hsiens still unoccupied in Che-kiang; also for the men to break into the nine unoccupied provinces. Asked in the Name of Jesus. I thank Thee, Lord Jesus, for the promise whereon Thou hast given me to rest. Give me all needed strength of body, wisdom of mind, grace of soul to do this Thy so great work. Amen.

It was not until many years later, when Mr. Taylor could look back over all the way in which the Lord had led him, that he was impressed with the fact that every important advance in the development of the Mission had sprung from or been directly connected with times of sickness or suffering which

had cast him in a special way upon God. It was to be so now; as though a deeper preparedness of spirit were needed, before he could be trusted with the answer to this prayer.

There was quite enough, as far as outward experiences went, to account for the serious illness that overtook him before he could get back to his temporary quarters at Fenghwa. In the depth of winter he had been almost incessantly on the road for weeks past, bearing an unusual strain even for him, physically and mentally. So persistent had been the calls upon him, that he had scarcely seen Mrs. Taylor for three months. Ten weeks out of twelve had been spent apart, though they were planning as well as longing to meet. About the middle of December they had found one another at last, in the empty mission-house at Feng-hwa, and had actually had the joy of being alone together, strange to say, for the first time! The little honeymoon was soon broken into, however, by a call for help in serious illness. Two days' journey away, the Crombies were threatened with the loss of their only remaining children. This meant hard travelling over mountain passes deep in snow; and before he could return a messenger had come in haste from a more distant station with news of a whole family down with small-pox.

Only waiting until the coolie could arrive with his belongings, whom he had out-distanced in his eagerness to be with his loved one again, Mr. Taylor set out once more to cross the mountains. It was a desperate business facing January storms on those heights, more than one of which could only be scaled by steps literally cut in the rock. Anxieties pressed sorely upon him with regard to Miss Blatchley and his children at home, as well as in connection with the shortness of funds in China.

"Well, the Lord reigns," he had written to his mother from a wretched inn on the road. "Trials cannot rob me of this

unchanging source of joy and strength."

But the overtaxed physical powers at length gave way, and his patients were no sooner convalescent than Mr. Taylor himself went down with fever, and was so ill as to be hardly able to get back to Feng-hwa. The interval, from the time when they were out of danger until he could safely leave them, he had employed in the evangelistic journey which brought him in touch with old Dzing, and led to the definite prayer recorded above.

And now, how unpromising seemed the sequel to that step of faith! Week after week he lay in helplessness and suffering, able to do nothing but wait upon the Lord. Of all that in His providence was drawing near, Hudson Taylor was unconscious. He only knew that God had given him to see something of the purposes of His heart; that he was sharing in some measure the compassions of Christ for the lost and perishing, and that the love of which he felt the yearnings was His Own infinite love. That that love, that purpose, would find a way to bless, he could not doubt. So he just prayed on—holding in faith to the heavenly vision; ready to go forward when and as the Lord should open the way. Never had advance seemed less possible. But in the Bible beside him was the record of that transaction of his soul with God, and in his heart was the conviction that even for the inland provinces—the Western Branch of the mission he longed to plant, as a stepping-stone to the far interior—God's time had almost come.

And then, as he lay there slowly recovering, a letter was put into his hands that had been two months on its way from England. It was from an unknown friend, a Mrs. Grace of Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, who had only recently become interested in the Mission.

"My dear Sir," the somewhat trembling hand had written early in December, "I bless God, in two months I hope to place at

*the disposal of your Council, for further extension of Inland China Mission work, £800. Please remember, for **fresh** provinces. ... I think your receipt-form beautiful-'The Lord our Banner: the Lord will provide.' If faith is put forth and praise sent up, I am sure that Jehovah of Hosts will honour it."*

Eight hundred pounds for "fresh provinces," for "further extension" of inland work—hardly could the convalescent believe he read aright! Could any one have penned those words who did not know the exercise of soul he had been passing through all those months? The very secrets of his heart seemed to look back at him from that sheet of foreign note-paper. Even before the prayer recorded in his Bible, the letter had been sent off; and now, just when it was most needed, it had reached him with its wonderful confirmation.

From his sick-room back to the Yangtze valley was the next step, and those spring days witnessed 'a happy gathering at Chin-kiang. There, as in almost all the stations, new life had come to the little company of believers. Young converts were being received into the Church, and native leaders were growing in grace and usefulness.^[260] Older missionaries were more hopeful, amid the needs of their great districts, and the young men, who had made good progress with the language, were eager for pioneering work. As many as could leave their stations came to meet Mr. Taylor for a week of prayer and conference, before he and Mr. Judd set out to seek, up the great river, a home for the new Western Branch.

It was not any improvement in the state of funds that accounted for the new note of joy and confidence.

"I feel no anxiety," Mr. Taylor wrote to his mother on the 1st of May, "though for a month past I have not had a dollar in hand for the general purposes of the Mission. The Lord will provide."

Quoting again the hymn they were singing daily at the Conference—"In some way or other, the Lord will provide"—he wrote to Miss Blatchley a little later.

I am sure that if we will but wait, the Lord will provide.... We go shortly, that is, Mr. Judd and myself, to see if we can procure headquarters at Wu-chang from which to open up Western China, as the Lord may enable us. We are urged on to make this effort now, though so weak-handed, both by the needs of the unopened provinces and by our having funds for commencing work in them, while we have none for the general work. I cannot conceive how we shall be helped through next month, though I fully expect we shall be. The Lord cannot and will not fail us.

To Mrs. Taylor he had written during April, "The balance in hand yesterday was sixty-seven cents! The Lord reigns: herein is our joy and confidence." And to Mr. Bailer he added, when the balance was still lower, "We have this, and all the promises of God."

"Twenty-five cents plus all the promises of God," wrote the latter, recalling the experience, "why, one felt as rich as Croesus! and sang:

I would not change my blest estate
For all the earth holds good or great;
And while my faith can keep its hold,
I envy not the sinner's gold.

One thing that concerned Mr. Taylor more at this time than shortness of supplies was the fear lest, in their desire to help, friends at home should be tempted to make appeals in meetings, or even more personally, for funds. To one and another he wrote very earnestly on the subject, begging that this

might not be done. The trial through which they were passing was no reason, to his mind, for changing the basis on which they had been led to found the Mission. In acknowledging one of Mr. George Muller's generous contributions^[261] he had written early in April:

The work generally is very cheering, and we feel happier than ever in the Lord and in His service. Our faith never was so much tried: His faithfulness never so much experienced.

And this position was to him far more safe and blessed, as long as the trial was permitted, than the alternative of going into debt or making appeals to man. How truly this was the case may be seen from the following letter to a member of the Council, written just after the Conference at Chin-kiang (April 24):

*I am truly sorry that you should be distressed at not having funds to send me. May I not say, "Be careful for nothing." We should use all care to economise what God does send us; but when that is done bear no care about real or apparent lack. After living on **God's faithfulness** for many years, I can testify that times of want have ever been times of special blessing, or have led to them. I do beg that never any appeal for funds be put forward, save to God in prayer. When our work becomes a begging work, it dies. God is faithful, must be so. "The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not want." He has said: "Take no thought (anxiety) for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. But seek first (to promote) the kingdom of God, and (to fulfil) His righteousness, and **all these things shall be added unto you.**"*

"Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." It is doubting, beloved Brother, not trusting that is tempting the Lord.

At this very time, it is interesting to notice, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were

themselves giving largely to the work in various ways. A considerable proportion of all they received for their own use was passed on to fellow-workers, and a property yielding an income of four hundred pounds a year, which had recently come to Mrs. Taylor from a relative, was joyfully set apart for the Lord's service. The intimate friend to whom Mr. Taylor was writing had questioned the wisdom of this course, which led to one of the few references he ever made to the subject. Anxious that their position should not be misunderstood, he continued in this letter:

As to the property my dear wife has given to the Lord for His service, I most cordially agreed with her in the step, and do so now. I believe that in so doing she has made hers for ever that which was her Master's, and only entrusted to her so to use. It is not a modern question, this of principal or interest, endowment or voluntary support, and we cannot expect all to see alike on the subject. We might capitalise the annual income of the Mission, and use only the interest; but I fear the income would soon be small, and the work not very extensive.

But you may, I think, be mistaken as to our thought and intention, as well as with regard to the nature of the property. The whole cannot be realised, half of it being reserved to provide annuities. ... At present all we have is about four hundred pounds of annual interest, payable in varying quarterly sums. We do not propose to put either principal or interest into the General Fund (though we might be led to do so), but to use it, equally avoiding stint or lavishness, as the Lord may direct, for special purposes not met by the General Fund. We are neither of us inexperienced, unacquainted with the value of money, or unaccustomed either to its want or possession. There are few more cool and calculating, perhaps, than we are; but in all our calculations we calculate on God's, faithfulness, or seek to do so. Hitherto we have not been put to shame, nor have I any anxiety or fear lest we should be in the

future.

Never has our work entailed such real trial or so much exercise of faith. The sickness of our beloved sister, Miss Blatchley, and her strong desire to see me; the needs of our dear children; the state of the funds; the changes required in the work to admit of some going home, others coming out, and of further expansion, and many other things not easily expressed in writing would be crushing anxieties if we were to bear them. But the Lord bears us and them too, and makes our hearts so very glad in Himself-not Himself plus a bank balance-that I have never known greater freedom from anxiety and care.

The other week when I reached Shanghai, I was in great and immediate need. The mails were both in-no remittance! and the folios showed no balances at home. I cast the burden on the Lord. Next morning on waking I felt inclined to trouble, but the Lord gave me a word, "I know their sorrows, and I am comedown to deliver. ... Certainly I will be with thee"; and before 6 A.M. I was as sure that help was at hand as when, near noon, I received a letter from Mr. Miller which had been to Ningpo, and was thus delayed in reaching me, and which contained more than three hundred pounds.

*My need now is great and urgent; God is greater and more near: and because **He is**, and is **what He is**, all must be, all is, all will be well. Oh, my dear Brother, the joy of knowing the LIVING GOD, of seeing the LIVING GOD, of resting on the LIVING GOD in our very special and peculiar circumstances! I am but His agent. He will look after His own honour, provide for His own servants, and supply all our need according to His own riches—you helping by your prayers and work of faith and labour of love. As to whether He will make the widow's oil and meal go a long way, or send her more-it is merely a question of detail; the result is sure. The righteous shall not be forsaken, nor his seed beg their bread.*

In Christ, all the promises are Yea and Amen.

Chapter XVIII[\(TOC\)](#)

Out of weakness were made strong

1874-1875. AET. 42-43

IT was a memorable day for Hudson Taylor when he set out with his like-minded companion to follow the mighty Yangtze, if not to its upper waters, at any rate to its confluence with the tributary Han, where the metropolis of midChina formed the farthest outpost of Protestant missions. Six hundred miles from the coast, this great centre of culture and commerce lay far beyond any inland station he had yet visited; but northward, westward, southward of it stretched the nine unopened provinces, from the tropical jungles of Burma to the barren steppes of Mongolia and the snowy ramparts of Tibet. Vast was that waiting world, and vast the longings with which Hudson Taylor turned his face-as he had long turned his heart-toward its silent appeal.

"My soul yearns, oh! how intensely," he wrote at this time (June 1874), "for the evangelisation of the hundred and eighty millions of these unoccupied provinces. Oh, that I had a hundred lives to give or spend for their good!"

Meanwhile in England very different were the experiences of those most closely connected with the work. Tenderly cared for by Miss Soltau, Mrs. Duncan, and others, Miss Blatchley still lingered, but it was in great weakness and suffering; and the ebb-tide of her life seemed to leave the cause she had so faithfully served almost stranded.

"I seem to see her now," wrote Miss Soltau, "her lovely face so wan, lying on the sofa, with the tears running down her cheeks as she prayed for every missionary at every station. Oh, the burden on that loving heart. of the great work"! And so conscious was she that she was leaving it before long for the Better Land. One Saturday Miss Pillans Smith might be with us, and another, dear Mrs. Duncan. For many weeks I do not

think we ever numbered ten; and never shall I forget the feeling of desolation and helplessness when we two would find ourselves alone-as if no one in the wide world cared for the little band of toilers in far-off China!"

It had been to Mr. Taylor, as we have seen, a keen sorrow that he could not hasten home when first he heard of this illness, to relieve the beloved friend to whom he and his, as well as the Mission, owed so much. But month after month had gone by, and it was not until he had seen Mr. Judd in possession of suitable quarters at Wu-chang^[262] that the way began to open for his return to England. But even before he could leave China, the one he so hoped to succour had set out on a longer journey. For her all need of human help was past.

"Dear, much-loved Emily!" wrote Miss Soltau. "Our loss only those can estimate who' really knew her.... Yet, not for one moment would I recall that tender heart from its joy in His embrace. ... Very lovely have been the last two years, ... such growth in grace, such sweet rest in the Lord, such loving tenderness to all around! It was a great privilege to be with her."

*"The most glorious triumphs of Christ are spiritual," we quote from the pen of the Rev. H. Grattan Guinness, "^[263] and His noblest work is that wrought in the secret of the soul. Not the conquest of kingdoms, but **self-conquest**; not the renunciation of anything external merely, but **self-renunciation**; not the consecration of substance, but **self-consecration** in the service of GOD and man-these are the hardest deeds to accomplish, and the most divine attainments. They shine with the peculiar light of Calvary.*

"Emily Blatchley, though unknown to the world, was a true heroine, and an instance of this noble, Christ-like self-sacrifice for the good of others. Her memory is fragrant, for

her life was consecrated to Christ and the salvation of the heathen. For his sake she took care of a little flock, the children of the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor of the China Inland Mission. She tended them in health and in sickness, at home and abroad, for years; and as long as health permitted was their only teacher. This she did to help forward the evangelisation of China, by setting Mr. and Mrs. Taylor as free as possible for directly missionary work. Not content with caring for Mr. Taylor's children, she became a Secretary of the Mission. She wrote in its interest thousands of letters; she kept its accounts; she edited its Occasional Papers; she helped to bear its burdens; she worked long hours, and often far into the night. She not only toiled with head and hand, but with her heart too, for she prayed for the Mission. She daily remembered its missionaries by name at the Throne of Grace, and pleaded continually its cause with God. She suffered too. She 'endured hardness.' when in China and on long journeys, putting up with much discomfort. She ministered to her fellow-missionaries, and nursed them when they were sick. She bore the trial of her faith and that of love as well, for in the cause of missions she sacrificed her heart's affections. And all this she did in a quiet, unpretending way, and with a calm perseverance which continued to the end of life. None could have given more to the work of God among the heathen than she did, for she gave all she had-herself.' Blessed be God for the grace bestowed upon her, and for the everlasting rest into which she has entered: for the grace which caused her to toil for Jesus, and then to sleep in Him.

"Faithful friend of a feeble but heroic Mission, would that all its helpers were like-minded with thee! Would that all those who have ministered to it of their substance had as constant a memory of its wants as thine! The China Inland Mission has no eloquent advocate of its claims. It has no denomination for its support. It has no great names on which to rely. It is, therefore, cast the more on God, and on the faithful love and

help of the comparatively few who can appreciate the simplicity, faith, and devotedness which characterise its work in the interest of China's millions. But let those few remember that it is no small honour to be enabled to recognise and minister to the Master when He appears in the garments of poverty and weakness.

"Friends of the China Inland Mission, a precious helper has just been removed from our midst; let us close our ranks and seek to fill the gap. That Mission now needs our help more than ever; let us prove ourselves worthy of the occasion. Let us help the work afresh; and let us Persevere in helping it. Here, around this newly opened grave, let our interest in this work revive; and help Thou, O Lord! Is not Thy Name inscribed upon its banner? Is not its song Ebenezer, and-its hope Jehovahjireh? Bless, then, this Mission, and let the little one become a thousand for Thy glory's sake." [264]

Strange and sorrowful was the home-coming in October, to find-Miss Blatchley's place empty, the children scattered, the Saturday prayer meeting discontinued, and the work almost at a standstill. But, even then, the lowest ebb had not been reached. When on his way up the Yangtze some months previously, a fall had severely shaken Mr. Taylor. The steamer by which he and Mr. Judd travelled was McBain's smallest cargo-boat, and the gangway down to "between decks" was little more than a ladder. Slipping on one of the top steps, Mr. Taylor had fallen heavily to the bottom, coming down upon his heels, and a sprained ankle had been only a small part of the damage. Extreme pain in the back disabled him for several days, and even when the ankle was well he still needed the help of crutches. Concussion of the spine often develops slowly; and it was not until he had been at home a week or two that the rush of London life, with constant travelling by train and omnibus, began to tell. Then came gradual paralysis of the lower limbs, and

the doctor's verdict that consigned him to absolute rest in bed. Stricken down in the prime of his days, he could only lie in that upstairs room conscious of all there was to be done, of all that was not being attended to—lie there and rejoice in God.

Yes, rejoice in God! With desires and hopes as limitless as the needs that pressed upon his heart; with the prayer he had prayed, and the answers God had given; with opportunities opening in China, and a wave of spiritual blessing reviving the churches at home that he longed to see turned into missionary channels;^[265] with the "sentence of death", in himself, and only the faintest hope that he would ever stand or walk again, the deepest thing of all was that unquestioning acceptance of the will of God, as wise, as kind, as best. Certain it is that from that quiet room, that room of suffering, sprang all the larger growth of the China Inland Mission.

A little bed with four posts was now the sphere to which Hudson Taylor found himself restricted—he who had hoped to do so much on this visit to England. Were not the receiving-home in Shanghai and the chain of river-stations ready for the pioneers? was not money in hand for their initial expenses? was not the home department calling for entire reorganisation? If ever strenuous, active effort had been needed, it was surely at this juncture: and a little bed with four posts was his prison, shall we say, or opportunity? Between the posts at the foot of the bed hung a map—though he hardly needed it—a map of China. And round about him day and night was the Presence to which he had fullest access in the Name of Jesus.

"I will give thee a place of access among these that stand by" (Zechariah 3:7). Might not they all have had it? We at any rate all "have our access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephesians 2:18). That Hudson Taylor not only had it but *used it* made all the difference.

Long after, when the prayers that went up from that bed of pain had been more than answered, and the workers of the Mission were preaching Christ far and wide throughout inland China, a well-known leader of the Scottish Church said to Mr. Taylor:

"You must often be conscious of the wonderful way God has prospered you in the C.I.M. I doubt if any man living has had a greater honour."

"I do not look upon it in that way," was the quiet answer. Then turning to his friend in the carriage he said earnestly: "Do you know I sometimes think that God must have been looking for some one small enough and weak enough for Him to use, so that all the glory might be His, and that He found me."^[266]

The outlook did not brighten as the year drew to a close. Mr. Taylor was less and less able to move, even in bed, and at last could only turn from side to side with the help of a rope firmly fixed above him. At first he had managed to write a little, but now could not even hold a pen, and circumstances deprived him of Mrs. Taylor's help for the time being. Then it was, with the dawn of 1875, that a little paper found its way into the Christian press entitled:

"APPEAL FOR PRAYER On behalf of more than a hundred and fifty millions of Chinese."

It briefly stated the facts with regard to the nine unopened provinces; that friends of the C.I.M. had long been praying for men to go as pioneer evangelists to these regions; that recently four thousand pounds had been given for the purpose; and that among the converts in the older stations of the Mission were some from the far interior, who were earnestly desiring to carry the Gospel to the districts from which they had come.

"Our present, pressing need," it continued, "is of more

missionaries to lead the way. Will each of your Christian readers at once raise "his heart to God, and spend one minute in earnest prayer that God will raise up, this year, eighteen suitable men to devote themselves to this work?"

It did not say that the leader of the Mission was to all appearances a hopeless invalid. It did not refer to the fact that the four thousand pounds recently given had come from his wife and himself, part of their capital, the whole of which they had consecrated to the work of God. It did not mention that for two and a half years they and others had been praying daily for the eighteen evangelists, praying in faith. But those who read the appeal felt the influence of these things and much besides, and were moved as men are not moved by sayings and doings that have not their roots deep in God.

So before long Mr. Taylor's correspondence was largely increased, as was also his joy in dealing with it-or in seeing, rather, how the Lord dealt with it and with all else that concerned him.

"The Mission had no paid helpers," he wrote of this time, "but God led volunteers, without pre-arrangement, to come in from day to day to write from dictation, and thus letters were answered. If one who called in the morning could not stay long enough to answer all, another was sure to come, and perhaps one or two might look in in the afternoon. Occasionally, a young friend who was employed in the city would come after business hours and do any needful bookkeeping, or finish letters not already dealt with. So it was day by day. One of the happiest periods of my life was that period of forced inactivity, when one could do nothing but 'rejoice in the Lord' and 'wait patiently for Him,' and see Him meeting all one's need. Never were my letters, before or since, kept so regularly and promptly answered.

"And the eighteen men asked of God began to come. There

was first some correspondence; then they came to see me in my room. Soon I had a class studying Chinese at my bedside. In due time the Lord sent them forth, ^[267] and then the dear friends at Mildmay began to pray for my restoration. The Lord blessed the means used and I was raised up. One reason for my being laid aside was gone. Had I been well and able to move about, some might have thought that my urgent appeals rather than God's working had sent the eighteen men to China. But utterly laid aside, able only to dictate a request for prayer, the answer to our prayers was the more apparent."

When he was so far recovered that the physicians wished him to sit up for an hour or two daily, he could scarcely find time to do so, as several letters record. Every moment was taken up with interviews, with correspondence through his willing helpers, and with care for the work in China. The weekly prayer meeting was now held in his room, and the Council gathered from time to time at his bedside.

"I am just venturing to do a little myself," he wrote to Miss Turner at the end of February. "I sit up in my easy chair for two hours some days. I cannot write much, but just pen a few lines to let you know that you are not forgotten...."

"Three months in bed is a long time. It would have been very weary, but that the Lord Jesus has made it very happy. Some nights when I have never slept at all, I have had much happy time to think of you all and to pray for you."

And to another friend in China a couple of months later:

You will be glad to hear that at last I am recovering. My back is gaining strength, and after nearly five months in bed I am now able to get up and down stairs.... I believe that God has enabled me to do more for China during this long illness than I might have done had I been well. Much thought, much prayer, and some effort in the way of writing by dictation have

brought my intense desire for the evangelisation of all the unreached provinces visibly nearer.

By this time a marked change had come over the spirit of the scene at Pyrland Road. Instead of a deserted house, many were coming and going. The first party of the Eighteen had already sailed, and 'candidates overflowed all the accommodation available for their reception. Another house, indeed, had to be taken for this purpose, for in answer to the "Appeal for Prayer" published in January, no fewer than sixty offers of service were received during the year. How important Mr. Taylor felt it that no hasty decisions should be made, may be judged from the following letter used in his correspondence with candidates at this period. If their response to this faithful statement of the case warranted the hope that they would work happily in the Mission, they were invited to spend a longer or shorter time at Pyrland Road for personal acquaintance.

*"While thankful for any educational advantages that candidates may have enjoyed," he wrote, "we attach far greater importance to spiritual qualifications. We desire men who believe that there is a God and that He is both intelligent and faithful, and who therefore trust Him; who believe that He is the Rewarder of those who diligently seek Him, and are therefore **men of prayer**. We desire men who believe the Bible to be the Word of God, and who, accepting the declaration 'All power is given unto me,' are prepared to carry out to the best of their ability the command, 'Go ... teach all nations,' relying on Him who possesses 'all power' and has promised to be with His messengers 'always,' rather than on foreign gun-boats though they possess some power; men who are prepared, therefore, to go to the remotest parts of the interior of China, expecting to find His arm a sufficient strength and stay. We desire men who believe in eternity and live for it; who believe in its momentous issues whether to the saved or to the lost,*

and therefore cannot but seek to pluck the ignorant and the guilty as brands from the burning.

"The Mission is supported by donations, not subscriptions. We have, therefore, no guaranteed income, and can only minister to our missionaries as we ourselves are ministered to by God. We do not send men to China as our agents. But men who believe that God has called them to the work, who go there to labour for God, and can therefore trust Him Whose they are and Whom they serve to supply their temporal needs, we gladly co-operate with-providing, if needful, outfit and passage money, and such a measure of support as circumstances call for and we are enabled to supply. As may be seen from the last Occasional Paper (No. 39), our faith is sometimes tried; but God always proves Himself faithful, and at the right time and in the right way supplies all our need.

"One-third of the human family are in China, needing the Gospel. Twelve millions there are passing beyond the reach of that Gospel every year. If you want hard work and little appreciation; if you value God's approval more than you fear man's disapprobation; if you are prepared to take joyfully the spoiling of your goods, and seal your testimony, if need be, with your blood; if you can pity and love the poor Chinese in all their mental and moral degradation, as well as literal filth and impurity, you may count on a harvest of souls now and a crown of glory hereafter 'that fadeth not away,' and on the Master's 'Well done.'

"You would find that, in connection with the China Inland Mission, it is no question of 'making the most of both worlds.' The men, the only men who will be happy with us, are those who have this world under their feet: and I do venture to say that such men will find' a happiness they never dreamed of or thought possible down here. For to those who count 'all things' but dross and dung for 'the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord,' He does manifest Himself in such

sort that they are not inclined to rue their bargain. If, after prayerfully considering the matter, you still feel drawn to engage in such work, I shall be only too glad to hear from you again."

Young men and women who came to Pyrland Road on probation, encouraged rather than daunted by the spirit of the above letter, soon found occasion to rejoice in God as the Hearer and Answerer of prayer. Such, for example, was the experience in May that followed the sailing of Mr. George King for China. It had been difficult to spare him; for, busy though he was in the city during the day, he had been one of Mr. Taylor's most faithful helpers both before and after office hours.

Perhaps the Lord will lessen the amount of correspondence for a time," said the latter, "unless He sends us unexpected help."

The correspondence lessened. Mr. King sailed on the 15th, and for a week or two the work was so far reduced as to continue manageable.

On the morning of the 25th, however, when the household gathered for noonday prayer, Mr. Taylor called attention to the fact that this lessening of correspondence had involved a lessening of contributions also.

"Let us ask the Lord," he suggested, "to remind some of His wealthy stewards of the needs of the work."

Casting up the amounts received from the 4th to the 24th of the month, he found that they came to a little over sixty-eight pounds.

"This is nearly £235 less than our average expenditure in China for three weeks," he added. "Let us bring the matter to the Lord in prayer."

The answer was not long delayed. That very evening the postman brought a

letter which was found to contain a cheque to be entered From the sale of plate," and the sum thus realised and sent to the Mission was 235: 7: 9. Little wonder that prayer was turned to praise at the next noon hour, or that Mr. Taylor in telling the facts could not help exclaiming, "Trust in Him at all times, and you will never be disappointed!"^[268]

Quite as remarkable was another experience that soon followed. It was early in June, and Mr. Taylor was returning from Brighton, where he had taken part in a memorable Convention on Scriptural Holiness. Waiting for his train at the station, he was accosted by a Russian nobleman who had been attending the meetings, and who on learning that Mr. Taylor was going to London suggested that they should find seats together.

"But I am travelling third class," said the missionary.

"My ticket admits of my doing the same," was the courteous reply. And they seem to have found a carriage alone together, for presently Count Bobrinsky took out his pocket-book with the words:

"Allow me to give you a trifle toward your work in China."

Glancing at the bank-note as he received it, Mr. Taylor felt there must be some mistake-it was for no less than fifty pounds.

"Did you not mean to give me five pounds?" he said at once. "Please let me return this note: it is for fifty."

"I cannot take it back," replied the other, no less surprised. "It was five pounds I meant to give, but God must have intended you to have fifty; I cannot take it back."

Impressed with the incident, Mr. Taylor reached Pyrland Road to find a prayer meeting going on. A remittance was about to be sent to China, and the

money in hand was short by 49:11s. of the sum it was felt would be required. This deficiency was not accepted as inevitable. On the contrary, it called together those who knew of it for special prayer. 49:11s was being asked for in simple faith, and there upon the office table Mr. Taylor laid his precious bank-note for fifty pounds. Could it have come more directly from the Heavenly Father's hand? "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord."

No less encouraging to faith was the widespread interest aroused in a new departure connected with the outgoing of the Eighteen. Even the Council, meeting at Mr. Taylor's bedside, had been startled by his revival of a plan to which in earlier years he had given much consideration-that of obtaining access to Western China (the far inland provinces) by way of Burma and the Irrawaddy. At that time it had been abandoned as premature, but now unexpected developments brought it again to mind. The British Government, seeking to develop trade with Western China, was about to send an exploring party to the mountainous region lying beyond Bhamo on the upper waters of the Irrawaddy. Only a hundred miles, traversed by frequent caravans, separated that frontier town from the Chinese province of Yun-nan; and Mr. Taylor was surprised to find, in an unknown visitor shown up to his room one day, a traveller who had himself taken the journey. Conversation with this gentleman assured him that Bhamo, with its large resident as well as floating population of Chinese, would be an admirable centre from which to reach the western provinces. Remarkably enough, Mr. Stevenson, who had shared Mr. Taylor's interest in the matter ten years previously, was again in England. So important did it seem to obtain direct access to those great regions not for trade only but for the Gospel, that he was willing to forgo the joy of returning to his own stations for the time being, that he might establish a branch of the Mission at Bhamo, D. V., for this purpose. This was the proposal that startled

the Council, coming at a time when there seemed little hope of Mr. Taylor's ever being more than an invalid. But so earnestly did he plead the cause upon his heart that they were not only brought to his point of view, but one of the Hon. Secretaries, Mr. Henry Soltau, himself volunteered to accompany Mr. Stevenson in his difficult if not hazardous undertaking.

Farewell meetings, in many places addressed by Mr. Stevenson and Mr. Soltau, called forth a volume of prayer, and brought the Mission and its objects once more into prominence.^[269] Very readable letters telling of their voyage to Burma and progress up the beautiful Irrawaddy to Mandalay, the capital of the despotic native king, and his remarkable friendliness in granting them an interview and permission to reside at Bhamo, where there were at that time no foreigners, deepened the interest. And with this may be connected a characteristic move on Mr. Taylor's part, by which he was enabled to make the most of these communications. For the spring of this year (March 1875) saw the last number of the little quarterly, which had told the story of God's gracious dealings with the Mission from its commencement. New wine must have new bottles, and all the life and blessing that had come with the appeal for the Eighteen needed more adequate representation. This Mr. Taylor saw; and though it meant taking upon himself, in his poor health, the burden of an illustrated monthly, he sought strength for this also as part of the service to which his life was given.

But it was a great undertaking; for those were not the days of illustrated papers such as we have now, and *China's Millions* when it appeared was quite an innovation.^[270] Its up-to-date articles and pictures, when Burma was occupying a good deal of public attention; its Chinese stories brightly translated for young people, and full-page texts with floral designs for children to colour on Sundays; its news of pioneer journeys, and of

conversions and progress in the older stations; and above all its spiritually helpful articles from Mr. Taylor's pen came to be looked for by friends old and new.

*"I vividly recall," wrote one of the young candidates, himself the Editor of the **Life of Faith** in later years, "Mr. Taylor's intense and eager interest in the first proof."*

Another, whose abounding energy placed him in the van as a pioneer in the unopened provinces, told of the joy with which Mr. Taylor received the first completed number.

*"I sold six the day it came out to a bookseller near Bow Station," was his lively recollection, "and disposed of many outside Moody and Sankey's great hall near by. The newsboys did not get hold of the title very well-they used to shout, '**Chinese Millions, a penny!**'"*

The work involved in addressing and wrapping copies for the post was recalled by yet another-first of the pioneers to settle in the province of Kweichow, and subsequently the valued Treasurer of the Mission in China.

We thought it a fine paper in those days. It was a great business sending it out to everybody! There was no publication department then, or for long after; no department, indeed, of any kind outside Mr. Taylor's busy room.

So wonderfully was the health of the latter restored in answer to prayer, that he was able for an astonishing amount of work. A brief holiday taken in August to join his children in Guernsey was spent almost entirely in writing. Though longing to share with them the delights of that beautiful coast, he only managed to get out once during his stay of a fortnight; but the letters he despatched to China and elsewhere were worth their weight in gold.

"I am thankful to be able to send you ninety dollars," he wrote

to one of the younger members of the Mission. ^[271]

"The Lord does provide, does He not? How blessed it is to trust in Him! It is far happier to want, trusting Him, than to be richly supplied, leaning on supplies rather than-on the Supplier. I find this life happier every year, though not less trying to faith.

*"You will find the dear native helpers improve on acquaintance, I trust. **They** need our energy and faith to help them; we, divine life and power. Read the Word with much prayer with them, dear Brother. Hold much holy communion with our Lord. Feed on the living Word; and when you find it marrow and fatness to your soul, tell them what you are **finding there**. Oh! you will find it a blessed and holy service; a fruitful and happy calling. You will not be kept long sowing thus before you are rejoicing over the first-fruits of the harvest."*

Work as he might, however, he could not write personally to **all** the members of the Mission, though all were so truly upon his heart. He had to content himself with a circular letter sent off on his return to London, in which he sought to share with them some of the precious lessons learned in weakness and suffering.

"It is nearly twelve months," he wrote on the 26th of August, "since I sailed from China, and ten since I reached England. Few have been the letters I have written to you, but every day of this time you have been on my heart. Usually not once nor twice daily but oftentimes have you and your circumstances, sphere of labour and surroundings, as far as known to me, been remembered and commended to God. I wish it were possible to write to each one of you more frequently and at length; but I take comfort in the thought that you all know me, and know that I am at work for you and for China to the full extent of my ability. May God bless you all and each of those

dear to you; bless and prosper the work He has given you, and in due time make it manifest that HE has been working in and through you.

*"When I came home, I hoped to have done much for China. God soon put that out of the question, as you know, and for many long months there was little I could do but pray. And what has been the result? Far more has been done by God; far more is being done, far more will be done **by Him** than my most sanguine hopes ventured to anticipate.*

"And shall we learn no lesson from this? Shall we not each one of us determine to labour more in prayer; to cultivate more intimate communion with God by His help; thinking less of our working and more of His working, that He may in very deed be glorified in and through us? If we can and will do this, I am quite sure that ere long there will be abundant evidence of it in the improved state of our congregations and churches, in the preparedness of the people for the message, and in the power with which it is delivered. More souls will be saved; the believers will lead more holy lives, and our own knowledge of God and joy in Him will be multiplied. Surely we ought to lead beautiful lives, glorious lives, if we are really with Him Who is Chiefest among Ten Thousand, the Altogether Lovely! 'The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits.'"

Chapter XIX[\(TOC\)](#)

The Faithfulness of God

1875-1876. AET. 43-44

"THERE are commonly three stages in work for God," Mr. Taylor would sometimes say: "first **impossible**, then **difficult**, then **done**." The project, of reaching the nine unopened provinces with the Gospel had not yet passed beyond the first stage. It was still, to all appearances, impossible. Despite the stipulations of the Treaty of Tientsin, ratified as early as 1860, the interior was inaccessible as ever. Passports, besides being practically unobtainable, meant little or nothing of protection, and the European who would venture far from the beaten track had to take his life in his hand. As an evidence of the almost insurmountable obstacles, one has but to recall that after nearly seventy years of work in China, Protestant missions were still confined to few, very few centres—**thirty-nine** stations only being occupied by the representatives of all societies.

"To some it may seem almost incredible," Mr. Taylor wrote in an early number of China's Millions, "that outside the thirtynine places named on the page opposite there, is not one Protestant missionary to be found in any of the thousands of Chinese cities, in any of the tens of thousands of large towns, or in any of the hundreds of thousands of villages, with their millions of perishing inhabitants. Yet such, alas, is the case."

And, strangely enough, even since the appeal for the Eighteen the situation had become decidedly more difficult. For the British exploring party sent to open up communication with Western China had met with tragic disaster. On the mountainous frontier of Yun-nan, a member of the expedition, Mr. Augustus Margary, had been treacherously murdered with the connivance of the Chinese authorities, and the latter would give neither apology nor the reparation international justice required. As month by month the negotiations were prolonged at Peking, relations became increasingly strained in high

places, which meant that foreigners were in added disfavour all over China. It certainly was not the moment, as far as human probabilities were concerned, for anything like advance. And yet the appeal for eighteen pioneers had gone out; the men were being given; and, "assuredly gathering" that the Lord's time had come, faith was strong in many hearts.

In the first issue of *China's Millions* (July 1875) Mr. Taylor had written on this subject:

*It was nine years on the 26th of May since the Lammermuir party sailed for China... We have needed all the time since then to gain experience and to gather round us a staff of native workers, through whose aid we are occupying some fifty stations and out-stations in five provinces. We believe, however, that the time has come for doing more fully what the Master commanded us; and by His grace we intend to do it—not **to try**, for we see no scriptural authority for trying. "Try" is a word constantly on the lips of unbelievers. "We must do what we can," they say; and too often the same attitude is taken up by the child of God. In our experience, to try has usually meant **to fail**. The Lord's word in reference to His various commands is not "Do your best," but "**Do it**"; that is, do the thing commanded. We are therefore making arrangements for commencing work in each of these nine, provinces-without haste, for "he that believeth shall not make haste," but also without unnecessary delay... "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat of the good of the land."
"Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."*

Among the "treasures of darkness" that had come to Mr. Taylor in 1870 had been a new conception of the scope and meaning of faith, upon which a flood of light had been thrown by a passage in his Greek Testament. A letter to Mrs. Berger toward the close of that year of bereavement (November 18) showed that he had already-made the discovery which was to be a mine of

wealth through all his later life, but gave no clue as to how it had-come about, It was just in his usual reading, as he often related, that he was struck with the words, "***Ekete pistin Theou.***" How strangely new they seemed! "Have (or hold) the faithfulness of God": surely it was a passage he had never seen before? Turning to the corresponding words in English he read (Mark 11:22) "Have faith in God." Ah, that was familiar enough; and something within him whispered, "the old difficulty!" How gladly would he have and increase in faith in God, if only he knew how! But this seemed entirely different. It laid the emphasis on another side of the matter in a way he found surprisingly helpful. It was not "have" in your own heart and mind, however you can get it, "faith in God," but simply "hold fast, count upon ***His faithfulness***"; and different indeed he saw the one to be from the other.^[272] Not my faith but God's faithfulness—what a rest it was.

And now, just five years later, the subject was filling his mind as he faced the seemingly impossible situation before the Mission. He knew that the impossibility was only seeming, and for his editorials in the new magazine had chosen the title "China for Christ." In the fourth of these papers, which dwelt upon the definite plan before the Mission for evangelising all the inland provinces, he wrote (November 1875):

Want of trust is at the root of almost all our sins and all our weaknesses; and how shall we escape it but by looking to Him and observing His faithfulness? ... The man who holds God's faithfulness will not be foolhardy or reckless, but he will be ready for every emergency. The man who holds God's faithfulness will dare to obey Him, however impolitic it may appear. Abraham held God's faithfulness and offered up Isaac, "accounting that God was able to raise him from the dead." Moses held God's faithfulness and led the millions of Israel into the waste, howling wilderness. Joshua knew Israel well, and was ignorant neither of the fortifications of the

Canaanites nor of their martial prowess, but he held God's faithfulness and led Israel across the Jordan. ... The Apostles held God's faithfulness, and were not daunted by the hatred of the Jews or the hostility of the heathen.... "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell "of those who, holding God's faithfulness, had faith, and by it "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained. promises ... out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens?"

Satan, too, has his creed: Doubt God's Faithfulness. "Hath God said? Are you not mistaken as to His commands? He could not really mean just that. You take an extreme view, give too literal a meaning to the words:" ... How constantly, and, alas, how successfully are such arguments used to prevent whole-hearted trust in God, whole-hearted consecration to God! ... How many estimate difficulties in the, light of their own resources, and thus attempt little and often fail in the little they attempt! All God's giants have been weak men, who did great things for God because they reckoned on His being with them....

*Oh! beloved friends, if there is a living God, faithful and true, let us hold His faithfulness. ... Holding His faithfulness, we may go into every province of China. Holding His faithfulness, we may face with calm and sober but confident assurance of victory every difficulty and danger; we may count on grace for the work, on pecuniary aid, on needful facilities, and on ultimate success. Let us not give Him a partial trust, but daily, hourly serve Him, counting on **His faithfulness**.*

For ten years this had been, in the main, the attitude of the Mission, when in the spring of 1876 the first anniversary services were held to report progress. Mr. Taylor was by this time well enough to move about with the help of a strong walking-stick, and the new, young, earnest life that had come into the

work with the outgoing pioneers was felt by all its friends and supporters. No more striking evidence could have been given of the place it was coming to hold in the sympathies of the Lord's people than the large and representative gatherings that filled the Mildmay Conference Hall. But remarkable as were the meetings, how little could the speakers really tell of all that had filled those first ten years—all that had been experienced of the love and faithfulness of God! Statistics are not without their meaning, however, and it was with joy Mr. Taylor pointed out on the large map twenty-eight stations in five provinces in which churches had been gathered—six hundred converts having been baptized from the beginning. Of these, more than seventy were devoting their lives to making known the Gospel, and in them lay the chief hope of the future, specially as regarded the evangelisation of the unreached interior. Sixty-eight missionaries had been sent to China, of whom fifty-two were still connected with the Mission. Means for their support had never failed—though that also which is "more precious than gold" had not been lacking the trial of your faith." Without a collection or an appeal of any kind for funds, fifty-two thousand pounds had been received, and the Mission was not and never had been in debt. ^[273]

How much of prayer and practical self-denial lay behind these facts the Report did not reveal, but the candidates at Pyrland Road could have supplied some details not lacking in interest. Preparing, themselves, to face danger and sacrifice in the work to which the Lord was calling them, it meant everything to have the encouragement of their leader's example. In him they found faith, not as a finished product to be obtained they knew not how, but as a practical, growing experience. They could see his faith lay hold upon God more and more, see him daily pay the price of spiritual power and fruitfulness.

"It was a great delight to be with him in those days;" said Mr. Broumton. "He used to call Easton and me to his room for

long talks about China, giving us advice as to how to go about our pioneering journeys, with many an illustration from his own experience. His interest in the outgoing of the Eighteen was intense."

Of his first visit to Pyrland Road, while Mr. Taylor was still an invalid, another wrote:^[274]

Who that has known it can ever forget his bright, winning greeting? It captivated you in a moment. He led me to his study, which was also the "office" of the Mission. It was the back room on the ground floor, and could be entered from the front sitting-room by large folding doors. Shall I say I was shocked, or surprised, or both? At any rate I had an absolutely novel experience. The room was largely occupied with packingcases and some rough shelves set along one of the walls. Near the window, which looked out on the dreary back-gardens, was a writing-table littered with papers. In front of the fireplace where a fender is usually found was a low, narrow, iron bedstead, neatly covered with a rug-Mr. Taylor's chief resting-place by night and by day. I hardly think there was a scrap of carpet on the floor, and certainly not a single piece of furniture that suggested the slightest regard for comfort or appearances.

Mr. Taylor offered no word of apology or explanation, but lay down on his iron bedstead and eagerly plunged into a conversation, which was, for me, one of life's golden hours. Every idea I had hitherto cherished of a "great man" was completely shattered: the high, imposing airs, and all the trappings were conspicuously absent; but Christ's ideal of greatness was then and there so securely set in my heart, that it has remained through all the years, up to this moment. I strongly suspect that, by his unconscious influence, Mr. Hudson Taylor did more than any other man of his, day to compel Christian people to revise their ideas of greatness....

I mention these details because they throw light upon some of the important principles upon which Mr. Taylor based his life and service. He profoundly realised that if the millions of China were to be evangelised, there would have to be a vast increase in self-denial and self-sacrifice upon the part of Christians at home. But how could he ask and urge others to do what he was not practising himself? So he deliberately stripped his life, on all sides, of every appearance of self-consideration and self-indulgence.

And it was just the same in China; but there an additional principle came into action. He would not ask those who worked with him to face hardships he himself was not willing to endure. He never used his position as Director of the Mission to purchase for himself the least advantage or ease. He made it his, under all circumstances, to live in that spirit and practice of self-sacrifice which he expected to find in his brethren on the field. However hard his lot might be in China, every missionary knew that Mr. Taylor had suffered in the same way, and was ready to do so again. No man could suspect, at any time, that while he himself was bearing the cross, his leader, under more favourable circumstances, was shirking it. Herein was one explanation of the remarkable and affectionate attachment to Mr. Taylor on the part of so many in the Mission.

And now he was going back—back to China to speed the pioneers, as he fully hoped and expected, on their far inland journeys. A gracious answer to the prayers of many years had made this possible, in the coming of his beloved sister and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. B. Broomhall, into the home department of the work. Long before the Mission came into existence he had written to them from, China (June 1860):

I have not given up hope of seeing you ... I believe you will yet come. I believe you will be sent by God. And a happy work you

will find it. We have only the Lord to look to for means, for health, for encouragement-and we need no other. He gives us all; and He best knows what we need.

How real was the faith involved in joining the Mission, when at length the way opened, may be judged from the fact that they had by that time a family of ten growing boys and girls. But this was perhaps one of their chief qualifications. What hearts are so large and what hands so free for others as those filled with love and service in which self has no part. Number 2 Pyrland Road, which became the home of Mr. and Mrs. Broomhall, soon radiated an atmosphere of helpfulness, spiritually and in other ways, that made it for many a long year the best loved centre of the Mission. Number 6 was still Mr. Taylor's home, but the two were practically thrown into one, the intervening house being occupied for offices and candidates. Mr. Taylor's little back room was now exchanged for a more cheerful study, and a Secretary was installed in the person of Mr. William Soltau, who took over much of his work. Barely waiting to see these arrangements completed, however, and to give time for the preparation of the party of eight who sailed with him, Mr. Taylor set out early in September (1876), notwithstanding the war-cloud that hung heavily over the eastern horizon.

For the negotiations that had dragged on so long at Peking had come at last to a stalemate. Nothing would induce the Chinese Government to give satisfaction of any sort for the murder of Mr. Margary; and the British Ambassador, having exhausted diplomatic resources, was on the point of retiring to the coast to put the matter into the hands of the Admiral. It seemed impossible that war could be averted, and there were many among the friends of the Mission who strongly advised against Mr. Taylor's going out.

"You will all have to return," they said. "And as to sending off pioneers to the

more distant provinces, it is simply out of the question."

It was indeed a critical juncture. After years of prayer and preparation, evangelists for the unentered provinces had been given; had gone to China, and having acquired some knowledge of the language were ready to set forth. Could it be that the iron gate of the last ward—having opened thus far—was again to close, leaving the prayer of faith unanswered? Mr. Taylor did not think so. Indeed he felt as sure that God's time had come, as he was that the men had been given. He was fully aware that in event of war, not the pioneers only, but all his fellow-workers might have to leave their inland stations. That matters could not look more threatening was obvious. Even before he sailed, though this he may not have heard, Mr. Thomas Wade had actually left Peking to make way for the commencement of hostilities. Every effort had failed, and a war that might close the country entirely to missionary effort was all but begun.

But no, *prayer* had not failed. In the third-class cabin of the French Mail, as in the prayer meetings at Pyrland Road, fervent supplication was going up to God that He would overrule the crisis for the furtherance of His own great ends. With Him it is never too late. At the last moment, utterly improbable as it seemed, a change came over the Peking Foreign Office. More alive to the situation than his fellows, the Viceroy Li Hung-chang hurried to the coast, overtaking the British Ambassador just in time to reopen negotiations; and there, at Chefoo, was signed the memorable Convention which threw open the door of access at last to the remotest parts of China. This was the news that awaited Mr. Taylor on his arrival in Shanghai, the agreement having been signed within a week of his leaving England; and already three parties of the Eighteen had set out and were well on their way to the interior.

"Just as our brethren were ready," he wrote, "not too soon

and not too late the long-closed door opened to them of its own accord."

Chapter XX[\(TOC\)](#)

The Gates of the West

1876-1877. AET. 44-45

AND what were the provisions of that notable Convention signed at Chefoo on September 13, 1876? As concerned the pioneers simply these: that foreigners were at liberty to travel in any part of the Emperor's dominions; that they did so under his protection, and were to be received with respect and in no wise hindered on their journeys. Imperial proclamations were to be posted in every city, giving publicity to these arrangements; and for a period of two years British officials might be sent inland, specially to see that this clause was carried out. As a matter of fact, representatives of the C.I.M. were the first, and for years almost the only foreigners, to avail themselves of this great opportunity. Far and wide they travelled, crossing and recrossing all the provinces of the interior, and penetrating even into eastern Tibet. Thirty thousand miles were thus traversed in the next eighteen months, Scriptures and tracts being everywhere sold or distributed, and friendly relations almost uninterruptedly maintained. At first, indeed, the missionaries were supposed to be Government agents, and their arrival spread dismay in the official breast. For there had been no unseemly haste in issuing the proclamations and more than one Mandarin hit upon the happy expedient of entertaining the visitors with elaborate hospitality, while the city was hurriedly placarded with the belated documents.^[275]

It must not be supposed, however, that the pioneers had a bed of roses. Though the attitude of the Government was favourable for the time being, the prejudices of the literati were unchanged, and the difficulties of travel, great and small, remained the same. Wonderful were those journeys with their new experiences, their launching out into the unknown, their fervent love for souls, their brave endurance, manifold perils, and the exercise of young hearts cast upon God! Fain would we follow the footsteps of the evangelists,

see with their eyes, hear with their ears, live over again experiences so well worth while, both for time and for eternity. The openness of the people and their response in spiritual things was what impressed them most. Whether it were Mr. Juddin Hu-nan, Henry Taylor in Ho-nan, or Easton and Parker on their way to the far north-west, all found the same willingness to listen, with here and there a deep heart-hunger in some who were seekers after truth.

"As we spoke of Jesus and His sufferings for our sin," Henry Taylor wrote on his journey to Ho-nan, "we saw tears stealing down some faces. The women go in, heart and soul, for idolatry, as you know, but still find their hearts unsatisfied and their minds in a maze."

Fifty-six days were spent, even on this first journey, in carts and inns, on foot and wheelbarrow, passing from city to city through the southern part of the province, where roads were roughest and accommodation poorest, and where little food was obtainable beyond steamed bread and rice, or coarse home-made vermicelli. Starting at earliest dawn, they, often travelled on till dark, preaching by the wayside or in crowded streets, everywhere telling the glad tidings of Redeeming Love.^[276]

In the city and district of Ju-ning several earnest inquirers were met with—Wang, the young school-master; Hu, the devout vegetarian; the medicine vendor who had no cure for a corrupt heart; the old scholar, who humbly knelt, the first time he ever heard of Jesus, to ask that his sins might be laid upon the divine Sacrifice, and who seemed astonished that any one could be indifferent to the good news about such a Saviour; and a Mr. Mu, also a man of letters, in whose heart there was an evident work of the Spirit of God. Several of these came daily to read and pray with the missionary and his Chinese companion, and Mr. Mu was urgent in his desire to be baptized. Only the promise that they would come again in a few months, D.V.,

prevailed upon him to wait until he could learn more of what it really meant to be a Christian.

Later journeys, while they brought encouragement in finding this man and others steadfast in the faith, brought also. perils from which only the hand of God could have delivered. Convinced that he should shorten his visit to the provincial capital (Kai-feng) on one occasion, Henry Taylor left a day or two earlier than he had intended. Not until months later did he learn that that very day a crowd of students had come to the inn, and, not finding him, had torn down the sign-board, and would have set fire to the place had not the authorities intervened. They had bound themselves by an oath to kill the foreigner, and had been lying' in wait in different parts of the city. When he did not appear they went in search of him, and their rage on learning that he was already far away knew no bounds.

Short of money on another occasion, he sent his helper to Hankow for silver, waiting his return in an inn. To his surprise a proclamation presently appeared, forbidding any one on pain of the severest punishment to sell anything to the foreigner. This, of course, included food, which the landlord of the inn dared no longer supply. Not knowing what to do, Henry Taylor was praying alone in his room one night when he heard a stealthy movement at the shutter. With some trepidation, for robbers are commonly armed in Honan, he went, to the window and saw a man apparently trying to get in. Before he could give the alarm the stranger beckoned to him to be silent. Fumbling in his girdle he produced a little loaf of bread, then another and another, six in all, something like large steamed dumplings. These he handed in through the window, and without a word disappeared in the darkness.

Next night he came again, and the same scene was transacted.

Not want, not want! "he whispered emphatically, when the missionary offered the few cash he had left.

He dared not stay for conversation, but was faithful in his visits until supplies came, and Mr. Taylor was able to leave for the coast.

Many a story could the pioneers have told of answers to prayer almost equally remarkable; of friendliness among all classes, as well as the old, bitter opposition; of opened hearts here and there, and access to regions never before visited by foreigners. Interested inquirers were met with again and again in remote places, and letters were received telling of baptisms in the clear water of some mountain stream, and even of little gatherings for the Breaking of Bread. The principle on which these itinerations were carried out was that of a widespread dissemination of saving truth, to be followed by settled work as the way should open. Thoughts wholly strange and new need time to filter into the mind of a community as of an individual. By coming back again and again, impressions could be deepened and interest followed up. The aim was, meanwhile, to gather information, and look for indications as to where to settle. For permanent localised work was the object kept in view only, not a station first, and a church (or no church) afterwards; but, if possible, signs of a real work of the Holy Spirit to begin with-mission-house and chapel to follow as they were needed. To this end itineration had to be patiently pursued; and even when inquirers were gathered and a district seemed full of promise, it was often long before it was possible to settle. In Ho-nan, as we have seen, there was much to indicate the Ju-ning district as suitable for permanent work. Some thirty people were found on the return of the evangelists, who seemed truly to have accepted the Gospel. While still homeless save for their room in an inn, Henry Taylor and his companions baptized two of these-a man named 'Wang, and Mr. Mu, through whose

preaching most of the others had been interested. At length a house was rented, in a little city at the foot of the hills, and six happy weeks spent among the people.^[277] Then the literati stirred up trouble. For days the place was in an uproar and the missionaries' lives were in danger; and few letters are more pathetic than the pencilled lines that tell of their finally having to withdraw and give up the premises.

Well was it, then, that the leader of the Mission was within reach, able to advise and comfort. No one had passed through more of such trials than he, and it was on purpose to guide the pioneers and strengthen their hands in God that he had returned to China.

For himself, little that he had planned was to be accomplished during the first few months after his arrival. A chill caught in the China Sea led to serious illness. He was able to go up-river as far as Chin-kiang, but there had to learn many a lesson of patience, as he found himself needed at nearly every station in the Mission, and unable to do more than pray and help by correspondence.

"It is difficult to realise," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor in November, "that I cannot run about as I once did"; and in another letter, 'the weakness that prevents overwork may be the greatest blessing to me.'"

Yet overwork seemed almost inevitable; for Mr. C. T. Fishe, in broken health, had gone home on furlough, and there was no one else to take his place as Secretary to the Mission in China. This meant long hours daily at office work, besides Mr. Taylor's directorial duties and the oft-recurring claims of *China's Millions*, of which he was Editor.

"We have never been so long separated," he wrote again when the worst of his illness was past," but He Who has helped us day by day for more than two months, will help us till He gives us the joy of reunion.... The Lord be with you and comfort

your heart with His love. May you find it better than mine."

Oh! it is good to soar

The winds and waves above,

To Him Whose purpose I adore,

Whose providence I love;

And in His mighty will to find

The joy and freedom of the mind.

Thus it was that Henry Taylor returning sorrowfully from Ho-nan, George Nicoll, homeless through a riot at I-chang, and other troubled spirits could be sure of finding not, only counsel and help at Chin-kiang but a heart of tender sympathy, exercised with the sorrows of many, yet free from anxious care.

Despite absence from home and loved ones, and the limitations of ill-health which he was feeling keenly, Mr. Taylor was enabled so to cast his burdens on the Lord that, as he wrote to Mr. Hill in February (1877), he "could not but rejoice seven days a week." Whenever work permitted, he was in the habit of turning to a little harmonium for refreshment, playing and singing many a favourite hymn, but always coming back to—

*Jesus, I am resting, resting, in the joy of what Thou art;
I am finding out the greatness of Thy loving heart.*

Some around him could hardly understand this joy and rest, especially when fellow-workers were in danger. A budget of letters arriving on one occasion, as Mr. Nicoll relates, brought news of serious rioting in two different stations. Standing at his desk to read them, Mr. Taylor mentioned what was happening and that immediate help was necessary. Feeling that he might wish to be

alone, the younger man was about to withdraw, when, to his surprise, someone began to whistle. It was the soft refrain of the same well-loved hymn:

Jesus, I am resting, resting, in the joy of what Thou art ...

Turning back, Mr. Nicoll could not help exclaiming, How **can** you whistle, when our friends are in such danger!"

"Would you have me anxious and troubled?" was the long-remembered answer. "That would not help them, and would certainly incapacitate me for my work. I have just to roll the burden on the Lord."

Day and night that was his secret, "just to roll the burden on the Lord." Frequently those who were wakeful in the little house at Chin-kiang might hear, at two or three o'clock in the morning, the soft refrain of Mr. Taylor's favourite hymn. He had learned that, for him, only one life was possible—just that blessed life of resting and rejoicing in the Lord under all circumstances, while HE dealt with the difficulties inward and outward, great and small.

Second only to his longing for the evangelisation of the inland provinces was the desire that possessed Mr. Taylor at this time for unity and blessing in the forthcoming Conference of missionaries to be held in Shanghai. Never had opportunities been greater, or the need for spiritual power more urgent, that they might be used aright. Mr. Taylor longed to see advance on a wide front—not in the C.I.M. only, but on the part of all societies—and a strong, united appeal to the home churches for adequate reinforcements. To bring this about, as he realised, nothing less than a wonderful answer to prayer could avail; for party spirit was running high over the difficult "term question,"^[278] and many missionaries were holding aloof from the Conference altogether,

feeling that it would be an occasion for controversy if not strife. And yet China was open from end to end as never before. Five hundred missionaries, all told, formed the little company to whom was entrusted the stupendous task of its evangelisation. How great their need of power—the real power of the Holy Spirit poured out, as at Pentecost, upon united, expectant hearts!

There were still some months before the Conference, convened for May (1877), and this interval Mr. Taylor was seeking to make the most of.

"There is one very important matter to pray about," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor in February—"the forthcoming conference. It will be a power shall it be for good or evil? This rests much with us, through the use of believing prayer. Unless there is a great outpouring of God's Holy Spirit, very much harm may result: very much has already resulted from preliminary discussions.... Nor are we likely to pass without attack if some have their way. But our God is an almighty Saviour, and my hope is in Him. If His Spirit be poured out, evil will be kept in check; and if we ask for it, will it not indeed be so? Let us pray, then, much for this—pray daily for this ... that division and discord may not prevail instead of unity and love."

But Mr. Taylor not only prayed; he did all that in him lay to promote the unity he felt to be of such importance, and to remove misunderstandings. It was hardly to be wondered at, as he was the first to recognise, that the C.I.M. should have come in for a large share of criticism. Its aims and methods never had been popular, and its new departure in the direction of widespread evangelisation was of the nature of an experiment. Because the pioneers were for the most part young, at the beginning only of their missionary life, it was argued that it could not be right to use them in work so difficult and important. Undoubtedly they were ignorant and inexperienced as compared with older missionaries, especially with the able men to be found in the

foremost ranks of other societies. No one would have been more thankful than Mr. Taylor to have seen such workers take the field. But they were all needed, more than needed in their actual posts. There was no suggestion that some or any of them should be set free, though China was accessible at last, from end to end, to preachers of the Gospel. Was, then, no one to go because they could not send the best? Mr. Taylor had good reason to believe that these young workers had been given in answer to prayer, and that the hand of God was in the coincidence of their being ready, on the spot, when the Gates of the West were thrown open. He was doing all he could to liberate experienced missionaries, and was thankful to have reliable Chinese Christians to send with the younger evangelists. Experience, he well knew, would be one of the great gains that would come to them as they pursued their task; and meanwhile, if they were not burdened with much knowledge, which often spells discouragement, they had the health and hopefulness of youth; the buoyancy of body, mind, and spirit which is in itself so great a gift. If only their critics, and they were many, could come nearer—could meet and know the men in question, and hear from their own lips of the wonderful opportunities God was giving—objections, he had no doubt, would give place to sympathy. But how was this to be brought to pass?

A leader less humble, perhaps, less truly taught of God, might have brushed aside unfriendly criticism, absorbing himself in what he felt to be his own work. But years of self-effacing discipline had not been in vain. Now that the opportunity prayed for through half a lifetime had come, the grace to use it wisely and to the glory of God was not withheld. Keenly as Mr. Taylor felt the attitude of opposition, he knew that those whose views differed most widely from his own might have just as sincere a desire for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. He had grasped, moreover; something of the real, indissoluble oneness of the body of Christ: that it is not that the eye *should*

not say to the hand, "I have no need of thee"—it *cannot*. "If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it *therefore not of the body?*" On the contrary, whatever it may say or feel, of the body it is and must remain. The bearing of this principle upon the position of the C.I.M. he saw with increasing clearness. As a hand, this pioneering effort might reach out a certain distance beyond the rest of the body; but if it would go further, the body must go too: there could be no other way. A large part, and not the easiest part of his work as he was learning, must consist in the humble, patient endeavour to carry his brethren with him in any new departure to which he was constrained of God. How much easier it would have been to go on alone, independently, he may have felt. But where is there room for independence in a living organism, every part of which is bound up with the whole?

These thoughts in mind, Mr. Taylor went on from Chinkiang, as soon as he was able, to the new centre of the Mission at Wu-chang. Mr. Judd had just set out with one of the pioneers for the far-off capita of Kwei-chow, and his place had to be filled. There were problems also to consider as to how to keep in touch with distant workers, so as to reach them regularly with supplies. For several weeks Mr. Taylor had the benefit of experienced help, while Mr. McCarthy was preparing for what proved to be one of the most remarkable journeys ever taken in Western China.^[279] Difficult as it was to spare him, Mr. Taylor rejoiced in the project almost as much as if he were going himself, and many were the hours of consultation and prayer they had over the whole forward movement.

Remembering their own spiritual difficulties, they felt the importance of providing help for younger workers whose strenuous life exposed them to so much of trial and temptation. The thought of calling together as many of the

pioneers as possible for a week of conference had long been in Mr. Taylor's mind, and in sending off recent parties he had arranged that they should return for books and money at a given time. And now as he considered the matter with Mr. McCarthy, they saw in such a reunion the possibility of just the *rapprochement* needed with workers of other societies. For the missionary community in Hankow, across the river, was considerable, and if united meetings could be arranged, much might be done to promote mutual understanding, and prepare the way for the larger Conference in Shanghai.

The response this suggestion met with from the London and Wesleyan Missions was so encouraging that Mr. Taylor could not but feel that, already, prayer was being answered; and he determined to seek opportunities for closer intercourse, especially with those whom he knew to be critical toward the C.I.M., This was not easy, on account of the great pressure of work upon him, nor was it a line of things his sensitive spirit would have chosen. But, as he had written to Mrs. Taylor soon after reaching Wu-chang:

*It is our Father Who orders **all**—these experiences included. I feel more and more that it is with **Him** we have to do: not so much with men, or things, but with Him. And herein lies our power to do and suffer patiently, perseveringly. We can take rebuffs, sorrows, disappointments from His hand, though we might resent them from one another. And joys are doubly joys when received from Him.*

In this spirit he was glad rather than otherwise to find himself delayed in Hankow one evening until it was too late to recross the river. Before he could reach the other side, the city-gates would be shut, and without bedding; etc., he could not very well go to an inn. It was necessary, therefore, to seek hospitality; and this Mr. Taylor did by calling upon a missionary with whom he was but slightly acquainted, and who took a very unfavourable view both

of himself and the C.I.M. Quite simply he explained the circumstances, asking whether it would be convenient to put him up for the night. Christian courtesy admitted but one reply, and the sense of having done a kindness opened the way for friendly intercourse. Mr. Taylor being as good a listener as he was a talker, his host found himself drawn into helpful conversation, even upon spiritual things. A cordial friendship resulted; the missionary in question taking an early opportunity of letting it be known that he had had "no idea Mr. Taylor was so good a man."

Down the Yangtze more or less the same experience was repeated, as Mr. Taylor visited the river stations with a view to making arrangements for Mr. McCarthy's district.^[280] Where missionaries of other societies were to be found, he took time to see something of their work, enjoying a Sunday especially with the Rev. David Hill at Wu-sueh. At Kiukiang he had a good deal of intercourse with the American missionaries, putting up apparently in native quarters.^[281]

*"The wind is strong and cold," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor during this visit (February. 24). "I am writing by a little window in a dark attic. The chair is not a foot high, yet I can touch the tiles as I sit. The hail-stones that came through the roof in the night, my 'boy' swept up into a heap this morning, a foot and a half square and one or two inches thick. I was writing with numbed fingers till 3 A.M., and out to breakfast at eight. Nature does not enjoy these things; but my heart rejoices in my Father's arrangements, and I cannot keep the words of **What a Friend we have in Jesus,**' and the music too, from welling up within-cannot and do not want to, for it is all true, is it not?"*

I have written to ***The Missionary Recorder,***" he continued a few days later, "asking special prayer for the outpouring of God's Spirit, not only at the

Conference but before; that we may all go up filled with the Spirit, and not merely hoping for a blessing." ...

A day or two later, out on the wind-swept river, he was thinking and praying over the needs of the province he had just touched in passing (Kiang-si).

*"It is stiff soil," he wrote, "and none but fully consecrated men will accomplish much. Comfort-seeking, etc., won't do there. **Cross-loving** men are needed. Where are they to be found? Alas—where! Oh, may God make you and me of this spirit! and may our only prayer be, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? I feel so ashamed that you and the dear children should affect me more than millions here who are perishing—while we are sure of eternity together. The good Lord forgive us, or me rather...."*

"There are such openings in China as there never have been and as are not likely to recur. Just while the effect of the Imperial proclamations lasts (and this will largely be over in a very few months), we can do in weeks what would have taken months or years before. I see God's hand in bringing me here just now, on this and many other grounds."

Meanwhile the long-closed gates were opening indeed. In the north and far north-west, the pioneers held on their way; Mr. McCarthy was already nearing the western province of Sze-chwan, larger than the whole of France and far more populous; Judd anti Broumton had been prospered in renting premises in the capital of Kwei-chow,^[282] eight hundred miles south-west of the nearest mission station; while from Bhamo Messrs. Stevenson and Soltau had made extended journeys into the Kah-chen hills, from which two or three hours' descent would have brought them into Chinese territory.^[283] To his beloved friend Mr. Berger, so long one with him in prayer for these very developments, Mr. Taylor had recently written:^[284]

It 'will afford you no small joy to know that our prayers are so far answered that work is begun in six of the nine provinces. You will have heard that Stevenson and Soltau are not permitted at present to enter Yun-nan. I trust the delay will only be temporary, and that the way may ultimately be all the more open. It is such a rest to know and feel that God knows how to carry on His own work. ...

My heart is unspeakably glad that He led my dear wife and myself to use our means in aid of this and other similar work in needy lands, and to separate for a season in furtherance of His cause. Can we be mistaken in trusting Him to do what He so easily can-to supply the men and means needed for carrying on His own work, and extending it? My glad heart says, "No," little as I know Him: and what is more, His word says, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not, with Him also, freely give us all things?"

Thus with thankfulness and expectation Mr. Taylor returned to Wu-chang to meet the pioneers as they gathered for their little conference. From the far inland provinces they came, as well as from the river stations-seventeen C.I.M. workers in all, to be joined by a dozen or more of the Hankow missionaries. The chief responsibility for the meetings rested upon Mr. Taylor; and as always in times of special need, a day was set apart for prayer and fasting. He and his fellow-workers were one in the longing for an outpouring of divine blessing that should sweep away all coldness and deadness in their own hearts, all criticism and misunderstanding; an enduement with "power from on high "for the great work to be done.

Wonderful in the days that followed was the answer to these prayers. In Mr. Judd's garden-house on the hill-side, and the L.M.S. chapel across the river, the presence of God was consciously felt. "Take time to be holy "was the

burden of Dr. Griffith John's message, followed by practical talks from Mr. Taylor and others on the real problems, the inward, spiritual problems, of missionary life. Much time was given to prayer, especially for the unopened provinces; and the story the young evangelists had to tell, simple though it was, called forth deepest sympathy. The hopefulness of these inexperienced workers, their enthusiasm and genuine confidence in GOD as able and willing to do the impossible, were contagious as well as cheering.

"I thank God for Mr. Taylor; I thank God for the C.I.M.; I thank God for my younger brethren," Dr. John said earnestly at the closing meeting, adding that he was sure he was but expressing the feeling of all the Hankow missionaries.

Three weeks later came the Shanghai General Conference, and Mr. Taylor having sent off the pioneers, strengthened and encouraged, turned to the difficult task awaiting him at the coast. The paper he had to read was upon "Itineration Far and Near, as an Evangelising Agency," and while it was the subject of all others nearest his heart, he well knew that next only to the "term question" it would probably call forth differences of opinion, if not bitterness of feeling. "**Jesus, I am resting, resting,**" was the hymn he most often asked for in the little crowded house where the C.I.M. contingent gathered;^[285] and despite the seriousness of the issues involved, his mind was kept in peace.

And once again prayer was answered and the seemingly impossible brought to pass. The "term question," which had threatened to prove so serious a difficulty, was by general consent excluded from the deliberations; and Mr. Taylor's paper, as *The Celestial Empire* recorded, "secured the deepest interest of his audience."^[286] From Dr. John's opening address with its searching, powerful appeal for a life in the Holy Spirit, to the call of the united conference "to the Mission Boards, Colleges and Churches of the World "for men and women to meet the great opportunity, all was cause for

thanksgiving—"a gathering fraught with blessing to the people of China," as Mr. Taylor wrote, "' the most important step China missions have yet taken." The parting, after two weeks of fellowship (May 10-24) was "like the breaking-up of a family never more to meet on earth." No discordant note remained. Even the Chinese dress of Mr. Taylor and his fellow-workers had ceased to offend, and the forward movement they represented had passed into the confidence and prayerful sympathy of most if not all present.

Part V (TOC)

Buried Lives: Much Fruit

1878-1881. AET. 46-49

Chapter XXI

For Jesus' Sake

1877-1879. AET.45-47

SERIOUS tidings were already reaching Mr. Taylor, before the Shanghai Conference, of the long-continued drought in the northern provinces. Failure of the wheat and other crops, year after year, had brought a vast population to the verge of famine, and letters from two of the pioneers on their second visit to Shan-si were full of the impending calamity. Realising in measure what the situation meant, and the opportunity it afforded for practising as well as preaching the Gospel, Mr. Taylor was anxious to do as much as possible to supply Messrs. Turner and James with funds for famine relief. They were the only Protestant missionaries in all the stricken area, and their letters published in *China's Millions* could not fail to awaken sympathy. But the assistance would have to be long-continued, and on this ground alone Mr. Taylor saw that his return to England should be as speedy as possible.

The forty weeks of his expected absence from home were nearing an end, but not so the work to be done in China. None of the older centres of the Mission had yet been visited; and keen as he was about the pioneering, the settled stations with their little churches were ever on his heart. In his poor state of health it was no easy matter to face the intense heat of summer in visits to the Che-kiang stations, with all that was involved of work and arduous travelling. He had fully expected to get through before the Shanghai Conference; but now that important occasion had come and gone, and he seemed little nearer the return to England that was in many ways so urgent.

"Sometimes it does seem hard," he had written to Mrs. Taylor early in May, "to be so long away from you. But when I think of One Who spent thirty-three years away from His heaven, and finished them on Calvary, I feel ashamed of my own selfishness."

And while the Conference was going on:

I do like our absence from one another, for Jesus' sake, to cost us something—to be a real sacrifice. May His worthy and loving heart accept it.

Much exhausted after the Conference, and suffering from neuralgia though he was, he set out therefore on a thorough visitation of the Che-kiang stations, [287] accompanied most of the way by a travelling-companion whose presence proved specially helpful among the women.

Miss Elizabeth Wilson, whom he was escorting to Wenchow, had by this time been more than a year in China. Though scarcely beyond middle-age, and full of energy and brightness, her silvery hair brought her the advantage of being considered "old," among a people with whom such an appellation is an honour, and her coming to China at all was rather a wonder to other foreigners. But Mr. Taylor knew the whole story. He had met her long before, as a girl on a visit to London, and had learned of her earnest desire to give her life to missionary work. But at that time she was needed in her Westmorland home, and when her sister married and her parents became invalids the cherished hope had to be hidden in her heart.

"Years went on," as, Mr. Taylor said in speaking of her subsequent usefulness in China, "and this loving daughter never let her parents suspect that she was making any sacrifice on the one hand, yet never recalled the gift she had given to the Lord for missionary service on the other. When five years had gone by, she began to feel, 'If I am delayed much longer, the language will be hard to learn.' But she waited God's time.

"Ten, twenty, thirty years passed away ere the Lord set her free; but the 'vow of twenty was as fresh in her heart at fifty as when first it had been offered. Within three weeks of the death

of her surviving parent, she wrote to our headquarters in London of her desire to spend the remainder of her days in missionary work in China." [288]

Very interesting it was, now, to see the welcome with which the Christian women received this unexpected visitor, especially in stations where they had no lady missionary. With their Romanised New Testaments wrapped in coloured handkerchiefs (the precious book it had cost Mr. Taylor and others years of labour to provide) they walked miles on tiny feet to meet the travellers, and begged in place after place that the "Elder Sister" might stay among them, that they as well as the men might have some one to teach them the things of God.

From Miss Wilson's recollections of this journey we learn of the exceeding love with which Mr. Taylor was received in many places, especially among the mountain people of what had been Mr. Stevenson's out-stations. Simple as they were, and poor, they entertained him with generous hospitality, so that the inns in which he had often sojourned knew him no more, on that route at any rate. To some of the villages he was carried in the primitive mountain-chair, hanging from a single pole, the Christians themselves, being his bearers and resolutely refusing payment.

It was a sorrow to miss, in this beautiful district, one who had been called Home since Mr. Taylor's last visit three and a half years previously. Then, the scholar Nying had been, under God, the inspiration of the work; now, his place was empty. The truth he had so faithfully proclaimed was still bearing fruit, however, in many a life, sometimes in strangely unexpected ways. There was the cotton-weaver of Cheng-hsien, for example, saved through the preaching of Tao-hsing (himself one of Nying's children in the faith), saved through a hole in the wall, amid ridicule and laughter; but blessedly saved! It

was a joy to Miss Wilson as well as Mr. Taylor to meet this man and hear his story.

He was just a poor orphan lad, the slave and drudge of the family who had adopted him. Hearing unusual sounds of merriment one day from the adjoining house, he left his work and went to a little opening he knew of, where a knot had dropped out of the wooden partition, to see what was going on. The son of the neighbouring family had just returned from the city and was telling his experiences. He was making fun, it appeared, of some one he had heard talking to a crowd. It was the well-known gambler, Tao-hsing, who had "eaten the foreign religion" and whose life had become so changed. He was telling the matchless story of the Prodigal Son, telling it out of a full heart. Travestied as it was in the reproduction, it still appealed to the dejected, lonely listener, as nothing else that he had ever heard. Could it be that there was a God—a Father in heaven—Who loved like that!

"Oh, go on, go on!" he cried almost without knowing it when the recital ended. "Let us hear more of those good words."

Astonishment and laughter on the other side of the partition drove him from his vantage-ground, but only to send him in search of his neighbour, from whom he learned where the wonderful teaching could be heard. And once he had grasped the heavenly message, nothing would induce him to turn away from the Saviour Whom, not having seen, he loved. Called up one night during the following winter, he was told by the people with whom he lived that they would stand it no longer. He must give up his employment, his home, the affianced bride for whom he was working give up everything and be thrust, penniless, into the streets—or have done with this new-fangled religion.

What, give up Christ? It was a terrible ordeal, for the people were very angry. But he was kept amid all the excitement, and enabled to tell them unhesitatingly that nothing could alter his choice. Then and there he found himself hustled out into the darkness; heard the door barred behind him, and felt the driving sleet beat upon his shelterless head. There was no refuge but in God.

"A week or two later," Mr. Taylor wrote, "the family found they could not manage without him. After trying in vain to induce him to turn from the Lord, they took him back; and when we were there, there was hope of the conversion of several members of that household. Truly the Gospel is still' the power of God unto salvation'; we have no need to be ashamed of it, or fear for its success!"

Farther south over the mountains, Miss Wilson had the new experience of being entertained in more than one village temple, cleared of idols, which had been given by its owner for Christian worship. Eleven baptisms took place in the temple" at Dien-tsi during their visit, quite a company of church members and inquirers assembling for the feast Mr. Taylor provided.

Then, too, she remembered his never-ending labours on boats, in sedan-chairs and in the stations to which they came-always the little white skin box that held his papers; always the letters to be answered, articles to be written for ***China's Millions***, or Mission business to attend to. It was the element of fervent, unflinching prayer for his fellowworkers, however, which impressed Miss Wilson most. No less than three times daily he was in the habit of waiting upon God on their behalf, once at least mentioning by name every member of the Mission, though they already numbered seventy apart from Chinese helpers.

Much though there was to encourage in connection with this five months'

journey, there were also little churches that greatly needed quickening, and missionaries who were in poor health and tried in 'spirit. And these places, Miss Wilson noticed, were not passed over hurriedly. Even when much of discomfort was involved, Mr. Taylor would stay on, doing all he could to help-relieving the workers in. charge by conducting daily meetings, getting into touch with the Christians and accompanying the, missionary to his out-stations. At one centre where there was sickness the house was so full that, Miss Wilson being accommodated, no room could be found for Mr., Taylor. But the family were greatly needing help, and though it was the hottest part of summer he remained for three weeks, sleeping on the verandah at night, and doing without any place to himself through the day.

By this time he had in mind a plan for helping the little churches, which he longed to see carried out. Why should there not be a Chinese conference for native leaders much on the same lines as the united meetings recently held in Shanghai? Such a gathering had never at that time been thought of, much less attempted, but Mr. Taylor saw the stimulus. and encouragement it might afford.

*"Pray very much for a blessing on our Ningpo Conference,"
he wrote to Mrs. Taylor 'when arrangements were in train.*

*"The brethren and natives all greatly need quickening, and I
do. This hot weather seems to relax soul as well as body."*

Who has not felt it? But he could not go on and leave things in a low state spiritually. He would give all the time, take all the trouble and responsibility of arranging the meetings, in faith that God would make them just the blessing needed. And when at last his visits were completed and he was in the midst of preparations for the return to England-taking with him a difficult party to care for one sick mother, one newly widowed, and several ailing children-he left everything to come himself and take part in the Conference,

as if it were the only concern upon his mind.

And that first Union Conference of native pastors and evangelists, it is good to record, exceeded even his expectations. Three English and three American societies were represented, the delegates coming from all parts of the province, and the meetings were entirely in Chinese.

"It was one of the most interesting conferences I have ever attended," Mr. Taylor wrote, "and we were both surprised and delighted at the ability displayed by our native brethren... When it is remembered that all these men were themselves, but a few years ago, in heathen darkness, we cannot but feel encouraged, and look for yet greater things in the future... May God hasten the time when such meetings shall be held in every province of the Chinese Empire."

Joyful was the reunion just before Christmas when Mr. Taylor reached home after this fourth visit to China. He had been away almost sixteen months, and the little ones of two and three years old could not remember him. The elder brothers and sister were fast growing up, and an adopted daughter had been added to the family, the doubly orphaned child of Duncan, the pioneer missionary of Nanking. Seven children filled the little home to overflowing, and made the Christmas season full of gladness to the father's heart.

Not that he had much time to spend with them. After visiting almost every station in the Mission, and meeting every fellow-worker with one exception, ^[289] Mr. Taylor had come home deeply impressed with the need for immediate reinforcements. Twenty-four men and at least six women were urgently wanted, and for that number he was praying thirty new workers to go out if possible in the following year (1878). Among the candidates awaiting his arrival, several were ready to go forward, and Mr. Taylor was soon absorbed in farewell meetings, which brought him in contact with many

friends.

"I am praying for an increase of £5000 a year in our income," he wrote to a senior member of the Mission in February, "and for £2000 extra for outfits and passages. Will you daily join in this prayer? We are daily remembering you all by name before the Lord. May you be filled with the Spirit, and all around you be blessed from the overflow. 'My cup runneth over': GOD puts these words in our mouth; we must not contradict them."

Meanwhile grievous news was coming, mail by mail, of the terrible famine in North China. In January it was estimated that six million people were starving, and the united efforts of the Chinese Government and of the foreign Relief Committee were wholly inadequate to cope with the disaster. In public meetings and through the press, Mr. Taylor was making known the facts, with the result that funds were coming to the C.I.M. freely for use in relief work. But more than money was needed. Not only were tens of thousands dying of starvation; thousands more were being sold into slavery—girls and young women literally taken away in droves by cruel traffickers from the south. Children were perishing in multitudes who might be gathered into orphanages and saved for time and eternity, and everywhere the poor suffering women were accessible as never before. Surely the time had come when missionary women, as well as men, should be found at the front in the newly opened provinces of inland China!

But where was the woman who could take the lead? To go to that famine-stricken region, two or three weeks' journey from the coast, was no easy matter. Some one with experience was needed; some one with a knowledge of the language, fitted to help and care for younger workers. In China there was no one in the C.I.M. circle free and suitable; and at home? Ah,, that was

where light began to come for Mr. Taylor—but at such a cost!

Yes, there was one who undoubtedly combined the qualifications necessary. Experienced, prayerful, devoted, with a knowledge of the language and the confidence of her fellow-workers, Mrs. Taylor could give just the help required. But how could she be spared from home? How could he let her go so soon after their long parting? And if the sacrifice was great for him, who shall say what it meant to the mother's heart? At first, indeed, she could not see it to be called for. Her husband in poor health and overwhelmed with work surely needed her, to say nothing of the children. Could it be right to leave him, even if the family were provided for? The struggle, if not long, was desperately hard; but for her, as for him, only one issue was possible. A little worn brown notebook tells the rest; and it is the same wonderful story that every truly Christian heart has known, of God's own Word meeting the inward need, the need so deep as to be voiceless even to Him, but none the less understood.

Point by point all her difficulties were met, her questions answered, until she knew beyond a doubt that it was God Himself Who had need of her out there in China. And, even then, His tender care went further. HE knew the inward shrinking, the hours of testing that must come.

"I felt like Gideon," Mrs. Taylor wrote, "that my strength in China would be, 'Have not I commanded thee?' and I wanted some fleeces to confirm my faith, and as a token for those who would have me remain at home. I asked God to give me, in the first place, money to purchase certain requisites for outfit, as we had none to spare; and further, to give me liberally, as much as fifty pounds, so that there might be money in hand when I went away."

The very next afternoon (Thursday) a friend called to see Mrs. Taylor, and

before leaving said:

"Will you accept a little gift for your own use, to get anything you may need for the journey?"

And the sum put into her hand was ten pounds-just the allowance made by the Mission at that time towards the cost of outfit.

No one knew, not even Mr. Taylor, about the fleeces; and with a wondering heart she waited. Several days passed without bringing the 'further answer to her prayer.' Perhaps the Lord was withholding it that she might trust Him without so much confirmation?

"Yesterday (Sunday)," she continued, in a letter to Mr. Taylor's mother, "I felt He would provide at the right time, and was very happy-realising that He is my Helper, and that in going I should learn more of Him and find His strength made perfect in my utter weakness."

Glancing next morning over the letters to see if there was one that might contain a gift for themselves, she came to the conclusion that there was not, and opened first a letter from Barnsley, thankful that Mr. Taylor's parents approved the step they were taking. And lo, from his father was enclosed a cheque for fifty pounds! Overwhelmed with joy and thankfulness, she ran to Mr. Taylor's study: but he was not alone.

"When I returned" (for she was called away), "he was reading your letter, and considering how the Lord would have the money applied. He knew we needed it, but never takes anything for ourselves that is left optional."

"'Oh,' I said, 'that fifty pounds is mine! I have a claim on it that you do not know of.' And I told him all the circumstances."

"So we accept it with warmest thanks to you, and with

gratitude to God. I had said to the Lord: 'Fifty pounds just now would be worth more than a fortune to me at another time. It would be a guarantee of all other needs being met.' I feel it is such tender consideration for my weakness to send it; and you and dear father may be assured, when I am far away, that the memory of this gift will be a continual strength and help to me."

Meanwhile, Mrs. Broomhall, who was away from home at the time, had heard of the proposed step, and was deeply moved. With the care of the Mission-house and candidates, as well as her own family of four boys and six girls, it would have been easy and true to think that her hands were full. But hers was the love that "never faileth," and in a busy, practical life she knew the secret of so waiting upon God as to have her strength daily renewed.

"If Jenny is called to go to China," she said without hesitation, "I am called to care for her children."

Nothing could have given Mrs. Taylor greater comfort for with such loving supervision close at hand, even the little ones could remain with their father, and the home-life be carried on as usual. But there was yet more that the Lord had it in His heart to provide. The very day before Mrs. Taylor left England, accompanied by several new workers,^[290] a letter came to hand from an old friend expressing warm sympathy with the object she had in view. It contained a gift toward 'the Orphanage she hoped to found; and to her surprise on looking at the cheque, it proved to be for a **thousand pounds**.

"Please enter it anonymously," he wrote. "It does not represent any superabundance of wealth, as my business affairs will miss it. But if you, for Christ's sake, can separate, I cannot give less than this."^[291]

It, was a great step forward when, the heat of summer over, Mrs. Hudson

Taylor set out from Shanghai to go to the inland province of Shan-si. Two younger ladies accompanied her-Miss Home and Miss Crickmay-and they travelled under the experienced escort of Mr. Bailer. Never before had foreign women attempted to go so far inland, and with their work in the famine-stricken region, a little light began to shine for the women and children of that vast waiting world-the hundred and eighty millions of the far interior. When the news reached Mr. Taylor by cablegram

*"I cannot tell you how my heart and prayers go with you all," he wrote. **"The Lord be glorified in this movement I do thank God for giving me such a wife as alone could satisfy my heart-one to whom the Lord Jesus is more than husband; to whom His work is more than love and enjoyment here. I know He is blessing and will bless our dear children; I know He is blessing and will bless you; I know He is blessing and will bless me too, and the work. And I am glad to think I am not selfishly, for my own help or enjoyment, depriving you of the eternal fruit of what you are now sowing. What will not the harvest be!"***

For himself, meanwhile, the sacrifice involved was very real. As long as Mrs. Broomhall could come in and out freely from her home next door, he did not feel the burden of family care; but when his own children developed whooping-cough, calling for the isolation of his household, more responsibility naturally fell to his share. In addition to very full days of work, Mr. Taylor had many an anxious night of watching by little bedsides from which the mother was absent. No "mere man" could have done more, or done it better, and it bound the children to him in a way that made it well worth while; but it was a tax on time and strength, of which he had little enough to spare.

"I took Ernie down to Barnet," he wrote when they were

getting better. "He enjoyed himself famously," in the home of Mrs. Taylor's parents, "and I am somewhat better for it too. I enjoyed the quiet and the hayfield, and' putting him to bed at night, and praying with him and dressing him, etc. He clung to me so tenderly."

The answer to the petition in which many were uniting for thirty new workers in the current year was at the same time bringing added burdens. At the Annual Meetings, (May 27) Mr. Taylor was able to tell of many candidates, some of whom seemed of unusual promise, but of a balance in hand, all obligations being met, of only twenty-nine pounds. The money Mrs. Taylor had given, with his hearty concurrence, for pioneering work in the inland provinces (L4000) had carried them through the two years since the Chefoo Convention. But the extensive itinerations of that period involving thirty thousand miles of travel had exhausted it, and the income of the Mission had not yet correspondingly increased.

"With current income not equal by so large a sum to the expenses of the work," Mr. Taylor said on that occasion, "the question might well be asked, 'Is the project of sending out twenty or thirty additional labourers at all a prudent one, even if men and women who appear suitable are found?'"

*"Well, we have looked the thing in the face, dear friends, and this is the conclusion we have come to: with the current income of the Mission we have nothing to do, but with GOD we have everything to do. **We** are not going to send out twenty or thirty new missionaries, or one; but we are asking GOD to send twenty or thirty. If **He** sends twenty or thirty devoted missionaries, He is just as able to supply them as He has proved faithful and loving in supplying those who have gone hitherto ... Up to the present, God has carried us safely through. As for the future—if by His grace He will only keep us, individually, **faithful to Him**, that ensures everything."^[292]*

That he was deeply feeling the responsibility of leadership in a mission which had already grown beyond the desires and hopes with which it was founded, is evident from a letter to Mrs. Taylor of a few weeks later.

"I have been praying very much this morning," he wrote on June 14, "for a wise and understanding spirit, and for largeness of heart, and organising capacity. The Lord make me Equal to increasing claims."

Very thankful must she have been to hear of a break that came soon after, an unexpected holiday-the first he had taken, apart from sea voyages, during the twelve years since the formation of the Mission. At the invitation of the Hon. Miss Waldegrave and Lady Beauchamp, who generously met the expense, he joined their family party in the Engadine for two or three weeks. It was the first time he had been in Switzerland, and many letters tell of the delight with which he drank in the beauty of lake, mountain and Alpine flowers, and the glacier air which seemed to give him new life. With true consideration, his friends left him free to attend to correspondence or wander as he would in the pine forests on the mountain side: Even there Mission matters followed him-as many as twenty-five letters being received one day, most of which required answers. Comparative leisure enabled him to write freely to Mrs. Taylor, among others, whose absence he was specially feeling amid those beautiful scenes.

"Every day I look at the little Bible marker you gave me, with the words 'For Jesus' sake,'" he wrote from Sils Maria (August. 27), "and I am thankful for the reminder. It is not for your pleasure or mine that we are separated, nor for moneymaking, nor for our children's sake. It is not even for China, or the missionaries or the Mission: no for Jesus' sake. HE is worthy I And He is blessing you, and is making the people I meet so kind to me, one and all."

When they reached Pontresina, it was the glaciers that attracted him most. With an umbrella for the sun (China fashion), a few biscuits in his pocket and a Bible as his sole companion, he would spend most of the day on or near them.

"The effect of the air on the system is wonderful," he continued. "I could not possibly have conceived it. It seems to go direct to the seat of weakness, and carry healing.... I have; been thinking to-day, darling, that all this refreshment, all this kindness, is the answer of God to your prayers for me; and the thought has given added pleasure to all I have enjoyed."

Entering into every detail of her life in that faminestricken region of North China, he wrote of the comfort it was to think of her as "a weak instrument in Almighty hands."

"Keep loving and patient with all," he said in another letter, "especially with any who try your patience, if it be tried."

And every letter was full of longing to be with her once more—to help forward the work, especially in the inland provinces.

Many were the problems thought out and prayed over in those mountain solitudes. A critical time had come, he could not help feeling, in the history of the Mission. Prayer had been wonderfully answered, and the whole interior opened up to 'the work of evangelists; but now the more responsible step had to be taken of sending women inland, to follow up what had been begun. In praying for the first twenty-four "willing, skilful labourers" on the sands at Brighton, he had hardly contemplated this. The pioneer missionaries would marry; it was well they should. The converts, many of them, would be women. There would be families to care for—their own and those of the Christians. If it had caused an outcry when men were sent to face the loneliness and dangers of life in the far interior, what would happen when he

encouraged single ladies, or even young married women, to do the same? 'Then there were questions connected with the home organisation of the growing work.

But most of all it was with the Lord Himself those hours of soul-refreshing silence were occupied. On coming down from the glacier heights to the level of the lakes once more, he wrote to a Swiss member of the Mission (from Lausanne, September 13):

May God keep you, and not only keep you-fill you more and more, and keep you running over with the living waters. The one thing, I judge, to bear in mind is that it has "pleased the Father that in Him should all the fulness dwell." Apart from Him we have nothing, are nothing, cannot bring forth any fruit to God. He will not give some of His riches to you and some to me, to use and live on away from Himself. But in Him all is ours. With Him there is a constant feast for us. To know Christ as the Bridegroom is most blessed; to be not betrothed, and having occasional visits, but married. "I am with you always," "I will, never leave thee," "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee"—such are now His messages of love to us.

Upon the many meetings that awaited Mr. Taylor's return to England in September we must not dwell, nor upon the remarkable answers to prayer that facilitated the outgoing of all the thirty asked for and given in 1878. Twentyeight new missionaries actually sailed before the close of the year, and several others were accepted to follow shortly. Not one really suitable candidate was declined for lack of funds, though some had to be told that there was not a penny in hand to send them out. But again and again the Lord's provision came ear-marked, so to speak, to meet the special need.^[293]

And in matters more perplexing than finance, help was given that cleared the way for Mr. Taylor's return to China. The Council was strengthened by the

addition of Mr. William Sharp-now its senior. member; and Mr. McCarthy, who was finding important openings for deputation work, undertook the subediting of China's Millions. More important still was the acceptance of the post of Home Director by Mr. Theodore Howard-Chairman of the Council and a life long friend of-the Mission. The appointment of Mr. B. Broomhall as General Secretary recognised the invaluable service he had rendered at Pyrland Road for the last three years; while Mrs. Broomhall continued to care for the outgoing and returning missionaries and the seventeen children.

There were still circumstances that called for prayer, and no lack of difficulties to be met both in England and, in China.

*"I do not expect an easy time of it," Mr. Taylor wrote home to Mr. Broomhall from Hongkong, "and but for the precious truth, 'My strength is made perfect in weakness,' I should be almost afraid to arrive in my present weak state. I am very glad that our fast-day, May 26th, is near, and shall look for a large outpouring of spiritual blessing in connection with it. God is with us; let us only walk humbly with Him and all will be brought round. You will pray for me, will you not? The all important thing is to improve the character of the work, and to deepen the piety, devotion, and success of the workers; to remove stones of stumbling, if possible; to oil the wheels where they stick; to amend whatever is defective and supplement as far as may be what is lacking; no easy matter where suitable men are wanting, or only in course of formation. That I may be used of God, at least, in some measure, to bring these things about is my hope; but I shall need your prayers; for **God's** wisdom, **God's** grace, **God's** strength alone can suffice: but they will suffice."*

Chapter XXII[\(TOC\)](#)

He Goeth before them

1879-1880. AET. 47-48

MRS. HUDSON TAYLOR had come to Shanghai. All the way from Shan-si she had travelled upon an uncertainty—yet sure in her own mind that she was being led of God. Was her husband on his way to China? Was he ill and needing her urgently, as she had seen in that curiously vivid dream? And how could she help him best?

A thousand miles away from the port at which he would land, she had felt painfully out of reach; and though he had suggested joining her there, to see something of the northern provinces, she knew how unlikely it was that he would be able to escape from claims nearer the coast. The work she had undertaken for the famine orphans was well established, and her companions were now able to carry it on. Two of the missionaries at the capital (Tai-yuan-fu) had been joined by their wives, so that there was no longer the same need for her presence. And that dream, fitting in with other elements of guidance, had decided her to cross the mountains and return to Shanghai, that she might be at hand in case of need.

It led also to definite and earnest prayer for Mr. Taylor, which was sorely needed. For he was on his way out, as we have seen, and in the Indian Ocean had become so seriously ill that a Singapore doctor doubted whether he could reach Hongkong alive. He decided to go on, however; and the news that reached him in the latter port of Mrs. Taylor's being actually in Shanghai, when he had thought her far away and inaccessible, was so cheering that it helped him over the rest of the voyage. Her letters too were encouraging.

"I have been spreading before the Lord," she had written soon after reaching Shanghai, ^[294] "some of the numerous difficulties that await you, and thinking of them with something of rejoicing. What a platform there will be for our

God to work and triumph on; and how clearly we shall see His hand! May He keep you without care, and bring you up like Jehoshaphat, your mouth filled with songs of praise in prospect of certain victories. ... Oh, the resources of the grace you have to draw upon! 'According to His riches in glory,' ... 'According to your need.' Surely, to need much grace and therefore to have much given is not a thing to be troubled about, is it?

"Don't you think that if we set ourselves not to allow any pressure to rob us of communion with the Lord, we may live lives of hourly triumph, the echo of which will come back to us from every part of the Mission? I have been feeling these last months that of all our work the most important is that unseen—upon the mount of intercession. Our faith must gain the victory for the fellow-workers God has given us. They fight the seen, and we must fight the unseen battle: and dare we claim less than constant victory when it is for Him, and we come in His Name?"

Met by Mr. Weir with his private launch, Mr. Taylor was carried without fatigue to the very door of the Missionhouse, then on the Soo-chow Creek, where he found quite a party awaiting him. Each one had special needs or problems to be dealt with; and Mr. and Mrs. Dalziel, in charge of the home and business department, were keeping open house for seamen, among whom an encouraging work was going on. This thoroughly suited the earnest band Mr. Taylor had brought with him, several of whom decided to give their first night in China to prayer and praise. They gathered in a room next to Mr. Taylor's, and had a memorable time, full of liberty and blessing, never realising that to the invalid on the other side of the partition it meant hours of wakefulness and pain. Nothing would have induced Mr. Taylor to stop them, however; he rejoiced, far too much in their fervent spirit, but it proved scarcely the best preparation, in his own case, for the busy days that

followed.

At first, in the joy of reunion, he was full of plans for visiting the stations and helping the new missionaries who had been sent out (thirty-four in number) during his recent visit to England. But the strain of all that had to be attended to was more than he could bear, and within a fortnight he was so ill that again life itself was hanging in the balance. The physician consulted had little hope, unless he could at once be removed to a more bracing climate. Summer was coming on, and it was useless to attempt to remain anywhere in the Yangtze valley. The northern port of Chefoo, with its freedom and freshness, he recommended as the best available refuge: but how to get there was the difficulty.

It was an anxious journey, from the Monday evening, when they went on board, through the long hours of Tuesday moving slowly in a damp sea-mist, while the fog-horn droned its melancholy sound—and especially that second night when Mrs. Taylor was almost at her wits' end. All the milk she had brought for the invalid had curdled, in spite of being boiled and put in the ice-chest, and some things he might have fancied she reproached herself for having failed to bring. He was so low that he could hardly take anything, and she feared he would be too weak to be moved from the steamer when Chefoo was reached. Weary though she was she dared not sleep, for Mr. Taylor could do nothing for himself, and from time to time was very faint.

"In my distress I cried to God to help me," she wrote to Miss Desgraz at Chin-kiang. "I asked Him either to enable Mr. Taylor to take the food we had, or to show me what I could get for him, or to make him better without anything—as He had said, 'Man doth not live by bread alone.' I pleaded too that the fog might clear away, and that God who loved His own child would undertake for him, as the responsibility was too great

for me to bear. I thought of 'God is a refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble,' and 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with, me.' 'He doeth all things well' came to my mind with comfort, and 'All the way my Saviour leads me.' Then I turned to Mr. Taylor and was able to prevail upon him to take a little food. In the night he had a cupful of arrowroot, and next day was decidedly better. ... That afternoon I went on deck, and fell in with an officer with whom I was able to have some earnest talk about spiritual things. I began about the improvement in the weather, and he said: 'Yes, it was remarkable! About 9.30 the fog cleared right away, and we had a splendid, moonlight night.'

"It was between 9 and 9.30 that I had been praying about it, before going to rest."

Next morning she could not but feel a little anxious as they neared Chefoo. The vessel was only staying an hour, to discharge passengers and cargo, and there had been no time to make arrangements as to where to take the patient on landing. Eagerly she looked out for the Customs House officer, a kindly Christian man whose acquaintance she had made on her recent journey from Shan-si; but when his boat came alongside Mr. Ballard was not on board. The illness that kept him at home deprived her of a helping hand when one was most needed; and for the moment it seemed desolate to transfer their belongings to a native sampan and take Mr. Taylor ashore, ill as he was, with no idea where to go. Had it not been for the fog, however, their vessel would have come in some hours earlier, and they would have had to land in the middle of a cold night. So the morning sunshine was a token of the loving care of One Who had gone before them, and to Whom their every need was known.

Lying there in the little boat while his companions went in search of quarters,

[295] how far was Mr. Taylor from imagining all that his illness and forlorn arrival were to mean of help and comfort for his fellow-labourers! He' had come to China full of hope for extension, especially in the field of Women's Work. The success that had attended Mrs. Taylor's efforts proved that the interior was no less accessible to women missionaries than to men; and having sent his own wife first, he felt the more free to encourage others in following her example. But it was a great task that lay before him, a great responsibility, calling for all he could give of time and strength. Did it not mean coming into personal touch with the new workers, as well as gathering up the threads at all the older stations, that he might know where reinforcements were most needed and who could best be spared for the forward movement? And here he was, laid aside, able to do nothing; and though happily he did not know it, long months were to lapse ere he would leave that silent shore again.

That silent, waiting shore—how much of help it was to afford in the practical problem of reaching the far interior with the Gospel! Scattered homes, missionary homes, centres of light and love among the people—yes, that was what he longed to see all over inland China. And what about the little children sent in love to such homes; sent to be not only their parents' joy and comfort, but an incalculable help in the work to which their lives were given? What about the need that must arise in the not distant future for a more favourable climate for those little ones than inland cities could afford, and for mental and physical training that should not separate them wholly from the influence of parents who must remain in China? What about the need of those parents, and others throughout the Mission, for rest and refreshment from time to time, and for a health resort in cases of illness like his own? All this Mr. Taylor could foresee but dimly, nor did he then imagine the extensive and complete equipment of buildings that was to arise on that far sweep of

shore—the hospital, sanitarium, schools of the Mission; the bright, breezy centre of young life from which incalculable influences for good were to flow, on and on through long years and to the ends of the earth. But the Lord knew, the Lord foresaw, the Lord planned it all. And was He not beginning, even then, to answer the countless prayers with which each of those young lives would be received and surrounded, though for love of Christ the parents might have little they could do for their children but pray. Such sacrifices mean much to the infinite Father-heart.

In the home of Mr. Ballard, meanwhile, Mrs. Taylor had met with a cordial welcome. His illness proved only a passing indisposition, and he and his wife were given to hospitality. They were young, newly married people, and had room for visitors, so the missionary party soon found themselves received into a real home, as paying guests.

"Under the shadow of a high cliff and quite on the seashore," was Mrs. Taylor's description of their new surroundings.

"Mr. Taylor bore the moving better than I expected," she continued to Miss Desgraz, "though in his weak state, of course, he felt it. When, however, we had been a little while here, the sense of rest among kind people, in such a pleasant spot, seemed to refresh him, and every hour since has done him good. It is so quiet about here, with only Mr. and Mrs. Ballard. Mr. Taylor can sit on the verandah and drink in the sea-air-looking out on the hills-all round the bay, and on the junks and steamers. The sea-weed smells so refreshing! Has not God been good to us?"

The summer that followed proved exceptionally trying. Few could remember a hotter season in China. Work such as Mr. Taylor had planned, down in the Yangtze valley, would in all probability have cost his life; and the illness of

one and another made him long to share with them the very real benefit he was deriving from Cliefoo. Several of the newly-arrived young missionaries were sent for first of all, and an unused building known as "The Bungalow" was called into requisition. With three small rooms and an empty warehouse or "go down" it possessed possibilities, and was soon occupied by a student party. But, for them, it was found possible to rent premises over at the Bluff-the fine headland with its purely Chinese villages, across the bay. And this arrangement was made none too soon; for even before the young men could vacate it, the Bungalow was needed for other occupants.

Far away in Wu-chang, Mr. and Mrs. Judd were breaking down under the strain of their work and the overpowering heat, and it seemed as though they and their family would be obliged to return to England. "Come up here if you can," wrote Mr. Taylor, telling them how wonderfully Chefoo was answering in his own case; but he had to pray that their way might be opened, as he had no money to send them just then for travelling. Under these circumstances, Mr. Judd was glad of an opportunity to sell the furniture they would no longer need; and with the proceeds took his suffering wife and five little boys down the Yangtze and' up to the northern port, at which a warm welcome awaited them.

To see those children playing on the beach was as much joy, almost, to Mr. Taylor as to their own parents, and he longed to bring the same relief to other fellow-workers and their families. But nothing was to be had in the way of accommodation, save The Bungalow, in which Mr. and Mrs. Judd were ingeniously making the best of circumstances. Boxes and packing-cases they turned into chairs and tables, in default of better, spreading their Chinese bedding on the floor at night.

"There was no furniture to be had in Chefoo in those days,"

wrote Mr. Judd, "save one kind of chair made of willow. It was altogether a new place; besides which, we had no money for anything except necessaries. Seeing a number of Chinese houses at no great distance however, I went over, and found a shopman selling off his shelves very reasonably. These I bought, and adapted to our requirements. Some of them did for beds, like berths on a ship, and didn't our boys enjoy them! I can truly say we lacked nothing-though it was a case of picnicking on the floor at first, which we did very willingly."

When things had got thus far, Mr. Taylor was so much better that he felt he must go down to Chin-kiang to see about certain rather surprising developments. For while he had been laid aside, unable to do anything in the matter most upon his heart, the Lord Himself had been working. His time had come, indeed, for opening the door of faith to the long-waiting womanhood of the recently entered provinces. Cost what it might, the Gospel must be carried to them too "according to the commandment of the eternal God"; and He had His messengers ready. Providentially, it was the pioneers themselves who broke the ice. After repeated journeys, the far interior did not seem to them so very different from inland districts near the coast. Prospered in obtaining houses, they were quite at home among the people, and saw the advantage of having some settled stations. What more natural than that they should wish to be married, and take the first foreign women to those outlying regions as their own home-makers and fellow missionaries? To this Mr. Taylor, who had himself led the way, could raise no objection. Thus when he came down in August to the Yangtze valley, one young couple had already started for the far north-west, and others were preparing for similar journeys. Meeting a terrific gale on the way from Chefoo to Shanghai, the steamer by which Mr. Taylor travelled had come very near shipwreck. It was one of the worst typhoons recorded on that stormy coast, and for some time even Mr.

Taylor felt doubtful as to the issue. He knew the vessel was not a strong one, and while earnestly praying for deliverance and the lives of all on board, blew up his swimming-belt and put it on, to be ready for the worst. And then, great calmness came to him in the assurance that his prayers, definitely offered in the Name of Jesus, would be answered.

*"I took off my swimming belt," he wrote next day (August. 1), "turned' the bedding over and found the under side moderately dry, and taking off my wettest things lay down in the others.... I had a good night—a much more quiet and restful one than the night before. It was **a little before one** that I felt God had answered prayer. The Captain put the ship's head round, I learn, and ran before the wind for some hours. But what interests me most is to hear from one of the officers to-day that the barometer, which had been very low, began to rise **soon after 1 A.M.** I had asked that if it were His will, the Lord would shorten the storm. ... It was of course some time later before it perceptibly abated. To God be all the thanks and praise. Will He not go on to help in all things?"*

A busy month was spent in Shanghai and Chin-kiang, with visits to Yangchow, where Mr. Taylor was altering the old premises to fit them for more aggressive work.

"It does seem so homelike," he wrote of the latter place "how I should like to settle there for the remainder of my days and be a missionary again!"

In letter after letter to Mrs. Taylor he spoke of being so thankful he had come; of seeing the Lord's hand manifestly working in the removal of difficulties and the solution of problems; of his purpose to go on to Hankow, despite the fresh heat-wave that could not last long, etc. Then came a break in the correspondence, and for the fourth time in as many months it looked as though his work were to be cut short, his earthly service ended. Dysentery

returned with the overpowering heat, and very near the spot where his loved ones lay sleeping Hudson Taylor came once more to the borderland.

But the life that had not yet attained its widest usefulness was still prolonged. Nursing him day and night with the utmost devotion, Rudland managed to get the patient down to Shanghai and on board the coasting steamer, and indeed would not leave him till he was safely back in Chefoo once more. And there again the bracing air did wonders, and Mr. Taylor was lured into spending much time out of doors by a new project that almost thrust itself upon him.

Delighting day by day in that long sweep of sandy shore, he and his fellow-workers could not but see how much it would mean to the Mission to have a sanitarium there, and some day, perhaps, a school for missionaries' children. But they knew from experience the difficulty of obtaining land in China, and that when property has to be acquired peace is more than likely to be destroyed. They contented themselves; therefore, with looking longingly at the hills, where a retired spot with nicely rising ground offered an attractive situation. How well it would suit them:with its freshwater stream running down to the shore! But, for the time being, they could only pray. They did not often go over there even, knowing how prices are apt to go up if any interest is shown in a possible purchase. But one day Mr. Taylor was walking over the ground with Mr. Judd when a farmer came up and asked, to their surprise, if they wanted to buy land. They had just been saying, as a matter of fact, what an admirable site that bean-field would afford, if only they could get it.

"Do you want land?" repeated the man, seeing their hesitation.

With little apparent interest they indicated that they might be prepared to buy some.

"Then will you buy mine?" was the next surprise.

He was offering that very bean-field; and at no unreasonable price, as they soon discovered.

"Then and there the bargain was struck," recalled Mr. Judd. "I never knew a piece of business settled so easily. The money was paid and we got the field, with a gully and fresh water running down beside it. Then neighbouring farmers were willing to sell theirs as well; and we bought all we wanted at a remarkably fair price. Now, of course, it is much more valuable."

The land given thus in answer to prayer, it was a question of how to utilise it at the least possible expense for the purpose of a sanitarium. Stones, brick and timber, if brought from a distance, would cost a good deal, and locally little or nothing was obtainable.

"Let us quarry our own stone," said Mr. Taylor, "and make bricks as we require them." He was his own architect, and Mr. Judd's account of the whole proceeding original and enterprising as it was-is not lacking in interest.

Neither Mr. Taylor nor I had any experience in house-building. We employed men to quarry stone out of the gully, and made most of our bricks from the surface soil, which did well for that purpose. Then it occurred to us to make use of a ship called the Christian which had been wrecked in the 'bay. It had been built chiefly of oak and Norwegian pine, which served our purpose splendidly. We bought a large part of the wreck, using the deck for rafters and the oak for heavy beams. A Shanghai newspaper remarked, I remember, that the Christian had ceased going to sea, and had joined the C.I.M.

From another wreck, the Ada, we were able to buy teak, which made the floors. The cabin-fittings from that wreck came in most usefully. There was a splendid sideboard. We bought doors, locks, cupboards, everything we liked to take, at two

dollars a hundredweight. ^[296] We squared the doors as well as we could, got keys for many of the locks, and they answered all right. The worst of the teak was the holes that the bolts had left. We filled them up, but the filling was very apt to come out, leaving openings in inconvenient places. I do not say that the house was well built, but it was wonderfully good considering our lack of experience. There were five rooms upstairs and about as many down, with outhouse and lean-to rooms besides. It was marvellously cheap; and the Europeans in the Settlement were amazed at the rapidity with which it was put up. They could hardly believe their eyes when they saw it finished!

All this meant a new lease of life to Mr. Taylor. The complete change of occupation and long hours spent in the open air did wonders for him physically.

How you would like to go out to the ground and see the operations," Mrs. Taylor wrote in November. "It is quite a busy scene. Builders, brickmakers, stonemasons and carpenters all have their matting tents, while others you might find occupied by 'Mr. Judd and Mr. Coulthard, or Mr. Taylor and Mr. Hunt. Looking well after the men is necessary to save expense and mistakes. The young men are finding it a capital school for the language, and are looking twice as robust as when they came out. The Gospel is explained to the workmen daily, at an enlarged sort of family prayers, and on Sundays they refit, at half pay, and one or two services are held for them. The young men find it an excellent opportunity for living Christ as well as speaking of Him, for patience is often exceedingly tried. The front of the house will face the sea, from which it is five minutes' walk, and the back looks on the hills. ... It is so bracing and pleasant here. Mr. Judd is hardly like the same person."

It long stood, that simple, first construction in which began the justly famous

Chefoo Schools of today. Two of Mr. Judd's sons, now valued members of the Mission, were the first pupils; and Lao Chao, converted among the workmen on the building, grew into the trusted head-servant of a large staff of helpers. For gradually, hospital and private houses, school after school and the new sanitarium have sprung up, transforming those sunny slopes, that silent shore into a scene of delightful activity. There, with its competent teachers, every one of whom is a full member of the Mission, the C.I.M. cares for its children from Kindergarten up to College years, giving them a thorough Christian education, and at the same time cherishing family relationships; brothers and sisters meeting from the various schools, and parents coming from time to time to rest in the sanitarium.

Far in the future, however, were these developments as the year 1879 drew to a close. Busily occupied though he was, Mr. Taylor had still in mind the special purpose with which he had come to China; and leaving Mr. Judd in charge of building operations he set out, as soon as health was re-established, for the advance post of the Mission at Wu-chang. The young couples who had left for the interior some months previously were now in their distant homes, beginning work for the first time among the women of the western and north-western provinces. What that work would mean, Mr. Taylor largely realised, and how great would be the need for sisterly help and companionship. Never in all the history of the Mission had he been called to take a step which cast him more in faith upon the living God. What, send women-unmarried women, young and defenceless-into all the dangers and privations, the hardship and loneliness of life in the far interior of China? Let them take those perilous journeys of weeks and months at a time, and condemn them to isolation in crowded cities, hundreds of miles from any other foreigner? The responsibility was great indeed, and keenly he felt it. He was but a servant, however, not the Master. And if women were waiting to go

at the Master's call, surely the time had come to help them rather than hinder.

Travelling by mule-litter with Mr. Coulthard from Chefoo to the Grand Canal, Mr. Taylor had leisure for thought and prayer over the situation. Three and a half weeks brought them to Chin-kiang, by roughest roads, with inns so poor that they even had to share their accommodation with the mules at night, when those voracious animals fell to eating the straw pillows on which their fellow travellers were sleeping. Disturbed as might be their rest, however, and chilly as were their comfortless quarters that Christmas season,^[297] the younger missionary never failed to see, if he woke early enough, the little candle burning that told of Mr. Taylor's quiet hour over the Word of God.

And it all came about so naturally, when at length Mr. Taylor reached Wu-chang. A number of C.I.M. people were there, for various reasons, with Mr. and Mrs. Bailer in charge. Daily they met for Bible reading and prayer, the needs of the lonely workers at the distant outposts burdening their hearts. A thousand miles up the Yangtze, Mr. and Mrs. Nicoll had just reached Chung-king, where she was the only foreign woman in the great province of Szechwan. For hard as it had been to part, Mr. and Mrs. George Clark had gone on further-another seventeen days' journey to the capital of Kwei-chow, where Mr. Broumton was holding the fort alone. This latter post was very distant, very isolated and Mr. Trench, on his next evangelistic journey, was to call in and see the little party. Yes, he could act as escort, if there were ladies willing and ready to go. And there were. Mrs. William McCarthy, newly widowed, whose husband had been designated to that very province, only asked to give her life to what was to have been their united task; and Miss Kidd, beloved by the Chinese no less than her fellow-workers, was more 'than willing to accompany her. So the week of meetings was followed by one of busy preparation.

"Such a venture of faith as it was! said Mr. Coulthard, looking back with more understanding than he or any of the young missionaries could have had at the time. "The last meeting to commend them to God was deeply solemn. Mr. Taylor no doubt felt it as we could not. We never thought of danger; but he realised what might be involved, and his heart was moved accordingly."

For the route decided upon lay across Hu-nan, turbulent and anti-foreign; and in addition to the Chinese Christian woman who had volunteered to accompany the ladies, Mr. Bailer was to be spared to reinforce the party. This practically exhausted the resources of the station, and when a call came for the help of ladies in quite another direction, no foreign escort was available. Mrs. Taylor had just come up-river, with a young worker who had already been two years in China. Miss Fausset, with true courage, was ready to go at once to the help of Mrs. King; but it meant a three months' journey by house-boat, without coming to a single place at which there were foreigners, and there was no one save Miss Wilson to accompany her.

Then it was that advancing years and silvery hair came to their own in a new way; for Miss Wilson's venerable appearance, from the Chinese point of view, made it possible for the ladies to travel without foreign escort, and they were quite prepared to undertake the journey with the Lord alone as their Protector. It is easy to write the words, easier still to read them with passing interest; but only those who have known from experience what such journeys meant in the early days can at all appreciate the situation. Mr. Taylor knew; yet he encouraged these brave women, and assumed the responsibility of letting them go.

Not lightly, however, or at little cost did he go through with this matter. No one of experience being left in the Mission-house, he engaged the boat

himself and made all arrangements, even to packing food-baskets and rolling up their bedding with his own hands. Delayed after they had' gone on board, he spent the first night with them among the crowded shipping at the mouth of the Han-sharing the only available cabin with Miss Wilson's protege, a leper lad rescued at Yang-chow, who had become an earnest Christian and proved invaluable as a helper.

"I complained," wrote Miss Fausset, "about the unpleasant odour of his bedding," forgetting the hundred and one other things about which she did not complain, "and the worst of it was discarded next day. But Mr. Taylor had slept in the same compartment with the poor fellow all night."

Seeing that the vegetable oil, which was all they had been able to procure for cooking, made their food unpalatable, Mr. Taylor went ashore next morning and was gone some time.

"When he returned," Miss Fausset continued, "he was carrying a basket on his arm (having no servant with him) in which were sweet potatoes, eggs and lard. One never could have thought a little lard capable of doing so much good, or making so enduring an impression!"

When the boatmen really started (March 1, 1880) Mr. Taylor still remained on board till they got well out on the Han; then after a helpful time of prayer, while the attention of the ladies was occupied, he slipped into his little sampan and was gone. Never were travellers more faithfully escorted than by his prayers. Day and night he went with them in spirit, as they had the comfort of knowing, and Miss Fausset could never forget the earnestness with which he said on meeting her again:

"I have prayed for you thousands of times."

As news began to come from distant stations in which these and other

pioneers were winning their way to the homes and hearts of the people, Mr. Taylor rejoiced with new, unutterable joy.

"I cannot tell you how glad my heart is," he wrote to his mother in July, "to see the work extending and consolidating in the remote parts of China. It is worth living for and worth dying for."

Chapter XXIII[\(TOC\)](#)

Women which Laboured with me in the Gospel

1880-1881. AET.48-49

BACK in the terrible days of the Tai-ping Rebellion, Captain Yu of the Imperial army was stationed for a short time in Ningpo, one of the famous cities of his own province. While there, he fell in with preachers of "the Jesus Doctrine," and learned something of the teachings of Christianity. Naturally a thoughtful, religious man, he could not but be impressed, but the little he had heard left him with no clear knowledge of the way of salvation. Fifteen long years went by without bringing him further light; but he was seeking, groping after the truth, and doing all in his power to win and help others to win "the favour of Heaven."

Among a sect of reformed Buddhists strongly opposed to idolatry he had found kindred spirits, and was giving all his time to going from place to place as their accredited agent, though without remuneration. His preaching was necessarily rather negative than positive-denouncing the folly and sin of idol-worship, and proclaiming the existence of one true, supreme Ruler of the universe, the only God who should be worshipped, but of Whom he could tell his hearers practically nothing.

He was growing an old man before, in an inland city (Kin-hwa-fu), he met another foreign missionary. Dr. Douthwaite had come over from his station on the Tsientang river, and with Pastor Wang Lae-djun was preaching daily in a newly opened Gospel hall. Here the devout Buddhist heard in all its fulness the glad tidings of salvation-heard, believed, and found himself a new creature in Christ Jesus. After his baptism a year later (1876) he went down to Chu-chow-fu to be under Dr. Douthwaite's care, for medical treatment, and the latter was rejoiced to see how much progress he had made in knowledge of the Word of God.

"I well remember how, after we had been reading the Scriptures and praying together," he wrote, "Yu earnestly entreated me to let him go out as a preacher of the Gospel.

"'I have led hundreds on the wrong road,' he said, 'and now I want to turn them to the Way of Truth. Let me go. I ask no wages; I do not want your money. I only want to serve the Lord Jesus.'"

Three weeks later this ardent missionary, sent out with the prayers of the little church at Chu-chow-fu, returned with his first convert. He had crossed the watershed between Che-kiang and the adjacent province of Kiang-si, and in the beautiful district of Yu-shan had visited some of his former disciples. One of these it was who accompanied him now—a cheery farmer, also named Yu, who was himself to become an earnest soul-winner.

"He seemed to be just boiling over with joy," recalled Dr. Douthwaite. "As soon as he saw me he fell down on his knees, bumped his head on the floor, and said how grateful he was that I had come to that city.

"'For forty years I have been seeking the Truth,' he said, and now I have found it!'"

"He was one of the many in China who are dissatisfied with all they have, and are groping in the dark for something that can really meet the heart's need. Well, this man earnestly requested to be at once baptized.

"'Oh,' I replied, 'we cannot go so fast. We must know a little of you and your antecedents.'"

"'No,' he urged, 'let me be baptized now. I am an old man, and have come three days' journey. I may never be able to travel so far again. I believe everything you have told me about the Lord Jesus. There is no reason why I should not be baptized

to-day.'

"On further enquiry, I myself could see none; so I baptized him and he went away rejoicing.

"But he did come back, bringing with him six or seven neighbours to whom he had been preaching the Glad Tidings (February. 1877). They, too, definitely expressed their faith in Christ, saying that from what they had heard they were convinced that idolatry was false and sinful, and were prepared to give it up. After a few months' testing, I had the joy of receiving them too into the church."

The ex-Captain meanwhile, continuing his labours, had been led to another man from the same district whose heart the Lord opened. Travelling to Yu-shan one day, carrying his few belongings, he had joined company with a stranger who soon became interested in his conversation. Perceiving the old "Teacher" to be a good man, Farmer Tung insisted on relieving him of his bundle of bedding, etc., as they tramped along together mile after mile. So fully did the story of the life, death and resurrection of Christ meet the young man's need, that from that day he too was not only a believer in Jesus but a preacher of the Gospel. On visiting his village (Ta-yang) some months later, Dr. Douthwaite was surprised to find the courtyard of the house filled with an orderly assembly of people waiting as if for a meeting. Stools, chairs, baskets, inverted buckets, whatever could be used as a seat had been requisitioned, and the company consisted of women as well as men—all eagerly expectant. They were waiting, he found, for him to address them; and on asking how such an audience had been gathered at short notice, he was still more interested to learn that had he not been coming the meeting would have been held just the same. It was their custom to come together every evening in Farmer Tung's house or courtyard, to sing hymns and pray and read from the Word of God; and in villages far and near, for miles around, the

Good News had been made known.^[298]

But what has this story, interesting as it may be, to do with our subject—the opening up of Women's Work in the inland provinces? Simply, that in this beautiful district and through the earnestness of these young converts, God was preparing for a remarkable development of that work; just as, at Chefoo, He was making unexpected provision for future needs. The schools as we see them to-day, with their numerous activities and advantages, were not primarily of Mr. Taylor's planning; nor was the chain of ladies' stations that now extends from Yu-shan all down the Kwang-sin River. With its native pastor and evangelists, its churches, schools, teachers, and scores of unpaid workers; with more than three thousand five hundred believers baptized from the commencement, and thirty foreign missionaries ***all of whom are women***, that chain of stations is unique in China and perhaps in any mission-field. It has afforded a singular demonstration of what God can do in using the weak things of the world to accomplish His purposes; and by its confirmation of Mr. Taylor's convictions and the lines on which he and his fellow-workers were acting, it has inspired and strengthened similar efforts in many other places.

But all this was as yet undreamed of in the summer of 1880. Mr. Taylor only knew that God was leading; and after taking the momentous step of sending single women inland, even without foreign escort, he set out himself for the older stations of the mission, little thinking that this journey was to be a link in the chain of such happenings. Thoroughly to investigate the work in Chekiang was his object; and the tact and sympathy with which he went about it greatly impressed his young companion, Mr. Coulthard.

"At some of the stations there would be many difficulties," he said in this connection, "but it was wonderful how they

disappeared in the course of a visit from Mr. Taylor. Some said he was able to get his own way through personal magnetism, but I saw how he prayed about everything, and was so wise in not being influenced by the prejudices of others. His love and genuine interest were unmistakable. Was there a child in the station—his heart went out to it, and the little one would be sure to respond, opening the way for friendly intercourse with the parents. And his talks over the Bible were so helpful, He had meetings too with the Chinese—just the ordinary Sunday and week-day services, but full of blessing. It was all very simple, but real; and difficulties were invariably settled."

Together they were keeping up as they journeyed the administrative work of the Mission—answering letters, sending out remittances, corresponding with the home department, and doing most of the preparation of ***China's Millions***. After six weeks of such travelling, they struck across from Tai-chow-fu by a mountainous route never before taken by foreigners to what had been Dr. Douthwaite's station.^[299] There, several years previously (1877), Mr. Taylor had met some of the early converts brought in through the labours of the ex-Buddhist, Captain Yu. The progress of the work interested him deeply, and he decided to cross into the neighbouring province, and return to the Yangtze by way of the Kwang-sin River.

Upon his visits to Farmer Tung and the newly opened out-station at Yu-shan we must not dwell; but in the light of those lives touched with the love of Christ, the darkness of all that lay around them and beyond was felt the more. Three native evangelists on that long stretch of river, and nothing else in all the million-peopled province, save the work in and near Kiu-Kiang—it was a state of things to burden a spirit less alive to its responsibilities than Mr. Taylor's. Upon reaching Chefoo a few weeks later,

"None can be more anxious than myself," he wrote, "to see Women's Work commenced in the interior of the various provinces. This has long been the consuming desire of my heart." ^[300]

Did the vision come to him—as he passed' those very cities day after day, which were to witness the loving, self-sacrificing labours of girls then free and happy in far-off Christian homes: the vision of lives laid down for Jesus' sake, quietly put into the upbuilding of that kingdom which is "righteousness, joy, and peace" in human hearts, into the comforting of sorrows and the lightening of darkness he could but deeply feel as he passed on? Whether he saw it or not, there was One who knew why Hudson Taylor had been brought to the Kwang-sin River; One who knew where to find the treasures of love, ready to be outpoured in His service from many a woman's heart.

And all the while in distant provinces, hundreds of miles farther north and west, a beginning was being made. Strange and new as was the presence of foreign ladies in the great inland cities they now called home, it was no more so than the experiences that were coming to them. Full of interest were the letters Mr. Taylor was receiving, though the pre-occupations they told of left little time for writing.

"We have had a busy time since our arrival," wrote Mr. Nicoll from the metropolis of Western China. ^[301] "As soon as it was known that my wife had come, the women flocked to see her.... Since the Chinese New Year we have been quite besieged. With the exception of yesterday and to-day, when it has been raining, we have had from two to five hundred daily."

And the interest did not pass away with the festive season.

"For nearly two months past," Mrs. Nicoll wrote somewhat later, "I have daily seen some hundreds of women. Our house has been like a fair. Men also have come to hear the Gospel in

as large numbers. They are spoken to in the front part of the house; the women I see in the guest-hall and the yard before it, for the room is soon filled.... Often while getting one crowd out at the front-door another has found its way in at the back."

How much she needed help may be imagined; for, without a Christian woman anywhere within reach, the only person she could fall back upon was a member of their household who, being an old man, was tolerated among the guests in the inner courtyard. As the summer wore on she had to get up at three o'clock in the morning to obtain quiet for Bible study or letters. The busy day that followed rarely brought opportunity for rest; and more than once she fainted from weariness in the midst of her visitors, returning to consciousness to find the women fanning her, full of affection and concern.

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Among many well-to-do women who were her friends was one elderly lady who cared for her like a mother. From time to time, knowing how weary she must be, this lady would send round her sedan-chair with an urgent request for Mrs. Nicoll to return in it immediately. If she succeeded thus in getting her away from the Mission-house, she would put her on the most comfortable bed in her own apartment, send out all the younger women, and sit down herself to fan her until the tired missionary was fast asleep. Then she would prepare an inviting meal and on no account let her go home until she had taken a good dinner.

That was the surprise, the unexpected encouragement that everywhere awaited these first women who went-the people were glad to see them, were eager, often, to hear their message, and showed not only natural curiosity and interest, but real heart sympathy. Crossing the desperately anti-foreign province of Hu-nan, for example, on its western border where few if any European travellers had ever been seen, Miss Kidd could write of friendly

women wanting to detain them.^[303]

Why do you go to Kwei-chow? "they said in several places:" we too want happiness and peace. Stay here and be our teachers."

"All the way along," wrote Miss Kidd, "except at large cities, Mrs. M'Carthy and I have been able either to go ashore and visit the women ourselves, or to invite them on board our boat to see us. I do like these Hu-nan women so much! They have been very kind, most. willing to receive us, and ready to listen to what we have to say.... It was a great boon having our native sister with us. Of course, as the women had never seen foreigners before, they were a little afraid at first; but she would speak to them and tell them all about us and what we had come to do, and soon they would draw near, take us by the hand and invite us to their homes. Once indoors, we would soon be surrounded by quite a crowd of them.

"At one village a little incident occurred that amused me a good deal. We had anchored for the night, and some women invited us to go ashore. Mrs. M'Carthy had toothache, so I went alone. A woman about half my size, with a baby in her arms, took hold of one of my hands and a girl of about fifteen took the other and led me along the street, telling me not to be afraid, they would take care of me! At the house, such a number came to see me, and some of them seemed to understand the Gospel very well. The same woman with her baby led me back to the boat. May the Lord bless her, kind soul!"

And their experiences on reaching Kwei-yang were no less encouraging.

"We find the people most friendly," Mrs. M'Carthy wrote during the following summer, "and we go in and out without the least inconvenience. As we walk about, we get many invitations to sit down and drink tea. We are always having

our names called out, as is the manner of the Chinese, and many a face brightens when we come in sight."

With Miss Wilson and Miss Fausset it was just the same in their distant northern province. Arrived in Han-chung-fu they found Mr. and Mrs. King in the midst of an absorbing work. God had a people in that place, and it was all the missionaries could do to keep up with developments that before long gave them an unusually bright little church of over thirty baptized believers. One of these, an elderly woman who seemed all on fire with love to Christ, never wearied of accompanying Miss Wilson to the surrounding villages.

"Nothing could be kinder than our reception everywhere," Miss Wilson wrote in October 1880. "I am as well as ever I was, and the old lady, my companion, is radiant. If we should not be back by Tuesday, do not be anxious, for she takes me on to one place after another."

Their experiences were pretty strenuous, however, "eating and sleeping with the people, and walking and talking all day."

"We sit down on the dry path outside a hamlet," she continued on her return to Han-chung, "and soon the women come round us, and ask us probably to a house, in front of which they bring out low benches and sit down to listen very attentively. Then after giving our message we pass on, not accepting their kindly proffered pipes, and sit down again where we see people working in the fields. They leave their ploughs or pulling up of cotton-plants, and come to see and I think to hear, for they get to know our object. Scarcely any can read. I do so want them to have preaching nearer than twelve miles off, and hope Hwang may go to the market-town. He is anxious to do so, and could sell books and be better for the change, as he is always ailing-feet and hands sorely lessened through his leprosy. But God uses his weakness to keep him accessible in' one place, and at liberty for talking to

any who may come to hear. He has a sweet Christian experience, and perhaps, had he not this thorn in the flesh—might be exalted, for several have been led to Christ through him.

"While we were in the villages the people were so hospitable, asking us to meals whenever they were having them, and not willing to take any money. An old couple near our first village, when I was too tired to walk back, brought me out food to where I was resting, and would have me sleep at their house. A huge, round, flat basket, filled with straw, made us a comfortable and roomy bed. My companion had gone back and brought a wadded quilt and everything she could think I might want, on her back, dear old creature! We managed without these etceteras on our two days' expedition.... My bed one night was quite luxuriously soft, on cotton-plant leaves, stored for fuel, which made a sort of eiderdown coverlet as well.... The people sat round the door in the dusk, listening to the old woman, and asking all about foreigners. Several young men had heard the preaching in the city, so were prepared to think well of our message. We were led step by step in such pleasant paths that we want to go again, hoping that other hamlets too may be equally accessible. Our experience next time may not be the same; but we have precious seed to sow on whatever ground, and some will spring up we must expect; for has not the Lord Jesus shed His blood for these, and will He not call out of this province a people for His Name, and send us to seek them?"

A few weeks later, when Miss Wilson had been about six months in Han-chung-fu, Mr. and Mrs. Parker came up, on their way to a still more needy and distant sphere. They were bound for Kan-su, the farthest north-west of all the provinces, which, with its Mohammedan and Chinese population of ten millions, had but one solitary witness for Christ. Up there in his loneliness, Mr. Easton was longing for their coming, and though it meant another ten

days' journey, over rough roads and mountain ranges, Miss Wilson could not let the little bride go on alone. To be her helper and companion, this brave lady set out again to face the unknown—riding on the top of her baggage on one of the pack animals, and accompanied by her faithful attendant the leper Hwang.

It was the depth of winter when they reached Tsin-chow, but hardly had they settled in their new home before the work began to take on a more encouraging aspect. Even the timid Tibetans were attracted by the fame of "the foreign doctor," and the friendliness of all classes was remarkable. Five months only after their arrival Mr. Parker wrote (June 2, 1881):

The wife of a Tao-ist priest had an ulcerated neck reaching from ear to ear, a disease very common in this district and believed by the people to be incurable. My wife visited her, and she began to mend very rapidly under her treatment. The news spread quickly, and for three weeks Mrs. Parker went into the city daily to visit the sick. Most of the women patients have long been sufferers, their ailments are constitutional, or the result of poor, indigestible food; but many have been much relieved, and to Chinese eyes several remarkable cures have taken place. For several days I sat in the reception-room, making promises of calls and giving medicines from sunrise to sunset. The wife of the chief Mahomedan A-hung we have staying in our house, to be attended to. She has a gathered arm of two years' standing. People are beginning to come in from the country. I doubt whether there is a lane or courtyard in the city where a visit from my wife or Miss Wilson would not be welcomed. ... Three candidates are waiting to be baptized."

Thus at point after point in the far interior, prayer was being answered and the seemingly impossible brought to pass.^[304] "Do love the Chinese women,"

Mr. Taylor had said to Miss Wilson when she first went out. "Whatever is your best time in the day, give that to communion with God; and do love the Chinese women." This was the power that was telling now on hearts that were learning through human love, unknown before, the wonder of the Love that passeth knowledge."

"What is this strange, warm feeling we have when we come here to you?" said a group of visitors to one of the first women missionaries in Ho-nan. "We never feel it anywhere else. In our own mothers' homes we do not feel it. Here our hearts are *k'uan-ch'ao*—broad and peaceful. What is it warms them so? We have never felt it before."

But such service was not without its cost. While there was much to encourage—for by the end of 1880 the pioneers were rejoicing in sixty or seventy converts gathered into little churches in the far inland provinces—there was much also to call for faith and patience and the spirit of those who overcame "by the blood of the Lamb" and "loved not their lives unto the death." First to go to the women of western China, Emily King was the first also to be called to higher service. But before her brief course ended—the one precious opportunity in which she had given her all—she had the joy of seeing no fewer than eighteen women baptized on confession of their faith in Jesus. Dying of typhus fever in her far-off home (May 1881), this it was that raised her above the sorrow of leaving her husband desolate, and their little one but five weeks old without a mother. The Man of Sorrows was seeing of "the travail of His soul" among those for whom He had waited so long! And she was satisfied.

This it was that strengthened the mother's heart by a little lonely grave, when in that same month of May Mrs. George Clarke went on from Kwei-chow, in which she had been the only woman missionary, to the still more distant and difficult province of Yun-nan. The sisters who had come to her help were

able by that time to carry on the work; and the precious child who had filled her hands as well as her heart had been taken to a safer, better Land.

"The Lord has been leading us by a painful path," the father wrote. "Doubtless He saw best to take our dear boy to Himself, to send us to Yun-nan for if he had been spared we should not have thought of leaving Kwei-chow. Now, where is the married couple who can go as well as we?"

Forty days' journey westward lay the city in which a house was waiting; and Yun-nan with its twelve millions was without a resident missionary, or any one at all to bring to its women and children the glad tidings of a Saviour's love. Kneeling beside that little grave, the mother consecrated herself afresh to God for this work, and went on to the loneliness and privations she knew so well, to do in a second great province of western China what she had already been doing in Kwei-chow. And though only two and a half years later she too was called to her reward, the fruit of that life, the answer to her many prayers lives on.

"I seem to have done so little," she said to her husband toward the end. "I seem to have done less than any woman in China."

It was two years and more since she had seen a sistermissionary, or had had any one save her husband to share the prayers and tears over what, in those days and for long after, was a hard and fruitless field. But faith rose above discouragement.

"Others will come after us," she said when her brave task was nearly done.

"Others will come after us—"

The harvest is white to the reaping now, in that province where her life was the first to be laid down. From the snowcapped mountains that reminded her of her own Switzerland, on which she loved to watch the sunset glow, the

long neglected tribespeople are coming, coming in their hundreds to the Saviour she so truly loved and served. More than eight thousand baptized believers form the present membership of a church in Yun-nan and Kwei-chow that is growing beyond the power to overtake it of those who long and pray for fellow-workers, called of God, to garner the precious sheaves. Who will come while still the Master tarries, and share both in the present toil and in the endless joy of Harvest home?

Part VI[\(TOC\)](#)

The Rising Tide

1881-1887. AET. 49-55

Chapter XXIV

The Seventy

1881. AET. 49

"Are the itinerations of the C.I.M. really valuable from a missionary point of view? Are they not unproductive and aimless wanderings? Can we hope for much good from the journeys themselves, and will they lead to more definite and settled work? "Such were some of the questions Mr. Taylor felt it desirable to answer in a paper for China's Millions early in 1881. It was now four and a half years since the Chefoo Convention had thrown open the gates of the west, and pioneer journeys had been made in all the then unoccupied provinces. Was it too early to discern the trend of the movement, or to speak of spiritual results? It was surely not little to be able to point, even then, to seventy baptized believers in those regions hitherto destitute of the Gospel, and to settled work in no fewer than six important centres in five provinces, in all of which women missionaries were to be found as well as men. When one records the name of Pastor Hsi as among those first converts, it will be seen how well worth while were the labours that had brought such a man out of darkness into God's marvellous light.^[305] He was already receiving opium-smokers into his home, to cure them of their craving and lead them to Christ, and was one of those whose faithfulness under persecution and zeal in making known the one and only Saviour filled Mr. Taylor's heart with joy, and led him to ask in his turn the question, "While the Lord so cheers us in our work, shall we hesitate to continue, nay to go forward?"

But Mr. Taylor's was not the only pen that by this time was found to advocate the line of things he and his fellowworkers had felt led to adopt.

"They are opening up the country," wrote Alex. Wylie of the L.M.S., as early as 1880, "and this is what we want. Other missionaries are doing a good work, but they are not doing this work."

And one of Her Majesty's Consult included, in the same year, the following statement in his official Report from Hankow:

Always on the move, the missionaries of this society have travelled throughout the country, taking hardship and privation as the natural incidents of their profession, and, never attempting to force themselves anywhere, they have made friends everywhere; and, while labouring in their special field as ministers of the Gospel, have accustomed the Chinese to the presence of foreigners among them, and in great measure dispelled the fear of the barbarian which has been the main difficulty with which we have had to contend.

Not only do the bachelor members of the Mission visit places supposed to be inaccessible to foreigners, but those who are married take their wives with them and settle down with the goodwill of the people in districts far removed from official influence, and get on as comfortably and securely as their brethren of the older missions under the shadow of the Consular flag and within range of a gunboat's guns; and, while aiding the foreign merchant by obtaining information regarding the unknown interior of the country, and strengthening our relations by increasing our intimacy with the people, this Mission has, at the same time, shown the true way of spreading Christianity in China.

Spreading the knowledge of the Truth—this was indeed the aim kept in view; and though it meant deliberately forgoing the more rapid ingathering to be expected from concentrating upon older work, Mr. Taylor held firmly to the principle, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth." To realise how extensive and thorough-going were the labours of the pioneers, one must look a little beyond the summer of 1881, though even then there was abundant cause for encouragement. In the midst of his six years of almost uninterrupted travelling—journeys arduous beyond description, in which he traversed every

province in China (except Hu-nan) and even entered Mongolia and Tibet—James Cameron had reached the mountainous regions of northern Shan-si, within and without the Great Wall. There, joining forces with other brethren, he was engaged in the systematic visitation of every city not only in that province but in the neighbouring one of Shen-si, beyond the Yellow River, and in the eastern part of Kan-su. Patiently and persistently, in face of untold hardship, they pressed their way through wintry snows and summer heat to the remotest corners of those far-reaching plains and valleys, missing out only two places of minor importance that were practically inaccessible on account of the rainy season.

Meanwhile, in the far South, equally faithful work was being done. Even before Cameron had passed through on his first extensive journey, John M'Carthy had traversed on foot the three south-western provinces, preaching everywhere as he went. George Clarke and Edward Fishe, at the same time, were evangelising in Kwang-si—still farther south, and until then wholly unreached. To this province the latter had been designated; but fever contracted on their first journey-cut short the service he hoped to render, and his companion had the sorrow of laying him in a far-off grave. Still the good work went on, and in the year that followed (1878) Kwang-si was visited again and again. When Mr. Clarke married and brought his bride to Kwei-yang, Broumton, who had hitherto held the fort alone, was set free to travel, and visited with others nearly every city in eastern Yun-nan. The western part of the province fell to the eager pioneers, J. W. Stevenson and Henry Soltau, when at last they were permitted to cross the hills from Burma, and unite the advance guards of the mission coming from east and west. Mr. Taylor was at Wu-chang when they reached the Yangtze in the spring of 1881—the first Europeans to travel from the Burman frontier right through to Shanghai.

It was a time of notable happenings, that month of March at Wu-chang; for then Mr. Taylor saw off another large party, including ladies, to cross the turbulent province of Hu-nan to Western China, and hardly had they started before Adam Dorward appeared, fresh from five and a half months of pioneering in that very region. Hu-nan was graven on his heart, and he had just commenced the selfsacrificing labours that for eight years he continued almost without intermission, giving his life at last in hope of the blessed results we see today. Little wonder that a crying need began to be felt, rising out of these developments-the need for reinforcements to follow up such labours and enter many a-widely opened door!

This then was the state of things when Mrs. Taylor was obliged to return to England, after more than three years' absence (October 1881), and Mr. Taylor set out from Chefoo, now his headquarters, for conference with several of the pioneers at Wu-chang. The summer had been one of intense heat and no little trial on account of sickness and shortness of funds.'

"Unless one could really cast the burden on the Lord," Mr. Taylor had written to Mr. Theodore Howard, "and feel that the responsibility of providing for His servants is His, one would be much concerned at the present aspect of things."

And to a fellow missionary:

When shall we get through our difficulties? Funds seem dropping lower and lower. We need much prayer. But God cannot fail us: let us trust and not be afraid.

Those who were with him at Chefoo that summer noticed how much time he spent in prayer.

"What would you do," he said quite simply to Mr. and Mrs. Nicoll one day, "if you had a large family and nothing to give them to eat? That is almost my

situation at present."

Many were the occasions, also, when he called the household together for special thanksgiving. For if not in one way, then in another, the daily needs were met and Mr. Taylor was enabled to send out sufficient if not ample supplies.

"The amounts received these two months are very low," he had written to Dr. Harold Schofield in May, "and but for God's goodness in giving us more contributions in China than ever before in the same time, I should have much less to distribute. Is it not blessed to see how His watchful care provides, now in this way, now in that; now giving more here and less at home, then more at home and less here.... Any way, it is all like Him, blessed; and we are blessed to be in His loving hands."

Accompanying himself on the harmonium, Mr. Taylor used often to sing at this time some little verses which, simple as they were, meant much in his experience:

By the poor widow's oil and meal
Elijah was sustained;
Though small the store, it lasted long,
For God that store maintained.
It seemed as if, from day to day,
They were to eat and die;
But God, though in a hidden way,
Prolonged the small supply.

Then let not fears your mind dismay;

Remember God has said,

"The cruse and barrel shall not fail

My people shall be fed."

That summer was memorable also for the personal sorrow it brought to Mr. and Mrs. Taylor in the death of both their beloved mothers within a few weeks of each other. In the midst of much sickness and trial of various kinds this bereavement was specially felt, and made the parting all the harder in October, when Mrs. Taylor's return to England could no longer be delayed. The three years she had been in China had brought her so fully into the work that for Mr. Taylor it meant losing his right-hand helper. But it was clearly her duty to return to home responsibilities, and he could not be free far months to come.

"God is helping us very much," he wrote ten days after she had left, "and not less by our trials than by our joys. I am sure you have been longing for me, as I for you. At the right time, by the right way the Lord will bring us together again. Let us seek to live all the more with Him, to find Him a satisfying portion."

Travelling up the Yangtze in November, he was more than ever confirmed in a position of quiet trust in the Lord, and in the conviction—tested in many ways—that in the main the Mission was on the right lines before Him.

"You are ploughing the Mediterranean, I hope," he wrote on November 21, "and will soon see Naples. I am waiting here (on the landing-stage at An-king) 'for a steamer to Wu-chang. I need not, cannot tell you how much I miss you, but God is making me feel how rich we are in His presence and love.... He is helping me to rejoice in our adverse circumstances, in

our poverty, in the retirements from our Mission. All these difficulties are only platforms for the manifestation of His grace, power and love."

And from Wu-chang four days later, when the Conference had begun:^[306]

I am very busy at work here. ... God is giving us a happy time of fellowship together, and is ***confirming us in the principles on which we are acting.***

That one little sentence, taken in connection with the crisis to which they had come, lets in a flood of light upon the important sequel to those days of fellowship in Wu-chang. For unconsciously, perhaps, to the younger members of the Mission, it was a crisis, and more was hanging in the balance than Mr. Taylor himself could realise. After years of prayer and patient, persevering effort, a position of unparalleled opportunity had been reached. Inland China lay open before them. At all the settled stations in the far north, south, and west, reinforcements were needed, whole provinces as large as kingdoms in Europe being at last accessible to resident as well as itinerant missionary work. Not to advance would be to retreat from the position of faith taken up at the beginning. It would be to look at difficulties rather than at the living God. True, funds were low-had been for years, and the workers coming out from home were few, while, several retirements had taken place in China. Difficulties were formidable; and it was easy to say, "All these things are indications that for the present no further extension is possible." But not to go forward would be to cripple and hinder the work; to throw away opportunities God had given, and to close, before long, stations that had been opened at great cost. This, surely, could not be His way for the evangelisation of inland China.

What then was to be done? What answer must be given to the pioneers who were writing and eagerly looking for help? There are several different ways

of working for God, as Mr. Taylor reminded the little company.

One is to make the best plans we can, and carry them out to the best of our ability. This may be better than working without plan, but it is by no means the best way of serving our Master. Or, having carefully laid our plans and determined to carry them through, we may ask God to help us, and to prosper us in connection with them. Yet another way of working. is to begin with God; to ask His plans, and to offer ourselves to Him to carry out His purposes.

This then was the attitude taken up. Day by day the needs of the whole work were laid before the Lord, guidance being sought as to His will in connection with them.

"Going about it in this way," Mr. Taylor continued, "we leave the responsibility with the Great Designer, and find His service one of sweet restfulness. We have no responsibility save to follow as we are led; and we serve One Who is able both to design and to execute, and Whose work never fails."

It was only gradually it came to them-for it seemed too big a thing for faith to grasp. Walking over the Serpent Hill in the midst of Wu-chang, Mr. Taylor was counting up with one of his fellow-workers how many men and women it would really take to meet the most pressing claims. Station after station was considered, their thoughts quickened meanwhile by the scene outspread before them-the homes of no fewer than two million people being gathered at that confluence of the mighty Yangtze with the Han. Thus it was the thought dawned, overwhelming almost in its greatness. Fifty to sixty new workers? Why, the entire membership of the Mission was barely a hundred! But fifty or sixty, at the lowest computation, would be all too few. "Other seventy also," came to Mr. Taylor's mind "the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them...."

But it seemed too much to ask; not in view of the great, waiting field, but in view of wholly insufficient resources. Just then, as they walked, Mr. Parrott's foot struck against something hard in the grass.

"See," he said, stooping to pick up a string of cash, "see what I have found! If we have to come to the hills for it, Gob is well able to give us all the money needed! "But they did not run away with the new idea all at once. Several prayer meetings and quiet consultations were held before they came to feel liberty and confidence in asking the Lord for seventy new fellow-workers.

"I quite believe that Mr. Taylor prayed the prayer of faith tonight," wrote Mr. Parrott of one of those meetings and of another, "There was a great spirit of expectancy."

This was the spirit, indeed, that characterised the whole transaction—definite expectation that God would answer definite prayer in the Name of Jesus.

"If only we could meet again," said one, "and have a united praise meeting when the last of the Seventy has reached China!"

Three years had been agreed upon as the period in which the answer should be looked for, as it would hardly be possible to receive and arrange for so many new workers in a shorter time.

"We shall be widely scattered then," said another with a practical turn of mind. "But why not have the praise meeting now? Why not give thanks for the Seventy before we separate?"

This happy suggestion commending itself to all, the meeting was held, and those who had joined in the prayer joined in the thanksgiving also, with which the answer was received—in faith.

Chapter XXV [\(TOC\)](#)

Deeper Down

1882. AET. 50

FIREED with new faith and refreshed with spiritual blessing, the little party scattered from Wu-chang. What a message was theirs to take and send throughout the Mission!

"The Lord has been with us indeed," Mr. Taylor wrote on his way down river. "We have been guided, I believe of Him, to ask for 'other Seventy also,' and if He tarry He will send them I am sure. I am now on my way to Chin-kiang, where I hope to have some meetings for spiritual blessing...."

God is faithful, and expects us to walk by faith.... We have our definite lines of working: we must not leave them, nor grow weary in them. If any leave us on account of them, they, not we, are the losers. ... God remains faithful. Do not be cast down if you meet with difficulties at home. All things are working together for good, as in due time we shall see. Pray much for me. ... Satan is a terrible reality, so is the flesh; but more is He Who is within us. If God be for us, who, what can overcome us?" ^[307]

The meetings at Chin-kiang early in December were fully as encouraging as those at Wu-chang had been. All the members of the Mission present agreed to pray daily for the Seventy until they should be given. When Mr. Taylor left, several of the young men went down with him to the steamer.

"We had prayer in his cabin," Mr. Parrott wrote. "Five 'of us prayed for the Seventy, and Mr. Taylor promised to telegraph home and ask them to receive and send out this number, if we would continue praying.... Certainly the Lord is reviving us: other missionaries at Chin-kiang have also been present in our meetings."

From that time on it was a constant joy to Mr. Taylor to see how the prayer

for reinforcements was taken up throughout the Mission. No one knew better than he did what it meant to his fellow-workers to be not willing only, but earnestly desirous that the staff of the Mission should be so largely increased, when funds were and had long been low. But he knew too that it is a safe thing to launch out upon a course of obedience, no matter what testings may be involved.

"I do feel more and, more the blessedness of real trust in God," he wrote to Dr. Harold Schofield before the close of the year (December. 23). "Faith, He tries, but sustains: and when our faithfulness fails, His remains unshaken. 'He cannot deny Himself.'

"I have asked Mr. Pigott to hand you some silver which he took back with him to Shan-si: I enclose receipts. It comes as the answer to more than usual prayer; may I not hope that a more than usual blessing will rest on it? It is not the much or the little that is all-important. The handful of meal in the widow's barrel might last longer than a store on which God's blessing did not rest. I do feel that our adorable Master has made us so rich in Himself, has so given us the wealth of His own heart's love and all that that includes and implies, that we can do without any one else, or anything else, as He may see best. It is yet true that 'man doth not live by bread alone'; and equally true that yearning human hearts are not to be satisfied with earthly love alone. How many have to feel, if not say, 'Whoso drinketh of this water shall thirst again'! But we can sing,

... Thy love so pure and changeless,

satisfies my heart;

Satisfies its deepest longings; meets,

supplies its every need;

Compasses me round with blessing;

Thine is love indeed.

"The Lord Jesus, this year of very peculiar trial from almost every quarter, does make my heart well up and overflow with His love. He knows what our separations and other incidents of service mean, and He so wonderfully makes all loss gain, as many seem unable to understand. Excuse my running on in this way. My glad heart seems as if it must have vent, even among figures and remittances."

A few days later, in the scene of his early labours at Ningpo (January 1882), Mr. Taylor was drafting an appeal to the home churches which in due course was signed by seventy-seven members of the Mission in China. The sense of responsibility that lay behind it, as well as its quiet confidence in God may be judged from the following extracts:

Souls on every hand are perishing for lack of knowledge; more than a thousand every hour are passing away into death and darkness. ... Provinces in China compare in area with kingdoms in Europe, and average between ten and twenty millions in population. One province has no missionary; one has only one, an unmarried missionary; in each of two other provinces there is only one missionary and his wife resident; and none are sufficiently supplied with labourers. Can we leave matters thus without incurring the sin of blood-guiltiness?

After requesting prayer for more workers "in connection with every Protestant missionary society on both sides of the Atlantic," the needs of the C.I.M. were specially referred to.

A careful survey of the spiritual work to which we ourselves are called ... has led us to feel the importance of immediate and large reinforcements,, and many of us are daily pleading with God in agreed prayer for forty-two' additional men and twenty-eight additional women, called and sent out by God, to assist us in carrying on and extending the work already committed to our charge. We ask our brothers and sisters in Christ at home to join us in praying the Lord of the Harvest to thrust out this "other seventy also." We are not anxious as to the means for sending them forth or sustaining them. He has told us to look to the birds and flowers, and to take no thought for these things, but to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and, that all these things shall be added unto us. But we are concerned that only men and women called of God, fully consecrated to Him, and counting everything precious as dross and dung "for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," should come out to join us; and we would add to this appeal a word of caution and encouragement, to any who may feel drawn to offer themselves for this blessed work. Of caution, urging such to count the cost; to wait prayerfully on God; to ask themselves whether they will really trust Him for everything, wherever He may call them to go. Mere romantic feeling will soon die out amid the toilsome labour and constant discomforts and trials of inland work, and will not be worth much when severe illness arises and perhaps all the money is gone. Faith in the living God alone gives joy and rest in such circumstances. But a word also of encouragement, for we ourselves have proved God's faithfulness and the blessedness of dependence on Him.' He is supplying. and ever has supplied all our need. And if not seldom we have fellowship in poverty with Him Who for our sakes became poor, shall we not rejoice if the Day prove that we have been, like the great missionary Apostle, "poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, yet possessing all things"? He makes us very happy in His service, and those of

us who have children desire nothing better for them, should the Lord tarry, than that they may be called to similar work and similar joys.^[308]

What should we not expect from 1882 after this beginning, with the prayer for the Seventy being taken up in such a spirit throughout the Mission? Should we not confidently look for a rising tide of spiritual blessing both at home and in China, and that Mr. Taylor especially, as representing the movement, should be led on from strength to strength? Perhaps a deeper knowledge not only of the "acts" but of the "ways" of God would modify such expectations, and lessen the surprise with which one finds the reality to have been very different. For in England as in China, difficulties did not lessen. Working to the limit of his powers, Mr. Broomhall was not able to report any decided increase either of funds or of service. Eleven new workers were sent out, but three only of the number were men, when five times as many had been hoped for. So great was the trial as to shortness of supplies that Mr. Taylor could scarcely wonder at the retirement of one and another from the Mission whom he knew to be loosely attached to its principles. Government posts were to be had at a salary of fifty pounds a month, in which it was easy to think that exceptional opportunities for usefulness would be found. And, most sorrowful of all, as he moved from place to place the work in some important stations seemed to be going back rather than forward.

Faith was thus thrown into the crucible in many ways, and the reality behind outward seeming, both as to Mr. Taylor's own position and that of others, was tested as never before. Weaknesses were brought out with startling clearness—need of spiritual power, of organisation, of leaders of more calibre. With answered prayer on the one hand as to the opening up of inland China, and a growing faith for large reinforcements on the other, they were forced to a

realisation of the utter inadequacy of existing arrangements to carry on the work even as it was. And in and through it all, Mr. Taylor himself was assailed by such depression, loneliness and forebodings, due in part to illness, that one stands amazed at the record merely-the little that could be put into letters of those long painful months.

Yet the soul was sustained upon its inward way. Wonderful indeed is the conflict, the dimly-seen midnight wrestling of this man of prayer with his God. Much he had known already of Him Whose larger blessing he so deeply craved. Did it seem in the darkness as if all were failing him? Strengthened and upheld by the Hand that seemed against him, he was yet to prove the faithfulness of Him to Whom he clung with the heart-cry, "Show me now Thy Name."

Wilt Thou not yet to me reveal

Thy new, unutterable name?

Tell me, I still beseech Thee, tell;

To know it now resolved I am:

Wrestling, I will not let Thee go,

Till I Thy name, Thy nature know.

What though my shrinking flesh complain,

And murmur to contend so long?

I rise superior to my pain,

When I am weak, then I am strong;

And when my all of strength shall fail,

I shall with the God-Man prevail.
Yield to me now; for I am weak,
But confident in self-despair;
Speak to my heart, in blessings speak,
Be conquered by my instant prayer;
Speak, or Thou never hence shalt move,
And tell me if Thy name is Love.
'Tis Love! 'tis Love! Thou diedst for me!
I hear Thy whisper in my heart;
The morning breaks, the shadows flee,
Pure, universal Love Thou art;
To me, to all, Thy mercies move
Thy nature and Thy name is Love.
My prayer hath power with God; the grace
Unspeakable I now receive;
Through faith I see Thee face to face,
I see Thee face to face, and live!
In vain I have not wept and strove
Thy nature and Thy name is Love.
I know Thee, Saviour, who Thou art,

Jesus, the feeble sinner's Friend;
Nor wilt Thou with the night depart,
But stay and love me to the end;
Thy mercies never shall remove
Thy nature and Thy name is Love. ^[309]

Thus it was that Hudson Taylor held on-hard pressed in faith and circumstances, sustained, borne down at times, but strengthened. Thus it was that he was brought out victorious.

"Were not my hope in God, I should be terribly discouraged by my recent visits," he wrote on February 13. "But the Lord' reigneth." ^[310]

February. 17: I do trust that good may result from these visits. They cost me a good deal, physically and mentally, and do not effect nearly as much as I could wish.

February. 21: May the Lord have mercy upon us, and purge out from among us every false and vain thing, and make us pure and holy before Him in love. ... These things almost break my heart. I do not know what to do, sometimes. But if I grieve over ... want of Christlike devotion, what must He feel Who shed His blood for souls? Blessed Jesus I how unworthy of Thee I am. Make me more like Thyself.

June 16: There are many and serious difficulties to be met, but the Lord is at our right hand, and we shall not be moved by them if He uphold us. All the way my Saviour leads me, What have I to ask beside?

July 7: Travelling by foot-boat. I do live in your love, during this long, long separation. If the Lord do not come first, it will

end; but oh, the end seems so far off! And you are, perhaps, longing for me, I will not say as much, but in the same way. I am so glad we can both say "All for Jesus"; and He fully knows how much that "all" means sometimes, does He not? May He be gracious to us, and keep our hearts full of His manifested love and conscious presence, and then we shall not faint nor be weary by the way.

July 22: Chefoo. I do believe God is doing and will do great things for us. As to health, I never was better.

July 31: 4 A.M.... I have had a trying time here, and it is not altogether past yet. One is very much tempted to say or to think, Satan is too much for us, and thus to dishonour our almighty Saviour. ... By God's help, I do manage to get things through.

August. 7: I feel sure that if we are only simple in faith and loyal in service, God will teach us much that at present we have little practical knowledge of. ... Here, we all feel that blessing is not far off. ... If I were to tell you the mercies we have had of late, the interpositions of God's hand, it would be a long letter! and "yet there's more to follow." I feel sure God will do, is doing, great things for us. Let us open wide our mouths and enlarge our hearts, for He is faithful.

September and October were specially trying months; since the formation of the Mission, Mr. Taylor had never been more overwhelmed. But for the reality of that inward sustaining, he must have broken down physically, if not in faith and courage. As it was, he was consciously shaken, though not "moved."

"Pray especially for guidance in the organisation of the work," he wrote on October 21, "and for men of calibre to carry it on.... Abundant spiritual power and some considerable capacity in leadership are just now great

desiderata. If I could be free from all but the spiritual oversight, I might do good for some time to come."

November. 23: Sometimes I venture to indulge the hope that I shall be able to get away in January, and reach you early in March. It seems too good to be true, and I feel afraid to build upon it; for, if hindered, the disappointment will be so great. If I really do know my heart, my first wish is to do God's will in the matter; but you and the dear children do draw so, that I am often afraid lest my motives in wishing to go home quickly are not so purely for the furtherance of God's work as I could wish. Oh, how graciously God has ordered it that we are accepted in the Beloved," "Complete in Him"!^[311]

*December. 5: I would not withhold anything from the Lord Jesus. I do want to **finish** the work He has given me to do. ... But I think that ere long He will restore us to. one another, and I hope the days of our parting may then be ended, and no more such lengthened separations be our lot.*

December. 30: Shanghai. Tomorrow (Sunday) I preach at the Masonic Hall—the last morning sermon of 1882, as I preached the first.' May God give me the message. I am glad to serve Him here. It is heavy and constant labour, but very happy. My path will not be easy, with regard to leaving. So little is coming in at home. ... The Lord will provide, no doubt; but it seems as if I must be near, to pray and to divide as closely as possible. Well ... I am praying for guidance, and He will give it. Many enjoy our meetings. They little know what they cost you and me. Is anything of value in Christ's service which costs little? Upon the cross of Jesus, mine eye at times can see, The very dying form of One Who suffered there for me.

How light our burdens, how small our love, compared with that!"

Yet there were gleams of brightness, all the more welcome for the shadows,

and some outstanding experiences that told of a deepening work of God. Memorable among these was the Conference at An-king in June, when Mr. Taylor spoke on a subject that was filling his heart. To some it may seem strange that the Scripture from which he derived most of the "power of endurance and encouragement"^[312] he so sorely needed at this time was the Song of Solomon; but those who have been brought by the King into "His chambers" in the treasure-house of its inspired pages will know the matchless revelation they contain of "the love that passeth knowledge" and the response it seeks from its own. This was Mr. Taylor's theme at the Conference, and much of the most helpful ministry of his later years may be traced to the same source.^[313]

"I have gone through the Canticles in the way, of exposition during this visit," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor from An-king, "and the Lord has wonderfully opened His heart to us all. We have also dwelt on some of the distinctive principles of our position and work, I think with great profit."

And a few days later:

I wish I could give you any adequate idea of the blessing we have had in An-king. ... So long as God gives us such times as these, we will not be cast down, however great the difficulties and trials by the way.

It was chiefly for an outpouring of a spirit of prayer that this Conference was memorable, and for the manifest presence and power of the Holy Ghost. Seven months had now elapsed since in a similar gathering the decision had been reached to ask in faith for seventy new fellow-workers, and to this little company on their knees at An-king came a wonderful confirmation of their convictions as to that purpose.

"We have had a day of united fasting and prayer to-day," Mr.

Taylor wrote on June 30, "and a wonderful time of blessing it has been. The Holy Spirit seemed so to fill us this morning that several of us felt as if we could not bear any more."

And to another correspondent:

I wish it were possible to give you any idea of the wonderful time of blessing we have had at An-king. They are a band of fully consecrated workers there, and were ready for blessing.... We arranged on my arrival for two meetings each day, 7-9 A.M. and P.M., and often went beyond these hours; and some of the stronger ones "spent a large part of several nights in prayer. On the morning of our fast-day the Holy Spirit seemed so to fill several of us that each felt (as we found in private conversation afterwards) that we could not bear any more and live.

Mr. Parrott wrote of one meeting in which prayer with thanksgiving, especially for the Seventy, continued without intermission for almost two hours; and one cannot but trace the rising tide of spiritual blessing that began to make itself felt, to the waiting upon God of this and of other special meetings toward the close of the year.

Meanwhile, Mr. Taylor had paid another visit to the district in which he had found a few months previously so much to discourage. Then he had written of his efforts being all or "nearly all in vain, so far as this part of the work is concerned." Now, baptized afresh with a spirit of love, he was enabled to find his way to hearts that had seemed closed against him, and a work of grace was the result, that was not only to save valuable workers from being lost to the Mission, but was to set them in its front rank as regards fruitfulness in soul-winning.

It was at Chefoo that the later months of the year were spent and some of its most important work accomplished;^[314] and there Mr. Taylor began to see his

way at length to returning to England. There, too, faith was encouraged by definite answers to prayer in the matter of funds. Early in October, for example, they were looking with special expectancy for the home remittance, autumn journeys having to be provided for those who were going up country, to whom Mr. Taylor would have been glad to entrust extra supplies for their own and other stations.

"We were at table," he recalled, "when we received our letters (the home mail); and when on opening one of them I found, instead of seven or eight hundred pounds for the month's supplies, only £96:9: 5, my feelings I shall not soon forget!

"I closed the envelope again, and seeking my room, knelt down and spread the letter before the Lord, asking Him what was to be done with less than ninety-seven pounds—a sum it was impossible to distribute over seventy stations in which were eighty or ninety missionaries, including their wives, not to speak of about a hundred native helpers, and more than that number of native children to be fed and clothed in our schools. Having first rolled the burden on the Lord, I then mentioned the matter to others of our own Mission in Chefoo, and we unitedly looked to Him to come to our aid; but no hint as to our circumstances was allowed to reach any one outside.

"Soon the answers began to come—kind gifts from local friends who little knew the peculiar value of their donations, and help in other ways, until the needs of the month were all met without our having been burdened with anxious thought even for an hour. We had similar experiences in November and again in December; and on each occasion, after spreading the letter before the Lord and leaving the burden with Him, we were 'helped.' Thus the Lord made our hearts sing for joy, and provided through local contributions in China for the needs of the work as never before nor since."

Encouraged in this way to remember that it was the Lord to Whom they must look, and not to friends in England, the little circle at Chefoo were the more prepared for Mr. Taylor's suggestion that they should unite in asking some definite "token for good" of the same sort to strengthen faith at home. Letters received had shown how really concerned were some of the workers and friends of the Mission as to the appeal for the Seventy. It had been kept in the background as much as possible, just because it seemed too great an advance to contemplate at such a time; and Mr. Taylor, who by no means ignored the difficulty, felt it laid on his heart to ask the Lord to put His seal upon the matter in a way that could not be mistaken. It was at one of the daily prayer meetings at Chefoo, on or about the first of February (1883), and the few who were present were conscious of much liberty in laying their request before God.

"We knew that our Father loves to please His children," Mr. Taylor wrote in recalling this experience, "what father does not? And we asked Him lovingly to please us, as well as to encourage timid ones at home, by leading some one of His wealthy stewards to make room for a large blessing for himself and his family by giving liberally to this special object."

A few days later Mr. Taylor sailed for England, and it was not until they stopped at Aden that he learned the sequel. No account of that special prayer-meeting had been written home, nor could a letter of that date have reached London until the end of March. But at Pyrland Road, Mr. Broomhall had the great and unexpected joy of receiving **on the second of February**—a sum of three thousand pounds for work in China, contributed by friends whose confidence he enjoyed in a special way.

Nor was this all. On landing at Marseilles, Mr. Taylor took the opportunity of

visiting Mr. and Mrs. Berger at Cannes.

*"The April **China's Millions** there came to hand," he wrote, "and I found in the list of donations this three thousand pounds, acknowledged under the date of February 2, with the text, 'Ask of ME, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' as follows:*

Father	£1000
Mother	1000
Mary	200
Rosie	200
Bertie	200
Amy	200
Henry	200
Total:	£3000

Father

"It was most striking to see how literally God had fulfilled our prayer, and led His faithful steward to make room for a large blessing for himself and his family. Never before was a donation sent to us in such a way, and never since, save on one occasion, a year and five months later, when a donation for the same fund is entered thus in China's Millions

Father	£200
Mother	200
Mary	200
Rosie	200
Bertie	200
Amy	100
Henry	100
Baby	100
Total:	£1000

Mother

"A beautiful instance, this, of a father who seeks that each member of his family should have' treasure in heaven."

Chapter XXVI^(TOC)

Above all that Ye Ask

1883-1884. AET. 51-52

PARIS and Easter-tide: how little had either Mr. or Mrs. Taylor in their long separation imagined such a setting for the reunion that came at length! Even the day or two spent at Cannes had seemed long when the traveller learned who was coming to meet him. Before leaving China he had been much impressed with the prophecy of Zephaniah, especially the closing chapter with its wonderful revelation of the heart of God: "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest (or "be silent") in His love, He will joy over thee with singing."

"The whole passage had been made a great blessing to me," he said "but it was not until I reached Paris that I learned the full preciousness of this clause. For there I was met by my beloved wife (after a separation of fifteen months), and as we sat side by side in the cab, though she had so much to say and I had too, I could only take her hand and be silent-the joy was too deep for words. Then it came home to me: if all this of earthly affection is but the type, what must it be when He is 'silent in His love'? And that love is drawn out by our trust. Oh, it is such a pity to hinder!"

Reaching home at the end of March, Mr. Taylor was in good time for spring and summer meetings, and soon had cause to notice the new position accorded to the Mission in the esteem of the Christian public. The eight years of Mr. Broomhall's unwearied labours had told especially in the direction which was his forte-that of inspiring confidence and making friends. Then, too, the achievements of the pioneers, women as well as men, in effecting a settled residence in almost all the inland provinces had called forth thanksgiving to God. In many parts of the country people were wanting to hear how the seemingly impossible had been brought to pass; how, without

appeals for money or even collections, the work had been sustained; and how in the most distant parts of China little groups of converts were being gathered. Meetings, therefore-meetings in all directions-soon claimed the leader of the Mission-the unobtrusive man so sure of his great God!

The correspondence of the next two years, the period of Mr. Taylor's stay in England, is deeply interesting from this point of view. To him who had never sought it had come the loving appreciation of high and low, rich and poor, old and young, to a remarkable degree.

"If you are not dead yet," was the charming communication of a child at Cambridge to whom "Hudson Taylor "was a household word," I want to send you the money I have saved up to help the little boys and girls of China to love Jesus."

"Will you do me the kindness," urged Canon Wilberforce of Southampton, "to give a Bible reading in my house to about sixty people ... and spend the night with us? Please do us this favour, in the Master's name."

"Much love to you in the Lord," wrote Lord Radstock from the Continent. "You are a great help to us in England by strengthening our faith."

From Dr. Andrew Bonar came a hundred pounds, forwarded from an unknown Presbyterian friend "who cares for the land of Sinim." Spurgeon sent his characteristic invitations to the Tabernacle, and Miss Macpherson to Bethnal Green.

"My heart is still in the glorious work," wrote Mr. Berger, with a cheque for £500. "Most heartily do I join you in praying for seventy more labourers—but do not stop at seventy! Surely we shall see greater things than these, if we are empty of self and only seeking God's glory and the salvation of souls."

There are letters from the nobleman inviting Mr. Taylor to his castle, and from the old family servant, sending a gift for China after his departure. And there are letters, above all, telling of blessing received in the meetings, not through Mr. Taylor's addresses only, but through his personality and spirit.

"It was the man himself we were drawn to," wrote one of the new friends of this year (the Rev. J. J. Luce of Gloucester). "It was what 'he-was that gave such sweet, undying force to what he did. Behind it all was a wealth of faith and knowledge of God, and of experience in His ways, that made you feel a dwarf indeed in comparison.

"Never can I forget a meeting in our schoolroom one summer evening (June 1883). It was an after-meeting at the close of a Convention for the Deepening of Spiritual Life, and a group of young men gathered round him while he told in the simplest way the story of his student days, and of his preparation for the work in China to which the Lord had called him. The effect on my own spirit, and I think upon others too, was overwhelming. I felt as though I had never yet given up anything for Christ, never yet learned to trust the Lord. ... I was so moved that I had to ask Mr. Taylor to stop: my heart was broken.... We were only twelve all told on that occasion, but three went to China as a result." [315]

"To me, 1883 was a place of great darkness," wrote a godly woman occupying a position of influence, "and the foundations of faith were shaken. I did not speak to anyone of what I was passing through, for I knew everything, as I thought, in theory."

Constrained' by the duties of her position to attend a conference of which her husband was Convener, she expected nothing but weariness from the missionary meeting, to which she went conscious of "intense soul-hunger, underneath rebellion and unbelief."

"As Mr. Taylor began to speak," she continued, "a great calm and stillness came over me—a fresh revelation of God's coming down to meet human need. The fountains of my inmost being were broken up ... I saw a little of what consecration really meant; and as I began to yield myself to God, fresh hope, light and gladness came into my life-streams that have been flowing ever since."

Many conferences that summer and autumn gave Mr. Taylor access to representative audiences; opportunities he did not fail to make use of, though in a way all his own.

"When he was speaking," Mr. Luce recalled, "you, could be quite sure that, whatever else he might say, he would make no plea for funds. Often I used to hear him explain, almost apologetically, that his great desire was that no funds should be diverted from other societies to the China Inland Mission; and that it was for this reason he had taken up lines of working which he hoped would preclude interference with other organisations. Nothing gave him more genuine pleasure than to speak well, of other missions...."

"Oh, the self-emptied spirit, the dignified way in which his life of faith was lived out, the reality of it all! Instead of wanting to get anything out of you, he was always ready to give to you. His heart and mind were full of that. Some people seem to be asking all the time, though they may not do so in actual words: he-never."

At the Salisbury Conference Canon Thwaites was impressed with Mr. Taylor's humility more than anything else or the way, rather, in which God clothed him with humility." Yet there was power in his addresses, especially in the missionary meeting, a power of the Holy Spirit which "was intense, almost awful"; and of the praise meeting, with which the Conference ended,

Mrs. Thwaites hardly knew how to write. No. reference was made on that occasion to the Inland Mission, but it was for China that lives were consecrated and money flowed in. In spite of there being no collection, people emptied their purses, stripped themselves of their jewels, handed over watches, chains, rings and the like, and gave their lives to God for His service.

Fifteen or sixteen offers for the mission-field were the result, and a whole jewelry case was sent in next day. People had received so much that they felt they could give anything.

So fully were Mr. Taylor's time and strength occupied in these ways that it is amazing to find how much he was doing all the while of correspondence and his own special work in the Mission. From a pair of substantial manuscript books lying before us, we might conclude that he had been wholly engrossed in directorial duties, instead of being almost continuously engaged in meetings. One of these volumes contains a list of his China letters—when received, when answered, with a line as to their contents—and the other is filled" in the same way with particulars about home correspondence. From this source alone one learns of two thousand six hundred letters attended to by Mr. Taylor personally (Mrs. Taylor often acting as his amanuensis) during a period of ten months, fully taken up with travelling and meetings. Little wonder he began to need a private secretary.

Much prayerful thought was being given also to a subject second to none in its importance, that of organisation within the Mission, on the China side of things especially. In frequent meetings with the Council and in private conversations, Mr. Taylor was seeking light upon how to prepare for the larger growth that was coming, and after five months at home-busy though he was with Summer Conferences-he sent out a carefully considered letter to all

the members of the Mission, stating what was proposed and asking their judgement.^[316]

Meanwhile, out in China the need for reinforcements was increasingly felt. Five only had been sent out in the first quarter of the year, but fifteen sailed in the months that followed,^[317] and many fresh candidates were in touch with the Mission.

"We look anxiously for news of the coming Seventy," wrote Mr. Easton from the north-western province of Shen-si, "and trust that warm-hearted, earnest brothers may join us here."

And from Tai-yuan-fu, the capital of the adjoining province, Dr. Schofield sent a special plea:

We are praying daily for the seventy new labourers, and I hope that at least four of them will come to this province. There are now three or four towns within a day or two's journey, in each of which we have old patients—three of them double cataract cases who can see well. Some of them are not only grateful, but were seemingly interested in the Gospel while with us. These openings I long to see followed up.

He did not say how deeply he was burdened for the whole, great, waiting land, with its teeming millions; how stealing time from work and rest he was giving himself to prayer, day by day, that men of God might be raised up for its evangelisation; how labouring beyond his strength he was becoming known not only as the wonder-working doctor, who could restore sight to the blind and almost raise the dead, but as the man with a message, the unwearied preacher with the heart of love.

To the crowded dispensary there came a patient with virulent diphtheria. The doctor did what he could, but having no isolation ward was reluctantly

compelled to refuse the poor man admission. Returning later, however, he managed to elude the gate-keeper, and crept into a small room near the entrance, in which before morning he died. Hearing to his concern that a patient had passed away, the doctor hastened to the spot. The odour in the room was overpowering, and a glance revealed the danger to which he and others were exposed. In the prime of his manhood, after only three years in China-the three happiest years of his life, as he had written more than once-Harold Schofield's work on earth was done.

But why recall it now? What had it to do with the special developments of 1883? Only this-that Schofield died **Praying**. During all the later months of his life, full as they were of splendid service, his chief pre-occupation had been prayer. For this he would leave wife and children, denying himself rest and recreation, and making time at any cost for waiting upon God. It was China that was on his heart-and the sleeping Church at home. And the petition he urged with special fervency was that God would touch the young life of our universities, and raise up men of gifts and education for His work among the heathen. There was no Student Christian Federation in those days, no Volunteer Movement in any of the Colleges. Himself a distinguished prizeman, who had taken more than £1400 in scholarships, he knew well the value of thorough mental training; and remembering all that had been said in his own case about "sacrifice of brilliant prospects, he prayed for a new spirit to come over Christian thinking, more in, harmony with His Who "made Himself of no reputation" that dying souls might live.

It was the 1st of August when Harold Schofield, stricken with a malignant fever, laid down his life in the work he so truly loved. But the prayers of those last months had not been in vain. News of his death, though cabled to England, did not reach Mr. Taylor immediately, but **that very day** a letter

came to him in the north of England that one cannot but connect with Dr. Schofield's prayers; It was from a young officer in the Royal Artillery who had for some time been thinking of offering himself, he said, for the work of the China Inland Mission. He asked an interview with Mr. Taylor, signing the name that, little as either of them could suppose it, was in due course to replace his own. D. E. Hoste writing from Sandown Fort in July, Stanley P. Smith coming up from Trinity College and his exploits on the river, these and the offers who joined them making the well-known "Cambridge Seven," whose going out awakened a new spirit indeed throughout the universities of the United Kingdom and America, and through them of the world-what were they but the answer to those sacred pleadings in which a believing heart had entered into fellowship with God?

*"I have sometimes thought," wrote the author of **The Evangelisation of the World**, "that in those prayers the greatest work of Harold Schofield's life was accomplished: that, having prayed thus, he had 'finished the work' God had given him to do, and so was taken to his eternal reward." [318]*

But if 1883 was memorable, with its many causes for encouragement, what shall be said of 1884; and the movement into which these young men came? It was a rising tide indeed of spiritual power and blessing; a year of intense activity, in which Mr. Taylor seemed to do the work of ten; a year of incessant meetings, and the flowing in of sympathy and gifts as never before; a year of harvest in the matter of new friends and workers; and above all a year of close and constant dependence upon God. It was the last of the three years in which the Seventy were to be given, according to the faith that had received them from the Lord; and given they were in royal fashion-most of the large party that sailed toward the end of October being over and above the number.^[319] Forty-six in all were sent out during the twelve months; and it

was not only the number but the calibre of the workers that was remarkable. Often must Mr. Taylor have been reminded of the prayer going up from many hearts that the Seventy might be God-sends as well as Godsent to China.

And here attention may well be drawn to some of the outside influences that contributed to the developments of this wonderful year and the years that followed, chief among which was the second visit of Messrs. Moody and Sankey to the United Kingdom. The foundations of the C.I.M. were laid, as we have seen, at a time when the spiritual life of the churches had been marvellously quickened by the Great Revival of 1859. Moody's first visit in 1873 had brought to the front again the supreme duty of soul-winning, preparing the way for many a forward movement, including the appeal for the Eighteen and the opening up of inland China; and now, when a fresh advance was to be made in missionary enterprise, the heart of Christian England was being stirred to its depths by a practical, overwhelming demonstration of the power of the Gospel. Who shall say how much the world-wide work of foreign missions owes to these devoted evangelists?

Then there was a book, equally simple and God-honouring. Published many years before, *China's Spiritual Need and Claims* had about it a living power. Edition after edition had been called for, and always the same deep spiritual influence seemed to flow from its pages. Steeped in prayer from the first, it had been used of God continually to call forth consecration in His service; and now enlarged and brought up to date it was to have a new lease of life in the attractive edition of 1884.

"That was the book that did the work," said Mr. Stevenson, who was just home from Burma. "At a single meeting five pounds' worth would be purchased. Many new friends were attached to the Mission as a result, and a constant stream of

gifts flowed in.

"It was a time of remarkable progress. Everywhere we had splendid openings, and neither labour nor forethought were spared in making the most of them. It was a new thing to be able to tell of China open from end to end, and the big map we carried with us made it all so real. M'Carthy's walk across China was of unique interest, and I too had travelled overland from Bhamo to Shanghai. Nobody else had such a story to tell in those days, just as no other mission had settled stations far in the interior. The outgoing of party after party introduced us to many new circles, and within the Mission itself all was hope and courage."

But still it was in prayer the work was really done. Quietly, at the back of everything, the spiritual life was maintained at the heart of the Mission. Never had the daily and weekly prayer meetings been more full of power. When Miss Murray's party came up from Glasgow, for example, on their way to China, it was no easy matter to accommodate all who gathered on Saturday afternoon. Many old friends were present, including the beloved Reginald Radcliffe, aglow with holy enthusiasm. From stirring scenes up north Mr. McCarthy had come, and with him Messrs. Hoste and Stanley Smith. Nothing of excitement followed them, however the presence of God and the sense of responsibility were too deep for that.

"We had a glorious meeting," wrote Mrs. Taylor of this occasion (October. 18). "Such power I think I never felt before. It seemed as though the world were being moved in that little room."

In the midst of these experiences Mr: and Mrs. Taylor were facing another long separation. The outgoing of so many new workers urgently called for his presence in China, and she could not be spared from home. He too seemed needed in England-never more so, with doors opening on every hand,

candidates applying and friends ready to help. Yet it was in China the fight had to be fought and the new recruits got into line. So the parting had to come, and Hudson Taylor went forward in the spirit of Livingstone's entry in his journal for one of his last, lonely birthdays in central Africa: "My Jesus, my King, my Life, my All again I dedicate my whole self to Thee."

Sending Mr. McCarthy on ahead to deal with the most pressing matters, and leaving Mr. Stevenson to stand by Mr. Broomhall and the Council for a while at home, Mr. Taylor was preparing to set out early in January with a party of young men, including Messrs. Hoste, Stanley Smith, and Cassels, when the unexpected happened, and God's purposes broke in upon these well-laid plans with an overflowing fulness that carried all before it.

It came about very naturally, and apart altogether from design or effort. In his *History of the Church Missionary Society*, Mr. Eugene Stock speaks of "the extraordinary interest aroused in the autumn of 1884 by the announcement that the captain of the Cambridge Eleven and the stroke oar of the Cambridge boat were going out as missionaries." When the news reached Edinburgh it deeply stirred a group of medical students who for some months had been burdened about the indifference to spiritual things in the university, especially among their fellow-medicals. A series of remarkable meetings had just been held at Oxford and Cambridge in which Mr. Taylor and several of the outgoing party had won the sympathies of the undergraduates for foreign missions as never before. But they were too much occupied with preparations for an early departure to be able to follow up even such promising openings. Then it was that, providentially, Reginald Radcliffe came upon the scene—that fervent evangelist whose parish was the world and whose aim nothing less than that the Gospel should be preached "to every creature." Loving Scotland with a special love, he longed to bring the outgoing band into touch with her

university life, and on obtaining Mr. Taylor's permission wrote to Professor Simpson to suggest that Studd and Stanley Smith should visit Edinburgh.^[320]

Coming just at the time when those medical students were earnestly seeking guidance as to how to bring the claims of Christ before their fellows, the suggestion was hailed with thankfulness.

"Many had heard of Stanley Smith," wrote Professor Charteris, "and to every one who knew anything of cricket the name of Studd was familiar. And so the word went round our class rooms, 'Let us go and give the athlete missionaries a welcome!'

"The men gathered-about a thousand, and the two missionaries spoke, well supported by Mr. Landale who is home from China, and others. Smith would have made his mark as an orator anywhere; he has unusual powers of thought, imagination, and utterance, and a colder man than he would have been roused by the audience to whom he was invited to tell how the 'love of CHRIST constrained' him to give up all home prospects and go to far-off China to preach the Gospel. Studd has not the gifts of an orator, but he never went more straight at the mark in the cricket-field than he did in his manly narrative of the way God had led him for years, from stage to stage of the Christian life, until he was ready to forsake father and mother, home and friends, because of his love for his Redeemer.

"The students were spellbound. Those two speakers were so manly-types indeed of handsome, healthy manhood-were so happy, spoke in such unconventional style, that when they had done hundreds of students, who had little thought of such a thing when they came into the hall, crowded round them to grasp their hand, followed, them to the train by which they were going right off to London, and were on the platform saying God speed you," when the train steamed away."

But that was not to be the end of it. During their campaign with Mr. Radcliffe the latter had seen the possibilities of such work, and had unfolded a plan for further meetings. Invitations had been urgent to return to Scotland, especially from Edinburgh students, and in spite of the early date fixed for the sailing of the party it was hoped that Mr. Taylor might accompany them.

"Could you come," wrote Mr. Stanley Smith to the beloved leader of the Mission; "and if not, may we go?"

By this time it was becoming clear to Mr. Taylor that the hand of God was in the movement, and greatly must he have longed to make the most of his share in it. He had been very conscious of the power of the Holy Spirit with those of the seven who had helped him in his meetings, and had seen the influence of their joyous consecration not over students only, but over leaders of Christian life and thought.^[321] The whole thing was beginning to stand out before him the uniqueness of the opportunity and of the band of fellowworkers who had been given-him; the evident purpose of the Lord of the Harvest to use them along lines that had always been his own ideal—through the deepening of spiritual life among His people, to thrust out many fresh labourers into His harvest. How his heart was in it all; how he would have rejoiced to stay and help I But, for him, duty clearly pointed in another direction.

Thus then it was arranged: Mr. Taylor going on ahead to get through important matters awaiting his attention in Shanghai, and Mr. Radcliffe undertaking, with Mr. Broomhall and others, the campaign that was to be so far-reaching in its results. One notable meeting Mr. Taylor had at Exeter Hall, when all the outgoing party were present—a meeting which in measure prepared him for Mr. Eugene Stock's comment:

The influence of such a band of men going to China was

irresistible. No such event had occurred before; and no event of the century had done so much to arouse the minds of Christian men to the tremendous claims of the Field, and the nobility of the missionary vocation. ^[322]

But it was not in public gatherings that these men were knit to their leader and the Mission with which they had cast in their lot. It was behind the scenes in quiet hours the work was done, and chiefly in times of prayer at Pyrland Road, as on the last day of 1884. There was no disguising on these occasions the poverty, as far as material resources were concerned, of the Mission that had closed its latest balance sheet with only ten pounds in hand" ten pounds and all the promises of God." But how small a matter this seemed with the presence of the Lord Himself so consciously felt! It never had been Mr. Taylor's way to minimise the trials that awaited young workers in China, especially if they desired to identify themselves with the people along the lines of the C.I.M. Speaking of himself in the third person, one of the Cambridge Party recalled:

Mr. Taylor was careful to set before him the real character of life and work in inland China, telling him quite plainly that it involved isolation, privation, exposure to the hostility of the people and the contempt of his own countrymen, and also many trials of faith, patience and constancy.

"Mr. Hoste went away deeply impressed with the character of the man with whom he had been speaking," was the young officer's only comment, "and with his heart more than ever set upon becoming a missionary in China."

Very memorable to such a spirit was that New Year's Eve spent in prayer and fasting. When Mr. Taylor left London three weeks later, some of the party were again in Scotland, rejoicing to tell of all the wealth they were finding in deeper fellowship with Christ, which so far outweighed anything of worldly

advantage they were laying down. And in a blinding snow-storm, as he crossed France alone, the traveller's heart was full of praise for news received only that morning from the northern capital

"Two thousand students last night—wonderful times! It is the Lord."

Chapter XXVII^(TOC)

The Price of Progress

1885-1886. AET.53-54

Who, that one moment has the least despised Him,

Dimly and faintly, hidden and afar,

Doth not despise all excellence beside Him,

Pleasures and powers that are not and that are.

Aye, amid all men bear himself thereafter

Smitten with a solemn and a sweet surprise,

Dumb to their scorn and turning on their laughter

Only the dominance of earnest eyes.

Yes, thro' life, death, thro' sorrow and thro' sinning,

He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed:

Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,

Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

MYERS.

How little the Church yet knows of her glorious Lord, that missionary work can ever be counted sacrifice! To be His ambassadors, His witnesses, His fellow-workers, to share in some measure "the fellowship of His sufferings," that we may "know Him and the power of His resurrection" and in some deeper, fuller sense "win Christ"—how can it but be gain, infinite and eternal?

Long had this been the attitude of Mr. Taylor's heart, and that it was so still

comes out very simply in a letter written as he was crossing France. He had been making the most of an empty side of a carriage when, at Lyons, additional travellers entered in the middle of the night. He judged them to be a newly married couple, on account of their evident youth, and at first felt disposed to regret the loss of space to lie down, for he was very weary.

"But they taught me a lesson, I trust," he wrote to the loved one left behind. "The French lady seemed simply to adore her husband. There was something about their ways one could not describe, which told how fully they were all in all to each other. Her eyes followed his every movement. If she touched him, there was something indescribable in the touch. They were oblivious of every one else. She wished for something at a station: he almost flew to procure it—and what thanks her eyes gave him! Some smiled. But I said to myself, 'How infinitely more worthy is my Lord of adoring love than this young husband can be! How much more He loves me! He has died for me; He lives for me; He delights to give me the desires of my heart. Do I love Him so? Cannot I take my eyes off Him? Is He really all in all to me'? Am I oblivious of all others, because of His presence and love? Is it joy to leave all—you, my precious one, included—to please Him?"

"Oh, Darling! that love did me good, and does still. The pain of parting is very real, but Jesus is very real, too. He will be a satisfying portion to you during my absence, and to me in your absence. Let us be thankful that our honeymoon has lasted so many years, and will last. But most of all, let us seek to be more to our Lord, to find more in our Lord, as time passes on. We shall never be alone, shall we?"

Nearing Shanghai some weeks later, the sense of responsibility in connection with all that lay before him was very great. An absence of two years, at a time of unparalleled growth and extension in the Mission, meant that many

problems would await him for which he had neither wisdom nor strength.

"Soon we shall be, in the midst of the battle," he wrote from the China Sea (February. 28, '85); "but the Lord our God in the midst of us is mighty, so we will trust and not be afraid. 'He will save': He will save all the time, in everything."

Meanwhile, in Edinburgh, the movement begun among the students was not only growing in popularity, it was taking on a deeper tone.

"Students, like other young men," wrote Dr. Moxey of this second visit, "are apt to regard professedly religious people of their own age-as wanting in manliness, unfit for the river or cricket-field, and only good for psalm-singing and pulling a long face. But the big, muscular hands and long arms of the excaptain of the Cambridge Eight, stretched out in entreaty, while he eloquently told out the old story of Redeeming Love, capsized their theory; and when Mr. C. T. Studd, whose name is to them familiar as perhaps the greatest gentleman bowler in England, supplemented his brother athlete's words by quiet but intense and burning utterances of personal testimony to the love and power of a personal Saviour, opposition and criticism were alike disarmed, and professors and students together were seen in tears, to be followed in the after-meeting by the glorious sight of professors dealing with students, and students with one another."

"We had a wonderful time," wrote one of the undergraduates. "I should think three-fourths of that meeting waited to an aftermeeting, and the great hall was covered with men anxious about their souls. Christians were stimulated all round, and many I believe came that night to an out-and-out decision for God."

"The following evening we met again in the Free Assembly Hall, and again had times of great blessing. To the men whom God had so signally used we said, 'Can you not possibly come

back?'

"They said, 'Well, we are going to the West. We are to pass this way again on Friday, and if you can 'arrange it shall be glad to-meet your students again, then.'

"We met in the same hall, and I think that I never saw a meeting like that. We had obtained a special lease of the hall. We ought to have left by half-past ten, but got permission to remain till midnight; and up to that hour the floor was covered with men anxiously inquiring, 'What must I do to be saved?'"

[323]

The precious days of January (1885) were hastening on, and it yet remained to pay farewell visits to Oxford and Cambridge.

"I want to recommend to you my Master," said Studd in his last address to the men of his own university. "I have had many ways of pleasure in my time, and have tasted most of the delights this world can give; but I can tell you that these pleasures are as nothing compared with my present joy. I had formerly as much love for cricket as any man could have; but when the Lord Jesus came into my heart I found that I had something infinitely better. My heart was no longer set on the game: I wanted to win souls, to serve and please Him."

"What a priceless testimony is this to spiritual realities," commented the Master of Pembroke. ^[324] "What a victory is scored to faith I for however eccentric his conduct may be thought, plainly he has demonstrated that there are unseen powers that sway a man's heart much more forcibly than any motives of the world. We who can recollect the strong man, how great he would rise up with his bat, with what force he would hurl his ball, how grand an ovation he would receive as captain of the victorious eleven after some international contest, who know how such a man is sought out, caressed and idolised, can in some measure estimate his sacrifice, or rather

the new force that has laid hold of him. For he was not leading a sinful life, but simply says that a stronger fascination has come over him, and he submits like a captive to it, with his eyes open, rationally and willingly., and in the new service finds a satisfaction far excelling the old."

It was this hidden power, this spring of inward joy that was so attractive, and multitudes everywhere wanted to see and hear for themselves. From Exeter Hall in London (headquarters of the Y.M.C.A.) came an urgent request for one last meeting, and the departure of the missionaries was delayed another day to make it possible. Fresh from the moving scenes at Oxford and Cambridge the whole party came up to London for this last farewell, and the great hall was densely crowded.

*"It was a sight to stir the blood," wrote a correspondent of **The Nonconformist**, "and a striking testimony to the power of the uplifted Christ to draw to Himself not the weak, the emotional, the illiterate only, but all that is noblest in strength and finest in culture."*

"I could not but ponder," said a thoughtful observer in The Record, "what were the main reasons for the might of a movement which has drawn to it man after man of a very noble type, and of just the qualities most influential in the young Cambridge world. My main reasons, after all, reduced themselves to one—the uncompromising spirituality and unworldliness of the programme of the Mission, responded to by hearts which have truly laid all at the Lord's feet, and whose delight is in the most open confession of His Name and its power upon themselves. I venture to pronounce it inconceivable, impossible, that such a meeting should have been held in connection with any missionary enterprise of mixed aims, or in which such great truths as personal conversion, present peace and joy in believing, the present sanctifying power of the Spirit, the absolute necessity among

the heathen of faith in Christ for salvation, and the loss of the soul as the alternative, were ignored, or treated with hesitation. Nor could such a profound interest possibly be called out, did the work not demand of the workers very real and manifest self-sacrifice and acts. of faith." ^[325]

All this was a great joy to Mr. Taylor and those with him in China; so also were the meetings he had arranged for the Cambridge Band at various ports on the way out, and others in Shanghai, Peking and elsewhere on arrival. To get the young men into work studying the language was important however, so meetings were curtailed, and they were soon on their way, in Chinese dress, to the interior northward to Shan-si and westward to Han-chung-fu.

For himself, Mr. Taylor was not expecting to be long detained in China, there being much of importance to require his presence at home. He hoped to give effect, on this sixth visit, to the plans for organisation that had been maturing in his mind, and to see something of the work in the interior, especially in the province of Shan-si. The time had come when superintendents were needed to afford help and guidance to the largely increased number of recruits, and some one who could be associated with himself as Deputy Director, in view of his necessary absences from the field. A China Council also was desirable, to assist the Director or his Deputy, as the London Council had long helped Mr. Taylor at home; and it was important to establish training centres for the study of the language, in which new arrivals, men and women respectively, could have experienced help in preparing for their life-work.

Seen in the light of subsequent developments it was to be expected that the great adversary would leave no stone unturned to hinder and if possible frustrate these purposes. "Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

Wonderful things had been happening in connection with the Mission, wonderful things were yet to happen, and the enemy seems to have been prepared at every point to oppose and hinder. Month after month went by, and at the close of 1885, Mr. Taylor wrote:

A year ago I thought to be back in England ere December was out, but I seem to be as far from it as on landing. Not that nothing has been done! A great deal, thank God, has been accomplished, and not a little suffered-but He knows all about that. Such a hand-to-hand conflict with the powers of darkness as I have seldom known has been no small part of the work of the year; but "hitherto the Lord hath helped us "and He will perfect that which concerns us, whatever that perfecting may mean or involve.

"Borne on a great wave of fervent enthusiasm," as Mr. Eugene Stock expressed it, the work had been swept into a new place in the sympathy and confidence of the Lord's people. "The Mission has become popular," Mr. Broomhall was writing from England; but out in China, Hudson Taylor had to fathom the other side of that experience.

"There must be a good deal more effected by pain," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor a few weeks after landing, "than we know of at present. It seems essentially connected with fruitfulness, natural and spiritual."

To no one else could he unburden his heart; and as the separation lengthened, many were the revealing passages in his letters.

October. 15: Great trial, great blessing are very present. My only rest is in God. But He is more than ever all to me, and I a resting in Him.

November. 1: I have it much impressed on my heart to plead mightily for a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those

who cause most concern. This is what they need; this would put all right, and nothing else will. So long as the motto practically is "Not Christ but I," our-best organisation will never give the victory over the world, the flesh and the devil. The motto must be changed.

November. 9: "It is three weeks to-day since I was out of doors," he continued after an illness due to overstrain. "Satan is so busy just now! there is trial on every hand" ... mentioning no fewer than seven causes of special anxiety. "In the midst of it all God is revealing Himself. The work is wonderfully advancing, and those who will have it are getting showers of blessing."

November. 11: I am sure you will pray hard for us. The conflict is heavy indeed. Satan harasses on all sides; but the Lord reigneth, and shall triumph gloriously.... It is easy enough to fancy we are weaned children when we don't mind much the thing we miss; but at other times and about other things we are less in danger of making this mistake.

November. 14: I believe we are on the eve of great blessing, perhaps of great trial too. The Lord our God in the midst of us is "mighty to save"; let us trust Him. Flesh and heart often fail: let them fail! He faileth not. Pray very much, pray constantly, for Satan rages against us. But God uses this most diligent though unwitting of His servants to refine and purify His people and to bring in the greatest blessings-witness the Cross.

The winter months were the most painful, and Mr. Taylor was anticipating what it would mean to be without the comfort even of letters on the long journey he expected to take after the Chinese New Year.

"I am wondering how you will bear the three months' fasting from letters while I am inland," he wrote in January 1886. I shall feel it dreadfully, but it has to be gone through. The Lord

help and comfort you.... There is much to distress. Your absence is a great and ever-present trial, and there is all the ordinary and extraordinary conflict. But the encouragements are also wonderful-no other word approaches the truth and half of them cannot be told in writing. No one dreams of the mighty work going on in connection with our Mission. Other Missions too, doubtless, are being greatly used. I look for a wonderful year.

"Sometimes I feel almost crushed by one thing and another ... but the wonderful progress, the wonderful love of most of our people, the effect that is being produced at home and abroad is worth the crushing of a score of us. And if you and I be the sacrifices (among others) shall we regret it-I do not say complain? Nay more, shall we not be willing, glad, eager to win at any cost (and God only knows how great it is) such real, abiding blessings?"

And a couple of months later (March 10), when once again his plans had all been broken up:

I do so comfort myself with that hymn:

What grace, O Lord, and beauty shone

Around Thy steps below!

What patient love was seen in all

Thy life and death of woe!

Thy foes might hate, despise, revile,

Thy friends unfaithful prove;

Unwearied in forgiveness still,

Thy heart could only love.

Oh give us hearts to love like Thee,

Like Thee, O Lord, to grieve

Far more for others' sins than all

The wrongs that we receive.

Darling, we must not pick our crosses, nor be dissatisfied with the training and discipline. Soon it will all be past and our separations over for ever. We cannot expect lightly to assault Satan's domain; if we do, we shall be corrected.

As to the progress that was being made, it is difficult now that the organisation of the Mission is so complete to realise what it meant to work it all out, when men were only gradually growing in fitness for various posts, and any delegation of Mr. Taylor's authority 'was apt to be regarded with misgivings if not opposed through misunderstanding. The family feeling in the Mission had been very precious to its early workers, who were accustomed to dealing with Mr. Taylor direct about every matter in which advice and help were needed. Much more of difficulty lay in the way of associating others with himself in these responsibilities than even he anticipated; but the appointment of Superintendents for a number of provinces, arrangements for receiving new arrivals in suitable training homes where help could be given them with the language, and the better ordering of business and financial matters in Shanghai were part of the outcome of his labours in 1885.^[326]

Twice had serious illness called him to Yang-chow during the year, twice had a life of incalculable value to the Mission hung in the balance. In answer to prayer, Miss Murray had been raised up, and the plan Mr. Taylor unfolded

even when it seemed that she might never work again had been brought to fruition.

"Lord, I am so weak and ill," was all she could say at first, "why does Mr. Taylor speak of these things now?"

But the long convalescence was brightened by a sense of call to much-needed service and the Mother of the women's training home-the heart that has poured itself out ever since in love and blessing reaching to every part of the Mission-came out of that illness ready for the appointed task.

At An-king also, steps had been taken to improve and consolidate the work, that it might become a helpful training centre for young men during their first months in China. In Mr. W. Cooper, the wise and prayerful leader was recognised for the post of Superintendent of the province and Pastor of the An-king church, while in Mr. Bailer, shortly afterwards associated with him, the students had from the first an ideal teacher and friend.^[327]

The older work in the province of Che-kiang was next organised, Mr. Meadows (the senior member of the Mission) being appointed Superintendent, with Mr. Williamson of the *Lammermuir* party as his helper. But it was not until the close of the year that Mr. Taylor saw with thankfulness who was to be his own Deputy. With an exceptional record of varied and useful service behind him, Mr. Stevenson had returned to China, landing on Christmas Eve after an absence of ten and a half years. All that time, in Burma and elsewhere, he had often longed to be at work again in his old sphere. But the Guiding Hand had been preparing him for wider usefulness; and so' real a blessing had come to him, spiritually, that he was ready to be a helper of many.^[328]

"The Rev. J. W. Stevenson has, I am thankful to say, accepted

the position of Director's Deputy," Mr. Taylor wrote in March (1886) to the members of the Mission. "He will assist, D. V., by visiting for me many places I cannot reach; will represent me in my absence from China, and deal with all questions brought before him by the Superintendents requiring immediate determination.

"I feel sure you will all share with me in thankfulness to God for this appointment, and feel that it is one of the most important steps in advance that we have recently been able to make. I should ask your special prayers for Mr. Stevenson, that he may be spiritually sustained, and that divine wisdom and grace may be given him for the weighty responsibilities of his post; and also that you will remember each of the Superintendents in your prayers, that they may be blessed, and helped in the discharge of their duties. Without full spiritual power, no experience or ability will avail for the important and momentous work they have undertaken." [329]

One thing that had tried Mr. Taylor a good deal all through 1885 had been the frustration, again and again, of his purpose to visit the northern provinces. Reasons of importance seemed to require his presence in Shan-si without delay, yet endless complications detained him at Shanghai or called in other directions. More than once he had been on the point of starting; and it was not until the time really came—twelve months and more after it had been expected—that he began to see how wisely even the hindrances had been planned. But for Miss Murray's illness combined with other delays, he would not have taken a journey, for example, which proved of great importance. Far up the Tsien-tang river was a station he found himself obliged to visit, and by crossing the watershed into the neighbouring province of Kiang-si it would take little longer to return by the Po-yang Lake than the other way. Both the Tsien-tang and the Kwang-sin rivers were of exceptional beauty at that season, and hoping that the complete change of boat-life would help to re-

establish Miss Murray's health, he arranged for several of the Yang-chow party to accompany him.

Thus, then, the months of May and June (1886) brought to that long-waiting district the loving hearts and earnest, prayerful lives that were to become its channels of divine blessing. Six years had passed since Mr. Taylor on his previous visit had met the converts gathered in through the labours of Captain Yu in the neighbourhood of Yu-shan. The little out-stations he had visited then among the hills and down the river were out-stations still, and had rarely seen even a passing missionary. But one great difference he noticed that was suggestive. For a young worker, a girl of only twenty, had recently come over from what had been Dr. Douthwaite's station, to take a few days' holidays in that beautiful region. Cared for by the evangelist and his wife, she had spent a week in the county town of Changshan, sharing their home and sleeping in an attic to which she climbed by a ladder-like stair. But neither this nor any other consideration could keep visitors away, and from morning till night her room was besieged with women and children. Warm-hearted Agnes Gibson welcomed them all, and spent her much-needed "holiday" in telling the old, old story, which had never seemed more precious.

The result was that when he came this second time Mr. Taylor found a marked change in the Sunday services. On his previous visit the Christians had been all and only men; and so bitter was the opposition of their women-folk that they had even rented a room for themselves, where they might read and pray undisturbed. Now, however, the women were as much in evidence as the men, and a deputation of the latter waited upon him to point the moral.

"We want a missionary of our own," they said, "and we want a lady. If one visit of a week could bring about such a change, what might not be accomplished if we had a Lady-Teacher all the time?"^[330]

This was unanswerable; and it was moreover the very development Mr. Taylor had long desired to see. As he travelled with the Misses Murray and their young companions down the Kwang-sin river, passing city after city in which no voice was raised to tell of the love of Jesus; as he saw the welcome with which these-gentle visitors were received, not only by little groups of Christians in lonely out-stations but by the people everywhere, he realised with thankfulness that the time had come, and that the Lord had sent His own messengers.^[331] It was no easy work that lay before them, and no light responsibility he assumed in consenting to let them undertake it. But with their hearts drawn out in prayer for place after place-cities like Ho-kow with its eighty thousand, or I-yang, for which they had a memorable time of waiting upon God, he could do no other. Going forward therefore in faith, he arranged for the Misses Mackintosh, Gibson and Gray to return with an older worker, and settle down among the native Christians, making the evangelisation of this populous region their life-work. And if the step cost him more, far more, than his fellow-travellers could realise, never was confidence in God more fully justified than by the result.^[332]

Returning to Shanghai after six weeks' absence Mr. Taylor found himself faced by a serious problem. He arrived, as it happened, on the very-last day of an option obtained upon a building site in the Settlement that he greatly desired to purchase for future use. It was a valuable plot of land, two acres in extent, admirably situated for the purposes of the Mission, but the price was almost £2500. Real estate could not but increase in value in such a locality, and other offers were being made for this particular property. It seemed providential that the last stages of Mr. Taylor's journey had been remarkably prospered, so that he had reached Shanghai earlier than could have been expected. But though he was in time, he had not money in hand to justify the purchase. If lost, the opportunity would never recur; yet what was to be done?

One thing at any rate was possible: the whole matter could be laid before the Lord in definite, united prayer. If it were of Him for the Mission to have and use that plot of land, He could bring it about, however unlikely it might seem. The clear duty was to refer the problem to Him, in the confident expectation that He would deal with it in the way that was best. This then they did at the noon prayer meeting (June 14) when no outsiders were present; and then and there the answer was given.

Among the party just arrived from home was one who had been interested in China through Mr. McCarthy's meetings in Scotland two years previously. Large business responsibilities rested upon him at that time, and it was not until he could see how these were to be cared for that he felt free to join the Inland Mission. Unexpected delays in his coming out had coincided with delays in Mr. Taylor's northern journey, so that the two met in Shanghai on the very day in question, met one might almost say in that prayer-meeting. The outcome was a gift sufficient to cover the purchase of the entire property, followed (though that was a later thought) by the still larger gift of all the buildings necessary to make it the most complete and serviceable of headquarters. It was a wonderful provision, a wonderful answer to prayer, and a wonderful anticipation of the enlargement in the Mission that was at hand.

Two days later Mr. Taylor set out on his northern journey, tidings from Mr. Stevenson who had preceded him filling his heart with thankfulness.

*"Praise for twenty years of blessing from our gracious Father!" the latter had written from Han-chung-fu on the anniversary of the sailing of the **Lammermuir** (May 26). "The struggles and victories of all these years are part and parcel of your spiritual fibre. May the third decade witness mighty outgoings of power through the Mission that shall astonish*

fainthearted Christians and be a source of strength to all wholehearted followers of our risen Saviour.

*"Well, dear Mr. Taylor, I am so overflowing with joy that I can scarcely trust myself to write. He has done great things for us up here—glory to His Name! I do bless Him for the peace and joy that fill my soul, and also for the floods that have come down upon my beloved Brothers and Sisters at present in Han-chung. We had the full tide last night, and found it hard work to break up such a glory-time as had never been witnessed in Han-chung before... The Lord has given us a wonderful manifestation of Himself these last few days. But we are all satisfied that there are infinite stores yet at our disposal of grace and power ... I do wish you could have been with us last night, and have witnessed the deep, overflowing joy, and heard the glad, full surrender of all present to Christ. I do not think you would have slept much for delight. As long as we keep banded together in love and consecration, as is happily the case here, there need be no doubt regarding our success in China—**none**.*

"The blessing at the meetings with the native Christians ... was like a heavenly breeze filling us with great delight and bright hope for the future. There are quite a number of characteristic converts here—some of them with most decided convictions and dauntless courage and enterprise for the Lord. It is truly refreshing to find, so far in the interior, a band of men and women so simple and devoted. ... I never was so hopeful as I am to-day with regard to the Gospel in this land."

Chapter XXVIII [\(TOC\)](#)

Days of Blessing

1886. AET. 54

IT had come at last—the opportunity so long looked forward to! For seven years Mr. Taylor had been planning to visit. Shan-si. Once he had even set out, only to be recalled by claims at the coast. But now, the better organisation of the Mission permitting an absence of several months from Shanghai, he hoped to strengthen the work not in Shan-si only but in other regions lying farther inland. For many desires were on his heart in connection with this journey. Each station to be visited had its problems, but greatest of all was the question how to evangelise the vast population to which the missionaries now had access. To bring help and encouragement to these lonely toilers was his chief object, and to confer with them about the organisation of the native church, which in some places was growing rapidly. It was also his hope to establish a Church of England district in the great western province of Sze-chwan, a matter which had long been under consideration. In the Rev. W. W. Cassels the Mission had for the first time one qualified to take the lead in such an enterprise, and Sze-chwan with its sixty-eight millions had as yet only two centres in which Protestant missionaries were to be found. Mr. Cassels with others of the Cambridge party had been gaining experience in Shan-si, where they were eagerly awaiting Mr. Taylor's coming, and he was looking forward with no less pleasure to seeing them in the midst of their work.

But first of all the desired province had to be reached, over the vast plains of Chih-li and the mountain passes beyond. Such travelling was strange to Mr. Taylor, hitherto accustomed to the endless water-ways of central and southern China. Springless carts and northern roads, consisting of unmade tracks over sun-baked or rain-flooded country; rivers to be crossed without bridge or ferry, and dangerous passes braved in litters swinging from the

backs of mules very prone to stumble; these by day, and big, noisy inns at night, together with northern speech, food, and manners, all made large demands upon strength and patience. While a native junk on canal or river may leave much to be desired, it is at any rate a shelter you can call your own; but to exchange the weariness of a cart in which you have been jolted and shaken for hours for a brick-bed shared with others in a close not to say filthy room, the minor occupants of which may be numbered by hundreds if not thousands, is quite another matter.

To Mr. Taylor and his companions the journey was memorable for its discomforts. Setting out toward the end of June, they found the heat intense. Flies swarmed everywhere; food was difficult to obtain; and at night the younger men, new to such conditions, were thoroughly "played out," and often too tired to unpack their provisions or forage for a meal. More than once they were roused after hours of slumber by Mr. Taylor's cheery invitation to come and share his "midnight chicken," prepared as likely as not with his own hands.^[333]

Two weeks even of such experiences soon passed, however, and great was the contrast when the hospitable home of Dr. and Mrs. Edwards was reached. There in the capital of the 'province (Tai-yuan-fu) most of the Shan-si missionaries were gathered to meet him, including five of the Cambridge band, who had now been fifteen months in China. Had Mr. Taylor been able, as he had planned, to follow them to their sphere of labour a year or so previously, he would have found them far less ready for his visit than they were now. Then, only two C.I.M. stations existed in the province, and in the southernmost of these they were beginning, under Mr. Baller's tuition, the study of the language. Now, with considerable fluency in Chinese, they had come up, each from their own centre, full of the problems that press upon

young missionaries in the midst of a large and growing work.^[334]

For the district in which they found themselves was that of Mr. Hsi, the ex-Confucian scholar, and his friends Chang and Ch'u of the Buddhist temple and little city of Ta-ning among the Western Hills. On either side of the Fen river these men, full of their first love and zeal, were sounding out the glad tidings of salvation far and wide. Seventy-two baptisms at the Spring Gatherings, a few months earlier, had doubled the membership of the Ping-yang church, and made the need for wise and careful supervision all the more apparent. The time had come for setting apart some of the Chinese leaders as deacons and elders in the village gatherings, and for recognising the God-appointed ministry of Hsi and others who were doing pastoral work. But before going on to the native conference at which these ordinations were to take place, Mr. Taylor was thankful for the quiet days in the capital for united waiting upon God.

Days of Blessing^[335]—how truly the title of the book in which a record of these meetings has been preserved expresses what they were in reality! As one turns the pages, the fragrance of the Lord's own presence cannot but be felt. HE never could be hid; and from first to last it was His fulness that rejoiced those waiting hearts. Face to face with the overwhelming need around them and the insufficiency within, it was good to remember, as Mr. Taylor put it, that it is not a question of the supply at all, but of ***the Supplier***. "He (the Lord Jesus) is enough for Shan-si, from the Great Wall to Ho-nan. We have a grander Saviour than we realise!"

Upon the main theme of the conference—***Christ our All-Sufficiency for personal life and godliness, as well as for all the exigencies of our service***—we must not dwell. Never was Mr. Taylor more helpful, more at his best, than in drawing upon the treasures of the Word of God,^[336] and on his own

experience, for the encouragement of fellow-workers. But the subject is too full for these pages. Some echoes, merely, of the conference may be gathered from suggestions made by Mr. Taylor as to the relation of the missionary to his work:

How can we secure the development of strong, healthy, Christlike native Christians unless we are living strong, healthy, Christlike lives ourselves?

Very few have been long in connection with missions without hearing a great deal of the faults and failures of the native Christians. Is it not the case that their faults and failures are very much the reflection of our own?

What the spiritual children will be depends on what the spiritual father is ... The stream will never rise higher than its source, but it will not fall far short of it, circumstances permitting. The hardness of heart which is a hindrance to the Gospel is not that of the hearers; it is the hardness of this heart of mine.

*When God's grace is triumphant in my soul, and I can look a Chinaman in the face and say, "God is able to save **you**, where and as you are," that is when I have power. How else are you going to deal with a man under the craving for opium? The cause of want of success is very often that we are only half saved ourselves. If we are fully saved and confess it, we shall see results.*

On the need for **contact**, close and real, not only with the Lord Himself but with those whose good we seek, Mr. Taylor dwelt with insistence. A very thin film between surfaces will prevent their union; and so also in things of the spirit. There must be heart-contact with the Chinese, and personal contact too, he urged, if our lives are to be invested to the utmost profit.

*I do like to look at **every** practical question in connection with Christ. The Incarnation shows that, provided we keep from*

sin, we cannot go too far in meeting this people and getting to know them, getting to be one with them, getting into sympathy with them.

There is wonderful instruction in the way in which the Lord Jesus wrought His works of mercy. He **touch**ed the leper and the blind when He healed them. ... The woman felt that if she only touched the hem of His garment she would be sure to be healed; and the Saviour felt that virtue had gone out of Him. If we keep, so far from the people that they cannot even touch the hem of our garment, how will virtue go out of us? Sometimes they are not clean, and we are tempted to draw our skirts together; but I believe there is no blessing when this is the case. The Lord Jesus became a curse for us, and in that way delivered us from the curse. There is power in drawing near to this people. A poor woman in Cheng-tu, when she heard of Mrs. Riley's death said "What a loss to us! **She used to take hold of my hand** and comfort me so." If you put your hand on the shoulder of a man, there is power in it. Any Christian, full of the Holy Ghost, may often impart blessing thus. Contact is a real power that we may use for God.

For consistent lives he pleaded, telling lives, lives not out of sight. We are to **manifest** the truth, as well as preach it (2 Corinthians 4:2. Cp. Acts 20:26-35)

We tell this people that the world is vain; let our lives **manifest** that it is so. We tell them that our Home is above, that all these things are transitory; does our dwelling look like it? Oh, to live consistent lives! The life of the Apostle was thoroughly consistent. ... No one could feel that his home was here: all saw that it was up there.

*But it is no use living lives such as **would** emphasise our teaching, if our lives are out of sight and our teaching only is in evidence. Must we not seek to make our lives as open as our teaching? This is no easy matter. The man who lives two or*

three miles away from the chapel, and merely goes and preaches to his audience is often disappointed. ... What wisdom we need to live lives that do emphasise our teaching, and to see that our lives are so ordered that those who receive the teaching may catch the emphasis too.

Hard missionaries are not of much use: they are not like the Master. He is, never hard. It is better to be trusting and gentle and sympathising, even if often taken in, rather than sharp and hard. The converts of Paul saw that the Apostle deemed it a small thing to die for them. To the Philippians he wrote: "Yea, and if I be offered—my blood poured out as a drink-offering—upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all."

*It is not preaching only that will do what needs to be done ... Our life must be one of visible self-sacrifice. There is much sacrifice in our lives of which the Chinese cannot know. God knows all about it, and we can well afford to wait His declaration of it and His award. There is much we have left for the sake of the Chinese which they have never seen. That will not suffice. They must **see self-sacrifice** in things they cannot but understand^[337]*

With all his desire that the gifts of the native church should be developed, Mr. Taylor was keenly conscious of the danger of allowing education, medical work, or any other auxiliary to usurp the foremost place.

Let us feel that everything that is human, everything outside the sufficiency of Christ, is only helpful in the measure in which it enables us to bring the soul to Him. ... If our medical missions draw people to us, and we can present to them the Christ of God, medical missions are a blessing; but to substitute medicine for the preaching of the Gospel would be a profound mistake. If we put schools or education in the place of spiritual power to change the heart, it will be a profound

*mistake. If we get the idea that people are going to be converted by some educational **process**, instead of by a regenerative re-creation, it will be a profound mistake. If we put our trust in money or learning or eloquence, or in anything but the living God, it will-be a profound mistake. Let all our auxiliaries be auxiliaries means of bringing Christ and the soul into contact—then we may be truly thankful for them all... Let us exalt the glorious Gospel in our hearts, and believe that it is the power of God unto salvation. Let everything else sit at its feet. ... We shall never be discouraged if we realise that in CHRIST is our Sufficiency.*

*What is the object of being apprenticed to a builder but to learn to build? What is the outcome of being joined to a Saviour if we do not learn to save? Though we might ourselves be saved, should we be His **disciples** indeed?*

In its practical influence on Christian character, Mr. Taylor felt that the truth of the Second Coming—the personal return of the Lord Himself to reign upon earth—was of paramount importance.

You will often read in missionary reports that the people have turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, but not in one out of ten do you hear anything about their waiting for His Son from heaven (1 Thessalonians 1:9). I believe that the ignorance of the native Christians generally of the fact that Christ is coming again, and that the present state of things is to be utterly overthrown, is one reason for the selfishness and worldliness to be found in some branches of the Church in China.

*Well do I remember the effect, when God was pleased to open my own heart to this great truth that the Lord Jesus was coming again, and that He might come at **any time**. I had not many books, but it sent me to see if I could give a good account of all I had, and also of the contents of my little*

wardrobe. The result was that some of the books disappeared before long, and some of the clothing too. It was an immense spiritual blessing to me. When I go home from China, and can make time to go through my house from attic to basement with my dear wife, to review our things in the light of His speedy return, I always find it a profitable spiritual exercise to see what we can do without. It is important to remember that we are stewards who have to give an account of everything that we **retain**; and unless we can give a good reason for the retention, shall we not be ashamed when the Master comes? And since He may come any day, is it not well to be ready every day? I do not know of any truth that has been a greater blessing to me through life than this.

Very practical, too, was his attitude as to the fulness laid up for us in Christ.

God is willing to, give us all we need, as we need it. He does not equip for life-service **all at once**. He does not expect us to toil along, burdened with next year's provisions on our back. There are fresh supplies on the way, fresh light, fresh power, fresh revelations as circumstances require.

Oh, to be **filled** with the knowledge of God's will! to be so filled with the presence of the Lord Jesus, so one with Him, that His life may flow through our veins; that He may borrow our lips to speak His messages, borrow our faces to look His looks of patience and love, our hands to do His service and our feet to tread His weary journeys. The dear Master can never be weary again by the side of any well, but **we** may be weary by the side of many for Him.

Whatever the sufficiency of Christ is for us, there is the same sufficiency in Him for our native converts.

In times of discouragement it is a great help to remember that the Lord's work is not **our** work for the Lord, but the Lord's own work through us and others. "HE will not fail, nor be

discouraged."

Refreshed in spirit, it was time for the workers from the south of the province to hasten back to their stations after this week of meetings. The rainy season had set in, and it would be all they could do to make final arrangements for the native conferences before Mr. Taylor's arrival at Hungtung. Mr. Stevenson was there already, having come over from the neighbouring province of Shen si to join Mr. Taylor in this part of his programme. Finding the missionaries absent, he had spent several weeks among the Chinese Christians, glad of the opportunity for coming into close touch with the leaders and their work. To him as to Mr. Taylor it was a new experience to find, in these northerners, men of such vigorous independence of character, and he was not slow to see how much it meant for the future of the native church.

But it was more than energy and initiative that impressed him, about Mr. Hsi especially. During the five or six weeks spent in his district Mr. Stevenson travelled with him, visited his home and Refuges, listened with delight to his preaching, and saw him among the church members, to whom he was a shepherd indeed.

"I was profoundly interested," he recalled. "His spirituality and earnestness; his prayer and fastings; the intensity of his purpose-nothing in the world but the one thing-and his ability as a practical leader were most remarkable. I had never seen such influence over others! He was so strong that all seemed to yield to him, and yet humble too. I was specially struck by the way people came to consult him. He had everybody's burdens to bear, and was always ready to advise and pray with those who needed help.

"His knowledge and use of Scripture also impressed me. One sermon on the temptation of Christ that he preached was very

*striking. Familiar passages seemed to unfold new meaning under his touch and in the light of his spiritual experience. God was to him a tremendous reality. Constantly and in everything he dealt with God. In a very real way he dealt with Satan too. His conflicts with the evil one at times were such that he would give himself for days to fasting and prayer. Even when travelling, I have known him fast a whole day over some difficult matter that needed clearing up. That was always his resource—**fast and pray.**"*

That such gifts and grace should be taken full advantage of in the organisation of the church was evident, and Mr. Stevenson was ready to confirm the judgement of the local missionaries by which Mr. Taylor had largely to be guided in the steps to be taken at the conference. It had been easier to set out for Hung-tung than to get there. Held up by the rain in that loess region, Mr. Taylor and his companions had had exciting experiences in some of the deep gullies worn in the friable soil. A hundred feet below the surface, in places, the road was sometimes a quagmire, sometimes a rushing torrent, and turbulent streams among the hills had to be crossed. Two weeks of such travelling brought them to their destination, however, on July 30, to find the Hung-tung Christians assembled in force for the conference.

What it was to Mr. Taylor to meet these men and see for himself the inspiring work of which he had heard may be better imagined than described. When one thinks of all that it had meant to him of faith and toil and prayer—all that he had done and suffered that inland China might have the Gospel—one can understand that to be welcomed by such a company of believers on his first visit to the far interior would be one of the most moving experiences of his life. With Mr. Hsi he was impressed no less than Mr. Stevenson had been," and it was a wonderful meeting, that first day of the conference, when they took the Sunday morning service between them (August 1).

*"There cannot have been fewer than three hundred listeners in the court," wrote Mr. Stanley Smith. "It made our hearts glad to think of Mr. Taylor's joy as he saw those earnest worshippers, and in that sight **some** outcome of years of prayer that has known no ceasing, of labour that has known no respite above all, it raised our hearts to Him Who in that gathering was, seeing further of the travail of His soul and being satisfied."*

It was not easy to get Mr. Hsi to accept the position to which Mr. Taylor, as leader of the Mission, wished to appoint him. But for Mr. Stevenson's influence he would probably have held back, so deep was his sense of unworthiness. But the latter was sufficiently intimate with him for Mr. Hsi to feel that he really understood the local problems as well as his own limitations; and when the Deputy Director led him to see that Mr. Taylor was but confirming what was manifestly a divine appointment, he could no longer demur. From that Saturday until the Ordination Service of the following Monday he gave himself to fasting and prayer, literally touching no food; and the sense of the presence of God with him was deeply solemnising.

"Mr. Hudson Taylor, inviting the brethren working in the district to unite with him in the laying on of hands," Mr. Stanley Smith recorded, "after a few words of fervent prayer, set him apart to be a watcher over and feeder of the sheep of God. Mr. Hsi was ordained pastor of no particular district. He has done such an extensive work, and been so owned of God, that it was thought best that he should be free to go anywhere for the work of God in these parts, knowing well how he would be welcomed by all the churches. Mr. Song was then set apart as native Pastor of the Ping-yang church."

The appointment of two elders followed and of sixteen deacons, after which over seventy baptized believers united in the Communion Service led by

Pastor Hsi.

One day's journey farther south—at Ping-yang-fu—another conference was held, attended by as many of the Ta-ning Christians as could come down from the mountains. It was a busy season for farming folk, and unusually heavy rains had made travelling in such regions almost impossible, but a warm-hearted company responded to the invitation of their beloved missionary, Mr. Cassels, to meet "the Venerable Chief Pastor," whose children in the faith they also were. Tenderly he spoke to them of the deeper lessons of his own life, and how, through its sorest trials, he had learned what the Lord Jesus Christ can be to those who simply trust Him. The ordination of Ch'ü, the fervent and scholarly evangelist of the Ta-ning district, and the appointment of five deacons, fitly closed the meetings, after which Mr. Taylor had to turn his face westward for the long journey to Han-chung-fu.

A brief visit first to Pastor Hsi's home, ten miles across the plain, gave him the opportunity of seeing more of this remarkable man and the Opium Refuge work for which he was responsible. Accompanied by quite a party, Mr. Taylor arrived in the cool of the day.^[338] Everything was beautifully arranged for their coming, the guest hall being fitted up as a state chamber, and, the courtyard on which it opened covered with an awning that it might do duty as a chapel. Here the principal meetings were held, the joy on all faces reflecting the golden characters of welcome above the guest hall, shining out from their crimson background—"Ta Hsi Nien," or "Year of Great Happiness."

Interesting as it all was, perhaps the best part of the visit to Mr. Taylor was the account he heard of the opening of a Refuge in one of the cities he had passed on his journey through the province. The place had long been on Pastor Hsi's heart, though he little anticipated the way in which his desire to commence work there was to be granted. Having no means in hand that he

could use for the purpose, he prayed the more earnestly day by day at family worship that the Gospel might be given to the Christless population of Hwo-chow.

"We have prayed very often for that city," his wife said at length, "is it not time to do something there?"

"Gladly would I," responded her husband, "but money is lacking. I have nothing to use for the purpose, and renting houses is expensive."

"How much would it require?" was her next question. And on hearing his reply she went away and said no more about it.

But she too could not forget Hwo-chow; and next morning it was an unadorned little figure that came up and laid some packages on the table after family worship.

"I think," she said, "that God has answered our prayers about that city."

Missing something in her appearance as well as surprised at her words, Pastor Hsi opened one of the packets, to find nothing less than all her jewelry—the gold and silver ornaments, bracelets, rings, and even hair-pins so indispensable to a Chinese lady and that form her marriage dower.

"You cannot surely mean," he began, "you cannot do without—"

"Yes, I can," she said joyfully. "I can do without these: ***let Hwo-chow have the Gospel.***"

And with the money they had brought, the Refuge had been opened and a good work begun.^[339]

But do you not miss your beautiful things?" said Mr. Taylor, turning to his hostess.

"Miss them!" she replied, almost with surprise. "Why, I have *Jesus*: is not He enough?"

Little wonder it was hard to part from friends like these, and from the fellow-missionaries he was leaving behind to share with them the great work developing in all that part of the province. Messrs. Studd and Beauchamp were going on with Mr. Taylor to take part in opening up the Church of England district he hoped to arrange for in Sze-chwan. Mr. Cassels was to follow shortly; but Messrs. Hoste and Stanley Smith were remaining in south Shan-si, and for them the parting was hardest.

"Their first stage was by moonlight," wrote the latter, "and we accompanied them out some way. A few last words of helpful counsel, a few last words of mutual love, a few last words in solemn stillness as with hands locked in his we each received his parting blessing, and the visit to Shan-si, so long expected, so long deferred, but now so blessed in its outcome, was over."

To fruitful fields ready for the reaper they went back, but on beyond there was no sign of harvest. Out-distancing his companions, all but Mr. Beauchamp, that he might save a mail at Han-chung, Mr. Taylor pressed forward; but even so, twenty-four travelling days were occupied on the journey, in which not a single-Mission station was passed, because in all that populous region there was none.

It was strenuous travelling, for which Mr. Beauchamp's athletic training stood him in good stead. With a couple of pack animals they were able to carry a few necessaries, Mr. Taylor riding most of the way, for his companion preferred to walk.

"Our great difficulty was in getting anything to eat," Mr. Beauchamp recalled, when the overpowering heat by day

obliged them to travel at night, "and we constantly lost our way for want of some one to direct us. At first Mr. Taylor was greatly troubled that I should carry him across rivers, and also that I was unable to get much sleep; but having once overruled his objection I carried him many a time. With Mr. Taylor on my shoulder and a Chinaman on either side to weigh us down, we were able to cross in safety some strong streams, waist deep.

"Night travelling was one of the hardest experiences I ever had, because I could not sleep by day. Occasionally, when I did drop off, I would wake to find that Mr. Taylor had been looking after me, rigging up mosquito-netting to keep the flies away. Walking at night, I have been so sleepy that even the motion could not keep me awake, and have fallen right down while plodding on-the tumble rousing one for the time being!

"The inns being closed at night, we used often to lie down by the roadside, when the animals had to be fed. Our own fare consisted chiefly of rice and millet. Occasionally we were able to purchase a chicken, eggs, cucumbers, or a little fruit. But we did not stop at regular stages, and as it was the rainy season nothing was brought out for sale in the places through which we passed. With so much rain, we often got soaked through. The way we managed was to take off our garments one by one and dry them in front of the fire. On one occasion this so offended the 'Kitchen God' that Mr. Taylor had to come and make peace. Of course we carried no bedding, though Mr. Taylor always had two pillows, one for the head and one for the thigh, and we each carried a plaid. The medicine-chest sometimes came in useful as an extra pillow."

Again and again it seemed as if they must be stopped by the rain, but in answer to definite prayer help was given at every point.

"I remember coming to one river," continued Mr. Beauchamp,

"where there were a few houses and people who made a harvest by carrying travellers over. They met us saying the river was impassable, nevertheless for a thousand cash apiece they would take us across. This was outrageous: so I went into the water which was rising by inches, the rain being a perfect deluge. When the men saw we were not to be deterred, they came and gave some help, glad to be paid a fair price for their work. After we were over, the water rose by feet. Had we been half an hour later, no crossing would have been possible. The river was by that time a wild, raging torrent.

On the farther side there was a small village, but no inn. To go on was impossible. Stay we must, though the only shelter we could find was apparently a pig-sty. So we turned the occupant out, borrowed a few forms, took the doors off their hinges to lie on, and rolling ourselves in our plaids prepared to pass the night as comfortably as circumstances would admit. We were only masters of the situation for a short time, however; for the pig came back, charged the make-shift door, which at once fell in, and settled down to share the apartment with us. After reflection, I concluded that it was too cold to turn out on the chance of ignominious defeat at the hands of the enemy.

"Next day was still cold—high mountains instead of the Si-an plain, drenching rain instead of burning sun. The road was washed away in places, but still Mr. Taylor would push on. Where the river side was impassable, we had to-clamber up steep banks as best we could, and follow crumbling tracks on the mountains. Nothing would-stop him, though he often begged me to remain behind. We had several narrow escapes from landslips—the path giving way behind us and rolling stones and earth into the stream. We had no fear of robbers; and the wolves, though we saw them, did not attack us. We went forty-eight to fifty miles one day; and the last three stages we made into two, not to miss the mail at Han-chung."

Mr. Taylor's cheerfulness and power of endurance greatly impressed his fellow-traveller. Hearing him singing on one occasion when they were very hungry, and catching the words "We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food," Mr. Beauchamp could not but inquire where the food was.

"It cannot be far away," was the smiling reply. "Our Father, knows we are hungry and will send our breakfast soon: but you will have to wait and say your grace when it comes, while I shall be ready to begin at once!"

And so it proved; for just ahead they met a man with ready-cooked rice to sell, which made an excellent meal.

But the soul never went hungry. A box of matches, a foreign candle, and his Bible in four small volumes were included in Mr. Taylor's travelling kit whatever else had to be left behind.

"He would invariably get his quiet time an hour before dawn," Mr. Beauchamp wrote, "and then possibly sleep again. ... When I woke to feed the animals I always found him reading the Bible by the light of his candle. No matter what the surroundings or the noise in those dirty inns, he never neglected this. He used to pray on such journeys lying down, for he usually spent long times in prayer, and to kneel would have been too exhausting."

Kept thus in touch with unfailing springs, the travellers reached Han-chung-fu to bring as well as find a blessing. Much as Mr. Stevenson's report had led him to expect of the converts in this centre, Mr. Taylor was not disappointed. In the intervals of attending to a heavy mail, he saw a good deal of Dr. Wilson's medical work and of the schools and native helpers. The earnest spirit of the Christians greatly rejoiced him, especially in view of their interest in the adjacent province of Sze-chwan, from which not a few of them had come as emigrants. Their keen desire to carry the message of salvation

back to their own people encouraged the hope Mr. Taylor entertained—that of seeing eastern Sze-chwan, as yet almost entirely destitute of the Gospel, opened up by the Church of England workers of the Mission.^[340]

For the moment, the outlook was not encouraging. A serious riot had taken place at Chung-king—one of the only two centres in Sze-chwan at which Protestant missionaries were working—and easy as it would have been for Mr. Taylor to enter the province from Han-chung; he might have found it impracticable to leave again without delay by the Yangtze. Tidings received from the coast had made it clear that he must return to Shanghai as soon as possible. Mission affairs required his presence, and he was still a month's journey from civilisation in the shape of a foreign steamer. But though he had to leave the actual pioneering in Sze-chwan to others, he could at any rate help in opening the way by definite waiting upon God. A day was set apart therefore for fasting and prayer, when Mr. Taylor united with the Han-chung circle in seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit and a fresh baptism of love and power upon those who were to go forward. Very conscious were the missionaries, so soon to be scattered, of access to God in the all-prevailing name of Jesus, and the answer to their prayers was apparent not only in the occupation of Eastern Szechwan before the close of the year, but in a quickened sense of responsibility which led to extension in other directions also.

We may almost feel ourselves one with that little group, far in the heart of China, through the recollections jotted down at the time of one of the last meetings before Mr. Taylor left. In the twilight of a summer evening they had gathered in Dr. Wilson's courtyard. Lamps were lighted under the broad eaves of the open guest-hall, and beyond were the shining stars.

Mr. Taylor's subject was Philippians 3: that what we give up

for Christ we gain, and what we keep back is our real loss. We seemed to lose sight of the speaker and to hear only the voice of the Holy Spirit. It was a time of humbling and confession, nearly every one was broken down. ... I cannot tell you what it was to sit there and hear Mr. Taylor tell of the hundreds of towns and cities he had passed, and not a single Christian in any of them! Vividly he described all this and the condition of the people: and there were we, comfortably settled down, taking for granted perhaps that we had obeyed our Master's command, practically forgetting that Han-chung-fu was not the world, and that people even in the villages at hand might never hear of Christ unless we set ourselves to go to them. The way in which he spoke of eternity—life eternal or death eternal—must have moved the coldest heart. One sentence I specially remember

"Let us make earth a little less homelike, and souls more precious. Jesus is coming again, and so soon! Will He find us really obeying His last command?"

Chapter XXIX^(TOC)

The Hundred

1886-1887. AET. 54-55

PROFOUNDLY impressed by all he had seen of the accessibility and need of the northern provinces, Mr Taylor had come by boat a thousand miles down the Han, bringing with him the little daughter of one of the Han-chung missionaries, whose parents saw that nothing but a change of climate could save her life. Only five years old, little Annie could speak no English, though, when not too shy, she could prattle away in Chinese prettily enough. Strange to say, she was never shy with Mr. Taylor. It had been hard for the mother to part with her, frail as she was from months of illness; but once on the boat in Mr. Taylor's care she wonderfully brightened up. It speaks much for the confidence with which fellow-workers regarded him that Mr. and Mrs. Pearse had no hesitation about the arrangement, save on the ground of giving Mr. Taylor trouble. They knew there would be no woman in the party, and that for a month or six weeks he would be the only one to see to little Annie's food and clothing, as well as to care for her by day and night. They were quite satisfied that the child would not suffer, however, though even they might have been surprised at the comfort Mr. Taylor found in her companionship.

"My little charge is wonderfully improving," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor on the journey, "and is quite good and cheerful. She clings to me very lovingly, and it is sweet to feel little arms around one's neck once more."

Hard as it was to be so long absent from home and loved ones, the way was not yet clear for Mr. Taylor's return to England. Nearly two years had passed since he had come out in advance of the Cambridge Party, but great as had been the progress in many directions, the recently developed organisation needed strengthening before he could think of leaving China.

"Oh, how weary I have been with the hundreds of letters!" he wrote to Mrs. Taylor some weeks after his return to the coast. "How many questions have had to be taken to the Lord! The way is now becoming somewhat clearer."

The year was drawing to a close (1886), and the chief object before him was the formation of a Council of experienced workers to help Mr. Stevenson in his new capacity as Deputy Director. The latter had also returned from his inland journey, full of enthusiasm over what he had seen in the northern provinces. He had spent several weeks with Pastor Hsi after Mr. Taylor had left, visiting widely scattered groups of converts, and was more than ever impressed with the vitality and possibilities of the work. His heart was overflowing with joy in the Lord, the joy that is our strength, and coming freshly into responsibilities Mr. Taylor had been bearing for years he brought with him no little accession of hope and courage.

"We all saw visions at that time," he himself recalled. "Those were days of heaven upon earth: nothing seemed difficult."

In this spirit, then, the Superintendents of the various provinces gathered for their first meeting, at An-king, in the middle of November. Several were detained at their own stations, and one or two were at home on furlough, but a little group of leaders, including Mr. McCarthy, spent from two to three weeks with Mr. Taylor and Mr. Stevenson. Before the Council was convened at all, a whole week was given to waiting upon God with prayer and fasting (the latter on alternate days), so that it was with prepared hearts they came to the consideration of the questions before them.

Upon the conclusions of that Council Meeting, important as they were, we must not dwell in detail. A little grey book, embodying the chief results, soon found its way to all the stations of the Mission—a little book breathing the spirit of the Master, as well as packed full of wise and helpful suggestions.

There were instructions for special officers, the Treasurer, the Secretary in China, and the Superintendents; instructions for senior and junior missionaries, lady evangelists and probationers, all based upon a thorough understanding of conditions in China. A course of study in the language, carefully prepared by Mr. Stevenson, Mr. Bailer, and others, was adopted for use in the Training Homes; and the Principles and Practice of the mission were restated and somewhat amplified for younger workers.^[341]

"It is hoped that all our friends will have seen from the foregoing," Mr. Taylor wrote in a concluding letter, "that what is sought is to relieve and help each one, and only to conduce to that harmonious co-operation without which the working of a large and scattered Mission would be impossible. Those at a distance must be helped by those near, and this can only be done as those near know the extent to which they can depend on the co-operation of those at a distance.

*"The principle of godly rule is a most important one, for it equally affects us all. It is this—the seeking to help, not to lord; to keep from wrong paths and lead into right paths, for the glory of God and the good of those guided, not for the gratification of the ruler. Such **rule always leads the ruler to the Cross**, and saves the ruled at the cost of the ruler. ... Let us all drink into this spirit, then lording on the one hand and bondage on the other will be alike impossible. ... When the heart is right it loves godly rule, and finds freedom in obedience."*

But there is something more important than the Grey Book which must be traced to the meetings of this first China Council, and that is the spirit of faith and expectancy which launched the mission at this time upon new testings of the faithfulness of God. Up in Shan-si it had begun, when Mr. Stevenson had written from the capital:

We are greatly encouraged out here, and are asking and receiving definite blessings for this hungry and thirsty land. We are fully expecting at least one hundred fresh labourers to arrive in China in 1887. [342]

It was the first suggestion of the Hundred. Ardent as he was and full of confidence in God, he kept the matter to the front on his return to Shanghai and in the Council Meetings, but Mr. Taylor seems at first to have shared the general impression that this was going rather too fast. A hundred new workers in one year, when the entire staff of the Mission was less than twice that number—why, even if the men and women were forthcoming, think of the additional expenditure involved!

"Yes," urged the Deputy Director, unperturbed, "but with needs so great how can we ask for less?"

That was difficult to answer; for fifty central stations and many out-stations in which resident missionaries were needed, not to speak of China open from end to end, made a hundred new workers even in one year seem but a small number.

And so, little by little, they were led on, until, in the Council Meetings, such was the atmosphere of faith and prayer that the thought could strike root. Begun with God, it could not fail to be taken up by hearts so truly waiting upon Him; and before leaving An-king Mr. Taylor was writing home quite naturally:

*We are praying for one hundred new missionaries in 1887.
The Lord help in the selection and provide the means.*

A little later at Ta-ku-tang, amid the quiet of lake and mountains, he was working at accounts, etc., with a view to leaving for England' as soon as possible, when an incident

occurred that fanned expectancy to a flame. Mr. Taylor was dictating to his secretary, walking up and down the room as was his wont, when he repeated in one of his letters what he had written above: "We are praying for and expecting a hundred new missionaries to come out in 1887." Did he really mean it? Mr. Stevenson saw the secretary, a young man who was himself to be one of the Hundred, look up with an incredulous smile. "If the Lord should open windows in heaven," that look seemed to say, "then might this thing be." Mr. Taylor saw it too, and immediately caught fire.

"After that, he went beyond me altogether," recalled Mr. Stevenson. "Never shall I forget the conviction with which he said:

"If you showed me a photograph of the whole hundred, taken in China, I could not be more sure than I am now.'

"Then I sent out a little slip throughout the Mission: 'Will you put down your name to pray for the Hundred?' and cabled to London, with Mr. Taylor's permission: 'Praying for a hundred new missionaries in 1887.'"

Thus the step was taken, and the Mission committed to a programme that might well have startled even its nearest friends. Yet it was in no spirit of rashness or merely human energy. Far too deeply had Mr. Taylor learned the lessons of experience to embark upon such an enterprise without the assurance that he was being led of God, without much forethought as well as faith, and the determination to see it through by unremitting toil no less than unceasing prayer.

"The accepting and sending out of the Hundred," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor early in December, "will require no small amount of work, but the Lord will give strength; and no little wisdom, but the Lord will guide. There is all-sufficiency in Him, is there not? ... We are ready to receive say fifty at once, and

shall be ready for others shortly, D. V. We sing a little prayer at each meal

*Oh send the hundred workers, Lord,
Those of Thy heart and mind and choice,
To tell Thy love both far and wide
So shall we praise Thee and rejoice
And above the rest this note shall swell,
My Jesus hath done all things well."*

To an inner circle of friends he also wrote in December:

Will you help us in prayer as often as you can? This movement will involve great responsibility and much toil, time, and expense. Some of us are hoping that His "exceeding abundantly" may mean fifty or sixty more missionaries besides the hundred for whom we are asking. Now I need not say that that must mean a good deal more than praying. Much correspondence about the candidates will be needed; much prayer and thought about which of them to accept and which to decline. The labour of arranging for and attending farewell meetings, to secure the prayers of at least six congregations for each party that comes out, will be great. Outfits and passages for a hundred people will come to £5500, and travelling expenses for many of them from distant parts of Great Britain and Ireland, as well as the cost of board in London, will materially add to this sum. The money, much of it, will come to our office at Pyrland Road in small gifts, each calling for a letter of thanks, which will involve additional help in correspondence, etc. So we shall have much need of Divine guidance, help, and strength, all of which He will supply, but for which He will be enquired of.

Am I wrong then in asking your prayers for myself and for those who will be associated with me in this important work? As I look forward in faith and think of the "willing, skilful" men and women who are coming-of the barren fields they will help to till, of the souls they will be the means of saving, and above all of the joy of our Redeemer in this movement and its widespread issues-my heart is very glad, and I think yours will be too.

It was this vision, this spirit of joy that upheld him through all the wonderful and strenuous days of 1887. But what a year it was! Preceded by two days of prayer because one was not enough,^[343] it ended with the last party of the Hundred on their way to China—all the work accomplished, all expenses met—and with a fulness of blessing that was spreading and to spread in ever-widening circles.

The story of the Hundred has often been told—it belongs to no one mission or land. We know how, with growing courage, Mr. Taylor and those associated with him were led to pray for ten thousand pounds of additional income, as necessary to meet the increased expenses; and that it might be given in large gifts, so that the home staff should not be overwhelmed with correspondence. We know that no fewer than six hundred men and women offered themselves to the Mission that year for service in China; that one hundred and two, to be exact, were sent out; and that not ten but eleven thousand pounds of extra income was received, no appeal having been made for financial help. And we know, most wonderful perhaps of all, how definite prayer was answered as to the very form in which the money came; the whole being received in just **eleven gifts**, involving little or no extra work to the office staff of the Mission. But such a story bears retelling, especially from Mr. Taylor's letters, to the glory not of man or methods, but of GOD.

"We want workers, not loiterers," was one of the first things he wrote after his return to England, and what an example he set by his own unparalleled labours throughout the year! Everywhere the friends of the Mission had heard of the prayer and expectation with which he had come home, and invitations to speak in meetings poured in from many parts of Great Britain. and Ireland. With brief intervals for correspondence and Council Meetings, Mr. Taylor was travelling and speaking all the time. Yet he seemed to be interviewing candidates all the time; writing letters—China letters, home letters, endless letters—all the time; giving himself to prayer, and well he might prayer and Bible study for the feeding of his own soul and of the multitudes to whom he ministered; prayer over all the problems of the work and the needs of every member of the Mission.

The number of letters he wrote during the year would be incredible, but for the details as to each one recorded in his correspondence index. They averaged thirteen or fourteen for every day of the twelve months, Sundays excepted; and as he often had two, three, and four meetings a day, as well as travelling, it is no wonder one comes upon pages that tell of thirty or forty letters written within twenty-four hours. And these were not business notes, or mainly to do with his programme of meetings. They were many of them long, thoughtful letters to Mr. Stevenson about the direction of affairs in China; answers to correspondence sent on to him from the field, which required careful consideration; and replies to people who consulted him about spiritual and other difficulties, having been helped through the meetings.

Three visits to Ireland and four to Scotland, an extensive campaign with his beloved friend, Mr. Reginald Radcliff, and Mr. George Clarke, on the subject of World Evangelisation, and attendance at no fewer than twenty conventions for the deepening of spiritual life, in most of which Mr. Taylor spoke

repeatedly, were but part of his outward activities. Besides these there were farewell meetings in churches of all denominations, as party after party went out, and frequent addresses in drawing-rooms or from the pulpit to the circles the young missionaries represented. Then how much it meant merely to interview the candidates! So busy was the Council with those who came before them in London, that they had occasionally to meet twice and three times a week, to get through the work.

"We were in Glasgow last week," wrote Mrs. Taylor in March, "holding one, two, or three meetings every day; and my husband had conversations with forty candidates."

And in Edinburgh, at the very time she was writing, he was dealing with twenty more. At one meeting in the Scottish capital, so deep was the interest that a hundred and twenty people definitely offered themselves for foreign missionary work, to go or stay as God might lead; and at the close of a conference in the south of England, half the audience that had filled the Corn Exchange accompanied Mr. Taylor to the station, singing missionary hymns and in other ways expressing sympathy.

At Pyrland Road, meanwhile, Mr. and Mrs. Broomhall were no less busy and encouraged. Invited to breakfast with a friend in London early in the year, Mr. Broomhall found himself one of several guests who had at heart the interests of the kingdom of God. Conversation turning on the C.I.M., Mr. Broomhall took from his pocket a letter which had touched him deeply: It was from a poor widow in Scotland who, with only a few shillings a week to live upon, frequently sent gifts for the work in China. She could do without meat, she said, but the heathen could not do without the Gospel. Very real was the self-denial that lay behind the simple words, and very real the prayers with which the modest gifts were accompanied. This it was, doubtless, that

led to results from that letter far beyond anything the-writer can have asked or thought.

At the close of the meal, the host said that all he had ever given to the work of God (and he had given much) had never cost him a mutton-chop. His interest had been chiefly in home missions, but he wanted now to forward the evangelisation of China. And to Mr. Broomhall's surprise, he then and there promised five hundred pounds for the work of the C.I.M. A little further conversation round the table led to similar promises from three of the guests, while another who had been unable to come, upon hearing what had transpired, made up the sum to two thousand five hundred pounds. Just as in connection with the Seventy, the Lord was encouraging the home leaders of the mission, giving them practical evidence that the prayer daily ascending in China from so many hearts was in line with His purpose.

And they must surely have needed such encouragement; for the strain of the year at Pyrland Road was unremitting and very heavy. No one rejoiced more in the forward movement and all it meant for dark hearts and lives in China than the Mother of the mission-house, upon whom came the burden of receiving and caring for the candidates. How it was ever done in that little home, with seven or eight of her own children still in the family circle, remains a mystery. Nothing but the early morning hour, when Mrs. Broomhall found her strength daily renewed in fellowship with God, could have carried her through, making her life the blessing it was to all who came-and went. The noon meeting that gathered the busy household for prayer she never failed to make the most of, and who shall say how much the spirit thus maintained had to do with the rising tide of blessing?

Great was the joy when on Mr. Taylor's birthday, just before the Annual Meetings,^[344] a cable from Shanghai brought news of large; ingatherings. In

Pastor Hsi's district two hundred and twenty-six had been baptized at the spring conference, which proved a time of great encouragement, A letter also from Mr. Berger came as a token for good, bringing a gift of five hundred pounds—the second or third he had given—toward the outgoing Hundred.

"I hope this note will reach you on the morning of the 26th," he wrote. "You will be very full of praise to God, I am sure, for all He has condescended to do through the China Inland Mission during the past twenty-one years. May all the glory be given to Him to Whom alone it is due.

"Let me share again in the prosperity of the blessed work by sending £500 toward the amount necessary for sending out the hundred or more labourers this year. 'To the Lord'—not the tithes only, but ourselves, our all! The exchange is altogether in our favour: our all, a little handful, versus God's all, illimitable riches of every kind! May grace be poured into your lips and heart on Thursday in an especial manner."

No wonder Mr. Taylor began his address at the Anniversary Meetings by recalling the quaint saying of a well known coloured evangelist: "When God does anything, He does it handsome"! That very morning another cable had been received from China, announcing a donation of a thousand pounds toward the expenses of the Hundred—fifty-four of whom were already either sent out or accepted, Up to that time all who were ready among the accepted candidates had gone forward, and Mr. Taylor could with confidence say:

God is, in this matter of funds, giving us signs that He is working with us; that this work is pleasing to Him, and that therefore He is prospering it. He will give the whole Hundred, and He will provide for them.

Speaking of the twenty-one years of "goodness and mercy" they were that day commemorating, and of the way in which financial needs had been

supplied, he continued:

The Lord is always faithful... People say, "Lord, increase our faith." Did not the Lord rebuke His disciples for that prayer? It is not great faith you need, He said in effect, but faith in a great God. Though your faith were small as a grain of mustard-seed, it would suffice to remove mountains. We need a faith that rests on a great God, and expects Him to keep His own word and to do just as He has promised.

Now, we have been led to pray for a hundred new workers this year. We have the sure word, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." Resting on this promise, it would not have added to our confidence one whit if, when we began to pray in November, my dear brother-in-law, Mr. Broomhall, had sent me out a printed list of a hundred accepted candidates. We had been spending some days in fasting and prayer for guidance and blessing before the thought was suggested to our minds. We began the matter aright, with God, and we are quite sure that we shall end aright. It is a great joy to know that thirty-one of the Hundred are already in China, but it is a greater joy to know that more than a hundred of our workers in China are banded together in daily pleading with God to send out the whole Hundred.

And by the Hundred we mean one of God's "handsome" hundreds!... Whether He will give His "exceeding abundantly" by sending us more than a literal hundred, or whether by stirring up other branches of the Church to send many hundreds, which I should greatly prefer, or by awakening missionary enthusiasm all over the Church and blessing the whole world through it, I do not know. I hope that He will answer prayer in all these ways; but sure I am that God will do it "handsome."...

I do want you, dear Friends, to realise this principle of

working with God and asking Him for everything. If the work is at the command of God, then we can go to Him in full confidence for workers; and when God gives the workers, we can go to Him for means to supply their needs. We always accept a suitable worker, whether we have funds or not. Then we often say, "Now, dear Friend, your first work will be to join us in praying for money to send you to China."

As soon as there is money enough, the time of the year and other circumstances being suitable, the friend goes out. We do not wait until there is a remittance in hand to give him when he gets there. The Lord will provide in the meanwhile, and the money will be wired to China in time to supply his wants... Let us see to it that we keep God before our eyes; that we walk in His ways, and seek to please and glorify Him in everything, great and small. Depend upon it, God's work, done in God's way, will never lack God's supplies. ...^[345]

And now, if this principle of taking everything to God and accepting everything from God is a true one—and I think the experience of the China Inland Mission proves that it is—ought we not to bring it to bear more and more in daily life? The Lord's will is that His people should be an unburdened people, fully supplied, strong, healthy and happy... Shall we not determine to be "careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving bring those things that would become burdens or anxieties to God in prayer, and live in His perfect peace?"

It can well be understood that this simple dealing with realities sent a thrill to the heart of the home churches wherever the prayer for the Hundred became known. To many it seemed to shed new light upon the problems of life, and to reveal a new, almost undreamed-of power in dealing with them.

"I have not known what anxiety is since the Lord taught me that the work is His," was Mr. Taylor's testimony wherever he

went. *"My great business in life is to please God. Walking with Him in the light, I never feel a burden."*

"I have had conversations with three people," wrote a friend from Ireland, "all of them Christians, who seem to have received a new thought at your meetings—as if God really means what He says when He gives us His promises. If you could return to Waterford and have, say, two evening meetings for preaching the Gospel, and two mid-day meetings to persuade Christians that God does mean all He says in His promises, I believe it would do eternal good."

This was the burden of his message everywhere, backed by a quiet simplicity and joy in the Lord which could not but carry conviction.

"I must close and have a sleep, or I shall fail at the meeting to-night in brightness," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor from Scotland. I do want to shine for Jesus, Jesus only!"

And shine he did, though the pressure of work was tremendous.

It was a mighty message last night," Mrs. Taylor heard from her husband's secretary on the same visit. "Many were broken down, to be lifted up of God. After a precious exposition of Zeph.3, Mr. Taylor spoke very simply and very straight to the heart on 'Trusting God.' He did not finish till close on 9 P.M., but you could have heard any ordinary clock tick most of the time." [\[346\]](#)

"The rush of work is very great," Mr. Taylor wrote himself at midsummer. "Well, praise the Lord, He helps me through day by day, and fills one's heart with blessing and one's lips with praise."

In China, meanwhile, the arrival of party after party was causing no little thanksgiving. The new organisation was working well, the training homes especially proving of incalculable value. Miss Murray at Yang-chow and Mr.

Bailer at An-king were bringing helpful, encouraging influences to bear on the new arrivals, caring for their health and spiritual life, as well as facilitating their studies. The advice they were able to give from personal observation was invaluable also to Mr. Stevenson, when the time came for allocating young workers to their future stations.

It was about the beginning of November, when Mr. Taylor had the joy of announcing to the friends of the Mission that their prayers were fully answered—all the Hundred having been given and the funds supplied for their passages to China., Many were still volunteering, while Mr. Taylor's third visit to Ireland and his fourth to Scotland were planned but not yet carried out. In all these later meetings, therefore, he had to tell of the response of a faithful God to the prayers of His believing people, and of the way in which His "exceeding abundantly" was being given.^[347] Of this he wrote to Mr. Stevenson:

November.11: ... Our meetings are evidently a blessing to the Church of God, the most grateful testimonies to spiritual refreshment being given at almost every place we visit. New candidates continue to come forward, and I see we cannot get one hundred without getting two from the Lord. Many of those who cannot possibly go this year will be ready to do so before long.

And a month later:

December. 8: ... With the sailing of the ladies today, eightyeight have left us for China: fourteen others sail on the 15th and 24th respectively. ^[348]

You must continue very earnestly in prayer, and secure the prayers of our friends generally, that God will magnify His Name and adequately sustain the work with funds. Nothing is clearer to me than that in obtaining a hundred for this year we

*have obtained at least a second hundred. To send them out and sustain them will require **another** ten thousand pounds of additional income; and in times like these it is a tremendous rise from a little over twenty to forty thousand pounds annually. One is so glad that God has Himself asked the question, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" But we must not forget that He will "be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." If we get less prayerful about funds, we shall soon get sorely tried about funds. Thank God, there is no need to be less prayerful. We can well afford to be more prayerful, and to God be the glory. ^[349]*

Every day I feel more and more thankful to God for giving you to us, and for giving you such general acceptance. No human prescience or wisdom is sufficient for your position; but so long as you continue to seek His guidance in every matter, and in the midst of the pressure of work take time to be holy, and time to pray for the workers, the Lord will continue to use and bless you.

Two days before the close of the year Mr. Taylor returned to London, the great work accomplished which, though wrought in faith and deep heart-rest, had taxed both him and those associated with him to the utmost.

"I have assured the friends," he wrote in his last letter of the year to Mr. Stevenson, "that there will be a big Hallelujah when they, the crowning party of the Hundred, reach Shanghai! It is not more than we expected God to do for us, but it is very blessed; and to see that God does answer, in great things as well as small, the prayers of those who put their trust in Him will strengthen the faith of multitudes."

Twelve months previously a veteran missionary in Shanghai had said to Mr. Taylor, then on the point of leaving for home:

"I am delighted to hear that you are praying for large reinforcements. You will not get a hundred, of course, within

the year; but you will get many more than if you did not ask for them."

Thanking him for his kindly interest Mr. Taylor replied: "**We** have the joy beforehand; but I feel sure that, if spared, you will share it in welcoming the last of the Hundred to China."

And so it proved. For among those who gathered to receive that last party with thanksgiving, no one was more sympathetic than the white-headed saint who a few weeks later was called to his reward.

Part VII[\(TOC\)](#)

Wider Ministry

1888-1895. AET. 56-63

Chapter XXX

Few Know What is Betwixt Christ and Me

1887-1888. AET. 55-56

AMONG many visitors to Pyrland Road toward the close of the year of the Hundred came one who in a special way was to be identified with the enlargement of Mr. Taylor's influence and the sphere of the Mission. Finding Mr. Taylor still away in Scotland, he took a room near by, and quietly gave himself to studying the work of which he had heard enough to bring him across the Atlantic. In spite of the pressure of those days, Mr. and Mrs. Broomhall welcomed the young stranger almost as a member of their household, giving him every opportunity to become acquainted with the inner life of the Mission, and all he saw did but deepen, by the blessing of God, the desire with which he had come. Of this he was writing to Mr. Taylor in the middle of December (1887)

About five months ago I began correspondence with Mr. Broomhall from America, my home, concerning going to China. As the result of that correspondence I am now at Pyrland Road, and have been here long enough to satisfy myself concerning the spiritual standing of the China Inland Mission, and to confirm my own desire of connecting myself with it.... But I came to London with a larger purpose in view.... It has been laid on my heart for many months past to talk with you and Mr. Broomhall about the establishment of an American Council that might work as a feeder of men and money for China, on the same principles of faith that have made the China Inland Mission so favourably known. Meeting Mr. Forman in Glasgow I found that he, too, had been praying for something of the same kind for a long time, and that Mr. Wilder, his companion, had also had the matter laid on his heart.

From his meetings in Scotland, bringing to a successful issue the work of that memorable year, Mr. Taylor returned just as simple, quiet, natural as ever, to

banish in a moment any apprehension his visitor had felt as to the interview. A little note from Glasgow, "fragrant with the love of Christ," had prepared the way for what proved an important conversation.

"Fear did indeed vanish on that occasion," wrote Mr. Henry W. Frost, "for I found him at leisure from himself, and most gentle and kind. From that hour my heart was knit to this beloved servant of God in unalterable devotion."

But though their intercourse resulted in an abiding friendship, it seemed to the one who was building much upon, it to have failed in its object. His interest in the Mission was warmly appreciated and his desire to work with it welcomed, but Mr. Taylor could not see his way to the establishment of an American branch. It would be, he suggested, far better for Mr. Frost to start a fresh organisation, on the lines of the C.I.M. if he pleased, but something that would be native in its inception and development; for a transplanted mission, like a transplanted tree, would have difficulty in striking root in the new soil. Needless to say this was a great disappointment.

"On reaching my lodgings," the visitor recalled, "I had one of the most sorrowful experiences of my life. At the threshold of my room, Satan seemed to meet me and envelop me in darkness.... I had come over three thousand miles only to receive to my request the answer, No. But this was not the worst of it. I had had positive assurance that the Lord had Himself guided me in my prayer, and had led me to take the long journey and make the request that had been made; but now I felt I could never again be sure whether my prayers were or were not of God, or whether I was or was not being guided of Him."

Only those who have passed through similar experiences can know what such a test of faith meant, and how real was the victory when the one so tried was

enabled to trust where he could not understand. This restored "something of soul-rest," and Mr. Frost went back to America leaving the issues with the Lord.

But the matter did not end there. Mr. Frost had learned that Mr. Taylor was returning to China before long, and that if invited to do so he might travel by way of America. This he made known to the Conveners of the Bible Study Conference at Niagara on the Lake and to Mr. D. L. Moody, whose summer gatherings at Northfield were already a centre of much blessing, with the result that invitations began to reach Mr. Taylor to visit the great new world.

Meanwhile, in England, the latter was unremitting in his labours. The widespread interest aroused by the outgoing of the Hundred brought more openings for meetings than he could possibly accept, and very stimulating to faith were the facts he had to tell.

"What a wonderful year it has been, both for you and me! "he wrote to Mr. Stevenson early in 1888. "Satan will surely leave no stone unturned to hinder, and we must not be surprised at troublesome difficulties coming up: but greater is He Who is for us than all who can be against us."

The certainty of opposition, definite and determined, from the powers of darkness seems to have been much before him, and the question of funds for the largely increased work was one that could not be ignored. But with regard to both the one and the other, his mind was kept in peace.

"God has moved," he said at the Annual Meetings (May '88); "are we also moving? Are we ready to go on with Him ... ready to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Oh, this is what we need, need supremely, need more than ever. 'I have not much anxiety about our income. I do not believe that our Heavenly Father will ever forget His children. I am a very poor father,

but it is not my habit to forget my children. God is a very, very good Father. It is not His habit to forget His children. But suppose He should not work in the way He has done, by sending in tens of thousands of pounds? Well, then, we can do without it. We cannot do without Him, but we can do without any 'it 'in the world. If only we have the Lord, that is sufficient."

"I do not wonder," he had written to Mr. Stevenson in January, "that Satan has been trying you sorely. I should wonder, and almost be afraid, if he did not. It is not likely that he will let work like this pass without showing himself as an opposer. But let us believe, as Mr. Radcliffe reminds us, that when the enemy comes in one way, he will have to flee seven. Difficulties are sure to increase, but the power of the Lord is unlimited. When He asks you or me where we shall buy bread, or how we shall solve this or that problem, it is only to prove us. He always knows what He will do; and if we wait His time, He will show us also."

It was a summer day toward the end of June when the s.s. **Etruria** put out to sea, carrying among her "Intermediate" passengers, Mr. Taylor, his son, and a secretary. Mr. and Mrs. Radcliffe also were of the party, though not in that semi-'steerage accommodation. Outward discomfort mattered little to Mr. Taylor; but he was finding, almost with surprise, that parting from those he loved best did not become any easier.^[350] A long while might elapse before he could return, and the very uncertainty was painful.

"As I walked the deck last night," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor from Queenstown, "I found myself singing softly, 'Jesus, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art'—such a comfort when feeling desolate, and feeling your desolation! No one comforts like He does."

"Few know what is betwixt Christ and me," wrote the saintly Rutherford; and

little can his fellow-passengers on that Atlantic voyage have realised what lay behind the quiet exterior of the missionary on his way for the seventh time to China. Yet the sweetness was felt, and the power; and by no one more than the young American who was on the New York landing stage to meet them. For there was about Mr. Frost's spiritual nature a quality that responded in an unusual way to much of which he could be, as yet, but dimly conscious in the life of Hudson Taylor.

It was with joy at any rate that he received the party, including Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Radcliffe, and escorted them to his father's home in Madison Avenue, where there was ample accommodation and the warmest of welcomes. How gracious was the hospitality that encompassed them, the visitors could not at the time fully realise. Unfamiliar with American ways, it was but natural that some mistakes should be made which no one would have regretted more than they, had they been conscious of them. Such, for example, was the almost unconscious act of putting their boots outside the bedroom doors at night, where they were found shining with an irreproachable polish next morning none of the visitors suspecting the discovery Mr. Frost had made of his father facing this formidable array of English "footwear" in the bathroom, where together they spent no little labour upon them before retiring.^[351]

Of the three months that followed it is difficult to write, not for lack of information but because of the very fulness of the records and the importance of events that took place. For who could have foreseen that, arriving in America in July, little known and with no thought but to take part in a few conferences on his way to China, Mr. Taylor would leave again in October, widely loved and trusted, laden with gifts, followed by prayer, and taking with him a band of young workers chosen out of more than forty who had

offered their lives for service in the Mission? If the going out of the Hundred in the preceding year had been a striking evidence of the hand of God working with him, what shall be said of this unexpected movement, deeply affecting Christian life in the Eastern States and Canada, and rousing Toronto, from which the party finally set out, to an enthusiasm rarely equalled?

"Sunday night, September. 23, 1888, saw the greatest and most enthusiastic gathering ever held in Toronto up to that time," wrote one who was present. "The place was the Y.M.C.A., the hour 8.30 P.M., just after the evening services in the churches. One might say that the cream of Toronto's religious life was gathered there, to hear the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor and the men and women accepted by him for work in China. The power of God was manifest in a wonderful way, and as a result a great and abiding impetus was given to foreign missions."

And the wonder of it all was that it was so unpremeditated!

"I had not the remotest idea in coming to America," Mr. Taylor himself recalled, "that anything specially bearing upon the work of the China Inland Mission would grow out of it. I was glad to come when my way was providentially opened. I wanted to see Mr. Moody, and had heard of over' two thousand students wishful to consecrate their lives to God's service abroad. ^[352] The American societies, I thought, are not quite in a position to take up these two thousand, and perhaps if we tell them about God's faithfulness they will find it written in their Bibles not 'be sent,' but 'go.' I believe in verbal inspiration, and that God could have said 'be sent' if He had wished it, instead of 'go.' I hoped I might be able to encourage some to' go.'"

As to bringing forward the work of the Mission with a view to developing an

American branch, nothing was further from his thoughts. Had he not told Mr. Frost only a few months earlier that he had no guidance in that direction, sending him back from England perplexed and disappointed? And if it was not in Mr. Taylor's purpose, still less was it anticipated by those to whom his personality and message came as so new a force that summer at Northfield. The Student Conference was in full swing when he and his companions arrived, and, met by Mr. Moody himself, were driven out to his beautiful home in the middle of the night. It was a strangely new experience to the English visitors, and one full of interest. Four hundred men from ninety different colleges filled the Seminary buildings, and overflowed in tents on the far-reaching campus backed by hills and woods. The afternoon was kept entirely free for recreation.

"Delegates should come fully equipped for bathing, tennis, baseball, football, hill-climbing and all other outdoor exercises," ran the official invitation. "They should also bring their own reference Bibles and a good supply of note-books."

Morning and evening the spacious auditorium was filled for devotional meetings and Bible study—the open doors admitting birds as well as breezes, and the summer dress of the students giving a rainbow effect in the blending of soft colours.^[353]

It was an inspiring assembly, including many pastors, professors, Y.M.C.A. secretaries, and leading philanthropists. The corps of speakers was able and representative, and Mr. Moody, who presided, was at his best. But it was in the young men themselves the inspiration lay—such power, such possibilities! Mr. Taylor could not but be moved by such an audience, and to him the students seem to have been attracted in a special way.

"With the exception of my own father," said Mr. Robert Wilder many years later, "Mr. Taylor was the man who was the

greatest spiritual help to me. When he came to Northfield and appealed on behalf of China, the hearts of the delegates burned within them. And he not only made the needs of the mission-field very real; he showed us the possibilities of the Christian life. The students loved to hear him expound the Word of God. He was a master of his Bible, and his sympathy and naturalness attracted men to him. His addresses were so much appreciated that Mr. Moody had to announce extra meetings to be held by him in the afternoons-so many of the students were anxious to hear more from the veteran missionary... Eternity alone can reveal the results of that life, and the effect of his words upon our Student Movement.

"One of the founders of the S.V.M., the Rev. J. N. Forman, has written to me from India: 'One of the greatest blessings of my life came to me through, not from, the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor.' 'Through, not from,' that was how we all felt. He was a channel-open, clean, and so closely connected with the Fountain of Living Waters that all who came in contact with him were refreshed.

"And what impressed us undergraduates was not merely the spirituality of Mr. Taylor, it was his common sense. One asked him the question: 'Are you always conscious of abiding in Christ?'

"'While sleeping last night,' he replied, 'did I cease to abide in your house because I was unconscious of the fact? We should never be conscious of not abiding in Christ.' ...

"When asked, 'How is it that you can address so many meetings?' he said to us: 'Every morning I feed upon the Word of God, then I pass on through the day messages that have first helped me in my own soul.'

'You can work without praying, but it is a bad plan,' was another of his sayings, 'but you cannot pray in earnest without

working.' And 'Do not be so busy with work for Christ that you have no strength left for praying. True prayer requires strength.'

"It was not, however, the words only of Mr. Taylor that helped us, it was the life of the man. He bore about with him the fragrance of Jesus Christ."

And this was the impression wherever he went. Even children felt it.

"Today is our little boy's fifth birthday," wrote a minister many weeks after Mr. Taylor had stayed in his home. "All the children constantly mention you, and often pray for you."

"It seemed to me," recalled Mr. W. E. Blackstone of Chicago, "that it was the almost visible presence of God in him that made his plain and simple words so powerful."

"A servant of the Lord whose light we had not heretofore seen," was the impression made at the Niagara Conference, where "his presence and words were so blessed as to make the occasion one of the most memorable in the lifetime of many a Christian worker." ^[354]

But though deeply thankful for such opportunities, it was not until Mr. Taylor had been nearly a month in America that it began to dawn upon him that there was a larger purpose concerning this visit than any he had in view. His increasingly full programme had brought him, a few days previously, to Niagara-on-the-Lake, in fulfilment of an engagement made before leaving England. It was the opening of the above-mentioned Conference, and Mr. Taylor found himself in the midst of "a great gathering of deeply taught Christians."

"The premillennial Advent is prominent," he wrote, "and the Word of God is honoured."

A special feature of the Conference, which was under the presidency of Dr. James Brookes of St. Louis, was the large number of ministers present, Canadian as well as American, of various denominations. Mr. Taylor was only able to speak twice, having to pass on to Chicago for other meetings, but the impression made was profound. Personal love to the Lord Jesus as typified in the Song of Solomon, and faith in God (or the faithfulness of God, rather, upon which faith is to lay hold) were his subjects, and he scarcely made any reference to China or the Mission.

"One of the leading evangelists present," Mr. Frost tells us, "confessed that the addresses had come to him almost as a revelation, and many others shared this feeling.... Hearts and lives were brought into an altogether new relationship to God and Christ, and not a few, in the joyfulness of full surrender, quietly but finally offered themselves to the Lord for His service anywhere and everywhere."

But of this and subsequent happenings Mr. Taylor knew nothing. His visit to Chicago ended, he had come east again to Attica; a lovely village in the state of New York, where Mr. Frost, senior, and his son had their summer homes. The son was expected on the midnight train from Niagara, and Mr. Taylor was at the station to meet him-eager to hear more of the Conference, but little thinking of the news he had to bring.

For unexpected developments had taken place at the Niagara meetings after Mr. Taylor's departure. Disappointed at not hearing more from him on the subject of foreign missions, the Conference all the more welcomed the addresses of Mr. Radcliffe and Mr. Robert Wilder, for which the way had been well prepared. Burning words were spoken by the veteran evangelist and the young volunteer on the responsibility of each succeeding generation of believers to obey the great command, "Go ye into all the world and preach

the Gospel to every creature." He had learned, Mr. Wilder told them, the secret of how to work for the Lord *twenty-four hours a day*, and to keep on doing so all the year round. It was a lady who had made the discovery. When asked how it was possible—

"I work twelve hours here, she replied, "and when I have to rest, my representative in India begins her day, and works the other twelve."

"We want many from the Niagara Conference to work twenty-four hours a day like this," he urged. "Christian friends, you who cannot go, why not have your own representatives on the foreign field?"

This was a new idea, but seemed so reasonable that Mr. Radcliffe was kept busy answering questions as to how much it would take to support a worker in the China Inland Mission. Two hundred and fifty dollars a year (£50) he thought would suffice,^[355] and a meeting was appointed to see what was to be the practical outcome. Dr. W. J. Erdman was in the Chair, but the occasion was not one for much direction or control.

"After singing and prayer," he wrote, "the Secretary, who had in mind the general guidance of the meeting, suddenly found himself entirely emptied of every idea and preference, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon the believers present. The rest of the hour was filled with voluntary praises, prayers and consecration of young men and women to service in the foreign field. It was a meeting never to be forgotten, and money for the China Inland Mission came in without advertisement or urging on the part of any."

But even this experience was surpassed next day when the Conference reassembled.

"As I reached the Pavilion," wrote Mr. Frost, to whom gifts and pledges of money sufficient for the support of two

missionaries had been given the previous evening, "I found that people had become intoxicated with the joy of giving, and that they were seeking another opportunity for making free-will offerings for the Lord's work in China. A number were standing up, pledging themselves to give a certain amount toward the support of a missionary, and some were saying that they wanted to work twenty-four hours a day by having a missionary all to themselves. Again promises and money came flowing in, until, this time, I had scarcely a place to put them. There I stood in the midst of the assembly-without ever wishing it or thinking such a thing could be-suddenly transformed into an impromptu Treasurer-of the China Inland Mission. And afterwards, upon counting what had been given, I found enough to support not two missionaries but actually eight, for a whole year, in inland China."

Returning to his room that summer morning Mr. Frost could not but remember the sorrowful experience through which he had passed in London, 'when he had wondered whether he could ever know that prayer was really answered, or be assured of the guidance of God again. The faith that had sustained him then was being exchanged for sight, and as he poured out his heart in wondering thankfulness he realised how safe and good it is "not only to wait upon God, but also to wait for Him."

This then was the story he had to tell, when upon reaching Attica at midnight he found Mr. Taylor on the platform to meet him.

"I kept my secret, however," he continued, "until we reached my father's house and Mr. Taylor's bedroom. Then, fully and joyously, I described to him how after his departure from Niagara the Spirit had swept over the Conference; how the offerings had been given and put into my hands to pass on to him; and how they had been found to amount to a sum sufficient to support eight missionaries for a year in China.

"Quietly he listened, and with such a serious look that I confess, for once in my life, I was disappointed in Mr. Taylor. Instead of being glad, he seemed burdened. If I remember rightly, he did just say, 'Praise the Lord,' or 'Thank God,' but beyond this there was nothing to indicate that he accepted the news as good news, as I had anticipated. For a few minutes he stood apparently lost in thought, and then said:

'I think we had better pray.'

"Upon this we knelt beside the bed, and he began to ask what the Lord meant by all that had taken place. It was only as he went on pleading for light that I commenced to understand what was in Mr. Taylor's mind. He had realised at once that this was a very marked providence, and that God had probably brought him to America for other purposes than simply to give a few addresses on his way to China. He had inquired from me how the money was to be used, and I had replied that it was designated, by preference, for the support of North American workers. From this he saw that the obligation was laid upon him of appealing for missionaries from North America—a heavy responsibility, in view of all that it involved.... It was becoming clear to him, as to me, that my visit to London and appeal for a branch of the Mission to be established on this continent had been more providential than was at first recognised."

Unexpectedly a crisis had arisen, fraught, as Mr. Taylor could not but see, with far-reaching results. He was glad to be returning to Northfield shortly for the General Conference, when he would have the opportunity of consulting Mr. Moody and other friends. For the problem that faced him, after little more than three weeks in America, was no simple one, and as yet the man at his side, young and retiring as he was, had not been recognised as the providential solution.

"God is with us," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor before leaving for Buffalo next morning (July 26). "Money for a year's support of several new missionaries is either given or promised, and great issues are likely to result from our visit. There never was more need for prayer than at present. May the Lord guide in all things."

"I think we must have an American branch of the Mission," he was writing to Mr. Stevenson from Ocean Grove a few days later. "Do not be surprised if I should bring reinforcements with me."

The conclusion to which Mr. Taylor was thus being led was strongly confirmed on his return to Northfield. Mr. Moody advised his appealing at once for workers, and introduced him to some of his own students who were feeling called to China. But even then it was with fear and trembling he went forward. The Mission had always been interdenominational, but there had been no thought of its becoming international, and twenty-one years of experience had made its leader cautious.^[356] But once his mind was made up, the appeal was a strong one.

"To have missionaries and no money would be no trouble to me," was the way he put it; "for the Lord is bound to take care of His own: He does not want me to assume His responsibility. But to have money and no missionaries is very serious indeed. And I do not think it will be kind of you dear friends in America to put this burden upon us, and not to send some from among yourselves to use the money. We have the dollars, but where are the people?"

One by one, in ways we must not attempt to detail, prepared men and women responded to the call, until Mr. Taylor was assured that it was indeed the Lord's purpose for him to take on a band to China. When the first three were accepted, he began to be relieved about the funds in hand. Their passages had

been promised independently, but their support for the first year would use a considerable part of the money contributed at Niagara "if things went smoothly." But from this point of view, things did not go at all smoothly. Parents, friends, or the churches to which they belonged claimed the privilege of sustaining these workers. When as many as eight had been accepted, the original fund was still untouched, and the further they went the less chance there seemed of getting to an end of it. Consecrated money, Mr. Taylor remarked, was something like the consecrated loaves and fishes, there was no using it up.

But all the while, out of sight, there was a quiet force of prayer at work that went far to account for the wonderful things that were happening: Mr. Taylor and his party were so carried forward on a tide of interest and enthusiasm that it was all they could do to keep up with their programme, and prolonged seasons of prayer—save for his early morning hour—were impossible. But in the retirement of that country home at Attica a man was on his knees, prevailing with God.

For, strange to say, Mr. Henry W. Frost was not much in evidence at the meetings. A serious illness that threatened the life of his father kept him from travelling, and when not required in the sick room he had more leisure than usual for thought and prayer. He saw, with the clearness of a listening soul, the way in which things were tending. Money continued to come to him for the support of missionaries in China, and in the middle of August he sent out a circular letter to the contributors asking "many and fervent prayers" that the right persons might be chosen, and that some might be ready to sail without delay, that the opportunity of Mr. Taylor's escort might not be lost. To the latter he wrote also, putting his home and services unreservedly at his disposal for the purpose of becoming better acquainted with candidates.

"This quiet at home is most blessed in one respect," he added (August. 27), "I have much opportunity for prayer, and I do praise God for it. I am sure it is what He wants just now, and I do count it a great privilege to tell Him of all our hopes and fears at this critical time. It makes me realise the force of that definition of prayer that one has given, 'Prayer is the attitude of a needy and helpless soul whose only refuge is in God': for I feel our need and I feel our helplessness; yet I feel at the same time what a great and sure refuge we have in our God. Praise His holy Name, He has made us 'prisoners in Christ' (Ephesians 4:1, Gk.), and from this vantage-ground we may ask what we will!"

"Please very specially remember the C.I.M.'s relation to America. I dare not seek to influence you, yet I ask most earnestly that you will consider the question, Will it not be well to establish a branch here? I have much to say to you upon this, if you are led to listen to it."

Meanwhile Mr. Taylor, as he moved about, was growingly impressed with the spirit and enterprise of American Christians, and with the interest in China awakened among them.

"We had a magnificent meeting last night," he wrote from Lockport on the 14th of August. "Things are working marvellously: the hand of God is everywhere apparent."

A week later, in Hamilton, he found a band of young people who seemed prepared in a special way for his message. From the Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. he learned that they were united in earnest prayer that seven of their number might be privileged to go as missionaries to China. Among the appreciative notices of Mr. Taylor's meetings was one long article in the leading paper that ended somewhat abruptly, as though the editorial scissors had been at work. Another pen, too, than the writer's seemed to have added a

closing sentence.

"The venerable gentleman," it said, "concluded a long, most interesting address, by informing the audience that the members of the China Inland Mission depended upon chance providences for a scanty subsistence."

Notwithstanding this disquieting assertion, Mr. Taylor's visit was largely occupied in interviews with candidates for the work, and among the party that sailed with him a few weeks later were four young women and three men from the Hamilton Christian Associations, the Secretary himself following by way of Europe. Such events could not but move the churches, and recall to mind the earnest request of the Rev. John McLaurin, who had arranged the Canadian meetings: "Pray, **pray** that God will make this visit a great blessing to our dear Canada."

Time fails to tell of the growing interest, the abiding impression and the many friendships made as Mr. Taylor moved from place to place.

"I was only a little girl," recalled a Southern lady, "when my mother took me to hear him at Dr. Brookes' Church in St. Louis, but years after I heard Dr. Brookes tell of the wonderful influence of that visit, and how during his stay Mr. Taylor rose regularly about 4 A.M. and spent the early hours with Him Who was the source of his great power."

"Only to-day Mrs. Brookes gave me the details of an incident her sainted husband loved to tell. It was necessary for Mr. Taylor to leave their home early, to get a train for Springfield (Ill.), where he was to speak that day. There was some unaccountable delay in the arrival of the carriage to convey him to the depot, and Dr. Brookes was much worried, but Mr. Taylor was perfectly calm. When they reached the station the train had left, and there seemed no possible way for him to keep his appointment. But he quietly told Dr. Brookes:

"My Father manages the trains, and I'll be there.'

"Upon inquiry of the agent they found a train leaving St. Louis in another direction, which crossed a line going to Springfield; but the train on the other line always left ten minutes before this train arrived, as they were opposing roads. Without a moment's hesitation Mr. Taylor said he would go that way, in spite of the fact that the agent told him they never made connections there. For almost the first time in the history of that road the St. Louis train arrived ahead of the other, and Mr. Taylor was able to keep his appointment at Springfield.

"When he was leaving next day for Rochester, N.Y., a Mr. Wilson accompanied him to the station. He felt it impressed upon him that Mr. Taylor did not have sufficient money for the tickets (a matter of about eight pounds), and upon inquiry found this to be the case.

"Why did you not tell us?" asked Mr. Wilson, who had decided the night before to take the tickets and had come provided.

"My Father knew,' was the quiet answer; 'it was not necessary to speak to any of His children about it.'

"Many of us who heard of these experiences had learned to bring the greater things of life to our Heavenly Father, but the simple, child-like trust of this godly man taught us to come to our Heavenly Father with the smaller details as well. 'Casting all your care (anxiety) upon Him, for He careth for you.'"

By the middle of September Mr. Frost's prayers seemed more than answered. The number of applicants to join the Mission had risen to over forty, out-distancing even his faith and expectations. Hundreds of letters had poured in, and Mr. Taylor was wholly unable to cope with the correspondence necessary for completing the cases of candidates.^[357] It was with thankfulness, therefore,

he fell back on Mr. Frost's suggestion of a reunion of the outgoing party at Attica, when he might be able to hand over much of the work that remained to his willing hands.

"It is very kind of you to choose Attica as a gathering place," wrote the latter. "There will be no difficulty in caring for almost any number likely to be invited. Besides my mother's home and our own, we will be permitted to send guests to three other homes in the village, or if that is not convenient, some of us can put up at the Hotel at very reasonable rates. You may invite freely therefore, and anticipate a comfortable entertainment for all who come. ..."

"You will be glad to know that your letter ... was a direct answer to many prayers. I have been praying specifically for two things: first, that you might return here, and second, that there might be a series of farewell meetings of just such a nature as you have suggested. Besides these, I have been asking for other things which your letter touches upon. I cannot tell you how it burdens my heart with a sense of unworthiness to find the Almighty God so ready to listen to my cries and so quick to answer them. Please pray for me that I may walk more worthy of such a Father."

Surely not the least remarkable of the converging providences by which Mr. Taylor was led to go forward in these matters was the generous, devoted cooperation of Mr. Frost, and the way in which he was ready to assume whatever of responsibility Mr. Taylor had to devolve.^[358]

Then came the farewell meetings—the best part in some ways of all that American visit. For the sacrifice was very real that the outgoing missionaries and their families were making, and the love of Christ so overflowed their hearts that few could see or hear them unmoved.

"You have often seen, dear Mrs. Taylor," wrote Mrs. Reginald

Radcliffe, whose presence in the party was no little help, "how God has sustained His children when leaving home and loved ones, but I do not suppose even you have ever witnessed such joy as beamed on the faces of the thirteen who left Toronto on the 26th of September." (With another who joined them farther west, they were fourteen in all—eight young women and six men.)

"I believe Toronto and even Canada," she continued, "will long remember those two nights—the farewell and the departure of the missionaries. At the farewell on Sunday night the Y.M.C.A. Hall was so full that an overflow meeting had to be held, and hundreds went away unable to get in. On Monday Mr. Taylor had to leave for Montreal, but it was arranged for the missionary party and their friends to meet at Dr. Parson's church at nine the following evening, to take the Lord's Supper together, going from the church to the station. It was said that from five hundred to a thousand people were at the station, singing and cheering. Finally my husband led in prayer, the great concourse repeating the words aloud after him ... and slowly the train moved away. As we returned the members of the Y.M.C.A. walked four abreast, singing hymns, up the streets of, Toronto."

Very different from these stirring scenes was the memory that lingered in Mr. Taylor's heart with special sweetness. It was in Mr. Frost's home town of Attica, the incident had taken place, at one of the first farewell meetings. The father of a dear girl in the party, Miss Susie Parker, had come over from Pittsfield, Mass., and was sitting near the platform. Seeing a wonderful light on his face, Mr. Taylor invited him to say a few words.

"He told us with a father's feelings," Mr. Taylor loved to recall, "what his daughter had been in the home, to him and to her mother; what she had been in the mission-hall in which he worked, and something of what it meant to part with her now.

"'But I could only feel,' he said, 'that I have nothing too precious for my Lord Jesus. He has asked for my very best; and I give, with all my heart, my very best to Him.'

*"That sentence was the richest thing I got in America, and has been an untold blessing to me ever since. Sometimes when pressed with correspondence the hour has come for united prayer, and the thought has arisen, ought I not to go on with this or that matter? Then it has come back to me—'Nothing too **precious for my Lord Jesus.**' The correspondence has been left to be cared for afterwards, and one has had the joy of fellowship unhindered. Sometimes waking in the morning, very weary, the hour has come for hallowed communion with the Lord alone; and there is no time like the early morning for getting the harp in tune for the music of the day. Then it has come again—'**Nothing too precious for my Lord Jesus,**' and one has risen to find that there is no being tired with Him. That thought also has been a real help to me when leaving my loved ones in England indeed, I could never tell how many hundreds of times God has given me a blessing through those words."*

Chapter XXXI[\(TOC\)](#)

The Cross does not Get Comfortable

1888-1889. AET. 56-57

CROSSING the Rocky Mountains by Canadian Pacific was a wonderful experience to Mr. Taylor. The greatness of the country as it unrolled before him was in keeping with the greatness of the possibilities he had felt among Canadian as well as American Christians for the rapid, world-wide extension of the kingdom of God. Wonderful, too, was it to have with him the party so unexpectedly given for China and the Inland Mission.

"We are so happy and united," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor en route. "You would enjoy knowing the dear young workers God has given us, in the fresh bloom of consecration and love. May it never wear off.

"Every day I feel more thankful for each member of our band. ... The little difficulties of travel only bring out character more clearly, and' show how good God's choice has been.

"You can have little idea how mightily the Spirit of God has been and is working."

The voyage across the Pacific was made the most of for helpful talks and Bible readings with his companions, in which he sought to prepare them for all that lay ahead. The consciousness was much with him, already referred to in letters to Mr. Stevenson, of the certainty of opposition from the powers of evil. For years the Mission had been carried forward on a wave of unparalleled success. 'During the period of the Seventy its membership had doubled, as we have seen, and since then it had more than doubled again, without the addition of this latest party. And what opportunities for enlargement did not their coming suggest? But experience had taught him that for every time of prosperity and blessing one of special trial was in store, though even he can hardly have anticipated how long and testing the conflict

now before them was to prove.

At Yokohama it began, even before they came in sight of China. For there news was received of the death from hydrophobia of Herbert Norris, the beloved Head of the Chefoo School, who in protecting his boys from a mad dog had himself been bitten; and that also of Adam Dorward, the devoted pioneer of Hunan and a member of the China Council. To one of Mr. Taylor's tender affections, who could so well appreciate the loss that had befallen the Mission, the news was a blow indeed.

"I am almost overwhelmed," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor that October day. "My soul is even as a weaned child.' I want to be alone with God and quiet before Him. May He bless you ... and all at home. May He make us more holy; more fit for His service here as there."

Meanwhile further sorrow had been permitted; and on landing in Shanghai Mr. Taylor learned not only of the death of a young worker of much promise, but that in the Home to which he was taking his fellow-travellers another was even then nearing the end of life's journey. Three men within a month, and now this woman of a gracious spirit, who had only come out in the Hundred! It was a time of heart-searching before God, to see why the hand of His protection had been in measure withdrawn, and a time also in which the cheer of the American Party was sorely needed.

Jesus, Saviour, pilot me;

Over life's tempestuous sea

was a new hymn in those days, and one they often sang together.

As a mother stills her child

Thou canst hush the tempest wild.

Boistrous waves obey Thy will,
When Thou say'st to them, Be still."
Wondrous Sovereign of the sea—
Jesus, Saviour, pilot me.

Times without number during the months that followed did that prayer go up from storm-stressed hearts in the mission-house at Shanghai, where Mr. Taylor was detained by apparently endless troubles. He had come out, as Mr. Stevenson remarked, "full of faith and hope," to do much in the way of consolidation. America had greatly encouraged him. His visit there had been providentially timed to coincide with a stage in the Mission's development when its material basis must take more adequate form. The purely native houses of earlier days had to be superseded, in the ports at any rate, by adequate receiving homes and business centres. All over the field young workers were getting into harness, and still larger reinforcements were expected.

"God is with us of a truth," he had written to Mr. Stevenson from Montreal, and will give us to see far greater things. I hope after conference with you to be able to look forward to a speedy doubling of our staff. Nothing less I am satisfied should be aimed at, even in the near future; and I trust that that doubling will only anticipate a doubling again. There ought to be no difficulty in getting at least three hundred good workers from the States and Canada...."

There was scarcely a grey head in the Mission in those days, and under Mr. Stevenson's enthusiastic leadership in China "everything seemed possible." Was there a danger, perhaps, of growing too fast for the spiritual well-being of the work or the faith of its supporters?

"It was a dark and trying time that winter," recalled the Deputy Director. "There had been so much success, such rapid extension. We were going ahead full sail set, before a favourable breeze. Ballast was needed, though at the time we could not see it, and the prolonged sickness and trial that surrounded us seemed mysterious indeed."

Never was day of fasting and prayer more timely than that which ushered in 1889. New Year's Eve had been set apart, according to the custom of the Mission, for thus waiting upon God, and when it came the need was found to be more urgent, even, than had been anticipated. For only the day before the accumulated trials of previous weeks had been surpassed by the arrival of the saddest party ever received from England. On the voyage-out one of the new workers had had a shock which resulted in temporary insanity, and on landing, her condition was that of acute mania. No asylums were to be found in China, even in the foreign Settlements, and she had to be cared for in the already crowded premises the Mission was renting in Shanghai. At the same time another bright, beautiful girl was stricken down at an inland station with black small-pox, and the life of both seemed to hang in the balance. Few among the younger Missionaries was more loved and valued than Maggie M'Kee, and it was with the keenest sorrow Mr. Taylor heard of her death after six days of suffering. Meanwhile a telegram had been received from Hongkong telling of the serious illness of Mr. William Cooper of the China Council. After furlough, he was returning to the province of An-hwei, in which his experience and ripeness of Christian character were greatly needed, but double pneumonia had supervened upon illness by the way, and it was doubtful whether he could live to reach Shanghai.

"We are passing through wave after wave of trial," Mr. Taylor wrote on January 11. "Each day has its full quota. God seems daily to be saying, 'Can you say, 'even so, Father,' to that?"

'But He sustains and will sustain the spirit, however much the flesh may fail. Our house has been a hospital; it is now an asylum. All that this means the Lord only knows....The night and day strain are almost unbearable.... But I know the Lord's ways are all right, and I would not have them otherwise.'

"There is absolutely nothing to be done," he added a week later, "but to bear the trial, while using proper means, and wait on God. There are no asylums, and she could not be taken by sea. So whatever time and care the case claims must be given, and it must be pleasing to the Lord for us to be so occupied.... He makes no mistakes. He can make none. Even now we accept with thankfulness His dealings, and soon with joy shall we the deep purposes of wisdom and love, wrought out by all that is so mysterious at present."

But more serious than these troubles in China were anxieties that pressed upon him from another quarter. Friends of the Mission in England, it appeared, including some of the London Council, were concerned about the steps taken in America. Not having been on the spot, they were unable as yet to realise the guidance given or the value of the work developed. It was natural, perhaps, that they should fear lest responsibilities taken up quickly should be as quickly forgotten; and, moreover, no one had as yet foreseen the adaptability of the Mission, on account of its special form of government, to relations of an international character. The principle of control on the field—the direction of the work not from a distance but by experienced leaders in China—could not but constitute Shanghai the headquarters of the Mission rather than London, making it possible for Mr. Taylor or his representatives there to work with auxiliary Councils in any part of the world, just as with the original Council at home. This natural application of one of the cardinal principles of the Mission came as a surprise, however, to those who had hitherto never dreamed of such developments. Even the necessity for the

China Council had hardly yet been fully conceded; and that it should come to occupy a central position, with affiliations in America and perhaps elsewhere, practically independent of the mother-country, was no little cause for concern. So hazardous did it appear, indeed, to the best interests of the work, that some felt they might have to resign from the Council rather than consent to it, even though this would involve for Mr. Taylor as well as themselves the severance of relations among the oldest and most valued they possessed.

Needless to say, the position was a critical one, and caused the leader of the Mission deep concern. More sure he could not be as to the guidance given in America. Step by step he had been led, almost compelled, to accept the party that had accompanied him, and to appoint as Secretaries and provisional Council those who had been so remarkably provided. Go back upon it he could not, without going back upon what he had assuredly gathered to have been the will of God. But how go forward at such a cost?

"As to the American question," he wrote to a leading member of the Council in February, "I shall be glad of your views when you have time to write them, but without a visit to America it difficult fully to understand the matter. I should have been as fearful as you are, if I had not been there.... I purposely made all the arrangements tentative, pending my return to England and having the opportunity for full conference about them.... My increasing desire is to please God. So far as I know my own heart, this is my only wish in the matter...."

I thirst for Thee, O God, for Thee.

Oh draw me nearer, nearer still!

For evermore Thine own to be,

*My will all lost in Thy sweet will,
As pants the hart for cooling streams,
So pants my soul, O God, for Thee;
As sends the sun its cheering beams,
So let Thy Spirit shine in me."*

But it was in letters to Mrs. Taylor that the manifold anxieties he was passing through found most expression.

"The Lord is sending a very flood of trials," he wrote in January. "No doubt they are all needed. We might be lifted up, perhaps, or lose spiritual life and power, if success were unaccompanied by discipline."

And in February:

Satan is simply raging. He sees his kingdom attacked all over the land, and the conflict is awful. But that our Commander is All-mighty, I should faint. I think I never knew anything like it, though we have passed through some trying times before.

Satan often says, "All these things are against you"; but God's Word is true and says the opposite.

"I am more and more desirous to do God's will; to be pleasing to Him, and that at all costs.

It was not all dark, however, for in January (1889) Mr. Taylor was able to write of the spiritual life of the Mission as "higher than ever before," and that "glad tidings of souls won for Christ and very real progress in many directions cheer us amid our trials." In March the pressure was again so great that in asking for renewed earnestness in prayer at home he said: "It seems. as

if every native Christian and helper as well as missionary were being assailed." Yet, in the midst of it all, he and many of his fellow-workers were learning deeper lessons of the sustaining power of God. "The cross does not get comfortable," is one revealing sentence in a letter of this winter, "but it bears sweet fruit." How truly it was so in Mr. Taylor's experience may be gathered from the recollections of one who was much with him at the time.

"I never went through such a distressful period," said Mr. Stevenson of 1888-89; "everything seemed crowded into those terrible months. I do not know what we should have done without Mr. Taylor; but oh, the look on his face at times! The special day of fasting and prayer (a second) was a great help. We never found it to fail. In all our troubles, in all our forward movements, in times of need, whether as to funds or spiritual blessing, we always had recourse to fasting and prayer, and with a quick response.

"One thing that deeply touched me at this time was Mr. Taylor's evident and intense longing to walk uprightly before God. He would go all lengths to do the right thing and put away misunderstandings. Early this spring, when our troubles were at their height, he was burdened about the lack of cordiality between ourselves and two former members of the Mission who were still in Shanghai. The trouble had arisen during one of Mr. Taylor's absences in England, but he could not leave it with simply—

"They were wrong, and we did what we could at the time.'

"He wrote a note saying he would be glad to call upon them and talk matters over, greatly desiring that any bitterness of feeling might be removed. On the 4th of March, I remember, he spent a long evening with them, going over the whole story. It must have been very painful, for their attitude was far from conciliatory, but it ended right. He was able to have prayer

with them, and friendship was restored.

"Oh, his was a life that stood looking into-searching through and through! Get a man like Mr. Taylor, and you could start any mission tomorrow. It was most wonderful his life. I never knew any other so consistent; and I watched him year in and year out, and had exceptional opportunities for doing so. He walked with God; his life bore the light all through. And he was so gracious and accessible! Day or night, literally at all hours, he was ready to help in sickness or any trouble. For self-denial and practical consecration, one could not but feel, he stood alone."

A sheet of notepaper bearing a few lines in Mr. Taylor's writing reveals, perhaps, more than anything else the secret of his inward life at this time. Found between the pages of diary, it brightens the record with unexpected radiance. From the brief entries in the book itself one learns little; but that well-worn paper, used evidently as a marker and moved on from day to day, what does it not reveal?

LORD Jesus, make Thyself to me
A living, bright Reality
More present to faith's vision keen
Than any outward object seen;
More dear, more intimately nigh
Than e'en the sweetest earthly tie.

Was it not the answer to this daily prayer that made endurance possible?
"Strengthened by His Spirit with power penetrating to your inmost being ...
that Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith"^[359]—is it not the
very experience for times of trouble?

*"I have been greatly distressed;" he wrote to Mrs. Taylor in March, "but all that is passed now. God has spoken, and my heart is at rest. ... I see no light as to the future of home arrangements; but I see God, the living God; and I love Him all the more for this trial and **trust**."*

March. 12: The Lord bless and guide us. This is the greatest trial we have yet had: it will bring the greatest blessing. Now the Lord has taken the burden off my shoulders, and He is going to order the whole thing. It is His work, not mine.

March. 27: As for the C.I.M., it never was so truly the Lord's own work, and He alone is all-sufficient-sufficient for the heartache and the sorrow, as well as for the service.

April 5: Our hope must be in God; He is equal to all emergencies.

Chapter XXXII^(TOC)

With Wings as Eagles

1889. AET. 57

IT was with confidence in God, though with a deep sense of the gravity of the situation, that Mr. Taylor prepared for leaving China when it became evident that home difficulties could not be settled by correspondence. Very little of all he had hoped to do on this visit had been accomplished; but the mental patient was recovering, and plans for the large new premises in Shanghai, to which" he had been devoting much attention, were finished and in the builder's hands. Mission house, prayer meeting hall, business quarters, and residences for the permanent staff were all to be erected on the site obtained some years previously, and so thoroughly had the details been gone into that Mr. Taylor knew by heart the measurement of every door and window: his interest being only exceeded by thankfulness that the buildings, extensive as they necessarily were, would be no charge upon the funds of the' Mission.

Facing the difficulties that awaited him, Mr. Taylor wrote to a member of the London Council before leaving:

Pray that in the reorganisation of our home work we may have much divine guidance, and that the issue of this great trial may be greater blessing all round. "All things work together for good to them that love God": we all do this and with all our hearts, whatever else we fail in, do we not? So the issue is sure.

It was in no spirit of self-confidence, however, that he went forward, as may be seen from a letter to Mr. Stevenson when nearing Aden:

It is so solemn to feel that, one may go out ... as Samson did, unconscious that the Lord has left one, to win defeat and captivity and blindness. May the Lord keep me and keep you very near Himself. All our service will be worse than useless without that. The solemnity of our position as the

representatives of such blessed truths as we teach makes me tremble. But the Lord will surely, for His own Name's sake, keep us.

The voyage by French Mail, though specially trying, afforded opportunity for waiting upon God. The heat was excessive, and a couple of hundred soldiers taken on board at Saigon did not add to the comfort or quiet of the thirdclass quarters. But the solitary English traveller was living less in outward things than in unseen realities.

"One is lonely in the midst of a crowd on this steamer," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor from the Red Sea (May 9). "There are fewer than usual who understand English ... If our love makes us long so for the glad day of our reunion, how much more must our Master look forward to the completion of His blood-bought Bride and the day of His espousals! Would that we were all more alive to His longings, more in earnest to do all that in us lies to hasten the day of His desire. One can well understand the glad 'shout 'with which He will come to claim His Bride, when His' long patience' is past. Oh, for more likeness to Him, more of His patience, more fellowship in His sufferings! My Darling, I am so little like Him!"

A very real sense of his own insufficiency led Mr. Taylor to rejoice at this time as never before in the wonderful deliverance given to the Apostle Paul, not from but in his infirmities. On the passage, "My grace is sufficient for thee," he had written shortly before leaving China:

When the pressure was greatest and his own weakness most felt, 'the Apostle knew himself to be in the very position to be made an instrument of blessing to many, and to 'be most abundantly sustained himself. ... And was not this a better answer to Paul's prayers than the mere removing of his "thorn" would have been? The latter course would have left him open to similar trouble whenever the next distress came; but God's

method at once and for ever delivered him from all oppression of present and future trials. Hence he triumphantly exclaimed 'Most gladly will I rather glory (or rejoice) in my weaknesses, that the strength of Christ may overshadow and cover me.' ...

Ah, who would not wish to share the Apostle's thorn in the flesh, if thereby he might be brought in reality into the experience of his deliverance from the oppression of all weakness, all injury, all necessity, all persecution, all distress, and might henceforth know that the very hour and time of weakness was the very hour and time of truest strength?

That it was so in this serious crisis is evident from the joy with which Mr. Taylor wrote to Mr. Stevenson of answered prayer in connection with the difficulties that had called him home. From the very day of his arrival (May 21) he found that God Himself had been working to make a continuance of happy relations possible,^[360] and when the annual meetings were held a week or two later, they proved a time of remarkable blessing:

"I think that all may now be put right," he wrote to Mr. Stevenson at the end of the month, "and that great good will result from our great trial."

And a few weeks later:

July 4: It is impossible not to see in these things the good hand of our God in answer to many prayers. I do not think things have been so cordial for years. In all this there is abundant cause for gratitude and praise.

Thus the storm clouds began to roll away, leaving behind them clearer vision and hearts more ready for the larger, purposes of God. The development of the home work in several important directions was one immediate result. A Deed of Incorporation for the safeguarding of mission property was drawn up. The Council was strengthened by the addition of Mr. Robert Scott as

Treasurer and several new members. An Auxiliary Council was formed in Glasgow, to deal with Scottish candidates, and a Ladies' Council in London, of which Miss Soltau was appointed Secretary with entire charge of a department for the help and training of women-workers.

In the midst of these and other arrangements, and with invitations for meetings pressing upon him, it was not easy for Mr. Taylor to cross the Atlantic again for the Niagara and Northfield Conferences. But a visit to America seemed necessary, to strengthen the relations between the oldest and newest departments of the work, and, armed with a cordial letter of welcome to the Toronto Council from the Council in London, he set out early in July. Of the quickened hopes stirring within him, and the way in which he was pressing on to know more of the wonder-working power of God, some impression may be gained from a letter to Mrs. Taylor before leaving Queenstown Harbour (July 6):

I am hoping to give special time to prayer and Bible-study on the voyage. Darling, I do want our whole life to be an ascending plane—not resting in anything we have learned or felt or attained, but a pressing on and up. ... God has been faithful to us, as far as we have gone out on His promises and have trusted His faithfulness; but how little we have done so I How small, after all, have been our prayers and expectations, seeing we have such a God to do with.

What would a great Sovereign think of a proposal to add one hundred soldiers in the course of a year to his army of invasion in a country like China? We must get on to a higher plane of thought altogether, and of prayer, if we are to walk worthy of God and deal in any sensible way with the world's crying need. Let us ask in faith for such workers for every department as shall be fit and able to deal worthily with their work at home, in America, in China, and for such an

*endowment of power as shall make the feeblest mighty and the strong as the angels (messengers) of God. Is it too much to expect of Him, too much to ask for His glory? May God save us from limiting the Holy One of Israel. May He open-our eyes to see **Himself**, and help us to go forward on the strength of His 'Have not I sent thee?'"*

We go working on, feeling our weakness and personal need; feeling the weakness and poverty of the Church and the unreality or at least extreme shallowness of its consecration; feeling the power of the one, united front of the world, the flesh and the devil. Do we not want more really to meditate' on GOD to gaze on Him; to take in what we are even now competent to take in of His greatness, His resources, His assurances and promises? Dwelling thus on Him, should we not be enabled to grasp more of the heights and depths of His character and purposes, and be more ready and able to do His will? May He, Darling, in our separation, become all the more to us, that we may first be more to Him, and then through Him to our work and to each other.

In the little town of Attica two other hearts had been learning similar lessons, hearts united in an equally deep bond of love. Circumstances had changed a good deal for Mr. and Mrs. Frost since Mr. Taylor's previous visit, but their home seemed, if anything, more attractive than before. The marriage gift of his father, it had been beautified by the addition of panelled wooden ceilings, to replace the plaster ones which had fallen in the lower rooms, a detail that was to have a good deal to do with the direction of their lives at this time. With every comfort in their surroundings, a large circle of friends and nothing but happiness in their children, there seemed little of earthly good left to desire. But an unseen Hand was stirring up this nest, and Mr. Taylor's second visit found them in the midst of strange experiences.

For their income, which had hitherto been amply sufficient, had suddenly

been cut off through the failure of a flourishing business. At his father's express desire, Mr. Frost had given up his own business some years previously, to devote himself entirely to evangelistic work. The father was well able to supply the needs of the family, and rejoiced to have fellowship in this way in his son's service for the Lord: But now, to his sorrow, this was no longer possible. To have gone back into secular employment would have greatly curtailed Mr. Henry W. Frost's usefulness as an evangelist, and would have necessitated his giving up much active participation in the work of the C.I.M. This he could not feel to be the will of God, after all the way in which he and Mr. Taylor had been led, and it practically came to be, as he expressed it, a question—"Which father are you really trusting?"

Outside the immediate family no one knew of their position, and both Mr. and Mrs. Frost saw it to be a special opportunity for putting to the test not their faith only but the definite promises of God. A few months previously they had determined never, under any circumstances, to go into debt. Amid the apparent comfort of their surroundings, therefore, and with wide margins of credit in the stores of the little town, they found themselves directly dependent upon their Heavenly Father even for daily bread. How searching as well as precious were the experiences through which they were learning more of His infinite faithfulness is a story to itself that we may not enter upon here. Suffice it to say that their joy in God was growing deeper and their desire to be wholly engaged in His service stronger, although they little anticipated the sacrifice that would be involved.

Great was the encouragement to Mr. Frost, as to Mr. Taylor, of the welcome with which they were received at the Niagara Conference of this summer. The interest in China seemed deeper and the sympathy for the Inland Mission stronger than the previous year. The gifts of 1888 for the support of

American workers were largely exceeded, and many new friendships were formed and old ones strengthened.

"The warm welcomes I have had," Mr. Taylor wrote before leaving, "and the assurances from one and another that great and permanent blessings have resulted from my former visit are very cheering. It does seem so wonderful that God can use even me. May He do so more and more, for His own glory."

Mr. Taylor's chief object in coming over being the settlement of the work upon a permanent basis, he gave much time to meetings with the Council and intercourse with its individual members. The number of the latter was increased, and Mr. Sandham finding it necessary, on account of many engagements, to retire from the position he had held, Mr. Frost was invited to assume the sole responsibility as Treasurer and Secretary, making his home in Toronto.

So this was what it had all been leading to! In view of recent experiences, he was himself prepared for a life of faith with regard to temporal supplies; but he knew that Mrs. Frost would feel giving up their lovely home very keenly, on account of the children.

"One day as I was in the parlour, resting," he wrote of this critical time, "my wife, unknown to me, was waiting upon God in her own room for guidance. While thus engaged she was led to open her Bible and to read in the book of Haggai; and she had not read long in this portion of Scripture before she had the light for which she had been so earnestly seeking. A moment later I heard her coming to me across the library and hall. She stepped to my side, and without a word laid her open Bible on my knee, pointing as she did so to the fourth verse of the first chapter of Haggai. I looked at the words indicated and read as follows:

"Is it a time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses and this house lie waste?"

"It was not necessary that my wife should say anything to explain her meaning; the lesson was self-evident. One look in her face showed me that the Lord had won the victory for her, and one look at the ceiling overhead settled the question finally for myself. From that hour, though it was not an easy thing to do, we were united in our desire to give up our home, in order that we might have part in the building of that spiritual house, the temple of Christ's body, which we knew the Lord was waiting to see completed."

Gladly would Mr. Taylor have made it possible for the step to be taken without financial difficulty; but while he could give them enough for the actual move, there was little over. The contributions at Niagara and in other centres, while amounting to thousands of dollars, were almost all designated for individual missionaries, and could not be drawn upon. About fifty pounds given to Mr. Taylor for his own use he felt free to pass on, but "beyond this" he said quite frankly, "I can promise you nothing. You will have to look to the Lord for supplies, as we do in England and in China."

*"I confess," was Mr. Frost's very natural recollection, "that Mr. Taylor's words did not at first suggest an inviting prospect. To move my family and belongings, to take a home in a strange city, to invite a large number of candidates into that home, to supply their needs and our own and to carry on the work of the Mission with little more than two hundred and fifty dollars was certainly not a promising arrangement from an earthly standpoint. But recent experiences ... had given me to understand that there was a factor in the case not to be left out, and which being reckoned upon altered the proposition. That factor was the Lord Himself. Two hundred and fifty dollars was anything but a large sum with which to begin such an undertaking; but two hundred. and fifty dollars **with the***

Lord was all that we could need. Thus, so far as finances were concerned, I soon felt prepared to accept Mr. Taylor's offer."

Could he have foreseen the many and wonderful answers to prayer that were to bring to the American branch of the Mission over half a million dollars within the next seventeen years, and place at his disposal property to the value of forty thousand more, he might have gone forward with less fear and trembling. But then, would there have been the same faith and prayerfulness, the constant, close dependence upon God which have made Mr. Frost so great a strength to the Mission? Would the Home in Toronto have become the centre of blessing it has been, and the object-lesson to very many whose hearts turn to it with gratitude from China and other lands, of what God can do and be in the lives of those who trust Him without reserve?^[361]

All this was in the future, however, and it was with concern Mr. Frost saw the days and weeks slip by of Mr. Taylor's too short visit. Much helpful fellowship they had together as they travelled from place to place, Mr. Taylor addressing over forty meetings in eighteen different centres during the five weeks he was in America. Four days at Northfield completed the programme, and brought the Mission again before many friends of the previous summer. Mr. Moody's interest was so much deepened that he offered the beautiful and spacious "Northfield Hotel" during the winter, as a training home for the candidates of the Mission, undertaking to give himself a course of one month's Bible lessons, while Dr. A. T. Pierson would give another.

Cheered and strengthened by many tokens for good, Mr. Taylor left America in August, to carry out a full programme of meetings, which included a visit to Sweden before the close of the year. 'So pressing and constant were his engagements that he found it difficult to obtain the time needed for remembering all his fellow-workers daily before God. Well he knew that to

relax prayer was to open the way for the enemy to come in like a flood; and as he travelled from place to place he literally had to buy up every opportunity for this unseen but important work.

"What line of thought will you be taking tonight?" asked one who was to speak at the same meeting, after they had travelled together for an hour or two.

"I can hardly tell," was Mr. Taylor's reply. "I have not yet had time to think about it."

"Not time!" exclaimed the other. "Why, what have you been doing but rest ever since we came into 'this carriage?'"

"I do not know about resting," was the quiet answer; "but I do know that since we left Edinburgh I have prayed by name for every member of the China Inland Mission."

This sort of preoccupation did not make him unmindful of the interests of those from whom he received hospitality, however, as may be judged from many a letter.

"I can never forget your fatherly kindness to me," wrote Mrs. Colville of his stay in Motherwell this autumn (near Glasgow). "Often the very memory of your visit refreshes me. There was such a sweet fragrance of Christ in all your words and actions that, praise God, the house is still filled with the odour of the ointment, and whenever your name is mentioned our hearts go out in love. I hope you are well: I know you are happy, for you walk in the light of His countenance."

This was the attractive power felt in Scotland just as in America, the unconscious influence that had had not a little to do with the interest in Sweden which had now grown to considerable proportions. Meeting a young

stranger from that country one busy day in Paternoster Row, Mr. Taylor had gone out of his way to show him courtesy. They met again in Exeter Hall-an important occasion connected with the outgoing of the Seventy (1883), when Mr. Taylor might have passed the Swedish visitor with a greeting. But—

"We had a conversation after the meeting," the latter recalled, "and Mr. Taylor talked to me in a very kind way, by which my heart was drawn out to him. He seemed to be full of love."

Further intercourse at Pyrland Road deepened the interest, and when Mr. Holmgren returned to Orebro it was as a staunch friend of the Inland Mission. First as editor of a religious weekly, then as Pastor of one of the leading churches in Stockholm, he did all that in him lay to awaken Swedish Christians to a sense of responsibility for the unevangelised millions of China, among whom they as yet had no representatives. Eric Folke, an Upsala graduate, deeply conscious of a call from God to that great field, could find no Swedish society to send him there. Going independently, he was welcomed at the C.I.M. in Shanghai, and passed on to its training home at An-king for the study of the language. Six months later he wrote to Mr. Holmgren of his desire to work in association with the Inland Mission, and a Committee was formed in Stockholm to facilitate the going out of others to join him.

For some time this representative group of friends had been urging Mr. Taylor to visit Sweden, where his name was well known through Mr. Holmgren's paper and his own writings. Tied for time as he was by the second General Missionary Conference in Shanghai, at which he had promised to preach the opening sermon, it was not easy to spare a month for this purpose; but the Committee was needing advice as to their work in China, for which Mr. Taylor felt in measure responsible, as it was to be

carried on in close affiliation with the C.I.M.

The whole thing was coming about so naturally that he can hardly have realised the widening that was taking place in his personal ministry and the connections of the Mission, which was yet to be linked with deeply prayerful movements in many Continental centres as well as in America and Australasia. With the Niagara Conference of the previous year the new movement had begun, and to the present summer may be traced the larger vision, the inward mounting up "with wings as eagles," which was to lead to much of the outward development. For Mr. Taylor himself was growing with the growing work. After the recent difficulties which had so tested and strengthened faith in God, he was full of longing, as we have seen, "to grasp more of the heights and depths of His character and purposes, and be more ready and able to do His will." And now, even before he could pay his promised visit to Sweden, a fuller revelation of that will had come.

Conscious of a new call from God, a new urgency about the work to which his life was given, Mr. Taylor was ready for the important openings his northern journey afforded. New to him was the welcome of Swedish Christians, which exceeded in its warmth and hospitality anything he had previously known; and new to them was the spirit of the man with so great a burden' for China's perishing millions.^[362]

"We seldom address fewer than two to five thousand people daily," he wrote toward the close of the visit, in which he was again accompanied by his second son. "Even in small places we have large audiences. Hundreds could not get in last night and some had come thirty miles to the meeting. May great and lasting blessing be the result."

The eagerness with which many of the poorer people called out or pressed forward in those crowded assemblies, to make their little gifts, greatly

touched the visitors.

One dear old sailor who did not look as if he had much to spare, put into the collecting plate his snuff-box-snuff and all I We were told that it had probably been his companion for thirty or forty years. It was made of a shell, and had a heavy silver top and lid. It sold that night for twenty crowns.

In another place a lady who had been much moved in the meeting came up and putting a beautiful watch into my hand began to speak in English. But her emotion prevented her completing the sentence in any but her own language

*"It is for **Herren Jesu**," she said—repeating several times in Swedish, "The Lord Jesus, the Lord Jesus, the dear Lord Jesus."*

In the homes of the wealthy and in' centres of learning the same interest was found.

"At Upsala the venerable Dean Torin was at three of my meetings," Mr. Taylor continued in the home-letters for which he made time whatever came. "Professor Rudin, one of the greatest preachers in Sweden, was at all four, and at Howard's, too, which was for students in the university. I had over two thousand hearers, morning and evening.... Many said they would never forget us, and I do think China will be remembered as never before. ... I must have addressed fifty or sixty thousand persons since landing, and I doubt not many are saying in their hearts, 'Here am I, send me.' The kindness, hospitality, of the Swedes exceeds all I have ever seen-and I have seen a good deal."

To Mr. Taylor it came just as naturally to be received with gracious kindness by the Queen as to travel third-class on the railways—which he did in spite of many a friendly remonstrance. Of this interesting experience he wrote to Mrs.

Taylor:

One of the Ladies in Waiting came to the hotel at which we were staying and took me in a royal carriage to the palace, five miles out of Stockholm. Very shortly after our arrival the Queen entered, and as I moved toward her she came over quite simply and shook hands. She conversed a little about China, and then asked for a Bible reading. Two Ladies in Waiting and two nurses from the Queen's own hospital were present. I took 1 Kings 10:1-13, afterwards showing Her Majesty our map of China, which led to further conversation about the Mission. The Queen ordered coffee and sandwiches to be brought in, and afterwards shook hands very warmly and retired.

In Sweden as elsewhere it was the spirit of the man that added weight to what was said. Seen through the eyes of Mr. Holmgren, who travelled with them, this was if anything the more eloquent message.

"Everywhere the people were drawn to Mr. Taylor, recalled this helpful friend. He showed much love and affection, which also was returned. It was a joy to see how the children gathered round him in the families we visited, although they could not understand what he said. He spoke very friendly to them and patted their heads, telling them some nice stories.

"Mr. Hudson Taylor felt much gladdened by his visit to Sweden. He gained many friends; and still to-day when his name is mentioned before those who heard him, their faces are lit up with joy. He also was very simple and without pretensions. On leaving Linköping, for example, he was specially tired. He had had several meetings the day before, and had risen early in the morning. There had already been a meeting at eleven o'clock, and at six there should be another in a town sixty miles away. On the way to the station, Dr. Howard Taylor said to his father:

"You are very tired now. Let me take the second-class ticket."

"In a so gentle way Mr. Taylor answered: 'Well, it is the Lord's money, you know; we had better be very careful about it.'

"Which answer made a great impression on me. I have many times since heard this word repeat itself in my ears: 'It is the Lord's money: we had better be very careful about it.'

"Lastly, I may mention an incident which also made a great impression upon my mind, and which shows his trust in God. The Committee had intended to meet Mr. Taylor's expenses and those of his son for their journey by taking collections at the meetings. When I met them in Gothenburg I told Mr. Taylor this. Then he looked at me, and with a smiling face said

"Well, I have a rich Father, you know. I will ask Him about it. But I do not think this thought is quite according to His will. He is sure to provide for me; and I feel that what is gathered by collections ought to be used' for the Swedish Mission."

"I felt very much touched, and if I had had money I should gladly have paid all the expenses of his travels in Sweden. But as to his trust that these would be provided, I said to myself, 'That is all very well in England; but in Sweden it is not the same.'

"I parted from Mr. Taylor at Christiania. He crossed for England and I returned to Stockholm. In his first letter he said

'A few days after we had come to England I received a letter from some one in Sweden, I do not know from whom. A cheque was enclosed for fifty pounds, and the writer said that this money was to meet my expenses and those of my son for our journey in Sweden, and if anything was left over I might use it. as I liked. If you know who has sent it, please give them my warm thanks.'

"I did not know at all from whom it was; but I felt very much ashamed and humiliated for my unbelief. At the same time I could not restrain my thanksgivings to the Lord for His faithfulness, and that His power is just the same in Sweden as in England."

The burden on Mr. Taylor's heart all through this Swedish visit, if burden it could be called, was the deeper apprehension that had come to him of the meaning of the divine command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." For more than forty years that command had controlled his life, responded to with unquestioning obedience. What had he not done and suffered; how had he not helped and inspired others in seeking to carry it out! Surely if there were a man anywhere who might feel that he had discharged his responsibility in this matter it was Hudson Taylor.

And yet, that quiet Sunday by the sea, how new the conception that had dawned upon him of the Master's meaning in those long-familiar words! It was Mrs. Taylor's birthday (October 6) and they were, spending it in her father's home at Hastings. Did it recall that other memorable Sunday, on the sands at Brighton, when he had met the crisis of his life, and had yielded himself to God for the evangelisation of inland China?

What he saw now, in the light of the Holy Spirit's teaching, was a meaning so great, so comprehensive, in those few simple words—among the last that fell from the ascending Saviour's lips—that it seemed as if he heard them for the first time.

"I confess with shame," he wrote a few months later, "that until that moment the question, What did our Lord really mean by His command, 'Preach the Gospel to every creature,' had never been raised by me. I had laboured for many years, as have many others, to carry the Gospel further afield; had laid

plans for reaching every unreached province and many smaller districts in China, without realising the plain meaning of our Saviour's words."

"**To Every Creature?**" And the total number of Protestant communicants in that great land was only forty thousand. Double the number, treble it, to include adherents, and suppose each one to be a messenger to eight of his fellow countrymen-even so, only one million would be reached. "To every creature": the words burned into his very soul. But how far was the Church, how far had he been himself from taking them literally, as intended to be acted upon I He saw it now, however; and with Hudson Taylor there was but one course-to obey.

*"How are we going to treat the Lord Jesus Christ with reference to this command?" he wrote that very day. "Shall we definitely drop the title Lord as applied to Him, and take the ground that we are quite willing to recognise Him as our Saviour, so far as the penalty of sin is concerned, but are not prepared to own ourselves 'bought with a price,' or Him as having any claim to our unquestioning obedience? Shall we say that we are our own masters, willing to yield something as His due, who bought us with His blood, provided He does not ask too much? Our lives, our loved ones, our possessions are our own, not His we will give Him what we think fit, and obey any of His requirements that do not demand too great a sacrifice? To be taken to heaven by Jesus Christ we are more than willing, but we will not have this Man to **reign** over us?"*

"The heart of every Christian will undoubtedly reject the proposition, so formulated; but have not countless lives in each generation been lived as though it were proper ground to take? How few of the Lord's people have practically recognised the truth that Christ is either Lord of all, or is not Lord at all I If we can judge God's Word, instead of being judged by that Word; if we. can give to God as much or as

little as we like, then we are lords and He is the indebted one, to be grateful for our dole and obliged by our compliance with His wishes. If, on the other hand, He is Lord, let us treat Him as such. 'Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?'"

So, all unexpectedly, he came to the widest outlook of his life, the purpose that was to dominate the closing decade of its active service. With hair fast turning grey and fiftyseven years of experience behind him, he met the new sense of responsibility with the old faith and confidence. Oh, the fresh appeal of the old incentives; the uprising of soul before the old ideals; the faithfulness to early vision, to the first calling; the undimmed power of the one, the eversupreme Love! It is all there—all the purpose of youth without abatement, without compromise, despite the stern realities of four and twenty years of the grinding-mill as leader of the Inland Mission. It was fine, fine flour now, but none of it was lost. "None other Name," none other sufficiency! Christ and Him crucified the one the only remedy for the. sin and need of the world; God, changeless, inexhaustible, behind His commands and promises; divine, constraining love, the motive-power—it is all there, first as last and last as first.

Chapter XXXIII[\(TOC\)](#)

To Every Creature

1889-1890. AET. 57-58

NOT a mere human project but **a divine command** was what Mr. Taylor saw in the words, "To Every Creature," that autumn day by the sea. They came to him with all the urgency of a royal mandate that brooks no delay. It was a question of duty, and, no time was to be lost. "If we begin at once," he realised afresh with straitened heart, millions will have passed away ere we can reach them."

But begin what? Begin a definite, systematic effort to do just as the Master said—to carry the glad tidings of salvation to every man, woman and child throughout the whole of China. Was not that His order? Did He not intend it to be obeyed? Nothing if not practical, Mr. Taylor set himself forthwith to consider, not whether the attempt should be made, but simply—**how?** And as he thought and prayed he came to see, first of all, that **it could be done**. There was no impossibility about the matter. Armies of scores of thousands could be sent to the ends of the' earth for the sake of material conquest, and the Church had at her command resources fully equal to the obligations laid upon her.

Very simply it occurred to him, about the vast population to be reached: a million is a thousand thousands; given a thousand evangelists, each one teaching two hundred and fifty people daily, and in a thousand days two hundred and fifty millions would have the offer of divine mercy. Surely a task that-could, at this rate, be accomplished in little over **three years** should not be thought of as chimerical or beyond the resources of the Christian Church!^[363]

Many objections, he knew, could be raised to this calculation. To begin with some might think it impossible for an individual worker to reach as many as

two hundred and fifty people daily; or that, if they could, such an offer of the Gospel would accomplish little. Mr. Taylor could not but remember, however, the work he had himself done in early years, and especially the many months spent with the Rev. William Burns in thorough systematic evangelisation in districts in which there were no settled missionaries. They had not found it difficult to reach five hundred to one thousand people daily—preaching in all the streets of a given town or city, and entering every shop with books and tracts. As night came on they would repair to a previously announced tea-shop, where interested hearers could meet them for conversation, and any who wished to learn more were invited to their boats for further talk and prayer. How he had loved the work; how often he longed to be in it still! And as to results, he in common with many others could recall, among the brightest converts they had ever known, not a few who had truly given their hearts to Christ the first time they ever heard of Redeeming Love.

His calculation, moreover, did not take into account the help to be given by the missionaries already in China—of whom there were considerably over a thousand—nor the immense and invaluable contribution to be made by native Christians. Forty thousand church members, not to speak of enquirers, would make the proposition a very different thing from what it could be without 'them. He had seen enough already, even in the newly opened provinces, to know that Chinese Christians were ready to lead as well as follow in such an enterprise.

It might be said, however, that our Lord's injunction was not only to "preach the Gospel to every creature, but also to baptize and instruct—"teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"—hence the schools, settled churches and much besides, in which the large majority of

missionaries were engaged. This Mr. Taylor recognised; and none can have longed more than he to see such agencies multiplied. It was not the suspension or neglect of any existing work he was considering, but the great unmet need **beyond**. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth," was a principle he had found deeply true in this connection; and, after all, a thousand additional workers could not give themselves for five years to a widespread evangelistic campaign throughout the whole of China, without fitting themselves all the more fully for the settled work that was sure to follow.

Thus it was that in the December ***China's Millions*** an earnest, practical paper entitled "To Every Creature "made its appearance, outcome of the deep soul-exercise of that October day. Its plea was for immediate action, first in the realm in which every believer may have power, the realm of prayer. What part the C.I.M. might take in the forward movement Mr. Taylor did not attempt to determine. It was the united, simultaneous action of all the societies that alone could put one thousand evangelists in the field without delay. His recent visits to America satisfied him that on that side of the water fully half the required number could be found.

"Even if the Churches were unwilling," he wrote, "to take it up, are there not five hundred Christian workers in Europe who might go out at their own charges? But shall we suppose that the Episcopalians of England, and the Presbyterians of Scotland and Ireland, have not each among them one hundred men and women fit for this glorious enterprise? That the Methodists of the United Kingdom could not supply another hundred, and that Congregationalist and Baptist Churches could not each provide a similar contingent? We may feel well assured that the United States and Canada would not be behind, and thus the one thousand evangelists might easily be forthcoming. How shall a project like this be translated into

*practice? First, by earnest, believing prayer. This was our Saviour's plan, and it has been left on record for our guidance 'The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; **Pray ye therefore** the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth labourers into His harvest.' When we sought for the C.I.M. the Seventy and the Hundred in prayer, and accepted them in faith, we received them in due course from His mighty, loving hand." [364]*

Upon the practical suggestions of this and subsequent papers as to how the 'work could be done we must not dwell. Thorough division of the field, method, and co-operation were his chief points, and that the fullest use should be made of the Chinese Christians. It was no question, as he showed, of merely one offer of the Gospel, in passing, to those who had never heard. A village of a thousand might only detain the evangelists two days (working in pairs), or a neighbouring town twice as long; but many such towns and villages would keep them in a given district for months, and interested inquirers would not lack opportunities for learning the Way of Life more perfectly. "If one offer of the Gospel is insufficient," he urged in this connection, "what shall we think of **none?**"

But it was not the Master's **command** only that was occupying Mr. Taylor's thought, it was the Master's **example**. From the first, the feeding of the four thousand recorded in Matthew had been before his mind. No sooner had the words of Christ, "To every creature," come home to him with power than the question had arisen, almost in spite of himself, "From whence can a man satisfy these with bread here in the wilderness?" The more he thought upon it the more he saw the whole situation in that one incident the whole problem and its solution. Travelling out to China for the second General Missionary Conference, he was thankful not only for the opportunity the gathering would afford for bringing forward the matter about which he was burdened, but also

for such a message. What better subject could he take for his opening sermon than the Lord Himself, face to face with that needy multitude—the **heart** of Jesus and His **sufficiency**?

He always did preach his sermons first of all to himself, and this was no exception.

"I am so glad of your prayers for spiritual blessing for me," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor from Colombo (April 10): "this is the one thing I want and need and must, have. ... How constantly we are all in danger of seeking our own! Darling, I feel I have been forgetting self-denial in the true sense; hence my unwillingness to be separated from you: and this, I fear, has brought me under a cloud. In one sense, God and His work have been first; in another, they have not been so as they should. I have not knowingly neglected the work; but I left you unwillingly instead of joyfully.... I do want to be whole-hearted in God's service. May He work this in me."

A little later he could write of being "refreshed and encouraged" (April 23), and that he had been helped by the preparation of his Conference sermon. He could tell in measure how the Redeemer's heart was going out in yearning compassion over the millions in China who were "as sheep having no shepherd," because of the reflected longing in his own soul; and what else 'could have strengthened and comforted as did that sacred fellowship?

*"I am so glad it was a **great** multitude," he wrote in the draft of his discourse, "so great that the disciples thought it simply impossible to feed them. Yet the multitude were in real need, and the need too was immediate. It must either be met at once or not at all. ... Let us notice that in these circumstances the presence of the disciples alone would not have sufficed. They might perhaps have said, 'Poor things!' They might have regretted that they had not more bread with them; but, they*

*would have left the multitude hungry. But JESUS was there and **His presence** secured the carrying out of His compassionate purpose. All were fed, all were filled, all went away satisfied and strengthened; and the disciples were not only reprov'd and instructed, but were enriched also."*

It was with special joy Mr. Taylor dwelt on the fact of the multitude being no difficulty, nor yet the smallness of supplies. When all that the disciples had was placed at disposal, the Master made it suffice and more than suffice. As for the disciples, they were much like ourselves.

They were slow to learn, they had little faith, they were easily appalled and discouraged-but they were near to Jesus. They were within sound of His voice, ready to obey His call and to listen to what He had to say. And our blessed Master did not scold nor despise them, nor dispense with their services. He lovingly led them on and used them; and He showed Himself so truly one with them that He would do nothing without them. And can it be true that "this same Jesus," now seated on His Father's throne, is so wonderfully one with us, and with our brothers and sisters in this land, that He will do nothing without us? That He, "the true Vine," will bear no fruit save through us, His branches, down here? Oh, my brethren, can we dwell on these thoughts without our hearts burning within us? Gracious Saviour, is Thy wondrous love still the same, Thy wondrous power still the same, to work through such poor, unworthy instruments as we are? Then may I not speak for all, and say, "We do now present ourselves afresh to Thee, to be filled and taught by Thy Spirit, and to be, at any cost, used of Thee for the salvation of this great people."

It was for consecration he pleaded, full consecration of all we have and are to Him Who has given Himself without reserve to us.

Now are we all, today,' in just this relation to Christ? Are we before Him in unreserved consecration? I do not say in strong

faith, I do not say in profound intelligence, I do not say in extraordinary natural or spiritual attainments, but I do say in unreserved consecration. We do not know what it may mean, what it may involve, but we do not need to know. He knows, that is enough. We cannot love ourselves as He loves us; we cannot care for ourselves as He cares for us. Oh, let us trust Him fully, and now if never before, now afresh if often before, take Jesus as our Master and Lord, and with unreserved consecration give over to Him ourselves, our possessions, our loved ones, our all. He is infinitely worthy and He will infinitely make up to us all we give to Him. For in return for our little all, He will give us Himself and His great all.

And then, in face of the unmet need, Jesus gave thanks. He was thankful for the disciples' sake that they had given their all; thankful for the people's sake that they were to be fed; thankful that the Father heard His prayers always, and was now to be glorified through His Son. "Are we always thankful for our difficulties?" Mr. Taylor questioned. "Do we see in them the wisdom and love of God, and an excuse, as it were, all the more to claim His power and help?"

"I do not know that we are told anywhere in the Bible to try to do anything," he continued. "'We must try to do the best we can,' is a very common expression; but I remember some years ago, after a remark of that kind, looking carefully through the New Testament to see under what circumstances the disciples were told to try to do anything. I did not expect to find many instances, but I was surprised not to find any. Then I went through the Old Testament, very carefully, and I could not find that the Lord had ever told Old Testament believers to try to do anything. There were many commands that appeared impossible to obey, but they were all definite commands and I think we all need to set ourselves, not to try to obey our Lord as far as we can, but simply to obey Him."

When face to face with his audience at last-that responsible body of men and women representing all the Protestant societies at work in China-his heart overflowed the bounds of his written address.

"If as an organised Conference," he urged with conviction, "we were to set ourselves to obey the command of the Lord to the full, we should have such an outpouring of the Spirit, such a Pentecost as the world has not seen since the Holy Spirit was outpoured in Jerusalem. God gives His Spirit not to those who long for Him, not to those who pray for Him, not to those who desire to be filled always-but He does give His Holy Spirit 'to them that obey Him.' If as an act of obedience we were to determine that every district, every town, every village, every hamlet in this land should hear the Gospel, and that speedily, and were to set about doing it, I believe that the Spirit would come down in such mighty power that we should find supplies springing up we know not how. We should find the fire spreading from missionary to flock, and our native fellow-workers and the whole Church of God would be blessed. God gives His Holy Spirit to them that obey Him. Let us see to it that we really apprehend what His command to us is, now in the day of our opportunity-this day of the remarkable openness of the country, when there are so many facilities, when God has put steam and telegraph at the command of His people for the quick carrying out of His purposes.

"As to wealth, there is no end to His resources. Poverty in His hands is the greatest wealth. A handful of meal blessed by the Lord is quite sufficient to accomplish any purpose the Lord chooses to accomplish with it. It is not a question of resources at all to those who are following the Master, doing what He has for them to do. ... Let us just obey and cease to reason and He Who cares for us and for the multitude today will make no mistake, and will not change tomorrow."

Chapter XXXIV [\(TOC\)](#)

The Coming Thousand

1890-1891. AET. 58-59

THE Conference appealed for the Thousand—a thousand men within the next five years, for all forms of missionary work in China. Taken by representative leaders of American and Continental as well as English Societies, this united action could not but have weight with all sections of the Church at home on either side of the Atlantic.

"We make this appeal," they wrote, "on behalf of three hundred millions of unevangelised heathen; we make it with the earnestness of our whole hearts, as men overwhelmed with the magnitude and responsibility of the work before us; we make it with unwavering faith in the power of the risen Saviour to call men into His vineyard, and to open the hearts of those who are His stewards to send out and support them, and we shall not cease to cry mightily to Him that He will do this thing, and that our eyes may see it."

To Mr. Taylor, who was Chairman of the Committee appointed to report the outcome, this step was cause for profound thankfulness. It was not all he had hoped for, but it went a long way in that direction. To one who was with him alone just after the opening service, he spoke more freely than he could in public. His sermon had deeply moved the Conference, though what would be the practical result remained to be seen.

*"I believe that the Lord would have us appeal for the Thousand," he said earnestly. "I believe that if we asked for them for the C.I.M., He would give them. But," he added with the quietness of a God-subdued spirit, "I believe that He would have **all** His servants in China share both in the prayer and in the blessing."*

Meanwhile, in other scenes and unexpected ways, the hand of God was

working. Simultaneously, though independently of each other, four ministers in Melbourne had been much exercised about China's spiritual need and claims. It was the very time, strange to say, when Mr. Taylor was writing the papers afterwards published in his little pamphlet "To Every Creature"—the close of 1889. To each of them came the conviction that Australian Christians ought to be doing something toward the evangelisation of the greatest heathen country in the world, and the heathen country nearest their own shores. Of the four, two were Episcopalians, the Rev. H. B. Macartney and his curate, the Rev. C. H. Parsons; one was a Presbyterian, the Rev. W. Lockhart Morton, and one a Baptist, the Rev. Alfred Bird. After some weeks, when they discovered that the burden was one they shared in common, the friends met together for prayer, and it was not long before they found that the Lord was calling one of their number to give his own life to the work. His place could be filled at home, but few were thinking of the greater need beyond.

Missions to the New Hebrides and New Guinea, as well as in some parts of India, were receiving the support of Australian Christians at this time, but partly in consequence of racial prejudice against the Chinese in their midst, nothing was being done for the vast and populous land from which they came. Yet it was evident, that these merchants, market-gardeners, and laundry-men, represented a strong, sagacious people, capable of, wonderful response to the redeeming love of Christ. Thus when the curate at Caulfield, near Melbourne, desired to go as a missionary to China, it was necessary to seek a connection with one of the societies in the old country. This led to a correspondence with the Inland Mission; to the acceptance of Mr. Parsons, and his sailing for Shanghai shortly before the Conference which had brought Mr. Taylor from England, and to the earnest desire on the part of his friends in Victoria that a local Council should be formed, to work in connection with

the C.I.M. as did the Councils in Toronto and elsewhere.

Nor was this all—for in the neighbouring island of Tasmania similar results had been arrived at, though in a different way. A young missionary who had gone out from England as an Associate of the Mission was obliged, through failing health, to return to Launceston about the time that Mr. Taylor was writing the above-mentioned papers. There in the home of her mother, Mrs. Henry Reed of Mount Pleasant, and in the church built in her father's memory, of which Mr. George Soltau was then pastor, her influence was telling in a remarkable way. China in all its need was the burden on her heart, and as she spoke of it in meetings, with the love and zeal of one who was following in the footsteps of the Master, many were moved with the same spirit. The result was that gifts began to flow in and offers of service, so that just as Mr. Parsons set out from Melbourne to urge the formation of a branch of the Mission in Victoria, Mr. George Soltau was writing to the same effect, conveying Mrs. Henry Reed's desire as well as 'his own that their old friend, Mr. Hudson Taylor, would visit the Colonies and form a Council for carrying on the work.

Before an answer could be received to these invitations, still further developments had taken place. Mr. Alfred Bird, on a visit to Tasmania, had been welcomed under Mrs. Reed's hospitable roof, and there had met her daughter from China and learned the above circumstances. This was news indeed to carry back to his friends in Melbourne, who heartily endorsed his invitation to Miss Mary Reed and her sister to come over for a campaign of meetings. A missionary from China was a novelty in those days, especially one who had lived in the interior, wearing native dress and working at her own charges. Drawing-rooms, churches, and college halls were thrown open, and the sisters found themselves overwhelmed with work, which resulted in

many gifts and candidates for the Mission.

To Mr. Taylor, in the midst of the Conference, all this was full of encouragement. If in China they were being led to ask great things for the Lord's work, He was certainly showing, under the Southern Cross, that He could open up fresh channels of supply. The new headquarters of the Mission also, to which he had been welcomed on landing, encouraged thoughts of development. Commenced as he was leaving China little more than a year previously, these ample premises were completed just in time for his return, and to receive the members of the Mission, eighty of whom gathered for the Conference and for the C.I.M. meetings which followed. The opening of the hall for prayer and public services, and the wedding that took place a few days later, when the generous donor of land and buildings married a fellow-member of the Mission—all the bridal party being in Chinese dress— attracted many friends, and called attention to the wonderful provision the Lord had made for the needs of the growing work.

Upon the C.I.M. Conference we must not dwell, nor upon the subsequent Council Meetings, when for three weeks the leaders of the Mission were occupied with problems of the work and with preparation for future developments. A cable to Melbourne authorising the formation of the proposed Council had put matters in train for Mr. Taylor's visit to the Australian states, and by the end of July he found himself free to set out.^[365]

"In the midst of much joy and much sorrow," he wrote to Mr. Theodore Howard before leaving, "the presence of our dear Lord has been a constant feast and a deep, rest. The Lord has immense blessing in store for us."

Travelling native passage to Hongkong to save expense, Mr. Taylor and his companions—Mr. Montagu Beauchamp and a secretary—could hardly feel

as if they had left China. For they still wore Chinese dress, and, crowded between decks with many fellow-passengers, they had all they could do to endure the heat of those August days. The change to a native inn on the quay in Chinatown, Hongkong, while waiting for a steamer to take them on to Sydney, was all the more welcome.

"They put us in an upper storey," wrote Mr. Beauchamp of this experience, "so we had the full benefit of the harbour with all its shipping, the shrieking whistles of countless steam launches being thrown into the bargain. We had Chinese meals and paid by the day-a dollar and a half covering everything for the party. They gave us a room to ourselves. It was absolute clover!"

When Port Darwin was reached, the Superintendent of the Steamship Company determined to transfer these "steerage passengers" to the almost empty first-class quarters. Knowing that Mr. Taylor would not consent to such an arrangement, he took advantage of their being detained ashore by a meeting to send word to the Captain to move their belongings, and on returning to the ship at night they were informed that so many Chinese were coming on board that they could no longer be accommodated in the fore-cabin. In great comfort, therefore, they finished the journey: at Thursday Island, even Mr. Beauchamp discarding his Chinese garments for more conventional attire. Hardly had he done so when, in the course of a stroll ashore, he met a friend who would have had difficulty in recognising him a few hours previously. In a pleasant bungalow in that remote spot, he saw, or thought he saw, no less a personage than Henry Drummond. Not feeling quite sure, he mentioned his name aloud in passing, when the Professor looked up quickly, and their surprise and pleasure were mutual.^[366]

Of the full weeks that followed the arrival of the party much might be said

did limits of space permit; for open doors awaited them on every hand, and friends old and new were generous with help and sympathy. As it is, however, the story of outward activities must be curtailed for details of greater significance. "Do not speak to me," was said by a thoughtful observer in another connection: "what you are thunders so loud that I cannot hear what you say." What message, in this sense, had Mr. Taylor's quiet, steadfast, God-impressed life for the go-ahead world of the Colonies?

Beginning in Melbourne, where at first the meetings were not large, Mr. Taylor had time to become personally acquainted with the members of the Council, and both there and in Tasmania it was noticed how he laid himself out to help these and other friends in the duties they had undertaken. Of a meeting in the drawing-room at Mount Pleasant to consider the important question of candidates, one who took part in it wrote:

Never can I forget how helpfully Mr. Taylor led us on to see the needs, so that we suggested the rules to be made and the line to be taken by the Council, wholly unaware at the moment of how he was guiding our thought. But that was characteristic of Mr. Taylor! the grace of our Lord Jesus' Christ so overflowing, that those who listened were for the time being scarcely conscious of the wisdom and power: behind his words.

The same friend remembered accompanying Mr. Taylor to a meeting in Launceston, when he stopped in the middle of the street, and, looking up, said without any introduction

"There should be only one circumstance to us in life, and that Circumstance—GOD."

"What a genius he had for giving utterance to telling sentences," she recalled, "which, like nails driven by a skilful

*hand, **remain**. I do not think I ever met him without carrying away some such word; and many of them have spoken comfort to my heart again and again, and to others, as I have passed them on."*

His simplicity and the naturalness of all he said and did impressed many. As the meetings became better known, large buildings were filled with eager hearers; but he was still the same, and as free from self-consciousness as a child. One occasion was long remembered in Melbourne, when a large Presbyterian Church was crowded, the Moderator himself occupying the Chair. In eloquent, well-chosen phrases he enlarged upon what had been accomplished in China through Mr. Taylor's instrumentality, finally introducing him to the audience as "our illustrious guest."

Quietly Mr. Taylor stood for a moment, "the light of God on his face," as one who was present recalled, and then began his address by saying in a way that won all hearts "Dear friends, I am the little servant of an illustrious Master."

Children were drawn to him, just as in Sweden, and indeed wherever he went. After a meeting in Government House, Hobart, where he was cordially welcomed by Sir Robert and Lady Hamilton, it was just like him to return with pleasure to the nursery of the home in which he was entertained, a few miles out of the city.

"He was just beautiful with little ones," wrote his hostess, Mrs. Fagg, formerly of Singapore. "He took each child in our home, and kneeling with them apart, presented them one by one to his Heavenly Father for definite blessing.... Two of those children are now engaged in missionary work, one in India and one in China."

It was the latter, little Edith, only three years old at the time of Mr. Taylor's visit, who remembered him with special affection. A year or two later, when

she achieved the triumph of knitting a doll's garment, nothing would do but that it must be sent to China, to Mr. Taylor—"Cause I love him so!"

But it was on those of ripe experience that he made the most impression, and the deeper the spiritual life the more it responded to his own. Thus his host in Melbourne for a fortnight, the Rev. H. B. Macartney, wrote:

He was an object lesson in quietness. He drew from the Bank of Heaven every farthing of his daily income—"My peace I give unto you." Whatever did not agitate the Saviour, or ruffle His spirit was not to agitate him. The serenity of the Lord Jesus concerning any matter and at its most critical moment, this was his ideal and practical possession: He knew nothing of rush or hurry, of quivering nerves or vexation of spirit. He knew there was a peace passing all understanding, and that he could not do without it.

Now I was altogether different. Mine is a peculiarly nervous disposition, and with a busy life I found myself in a tremor all day long. I did not enjoy the Lord as I knew I ought. Nervous agitation possessed me as long as there was anything to be done. The greatest loss of my life was the loss of the light of the Lord's presence and fellowship during writing hours. The daily mail robbed me of His delightful society.

"I am in the study, you are in the big spare room," I said to Mr. Taylor at length.', 'You are occupied with millions, I with tens. Your letters are pressingly important, mine of comparatively little moment. Yet I am worried and distressed, while you axe always calm. Do tell me what makes the difference."

"My dear Macartney," he replied, "the peace you speak of is in my case more than a delightful privilege, it is a necessity."

He said most emphatically, "I could not possibly get through

the work I have to do without the peace of God 'which passeth all understanding' keeping my heart and mind."

That was my chief experience of Mr. Taylor: Are you in a hurry, flurried, distressed? Look up I See the Man in the Glory! Let the face of Jesus shine upon you-the face of the Lord Jesus Christ. Is He worried, troubled, distressed? There is no wrinkle on His brow, no least shade of anxiety. Yet the affairs are His as much as yours.

"Keswick teaching" as it is called was not new to me at that time. I had received those glorious truths and was preaching them to others. But here was the real thing-an embodiment of Keswick teaching "such as I had never hoped to see. This impressed me profoundly—here is a man almost sixty years of age, bearing tremendous burdens,, yet absolutely calm and unruffled. Oh, the pile of letters! any one of which might contain news of death, of shortness of funds, of riots or serious trouble. Yet all were opened, read and answered with the same tranquillity-Christ his reason for peace, his power for calm. Dwelling in Christ he partook of His very being and resources, in the midst of and concerning the very matters in question. And he did this by an act of faith as simple as it was continuous.

Yet he was delightfully free and natural. I can find no words to describe it save the Scriptural expression "in God." He was "in God" all the time, and God in him. It was that true "abiding" of John 15. But oh, the lover-like attitude that underlay it! He had in relation to Christ a most bountiful experience of the Song of Solomon. It was a wonderful combination-the strength and tenderness of one who, amid stern preoccupation, like that of a judge on the bench, carried in his heart the light and love of home.

It was this element of delight in God that made him so responsive to the beauty of His works, from the greatest to the

least. Behind our house lay an extensive field "in Chancery" all overgrown with epacrid, heather and Australian wild flowers. Oh, his enjoyment of it! He would go out after his letters had been sent to the post and wander over the common, standing in the midst of that blaze of colour and beauty with the rapture of a child. "All things were made by Him": this was the secret of his unfailing joy in them.

The influence of Mr. Taylor's public utterances may be judged from the result of the meetings.

"Funds are coming in, and many promising candidates offer," he wrote two months after landing. "Fifty-seven was the number I last heard mentioned."

More than sixty applied to join the Mission before the time came for Mr. Taylor's return to China, and many others were profoundly influenced who found their life-work in India and elsewhere. Such, for example, was the young evangelist who felt quite annoyed when he saw in the local paper an announcement of Mr. Taylor's Hobart meetings. He had no sympathy at that time, no patience even, with those who advocated foreign missions; being convinced, through certain preconceptions, that the whole idea was mistaken and unscriptural. Mr. Reeve was an earnest Bible student however, and when drawn to the meetings in spite of himself the first thing he noticed was that the speaker, whatever might be his vagaries, was certainly dealing faithfully with the Word of God. Indeed as he listened, Charles Reeve felt that he had never heard the Bible more truly and helpfully expounded, though the conclusions he could not escape ran counter to his strongest convictions up to that hour. For it was on the back seat of that hall, as Mr. Taylor's earnest voice went on, that the call of God came to him, and the Poona and Indian Village Mission of today, with its band of devoted workers, is the outcome.

The best of the meetings were naturally the last, when Mr. Taylor was surrounded by the bright young volunteers who were returning with him to China. He had had no hesitation in letting it be known that he was praying for a hundred fellow-workers from Australasia, and the large number who had already come forward awakened the deepest interest. When the Council arranged for a day of prayer and conference for ministers only, to meet Mr. Taylor and Mr. Beauchamp, no fewer than forty attended; and the same evening the Melbourne Town Hall witnessed an enthusiastic gathering of three thousand people to bid farewell to the party.

"Many souls have been saved and blessed through these meetings," Mr. Taylor was able to write to Mr. Stevenson. "God is stirring the hearts of His people here; and if we had more time, we might look for a hundred workers from these Colonies and New Zealand before very long. As it is, I believe the Lord will do great things for China."

Four young men, Miss Mary Reed, and seven other ladies composed the party which was to sail with Mr. Taylor in October. But the vessel was delayed owing to a strike of dock labourers, and an invitation for meetings in Queensland, which he had had to decline, recurred to Mr. Taylor's mind. He little knew how much prayer there had been behind that invitation, or the outgoings of heart with which the Queensland vicar and his wife thought of great, dark China, far away. Their home was attractive, the living one of the best in the Colony, and their work congenial. But the appeal of the Shanghai Conference had reached them, and Mr. Southey noted that ordained men were specially asked for. His health was not very robust, and with three young children to think of, it might well have seemed that he was doing all he could, by earnestly forwarding the cause of missions at home. But this did not satisfy his conscience before God.

I cannot help feeling," he wrote to Mr. Taylor when he heard that the latter was really coming, "that some of the Ipswich ministers ought to go to the heathen. In a town of eight or nine thousand inhabitants—of whom not quite two thirds are Protestants—there are nine Protestant churches with ten ministers; and not one of the churches is ever really full. It is not from any wish to change that I write this. I am only anxious to do my Father's will. I am perfectly willing to stay in Queensland if it is His will, and I am willing if it be His will to go to the heathen. There is plenty to do here. Spiritual religion in all the churches is at a sadly low ebb, and there is but little missionary zeal. ... So that I may truly say that there is work for a child of God here; but it does seem that there is more among the heathen."

Few experiences ever touched Mr. Taylor more deeply than the visit to this happy, delightful home, which the parents were so ready to forsake for the love that is stronger than any earthly tie. Mr. Southey, when he met him that early summer morning,^[367] was for a moment disappointed. He had heard and thought so much about the veteran missionary, that he unconsciously expected some one of imposing appearance; and when a single passenger alighted from the express and came toward him, he could hardly believe it was the visitor expected.

"On reaching home," he wrote some years later, "I mentioned this feeling of disappointment to my wife, adding, however, 'I am sure he is a good man.'

"But she was of quicker discernment than I, and after a little chat with our guest came and said, 'Look at the light in his face.'

"And truly Mr. Taylor did have the light of God in his face. So constantly did he look up to God, and so deep was his communion with God, that his very face seemed to have upon

it a heavenly light. He had not been many hours in the house before the first sense of disappointment gave place to a deep reverence and love, and I realised as never before what the grace of God could do. Often and often had I longed to go to Keswick, but now God in His love had sent Keswick to me, and I was permitted not to listen to beautiful teaching, but to see the beauty of, a: life lived in abiding fellowship with the Lord Jesus. In the house he was all that a guest should be, kind, courteous, considerate, gracious. He at, once fell into the routine of the household, was punctual at the meal table, studied to give the minimum of trouble, and was swift to notice and to express. his thanks for every little service rendered. We could not help noticing the utter lack of self-assertion about him, and his true because unconscious humility. About the Lord and His grace and faithfulness he spoke freely; about himself and his service he said nothing. Only by questioning did we learn anything of his own labours or experiences, but when he was thus drawn out, how much he had to tell!

"While he was with us the question of our going to China was discussed, and though from the very first he seemed to feel that our offer was of the Lord, yet he took pains to set before us the whole facts of the case. The climate, the discomforts, the absence of medical help, the necessity of parting from the children, etc., were fully gone into. He certainly did not lead us out by withholding from us the real facts; and more than once after walking up and down our garden, which seemed to have a great charm for him, he said to my wife, 'You won't have a garden like this in China!'"

But the refuge in God that they would have, and the certainty of His sustaining grace, was confirmed to them by all they saw of their visitor, and had not a little to do with the step of faith which gave to China two of its truest helpers and to the Mission, ultimately, its beloved Home Director for Australia and New Zealand.

Wonderful were the developments of that winter, both before and after Mr. Taylor's return to China. Arriving on Sunday the 21st of December, he had the joy of finding Mrs. Taylor awaiting him. Arrangements had at last been possible to free her from home responsibilities, and she had long felt that her place was at his side. Unable to be at the last Saturday prayer meeting before leaving Pyrland Road, she had written to the friends to whom she had been in the habit of giving recent news from China

I had wanted to ask you—when some one else rises to read the letters—to lift your hearts to God for me, and say: "Make her a blessing to her husband: make her a blessing wherever she goes."

We may visit many stations. In a few weeks I hope to join the Shanghai prayer meeting, and I want to cheer them on. May I tell them that you are more in earnest for blessing than ever? If the Gospel is to be given "To every creature," much will depend on you, dear friends. You must take hold upon God for this. You must uphold our hands in believing, fervent prayer. The work is yours as well as ours, and so will the reward be. The Lord unite your hearts in one, and bow them before Himself in compassion for the lost. Oh, that we could have heart breakings at home over the state of the world! Dr. Pierson says, "Prayer has turned every great crisis in the kingdom of God." It is a solemn question for each one of us, "What are my prayers really effecting?" Do we know that we have the petitions that we desire of Him?

I want to carry fresh inspiration to the Training Home at Anking, and to the Sisters in Yang-chow. Will you pray that to every place we are allowed to visit, my beloved husband and I may be taken in the power of the Spirit? The enemy's tactics are to divide, to discourage, to deaden. Let us realise our oneness in Christ; let us be strong and of a good courage, and seek zealously and continuously the quickening influences of

the Holy Spirit. God grant that the Saturday prayer meeting, which has brought such blessing in the past, may this winter be more than ever a meeting-place with God. We praise for what has been done; but when we look at what needs to be done, when we think of what might be done, we must humble ourselves before God. Time is short, opportunity great: let us be downright in earnest.

Absent nine years from China, Mrs. Taylor saw great changes, great advance on every hand, and her presence seemed to double Mr. Taylor's capacity for work and happiness in it. And there was need 'of all he could do and be that winter, to keep pace with the unprecedented growth of the Mission. Great had been the joy in 1887 when a hundred new workers had come out within twelve months; but now, in *half* that time, **a hundred and thirty-one** were received in Shanghai for the C.I.M. alone. Sixty-six of them, indeed, arrived in little over three weeks—a new thing on any mission field! And the sources of supply were no less remarkable than the numbers.^[368]

Far away in northern Europe, the little pamphlet "To Every Creature" had fallen into the hands of a devoted evangelist, the Rev. F. Franson—Swedish by birth but a naturalised 'American—who had worked for seven years with D. L. Moody. Always keen about foreign missions, its appeal for absolute loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ and unquestioning obedience to His great command fired a soul whose zeal could not but move others. Twice had Franson been in prison for his uncompromising earnestness in preaching the Gospel; and now, with a burning heart, he carried this new crusade throughout the region where he then was, which happened to be northern Germany. Wonderfully used of God, he was the means of widespread blessing, and meeting in Barmen with kindred spirits—Messrs. Polnick, Paas, and others—it was there the missionary interest specially developed. The China Alliance Mission was the result, and wishing to work on the lines of

the C.I.M. its leaders entered into correspondence with Mr. Taylor. It was not long before its first representatives sailed for China as associates of the Inland Mission; but Franson, by that time, had entered upon another campaign, among the Scandinavian churches in America.

Well known throughout the States, he had no lack of openings, and he proceeded on the plan, as he wrote to Mr. Taylor, of encouraging the Lord's people "to give support each church to one missionary."

"This plan has proved to be a very good one," he continued. I have succeeded very well. Not only have this party their support secured, but another expedition of some ten will leave Omaha twelve days later than this one. We arrange it so that we do not send any who has not been used of God to blessing for souls.... A good many have offered themselves but have been refused, some on the ground of insufficient health, some on the ground of incapability for mission work. A very great interest has been created all over America among Scandinavians, through my personal visits and the visits of these missionaries."

Chosen men and women of devoted spirit, their intention was, as Mr. Franson explained, to do itinerant. work; "that is to be of the Thousand Mr. Taylor has prayed to the Lord about-to do just that work."

They are prepared to go from place to place preaching the Gospel, distributing tracts and Bibles, as the Lord may lead for at least three years ... and not to marry during this time, or even get engaged to marriage. ... I suppose it best that they procure Chinese clothes as soon as they arrive.

Their desire was to be associated with the C.I.M., just as the Swedish and German Alliance Missions were, and to be under the direction of Mr. Taylor and his representatives no less than that of their own leaders. It was a large

contribution, as it proved, to the ranks of the Mission.

Never can one of the writers forget coming down the long verandah of the Mission-house with Mr. Stevenson that February morning, in glorious sunshine, just as two young men of pleasing appearance presented themselves at the main entrance.

"They must be the Scandinavians," said the Deputy Director, going to meet them; for he had just been speaking of Mr. Franson's party.

"How many are you?" was a necessary question in view of providing accommodation.

"We are thirty-five," came the astonishing reply, "and there are ten more, or perhaps fifteen, who will be here next week."

Thirty-five in one party, and more to follow I hardly could we take it in. But the dear fellows looked so happy, and were so anxious to bring up all the others to share their welcome, that there was no room for hesitation. The only thing to do was to receive them, full though the house seemed already, thankfully realising that they were given of God in answer to prayer, part of the coming thousand.

And who that was then in the Mission-house was not cheered and blessed through the coming of the Scandinavian Fifty? Faith set to music was the atmosphere they carried with them. To the accompaniment of their guitars and hearts overflowing with praise, they taught us many a sweet refrain from their Swedish hymns. Few of them could speak much English, but they prayed with perfect freedom in our meetings, and though we could not understand-save where the oft-repeated "Chere Herre Jesu "or Kina, Kina "came in-the sense of fellowship in Christ was very real.

It's best to go singing, to go singing all the way,

was one chorus they translated for us and no less characteristic was the postscript to a letter of united thanks they wrote on leaving Shanghai for their up-country destinations:

"March along—we are going to conquer! We have victory through the Blood."

Chapter XXXV [\(TOC\)](#)

Deepening the Channels

1891-1892. AET. 59-60

YET with all this growth and encouragement, seldom had there been a time of more serious and widespread danger for foreigners in China, or of greater strain for Mr. Taylor as leader of the Mission. The Scandinavian Fifty had hardly gone singing on their way when riots began to break out all along the Yangtze valley. In place after place Mission premises were destroyed, and though the fury of the people was specially directed against the Romanists, all foreigners were more or less imperilled. Even in Shanghai it seemed uncertain whether the authorities would be able to restrain looting and violence, and little sleep was to be had on more than one hot summer night because a riot was expected before morning.

Mr. Stevenson, meanwhile, had been obliged to take needed furlough, after five years of heavy directorial responsibilities. This left Mr. Taylor in sole charge in Shanghai and unable to leave headquarters, gladly as he would have gone to the help of those in more difficult situations. It was the women workers of the Mission who were specially on his heart, the little groups alone in the interior, with no human protection or companionship save that of the native Christians; and great was, the comfort of letters such as the following

"There has been a good deal of iao-ien (wild talk) since the riots," wrote Miss Mackintosh from the Kwang-sin river, "but we go quietly on as usual. 'Under His shadow' there is perfect safety anywhere. The six Swedish sisters are here, and are getting along with the language. The sisters from Kwangfeng are here also during the heat, so we are a party of thirteen, and all well and happy.... 'Jesus Himself drew near.'"

"Jesus Himself drew near": yes, that was the secret of peace at many a post of

danger. One missionary, not of the C.I.M., was murdered while waiting for a steamer on the Yangtze,^[369] and with him the Customs official (European) who had gone to his relief; and everywhere rumours were most menacing.

"The great enemy of souls has been simply raging against missions in China," Mr. Taylor wrote to Mrs. Fagg in Hobart some months later. "I look on the recent riots as Satan's reply to the Conference appeal for a thousand additional workers. God will have His response, however; and while the enemy is mighty, God alone is almighty."

His chief concern was that the Mission should stand for real faith at such a time, setting an example of quietness and confidence in God to the Chinese Christians.

"We are continually encouraging our converts to brave persecution and to suffer loss for Christ's sake," he wrote in a circular letter upon how, to act in times of danger,^[370] "and they are apt to think that it is easy for us to speak in this way, seeing that, as far as they can tell, we are well-off and exposed to no danger or loss. When, therefore, we are in danger they will mark our conduct very closely, and judge for themselves how far we really believe that 'Sufficient is His arm alone, and-our defence is sure.'

What a loss it would be if any of them should think that we relied more upon a gunboat or a band of soldiers than upon the living God! Years of teaching would not impress them as our conduct at such times may do. Moreover their sympathy will be drawn out toward us when they see us willing to suffer for the Gospel, as they so often have to do. A time of danger is a grand opportunity for being an object-lesson to the native Christians."

For five, long months, from May to October, the excitement continued,

notwithstanding an Imperial proclamation which had a good effect. With few exceptions, C.I.M. workers were enabled to remain at their stations, none of which were actually rioted, though many were seriously threatened. Prayer for rain in June was wonderfully answered, and again in October, when the Council Meetings were adjourned in order that all in the Mission-house at Shanghai might unite in waiting upon God for deliverance. The summer had been intensely hot, and nothing was so likely to quiet the people as steady, continuous rain, which was much needed. Prayer was earnest and definite therefore, in this connection, and three weeks later a letter from Mrs. Taylor recorded the definite answer: "Rain has been coming down almost all this month." The effect was just what was hoped for: crowds were scattered, and gradually the anti-foreign feeling died down for the time being, and normal conditions were restored.

Meanwhile burdens of a different nature were pressing more and more heavily. With a mission embracing so many workers, widely scattered over a vast territory, all to be counselled, guided, sustained by prayer, supplied with means and many of the necessaries of life, it was inevitable that much of care, if not anxiety, should come upon its responsible head in Shanghai. To his beloved friend the Home Director in London, Mr. Taylor wrote in June

Even you, dear Mr. Howard, can scarcely realise what it is to be out here, to know and love our dear workers, to hear of their sorrows and difficulties, their disappointments and their strifes; learning of sickness, needing arrangements for succour if possible; receiving telegrams asking for direction in peril, or telling it may be of death accounts coming in of massacre and arson, and all the untold incidents of our ever-varying experience—not to speak of the ordinary responsibilities and the pecuniary claim of a mission now approaching five hundred in number. There is just one way to avoid being overwhelmed—to bring everything as it arises to

our Master; and He does help, and He does not misunderstand.

Often had the question of funds to be brought to the Lord at this time, for it was one that was causing Mr. Taylor no little exercise of mind. With a rapidly growing and encouraging work a the field, the income received in England had been falling for two or three years. Believing as he did that every gift to the Mission was the outcome of a divinely given impulse, Mr. Taylor could not but search his own life again and again, and prayerfully consider every aspect of the work to see whether there might be anything hindering the blessing of the Lord in this respect. His heart was kept in peace about it and about all the pressure that was upon him, but apart from the daily miracle of sustaining grace it would have been far otherwise.^[371]

And there were other trials that led to even deeper exercise of heart and mind. For the relation of the work in China to the Council at home had not yet passed beyond the experimental stage, in which questions were apt to come up that were difficult of settlement. The whole idea of, the Mission in this connection-government on the field rather than from a distance-was so new and contrary to received traditions that it was no wonder it had to win its way gradually, and in face, at times, of criticism and questioning. To Mr. Taylor with his thorough grasp of the problems to be dealt with, nothing could be clearer than that the control of affairs in China must be vested in men of expert knowledge, leaders in whom their fellowmissionaries would have confidence, able to deal with matters effectively on the spot. It was easy to see that in the home centres the Directors and Councils must be free to apply the principles of the Mission to their own problems and decide their own line of action in accordance with them; but it needed time and experience to make it equally plain that the China administration must be upon the same footing. In principle this had been-conceded from the first; but it was one thing to

have confidence in Mr. Taylor's 'management as long as matters were in his own hands, and quite another to transfer that confidence to the China Council. Yet this was a cardinal point in the organisation he was building up, sometimes amid much of trial and perplexity.

"Mr. Berger is quite right," he wrote to Mr. Stevenson in this connection (May '91), "that the supreme question is that of final headship, and it is equally clear to me that it can only be vested in China; but great gentleness and patience will be needed to make the reasonableness of this clear to all. It is the Lord's work, and He Who is most deeply interested will help us."

To one of Mr. Taylor's tender, affectionate nature divergence of judgement from those he esteemed highly, and to whom the Mission was indebted for much selfsacrificing service, was peculiarly painful, especially when, as in the present case, it was long continued. But there could be no question of compromise upon so vital an issue.

"We may make mistakes in China," he wrote again to Mr. Theodore Howard (August. 28), "and no doubt mistakes have been made in the past; but evils far more serious would result from abandoning what I am convinced are God-given lines for the C.I.M."

Much as it would have meant to him therefore, amid all the pressure of this period, to have had the full and sympathetic concurrence ultimately secured in these matters, there was nothing for it but to wait upon God and to wait His time. And meanwhile the whole situation was being thought out and prayed over, both in England and China, in a way that could not but strengthen the work in days to come.

"The Lord doubtless has His purpose in permitting it," Mr. Taylor wrote to Mr. Stevenson at the close of the year

(December. '91), "and to learn any lesson He may have to teach us is more important than getting rid of the trouble."

What could have been more encouraging under the circumstances than just the outpourings of spiritual blessing, both in the spying of the year and at its close, with which the Lord was pleased to cheer His servants in Shanghai? No one could relieve Mr. Taylor of burdens that pressed the heaviest, but others might be channels of divine grace through which the entire Mission should be refreshed.

Such a channel was Mr. Frost, now paying his first visit to China. Arriving with a party from Toronto in February, he stayed till well on in the summer, making a considerable journey round the nearer stations. A conference of American workers gathered in Shanghai to meet him proved a time of real spiritual help.^[372] "We would see Jesus," the hymn with which it opened, had to be modified ere the close to a version more in keeping with radiant lives and faces:

We have seen Jesus—the great rock foundation,
Whereon our feet were set with sovereign grace;
Nor life, nor death, with all their agitation,
Can thence remove us, as we see His face.

Early in the autumn Mr. Cassels arrived from his far western province to attend the Council Meetings, and the Misses Newcombe of the C.M.S—soon to lay down their lives for Christ's sake—came up from Foo-chow on a visit. All these brought blessing to the resident staff and the many coming and going in the Mission-house. They spoke much of the life that is "No longer I but Christ" in practical reality, but best of all **they lived it**. And is there anything else so sure to awaken hunger in other hearts?

"There is a real spirit of prayer and quickening in the Home here, praise God!" Mrs. Taylor wrote on November 7.

A week later Mr. and Mrs. Orr-Ewing arrived from England, and with them Mr. Walter B. Sloan, whose way had opened, after years of prayer, to join the Mission. Before going on to An-king to commence the study of the language, he gave in a series of Bible Readings some of the deeper things learned in that waiting time. The Word was with power, and many of his hearers could have said with Mr. Macartney of Melbourne:

The peace you enjoy has made me envious: I want to have more of it, and from the same Source. This, I think, I can truly say—the absence of it, or the interruptions of it, make me more uncomfortable and unhappy than ever before. This, too, is a work of the Holy Spirit for which I am thankful; but I long to pass completely from the reign of ever-recurring conviction to the reign of ever-increasing rest. ^[373]

Then a great uplift was given, as the year drew to a close, by the coming of a C.M.S. party with Mr. and Mrs. Heywood Horsburgh from England. These beloved friends had the sorrow of losing a precious child in Shanghai, but from stricken hearts only love and blessing flowed to others. The tide of spiritual life was deepening, and before they left for their new sphere, fifteen hundred miles up the Yangtze, several conversions had taken place in the C.I.M. Hall and on a British man-of-war lying in the river. After that came a wonderful time, in which one and another were brought face to face with a question which revealed the heart's deepest need and opened up a whole world of blessed possibility. One young worker from the interior, for example, unavoidably detained in Shanghai, was present at these meetings, and stirred with a sense of need and longing as; never before. Four years in China had taught her something of the joy and blessing to be found in deeper fellowship with the Master, but something also of the deadening influences of

heathenism, the power of evil within as well as around her, and the blank despair of seeking to help others when her own soul was out of living touch with Christ. How she longed for "the changed life," the life she saw in others, but knew not: how to attain. Praying in anguish no one suspected for light and help, it was the last Sunday before Christmas when a word was spoken that, under God, brought deliverance and made all things new. After the evangelistic service in the C.I.M. Hall, an entire stranger—a Christian seaman—came up to her and said earnestly:

"Are you filled with the Holy Ghost?"

Filled with the Holy Ghost? She remembered no more of the conversation, but that question burned deeper and deeper into her heart. This, then, was the explanation of all the inward failure, the sorrow that seemed unavailing, the purposes that came to nothing. God had made a provision, given a Gift that she had never definitely accepted. She knew that the Holy Spirit must be her life in a certain sense, for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." And yet, just as certainly, she knew that she was not "filled with the Spirit, and was experiencing little of His power.

But how afraid she was of being misled, of running into error and mistaking emotion for reality! The Word of God was full, now she came to study the subject, of the personality and power of the Holy Spirit. The Acts of the Apostles—what was it but the acts of the Holy Ghost, transforming and quickening lives just as she knew she needed to be quickened and transformed? Oh, yes, why had she never seen it! It was indeed the Holy Spirit she needed; the fulness of the Holy Spirit, to make unseen things real to her and impossible things possible. And there stood out in Galatians 3:13, 14 the words:

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, having

*been made a curse for us ... that we might **receive** the promise of the Spirit **through faith**."*

What was she doing with the infinite Gift purchased at such a cost? She saw that just as Christ is ours by the gift of God, and yet we have each one personally to receive Him, so with the Holy Spirit. She saw that He too was a Person, just as real as the Lord Jesus, and to be just as truly welcomed by faith into the heart that cannot do without Him as a living link with the risen, glorious Lord. All the rest that can be told is that she took the step, though with fear and trembling-scarce knowing what it meant and trusted the Holy Spirit to come in and possess her fully, just as she had trusted the Lord Jesus to be her Saviour. Feeling nothing, realising nothing, she just took God at His word, and then and there asked that the promise might be fulfilled—"When He is come (to you) He will reprove (or convict) the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgement." Her chief sorrow for many months had been that she seemed to have little power for soul-winning, and hardly knew of any who had been brought to Christ through her instrumentality. It was Christmas week, and believing that a real, a definite transaction had taken place alone in that quiet room, she asked in faith that God would give her to see the proof of it in actual conversions **every day that week**, in connection with meetings that were being held.

And every day that week the prayer was answered. More than twenty people, young and old, sailors, visitors, and residents in Shanghai, it was given her to help to a definite decision for Christ, while the joy and liberty of her own heart were so manifest that others could not but long for and seek the same blessing. All this meant much to Mr. Taylor. No encouragement could ever be, to him, so great as just to see the hand of God working in such ways. Going into the room where a young missionary lay dying one he had been seeking to help—he found the extremity of human weakness overflowed

with the glow of a wonderful triumph. Fear and distress were gone.

"She told me about the Holy Spirit," whispered the one who had so dreaded the dark valley, "and it was just what I needed."

For weeks and even months the blessing continued. Mr. Sloan returned to Shanghai for a second series of meetings; and in various centres, foreign residents and members of other missions entered into fulness of life in Christ.

God is working in our midst," Mrs. Taylor wrote in April (1892), "emptying and humbling one and another, and filling with the Holy Spirit. We are having frequent meetings full of liberty and power."

On the 16th of that month the Council, which was in session, was suspended, a minute being passed to record that,

Instead of meeting for conference, the China Council united with the members of the Mission in Shanghai in seeking for themselves, the whole Mission in China and the Home Councils, the filling of the Holy Spirit.

In answer to prayer the blessing spread. From distant stations letters that took weeks in coming told of individual missionaries, and whole groups in some cases, transformed by the same renewing power, while from the young men's training home came the tidings that not one of the students remained unblest.

"Here in Shanghai there have been some very hungry hearts," Mr. Taylor wrote in a circular letter to the members of the Mission, ^[374] "and praise God He has been fulfilling to them the promise 'He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness'; with the result that there have been more conversions in connection with our work here, in a few months, than for several years previously-some fifty

persons, sailors and residents as well as native servants, having accepted Christ. From other places too we are hearing of quickening and ingathering, which we trust may be as droppings before the showers we need.

"The supreme want of all missions in the present day is the manifested presence of the Holy Ghost. Hundreds of thousands of tracts and portions of Scripture have been put into circulation; thousands of Gospel addresses have been given; tens of thousands of miles have been traversed in missionary journeys but how small has been the issue in the way of definite conversions! We as a mission have much need to humble ourselves before God. There has been a measure of blessing among us and souls have been saved, but where are the ones that chase a thousand, or the two that put ten thousand to flight? Where are the once-thirsty ones, now filled, from whom flow rivers of living water? ...

"Few of us, perhaps, are satisfied with the results of our work, and some may think that if we had more, or more costly machinery we should do better. But oh, I feel that it is divine power we want and not machinery! If the tens or hundreds we now reach daily are not being won to Christ, where would be the gain in machinery that would enable us to reach double the number? Should we not do well, rather, to suspend our present operations and give ourselves to humiliation and prayer for nothing less than to be filled with the Spirit, and made channels through which He shall work with resistless power? ...

Souls are perishing now for lack of this power. ... God is blessing now some who are seeking this blessing from Him in faith. All things are ready, if we are ready. Let us ask Him to search us and remove all that hinders His working by us in larger measure. If any of us have been tempted to murmur, to think or speak unkindly of fellow-workers; if light conversation or jesting 'which are not convenient' have been

indulged, in; if we have allowed less important things to take time and attention that God's direct work should have had if our Bibles or secret prayer have been neglected, let us confess the evil before God and claim His promised forgiveness, carefully avoiding such occasions of weakness for the future. And having sought the removal of all hindrances and yielded ourselves up in fresh consecration, let us accept by faith the filling, and definitely receive the Holy Ghost, to occupy and govern the cleansed temple."

It was cause for great thankfulness to all concerned when, before the close of the year, deliverance was given in the matters of difficulty that had so long been under consideration. These had necessitated Mr. Taylor's return to England, and when it seemed that unanimity could not be reached by discussion of the problems, the whole time was given at more than one Council Meeting to united waiting upon God. After that the change was very marked. With certain wise concessions on Mr. Taylor's part, liberty for the China administration was fully and finally secured, and early in the new-year (1893) it was evident that this prolonged period of trial was passing away.

Nobly had the home staff borne the strain of continually increasing demands upon them through the enlargement of the work. Arrangements that had been adequate when Mr. Broomhall became General Secretary, and the total membership of the Mission was only about a hundred, had necessarily ceased to be so. With five times that number on the field, the home department needed strengthening, and there seemed a possibility, at last of securing one in every way fitted to relieve the situation. At the sacrifice of a life of direct missionary service, Mr. Walter B. Sloan consented to take up the responsibilities of Secretary in London as junior colleague to Mr. Broomhall. Mr. Marcus Wood also gave up returning to his much-loved work in China, that he might undertake meetings throughout the country, especially with a

view to enlisting young men in the cause of foreign missions. Mr. Stevenson having returned to China, Mr. Taylor was able to remain for a time in England, to the encouragement of the Council and staff; and best of all, the blessing of God was manifest in unmistakable ways.

As to the financial trial of the period, Mr. Taylor had written before leaving Shanghai:

It has been wonderful and beautiful to see how the Lord has helped us. Timely gifts from members of our own Mission, some of them representing much self-denial, and contributions from foreign residents and visitors have not infrequently in the day answered the prayers for the day, so 'that every need has been met. On one occasion a party preparing to go to a distant station had their packing completed, and the hour for departure was drawing near before the funds came in to take them forward. Repeatedly we have been without any funds for the general requirements of the whole Mission, though for particular objects there have been balances which, of course, could not be touched. Our hearts have been kept in peace, knowing that God's promises cannot fail; and to the question, "Lacked ye anything?" we can only reply as did the disciples of old, "Nothing, Lord."

Needless to say, there had been times of straitness in China when special prayer was called forth, times when the members of the Mission had been drawn to one another in quickened love and sympathy, and had learned fresh lessons of the overruling care of God. Such, for example, was the December day in 1891 when two thousand pounds was urgently needed for general purposes, and the cable announcing the month's remittance was due to arrive from England. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were at work in the study as usual, a junior member of the Mission being with them when the telegram was brought in. With a brief pause for silent prayer he opened and read it, read it

aloud, forgetful perhaps of the young worker to whom the moment was one of almost breathless suspense.

"A hundred and seventy pounds."

"One thousand seven hundred, perhaps?" questioned Mrs. Taylor.

"No: a hundred and seventy."

In the silence that followed it seemed to the one who listened as if the heavens had fallen, or a chasm of measureless blackness had opened at her feet. A hundred and seventy pounds, and a pressing need of two thousand! Nearly five hundred missionaries, and no further cable for a month!

How did he know just what that young heart, was experiencing? How could he be so at leisure from himself, so sure of God and at rest in Him that his first thought was for the-faith of another? Turning in his chair, Mr. Taylor held out his hand with fatherly kindness:

"Now you will watch," he said, and there was even a touch of joyous confidence about the words, "You will watch and see *what God will do.*"

A special opportunity for God to work and for faith to triumph—this was the immediate attitude, fully justified by the events that followed. The deficiency was not made up by any outstanding gift on this occasion, but in many directions the hand of God was seen. Larger remittances than usual were received from Australia and other centres, while unexpected help was forthcoming in China, so that by the end of the month an average remittance had been sent to all the stations with more than an average sense of the love and care of Him Who "abideth faithful," Who even when our faith wavers "cannot deny Himself."

Shortly before the settlement of home difficulties, a remarkable instance of the kind occurred in England which brought great joy to all at Pyrland Road. It was the 3rd of October (1892), and Mr. Taylor, returning from an absence in Scotland, found that the remittance for September had not yet been cabled to Shanghai, the Financial Secretary having waited to consult him as to how best to dispose of the small sum in hand. The Council was to meet that evening, and the balance being wholly inadequate, Mr. Taylor suggested, delaying another day before sending the telegram, and setting aside the ordinary business of the Council, that the time might be given to waiting upon God for funds. The September receipts, however, Mr. Fische reminded him, could not be added to in any case; so the telegram was sent, and the matter was specially remembered at mid-day when the household gathered for prayer. Late that afternoon a letter was received at Pyrland Road which turned the Council Meeting into one of praise. Not only did it contain a cheque for five hundred pounds; the cheque was accompanied by an unusual request. It was from a lady and gentleman who felt constrained, they said, to send that sum for ***immediate transmission to China***. It was too late to despatch an additional cable that day, but early the following morning the good news was telegraphed on, reaching Shanghai, as it proved, at a critical moment.

The autumn meetings of the China Council were in progress, and very encouraging it was to find, when the minutes came to hand by mail, how faith had been strengthened and rewarded. On receiving the first small remittance, special thanksgiving had been made for past deliverances, and the matter very definitely committed to the Lord and left in His hands-it being noted that only about one-fifth of the requirements of the month had been met. Twentyfour hours later, as the Council reassembled, the second wire was received, and Mr. Stevenson was able to tell of a like sum of five hundred

pounds which had reached him from another quarter. With glad and grateful hearts it was recorded that "the members of the Council rose and reverently sang the Doxology."

Chapter XXXVI[\(TOC\)](#)

The Forward Movement

1893-1894. AET. 61-62

NEVER since that October day in 1889, when the thoughts had come to Mr. Taylor that found expression in his pamphlet *To Every Creature*, had the subject been absent from his heart. Despite the many grave difficulties that had attended missionary work in China since then, as though the appeal of the Shanghai Conference for a thousand missionaries had aroused all the opposition of the powers of evil, he was assured that the purpose was of God, and 'had lost none of his first sense of responsibility to do all that in him lay to carry it into effect. Travelling, thinking, speaking, planning new premises to replace the long inadequate quarters at Pyrland Road, encouraging his fellow-workers by visits to the Continent and to Scotland, where the Glasgow Council was growing in helpfulness, he quietly kept in view the large reinforcements that would be needed if "every creature" in China were to hear the Gospel.

With a diminishing income in England and responsibilities already heavy in China, it might have seemed anything but a time for fresh advance. But the heart of the Mission was glowing with fresh blessing, so that there could not but be fresh and fuller response to all the known will of God. Just before the annual meetings of this year (1893) four days were given to a gathering of C.I.M. workers at Pyrland Road for Bible study and prayer. For spiritual power both these meetings and the anniversary services were very marked, and Mr. Taylor's attitude toward the financial problem was more than ever one of confident faith.

"I have often felt glad," he said in the evening meeting, "that I was a poor man; that I had no 'money and could never promise anything to anybody; but that I had a rich heavenly Father, and could promise them all that He would not forget

them. And since I have been a father myself I have often thought of something more-that He could not forget them.

"There are now labouring with us, largely in the interior of China, five hundred and fifty-two Christian workers who have gone out, a large proportion of them, with no means of their own and with no guarantee of support from man, but every one of them with the guaranteed supply of every need: 'My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.' They have put it to the test; and that our God does at all times fulfil this gracious promise is no small cause of encouragement.

"The living God still lives, and the living Word is a living Word, and we may depend upon it; we may hang upon any Word God ever spoke or ever caused by His Holy Spirit to be written. Forty years ago I believed in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. I have proved them for forty years, and my belief is stronger now than it was then. I have put the promises to the test; I have been compelled to do so, and have found them true and trustworthy."

In this spirit Mr. Taylor did not wait for the rise in income, which came with the latter half of the year, before taking steps in the direction of advance.

"Pray much for guidance for us," he wrote to Mr. Stevenson in November. "I do not think we are ready to appeal for a hundred men just yet, but we may be six months hence."

And a few weeks later:

"We are encouraged as to our Forward Movement. Yesterday either a promise or a sum of one thousand six hundred pounds was sent us towards it. God always prospers us when we go forward, does He not?"

It was little wonder that Mr. Taylor felt the time had come for advance. With

the enlarged staff at Pyrland Road, much in the way of development seemed possible. A visit to Germany in April and another in August had convinced him that many valuable workers for China might be added to those who had already gone out from Barmen as associates of the Mission.^[375] He saw his way to organise, as he wrote to Mr. Stevenson, a thorough campaign throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland, specially with a view to calling forth young men for missionary service. The newly published Story of the C.I.M. was being widely read; funds were encouraging, no less than ten thousand pounds having been received in little over a month for new undertakings; and with the exception of a brief visit to America for the second Student Volunteer Conference, Mr. Taylor was looking forward to a steady spell of work at home such as he had not had since the days of the Hundred.

And just then, strange to say, a little cloud no bigger than a man's hand warned him that he was needed in China. It concerned the welfare and usefulness of one or more valued members of the Mission; and Mr. Taylor's warm love for them personally, as well as his sense of responsibility for the work, decided him to go on from America to Shanghai to deal with the matter. While regretting the break in his programme at home, it seemed that only a brief absence would be necessary, and he allowed his name to stand as one of the speakers at Keswick for the following summer.^[376]

The Student Conference at Detroit was memorable, when John R. Mott, Robert E. Speer, and other leaders fresh from college gave evidence of the gifts which have since been so remarkably developed in world-wide work for God.

"Our chief and only burden," Mr. Mott had written to Mr. Taylor, in urging him to come over, "is that it may be a

markedly spiritual convention. God has been with you in other gatherings, as well as in your regular work, and we have faith to believe that you would be a channel of great spiritual blessing in this continent and through it to the world, if you are at Detroit.... Have we not a right to expect that God will do mighty things during these days, if we comply with His conditions?"

And He did do mighty things, through various instrumentalities. Never to be forgotten was one early morning hour when the great hall was filled with students only, who had come together because they were hungry for definite, abiding blessing. The message was the same that had brought help to many in Shanghai two years previously; and as then, heart after heart discovered God's provision to meet all depths of failure and need. Years of devoted service on many a mission-field were to bear witness to the spiritual transactions of that hour.

A few weeks later, the matter having been prospered that had brought Mr. Taylor to Shanghai, he was about to leave again for home, eager to help in calling out men for the Forward Movement, when all unexpectedly he found himself claimed in quite another direction. Far away in the north of China complications had arisen which threatened the recall of all Scandinavian missionaries to the coast. A little band, unconnected with the C.I.M., had recently commenced work in a devoted spirit, but on lines so foreign to native ideas of propriety that grave and growing danger was the result. The workers themselves were too inexperienced to realise the state of affairs, but passing travellers had carried the tidings to Peking and the Swedish Foreign Office was on the point of taking action. Of this, warning was received by Mr. Taylor, and though he had nothing to do with the missionaries in question he could not but see how seriously the Scandinavian associates of the C.I.M. might be affected. To those who knew of the

situation it seemed providential that the Director of the Mission was in China, as no one could have greater influence in the matter, or be more likely to command the confidence of the authorities in Peking.

But how, even if he gave up his return to England, could he reach those far-off stations in time to be of use save by travelling through the entire summer? It was already the end of April. In a few weeks the hot season would begin, and the journey was one that involved three or four months of overland travel. Little wonder Dr. Howard Taylor felt concerned, medically, when on returning to Shanghai from his wedding trip he found his parents gone and already on their way to the interior. Permission was obtained from Mr. Stevenson to follow them, and at Hankow the bride and bridegroom overtook the beloved travellers, who were preparing to set out by wheelbarrow to cross the mountains into Ho-nan. Railways there were none at that time in the inland provinces, and after the barrow stage must come even rougher travelling on springless northern carts. Exposure to the burning sun and tropical rains of midsummer were serious indeed, not to speak of the difficulty of obtaining food when villages are deserted during the harvest season.

"It may cost your life, dear father," pleaded his children, hoping that some other way might be devised of meeting the situation.

"Yes," was the reply, so gently made that it seemed no reproof, "and let us not forget—'We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.'"

After this there was nothing more to be said, but they obtained permission to accompany him. An experienced escort had been provided in Mr. J. J. Coulthard, Mr. Taylor's son-in-law, whose wife and children had just sailed for England, and with Mrs. Hudson Taylor, who was not to be left behind, the

family party numbered five.

It was May when they left Hankow, and September when they emerged again from the interior at the northern port of Tien-tsin. Five provinces had been traversed in whole or part, and all the mission-stations visited along their route. Warm, indeed, was the welcome received at these few and far-separated centres: for the rest, excepting Sundays, it was fourteen hours daily on the road—from dawn to dusk, all through the blazing heat—everywhere meeting crowds of accessible, friendly people, amongst whom no witness for Christ was to be found. "Over and over again the travellers' hearts were saddened at having to leave groups of interested hearers who begged them to stay longer or promise to return and teach them more. The family relationships proved a source of endless interest. It was all so natural from the Chinese point of view, especially the daughter-in-law! and everywhere people met them with a smile.

"Perhaps that is because we smile at them," said the bridegroom, who also had noticed the fact.

And certainly there was sunshine in the hearts and on the faces of the little party, despite the heat and dust, the weariness by day and broken rest at night, in inns compared with which a clean cow-shed at home would be luxury.

And what shall be said of the wheelbarrows—those characteristic Ho-nan conveyances, whose chief recommendation from the point of view of a wedding journey is that they are designed to carry two victims rather than one. Primitive springless constructions, they consist of a strong wooden frame with one large wheel in the middle, and handles both back and front. On either side of the wheel the passengers sit, facing backwards, and the whole is covered by a hood of bamboo matting. Food baskets and light

baggage may be piled up in front, while inside the travellers' bedding is spread out, to save those poor unfortunates from being shaken and battered beyond possibility of endurance.

"As soon as we were in," wrote the youngest of the party, "one powerful young barrowman slipped the broad canvas strap across his shoulders, lifted and balanced the barrow-throwing us backward at a sharp incline-and called to the other man in front to start away. With a creak, a jolt, and a long, strong pull, the cumbrous machine moved slowly forward. The dust began to rise around us from the feet of the men and the wheel track in the sandy road. With a gasp we clung, as for dear life, to the framework of the barrow, jumbling heavily over ruts and stones. Dry and oil-less, the slowly revolving wheel set up a discordant wail; large beads of perspiration stood out upon the forehead of the man scarcely a yard away from us, bending so determinedly to his task; the friendly crowds disappeared in the distance, and our journey was begun."

Ten days of such travelling brought the party to Mr. Coulthard's station, the great, busy mart of Chow-kia-kow. Here the church members, seventy in number, were on the tiptoe of expectation. Mr. and Mrs. Shearer and their fellow-workers received the dusty pilgrims with loving hospitality, and late though it was, cards and letters of welcome poured in. The next day was Sunday, and at an early hour guest-halls began to fill with visitors. Among them came dear old Mr. Ch'en-dignified, keen, and irreproachably dressed in his pale silk gown, but moved to the heart at the prospect of meeting Mr. Taylor. As the latter left his room to go to breakfast, Mr. Ch'en stood in the courtyard to greet him, and very touching it was to see the bowings and interchange of courtesies, and the unaffected love and reverence with which the ex Mandarin said, again and again:

"But for you, Venerable Sir, we should never have known the

love of Jesus."

A letter beautifully penned on a large sheet of red paper further expressed his feelings.

I bathe my hands and reverently greet—

The Venerable Mr. Taylor, who from the beginning raised up the C.I.M. with its worthy leaders, elders, and pastors.

You, Sir, constantly travelling between China and the foreign lands, have suffered much weariness and many labours. ... And in our midst you have shown forth the seals of your apostleship—2 Corinthians 12:11 (last clause) and 12 (first and second clauses). It is the glorious, redeeming grace of the Saviour that has blessed us, but it has been, Sir, through your coming amongst us and leading us in the true way; otherwise we had not been able to find the gate whereby to enter the right path....

God grant you, our aged Teacher, to be spared to await the coming of our Lord, when Jesus Christ shall become King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 18:14). We are assured, Sir, that you will certainly hold high office in the Millennial Kingdom, and reign with Jesus Christ a thousand years; also that at the close of the Millennium you will closely follow Jesus when He ascends up to heaven.

Among our own household, and indeed throughout the little church in and around Chow-kia-kow, there is no one who does not esteem you highly.

*Respectfully wishing peace,
The very unworthy member,
CH'EN named PEARLY WAVE.*

I bow my head, and respectfully salute.

A feast for the whole household in handsome native style was sent round the following day, Mr. Ch'en feeling "unworthy" to invite the Venerable Chief Pastor to his "mean abode." The cooking he had himself superintended—"six basins of the largest size, containing prepared meats such as are used in ancestral worship." On hearing that Mr. Taylor had to avoid pepper, he prepared with his own hands special provisions for the road, which arrived with the following characteristic note:

Honourable and Most Reverend Mr. Taylor:

Ch'en of the Pearly Wave bows his head.

I write this respectfully to present to you some travellers' provisions—minced meat boiled in oil, spiced apricot kernels, and pickled water-melon. Be pleased graciously to receive these at my hands. Of the spiced meats, one kind without cayenne pepper is for the special use of the aged Teacher, the other with capsicum is for the consumption of Mr. Coulthard and your second princely son. I write this note on purpose to wish you peace.

1st day of the Midsummer moon.

The poorer Christians also could not do enough to express love and gratitude. A little collection made among themselves was expended on cakes and sweetmeats with much ornamental red paper; and a few days later one dear old coolie came to the missionary-in-charge with a matter that was causing him exercise of mind. The travellers had passed on their way by that time, but he was following them daily in prayer.

"I have been thinking about the Venerable Chief Pastor," he said. "His life is so precious! but he is far from strong. I am not old yet; I might live another ten or twenty years. But Mr. Taylor Teaches, I want you to know: if I should die suddenly,

it is because I have offered the remaining years of my life that they may be added to his life. It is not to be spoken about. It is just my heart's desire before the Lord." ^[377]

Doubtless the prayers of these dear Christians had much to do with the safety of the travellers, and the way in which Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were enabled to endure exposure and weariness, especially through the long weeks of the cart journey. For neither of them were accustomed to this strenuous form of exercise, and Mr. Taylor, having a sensitive back from concussion of the spine, found it decidedly trying. And then the heat! So terrific was it that the rainy season, though it turned the roads into quagmires, was almost a relief. But that again brought its dangers, for rivers fed by mountain streams rose rapidly, and the fords were soon merged in swirling torrents. Yet it was urgent to press on, and the inns in which other travellers were likewise detained were of the most wretched description. After three days, therefore, in one place in which, despite the rain, Mr. Taylor preferred his cart to the evil-smelling rooms that offered the only alternative, it seemed desirable to set out as soon as the river began to fall.

The carters reached the ford and were about to cross, when, to their surprise and indignation, another driver came down the bank and plunged in before them. This was an unheard-of insult, for every carter knows that he must jog along for hours behind respectable fellow-travellers rather than pass them, unless invited to do so. Their rage, however, was appeased by the suggestion that after all it was just as well, as now they would see what sort of crossing the others would make. All went prosperously awhile. The mules waded out deeper and deeper, but managed to keep their footing, until in the middle of the stream they paused on a sandbank to rest. Then came intense excitement as they were seen to go down into the main body of the stream. Higher and higher rose the water, until it crept into the cart. Jumping and yelling wildly, the men on the

bank cried out:

"Puh-chong, puh-chong! It's all up! It's all up!"

And sure enough, the current had caught the vehicle. Over and over it turned, the mules disappearing from sight-first 'wheels uppermost, then again the battered covering-until there seemed no hope for those within. Had it been Mr. Taylor's party, little doubt lives would have been sacrificed, but the far tougher Chinese somehow survived and were dragged out at a bend in the river where the cart stranded on the opposite bank. Needless to say, our travellers did not attempt that ford. Taking a circuitous route they reached a ferry, by means of which carts and mules were carried safely across.

Much more might be told of the experiences of that journey; of its answers to prayer in deliverances from danger, in blessing at the stations, in the sparing of Mr. Taylor's life when stricken down with overpowering heat; of Mrs. Taylor's brave endurance and beautiful example; of the attainment of the object in view, and the final visit to Peking to communicate results to the British Minister. But of even more interest to Mr. Taylor were the signs of progress on the vast and populous Si-an plain, as well as in other regions, in the work nearest of all to his heart. When he had crossed the plain with Mr. Beauchamp, eight years previously, travelling from Pastor Hsi's district to Han-chung, no light-centres had broken the darkness all around them for hundreds of miles. Now, station after station had been opened, and in the capital-long one of the most anti-foreign cities in China-the Scandinavian workers were gathered whom he had come so far to meet.

It was a wonderful change, all due under God to the devoted lives of a little group of pioneers, long homeless, scorned, and persecuted, for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. When Thomas Botham first went over from Han-chung, things were so hard that even he was discouraged. Yet he could not give up

the task to which he felt himself called.

"I am willing to walk in the dark with God" he said to his Superintendent, himself one of the first pioneers in the province.

"In the dark with God," replied Mr. Easton; "why, dear Brother, in Him, with Him is 'no. darkness at all.'"

It was a good word with which to begin work on the Si-an plain, and much he and his companions had need of it! Joined by Mr. Redfern and a few months later by Mr. Bland, the young men naturally took it for granted that they must obtain a settled dwelling. Not so, however, the people of the plain. No one would rent them a house, and every effort in that direction aroused intense opposition. At last it came to them—"the command is 'Preach the Gospel.' Let us go everywhere and do that, and leave the rest with God. If He wants us to have a house He will give it, and give it in such a way as not to hinder His work."

Twenty-two governing cities, sixty market towns and innumerable villages formed their parish—a district extending over twelve thousand square miles, in which they were the only missionaries—and from end to end of it they were met with little but opposition. All they could do was to move from place to place, staying as long as possible in any inn willing to receive them, preaching on the streets, and seeking by Christlike humility and love to recommend the Gospel. It was work that told, and they were willing for the cost.

When Mr. Botham married, his bride had already been two years in China and was herself a missionary. Rejoicing to "suffer hardship with the Gospel," she determined to make the most of their splendid opportunity, and so much sunshine did she bring into that toilsome life that her husband was able to

write

I never feel so happy as when with all my worldly goods on one donkey, and my wife on another, I set out to carry the Gospel to some new place on the Si-an plain.

So liable were they to riots and disturbances that the little company had to divide, and scarcely ever dared to be more than two in a city at the same time. Even in the place where they were most at home, they might have been "foreign devils" indeed, to judge by the treatment accorded them in the streets, and the city gates were placarded with posters accusing them of atrocious crimes. For months they were troubled that they felt these things so keenly, until the passage came home to them, "Reproach hath broken my heart" (Psalm 69:20). Then it was all fellowship, deeper fellowship with the suffering Saviour-how it lighted their most humbling and painful experiences with joy!

Meeting Mr. Bland returning from a city in which they knew he must have had a hard time, they inquired what he had been able to do on this visit.

"I was able to praise the Lord," was the brave answer. And together they rejoiced in this victory of faith.

But their wanderings were not aimless. They were literally carrying out the Master's word, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another"; but they took good care, as Mr. Botham put it, to "flee in a circle," so that coming back from time to time to the same places, the people became used to seeing them.

"Home still means an inn," he wrote months after their marriage, "I might almost say any inn, we are so accustomed to travelling."

And the great advantage was that the love and purity, the sweetness and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ in those lives "could not be hid," just because they were lived so openly among the people.

"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me," how true it was in their experience! Two or three years sufficed to bring the change. Wonderful things were happening that we must not dwell on now, and returning from a journey on which they had met with attention and sympathy-crowds of listeners following them in nearly every place, and people actually bringing out chairs and tea into the streets-the new note of their thanksgiving was, "The darkness is passing away."

To this district the leaders of the Scandinavian Fifty had been sent, and arriving just as these devoted lives were beginning to bear fruit, they were ready to take advantage of the changed conditions. Station after station was opened with little difficulty, and the new workers, being men of faith and prayer, were enabled to hold their own even in the capital itself. Many a missionary had sought to obtain a footing in that important city, but it was reserved for Holman and his guitar to win the day. Surrounded by a crowd bent on mischief that had invaded his premises, he pleasantly asked the people if they would like to hear him sing. Taken by surprise they listened, as with musical voice and instrument he poured forth Swedish melodies. He was so quiet and friendly that they began to feel ashamed; and finally, as he went on singing crying to God in his heart for deliverance-the crowd gradually melted away.

It was to the city thus opened Mr. Taylor's party was drawing near. Ten miles away it was plainly visible, the turreted wall, gates, and towers standing out against the sunset sky. At the cross-roads two men in Chinese dress with big straw hats were waiting, who turned out to be Mr. Easton and Mr.

Hendrikson. Charged with letters and the warmest of welcomes, they had come to escort the visitors, some into the city and some to the ladies' house in the west suburb. Riding before the carts in the gathering dusk, they led the way through little-frequented streets, and oh, the joy of that arrival without observation! Seventeen days of heat and weariness since leaving the last mission station had prepared the travellers to appreciate the comfort of those Christian homes far in the heart of China; and, luxury of luxuries, they found in each house a well—plenty of clean, cool water at their very doors!

The helpful meetings of the conference can only be mentioned in passing, and the notable answer to prayer when Mrs. Botham's life was despaired of, four days' journey away, and after seventy-two hours of restlessness and fever she passed into a healing sleep the very evening special prayer was being made for her at Si-an. Although on account of this illness Mr. Botham could not be present, the Superintendent of the province was there with Mr. Bland, and definite arrangements were entered into with regard to the Swedish associates. A district, including the capital and extending north-west into the province of Kan-su, was set apart for them under the general supervision of Mr. Botham, one of their own leaders being appointed missionary-in-charge. It was a great joy to Mr. Taylor to see how those in Si-an-fu had grown and developed during the short time, little more than three years, that they had been in China, and to find that though he had to suggest restrictions that might have seemed irksome, the ties were but drawn the closer that united the Scandinavian Alliance workers with the C.I.M.

Very real was the consciousness of that love and unity as he spoke to them around the Table of the Lord in the last meeting of the conference. Dwelling on the secret of a fully satisfied life—the heart that knows what it is to drink of the Living Water—Mr. Taylor referred to the delight of a well in those

days of midsummer heat.

"After our long thirsty journey," he said, sitting in the midst of those young workers, "what refreshment-we have found in the cool, delicious water springing up in your own dwellings, always within reach! We have never thirsted since coming to Si-an. And the Lord Jesus gives me a well, a spring of living water deep down in my own heart-His presence there at all times. What do we do with our wells? We go to them and draw. Drinking, we do not thirst. So, having Jesus, drinking of the spring He gives, we need never thirst again.

*"Oh, it is so blessed to learn that His promise is strictly true. I that 'shall' means shall, 'never' means never, and 'thirst' means **thirst**: 'shall never thirst'—no, not at any time! And it is to be a well springing up, overflowing in a constant stream of blessing. Yes, it is for me, weak and old and good-for-nothing as I am; and it is for you, young, strong, and able. 'From him shall flow rivers of living water.' God grant you to find, as you travel over this wide plain, the truth of that word, 'Everything shall live whither the river cometh.'"*

Name of Jesus—living tide.!

Days of drought for me are past.

How much more than satisfied

Are the thirsty lips at last.

Reluctantly we must pass over the rest of the journey' scarcely touching upon Mr. Taylor's visits in the neighbouring province of Shan-si to districts he already knew to some extent. Mr. Folke and his fellow-workers of the Swedish Mission in China had occupied one important region previously without any witness for Christ, and very delightful it was to meet in the

important city of Yun-cheng a circle whose home-friends and churches had received Mr. Taylor with so much cordiality in Sweden. Beyond this point the travelling was by moonlight, to escape the intense heat (120 in the carts) which had almost cost Mr. Taylor's life in coming from Si-an. Setting out toward evening, it was a comfort to feel that before the sun rose again a good stage would have been accomplished, though dangerous characters other than wolves were to be met with in the mountains or in the shelter afforded by tallgrowing crops. Stopped one night in the shadow of an arch or shrine, they found that two men had accosted the foremost cart.

Do you carry foreign travellers? "was the question which startled them.

A moment later, however, the situation was explained by the inquiry in a cultured English voice, "Is this Mr. Taylor's party?"

Pastor Hsi and Mr. Hoste! Miles had they walked out together to meet the expected visitors, and warm indeed was the welcome with which they received Mr. Taylor once again, just where Mr. Hosts had parted from him eight years previously.

It was a week later when, the Ping-yang-fu Conference being over, Mr. Taylor was free to accept Pastor Hsi's hospitality and spend a day or two in his home. Having been there before, what was his surprise on arrival to be driven in through courtyard after courtyard, past house and farm buildings, till an open space was reached that looked like a threshing-floor. There stood an ample table covered with a clean white cloth and other preparations for a "foreign" meal. Overhead a brown awning, supported on a dozen or more wooden masts, formed a sheltering roof, and in the background a building (could it be a barn?) stood with open doors. To this Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were led-and lo, a royal pavilion, a whole suite of apartments, beautifully arranged,

clean, cool, and ready for use!

With growing astonishment they explored its resources, touched by evidences of loving thoughtfulness on every hand. The central dining-room gave access to a large sleeping apartment on one side, and to a couple of smaller chambers on the other. All were comfortably furnished and most inviting. Lamps were ready on the tables, fresh straw mats completely covered the floors, new bamboo curtains as well as coloured hangings protected doors and windows, new white felt rugs were laid over fine white matting on each of the beds. The tables were spread with red covers, and neatly laid in the centre of each was a square of green oil-silk, beautifully rich in colour. Brass basins, shining like mirrors, were placed upon little stands ready for use, with clean white towels and new cakes of the best Pears' soap! The whole place, in a word, was so clean and attractive, so polished and radiant, that they could hardly believe their eyes.

And there stood dear Pastor and Mrs. Hsi eager to see if they were pleased, but disclaiming gratitude or remonstrance.

"It is nothing. It is altogether unworthy. Gladly would we have arranged far better for our Venerable Chief Pastor and his family."

Nothing could exceed the love and joy of that welcome, in which the whole household took part. Pastor Hsi himself brought hot water for washing, and kept the cups filled with tea. He hastened the mid-day meal, covering the table with good things, and insisted on waiting in person, lest his helpers should not be quick enough to anticipate every wish. Very touching it was to see his eyes fill with tears, as Mr. Taylor tried to thank him again and again, and to hear him say

"What, sir, have you suffered and endured that we might have

the Gospel! This is my joy and privilege. How could I do less?" ^[378]

Gladly would we linger over changes that told of progress in the work, and all the development in spiritual things that Mr. Taylor rejoiced to witness. For harvest days had come in Southern Shan-si, of which he had seen the promise, and in spite of many problems the outlook was full of encouragement. Far away from the Western Chang Village events were transpiring, however, that were to have an important bearing on Mr. Taylor's movements. Hastening to complete the matter he had in hand, the leader of the Mission was anticipating a speedy return to England to take up the Forward Movement he had reluctantly left in February. But there is an unseen Leader Whose great ends are served by all happenings and in ways we should least devise. The very day Mr. Taylor spent in the delightful hospitality of Pastor Hsi's home (July 25) witnessed the outbreak of war between China and Japan, and by the time he reached Shanghai it was evident that he could not absent himself from the scene of danger. Things were going badly for the Chinese, and there was no knowing when or how baffled rage against the enemy might react upon other "foreigners". All thought of leaving for England had to be abandoned, and the visit to China that had already lengthened out from weeks to months was prolonged indefinitely.

Part VIII[\(TOC\)](#)

Worn Out with Loving

1895-1905. AET. 63-73

Chapter XXXVII

Can Ye Drink of the Cup?

1895. AET. 63

WITH the close of the Japanese War in April (1895) came the close also of the period in which the thousand missionaries were looked for in response to the appeal sent out by the Shanghai Conference of 1890. As Chairman of the Committee to report results, Mr. Taylor was thankful to be able to state that not a thousand only, but one thousand one hundred and fifty-three new workers had been added to the missionary staff in China during that time—a wonderful answer to prayer that could not but call forth widespread thanksgiving. And yet, as he pointed out, it was far from final, in the sense of having attained the end in view. A great step forward had been taken, but it left the primary duty that of making known the Gospel "to every creature" in China, in obedience to the Master's great command—still unfulfilled. For out of the eleven to twelve hundred new missionaries only four hundred and eighty were men; and this number, divided among the forty-five societies which had sent them, would only give an average of ten to each. Clearly, as many of these societies were working in provinces on or near the coast, the addition of even this large number hardly affected the situation in the great waiting world of inland China. It was for these unreached millions Mr. Taylor pleaded still and with renewed urgency.

"An important crisis in China's history has been reached," he wrote on behalf of the Committee. "The war just terminated does not leave her where she was. It will inevitably lead to a still wider opening of the empire and to many new developments. If the Church of Christ does not enter the opening doors, others will, and they may become closed against her. ... Time is passing. If a thousand men were needed five years ago, they are much more needed now. ... In view of the new facilities and enlarged claims of China, the next five years should see larger reinforcements than those

called for in 1890. Will not the Church arise and take immediate and adequate action to meet the pressing needs of this vast land?"

In the same spirit he addressed himself to the home circle of the C.I.M—the friends long tried and proved,, whose fellowship in the work of the Gospel had made so many an advance possible.

"A new call is given us to hasten the evangelisation of China," he wrote on his sixty-third birthday, with reference to the war and its outcome. "Let us remember the power we possess in united prayer...."

Touching upon many causes for thankfulness in the development of the Mission, he continued:

"Now we have peace, we must look for large and immediate reinforcements. We in the C.I.M. have been conscious that God has been preparing us for this. Needed facilities have been supplied, without which large reinforcements would have embarrassed us. ... Never before were we so well prepared for definite advance, and our hope and prayer is that now the war is over we may have given to us many 'willing, skilful' helpers, men and women, for every department of missionary service.

"Continue to pray for us, dear friends, and to help us as God may lead you. Thank God for the hundreds of souls being reaped year by year, and ask that soon the annual increase may be very much larger. Pray that only Spirit-filled missionaries may be sent out, and that all of us here may overflow with the Living Water." [379]

But the effect upon missionary work of the tragic events which had transpired was to be serious and far-reaching. Five years yet remained of Mr. Taylor's active service, years which, though they brought no lessening of the sense of responsibility that had come to him, raised unparalleled difficulties in the way

of carrying out the project so much upon his heart. China had entered at last upon the troubled period of transition from her exclusive policy of centuries to the reluctant but inevitable acceptance of her place in the great family of nations. The change was not one that could take place easily; and the weakening, through loss of prestige, of the Imperial Government at Peking let loose forces of disorder in many parts of the country. Thus barely a week after the above letter was written. Mr. Taylor began to hear of riots, persecutions, and rebellion, from the coast right out to the borders of Tibet. Sitting quietly at breakfast on Sunday the 1st of June a telegram was put into his hands which brought the startling tidings:

*Riot in Cheng-tu. ^[380] All missions destroyed: friends in **ya-men.***

This was followed by another and another, until within ten days he learned of destruction in all the central stations of the Mission in that province, except Chung-king on the Yangtze, from which many of the refugees were being helped. At the same time bitter persecution broke out against the Christians in the Wen-chow district, one of the oldest and most fruitful in the Mission. Tidings kept coming of homes attacked and pillaged, families fleeing for refuge to the Mission compound, and a work that had taken long years to build up threatened with complete devastation.

Nor were these the most serious issues. They were symptomatic of general excitement and unrest. Gradually the facts were becoming known as to the defeat suffered at the hands of Japan, and loss of confidence in the ruling powers was the inevitable result. Secret societies were everywhere active, and a great Mohammedan uprising was reported from the north-west, where C.I.M. missionaries were the only foreigners. The disbanded soldiery—still armed and with arrears of pay due in many cases—were a serious menace, and

with hundreds of fellow-workers in inland stations, Mr. Taylor had no little cause for concern.^[381]

Over a thousand miles from Sze-chwan and kept in suspense for weeks until letters could reach him, he was specially exercised about the Church of England district in which the work had been full of promise. In that group of stations alone the number of baptized believers had risen from fifty to a hundred during the previous year; and for the time being they were deprived of their leader, Mr. Cassels being at home on furlough. Would they be scattered now, and the work-outcome of so much prayer-be brought to a standstill? Mr. Taylor believed not; and in the midst of his distress, on behalf of the native Christians as well as his fellow-missionaries, he was enabled to rejoice as never before in Psalm 76:10, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain."

Then as news began to be received from one district and another, it was cheering to see this expectation fulfilled, even in the most painful situations. Protected by Government officials, no lives were actually lost in Sze-chwan, and not a few of the missionaries who had taken refuge with the local Mandarins were allowed to return before long to their dismantled dwellings. To their great joy they found in some places that the converts had been witnessing so faithfully that new inquirers had enrolled their names and were coming regularly for instruction. This was the case in the capital (Cheng-tu) and in Mr. Cassels' station (Pao-ning), where the Christians had braved all danger, and coming to the wall of the ya-men, had sought to reassure their missionary friends by calling out fearlessly: "We are all here! Not one of us has gone back." In a lonely station among the hills, from which the ladies had not been driven out, their house was guarded night after night by Christian men who, unknown to them, volunteered for the task; and a woman of

position in the district was so concerned for their safety that she came twenty miles on her crippled feet to make inquiries, finding far more than she sought, for her heart was drawn to living faith in the Saviour of whom she thus heard for the first time.^[382]

Even when the worst came—the tragedy that was to make this summer memorable in the long conflict between light and darkness—it was immediately and wonderfully overruled for good. Hardly could any missionary then in China forget the thrill with which the news was received of the cold-blooded murder of the Rev. Robert Stewart with his wife and child and eight fellow-workers of the Church Missionary Society. Mr. Taylor was at Chefoo when it happened, engaged upon buildings for the growing schools, and was not slow to realise the full significance of the event. Never before had the protecting hand of God been so far withdrawn as to permit of such a sacrifice. Instances had occurred in which Protestant missionaries had laid down their lives one or two at a time, but they had been few and far between, and no women had hitherto been among the number. Now mother and children had alike been attacked, and most of the sufferers were young, unmarried women. Gathered at a hill-station for rest during the great heat, they had fallen a prey to the plottings of a secret society which apparently hoped to involve the Government in trouble. Whatever the cause or ultimate results, the realisation came home to many a heart that a new era had dawned that day (August 1), and that a great price might yet have to be paid for the triumph of the Gospel in China. But there was no faltering.

Not to demand reparation nor to mourn the loss sustained was the great meeting held that filled Exeter Hall to its utmost capacity, but simply to pray for China and seek divine guidance as to the future of missionary work in that land. Far from looking upon what had happened as a check, the Secretary of

the Church Missionary Society expressed the conviction of all present when he said that it simply demonstrated China's unutterable need of the Gospel, and was thus a call and challenge to *advance*. No reference was made to the harrowing details of the massacre, though the names of the martyr-band were read with some touching allusions to family matters. Personal considerations were lost sight of in the presence of Him Who loved not His life unto death, that He might open the gates of Life to all mankind. Facing as never before what it must mean to follow Him in His redeeming work, the whole assembly bowed in prayer as the consecration vow of many a heart was sung:

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all.

At that very time, unknown to those who were praying for China, but not to Him Who was watching over all, another little band was in utmost peril, far in the heart of that great land. After a preparatory stage of several months the Mohammedan Rebellion had swept down upon the city of Si-ning on the borders of Tibet, where Mr. and Mrs. Ridley, their infant child, and Mr. Hall were the only foreigners. Ten thousand Mohammedans lived in the suburbs round the city, and it was a terrible night (July 24) when, contrary to vows and protestations, they turned upon their Chinese neighbours, and amid scenes of fearful carnage threw in their lot with the rebels. Already the city was filled with refugees, and the missionaries were working night and day to care for the wounded. Led by a beggar who knew the healing virtue of their medicines, they had found in the Confucian Temple hundreds of women and children who had made their escape from burning villages and the horrors

perpetrated by their enemies. Groans and wailing were heard on every hand, and in the twilight of that summer evening they saw a mass of human suffering that was appalling. Burned from head to foot and gashed with fearful sword-cuts, scores of these poor creatures lay dying with not a hand to help them, for no one would go near even with food and water.

Then the missionaries understood why they had felt so definitely that they ought to stay on in the city, when they might have made good their escape. This was the work for which they were needed, the work that was to open hearts to the Gospel as years of preaching had not done. With heroic courage they gave themselves to the task, and throughout all that followed never ceased their ministrations. Amid scenes passing conception they cared for the wounded of both sides—first in the seven months of Mohammedan frenzy, when the Chinese were falling before them in thousands, then in still more awful months of Chinese retaliation. With no surgical instrument but a pen-knife and hardly any appliances but such as could be obtained on the spot, they performed hundreds of operations, and treated over a thousand cases of diphtheria, not to speak of the dressing of wounds that occupied them from early morning till late at night. ^[383]

But for the help of a four-footed friend Mrs. Ridley could never have got through at all. For their servants left them at the beginning of the siege, and with the baby she was nursing and all the household work on her hands, she alone could attend to a large proportion of their patients, the women and girls. Full gallop her brave little donkey would go through the busy streets, the people gladly making way for the mother whose baby was waiting at home. Well they knew there was nothing she would not do to comfort the suffering and bind up broken hearts, while her own must be torn with anxiety. Ah, that was what they could not understand—the secret of her peace!

She herself could hardly understand it, as those fearful days wore on. Once, only once, her heart failed her—in the midst of an attack upon the city, when it seemed as though all hell were let loose, and that at any moment the defences might fall. She was fully alive by that time to what it meant to be at the mercy of Mohammedan hordes. Had not infants been brought to her, scores of them, mutilated by their savagery? Alone in the house that night, her husband and Mr. Hall being out amid the panic-stricken people, a wave of terror swept over her. It was Dora, little Dora she thought of. For themselves it did not matter—but oh, her baby! Her happy, smiling, always contented treasure! how could she bear to see? But as she knelt beside the sleeping infant and cried to God, the Presence which is salvation so wrapped her round that all else receded and was forgotten.

"He gave me the assurance then," she said, "that no harm should come to us." And though it was many a long month before fighting and massacre were over, that agonising dread never returned.

To Mr. Taylor, far off in Shanghai, such knowledge as he had of the situation was peculiarly distressing. Neither letters nor money could be sent to these fellow-workers, and for months together no tidings of them were received. A remittance forwarded in the spring had got through before the siege commenced, but it was spring again when the next came to hand. Relief expeditions sent by the Government failed to reach the city, more than a thousand soldiers losing their lives in the attempt. Mr. Taylor did not know that Mr. Ridley had almost succumbed to an attack of diphtheria, that smallpox was, raging in the city, and that neither bread nor coal was to be purchased at any price. A winter of seven months had to be faced, with the temperature below zero much of the time,^[384] and so small was their supply of fuel that they had to eke it out with manure, and even so could only afford a

fire at meal-times. Had he seen and known it all, Mr. Taylor's solicitude could hardly have been greater, however; and so much was that little group upon his heart that not infrequently he rose two and three times at night to pray for them.

And it was wonderful how prayer was answered in their desperate situation. The ninety-first Psalm could hardly have a more striking commentary. God raised up friends for them, supplied their need when money was useless and kept them strong in faith, so busy helping others that they had little time to think of themselves. Without anxiety they saw their stock of flour coming to an end, sure that before the sack was empty more would be provided. They were thankful then to have no servants, for to have fed a household would have exhausted their resources much more quickly. They recognised a Father's loving care, also, in an unexpected gift that had reached them, carriage paid, to their door, shortly before the siege commenced—two packingcases containing soups and jam, biscuits and tinned meat, cocoa, and above all an abundant supply of oatmeal. Many months they had been on the way from England, but One Who knew when they would be needed brought them safely and just in time. ^[385]

Another comfort was the serene health of little Dora. Nothing troubled her. She would say "ta" in her pretty smiling way when she heard the guns close by, and was happy in her mother's absence and unaffected by the strain through which the latter had to pass. Then the kindness of neighbours was no little help. An official (the Governor's Secretary) living in the same street gave nineteen taels toward the medical work, which purchased oil, wadding, and material for bandages; and his wife, knowing that Mrs. Ridley had no time for cooking, invited her to run in whenever she could for meals. Another lady used to send batches of bread from time to time, and when in the

straitness of the siege she could no longer do so, she begged that her cook might make bread for the Ridleys from their own flour.

No one guessed how hard up they really were, because Chinese families in their position would always have reserve stores of grain. When the flour was running low therefore, they had to take very literally the promise, "Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." Hardly welcome under the circumstances was a visit from one of the city magnates, for, being alone in the house, Mr. Ridley had to light the fire and prepare tea, excusing as best he could his poor hospitality.

Too polite to make any comment, the visitor was taken aback by his discovery, and going straight to the head Mandarin informed him that the foreigners who were doing so much to help others were without a servant of any kind. Four soldiers were immediately pressed upon Mr. Ridley to attend him and look after his "animals," with the result that he was obliged to explain his circumstances and that he really could not provide them with food.

Busy among his patients next morning, what was his surprise to see two men enter the courtyard each carrying a large sack of grain. These were set down amid the delighted onlookers, the bearers explaining that the Prefect had sent two hundred pounds of wheat as a small recognition of the virtuous labours of the missionaries. Presently two more soldiers came and carried the sacks to the mill, bringing back the flour. Long before that supply could be exhausted, a procession of six men in uniform appeared, each with his sack of wheat, which was also ground and returned in the shape of six hundred pounds of flour! So that without asking help of any save of God alone, those children of His, so isolated and resourceless, were not only provided for but were enabled to feed many of the starving around them until the siege was over.

Meanwhile Mr. Taylor was making every effort to reach them with supplies. He knew they must be still alive because of the burden of prayer on his heart for them day and night, but for months there was no other encouragement to hope.^[386] Not until the new year dawned (1896) did the longed-for message come that Si-ning was relieved and communication re-established, and even then the reign of terror was prolonged by the Chinese retaliation, Almost two years in all the fearful business lasted, eighty thousand people being actually massacred, not to speak of soldiers killed in battle or frozen upon the mountains. But through it all the missionaries stayed at their post, proving themselves the friends of Chinese and Mohammedans alike, and winning love and confidence that brought wonderful opportunities for the Gospel. All the country was open to them. Wherever they went they found known and unknown friends, and the work they could not overtake emphasised afresh the need for large and immediate reinforcements. But that belongs to a later period.

Anxiety about Si-ning was at its height when, in the middle of October, tidings reached Mr. Taylor in Shanghai that added a poignant element to the already full cup of 1895. Troubles and dangers had followed one another in quick succession, but so far without loss to the Mission. Now it was cholera that had visited one of the nearer stations, carrying off a whole group of native Christians and foreign missionaries. Nine deaths in all had taken place in ten days, leaving the bereaved community sorely stricken.

And there were circumstances that made the news, peculiarly distressing. Well did Mr. Taylor remember the: young husband and wife he had welcomed to China only a few months previously, whose record in the Soldiers' Home at Litchfield proved them to be soul-winners of exceptional value, and the brave Scotch workers they had joined in the Wen-chow

district; who had stood the brunt of the persecution already referred to in this chapter, sheltering in their home scores of the suffering Christians. Could it be that of the four only one was left, and that to her had come the double bereavement of losing husband and child?

Not so long before, it seemed, she had arrived in China, having put off her marriage with the full consent of her fiancé, that they might each give themselves to learning the language and becoming useful as missionaries before beginning life together. The rule of the Mission in this respect had meant, for them, real sacrifice, for they had long been engaged and were everything to each other. But amid the loneliness of those first days in China, she looked as well as lived the message engraved on the simple brooch she wore: "Jesus does satisfy."

Married after two years to Alexander Menzies, home had been to them a little bit of heaven, and their joy in one another had deepened with the coming of their baby boy. And now the letter lay before Mr. Taylor in which the mother tried to comfort him in her overwhelming grief.

"It is just possible," she wrote from Wen-chow, "that you may have heard of the honour that my God and Father has put upon me., Yes, He has trusted me to live without my beloved husband and darling child. They are not, for God has taken them...."

Briefly she told the circumstances, sparing Mr. Taylor most of the touching details: the father reaching home from a journey to find himself just in time for the funeral of his little son; the bleeding heart, so chastened in its sorrow that he could say to an intimate friend two days later: "Ah, man! It has been a blessed time for me: the Lord has made it a sweet sacrament to my soul"; the short, sharp fight for life after life on the Mission compound; three

schoolgirls taken, a man, a woman, and the missionaries caring for them to the last, regardless of their own danger; then Mr. Menzies first to go, followed by Mr. and Mrs. Woodman within a few hours of each other.

"It would have been so easy for me to have joined my Treasures," she continued, "but our Father has willed it otherwise. My Treasures are gone and I am left alone-yet not alone: 'Nevertheless, I am continually with thee.'

"Dear Mr. Taylor, God has taken His workmen, but He will carry on His work. I do not know what He has in store for me, but I do know He will guide the future as He has the past. . . . I long more than ever to do His blessed will. He has taken my all: now I can only give Him what remains of life. He has indeed emptied me! May it be only to fill with His love, compassion and power."

So the sweet fragrance went up to God, and the life more than ever given to the Chinese witnessed, as words never could, to the blessed reality—"Jesus does satisfy." Thus it was all over the field: sorrow worked blessing; trials of faith resulted in deeper confidence; the bond of love and unity in the Mission was strengthened, and a spirit of prayer was called forth that prepared the way for more of God's own working.

The encouragements of the year were also great and many. After a visit to the training homes in the spring, Mr. Taylor wrote with thankfulness':

My heart was much rejoiced at each place. Never have parties of brighter, more capable, more consecrated workers gone out from these homes than this year.

At Chefoo there was much to 'be thankful for in the growth of the schools, and the way in which Dr. Douthwaite's medical work had been prospered. Beginning with three thousand cases in the first twelve months, the

dispensary was now attracting over twenty thousand out-patients annually, while in the hospital hundreds of operations were performed and in-patients cared for, A great opportunity had been afforded by the recent war with Japan, of which Dr. Douthwaite and his helpers had not been slow to avail themselves. At the commencement of hostilities, strange to say, the Chinese had no provision whatever for Red Cross work.

"When the attack was made on the port of Wei-hai-wei," said the Doctor, "the Chinese fled towards Chefoo, many of them very severely wounded and many dying on the way. Snow was deep on the ground, the winter being almost arctic in severity. The poor fellows, bleeding as they were, had no strength to reach a place of refuge. Many sought safety in their own native villages, but not one was allowed to remain. They were seized by their countrymen, carried off and thrown into the sea and actually drowned, lest they should become a burden.

"About two hundred poor creatures managed to reach Chefoo in an awful condition, their clothing saturated with blood. One man, I remember, had seven bullets through him; another, with his knee-caps shattered, had walked all the way, forty miles; a third, with a bullet right through his lung, had walked through that bitterly cold weather; while some crawled most of the way on their hands and knees, their feet being frostbitten. Of those that reached Chefoo, we were able to take in a hundred and sixty-three, and care for them with all the kindness possible in our hospital."

The result was amazing gratitude and openness of heart. Prejudice was broken down that had long hindered the work of the missionary, and for Dr. Douthwaite and his helpers the admiration of soldiers and civilians knew no bounds. When the war was over, a General, with all his staff, on horseback came to the hospital, attended by a brass band and a company of soldiers, and with great ceremony put up a complimentary inscription, beautifully

embossed in gold on a large lacquered tablet. And when the same military official learned that stone was needed for the foundation of the new Boys' School, he sent to Dr. Douthwaite saying that he would gladly supply it from his own quarry, and that his soldiers would be delighted to carry it to the Mission compound, where they had received so much kindness.

No less encouraging had been the answer to prayer with regard to the new building for the Boys' School. Conducted on the same principles as the rest of the Mission, prayer was the only resource when the young life at Chefoo overflowed all bounds, and with a hundred boys and girls in the three departments of the school as many more were waiting to be taken in. Five thousand pounds at least were needed to put up a new building for the senior boys; and while daily prayer was being made for this sum, and many were wondering where the money could possibly come from, a letter was received by Dr. Douthwaite, the Superintendent of the station, in which a fellow-missionary said:

The Lord has laid it on my heart to bear the entire cost of building the new school.

Well might the doctor write when the beautiful premises were completed, upon which Mr. Taylor was working this summer:

Truly, the history of this school proves that God answers prayers, and that miracles are not doubtful events of a by-gone age of superstition.

Another gift that brought great joy was one the generosity of which far exceeded its financial value. In the old home at Hang-chow, Pastor Wang and his family had united in making an offering to the Lord which deeply touched Mr. Taylor's heart. Declining a settled salary that he might be on the same faith basis as the members of the Mission, Wang Lae-djiin had yet been

enabled to lay by for his only child a sum which to people in their position was considerable. His daughter's husband had long been his co-Pastor in the Hang-chow church, but while his gifts would have brought them affluence in a business career, it was all they could do to educate their large family on the income he received in confection with the C.I.M. But neither Pastor Ren nor his wife would consent to accept the savings of their father's lifetime.

A thousand dollars-how large a sum it seemed! No it must not be given to them or their children. The Lord had always provided for their needs, and would still provide. It was far too precious for any but Himself; and to Him they would unitedly give it.

So, while the war with Japan was still going on, the dear old Pastor came up to Shanghai to see Mr. Taylor. Very moving it was to the latter to learn the object of his visit, and that the money which meant so much to him and his was to be used, through, the Mission, for sending out evangelists to carry the glad tidings to those who had never heard.

To the dear old Pastor it was wonderful to see the extensive premises of the Mission in Shanghai, and hear of the progress of the work throughout the far inland provinces, remembering the early beginnings in the little house by the Ningpo canal to which his beloved missionary friend had brought home his bride. Deeply their hearts were still united in the supreme longing that the Lord Jesus should see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied through the gathering in to Him of the fulness of His redeemed from among the millions of China.

Even this year of trial stood out as one of thankfulness, because it proved by the blessing of God to be the most fruitful in soul-winning that the Mission had ever known.

"In the midst of our sorrows God has been working," Mr. Taylor wrote, looking back upon its experiences, "and it is no small joy to record that, notwithstanding all hindrances, and in some cases through the very trials reported, many souls have been brought to Christ, so that a larger number of converts have been baptized in 1895 than in any previous year."

Detained in Shanghai amid all the coming and going; welcoming new workers from many lands, and hearing the simple, often touching stories of how God had led them; feeling the throb of faith and love that pulsed throughout the far-reaching fellowship of the Mission, Mr. Taylor might indeed have said, with one of his 'helpers of this summer: "It seems to me that the Holy Spirit is working all over the world on behalf of China."

Chapter XXXVIII[\(TOC\)](#)

Again the Forward Movement

1896-1899. AET. 64-67

IT was hardly to be wondered at that Mr. Taylor's physical powers, so long taxed to the utmost in the interests of the Mission, should begin to fail under the strain of periods such as this of his ninth visit to China. It was the heart burdens that told, even more than the responsibilities of his position in a time of political upheaval and general unrest. "Worn out with loving" was as true of him as of the ardent spirit of whom the words were written,^[387] and his service was checkered now with times of weakness from which recovery was less complete and rapid than formerly. Little by little the scaffolding of his life was being taken down from about the work he had prayed into being. Not that those nearest to him recognised it, or if they did in moments of anxiety could reconcile themselves to the thought. But he himself had it steadily in view, and rejoiced in the growing usefulness of others, and the way in which provision was being made for leadership in days to come.

The internal organisation slowly developed, and at much cost was working well throughout the Mission. The appointment of Mr. William Cooper as Assistant Deputy Director in China was proving exceedingly helpful, his wise judgement and loving spirit making him invaluable at headquarters.^[388] Mr. Broumton also had joined the Shanghai staff, the financial department having been moved from Wu-chang in order to consolidate the work. Thus the completed buildings round the Mission compound were utilised to the utmost. More and more the C.I.M. was saving expense and caring for its workers through the business department, and in nothing was the practical value of its principles more evident than in the provision made in this and other ways for coming needs. Refusing none who seemed truly called of God, whatever their nationality, denomination, or previous training, the Mission had been given men and women with every sort of qualification for

usefulness. If all had been theologians or members of learned professions, how could the practical working of so large and varied an organisation have been provided for? As it was, when need arose for the formation of a diocese in Western China, there was a bishop to be found in the ranks of the Mission. There were superintendents for great districts, including Mr. D. E. Hoste, recently appointed to South Shan-si. There were financial experts for the management of complicated money matters; stenographers to help with the burden of correspondence; competent heads for postal, shipping, and business offices; an architect and land surveyor for building operations; doctors and nurses to care for their fellow-missionaries as well as for medical work among the people; and last, but not least, qualified teachers for the increasingly responsible posts at Chefoo. And all these workers, each indispensable in their own department, were equally members of the Mission and called to spiritual service in China.

"We are a very large family, and rather mixed," said Mr. Cooper when the Mission numbered seven hundred, "but all labouring in blessed harmony in this work of works. With a bond of union like this and a field like China, we can afford to sink our differences."

Of the interesting appointment of Mr. Cassels to the diocese of West China, Dr. Eugene Stock wrote as follows in his ***History of the Church Missionary Society***:

The China Inland leaders heartily entered into the plan, and Archbishop Benson, who took a warm interest in it, appointed, at the suggestion of the C.M.S. Committee, and with all his usual graciousness, the head of the C.I.M. in Sze-chwan to be the new bishop. This was the Rev. W. W. Cassels, one of the Cambridge Seven of 1885, in whose goodness and wisdom all parties had learned to repose confidence. The first public

announcement was made at the great Saturday missionary meeting at the Keswick Convention of 1895, and drew forth much prayerful interest and sympathy. The C.M.S. guaranteed the Episcopal stipend, and Mr. Cassels came on to the Society's roll of missionaries, while fully retaining his position in the C.I.M. He was consecrated on St. Luke's Day, October 18, 1895, together with Dr. Talbot, the present Bishop of Rochester; and he sailed on that day week for China. From Shanghai he wrote a striking letter-to the missionary workers in his new diocese, headed with these words: "I am but a little child"; "Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst"; "A little child shall lead them." The arrangement has proved by God's blessing a singularly happy one. ^[389]

When Bishop Cassels reached China to take up his new responsibilities, Mr. Taylor missed the expected pleasure of meeting him in Shanghai. Broken down after a visit to Wen-chow, to which he had gone immediately upon hearing of the deaths through cholera, he had been obliged to take a few weeks' rest. This gave opportunity for a boat journey to several of the Che-kiang stations, and for refreshing intercourse with Mr. Frost, who was again in China. Accompanied by Mrs. Taylor, they went to the beautiful district of Chu-chow, occupied by the Barmen Associates of the Mission, and completed the arrangements for handing it over to these fellow-workers-an important step in the direction of division of the field. But Mr. Taylor was still so unfit for any pressure of work on his return to Shanghai that it was with thankfulness they looked forward to the visit to India he was to pay before long.

A former member of the Mission, Miss Annie Taylor, who had made a remarkable journey through Tibet, was urgently needing help with a band of inexperienced workers she had been the means of calling out. They were in Northern India, hoping to gain an entrance from the Darjeeling district to that

long-closed land, and Mr. Taylor was to speak at the first Christian Student Conference in Calcutta on his way to join them. An unexpected gift received for their own use made it possible for Mrs. Taylor to accompany him, which in his poor state of health was no little comfort. It would have enabled them also to travel second class by French mail, had they chosen to spend it all upon themselves. But there were fellow-workers to think of; and though third class meant separation in the cabins for, men and women respectively, they were thankful for berths near the doors which were not far apart. Then at Hongkong, Mr. Taylor was able to write the following letters, among others, to Shanghai.

After completing our arrangements here and making up our accounts, I find we have a margin that will allow of our providing the ten pounds we spoke of as desirable for your expenses beyond Melbourne. As the Mission funds were low when we left, we are very thankful to 'be able to send this. I had rather no one knew of the little gift.

I find the kind gift received in Wen-chow more than covers my wife's travelling expenses; and having come to Hongkong cheaply, we have the joy of being able to enclose a cheque for a hundred taels toward your journey. ... Please do not let any one know of this, but cash the cheque yourself at the bank.

Few things are more precious in the records that remain than the frequency of such acts of loving ministry, at a cost that no one knew of save the Lord Himself, to whom first and most of all their gifts were offered.

But though prospered in their visit to India, and much refreshed by intercourse with workers in that great field, the needs of which profoundly impressed him, Mr. Taylor was in no condition to face a summer in China, and an absence of more than two years from England made it desirable for him to be again in touch with the home work. He returned therefore after the

spring meeting of the China Council, thankfully leaving matters to the wise and helpful direction of Mr. William Cooper.

Great were the changes that had taken place, as the travellers were prepared to find; the new headquarters of the Mission being now completed and occupied at Newington Green. Knowing they would arrive from Paris during the Saturday prayer meeting, they avoided mentioning the train by which they were coming, so that no thought of giving them a welcome might disturb the meeting. Friends were on the tip-toe of expectation, however, and a larger company than usual had gathered, the Mildmay Conference and the Jubilee of the World's Evangelical Alliance having brought many visitors to London. Leaving their cab at the entrance, it was with great interest Mr. and Mrs. Taylor walked up the private road from the busy London thoroughfare to the open door of the hall for meetings, over which, carved in stone, stood out the words which meant so much in the history of the Mission—"HAVE FAITH IN GOD." Entering quietly, they remained at the back of the room while prayer was going on, so that not until the meeting closed was it generally known that Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were present. The warm welcome they then received greatly delighted some of the Continental delegates of the Evangelical Alliance who were staying at the Mission-Mouse.

For the new premises were spacious enough to contribute to the realisation of one of Mr. Taylor's cherished ambitions that of being able, in measure, to discharge the debt of the Mission for hospitality in many lands, by receiving—whether in London, Shanghai, or elsewhere—those of the one great family to whom a home away from home might be a convenience. Simple as it was in all its appointments, the London headquarters could accommodate quite a number of guests, and in Miss Williamson a hostess had been found as large of heart as she was full of sympathy with the ideals of the Mission.^[390]

Here, then, in the summer. of 1896, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor settled down for the last period, little as any one realised it, of their active service in connection with the work in England. Their children being scattered they no longer needed a home of their own, and though with advancing age they might have been glad of more of privacy at times, they were thankful for the closeness of touch with their fellow-workers afforded by the daily life of the Mission-house.

The retirement of Mr. Broomhall had made a change they could not but feel in the London work. But Number 2 Pyrland Road was still his home, and the relations of love and sympathy were unbroken. The step had been taken during Mr. Taylor's absence, after twenty years of service, on Mrs. Broomhall's part as well as his own, the value of which was beyond estimation.

"Few probably are aware," Mr. Howard recorded in the minutes of the Council, "of the immense amount of work accomplished by Mr. Broomhall in past days, when he was assisting Mr. Taylor in the early and rapid development of the Mission and almost single-handed was doing the work now divided amongst several-and the Council feels that no words of theirs can adequately express all that the Mission owes to his untiring energy and unbounded labours. And they cannot but recall how, for years, it was the privilege of candidates for China to be welcomed into the happy home circle of Pyrland Road, where in Mr. and Mrs. Broomhall a great many of our members now labouring in China found a second father and mother."

The responsible post of Secretary was now filled by Mr. Sloan, and both he and Mr. Wood in the deputation work were leaders to be relied on. Mr. Taylor thus found himself free for the larger issues claiming thought and

prayer, for conference with Mr. Stevenson and the Council, and for visits to Norway, Sweden, and Germany for personal intercourse with the representatives of affiliated missions. And then, with-returning strength, he was claimed for conventions and meetings of all sorts just in the old way, from the Highlands to Salisbury Plain, and from Gloucester and Liverpool to the eastern counties.

To Mr. J. T. Morton, who was increasingly interested in the work, he wrote somewhat later:

You kindly ask whether workers are offering freely and whether our funds enable us to accept those so offering. I am thankful to say that we have been enabled to send out all suitable candidates, whom we felt to be sufficiently prepared for the work. We have a number still in training, principally in Edinburgh and Glasgow. ... Sometimes during the past year (1896) we have been straitened for funds for the support of missionaries and of the general work, while freely supplied for special objects. At these times God has helped us through, in answer to much prayer....

Thank you for your kind thought about myself. My aim is to get every part of the work into such a condition that it can be carried on without me, and with this in view I visit different branches of it in turn. We are specially asking God to give us an increased number of efficient leaders, and to preserve the lives and health of those we already have.

Needless to say the Forward Movement, which had been for a time in abeyance, was the chief burden on his heart. Wherever he went he kept it to the front, pleading for full consecration to Christ in view of His unconditional command, "Preach the Gospel to every creature." Busy indeed was the winter (1896-1897) after his return from the Continent, when he was strong enough to travel constantly and address meetings in all parts of the country. Never

had invitations been more cordial or the hearts of the Lord's people more open to him. Many who remembered his missionary appeals in the days of their childhood had grown to maturity, and those who remained of his first friends and supporters were, like himself, far on in life's pilgrimage. No voice had quite the ring for them of his voice; no one was more welcome in conferences or among the churches of all denominations that had known him so long.

How they loved him in that warm, throbbing centre of Christian activity St. George's Cross Tabernacle, Glasgow! Of his many visits, the Rev. D. J. Findlay wrote:

His ministry in public and in our home was made a rich blessing, and the atmosphere of the presence of God which always surrounded him was a precious benediction. The way in which he was ever ready to give place to other speakers and to plead and pray for other missions was specially helpful. One year he gave half the time set apart for his own address to Mr. Fanstone from South America, who launched the "Help for Brazil" effort on that occasion and obtained his first missionary on the spot.

More than once Mr. Taylor spoke to us at the Table of the Lord, and these were memorable occasions. Many remember with what overflowing joy, on his last visit (September. 1896), he led us in singing the chorus of which he was very full at the time:

I am feasting on the Living Bread,

I am drinking at the Fountain Head;

For he that drinketh, Jesus said,

Shall never, never thirst again.

It was as always the need of others that occupied him most—the desire not to get but to give, to bring all whom he could influence into the rest and joy of abiding fellowship with Christ.

"There are many hearts, everywhere, wanting to know more of the fulness of Christ," he wrote to Mr. C. G. Moore before a longer visit to Germany in the spring of 1897. "Ask with us a fresh anointing for this service of love."

Tired with the winter's work, he was glad to accept Mr. Berger's invitation to the south of France for a quiet week or two before beginning his Continental meetings. It was good to be with his loved friend once more, for whom the sands of life were running low,^[391] and to put into practice the injunction of which he had himself written a few months previously:

On my birthday I received your cheering note and card, for both of which my heart thanks you. May I send back the same message—"Rest, in the Lord"?

Bear not a single care thyself,

One is too much for thee;

The work is mine, and mine alone,

Thy work is rest, in me.

You will notice, perhaps, that I have put in a comma after the word "Rest," for I think that sometimes we run on in thought to the end and forget the first part of the sentence. Rest, as if nothing more were said. When you need it, rest in body; rest always in spirit. Rest as one "in Him" alone can, and as all such can afford to; for one with Him, all things are ours. Rest in His love, power, strength, riches, Ah, what arms to enfold, what a heart to lean upon!

Limits of space forbid more than a brief mention of that important visit to Germany, in which Mr. Taylor was joined by Mr. Sloan for the months of March and April. In addition to the Barmen Mission, whose workers Mr. Taylor had recently visited in China, there was a newer movement at Kiel which he was glad to strengthen. Started as a branch of the C.I.M. and subsequently developed as the Liebenzell Mission, this work was destined to great usefulness, and both its leaders and those of the older Barmen Mission gave Mr. Taylor a cordial welcome and many opportunities for speaking about China.^[392]

In Berlin their meetings were chiefly under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. which had invited them for a Student Conference. Generously entertained by Count Puckler, they were kept busy for ten days in the capital, some of the meetings doing much to deepen friendly relations. For the C.I.M., as they discovered, was not too favourably regarded in certain quarters. Its interdenominational basis did not commend it to leaders of Societies connected with the State Church, and the accounts that had reached them of its growth and faith principles were hardly credited. It was, thus, in a somewhat uncertain frame of mind that prominent ministers and secretaries gathered in the drawing room of Mrs. Palmer Davies (*nee* Baroness von Dungern) to meet the visitors, interested specially in seeing what sort of person "the renowned Hudson Taylor" might be.

"The stranger who stood in our midst," wrote the Baroness, "was not of an imposing appearance, and his fair curly hair made him look younger than he really was."

The time was largely given, we learn from her charming letter, to questions through interpretation, and her anxiety as hostess is frankly confessed. For she was conscious, as Mr. Taylor could not be, of the critical attitude of not a

few present, who regarded him as rather a free-lance in the sphere of missions.

"But how beautifully," she exclaimed, "this heavenly minded man was able, in the humility of his heart, to conquer all the hidden prejudice against him and his work!"

That as leader of the C.I.M. he received workers from various denominations was the first point on which explanation was desired.

Only recently the Mission had accepted a number of highly educated and well-gifted young men who were members of the State Church. How, then, were they able to work together with Methodists and Baptists, etc? It was also in the mind of the questioners that Mr. Taylor himself had been connected with Baptists, and that he was the son of a Methodist preacher, which, with regard to his orthodoxy, made the strongly Lutheran clergy look upon him with suspicion.

To all this Mr. Taylor replied that, in our chief aims, we are all one in Christ; also that China is large enough, and the workers can be distributed over the various provinces so that each denomination is able to retain its particular order of Church government. "Only recently," he stated, "we have been glad to welcome an English Bishop (one of our own number) for Western China, so that our missionaries from the State Church are not lacking the care of a spiritual guide and head. The great work of the mission-field, which is a call to us all, overrides theological differences, and our motto remains, 'All one in Christ—'"

Just when the Director of the Gossner Mission had shaken his silver-white head and remarked to his neighbour in an undertone, "Such a mixture of Church and Sectarians would be impossible with us," Mr. Taylor continued:

"It is remarkable how the Lord Himself has chosen His

instruments, so that even the most insignificant, in His hand, are able to be 'to the praise of His glory.' Surely it goes as in creation: there are strong and beautiful oak-trees, but there are also little flowers of the meadow; and both the oak and the flower have been placed there by His hand. I myself, for instance, am not specially gifted, and am shy by nature, but my gracious and merciful God and Father inclined Himself to me, and I who was weak in faith He strengthened while I was still young. He taught me in my helplessness to rest on Him, and to pray even about little things in which another might have felt able to help himself."

Instances were mentioned from his early experiences such as the giving away of his last half-crown, the only coin he possessed in the world, when he was living alone in lodgings and scarcely knew where the next meal was to come from.^[393] To know God for himself as the Hearer and Answerer of prayer had been the preparation, in view of his life-work, that he felt all-important.

He knew the desire of my heart, and simply trusting like a child, I brought all to Him in prayer. Thus I experienced, quite early, how He is willing to help and strengthen and to fulfil the desire of those who fear Him. And so in later years, when I prayed the money came.

He then told how the passage, "Owe no man anything save to love one another," had raised the question in his mind, "Are we entitled to make exceptions in work for the Kingdom of God, and continuously to sigh under the oppression of debt? "His own conclusion had been that the words meant just what they said: that God is rich enough to supply" all our need "as it arises, and that He likes to do so before we run into debt much better than afterwards and he gave instances to show how, trusting Him to fulfil His own Word, and neither spending money before it was received nor making appeals for help, the seven hundred missionaries of the C.I.M. were actually

sustained.^[394]

"Will you please tell us," was then asked, "whether it is true that after you had moved a large audience by putting the need of missionary work to their hearts, and someone arose to make a collection, you went so far as to hinder it?"

"I have done so more than once," replied Mr. Taylor. It is not our way to take collections, because we desire to turn aside no gifts from other Societies. We receive free-will offerings, but without putting any pressure upon people. After such a meeting they can easily find opportunity, if they wish, to send their gifts which so far has been done freely." "We have heard," remarked a clergyman, "that in that way some quite large sums are sent in; but we aim at training our congregations to systematic giving...."

"That is a very important matter," answered Mr. Taylor. "However, one is led so, while another is led otherwise. Each must act according to his light. As I said before, for my weakness' sake the Lord has acknowledged my way of working and praying, but I am far from advising any one to copy me. You do well to train individuals, to train the whole Church to systematic giving...."

Other questions were still raised, until I at length interposed, saying that Mr. Taylor had promised to be present at another meeting that same evening, and it might be well to spare his strength. He had been standing, by his own request, while for over an hour we had been sitting comfortably round him. Just then a sunbeam touched his face, so full of joy and peace, bringing a brightness as from above-and I could only think of Stephen, who saw heaven opened and Jesus at the right hand of God. One present bowed his head, covering his eyes with his hand, and I heard him whisper: "We must all take shame before this man."

"Yes," the white-headed Professor replied to my suggestion, "you are quite right; we will not trouble our friend any further." And rising he crossed the room, put his arm round Mr. Taylor's neck and kissed him.

Summer days in England, after Mr. Taylor's return from the Continent, found him more than ever occupied with meetings. Not that he was equal to the strain, but funds were low for the general purposes of the Mission, and he was never one who could pray without working to the limit of his powers. That limit was reached before the Keswick Convention, however. Suffering severely from neuralgia and headache, he was obliged to cancel his engagements and accept the doctor's verdict-complete rest, and absence from the Mission for several months to come.

The wonderful air of Davos, in Switzerland, proved just the tonic he was needing, and there in the early autumn Mr. Taylor heard of an answer to prayer that helped to confirm his recovery. He had been much exercised about a financial difficulty that had arisen, due in part to the arrangements for special support in the new branches of the Mission. To deal with it, he would have to visit America as well as China and perhaps Australia, and he was planning such a journey, when a gift of no less than ten thousand pounds for the general fund relieved the situation and sent him rejoicing on his homeward way.

And there was more to follow. The generous donor, Mr. J. T. Morton, had been in failing health for some time, but it was a shock to hear of his death within a few days of the above-mentioned gift, and almost more so to learn that he had bequeathed to the C.I.M. a fourth part of his residuary estate-a share which could not be less and might be a good deal more than a hundred thousand pounds. This noble legacy for evangelistic and education work was to be treated as income and not as an endowment.

Overwhelmed with thankfulness and a deep sense of responsibility, Mr. Taylor could not but connect the great trust thus committed to the Mission with the great task yet to be accomplished in China, in obedience to the divine command. Ten thousand pounds a year for ten years or longer for the money was to be paid in instalments-what might it not accomplish toward this end? And so it came to pass that articles under the title of "The Forward Movement" began to appear in China's Millions, and before the year was out (1897) he was on his way to Shanghai, full of longing to see the inauguration of an evangelistic effort that might spread throughout all the provinces.

From certain points of view the outlook was definite before him, though just as indefinite from others. He saw with perfect clearness the dangers to which so large an accession of means exposed the Mission, and deeply felt the need for an increase of spiritual power. Not with silver and gold could precious souls be won, or, men and women fitted to be messengers of the cross of Christ. A fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Calvary and Pentecost, was the supreme need, and for this he prayed as never before. And he did more than pray. Knowing how much blessing had been given through "Winter Missions" in India, he approached the leaders of the Keswick Convention about similar work among the native Christians in China, if the thought approved itself to the missionary body in that great field. For it was not the C.I.M. only that was upon his heart, it was all China. He longed to see the eighty thousand communicants of all Protestant churches quickened with new life and fired with zeal for the salvation of their fellow-countrymen.

"We missionaries could not take part in such a movement," he wrote, "without being greatly refreshed and strengthened and the fresh anointing would prepare us to arrange among ourselves for the division of the field, and for assisting and guiding the native evangelists whom the Holy Spirit might

thrust forward, and the missionary evangelists whom we expect the same Holy Spirit would call from the homelands."

A Forward Movement in spiritual power and blessing was the object most of all upon his heart.

"We are not immediately appealing for new workers," he continued with regard to the Inland Mission—"our first need being to prepare for them in China, and the most important preparation of all a spiritual one."

Chapter XXXIX^(TOC)

Even So, Father

1898-1900 AET. 66-68

*And except life itself be cast in the scale,
No life can be won, no cause prevail.*

MORE and more it was to China's Christians, filled with the Spirit of Christ, that Mr. Taylor looked for the evangelisation of China. In his second article on the Forward Movement, written from Shanghai (March 1898), he asked much prayer that the Keswick deputation, to whom a cordial welcome had been sent by Dr. Muirhead in the name of the missionary body, might be enabled to come out without delay, and that

*... in the meantime the Spirit of God may work mightily,
preparing the heathen for the Gospel and the converts for
fuller blessing, likewise raising up from among them
evangelists, called, qualified, and constrained to preach the
Gospel, as well as live out the Christ-life.*

*"There are eighty thousand Protestant communicants in
China," he had written in his earlier paper, "and possibly as
many more candidates and probationers. Besides these there
are a still larger number who are convinced of the truth of
Christianity, though they have not yet grace and courage to
confess Christ. If there were a widespread outpouring of the
Holy Spirit, all these might speedily be swept into the fold, and
the effect in China of a quarter of, a million earnest, active,
holyliving Christians would be very great." [395]*

But though the work was theirs, and without them could never be carried to completion, Mr. Taylor equally felt the need for Spirit-filled missionaries and many more of them, especially evangelists. Never before had he seen his way so clearly as far as money was concerned, but that very fact only made a revival of spiritual blessing the more urgent. Ten or twelve thousand pounds annually, in addition to current income, to be spent as it was received and to

be spent in China, was a serious responsibility. It meant not only great possible development, but great possible difficulty at the end of the period when, the last instalment having been paid, the new undertakings would have to be carried on. Mr. Taylor had no doubt whatever but that the whole thing—the form of the bequest as well as the gift itself—was of God, and had no hesitation in accepting it; but he saw that to go forward and enlarge the work without an increase of faith, prayer, and spiritual power, which alone could make it fruitful and sustain it, would be to court disaster.

"There probably never was a time when we needed divine guidance more than at present," he had written to Mr. Stevenson before leaving England. "We sorely need fresh life infusing into every part of our work, without which this large legacy which has been left us may prove the greatest misfortune we have had for a long time."

It was with this double thought in view therefore—a Forward Movement, based upon real accessions of spiritual blessing—that Mr. Taylor came out for his tenth visit to China, accompanied by Mrs. Taylor, Miss Soltau of the Women's Department in London, and Miss Bessie Hanbury a little company who knew the way to the Throne. How serious was the call to prayer they could not but realise from another consideration very present to their minds.

"If the Spirit of God work mightily," Mr. Taylor wrote on the journey, "we may be quite sure that the spirit of evil will also be active. When the appeal for a thousand new workers went forth from the Missionary Conference of 1890, the enemy at once began a counter-movement, and riots and massacres have from time to time followed as never before."

Not that this was any argument for holding back. It simply meant that whatever was undertaken must be begun, as it could alone be continued, ***in God.***

One year and nine months now lay before Mr. Taylor of this last period of his active service in China (January. 1898 to September. 1899). He as little as those about him realised to be the last, and yet in tracing its experiences one cannot but be conscious of the finishing touches God was putting to the life labours of His servant. He was present at all the Council Meetings of this period, for example, with one exception. Seven times the leaders of the Mission gathered to meet him, and he was enabled to come into touch, through them, with a large part of the work. Many questions of difficulty were settled, and some problems of long standing happily solved. Then the important question of the Forward Movement was dealt with in ways that told of God's own working.

"Before leaving home," Mr. Taylor wrote in this connection, "we were greatly cheered by the promise of Psalm 32:8, 'I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go.' We felt we were going forward in this matter not knowing when, how, or where God would have the new work begun, but assured that, in the way, needed light and leading would be given; and we have not been disappointed."

Quite apart from previous planning, experienced workers had met in Shanghai from England, America, the Continent of Europe, and the interior of China, and after the January and April Council Meetings all was arranged for a beginning to be made in the accessible province of Kiang-si, with its ninety-nine governing cities, capitals of counties, in very few of which the Gospel was as yet being preached.

The tide of spiritual blessing, too, was rising, even before the arrival of the Keswick deputation. He who delights to use "the weak things" had found a cleansed and empty vessel which He was pleased to fill to overflowing with His own Spirit.

"I go forth in conscious weakness," Miss Soltau had written of her visit to China, "feeling my need of His abundant life for the untried way."

Drawing on the promised fulness, she had begun the journeys which were to occupy thirteen consecutive months, taking her over six thousand miles in all, to forty-four mission-stations, in every one of which she was made a blessing. Some years before, from her responsible post in London, she had written to a near relative:

The work is always increasing; and were it not for the consciousness of Christ as my life, hour by hour, I could not go on. But He is teaching me glorious lessons of His sufficiency, and each day I am carried onward with no feeling of strain or fear of collapse.

And so it was in China. Fatiguing journeys, lack of quiet and home-comforts, extremes of winter cold and summer heat, and at each station the demands of heart to-heart interviews with beloved workers, many of whom were like her own children, as well as of frequent meetings with the missionaries or Chinese Christians who flocked around her—all were met in the same spirit of dependence upon the resources of the Lord Himself. Thus there was no breakdown, no hindrance to carrying out a full programme; and from station after station Mr. Taylor had the joy of receiving just the tidings he longed for. From the young men's training home at An-king he heard through Mr. Stevenson of Miss Soltau's visit as "a truly remarkable season."

"The Holy Spirit was poured out upon all present," Mr. Taylor wrote, "and every one of the missionaries and students received extraordinary spiritual help. Such a Pentecostal season had never been experienced there before. This, surely, is what we need, for ourselves and for our native brethren."

With regard to his own usefulness, it was doubtless a trial to Mr. Taylor that

he was prevented through ill-health from joining in these meetings: For several months after his arrival he was confined more or less to his room, but amid outward limitations he was learning much of the divine alchemy that for brass can bring gold and for iron silver, teaching in so many ways the lesson that His strength "is **made perfect** in weakness." To Dr. A. T. Pierson, whom he had visited in America, and who had since been laid aside by serious illness, Mr. Taylor wrote in April:

Ah, how much pains the Lord takes to empty us and to show us He can do without us! My experience has not been yours, of suffering pain for any long periods, but of great prostration and weakness, so that I have had to decline all public work since reaching China. In a quiet way I have been able to think and pray over many matters, and to confer with many of our workers. Some important arrangements have been made, which will, I believe, bear fruit in the future, and I trust some lessons have been learned. May we both be better fitted for any service the Lord may call us to, or for His own blessed appearing, which surely is very near!

*On our way out my wife came across a little verse in **Hymns of Tersteegen and Others** which we have often thought of since:*

He told me of a river bright

Which flows from Him to me,

That I might be, for His delight,

A fair and fruitful tree.

It is very simple: but has He not planted us by the river of living water that we may be for His delight, fair and fruitful to His people? ...

Sometimes God can carry on His work better without us than with us. ... Then, again, the best work is not always done with large numbers. Our Lord fed the five thousand on the mountain-side, and eternity may show results we shall not know of till that day, but the record does not tell of much immediate outcome. On the other hand, He fed one woman at the well of Samaria, and immediately, through her, brought multitudes to His feet. So, do you not think, the Lord may see fit to call us away from the thousands, and do perhaps His best work through us to tens or even units, whom we may meet by the way?

May He lead you, dear Brother, and continue to bless you more and more. I am increasingly thankful that "My Father is the Husbandman." There are "under-shepherds"; but no prentice hand trains the branches of the True Vine, nor cleanses nor prunes them.

Dr. Pierson had not been able to join the Keswick deputation to China, but the Rev. Charles Inwood came, fresh from a wonderful time of blessing on the Continent. Accustomed to speaking through interpretation and to leading his hearers step by step from the elements of truth into fuller and deeper experiences, he was just the teacher needed, and from autumn to early summer he and Mrs. Inwood laboured without intermission as Miss Soltau was doing, their united service covering almost the entire period of Mr. Taylor's visit. One year and five months altogether these special meetings continued, Mr. Inwood in particular finding a wide sphere outside the Inland Mission. Travelling over ten thousand miles-north and south and far up the Yangtze to Chung-king-he had "precious fellowship with every missionary society in China," and found that year stand out, in spite of toil and danger, as the brightest he had ever spent in the Master's service.

Mr. Taylor meanwhile had wonderfully gained in strength, and even before

Mr. Inwood's arrival had been able to take several journeys, and by meetings and correspondence to forward the same important end. While detained in Shanghai he had met over two hundred members of the Mission, and subsequently in visits to Chefoo and the new hill-station at Ku-ling had had opportunity for ministry to a large circle. But his letters went further still, carrying much of the blessing that sustained him and which he thankfully realised to be accessible to all.

"Go forward in the strength of the Lord, and in the sufficiency that comes from Him alone," he wrote to one who needed encouragement, "and thank Him for your conscious insufficiency, for when you are weak, then He can be strong in you.

"Do not be afraid to let His light shine through you; do not be afraid to let even a trickling overflow, overflow. Do not let any self-consciousness prevent your being at God's disposal for any message He may want you to give at any time, to any one. Never mind what people think about you; perhaps they will only think about Him, not about you at all, and thank Him for His ministry, though it may come through you. If at any time you are conscious of failure or sin, or even if you stand in doubt about anything, confess it at once to Him, and accept His promise of immediate cleansing and restoration. The moment you switch on electricity, the light shines or the power is manifested, just as before it was switched off, though in spiritual things the power of God may be manifested differently at one time from another. I do pray for you. My very heart goes out in prayer on your behalf, and I never was more thankful to God for you than I am now." ^[396]

No pains seemed too great if he could lead a soul into fuller blessing, and not least, his own children.

"With regard to many truths, there are two aspects to be borne

in mind," he wrote to his daughter a few weeks later, "the divine and the human. This is so of the question of being filled with the Spirit. The command 'be filled' etc., points us to the human side. What do we mean when we say that a loving mother is 'full of her baby'? Some leave their babies to the nurse and do little or nothing for them themselves, going occasionally to amuse themselves with their children, but finding their principal enjoyments apart from them altogether. But the mother full of her baby is very different. Her heart, her time, her life are given to the child. Very much in the same way, the mind of the Spirit' spoken of in Romans 8:6 (R.V.) means letting the Holy Spirit fill us and have us.

"Now the heart can no more be filled with two things at the same time than a tumbler can be filled with both air and water at the same time. If you want a tumbler full of water to be filled with air, it has first to be emptied of the water. This shows us why prayer to be filled with the Spirit is often gradually answered. We have to be shown our sins, our 'faults, our prepossessions, and to be delivered from them. Faith is the channel by which all grace and blessing are received; and that which is accepted by faith, God bestows in fact. Being filled does not always lead to exalted feeling or uniform manifestation, but God always keeps His word. We have to look to His promises or rest in them, expecting their literal fulfilment. Some put asking in the place of accepting; some wish it were so, instead of believing that it is so. We have never to wait for God's giving, for God has already 'blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ.' We may reverently say, He has nothing more to give; for He has given His all. Yet, just as the room is full of air, but none can get into the tumbler save as far as the water is emptied out, so we may be unable to receive all He has given, if the self-life is filling to some extent our hearts and lives'."

Gradually, as 1898 wore on, the outlook with regard to social and political

conditions became increasingly disquieting. While souls were being saved in larger numbers than ever before and spiritual blessing given, the political unrest which had been growing since the Japanese war, and the bitterness of feeling due to the aggressions of foreign powers were hastening a crisis the nature of which was but too evident. The countermove Mr. Taylor had anticipated as likely to hinder widespread evangelistic effort was taking serious form. Too hasty attempts on the part of the young Emperor to introduce reforms had thrown the country into a ferment; open discussion in the European press of the "partition of China "was goading the authorities to desperation; and the Imperial Government had so lost influence with the people that, as Mr. Taylor wrote in July, there seemed little hope of averting a complete collapse." A powerful rebellion had broken out in Western China in the spring of the year, which was still unsubdued; local uprisings and riots were of frequent occurrence; and finally the Dowager Empress, at the head of the reactionary party, had resumed the reins of government, visiting with dire retribution the over-zealous reformers, and consigning the hapless Emperor to virtual imprisonment in "the inner apartments." This had taken place in September, and now in quick succession drastic measures were being taken to reverse the policy of recent years and to curtail the pretensions of foreigners. Needless to say, this sudden change of front on the part of the Government encouraged anti-foreign feeling throughout the country; and as almost the only Europeans in the interior were missionaries, it was against them particularly that hostilities were directed. The situation was fraught with peril, and could not 'but give rise to serious apprehensions.

*"Leave God out of count," Mr. Frost had written for the November **China's Millions**, "and fear might well possess and overwhelm us. Bring God into account and there is perfect peace for us at home and for our beloved missionaries in China. ... Satan is mighty, but God is almighty. Not one thing*

can man do that God does not allow to be done, and one outstretching of His glorious arm can subdue every enemy. ... For thirtytwo years of the Mission's history He has preserved life in the face of threatened dangers, so that up to the present time, in spite of robbers, bandits, and rioters, not one person has been called on such accounts to pass through, death. And further, suppose He should allow this long record of divine interposition to be broken, would He be less strong to keep in the hour of death than He has been in the days of life? We do not speak lightly; but thinking of God and of His mighty acts, and with the past in view, though faced in thought with martyr fires and rack and sword, we know that God can keep His own, and we believe that He would do so, now, as in the days of old."

That for thirty-two years God had so watched over the Mission that no life had ever been lost through violence or accident or in travelling was a very real comfort to Mr. Taylor. Frequently in his letters of this troubled year he calls attention to the fact, which was indeed a remarkable one, considering the pioneering work 'accomplished in all the inland provinces, and that there was scarcely a moment of the day or night in which journeys were not being taken, either by land or water. Shipwrecks had occurred once and again at sea, and more often on the rapids of the Yangtze; but though loss of property had been permitted, as also in many a riot, life and limb had been protected in every case, often in most wonderful ways. Indeed, there had grown up in Mr. Taylor's mind a restful confidence in God that He would thus protect His servants in the Mission, especially defenceless women, working alone in their stations, at a distance often from the nearest missionaries. He rejoiced in their faith and devotion no less than in the blessing that rested on their labours. At this very time (1898-1899) despite persecution and threatened danger, two hundred and fifty converts were received into church membership in the ladies' stations on the Kwang-sin River, while a thousand inquirers were

under instruction as candidates for baptism. Such a result from the labours of a few young women in a few brief years, with quite a small, though growing, band of native leaders, was indeed cause for thankfulness.^[397]

To a woman also had been given success in the difficult and dangerous task of effecting a settled residence in Hu-nan, so long the most anti-foreign province in China. With a single native helper and a Chinese woman-companion she had walked quietly over the border from Kiang-si, under the very eyes of the soldiery sent to guard the frontier, but who never dreamed of connecting those dusty wayfarers with the dreaded foreigner they were to intercept! During his recent visit to England Mr. Taylor had been rejoiced by a letter (1896) from this brave Norwegian worker saying that the Lord Jesus had taken up His abode in the hearts of some of the people over the border, and that if she should be put out, He could not-for hearts that have once received Him are not likely to give Him up. But a new day had dawned for Hu-nan. Miss Jacobsen was not put out. On the contrary, the Rev. George Hunter, Dr. Keller and others were so prospered in similar efforts that this very period of uneasiness and trouble witnessed the opening of centre after centre, until the C.I.M. alone had four settled stations in the province. From Cha-ling-chow, Dr. Keller wrote at the close of 1898:

We have from twenty to forty quiet, attentive hearers at our morning services. Yesterday, Sunday, we held a longer meeting, about sixty being present. We have quite a few callers, and they all drink tea with us without hesitation. Is not this rather unusual? Everything seems peaceful and quiet. Oh, let us praise Him! Reports are brought to us of some harsh talk in a large students' hall near here-threats to kill our landlord and loot his premises, and afterwards make an assault on us. We are in God's hands, and He is almighty. ... Pray for us.

By this time Mr. Taylor was on his way up the Yangtze to the far west of China. Despite the rebellion in Szechwan, which was still in progress, and the unquiet state of the country everywhere, Mr. and Mrs. Inwood were to attend the conference of West China missionaries to be held at Chung-king in January (1899) and Mr. and Mrs. Taylor had decided to accompany them. The journey, first by steamer and then by native boat hundreds of miles up the Yangtze, was no little undertaking in mid-winter, especially to those unaccustomed to the rapids; but much help was found on the way at the various homes and business centres of the Mission, at which every possible arrangement was made for the comfort of the travellers. Very different had been Mr. Taylor's earlier experiences before the Mission had any business organisation, when in the midst of pressing work and responsibilities he had to look after such affairs himself, or risk their miscarrying. Of one journey, happily not a long one, he retained a feeling recollection-when the willing but unbusinesslike fellow-worker to whom he had entrusted his belongings (being so busy himself that he hardly knew how to get off) arrived with his coolie at the landing-stage just as the vessel was steaming away. Mr. Taylor, after waving farewell to his baggage, had to sleep on bare boards that night-making the best, as he said, of a shoe and an umbrella for a pillow and the cold wintry air for a coverlet. Now, things were on a very different footing, and no one appreciated the change, or the sacrifice at which able and devoted missionaries were facilitating the work of others, more than the leader of the Mission who had himself known so much of "serving tables."

But not all the loving care of fellow-workers by the way could keep from him the heavy tidings received at Hankow of the first martyrdom in the ranks of the C.I.M. Away in the distant province of Kwei-chow the tragedy had occurred, when William S. Fleming, from Australia, had been murdered with his friend and helper, P'an, a convert from the Black Miao tribe they were

seeking to evangelise. In trying to protect the latter, Mr. Fleming's own life had been sacrificed; and while thanking God for the spirit in which he had met his brief but terrible end, Mr. Taylor realised with a straitened heart something of what it meant that such an event should have happened.

*"How sad the tidings!" he wrote to Mr. Stevenson on the 22nd of November: "blessed for the martyrs but sad for us, for China, for their friends. And not only sad, but ominous! It seems to show that God is about to test us with a new **kind** of trial: surely we need to gird on afresh 'the whole armour of God.' Doubtless it means fuller blessing, but through deeper suffering. May we all lean hard on the Strong for strength ... and in some way or other the work be deepened and extended, not hindered, by these trials."*

"Deepened and extended, not hindered"—how often in the months that followed the thought must have been turned into prayer as his own way was increasingly hedged about with 'difficulty. The conference at Chung-king proved a time of blessing. Attended by seventy to eighty missionaries of various societies it gave opportunity for Mr. Inwood's helpful ministry, and brought Mr. Taylor into touch with Bishop Cassels, Dr. Parry, and other leaders in the C.I.M. work. But the visits he and Mrs. Taylor hoped to pay to many of the western stations had to be abandoned. In the first place, a fresh outbreak of the Yu Man-tze rebellion made travelling extremely dangerous; and further, a serious illness brought Mr. Taylor so low that his life was almost despaired of. Nursing him night and day, Mrs. Taylor at last saw that all that could be done was unavailing. It seemed as if, at any moment, his heart might fail. Realising what it would mean to the Mission if he were taken suddenly, with no one in view to fill his place, she had been holding on to God in prayer and faith for his recovery. Now, in the silent room, she could only kneel and cry:

"Lord, we can do nothing! Do what Thou wilt. Undertake for us."

When he next spoke, knowing nothing of her prayer, it was to whisper, "I feel better, dear": and from that time he recovered.

On the return journey to Shanghai he regained a measure of strength, but the summer (1899) had to be spent either on the hills or at Chefoo. It was a matter of concern to Mr. Taylor that the men for the Forward Movement seemed to be volunteering so slowly. Some had been sent out and some had offered from the ranks of the Mission in China, including his own youngest son, but quite a few were yet needed to make up the first twenty, though the money to sustain them was waiting in abundance. Contrasted with former experiences, such as the answers to prayer in connection with the Seventy and the Hundred, this seemed the more remarkable, and could not but confirm Mr. Taylor's life-long conviction that in God's work the silver and the gold, though very necessary, are of secondary importance. Still, the disturbed state of the country reconciled him to patience. Things seemed to be going from bad to worse politically. The anti-foreign movement fostered by the Dowager Empress was growing in power, and it might be long before normal conditions were restored. Meanwhile, a promised visit had to be paid to Australia and New Zealand, and then to New York for the (Ecumenical Missionary Conference. This journey, Mr. Taylor hoped, would greatly help the Forward Movement, as well as call forth much prayer for China.

A tender tender and special interest necessarily attaches to those spring and summer days that witnessed his last ministries in scenes and to-fellow-workers long held dear. So unconscious was he that his work in China was drawing to a close that he entered heartily into plans for building a cottage to which he and Mrs. Taylor could retire for rest from the busy Mission-house

at Shanghai. This little summer home, the only dwelling they ever planned for themselves, consisted of a sitting-room and two small bedrooms, over kitchen and servants' quarters, with an upstairs verandah on three sides. The latter was the great attraction, for from it the well-wooded hills stretched away in beautiful vistas to the plain two thousand feet below. Cool even on summer nights, the spot seemed ideal for a sanatorium, and Mr. Taylor had purchased a strip of the hill while property up there was still of little value. It was soon, however, to become a favourite resort for foreign residents, and a service of steam-launches brought it within two days of Shanghai.

Thus it was that Mr. and Mrs. Taylor found themselves in the old home at Hang-chow once more, for having missed the north-bound launch they had just time to go down while waiting for the next train of boats to start. The visit was only for a few hours, but how many recollections it brought—! More than thirty years had elapsed since the Lammermuir party had found shelter in the house next door, beginning there the work that had now spread to the most distant provinces. Fuh Ku-niang, the bright-faced girl who had been the first to visit the women in their homes, and had led many to the Saviour, was still remembered and loved. Long had she borne with her husband the burden and heat of the day. Its working hours were numbered now. How gladly would they have spent them to the last with the dear old Pastor in the care of the church, and in soulsaving work which had always had a first place in their hearts. But the Mission needed them, needed them in some ways more than ever, and in service to their fellowworkers all those last weeks and months were filled. No one could sympathise, counsel, or comfort as they could; no one had so sure an access, by way of the Throne, to other hearts.

In much perturbation of spirit, for example, one devoted worker had come

down to Shanghai in May, determined to leave the Mission unless the principle of not appealing to Consuls for redress could be so far set aside in his case as to admit of his wrongs being righted in connection with a recent riot, Mr. Taylor greatly valued both the brother in question and his work. He knew him to be a man of intense convictions and strong feelings, and being warned of his attitude by Mr. Stevenson, who had travelled with him, gave himself specially to prayer, and delayed the interview for a day or two. It was a case for putting into practice his own words.

What is spiritual ministry? It is that if you see me to be wrong you are able by prayer, by spiritual power, by tact, by love, forbearance and patience to enlighten my conscience, and thus cause me gladly to turn from my mistaken course to the right one. ^[398]

Meanwhile the young missionary, eager, and impatient as he was, began to see things, somehow, in a different light. Though no word was said against his position, he could not but feel as he reconsidered the matter that it was, perhaps, rather out of keeping with the spirit of Christ. He little knew that Mr. Taylor, who seemed too busy to spare him a few minutes, was spending not minutes but hours in earnest pleading on his behalf. But that hidden influence did what no reasoning, far less exercise of authority, could have accomplished.

"Before the interview took place, or Mr. Taylor said a word to me on the subject," he recalled with thankfulness, "my whole position was changed. I saw I had been utterly wrong, and that the C.I.M. principle was right, even in such a peculiar case as mine. During our first conversation, Mr. Taylor did not refer to the matter. He talked about other things, asking my opinion as to the use of certain drugs, and when the dinner-bell rang said that he would like to have further talk with me that afternoon at three o'clock.

"I felt guilty over taking up so much of his time, and so, though I had resolved not to open the subject, I decided to tell him frankly of my change of position. At the appointed hour I went to him and said:

"Mr. Taylor, I feel I ought to let you know at once that I see things differently, and am prepared to submit the whole matter to you and act as you may direct."

It was a manly decision, worthy of a strong character, and Mr. Taylor's relief was so great that he could only exclaim "Thank God!"

"This experience was a crisis and turning-point in my life," continued Dr. Keller. "It taught me in a most practical way how even strongly formed purposes can be changed and men's hearts influenced by prayer alone. I have always felt that surrenders made and principles accepted at that time, together with real changes in character that then took place, were God's direct and gracious answer to Mr. Taylor's prayers."

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Then at Chefoo that summer Mr. and Mrs. Taylor had many opportunities of coming into touch with the staff and pupils of the three flourishing schools. The month spent in their midst was full of interest.

"Over a hundred and fifty children," Mrs. Taylor wrote, "all in good health and doing well in their work, is something to be thankful for."

Delighting in the happiness of the boys and girls, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor never tired of watching their games and seeing all they could of them personally. Foundation Day was a great occasion. A boat race in the early morning, followed by cricket and tennis matches, prepared the young folk to enjoy the quiet noonday hour with plenty of singing and an address from Mr. Taylor. After tea, under the willows, several photographs were taken, and the cool of

evening brought a delightful "social" in the quadrangle.

"It was a warm, moonlit night," wrote Mrs. Taylor, "and the lights in the room near the pianos were all that was necessary. One of the teachers, Miss Norris, is a beautiful musician, and with songs and recitations the pleasant day ended."

In the serious work of the schools with all that it involved for the teachers of strenuous, self-denying labour they were still more interested. Few could realise better what it meant to have the constant care of so many young lives in a climate and amid surroundings that were often trying. The strain upon patience and endurance was great indeed, and to no members of the Mission did Mr. and Mrs. Taylor's hearts go out in deeper sympathy. Writing to the ladies in the Girls' School especially, Mrs. Taylor said, as they were leaving the beautiful harbour for the last time (June 26, '99):

I do love and value you, and am so glad to know you better! Though we have left, our hearts are still with you, and we would fain have had longer together. I do thank you for giving me your confidence, and I want to send to all of you a good-bye message: it is this: Determine to Prove what faith and love will do. "Grip God," as Mr. Inwood says, for one another. Believe that God will make you helpers, each one to all the rest. Covet earnestly to put joy into one another's lives, and by love conquer all that otherwise would be trying. Our calling in Christ Jesus is to live supernatural lives, to be "more than conquerors" day by day. Yield yourselves to God to be more fully indwelt, and to serve only in His strength, and then expect Him to do all that you need, for "nothing shall be impossible to you. ..."

Only take firm hold of God, for yourselves and for one another, and look out to see what God will do. You have His Almightyness amongst you always, for everything... More and ever more of Christ in our lives, more of dependence upon

Him, is the remedy for every lack, the solution of every difficulty.

To the last this loving ministry was maintained, by letters and in other ways, so that it was difficult to get off to the steamer even when their luggage was on board and they were starting for America via Australia and New Zealand. Mr. Taylor was still writing letters when Mrs. Taylor left for the dock— letters of sympathy and comfort to one and another whose needs were upon his heart. It was midnight before he could tear himself away, a fine night in September. Only Mr. Stevenson accompanied him, the Mission-house being all asleep and farewell said some hours before. Together they went by rickshaw through the quiet streets, and alone Mr. Stevenson returned to the heavy responsibilities that awaited him.

For events were moving with startling rapidity, now, to the **denouement** of 1900. Mr. Taylor was still in the midst of his campaign in Australia, joined by the writers, when the Dowager Empress put forth the inflammatory edict with which that fateful year opened. Posted up in every city of importance, those burning words lost nothing through the free translation given by scholars to the great mass of the illiterate. It was seen to be war to the death, and the secret society of patriotic "Boxers," pledged to the extermination of all foreigners, flourished under Imperial protection till the movement spread like wildfire throughout the land.

By this time Mr. Taylor and his party, having found warm friends and addressed many meetings in New Zealand, had crossed the Pacific to California, and were on their way to New York, where they were among the speakers expected at the (Ecumenical Conference. From all parts of the world representative missionaries and others gathered for this great occasion, and much prayer was made for China, where the situation was becoming

desperate. After the Conference, sending his son and daughter-in-law before him, that they might take part in the annual meetings of the Mission in London, Mr. Taylor remained on for further work. Concern about the state of things in China and an over-full programme when he was single-handed proved just too much, and brought about a rather serious breakdown.

England was reached in June, and under a feeling of urgency that she hardly understood, Mrs. Taylor arranged for the continuation of their journey to the quiet spot among the mountains where Mr. Taylor's health had been so wonderfully restored some years previously. He was quite unable for meetings or correspondence, and consented to the course that offered best prospect of recovery, thankful to leave the work in London, as in Shanghai, so well provided for. At Davos they had found warm friends in an English lady and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Hofmann, who received visitors in a homelike Pension at moderate charges. Simply writing to say they were coming, the travellers set out-a few days only before the prayer meeting at Newington Green, at which Mrs. Hofmann herself was present, when the first announcement was made of the terrible events even then transpiring in China. Had Mr. and Mrs. Taylor delayed for that meeting or for a reply from the Villa Concordia, they probably would never have reached the shelter of that quiet home. For 'when the telegrams began to come they could not have left London. The Boxers had already entered Peking, and the work of destruction was begun. Hundreds of Christians were massacred, and war openly entered upon by the Chinese authorities. The Foreign Legations were in a state of siege, and Imperial decrees had gone out commanding viceroys and governors everywhere to support the rising.

Hearing that Mr. Taylor would already be at Davos, Mrs. Hofmann hastened back to do all in her power to help and comfort in that time of sore distress.

And there it was the blow fell, and telegram after telegram was received telling of riots, massacres, and the hunting down of refugees in station after station of the Mission-until the heart that so long, in joy and sorrow, had upheld these beloved fellowworkers before the Lord could endure no more, and almost ceased to beat. But for the protection of that remote valley where news could, in measure, be kept from him, Hudson Taylor would himself have been among those whose lives were laid down for Christ's sake and for China in the oversweeping horror of that summer. As it was he lived through it, holding on to God.

"I cannot read," he said when things were at their worst; "I cannot think; I cannot even pray but I can trust."

Chapter XL^(TOC)

Waters of Rest

1900-1904. AET. 68-72

The Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and He knoweth them that put their trust in Him.

IN the Mission-house at Ping-yang-fu (South Shan-si) the little party of 'foreigners were preparing for flight-facing the desperate journey of a thousand miles overland, through a country teeming with "Boxers," to the nearest place of safety. The white-haired native pastor, so infirm with age that he could hardly walk, had come to bid them farewell, and was talking with one of the ladies, when an urgent message called him out. A friend, in real concern; begged him to return home immediately. It was at the risk of his life he was showing sympathy with foreigners. An Imperial Edict had just arrived saying that they and all connected with them were to be utterly destroyed, and his only safety lay in keeping out of sight. Calmly the old man returned to his missionary friends, and finished what he had been saying with the words

"Kueh neng mieh; Kiao mieh puh-liao": "Kingdoms may perish; but the Church can never be destroyed."

And in this confidence he and hundreds of other Chinese Christians sealed their testimony with their blood. ^[400]

Among those who escaped in Pastor Hsi's district was one dear old man who held a very simple creed. He had long been a leader in the opium-refuge work and had seen much of the power of God. All over the countryside people knew the value of his prayers and would send for him in sickness or trouble. Yet Li Pu-cheo was no scholar he could not even read. But one thing he did know beyond a doubt-that the Lord Jesus was risen from the dead, and that therefore ***everything was possible.***

Before the terrible summer of 1900, this had been his ground for expecting deliverance in and through every trial. Was some village cause in danger, the chapel looted, and the Christians scattered?

"But I knew that Jesus rose from the dead," he would say with quiet confidence.

Because of that glorious fact the little church no less would rise. And neither before nor after those long months of anguish was he disappointed.

For Mr. Taylor too, as we have seen, nothing remained but sheer and simple faith. "Lord, **Thou** hast been our dwelling-place in all generations." Long had he found strength and sufficiency, his one unchanging rest, in GOD, and that Refuge did not fail him now. Everything was falling about him, everything that is that could be shaken but there are "things that cannot be shaken," and they held fast amid the storm. The confidence of a lifetime trust in the infinite faithfulness of our Father in heaven had not been in vain. **All** His ways are love and light, light and love; for "In Him there is no darkness at all."

"Before I had children of my own," Mr. Taylor had often said, "I used to think, God will not forget me; but when I became a father I learned something more—God cannot forget me."

In the last analysis is it not just that love, that Father heart, we must fall back upon? Amid the darkness and confusion and all the havoc wrought by sin I may see nothing, understand nothing, be able to do nothing, not even to pray at times; but GOD I know. All is intelligible from His standpoint, all necessary, working out the highest good.

"I trusted in Thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God. My times are in Thy hand."

Leaving China for the last time a few months previously, Mr. Taylor had written to one in trial-written at midnight just as he was going to the steamer:

'The Lord Himself will undertake for you and help you....

Leave God to order all thy ways,
And hope in Him whate'er betide;
Thou'lt find Him in the evil days
Thy all-sufficient strength and guide
Who trusts in God's unchanging love
Builds on the rock that naught can move.

And this he and those he bore upon his heart were to prove as never before.

But how he suffered as the days and weeks went by in the sufferings he was unable to lessen or even directly share! For more than thirty years he had always been the first to hasten to scenes of calamity and danger, never sparing himself if he could succour the fellow-workers he so truly loved. And now in the hour of their supreme trial he had to stand aside, and be willing to be nothing and do nothing, save as he could cry to God on their behalf.

"Day and night our thoughts are with you all," Mrs. Taylor wrote in July. "My dear Husband says: 'I would do all I could to help them; and our Heavenly Father, Who has the power, will do for each one according to His wisdom and love.'"

He could not write himself. Indeed, when the worst news was coming, in the middle of August, life seemed to ebb away so fast that he could scarcely cross the room alone, and his pulse fell from seventy or eighty to only forty per minute. Anguish of heart was killing him, and it was only by keeping the

tidings back in measure that the slender thread of life held on. With the relief of the Legations and the flight of the Court from Peking (August 14) the Boxer madness began to pass away, and Li Hungchang was called again to the helm, to pilot his distracted country through the complications with foreign Powers. But before that time the Inland Mission had a martyr-roll of over fifty of its members, while not a few who survived had suffered even more than those whose lives had been laid down. Fifty-eight in the C.I.M. alone perished in that terrible crisis, besides twenty-one children of the Mission, martyred with their parents or dying under sufferings the latter were enabled to survive. But in all the correspondence of the period not one bitter feeling can be traced against their persecutors, not one desire for vengeance or even for indemnification. The spirit of that tender mother who-dying after weeks of brave endurance on the journey to Hankow, having lost one little one by the way and witnessed the prolonged sufferings of others whispered to her husband, "I wish I could have lived, I wish I could have gone back there, to tell the dear people more about Jesus," seemed rather to animate all hearts.

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As to the difficult question of compensation, Mr. Taylor had from the first advised that no claim should be made by the Mission, and that even if offered none should be accepted for injury to life or person. Later on when, besides a heavy indemnity and other punitive measures, retribution of a fearful character was inflicted by certain of the Powers, he went further, fully agreeing with the Councils that indemnification for Mission property also should be declined, though individuals were left free to accept compensation for personal losses if they so desired. This action, though criticised in certain quarters, was warmly approved at the British Foreign Office and by its Minister in Peking, who sent a private donation of a hundred pounds to the Mission in expression of his "admiration" and sympathy.

When with returning strength Mr. Taylor was able to bear more detailed knowledge of what had taken place, not one page of journals or letters did he spare himself as these came to hand. Snow had fallen on the mountains when he sought his daughter-in-law one bright October morning where she was working on the manuscript of *Pastor Hsi*. A mail had just been received with tidings from Pastor Hsi's own district, which had moved him deeply. Tears overflowed as he paced the little room, telling of what he had been reading—last letters from his dear friend Miss Whitchurch and her companion, Miss Searell, written only the day before they met death alone in their distant station.

"Oh, think what it must have been," he broke in on the sad recital, "to exchange that murderous mob for the rapture of *His* presence, *His* bosom, *His* smile!"

"They do not regret it now," he continued, when able to command his voice, "A crown that fadeth not away. 'They shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.'"

A little later, speaking of his longing to go to Shanghai to be with the refugees gathered there.

"I might not be able to do much," he said, "but I feel they love me. If they could come to me in their sorrows and I could only weep with them, it might be a comfort to some."

Tenderly his daughter-in-law tried to tell him how much such sympathy would mean, and that there was no one in the world who could give it as he could, but even that was almost more than he could bear.

Prevented thus from being himself in China, it was a great comfort to Mr.

Taylor that Mr. Stevenson was not without the help of one manifestly prepared of God for this emergency. Mr. Cooper, whose return from the north he had been eagerly anticipating, had fallen by the headsman's axe, and it seemed as if nothing could make up to the Mission for the loss of so wise and prayerful a leader, whose experience and powers of sympathy fitted him to be a help to the Chinese Christians no less than to his fellowmissionaries. But by Mr. Taylor's wish and arrangement, Mr. D. E. Hoste had come down from Ho-nan, of which he was then Superintendent, and was spending the summer at Shanghai. He was thus at hand when the pressure upon Mr. Stevenson became overwhelming, and was able to give invaluable assistance. Feeling that his own life might be cut short at any time, Mr. Taylor cabled out in August, appointing Mr. Hoste as Acting General Director of the Mission. This was no hasty step taken in an emergency. For years he had been looking to the Lord for guidance as to his successor, and had seen with thankfulness Mr. Hoste's growing fitness for the position. There had been no uncertainty in Mr. Taylor's mind, even before he left China, as to the answer to his prayers; and though the appointment of Mr. Hoste was not made public until some months later, when Mr. Stevenson's approval and that of the London and China Councils had been cordially expressed, Mr. Taylor had the comfort of feeling that an important step had been taken to safeguard the interests of the whole work.

Another cause for thankfulness was the spirit that breathed through many a letter that found its way to Mr. and Mrs. Taylor at Davos.

"I have been writing," he said toward the close of the year, to some of the relatives of those we have lost, to comfort them in their sorrow, and to my surprise they forget their own bereavement in sympathising with me."

How much it meant to him that fathers and mothers should not only write in a

spirit of resignation, but should send gifts for the work, and even wish that others of their children might be called to missionary service, will readily be understood. In reply to a letter of loving sympathy from Shanghai, signed by three hundred members of the Mission, he wrote in December (1900):

As we have read over your signatures one by one we have thanked God for sparing you to us and to China. The sad circumstances through which we have all suffered have been permitted by God for His glory and our good, and when He has tried us and our native brethren 'He will doubtless reopen the work at present closed, under more favourable circumstances than before.

We thank God for the grace given to those who have suffered. It is a wonderful honour He has put upon us as a mission to be trusted with so great a trial, and to have among us so many counted worthy of a martyr's crown. Some who have been spared have perhaps suffered more than some of those taken, and our Lord will not forget. How much it has meant to us to be so far from you in the hour of trial we 'cannot express, but the throne of grace has been as near to us here as it would have been in China....

When the resumption of our work in the interior becomes possible we may find circumstances changed, but the principles we have proved, being founded on His own unchanging Word, will be applicable as ever. May we all individually learn the lessons God would teach, and be prepared by His Spirit for any further service to which He may call us while waiting for the coming of the Lord.

It was not until the following summer (1901) that Mr. Taylor was obliged to abandon his cherished hope of returning before long to China. A little accident in the Chamounix Valley, where he was regaining a measure of strength, brought on his old spinal trouble, and for many months he was more

or less crippled. It seemed impossible, at first, that such a small thing would develop serious consequences-only a slip on the pine-needles on a wooded slope. But it proved God's answer to His servant's prayer for guidance, by gently closing the way.

A visit to England some months later brought happy intercourse with friends at the Mission-house and in other circles, but was too much of a strain because of its very interests. It was all Mr. Taylor could do-just before his seventieth birthday-to return to the quieter surroundings of Switzerland, thankful for the relief of the simple, retired life which enabled him and Mrs. Taylor to serve the Mission still by prayer and correspondence.

Glad to be near their beloved friend, Mrs. Berger, it was by the Lake of Geneva they made their home at length, in the hamlet of Chevalleyres above Vevey. No railway climbed, the hillside then, nearer than the village and castle of Blonay, whose grey old tower looked out on a scene of ever-changing beauty. Further up toward the wooded heights of the Pleiades an attractive though simple Pension was found among meadows and orchards. Entering at the back, from the level of the road, the south rooms on the ground floor were raised a storey above the garden. This was just what Mrs. Taylor was seeking. A little sitting-room and bedroom, with a front balcony and a closed-in verandah toward the sun-rising, offered just the accommodation needed; while the moderate charge of four and a half francs a day included meals served in their own apartment. But best of all was the kindness of Monsieur and Madame Bonjour and their parents in the old home next door, who from the first seemed specially drawn to these visitors.

Here, then, they came to stay in the summer of 1902; and here they found loving care and sympathy that almost made them feel as if they were among their own people. From the dear old Count and Countess at the chateau to the

peasants who met them in their daily walks there came to be hardly a face that did not brighten or a heart that did not warm toward the white-headed missionary and his devoted companion. Love radiated from their lives, despite the restrictions of an unfamiliar language, and it is safe to say that that love was never more warmly responded to than in this last resting-place on their earthly pilgrimage.

"My beloved husband is very frail," Mrs. Taylor wrote a few weeks after settling in. "I am thankful he can be so quiet here and comfortable. We are looking forward to seeing Mr. Hoste."

Little by little, as their stay was prolonged, the Pension became quite a resort for English guests, many friends coming for longer or shorter visits because Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were there. This afforded delightful society and opportunities for united prayer about China. That little corner sitting-room became, indeed, a C.I.M. centre up among the mountains, the precious influence of which was felt in many distant places.

"It was not so much what your father said but what he was that proved a blessing to me," wrote Mr. Robert Wilder of that winter. "You may remember the words of Emerson, 'Common souls pay with what they do, nobler souls with what they are.' Your father bore about with him the fragrance of Jesus Christ. His strong faith, quietness, and constant industry, even in his weakness, touched me deeply. It was a privilege to spend six months with him in the same house at Chevalleyres. To see a man who had been so active compelled to live a retired life, unable to pray more than fifteen minutes at a time, and yet remaining bright and even joyous, greatly impressed me. I remember his saying, 'If God can afford to lay me aside' from active service, surely I should not object.' Not one single complaint or murmur did we ever hear from his lips. He was always cheerful—rejoicing in the flowers by day and studying

the stars at night."

One reason for the quiet happiness of those days was that changes and partings were over, and the two who had known so much of separation could be together at last and have time to enjoy one another's society. For they were lovers still, and fitted in perfectly with each other's needs. At first they were able to be out a good deal together, delighting in little excursions by rail and steamer and in the long, patient climbs that ended in a glorious outlook from some favourite height. By degrees it came to be others who accompanied Mr. Taylor in his longer walks, however, Mrs. Taylor finding sufficient excuse for staying oftener at home. Her strength was not what it had been, but she did not wish him to be anxious. In Miss Williamson, who managed to leave the Mission-house for months at a time that she might cheer their solitude, he had a companion whose love for the mountains was as unfailing as his own. And always-writing at the table or knitting by the window Mrs. Taylor was ready for their return with the welcome cup of tea and cheery news of visitors or letters. Then there were long hours in developing the photographs taken and studying the flowers gathered. The keenness of Mr. Taylor's pleasure in these simple enjoyments as well as his delight in nature and the everyday intercourse of friendship were remarkable. His capacity for happiness was like that of an unspoilt child. Time never hung heavy on his hands; and while unable for any but easy reading, his love for the Word of God remained the same. In this seventy-first year of his life he read the Bible through from beginning to end, for the fortieth time in forty years, and rejoiced in the various renderings Mrs. Taylor loved to gather from the French and other versions.^[402] His correspondence was carried on almost entirely through her pen, the letter-books that remain showing how closely they were in touch with friends in many parts of China and all over the world.

Until the autumn of this year (1902) Mr. Taylor retained his position as

General Director of the Mission, receiving 'regular reports from Mr. Hoste, Mr. Stevenson, and others. Once and again Mr. Frost and Mr. Sloan came over to Switzerland to see him, and on their second visit the latter was appointed Assistant Director of the Mission in England. Then, when Mr. Hoste arrived from China (November 1902), Mr. Taylor felt that the time had come for laying down responsibilities for which he was no longer equal. Many problems were pressing in connection with the reconstruction and rapid development of the work. Opportunities were wonderful, and the seed sown in tears and watered with blood was giving promise of an abundant harvest. The blessing of God had signally rested on the appointment made two years previously, and knowing he had the full concurrence of all the Directors and Councils, Mr. Taylor felt only thankfulness in resigning to Mr. Hoste the full direction of the Mission. The change had come about so gradually that to many it was hardly felt, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor remaining in all but name as closely connected with the work as ever, but to Mr. Hoste it meant a heavy increase of responsibility. Waking next morning in his little room at Chevalleyres, in the grey November twilight, it all came over him

"Now I have ***no one***—no one but God."

But the love and confidence of all his fellow-workers went out to him afresh when the appointment became known, many writing in the spirit of Mr. Orr Ewing's previous letter: "I am thankful that you have been led to select, perhaps, the most prayerful man among us."

That Mr. Taylor deeply and painfully felt his inability to labour as he had formerly was evident to those who saw below the surface. While preparations were being made one morning for an excursion to the Matterhorn, he learned that one of the family felt she must remain at home to press on with important writing. Coming to the little study, he spoke so tenderly about the

disappointment, and about its being for Jesus' sake. That was the true joy of life-to do all for Jesus' sake. Sacrifice and labour were alike sweet when it was for Him.

"Yes," he added after a pause in which she could not but think how much he had known of that joy, "yes, but it's hardest of all to do *nothing* for His sake."

Yet he rejoiced in and shared the experience of his beloved friend the Rev. Charles Fox, whose own long fruitful day was drawing to a close:

Two glad services are ours,
Both the Master loves to bless;
First we serve with all our powers,
Then with all our feebleness.
Nothing else the soul uplifts
Save to serve Him night and day;
Serve Him when He gives His gifts,
Serve Him when He takes away.

In this spirit Mr. Taylor met with fortitude the last great sacrifice of his life, when a little cloud came up unexpectedly that threatened to darken the whole horizon. It was a telegram in July (1903), that first informed the writers of serious trouble, and brought them from their deputation work to the stricken hearts of those they loved so well. An internal tumour had discovered itself, and Mrs. Taylor, whose mother had died of cancer, was facing a terrible fear. In that remote Swiss hamlet they felt the need of their doctor-son, and he was thankful to call in a specialist of world-wide fame who was just then visiting

Europe and "happened" to be in Switzerland. A Christian man of no ordinary devotion, Dr. Howard Kelly was a member also of the American Council of the C.I.M., so that the providence of his being just then accessible was very comforting, one of many evidences of the tender care of God at this time.

For it **was** cancer; though in the merciful ordering of circumstances about them Mr. and Mrs. Taylor never knew it, and even the fear passed away. Not that they were in any way deceived as to the diagnosis. When the case was investigated under chloroform it was found that an operation would be useless, the disease being too far advanced. Having committed themselves unreservedly to the guidance of God through the specialists, including the skilful Dr. Roux of Lausanne, they never questioned further, thankfully concluding that an operation was not necessary. The growth must therefore be a simple tumour, and their relief was so great that nothing but thankfulness remained. It was very wonderful, but so in keeping with the "quietness and confidence" of their whole lives that it did not seem strange.

"Loving kindness and tender mercy "was indeed the crowning of the years that remained (1903-1904) that might have been so full of pain and apprehension. To those who knew what lay before them it was a daily miracle to see, instead of a troubled sunset, the path growing brighter and brighter to the perfect day. Nothing was changed or marred of their happy life together. Dying of cancer, she was still taken up with those around her, not with herself, still continued her loving ministries and correspondence, still lived for her husband and for China, and in her days of weakness and suffering did but count the more on God.

Be glad of thy helplessness, Beloved;

And if thou needs must long,

Let it be only for the rest of weakness

In the Arms for ever strong.

The winter was spent in Lausanne to be near Dr. Roux, and fully did Mrs. Taylor appreciate the comforts of a home in the city with an electric tramway to the very door. The English church and the frequent visits of friends were a help while she was able to go about more or less freely; and then, as greater weakness came on, how good it was to return to the spring flowers and all the peace and beauty of Chevalleyres! Back in their old quarters and surrounded as before with loving care, their cup seemed to run over. Never had the news from China been more cheering.

"God is greatly helping Mr. Hoste in directing and developing the work of the Mission," Mr. Frost had written after his visit to Shanghai in February. "There is an unusual spirit of unity and devotion among the workers, both native and foreign. Openings and opportunities abound as never in the past, and souls are being won to Christ and gathered into the churches of the Mission in ever-increasing numbers."

Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were rejoicing also in an accession of means which enabled them to make a number of unexpected gifts at this time. It seemed as if the Lord must have hastened the winding up of legal proceedings in Australia, so that the residuary estate of her uncle yielded this fifteen hundred pounds while she was still able to use it for the advancement of His kingdom. Giving had been, to her, the luxury of life, and she was to have the joy of giving to the last. Several cheques for a hundred pounds found their way to the treasuries of the Mission, with words of loving cheer, while the letters that went with other gifts were just as much from the heart. To the Secretary of the Church Missionary Society she wrote, for example:

My beloved husband and I have much pleasure in sending a

little contribution toward your funds. We sympathise with you much in the trial and crisis you are in, and pray that God may raise up many more friends for the dear C.M.S., and may enable those who do give to do so more adequately.

And her last gift to the Rev. John Wilkinson expressed the deepest interest in his work among the Jews.^[403]

Thus, then, came the beauty of their last spring and summer days together.

"You ask about my health," she wrote before leaving Lausanne (March 1904). "Well, I have got thin and weak, and have more or less of discomfort at times. I vary a good deal, but am so thankful to be able to keep about. The Lord's loving kindness and tender mercies are new every morning. The clever and kind Dr. Roux has given me a remedy which is helping me, and I am able to rest as I need and have every comfort.

"All the way 'He shall choose,' Who knows what is really best, and Who loves evermore. My beloved husband keeps very frail. ... We match one another very well-both so thankful for a quiet life without strain. We have many pleasures and such kind friends!"

And after their return to Chevalleyres:

May 2: I had been thinking yesterday morning whether we were not too comfortable here, and free from the rubs of ordinary life, and the Lord gave me His answering message through Daily Light, so sweetly: "My people shall abide in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places" (Isaiah 32:18). He had told me when we were here before that this was one of His "resting-places." Anything more peaceful it would be impossible to find down here, and nature is so lovely now. I am sitting on the verandah, and all around are cherry-trees in blossom and little songsters flitting about, while the grass is just one vast nosegay of flowers:

narcissus and forget-me-nots are just now our favourites.

The long chair on the 'verandah was a great comfort, and in it more and more time came to be spent.

"I have weary days often," Mrs. Taylor wrote to Mrs. Broomhall at the end of May, "but am. not suffering as I did. It is so good to know that all is chosen for one in infinite love. We received such a good report on Saturday of the work in China. I read it aloud at tea-time, and we rejoiced and thanked God."

May 31: It is so. good to have the summer before us.... The news from China was never more encouraging.

June 7: Dear Howard reached us last Saturday, and we hope to have him mostly with us now, for a while. It relieves the strain on my dear husband about me as nothing else could. I do very fairly, night and day, except for the weakness which makes it difficult to get across the floor now: The LORD has "our times" in His hand, and it is well.

June 8: I have just to rest in Him now. My busy days are all past; and I can only talk to Him about you busy toilers in His vineyard.

June 8: Our dear Amy is here, caring for us very lovingly. Howard spent a few days with us, on his return from China. He and Geraldine have been doing and will do deputation work in England, coming to us for a little while in the summer, D. V., and Howard being available should we need him. No, my dear husband had no bronchitis in the winter, not even a cold. We do not know what lies before us; but we know Him, and that all will be well.

June 24: My strength seems ebbing fast away. I trust I may not linger on in a quite helpless condition; but however it is, it will

be all right.

By the end of June the dear invalid was obliged to give up the effort of dressing, which she had kept on with as long as possible, not to break the family circle. A visit from his younger son, Charles, was a great comfort to Mr. Taylor at this time, and the bright companionship of his daughter Amy, who was helping with the nursing. If anything troubled Mrs. Taylor 'it was the fear of being a burden to these loved ones, and under the circumstances it seemed difficult to arrange for a trained nurse. But for this too, although it never became a need, the Lord provided. To Mr. Frost, who was of the inner circle of her correspondents, Mrs. Taylor wrote on the 30th:

The Bonnours are eager to do anything for us at any time, and the servants are like-minded. The chambermaid speaks English, and is a very nice, trained nurse. If I come to need night attention, I am to have her altogether, and the Bonjours will get some one else. Could anything be kinder, seeing she is most acceptable and capable in this busy house. The Lord is good and does make His children kind!

"Since I have not attempted to get up, I have been better in some ways," she wrote in the middle of July; "and with the French windows open on to the verandah I get view and air, while the open door into the sitting-room keeps me in touch with the others. I could not be better cared for or happier. It is just a peaceful, quiet time, though in weakness and sometimes pain."

I have been praying, often, "Let GOD arise"; it seems to be all that is needed anywhere.

I am nearly Home—what will it be to be there! It is all goodness and mercy, and will be to the end.

The Lord is taking me slowly and gently, which is such a

mercy for dear father's sake.

One precious letter from that borderland reached her daughter-in-law at Keswick, where she was fulfilling a last engagement before hastening to the dear mother's side.

July 16: Here in my quiet room I hope to bear you up next week amid the thronging multitudes. I am learning lessons of the sweet power of helplessness and dependence; and perhaps you too are learning. them spiritually, in another way. Oh, that one had always been quite dependent in one's service!

"Leaning upon her Beloved" it is always "coming up," and the restfulness and the guidance and the full supply and the deep satisfaction in Him are all secured. May He enable us to ask big things for His glory.

It will be lovely to see you here afterwards, if the Lord will; but I only live by the day now, not knowing what the next may bring. "My times are in Thy hand," so blessed that it is so You will know the comfort that dear Howard is, and Amy and dear father—all so loving and ready to spoil me in everything. So tenderly the Lord is dealing with us I there seems nothing to wish for, only to praise.

Chapter XLI^(TOC)

His Way is Perfect

1904-1905. AET. 72-73

AFTER that the end came quietly. A few more helpful messages and letters, showing how her heart went out to loved ones near and far; a last gift to the Mission of a hundred pounds as "a thank-offering for mercies received and expected"; a few days so peaceful and tender that those about her caught the reflection in those deeply shining eyes of a Presence to them unseen, and then the silent crossing of the swift, dark river.

"No pain, no pain," she said repeatedly, though for some hours the difficulty in breathing was distressing. Toward morning, seeing Mr. Taylor's anguish:

"Ask Him to take me quickly," she whispered.

Never had he had a harder prayer to pray; but for her sake he cried to God to free the waiting spirit. Five minutes later the breathing became quiet-and in a little while all was peace.

Before the world, O soul, I longed for thee,
And still I long, and thou dost long for Me;
And when two longings meet, for ever stilled,

The cup of love is filled.

But for him the desolation was unutterable. On the wall of the little sitting-room hung a text, the last purchase they had made together, and many a time during the days that followed did he look up through his tears to the-words in blue, shining out from their white background

"Celui qui a fait les promesses est fidele."^[404]

"MY grace is sufficient," had been almost her last words to him, and then

—"He will not fail." Upon this certainty he rested now in the desolation he had so little strength to endure, remembering her constant joy in the will of God, and that, as he recalled again and again, "she never thought anything *could* be better."

Cheered by the companionship of his niece, Miss Mary Broomhall, Mr. Taylor remained on in the Pension that had become a second home. Week by week he gathered strength for the walk down to Blonay Castle and the village and church of La Chiesaz, where his loved one lay sleeping. It was a lovely spot—the grey old tower of the church, draped in crimson creepers, seen through the branches of a spreading cedar, with all the background of lake and mountains. There Mr. Taylor spent many an hour, planting seeds and flowers, or quietly resting before he turned to climb the hill again.

He was not without congenial society at Chevalleyres that winter, some old friends from Toronto making a stay of several months and entering into all his interests with kindness that could not be exceeded. A decided improvement in health encouraged him to hope that with the spring he might even think of returning to China; and the desire gaining ground, the writers were set free to accompany their father by way of America.

On Mr. Taylor's seventh visit to the United States we must not dwell, save to say how great was his interest in the new centre of the Mission in Philadelphia. In the pleasant suburb of Germantown almost a fortnight was spent as the guests of Miss C. L. Huston, close to the Missionhouse which her generosity and that of Mr. H. C. Coleman, a member of the American Council, had provided. Very refreshing was the intercourse with these beloved friends, as well as with the larger circle who welcomed the coming of Mr. and Mrs. Frost into their midst, and found the Mission-house to be a centre of blessing. There in the Saturday prayer-meeting, and in the church of

the Rev. D. M. Steams near by, Mr. Taylor was able to give brief addresses.

"Every remembrance of your dear father stirs my heart," wrote Dr. Steams a few months later, "and awakens new gratitude to God for that Sunday morning when you and he sat in the little church at Germantown, knelt together at the chancel-rail to commemorate our Lord's death, and afterwards stood by me (your dear father standing between us) while he gave my people an after-Communion message-reminding us that, in love, the Lord Jesus Christ had died for us, and that His love can never die. In all my twenty-five years' ministry I never saw any one so moved at the thought of the love of God, and in receiving the emblems of our Lord's body and blood, as your dear father was that morning.... I have wondered whether he commemorated our Lord's death again, after that, in the little while that remained before his Home-going?"

How short the interval was to be, and how full of precious experiences, no one anticipated. Only six weeks lay before him in China, but frail though he was for the long journeys undertaken, there was no sign that the end was near, and least of all did he himself expect it.

Landing at Shanghai on the 17th of April (1905), he was welcomed by a representative company at the Missionhouse, for the Spring Council Meetings were in session. Mr. Hoste and Mr. Stevenson were there, together with some who had come through the worst of the Boxer outbreak, and from the Che-kiang stations Mr. Meadows had come up, whose association with Mr. Taylor went back to the old days of the Ningpo Mission. The love and veneration for their leader of these long-trying friends was beautiful to see, as were also the tokens of welcome from far and near—the flowers that filled his rooms, the comforts forethought had provided, and the letters of love and sympathy that flowed in.

Easter was spent' with Miss Murray at Yang-chow, home of so many memories I There and at Chin-kiang: the old headquarters of the Mission, early prayers and longings could not but come to mind-now abundantly fulfilled. How weak the human instrumentality had been all through! "A work of God,' that alone explained it; and a remark Mr. Taylor made before leaving the training home was long remembered. "We cannot do much, but we can do a little, and God can do a great deal."

From the new Mission-house near the hills at Chin-kiang it was an easy walk to the cemetery overlooking the river, where in the long-ago years that seemed somehow not far away he had laid his heart's best treasures. There the names of four of his children were engraved beside their mother's; and the memories were sweet rather than sorrowful, for the partings were long since past and reunion must be at hand. To a group of young workers just setting out for inland stations he spoke a few words of loving counsel.

It is a great privilege to meet many of you here. I have met many here in days gone by. My dear wife died by me here....In spirit our loved ones may be nearer to us than we think; and HE is near, nearer than we think. The Lord Jesus will never leave nor forsake us. Count on Him: enjoy Him: abide in Him. Do, dear friends, be true to Him and to His Word. He will never disappoint you.

"You may be tired often and lonely often," he said to one in parting, "but the Lord knows just how much each cup costs. Look to Him; He will never disappoint you."

Steamer to Hankow was an easy stage that brought him once again to that busy centre of the Mission at which there was so much coming and going for the far interior. Here the welcome was just as warm as at Shanghai, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Jones lavishing love and care on the dear traveller, and old

friends of other Societies gathering round him with every token of affection. It was touching to see the meeting, of the veteran Dr. Griffith John, still in the ripeness of his strength, with one whose course had run parallel with his own for nearly fifty years in China. He seemed to remember Mr. Taylor's love of music, and sang hymn after hymn with him in his own home, with all the old Welsh fire. Dr. W. A. P. Martin, too, came over from Wu-chang to join the circle, a friend of very early Ningpo days, the missionary life of the three together amounting to no less than a hundred and fifty-six years.^[405]

The journey to Hankow having been accomplished in safety, Mr. Taylor felt encouraged to go 'a little farther and make trial of the new railway running northward to Peking. If he could only reach one or two of the stations in Honan, it would be so good to be right in the interior again! Thus with no definite plan, but looking to be guided day by day, he set out, every arrangement being made with the utmost helpfulness by those in charge of the BusinessDepartment.^[406]

"It was so interesting at all the wayside stations to notice the pleasure the sight of dear Father called forth," wrote one of his companions. "Whenever he appeared at the window or on the platform, young and old seemed drawn to him, and looks of kindness and interest made even the dullest faces attractive. Every one seemed anxious to show him attention. The Belgian officials kindly arranged for us to sleep on the train at night, to save him the trouble of going to an inn, and all along the way he was the centre of smiling interest.

"Once before on just such a May morning we had left Hankow on the same journey, but then it was by barrow, and many a weary day lay between us and our destination. Now, two weeks of strenuous travelling was replaced by a run of twenty-four hours. It was a wonderful change, and as we glided swiftly over the iron road we felt as if there must be a rude

awakening. But no, it went on and on, fresh surprises meeting us at every point, until only six hours after leaving Hankow we steamed through the long tunnel under the mountains between Hu-peh and Ho-nan, and found ourselves once again in that familiar province."

A delightful visit at Yen-cheng, a station to which the railway brought them, gave Mr. Taylor the opportunity of seeing something of the work of Australian members of the Mission. In Mr. and Mrs. Lack he found missionaries after his own heart, and so also in Mr. and Mrs. Joyce in the neighbouring station to which he ventured on, though it involved an overland journey. A night, indeed, had to be spent in an inn, which was an outstanding experience for its strangeness and yet familiarity just an ordinary wayside inn like so many hundreds Mr. Taylor had known in earlier days.

"We made dear Father as comfortable as we could," continued the story written at the time, "and though he was very weary he seemed to enjoy the Chinese supper and arrangements, and was full of interest in the people who thronged about us listening to the Gospel. After he had gone to rest a touching little incident happened, which we did not hear of until morning.

"It was between ten and eleven at night, and we were all soundly sleeping, when Mr. Joyce, who had come to meet us, was awakened by some one calling him outside the window. It proved to be one of his own church members, who had heard in his village not far away of our being in the inn that night, and had come over after his long day's work to pay his respects to the Venerable Chief Pastor. Mr. Joyce explained that Mr. Taylor was now sleeping; that the journey had tired him very much, and that it would hardly do to awaken him.

"'Never mind, never mind,' said the visitor, though much disappointed. And then, fumbling with something he was

carrying, he pushed a little bundle through the paper window.

""Why, what is this?' asked Mr. Joyce." 'Oh, nothing! It is only my poor little intention. It is my duty to provide for the Venerable Pastor while he is near our village.'

It was two hundred cash, money the dear man had brought for our expenses at the inn. And when he had given it he slipped away, leaving us all to rest. We were so sorry in the morning not to have seen him; but on Sunday he came in to the services and Father was able to thank him in person."

The Sunday at Hiang-cheng was full of interest; and as heavy rains came on, an easier method of returning to the railway was suggested. Hour by hour the river rose behind the Mission-house, until with a good current boats were going down stream cheerily. On one of these, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Joyce and their children who needed change, the journey was made, and instead of parting when the railway was reached Mr. Taylor decided to go right on to a station where his daughter (Mrs. Coulthard) had been the first lady missionary. Sunday the 14th of May was spent at this important place, and there Mr. Taylor preached a sermon two miles long, which would never be forgotten. The home of Mr. and Mrs. Brock, in which Mr. Taylor's party were entertained, was at a considerable distance from Mr. Shearer's compound, where the principal services were held, and the question arose as to how Mr. Taylor was to cross the city that hot summer morning. A beautiful sedan-chair with eight bearers had been sent over from a neighbouring station, in the hope that he might be persuaded to go over on Monday to visit the ladies working there. It would have been easy to let four of the men carry him through the crowded streets to the meeting. But no, Mr. Taylor would not hear of it! Not to set such an example had he come up to Ho-nan. If he went to church at all, he would walk; and walk he did, the whole way there and back. One of his companions carried a folding chair, and when Mr:

Taylor was too tired to go further he just sat down and rested.

"'Tsa puh k'iah ko kiao lai?' 'Why don't you bring a sedan-chair?' exclaimed the people who gathered in crowds about him; which gave an opportunity for explaining that Sunday was God's day of rest, and that, it was His will that men should keep it holy. Great was the astonishment with which onlookers heard that there was, even then, a sedan-chair with bearers waiting at the Mission-house, but that the white-haired missionary would not use it, on this account. It was a theme for several little discourses by the way, and went further to impress the meaning and duty of Sabbath-keeping on the Christians than many a sermon could have done."

And so, just a step at a time, the way opened and Mr. Taylor was led on until he had visited five of the centres in Ho-nan, meeting with the missionaries from as many others. To his companions the latter part of the journey was of special interest, as the two stations to which he travelled by sedan they had had a part in opening., Oh, that familiar road-how often they had traversed it in all weathers! Every tree and house looked just as they had seen them scores of times, until they neared the first of the two cities (Chen-chow-fu) and there something unusual arrested their attention.

Right in front of us on the main highway a crowd of men and boys were gathered near a table, and as they stood there in the sunlight, several bright gleaming objects held up in their hands puzzled us not a little. They looked like the instruments of a brass band: but surely that could hardly be? Then in a moment it flashed upon us-they were the Christians from Chen-chow-fu who had come out to meet us. The table we now saw was spread with refreshments for dear Father on his journey. The glittering objects shining in the sun were four large golden characters held up to greet him-the motto to be fixed on a banner they were probably preparing to present

when he arrived.

And so it proved. For in a few minutes they were all about us, the love and enthusiasm of their welcome defying description. The beautiful characters, Nui-ti en-ren, were their chosen greeting to dear Father-literally "Inland China's Grace-man," or "Benefactor of Inland China."

A little farther on a group of women Christians met us, and when we reached the house inside the city we found the whole courtyard covered in, with a broad platform arranged at one end, draped in red, and welcome written large on everything. When the red satin banner was hung up over the platform, and the crowd of smiling, happy, hearty friends trooped in for the afternoon meeting, filling every corner to overflowing, it was a beautiful sight, not soon to be forgotten.

Oh, the happy days spent there, how they live in our memory! Dear Father was much among the Christians, and spoke to them once or twice by interpretation. At a Christian Endeavour meeting we were all presented with silver badges, and enrolled as members of the Chen-chow branch. Father was very pleased with the way in which it was done, and wore the sign of membership on his coat right on to the end.

At Tai-kang, the last station visited, the same love and lavish kindness were displayed. Some of the Christians hired a cart and came to Chen-chow, a whole day's journey, to meet us. On the way they passed a letter-carrier, who said that Father was not well and that he would have to turn back without visiting their city. Upon this the Tai-kang friends were greatly distressed, and stopped in the middle of the road to pray that the Lord would strengthen him and help him to undertake the journey.

"Oh, Lord, what have we done," they said, "that the Venerable Pastor should come thousands of miles from the other side of

the world, and after months of travelling stop short just one day's journey from our city? Oh, Lord, we too are his little children! Help him to come on and visit us."

Great was their joy a few hours later, when they reached Chen-chow, to find a baptismal service in progress, and Father taking part and addressing the newly received believers, and to hear that he had already made up his mind to go on to Tai-kang next day. What a journey that was, in their escort! Kuo Lao-siang, a very Greatheart, bore us' along in triumph; insisted on paying himself all expenses by the way, and delighted us hour after hour by the story of all the Lord had done for the Tai-kang Church since we left it seven years ago, and especially during the troubles of 1900.

Outside the city gate the Christians met us, with Mr. Ford and Mr. Bird, their missionaries. Mr. and Mrs. Joyce had arrived already, so we were a large party-old friends and fellow workers, reunited after long years. With hearts full of thankfulness we recalled early experiences, hopes, and prayers; how the Lord brought us through the terrible riot of 1896, and how He had blessed and increased the work ever since.

Time fails to tell further of those happy days at Tai-kang; of the long talks and meetings with the Christians, the beautiful banner they too presented to dear Father; the return journey all the way to Yen-cheng and much besides. One meeting at Chowkia-kow, however, must be mentioned. We found ourselves there for a Sunday, and as it happened for Sunday the 21st of May. The Christians came to know it was Father's birthday, and to our surprise prepared a beautiful scarlet satin banner to present to him, bearing the inscription, O man greatly beloved." He was not well enough to walk to church that day, so they all gathered at Mr. Brock's for an afternoon meeting. Numbers had come in from the country and from distant out-stations, a dozen or more of the leading men being

present from all over the district. One after another they rose and made little addresses to dear Father, some of them very heart-moving. He spoke to them too for a few minutes.

It was Friday the 26th of May when the party reached Hankow once more, the thirty-ninth anniversary of the sailing of the Lammermuir. In the train on the way down they had had precious times of prayer, joined by Miss af Sandeberg, whose relatives had been the first to show Mr. Taylor hospitality in Sweden. At Hankow Dr. Whitfield Guinness, among others, was waiting to meet them, and with thankfulness for the three and a half weeks in Ho-nan they sought renewed strength from the Lord and guidance as to the next stage of their journey.

And oh, how tender was His watchful care over every step of the way that remained! Only eight days were left of dear Father's earthly pilgrimage, five in May and three in June-and then the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." If only we had known! But He knew who was planning all.

After a quiet Sunday in Hankow, Mr. Taylor decided to go on by steamer to Chang-sha, capital of the province of Hu-nan, which he had never visited. First of the far inland provinces the Mission had attempted to enter, it had been the last in which settled residence had been obtained, and for more than thirty years Mr. Taylor had borne it specially upon his heart in prayer. Only since the troubles of 1900 had it been fully opened, and he greatly desired to see the work of Dr. Keller and others in the capital, described with graphic interest by Dr. Harlan Beach in a recent number of China's Millions. Strangely enough, when all arrangements had been made and the berths taken, unlooked for circumstances prevented their travelling among the native passengers as Mr. Taylor wished.

It was the last, last journey dear Father was to take in China;

the days were very hot and the nights trying, and it was to be made as cool and comfortable for him as possible. Nothing would have persuaded him to travel foreign passage had the less expensive accommodation been available, but the matter was taken out of our hands. The Japanese steamer for which we were waiting ran aground in the Tong-ting lake, and a wire was received in Hankow saying it was quite uncertain as to when she would arrive. We were expected at Ch'ang-sha for Sunday, and the only thing to do was to take the China Navigation Company's steamer sailing that same evening, and even then waiting off shore. But it had to be by saloon cabin, as they do not issue tickets to foreigners travelling Chinese passage. Thus when we went on board it was to find a beautiful new boat, the best on the upper river, the kindest of captains and officers, and the entire saloon accommodation at our disposal. We were the only foreigners on board, and under the circumstances nothing could have been more delightful.

Those two days with Captain Hunter on the s.s. Shasi could hardly have been more perfect: Dear Father was just himself, and though the weather was intensely hot he enjoyed the cool saloon, the comfortable chairs on deck, and the fresh breezes. It meant much to him to have us all with him and to see the friendship between the younger members of our party deepening, ^[407] and his joy in the answer to the prayers of a life-time in the opening of China's last unreached province to the Gospel was very great.

As they crossed the far-reaching lake and steamed up the river, passing well-built cities, beautiful pagodas and temples, rich plains covered with ripening crops, and noble mountain ranges near and distant, they could not but think of all the toil and prayer of years gone by, of buried lives and dauntless faith, richly rewarded at last in the change that was coming over the attitude of the people. Until eight or nine years previously there had not been one Protestant

missionary settled in the province. None had been able to gain a footing. No fewer than a hundred and eleven missionaries were to be found there now, connected with thirteen societies, working in seventeen central stations and aided by a strong band of Chinese helpers.

It was Thursday afternoon the first of June when we reached the capital (Chang-sha) and were welcomed by our dear friends Dr. and Mrs. Keller and Dr. Barrie. Twenty minutes in chairs brought us to the Mission-house, in which we felt quite at home already, having carefully studied Dr. Harlan Beach's ground-plan and article Of the two days that followed, how can I write? They were so calm and peaceful, so full of interest and encouragement, so rich in love and sympathy and the tender care: surrounded our beloved one, that our hearts overflow on eves remembrance of the Lord's goodness up to the very end.

Friday was a quiet, restful day. It rained all the morning and we could not go out. After lunch, chairs were called and we visited the T'ien Sin Koh, a lofty building on the highest point of the city' wall. Father was delighted with the wonderful view of mountains, plain, and river, surrounding the city outspread at our feet. He climbed to the second story without being overtired, and afterwards went to see the site for the new hospital several acres of land in a good situation that the Governor hopes to give for the work off our medical mission.

On Saturday, Father did not come down to breakfast, but was dressed and reading when we carried up his tray. He was to speak to the Chinese friends that morning, so as soon as the daily service was concluded he went to the Chapel and said a little through interpretation. They were deeply interested in seeing him, many of them having just read the Retrospect translated by Mr. Baller into Chinese. Mr. Li the evangelist responded, expressing the love and joy with which they welcomed him to Chang-sha.

That afternoon a reception had been arranged to give all the missionaries in the city an opportunity of meeting Mr. Taylor, and before the time appointed he came down seasonably dressed in a suit of Shantung silk.

It was cool and pleasant in the little garden on to which the sitting-room opened, and tea was served on the lawn, surrounded by trees and flowers. Father went out and sat in the midst of the guests for an hour or more, evidently enjoying the quiet, happy time, and interested in the photographs that were being taken.

After all had left, Howard persuaded him to go upstairs, and as we were busy sending our things to the steamer (we were to walk down ourselves on Sunday evening after the service) Dr. Barrie remained with him for half an hour. It was a still evening, and while they were talking Father rose and crossed the room to fetch two fans. One of these he handed to Dr. Barrie, who exclaimed:

"Oh, why did you not let me bring them?"

"I wanted to get you one," was the reply, in a tone which deeply touched his companion.

Speaking of the privilege of bringing everything to God in prayer, Dr. Barrie said that he was sometimes hindered by the feeling that many things were too small, really, to pray about. Father's answer was that he did not know anything about it—about such a distinction, probably. Then he, added:

"There is nothing small, and there is nothing great: only God is great, and we should trust Him fully."

When the evening meal was ready Mr. Taylor did not feel inclined to come down, and a little later he was preparing to go to rest when his son brought him his supper. While waiting for him to be comfortably settled, his

daughter-in-law spent a few minutes alone on the little roof-platform which is such a pleasant addition to many Chang-sha houses.

Twilight had fallen then, and darkness veiled the distant mountains and river. Here and there a few glimmering lights dotted the vast expanse of grey-roofed city. All was silent under the starlit sky. Enjoying the cool and quietness I stood alone awhile, thinking of Father. But oh, how little one realised what was happening even then, or dreamed that in less than one halfhour our loved one would be with the Lord! Was the golden gate already swinging back on its hinges? Were the hosts of welcoming angels gathering to receive his spirit? Had the Master Himself arisen to greet His faithful friend and servant? What was happening, oh, what was happening, even then, over the sleeping city?

Knowing nothing, realising nothing, I went down. Dear Father was in bed, the lamp burning on the chair beside him, and he was leaning over it with his pocket-book lying open and the home letters it contained spread out as he loved to have them. I drew the pillow up more comfortably under his head, and sat down on a low chair close beside him. As he said nothing, I began talking a little about the pictures in the Missionary Review lying open on the bed. Howard left the room to fetch something that had been forgotten for supper, and I was just in the middle of a sentence when dear Father turned his head quickly and gave a little gasp. I looked up, thinking he was going to sneeze. But another came, then another! He gave no cry and said no word. He was not choking or distressed for breath. He did not look at me or seem conscious of anything.

I ran to the door and called 'Howard, but before he could reach the bedside it was evident that the end had come. I ran back to call Dr. Keller, who was just at the foot of the stairs. In less time than it takes to write it he was with us, but only to see dear Father draw his last breath. It was not death-but the

glad, swift entry upon life immortal.

"My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!"

And oh, the look of rest and calm that came over the dear face was wonderful! The weight of years seemed to pass away in a few moments. The weary lines vanished. He looked like a child quietly sleeping, and the very room seemed full of unutterable peace.

Tenderly we laid him down, too surprised and thankful to realise for the moment our great loss. There was nothing more to be done. The precious service of months was ended. Mr. Li and other Chinese friends went out to make arrangements, but we could hardly bring ourselves to leave that quiet room. All the house was still, hallowed by a serenity and sweetness that hardly seemed of earth. Though he was gone, a wonderful love and tenderness seemed still to draw us to his side. Oh, the comfort of seeing him so utterly rested. Dear, dear Father, all the weariness over, all the journeyings ended—safe home, safe home at last!

One by one or in little groups the friends who were in the house and the dear native Christians gathered round his bed. All were so impressed with the calm, peaceful look that lingered on his face, and many touching things were said, showing that even in these short days the sweetness and simplicity of his life had won their hearts.

"Oh Si-mu," whispered one dear woman as she left the room, "ts'ien ts'ien wan-wan-tih t'ien-shi tsiek t'a liao!" (thousands and myriads of angels have welcomed him)—and in a flash one almost seemed to see it.

Last of all a dear young evangelist and his wife, a bride of eighteen, came up. They had journeyed in from an out-station on purpose to meet us all, and especially Father, whose

Retrospect they had been reading. Arriving in the afternoon while tea was going on, they did not like to ask to see him, and when the guests had left he was tired. So they put it off till morning, as we were to spend Sunday with them all. And then, suddenly, they heard of his departure to be with the Lord.

Full of sorrow, they sent in to ask if they might come and look upon his face. Of course we welcomed them, telling them all that had happened and how grieved we were that they had not seen him earlier in the day. Together they stood beside the bed in silence, until the young man said

"Do you think that I might touch his hand?"

Then he bent over him, took one of Father's hands in his and stroked it tenderly, while to our surprise he began to talk to him just as if he, could hear. He seemed to forget us and everything else in a great longing just to reach the one who still seemed near, and make him feel his love and gratitude.

*"**Lao Muh-si, Lao Muh-si,**" he said so tenderly (Dear and Venerable Pastor), "we truly love you. We have come today to see you. We longed to look into your face. We too are your little children—**Lao Muh-si, Lao Muh-si.** You opened for us the road, the road to heaven. You loved us and prayed for us long years. We came today to look upon your face.*

"You look so happy, so peaceful! You are smiling. Your face is quiet and pleased. You cannot speak to us tonight. We do not want to bring you back:' but we will follow you. We shall come to you, Lao Muh-si. You will welcome us by and by."

And all the time he held his hand, bending over him and stroking it gently, his young wife standing by.

Downstairs, meanwhile, another touching scene was taking place. Mr. Li and others who had been out to make arrangements returned, bringing a coffin and bearers and

everything necessary for the last journey. They had hoped when first they learned of dear Father's Home-call that he would be buried in Hu-nan, and had rejoiced to think that in this way they might keep him among them still. But when it was explained that we must leave at once for Chin-kiang, as his family grave was there, and he had always wished to be laid beside his loved ones should he die in China, they set aside their own desire and did all they could to forward our departure.

When everything had been brought to the house they sent word to my husband asking if they might speak with him. He went at once, and was touched by the many evidences of their thought and care. Then, gathering round him, they said that they had wished to obtain a more beautiful coffin, but had been obliged to be satisfied with the best they could find ready-made; that he need not ask the price, for it was their gift, the gift of the church; for if they could not be allowed to keep the Venerable Chief Pastor in Hu-nan, they must at any rate do everything for him at their own expense.

It was a great surprise, but they would take no denial. Had not the Lord brought their beloved father in the faith to Changsha, and permitted them to look upon his face? From their midst had he not been translated? Hu-nan Christians had been the last to hear his voice, to receive his blessing. Theirs must be the privilege of providing for his last needs.

Yes, it was beautiful and right. It meant a large sum to them, and they would feel it. But the joy of sacrifice was in their hearts, and we could not but stand aside and let them do as they would. So Hu-nan hands prepared his last resting-place, Hu-nan hearts planned all with loving care-one little company of the great multitude his life had blessed. Not in vain, ah, not in vain the faith and toil and suffering, the ceaseless prayer and soul-travail of fifty years. Inland China open everywhere to the Gospel proclaims the faithfulness of God, and these

strong Hu-nan men with hearts as tender as children's, these women with tear-dimmed eyes helping in the last ministries of love, attest the gratitude of a redeemed and blood-washed company no man can number.

By the mighty river at Chin-kiang they laid him, where it rolls its waters two miles wide toward the sea. Much might be said of the love and veneration shown to his memory; of Memorial Services in Shanghai, London, and elsewhere; of eulogies in the public press; of sympathetic resolutions passed by missionary and other societies, and of personal letters from high and low in many lands. From the striking tribute of a High Church Bishop in The Guardian to the tender reminiscences of fellow-workers, many were the written and spoken words that showed him to have been not only "the heart-beat felt throughout the Mission," but a vital force of life and love in every part, one might almost say, of the body of Christ. But the voices that linger longest are those he would have loved the best—the voices of Chinese children singing sweet hymns of praise as they laid their little offerings of flowers upon his restingplace.

"Thus one by one the stars that are to shine for ever in God's firmament appear in their celestial places, and the children of the Kingdom enter upon the blessedness of their Father's house not made with hands."

Chapter XLII^(TOC)

Prayers Yet to be Answered

ADONIRAM JUDSON, the Apostle of Burma, less than two weeks before his death, heard of a definite answer to prayers he had offered with great earnestness long years before, and which had seemed to be unheard. His heart had been deeply burdened about the Jewish people—so much so that he had even sought to found a mission in Palestine for their benefit—but nothing came of it. And then, only a few days before he passed away, he learned from a daily paper of the conversion of a number of Jews in Trebizond through a tract concerning his own life-work, and that they had sent to Constantinople asking for a Christian teacher. With tears in his eyes the veteran missionary exclaimed:

I never was deeply interested in any object, I never prayed sincerely and earnestly for anything, but it came. At some time, no matter how distant a day, somehow, in some shape, probably the last I should have devised, it came. And yet I have always had so little faith. May God forgive me ... and cleanse the sin of unbelief from my heart.

Prayers yet to be answered—how rich the inheritance Hudson Taylor left to the land he loved, to the Church of God in China for which his life was given! In one sense the prayers of that life-time had indeed been answered.

He sowed with tears;

He laboured, suffered, strove for one great field,

And saw it yield,

His every hope of half a hundred years. ^[408]

But in another sense do not those prayers lie beyond us yet, marking out wide possessions upon which the foot of faith has trodden, possessions still to be possessed?

Nothing could have been more definite than Mr. Taylor's own conviction as to the thoughts that had come to him in 1889. Once he had seen it he could never doubt again the Master's will and purpose that "every creature" in China should hear the glad tidings of salvation. Through all the years that followed, though hindered again and again, and postponed for a time by the Boxer crisis, his purpose never wavered.

"This work will not be done without crucifixion," he said in the C.I.M. Conference of May 1890, "without consecration that is prepared at any cost to carry out the Master's command." But, given that, I believe in my inmost soul that it will be done. If ever in my life I was conscious of being led of God, it was in the writing and publication of those papers, the first of which came out in November of last year."

The time had not come for it then, as events were to prove, but who shall say that the time has not come for it now? Many are the indications that these are the lines on which the Spirit of God is working. A recent survey of missionary operations in China during the last ten years reveals nothing more clearly than the new spirit of evangelism which is taking hold of the Chinese Church. In the province of Ho-nan, for example, with its twenty-five millions-the province in which Mr. Taylor spent more than half his last brief visit to China-all the Societies and churches are at the present' moment united in an effort to carry the Gospel to every home and "ever creature "within a period of five years. At the beginning of 1917 this forward movement was entered upon, its definite aim being" to enlist the co-operation of every

Christian in Ho-nan and bring the Gospel to the ears of every nonChristian in the province" within the time agreed upon. And this effort, which will command the prayerful sympathy of all who long for the coming and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, is but part of the larger movement which in varying degrees is making itself felt throughout China. ^[409]

Equally encouraging are the tidings that come from Hu-nan, where the Floating Bible School is proving an effective method of developing soul-winners. Started by Dr. Keller, from whose home in Chang-sha Mr. Hudson Taylor had passed to his reward, this remarkable movement has for its aim "the speedy and thorough evangelisation of the twenty-two millions" of that province by means of itinerant bands labouring in connection with all the Societies. Taking advantage of the waterways which abound, the students of the Bible School—who must be men of a living faith in Christ and a serious call to His service—spend most of the year with a trained Chinese leader, visited by their missionary superintendents, on a boat large enough to accommodate twelve or more. ^[410] On the invitation of the missionary in charge they go to a given district and take whatever time is necessary to reach its entire population, whether in town or country, with the Message of Salvation.

"We now have three parties at work," Dr. Keller wrote in 1917, "and we hope to add three more parties this year. In hundreds of homes the people have given up idolatry, and have accepted Christ as their Saviour and Lord. Bible-study classes have been formed; new churches have been organised, always by the missionary of the district, never by our men; and many thousands who never heard the Gospel before have had their misconceptions cleared away, their prejudices broker} down, and their hearts opened to the Gospel message."

Then once a year the bands gather together for two months of special study in their Autumn Bible School among the mountains, where a famous shrine (Nan-yoh) attracts hundreds of thousands of pilgrims annually. There the students are joined by pastors and evangelists from all over the province who come up for rest and spiritual refreshment, and take part in the "intense, fruitful, heart-to-heart work" carried on among the pilgrims, a large proportion of whom are earnest, religiously-inclined young men. Forty thousand personal conversations were recorded in 1916, and many cases of conversion of the deepest interest. These methods of training and work, Dr. Keller believes, could be adapted to the special needs of other provinces, and would go far to solve the problem of the evangelisation of China in this generation.

In the Bible Mr. Taylor used up to the time of his Home going a little map was found, traced on thin paper, of the province of Kwei-chow, showing the stations especially in which the work among the tribes-people was beginning. Often prayed over, that fragment of paper bears its silent testimony to the longing of his heart after those wild, neglected children of the mountains—living at enmity with their Chinese neighbours, worshipping demons and charms, and bound by the grossest superstition and sin. Coming home on his first furlough from Kwei-chow, Mr. James R. Adam, who had been doing what he could among the Miao people round An-shun, met Mr. Taylor in Dundee in the home of Mr. William Scott. The work was difficult though full of promise, and how to follow it up Mr. Adam hardly knew, with the charge of the station on his hands. Yet there seemed no prospect of fellow-workers. What was Mr. Adam to do? Should he give up the effort to reach the tribes-folk, and confine himself to work among the Chinese?

"Never shall I forget your dear father's kindness," he wrote, that last time I met him. With affectionate sympathy he wished me Godspeed in this work among the Chinese and Miao,

telling me to go on as I had been doing and to do the best I could for both."

Little did either of them think as they parted in Dundee of the answer that was to be given to their prayers; of the wonderful movement that, beginning in the An-shun district, was to extend to the adjacent province (Yun-nan), gathering many thousands of these simple mountain people into the kingdom of God, and raising up from among them ardent missionaries to carry the Gospel on from tribe to tribe in ever-widening circles of blessing.

"The sun has never risen upon China without finding me at prayer," Mr. Taylor could say of long years of his labours in that land; and perhaps no part of those labours had more to do with the results we see today. But he not only prayed. The foregoing pages have revealed a little of what lay behind those prayers. "I do want to give up myself and you too, darling, for the life of the Chinese and of our fellow-workers," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor in one of their many separations: and, "Notice, in 1 Corinthians 1:18 the connection of the Cross with power. 'Do not many lives lack power because they do not love the Cross? May your life be full of the power of God, and mine."

The needs that moved him, the command that revealed the yearning of the heart of Christ—Whom we, too, call Master and Lord—remain the same today. Great changes have come and are coming in China. New methods are needed in missionary work to meet the new conditions, and are being prayerfully developed and applied. But the great underlying facts remain the same. Idolatry has not lost its hold. Writing from the far north-west (June 1918), a member of the Mission tells of Guilds in one city numbering thousands of men and women sworn to regular worship at stated times. In one of these some fifteen hundred women are pledged to go to a certain temple on the second and sixth of every month, "where they kneel upright on

the verandahs and in the courtyard, each holding a stick of incense between the two hands raised to the level of the forehead. This position has to be maintained and prayers recited until the stick of incense has burned away—quite a long process." And offerings of money must be made on every one of the stated worship days, which go to the building and beautifying of temples and making fresh idols. And this is only one city out of hundreds that have as yet no resident missionary. Do the people need light in their darkness? Do they not care about the unknown future and what becomes of the soul? Is it for them too that the precious blood was shed which alone can cleanse from sin and bring us nigh to God? And what shall be said of the responsibility that rests upon us if, these things, we are not doing our utmost whether by prayer or gifts or personal service—to bring to them too the knowledge which is life eternal?

Much is being done; but much more is needed if the present opportunity—perhaps the most glorious that has ever come to Christian men and women—is to be dealt with faithfully. "When China is moved," Napoleon used to say, "it will change the face of the globe." China is moved, is moving: shall it, not be home to the heart of God?

"We must advance upon our knees," said Bishop Cassels in view of the needs, the possibilities of that vast country. "There must be a fresh taking hold of God in prayer. I thank God that this Mission lives upon prayer. But I say, God will do 'a new thing' for us when there is a new spirit of prayer among us. God will do 'a new thing' for us when there is a new spirit of consecration among us."

If the one whose steps we have followed through a life of toil and sacrifice, yet of radiant joy in fellowship with Christ, could speak to us to-day from "the exceeding and eternal weight of glory," would he not say again as he

said in the midst of the fight:

There is a needs-be for us to give ourselves for the life of the world-as He gave His flesh for the feeding of the lifeless and of living souls whose life can only be nourished by the same lifegiving Bread. An easy-going non-self-denying life will never be one of power.

Fruit-bearing involves cross-bearing. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." We know how the Lord Jesus became fruitful-not by bearing His Cross merely, but by dying on it. Do we know much of fellowship with Him in this? There, are not two Christs-an easy-going one for easy-going Christians, and a suffering, toiling one for exceptional believers. There is only one Christ. Are you willing to abide in Him, and thus to bear much fruit?

Would that God would make hell so real to us that we cannot rest; heaven so real that we must have men there; Christ so real that our supreme motive and aim shall be to make the Man of Sorrows the Man of joy by the conversion to Him of many concerning whom He prayed, "Father, I long that those whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory."

^[1] Quoted from an address by Mr. Edward Taylor of Barnsley, Yorkshire, reported in the Barnsley Chronicle, January 1880.

^[2] It was the custom in that part of England to leave the sheaves in stacks instead of at once threshing out the wheat. As the flour was needed for use, two or three sheaves would be threshed at a time and the grain taken to the mill for grinding.

^[3] See the Account of an Extraordinary Deliverance, by Rev. J. Pawson in the Arminian Magazine for 1796, pp. 409-411. This experience was related to him at Staincross by Dame Betty herself, in the year 1775, and confirmed by many witnesses.

^[4] This, we learn from Wesley's journal, was on July 27, 1761. That it was Mapplewell "Feast Monday" is given on the authority of The Barnsley.

^[5] Mapplewell, as it was called in those days, is now the busy mining town of Staincross, near Barnsley, and the Shaws' cottage still stands on the Ridge which divides it from the neighbouring parish of Royston. Substantially built of stone, it hardly shows the wear and tear of two centuries, and is the best preserved of the few remaining dwellings that is the oldest part of the town. How interesting it was to find oneself in the pleasant kitchen in which Wesley was once entertained, talking by the fireside with a member of the very family that had shown him hospitality. For the cottage still belongs to the Shaws, who have occupied it from the first; and their next-door neighbours have been Taylors for many generations.

^[6] The definiteness of the stone-mason's conversion on the morning of his wedding-day, and under the circumstances narrated, is ascertained from the careful researches of Mr. Edward Taylor, embodied in several Lectures. Mr. Edward Taylor's name is one of the most respected in Barnsley. He was for many years a Local Preacher and leader in the Methodist "Reform Movement." Omnivorous in his reading and of strongly antiquarian tastes, he made it his business to search out all available information regarding early Methodism and its supporters in the district, and left a considerable library now in the possession of his widow, his son Mr. William Taylor, and his son-in-law Mr. John Knee, to whom belong most of his Lectures and other MSS. To each of these members of Mr. Taylor's family we are indebted for valuable help. Though not related to James Taylor the stone-mason, Mr. Edward Taylor was specially interested in his history as the pioneer and practically the founder of the Methodist Movement in Barnsley, and to his records we owe many of the facts related in this chapter concerning the marriage and after experiences of the greatgrandparent of Mr. Hudson Taylor.

^[7] The details of Betty Taylor's conversion are gathered from an address by Mr. Edward Taylor, already quoted, and from the written Recollections of the Rev. Samuel Taylor, late of St. Leonards, the last surviving grandson of James and Betty Taylor, and uncle of the subject of this Memoir. With his death in 1904 there passed away a man of God indeed, whose memory will long be fragrant.

^[8] In this we cannot be mistaken," said an archbishop of the time, "that an open and professed disregard of religion is become, through a variety of unhappy causes, the distinguishing character of the age. Such are the dissoluteness and contempt of principle in the higher part of the world, and the profligacy, intemperance, and fearlessness of committing crimes in the lower part, as must, if the torrent of impiety stop not, become absolutely fatal." See Archbishop Secker's Eight Charges. Bishop Butler went further when he wrote in the preface to his Analogy: It has come to be taken for granted that Christianity is no longer a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly it is treated as if, in the present age, this were an agreed point among all persons of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject for mirth and ridicule."

^[9] The Taylors' cottage has recently been demolished, with several others, to make room for a row of shops and houses at the top of Old Mill Lane.

^[10] From Rev. Samuel Taylor's Recollections.

^[11] See The Christian Leaders of the Eighteenth Century, by Bishop Ryle.

^[12] See Life of Henry Longden, by the Rev. William Bramwell.

^[13] The first Methodist Class Meeting in Barnsley was composed of seven members, i.e. James and Betty Taylor, Jonathan Pashley, John Denton, weaver, Timothy Peckett, mason, Thomas Blackburn, farmer, and his wife" Early Methodism in Barnsley and District, by Mr. John knee).

^[14] Recollections of the Rev. Samuel Taylor.

^[15] Whitfield and Wesley transformed England by giving to conversion once more its proper value."—Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.

^[16] Well might John Wesley be called "the best-known man in England." His labours had been prodigious for well-nigh fifty years. Travelling on horseback or by chaise from four to five thousand miles annually, he had established in Great Britain alone more than a hundred circuits, in which three hundred ministers and over a thousand local preachers were making known the truth as it is in Jesus. Acting on his own memorable words,

"simplify religion and every part of learning," he had enlisted the press in the work of popular reformation. "Cheaper, shorter, plainer books "was his motto. Amid all other labours he found time to keep up a constant supply of pamphlets, tracts and sermons, carried by his preachers to the remotest parts of the country, besides providing them with a library of over two hundred volumes on a great variety of subjects, written or edited by himself, five works on music and forty-nine collections of hymns. He preached in all 42,400 sermons after his return from Georgia, in 1738, an average up to the time of his death in 1791 of more than fifteen every week for fifty-three consecutive years. His last words were, "The best of all is God is with us." See History of Methodism, by Abel Stevens, LL.D., vol. ii. PP. 320, 494, 508, etc.

^[17] The late William Woodcock, Esq., one of the chief authorities upon the history of Methodism in the Barnsley district. This gentleman left a valuable library and collection of manuscripts, now in the care of his daughter Miss L. Woodcock, who generously spared no pains in making them available for the purposes of this book.

^[18] Quoted from the excellent Rules drawn up by John Wesley for the guidance of his young preachers; and from the bright, practical Conversations with his fellow-workers that have come down to us. The full title of this interesting work is: Minutes of several Conversations between the Rev. John Wesley, A.M., and the Preachers in connection with him, from the year 1744; published in Leeds in 1803.

^[19] In the Public Library of Barnsley may be seen today a record of no little interest in this connection. It was penned by one Hugh Burland, who filled several large calf-bound volumes with the ancient "Annals" of the town, among which we come upon the following in his handwriting

"1791—The Wesleyans of Barnsley determined to build themselves a Chapel. Since the visit of John Wesley they had held Divine Service in a room in Eastgate. In about three years they accomplished their object; for their Chapel, which was erected on Pinfold Hill, was opened for public worship in 1794. The whole was accomplished, including the cost of site, for the sum of 473 Sterling £:18 Schilling: 3 1/2 pence."

But old Hugh Burland does not tell of all the love and self-denial, the faith and prayer that went into that building; the hours of unpaid labour James and his friends devoted; the care they lavished upon every detail, and the joy that came to them when at length the whole was completed and dedicated to the service of God.

^[20] The following quaint epitome of the life of John Taylor appeared in the Leeds Intelligencer for October 11, 1834:

"October 6, Died, Mr. John Taylor, Linen-reed Maker, Barnsley, aged 56: an excellent man and most highly respected. Mr. Taylor has been an inhabitant of Barnsley a great number of years, and in his business has been of great consequence to the staple trade of the town. He was a member of the Methodist Connexion, and evinced a remarkable fondness for sacred music. His voice was a powerful counter, and was considered by men of science to possess great harmony."

^[21] The old home of John and Mary Taylor is now known as "Sten Court, five house," and is occupied by an elderly couple, Mr. and Mrs. William Irving, who well remember its former owners.

^[22] Seven of John Taylor's children lived to grow up: Elizabeth became Mrs. Cope; John took up his father's business and left a large family; Mary became Mrs. Norman; James was the father of Hudson Taylor William was a stockbroker in Manchester; Sarah died unmarried; and Samuel was for many years useful and beloved as a Wesleyan Minister. He had a great admiration for his mother, and used to say that he owed everything to her, his father dying while he was still a child.

^[23] In whatsoever he doeth, he shall prosper (Psalm 1:3, R.V. margin).

^[24] The revival commenced in Westgate Chapel, as it was then called, with the Watch Night Service on December 31, 1832, and one of the lads converted in James Taylor's class was his cousin John Bashforth, whose mother was a daughter of James and Betty Taylor, brought up in the little cottage on Old Mill Lane. The Bashforths became one of the leading families in Barnsley. Young John Bashforth from this time onward lived a consistent

Christian life, and was for many years Superintendent of the Sunday School.

^[25] "Possessing good natural abilities, which he carefully improved by study, James Taylor was a most able and effective preacher. His manner was at once pleasant and dignified. His sermons bore evidence of much thought and study, and as literary compositions were considerably above the average of lay discourses "(from the Obituary Notice in The Barnsley Chronicle).

^[26] "He was one of the founders and for many years Acting Manager of the Barnsley Permanent Building Society. ... After his retirement from business, about 1864 or 1865, he was able to devote a considerable amount of time to the work of the Society, which had by this time attained important dimensions, and all its members will agree that from first to last he had its interests thoroughly at heart. ... On the eve of his leaving Barnsley he was presented by the directors, officers, and members of the Society with a solid silver tea-service and an illuminated address 'as a mark of their esteem for his personal character, and in recognition of his faithful services as Manager of the Society from 1853 to 1875.

"During the long period of his residence in Barnsley, Mr. Taylor enjoyed the confidence and esteem of all sections of his fellow-townsmen, and of him it could with truth be said as his active, well-knit figure was seen passing along our streets: 'An honest man, close-button'd to the chin, Broadcloth without, and a warm heart within.'"—Ibid.

^[27] Afterwards Mrs. Benjamin Broomhall.

^[28] "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." (St. Mark 3:35).

^[29] To Mrs. B. Broomhall, the "little Amelia" of those days, we are indebted for many of the recollections incorporated in this chapter.

[30a] Romanism in China was just recovering from its second period of decline, and foreign priests were to be found at a few points in the interior on the ground of ancient rights. The Order of Jesuits, suppressed by Pope Clement XIV. in 1773, had been re-established half a century later, and from that time (1822) the Roman Catholic Church entered upon a stronger, more

aggressive policy in China.

[30] Long years after, when Mr. Henry Reed had become a warm friend and supporter of the China Inland Mission, Mr. Hudson Taylor, writing to him about other matters, recalled these facts.

"It must be about thirty years ago that I had the privilege of hearing you speak at a missionary meeting in a park near Leeds. I was then a boy, and unconverted. But one incident you narrated, showing the danger of quenching the strivings of the Spirit of God, riveted itself on my memory, and in after years has been often repeated by me to Chinese audiences... I believe that in several instances in China it has been used of God to bring persons in a hesitating state of mind to the point of decision for Christ."

[31] In a letter printed later in this book

[32] Three years before, in 1846, the congregation had migrated from the Chapel on Pinfold Hill to larger premises. The new building on Pitt Street was very near the Methodist Manse in which the Hudsons had lived.

[33] Ezekiel 36:25-27

[34] This is stated in his mother's written recollections.

[35] The Treaty Ports of Canton, Amoy, Fuchow, Ningpo and Shanghai, opened by the Treaty of Nanking, which concluded the first opium war with England, in 1842.

[36] The order in which the British Societies commenced work in China, up to this point, is as follows:

1807. The London Missionary Society; sending Robert Morrison to Canton.

After the Treaty of Nanking—

1843. The British and Foreign Bible Society.

1844. The Church Missionary Society.

1845. The Baptist Missionary Society.

1847. The English Presbyterian Mission, whose first representative was the Rev. William Burns; see Chaps. 25-29.

^[37] Quoted from his own brief but well-known Autobiography, *A Retrospect*, from which extracts have already been made.

^[38] The Rev. William Milne, who joined Dr. Morrison in 1813. A man of remarkable linguistic gifts, he took a large share in Morrison's literary labours. His lamented death took place in 1822; but far and wide, wherever Chinese is spoken, Milne is at work to-day. His well-known dialogue *The Two Friends* is circulated still by tens of thousands, and is generally regarded as "the most popular tract in China."

^[39] Dr. Gutzlaff reached Europe early in 1850.

^[40] Dr. Gutzlaff, wearing Chinese dress, made seven journeys during the years 1831-35 along the Chinese coast, landing at places even as far north as Tien-tsin, and risking his life again and again in earnest efforts to make known the Gospel. Dr. Medhurst, at the request of the L.M.S., made a similar journey in 1835, seven years before the opening of the Treaty Ports.

^[41] See Ball's China, published in 1854, PP. 59, 60

^[42] This interesting paper, *The Gleaner in the Missionary Field*, seems to have been edited by the Secretaries of the Chinese Association, or, as it was afterwards called, the Chinese Evangelisation Society. Although no names are given, it is easy to recognise Mr. George Pearse of the London Stock Exchange as well as Mr. Richard Ball of Taunton in many of its articles. The latter was a man of literary gift as well as spiritual insight, and both were deeply taught in the Word of God.

^[43] Dr. Gutzlaff passed away at Hong-kong on the 9th of August 1851, devotedly labouring among the Chinese until his brief but fatal illness came on. *The Gleaner* for January 1852 supplied the following details.

"Even in his last hours, all his thoughts were directed to the evangelisation of China. He spoke of it with great confidence, and in the delirium of fever frequently expressed bright hopes for the blessing and regeneration of his beloved Sinim. Truly of him it may be said that he departed this life and entered the presence of the Lord bearing the millions of China upon his heart."

^[44] See Frontispiece.

^[45] The Rev. Andrew Jukes, previously a clergyman of the Church of England, did not hold in those days, or at any rate did not teach, the views with which his name was afterwards connected.

^[46] Philippians 3:7-12

^[47] Revelation 3:8; 1 Corinthians 16:9

^[48] A letter to his mother, dated December 15, 1851.

^[49] Along the little canal, in the dark.

^[50] This uncle, a brother of Mrs. James Taylor's, was the seventh and youngest child of the Rev. Benjamin Hudson. He went to Calcutta, shortly after this period, and made quite a fortune by painting Indian princes and officials, entertaining them the while with amusing stories.

^[51] It was Tom's elder brother, John Hodson, who had been apprenticed to Hudson Taylor's father in Barnsley for three years, and was now in Hull with Dr. Hardey.

^[52] Mr. Pearse, it should be remembered, while acting as Hon. Secretary to the Chinese Evangelisation Society, was at the same time much engrossed in business. It was no lack of interest that made him dismiss Hudson Taylor so curtly, but simply the pressure of other claims, and a failure to realise what this coming to London meant to his young friend.

^[53] It has been one of the privileges of my life," wrote Miss Elizabeth Wilson of Kendal, "to have known so much of your beloved and honoured father. The first time I ever met him was when as a young girl I was on a visit to Miss Stacey. He came for one of the little rests he so much needed and that

Miss Stacey rejoiced to give him, leaving him the run of the garden and library and protecting him from much company or conversation. He was then a medical student and living I think on very little. For years after, when I asked him how he had been able to afford the omnibus so often, he replied, 'Miss Stacey was not one who could forget details of that sort. She never let me pay my fare.' So no doubt the excellent dinners now and then did him good, as well as the ministry of the Tottenham meeting."

Little could Miss Wilson have imagined at that time that she too would be called to China, and used as one of the most devoted pioneers of the Inland Mission.

Another friend of those days, though still a lad at school, was Theodore Howard, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Howard of Bruce Grove: now and for many years Home Director of the China Inland Mission. "I do certainly think," he wrote concerning Mr. Taylor's visits to Tottenham, "that the intercourse he had with friends there must have considerably influenced his views of Christian faith, doctrine, and practice. Those were palmy days in which there was much of the Holy Spirit's teaching, and I believe they have left their mark on many branches of the Evangelical Church. And they were followed by the blessed gatherings at Barnet and Mildmay, through which the same truths became the heritage of an everwidening circle of believers. Thank God that light has never died away, but has grown brighter and brighter amid the darkness of sacerdotalism, ritualism, and scientific criticism in these days of 'modern thought.'"

^[54] This was the Rev. F. J. Roberts of the American Baptist Missionary Union. Hung Siu-ts'uen, founder and leader of the Tai-ping movement, first learned the Truth from a tract given him during a literary examination in Canton, by Liang A-fah, one of Morrison's converts. Subsequently he returned to Canton to hear more of the New Doctrine, and spent two or three months in studying the Scriptures under the direction of Mr. Roberts. Though he did not remain long enough to be baptized and received into Church fellowship, he had learned enough of the spirit and teaching of Christianity to make him a missionary to his own people on his return to Kwang-si, the province in which his fervent propaganda began. It was not until bitter

persecution from the Chinese authorities had driven his followers to arms, that the movement took on a revolutionary character.

[55] The title taken by the Tai-ping leader or "Emperor."

[56] T'ien-teh was probably the only aspirant to a throne who ever made it a chief object to print and circulate the Christian Scriptures. So eager was he that his people should possess the Word of God that he kept four hundred men employed in Nanking, under his own supervision, printing and binding various books of both the Old and New Testament. The version used was that of Dr. Gutzlaff, which thus found its way in actual fact to the remotest part of the empire. The title-page of every copy bore the inscription: "A new edition, published in the third year of the Tai-ping Dynasty. "Around the title itself, the imperial arms were emblazoned, and a large red stamp, four inches square, stated that the book was sent out on the authority of the new emperor, the man before whom Peking itself trembled.

[57] The impression made by the young assistant upon those with whom he lived at this time may be judged from the following recollections, kindly communicated to the writers more than fifty years later by a member of Mr. Brown's family.

"Early in 1853, Mr. Hudson Taylor went to assist Mr. Thomas Brown, Surgeon, who then resided at the corner of St. Mary Axe and Camomile Street, London. Mr. Brown's youngest child was a baby of a year old. Dr. Brown did not approve of perambulators for children living in the city, so on week-days the baby went out in his father's carriage. On Sundays, however, Dr. Brown never took any of the children with him on his necessary rounds. As little Henry was too heavy for his nurse to carry, he would have had to remain indoors all Sunday, if Mr. Taylor had not taken compassion on him. But he was fond of children, and before church time on Sunday used to carry the little fellow in his arms around Finsbury Circus which was near at hand. Soon after Mr. Taylor left for China, Dr. Brown and his family moved to Finsbury Circus, where one of his sons still practises—MARY E. BROWN."

[58] Isaiah 64:4, R.V.

[59] What the Tai-ping propaganda might have become, had it retained its

earlier characteristics, who can say? Success, as is so often the case, led to dissension and decline. From the zenith of its triumphant advance on Peking commenced this summer (1853), it degenerated into a corrupt political movement, deluging the country with blood and sufferings untold during the eleven remaining years of its course. Even so the Imperial Government was powerless to bring it to an end until succoured by Western Powers. England, in the person of General Gordon, Chinese Gordon as he is still appreciatively called, delivered the empire at last from what had become an intolerable evil. Nanking fell before General Gordon in 1864.

^[60] So great was the interest in the Tai-ping Rebellion and the hope that by the sympathetic co-operation of Christian nations it might lead to the conversion of multitudes to Christianity, that in September of this year (1853) the British and Foreign Bible Society decided to celebrate its Jubilee by printing a million New Testaments for use in that country, an undertaking almost incredibly great in those days.

^[61] The following paragraph gives all the notice that appeared in The Gleaner of Hudson Taylor's departure for China:

"On Friday, the 9th of September, a meeting was held at the rooms of the Chinese Evangelisation Society at 7 o'clock in the evening, for the purpose of commending to the protection and blessing of God, Mr. James Taylor, on going out as a missionary to China. Mr. J. H. Taylor embarked on the Dumfries, Captain A. Morris, for Shanghai. The vessel left Liverpool on the 19th of September."

It is interesting to notice that the same day witnessed also the departure for China of the Rev. J. L. Nevius (of the American Presbyterian Mission) with his bride. They sailed from Boston "in a small, old, unseaworthy vessel," and after a trying voyage round Cape Horn arrived in Shanghai just three weeks later than Mr. Hudson Taylor. These distinguished missionaries became, and continued through life, sincere and valued friends of Mr. Taylor's.

But September 19 is chiefly memorable as the day upon which the following decision was reached by the British and Foreign Bible Society. "The attention

of the British and Foreign Bible Society having been directed to the unprecedented movement in China, and to the hopeful prospects thereby presented for the wider introduction of the Sacred Scriptures into that extensive and densely populated empire, it was resolved, September 19, 1853, 'that the Committee, relying upon the sympathy of the British public in this desirable object, are prepared to take upon themselves all measures necessary for printing, with the least practicable delay, one million copies of the Chinese New Testament.'

—Robert Frost, George Brown, Secretaries.

^[62] One thing was a great trouble to me that night. I was a very young believer, and had not sufficient faith in God to see Him in and through the use of means. I had felt it a duty to comply with the earnest wish of my beloved and honoured mother, and for her sake to procure a swimming-belt. But in my own soul I felt as if I could not simply trust in God while I had this swimming-belt, and my heart had no rest until on that night, after all hope of being saved was gone, I had given it away. Then I had perfect peace, and strange to say put several light things together, likely to float at the time we struck, without any thought of inconsistency or scruple.

Ever since, I have seen clearly the mistake I made; a mistake that is very common in these days, when erroneous teaching on faith-healing does much harm, misleading some as to the purposes of God, shaking the faith of others and distressing the minds of many. The use of means ought not to lessen our faith in God, and our faith in God ought not to hinder our using whatever means He has given us for the accomplishment of His own purposes.

For years after this I always took a swimming-belt with me and never had any trouble about it; for after the storm was over, the question was settled for me through the prayerful study of the Scriptures. God gave me then to see my mistake, probably to deliver me from a great deal of trouble on similar questions now so constantly raised. When in medical or surgical charge of any case, I have never thought of neglecting to ask God's guidance and blessing in the use of appropriate means, nor yet of omitting to give thanks for answered prayer and restored health. But to me it would appear as

presumptuous and wrong to neglect the use of those measures which He Himself has put within our reach, as to neglect to take daily food, and suppose that life and health might be maintained by prayer alone" (from Mr. Taylor's *Retrospect*).

^[63] I They rounded the Cape of Good Hope early in December, and soon after Christmas Day "began to make northing,' having run 14,500 miles since leaving the Mersey. On January 5 they reached the nearest point to Western Australia, only 120 miles away, and thence steered a perilous course through the East Indian Islands to the Pacific Ocean and the China Sea, dropping anchor at Woo-sung, in the mouth of the Shanghai River on March 1, 1854.

^[64] This war, which was to cost England twenty-four thousand men, and to add forty-one millions sterling to the national debt, commenced on March 27, 1854, and was not concluded until two years later.

^[65] The name of the London Mission Compound on Shantung Road, familiar and beloved. The three characters mean, "Medhurst Family Enclosure."

^[66] It is a matter of no little interest to think of Hudson Taylor on his arrival as welcomed by this group of distinguished missionaries. "There were giants ... in those days," and certainly the L.M.S. had their share! Among the honoured names on the long roll of its missionaries few take a higher place than Medhurst, Lockhart, Wylie, Muirhead, Edkins, and Griffith John who joined them a few months later.

"Most of the large cities in Kiang-su and North Cheh-kiang first heard the Word of Life from this band of devoted young men who in the years before 1860 were associated with the pioneer evangelist to central China, Dr. Medhurst" (A Century of Missions in China, p. 7).

Of Dr. Lockhart it need only be said that he was the first medical missionary from England to China. He landed in Canton four years after Dr. Peter Parker from America, and accompanied Dr. Medhurst when, in 1843, he commenced missionary operations in central China.

At the time of Hudson Taylor's arrival, Dr. Medhurst and Dr. Lockhart had

already been eleven years in Shanghai. Both were in middle life. Dr. Medhurst being fifty-eight and Dr. Lockhart forty-three years of age. Mr. Wylie was a man of thirty-nine, and a widower. Messrs. Edkins and Muirhead were thirty-one and thirty-two respectively, and had been in Shanghai already six and seven years: the important centre in which they were still to be fellow-labourers after more than half a century had gone by.

The literary as well as evangelistic labours of these men were most remarkable. Dr. Medhurst was proficient in eight or ten languages, and published fifty-nine works in Chinese, six in Malay, and twenty-seven in English. Dr. Lockhart wrote and translated valuable books on medicine and medical-missions. Alexander Wylie "acquired French, Russian, German, and the Manchu and Mongol languages while in charge of the L.M.S. Press in Shanghai, and published numerous works of great value both in English and Chinese." The venerable and beloved Dr. Muirhead, during his fifty-three years of incessant evangelistic and pastoral labours, "translated the first considerable work on Geography ever published in Chinese ... and was the author also of many theological works, and a member of the Bible Revision Committee." While the well-known Dr. Edkins, who survived them all, with "an extraordinary gift for languages and a profound knowledge of Chinese," was one of the leading sinologues of his day.

The Rev. J. S. Burdon also continued for nearly half a century in missionary labours in China. He was the first representative of the Church Missionary Society to commence work in Peking, which became his headquarters for eleven years. "He translated the Prayer Book and a Bible History, and published several lesser works, besides aiding in the translation of the Scriptures." In 1873 he was consecrated third Bishop of Victoria, Hong-kong, which responsible office he held for more than twenty years.

A remarkable group of men, reinforced by a remarkable addition in the coming among them of Hudson Taylor.

^[67] The Treaty of Nanking, opening the "Five Ports" to Western commerce, had only been signed twelve years previously, in 1842.

^[68] Sir Thomas Sutherland, G.C.M.G.; article entitled "Far Eastern Shipping, Fifty Years Ago," in The London and China Express for November 27, 1908: Fiftieth Anniversary Number.

The next paragraph continues: Exchange was constant at not less than 4s. 6d. for the dollar and 6s. 8d. for the tael. The current rate of interest was twelve per cent. per annum. Alas 1 a change came over the spirit of the dream a few years later, when the telegraph reached China and the centre of gravity in trade was in large measure transferred to Europe. No longer could China merchants store their silk and teas in London with the tolerable certainty that if they held their merchandise long enough the price would rise to meet their demands. Following the telegraph, the opening of the Suez Canal and the rapid development of steam-shipping changed completely the character of Eastern trade. But I am anticipating events that were undreamed of in China or India fifty years ago."

^[69] The beloved and now departed Herr Inspektor, C. H. Rappard-Gobat, Director of the "Pilgrim Mission" of St. Chrischona, near Basel, himself in early years a foreign missionary.

^[70] The idea of commencing a new dialect," he had written a month before (August 18), "is rather overwhelming, one being a tolerable dose But if you mean to learn Chinese, you must not say, 'Can I do it?' but 'I *can* and *will*, by the blessing of God.'"

^[71] Based as it was upon his own correspondence, it was little wonder that this Resolution produced a painful impression on his mind. It hurt like a wound inflicted by one from whom he had expected sympathy. In a letter to Mr. Pearse of November 2, he expressed himself as follows:

"And lastly, in reference to the Resolution of June 29, 1854: your Board ought to be very careful how they bind their Secretaries to such a course in present times. Your missionaries are sent into a country in a state of revolution, where it is literally true that they know not what a day or an hour may bring forth. They should be well provided against contingencies before you adopt such an ultra measure, a measure that would at once and forever destroy their credit, if they have any, and compared with which their

dismissal by the Society would not be severe. At any rate, if not accepted, such bills should not be positively refused before you hear the reasons which led to their being drawn. But more I need not say. Your hearts are in the work as well as ours, and I know you will excuse these remarks when you remember that half the world lies between us."

[72] Though written at the North Gate house just before the arrival of the Parkers, what he said then seems even more applicable a little later.

[73] To his intimate friend Mr. B. Broomhall, dated November 19, 1854.

[74] During October, November and the first part of December, Hudson Taylor distributed, with help from Dr. Parker, more than eighteen hundred New Testaments and Scripture portions and two thousand two hundred Christian books and tracts.

[75] A Fu is the governing city of a prefecture (or group of counties), seven to fourteen of which go to make up a province. The word is also applied to the prefect himself and to the district he governs. So that the Sung-kiang Fu (mandarin) resides in Sung-kiang Fu (the city) and from that centre controls the entire Sung-kiang Fu (prefecture).

[76] The province of Kiang-su in which Shanghai is situated, and the province of Cheh-kiang immediately to the south, with Hang-chow and Ning-po among its well-known cities.

[77] *Pah-ko ts'ien ih pun*, "Eight cash a copy," is a phrase that early becomes familiar to the missionary who in *these* days presents his Scriptures for sale rather than free distribution. And certainly they are a wonder at the price (one farthing), printed in clear, large type, and attractively bound in tinted paper covers.

[78] Nan-hwei "Hsien," the latter word standing for a county-town or governing city next in importance to a "Fu."

[79] The *Ya-men* is the residence of the local Mandarin.

[80] A period of only three months: January-March 1855.

[81] Should there be only one traveller, and no luggage or corresponding

burden on the other side, the barrow is simply tilted till his weight is well over the wheel, and in this seemingly precarious position he is trundled from behind.

^[82] Six months later two wealthy men, brothers, sent a servant all the way to Shanghai to invite the missionaries to return to Hai-men. They had obtained books, it appeared, on the occasion of this first visit, and were anxious to have "the foreign teachers" make a long stay in their home. Unfortunately it was not possible to accept the invitation in person. See Chap. 22, p.341, footnote.

^[83] The *Lang-span* group, facing the heights of Fu-shan on the opposite side of the river.

^[84] Offerings of money and other objects made in paper, expressly for burning before the idols.

^[85] This young man, a brother of the pupil they had adopted on the strength of Mr. Berger's gift, proved increasingly satisfactory as time went on, and was the first convert Mr. Taylor baptized in China.

^[86] This dispensary and "outstation" Dr. Parker opened in May, when he had been about six months in China. It was in the town of Yang-king, across the Hwang-poo river, a few miles east of Shanghai.

^[87] Paul Gerhardt; translated by John Wesley.

^[88] Miss Aldersey, an English lady who six years before China was opened to the residence of foreigners had settled in Java to work among Chinese women there. After the Treaty of Nanking in 1842 she was the first to commence a school for girls on Chinese soil-coming to Ning-po in 1843 as one of the pioneer missionaries to settle in that city.

^[89] In a letter dated June 28, 1855.

^[90] See Chap 22, P. 273.

^[91] Jeremiah 48:11.

^[92] On September 7, writing to his mother, Hudson-Taylor alluded to their

disappointment as follows:

"The hospital project for here, as you will see, is over. The Society's objection is not, 'We cannot do it.' Had that been all, I believe we here could. But they say, 'Our professed intentions are not to work in the five Ports, but in the interior. We do not wish our representatives to spend money in Shanghai.'"

^[93] A letter to a friend in Hull.

^[94] For protection from sunstroke Mr. Taylor carried a native umbrella.

^[95] A letter to his sister Amelia, dated October 3.

^[96] It is a common impression among the Chinese, especially in places new to missionary work, that the attractions of their native land must be great in order to induce foreigners to travel so far to settle among them. Clearly they can have nothing so beautiful at home, or they would not leave it! Material comfort especially, they conclude, must be immeasurably greater among themselves than anything "outside barbarians" know. This of course only applies in the present day to districts remote from the coast.

^[97] In a letter to an uncle by marriage, the Rev. Edward King, dated October 23, 1855, in which Mr. Taylor also says: "That I have succeeded in renting a house here so easily is due no doubt to my having adopted the native costume, not losing sight of the fact that the hearts of all are in the Lord's hands, to be moved by Him as He will."

^[98] Written from Sin-k'ai-ho at the end of November.

^[99] Presumably Kuei-hua's full literary name.

^[100] This was in the summer after Mr. Taylor's return from his long journey up the Yang-tze. In a letter to his mother dated July 29 he referred to the circumstance as follows:

"The Chinese authorities have had me up before the Consul for violating the treaty with England by travelling in the interior. He said very little, not more than he was obliged to, but told me that if I continued to exceed treaty rights

his position admitted of no respect of persons; he must punish me as he would a merchant."

[101] This was happily incorrect: no one had been arrested.

[102] Worth at that time considerably over a hundred pounds.

[103] A letter from the South Gate to Mr. Pearse, dated December 7, 1855.

[104] For details of this truly Apostolic life, see Memoir of the Rev. William Burns, M.A., by his brother, the Rev. Islay Burns, D.D.

[105] Residence on Tsung-wing had been forbidden, but he saw no reason why he should not accompany another missionary to whose itinerations no objection had been raised.

[106] Mr. Taylor had his teacher with him, but Tsien and Kuei-hua had been sent to the island of Hai-men in response to an urgent invitation from two gentlemen, brothers, who had received books on Mr. Taylor's visit with Mr. Burdon and desired to learn more of the way of Salvation. They rejoined Mr. Taylor at Nan-zin just after the New Year.

[107] Extracted from Mr. Taylor's journal for December 28, 1855, and from a letter of the same date.

[108] His whole life was literally a life of prayer, and his whole ministry a series of battles fought at the mercy-seat."

"Who among us has the spirit of prayer?" he wrote from Swatow. "They are mighty who have this spirit, and weak who have it not."

"In digging in the field of the Word," said an intimate friend, "he threw up now and then great nuggets which formed part of one's spiritual wealth every after."

"He was mighty in the Scriptures, and his greatest power in preaching was the way in which he used 'the Sword of the Spirit' upon men's consciences and hearts.... Sometimes one might have thought, in listening to his solemn appeals, that one was hearing a new chapter in the Bible when first spoken by

a living prophet."

Quoted from the Memoir by the Rev. Islay Burns, D.D., pp. 545, 237, 549.

[109] Quoted from the Memoir by the Rev. Islay Burns, D.D., p. 551.

[110] Confucianists, i.e. scholarly men, affect to despise Buddhism and its grosser forms of idolatry, together with many superstitions of the uneducated.

[111] The Fu cities of Hu-chow near the Great Lake and Ka-shing on the Grand Canal.

[112] Tsien and Kuei-hua, Mr. Taylor's valued helpers, had just rejoined him, having returned from their visit to the island of Hai-men. See Chap. 27. p. 341.

[113] This second campaign with Mr. Burns lasted between two and three weeks. They left Shanghai for Sung-kiang Fu on January 28 or 29, returning about February 18, 1856. It was Mr. Taylor's Eleventh Evangelistic Journey since reaching China.

[114] The Rev. and Mrs. Robert Lowrie, of the American Presbyterian Mission.

[115] February 26, 1854.

[116] "Faith looks to Jesus," he wrote in April of this year, "and walks the troubled sea in spite of winds and waves. I understand that the funds of the Chinese Evangelisation Society were much reduced a short time ago, on account, I suppose, of the [Crimean) war. It does not affect me, however.... as I have not needed to draw on my Society for the last two quarters, and have now in hand enough for six months to come. Only by last mail a valued friend and devoted servant of Christ who has sent me one hundred pounds since last October, wrote urging me to tell him of any additional way in which he could forward the work by supplying the means. So as you truly say, if we are in the will of God, difficulty or trial as to circumstances cannot hinder us. Nothing can by any means harm us or frustrate His designs."

[117] Written on March 29, after they had occupied the room for two weeks.

[118] Although in the first five years after Mr. Burns commenced work in Swatow only thirty-nine converts were received into church fellowship, more than 4400 adults have been baptized since that time in connection with the English Presbyterian Mission alone, of whom 2700 are actual communicants to-day (1911). A strong native ministry has been developed which is now entirely supported by the native Church.

[119] This devoted servant of God, the Rev. R. Lechler, was sent out by the Basel Missionary Society in 1846, and with the Rev. Th. Hamburg was the first representative of the Society in China. Mr. Lechler went to Swatow in 1848, and did not retire from that difficult field until obliged to do so in 1852. For more than fifty years he was almost continuously at work in China, witnessing the development of a Church which now numbers, by the blessing of God, over 5700 communicants.

[120] The usual term "Foreign Devil" was here reinforced by more offensive epithets, "Foreign Dog," "Foreign Fig" and worse, hissed out with bitterest scorn.

[121] A Christian man, who entertained the warmest friendship for Mr. Taylor and Mr. Burns, and subsequently joined the latter as a medical missionary in Swatow.

[122] Dialect for Ch'ao-chow, the name, of the Prefecture of which Swatow is the commercial centre.

[123] On account of danger from evil men, not to mention the malarial climate.

[124] One missionary journey had been made in Manchuria some time previously, that of Dr. Alexander Williamson, who as Agent of the Scottish Bible Society traversed this important region between the years 1866 and 1868, even reaching a point-San-sin, on the Sungari river-which the Church has not yet overtaken. See *A Century of Missions in China*, p. 50.

[125] The Rev. Wm. C. Burns passed away on April 4, 1868, just two years after the formation of the China Inland Mission which he had watched with the warmest interest.

To the far-away homeland he sent as his last message an appeal to tab up the work he was thus laying down; an appeal nobly responded to by the arrival of the first representative of the Irish Presbyterian Mission in the following year, and of the sister Church in Scotland three years later. The united Irish and Scotch Presbyterian Missions in Manchuria (one Chinese Church) now number no fewer than 16,075 actual communicants, with a missionary staff of sixty-nine Europeans. Thus blessedly has the confidence of William Bums been justified: "God," he said, "will carry on the good work. Ah no, I have no fears for that!"

[126] Up to this point Mr. Taylor had distributed with his usual care as many as 200 copies of the New Testament and 3000 other books and tracts. He had been two weeks upon his way (July 22-August 4) and was able to write: "Never since I have been in China have I had such opportunities for preaching the Gospel.

"The account that follows of the rest of the journey is taken from letters to his mother and to the Secretary of the C.E.S., published in part in *The Gleaner* for December 1856.

[127] Thirty miles, a good day's journey by ordinary houseboat.

[128] Isaiah 65:24.

[129] Arriving at Ning-po (the "City of the Peaceful Wave" as the Chinese characters imply) on August 22, Mr. Taylor remained for seven weeks with Dr. Parker, taking an active share in his work.

[130] The first President of the Peking University, author of *A Cycle of Cathay* and many other works, and now the oldest representative of the missionary body in China.

[131] See Chap. 24. p. 308

[132] Quoted from his well-known book, *A Cycle of Cathay*.

[133] He was the son of a certain John Dyer, who held a post in the Admiralty about the time of the accession of Queen Victoria.

[134] To this devoted missionary belongs the honour of introducing a process which greatly Simplified the manufacture of movable Chinese type, thus facilitating the way for the rapid production of Christian literature for one-fourth of the human race.

[135] He was singularly happy in his marriage with Miss Maria Tam, eldest daughter of Joseph Tam, Esq., one of the early directors of the London Missionary Society.

[136] Mr. and Mrs. Jones had been seven months in China; but had not reached Ning-po until June of this year. Detained at Hong-kong by serious illness, and by the death of their eldest child, they had suffered much for the land to which their lives were given. But in it all their faith and love only deepened, and their longing to comfort others with the comfort wherewith they themselves were "comforted of God."

[137] *Ku-niang* (aunt-mother) is the title in courtesy of an unmarried lady, and the combined, monosyllables Da-yia form the nearest Ning-po soundequivalent for the English surname Dyer.

[138] Growing out of the paltry affair of the *Arrow* in October 1856, this war did not come to a final conclusion until four years later (October 1860), when Peking was in the hands of the enemy.

[139] Fourteen years since the conclusion, in 1842, of England's first war with China, justly called "the Opium War." See Chap VII.

[140] The rapacity and lawlessness of the Cantonese when away from their native province cause them to be both dreaded and disliked by the people in general. From their habit of confederating themselves together in secret clubs or societies, the local government officials are often powerless to act against them."

[141] One little orphan, *Tien-hsi*, adopted as a result of this work, grew up to be a valued helper at Shao-hing, and one of the first native preachers in connection with the China Inland Mission.

[142] See Romans 8:1, 16; and indeed the whole chapter.

[143] In the previous October, when he had left Ning-po to return, as he hoped, to Mr. Bums.

[144] Mr. Hudson Taylor's Bible Readings on the Song of Solomon are published under the title *Union and Communion*.

[145] Mr. Taylor was then dealing specially with the question of a call to missionary work, the consent of one or both parents being withheld.

[146] In August 1905, nearly fifty years later, a sister of Mrs. Way's wrote as follows—

"from Mrs. R. Way of Ning-po would have given delightful reminiscences of Mr. Hudson Taylor, but these letters, so much prized, were unavoidably lost.... Mr. Way was absent from the city when the sickness of Mr. Quarterman, proving to be smallpox, rendered the situation of Mrs. Way and her children very alarming. The doctor had him isolated, and I suppose he would have been left to the care of the Chinese, had not our Heavenly Father interposed and moved the heart of His faithful servant, Mr. Hudson Taylor, to take upon himself to be nurse, brother, and comforter in one. Actuated by the very spirit of Christ, he cut himself off from every one, and devoted himself to the care of my suffering brother.

"The sad details-his sore sickness and death-brought sorrow to our hearts; but how this was tempered by the knowledge that loving hands and devoted care had done all that could be done for our brother!"

"For this dear servant of the Lord, Mr. Hudson Taylor," added another member of the family (Miss G. S. Way, of Savannah, Georgia), "we have always felt the deepest gratitude; and we ever rejoiced in the great things he was enabled to accomplish in winning China for Christ."

[147] "I conclude," writes Dr. W. A. P. Martin recalling early Ning-po days, "with two names more eminent than any of the preceding, the names of Robert Hart and Hudson Taylor. From a budding interpreter the former has blossomed into the famous statesman known as the 'Great I.G.' (Inspector-General of the Chinese Customs Service). His career to which there is no

parallel in East or West will be further noticed in connection with Peking. The latter, who rules as many men and with a sway not less absolute, is the Loyola of Protestant Missions. When I first met him he was a mystic absorbed in religious dreams, waiting to have his work revealed; not idle, but aimless. When he had money he spent it on charity to needy Chinese, and then was reduced to sore straits himself. When the vocation found him it made him a new man, with iron will and untiring energy. He erred [?] in leading his followers to make war on ancestral worship, instead of seeking to reform it; still in founding the China Inland Mission he has made an epoch in the history of missionary enterprise" (from A Cycle of Cathay).

[148] January 20, 1858.

[149] It was a needless alarm for the time being, for not until three and a half years later (December 1861) did the Rebels succeed in possessing themselves of Ning-po. But the tragedy when it came justified only too fully all the terrible apprehensions, reducing the population of the city and its immediate surroundings to barely a twentieth part of its former number.

[150] The *Kuen-kiao-teo* house had been given up soon after Mr. Taylor's marriage, and Mr. and Mrs. Jones were now living in a purely Chinese residence, about a mile from Bridge Street.

[151] Mr. Taylor spent the larger part of his first furlough (in association with the Rev. F. F. Gough) in carefully revising this, Romanised New Testament, and supplying it with marginal references: a work which Archdeacon Moule of Ning-po stated many years later to have been of "the greatest value to Christians throughout the province.

[152] Those were red-letter days indeed when Neng-kuei the basket-maker and the Teacher's mother were baptized and received into the little Church. This took place on August 15 and 29, Sundays when the Chapel of the American Baptist Mission was available. Mrs. Tsiu was the first Chinese woman Mr. Taylor had ever baptized, and his address on the reproach of Christ as greater riches than the treasures of Egypt came from a full heart.

[153] This Treaty, signed on June 26, 1858, was of the utmost importance in our relations with China. It contained excellent provisions, such as the right

of maintaining an Ambassador at Peking, freedom for foreigners to travel in the interior of China, and toleration for Christianity, so that, "persons teaching it or professing it should alike be entitled to the protection of the Chinese authorities." But alas, under the Tariff Supplement, it also contained a clause legalising the importation of opium, against which the Chinese had striven so long!

[154] The labours of Mrs. Tsiu and her devoted son, of Nyi the cottonmerchant, Neng-kuei the basket-maker, Wang the farmer and Wang the painter (see next chapter), not to speak of Loh Ah-tsih and others, can never be forgotten. It would be difficult to overestimate the services of that little band in connection with the earliest stations of the Mission—services extending over ten, twenty, forty and even fifty years, and ending in unclouded testimony to the glory of God.

[155] Seven baptisms within a year was cause indeed for thanksgiving, representing as it did fully as much of prayer, labour and progress as would ten times that number in the same localities to-day. One Mission then in Ning-po, after fifteen years of faithful labour, had a Church Roll of only twenty members; though another, not quite so long in the field, had considerably more.

[156] The Ven. Arthur E. Moule, B.D., Archdeacon in Mid-China and C.M.S. Missionary at Ning-po. Quoted from *The Story of the Cheh-hiang Mission*, p. 76.

[157] For the Treaty of Tien-tsin, signed in June of the previous summer, was to have been ratified at Peking a year later. Upon the arrival of the fleet of nineteen vessels representing the Allies (England, France, Russia and America) they were attacked in the mouth of the Pei-ho river and driven back with considerable loss; and the capture of Peking itself was necessary before the Chinese Government realised that they must carry out their terms of surrender. The Treaty was finally ratified in October 1860. In August of the following year the heart-broken Emperor (Hienfeng) died. The ratification of these Treaties had swept away the barriers he had so long striven to maintain against the importation of opium, which, from this time, alas I spread with fatal rapidity throughout the length and breadth of the land.

[158] This was the same valued servant who had been with Mr. Taylor in Shanghai, Tsung-wing and elsewhere; and who was now a bright Christian.

[159] This was on February 13, 1860, when to his parents he wrote: "You will rejoice to hear that on the 5th inst. we received five men into our little Church, to whom I had the privilege of administering the Lord's Supper yesterday.... We have now therefore eleven men and six women in fellowship with us, though one, I regret to say (dear Neng-kuei), is suspended for the present. May God grant him speedy restoration. To-morrow we are to have a Church-meeting, **D.V.**, to consider the cases of other candidates, twelve in all, I believe."

[160] 1 Corinthians 1:26; R.V. margin; and vers. 27-31 from A.V.

[161] In a letter to his parents in Barnsley, dated January 16, 1860.

[162] First of the five was the Rev. J. J. Meadows, who, after half a century of devoted labours in China, is still working within a hundred miles of Ning And fifth of that little group was the Rev. J. W. Stevenson, now and for more than twenty years the Deputy Director on the field of the China Inland Mission.

[163] A letter written on March 25.

[164] In the train on his way from Aberdeen to Perth, Mr. Taylor had written to his wife in London, his chief helper in prayer "

September. 5, 1865: Through God's goodness I have got some letters of introduction to Perth. May the Lord help and guide and use me there. My hope is in Him. I do desire not to please myself, but to lay myself open for China's sake. I much need to add to faith courage: may God give it me."

[165] One of the very few gatherings which, at that time, united Christians,, of all denominations, Perth was taking much the place in Scotland that the Barnet Conference (afterwards moved to Mildmay) occupied in London. The occasion of Mr. Taylor's visit to Perth was the third Conference, presided over in the City Hall by the Revs. J. Milne of Perth and Macdowall Grant of Arndilly, and attended by Messrs. Stevenson A. Blackwood, R. C. Morgan of

The Revival (afterwards The Christian), the Rev. Hay Aitken of Penzance, Brownlow North and other visitors from England, as well as by such well-known Scottish leaders as the Revs. Andrew Bonar, J. Macpherson, Moody Stuart, M'Gregor of Dundee, Yule of Cargill, General Macdowall, George Barbour, Esq., of Bonskeid, Messrs. Colville and Gillett of Glasgow, and Mr. Jenkinson of Edinburgh, who in the Carrubber's Close Mission had for six years been dealing almost nightly with anxious inquirers, seeking and finding salvation, an outcome of the great Revival of 1859. The Conference was attended by about two thousand people.

[166] Worth at the time more than thirty shillings—J. H. T.

[167] It was on Friday, October 10, 1856, that this incident took place, when young Hudson Taylor was returning to Ningpo with Mr. J. Jones, whose colleague he became a little later.

[168] "I spoke on China yesterday," Mr. Taylor wrote from the Conference, and have one or more meetings to-morrow for this purpose exclusively. I am staying with General Sir Alexander Lindsay.... I should not wonder if many men are raised up for China."

[169] The story of Mr. Taylor's first period of work in China will be found in Hudson Taylor in Early Years: The Growth of a Soul, published by the China Inland Mission and the Religious Tract Society, to which this volume forms the sequel.

[170] For the conversion of this remarkable man and his early labours, see *The Growth of a Soul*, Ch.39

[171] The Rev. F. F. Gough of the Church Missionary Society, also on furlough from Ningpo, who had joined Mr. Taylor in the revision.

[172] Mr. Meadows and his bride sailed for China in January 1862, first of the five workers prayed for to reinforce Mr. and Mrs. Jones in the Ningpo Mission.

[173] In a letter of July 27, 1862.

[174] ie. December 1862 to the end of 1865.

[175] The only Chinese Christian within reach, Lae-djun was not neglected spiritually. Regularly, as the journals testify, Mr. Taylor spent hours with him on Sunday, tired though they must often have been: hours of prayer and Bible study that had not a little to do with Lae-djun's subsequent usefulness as the first and for thirty years one of the most devoted native Pastors in the China Inland Mission.

[176] The walk to and from Tottenham, twelve miles in all, must have been fatiguing to Mr. Taylor; but he had strong conscientious objections to Sunday travelling, and felt the effort well repaid by intercourse with the Howards and other friends, and the helpful fellowship of the Brook Street Meeting

[177] Bayswater was the home at this time of Mr. and Mrs. B. Broomhall, the beloved sister Amelia, for many years Mr. Taylor's chief correspondent. The Rev. W. G. Lewis was the minister of the Baptist Church, of which Mr. Taylor had become and long remained a member.

[178] The Rev. E. C. Lard of Ningpo, formerly of the American Baptist Missionary Union, was a highly esteemed friend of Mr. Taylor's. Although very busy in his own work, he found time to replace Mr. Jones in the pastoral oversight of the Bridge Street Church, and to give much help to Mr. Meadows. Mr. Jones had had to leave China in broken health, and reached the better Home before the journey could be completed.

[179] Hon. Secretary of the Church Missionary Society.

[180] As much was to grow out of this association, it is interesting to recall that the introduction was through a mutual friend, Mr. George Pearse of the stock Exchange, Secretary of the Society that was sending the young missionary to China, who, after the Hackney Meeting one Sunday morning, took Hudson Taylor and his friend (later on his brother-in-law), Mr. B. Broomhall, to dine with the Bergers, then living at Hornsey Rise.

[181] The beautiful mansion near East Grinstead to which they had moved from London.

[182] It is interesting that this experience took place on March 13, 1865, little more than three months before Mr. Taylor himself met the crisis of his life on

the sands at Brighton.

[183] With the sailing of the bride-elect the prayer was fully answered which had been going up since 1860, for five additional workers for the Ningpo Mission. The five thus sent out were: Mr. Meadows (who had already lost his wife in China), Miss Notman, Messrs. Barchet and Crombie, and Miss Skinner (Mrs. Crombie).

[184] The Rev. Sir Montagu Beauchamp, C.F., who after thirty years of devoted service in China has recently succeeded to the title, through the lamented death of his brother, Col. Sir Horace Beauchamp, Bart., at the front.

[185] "The writer has seen God, in answer to prayer, quell the raging of the storm," Mr. Taylor continued, "alter the direction of the wind and give rain in the midst of prolonged drought. He has seen Him, in answer to prayer, stay the angry passions and murderous intentions of violent men, and bring the machinations of His people's foes to nought. He has seen Him, in answer to prayer, raise the dying from the bed of death, when human aid was vain; has seen Him preserve from the pestilence that walketh in, darkness, and from the destruction that wasteth at noon-day. For more than eight years and a half he has proved the faithfulness of God in supplying his own temporal wants and the needs of the work in which he has been engaged." See Hudson Taylor in *Early years; The Growth of a Soul*, especially pp. 429-492.

[186] Herr Spittler, connected with "The Pilgrim Mission" of St. Chrischona, near Basel, Switzerland.

[187] From Mr. Rudland's centre at Tai-chow-fu three other cities were opened during his lifetime and thirty-seven out-stations. In connection with these, over 3000 persons have been baptized; and at the time of Mr. Rudland's death, in 1912, there were more than 1500 communicants. He had translated into the local dialect the whole New Testament and a large part of the Old, printing himself edition after edition on the Mission press, for which he was responsible.

[188] In January 1866 Mr. Taylor relinquished into the hands of his colleague, the Rev. F. F. Gough, the work that had occupied so large a part of his time for four and a half years. Finally completed by the Rev. George Moule

(afterwards Bishop in mid-China), the book became, as a C.M.S. authority stated, "of the greatest value to Christians throughout the province" (Chekiang).

[189] T. J. Barnardo, coming to Coborn Street as a candidate for the China Inland Mission, was advised by Mr. Taylor to study medicine, and introduced accordingly to the London Hospital. His sayings and doings were a source of constant amusement to the missionary household. In his Bible he had written "Tom Barnardo, China"; and long after the work for waifs and strays began which has attained such wonderful proportions, he fully intended leaving it to others and going out himself to the land of his prayers and longings.

[190] Mr. and Mrs. Grattan Guinness were also attracted to East London by their interest in the new Mission. "Strangely enough," as he wrote of this experience, "Harley House—for more than thirty years our Missionary Training Institute—is but a few steps from Coborn Street, where Mr. Taylor received his first volunteers for the China Inland Mission. How little when I visited the small, crowded home of the out-going 'Lammermuir party,' did I imagine that close to that spot we were to build a college which should train more than a thousand evangelists for the foreign field.About a hundred of our students have become missionaries in China, some of them being numbered among the martyrs of the Boxer Outbreak. The acquaintance between Dr. Howard Taylor and our beloved daughter Geraldine, which subsequently led to their marriage, arose from Dr. Taylor's residence in East London while studying for several years at the London Hospital. All these things were linked together and connected with Hudson Taylor's choice of that humble home in Coborn Street, amid the poverty and obscurity of East London, for the reception of the 'Lammermuir party.' It would be impossible to estimate the results for good in East London and throughout the world which have followed the selection of that lowly dwelling in the mighty city."

[191] Shortly thereafter increased to two thousand, and later on to double that number.

[192] No fewer than six members of this family (of which the father, Mr. Henry W. Soltau, was then at the height of his great usefulness by voice and pen as a Bible teacher) have for longer or shorter periods been connected

with the C.I.M.—as well as the son-in-law mentioned above and a granddaughter, Miss Mabel Soltau, now in China. Messrs. George and Henry Soltau were members of the first Council, formed in 1872, and the latter went with Mr. J. W. Stevenson to Burma to attempt the opening up of Western China. Mr. William Soltau, prior to his devoted work in France, gave much assistance in the home department. Mr. Richard Hill, who had been largely instrumental in forming the Council, became its Hon. Secretary, and rendered valued service in this and other capacities for nearly forty years. Mrs. William Warren (Miss Charlotte Soltau), in her Training Home for missionaries in Melbourne, prepared not a few of its first Australian workers; and Miss H. E. Soltau (assisted latterly by Miss Elsie Soltau and Miss Edith Smith) was for many years entirely responsible for the Women's Department in London, sending out hundreds of workers and following them with helpful ministrations.

^[193] Saturday was the day Mr. Robert Chapman set apart for special waiting upon God, though it was his habit to rise always at or before daylight and give hours to fervent intercession—and this until he was well over ninety years of age. His "workshop" claimed him, however, in a special way at the close of every week. It was his sanctum, containing little but his turning-lathe and a shelf on which he could lay his open Bible. Here he spent hours at a time, denying himself on Saturdays to any and every visitor, and going without his midday meal that he might be the more free in spirit. The mechanical occupation of the lathe he found helpful to a connected line of thought; so looking at the Bible from time to time, or dropping on his knees in prayer, he would turn out plates and trenchers, his mind occupied the while with the eternal interests of the Kingdom of God. "Dear Brother," he exclaimed on meeting Mr. Taylor again six or seven years later, I have visited you every day since you went to China." Who can tell how much the Inland Mission owes to the prayers that went up from that hidden corner in Barnstaple?

^[194] "Your plan of seeking to plant two missionaries in each of the unoccupied provinces is a noble one," wrote the Rev. William Burns from Peking in January of this year (1866), "and if, by the help of God, it is but half accomplished, a great step will have been taken in advance, and the necessities of China will become more visible and clamant in the view of all

the Protestant Churches."

[195] The Rev. Alexander M'Aulay, then a minister in East London, saw a good deal of Mr. Taylor and his fellow-workers at this time. "I watched very closely the manner and spirit of those about to proceed to China," he said as President of the Wesleyan Conference ten years later., "I was delighted to find the spirit of self-sacrifice very deep in every one of them, so far as I could discern. They were given to prayer, and had all the elements about them that were likely to make them successful missionaries in any field to which God might call them."

[196] From *The Voice of thy Brother's Blood*, by H. Grattan Guinness.

[197] The Saturday prayer-meeting was continued by Mr. and Mrs. Gough (the widow of Mr. J. Jones of Ningpo) in their home on Bow Road, near Coborn Street. Another weekly prayer-meeting was held by Mr. and Mrs. Berger at Saint Hill, who also kept up the noon half-hour daily, no matter what guests or occupations they might have. There were praying circles also in Scotland, Ireland, and the provinces, in which the needs of the mission found constant remembrance.

[198] This they had all to themselves, with its three port-holes at the stem, and sky-light over the table from the poop deck. Immediately outside this saloon (or "stern-cabin") was the main-mast, forward of which lay the well-deck with officers' quarters, and the forecastle. The *Lammermuir* was a three-masted iron sailing-ship of 760 tons burden.

[199] "Mr. Brunton's conversion was very interesting," wrote Miss Rose, who was going out to be married to Mr. Meadows." For several weeks he was miserable. He had been brought up a Roman Catholic, and there were many prejudices to overcome. Every means was used to help him, and again and again requests' came from those who were going to converse with him, that they might be prayed for. One night Mr. Sell came running down from the deck at twelve o'clock saying that Mr. Brunton had just asked him to go to his cabin and pray with him. Two of us were up and we united in prayer: but he did not find peace that night, nor for many weeks following.

"By the first week in August, matters came to a climax, and it was felt that if

he were to be saved it must be at once. He was wretched it seemed a life and death question. The enemy was determined not to let him go, and the struggle was fearful. On the night of the 3rd his watch ended at twelve o'clock, Mr. Taylor went just after and had a long conversation with him, those who were up retiring to the stern-cabin for prayer. When Mr. Taylor came down and the answer had not yet been given, he and another continued in prayer till three o'clock. The Bible next day was turned into a prayer-meeting, another special meeting was called in the forenoon; and a third would have been held later, but bad weather prevented it. God, however, knew the longing of our hearts, and took the work into His own hands. Mr. Taylor again met Mr. Brunton at midnight, in his-cabin; and while he was explaining to him the passage, 'When I see the blood, I will pass over you,' light broke I He saw the plan of salvation; peace and joy took possession of his heart and he at once poured out his soul to God in praise and prayer-remembering us each one by name, all who were unsaved on board, and his own wife and children. Mr. Taylor was so overjoyed that he went and awoke Mr. Sell, to tell him the good news. The latter got up and woke me, and at three in the morning we gave thanks together. It is impossible to describe the rejoicing of that day I You know what it is to have the burden of souls upon your hearts, and the joy that follows their conversion."

^[200] "All through the storm," said Mr. Rudland, "Mr. Taylor was perfectly calm. When almost at its height the men refused to work any longer. The Captain had advised all to put on life-belts. 'She can scarcely hold together two hours,' was his verdict. At this juncture he was going to the fore-castle, where the men were taking refuge, revolver in hand. Mr. Taylor went up to him. 'Don't use force,' he said, 'till everything else has been tried.' He then went in quietly and talked to the men, telling them he believed God would bring us through, but that everything depended upon the greatest care in navigating the ship, in other words, upon the men themselves. 'We will all help,' he added, 'our lives are in jeopardy as much as yours.' The men were completely reassured by his quiet demeanour and friendly reasoning, and with officers, midshipmen, and the rest of us went to work in earnest at the wreckage, and before long got in the great iron spars that were ramming the side of the ship."

[201] It is impossible, in view of the cosmopolitan city of to-day, to imagine how primitive were the conditions in Shanghai as recently as 1866. A temporary building, since used as a gymnasium, did duty for the Cathedral. The British Consulate, though occupying the same site as at present, was an insignificant structure. The Garden Bridge, now traversed daily by a ceaseless stream of vehicles, was so narrow that two wheelbarrows could barely pass each other, and pedestrians had to pay a three cash toll. As to conveyances, the choice lay between sedan-chairs and wheelbarrows, rickshaws not having yet come over from Japan. One of the Consuls possessed a carriage, and so did the Commissioner of Customs; but there was little use for them, the Bund scarcely extending beyond the British Settlement, and the Nanking Road soon running off into fields and marketgardens. Other roads were just tracks and footpaths, save where they adjoined the river, and the Gardens of to-day were, at low tide, an unsavoury mud bank. As for the native city, walled in and crowded with a dense population, the less said of it the better, from a European standpoint.

[202] The primitive Chinese gondola.

[203] In the great city of Shao-hing-fu with a quarter of a million inhabitants they had succeeded in obtaining a footing, adding thus a fourth station to those already opened by the Mission before the arrival of the *Lammermuir* party. Living over their little chapel at the junction of three busy streets, hard by one of the water-ways of that Venice of midChina, they were "feeling very happy and getting on with the language," not another foreigner to be found in a long day's journey. Neng-kwei, the basket-maker of Ningpo, was their helper; for whose story see *Hudson Taylor in Early Years*, pp. 461-2.

[204] Hang-chow and Ningpo, about a hundred miles apart, form approximately an equilateral triangle, with Shanghai as its apex.

[205] Psalm 68:2. R.V.

[206] The letter, which was a long one, was written to help Mr. Berger in putting the matter before young people at home who were candidates for the Mission.

[207] It is interesting to recall the names of those who in 1866 formed the staff

of the two British and four American societies at work in Shanghai: they were the Revs. W. Muirhead and G. Owen (L.M.S.); Mr. Alex. Wylie (B. & F. Bible Society); the Revs. E. H. Thomson (Protes. Epis.); M. T. Yates (Southern Baptist); W. G. Cunyngham, J. W. Lambuth, J. J. Allen, and M. L. Wood (Meth. Epis., South); J. M. Farnham, J. Wherry (Presby. Board), and Mr. W. Gamble of the Presby. Press. The kindness of Mr. Farnham and Mr. Gamble established a special sympathy between their mission and the C.I.M. which continues to this day.

^[208] To the sorrow of the missionary party, who had continued to hold meetings on board, some of the crew had fallen back into old habits amid the temptations of port life. "Their deep contrition, however," Mr. Taylor was able to write, "encourage us to hope that they are really children of God"; and others, both among the officers and men, gave only cause for rejoicing.

^[209] One link with the Lammermuir still remained, for Mr. Brunton, formerly the dread of the crew, was with the young men on their boat. He came a little way up-country with us," continued Miss Blatchley; and on Sunday, in the beautiful sunset light, Mr. Taylor baptized him in the river."

Hearing from this officer, doubtless, of their being without much in the way of European comforts, Captain Bell sent after them-before they could finally get away-two pots of butter, a barrel of treacle, a cooked ham, a joint of beef, and a cheese! To him the party had given a beautiful Bible and a travelling rug.

^[210] A letter to the Hon. Miss Waldegrave, one of many written by Miss Blatchley as Mr. Taylor's secretary.

^[211] To her mother's care it was due that a complete series of the bright, girlish letters have been preserved that give so natural a picture of daily life at Sin-kai-long (Hang-chow) from the first. Miss Faulding was only twenty-two when she went to China, and her parents, who were old friends of Mr. Taylor's, did much to maintain a prayerful interest in the Mission throughout a large circle.

^[212] "I think of him as I ever knew him," wrote Mr. McCarthy from Western China thirty-eight years later, "kind, loving, thoughtful of every one but

himself, a blessing wherever he went and a strength and comfort to all with whom he came in contact ... a constant example of all that a missionary ought to be."

[213] See *Hudson Taylor in Early Years*, pages 420 *et seq.*

[214] Chronicles 4:9, 10.

[215] In February and March, after the riotous disturbance at Siao-shan, matters looked very serious for the missionary community in Hang-chow as well as for the native Christians. A plot to get rid of all foreigners—worked up by so-called "doctors" of the city, who saw their gains imperilled—might easily have been successful but for the prompt action of the local authorities. As it was, the young converts were tested in a very real way and had practical demonstration of the power of prayer.

[216] Miss Bowyer also wrote from Hang-chow at the time: "never saw anything so lovely as dear little Gracie the evening after her death (on August 23): it was the sweetest expression of countenance one could behold on earth."

[217] "It is a great blessing when God gives one a hunger for souls," Mr. Taylor wrote many years later (November 11902). "A good many of our early workers had it. We get better people now in some ways, better educated and so on, but it is not often you find that real hunger for soulspeople willing to live anywhere and endure anything if only souls may be saved. They were very often humble people. If they were to offer to our Mission now, they might not be accepted-George Duncan, for example I But nothing can take its place, or make up for the lack of it. ... It is so much more important than any ability."

[218] *Fuh*, the character chosen as the nearest in sound to Miss Faulding's surname, means happiness: "Miss Happiness," a suitable name for the bright-faced girl who was a messenger of life and peace to so many in Hang-chow, and who is lovingly remembered there to this day.

[219] From Mr. Taylor's first general letter to friends at home after reaching Hang-chow, dated October 1867.

[220] In addition to Siao-shan, which was near Hang-chow, Tai-chow-fu, Nanking, and Wen-chow-had been opened—all important governing cities and centres of population.

[221] Mrs. Taylor was accompanied by Miss Blatchley and the children's nurse, Mrs. Bohanan (who had replaced Mary Bell, her sister, now married to Mr. Rudland). Mr. Taylor followed ten days later, having been detained by illness in the family of one of the American missionaries in Hang-chow.

[222] I The charm as well as importance of this place from the Chinese point of view may be judged from their proverb, "Above is Heaven; below Hang-chow and Soo-chow." Mr. Charles Schmidt—formerly an officer under General Gordon in the "Ever-Victorious Force"—had been the first to live and preach Christ in this city. Converted through the instrumentality of Mr. Meadows, he was a warm friend to the C.I.M., and at his request the Mission had also undertaken work in Soo-chow. Mr. Henry Cordon had succeeded in renting premises a few weeks previously, in which regular services were now commenced with help from Mr. and Mrs. Taylor.

[223] In the interests of this kindly host, Mr. Taylor had called upon the local Mandarin, making his presence and purposes known, and had obtained an assurance that there should be no interference.

[224] But for the difficulties at Chin-kiang there never would have been, humanly speaking, a Yang-chow riot. Arriving there with a large quantity of goods and finding no house available, Mr. and Mrs. Rudland and Miss Desgraz had come on to Yang-chow early in August. Thus three additional foreigners, and all the paraphernalia needed for a printing-press and a second household, had been crowded into Mr. Taylor's premises. No wonder the Yang-chow people were tempted with thoughts of plunder!

[225] "In the Yang-chow riot," Mr. Taylor wrote some years later, "when she and the little children were in danger of being massacred at any moment, she was as calm as in her own parlour in London: and I am quite certain that if she could have altered any of the circumstances she would not have done it, so satisfied was she at all times that God's ordering was best."

[226] Mr. Judd recalls that it was "her calmness and the fact that she spoke

such beautiful Chinese" that disarmed the man whose band she stayed in a murderous attack on Mr. Rudland.

[227] Quoted from Mr. Taylor's letter of dismissal, September 12, 1868: a letter that cost him untold sorrow, and was only written "after many weeks of anxious, prayerful thought."

[228] Writing of a missionary candidate at home who had manifestly mistaken his calling, Mrs. Taylor said:

"One thing seems very clear from Mr. M.'s letter, namely, that he is not likely to be one who would work happily in the C.I.M. And oh, we will be thankful to God when He makes this plain in England, and thus prevents persons from coming out who might work sorrow in our midst. Not that I would repine at the past or the present. The Lord was entreated to guide about those who should come out, and if He has suffered some to come who have caused us untold sorrow, may we not regard this as part of the storms that are to make our young Mission strike its roots deeper into the soil?"

[229] In February 1869 Miss Faulding wrote to her mother: "Mr. Taylor longs to go forward now more than ever, and is hoping that the end of this year may find him in Sze-chwan."

[230] "Many of our number are much stirred up to press into the interior," Mr. Taylor wrote from Chin-kiang about the middle of September, "and our recent disasters, if such I may call them, only make us the more determined to go on, leaning on the Almighty Power of our Captain. Pray for us. We need much grace. You cannot conceive the many daily calls there are for patience, for forbearance, for tact in dealing with the many cases of difficulty, of misunderstanding that arise among so many persons of different nationality and language temperament. Pray the Lord ever to give me the single eye, the clear judgment, the wise and gentle manner, the patient forbearing spirit, the unwavering purpose, the unshaken faith, the Christ-like love that are needed for the efficient discharge of my duties. And ask Him to send us sufficient means and suitable helpers for the great work which we have as yet barely commenced."

[231] In a long letter to Mrs. Berger, explaining all the circumstances that

attended the riot, Mrs. Taylor said (February 11, 1869): "As to the harsh judgments of the world or the more painful misunderstandings of Christian brethren, I generally feel that the best plan is to go on with our work and leave God to vindicate our cause. But it is right that you should know intimately how we have acted, and why. I would suggest, however, that it would be undesirable to print the fact that Mr. Medhurst, and through him Sir Rutherford Alcock, took up the matter without application from us. The new Ministry at home censures those out here for the policy which the late Ministry enjoined upon them. It would be ungenerous and ungrateful were we. to render their position still more difficult by throwing all the onus, as it were, on them.

"Perhaps one secret of our matter being taken up so warmly was that it was looked upon as a climax to a series of provocations which the English had suffered from the Chinese; and the representatives of our Government were, I believe, not sorry to have an opportunity of, and good ground for, settling off a number of 'old counts.'"

^[232] The only appeal of any kind that Mr. Taylor had made to the Consular authorities had been a verbal message on August 22, and a pencilled note the following morning—when the riot was beginning all over again after that awful night of suspense and anguish—*simply informing them of the situation.*

^[233] Letter to Lady Boyd from Aberdeen, May 1, 1837.

^[234] Titus 2:54 in Weymouth's translation reads: "Who gave Himself for us, to purchase our freedom from all iniquity, and purify for Himself a people who should be specially His own, zealous for doing good works."

^[235] September 4 saw the following entry in Miss Blatchley's journal: "Mr. Taylor here (Chin-kiang) by about breakfast-time. He had met the Duncans, and they came back with him. Soon after, the Cordons also arrived. All are to stay over Sunday for special prayer re: holiness. Mr. McCarthy's letter on the subject, awaiting Mr. Taylor, God used for a channel of blessing to him. He too has now received the rest of soul that Jesus gave to me some little time ago. Mr. McCarthy and Jennie (Miss Faulding) both seem to have obtained it,

as also had Miss Desgraz before we returned from the South. Others too, the Rudlands, Cordons, Duncans, Judds, and Miss Bowyer have had their minds much exercised on the same subject-how to attain holiness of heart and life."

[236] Written in a boat, near Yang-chow, December 4, 1869. By the blessing of God the missionaries were not only reinstated at An-king without special difficulty, but the station became the centre from which a widespread work was carried on in districts never before reached by the Gospel; and when Yang-chow developed into a receiving home for the women of the Mission, where they could have special help in the study of the language, An-king came to fill the same important role for the men. Both are to this day training homes of the Mission.

[237] Mr. Miller's gifts for the next few years amounted to nearly £2000 annually. In 1870 he sent Mr. Taylor £1940. He was now largely assisting twenty-one missionaries, who with twelve wives constituted the entire staff of the Mission-thirty-three, including Mr. and Mrs. Taylor.

[238] The booklet quoted above was one they specially valued. Mr. Taylor sent one to every member of the Mission at this time. It had appeared in full as an article in *The Revival*.

[239] Lines written by Miss Blatchley a few months later.

[240] To Mr. Berger, March 22, 1870.

[241] To Mr. Berger, February 11, 1870.

[242] "To know," he added in connection with the promise above quoted (John 4:14), "that 'shall' means shall, that 'never' means never, and that 'thirst' means any unsatisfied need may be one of the greatest revelations God ever made to our souls."

[243] One of these married, a few years later, the daughter of Wang Laedjun, becoming his co-pastor in Hang-chow, and is still (1918) in charge of the Sin-kai-long Church.

[244] "Never in my lifetime has any year witnessed such events as has the year 1870," Mr. Berger had gone on to say in the letter of July 30, quoted above,

whether in relation to our mission or the world at large. Rome is now I suppose the capital of free Italy. France lies humiliated to a degree. The Pope's temporal power is no more. China seems to be rising to expel foreigners, the heralds of the Cross among them. And personally we have suffered the loss of the most devoted labourer for China's millions that could be found, as well as of a beloved friend. 'Be still and know that I am God,' is a word appropriate at such a juncture. May we all have grace to give heed to it."

[245] To Mr. and Mrs. Grattan Guinness he had written in January (1871) thanking them for no little help afforded to Miss Blatchley and his children while in Paris, and saying as to his own experiences:

"I need not tell you of the difficulties and dangers, the pressure daily changing, and the sickness and sorrows of the past year. I think I may say that in the aggregate they have equalled, if not exceeded, those of the sixteen previous years of my missionary labour. Be this as it may, the Lord had previously taught me practically, as I never knew-it before, our present, real oneness with Christ; and with the exception of the past two months, it has been the happiest, the most joyous year of my life. For the last two months my liver has been so deranged that I have rather realised the Lord Jesus as my refuge than as my abounding joy; but none the less precious are the blessings I receive in Him. Oh, my dear Brother! in this dark, dark land, one does need a deep assurance of the presence of Jesus."

[246] To Miss Desgraz at Yang-chow, written from Salisbury at 5 AM, on a wintry morning, February 8. 1872.

[247] The letter appeared in Occasional Paper, No. 29.

[248] The name of Mr. F. W. Bailer is well known to students of Chinese, who are indebted to him for many valuable helps, including his Primer and Dictionary. A member of the Mandarin Bible Revision Committee, his work is now chiefly literary; but it is interesting to recall that long before he became distinguished in this realm he was among the early pioneers of the Mission whose itinerations did so much to open inland China to the Gospel.

[249] At the first regular meeting of the Council, October 4, 1872, Mr. Henry

Soltau was appointed to act as joint Honorary Secretary with Mr. Richard Hill. The remaining members were Messrs. John Challice, William Hall, Joseph Weatherley, and George Soltau. The late Mr. Theodore Howard, for thirty-five years the Home Director of the Mission, and Mr. William Sharp, now the senior member of the Council, joined a little later—the former in 1872 and the latter in 1879.

^[250] A letter dated Chin-kiang, January 18, 1873.

^[251] It was with great interest he visited Mr. Cardwell at this time, and learned from his own lips something of the pioneering work in which he was engaged in the beautiful province of Kiang-si. All round the Poyang Lake he had travelled, and up the four main rivers on which the important cities were found. In scores of these, besides populous towns and villages, he had preached the Gospel, selling 15,500 Scripture portions and tracts. Throughout the whole of these journeys, steadily pursued for a year and a half (1871-72), he had not met a single missionary or native preacher, nor come across a mission station or a convert—for in the whole great province with its twenty millions he was the only evangelist outside the treaty port of Kiu-kiang. Well might Mr. Taylor say, "The importance of such journeys is very great, and the need of these districts truly appalling."

^[252] Or as Weymouth renders it: "Gentle as a mother, when she tenderly nurses her own children."

^[253] "I feel, Darling," Mrs. Taylor wrote in one of their long partings (November. 10, 1873), "that we must lean fully and constantly on Jesus if we are to get on at all, and I have been seeking to do it, and in believing prayer to bring our many needs to Him. I have written down the names of our foreign and native helpers, that I may be able to plead for them all daily. If we would have power for what Jesus calls us to do, we must not expend it in bearing burdens that He would have us cast on Him, must we? And there is abundant supply, with Him, for all this work, for all we need, isn't there? It's unbelief that saps our strength and makes everything look dark; and yet He reigns, and we are one with Him, and He is making everything happen for the very best; and so we ought always to rejoice in Him, and rest, though it is not always easy. We must triumph with God, and then we shall succeed with men, and

be made blessings to them. You know these things, and can put them much better than I can, but still it does us good to remind one another, doesn't it?"

[254] Hang-chow, December 16, 1872.

[255] 'Miss Emmeline Turner: a letter dated Nanking, March 19, 1873.

[256] "Beloved Younger-sister," the Chinese equivalent of Emily, Miss Blatchley's Christian name.

[257] Some distance down Broadway in the American Settlement, five little native shops were taken, almost opposite the old Sailors' Home. The open fronts were built up, and the whole connected with a long up stairs passage. Such was the first C.I.M. Home in Shanghai, arranged for by Mr. Taylor in November, and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Fische before the close of 1873.

[258] From Tai-chow Mrs. Taylor had written a few weeks earlier (November 17, 1873): "When I think of your responsibilities and burdens which I am not with you to share, my heart would sink if I did not feel that Jesus is with you, loving you so tenderly and ready to meet each need of every moment, and abundantly to bless you. I am asking Him continually to uphold, strengthen and guide you, to refresh you with His unspeakable love, and to give you richly every blessing. I am very, very happy in Jesus. My joy and rest were never so full before. He has taken all my cares away. We have Jesus, and He is ready always to do for us every good thing. I must tell you more of the burdens I have been bearing, and the way God has been leading me when you come. As far as I know the reasons for and against going to England, they seem to me stronger for remaining here: the Lord will guide."

[259] The Bible, a leather-bound Bagster, had been a gift from Mrs. Taylor on his first birthday after their marriage, and was his constant companion at this time. It was given by him to his third son, Mr. C. E. Taylor.

[260] To his parents, Mr. Taylor wrote in April: "To seven new counties we have been enabled to carry the Gospel since I reached China, and in nearly as many others fresh towns have been opened up. The Hang-chow Church has sent out its first missionary, chosen by themselves and supported by their

own gifts." He added in May: "Mr. Stevenson has blessing in all his stations, and has baptized eight since I was with him. Wang Lae-djun is also prospered. Recently he has baptized the first converts in three out-stations. Mr. Crombie writes of blessing in Feng-hwa and Ning-hai; and we are meeting with encouragement in the northern stations.

To Mr. Hill he gave further details (May 29): "We have the joy of cheering reports as to spiritual progress from all the stations nearly. Mr. Stott writes that the work has not been so encouraging at Wen-chow for a year and a half or two years. Mr. Rudland tells of another, the seventeenth candidate for baptism. at Dien-tsi (when an idol temple had been given for a place of worship). Four persons were baptized here (Chin-kiang) yesterday, and we had good meetings. One of these is a native of Hunan, one of the unoccupied provinces which has long been on our hearts. ('His soul seems all on fire for the conversion of his own people,' Mr. Taylor added in, a later letter.) Is it not good of God so to encourage us when we are sorely tried for want of funds?"

And in June Mr. Taylor reported five or six enquirers at Tai-ping where he had met the old man who did not know what to do with his sins and baptisms also from several other stations.

^[261] Most opportunely had this help arrived at the beginning of the quarter (gifts of L325 in all)—ten cheques for members of the Minion, including one of L30 for himself.

^[262] Not that the house first rented proved to be the permanent headquarters of the Western Branch of the C.I.M. No fewer than twelve different arrangements had to be made—twelve houses found and rented, if not occupied for longer or shorter periods—before the missionaries were allowed to settle in that proud, anti-foreign capital of two provinces. Across the river in the treaty, port of Hankow, it might have been easier to obtain premises; but the London Missionary Society and the Wesleyan Mission were already there, represented by able and devoted workers. Time after time, as they faced their seemingly endless difficulties, Mr. and Mrs. Judd found, in common with all the pioneers of the Mission, that a day set apart for prayer and fasting turned the tide, and brought deliverance as well as blessing.

[263] In their newly founded East London Institute for Home and Foreign Missions, Mr. and Mrs. Guinness were even then preparing not a few of the pioneers destined to open up inland China. Messrs. Baller and Henry Taylor, already in China, proved to be the first of a thousand and more young workers who from Harley House, Bow, went out to the ends of the earth, including all Mr. and Mrs. Guinness's own children.

[264] Miss Blatchley entered into rest on Sunday morning July 26, 1874, and was buried in Highgate Cemetery. The above appreciation-a wreath of tender thoughts to lay upon her grave-appeared in The Christian a few days later.

[265] Just as the launching of the Mission had coincided with an epoch of spiritual revival in the home churches (see p. 48), so now the commencement of its larger growth synchronised with a remarkable movement for the deepening of spiritual life. Messy' Moody and Sankey were in the midst of their first great missions in London, crowding among other places the Agricultural Hall, with its seating capacity of twenty thousand. Dr. Boardman's memorable book The Higher Christian Life was-being widely read, and conferences on the lines of "Keswick," which indeed grew out of them, were drawing together Christians of all denominations. Notable among these was the Brighton Convention of this summer (ten days in June 1875), when audiences of two to three thousand filled the Corn Exchange, and rivers of blessing were opened in many hearts that were to flow to the ends of the earth. From the deep experience through which he had himself been brought in China, Mr. Taylor was able to enter into the spirit and purpose of these gatherings in no ordinary way. He was sufficiently recovered to be one of the speakers at the Brighton Convention, and his life-long connection with "Keswick" may thus be said to have dated from its very inception.

[266] Dr. Elder Cumming mentioned this incident to the writers as having taken place when he and Mr. Taylor were driving together to the funeral of the venerable Dr. Somerville of Glasgow.

[267] It had been quite a problem as to how arrangements were to be made for the outgoing of party after party with the leader of the Mission a helpless invalid; but in this too the Lord provided unexpected and most efficient help. Mr. Taylor had prayed much about it, and rejoiced to find that a warm friend

from Glasgow, whom he had last met on the steamer at the time of his accident, was passing through London. Mr. Thomas Weir, from his connection with China shipping and his love for the Mission, was the one person whose advice Mr. Taylor would most have welcomed; and when it proved that he could give the matter personal attention it was a cause for great thankfulness. The economical arrangement Mr. Weir made at that time with the Directors of the Castle Line continued to work well for a number of years.

[268] "What a life of praise and joy and rest," he wrote a few weeks later, we should all lead, did we but fully believe in God's wisdom and love; and, gladly acquiescing in His will and way, cast every care on Him in trustful prayer—China's Millions for August 1875.

[269] To one of the missionaries in China Mr. Taylor wrote at the end of February: "You will have heard that Mr. Stevenson sails, D. V., March 30, for Bhamo-via Rangoon, Burma-to open a new mission there, before returning to Shao-hing. Pray much for this mission to Western China. It is giving a wonderful impetus to interest in the whole work."

[270] To Mrs. Hudson Taylor the Mission was indebted for this title, its first form being China's Millions and Our Work among Them.

[271] From a letter to Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Douthwaite, who was taking up settled work in Chit-chow Fu, near the Kiang-si border of Che-kiang.

[272] As to the correctness of this modified translation, Mr. Taylor noted For the rendering 'God's faithfulness,' see Romans 3:3 where 'the faith of God evidently, means His faithfulness. The verb translated 'hold,' is thus rendered in Matthew 21:26, 'all hold John as a prophet.' In the corresponding passage in Mark 11:32, it is rendered 'count'; and in that in Luke 20:6, a different Greek verb is used, which well illustrates the meaning, 'They be persuaded that John was a prophet.' Let us see that in theory we hold that God is faithful; that in daily life we count upon it; and that at all times and under all circumstances we are fully persuaded of this blessed truth."

[273] "We have never had to leave an open door unentered from lack of funds," said Mr. Taylor's Report on this occasion; "and although the last

penny had not unfrequently been spent, none of our native agents or foreign missionaries have ever lacked the promised 'daily bread.' Times of trial have always been times of blessing, and needed supplies have never failed" or come too late.

[274] The Rev. C. G. Moore, for many years a member of the China Inland Mission.

[275] From the distant city of Si-an-fu, capital of Shen-si, Mr. Easton wrote on his first journey (December. 20, 1876): "At every city and village of any size, a large proclamation from the Peking Foreign Office makes it easy for us to travel. At Shen-chow we first noticed it; the officials putting it out after our arrival, and being very polite to us."

[276] This journey and another taken in 1875—a few months only after the murder of Margary-show that the pioneers who were ready did not wait for the Chefoo Convention, or any other Government assistance, thankful though they were for the new Treaty when it came.

[277] At Kio-shan Hsien, near which in "a beautiful mountain stream" the baptisms had taken place. As the first-fruits of Ho-nan, it is interesting to record that these converts were baptized on April 1, 1876, by Mr. Henry Taylor, Mr. G. W. Clarke, and the Evangelist Yao, who accompanied them. "We returned to our inn," wrote Mr. Clarke, "and after instructing them from several portions of Scripture on the Lord's Supper, partook of it with them for the first time."

[278] The perplexing question, that is, as to what Chinese term should be adopted as the nearest and most unambiguous equivalent for the Scriptural idea of God.

[279] Without saying anything of their hopes in this connection, Mr. Taylor and he made plans for a walk right across China—from the Yangtze to the Irrawaddy; which Mr. McCarthy was enabled to accomplish in seven months, taking time to preach the Gospel fully in many places, and opening Chung-king, the first Mission-station in the province of Szechwan with its population of nearly seventy millions. The only foreigner met with on this long journey—on which he was accompanied by the faithful soldier-

evangelist Yang Ts'tien-ling-was Mr. Broumton, alone in the city of Kwei-yang; until at Bhamo Messrs. Stevenson and Soltau welcomed the wayworn travellers. This journey laid the needs of the women so deeply on Mr. McCarthy's heart that he was used to stir up many to pray and labour for their salvation, and much of his subsequent usefulness was connected with the development of Women's Work in the inland provinces.

[280] To Mr. and Mrs. Edward Pearse, who joined him at An-king, this chain of stations was committed, the importance of the work being seen in the fact that the converts baptized on this journey (March 1877) represented no fewer than six provinces.

[281] The C.I.M. house was closed, Mr. and Mrs. Cardwell being at home on furlough.

[282] Thus was opened in February 1877 the first permanent Missionstation in any of the nine hitherto unoccupied provinces. Kwei-yang is still a centre of the C.I.M. in that province, in which it has now ten stations, 57 out-stations, and 6330 communicants.

[283] It was a sore trial to Mr. Stevenson and Mr. Soltau to be withheld from carrying out the purpose with which they had gone to Bhamo, not through any difficulty with the Burman or Chinese authorities, but through the attitude of the Indian Government, which declined to grant the passports needed to cross into Chinese territory. News of this unexpected difficulty reached Mr. Taylor in the Yangtze valley, in February 1877.

[284] On the s.s. Kiarig-yung, travelling up to Wu-chang, January 6, 1877.

[285] The C.I.M. Headquarters in Shanghai had been moved by this time to 7 Seward Road, Hongkew, Mr. and Mrs. Cranston generously acting as house-father and house-mother. While paying, for the rooms they occupied, they undertook all the Mission business that had to be transacted in that port, and boarded the missionaries as they came and went. In spirit they were almost members of the Mission, and with Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Weir, also residents in Shanghai, were, and still are, among its most valued friends.

[286] "God greatly helped me this afternoon with my paper," he wrote himself;

"the feeling, now, is very kind toward us."—To Mrs. Taylor, May 12, 1877.

[287] Mr. Taylor not only visited on this journey (May to October 1877) all the stations and out-stations of the Mission in Che-kiang, with one exception (illness at Wen-chow obliging him to hurry past Hwang-yen); he crossed over from Wen-chow to Chu-chow-fu on the Tsien-tang river, staying at Chu-chow (the district now occupied by the Barmen Mission), at Yung-kang, Kin-hwa-fu and Lan-chi on the way. In all this' region there was then no resident missionary. At Chu-chow-fu, under Mr. Douthwaite's care, he met the first converts from Yu-shan, in the neighbouring province of Kiang-si (see pp. 334. 335). Thence he returned down the Tsien-tang river to Hang-chow.

[288] Miss Wilson, a sister of the well-known Convener of the Keswick Convention, Mr. Robert Wilson, went out as a self-supporting worker with the last party of the Eighteen (1876), and remained twelve years in China. "Whether she will be strong enough to go back, as she so much desires, I do not know, Mr. Taylor wrote after her return (1888), "but I do know that her life there has been an immense blessing."

[289] The one member of the Mission he had not met on this visit to China was Mr. Broumton, holding the fort alone in the distant province of Kweichow—the only Protestant missionary south of the Yangtze, at that time, in the western half of China.

[290] The party, which included Adam Dorward, J. H. Riley, and S. R. Clarke, men of notable usefulness in later years, sailed on the 2nd of May 1878.

[291] "The day after Mrs. Taylor had sailed, the one who was missing her most sorely wrote: "Your dear Mother has borne up bravely, and says she is 'proud of you.' I, darling, am grateful for the grace which has take you from me, and which I count on to sustain you all the way. He will not fail me either, or the work He has given us to do. We will trust Him in all and for all."

[292] How real were Mr. Taylor's convictions on this point may be judged from the unstudied expression of his feelings in a letter to Mrs. Taylor of September 20

"Nothing is coming in for the general fund scarcely; but this is usual at this time of year. We must all get nearer to God; we must all abide in Christ; our

lives must be more up to our principles and privileges, and all will be well. Let us trust for all, and we shall find all. God can bless each member of the Mission; let us ask it in faith, and expect it. Nothing else, nothing less can satisfy Him; nothing less must satisfy us."

[293] The very day one October party sailed, for example, Mr. Taylor wrote to two young men of much promise; accepting them for work in Shan-si. Although he had nothing, as he frankly told them, toward the expense of passages and outfits, he invited them to come to London with a view to an early departure. These communications were posted at 5.15 P.M., and by the nine o'clock delivery, that same evening, a letter was received from Lord Radstock (then in Stockholm) enclosing, among other gifts, the sum of one hundred pounds to send two new workers to the faminestricken province of Shan-si. Thus, even before the young men could set out in faith for London, the money needed was in hand and the way open for them to go forward.

[294] A letter dated March 18, 1879.

[295] Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were accompanied on this journey by Mr. J. J. Coulthard, one of the party just arrived from England who was much with them this summer, acting as Mr. Taylor's secretary; and who afterwards became his son-in-law.

[296] The dollar was 35. 9d. that summer.

[297] The journey occupied from December 9 to January 3 (1880), when they rejoined Mrs. Taylor at Chin-kiang, the latter having gone round by sea.

[298] "During the year which followed this visit to Ta-yang, Dr. Douthwaits baptized fifteen converts from that village, and an equal number from other villages in the same district—all the fruit of the labours of Captain Yu and Farmer Tung. In this obscure village, on the eastern border of Kiang-si, the first Christian Church in the Kwang-sin River district was organised. Subsequently a house was rented in the city of Yfi-shan, which was made the centre of missionary effort in that district, and preaching-halls were soon opened in other places "(from *The Jubilee Story* of the C.I.M., by Marshall Broomhall, p. 138).

[299] Failure of health had obliged Dr. and Mrs. Douthwaite to remove to more favourable surroundings (at Wen-chow), and before long led to their finding the sphere for which they were ideally suited, in the rapidly growing C.I.M. colony at Chefoo.

[300] From a letter to Mr. Sowerby, then a young missionary at Hweichow, An-hwei. October 26. 1880.

[301] Chung-king, in Sze-chwan: a letter dated February 1880.

[302] Mr. Henry Soltau, in giving an account of his visit to Chung-king (January. 1881) says: "At the service on Sunday I was much struck with the number of women present, all of whom remained to the close, and afterwards, when the men had left, had a service by themselves with Mrs. Nicoll and the old Cantonese Christian. This work among the women is a most important portion of the mission here. They pay great respect to Mrs. Nicoll and really seem to have an affection for her, while she is deeply interested in them, finding more work to do than she can compass. I could not help feeling what an honour I should regard it had I one of my own sisters labouring in such a field as this. Mrs. Nicoll has access to the homes of the rich and poor. Some of the women I have seen have been dressed in the most handsomely embroidered silks and satins and come in chairs. Mrs. Nicoll helps the women with a few medicines. And she is the only foreign lady in all this province of twenty-one million people! the first Christian woman who has ever lived and worked among the women of Sze-chwan." It is now known that there are from sixty to seventy millions in this province.

[303] "We set out on our journey with considerable fear and trembling," Mr. Bailer recalled. "We did not know what might happen.... We found, however, contrary to our expectations, that the people received us with a great deal of kindness. There is a very large floating population in Hu-nan, and many of the boats on the Tung-ting lake are manned by women and worked by them. These women came round our boat as soon as we anchored, and our sisters had not the slightest difficulty in preaching the Gospel to them; and instead of being hostile, they were highly delighted to see the foreign ladies. They stroked their hands and stroked their cheeks and said: 'Dear me, what beautiful white skins you have! good looks, and enquired

what they had come for. This our sisters were not slow to explain. They sang Chinese hymns to the women, with which they were delighted."

[304] Shortly before Mrs. Hudson Taylor had left home (May 1878) to lead in this pioneer movement, a special Prayer Union had been formed in England "to seek blessing upon the one hundred and twenty-five millions of heathen women in China." Daily prayer for those labouring among them was the condition of membership; and who shall say how much the safety, happiness, and success of the first women workers to go to the far inland provinces was due to the united, definite prayer focussed thus upon their labours? The circular setting forth the objects of the Union was headed with the promise: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven" (Matthew 18:19).

[305] It is interesting, in view of Pastor Hsi's subsequent usefulness, to quote Mr. Turner's reference to his baptism, with that of several others at Ping-yang Fu, in November 1880. Mr. David Hill, who had been the means of his conversion, had by that time returned to his regular work in the Yangtze valley. "On Saturday the 27th, five of our native brethren were baptized. Hsi Liao-chuh, aged forty-five, a native of a village thirty li (so miles) from here, is a man of great ability and influence. He came to us at the beginning of-the year. He had read Christian books, and he soon broke off his opium, demolished his idols, and accepted Christ as his Saviour. He is a man of quick temperament, and his conversion was rapid and full of joy. He is serving the Lord in his own neighborhood.....Last evening these dear brethren were formally received into Christian fellowship, and the newly formed church—the first Protestant church of Shan-si—gathered around the table of our Lord." For the subsequent life of this man of God see Pastor Hsi: on of China's Christians, published by the China Inland Mission and Messrs. Morgan & Scott.

[306] There had been little or no prearrangement about these meetings. As Mr. Taylor came up-river, he brought with him one and another who seemed to need refreshment, and Mr. Coulthard's bachelor housekeeping was taxed to the utmost. Dorward was there from Hu-nan, Parrott and Pigott from the north, Trench and Miss Kidd from the far south-west, and other workers from Central China. Just a family-party they seemed—overjoyed to have Mr.

Taylor all to themselves, quite unconscious of what was to be the outcome. A spirit of prayer prevailed; and in their daily Bible Readings, morning and evening, Mr. Taylor was seeking to establish these younger workers in the Scriptural principles on which the Mission was based.

^[307] This letter to Mrs. Taylor was written, as it happened, on the very day of her arrival in England, December 1, 1881. Tidings of a fresh bereavement awaited her, for Mr. Taylor's father had passed away a few weeks previously.

"My dear and honoured father," he wrote on hearing of it, "has been taken Home, painlessly and without a moment's warning. None was needed: to him, to die was gain. I realised very thankfully that the long, dreary winter we had dreaded for him, alone-without my dear mother, for fifty years his companion-would not distress him now; but I could not help a feeling of desolation at the thought of no more Father's or Mother's welcome; no old home to go to, should I return to England again. But it dawned on, me that not only are they both at rest, in the presence of the Lord Jesus, but they are reunited, freed from infirmity and imperfection for ever: and then the old home feeling came back to my heart—only centred there, where I would have it, instead of down here. It has made me so happy!"

^[308] Shortly before this was written, Mr. Taylor had welcomed his eldest son to China, Mr. Herbert Taylor, who for thirty-six years has continued in faithful labours—first in the Chefoo Schools, and subsequently in evangelistic and pastoral work.

^[309] From Wesley's noble hymn commencing, "Come, O Thou Traveller unknown," familiar to Hudson Taylor from childhood.

^[310] This and the following quotations are all from letters to Mrs. Taylor.

^[311] The "Shanghai Free Christian Church" was by this time well established, and had been meeting in the Masonic Hall for twelve months. Mr. Taylor was so much interested in its beginnings and preached for them so frequently that he was practically its first Pastor. He was succeeded by Messrs. Pearse, Judd, and other members of the Mission, for longer or shorter periods. Notes of many of Mr. Taylor's sermons are preserved, showing how faithfully he gave himself to this ministry.

[312] A literal "rendering of Romans 15: 4. See The New Testament in Modern Speech-Dr. Weymouth.

[313] It is worthy of notice that just as Mr. Taylor's first insight into the spiritual teaching of the Song of Solomon was obtained in the period of trial and testing that preceded his first marriage (see Hudson Taylor in Early Years, p. 426), so now in heart-loneliness and prolonged separation from home and loved ones it became as never before his "garden of delights." In Union and Communion will be found the line of thought which made him to many the most practically helpful expositor of this book.

[314] One outgrowth of the manifold testings of this year was the increasing attention given to the question of organisation within the Mission, about which several circular letters were sent to all the stations. One of them, dated August 12, 1882, gave permanence to the arrangement by which Mr. Coulthard had for some time been acting as Mr. Taylor's representative at Wu-chang, especially in financial matters for the western and north-western provinces, and Mr. Parrott as Corresponding Secretary dealing with letters that did not need the Director's personal attention.

[315] And Mr. Luce himself, who wished he could have gone to China, became not only one of Mr. Taylor's best-loved friends, but a member of the London Council and a true prayer helper in the Mission; a ministry continued to this day.

[316] "It is important to secure that no contingency shall alter the character of the Mission," Mr. Taylor wrote (August. 24, 1883), "or throw us off those lines which God has so signally owned and blessed from the commencement. But our home arrangement of assisting the Director by a Council may be introduced into the China work; the members of that Council may themselves be Superintendents-of' districts, in which capacity they may in their turn be assisted by district Councils of our missionaries. In all this no new principle will be introduced, yet our work will be rendered capable of indefinite expansion while maintaining its original character. Many local matters can thus be locally considered and attended to without delay, and local as well as general developments will be facilitated. I have hitherto had the opportunity of conferring only with those of our number who might be within reach, and

that at irregular intervals. The plan I now propose will, through the district Superintendents, bring me into conference with all our missionaries of experience, and will secure an increasingly effective supervision of the whole work. It will also make apparent what has all along been the case—that all important measures are adopted only after full conference with those best qualified to throw light upon them. I shall be glad to hear from you how these suggestions strike you, and how far they commend themselves to your mind."

^[317] The first to sail after Mr. Taylor's return was Mr. Marcus Wood, now and for many years the beloved Secretary of the Mission in England, with whom Mr. J. N. Hayward, for many years Treasurer in Shanghai, has recently been associated.

^[318] Published a year or two later (188s) under the title *A Missionary Band*, this remarkable work by Mr. B. Broomhall had a large circulation, and powerfully influenced the founders of the Student Volunteer Movement which came into existence a few-months later, and which Dr. A. T. Pierson characterised as "the epiphany of youth." Apart from the Bible, Dr. Robert Speer has stated, no books so influenced his career as *The Evangelisation of the World* and *Blaikie's Personal Life of Livingstone*.

^[319] This was Miss Murray's party, which, proceeding at once to Yangchow, formed the nucleus of the present invaluable Training Home for the study of the language (still under Miss Murray's care), and included the little band who were used of God to inaugurate the now fruitful and extensive work on the Kwang-sin River.

^[320] By this time Messrs. D. E. Hoste and Stanley P. Smith (stroke of the Cambridge Eight a couple of years previously) and the Rev. W. W. Cassels of St. John's, Cambridge (late curate of All Souls, South Lambeth, and now Bishop in Western China) had been joined by Mr. C. T. Studd, ex-captain of the Cambridge Eleven. A little later Mr. Montagu Beauchamp, nephew of Lord Radstock, also a university oar, and Messrs. C. P. and A. T. Polhill, sons of a late M.P. for Bedford ("the former an officer in the 2nd Dragoon Guards, and the latter a Ridley Hall Theological student, and both of them prominent Eton and Cambridge cricketers") made up the party to seven—a strong team from the university man's point of view.

[321] "The visit of Messrs. Stanley Smith and Studd to Melbourne Hall (Leicester) will always mark an epoch in my own life," wrote the Rev. F. B. Meyer. "Before that time my Christian life had been spasmodic and fitful; now flaming up with enthusiasm, and then pacing weariedly over leagues of grey ashes and cold cinders. I saw that these young men had something which I had not, but which was within them a constant source of rest and strength and joy. And never shall I forget a scene at 7 A.M. in the grey November morning, as daylight was flickering into the bedroom, paling the guttered candles, which from a very early hour had been lighting up the page of Scripture, and revealing the figures of the devoted Bible-students, who wore the old cricketing or boating costume of earlier days, to render them less sensible of the raw, damp climate. The talk then held was one of the formative influences of my life."

[322] The gift of such a band to the China Inland Mission-truly it was a gift from God," continued the Editorial Secretary of the C.M.S., "was a just reward to Mr. Hudson Taylor and his colleagues for the genuine unselfishness' with which they had always pleaded the cause of China and the world, and not of their own particular organisation, and for the deep spirituality which had always marked their meetings: And that spirituality marked most emphatically the densely crowded meeting in different places at which these seven men said farewell. They told, modestly and yet fearlessly, of the Lord's goodness to them, and of the joy of serving Him; and they appealed to young men, not for their Mission, but for their Divine Master. No such missionary meeting had ever been known as the final gathering at Exeter Hall on February 4, 1885. We have become familiar since then with meetings more or less of the same type, but it was a new thing then. In many ways the Church Missionary Society owes a deep debt of gratitude to the China Inland Mission and the Cambridge Seven. The Lord Himself spoke through them; and it was by His grace that the Society had ears to hear." (From *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, Vol. 3, p.285.)

[323] We were then unable to stop," continued the same writer. "Professor Drummond took up the meetings. Every Sunday evening the Oddfellows' Hall was crowded with students, and each address was followed by an after-meeting. Many students during that never-to-be-forgotten winter session

(1884-1885) were converted."

^[324] The Rev. C. E. Searle, D.D.

^[325] Three months later (May 1885) an Edinburgh student came up to the Annual Meetings of the C.I.M. in London to tell of further developments:" The story with which I have to deal," he said, "is that of a movement, perhaps the most wonderful that ever had place in the history of university students, certainly the strangest that ever took place in the history of Scottish universities. I have to tell you how our great Edinburgh University and the allied medical schools, with between three and four thousand students, have been shaken to their very depths; how the work has spread to all the other universities of Scotland; and how, already, as the students of these universities have gone far and wide, the work is spreading in all its depth and reality throughout the whole country, I might almost say, throughout the world...."

The present work has been carried forward by the very best men in our university. Some of our best-known professors and assistant professors ... have been actively engaged in it. And among the students it has not been any one set, but our best intellects, our medallists, our scholars, our bursars, our prize-men-these have been among the most prominent in carrying forward this work. As to results, as I said before, we cannot estimate them. I believe that the number of conversions, even in our own university, is to be counted by hundreds and not by scores. And, as one result, scores of men have given themselves to missionary work, and have entered on medical courses in preparation for it. I have just to ask you to praise God with me, and with Edinburgh University, for sending among us those two missionaries-elect of the China Inland Mission, Studd and Stanley Smith."

In the following year, a similar work of grace commenced among university men in North America, from which developed the Student Volunteer Movement and ultimately the World's Student Christian Federation. And, back of it all, one remembers Harold Schofield's prayers.

^[326] As early as 1870, Mr. Taylor had sought to develop helpers upon whom he might devolve responsibility in the supervision of the work; but as he wrote to Mr. McCarthy at that time, "such a position has to be *gained*, and the ability is only in and from the Lord."

A year later he wrote again (January. 18, 1871): "I wish you to feel responsible before the Lord for seeking to help the brethren in all these stations. Really help them; really feel responsibility about them; really pray much for them, and as far as possible with them. Feel and evince a deep interest in all their out-stations and work generally. And above all, do not let them dream you are taking a higher place than their own leave God to show that in due time. You are really their head as you become their servant and helper."

^[327] A week spent at that station in November 1885, when the training home was decided upon, enabled Mr. Taylor to hold a conference in which he went over the *Principles and Practice of the C.I.M.* signed by the members of the Mission before leaving England. The addresses embodied in the *Retrospect*—which has since, in many editions, attained so wide a circulation—were originally given in those meetings, to the refreshment of all present.

^[328] "Ever since the Keswick Convention," he had written before leaving England, "my cup has been running over."

^[329] Shortly afterwards Mr. J. F. Broumton, prevented by unavoidable circumstances from returning to his former sphere in Kwei-chow, consented to take up the account-keeping and statistics of the Mission. "The first cash-book I had handed to me," he recalled, "and the only one in use at that time, was an ordinary threepenny account book [preferred, until then, for convenience in travelling]—very different from the large ledgers we use now! I took over the accounts from Mr. Taylor himself, and arranged with him about carrying on the work at Wu-chang rather than in Shanghai. It was midnight on the 1st of May (1886) before the transfer was made and we set off for the steamer. Everything had to be balanced up to the cent. Mr. Taylor was very particular about details. Five and a half years at Wu-chang, followed by eleven years in Shanghai as Treasurer, so demonstrated Mr. Broumton's ability and devotion to his arduous task that more than once Mr. Taylor wrote of him with thankfulness as second to none in his value to the Mission.

Mr. J. E. Cardwell in the business department and Miss Mary Black in charge of the Mission-house (Yuen-ming-yuen Buildings) were also much associated with Mr. Taylor at this time.

[330] So much were they in earnest that they were ready, at their own expense, to put down a board floor and make other alterations in the Mission house (toward which they had put aside ten dollars) if only Mr. Taylor would send them a teacher of their own. This he could not at the moment arrange for, though ladies were appointed to the district soon after. The station in question (Chang-shan) has now for many years been occupied by Miss Marie Guex from Vevey and her sister Madame Just, Swiss members of the mission.

[331] "As to Miss Mackintosh, Miss Gibson and Miss Gray," he wrote at the time, "they read the Mandarin Testament as fluently as English, and with few mistakes. They have been wonderfully prospered both in their studies and work. It would do you good to see them among a group of Chinese women."

[332] Within the first year of Women's Work on the Kwang-sin river forty-two additional converts were, baptized, and within four years the Yu-shan Church alone had grown from about thirty to one hundred and eight members. At the present time, in a complete chain of ten central stations and sixty out-stations, there are over two thousand two hundred communicants and a large number of enquirers, pupils in schools, etc., cared for by native leaders—ladies being still the only foreign missionaries.

As early as 1868, Mr. Taylor had written to Miss Faulding, upon leaving Hang-chow: "I do not know when I may be able to return, and it will not do for Church affairs to wait forms. You cannot take a Pastor's place in name, but you must help (Wang) Lae-djun to act in matters of receiving and excluding as far as you can. You can speak privately to candidates, and can be present at Church meetings, and might even, through others, suggest questions to be asked of those desiring, baptism. Then after the meeting you can talk privately with Lae-djun about them, and suggest who you think he might receive next time they meet. Thus he may have the help he needs, and there will be nothing that any one could regard as unseemly." Upon these lines the Kwang-sin river work has prospered by the blessing of God.

In reply to a letter from Dr. Happer of Canton, Mr. Taylor wrote in July 1890: "The principal reasons to my mind for the safety and, comfort of Women's Work among the Chinese are, firstly, that the ladies walk with God, and the 'beauty of holiness' upon them gives a dignity before which lewdness cannot live; and secondly, that they are really entrusted to the care of the

Lord Himself as their Escort, when commended to Him for their work. And He is faithful to the trust, and does keep those who are committed to Him. We expect Him to do it, and He does not disappoint as."

[333] Who that ever travelled with him could forget his unfailing care and thought for others, and the practical way in which he could turn his hand to anything. Cooking was quite in his line. "All the way Mr. Taylor prepared food for me," recalled Miss Murray of the journey down the Kwang-sin river, when she was recovering from her serious illness. "He used to make omelets in the back of the boat. We would hear him beating up the eggs. He managed to get the things somehow!"

[334] With help from Mr. Baller, four new stations had been opened (1885-1886) by Messrs. Hoste, Cassels, Beauchamp and Stanley Smith, in the following order-Ku-wo, Si-chow, Ta-ning, and Hung-tung. In the extreme north of the province Kwei-hwa-ting and Ta-tung-fu had also been occupied by members of the C.I.M.

[335] Edited by Mr. (now Sir) Montagu Beauchamp.

[336] Speaking of the Lord Jesus as our Sufficiency, Mr. Taylor said It is well to remind ourselves of the close connection that exists between the written Word of God and the incarnate Word of God. We shall never enjoy the one apart from the other. It is through, God's own revelation in the written Word that we really see and know the Word Who was made flesh, and Who rose from the dead. It is through the written Word we shall feed on Him, not through our own speculations. It is important that we bear in mind that as the Incarnate Word is a 'Divine Person, so is the written Word a Divine Message; and as we may rest all our soul's interests on Jesus Christ, so we may rest all our soul's weight on the Word of God. To be unsettled on the question of inspiration is to be overcome by temptation, and to be unable to accomplish God's work. The connection between full faith in God's will as revealed in His written Word and in the Incarnate Word is so close and intimate, that you can no more separate them than you can separate between body and soul, or soul and spirit. Begin to separate them, and to study theology *instead* of the Word of God (rather than as a mere aid in gaining a fuller grasp of it) and if it does not make you weaker rather than stronger you will be fortunate indeed.

No I Take God's Word as it stands, and God's Christ as He reveals Himself to us, and enjoy all in Him" (*Days of Blessing*, p. 55).

[337] It was remarkable that in that city (Tai-yuan-fu) where the blood of martyrs was to be so freely shed, Mr. Taylor should dwell upon the necessity for sacrifice, and the certainty not only that persecution must come, but that it-would be overruled for blessing.

"Paul was in bonds in Rome, and we might have imagined that his position was one that would have deterred the brethren. But what does he tell us? That they waxed confident through his bonds. So far from his sufferings taking courage out of the believers, when they found what a little thing a chain was to an Apostle, they felt, 'we can preach with good courage! What is it, after all, if only Christ is in us?' Christ living, Christ reigning, made the Apostle so superior to these things that it encouraged others to go forward, though at the risk of the-same trials...

"There is no better way of proving to the world that the devil's power is not so great after all than by letting him have his fling, and showing in the midst of it what a triumph over him the believer has in Christ. Just as Jesus, by dying, conquered him who had the power of death, so frail, feeble martyrs, many of them women, were able to show that all the power of Pagan Rome could do *nothing* against those who were filled with Christ. Hence there were many conversions in the very arena...and the blood of the martyrs proved itself to be indeed the seed of the Church...Their foes thought they had succeeded; it was even announced in their edicts that Christianity was defunct; but it was paganism that tottered.

"We need not be afraid of persecution. *It is coming; it is sure to come.* Only let us have such success as to make the people fear the abolition of their customs, and we shall see severe persecution. But are we to fear lest the Gospel should triumph sufficiently to bring such results about? Or are we to feel that, when it does come, it will bring to us the very conditions that will ensure still greater success?" (*Days of Blessing*, PP. 41-43.)

[338] Dr. Edwards and Messrs. Stevenson, Stanley Smith, and Beauchamp were with him, as well as his son, Mr. Herbert Taylor, who had been his companion all the way from Shanghai.

[339] For the remarkable sequel see Miss Cable's *The Fulfilment of a Dream*,

published by Messrs. Morgan & Scott and the China Inland Mission.

[340] With regard to the denominational position of the Mission, Mr. Taylor had written as early as 1866 (a few weeks only after the arrival of the *Lammermuir* party) in reply to an inquiry from the Rev. W. Muir head of the L.M.S., Shanghai:

"Those already associated with me represent all the leading denominations of our native land- Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist, Baptist and Paedobaptist. Besides these, two are or have been connected with the 'Brethren' so called. It is intended that those whose view of discipline correspond shall work together, and thus all difficulty on that score will be avoided. Each one is perfectly at liberty to teach his own views on these minor points to his own converts; the one great object we have in view being to bring heathen from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God. We all hold alike the great fundamentals of our faith, and in the presence of *heathenism* can leave the discussion of discipline while together, and act as before God when in separate stations."

[341] It is, difficult in these days to realise how young the Mission still was. It had been founded little more than twenty years, and while several scores of its members had been out more than five years, by far the larger number were new-comers. Out of a total of a hundred and eighty-even no fewer than a hundred and ten were junior missionaries or probationers, which meant that they were young in years as well as in experience. It was clearly desirable, therefore, to formulate for their benefit much that had been learned at great cost by those to whom they looked for help and guidance.

[342] In a letter to Mrs. Hudson Taylor from Tai-yuan-fu, September. 16, 1886.

[343] "To-morrow and the day after we give to waiting on God for blessing," he wrote to Mrs. Taylor on December 29. "We need two days at least, this year. We have much to praise for, much to expect; but Satan will be busy, and we must be prepared by living near to God, by putting on the whole armour of God."

[344] Mr. Taylor completed, his fifty-fifth year on May 21, 1887, and the 26th of the same month brought the anniversary of the sailing of the *Lammermuir*,

twenty-one years previously.

[345] "I am far more afraid of unconsecrated money than of no money at all." Mr. Taylor said again a few weeks later. "The Lord did not tell His disciples to carry loads of provisions into the wilderness. There was a lad there with five barley loaves and two fishes: it was enough. The Lord wants His people to be, not rich, but in full fellowship with Him Who is rich. Why, as Christians, we are all children of a King!"

[346] Fifteen hundred people were present on that occasion in the Town Hall at Motherwell, near Glasgow.

[347] One of the valuable workers over and above the Hundred, given to the Mission toward the close of this year, was the Rev. E. O. Williams, Vicar of St. Stephen's, Leeds. He-and Mrs. Williams gladly gave up their important sphere, to go with their young children to the far west of China the district the Rev. W. Cassels was opening up, in which were millions destitute of the Word of Life.

[348] "Six times that number offered," wrote Mr. Eugene Stock in the History of the Church Missionary Society, "but the Council faithful to its principles, declined to lower the standard, and rejected five-sixths of the applicants; yet the exact number of one hundred-not ninety-nine nor a hundred and one, but one hundred-actually sailed within the year. (This did not include two Associates—ED.) Still more significant of God's blessing is the fact that, seven years later, seventy-eight of the Hundred were still on the C.I.M. staff; and of the remainder, five had died, and most of the others were still labouring in China, though in other connections. Does the whole history of Missions afford quite a parallel to this?"

[349] In his New Year's greeting to the members of the now greatly enlarged Mission (January. 1888) Mr. Taylor said in this connection: "Let us never forget that, if we make no appeal to man, we need very, very definitely to continue our appeal to God. A God-given, God-guided, spiritual impulse is expressed in every donation we receive; and this, which makes our work peculiarly blessed, will always keep us peculiarly dependent upon Him. How can we sufficiently praise Him for this happy position, this necessity of trustfulness?"

[350] His second son, Howard, who was travelling with him, though an accepted member of the Mission, had to go back from America to complete his appointments at the London Hospital as House-Surgeon, Physician, etc.

[351] Mr. Taylor discovered before Mr. Radcliffe, as it happened, that boots and shoes in America are usually attended to by those to whom they belong—a little polishing outfit forming part of one's personal equipment. Having provided himself in this way, it was with real enjoyment he would slip along, when travelling alone with Mr. Radcliffe, and fetch the boots the latter put outside his door, and after cleaning them to perfection, as quietly put them back again.

[352] The Student Volunteer Movement, only called into being two summers before, had already attained remarkable proportions—over two thousand undergraduates having signed the declaration: "I am willing and desirous, God permitting, to become a foreign missionary." To Mr. Taylor it must have been no little encouragement to learn of the connection of all this with the China Inland Mission. "The story ... of the Cambridge band, particularly the account of the visits of a deputation of these students to other British universities, with their missionary message, made a profound impression on us," wrote one of the early leaders. "Here really was he germ thought of the Student Volunteer Movement" (Charles K. Ober).

[353] An unstarched white or coloured shirt and collar, a tie, a belt and light-coloured trousers is the summer costume of the American student, completed with a "sweater," or coat, when warmth is needed. This is en regle for Sundays even at Student Conferences.

[354] The Rev. W. J. Erdman. D.D., Secretary to the Conference.

[355] This proved inadequate, however, as it made no allowance for incidental and travelling expenses, house rent, and the like.

[356] "I never felt more timid." he said a year later, "about anything in my life."

[357] Eight hundred and twenty-six letters were received by Mr. Taylor between July 1, when he arrived in New York, and October 5, when he sailed

from Vancouver.

[358] In this connection, an incident that happened in Toronto could not but confirm Mr. Taylor's assurance that he was being guided of God. Prayerful consideration of the circumstances had led him and Mr. Frost to the conclusion that it would be well to secure the help of a few leading, godly men, as a temporary Council, until, after consultation with friends in London and Shanghai, more permanent arrangements could be made. As most of the young missionaries were from Canada, Toronto seemed the centre indicated, and the valuable help of Mr. Sandham of the Christian Institute, who was editor also of a religious paper, opened the way for such an arrangement. With wide, interdenominational connections, he very kindly undertook the responsibility of Hon. Secretary in Canada, Mr. Frost occupying a similar position in the States. But time was short in which to arrange for a Council.

In an upper room at the Institute Mr. Taylor was in conference with Messrs. Frost and Sandham, the day after the farewell meetings which moved Toronto so profoundly (September. 25). The names of several suitable persons had been mentioned who might be asked to join a provisional Council, and among them Dr. Parsons, Mr. Gooderham and Mr. Nasmith, all of that city. It was with regret Mr. Taylor found that he could not arrange for interviews, to put the matter before them in person. He had to leave that very day for Montreal, and was about to request Mr. Sandham to act for him, when a knock was heard at the door. Great was the surprise of those within when the visitor proved to be one of the gentlemen in question. Hardly had Mr. Taylor explained to him the circumstances, and received his assurance of willing co-operation however, before another knock came, and a second of the three appeared. He, too, was glad to serve on the Council, and they were all feeling impressed with the hand of God in the matter, when yet another visitor came seeking Mr. Sandham. It did seem almost too wonderful to be true when the third of the friends entered whom Mr. Taylor had desired to meet before leaving-especially when it transpired that two of the three had not been in the building for months and had no idea that he was there. "They were indeed sent by the Lord," was Mr. Frost's comment, "and we were never disappointed in the choice He had made."

[359] Ephesians 3:16, 17, in Weymouth's version: The Now Testament in Modern Speech.

[360] "Many thanks for your good wishes for my birthday," Mr. Taylor wrote to Mr. Stevenson some weeks later. "I reached England on that day, and found the stone already rolled away."

[361] To-day the American branch of the C.I.M. is represented by a hundred and fifteen missionaries, working in fifty-seven stations in thirteen of the eighteen provinces.

[362] Mr. Taylor spent most of November in Sweden and Denmark passing on to Norway, and returning via Hamburg and Rotterdam early in December 1889.

[363] Mr. Taylor at that time estimated the population of China at 230 millions, but pointed out that if, as some supposed, it reached 400 millions, the work on the scale indicated would only take five years instead of three.

[364] "We cannot take hold of this thing in earnest," was his conviction, "without getting more than a thousand; and oh, the enlargement, the enrichment that would come in the train of such a movement! Could China be blessed alone? Would not the whole world 'necessarily share in the blessing? For we could not be blessed on the field without our home churches being brought into it; and if they were filled with spiritual life, every land would be thought of and cared for. The Church is well able to evangelise the whole world and to do it with rapidity."

[365] The Australian Council, formed on the 22nd of May 1890, two days after the close of the Shanghai Conference, consisted of a representative group of ministers and laymen: the Revs. H. B. Macartney (Chairman), S. Chapman, Alfred Bird (Hon. Secretary), W. Lockhart Morton, D. O'Donnell, and George Soltau; the Hon. James Campbell, Dr. Simpson Flett, and Mr. Philip Kitchen (Treasurer). At their first session they had the names of eight candidates for the Mission before them.

[366] Crossing the Gulf of Carpentaria, Mr. Taylor had noted in his journal that 'it was a gulf so large that the whole of Ireland might lie upon its waters

and be out of sight of land. Many of the islands passed before reaching Australia appealed to him both by their great natural beauty and spiritual darkness. The fine mountains of Celebes and the hills of Timor, wooded down to the water's edge, made a picture not soon to be forgotten. Of the latter he wrote: "It is thirty-six years since I saw this island before, and still ***nothing is being done for the souls of its people.***"

[367] Christmas being midsummer, of course, in that southern world.

[368] The analysis of these arrivals was as follows: from October 19 to December 25, 1890, nine parties reached Shanghai from Europe, Canada, and Australia, numbering in all fifty-three new workers. From January 1 to April 12, 1891, seven parties from Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia were received, adding seventy-eight new workers, the last party being that of Mr. Southey.

The sixty-six who arrived in little over three weeks were the Scandinavian thirty-five on February 17, followed by nine from England on February 21, four from Canada on February 26, three from Australia on the 7th of March, and the second detachment of the Scandinavian party, which arrived on March 10, proved to number fifteen—five more than had been expected. Well was it that the new C.I.M. Home in Shanghai was not only spacious but elastic, and in good working order.

[369] Much sympathy was felt for the Wesleyans in the loss of this promising young worker, Mr. Argent of the Joyful News Mission, killed at Wusueh in May 1891.

[370] Dated June 17, 1895.

[371] "I should feel anxious if the work were my work," he had written to a friend in England (January. 1891), "but it is the Lord's work; and though I do not see my way, the Lord sees His way, and I am thinking of Miss Warner's hymn: 'My heart is resting, O my God, I will give thanks and sing,' etc. I never saw my way less, or felt more at rest."

And in February, to another correspondent: "I need your prayers for strength and guidance. I should feel very concerned at the present aspect of matters had I not a deep consciousness that God is with us, and that He will care and provide for His own work. Thank God, I never had more deep rest and

manifest help than in this hour of need. 'The LORD reigneth,' how can we but rejoice!"

[372] Mr. Southey, who had just arrived from Queensland, and Mr. Taylor also took part in this conference.

[373] From a letter to Mr. Taylor of a few weeks later, dated December 15, 1891.

[374] Dated March 29, 1892.

[375] At Barmen Mr. Taylor had the pleasure of seeing Messrs. Paas and Polnick in the midst of the encouraging work of which he had heard on their visit to Pyrland Road in February. At Frankfort-on-Main he was impressed with the Student Conference in which he took part, and with the earnest, aggressive efforts of Pastor Bernus, whose guest he was; and at Heidelberg he was much attracted to a young minister in whose church he held two meetings—the Rev. H. Coerper, whose interest in China and love for himself personally were to bear rich fruit in days to come.

[376] Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Taylor sailed for New York on February 14, 1894, accompanied by Miss Geraldine Guinness, whose marriage to Dr. Howard Taylor took place on their arrival in Shanghai.

[377] This faithful friend, Dr. Howard Taylor's special coolie, was subsequently a great help in opening two new cities in Ho-nan to the Gospel—Chen-chow-fu and Tai-kang. His years were not shortened in the way he anticipated. for he outlived Mr. Hudson Taylor.

[378] The beautiful suite of rooms was as new to Mr. Hoste as it was to the travellers, and later on he let out the secret of the transformation scene. The building really was a barn, consisting of nothing but a roof and three bare walls. The new front and windows, partitions, plastering, white washing, and hangings had been put in expressly for their use, and the furniture carried from Pastor Hsi's own rooms across several courtyards. And all this for a visit of a day or two!

[379] From a circular letter dated Shanghai, May 22, 1895.

[380] The capital of the great western province of Sze-chwan.

[381] At the end of March 1895 the Mission numbered 621 members, settled in 122 central stations, 90 of which were in the eleven formerly unoccupied provinces.

[382] So great was the love of this woman for the things of God that she frequently walked the long distance from her home to the Mission-station to attend the Sunday services, starting on Saturday morning to be in time. Unable on one occasion to leave before evening, she set out to walk the whole of Saturday night, assuring her neighbours who remonstrated—urging the danger of wolves and brigands—that she would not be alone, the best of Protectors was with her. So she "sang hymns by the way, and was not afraid."

[383] It was wonderful how they were helped, for neither Mr. Ridley nor Mr. Hall had had medical training, and though Mrs. Ridley was experienced in sickness she was not a qualified nurse. Operations without chloroform that would have daunted many a strong man she bravely took her part in, and they never once lost a life by cutting an artery in the extraction of bullets, etc. Cotton wool and oil for burns, and common needles and silk for sewing up wounds they were able to buy in the city, as also the sulphur with which they treated diphtheritic patients. A foreign razor helped out the pocket-knife in surgical cases.

[384] Si-ning lies in a valley 8000 feet above sea-level.

[385] A like generous gift was sent to every station in the Mission, from Mr. J. T. Morton, a London wholesale provision merchant, who was becoming deeply interested in the Mission.

[386] Writing to Mr. Easton, the Superintendent of the district, on October 30 (1895), Mr. Taylor said: "We are praying, I may literally say, night and day for our dear friends in Si-ning and in all the other Kansu stations. ... I am almost hourly praying that God will give more souls 'this winter than have ever been given before in the north-west."

[387] The Rev. Denholm Brash, the devoted pastor and evangelist, of whom his son presents so beautiful a picture in the Memoir entitled, Love and Life,

published by Kelly & Co.

[388] With much gentleness of spirit, Mr. Cooper possessed strong individuality and was fearless as to his convictions. Mr. Taylor's relationship with the leaders in the Mission, and with this beloved friend in particular, may be judged from an incident that took place in the early days of the China Council.

"I do not like so often to oppose you," said Mr. Cooper on one occasion; "I think I had better resign."

"No, indeed!" was the reply, "I *value* such opposition: it saves me from many a mistake."

[389] Mr. Stevenson being at home in England, Mr. Taylor was glad to leave the matter, as concerned the C.I.M., largely in his hands. While regretting the partial loss of Mr. Cassels to the Mission, inevitable through the enlargement of his sphere, "I cannot but think," he wrote to a member of the London Council, "that it will be for the advantage of China. Mr. Cassel's department is surpassed by nothing in the Mission for spirituality or success."

[390] Toward the erection of these premises Mr. and Mrs. Taylor had themselves given £900, though only one or two members of the Council were aware of the fact.

[391] During Mr. Taylor's next visit to China, Mr. Berger passed swiftly and painlessly into the presence of the Lord he loved, on the 9th of January 1899. Few expressions of his thoughtful sympathy in the work had been more precious to Mr. Taylor than his gift a few years previously of L4000 to commence a Superannuation Fund for the members of the Mission. To this Fund, any profits from the sale of the present volume, as from Hudson Taylor in Early Years. are devoted.

[392] Of the origin of the Liebenzell work and Mr. Taylor's visit of the previous summer, Pastor Coerper wrote:

"When in 1896 the dear Hudson Taylor came to see me at Essen, his clear simple testimonies were a great joy and inspiration for me and others. He was just then helping to form a German branch of the C.I.M., as there was much interest for the Mission in 'China in districts not attainable for Lie Barmen

Alliance Mission. He mentioned the matter to me several times, asking me to join him in prayer about it. How I longed to offer myself for this work! But I did not feel free to do so, fearing that I might be following merely the desires of my own heart. When in 1899, however, the call came to me quite clearly ... to take charge of the work, the Lord had opened the way and had made me willing to devote my life to Him for this service."

The Liebenzell Mission, still (1918) under the care of Pastor Coerper, has twelve central stations and sixty missionaries in the province of Hunan (Associates of the C.I.M.) with almost a thousand church members. It has also nineteen representatives in the South Sea Islands. All that such figures mean of prayer, labour, and self-sacrificing gifts at home, as well as devoted service abroad, the Lord only knows. It is a privilege to record here that nowhere in connection with the C.I.M. has the spirit of Christ been more manifest in these ways, or more steadfastly maintained, than in the Barmen and the Liebenzell Missions.

^[393] See Hudson Taylor in *Early Years*, pp. 132-138.

^[394] In times of financial straitness Mr. Taylor more than once took occasion to remind his fellow-workers of this principle. "The position of faith is incompatible with borrowing or going into debt, or forcing our way forward when the Lord closes the door before us," he wrote in November 1898. "If we propose a certain extension for which the Lord sees the time has not come, or which is not in accordance with His will, how can He more clearly guide us than by withholding the means? It would be a serious mistake, therefore, to refuse to listen to the Lord's 'No,' and by borrowing or going into debt do the thing to which He had objected by withholding the needed funds or facilities. All the work we are engaged in is His rather than ours; and if the Master can afford to wait, surely the servant can also."

^[395] Mr. Taylor's thought, as set forth in these papers, was that centres should be arranged for, in charge of experienced missionaries, to which the new workers (foreign) should go on arrival for study of the language and training in evangelistic method, and to which they could return from time to time for rest and refreshment after their itinerations. Chinese evangelists should also have training and Bible study in such centres.

"A special Itinerant Missionary Evangelistic Band would, then be required," he wrote, "willing to consecrate five years of their lives to itinerant work, without thought of marriage or of settling down till their special work is accomplished. The work would be arduous, involving much self-denial, but it would bring with it much blessing and great spiritual joy, as the command, 'Preach the Gospel to every creature,' was being obeyed: in keeping of His commandments there is great reward (see Psalm 19:11).

"The workers, when ready, would go out two and two, i.e. two missionaries and two native helpers, to previously arranged districts, to sell Scriptures and Gospel tracts, and to preach the Glad Tidings. Living together in the same inns, for companionship and fellowship, they would often separate during the day, one missionary and native brother going in one direction, and the other two in another, and meeting again at night, to commend to GOD the work of the day, as before setting out they had unitedly sought His blessing. Two-thirds to three-quarters of their time being thus occupied, the remainder would afford opportunity for bodily and spiritual rest and refreshment, for continuing the Chinese studies of the missionaries, and the systematic Bible studies of the native helpers. As the work progresses the number of these centres would need increasing."

[396] Written from Ku-ling, September. 2, 1898.

[397] "They are weak enough for God to use," Mr. Taylor had written of similar workers in Shan-si, "and they believe in being filled with the Holy Ghost. They seek a blessing with fasting and prayer, and they do not seek in vain. The people feel that there is power in connection with their work."

[398] "Though we cannot scold people right we may often love them right," he had written to Mr. Stevenson before leaving England. "It will not do for us to lose expectant faith and Holy Ghost power, and let those whom God gives us drift away, if prayer and fasting, pains and patience will hold them together. ... We must claim from God by faith the love and spiritual power that will make men wish to obey. I do long for myself and for all of us to be more filled with the Spirit, and thus fitted for God's work. Then we shall always overflow with love, joy, peace, gentleness, and all the fruit of the Spirit, and every one will be attracted and helped as far as possible."

[399] When Dr. Keller was willing to accept Mr. Taylor's advice and help, the latter arranged for a more experienced missionary, the Rev. Ed. Pearse, to go to the capital of the province and call on the Governor to make a friendly representation. This, by the blessing of God, proved entirely successful. The Governor sent a deputy to Cha-ling-chow, who arranged with the local authorities to repair the house and re-establish the missionaries according to Chinese law. In order that the landlord might be fully compensated, Dr. Keller waived all claim to indemnity.

"Every one was delighted with this arrangement," the Doctor wrote after his return, "and all the secretaries and petty officials in the ye-men rushed in to thank us for our gracious treatment of the Chow (the local Mandarin). From this time the Chow and his family were our warm friends. I became their family physician ... and the Chow himself came to Chang-sha (the capital) years after to be treated by me in his last illness. They proved the sincerity of their friendship at the time of the Boxer uprising. After the Italian priests had been killed at Hengchow, a band of soldiers came over to Cha-ling and wanted to kill me. The Chow protected me for a week in his ya-men, and at last, when things got beyond control and his own life was in danger, he got me away by night, and sent me with a strong escort safely to Kiang-si. A year later we went to Chang-sha, and our kindly reception there, together with the confidence and friendship of the officials which were such a help to us, were largely due to the settlement at Cha-ling made in answer to Mr. Taylor's prayers.'

[400] Pastor Hsi would doubtless have been among the number had he not passed away four years previously. Song, ordained with him in 1886, was the Pastor of the Ping-yang church above referred to.

[401] A precious heritage to the people of God is found in the full story of the Boxer crisis as it affected the Inland Mission, told by Mr. Marshall Broomhall in his *Martyred Missionaries of the C.I.M.*, by the Rev. A. Glover in *A Thousand Miles of Miracle in China*, and by Mr. C. H. Green in his equally touching record of personal experiences, *In Deaths Oft*.

[402] From his own experience Mr. Taylor said: "The hardest part of a missionary career is to maintain regular, prayerful Bible study. Satan will

always find you something to do when you ought to be occupied about that—if it is only arranging a window-blind!"

[403] Work among God's ancient people occupied a special place in the prayerful sympathy of both Mr. and Mrs. Taylor; and Mr. John Wilkinson, founder of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, recalled an interesting phase of their long friendship. Taking advantage of a New Year's Day spent at home (1897), Mr. Taylor went round to Mr. Wilkinson's house with a brotherly note enclosing a gift for the Mission. "To the Jew first," were the words with which the cheque was accompanied. Mr. Wilkinson's warm heart was touched, and he immediately wrote a brotherly reply, enclosing his own cheque for the same amount, with the words: "And also to the Gentile." This helpful interchange of sympathy was kept up ever after, the only change being that each doubled the amount of their contribution.

[404] To a friend called to pass through similar sorrow Mr. Taylor wrote on August 6, one week after his own bereavement: "You may have noticed the French version of Hebrew 10:23, 'Celui qui a fait les promesses est fidele' ('Faithful is He who made the promises'). All we have to do is to look out with patience to see how He will prove it true."

[405] Dr. Martin, who reached China in 1850, was seventy-eight years of age; Mr. Hudson Taylor, who arrived in 1854, was seventy-three; and Dr. Griffith John, who arrived in 1855, was a year older. They were photographed together at Hankow on the 29th of April 1905.

[406] With reference to the Business Department, Mr. W. E. Geil, author of *A Yankee on the Yangtze*, wrote to Mr. Stevenson after his journey across China: "I am emphatically endorsing (in my book) the management of the missionary merchandise by the C.I.M. Never have I seen the people's money made to go so far as under your wise administration. As to my own accounts, without exception they were promptly, politely, properly attended to. In an age of commerce and high-pressure commercial enterprises worked by vast combinations, it is good to find equally wise methods applied to the gifts of the Church in this economical and wise distribution.... I have been impressed too when among the C.I.M. workers by a spiritual atmosphere saturated with two good things, kindness and common sense.... Your missionaries receive

very small pay, but never once have I heard complaint, and never has salary been mentioned but the ready reply has come, 'It is sufficient.' God bless the self-sacrificing missionaries in Inland China."

[407] Miss J. of Sandeberg and Dr. Whitfield Guinness were engaged a few days later.

[408] From an In Memoriam poem by his niece, Miss Marian Fishe, now Mrs. J. L. Rowe.

[409] On this subject the China Mission Year-Book (1917) gives definite and most encouraging testimony. Following the great evangelistic meetings among students held by Dr. John R. Mott and Mr. Sherwood Eddy, (1913 and 1915), which evoked a response undreamed of before among the educated classes to the character and claims of Christ, has come a "new vitality in evangelistic work," fostered by the "Special Committee on a Forward Evangelistic Movement," of which Bishop Price of the C.M.S. (Fukien) is Chairman and Dr. Warnshuis the National Evangelistic Secretary. Such a movement, uniting all Societies labouring in China, is new indeed, and so is the Week of Evangelism it has promoted the first attempt ever made to mobilise the spiritual forces of the Chinese Church in a united evangelistic forward movement" (p. 343).

In their report for 1917 the Forward Evangelistic Committee states:

"Wherever this national Week of Evangelism was thoroughly prepared for and carried through with energy, the churches have been awakened and found themselves able to move forward on a wide front. As stated in last year's report, the purpose was to create a persistent, organised, and enthusiastic missionary endeavour in the whole Church, among both pastors and lay-people, of which this Week of Evangelism would be but the beginning. This ideal still remains to be achieved, and the programme which the Committee recommends for the ensuing year contains proposals for a continuation of this effort."

[410] The course of study, which is thoroughly supervised and systematic, "covers two years and includes Biblical introduction, book, chapter, and topical Bible study, Bible doctrine, outlines of church history, music, the preparation of Gospel addresses, and individual training in chapel and street

preaching, and in personal work. Much care is taken to foster a deep prayer life in each worker, real, living fellowship with God, and a consciousness of absolute dependence on the indwelling Holy Spirit for a holy life and fruitful service."

MEMOIR OF JONATHAN EDWARDS

BY

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Chapter I^(TOC)

Birth—Parentage—Early Religious Advantages—Serious Impressions and Account of his Experience.

FEW individuals ever appeared in the church of God who have merited, and actually received, higher tributes of respect than Jonathan Edwards. His intellectual powers were of no common order, and his industry in the cultivation of those powers is strongly marked in that wide extent of most important knowledge which he possessed. If we consider him as ranking with Hartley, Locke, and Bacon, in the scale of intellect, we shall have little apprehension of his title to such distinction being disputed. His mighty mind grasped with ease those subjects at which others faltered. He saw truth almost intuitively, and was equally keen in the detection of error in all its varied shades—This distinguished man claims admiration, not merely on the ground of uncommon strength of intellectual powers, and intense application of mind, rewarded by proportionate acquirements, but also as a most humble and devoted servant of Christ; bringing all he had received into his service, and living only to him. His soul was indeed a temple of the Holy Spirit, and his life uniformly manifested all the simplicity, purity, disinterestedness, and elevated character of the gospel of Christ. The glory of God was his supreme object, whether engaged in his devotional exercises, his studies, his social intercourse, the discharge of his public ministry, or in the publication of his writings. All inferior motives seem to have been without any discernible influence upon him. He entered fully into the expressive language of Paul—"The love of Christ constraineth me." "For me to live is Christ." His personal example will long instruct, excite, and encourage, and his writings

will necessarily be most highly esteemed so long as the love of truth prevails.

It has been justly observed, "The number of those men, who have produced great and permanent changes in the character and condition of mankind, and stamped their own image on the minds of succeeding generations, is comparatively small; and, even of this small number, the great body have been indebted for their superior efficiency, at least in part, to extraneous circumstances, while very few can ascribe it to the simple strength of their own intellect. Yet here and there an individual can be found, who, by his mere mental energy, has changed the course of human thought and feeling, and led mankind onward in that new and better path which he had opened to their view. Such an individual was Jonathan Edwards. Born in an obscure colony, in the midst of a wilderness, and educated at a seminary just commencing its existence; passing the better part of his life as the pastor of a frontier village, and the residue as an Indian missionary in a still humbler hamlet; he discovered, and unfolded, a system of the divine moral government, so new, so clear, so full, that while at its first disclosure it needed no aid from its friends and feared no opposition from its enemies, it has at length constrained a reluctant world to bow in homage to its truth."

Jonathan Edwards was born on the 5th of October, 1703, at Windsor, on the banks of the Connecticut. His father, the Rev. Timothy Edwards, was minister of that place about 60 years. He died in January, 1758, in the 89th year of his age, not two months before this his only son. He was a man of great piety and usefulness. On November 6th, 1694, he married Esther Stoddard, daughter of the reverend and celebrated Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton, in the 23rd year of her age. They lived together in the married state above sixty-three years. Mrs. Edwards, our author's mother, was born June 2nd, 1672, and lived to about ninety years of age, (some years after her

son,) a remarkable instance of the small decay of mental powers at so advanced an age. This venerable couple had eleven children; one son, the subject of these memoirs, and ten daughters, four of whom were older, and six younger, than himself.

From the highly spiritual character and intellectual attainments of his parents, it might naturally be expected that his early education would be attended with no common advantages; this was the fact. Many were the prayers presented by parental affection that this only and beloved son might be filled with the Holy Spirit; from a child know the Holy Scriptures; and be great in the sight of the Lord. They who thus fervently and constantly commended him to God, manifested equal diligence in training him up for God. Prayer excited to exertion, and exertion again was encouraged by prayer. The domestic circle was a scene of supplication, and it was a scene of instruction. In the abode of such exemplary servants of God, instruction abounded; that which the eye saw, as well as that which the ear heard, formed a lesson. There was nothing in the example of those who taught to diminish the force of instruction; there was nothing in social habits which counteracted the lessons of wisdom, and infused those principles which in after-years produced the fruit of folly and sin. On the contrary, there was every thing to enlarge, to purify, and to elevate the heart, and at the same time to train the mind, to those exercises of thought from which alone eminent attainments can be expected.

The faithful religious instructions of his parents "rendered him when a child familiarly conversant with God and Christ, with his own character and duty, with the way of salvation, and with the nature of that eternal life which, begun on earth, is perfected in heaven." Their prayers were not forgotten, and their efforts did not remain without effect. In the progress of childhood he was in several instances the subject of strong religious impressions. "This

was particularly true some years before he went to college, during a powerful revival of religion in his father's congregation. He, and two other lads of his own age, who had the same feelings with himself, erected a booth in a very retired spot in a swamp, for an oratory, and resorted to it regularly for social prayer. This continued for a long period; but the impressions ultimately disappeared, and in his own view, were followed by no permanent effects of a salutary nature." The precise period when he regarded himself as entering on a religious life he nowhere mentions, nor has any record been found of the time when he made a publick profession of religion. Even the church with which he became connected would not certainly be known, were it not that on one occasion he alludes to himself as a member of the church in East Windsor. From various circumstances, it seems that the time of his uniting himself to it was not far from the time of his leaving college. Of the views and feelings of his mind, on this most important subject, both before and after this event, there is a most satisfactory and instructive account which was found among his papers in his own hand-writing, and which was written near twenty years afterwards for his own private benefit. It is as follows:

"I had a variety of concerns and exercises about my soul from my child-hood; but I had two more remarkable seasons of awakening, before I met with that change by which I was brought to those new dispositions, and that new sense of things, that I have since had. The first time was when I was a boy some years before I went to college, ^[1] at a time of remarkable awakening in my father's congregation. I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my soul's salvation; and was abundant in religious duties. I used to pray five times a day in secret, and to spend much time in religious conversation with other boys; and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion. My mind was much engaged in it, and had much self-righteous

pleasure, and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I, with some of my school-mates, joined together and built a booth in a swamp, in a very retired spot, for a place of prayer. [2] And besides, I had particular secret places of my own in the woods, where I used to retire by myself; and was from time to time much affected. My affections seemed to be lively and easily moved, and I seemed to be in my element when I engaged in religious duties. And I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections, and such a kind of delight as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace.

"But, in progress of time, my convictions and affections wore off, and I entirely lost all those affections and delights, and left off secret prayer, at least as to any constant preference of it; and returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in the ways of sin. Indeed, I was at times very uneasy, especially towards the latter part of my time at college, when it pleased God to seize me with a pleurisy; in which he brought me nigh to the grave, and shook me over the pit of hell. And yet it was not long after my recovery, before I fell again into my old ways of sin. But God would not suffer me to go on with any quietness; I had great and violent inward struggles, till after many conflicts with wicked inclinations, repeated resolutions, and bonds that I laid myself under by a kind of vows to God, I was brought wholly to break off all former wicked ways, and all ways of known outward sin; and to apply myself to seek salvation, and practise many religious duties, but without that kind of affection and delight which I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more inward struggles and conflicts, and self-reflection. I made seeking my salvation the main business of my life. But yet, it seems to me, I sought it after a miserable manner which has made me sometimes since to question, whether ever it is sued in that which was saving; being ready to doubt whether such miserable seeking ever succeeded. I was indeed brought to seek salvation, in a manner that I never was before; I felt a spirit to part

with all things in the world, for an interest in Christ. My concern continued, and prevailed, with many exercising thoughts and inward struggles; but yet it never seemed to be proper, to express that concern by the name of terror.

"From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life; and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure. But never could give an account how, or by what means, I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's Spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However, my mind rested in it; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with respect to the doctrine of God's sovereignty, from that day to this; so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God showing mercy to whom he will show mercy, and hardening whom he will. God's absolute sovereignty and justice, with respect to salvation and damnation, is what my mind seems to rest assured of, as much as of any thing that I see with my eyes; at least it is so at times. But I have often, since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty than I had then. I have often since had not only a conviction, but a delightful conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceedingly pleasant, bright, and sweet. Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not so.

"The first instance, that I remember, of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things, that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words, 1 Timothy 1:17. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be rapt up to him in heaven; and be as it were swallowed up in him for ever! I kept saying, and as it were singing, over these words of Scripture to myself; and went to pray to God that I might enjoy him; and prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do, with a new sort of affection. But it never came into my thought, that there was any thing spiritual, or of a saving nature, in this.

"From about that time I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. An inward, sweet sense of these things, at times, came into my heart; and my soul was led away in pleasant views and contemplations of them. And my mind was greatly engaged to spend my time in reading and meditating on Christ, on the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. I found no books so delightful to me, as those that treated of these subjects. Those words Song of Solomon 2:1 used to be abundantly with me, I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys. The words seemed to me sweetly to represent the loveliness and beauty of Jesus Christ. The whole book of Canticles used to be pleasant to me, and I used to be much in reading it, about that time; and found from time to time an inward sweetness, that would carry me away in my contemplations. This I know not how to express otherwise, than by a calm,

sweet abstraction of soul from all the concerns of this world; and sometimes a kind of vision, or fixed ideas and imaginations, of being alone in the mountains, or some solitary wilderness, far from all man-kind, sweetly conversing with Christ, and wrapt and swallowed up in God. The sense I had of divine things, would often of a sudden kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning my heart, an ardour of soul, that I know not how to express.

"Not long after I first began to experience these things, I gave an account to my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together; and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father's pasture, for contemplation. And as I was walking there, and looking upon the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious majesty and grace of God, as I know not how to express—I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction; majesty and meekness joined together: it was a sweet, and gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high, and great, and holy gentleness.

"After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast or appearance of divine glory, in almost every thing. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity, and love, seemed to appear in every thing; in the sun, moon, and stars; in the clouds and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for a long time; and in the day, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things: in the mean time singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. And scarce any thing, among all the works of nature,

was so sweet to me as thunder and lightning: formerly nothing had been so terrible to me. Before, I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunder-storm rising; but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God, if I may so speak, at the first appearance of a thunderstorm; and used to take the opportunity, at such times, to fix myself in order to view the clouds, and see the lightnings play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunders, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. While thus engaged, it always seemed natural for me to sing or chant forth my meditations; or, to speak my thoughts in soliloquies with a singing voice.

"I felt then great satisfaction as to my good estate; but that did not content me. I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness, wherewith my heart seemed to be full, and ready to break; which often brought to my mind the words of the psalmist, Psalms 119:28. My soul breaketh for the longing it hath. I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart, that I had not turned to God sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things; almost perpetually in the contemplation of them. I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year; often walking alone in the woods, and solitary places, for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and converse with God; and it was always my manner, at such times, to sing forth my contemplations. I was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer, wherever I was. Prayer seemed to be natural to me, as the breath by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent. The delights which I now felt in the things of religion, were of an exceedingly different kind from those before mentioned, that I had when a boy; and what then I had no more notion of, than one born blind has of pleasant and beautiful colours. They were of a more inward, pure, soul-

animating, and refreshing nature. Those former delights never reached the heart; and did not arise from any sight of the divine excellency of the things of God; or any taste of the soul-satisfying and life-giving good there was in them.

"My sense of divine things seemed gradually to increase, till I went to preach at New York; which was about a year and a half after they began: and while I was there I felt them very sensibly, in a much higher degree than I had done before. My longings after God and holiness were much increased. Pure and humble, holy and heavenly, Christianity appeared exceedingly amiable to me. I felt a burning desire to be, in every thing, a complete Christian; and conformed to the blessed image of Christ; and that I might live, in all things, according to the pure, sweet, and blessed rules of the gospel. I had an eager thirsting after progress in these things; which put me upon pursuing and pressing after them. It was my continual strife, day and night, and constant inquiry, how I should be more holy, and live more holily, and more becoming a child of God, and a disciple of Christ. I now sought an increase of grace and holiness, and a holy life, with much more earnestness than ever I sought grace before I had it. I used to be continually examining myself, and studying and contriving for likely ways and means how I should live holily, with far greater diligence and earnestness than ever I pursued any thing in my life; but yet with too great a dependence on my own strength; which afterwards proved a great damage to me. My experience had not then taught me, as it has done since, my extreme feebleness and impotence, every manner of way; and the bottomless depths of secret corruption and deceit there was in my heart. However, I went on with my eager pursuit after more holiness and conformity to Christ.

"The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness; to be with God, and to spend

my eternity in divine love, and holy communion with Christ. My mind was very much taken up with contemplations on heaven, and the enjoyments there; and living there in perfect holiness, humility, and love; and it used at that time to appear a great part of the happiness of heaven, that there the saints could express their love to Christ. It appeared to me a great clog and burden, that what I felt within I could not express as I desired. The inward ardour of my soul seemed to be hindered and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think, how in heaven this principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared exceedingly delightful, as a world of love; and that all happiness consisted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

"I remember the thoughts I used then to have of holiness; and said sometimes to myself, 'I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel prescribes.' It appeared to me, that there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely; the highest beauty and amiableness—a divine beauty; far purer than any thing here upon earth; and that every thing else was like mire and defilement in comparison of it.

"Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature; which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness, and rapture to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers; enjoying a sweet calm, and the gently vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year; low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing, as it were, in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragrantcy; standing peacefully and lovingly, in the

midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature-holiness that I had so great a sense of its loveliness, as humility, brokenness of heart, and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this—to lie low before God, as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be all, that I might become as a little child.

"While at New York, I sometimes was much affected with reflections on my past life, considering how late it was before I began to be truly religious; and how wickedly I had lived till then: and once so as to weep abundantly, and for a considerable time together.

"On January 12, 1723, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God, and wrote it down; giving up myself, and all that I had, to God; to be for the future in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to himself, in any respect. And solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; engaging to fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. But I have reason to be infinitely humbled, when I consider how much I have failed of answering my obligation.

"I had, then, abundance of sweet religious conversation, in the family where I lived, with Mr. John Smith, and his pious mother. My heart was knit in affection to those in whom were appearances of true piety; and I could bear the thoughts of no other companions, but such as were holy, and the disciples of the blessed Jesus. I had great longings for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; and my secret prayers used to be, in great part, taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of any thing that happened in any part of the world, that appeared, in some respect or other, to have a

favourable aspect on the interests of Christ's kingdom, my soul eagerly caught at it, and it would much animate and refresh me. I used to be eager to read public news-letters, mainly for that end; to see if I could not find some news favourable to the interest of religion in the world.

"I very frequently used to retire into a solitary place on the banks of Hudson's river, at some distance from the city, for contemplation on divine things and secret converse with God; and had many sweet hours there. Sometimes Mr. Smith and I walked there together, to converse on the things of God; and our conversation used to turn much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world, and the glorious things that God would accomplish for his church in the latter days. I had then, and at other times, the greatest delight in the Holy Scriptures of any book whatsoever. Oftentimes in reading it every word seemed to touch my heart. I felt a harmony between something in my heart, and those sweet and powerful words. I seemed often to see so much light exhibited by every sentence, and such a refreshing food communicated, that I could not get along in reading; often dwelling long on one sentence, to see the wonders contained in it; and yet almost every sentence seemed to be full of wonders.

"I came away from New York in the month of April, 1723, and had a most bitter parting with Madam Smith and her son. My heart seemed to sink within me, at leaving the family and city, where I had enjoyed so many sweet and pleasant days. I went from New York to Wethersfield by water; and as I sailed away, I kept sight of the city as long as I could. However, that night, after this sorrowful parting, I was greatly comforted in God at West Chester, where we went ashore to lodge: and had a pleasant time of it all the voyage to Saybrook. It was sweet to me to think of meeting dear Christians in heaven, where we should never part more. At Saybrook we went ashore to lodge on

Saturday, and there kept the sabbath; where I had a sweet and refreshing season walking alone in the fields.

"After I came home to Windsor, I remained much in a like frame of mind as when at New York; only sometimes I felt my heart ready to sink with the thoughts of my friends at New York. My support was in contemplations on the heavenly state; as I find in my diary of May 1, 1723. It was a comfort to think of that state, where there is fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, calm and delightful love, without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting; where those persons who appear so lovely in this world will really be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. And how secretly will the mutual lovers join together, to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How will it fill us with joy to think, that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never cease, but will last to all eternity!"

Thus deep, decided, and powerful were the operations of divine grace upon the mind of this eminent servant of Christ. That his understanding was much enlightened in the things of God, and his heart deeply affected by them, are circumstances which will immediately strike the attention of every serious observer. There was in him a holy anxiety to obtain the most satisfactory testimony to a change of heart: for this purpose he closely and diligently examined himself; he had no inclination to shun this self-inquiry. Personal examination seems to have been considered by him as a pleasing as well as a momentous exercise. Many professors revolt at the thought of such inward survey; they content themselves with looking (and that hastily) at external matters, but they will not look within, though this neglect be at the peril of eternal good. The feelings with which men regard the duty of personal examination, may justly be viewed as an accurate criterion of their spiritual

state, for in proportion to their concern for eternity, will be their disposition to try themselves; or in other words, in the same measure in which grace exists, will there be a desire of fully ascertaining its existence and progress. Upon a review of the statement given by Mr. Edwards as to his early religious experience, it is evident that he was not one who could satisfy himself upon any insufficient grounds: not a symptom of carelessness or of presumption can be discerned; he looked upon himself with a holy jealousy; he thought, he read, he conversed, and above all he prayed, that he might be enabled more accurately to search his own heart, and thus escape the danger of self-deception, and be convinced by proofs which would stand the test of the judgment of God, that he was a child of light, a subject of holiness, and an heir of glory. And thus studying himself under the penetrating light of the word, and the gracious influences of the Spirit of God, he acquired that exact knowledge of the various inward exercises and outward displays of the christian character, which enabled him in after-years, with such skill, to separate delusive appearances from those which are solid, and to mark the strong difference between the mere professor of the name of Christ, and the actual partaker of the power of the gospel. It was in these early years of his life that those correct views were formed which after-wards expanded in his admirable treatise on Religious Affections.

Chapter II^(TOC)

Intellectual Progress—Earliest Productions—Entrance at College—Mental Habits.

A STATEMENT has been given principally from the pen of Mr. Edwards himself of his religious views in youth, and it will be proper before that subject be resumed, to advert to his intellectual progress at the same period. It is delightful to contemplate the simultaneous advancement of knowledge in the mind and of piety in the heart. None can reasonably imagine that there is an opposition between these things; and all whose minds are open to conviction will be persuaded, that the growth of piety is most conducive to the increase of the best treasures of earthly wisdom. Religion strengthens the powers of man; it never enfeebles them. It at once cuts off those guilty pleasures, and those unworthy pursuits, which not merely impede the progress of the understanding, but in many cases are absolutely fatal to its energies; and it forms those mental habits, as well as produces that outward propriety of conduct, which are most favourable to the cultivation of man's noblest faculties. It would be easy to record a lengthened list of names enrolled with never-fading honour, both in the schools of science, and in the church of God. The gospel of Christ has uniformly been the friend of solid learning, nor are those persons the judicious friends of the gospel, who are disposed to disparage the exertions and acquirements of intellect. The christian church dreads the veil of darkness, but it rejoices in the light.

The same parental kindness and wisdom, which, under God, guided the mind of Jonathan Edwards to the knowledge and love of things eternal, were also

much discovered in the direction of his powers to useful objects of earthly science. When only six years of age, the study of the Latin language engaged his attention under the care of his father, and occasionally that of his elder sisters. No account is preserved of his progress in his studies at that early period, but his high standing as a scholar on his admission to college, as well as after-wards, and his thorough knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, prove at once his own diligence as a student at this time, and the accuracy and fidelity of his father's instructions.

"From his remaining manuscripts, it is evident that his father's family were fond of the use of the pen, and that he and his sisters were early encouraged by their parents to make attempts, not only in letter writing, but in other species of composition. This course, though rarely pursued with children, is eminently advantageous; and in the case before us, was obviously followed by the best results. While it increased the mutual affection of the brother and the sisters, it also served to strengthen their minds, and to impart exactness both of thought and expression. The earliest effort of his pen appears to have been written on the following occasion. Some one in the vicinity, probably an older boy than himself, had advanced the opinion, ***that the soul was material, and remained with the body till the resurrection;*** and had endeavoured to convince him of its correctness. Struck with the absurdity of the notion, he sat down and wrote the following reply; which, as a specimen both of wit and reasoning in a child of about ten years of age, may fairly claim to be preserved. It is without date, and without pointing, or any division into sentences; and has every appearance of having been written by a boy just after he had learned to write.

"I am informed that you have advanced a notion, that the soul is material, and attends the body till the resurrection; as I am a professed lover of novelty,

you must imagine I am very much entertained by this discovery; (which, however old in some parts of the world, is new to us;) but suffer my curiosity a little further. I would know the manner of the kingdom before I swear allegiance: 1st, I would know whether this material soul keeps with (the body) in the coffin, and *if* so, whether it might not be convenient to build a repository for it; in order to which I would know what shape it is of, whether round, triangular, or four-square; or whether it is a number of long fine strings reaching from the head to the foot; and whether it does not live a very discontented life. I am afraid when the coffin gives way, the earth will fall in and crush it; but if it should choose to live above-ground, and hover about the grave, how big is it?—whether it covers all the body; what it does when another body is laid upon it: whether the first gives way; and if so where is the place of retreat. But suppose that souls are not so big but that ten or a dozen of them may be about one body; whether they will not quarrel for the highest place; and, as I insist much upon my honour and property, I would know whether I must quit my dear head, if a superior soul comes in the way: but above all, I am concerned to know what they do, where a burying-place has been filled twenty, thirty, or an hundred times. If they are a-top of one another, the uppermost will be so far off, that it can take no care of the body. I strongly suspect they must march off every time there comes a new set. I hope there is some other place provided for them but dust. The undergoing so much hardship, and being deprived of the body at last, will make them ill-tempered. I leave it with your physical genius to determine, whether some medicinal applications might not be proper in such cases, and subscribe your proselyte, when I can have solution of these matters."

The following letter to one of his sisters, written at twelve years of age, is the earliest ***dated*** effort of his pen which has been discovered.

To Miss Mary Edwards, at Hadley.

"Windsor, May 10, 1716.

"DEAR SISTER,

"Through the wonderful goodness and mercy of God, there has been in this place a very remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God. It still continues, but I think I have reason to think is in some measure diminished, yet I hope not much. Three have joined the church since you last heard; five now stand pro-pounded for admission; and I think above thirty persons come commonly on Mondays to converse with father about the condition of their souls. It is a time of general health here. Abigail, Hannah, and Lucy have had the chicken pox and are recovered. Jerusha is almost well. Except her, the whole family is well.

"Sister, I am glad to hear of your welfare so often as I do, I should be glad to hear from you by letter, and therein how it is with you as to your crooked-ness

*"Your loving brother,
"JONATHAN E."*

He was educated, until he entered college, at home, and under his father's personal instruction; while his older sisters were daily pursuing their respective branches of study in his immediate presence. Their father having been distinguished as a scholar, was able to give them, and actually gave them, a superior education. In all their various pursuits, the mind of their

brother, as it opened, would of course be more and more interested; and thus at length he would easily and insensibly acquire a mass of information far beyond his years. The course of his education may in this way have been less systematic, indeed, and less conformed to rule, than that ordinarily given in the school. At the same time it was more safe; forming him to softer manners, gentler feelings, and purer affections. In his circumstances, also, it was obviously more comprehensive and universal; and while it brought him acquainted with many things which are not usually communicated until a later period, it also served to unfold the original traits of his mind, and to give it that expansion, which is the result of information alone. One characteristic, of which he has not generally been suspected, but which he possessed in an unusual degree, was a fondness minutely and critically to investigate the works of nature. This propensity was not only discovered in youth and manhood, but was fully developed in childhood, and at that early period was encouraged and cherished by the fostering hand of parental care.

He entered Yale college in New-Haven, in September, 1716, before he was thirteen years of age. The college was then in its infancy, and various untoward circumstances had greatly impeded its growth. It was first planted at Saybrook, and then partially removed to Kenilworth, to the house of its first rector, until his death in 1707. From that time the Rev. Mr. Andrews, of Milford, one of the trustees, was rector *pro tempore*, upwards of twelve years; and the location of the college was a constant theme of contention between the towns of New-Haven, Saybrook, Wethersfield, and Hartford, until 1716; when the vote of the trustees, the donation of Mr. Yale, and the vote of the legislature of the colony, fixed it permanently at New-Haven. In the collegiate year 1716-1717, thirteen of the students resided at New-Haven, fourteen at Wethersfield, and four at Saybrook. The temporary presidency of Mr. Andrews continued until 1719; and as he was the acting minister of

Milford, his oversight of the college, and his influence over the students, must of course have been exceedingly imperfect. The government of the institution, virtually and necessarily, was chiefly in the hands of the tutors: who, as young men without experience and a knowledge of mankind, could not usually be found qualified for so difficult a trust. Some time in the year 1717, the extreme unpopularity of one of the tutors occasioned a general insurrection of the students, who were at New-Haven, against the government of the college: and in one body they withdrew from New-Haven, and joined their companions at Wethersfield. At the commencement in that year, eight of the senior class returned to New-Haven, to receive their degrees of the regular college government; while five received theirs irregularly at Wethersfield. There is no evidence that Jonathan Edwards took part in these disturbances. He went however with his companions to Wethersfield, and continued there until 1719. While there, he gained a high character and standing in his class. His father, writing to one of his daughters, under date of January. 27, 1718, says, "I have not heard but that your brother Jonathan is also well. He has a very good name at Wethersfield, both as to his carriage and his learning." While at Wethersfield, he wrote to one of his sisters the following letter; which, as it is a document relating to an interesting event in the history of the college, may not improperly be preserved.

***To Miss Mary Edwards at
Northampton.***

"Wethersfield, March 26, 1719

"DEAR SISTER,

"Of all the many sisters I have, I think I never had one so long out of my hearing as yourself; inasmuch as I cannot remember, that I ever heard one tittle from you, from the time you last went up the country, until the last week, by Mr. B. who then came from Northampton. When he came in, I truly rejoiced to see him, because I fully expected to receive a letter from you by him. But being disappointed, and that not a little, I was willing to make that, which I hoped would be an opportunity of receiving, the same of sending. For I thought it was a pity, that there should not be the least correspondence between us, or communication from one to another, when at no farther distance. I hope also that this may be a means of exciting the same in yourself; and so, having more charity for you than to believe that I am quite out of your mind, or that you are not at all concerned for me, I think it fit that I should give you some account of my condition, relative to the school. I suppose you are fully acquainted with our coming away from New-Haven, and the circumstances of it. Since then we have been in a more prosperous condition, as I think, than ever. But the council and trustees, having lately had a meeting at New-Haven concerning it, have removed that which was the cause of our coming away, viz. Mr. Johnson, from the place of a tutor, and have put in Mr. Cutler, pastor of Canterbury, president; who, as we hear, intends very speedily to be resident at Yale college, so that all the scholars belonging to our school expect to return there, as soon as our vacancy after the election is over.

*"I am your loving brother in good health,
"JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

While a member of college, he was distinguished for the uniform sobriety and correctness of his behaviour, for diligent application to his studies, and for rapid and thorough attainments in learning. In the second year of his collegiate course, while at Wethersfield, he read Locke on the Human Understanding, with peculiar pleasure. The uncommon strength and penetration of his mind, which admirably qualified him for profound thought and metaphysical investigation, began to be discovered and exerted even at this early age. From his own account of the subject, he was inexpressibly entertained and delighted with that profound work, when he read it at the age of fourteen, enjoying a far higher pleasure in the perusal of its pages, "than the most greedy miser finds, when gathering up handfuls of silver and gold, from some newly discovered treasure." To studies of this class he from that time devoted himself, as to those in which he felt the most intense interest. Still, however, he applied himself, with so much diligence and success, to the performance of his assigned duties, as to sustain the first standing in his class, and to secure the highest approbation of his instructors.

Mr. Cutler went to New-Haven early in June 1719, at the opening of the summer term, to enter on the duties of his office as rector; and the students, among whom was Jonathan Edwards, returned to the college. The following letter from the rector to his father, will show the character which he had acquired while at Wethersfield, and the trying circumstances of the college.

"New-Haven, June 30, 1719.

"REV. SIR,

"Your letter came to my hands by your son. I congratulate you

upon his promising abilities and advances in learning. He is now under my care, and probably may continue so, and doubtless will so do if he should remain here, and I be settled in the business I am now in. I can assure, Rev. Sir, that your good affection to me in this affair, and that of the ministers around you, is no small inducement to me; and if I am prevailed on thereby, it shall be a strong motive to me to improve my poor abilities, in the service of such hopeful youths as are with us. They may suffer much from my weakness, but they shall not from my neglect. I am no party man, but shall carry it, with an equal hand and affection, to the whole college; and I doubt not, but the difficulty and importance of the business will secure me your prayers, and those of all good men, which I do much value and desire.

I remain, under the earnest hope and expectation of your prayers,

*"Your humble servant
"T. CUTLER."*

The following characteristical letter, written to his father in his third collegiate year, will not be uninteresting to the reader.

***To the Rev. Timothy Edwards,
Pastor of the Church at East
Windsor***

"New-Haven, July 21, 1719.

"EVER HONOURED SIR,

"I received, with two books, a letter from yourself, bearing the date of July 7th; and therein I received, with the greatest gratitude, your wholesome advice and counsel; and I hope I shall, God helping of me, use my utmost endeavours to put the same in practice. I am sensible of the preciousness of my time, and am resolved it shall not be through any neglect of mine, if it slips without the greatest advantage. I take very great content under my present tuition, as all the rest of the scholars seem to do under theirs. Mr. Cutler is extraordinarily courteous to us, has a very good spirit of government, keeps the school in excellent order, seems to increase in learning, is loved and respected by all who are under him; and when he is spoken of in the school or town, he generally has the title of President. The scholars all live in very good peace with the people of the town, and there is not a word said about our former carryings on, except now and then by aunt Mather. I have diligently searched into the circumstances of Stiles's examination, which was very short, and as far as I can understand, was to no other disadvantage than that he was examined in Tully's Orations; in which, though he had never construed before he came to New-Haven, yet he committed no error in that or any other book, whether Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, except in Virgil, wherein he could not tell the preteritum of requiesco. He is very well treated among the scholars, and accepted in the college as a member of it by

every body, and also as a freshman; neither, as I think, is he inferior, as to learning, to any of his classmates. I have inquired of Mr. Cutler what books we shall have need of the next year. He answered, he would have me to get against that time, Alstead's Geometry and Gassendus's Astronomy; with which I would entreat you to get a pair of dividers, or mathematician's compasses, and a scale, which are absolutely necessary in order to learning mathematics; and also the Art of Thinking, which, I am persuaded, would be no less profitable, than the other necessary, to me who am

*Your most dutiful son,
JONATHAN EDWARDS.*

P. S. What we give a week for our board is £0 5s. *0d.*

"The habits of study, which Edwards formed in very early youth, were not only strict and severe, and this in every branch of literature, but in one respect peculiar. Even while a boy, he began to study ***with his pen in his hand***; not for the purpose of copying off the thoughts of others, but for the purpose of writing down, and preserving, the thought suggested to his own mind, from the course of study which he was pursuing. This most useful practice he commenced in several branches of study very early; and he steadily pursued it in all his studies through life. His pen appears to have been in a sense always in his hand. From this practice steadily persevered in, he derived the very great advantages of thinking continually during each period of study; of thinking accurately; of thinking connectedly; of thinking habitually at all times; of banishing from his mind every subject, which was not worthy of continued and systematic thought; of pursuing each given subject of thought as far as he was able, at the happy moment when it opened spontaneously on

his mind; of pursuing every such subject afterwards, in regular sequence, starting anew from the point where he had previously left off, when again it opened upon him in some new and interesting light; of preserving his best thoughts, associations, and images, and then arranging them under their proper heads, ready for sub-sequent use; of regularly strengthening the faculty of thinking and reasoning, by constant and powerful exercise; and above all, of gradually moulding himself into a thinking being—a being, who instead of regarding thinking and reasoning as labour, could find no high enjoyment but in intense, systematic, and certain thought. In this view of the subject, when we remember how few students comparatively, from want of this mental discipline, think at all; how few of those who think at all, think habitually; how few of those who think habitually, think to purpose; and how few of those who think to purpose, attain to the fulness of the measure of the stature, to which, as thinking beings, they might have attained; it will not I think be doubted, that the practice in question was the principal means of the ultimate development of his mental superiority."

Chapter III^(TOC)

*Early Religious Productions—"Miscellanies"—Notes on the Scriptures—
Commencement of his Preaching—Resolutions.*

A CONSCIENTIOUS regard to duty appeared greatly in the early as well as in the latter days of Jonathan Edwards. As a child, the spirit of love and obedience uniformly guided him; and as a pupil, he discovered every disposition honourable to himself, encouraging to those who anxiously watched over his progress, and which was justly considered as the earnest of uncommon attainments. The child, the youth, the man, all presented to view the same superior mind, in different degrees of advancement, but still alike indicative of the same general excellencies.

While at college, he paid a most assiduous and successful attention to his assigned duties, and particularly to the study of mental and physical philosophy; yet he still found time for pursuits of a more elevated and spiritual character. His whole education from early infancy, and the counsels of his parents, as well as his own feelings, prompted him to these pursuits. "To read the Bible daily, and to read it in connexion with other religious books, diligently and attentively, on the sabbath, was made, in the earlier days of New England, the habitual duty of every child; and his father's family, though not inattentive to the due cultivation of mind and manners, had lost none of the strictness, or conscientiousness, which characterized the pilgrims. The books which he found in his father's house, the conversation of ministers often resorting to the house, the custom of the times, as well as the more immediate influence of parental instruction and example, naturally

prompted a mind like his to the early contemplation and investigation of many of the truths and principles of theology. He had also witnessed in his father's congregation, before his admission to college, several extensive revivals of religion; and in two of them the impressions made on his own mind had been unusually deep and solemn. The name familiarly given by the plain people of New England to these events—"A religious *attention*," and "A *general attention* to religion"—indicates their nature; and those personally acquainted with them need not be informed, that during their progress, the great truths of religion, as taught in the Scriptures, and as explained in the writings of theologians, become the objects of general and intense interest, and of close practical study; or that the knowledge, acquired by a whole people at such a time, in a comparatively little period, often exceeds the acquisitions of many previous years. With all these things in view, it is not surprising, that, to these two kinds of reading, he devoted himself early, with great diligence and with great success."

Two of his early "Resolutions" relate to this subject, in which he proposes "to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that I may find and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same." He never lost sight of this resolution. On the 8th of June, 1723, he also proposes, whenever he finds himself in a dull, listless frame, to read over his own "Remarks and Reflections of a Religious Nature," in order to quicken him in his duty. These "Remarks and Reflections" were very numerous. The first manuscript of his "Miscellanies" is in folio, and consists of forty-four sheets of foolscap, written separately, and stitched together. When he began the work, he had obviously no suspicion of the size to which it was to grow, nor had he formed his ultimate plan of arrangement. He headed his first article, "Of Holiness;" and having finished it, and drawn a line of separation across the page, he commenced the second, "Of Christ's mediation and satisfaction."

The same is done with the third and fourth. The fifth he writes, without a line of separation, in larger letters, "***Spiritual Happiness.***" After that the subject of each new article is printed, or written, in larger letters. His first article was written on the second page of a loose sheet of paper; and having written over the second, third, and fourth pages, he went back to the first. He began to number his articles by the letters of the alphabet, a, b, c, and having gone through, he commenced with a double alphabet, aa, bb, cc; when this was finished, finding his work enlarge, he took the regular numbers, 1, 2, 3, etc. and this plan, both as to subjects and numbers, is afterwards continued.

The beginning of the work is written in a remarkably small round hand, nearly the same with that in which his earliest productions are written. This extends through about the first 150 articles, and is soon after perceptibly changed, into a hand somewhat more formed and flowing. These appear obviously to have been written during the last years of his college life, and the two years of his residence at college as Bachelor of Arts. Large extracts from this work will be found in the present edition of his Works, and a number of them from the earlier articles. Such are the Miscellaneous Observations, and the Miscellaneous Remarks, vol. ii. page 459. and the Miscellanies, page 525. In these will be found many of his most original and most profound thoughts and discussions on theological subjects.

"His regular and diligent study of the sacred Scriptures, led him early to discover, that they opened before him an almost boundless field of investigation and inquiry. Some passages he found to be incorrectly rendered; many were very obscure, and difficult in explanation; in many there were apparent inconsistencies and contradictions; many had been long employed, as proofs of doctrines and principles, to which they had no possible reference; the words and phrases, as well as the sentiments and narratives, on one part,

he saw illustrated, and interpreted those of another. The Old Testament, in its language, history, doctrines, and worship, in its allusions to manners and customs, in its prophecies, types, and images, he perceived to be introductory and explanatory of the New; while the New, by presenting the full completion of the whole plan and design of their common Author, unfolded the real drift and bearing of every part of the Old. Regarding the sacred volume with the highest veneration, he appears to have resolved, while a member of college, that he would, as far as possible, possess himself, in every part of it which he read, of the true meaning of its Author. With this view he commenced his "*Notes on the Scriptures;*" obviously making it his standing rule to study every passage which he read, which presented the least difficulty to his own mind, or which he had known to be regarded as difficult by others, until such difficulty was satisfactorily removed. The result of his investigations he regularly, and at the time, committed to writing; at first in separate half-sheets, folded in 4to; but having found the inconvenience of this in his other juvenile writings, he soon formed small pamphlets of sheets, which were ultimately made into volumes. A few of the articles, to the number of about fifty, appear to have been written while he was in college; the rest, while preparing for the ministry, and during his subsequent life. That he had no suspicion when he began of the size to which the work would grow, is plain, and whether he afterwards formed the design of publishing it, as an illustration of the more difficult and obscure passages of the Bible, perhaps cannot be determined with certainty. A few of the articles of an historical or mythological nature, are marked as quotations from the writings of others, and are omitted in the present edition of his Works. The reader, after perusing the work, will be satisfied that they are the fruit of his own investigations; and that his mode of removing difficulties was—not as it too often is, by disguising or misstating them, but by giving them their full force,

and meeting them with fair argument. Perhaps no collection of notes on the Scriptures so entirely original can be found. From the number prefixed to each article, it will be found easy to select those which were the result of his early labours. Such a plan of investigating and explaining the difficulties of the sacred volume, at so early a period of life, was probably never formed in any other instance, and evinces a maturity of intellectual and moral attainments, not often paralleled. Among the most interesting and able of these investigations, will be found the discussion of the *sacrifice of the daughter of Jephtha*, Judges 11:29-40.; and that on the principle advanced by Paul, in Romans 8:28. *That all things work together for good to them that love God*; which as being contained in his letter to Mr. Gillespie, of September. 4, 1747, is omitted in the notes on the Scriptures."

The class of which Edwards was a member, finished their regular collegiate course, in September. 1720, before he was seventeen years of age. At that period, and for a long time afterwards, the only exercise, except the Latin Theses, given at the public commencement, to the class of Bachelors, was the Salutatory, which was also a Valedictory, Oration in Latin. This exercise was awarded to Edwards, as sustaining the highest rank as a scholar among the members of the class.

He resided at college nearly two years after he took his first degree, preparing himself for the work of the ministry; after which, having passed the customary trials, he received a licence to preach: this was in the nineteenth year of his age. In consequence of an application from a number of ministers in New England, who were intrusted to act in behalf of the presbyterians in New York, he went to that city in the beginning of August, 1722, and preached there with great acceptance, about eight months. While there he found a most happy residence in the house of a Mrs. Smith; whom, as well as

her son Mr. John Smith, he regarded as persons of uncommon piety and purity of life, and with whom he formed an intimate christian friendship. There also he found a considerable number of persons, among the members of that church, exhibiting the same character; with whom he enjoyed, in a high degree, all the pleasures and advantages of christian intercourse. His personal attachment to them became strong; and their interest in him as a man and a preacher was such, that they warmly solicited him to remain with them for life. To decline their candid invitation was most distressing to his feelings; but on account of the smallness of that congregation, and some peculiar difficulties which attended it, he did not think there was a rational prospect of usefulness and comfort. After a most painful parting with the kind friends, under whose hospitable roof he had so long and happily resided, he left the city on Friday, the 26th of April, by water, and reached his father's house on Wednesday, the 1st of May. Here he spent the summer in close study, during which he was again earnestly requested, by the congregation in New York, to return to that city, and settle among them; but his former views were not altered; and therefore, though strongly inclined from his own feelings to gratify them, he could not comply with their wishes. Probably in no part of his life had he higher advantage for spiritual contemplation and enjoyment, than in the period first mentioned. He went to New York in a delightful frame of mind. He found there a little flock of Christ, constrained from a sense of their own weakness to "dwell together in unity," and to feel a practical sense of their dependence on God. He was in the midst of a family, whose daily influence served only to refresh and to sanctify. He had also much leisure for religious reading, meditation, and prayer. In these circumstances the presence of the Comforter appears to have been a daily reality; the evidence of which he found in that purity of heart which enables its possessor to see God, in the peace which passeth all understanding, and

the joy with which a stranger intermeddled not.

During his preparation for the ministry, his residence in New York, and his subsequent residence in his father's house, he formed a series of *resolutions*, to the number of seventy, intended obviously for himself alone, to regulate his own heart and life, but fitted also, from their christian simplicity and spiritualmindedness, to be eminently useful to others. Of these the first thirty-four^[3] were written before December. 18, 1722, the time in which his Diary, as it now exists, commences. The particular time and occasion of making many of the rest, will be found in that most interesting narrative, in which also are many other rules and resolutions, intended for the regulation of his own affections, of perhaps equal excellence. It should be remembered they were all written before he was twenty years of age. As he was wholly averse to all profession and ostentation; and as these resolutions themselves were plainly intended for no other eye than his own, except the eye that is omniscient; they may be justly considered as the basis of his conduct and character, the plan by which he governed the secret as well as the publick actions of his life. As such they will deeply interest the reader, not only as they unfold the inmost mind of their author, but as they also show, in a manner most striking and convincing to the conscience, what is the true foundation of great and distinguished excellence.

He was too well acquainted with human weakness and frailty, even where the intentions are most sincere, to enter on any resolutions rashly, or from a reliance on his own strength. He therefore in the outset looked to God for aid, who alone can afford success in the use of the best means, and in the intended accomplishment of the best purposes. This he places at the head of all his other important rules, that his whole dependence was on the grace of God, while he still proposes to recur to a frequent and serious perusal of them, in

order that they might become the habitual directory of his life.

Resolutions

"Being sensible that I am unable to do any thing without God's help, I do humbly entreat him, by his grace, to enable me to keep these Resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake.

Remember to read over these Resolutions once a week.

1. ***Resolved***, That ***I will do whatsoever*** I think to be most to the glory of God, and my own good, profit, and pleasure, in the whole of my duration; without any consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriads of ages hence.
Resolved, to do whatever I think to be my ***duty***, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general. ***Resolved***, so to do, whatever ***difficulties*** I meet with, how many soever, and how great soever.
2. ***Resolved***, To be continually endeavouring to find out some ***new contrivance*** and invention to promote the forementioned things.
3. ***Resolved***, If ever I shall fall and grow dull, so as to neglect to keep any part of these Resolutions, to repent of all I can remember, when I come to myself again.
4. ***Resolved***, Never ***to do*** any manner of thing, whether in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God, nor ***be***, nor ***suffer*** it, if I can possibly avoid it.

5. **Resolved**, Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.
6. **Resolved**, To live with all my might, while I do live.
7. **Resolved**, Never to do any thing, which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.
8. **Resolved**, To act, in all respects, both speaking and doing, as if nobody had been so vile as I, and as if I had committed the same sins, or had the same infirmities or failings, as others; and that I will let the knowledge of their failings promote nothing but shame in myself, and prove only an occasion of my confessing my own sins and misery to God. **Vid.** July 30.
9. **Resolved**, To think much, on all occasions, of my dying, and of the common circumstances which attend death.
10. **Resolved**, when I feel pain, to think of the pains of martyrdom, and of hell.
11. **Resolved**, When I think of any theorem in divinity to be solved, immediately to do what I can towards solving it, if circumstances do not hinder.
12. **Resolved**, If I take delight in it as a gratification of pride, or vanity, or on any such account, immediately to throw it by.
13. **Resolved**, To be endeavouring to find out fit objects of liberality and charity.
14. **Resolved**, Never to do any thing out of revenge.
15. **Resolved**, Never to suffer the least motions of anger towards

irrational beings.

16. **Resolved**, Never to speak evil of any one, so that it shall tend to his dishonour, more or less, upon no account except for some real good.
17. **Resolved**, That I will live so, as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.
18. **Resolved**, To live so, at all times, as I think is best in my most devout frames, and when I have the clearest notions of the things of the gospel, and another world.
19. **Resolved**, Never to do any thing, which I should be afraid to do, if I expected it would not be above an hour before I should hear the last trump.
20. **Resolved**, To maintain the strictest temperance in eating and drinking.
21. **Resolved**, Never to do any thing, which if I should see in another, I should count a just occasion to despise him for, or to think any way the more meanly of him.
22. **Resolved**, To endeavour to obtain for myself as much happiness in the other world as I possibly can, with all the power, might, vigour, and vehemence, yea violence, I am capable of, or can bring myself to exert, in any way that can be thought of.
23. **Resolved**, Frequently to take some deliberate action, which seems most unlikely to be done, for the glory of God, and

trace it back to the original intention, designs, and ends of it; and if I find it not to be for God's glory, to repute it as a breach of the fourth Resolution.

24. **Resolved**, Whenever I do any conspicuously evil action, to trace it back, till I come to the original cause; and then, both carefully endeavour to do so no more, and to fight and pray with all my might against the original of it.
25. **Resolved**, To examine carefully and constantly, what that one thing in me is, which causes me in the least to doubt of the love of God; and so direct all my forces against it.
26. **Resolved**, To cast away such things as I find do abate my assurance.
27. **Resolved**, Never wilfully to omit any thing, except the omission be for the glory of God; and frequently to examine my omissions.
28. **Resolved**, To study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive, myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.
29. **Resolved**, Never to count that a prayer, nor to let that pass as a prayer, nor that as a petition of a prayer, which is so made, that I cannot hope that God will answer it; nor that as a confession which I cannot hope God will accept.
30. **Resolved**, To strive every week to be brought higher in religion, and to a higher exercise of grace, than I was the week before.

31. **Resolved**, Never to say any thing at all against anybody, but when it is perfectly agreeable to the highest degree of christian honour, and of love to mankind, agreeable to the lowest humility, and sense of my own faults and failings, and agreeable to the golden rule; often, when I have said anything against any one, to bring it to, and try it strictly by, the test of this Resolution.
32. **Resolved**, To be strictly and firmly faithful to my trust, that that, in Proverbs 20:6. 'A faithful man, who can find?' may not be partly fulfilled in me.
33. **Resolved**, To do always what I can towards making, maintaining, and preserving peace, when it can be done without an overbalancing detriment in other respects.
December. 26, 1722.
34. **Resolved**, In narrations, never to speak anything but the pure and simple verity.
35. **Resolved**, Whenever I so much question whether I have done my duty, as that my quiet and calm is thereby disturbed, to set it down, and also how the question was resolved. December. 18, 1722.
36. **Resolved**, Never to speak evil of any, except I have some particular good call to it. December. 19, 1722.
37. **Resolved**, To inquire every night, as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent—what sin I have committed—and wherein I have denied myself—also, at the end of every

week, month, and year. December. 22 and 26, 1722.

38. **Resolved**, Never to utter anything that is sportive, or matter of laughter, on a Lord's day. Sabbath evening, December. 23, 1722.
39. **Resolved**, Never to do any thing, of which I so much question the lawfulness, as that I intend, at the same time, to consider and examine afterwards, whether it be lawful or not; unless I as much question the lawfulness of the omission.
40. **Resolved**, To inquire every night before I go to bed, whether I have acted in the best way I possibly could, with respect to eating and drinking. January. 7, 1723.
41. **Resolved**, to ask myself, at the end of every day, week, month, and year, wherein I could possibly, in any respect, have done better. January. 11, 1723.
42. **Resolved**, Frequently to renew the dedication of myself to God, which was made at my baptism, which I solemnly renewed when I was received into the communion of the church, and which I have solemnly remade this 12th day of January, 1723.
43. **Resolved**, Never, henceforward, till I die, to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's; agreeably to what is to be found in Saturday, January. 12th. **January.** 12, 1723.
44. **Resolved**, That no other end but religion shall have any influence at all on any of my actions; and that no action shall

be, in the least circumstance, any otherwise than the religious end will carry it. January. 12, 1723.

45. **Resolved**, Never to allow any pleasure or grief, joy or sorrow, nor any affection at all, nor any degree of affection, nor any circumstance relating to it, but what helps religion. January. 12 and 13, 1723.
46. **Resolved**, Never to allow the least measure of any fretting or uneasiness at my father or mother. **Resolved**, to suffer no effects of it, so much as in the least alteration of speech, or motion of my eye; and to be especially careful of it with respect to any of our family.
47. **Resolved**, To endeavour, to my utmost, to deny whatever is not most agreeable to a good and universally sweet and benevolent, quiet, peaceable, contented and easy, compassionate and generous, humble and meek, submissive and obliging, diligent and industrious, charitable and even, patient, moderate, forgiving, and sincere, temper; and to do, at all times, what such a temper would lead me to; and to examine strictly, at the end of every week, whether I have so done. Sabbath morning, May 5, 1723.
48. **Resolved**, Constantly, with the utmost niceness and diligence, and the strictest scrutiny, to be looking into the state of my soul, that I may know whether I have truly an interest in Christ or not; that when I come to die, I may not have any negligence respecting this to repent of. May 26, 1723.
49. **Resolved**, That this never shall be, if I can help it.

50. **Resolved**, That I will act so, as I think I shall judge would have been best, and most prudent, when I come into the future world. July 5, 1723.
51. **Resolved**, That I will act so, in every respect, as I think I shall wish I had done, if I should at last be damned. July 8, 1723.
52. I frequently hear persons in old age say how they would live, if they were to live their lives over again: **Resolved**, That I will live just so as I can think I shall wish I had done, supposing I live to old age. July 8, 1723.
53. **Resolved**, To improve every opportunity, when I am in the best and happiest frame of mind, to cast and venture my soul on the Lord Jesus Christ, to trust and confide in him, and consecrate myself wholly to him; that from this I may have assurance of my safety, knowing that I confide in my Redeemer. July 8, 1723.
54. **Resolved**, Whenever I hear anything spoken in commendation of any person, if I think it would be praiseworthy in me, that I will endeavour to imitate it. July 8, 1723.
55. **Resolved**, To endeavour, to my utmost, so to act, as I can think I should do, if I had already seen the happiness of heaven and hell torments. July 8, 1723.
56. **Resolved**, Never to give over, nor in the least to slacken, my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.
57. **Resolved**, When I fear misfortunes and adversity, to examine whether I have done my duty, and resolve to do it and let the

event be just as Providence orders it. I will, as far as I can, be concerned about nothing but my duty and my sin. June 9, and July 13, 1723.

58. **Resolved**, Not only to refrain from an air of dislike, fretfulness, and anger in conversation, but to exhibit an air of love, cheerfulness, and benignity. May 27, and July 13, 1723.
59. **Resolved**, When I am most conscious of provocations to ill nature and anger, that I will strive most to feel and act good-naturedly; yea, at such times, to manifest good nature, though I think that in other respects it would be disadvantageous, and so as would be imprudent at other times. May 12, July 11, and July 13.
60. **Resolved**, Whenever my feelings begin to appear in the least out of order, when I am conscious of the least uneasiness within, or the least irregularity without, I will then subject myself to the strictest examination. July 4 and 13, 1723.
61. **Resolved**, That I will not give way to that listlessness which I find unbends and relaxes my mind from being fully and fixedly set on religion, whatever excuse I may have for it—that what my listlessness inclines me to do, is best to be done, etc. May 21, and July 13, 1723.
62. **Resolved**, Never to do any thing but my duty, and then, according to Ephesians 6:6-8 to do it willingly and cheerfully, as unto the Lord, and not to man: knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the same shall be receive of the Lord. June 25, and July 13, 1723.

63. On the supposition, that there never was to be but one individual in the world, at any one time, who was properly a complete Christian, in all respects of a right stamp, having Christianity always shining in its true lustre, and appearing excellent and lovely, from whatever part and under whatever character viewed: **Resolved**, To act just as I would do, if I strove with all my might to be that one, who should live in my time. January. 14, and July 13, 1723.
64. **Resolved**, When I find those "**groanings which cannot be uttered**," of which the apostle speaks, and those "**breathings of soul** for the longing it hath," of which the psalmist speaks, Psalm 119:20 that I will promote them to the utmost of my power; and that I will not be weary of earnestly endeavouring to vent my desires, nor of the repetitions of such earnestness. July 23, and August. 10, 1723.
65. **Resolved**, Very much to exercise myself in this, all my life long, **viz.** with the greatest openness of which I am capable, to declare my ways to God, and lay open my soul to him, all my sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, fears, hopes, desires, and everything, and every circumstance, according to Dr. Manton's Sermon on the 119th Psalm, July 26, and August. 10, 1723.
66. **Resolved**, That I will endeavour always to keep a benign aspect, and air of acting and speaking, in all places, and in all companies, except it should so happen that duty requires otherwise.

67. **Resolved**, After afflictions, to inquire, what I am the better for them; what good I have got by them; and, what I might have got by them.
68. **Resolved**, To confess frankly to myself, all that which I find in myself, either infirmity or sin; and, if it be what concerns religion, also to confess the whole case to God, and implore needed help. July 23, and August 10, 1723.
69. **Resolved**, Always to do that, which I shall wish I had done when I see others do it. August. 11, 1723.
70. Let there be something of benevolence in all that I speak. August. 17, 1723."

Such were the excellent Resolutions formed by Jonathan Edwards at an early period of life, and which in succeeding years were regarded by him, not as unimportant records, but as containing the great principles of the spiritual life. A deep and extensive knowledge of the heart is manifest in these Resolutions, a conviction of its defects, a lively apprehension of its dangers, and an intense concern that all its tendencies should be towards God, and towards everything required by his holy will. There is a remarkable tenderness of conscience discovered in every particular which has been stated. The man who could thus write, was not one who could easily trifle with sin, or who could enter any of its paths without the immediate reproofs of an offended conscience. This holy man trembled even at the distant view of sin; he could not willingly come near and survey its enticements. Accustomed to breathe in a holy atmosphere, the least taint of corruption immediately affected his spiritual frame. He knew no happiness except that connected with a conscience void of offence. All these rules were the

suggestions of a conscience of a highly enlightened character.

They also indicate a constant sense of the presence and exact observations of the Searcher of all hearts. The writer lived as seeing him who is invisible; he set the Lord always before him; encouraging upon all occasions an earnest concern for the glory of God, the grand object for which he desired to live both upon earth and in heaven, an object compared with which all other things seemed in his view but trifles. If this were attained, all his desires were satisfied; but if this were lost or imperfectly gained, his soul was filled with anguish. These Resolutions afford ample testimony how much the author had entered into the spirit of 1 Corinthians 10:31. ***Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*** They also illustrate his views of the importance of consistency of character. He was not content with accurate views of truth, or any kind of outward profession, apart from holy consistency of character. He studied, he admired, and he exhibited the influence of the gospel; a walk "worthy of the vocation wherewith he was called" was the elevated object at which he ardently aimed. He well knew that the followers of Christ are required "to hold forth the word of life," to shine as lights in the world, to instruct by their examples as well as by their words; and he desired to honour God by presenting to the view of the members of the spiritual kingdom, and also of the world, an example which might declare the reality and the beauty of religion. It is further manifest from these Resolutions, that his mind was most anxious for daily advancement in every branch of holiness. An active spiritual principle existed in him, which caused him to press forward, whatever might be the obstacles in his way. He could not be contented while one sin remained in him, while one grace was defective, or a single duty engaged in but imperfectly. He longed for the holy perfection of the heavenly world, and anticipated with joy that day when he should awake with the Divine likeness. It cannot be a matter of surprise, that

with these sentiments and feelings he attained an exaltation of character seldom equalled and perhaps never surpassed.

The Resolutions which have given rise to these reflections are probably, "to persons of every age, but especially to the young, the best uninspired summary of christian duty, the best directory to high attainment in evangelical virtue, which the mind of man has hitherto been able to form." They disclose the writer's own character, and they are admirably calculated to improve the character of every reader who fears to sin, and rejoices in the purity of the Divine will.

Chapter IV^(TOC)

His Diary.

THE views and practices of men of equal excellence have differed considerably in regard to the keeping of a diary. Many have never attempted it; some who at one period of life commenced it have afterwards from various causes declined it; and others have steadily adhered to a custom which certainly has the sanction of some of the most eminent names in the church of God. It is at once admitted that many diaries have been kept in the most injudicious manner, and it is still more an object of deep regret that these records have in some instances been published, not merely to the grief of serious and intelligent minds, but to the injury of religion itself, and the exciting a prejudice against all similar records. There are, however, some published journals of excellent men which evince so much solid judgment as well as fervent piety, and have been the sources of so much usefulness, that a more than equal balance is presented against works in part of an opposite description. No one is disposed to lament the publication of parts of the Diaries of Philip and Matthew Henry, Brainerd, Doddridge, or Joseph Williams and some others; writings which illustrate the inward and outward power of godliness, reflect honour upon the individuals themselves, and yield a powerful and holy stimulus to the minds of other Christians. The Diary of Jonathan Edwards corresponds in its excellencies with those to which reference is thus made, and will be perused with the same feelings, and lead it is hoped to the like beneficial effects—This Diary begins December. 18, 1722, when he was nineteen years of age. As far as to January. 15th, at night, it is written on two detached slips of paper; and the remainder in a book.^[4] As

it commences abruptly, and as near as possible to the top of that paper, the beginning of it is undoubtedly lost; and it is not improbable, that, as he originally wrote it, it may have reached back, at least to the period of his preparation for the ministry. It was intended, as will at once be perceived, for his own private use exclusively; and had it been with him at the close of life, it is not unlikely it might have been destroyed. "Still, whatever is calculated to do good, and is perfectly consistent with an author's real reputation, may be published with honour, whatever his design might be while writing. The best of men, indeed, have thoughts, and opinions, and feelings, which are perfectly proper and right in themselves, which yet it would be wholly improper for them to disclose to others. But a man of sound discretion will take care that nothing of this nature is placed within the reach of accident. What Mr. Edwards wished to have concealed from every eye but his own, he wrote in *short hand*; and on one occasion, after having written to a considerable extent in that character, he adds this remark in his customary hand, 'Remember to act according to Proverbs 12:23. A prudent man concealeth knowledge.'

[5] "The reader, while perusing the Diary in its various parts, will be struck with it as possessing the following characteristics. It consists of facts; and of solid thought, dictated by deep religious feeling; and not of the mere expressions of feeling, or of common-place moral reflections or exhortations. It was intended for his own eyes exclusively; and not chiefly for those of his friends and of the public. It is an exhibition of the simple thinking, feeling, and acting of a man, who is unconscious how he appears, except to himself and to God; and not the remarks of one, who is desirous of being thought humble, respecting his own humility. If we suppose a man of christian simplicity and godly sincerity to bring all the secret movements of his own soul under the clear, strong light of heaven, and there to survey them with a

piercing and an honest eye, and a contrite heart, in order to humble himself, and make himself better; it is just the account which such a man would write."

Diary—December, 1722^(TOC)

"December. 18. This day made the 35th Resolution. The reason why I in the least question my interest in God's love and favour, is—1. Because I cannot speak so fully to my experience of that preparatory work, of which divines speak—2. I do not remember that I experienced regeneration, exactly in those steps, in which divines say it is generally wrought—3. I do not feel the christian graces sensibly enough, particularly faith. I fear they are only such hypocritical out-side affections, which wicked men may feel as well as others. They do not seem to be sufficiently inward, full, sincere, entire, and hearty. They do not seem so substantial, and so wrought into my very nature, as I could wish—4. Because I am sometimes guilty of sins of omission and commission. Lately I have doubted, whether I do not transgress in evil speaking. This day, resolved, No.

December. 19. This day made the 36th Resolution. Lately I have been very much perplexed, by seeing the doctrine of different degrees in glory questioned; but now have almost got over the difficulty.

December. 20. This day somewhat questioned, whether I had not been guilty of negligence yesterday, and this morning; but resolved, No.

December. 21, **Friday.** This day and yesterday, I was exceedingly dull, dry, and dead.

December. 22, **Saturday.** This day, revived by God's Holy Spirit; affected with the sense of the excellency of holiness; felt more exercise of love to Christ, than usual. Have, also, felt sensible repentance for sin, because it was committed against so merciful and good a God. This night made the 37th

Resolution.

Sabbath night, December. 23. Made the 38th Resolution.

Monday, December. 24. Higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Christ and his kingdom—Concluded to observe, at the end of every month, the number of breaches of resolutions, to see whether they increase or diminish, to begin from this day, and to compute from that the weekly account my monthly increase, and out of the whole, my yearly increase, beginning from new-year days.

Wednesday, December. 26. Early in the morning yesterday, was hindered by the headache all day; though I hope I did not lose much. Made an addition to the 37th Resolution, concerning weeks, months, and years—***At night.*** Made the 33d Resolution.

Saturday, December. 29. About sunset this day, dull and lifeless. 1722-23,
Tuesday, January. 1. Have been dull for several days. Examined whether I have not been guilty of negligence to-day; and resolved, No.

Wednesday, January. 2. Dull. I find, by experience, that, let me make resolutions, and do what I will, with never so many inventions, it is all nothing, and to no purpose at all, without the motions of the Spirit of God; for if the Spirit of God should be as much withdrawn from me always, as for the week past, notwithstanding all I do, I should not grow, but should languish, and miserably fade away. I perceive, if God should withdraw his Spirit a little more, I should not hesitate to break my resolutions, and should soon arrive at my old state. There is no dependence on myself. Our resolutions may be at the highest one day, and yet, the next day, we may be in a miserable dead condition, not at all like the same person who resolved. So that it is to no purpose to resolve, except we depend on the grace of God. For, if it were not

for his mere grace, one might be a very good man one day, and a very wicked one the next. I find also by experience, that there is no guessing out the ends of Providence, in particular dispensations towards me—any otherwise than as afflictions come as corrections for sin, and God intends when we meet with them, to desire us to look back on our ways, and see wherein we have done amiss, and lament that particular sin, and all our sins, before him—knowing this, also, that all things shall work together for our good; not knowing in what way, indeed, but trusting in God.

Saturday evening, January. 5. A little redeemed from a long dreadful dulness, about reading the Scriptures. This week, have been unhappily low in the weekly account—and what are the reasons of it?—abundance of listlessness and sloth; and if this should continue much longer, I perceive that other sins will begin to discover themselves. It used to appear to me, that I had not much sin remaining; but now, I perceive that there are great remainders of sin. Where may it not bring me to, if God should leave me? Sin is not enough mortified. Without the influences of the Spirit of God, the old serpent would begin to rouse up himself from his frozen state, and would come to life again. **Resolved**, that I have been negligent in two things—in not striving enough in duty; and in not forcing myself upon religious thoughts.

Sabbath, January. 6. At night. Much concerned about the improvement of precious time. Intend to live in continual mortification, without ceasing, and even to weary myself thereby as long as I am in this world, and never to expect or desire any worldly ease or pleasure.

Monday, January. 7. At night, made the 40th Resolution.

Tuesday, January. 8. In the morning, had higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Christ, and felt an unusual repentance of sin therefrom.

Wednesday, January. 9. At night. Decayed. I am sometimes apt to think, that I have a great deal more of holiness than I really have. I find now and then that abominable corruption, which is directly contrary to what I read of eminent Christians. I do not seem to be half so careful to improve time, to do every thing quick, and in as short a time as I possibly can, nor to be perpetually engaged to think about religion, as I was yesterday and the day before, nor indeed as I have been at certain times, perhaps a twelvemonth ago. If my resolutions of that nature, from that time, had always been kept alive and awake, how much better might I have been than I now am! How deceitful is my heart! I take up a strong resolution, but how soon doth it weaken!

Thursday, January 10. About noon. Recovering. It is a great dishonour to Christ, in whom I hope I have an interest, to be uneasy at my worldly state and condition; or when I see the prosperity of others, and that all things go easy with them, the world is smooth to them, and they are very happy in many respects, and very prosperous, or are advanced to much honour; to grudge them their prosperity, or envy them on account of it, or to be in the least uneasy at it, to wish and long for the same prosperity, and to desire that it should ever be so with me. Wherefore, concluded always to rejoice in every one's prosperity, and not to pretend to expect or desire it for myself; and to expect no happiness of that nature, as long as I live; but to depend on afflictions, and to betake myself entirely to another happiness—I think I find myself much more sprightly and healthy, both in body and mind, for my self-denial in eating, drinking, and sleeping. I think it would be advantageous, every morning to consider my business and temptations, and the sins to which I shall be exposed on that day, and to make a resolution how to improve the day, and avoid those sins; and so at the beginning of every week, month, and year. I never knew before what was meant, by not setting our

hearts on those things. It is, not to care about them, nor to depend upon them, nor to afflict ourselves with the fear of losing them, nor to please ourselves with the expectation of obtaining them, or with the hopes of their continuance—*At night.* Made the 41st Resolution.

Saturday, January 12. In the morning. I have, this day, solemnly renewed my baptismal covenant and self-dedication, which I renewed when I was taken into the communion of the church. I have been before God, and have given myself, all that I am and have, to God; so that I am not, in any respect, my own. I can challenge no right in this understanding, this will, these affections, which are in me. Neither have I any right to this body, or any of its members—no right to this tongue, these hands, these feet; no right to these senses, these eyes, these ears, this smell, or this taste. I have given myself clear away, and have not retained any thing as my own. I gave myself to God in my baptism, and I have been this morning to him, and told him, that I gave myself *wholly* to him. I have given every power to him; so that, for the future, I'll challenge no right in myself, in no respect whatever. I have expressly promised him, and I do now promise Almighty God, that by his grace I will not. I have this morning told him that I did take him for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law, for the constant rule of my obedience; and would fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life; and that I did believe in Jesus Christ, and did receive him as a Prince and Saviour; and that I would adhere to the faith and obedience of the gospel, however hazardous and difficult the confession and practice of it may be; and that I did receive the blessed Spirit as my Teacher, Sanctifier, and only Comforter, and cherish all his motions to enlighten, purify, confirm, comfort, and assist me. This, I have done; and I pray God, for the sake of Christ, to look upon it as a self-dedication, and to

receive me now as entirely his own, and to deal with me, in all respects, as such, whether he afflicts me or prospers me, or whatever he pleases to do with me, who am his. Now, henceforth, I am not to act, in any respect, as my own—I shall act as my own, if I ever make use of any of my powers to any thing that is not to the glory of God, and do not make the glorifying of him my whole and entire business—if I murmur in the least at affliction; if I grieve at the prosperity of others; if I am in any way uncharitable; if I am angry because of injuries; if I revenge them; if I do any thing purely to please myself, or if I avoid any thing for the sake of my own ease; if I omit any thing because it is great selfdenial; if I trust to myself; if I take any of the praise of the good that I do, or that God doth by me; or if I am in any way proud. This day, made the 42nd and 43rd Resolutions—Whether or no, any other end ought to have any influence at all on any of my actions; or whether any action ought to be any otherwise, in any respect, than it would be, if nothing else but religion had the least influence on my mind. Wherefore I make the 44th Resolution.

Query: Whether any delight or satisfaction ought to be allowed, because any other end is obtained beside a religious one—*In the afternoon.* I answer, Yes, because, if we should never suffer ourselves to rejoice, but because we have obtained a religious end, we should never rejoice at the sight of friends, we should not allow ourselves any pleasure in our food, whereby the animal spirits would be withdrawn, and good digestion hindered. But the query is to be answered thus—We never ought to allow any joy or sorrow, but what helps religion. Wherefore, I make the 45th Resolution.

The reason why I so soon grow lifeless, and unfit for the business I am about, I have found out, is only because I have been used to suffer myself to leave off, for the sake of ease, and so I have acquired a habit of expecting ease; and

therefore, when I think I have exercised myself a great while, I cannot keep myself to it any longer, because I expect to be released, as my due and right. And then I am deceived, as if I were really tired and weary, whereas, if I did not expect ease, and was resolved to occupy myself by business as much as I could, I should continue with the same vigour at my business, without vacation time to rest. Thus I have found it in reading the Scriptures; and thus I have found it in prayer; and thus I believe it to be in getting sermons by heart, and in other things.

At night. This week, the weekly account rose higher than ordinary. It is suggested to me, that too constant a mortification, and too vigorous application to religion, may be prejudicial to health; but nevertheless, I will plainly feel it and experience it, before I cease on this account. It is no matter how much tired and weary I am, if my health is not impaired.

Sabbath day, January 13. I plainly feel, that if I should continue to go on, as from the beginning of the last week hitherto, I should continually grow and increase in grace. After the afternoon meeting, made an addition to the 45th Resolution—**At noon.** I remember I thought that I loved to be a member of Christ, and not any thing distinct, but only a part, so as to have no separate interest or pleasure of my own—**At night.** Resolved to endeavour fully to understand 1 Corinthians 7:29-32 and to act according to it.

Monday, January 14. About 10 o'clock in the morning made this book, and put these papers in it.^[6] The dedication, which I made of myself to God on Saturday last, has been exceedingly useful to me. I thought I had a more spiritual insight into the Scriptures, when reading the 8th of Romans, than ever before—**At night.** Great instances of mortification are deep wounds given to the body of sin; hard blows, which make him stagger and reel. We thereby get strong ground and footing against him, he is the weaker ever

after, and we have easier work with him the next time. He grows cowardly; and we can easily cause him to give way, until at length we find it easy work with him, and can kill him at pleasure. While we live without great instances of mortification and selfdenial, the old man keeps about where he was; for he is sturdy and obstinate, and will not stir for small blows. This, without doubt, is one great reason why many Christians do not sensibly increase in grace. After the greatest mortifications, I always find the greatest comfort. Wrote the 63rd Resolution. Such little things as Christians commonly do, will not evince much increase of grace. We must do great things for God—It will be best, when I find that I have lost any former ancient good motions or actions, to take notice of it, if I can remember them.

Tuesday, January 15. About two or three o'clock. I have been all this time decaying. It seemed yesterday, the day before, and Saturday, that I should always retain the same resolutions to the same height. But alas! how soon do I decay! O how weak, how infirm, how unable to do any thing of myself! What a poor inconsistent being! What a miserable wretch, without the assistance of the Spirit of God! While I stand, I am ready to think that I stand by my own strength, and upon my own legs; and I am ready to triumph over my spiritual enemies, as if it were I myself that caused them to flee—when alas! I am but a poor infant, upheld by Jesus Christ; who holds me up, and gives me liberty to smile to see my enemies flee, when he drives them before me. And so I laugh, as though I myself did it, when it is only Jesus Christ leads me along, and fights himself against my enemies. And now the Lord has a little left me, how weak do I find myself! O let it teach me to depend less on myself, to be more humble, and to give more of the praise of my ability to Jesus Christ! The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?—The occasion of my decaying, is a little melancholy. My spirits are depressed, because I fear that I lost some

friendship the last night; and, my spirits being depressed, my resolutions have lost their strength. I differ to-day from yesterday in these things: I do not resolve anything to-day half so strongly. I am not so perpetually thinking of renewing my resolutions as I was then. I am not half so vigorous as I was then; nor am I half so careful to do every thing with vigour. Then, I kept continually acting; but now, I do things slowly, and satisfy myself by thinking of religion in the mean time. I am not so careful to go from one business to another—I felt humiliation about sunset. What shall I do, in order that I may, with a good grace, fall into christian discourse and conversation? —**At night.** The next time I am in such a lifeless frame, I will force myself to go rapidly from one thing to another, and to do those things with vigour, in which vigour would ever be useful. The things which take off my mind, when bent on religion, are commonly some remarkable change or alteration—journeys, change of place, change of business, change of studies, and change of other circumstances; or something that makes me melancholy; or some sin.

Thursday, January 17. About three o'clock, overwhelmed with melancholy.

Friday, January 18. At night. Beginning to endeavour to recover out of the

death I have been in for these several days. **Sabbath day, January 20. At night.** The last week I was sunk so low, that I fear it will be a long time before I am recovered. I fell exceedingly low in the weekly account. I find my heart so deceitful, that I am almost discouraged from making any more resolutions—Wherein have I been negligent in the week past; and how could I have done better, to help the dreadful low estate in which I am sunk?

Monday, January 21 Before sunrise, answered the preceding questions thus: I ought to have spent my time in bewailing my sins, and in singing psalms—especially psalms or hymns of penitence; these duties being most suited to the frame I was in. I do not spend time enough in endeavouring to affect

myself with the glories of Christianity—Fell short in the monthly account. It seems to me, that I am fallen from my former sense of the pleasantness of religion.

Tuesday, February. 5. At night. I have thought that this being so exceedingly careful, and so particularly anxious, to force myself to think of religion at all times, has exceedingly distracted my mind, and made me altogether unfit for that and every thing else. I have thought that this caused the dreadful low condition I was in on the 15th of January. I think that I stretched myself further than I could bear, and so broke—But now it seems to me, though I know not why, that I do not do enough to prepare for another world. I do not seem to press forward, to fight and wrestle, as the apostles used to speak. I do not seem so greatly and constantly to mortify and deny myself, as the mortification of which they speak represents. Therefore, wherein ought I to do more in this way?—I answer: I am again grown too careless about eating, drinking, and sleeping—not careful enough about evilspeaking.

Saturday, February. 16. I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel prescribes—**At night.** For the time past of my life, I have been negligent, in that I have not sufficiently kept up that part of divine worship, singing the praise of God in secret and with company—I have been negligent this month past, in these three things: I have not been watchful enough over my appetites, in eating and drinking; in rising too late in the morning; and in not applying myself with sufficient application to the duty of secret prayer.

Sabbath day, February. 17. Near sunset. Renewedly promised, that I will accept of God for my whole portion, and that I will be contented, whatever else I am denied. I will not murmur, nor be grieved, whatever prosperity upon any account I see others enjoy and I am denied. To this I have lately acted contrary.

Thursday, February. 21. I perceive that I never yet have adequately known what was meant by being weaned from the world, by not laying up treasure on earth, but in heaven, by not having our portion in this life, by making the concerns of another life our whole business, by taking God for our whole portion. I find my heart in great part yet adheres to the earth. O that it might be quite separated from thence. I find when I have power and reputation as others, I am uneasy, and it does not satisfy me to tell me, that I have chosen God for my whole portion, and that I have promised to rest entirely contented with him.

Saturday, February. 23. I find myself miserably negligent, and that I might do twice the business that I do, if I were set upon it. See how soon my thoughts of this matter will be differing from what they are now. I have been indulging a horrid laziness a good while, and did not know it. I can do seven times as much in the same time now, as I can at other times, not because my faculties are in better tune; but because of the fire of diligence that I feel burning within me. If I could but always continue so, I should not meet with one quarter of the trouble. I should run the christian race much better, and should go out of the world a much better man.

Saturday, March 2. O how much more base and vile am I, when I feel pride working in me, than when I am in a more humble disposition of mind! How much, how exceedingly much, more lovely is an humble than a proud disposition! I now plainly perceive it, and am really sensible of it. How immensely more pleasant is an humble delight, than a high thought of myself! How much better do I feel, when I am truly humbling myself, than when I am pleasing myself with my own perfections! O how much pleasanter is humility than pride! O that God would fill me with exceeding great humility, and that he would evermore keep me from all pride! The pleasures

of humility are really the most refined, inward, and exquisite delights in the world. How hateful is a proud man! How hateful is a worm, that lifts up itself with pride! What a foolish, silly, miserable, blind, deceived poor worm am I, when pride works—**At night**. I have lately been negligent as to reading the Scriptures. Notwithstanding my resolutions on Saturday was se'night, I have not been sedulous and diligent enough.

Wednesday, March 6. Near sunset. Regarded the doctrines of election, free grace, our inability to do any thing without the grace of God, and that holiness is entirely, throughout, the work of the Spirit of God, with greater pleasure than ever before.

Thursday, March 7. I think I now suffer from not forcing myself enough on religious thoughts.

Saturday night, March 24. I intend, if I am ever settled, to concert measures, and study methods, of doing good in the world, and to draw up rules of acting in this matter, in writing, of all the methods I can possibly devise, by which I can in any respect do good.

Saturday night, March 31. This week I have been too careless about eating.

Monday morning, April 2. I think it best not to allow myself to laugh at the faults, follies, and infirmities of others.

Saturday night, April 7. This week I found myself so far gone, that it seemed to me I should never recover more. Let God of his mercy return unto me, and no more leave me thus to sink and decay! I know, O Lord, that with-out thy help I shall fall, innumerable times, not withstanding all my resolutions, how often soever repeated.

Saturday night, April 14. I could pray more heartily this night for the for-

givenness of my enemies, than ever before—I am somewhat apt, after having asked one petition over many times, to be weary of it; but I am now resolved not to give way to such a disposition.

Wednesday forenoon, May 1. Last night I came home, after my melancholy parting from New York.

I have always in every different state of life I have hitherto been in, thought that the troubles and difficulties of that state were greater than those of any other state that I proposed to be in; and when I have altered, with assurance of mending myself, I have still thought the same, yea that the difficulties of that state are greater than those of that I left last. Lord, grant that from hence I may learn to withdraw thoughts, affections, desires, and expectations entirely from the world, and may fix them upon the heavenly state, where there is fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, sweet, calm, and delightful love without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where there is the enjoyment of this love without ever parting; and where those persons, who appear so lovely in this world, will be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. How sweetly will those, who thus mutually love, join together in singing the praises of God and the Lamb. How full will it fill us with joy, to think that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never cease or come to an end, but will last to all eternity. Remember after journeys, removals, overturnings, and alterations in the state of my life, to reflect and consider, whether therein I have managed the best way possible respecting my soul; and before such alterations, if foreseen, to resolve how to act.

Thursday, May 2. Afternoon. I observe this, that when I was at New York, when I meditated on things of a religious nature, I used to conceive of myself as walking in the fields at home; but now I am at home, I conceive of myself

as walking in the fields which I used to frequent at New York. I think it a very good way, to examine dreams every morning when I awake; what are the nature, circumstance, principles, and ends of my imaginary actions and passions in them; in order to discern what are my prevailing inclinations, etc.

Saturday night, May 4. Although I have, in some measure, subdued a disposition to chide and fret, yet I find a certain inclination, which is not agree-able to christian sweetness of temper and conversation: either too much dog-maticalness or too much egotism; a disposition to manifest my own dislike and scorn, and my own freedom from those which are innocent, sinless, yea common infirmities of men, and many other such like things. O that God would help me to discover all the flaws and defects of my temper and conversation, and help me in the difficult work of amending them; and that he would grant me so full a measure of vital Christianity, that the foundation of all those disagreeable irregularities may be destroyed, and the contrary sweetnesses and beauties may of themselves naturally follow.

Sabbath morning, May 5. Made the 47th Resolution.

Monday morning, May 6. I think it best commonly to come before God three times in a day, except I find a great inaptitude to that duty.

Saturday night, May 11. I have been to blame, the month past, in not laying violence enough to my inclination, to force myself to a better improvement of time. Have been tardy with respect to the 47th Resolution. Have also been negligent about keeping my thoughts, when joining with others in prayer.

Sabbathday morning, May 12. I have lost that relish of the Scriptures, and other good books, which I had five or six months ago. **Resolved,** When I find in myself the least disposition to exercise good nature, that I will then strive most to feel good-naturedly—**At noon.** Observe to remember the meditations

which I had at West Chester, as I was coming from New York; and those which I had in the orchard; and those under the oak-tree. This day, and the last night, I read over and reviewed those reflections and remarks, which I find to be a very beneficial thing to me—*After the afternoon meeting*. I think I find in my heart to be glad from the hopes I have, that my eternity is to be spent in spiritual and holy joys, arising from the manifestation of God's love, and the exercise of holiness, and burning love to him.

Saturday night, May 18. This week past, spent in journeying to Norwich, and the towns thereabouts. This day returned, and received a letter from my dear friend, Mr. John Smith—The last Wednesday, took up a resolution to refrain from all manner of evil speaking, for one week to try it, and see the effect of it: hoping, if that evil speaking, which I used to allow myself in, and to account lawful, agreeably to the resolutions I have formed concerning it, were not lawful, or best, I should hereby discover it, and get the advantage of temptations to it, and so deceive myself into a strict adherence to my duty, respecting that matter—that that corruption, which I cannot conquer by main strength, I may get the victory of by stratagem. I find the effect of it already to be, to make me apt to take it for granted, that what I have resolved on this week, is a duty to be observed for ever.

I now plainly perceive, what great obligations I am under to love and honour my parents. I have great reason to believe, that their counsel and education have been my making: though, in the time of it, it seemed to do me so little good. I have good reason to hope, that their prayers for me have been, in many things, very powerful and prevalent, that God has, in many things, taken me under his care and guidance, provision and direction, in answer to their prayers for me. I was never made so sensible of it as now.

I think it the best way, in general, not to seek for honour, in any other way,

than by seeking to be good and to do good. I may pursue knowledge, religion, the glory of God, and the good of mankind with the utmost vigour; but am to leave the honour of it entirely at God's disposal, as a thing with which I have no immediate concern; no, not although, by possessing that honour, I have the greater opportunity to do good.

Mem. To be particularly careful, lest I should be tardy in any point wherein I have been negligent, or have erred, in days, weeks, months, or years past.

Sabbath-day morning, May 19. With respect to my journey last week, I was not careful enough to watch opportunities of solemnly approaching to God three times a day. The last week, when I was about to take up the Wednesday Resolution, it was proposed to me, in my thought, to omit it till I got home again, because there would be a more convenient opportunity. Thus am I ready to look at any thing as an excuse, to grow slack in my christian course—**At night.** Concluded to add to my inquiries, as to the spending of time—At the beginning of the day, or the period, What can I do for the good of men?—and at the end, What have I done for their good?

Tuesday morning, May 21. My conscience is, undoubtedly, more calm, since my last Wednesday Resolution, than it was before.

Wednesday morning, May 22. Memorandum. To take special care of the following things: evil speaking, fretting, eating, drinking, and sleeping, speaking simple verity, joining in prayer, slightness in secret prayer, listlessness and negligence, and thoughts that cherish sin.

Saturday morning, May 25. As I was this morning reading the 17th Resolution, it was suggested to me, that if I were now to die, I should wish that I had prayed more that God would make me know my state, whether it be good or bad, and that I had taken more pains and care, to see and narrowly

search into that matter. Wherefore, **Mem**, for the future, most nicely and diligently to look into the opinions of our old divines, concerning conversion. This morning made the 48th Resolution.

Monday afternoon, May 27. Memorandum. Not only to keep from an air of dislike, anger, and fretfulness, in discourse or conversation; but, let me also have as much of an appearance of love, cheerfulness, and benignity, as may be, with a good grace. These following things especially to beware of, in order to the better observation of the 47th Resolution: distrust, discontent, uneasiness and a complaining temper, self-opinion, self-confidence, melancholy, moroseness, slight antipathy, privacy, indolence, and want of resolution—to beware of any thing in discourse or conversation that savours of these.

Saturday night, June 8. At Boston. When I find myself listless and dull, and not easily affected by reading religious books, then to read my resolutions, remarks, reflections, etc—One thing that would be of great advantage to me, in reading to my profit, would be, the endeavouring, with all my might, **to keep the image and picture of the thing in my mind**, and be careful that I do not lose it in the chain of the discourse.

Sabbath day, June 9, after the afternoon meeting. Mem. When I fear misfortune, to examine whether I have done my duty; and at the same time, to resolve to do it, and let it go, and be concerned about nothing, but my duty and my sin.

Saturday morning, June 15. At Windsor. Have been to blame, this journey, with respect to strict temperance, in eating, drinking, and sleeping, and in suffering too small matters to give interruption to my wonted chain of religious exercises—Concluded to protract the Wednesday Resolution to the

end of my life.

Tuesday morning, June 18. Mem. To do that part, which I conveniently can, of my stated exercise, while about other business, such as self-examination, resolutions, etc. that I may do the remainder in less time.

Friday afternoon, June 21. I have abundant cause, O my merciful Father, to love thee ardently, and greatly, to bless and praise thee, that thou hast heard me, in my earnest request, and so hast answered my prayer, for mercy, to keep me from decay and sinking. O, graciously of thy mere goodness, still continue to pity my misery, by reason of my sinfulness. O, my dear Redeemer, I commit myself, together with my prayer and thanksgiving, into thine hand.

Saturday morning, June 22. Altered the 36th Resolution, to make it the same with the Wednesday Resolution. If I should take special care, every day, to rise above, or not to fall below, or to fall as little as I possibly could below, what I was the day before, it would be of great advantage to me—I take notice that most of these determinations, when I first resolve them, seem as if they would be much more beneficial than I find them.

Tuesday morning, June 25. Last sabbath, at Boston, reading the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses of the 6th to the Ephesians, concluded that it would be much to my advantage, to take the greatest care, never to do any thing but my duty, and then to do it willingly, cheerfully, and gladly, whatever danger or unpleasant circumstances it may be attended with; with good-will doing it, as to the Lord, not as pleasing man, or myself; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

Saturday morning, June 29. It is best to be careful in prayer, not to put up those petitions, of which I do not feel a sincere desire: thereby my prayer is

rendered less sincere, less acceptable to God, and less useful to myself.

Monday noon, July 1. I find I am not careful enough, to keep out all thoughts but religious ones on the sabbath. When I find the least uneasiness in doing my duty, to fly to the 43rd Resolution.

Wednesday night, July 3. I am too negligent, with respect to improving petty opportunities of doing good; thinking, that the good will be very small and unextended, and not worth the pains. **Resolved**, to regulate this, as that which is wrong, and what ought not to be—Again confirmed by experience, of the happy effects of a strict temperance, with respect both to body and mind.

Thursday morning, July 4. The last night, in bed, when thinking of death, I thought if I was then to die, that which would make me die in the least degree fearfully, would be the want of a trusting and relying on Jesus Christ, so distinctly and plainly, as has been described by divines; my not having experienced so particular a venturing, and entirely trusting my soul on Christ, after the fears of hell, and terrors of the Lord, encouraged by the mercy, faithfulness, and promises of God, and the gracious invitations of Christ. Then I thought I could go out of the world, as much assured of my salvation, as I was of Christ's faithfulness, knowing that if Christ did not fail me, he would save me who had trusted in him on his word—**At night.** Whenever things begin to seem to be in the least out of order, when things begin to feel uneasy within, or irregular without, then to examine myself by the strictest examination—**Resolved**, for the future to observe rather more of meekness, moderation, and temper in disputes.

Friday morning, July 5. Last night, when thinking what I should wish I had done, that I had not done, if I was then to die; I thought I should wish, that I had been more importunate with God to fit me for death, and lead me into all

truth, and that I might not be deceived about the state of my soul—In the forenoon made the 50th Resolution.

Thursday night, July 11. This day, too impatient at the church meeting. Snares and briers have been in my way this afternoon. It is good at such times for one to manifest good nature, even to one's disadvantage, and so as would be imprudent at other times.

Saturday morning, July 13. Transferred the conclusion of June 9, to the Resolution, No. 57; and the conclusion of May 27, to No. 58; and May 12, and July 11, to No. 59; and of July 4, **at night**, to No. 60; and of May 24, to No. 61; and of June 25, to No. 62; and about noon, the Resolution of January 14, to No. 63—In times past, I have been too free in judging of the hearts of men from their actions.

Thursday, July 18. Near sunset. Resolved, to make sure of that sign, which the apostle James gives of a perfect man: James 3:2. "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able, also, to bridle the whole body."

Friday afternoon, July 19. 1 Peter 2:18. "Servants, be subject to your masters, with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward:" how then ought children to honour their parents!—This verse, together with the two following, **viz.** "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience to-ward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."

Saturday noon, July 20. Dr. Manton's Sermon, on the 119th Psalm. pp. 140, 141. Of Evil-speaking, Use 2d. To them that either devise or receive reproaches. Both are very sinful. Hypocrites, and men that put themselves

into a garb of religion, are all for censuring, take a mighty freedom that way: these men betray the rottenness of their hearts—Alas, in our own sight, we should be the worst of men. The children of God do ever thus speak of themselves, as the least of saints, the greatest of sinners—"more brutish than any man"—"of sinners, whereof I am the chief." You rob them of the most precious treasure. He that robs thee of thy name, is the worst kind of thief. Proverbs 22:1. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches."—Object. But must we, in no case, speak evil of another; or may we not speak of another's sin in any case?—Solution 1. It is a very hard matter to speak evil of another without sin—In one way or another, we shall dash upon the command: better let it alone—If you speak of the failings of another, it should be with tenderness and grief; as, when they are incorrigible, and likely to infect others; or when it is for the manifest glory of God—To them that receive the slander, he is a slanderer, who wrongs his neighbour's credit, by upholding an ill report against him.

Monday afternoon, July 22. I find it would be desirable, on many accounts, always to endeavour to wear a benign aspect and air of acting and speaking, in all companies, except it should so happen, that duty requires it otherwise—I am afraid I am now defective, in not doing whatever my hand finds to do, with my might, with respect to my particular affairs. Remember to watch, see, and know how it is. **Vid.** August. 31—I see there is danger, of my being drawn into transgression, by the power of such temptations, as the fear of seeming un-civil, and of offending friends. Watch against it—I might still help myself, and yet not hurt myself, by going with greater expedition from one thing to another, without being quite so nice.

Tuesday afternoon, July 23. When I find those *groanings which cannot be uttered*, of which the apostle speaks, and those soul-breakings for the longing

it hath, of which the psalmist speaks, (Psalms 119:20) **Resolved**, to favour and promote them, to the utmost of my power, and not to be weary of earnestly endeavouring to vent my desires, and not to be weary of the repetitions of such earnestness.

To count it all joy, when I have occasions of great self-denial; because, then, I have a glorious opportunity of giving deadly wounds to the body of sin, and of greatly confirming and establishing the new creature. I seek to mortify sin, and increase in holiness. These are the best opportunities, according to January 14.

To improve afflictions, of all kinds, as blessed opportunities of forcibly bearing on, in my christian course, notwithstanding that which is so very apt to discourage me, and to damp the vigour of my mind, and to make me lifeless; also, as opportunities of trusting and confiding in God, and getting a habit of so doing, according to the 57th Resolution; and as an opportunity of rending my heart off from the world, and setting it on heaven alone, according to January 10. and the 43d and 45th Resolutions; and according to January 12 February. 17 and 21. and May 1—To improve them, also, as opportunities to repent of and bewail my sin, and abhor myself; and as a blessed opportunity to exercise patience, to trust in God, and divest my mind from the affliction, by fixing myself in religious exercises. Also, let me comfort myself, that it is the very nature of afflictions, to make the heart better; and, if I am made better by them, what need I be concerned, however grievous they seem for the present.

Wednesday night, July 24. I begin to find the success of my striving, in joining with others, in the worship of God; insomuch that there is a prospect of making it easy and delightful, and very profitable, in time. Wherefore, **Resolved** not to cease striving, but to continue it, and redouble it.

Thursday morning, July 25. Altered, and anew established, the 8th Resolution; also established my determination of April 1—**Memorandum.** At a convenient time, to make an alphabet of these Resolutions and Remarks, that I may be able to educe them on proper occasions, suitable to the condition I am in, and the duty I am engaged in.

Friday afternoon, July 26. To be particularly careful, to keep up, inviolably, a trust and reliance, ease and entire rest in God, in all conditions, according to the 57th Resolution; for this I have found to be wonderfully advantageous to me—**At night. Resolved,** very much to exercise myself in this, all my life long: **viz.** with the greatest openness, of which I am capable, to declare my ways to God, and lay open my soul to him—all my sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, fears, hopes, desires, and every thing and every circumstance, according to Dr. Manton's 27th Sermon, on the 119th Psalm.

Saturday forenoon, July 27. When I am violently beset with temptation, or cannot rid myself of evil thoughts, to do something in arithmetic, or geometry, or some other study, which necessarily engages all my thoughts, and unavoidably keeps them from wandering.

Monday afternoon, July 29. When I am concerned how I shall prepare any thing to public acceptance, to be very careful that I have it very clear to me, to do what is duty and prudence in the matter—I sometimes find myself able to trust God, and to be pretty easy when the event is uncertain, but I find it difficult when I am convinced beforehand, that the event will be adverse. I find that this arises, 1. From my want of faith, to believe that that particular advantage will be more to my advantage than disadvantage: 2. From the want of a due sense of the real preferableness of that good, which will be obtained to that which is lost: 3. From the want of a spirit of adoption.

Tuesday night, July 30. Have concluded to endeavour to work myself into duties by searching and tracing back all the real reasons why I do them not, and narrowly searching out all the subtle subterfuges of my thoughts, and answering them to the utmost of my power, that I may know what are the very first originals of my defect, as with respect to want of repentance, love to God, loathing of myself—to do this sometimes in sermons—**Vid.**

Resolution 8. Especially, to take occasion therefrom, to bewail those sins of which I have been guilty, that are akin to them; as for instance, from pride in others, to take occasion to bewail my pride; from their malice, to take occasion to bewail my evil speaking: and so of other sins. **Mem.** To receive slanders and reproaches, as glorious opportunities of doing this.

Wednesday afternoon, July 31. After afflictions, to inquire what I am the better for them; what good I have got by them; and what I might have got by them—Never in the least to seek to hear sarcastical relations of others' faults. Never to give credit to any thing said against others, except there is very plain reason for it; nor to behave in any respect otherwise for it.

Sabbath morning, August. 4. Concluded at last, at those times when I am in the best frames, to set down the aspirations of my heart, as soon as I can get time.

Tuesday afternoon, August. 6. Very much convinced of the extraordinary deceitfulness of the heart, and how exceedingly affection or appetite blinds the mind, and brings it into entire subjection. There are many things which I should really think to be my duty, if I had the same affections, as when I first came from New York; which now I think not to be so. How doth appetite stretch the reason, to bring both ends together.

Wednesday forenoon, August. 7. To esteem it as some advantage, that the

duties of religion are difficult, and that many difficulties are sometimes to be gone through, in the way of duty. Religion is the sweeter, and what is gained by labour is abundantly more precious, as a woman loves her child the more for having brought it forth with travail; and even to Christ Jesus himself his mediatorial glory, his victory and triumph, the kingdom which he hath obtained, how much more glorious is it, how much more excellent and precious, for his having wrought it out with such agonies.

Friday afternoon, August. 9. With respect to the important business which I have now in hand,^[7] **Resolved,** To do whatever I think to be duty, prudence, and diligence in the matter, and to avoid ostentation; and if I succeed not, and how many disappointments soever I meet with, to be entirely easy; only to take occasion to acknowledge my unworthiness; and if it should actually not succeed, and should not find acceptance, as I expected, yet not to afflict myself about it, according to the 57th Resolution—**At night.** One thing that may be a good help towards thinking profitably in times of vacation, is, when I find a profitable thought that I can fix my mind on, to follow it as far as I possibly can to advantage—I missed it when a graduate at college, both in point of duty and prudence, in going against a universal benevolence and good nature.

Saturday morning, August. 10. Transferred my determination of July 23, to the 64th Resolution, and that of July 26, to the 65th—**About sunset.** As a help against that inward shameful hypocrisy, to confess frankly to myself all that which I find in myself, either infirmity or sin; also to confess to God, and open the whole case to him, when it is what concerns religion, and humbly and earnestly implore of him the help that is needed; not in the least to endeavour to smother what is in my heart, but to bring it all out to God and my conscience. By this means, I may arrive at a greater knowledge of my

own heart—When I find difficulty in finding a subject of religious meditation, in vacancies, to pitch at random on what alights to my thoughts, and to go from that to other things which that shall bring into my mind, and follow this progression as a clue, till I come to what I can meditate on with profit and attention, and then to follow that, according to last Thursday's determination.

Sabbath afternoon, August. 11. Resolved always to do that, which I shall wish I had done when I see others do it; as for instance, sometimes I argue with myself, that such an act of good nature, kindness, forbearance, or forgiveness, etc. is not my duty, because it will have such and such consequences: yet when I see others do it, then it appears amiable to me, and I wish I had done it, and see that none of these feared inconveniences follow.

Monday morning, August. 12. The chief thing, that now makes me in any measure to question my good estate, is my not having experienced conversion in those particular steps, wherein the people of New England, and anciently the dissenters of Old England, used to experience it. Wherefore, now resolved, never to leave searching, till I have satisfyingly found out the very bottom and foundation, the real reason, why they used to be converted in those steps.

Tuesday morning, August. 13. Have sinned, in not being careful enough to please my parents—**Afternoon.** I find it would be very much to my advantage, to be thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures. When I am reading doctrinal books, or books of controversy, I can proceed with abundantly more confidence; can see on what footing and foundation I stand.

Saturday noon, August. 17. Let there, in the general, be something of benevolence in all that I speak.

Tuesday night, August. 20. Not careful enough in watching opportunities of bringing in christian discourse with a good grace. Do not exercise myself half enough in this holy art; neither have I courage enough to carry it on with a good grace. *Vid* September. 2.

Saturday morning, August. 24. Have not practised quite right about revenge; though I have not done any thing directly out of revenge, yet I have perhaps omitted some things that I should otherwise have done; or have altered the circumstances and manner of my actions, hoping for a secret sort of revenge thereby. I have felt a little sort of satisfaction, when I thought that such an evil would happen to them by my actions, as would make them repent what they have done. To be satisfied for their repenting, when they repent from a sense of their error, is right. But a satisfaction in their repentance, because of the evil that is brought upon them, is revenge. This is in some measure a taking the matter out of God's hands when he was about to manage it, who is better able to plead it for me. Well, therefore, may he leave me to boggle at it—**Near sunset.** I yet find a want of dependence on God, to look unto him for success, and to have my eyes unto him for his gracious disposal of the matter; for want of a sense of God's particular influence, in ordering and directing all affairs and businesses, of whatever nature, however naturally, or fortuitously, they may seem to succeed; and for want of a sense of those great advantages, that would follow therefrom: not considering that God will grant success, or make the contrary more to my advantage; or will make the advantage accruing from the unsuccessfulness more sensible and apparent; or will make it of less present and outward disadvantage; or will some way so order the circumstances, as to make the unsuccessfulness more easy to bear: or several, or all of these. This want of dependence, is likewise for want of the things mentioned, July 29—Remember to examine all narrations I can call to mind; whether they are exactly according to verity.

Wednesday night, August. 28. When I want books to read; yea, when I have not very good books, not to spend time in reading them, but in reading the Scriptures, in perusing Resolutions, Reflections, etc. in writing on types of the Scripture, and other things, in studying the languages, and in spending more time in private duties. To do this, when there is a prospect of wanting time for the purpose. Remember, as soon as I can to get a piece of *slate*, or something, whereon I can make short memorandums while travelling.

Thursday, August. 29. Two great quærenda with me now are: How shall I make advantage of all the time I spend in journeys? and how shall I make a glorious improvement of afflictions?

Saturday night, August. 31. The objection which my corruptions make against doing whatever my hands find to do with my might, is, that it is a constant mortification. Let this objection by no means ever prevail.

Sabbath morning, September. 1. When I am violently beset with worldly thoughts, for a relief, to think of death, and the doleful circumstances of it.

Monday afternoon, September. 2. To help me to enter with a good grace into religious conversation; when I am conversing on morality, to turn it over by application, exemplification, or otherwise, to Christianity. **Vid.** August. 28, and January 15—**At night.** There is much folly, when I am quite sure I am in the right, and others are positive in contradicting me, in entering into a vehement or long debate upon it.

Saturday, September. 7. Concluded no more to suffer myself to be interrupted, or diverted from important business, by those things from which I expect, though some, yet but little, profit.

Sabbath morning, September. 8. I have been much to blame, for expressing

so much impatience for delays in journeys, and the like.

Sabbath evening, September. 22. To praise God by singing psalms in prose, and by singing forth the meditations of my heart in prose.

Monday, September. 23. I observe that old men seldom have any advantage of new discoveries, because they are beside the way of thinking to which they have been so long used. ***Resolved***, if ever I live to years, that I will be impartial to hear the reasons of all pretended discoveries, and receive them if rational, how long soever I have been used to another way of thinking. My time is so short, that I have not time to perfect myself in all studies; wherefore resolved, to omit and put off all but the most important and needful studies."

Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life—was the maxim of the wisest of men, and it was founded upon the most solid reason. This maxim has ever been considered as most important by all the possessors of true wisdom and piety who have strenuously aimed at daily spiritual advancement. It has never been regarded without the greatest advantages, nor neglected without the most extensive injury. The views which were entertained of this lesson of spiritual wisdom by Jonathan Edwards are sufficiently apparent in all the extracts now presented from his Diary, and the advantages which he derived from its practice are equally manifest. He lived in the sight of God; he lived in the constant and faithful survey of his own heart and conduct, and he arose to the highest class of the followers of Christ, whose religion is eminently that of the heart. Let others pursue the same steps, and they will surely find the same precious results.

Chapter V (TOC)

His Tutorship—Sickness—Invitation to Northampton—Personal Narrative Continued—Diary Concluded.

IN September. 1723, Mr. Edwards went to New-Haven, and received his degree of Master of Arts, when he was elected a tutor in the college. About this time, several congregations invited him to become their minister; but being fond of study, and conscious how much it would promote his usefulness, he declined their proposals. As there was no immediate vacancy in the office of tutor, he passed the ensuing winter and spring at New-Haven, in study, and in the occasional discharge of the active duties of his profession, and in the beginning of June, 1724, entered on the instruction of a class in the college.

The period of his tutorship was a period of great difficulty. For a long time before the election of Mr. Cutler to the office of rector, the college had been in a state of open revolt against the legal government, and had withdrawn from New-Haven. Two years after his election, in January 1721, there was a universal insurrection of the students, which though, after considerable effort, apparently quieted, resulted in a state of extreme disorder and insubordination, beyond any thing that had been known before. In 1722, Mr. Cutler, one of the tutors, and two of the neighbouring ministers, renounced their connexion with the presbyterian church, and publicly declared themselves episcopalians. The shock, occasioned by this event, was very great in the college, in the town, and throughout the colony; and a series of controversies grew out of it, which lasted for many years. In consequence of

this, the offices of these gentlemen were vacated, and the college was left for four years without a head; the trustees residing by turns at the college, and each in rotation acting as vice-rector for a month. Fortunately however for the institution, during this bereavement, it had three gentlemen in the office of tutor, of distinguished talents and scholarship, and of great resolution and firmness of character—Mr. William Smith, of the class of 1719, and chosen tutor in 1722; Mr. Edwards; and Mr. Daniel Edwards, his uncle, classmate and roommate, who was chosen in September. 1724. On these three gentlemen, all of whom were young men, devolved almost exclusively the government and instruction of the college; yet, by their union, energy, and faithfulness, they introduced among the students, in the room of their former negligence and misrule, habits of close study and exact subordination; and in no great length of time, rendered the institution flourishing and prosperous beyond what it had long been. The late President Stiles, who, though a member of college a considerable time after this period, was personally acquainted with the three gentlemen, and knew well the history of their administration, has left an eulogy on the three united, of the highest character. "The Honourable William Smith, the Honourable Daniel Edwards, and the Rev. President Edwards, were the pillar tutors, and the glory of the college, at the critical period between Rector Cutler and Rector Williams. Their tutorial renown was great and excellent. They filled and sustained their offices with great ability, dignity, and honour. For the honour of literature these things ought not to be forgotten."

September. 1725, immediately after the commencement, as he was preparing to set out for his father's house, he was taken suddenly ill, at New-Haven; but hoping that the illness was not severe, and anxious to be at home if he was to be sick, he set out for Windsor. The fatigue of travelling only increased his illness, and he was compelled to stop at North-Haven, at the house of the

Rev. Mr. Stiles, where he was confined, by severe sickness, about three months: during the greater part of this time, his mother was constantly with him. Her husband, writing to her on the 20th of October, begs her to spare herself. "I am afraid you are taking too great a burden on yourself, in tending your son both day and night. I beg of you, therefore, not only to take care of him, but of yourself also. Accept, rather, of the kindness of neighbours, in watching over again, than outbid your own strength, which is but small, by overdoing." She could not leave him till about the middle of November; and it was some time in the winter before he could go to his father's house. In this sickness, he speaks of himself as having enjoyed new, and most refreshing, manifestations of the presence and grace of God.

After he had held the office of tutor upwards of two years, with the highest reputation, he received proposals from the people of Northampton to become their minister. Many circumstances conspired to prompt his acceptance. He was familiarly acquainted with the place and people. The Rev. Mr. Stoddard, his grandfather, a man of great dignity, and of singular weight and influence in the churches, in consequence of his advanced age, stood in need of his assistance, and wished him to be his colleague. His parents and his other friends all desired it. The situation was in itself respectable, and the town unusually pleasant. He therefore resigned his tutorship, in September. 1726, and accepted of the invitation.

"Those who are conversant with the instruction and government of a college, will readily be aware that the period, of which we have now been speaking, was a very busy portion of Mr. Edwards's life; and if they call to mind the circumstances of the institution, and the habits of the students, when he entered on his office, they will not need to be informed, that the discharge of his official duties must have been accompanied with painful anxiety. It is a

rare event in Providence, that so heavy a responsibility is thrown on three individuals so young, so destitute of experience, and of the knowledge of man kind; and the business of instruction and government must have occupied their whole time, and exhausted their whole strength."

"In such a state of things, it was not possible that he should find the same leisure for spiritual exercises as he had found at New York. There his business was chiefly to enjoy; here it was to act. There the persons with whom he continually associated were possessed of uncommon excellence; here their characters were very different. There his attention was drawn, by the objects around him, to heavenly things; here it was necessarily confined almost all the time to this world. There, when retiring for prayer and heavenly contemplation, his mind sought communion with God in all its energy and freshness; here, when it was worn out by toil and exhausted by perplexities. The change in the current of thought and feeling must, therefore, have been great; and (so much is the mind prone to measure its religious state by the amount of daily enjoyment, and so little by the readiness to encounter trials, and to perform laborious and self-denying duties) it is not surprising, that he should have regarded this change, as evidence of perceptible and lamentable declension in religion. Such he in fact regarded it; as we shall find, both from his Narrative and Diary; yet it is by no means certain, that his views of the subject were altogether correct."

"The young Christian has usually a season of leisure, given him in the providence of God, in which to become acquainted with the members of that family into which he has lately been introduced, and with those objects with which as a spiritual being he is in future to be conversant. His time and his strength are given chiefly to the Scriptures, to prayer, to meditation, and to religious conversation; and he is delightfully conscious that his communion is

with the Father, and the Son Jesus Christ, through the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, as well as with 'the whole family both on earth and in heaven.' The design of this is to open to him his new state of existence, to enable him to understand its relations and duties, and to give him an earnest of better things in reversion. It is a most refreshing and happy period of his life, and, were he designed for contemplation merely, might well be protracted to its close. But, as we are taught most explicitly, in the word and Providence of God, his great worth lies in action—in imitating him whose rule it was—I must **do the work** of him that sent me while it is day;' and whose practice it was that 'he went about **doing** good.' The Scriptures are given by the inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness—Wherefore? that the man of God may be perfected, being thoroughly furnished unto every good **work**. Probably no year in the life of Mr. Edwards was spent more usefully, than that in which he was occupied, with his associates, in laying the foundation of sober habits and sound morals, in the seminary now intrusted to their care. Probably in no equal period did he more effectually serve God and his generation. And if, in its progress, he found less of that enjoyment which grows out of spiritual contemplation; he must have had the more delightful consciousness, that in the midst of great difficulties and crosses, he had honestly endeavoured to serve God, and to perform his duty."

There may therefore be reason for doubt, whether the change in his feelings, of which he speaks in the succeeding parts of his Narrative and Diary, was not a declension in this particular species of religious enjoyment, necessarily growing out of the circumstances in which he was placed, rather than a declension in the life and power of religion.

"I continued," he observes, "much in the same frame, in the general, as when

at New York, till I went to New-Haven as tutor of the college; particularly once at Bolton, on a journey from Boston, while walking out alone in the fields. After I went to New-Haven, I sunk in religion, my mind being diverted from my eager pursuits after holiness, by some affairs that greatly perplexed and distracted my thoughts.

"In September, 1725, I was taken ill at New-Haven, and while endeavouring to go home to Windsor, was so ill at the North Village, that I could go no further; where I lay sick, for about a quarter of a year. In this sickness, God was pleased to visit me again with the sweet influences of his Spirit. My mind was greatly engaged there, on divine and pleasant contemplations, and longings of soul. I observed, that those who watched with me, would often be looking out wishfully for the morning; which brought to my mind those words of the psalmist, and which my soul with delight made its own language; 'My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning;' and when the light of day came in at the window, it refreshed my soul, from one morning to another. It seemed to be some image of the light of God's glory."

"I remember, about that time, I used greatly to long for the conversion of some that I was concerned with; I could gladly honour them, and with delight be a servant to them, and lie at their feet, if they were but truly holy. But some time after this, I was again greatly diverted with some temporal concerns, that exceedingly took up my thoughts, greatly to the wounding of my soul; and went on, through various exercises, that it would be tedious to relate, which gave me much more experience of my own heart than I ever had before."

That the mind of Mr. Edwards was not injured as to its spirituality, by his official engagements and trials, is sufficiently evident from these extracts. He

was still a holy man of God, whose heart was in heaven, and with whom converse with God was the highest delight—The remainder of his Diary is chiefly confined to the period of his life which has now been reviewed, and is therefore inserted here. It is only to be regretted, that through the multiplicity of his affairs, he should have found it necessary to discontinue it.

Remainder of Diary^(TOC)

Thursday forenoon, October. 4, 1723. Have this day fixed and established it, that Christ Jesus has promised me faithfully, that, if I will do what is my duty, and according to the best of my prudence in the matter, that my condition in this world shall be better for me than any other condition whatever, and more to my welfare to all eternity. And, therefore, whatever my condition shall be, I will esteem it to be such: and if I find need of faith in the matter, that I will confess it as impiety before God. ***Vid.*** Resolution 57, and June 9.

Sabbath night, October. 7. Have lately erred, in not allowing time enough for conversation.

Friday night, October. 12. I see there are some things quite contrary to the soundness and perfection of Christianity, in which almost all good men do allow themselves, and where innate corruption has an unrestrained secret vent, which they never take notice of, or think to be no hurt, or cloak under the name of virtue; which things exceedingly darken the brightness, and hide the loveliness, of Christianity. Who can understand his errors? O that I might be kept from secret faults!

Sabbath morning, October. 14. Narrowly to observe after what manner I act when I am in a hurry, and to act as much so at other times as I can without prejudice to the business.

Monday morning, October. 15. I seem to be afraid, after errors and decays, to give myself the full exercise of spiritual meditation—Not to give way to such fears.

Thursday, October. 18. To follow the example of Mr. B. who though he meets with great difficulties, yet undertakes them with a smiling countenance, as though he thought them but little; and speaks of them as if they were very small.

Friday night, November. 1. When I am unfit for other business to perfect myself in writing *characters*.

Friday afternoon, November. 22. For the time to come, when I am in a lifeless frame in secret prayer, to force myself to expatiate, as if I were praying before others, more than I used to do.

Tuesday forenoon, November. 26. It is a most evil and pernicious practice, in meditations on afflictions, to sit ruminating on the aggravations of the affliction, and reckoning up the evil, dark circumstances thereof, and dwelling long on the dark side: it doubles and trebles the affliction. And so when speaking of them to others, to make them as bad as we can, and use our eloquence to set forth our own troubles, is to be all the while making new trouble, and feeding and pampering the old; whereas the contrary practice would starve our affliction. If we dwelt on the bright side of things in our thoughts, and extenuated them all that we possibly could, when speaking of them, we should think little of them ourselves, and the affliction would really, in a great measure, vanish away.

Friday night, November. 29. As a help to attention in social prayer, to take special care to make a particular remark at the beginning of every petition, confession, etc.

Monday morning, December. 9. To observe, whether I express any kind of fretting emotion, for the next three weeks.

Thursday night, December. 12. If, at any time, I am forced to tell others wherein I think they are somewhat to blame; in order to avoid the important evil that would otherwise ensue, not to tell it to them so, that there shall be a probability of their taking it as the effect of little, fretting, angry emotions of mind—**Vid.** August. 28. When I do want, or am likely to want, good books, to spend time in studying mathematics, and in reviewing other kinds of old learning; to spend more time in visiting friends, in the more private duties of a pastor, in taking care of worldly business, in going abroad, and other things that I may contrive.

Friday morning, December. 27. At the end of every month, to examine my behaviour strictly by some chapter in the New Testament, more especially made up of rules of life—At the end of the year, to examine my behaviour by the rules of the New Testament in general, reading many chapters. It would also be convenient some time at the end of the year, to read for this purpose in the book of Proverbs.

Tuesday night, December. 31. Concluded never to suffer nor express any angry emotions of mind, more or less, except the honour of God calls for it in zeal for him, or to preserve myself from being trampled on.

1724. **Wednesday, January** 1. Not to spend too much time in thinking, even of important and necessary worldly business, and to allow every thing its proportion of thought, according to its urgency and importance.

Thursday night, January 2. These things established—That time gained in things of lesser importance, is as much gained in things of greater; that a minute gained in times of confusion, conversation, or in a journey, is as good as minute gained in my study, at my most retired times; and so, in general, that a minute gained at one time is as good as at another.

Friday night, January 3. The time and pains laid out in seeking the world, is to be proportioned to the necessity, usefulness, and importance of it, with respect to another world, together with the uncertainty of living, and of retaining; provided, that nothing that our duty enjoins, or that is amiable, be omitted, and nothing sinful or unbecoming be done for the sake of it.

Friday, January 10. (After having written to a considerable extent in short hand, which he used, when he wished what he wrote to be effectually concealed from every one but himself, he adds the following.) Remember to act according to Proverbs 12:23. ***A prudent man concealeth knowledge.***

Monday, January 20. I have been very much to blame, in that I have not been as full, and plain, and downright, in my standing up for virtue and religion, when I have had fair occasion, before those who seemed to take no delight in such things. If such conversation would not be agreeable to them, I have in some degree minced the matter, that I might not displease, and might not speak against the grain, more than I should have loved to have done with others, to whom it would be agreeable to speak for religion. I ought to be exceedingly bold with such persons, not talking in a melancholy strain, but in one confident and fearless, assured of the truth and excellence of the cause.

Monday, February 3. Let every thing have the value now which it will have upon a sick bed: and frequently, in my pursuits of whatever kind, let this question come into my mind. 'How much shall I value this upon my death-bed?'

Wednesday, February 5. I have not in times past, in my prayers, enough insisted on the glorifying of God in the world, on the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, the prosperity of the church, and the good of man. Determined that this objection is without weight, **viz.** that it is not likely that

God will make great alterations in the whole world, and overturnings in kingdoms and nations, only for the prayers of one obscure person, seeing such things used to be done in answer to the united prayers of the whole church; and that if my prayers should have some influence, it would be but imperceptible and small.

Thursday, February. 6. More convinced than ever, of the usefulness of free religious conversation. I find by conversing on natural philosophy, that I gain knowledge abundantly faster, and see the reasons of things much more clearly, than in private study: wherefore, earnestly to seek at all times for religious conversation; for those with whom I can at all times, with profit and delight, and with freedom, so converse.

Friday, February. 7. **Resolved,** If God will assist me to it, that I will not care about things, when, upon any account, I have prospect of ill success or adversity; and that I will not think about it, any further than just to do what prudence directs to for prevention, according to Philippians 4:6. Be careful for nothing; to 1 Peter 5:7. Cast all your care upon God, for he careth for you; and again, Take no thought for the morrow; and again, Take no thought, saying, What shall I eat, and what shall I drink, and wherewithal shall I be clothed: seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Saturday night, February. 15. I find that when eating, I cannot be convinced in the time of it, that if I should eat more, I should exceed the bounds of strict temperance, though I have had the experience of two years of the like; and yet as soon as I have done, in three minutes I am convinced of it. But yet when I eat again, and remember it, still while eating I am fully convinced that I have not eaten what is but for nature, nor can I be convinced, that my appetite and feeling is as it was before. It seems to me that I shall be

somewhat faint if I leave off then; but when I have finished, I am convinced again, and so it is from time to time—I have observed that more really seems to be truth, when it makes for my interest, or is in other respects according to my inclination, than it seems if it be otherwise; and it seems to me, that the words in which I express it are more than the thing will properly bear. But if the thing be against my interest, the words of different import seem as much as the thing will properly bear—Though there is some little seeming indecorum, as if it looked like affectation, in religious conversation as there is also in acts of kindness, yet this is to be broke through.

Tuesday, February. 18. Resolved, to act with sweetness and benevolence, and according to the 47th Resolution, in all bodily dispositions—sick or well, at ease or in pain, sleepy or watchful; and not to suffer discomposure of body to discompose my mind.

Saturday, February. 22. I observe that there are some evil habits, which do increase and grow stronger, even in some good people, as they grow older; habits that much obscure the beauty of Christianity: some things which are according to their natural tempers, which in some measure prevail when they are young in Christ, and the evil disposition having an unobserved control, the habit at last grows very strong, and commonly regulates the practice until death. By this means, old Christians are very commonly, in some respects, more unreasonable than those who are young. I am afraid of contracting such habits, particularly of grudging to give, and to do, and of procrastinating.

Sabbath, February. 23. I must be contented, where I have any thing strange or remarkable to tell, not to make it appear so remarkable as it is indeed; lest through fear of this, and the desire of making a thing appear very remarkable, I should exceed the bounds of simple verity. When I am at a feast, or a meal, that very well pleases my appetite, I must not merely take care to leave off

with as much of an appetite as at ordinary meals; for when there is a great variety of dishes, I may do that, after I have eaten twice as much as at other meals is sufficient. If I act according to my resolution, I shall desire riches no otherwise, than as they are helpful to religion. But this I determine, as what is really evident from many parts of Scripture, that to fallen man, they have a greater tendency to hurt religion.

Monday, March 16. To practise this sort of self-denial, when, as some-times on fair days, I find myself more particularly disposed to regard the glories of the world, than to betake myself to the study of serious religion.

Saturday, May 23. How it comes about I know not, but I have remarked it hitherto, that at those times when I have read the Scriptures most, I have evermore been most lively and in the best frame.

At Yale College^(TOC)

Saturday night, June 6. This week has been a very remarkable week with me, with respect to despondencies, fears, perplexities, multitudes of cares, and distraction of mind: it being the week I came hither to New-Haven, in order to entrance upon the office of tutor of the college. I have now abundant reason to be convinced of the troublesomeness and vexation of the world, and that it will never be another kind of world.

Tuesday, July 7. When I am giving the relation of a thing, remember to abstain from altering either in the matter or manner of speaking, so much, as that if every one, afterwards, should alter as much, it would at last come to be properly false.

Tuesday, September. 2. By a sparingness in diet, and eating as much as may be what is light and easy of digestion, I shall doubtless be able to think more clearly, and shall gain time; 1. By lengthening out my life; 2. Shall need less time for digestion, after meals; 3. Shall be able to study more closely, without injury to my health; 4. Shall need less time for sleep; 5. Shall more seldom be troubled with the headache.

Saturday night, September. 12. Crosses of the nature of that, which I met with this week, thrust me quite below all comforts in religion. They appear no more than vanity and stubble, especially when I meet with them so unprepared for them. I shall not be fit to encounter them, except I have a far stronger and more permanent faith, hope, and love.

Wednesday, September. 30. It has been a prevailing thought with me, to which I have given place in practice, that it is best sometimes to eat or drink,

when it will do me no good, because the hurt that it will do me, will not be equal to the trouble of denying myself. But I have determined to suffer that thought to prevail no longer. The hurries of commencement and diversion of the vacancy, has been the occasion of my sinking so exceedingly, as in the last three weeks.

Monday, October. 5. I believe it is a good way, when prone to unprofitable thoughts, to deny myself and break off my thoughts by keeping diligently to my study, that they may not have time to operate to work me to such a listless frame. I am apt to think it a good way when I am indisposed to reading and study, to read of my own remarks, the fruit of my study in divinity, etc. to set me a going again.

Friday, November. 6. Felt sensibly somewhat of that trust and affiance in Christ, and with delight committing of my soul to him, of which our divines used to speak, and about which I have been somewhat in doubt.

Tuesday, November. 10. To mark all that I say in conversation merely to beget in others a good opinion of myself, and examine it.

Sabbath, November. 15. Determined, when I am indisposed to prayer, always to premeditate what to pray for; and that it is better, that the prayer should be of almost any shortness, than that my mind should be almost continually off from what I say.

Sabbath, November. 22. Considering that by-standers always copy some faults, which we do not see ourselves, or of which at least we are not so fully sensible; and that there are many secret workings of corruption, which escape our sight, and of which others only are sensible: **Resolved**, therefore, that I will if I can by any convenient means, learn what faults others find in me, or what things they see in me, that appear any way blameworthy, unlovely, or

unbecoming.

Friday, February. 12, 1725. The very thing I now want, to give me a clearer and more immediate view of the perfections and glory of God, is as clear a knowledge of the manner of God's exerting himself, with respect to spirits and mind, as I have of his operations concerning matter and bodies.

Tuesday, February. 16. A virtue which I need in a higher degree, to give a beauty and luster to my behaviour, is gentleness. If I had more of an air of gentleness, I should be much mended.

Friday, May 21. If ever I am inclined to turn to the opinion of any other sect: **Resolved**, beside the most deliberate consideration, earnest prayer, etc. privately to desire all the help that can possibly be afforded me, from some of the most judicious men in the country, together with the prayers of wise and holy men, however strongly persuaded I may seem to be that I am in the right.

Saturday, May 22. When I reprove for faults, whereby I am in any way injured, to defer till the thing is quite over and done with; for that is the way, both to reprove aright, and without the least mixture of spirit, or passion, and to have reproofs effectual, and not suspected.

Friday, May 28. It seems to me, that whether I am now converted or not, I am so settled in the state I am in, that I shall go on it all my life. But, however settled I may be, yet I will continue to pray to God, not to suffer me to be deceived about it, nor to sleep in an unsafe condition; and ever and anon, will call all into question and try myself, using for helps some of our old divines, that God may have opportunities to answer my prayers, and the Spirit of God to show me my error, if I am in one.

Saturday night, June 6. I am sometimes in a frame so listless, that there is no other way of profitably improving time, but conversation, visiting, or recreation, or some bodily exercise. However, it may be best in the first place, before resorting to either of these, to try the whole circle of my mental employments.

November. 16. When confined at Mr. Stiles's. I think it would be of special advantage to me, with respect to my truer interest, as near as I can in my studies, to observe this rule: To let half a day's, or at most a day's, study in other things, be succeeded by half a day's or a day's study in divinity.

One thing wherein I have erred, as I would be complete in all social duties, is, in neglecting to write letters to friends. And I would be forewarned of the danger of neglecting to visit my friends and relations when we are parted.

When one suppresses thoughts that tend to divert the run of the mind's operations from religion, whether they are melancholy, or anxious, or passionate, or any others; there is this good effect of it, that it keeps the mind in its freedom. Those thoughts are stopped in the beginning, that would have set the mind a going in that stream.

There are a great many exercises, that for the present seem not to help, but rather impede, religious meditation and affections, the fruit of which is reaped afterwards, and is of far greater worth than what is lost; for thereby the mind is only for the present diverted; but what is attained is, upon occasion, of use for the whole life-time.

September. 26, 1726. 'Tis just about three years, that I have been for the most part in a low sunk estate and condition, miserably senseless, to what I used to be, about spiritual things. 'Twas three years ago, the week before commencement, just about the same time this year, I began to be somewhat

as I used to be.

January 1728. I think Christ has recommended rising early in the morning, by his rising from the grave very early.

January 22, 1734. I judge that it is best, when I am in a good frame for divine contemplation, or engaged in reading the Scriptures, or any study of divine subjects, that, ordinarily, I will not be interrupted by going to dinner, but will forego my dinner, rather than be broke off.

April 4, 1735. When at any time I have a sense of any divine thing, then to turn it in my thoughts to a practical improvement. As for instance, when I am in my mind, on some argument for the truth of religion, the reality of a future state, and the like, then to think with myself, how safely I may venture to sell all, for a future good. So when at any time I have a more than ordinary sense of the glory of the saints in another world, to think how well it is worth my while to deny myself, and to sell all that I have, for this glory, etc.

May 18. My mind at present is, never to suffer my thoughts and meditations at all to ruminate.

June 11. To set apart days of meditation on particular subjects; as, sometimes to set apart a day for the consideration of the greatness of my sins; at another, to consider the dreadfulness and certainty of the future misery of ungodly men; at another, the truth and certainty of religion; and so, of the great future things promised and threatened in the Scriptures."

Chapter VI^(TOC)

Settlement in the Ministry at Northampton—Situation of Things at the Time of his Settlement—Attention to Religion in the Parish—Course of Study—Habits of Life—Marriage—Death and Character of Mr. Stoddard—Sickness of Mr. Edwards—Death and Character of his Sister Jerusha—His First Publication.

ON the 15th of February, 1727, Mr. Edwards was ordained as a minister of the gospel, and placed over the church and congregation at Northampton, as the colleague of his grandfather, the Rev. Mr. Stoddard. He was now entering on the business of life, in a profession attended with many difficulties, and presenting a field sufficiently ample for the employment of the highest faculties ever conferred on man. It may not be improper, therefore, to stop a moment, and review the circumstances in which he was placed.

He was twenty-three years of age. His constitution was naturally so tender and feeble, as to be preserved, even in tolerable health, only with unceasing care. He had passed through the successive periods of childhood, youth, and early manhood, not only without reproach, but in such a manner, as to secure the high esteem and approbation of all who knew him. His filial piety, and fraternal affection, had been most exemplary, and had rendered him a centre for strong attraction to the united family. Originally of a grave and sober character, he had been the subject of early, frequent, and strong religious impressions; which, if they did not result in saving conversion in his childhood, yet rendered him conscientious, and solemnly and habitually mindful of eternal things. For a considerable period, he had not only felt the life and power of religion, but had appeared imbued with an unusually large measure of the grace of God. Few persons, of the same age, discover a piety

so pure, so practical, or so pervading.

He had been devoted to books from his infancy, and appears of his own accord, from an early period, to have formed habits of severe and successful application. His mind, originally possessed of uncommon powers, and fraught with an intense desire of knowledge, was qualified for eminence, as we have already seen, not in a single pursuit merely, but in every walk of literature and science. Though probably the youngest member of his class, he had been acknowledged as its first scholar, in the distribution of its honours. He had not been distinguished for his attainments in Latin, Greek, or Hebrew literature only, but still more in those studies which require the application of stronger powers—in mathematics and logic, in natural and mental philosophy, and the higher principles of theology. In these, he had not simply proved himself capable of comprehending the discoveries of others, but had ventured out, where there was no path nor guide, into new and unexplored regions of the spiritual^[8] world, with a success, which might well have prompted him to bold and fearless enterprise. As officers of the college, the peculiar difficulties in which they were placed, had given him, and his associates, an opportunity to acquire uncommon reputation, not only as instructors and governors of youths, but as men of unshaken firmness, and unwavering integrity. His mind was now rich in its attainments; its views were already, for the period in which he lived, singularly expanded and comprehensive; and its powers were under thorough discipline, and yielded an exact and persevering obedience. His habits of study were completely formed, and were of the most severe and unbending character.

Theology had been, for years, his favourite study. For it he had deliberately relinquished, not only the varied pursuits of natural science, but in a measure, also, those investigations into the nature and operations of mind, by which, at

an earlier period, his whole attention had been engrossed. He had already discovered, that much of what he found in systems and commentaries, was a mere mass of rubbish; and that many of the great principles, which constitute the foundation of the science, were yet to be established. He had studied theology, not chiefly in systems or commentaries, but in the Bible, and in the character and mutual relations of God and his creatures, from which all its principles are derived; and had already entered on a series of investigations, which, if ultimately found correct, would effectuate most important changes in the opinions of the christian world.

The ministry had long been the profession of his choice, and was doubtless the only profession which he had ever thought of pursuing. Few persons, probably, enter the sacred office with more just views of its elevation and importance. His work he appears to have regarded simply as the work of salvation—the same work, on which HE, whose commission he bore, came down to this lower world—and to the accomplishment of it, the surrender of himself appears to have been deliberate and entire. His reception as a preacher had certainly been flattering. Repeated and urgent proposals had been made to him for settlement; and, as far as he was known, he was obviously regarded as a young man of uncommon promise.

Northampton, the place of his settlement, is in its natural situation uncommonly pleasant, was then the shire town of a county, embracing nearly one half of the area of the colony, and embodied within its limits, more than the ordinary share of refinement and polish. The church was large, and, with the congregation, was united. Both were united in him, and earnestly desirous that he should become their minister. From his childhood he had familiarly known both the place and the people. His parents were the familiar friends of many of the inhabitants; and they, with his connexions in the place, regarded

his settlement there as a most pleasing event.

He was also the individual, whom probably, of all others, his grandfather desired, for his colleague and successor. That venerable man, then in his 84th year, had been the minister of Northampton 55 years; and by his piety, his great energy of character, and his knowledge of mankind, had early acquired, and maintained through a long life, a singular degree of weight among the ministers and churches of New England. Though a close student, and an able and faithful preacher, he was in character a man of business, and of action; and, in all the important ecclesiastical bodies of Massachusetts, he had for many years an influence, which usually was not contested, and almost always was paramount. In Northampton he had been a faithful and successful minister. Under his preaching, the place had repeatedly witnessed revivals of religion; particularly in 1679, 1683, 1690, 1712, and 1718. Those in 1683, 1690, and 1712, were distinguished for their extent, and for the accessions made to the number of communicants. While the existing members of the church, with scarcely an exception, regarded him as their spiritual father, all the acting in-habitants of the town had grown up under his ministry, and had been accustomed, from infancy, to pay a respect to his person and character, and a deference to his opinions, such as children pay to those of a loved and venerated parent.

One circumstance, relating to the actual condition of the church at Northampton, deserves to be mentioned here, as it had an ultimate bearing on some of the most important events recorded in these pages. That church, like the other early churches of New England, according to its original platform, admitted none to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, except those who, after due examination, were regarded in the judgment of christian charity as regenerate persons. Such was the uniform practice of the church, from the

time of its formation, during the life of Mr. Mather, and for upwards of thirty years after the settlement of Mr. Stoddard. How early Mr. Stoddard changed his own views on this subject, cannot probably be ascertained; but he attempted, in 1704, and, though not without opposition, yet with ultimate success, to introduce a corresponding change in the practice of the church. Though no vote was then taken to alter the rules of admission, yet the point of practice was yielded. The sacrament, from that time, was viewed as a converting ordinance, and those who were not regarded, either by themselves or others, as possessed of piety, were encouraged to unite themselves to the church.

The attention to religion in 1718, was neither extensive, nor of long continuance, and appears not to have terminated happily. During the nine years which intervened between that event and the settlement of Mr. Edwards, Mr. Stoddard witnessed "a far more degenerate time among his people, particularly among the young, than ever before," in which the means of salvation were attended with little or no visible efficacy. The young became addicted to habits of dissipation and licentiousness; family government too generally failed; the sabbath was extensively profaned; and the decorum of the sanctuary was not infrequently disturbed. There had also long prevailed in the town a spirit of contention between two parties, into which they had for many years been divided, which kept alive a mutual jealousy, and prepared them to oppose one another in all public affairs. Such were the circumstances in which Mr. Edwards entered on his ministry at Northampton.

At this time, Mr. Stoddard, though so much advanced in years, had a good degree of strength, both of body and mind; and, for a considerable period after the settlement of his grandson, he was able to officiate in the desk the

half of every sabbath. Almost immediately after that event, he was permitted to witness a work of divine grace among some of his people; in the course of which about twenty were believed to be savingly converted. This was to him a most pleasing circumstance, as well as most useful to his colleague; who observes, "I have reason to bless God for the great advantage I had by it." No doubt it was intended to prepare him for more important and interesting scenes. The attention to religion, though at no time very extensive, continued for about two years, and was followed by several years of general inattention and indifference.

Immediately after his settlement, Mr. Edwards commenced the practice of preparing two discourses weekly; one of which was preached as a lecture, on an evening in the week. This he continued for several years. Though he regarded preaching the gospel as the great duty of a minister, and would on no account offer to God, or deliver to his people, that which was not the fruit of toil and labour; yet he resolved, from the commencement of his ministry, not to devote the time of each week exclusively to the preparation of his sermons, but to spend a large portion of it in the study of the Bible, and in the investigation of the more difficult and important subjects of theology. His mode of study with the pen has been described, and was now vigorously pursued, in the continuation of his "Miscellanies," and his "Notes on the Scriptures," as well as of a work, entitled, "The Types of the Messiah in the Old Testament," which he appears to have commenced while a candidate for the ministry. With an infirm constitution, and health ordinarily feeble, it was obviously impossible, however, to carry this resolution into practice, without the most strict attention to diet, exercise, and method; but in all these points, his habits had long been formed, and persevered in, with a direct reference to the best improvement of time, and the greatest efficiency of his intellectual powers. In eating and drinking, he was unusually abstemious, and constantly

watchful. He carefully observed the effects of the different sorts of food, and selected those which best suited his constitution, and rendered him most fit for mental labour. Having also ascertained the quantity of food, which, while it sustained his bodily strength, left his mind most sprightly and active, he most scrupulously and exactly confined himself to the prescribed limits; regarding it as a shame and a sin, to waste his time, and his mental strength, by animal indulgence. In this respect, he lived *by rule*, and constantly practised great self-denial; as he did also, with regard to the time passed in sleep. He accustomed himself to rise at four, or between four and five, in the morning, and, in winter, spent several of those hours in study which are commonly wasted in slumber. In the evening, he usually allowed himself a season of relaxation, in the midst of his family.

His most usual diversion in summer, was riding on horseback, and walking; and in his solitary rides and walks, he appears to have decided, before leaving home, on what subjects to meditate. He would commonly, unless diverted by company, ride two or three miles after dinner, to some lonely grove, where he would dismount and walk awhile. At such times, he generally carried his pen and ink with him, to note any thought that might be suggested, and which promised some light on any important subject. In winter, he was accustomed, almost daily, to take his axe, and cut wood moderately, for the space of half an hour or more. In solitary rides of considerable length, he adopted a kind of artificial memory. Having pursued a given subject of thought to its proper results, he would pin a small piece of paper on a given spot in his coat, and charge his mind to associate the subject and the piece of paper. He would then repeat the same process with a second subject of thought, fastening the token in a different place, and then a third, and a fourth, as the time might permit. From a ride of several days, he would usually bring home a considerable number of these remembrancers; and, on going to his study,

would take them off, one by one, in regular order, and write down the train of thought of which each was intended to remind him.

"He did not," observes Dr. Hopkins, "make it his custom to visit his people in their own houses, unless he was sent for by the sick, or he heard that they were under some special affliction. Instead of visiting from house to house, he used to preach frequently at private meetings, in particular neighbourhoods; and often call the young people and children to his own house, when he used to pray with them, and treat with them in a manner suited to their years and circumstance; and he catechized the children in public, every sabbath in the forenoon. And he used, sometimes, to propose questions to particular young persons, in writing, for them to answer, after a proper time given to them to prepare. In putting out these questions, he endeavoured to suit them to the age, genius, and ability of those, to whom they were given. His questions were generally such, as required but a short answer; and yet, could not be answered without a particular knowledge of some historical part of the Scriptures; and therefore led, and even obliged, persons to study the Bible.

"He did not neglect visiting his people from house to house, because he did not look upon it, in ordinary cases, to be one important part of the work of a gospel minister; but, because he supposed that ministers should, with respect to this, consult their own talents and circumstances, and visit more or less, according to the degree in which they could hope thereby to promote the great ends of the ministry. He observed, that some had a talent for entertaining and profiting by occasional visits among their people. They have words at command, and a facility at introducing profitable religious discourse, in a manner free, natural, and familiar, and apparently without design or contrivance. He supposed, that such had a call to spend a great deal

of their time in visiting their people; but he looked on his own talents to be quite otherwise. He was not able to enter into a free conversation with every person he met, and, in an easy manner, turn it to whatever topic he pleased, without the help of others, and it may be, against their inclinations. He therefore found, that his visits of this kind must be, in a great degree, unprofitable. And as he was settled in a large parish, it would have taken up a great part of his time to visit from house to house, which he thought he could spend, in his study, to much more valuable purposes, and so better promote the great ends of his ministry. For it appeared to him, that he could do the greatest good to the souls of men, and most promote the cause of Christ, by preaching and writing, and conversing with persons under religious impressions, in his study; whither he encouraged all such to repair; where they might be sure, in ordinary cases, to find him, and to be allowed easy access to him; and where they were treated with all desirable tenderness, kindness, and familiarity."

Owing to his constant watchfulness and self-denial in food and sleep, and his regular attention to bodily exercise, notwithstanding the feebleness of his constitution, few students are capable of more close or more long-continued application than he was. He commonly spent thirteen hours every day in his study; and these hours were passed, not in perusing or treasuring up the thoughts of others, but in employments far more exhausting—in the investigation of difficult subjects, in the origination and arrangement of thoughts, in the invention of arguments, and in the discovery of truths and principles. Nor was his exact method, in the distribution of his time, of less essential service. In consequence of his uniform regularity and self-denial, and the force of habit, the powers of his mind were always at his command, and would do their prescribed task in the time appointed. This enabled him to assign the preparation of his sermons, each week, to given days, and specific

subjects of investigation to other given days; and except in cases of sickness, or journeying, or some other extraordinary interruption, it was rare, indeed, that he failed of accomplishing every part of his weekly task, or that he was pressed for time in the accomplishment. So exact was the distribution of his time, and so perfect the command of his mental powers, that in addition to his preparation of two discourses in each week, his stated and occasional lectures, and his customary pastoral duties, he continued regularly his "Notes on the Scriptures," his "Miscellanies," his "Types of the Messiah," and a work which he soon commenced, entitled, "Prophecies of the Messiah in the Old Testament, and their Fulfilment."

On the 28th of July, 1727, Mr. Edwards was married, at New-haven, to Miss Sarah Pierrepont. Her paternal grandfather, John Pierrepont, Esq. who came from England and resided in Roxbury, Massachusetts, was a younger branch of a most distinguished family in his own country. Her father, the Rev. James Pierrepont, was "an eminent, pious, and useful minister, at New-Haven." He married Mary, the daughter of the Rev. Samuel Hooker, of Farmington, who was the son of the Rev. Thomas Hooker, of Hartford, familiarly denominated "the father of the Connecticut churches," and "well known, in the churches of England, for his distinguished talents and most ardent piety." Mr. Pierrepont was one of the principal founders, and one of the trustees, of Yale college; and, to help forward the seminary, read lectures to the students, for some considerable time, as professor of Moral Philosophy. The Platform of the Connecticut Churches, established at Saybrook, in 1708, is ascribed to his pen. Miss Pierrepont was born on the 9th of January, 1710, and at the time of her marriage was in the 18th year of her age. She was a young lady of uncommon beauty. Not only is this the language of tradition; but Dr. Hopkins, who first saw her when the mother of seven children, says she was more than ordinarily beautiful; and her portrait, taken by a respectable

English painter,^[9] while it presents a form and features not often rivalled, exhibits also that peculiar loveliness of expression, which is the combined result of intelligence, cheerfulness, and benevolence. The native powers of her mind were of a superior order; and her parents being in easy circumstances, and of liberal views, provided for their children all the advantages of an enlightened and polished education. In her manners she was gentle and courteous, amiable in her behaviour, and the law of kindness appeared to govern all her conversation and conduct. She was also a rare example of early piety; having exhibited the life and power of religion, and that in a remarkable manner, when only five years of age;^[10] and having also confirmed the hopes which her friends then cherished, by the uniform and increasing excellence of her character, in childhood and youth. So warm and animated were her religious feelings, in every period of life, that they might perhaps have been regarded as enthusiastic, had they not been under the control of true delicacy and sound discretion. Mr. Edwards had known her several years before their marriage, and from the following passage, written on a blank leaf, in 1723, it is obvious, that even then her uncommon piety, at least, had arrested his attention. "They say there is a young lady in [New-Haven] who is loved of that Great Being, who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this Great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight; and that she hardly cares for any thing, except to meditate on him—that she expects after a while to be received up where he is, to be raised up out of the world and caught up into heaven; being assured that he loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from him always. There she is to dwell with him, and to be ravished with his love and delight for ever. Therefore, if you present all the world before her, with the richest of its treasures, she disregards it and cares not for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affliction.

She has a strange sweetness in her mind, and singular purity in her affections; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct; and you could not persuade her to do any thing wrong or sinful, if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this Great Being. She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness, and universal benevolence of mind; especially after this Great God has manifested himself to her mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place, singing sweetly; and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure; and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have some one invisible always conversing with her." After due allowance is made for animation of feeling, the reader will be convinced, that such a testimony, concerning a young lady of thirteen, could not have been given, by so competent a judge, had there not been something unusual in the purity and elevation of her mind and the excellence of her life. Few persons, we are convinced, no older than she was at the time of her marriage, have made equal progress in holiness; and rare, very rare, is the instance, in which such a connexion results in a purer or more uninterrupted happiness. It was a union founded on high personal esteem, and on a mutual affection, which continually grew, and ripened, and mellowed for the time of harvest. The station, which she was called to fill at this early age, is one of great delicacy, as well as responsibility, and is attended with many difficulties. She entered on the performance of the various duties to her family and the people, to which it summoned her, with a firm reliance on the guidance and support of God; and perhaps no stronger evidence can be given of her substantial worth, than that from the first she discharged them in such a manner, as to secure the high and increasing approbation of all who knew her.

The attention to religion, which has been mentioned as commencing about the period of Mr. Edwards's ordination, though at no time extensive,

continued about two years, and was followed by several years of inattention and indifference. His public labours were continued with faithfulness, but with no peculiar success; and he had reason to lament the too perceptible declension of his people, both in religion and morals.

On the 11th of February, 1729, his venerable colleague was removed from the scene of his earthly labours. The event was sincerely and tenderly lamented by the people of Northampton, as well as extensively throughout the province. His funeral sermon was preached by his son-in-law, the Rev. William Williams, of Hatfield; and numerous ministers, in their own pulpits, paid a similar tribute of respect to his memory.

In the spring of the same year, the health of Mr. Edwards, in consequence of too close application, so far failed him, that he was obliged to be absent from his people several months. Early in May he was at New-Haven, in company with Mrs. Edwards and their infant child, a daughter born August. 25th, 1728. In September, his father, in a letter to one of his daughters, expresses the hope that the health of his son is so far restored, as to enable him to resume his labours, and to preach twice on the sabbath. The summer was probably passed, partly at Northampton, and partly in travelling.

His visit to Windsor, in September, gave him his last opportunity of seeing his sister Jerusha, whom he tenderly loved; and who a little while before had passed a considerable time with her friends in Northampton. She was attacked with a malignant fever in December, and on the 22d of that month died at her father's house. The uncommon strength and excellence of her character, rendered her peculiarly dear to all her relatives and friends; and from the testimonials of her father, of four of her sisters, and of a friend of the family at a distance, written soon after her death,^[11] I have ascertained the following particulars. She was born in June, 1710, and, on the testimony of

that friend, was a young lady of great sweetness of temper, of a fine understanding, and of a beautiful countenance. She was devoted to reading from childhood, and though fond of books of taste and amusement, she customarily preferred those which require close thought, and are fitted to strengthen and inform the mind. Like her sisters, she had received a thorough education, both English and classical, and by her proficiency, had justified the views of her father, and sustained the honour and claims of her sex. In conversation, she was solid and instructive beyond her years, yet, at the same time, was sprightly and active, and had an uncommon share of native wit and humour. Her wit was always delicate and kind, and used merely for recreation. According to the rule she prescribed to another, it constituted "the sauce, and not the food, in the entertainment." Being fond of retirement and meditation from early life, she passed much of her leisure time in solitary walks in the groves behind her father's house; and the richness of her mind, in moral reflection and philosophical remark, proved that these hours were not wasted in reverie, but occupied by solid thought and profitable contemplation. Habitually serene and cheerful, she was contented and happy; not envious of others, not desirous of admiration, not ambitious nor aspiring: and while she valued highly the esteem of her friends and of the wise and good, she was firmly convinced that her happiness depended, chiefly and ultimately, on the state of her own mind. She appeared to have gained the entire government of her temper and her passions, discovered uncommon equanimity and firmness under trials, and while, in difficult cases, she sought the best advice, yet ultimately acted for herself. Her religious life began in childhood; and from that time, meditation, prayer, and reading the sacred Scriptures, were not a prescribed task, but a coveted enjoyment. Her sisters, who knew how much of her time she daily passed alone, had the best reason to believe that no place was so pleasant to her as her own retirement, and no

society so delightful as solitude with God. She read theology, as a science, with the deepest interest, and pursued the systematic study of the Scriptures, by the help of the best commentaries. Her observance of the sabbath was exemplary, in solemnly preparing for it, in allotting to it the prescribed hours, and in devoting it only to sacred employments; and in the solemn and entire devotion of her mind to the duties of the sanctuary, she appeared, habitually, to feel with David, "Holiness becometh thine house for ever." Few persons attend more closely to preaching, or judge more correctly concerning it, or have higher pleasure in that which is solid, pungent, and practical. She saw and conversed with God, in his works of creation and providence. Her religious joy was, at times, intense and elevated. After telling one of her sisters, on a particular occasion, that she could not describe it, she observed to her, that it seemed like a streak of light shining in a dark place; and reminded her of a line Watts's Lyrics,

"And sudden, from the cleaving skies, a gleam of glory broke."

Her conscience was truly enlightened, and her conduct appeared to be governed by principle. She approved of the best things; discovered great reverence for religion, and strong attachment to the truly pious and conscientious; was severe in her estimate of herself, and charitable in judging of others; was not easily provoked, and usually tried to excuse the provocation; was unapt to cherish prejudices, and lamented, and strove to conceal, the faults of Christians.

On the testimony of those who knew her best, "She was a remarkably loving, dutiful, obedient daughter, and a very kind and loving sister," "very helpful and serviceable in the family, and willingly labouring with her own hands," very "kind and friendly to her neighbours," attentive to the sick, charitable to the poor, prone to sympathize with the afflicted, and merciful to the brutes;

and at the same time, respectful to superiors, obliging to equals, condescending and affable to inferiors, and manifesting sincere good will to all mankind. Courteous and easy in her manners, she was also modest, unostentatious, and retiring; and, while she uniformly respected herself, she commanded the respect of all who saw her. She was fond of all that was comely in dress, but averse to every thing gay and gaudy. She loved peace, and strove to reconcile those who were at variance; was delicately attentive to those of her sex, who were slighted by others; received reproofs with meekness, and told others of their faults with so much sweetness and faithfulness, as to increase their esteem and affection for herself. She detested all guile, and management, and deception, all flattery and falsehood, and wholly refused to associate with those who exhibited this character. She was most careful and select in her friendships, and most true and faithful to her friends—highly valuing their affection, and discovering the deepest interest in their welfare. Her conversation and conduct indicated uncommon innocence and purity of mind; and she avoided many things, which are thought correct by multitudes who are strictly virtuous. During her sickness she was not forsaken. A day or two before its termination, she manifested a remarkable admiration of the grace and mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, to sinners, and particularly to herself: saying, "It is wonderful, it surprises me." A part of the time she was in some degree delirious; but, when her mind wandered, it seemed to wander heavenward. Just before her death, she attempted to sing a hymn, entitled, "The Absence of Christ," and died, in the full possession of her rational powers, expressing her hope of eternal salvation through his blood. This first example of the ravages of death, in this numerous family, was a most trying event to all its members; and the tenderness with which they cherished the memory of her who was gone, probably terminated only with life.

The second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, was born on the 16th of the following April, and named Jerusha, after their deceased sister.

In July, 1731, Mr. Edwards being in Boston, delivered a sermon at the public lecture, entitled, "God glorified in Man's Dependence," from 1 Corinthians 1:29, 30. "That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." It was published, at the request of several ministers, and others who heard it, and preceded by a preface by the Rev. Messrs. Prince and Cooper, of Boston. This was his first publication, and is scarcely known to the American reader of his works. The subject was at that time novel, as exhibited by the preacher, and made a deep impression on the audience, and on the reverend gentlemen who were particularly active in procuring its publication. "It was with no small difficulty," say they, "that the author's youth and modesty were prevailed on, to let him appear a preacher in our public lecture, and afterwards to give us a copy of his discourse, at the desire of divers ministers, and others who heard it. But, as we quickly found him to be a workman that need not be ashamed before his brethren, our satisfaction was the greater, to see him pitching upon so noble a subject, and treating it with so much strength and clearness, as the judicious will perceive in the following composure: a subject, which secures to God his great design, in the work of fallen man's redemption by the Lord Jesus Christ, which is evidently so laid out, as that the glory of the whole should return to him the blessed ordainer, purchaser, and applier; a subject, which enters deep into practical religion; without the belief of which, that must soon die in the hearts and lives of men."

The following is the testimony, borne by these excellent men, to the talents

and piety of the author:

"We cannot, therefore, but express our joy and thankfulness, that the great Head of the church is pleased still to raise up, from among the children of his people, for the supply of his churches, those who assert and maintain these evangelical principles; and that our churches, notwithstanding all their degeneracies, have still a high value for just principles, and for those who publicly own and teach them. And, as we cannot but wish and pray, that the college in the neighbouring colony, as well as our own, may be a fruitful mother of many such sons as the author; so we heartily rejoice, in the special favour of Providence, in bestowing such a rich gift on the happy church of Northampton, which has, for so many lustres of years, flourished under the influence of such pious doctrines, taught them in the excellent ministry of their late venerable pastor, whose gift and spirit we hope will long live and shine in his grandson, to the end that they may abound in all the lovely fruits of evangelical humility and thankfulness, to the glory of God."

The discourse itself deserves this high commendation. It was the commencement of a series of efforts, on the part of the author, to illustrate the glory of God, as appearing in the greatest of all his works, the work of man's redemption. Rare indeed is the instance, in which a first publication is equally rich in condensed thought, or in new and elevated conceptions.

The third child of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, also a daughter, was born February 13th, 1732, and received the name of Esther, after his mother and Mrs. Stoddard.

Chapter VII^(TOC)

Remarkable Revival of Religion, in 1734, and 1735—Its Extent and Power—Manner of Treating Awakened Sinners—Causes of its Decline—Religious Controversy in Hampshire—Death of his Sister Lucy—Characteristics of Mrs. Edwards—Remainder of Personal Narrative.

EARLY in 1732, the state of religion in Northampton, which had been for several years on the decline, began gradually, and perceptibly, to grow better; and an obvious check was given to the open prevalence of disorder and licentiousness. Immoral practices, which had long been customary, were regarded as disgraceful, and extensively renounced. The young, who had been the chief abettors of these disorders, and on whom the means of grace had exerted no salutary influence, discovered more of a disposition to hearken to the counsels of their parents, and the admonitions of the gospel, relinquished by degrees their more gross and public sins, and attended on the worship of the sabbath more generally, and with greater decorum and seriousness of mind; and, among the people as a body, there was a larger number than before, who manifested a personal interest in their own salvation. This desirable change in the congregation became more and more perceptible, throughout that and the following year. At the latter end of 1733, there appeared a very unusual flexibleness, and a disposition to yield to advice, in the young of both sexes; on an occasion, too, and under circumstances, where it was wholly unexpected. It had long, and perhaps always, been the custom in Northampton to devote the sabbath evening, and the evening after the state public lecture, to visiting and diversion. On a sabbath preceding one of the public lectures, Mr. Edwards preached a sermon

on the subject, explaining the mischievous consequences of this unhappy practice, exhorting the young to a reformation; and calling on parents and masters, universally, to come to an explicit agreement with one another, to govern their families in this respect, and on these evenings to keep their children and servants at home. The following evening, it so happened that, among a considerable number visiting at his house, there were individuals from every part of the town; and he took that occasion to propose to those who were present, that they should, in his name, request the heads of families in their respective neighbourhoods to assemble the next day, and converse upon the subject, and agree, every one, to restrain his own family. They did so. Such a meeting was accordingly held in each neighbourhood, and the proposal was universally complied with. But, when they made known this agreement to their families, they found little or no restraint necessary; for the young people, almost without exception, declared that they were convinced, by what they had heard from the pulpit, of the impropriety of the practice, and were ready cheerfully to relinquish it. From that time forward, it was given up, and there was an immediate and thorough reformation of those disorders and immoralities, which it had occasioned. This unexpected occurrence tenderly affected the minds of the people, and happily prepared them for events of still deeper interest.

Just after this, there began to be an unusual concern on the subject of religion, at a little hamlet called Pascommuck, consisting of a few farm houses, about three miles from the principal settlement; and a number of persons, at that place, appeared to be savingly converted. In the ensuing spring, the sudden and awful death of a young man, who became immediately delirious, and continued so until he died; followed by that of a young married woman, who, after great mental suffering, appeared to find peace with God, and died full of comfort, in a most earnest and affecting manner warning and counselling

others; contributed extensively, and powerfully, to impress the minds of the young, and to excite a deeper interest on the subject of religion, throughout the congregation.

The fourth child and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards was born April 7th, 1734, and baptized by the name of Mary.

In the autumn, Mr. Edwards recommended to the young people, on the day of each stated public lecture, to assemble in various parts of the town, and spend the evening in prayer, and the other duties of social religion. This they readily did, and their example was followed by those who were older.

The solemnity of mind, which now began to pervade the church and congregation, and which was constantly increasing, had a visible reaction on all the labours of Mr. Edwards, public as well as private; and it will not be easy to find discourses in any language, more solemn, spiritual, or powerful, than many of those which he now delivered. One of these, from Matthew 16:17 entitled, "A Divine and Supernatural Light immediately imparted to the Soul by the Spirit of God, shown to be both a Scriptural and Rational Doctrine," excited uncommon interest in the hearers, and, at their request, was now published. As an exhibition of religion, as existing within the soul, in one of its peculiar forms or aspects, it will be found, in the perusal, remarkably adapted to enlighten, to refresh, and to sanctify; while the evidence of the reality of such a light, as derived both from the Scriptures and from reason, will convince every unprejudiced mind.

At this time, a violent controversy, respecting Arminianism, prevailed extensively over that part of New England, and the friends of vital piety in Northampton regarded it as likely to have a most unhappy bearing on the interests of religion in that place; but, contrary to their fears, it was

powerfully overruled for its promotion. Mr. Edwards, well knowing that the points at issue had an immediate bearing on the great subject of salvation, and that mankind never can be so powerfully affected by any subject, as when their attention to it has been strongly excited, determined, in opposition to the fears and the counsels of many of his friends, to explain his own views to his people, from the pulpit. Accordingly, he preached a series of sermons, on the various points relating to the controversy, and among others, his well-known Discourses on the great doctrine of Justification by Faith alone. For this he was sincerely censured by numbers on the spot, as well as ridiculed by many elsewhere.^[12] The event, however, proved that he had judged wisely. In his discourses, he explained the scriptural conditions of salvation, and exposed the errors then prevalent with regard to them, with so much force of argument, and in a manner so solemn and practical, that it was attended with a signal blessing from heaven, on the people of his charge. Many, who had cherished these errors, were convinced that they could be justified only by the righteousness of Christ; while others, who had not, were brought to feel that they must be renewed by the Holy Spirit; and the minds of both were led the more earnestly to seek that they might be accepted of God. In the latter part of December, five or six individuals appeared to be very suddenly and savingly converted, one after another; and some of them in a manner so remarkable, as to awaken very great numbers, of all ages and conditions. The year 1735 opened on Northampton in a most auspicious manner. A deep and solemn interest in the great truths of religion had become universal in all parts of the town, and among all classes of people. This was the only subject of conversation in every company; and almost the only business of the people appeared to be, to secure their salvation. So extensive was the influence of the Spirit of God, that there was scarcely an individual in the town, either old or young, who was left unconcerned about the great things of the eternal

world. This was true of the gayest, of the most licentious, and of the most hostile to religion. And in the midst of this universal attention, the work of conversion was carried on in the most astonishing manner. Every day witnessed its triumphs; and so great was the alteration in the appearance of the town, that in the spring and summer following, it appeared to be full of the presence of God. There was scarcely a house which did not furnish the tokens of his presence, and scarcely a family which did not present the trophies of his grace. "The town," says Mr. Edwards, "was never so full of love, nor so full of joy, nor yet so full of distress, as it was then." Whenever he met the people in the sanctuary, he not only saw the house crowded, but every hearer earnest to receive the truth of God, and often the whole assembly dissolved in tears: some weeping for sorrow, others for joy, and others from compassion. In the months of March and April, when the work of God was carried on with the greatest power, he supposes the number, apparently of genuine conversions, to have been at least four a day, or nearly thirty a week, take one week with another, for five or six weeks together.

During the winter and spring, many persons from the neighbouring towns came to Northampton, to attend the stated lectures of Mr. Edwards; many others, on business, or on visits; and many others, from a distance, having heard contradictory reports of the state of things, came to see and examine for themselves. Of these, great numbers had their consciences awakened, were savingly wrought upon, and went home rejoicing in the forgiving love of God. This appeared to be the means of spreading the same influence in the adjacent towns, and in places more remote, so that no less than ten towns in the same county, and seventeen in the adjoining colony of Connecticut, within a short time, were favoured with revivals of religion.

This was undoubtedly one of the most remarkable events of the kind that has

occurred since the canon of the New Testament was finished. It was so on account of its universality: no class, nor age, nor description, was exempt. Upwards of fifty persons above forty years of age, and ten above ninety, near thirty between ten and fourteen, and one of four,^[13] became, in the view of Mr. Edwards, the subjects of the renewing grace of God. It was so on account of the unusual numbers, who appeared to become Christians; amounting to more than three hundred persons, in half a year, and about as many of them males as females. Previous to one sacrament, about one hundred were received to the communion, and near sixty previous to another; and the whole number of communicants, at one time, was about six hundred and twenty, including almost all the adult population of the town. It was so in its rapid progress, in its amazing power, in the depth of the convictions felt, and in the degree of light, of love, and of joy communicated; as well as in its great extent, and in its swift propagation from place to place.

Early in the progress of this work of grace, Mr. Edwards seems to have decided for himself, the manner in which he was bound to treat awakened sinners—to urge repentance on every such sinner, as his immediate duty; to insist that God is under no manner of obligation to any unrenewed man; and that a man can challenge nothing, either in absolute justice, or by free promise, on account of anything he does before he repents and believes. He was fully convinced that if he had taught those, who came to consult him in their spiritual troubles, any other doctrines, he should have taken the most direct course to have utterly undone them. The discourses, which, beyond measure more than any others which he preached, "had an immediate saving effect," were several from Romans 3:19. "That every mouth may be stopped,"—in which he endeavoured to show that it would be just with God, for ever to reject, and cast off, mere natural men.

Though it had not been the custom, as we have already seen, for a long period at Northampton, to require of candidates for admission to the church, a credible relation of the evidences of their own conversion, because, if unconverted, they were supposed to have a right to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, as a converting ordinance: yet Mr. Edwards supposed he had very "sufficient evidence" of the conversion of those who were now admitted. There can be but little doubt, however, that, if the rules of the church had required, in every case, a thorough examination of the candidate's piety, the period of probation would have been longer, the danger of a false profession more solemnly realized, and the examination of each individual, by the pastor of the church, as well as by himself, far more strict; or that many, at first, regarded, both by themselves and others, as unquestionably Christians, would not, at that time, have made a profession of religion. But unfortunately he had never fully examined the scriptural ground for admission to the Lord's supper, and, like many others, had taken it for granted that Mr. Stoddard's views of the subject were just. Had he investigated it as thoroughly, at that important crisis, as he did afterwards, there can be but little doubt that, in the high state of religious feeling then prevalent, the church would readily have changed its practice, or that all the candidates for admission would have consented to a thorough examination. Had such indeed been the issue, Mr. Edwards himself would have been saved from many trials, and the church and people of Northampton from great and incalculable evils: still it may well be doubted, whether the actual result has not occasioned a far greater amount of good to the church at large.

In the latter part of May, 1735, this great work of the Spirit of God began obviously to decline, and the instances of conversion to be less numerous, both at Northampton and in the neighbouring villages. One principal cause of this declension is undoubtedly to be found in the fact, that in all these places,

both among ministers and private christians, the *physical excitement* had been greater than the human constitution can, for a long period, endure. Nothing, it should be remembered, exhausts the strength and the animal spirits, like *feeling*. One hour of intense joy, or of intense sorrow, will more entirely prostrate the frame, than weeks of close study. In revivals of religion, as they have hitherto appeared, the nerves of the whole man—of body, mind, and heart—are kept continually on the stretch, from month to month; until at length they are relaxed, and become non-elastic; and then all feeling and energy, of every kind, is gone. Another reason is undoubtedly to be found in the fact, that those, who had so long witnessed this remarkable work of God, without renouncing their sins, had at length become hardened and hopeless in their impenitence. Mr. Edwards also attributes it, in part, to two striking events of Providence, at Northampton, and to two remarkable instances of enthusiastic delusion, in two of the neighbouring villages.

He mentions also a third cause, and one far more powerful, and more extensive in its influence, than either of the two last. This was an ecclesiastical controversy, growing out of the settlement of a minister at Springfield, in which he himself was ultimately compelled, though with great reluctance, to take a part; which agitated, not only the county of Hampshire, but the more remote churches of the province. Of this, a bare mention would alone be necessary, did we not find his connexion with it referred to, at a subsequent and most interesting period of his life.

In 1735, the first church in Springfield, having elected a pastor, invited the churches in the southern part of Hampshire, by their pastors and delegates in council, to proceed to his ordination. The council, when convened, after examining the qualifications of the candidate, refused to ordain him, and assigned two reasons for this refusal—youthful immorality, and anti-

scriptural tenets. Mr. Edwards, though invited to this council, for some reason or other, was not present. The church, in August, called a second council, consisting chiefly of ministers and delegates from the churches in Boston, which, without delay, proceeded to the ordination. The first council, finding their own measures thus openly impeached, published a pamphlet entitled, "A Narrative and Defence of the Proceedings of the Ministers of Hampshire," etc. justifying their own conduct, and censuring that of their brethren. The second council defended themselves in a pamphlet entitled, "An Answer to the Hampshire Narrative." Mr. Edwards, at the request of the first council, and particularly of his uncle, the Rev. Mr. Williams, of Hatfield, who was its moderator, wrote a reply to this, entitled, "A Letter to the Author of the Pamphlet called, An Answer to the Hampshire Narrative."—This reply, viewed either as an argument upon the law and the facts, or as an answer to his opponents, is an exhibition of logic, not often met with in similar discussions, and appears to have concluded the controversy. This series of events occurred during the revival of religion in the churches of that county, and was thought, by too powerfully engrossing the attention, both of ministers and people, in various places, to have hastened its conclusion. And there can be no doubt that this opinion was correct. A revival of religion is nothing but the *immediate result* of an uncommon *attention*, on the part of a church and congregation, to the truth of God—particularly to the great truths, which disclose the worth of the soul, and the only way in which it can be saved. Whenever, and wherever, the members of a church pay the due attention to these truths, by giving them their proper influence on their hearts, religion revives immediately in their affections and their conduct; and when the impenitent pay such attention, the kingdom of heaven immediately "suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." The only effectual way to put a stop to such a work of grace is, therefore, *to divert the attention* of

Christians and sinners from those truths which bear immediately on the work of salvation.

In the latter part of the summer, Mr. and Mrs. Edwards were called to mourn the death of another of his sisters, named Lucy, the youngest but one of his father's children; who was born in 1715, and died August 21, 1736, at the age of 21. After her they named their fifth child, who was born August 31, of the same year.

It was a peculiarly favourable dispensation of Providence that, amid the multiplied cares and labours of this period, the health of Mr. Edwards was graciously preserved. A revival of religion to a minister, like the period of harvest to the husbandman, is the most busy and the most exhausting of all seasons; and during the progress of that, which he had just witnessed, not only was the whole time of Mr. Edwards fully occupied, but all the powers of his mind were laboriously employed, and all the feelings of his heart kept, from month to month, in high and powerful excitement. In addition to his ordinary duties as a teacher and pastor, his public lectures were now multiplied, private lectures were weekly appointed in different parts of the town, and his study was almost daily thronged by multitudes, looking to him as their spiritual guide. From the adjacent villages, also, great numbers resorted to him, for the same purpose, having the highest confidence in his wisdom and experience; and numerous ministers from various parts of the country, came to his house, to witness the triumphs of divine grace, and to gain, from his counsels and his measures, more just conceptions of the best manner of discharging the highest and most sacred duties of their office.

In the midst of these complicated labours, as well as at all times, he found at home one, who was in every sense a *help meet* for him; one who made their common dwelling the abode of order and neatness, of peace and comfort, of

harmony and love, to all its inmates, and of kindness and hospitality to the friend, the visitant, and the stranger. "While she uniformly paid a becoming deference to her husband, and treated him with entire respect, she spared no pains in conforming to his inclinations, and rendering everything in the family agreeable and pleasant: accounting it her greatest glory, and that wherein she could best serve God and her generation, to be the means, in this way, of promoting his usefulness and happiness. As he was of a weakly, infirm constitution, and was necessarily peculiarly exact in his diet, she was tender nurse to him, cheerfully attending upon him at all times, and in all things ministering to his comfort. And no person of discernment could be conversant in the family, without observing, and admiring, the perfect harmony, and mutual love and esteem, that subsisted between them. At the same time, when she herself laboured under bodily disorders and pains, which was not infrequently the case, instead of troubling those around her with her complaints, and wearing a sour or dejected countenance, as if out of humour with everybody, and everything around her, because she was disregarded and neglected; she was accustomed to bear up under them, not only with patience, but with cheerfulness and good humour."

Devoted as Mr. Edwards was to study, and to the duties of his profession, it was necessary for him at all times, but especially in a season like this, of multiplied toils and anxieties, to be relieved from attention to all secular concerns; and it was a most happy circumstance, that he could trust everything of this nature to the care of Mrs. Edwards, with entire safety, and with undoubting confidence. "She was a most judicious and faithful mistress of a family, habitually industrious, a sound economist, managing her household affairs with diligence and discretion. She was conscientiously careful that nothing should be wasted and lost; and often when she herself took care to save any thing *of trifling value*, or directed her children or others

to do so, or when she saw them **waste** any thing, she would repeat the words of our Saviour—'that nothing be lost;' which words she said she often thought of, as containing a maxim worth remembering, especially when considered as the reason alleged by Christ, why his disciples should gather up the fragments of that bread which he had just before **created with a word**. She took almost the whole direction of the temporal affairs of the family without doors and within, managing them with great wisdom and prudence as well as cheerfulness; and in this was particularly suited to the disposition as well as the habits and necessities of her husband, who chose to have no care, if possible, of any worldly business."

But there are other duties, of a still more tender and difficult nature, which none but a parent can adequately perform; and it was an unspeakable privilege to Mr. Edwards, now surrounded by a young and growing family, that when his duties to his people, especially in seasons like this, necessarily occupied his whole attention, he could safely commit his children to the wisdom and piety, the love and faithfulness, of their mother. Her views of the responsibility of parents were large and comprehensive. "She thought that, as a parent, she had great and important duties to do towards her children, before they were capable of government and instruction. For them, she constantly and earnestly prayed, and bore them on her heart before God, in all her secret and most solemn addresses to him; and that, even before they were born. The prospect of her becoming the mother of a rational immortal creature, which came into existence in an undone and infinitely dreadful state, was sufficient to lead her to bow before God daily, for his blessing on it—even redemption and eternal life by Jesus Christ. So that, through all the pain, labour, and sorrow, which attended her being the mother of children, she was in travail for them, that they might be born of God."

She regularly prayed with her children, from a very early period, and, as there is the best reason to believe, with great earnestness and importunity. Being thoroughly sensible that, in many respects, the chief care of forming children by government and instruction naturally lies on mothers, as they are most with their children at an age when they commonly receive impressions that are permanent, and have great influence in forming the character for life, she was very careful to do her part in this important business. When she foresaw or met with any special difficulty in this matter, she was wont to apply to her husband for advice and assistance; and on such occasions, they would both attend to it as a matter of the utmost importance. She had an excellent way of governing her children: she knew how to make them regard and obey her cheerfully, without loud angry words, much less, heavy blows. She seldom punished them; and in speaking to them used gentle and pleasant words. If any correction was necessary, she did not administer it in a passion; and when she had occasion to reprove and rebuke, she would do it in few words, without warmth and noise, and with all calmness and gentleness of mind. In her directions and reproofs in matters of importance, she would address herself to the reason of her children, that they might not only know her inclination and will, but at the same time be convinced of the reasonableness of it. She had need to speak but once; she was cheerfully obeyed; murmuring and answering again were not known among them. In their manners, they were uncommonly respectful to their parents. When their parents came into the room, they all rose instinctively from their seats, and never resumed them until their parents were seated; and when either parent was speaking, no matter with whom they had been conversing, they were all immediately silent and attentive. The kind and gentle treatment they received from their mother, while she strictly and punctiliously maintained her parental authority, seem naturally to beget and promote a filial respect and affection, and to lead them

to a mild, tender treatment of each other. Quarrelling and contention, which too frequently take place among children, were in her family wholly unknown. She carefully observed the first appearance of resentment and ill will in her young children, towards any person whatever, and did not connive at it, as many who have the care of children do, but was careful to show her displeasure, and suppress it to the utmost; yet not by angry, wrathful words, which often provoke children to wrath, and stir up their irascible passions, rather than abate them. Her system of discipline was begun at a very early age, and it was her rule to resist the first, as well as every subsequent, exhibition of temper or disobedience in the child, however young, until its will was brought into submission to the will of its parents; wisely reflecting, that until a child will obey his parents, he can never be brought to obey God.

Fond as Mr. Edwards was of welcoming the friend and the stranger, and much as his house was a favourite place of resort, to ministers and others; it was absolutely necessary at all times, and peculiarly so in seasons of religious attention like this, that some one, well knowing how to perform the rites of hospitality, and to pay all the civilities and charities of life, should relieve him from these attentions, during those hours which were consecrated to his professional duties; and here, also, he could most advantageously avail himself of the assistance of Mrs. Edwards. Educated in the midst of polished life, familiar from childhood with the rules of decorum and good breeding, affable and easy in her manners, and governed by the feelings of liberality and benevolence, she was remarkable for her kindness to her friends, and to the visitants who resorted to Mr. Edwards; sparing no pains to make them welcome, and to provide for their convenience and comfort. She was also peculiarly kind to strangers who came to her house. By her sweet and winning manners and ready conversation, she soon became acquainted with them, and brought them to feel acquainted with herself; and showed such

concern for their comfort, and so kindly offered what she thought they needed, that while her friendly attentions discovered at once that she knew the feelings of a stranger, they also made their way directly to his heart, and gaining his confidence, led him immediately to feel as if he were at home, in the midst of near and affectionate friends. "She made it her rule to speak well of all, so far as she could with truth and justice to herself and others. She was not wont to dwell with delight on the imperfections and failings of any; and when she heard persons speaking ill of others, she would say what she thought she could with truth and justice in their excuse, or divert the obloquy, by mentioning those things that were commendable in them. Thus she was tender of every one's character, even of those who injured and spoke evil of her; and carefully guarded against the too common vice of evil speaking and backbiting. She could bear injuries and reproach with great calmness, without any disposition to render evil for evil; but, on the contrary, was ready to pity and forgive those who appeared to be her enemies." This course of conduct, steadily pursued, secured, in an unusual degree, the affection and confidence of those who knew her.

She proved, also, an invaluable auxiliary to Mr. Edwards, in the duties of his profession, not only by her excellent example, but by her active efforts in doing good. "She was," says Dr. Hopkins, "eminent for her piety, and for experimental religion. Religious conversation was her delight; and, as far as propriety permitted, she promoted it in all companies. Her religious conversation showed at once her clear comprehension of spiritual and divine things, and the deep impression which they had made upon her mind." It was not merely conversation *about* religion—about its truths, or duties, or its actual state—its doctrines or triumphs—or the character and conduct of its friends and ministers: it was religion itself—that supreme love to God, to his kingdom and his glory, which, abounding in the heart, flows forth

spontaneously, in the daily conversation and the daily life.

The friends of vital Christianity, those who delighted in its great and essential truths, who showed its practical influence on their lives, and who were most engaged in promoting its prosperity, were her chosen friends and intimates. With such persons she would converse freely and confidentially, telling them of the exercises of her own heart, and the happiness she had experienced in a life of religion, for their encouragement in the christian course. Her mind appeared to attend to spiritual and divine things constantly, on all occasions, and in every condition and business of life. Secret prayer was her uniform practice, and appeared to be the source of daily enjoyment. She was a constant attendant on public worship, and always exhibited the deepest solemnity and reverence in the house of God. She always prized highly the privilege of social worship, not only in the family, but in the private meetings of christians. Such meetings, on the part of females *only*, for prayer and religious conversation, have at times been objected to, as, both in their nature and results, inconsistent with the true delicacy of the sex. Her own judgment, formed deliberately, and in coincidence with that of her husband, was in favour of these meetings; and accordingly, she regularly encouraged and promoted them, during the revival of religion of which we have been speaking, as well as at other times; attending on them herself, and not declining to take her proper share in the performance of their various duties. In this way, she exerted an important influence among her own sex, and over the young; an influence always salutary in promoting union, ardour, and spiritual-mindedness, but especially powerful in seasons of uncommon attention to religion.

One circumstance, which served essentially to extend and increase this influence, was the fact, that her religion had nothing gloomy or forbidding in

its character. Unusual as it was in degree, it was eminently the religion of joy. On the testimony of Mr. Edwards, it possessed this character, even when she was a little child of about five or six years of age, as well as customarily in after-life. At the commencement of this remarkable work of grace, she appears to have dedicated herself anew to God, with more entire devotion of heart to his service and glory, than she had ever been conscious of before; and during its progress, as well as afterwards, she experienced a degree of religious enjoyment, not previously known to herself, and not often vouchsafed to others. But on this subject, we may have occasion to speak more fully hereafter.

What, during this interesting work of grace, was the state of Mr. Edwards's own feelings on the subject of religion, must be gathered chiefly from his sermons written at the time, from the "Narrative of Surprising Conversions," and from that high character for moral excellence, which he enjoyed not only among his own people, but among the ministers. Yet the remainder of his Personal Narrative, extending from his settlement, until a date somewhat later than this, and of course including this period, presents a general view of the subject, in a high degree interesting, and most proper to be inserted here.

Remainder of Personal Narrative^(TOC)

"Since I came to Northampton, I have often had sweet complacency in God, in views of his glorious perfections, and of the excellency of Jesus Christ. God has appeared to me a glorious and lovely Being, chiefly on account of his holiness. The holiness of God has always appeared to me the most lovely of all his attributes. The doctrines of God's absolute sovereignty, and free grace, in showing mercy to whom he would show mercy; and man's absolute dependence on the operations of God's Holy Spirit, have very often appeared to me as sweet and glorious doctrines. These doctrines have been much my delight. God's sovereignty has ever appeared to me a great part of his glory. It has often been my delight to approach God, and adore him as a sovereign God, and ask sovereign mercy of him.

"I have loved the doctrines of the gospel; they have been to my soul like green pastures. The gospel has seemed to me the richest treasure; the treasure that I have most desired, and longed that it might dwell richly in me. The way of salvation by Christ has appeared, in a general way, glorious and excellent, most pleasant and most beautiful. It has often seemed to me, that it would, in a great measure, spoil heaven, to receive it in any other way. That text has often been affecting and delightful to me, Isaiah 32:2. 'A man shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest,' etc.

"It has often appeared to me delightful, to be united to Christ; to have him for my Head, and to be a member of his body; also to have Christ for my Teacher and Prophet. I very often think with sweetness, and longings, and pantings of soul, of being a little child, taking hold of Christ, to be led by him through the wilderness of this world. That text, Matthew 18:3, has often been sweet to

me, 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children,' etc. I love to think of coming to Christ, to receive salvation of him, poor in spirit, and quite empty of self, humbly exalting him alone; cut off entirely from my own root, in order to grow into and out of Christ: to have God in Christ to be all in all; and to live, by faith on the Son of God, a life of humble, unfeigned confidence in him. That scripture has often been sweet to me, Psalms 115:1. 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.' And those words of Christ, Luke 10:21, 'In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.' That sovereignty of God, which Christ rejoiced in, seemed to me worth of such joy; and that rejoicing seemed to show the excellency of Christ, and of what spirit he was.

"Sometimes, only mentioning a single word caused my heart to burn within me; or only seeing the name of Christ, or the name of some attribute of God. And God has appeared glorious to me, on account of the Trinity. It has made me have exalting thoughts of God, that he subsists in three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The sweetest joys and delights I have experienced have not been those that have arisen from a hope of my own good estate; but in a direct view of the glorious things of the gospel. When I enjoy this sweetness, it seems to carry me above the thoughts of my own estate; it seems, at such times, a loss that I cannot bear, to take off my eye from the glorious, pleasant object I behold without me, to turn my eye in upon myself, and my own good estate.

"My heart has been much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world. The histories of the past advancement of Christ's kingdom have been

sweet to me. When I have read histories of past ages, the pleasantest thing, in all my reading, has been, to read of the kingdom of Christ being promoted. And when I have expected, in my reading, to come to any such thing, I have rejoiced in the prospect, all the way as I read. And my mind has been much entertained and delighted with the scripture promises and prophecies, which relate to the future glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom upon earth.

"I have sometimes had a sense of the excellent fulness of Christ, and his meetness and suitableness as a Saviour; whereby he has appeared to me, far above all, the chief of ten thousands. His blood and atonement have appeared sweet, and his righteousness sweet; which was always accompanied with ardency of spirit; and inward strugglings and breathings, and groanings that cannot be uttered, to be emptied of myself, and swallowed up in Christ.

"Once, as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view, that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent, with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception—which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love; to trust in him; to live upon him; to serve and follow him; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have several other times had views

very much of the same nature, and which have had the same effects.

"I have, many times, had a sense of the glory of the Third Person in the Trinity, and his office as Sanctifier; in his holy operations, communicating divine light and life to the soul. God in the communications of his Holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and sweetness; being full, and sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul; pouring forth itself in sweet communications; like the sun in its glory, sweetly and pleasantly diffusing light and life. And I have sometimes an affecting sense of the excellency of the word of God as a word of life; as the light of life; a sweet, excellent, life-giving word; accompanied with a thirsting after that word, that it might dwell richly in my heart.

"Often, since I lived in this town, I have had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness; very frequently to such a degree, as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together; so that I have often been forced to shut myself up. I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness, and the badness of my heart, than ever I had before my conversion.^[14] It has often appeared to me, that if God should mark iniquity against me, I should appear the very worst of all mankind, of all that have been since the beginning of the world to this time: and that I should have by far the lowest place in hell. When others, that have come to talk with me about their soul-concerns, have expressed the sense they have had of their own wickedness, by saying, that it seemed to them, that they were as bad as the devil himself; I thought their expressions seemed exceeding faint and feeble, to represent my wickedness.

"My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and swallowing up all thought and imagination; like an infinite deluge or mountains over my head. I know not how to express better what my

sins appear to me to be, than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite. Very often, for these many years, these expressions are in my mind, and in my mouth, 'Infinite upon infinite—Infinite upon infinite!' When I look into my heart, and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss, infinitely deeper than hell. And it appears to me, that were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fulness and glory of the great Jehovah, and the arm of his power and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of his power, and in all the glory of his sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself; far beyond the sight of everything, but the eye of sovereign grace, that can pierce even down to such a depth. And yet, it seems to me that my conviction of sin is exceedingly small and faint; it is enough to amaze me, that I have no more sense of my sin. I know certainly, that I have very little sense of my sinfulness. When I have had turns of weeping and crying for my sins, I though I knew at the time, that my repentance was nothing to my sin.

"I have greatly longed of late for a broken heart, and to lie low before God; and, when I ask for humility, I cannot bear the thoughts of being no more humble than other Christians. It seems to me, that though their degrees of humility may be suitable for them, yet it would be a vile self-exaltation in me, not to be the lowest in humility of all mankind. Others speak of their longing to be 'humbled to the dust;' that may be a proper expression for them, but I always think of myself, that I ought, and it is an expression that has long been natural for me to use in prayer, 'to lie infinitely low before God.' And it is affecting to think, how ignorant I was, when a young Christian, of the bottomless, infinite depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy, and deceit, left in my heart. "I have a much greater sense of my universal, exceeding dependence on God's grace and strength, and mere good pleasure, of late, than I used formerly to have; and have experienced more of an abhorrence of

my own righteousness. The very thought of any joy arising in me, on any consideration of my own amiableness, performances, or experiences, or any goodness of heart or life, is nauseous and detestable to me. And yet, I am greatly afflicted with a proud and self-righteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see that serpent rising and putting forth its head continually, everywhere, all around me.

"Though it seems to me, that in some respects I was a far better Christian, for two or three years after my first conversion, than I am now; and lived in a more constant delight and pleasure; yet of late years, I have had a more full and constant sense of the absolute sovereignty of God, and a delight in that sovereignty; and have had more of a sense of the glory of Christ, as a Mediator revealed in the gospel. On one Saturday night, in particular, I had such a discovery of the excellency of the gospel above all other doctrines that I could not but say to myself, 'This is my chosen light, my chosen doctrine;' and of Christ, 'This is my chosen Prophet.' It appeared sweet, beyond all expression, to follow Christ, and to be taught, and enlightened, and instructed by him; to learn of him, and live to him. Another Saturday night, (*January*. 1739,) I had such a sense, how sweet and blessed a thing it was to walk in the way of duty; to do that which was right and meet to be done, and agreeable to the holy mind of God; that it caused me to break forth into a kind of loud weeping, which held me some time, so that I was forced to shut myself up, and fasten the doors. I could not but, as it were, cry out, 'How happy are they, who do that which is right in the sight of God! They are blessed indeed, **they** are the happy ones!' I had, at the same time, a very affecting sense, how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world, and order all things according to his own pleasure; and I rejoiced in it, that God reigned, and that his will was done."

Chapter VIII (TOC)

"Narrative of Surprising Conversions"—His Views of Revivals of Religion—Remarkable Providence at Northampton—"Five Discourses"—Mr. Bellamy a Resident of his Family—History of Redemption—Extra-Parochial Labours of Mr. Edwards—Sermon at Enfield—Funeral Sermon on the Rev. W. Williams.

ON the 30th of May, 1735, Mr. Edwards, in answer to a letter from the Rev. Dr. Colman, of Boston, wrote a succinct account of the work of Divine grace at Northampton; which, being published by him, and forwarded to the Rev. Dr. Watts and the Rev. Dr. Guyse, in London, those gentlemen discovered so much interest in the facts recited, detailing them on several occasions before large assemblies, that the author, at the request of his correspondent, was induced to prepare a much fuller statement, in a letter to the same gentleman, bearing date, November. 6, 1736. This was published in London, under the title of "Narrative of Surprising Conversions," with an Introduction by Dr. Watts and Dr. Guyse; and was read very extensively, and with very lively emotions, by Christians in England. There, this mark of Divine grace was regarded, not only with very deep interest, but with surprise and wonder: nothing like it, for its extent and power, having been witnessed in that country, for many previous years. Those excellent men observe, "We are abundantly satisfied of the truth of this narrative, not only from the character of the writer, but from the concurrent testimony of many other persons in New England; **for this thing was not done in a corner.** There is a spot of ground, as we are informed, wherein there are twelve or fourteen towns and villages, chiefly situate in the county of Hampshire, near the banks of the river Connecticut, within the compass of thirty miles, wherein it pleased God,

two years ago, to display his sovereign mercy, in the conversion of a great multitude of souls, in a short space of time; turning them from a formal, cold, and careless profession of Christianity, to the lively exercise of every christian grace, and the powerful practice of our holy religion. The great God has seemed to act over again the miracle of Gideon's fleece, which was plentifully watered with the dew of heaven, while the rest of the earth round about it was dry, and had no such remarkable blessing.

"There has been a great and just complaint, for many years, among the ministers and churches of Old England, and in New, (except about the time of the late earthquake there,) that the work of conversion goes on very slowly, that the Spirit of God, in his saving influences, is much withdrawn from the ministrations of his word; and there are few that receive the ministrations of the gospel, with any eminent success upon their hearts. But as the gospel is the same divine instrument of grace still, as ever it was in the days of the apostles, so our ascended Saviour, now and then, takes a special occasion to manifest the divinity of this gospel, by a plentiful effusion of his Spirit where it is preached: then sinners are turned into saints in numbers, and there is a new face of things spread over a town or country. The wilderness and the solitary places are glad, the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose; and surely, concerning this instance, we may add, that they have seen the glory of the Lord there, and the excellency of our God; they have seen the outgoings of God our King in his sanctuary."

This work was the first of a series of publications from Mr. Edwards, intended to explain the nature and effects of saving conversion, and the nature of a genuine work of the Holy Spirit in a community. As a religious narrative, it is one of the most interesting I have hitherto met with; having all that exactness of description and vividness of colouring, which attend the

account of an eyewitness, when drawn up, not from recollection, but in the very passing of the scenes which he describes. It proved a most useful and seasonable publication. For a long period, revivals of religion had been chiefly unknown, both in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe. The church at large had generally ceased to expect events of this nature, regarding them as confined to apostolic times, and to the ultimate triumphs of Christianity; and appear to have entertained very imperfect views of their causes, their nature, and the manner in which they ought to be regarded. In no previous publication had these important subjects been adequately explained. The particular event, which Mr. Edwards had the privilege of recording, viewed as a remarkable work of Divine grace, has, to this day, scarcely a parallel in the modern annals of the church. His own views of these subjects were alike removed from the apathy of unbelief, and the wildness of enthusiasm; they were derived, not merely from his familiarity with the facts, but from just conceptions of the intellectual and moral faculties of man, and from a thorough knowledge of the word of God. And while the "Narrative of Surprising Conversions" served to inspire the church at large with a new and higher kind of faith, and hope, and zeal, it also proved a safe directory of their views and their conduct. In a short time it was extensively circulated, both in England and Scotland; and in the latter country, as we shall soon have occasion to remark, its diffusion was speedily followed by salutary and important consequences.

It may not be improper to insert in this place the following letter of Mr. Edwards, giving an account of a surprising and alarming providence, which attended the people of Northampton, in the early part of 1737.

"Northampton, March 19, 1737.

"We in this town were, the last Lord's day, (March 13th,) the spectators, and

many of us the subjects, of one of the most amazing instances of Divine preservation, that perhaps was ever known in the world. Our meeting-house is old and decayed, so that we have been for some time building a new one, which is yet unfinished. It has been observed of late, that the house we have hitherto met in, has gradually spread at the bottom; the sills and walls giving way, especially in the foreside, by reason of the weight of timber at top pressing on the braces, that are inserted into the posts and beams of the house. It has done so more than ordinarily this spring: which seems to have been occasioned by the heaving of the ground, through the extreme frosts of the winter past, and its now settling again on that side which is next the sun, by the spring thaws. By this means, the underpinning has been considerably disordered, which people were not sensible of, till the ends of the joists, which bore up the front gallery, were drawn off from the girts on which they rested, by the walls giving way. So that in the midst of the public exercise in the forenoon, soon after the beginning of the sermon, the whole gallery—full of people, with all the seats and timbers, suddenly, and without any warning—sunk, and fell down, with the most amazing noise, upon the heads of those that sat under, to the astonishment of the congregation. The house was filled with dolorous shrieking and crying; and nothing else was expected than to find many people dead, or dashed to pieces.

"The gallery, in falling, seemed to break and sink first in the middle; so that those who were upon it were thrown together in heaps before the front door. But the whole was so sudden, that many of those who fell, knew nothing what it was, at the time, that had befallen them. Others in the congregation thought it had been an amazing clap of thunder. The falling gallery seemed to be broken all to pieces before it got down; so that some who fell with it, as well as those who were under, were buried in the ruins; and were found pressed under heavy loads of timber, and could do nothing to help

themselves.

"But so mysteriously and wonderfully did it come to pass, that every life was preserved; and though many were greatly bruised, and their flesh torn, yet there is not, as I can understand, one bone broken, or so much as put out of joint, among them all. Some, who were thought to be almost dead at first, are greatly recovered; and but one young woman seems yet to remain in dangerous circumstances, by an inward hurt in her breast; but of late there appears more hope of her recovery.

"None can give an account, or conceive, by what means people's lives and limbs should be thus preserved, when so great a multitude were thus imminently exposed. It looked as though it was impossible, but that great numbers must instantly be crushed to death, or dashed in pieces. It seems unreasonable to ascribe it to any thing else but the care of Providence, in disposing the motions of every piece of timber, and the precise place of safety where every one should sit and fall, when none were in any capacity to care for their own preservation. The preservation seems to be most wonderful, with respect to the women and children in the middle alley, under the gallery, where it came down first, and with greatest force, and where there was nothing to break the force of the falling weight.

"Such an event may be a sufficient argument of a Divine providence over the lives of men. We thought ourselves called on to set apart a day to be spent in the solemn worship of God, to humble ourselves under such a rebuke of God upon us, in time of public service in his house, by so dangerous and surprising an accident; and to praise his name for so wonderful, and as it were miraculous, a preservation. The last Wednesday was kept by us to that end; and a mercy, in which the hand of God is so remarkably evident, may be well worthy to affect the hearts of all who hear it."

In 1738, the "Narrative of Surprising Conversions" was republished in Boston, with a preface by four of the senior ministers of that town.

To it were prefixed five discourses, on the following subjects:

- I. Justification by Faith alone. Romans 4:5.
- II. Pressing into the Kingdom of God. Luke 16:16.
- III. Ruth's Resolution. Ruth 1:16.
- IV. The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners. Romans 3:19.
- V. The Excellency of Jesus Christ. Revelation 5:5, 6.

The first four of these discourses were delivered during the revival of religion, and were published at the earnest desire of those to whom they were preached. In fixing on the particular discourses necessary to make up the volume, he was guided by the choice of the people. "What has determined them in this choice," he observes, "is the experience of special benefit to their souls from *these discourses*. Their desire to have them in their hands, from the press, has long manifested, and often expressed to me; their earnestness in it is evident from this, that though it be a year to them of the greatest charge that ever has been, by reason of the expense of building a new meeting-house, yet they chose rather to be at this additional expense now, though it be very considerable, than to have it delayed another year." In publishing the discourse on "Justification," he was also influenced by the urgent request of several ministers, who were present when a part of it was delivered, and whose opinion and advice he thought deserving of great respect. This discourse, though when first written of a much less size than as it is printed, was preached at two successive public lectures, in the latter part of 1734. It

was a time, when the minds of the people, in all that section of country, were very much agitated by a controversy on that very subject; when some were brought to doubt of that way of acceptance with God, which they had been taught from their infancy was the only way; and when many were engaged in looking more thoroughly into the grounds of those doctrines in which they had been educated; that this discourse seemed to be remarkably blessed, not only in establishing the judgments of men in this truth, but in engaging their hearts in a more earnest pursuit of justification, by faith in the righteousness of Christ. "***At that time,***" says the author, "while I was greatly reproached for defending this doctrine in the pulpit, and just upon my suffering a very open abuse for it, God's work wonderfully broke forth among us, and souls began to flock to Christ, as the Saviour in whose righteousness alone they hoped to be justified. So that this was the doctrine, on which this work, in its beginning, was founded, as it evidently was in the whole progress of it." He regarded these facts as a remarkable testimony of God's approbation of the doctrine of justification by faith alone.

This discourse, which is really a treatise of more than one hundred closely printed pages, exhibited the subject in a light so new, clear, and convincing, and so effectually removed the difficulties with which, till then, it was supposed to be attended, that on its first publication it met a very welcome reception, and from that time to the present has been regarded as the common text book of students in theology. It would not be easy to find another treatise on the same subject, equally able and conclusive.

There are individuals, who, having received their theological views from the straitest sect of a given class of theologians, regard the sermon on "Pressing into the kingdom of God," as inconsistent with those principles of moral agency, which are established in the treatise on the "Freedom of the Will;"

and charitably impute the error to the imperfect views of the author at this period. While a member of college, however, Mr. Edwards, in investigating the subject of **Power**, as he was reading the Essay of Locke, came to the settled conclusion, that men have **in the physical sense**, the power of repenting and turning to God. A further examination might perhaps evince, that the points in question are less consistent with some peculiar views of theology, of a more modern date, than with any, logically deducible from the treatise on the "Will." The sermon itself, like the rest, has uncommon ardour, unction, and solemnity, and was one of the most useful which he delivered.

The sermon on the "Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners," in the language of the text, literally **stops the mouth** of every reader, and compels him, as he stands before his Judge, to admit, if he does not feel, the justice of his sentence. I know not where to find, in any language, a discourse so well adapted to strip the impenitent sinner of every excuse, to convince him of his guilt, and to bring him low before the justice and holiness of God. According to the estimate of Mr. Edwards, it was far the most powerful and effectual of his discourses; and we scarcely know of any other sermon which has been favoured with equal success.

The sermon on the "Excellency of Christ," was selected by Mr. Edwards himself, partly because he had been importuned to publish it by individuals in another town, in whose hearing it was occasionally preached; and partly because he thought that a discourse on such an evangelical subject, would properly follow others that were chiefly awakening; and that something of the excellency of the **Saviour** was proper to succeed those things, that were to show the necessity of **salvation**. No one who reads it will hesitate to believe, that it was most happily selected. I have met with no sermon hitherto, so admirably adapted to the circumstances of a sinner, when, on the

commencement of his repentance, he renounces every other object of trust, but the righteousness of Christ. Taking the whole volume, as thus printed, the Narrative and the Five Discourses, we suppose it to have been one of the most effectual, in promoting the work of salvation, which has hitherto issued from the press.

The sixth child, and eldest son, of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards was born July 25, 1738, and after *his* father was baptized by the name of Timothy.

About this period, Mr. Joseph Bellamy, afterwards the Rev. Dr. Bellamy of Bethlem, Connecticut, went to Northampton to pursue his theological studies under Mr. Edwards, and resided for a considerable period in his family. The very high respect which he cherished for the eminent talents and piety of Mr. Edwards, and which drew him to Northampton, was reciprocated by the latter; and a friendship commenced between them, which terminated only with life.^[15]

In the beginning of March, 1739, Mr. Edwards commenced a series of sermons from Isaiah 51:8. "For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." The eight first were delivered during that month, the eight next in the two following months, and the whole series, thirty in all, was completed before the close of August. After explaining the text, he derives from it the following doctrine: "The work of redemption is a work, which carries on from the fall of man to the end of the world." The subject was one in which Mr. Edwards felt the deepest interest; but he appears never to have repeated the series of discourses to his people. What his ultimate intentions were, we may learn, however, from the following extract of a letter, written by him many years afterwards: "I have had on my mind and heart (which I long ago began, not with any view to

publication) a great work, which I call *a History of the Work of Redemption*, a body of divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of a history, considering the affair of christian theology, as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ, which I suppose is to be the grand design of all God's designs, and the *summum* and *ultimum* of all God's operations and decrees, particularly considering all parts of the grand scheme in their historical order—The order of their existence, or their being brought forth to view, in the course of divine dispensations, or the wonderful series of successive acts and events; beginning from eternity and descending from thence to the great work and successive dispensations of the infinitely wise God in time, considering the chief events coming to pass in the church of God, and revolutions in the world of mankind, affecting the state of the church and the affair of redemption, which we have an account of in history or prophecy, till at last we come to the general resurrection, last judgment, and consummation of all things, when it shall be said, *It is done*, I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and *the End*; concluding my work, with the consideration of that perfect state of things, which shall be finally settled to last for eternity—This history will be carried on with regard to all three worlds—heaven, earth, and hell; considering the connected successive events and alterations in each, so far as the Scriptures give any light; introducing all parts of divinity in that order which is most scriptural and most natural; which is a method which appears to me the most beautiful and entertaining, wherein every doctrine will appear to the greatest advantage, in the brightest light, in the most striking manner, showing the admirable contexture and harmony of the whole."

From this it is obvious, that he long cherished the intention of rewriting and enlarging the work, and of turning it into a regular treatise; but this design he

never accomplished. We shall have occasion to allude to this work hereafter.

The sixth daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards was born June 24, 1740, and named Susannah.

The circumstances which caused the remarkable attention to religion, which began in 1734, to decline, were chiefly local in their nature, and limited in their influence, either to Northampton, or to the county of Hampshire. The consequence was, that it continued to exist, in various sections of the country, to the east, the south, and the west, during the five following years. By the astonishing work of grace at Northampton, an impulse had been given to the churches of this whole western world, which could not soon be lost. The history of that event, having been extensively circulated, had produced a general conviction in the minds of Christians, that the preaching of the gospel might be attended by effects, not less surprising, than those which followed it in apostolic times. This conviction produced an important change in the views, and conduct, both of ministers and churches. The style of preaching was altered: it became, extensively, more direct and pungent, and more adapted to awaken the feelings and convince the conscience. The prayers of good men, both in public and private, indicated more intense desires for the prevalence of religion, and a stronger expectation that the word of God would be attended with an immediate blessing. As the natural result of such a change, revivals of religion were witnessed in numerous villages in New Jersey, Connecticut, and the eastern parts of New England; and even where this was not the case, religion was so extensively and unusually the object of attention, during the period specified, that the church at large seemed preparing for events of a more interesting nature, than any that had yet been witnessed.

In consequence of the high reputation, which Mr. Edwards had acquired as a

powerful and successful preacher, and as a safe and wise counsellor to the anxious and inquiring, he received frequent invitations from churches, near and more remote, to come and labour among them for a little period; and with the consent of his people, (his own pulpit always being supplied,) he often went forth on these missionary tours, and found an ample reward in the abundant success which crowned his labours. In this, his example was soon followed by several distinguished ministers in Connecticut and New Jersey. In one of these excursions, he spent some little time at Enfield in Connecticut, where he preached, on the 8th of July, 1741, the well-known sermon, entitled, "***Sinners in the hands of an angry God,***" from Deuteronomy 32:35.; which was the cause of an immediate and general revival of religion throughout the place. It was soon afterwards published.

On the 2d of September following, he preached the sermon, entitled, "The Sorrows of the Bereaved spread before Jesus," at the funeral of his uncle, the Rev. William Williams of Hatfield, a gentleman highly respected for his sound understanding, piety, and faithfulness as a minister. This sermon was immediately afterwards published.

Chapter IX^(TOC)

Commencement of a Second Great Revival of Religion, in the Spring and Summer of 1740—Visit of Mr. Whitefield at Northampton—Impulses—Judging of the Religious Character of Others—Letter to Mr. Wheelock—Great Effects of a Private Lecture of Mr. E—Letter to his Daughter—Letter to a Young Lady in Connecticut—Lay Preaching—Letter of Rev. G. Tennent—Sermon at New-Haven—"Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God"—Prefaces by Mr. Cooper and Mr. Willison—Mr. Samuel Hopkins.

WHILE Mr. Edwards was thus occasionally serving his Divine Master abroad, he found, also, that his labours at home began to be attended with similar success. A great reformation in morals, as well as religion, had been the consequence of the preceding revival of religion. Associations for prayer and social religion had been regularly kept up, and a few instances of awakening and conversion had all along been known, even at the season of the greatest stupidity. In the spring of 1740, there was a perceptible alteration for the better; and the influence of the Spirit of God was most obvious on the minds of the people, particularly on those of the young, in causing greater seriousness and solemnity, and in prompting them to make religion far more generally the subject of conversation. Improperities of conduct, too often allowed, were more generally avoided; greater numbers resorted to Mr. Edwards to converse with him respecting their salvation; and, in particular individuals, there appeared satisfactory evidence of an entire change of character. This state of things continued through the summer and autumn.

On the evening of Thursday, the 16th of October, 1740, Mr. Whitefield came to Northampton to see Mr. Edwards, and to converse with him respecting the

work of God in 1735, and remained there until the morning of the 20th. In this interval he preached five sermons, adapted to the circumstances of the town, reproofing the backslidings of some, the obstinate impenitence of others, and summoning all, by the mercies with which the town had been distinguished, to return to God. His visit was followed by an awakening among professors of religion, and soon afterwards by a deep concern among the young, and there were some instances of hopeful conversion. This increased during the winter; and in the spring of 1741 religion became the object of general attention.

On Monday, Mr. Edwards, with the Rev. Mr. Hopkins of West Springfield, his brother-in-law, and several other gentlemen, accompanied Mr. Whitefield on the east side of the river as far as East Windsor, to the house of his father, the Rev. Timothy Edwards. While they were thus together, he took an opportunity to converse with Mr. Whitefield alone, at some length, on the subject of *impulses*, and assigned the reasons which he had to think, that he gave too much heed to such things. Mr. Whitefield received it kindly, but did not seem inclined to have much conversation on the subject, and in the time of it, did not appear convinced by anything which he heard. He also took occasion in the presence of others, to converse with Mr. Whitefield at some length, about his too customary practice of *judging other persons to be unconverted*; examined the scriptural warrant for such judgments, and expressed his own decided disapprobation of the practice. Mr. Whitefield, at the same time, mentioned to Mr. Edwards his design of bringing over a number of young men from England, into New Jersey and Pennsylvania, to be ordained by the two Mr. Tennents. Their whole interview was an exceedingly kind and affectionate one; yet Mr. Edwards supposed that Mr. Whitefield regarded him somewhat less as an intimate and confidential friend, than he would have done, had he not opposed him in two favourite

points of his own practice, for which no one can be at a loss to perceive that he could find no scriptural justification. Each however regarded the other with great affection and esteem, as a highly favoured servant of God; and Mr. Edwards, as we shall soon see, speaks of Mr. Whitefield's visit to Northampton in terms of the warmest approbation.

In the month of May, a private lecture of Mr. Edwards's was attended with very powerful effects on the audience, and ultimately upon the young of both sexes, and on children throughout the town; and during the summer, and the early part of the autumn, there was a glorious progress in the work of God on the hearts of sinners in conviction and conversion, and great numbers appeared to become the real disciples of Christ.

Among the ministers, who at this period occasionally left their own congregations, and went forth as labourers into the common field to gather in the harvest, one of those who were most distinguished for their activity and success, was the Rev. Mr. Wheelock, of Lebanon, afterwards the president of Dartmouth college. In the following letter from Mr. Edwards to this gentleman, he urges him to visit Scantic, a feeble settlement in the northern part of his father's parish: the inhabitants of which were too remote to attend public worship regularly at East Windsor, and yet too few and feeble to maintain it themselves.

"Northampton, June 9, 1741.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,

"The special occasion of my now writing to you is a desire I have of two things; one is, that you and your brother Pomeroy would go to Scantic, in my father's parish, and preach there as often as the people will be willing to hear you, and continue so

doing as long as the concerns of your own parishes will allow of your being absent. You know the wretched circumstances of that society; and if ever they are healed, I believe it must be by a reviving and prevailing of true religion among them. By all that I can understand, they are wholly dead, in this extraordinary day of God's gracious visitation. You have lately been so remarkable blessed elsewhere, that I cannot but hope you would have success there also. I have written to my father, to inform him that I have desired this of you.

"Another thing that I desire of you is, that you would come up hither and help us, both you and Mr. Pomeroy. There has been a reviving of religion among us of late; but your labours have been much more remarkably blessed than mine. Other ministers, I have heard, have shut up their pulpits against you; but here I engage you shall find one open. May God send you hither, with the like blessing as he has sent you to some other places; and may your coming be a means to humble me, for my barrenness and unprofitableness, and a means of my instruction and enlivening. I want an opportunity to concert measures with you, for the advancement of the kingdom and glory of our Redeemer. Please to communicate what I write to Mr. Pomeroy, and give my service to him. I desire the prayers of you both, that God will give me more of that holy spirit, and happy success, with which you are replenished.

*I am, Dear Sir,
your unworthy brother and fellow-labourer,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

As very few of Mr. Edwards's letters to his own family are preserved, it is proper to give those few to the reader, even when they are not otherwise interesting, in order to exhibit his true character, as an affectionate and faithful christian father. The following was addressed to his eldest daughter, in her thirteenth year, while residing with her aunt, Mrs. Huntington, at Lebanon.

To Miss Sarah Edwards, Lebanon.

Northampton, June 25th, 1741.

MY DEAR CHILD,

Your mother has received two letters from you, since you went away. We rejoice to hear of your welfare, and of the flourishing state of religion in Lebanon. I hope you will well improve the great advantage God is thereby putting into your hands, for the good of your own soul. You have very weak and infirm health, and I am afraid are always like to have; and it may be, are not to be long-lived; and while you do live, are not like to enjoy so much of the comforts of this life as others do, by reason of your want of health; and therefore, if you have no better portion, will be miserable indeed. But, if your soul prospers, you will be a happy, blessed person, whatever becomes of your body. I wish you much of the presence of Christ, and of communion with him, and that you might live so as to give him honour, in the place where you are, by an amiable behaviour towards all.

Your mother would have you go on with your work, if you can, and she would be glad if your aunt would set you to work something of hers, though you do but little in a day. She would have you send word by Mr. Wheelock, who I suppose will come up the next week, or the week after, whether you are well enough to make lace: if you are, she will send you a lace and bobbins. The flourishing of religion in this town, and in these parts of the country, has rather increased since you went away. Your mother joins with me in giving her love to you, and to your uncle and aunt. Your sisters give their love to you, and their duty to them. The whole family is glad, when we hear from you. Recommending you to the continual care and mercy of heaven, I remain your loving father,

JONATHAN EDWARDS."

Some time in the course of the year, a young lady, residing at S—, in Connecticut, who had lately made a public profession of religion, requested Mr. Edwards to give her some advice, as to the best manner of maintaining a religious life. In reply, he addressed to her the following letter; which will be found eminently useful to all persons just entering on the christian course.

***Letter addressed to a Young Lady at S—,
Conn. in the year 1741.***

"MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

As you desired me to send you, in writing, some directions how to conduct yourself in your christian course, I would now answer your request. The sweet remembrance of the great things I have lately seen at S—, inclines me to do anything in my power, to contribute to the spiritual joy and prosperity of God's people there.

- 1. I would advise you to keep up as great a strife and earnestness in religion, as if you knew yourself to be in a state of nature, and were seeking conversion. We advise persons under conviction, to be earnest and violent for the kingdom of heaven; but when they have attained to conversion, they ought not to be the less watchful, laborious, and earnest, in the whole work of religion, but the more so; for they are under infinitely greater obligations. For want of this, many persons, in a few months after their conversion, have begun to lose their sweet and lively sense of spiritual things, and to grow cold and dark, and have 'pierced themselves through with many sorrows;' whereas, if they had done as the apostle did, (Philippians 3:12-14) their path would have been 'as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.'*
- 2. Do not leave off seeking, striving, and praying for the very same things that we exhort unconverted persons to strive for, and a degree of which you have had already in conversion. Pray that your eyes may be opened, that you may receive sight, that you may know yourself, and be brought to God's foot-stool; and that you may see the glory of God and Christ, and may be raised from the dead, and have the love of Christ shed abroad in your heart. Those who have most of these*

things, have need still to pray for them; for there is so much blindness and hardness, pride and death remaining, that they still need to have that work of God wrought upon them, further to enlighten and enliven them, that shall be bringing them out of darkness into God's marvellous light, and be a kind of new conversion and resurrection from the dead. There are very few requests that are proper for an impenitent man, that are not also, in some sense, proper for the godly.

- 3. When you hear a sermon, hear for yourself. Though what is spoken may be more especially directed to the unconverted, or to those that, in other respects, are in different circumstances from yourself; yet, let the chief intent of your mind be to consider, 'In what respect is this applicable to me? and what improvement ought I to make of this, for my own soul's good?'*
- 4. Though God has forgiven and forgotten your past sins, yet do not forget them yourself: often remember, what a wretched bond-slave you were in the land of Egypt. Often bring to mind your particular acts of sin before conversion; as the blessed apostle Paul is often mentioning his old blaspheming, persecuting spirit, and his injuriousness to the renewed; humbling his heart, and acknowledging that he was 'the least of the apostles,' and not worthy 'to be called an apostle,' and the 'least of all saints,' and the 'chief of sinners;' and be often confessing your old sins to God, and let that text be often in your mind, (Ezekiel 16:63) 'that thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou*

has done, saith the Lord God.'

5. *Remember, that you have more cause, on some accounts, a thousand times, to lament and humble yourself for sins that have been committed since conversion, than before, because of the infinitely greater obligations that are upon you to live to God, and to look upon the faithfulness of Christ, in unchangeably continuing his loving-kindness, notwithstanding all your great unworthiness since your conversion.*
6. *Be always greatly abased for your remaining sin, and never think that you lie low enough for it; but yet be not discouraged or disheartened by it; for, though we are exceeding sinful, yet we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; the preciousness of whose blood, the merit of whose righteousness, and the greatness of whose love and faithfulness, infinitely overtop the highest mountains of our sins.*
7. *When you engage in the duty of prayer, or come to the Lord's supper, or attend any other duty of divine worship, come to Christ as Mary Magdalen^[16] did; (Luke 7:37, 38) come, and cast yourself at his feet, and kiss them, and pour forth upon him the sweet perfumed ointment of divine love, out of a pure and broken heart, as she poured the precious ointment out of her pure broken alabaster box.*
8. *Remember, that pride is the worst viper that is in the heart, the greatest disturber of the soul's peace, and of sweet communion with Christ: it was the first sin committed, and lies*

lowest in the foundation of Satan's whole building, and is with the greatest difficulty rooted out, and is the most hidden, secret, and deceitful of all lusts, and often creeps insensibly into the midst of religion, even, sometimes, under the disguise of humility itself.

- 9. That you may pass a correct judgment concerning yourself, always look upon those as the best discoveries, and the best comforts, that have most of these two effects: those that make you least and lowest, and most like a child; and those that most engage and fix your heart, in a full and firm disposition to deny yourself for God, and to spend and be spent for him.*
- 10. If at any time you fall into doubts about the state of your soul, in dark and dull frames of mind, it is proper to review your past experience; but do not consume too much time and strength in this way: rather apply yourself, with all your might, to an earnest pursuit after renewed experience, new light, and new lively acts of faith and love. One new discovery of the glory of Christ's face, will do more toward scattering clouds of darkness in one minute, than examining old experience, by the best marks that can be given, through a whole year.*
- 11. When the exercise of grace is low, and corruption prevails, and by that means fear prevails; do not desire to have fear cast out any other way, than by the reviving and prevailing of love in the heart: by this, fear will be effectually expelled, as darkness in a room vanishes away, when the pleasant beams of the sun are let into it.*

12. *When you counsel and warn others, do it earnestly, and affectionately, and thoroughly; and when you are speaking to your equals, let your warnings be intermixed with expressions of your sense of your own unworthiness, and of the sovereign grace that makes you differ.*
13. *If you would set up religious meetings of young women by yourselves, to be attended once in a while, besides the other meetings that you attend, I should think it would be very proper and profitable.*
14. *Under special difficulties, or when in great need of, or great longings after, any particular mercy, for yourself or others, set apart a day for secret prayer and fasting by yourself alone; and let the day be spent, not only in petitions for the mercies you desire, but in searching your heart, and in looking over your past life, and confessing your sins before God, not as is wont to be done in public prayer, but by a very particular rehearsal before God of the sins of your past life, from your childhood hitherto, before and after conversion, with the circumstances and aggravations attending them, and spreading all the abominations of your heart very particularly, and fully as possible, before him.*
15. *Do not let the adversaries of the cross have occasion to reproach religion on your account. How holily should the children of God, the redeemed and the beloved of the Son of God, behave themselves. Therefore, 'walk as children of the light, and of the day,' and 'adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour;' and especially, abound in what are called the*

christian virtues, and make you like the Lamb of God: be meek and lowly of heart, and full of pure, heavenly, and humble love to all; abound in deeds of love to others, and self-denial for others; and let there be in you a disposition to account others better than yourself.

16. In all your course, walk with God, and follow Christ, as a little, poor, helpless child, taking hold of Christ's hand, keeping your eye on the marks of the wounds in his hands and side, whence came the blood that cleanses you from sin, and hiding your nakedness under the skirt of the white shining robes of his righteousness.

17. Pray much for the ministers and the church of God; especially, that he would carry on his glorious work which he has now begun, till the world shall be full of his glory."

About this period, a considerable number of lay members of the church began, in various parts of New England, to hold religious meetings, and to preach and exhort in the manner of ministers. They were usually men of worth, and desirous of doing good; but having much zeal, and little knowledge, and often but little discretion, the church, at that period, had certainly very little reason to rejoice in their labours. The following letter of the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, written probably in the autumn of 1741, explains his own views on this subject.^[17]

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I rejoice to hear that my poor labours have been of any service to any in New England. All glory be to the great and glorious God, when out of the mouths of babes and sucklings,

he is pleased sometimes to ordain praise. I rejoice to hear the progress of God's work among you, this last summer and that there are any appearances of its continuance: Blessed be God, dear brother! As to the subject you mention of **laymen being sent out to exhort and to teach**, supposing them to be real converts, I cannot but think, if it be encouraged and continued, it will be of dreadful consequence to the church's peace and soundness in the faith. I will not gainsay but that private persons may be of service to the church of God by private, humble, fraternal reproof, and exhortations; and no doubt it is their duty to be faithful in these things. But in the mean time if christian prudence and humility do not attend their essays, they are like to be prejudicial to the church's real well-being. But for ignorant young converts to take upon them authoritatively to instruct and exhort publicly, tends to introduce the greatest errors and the grossest anarchy and confusion. The ministers of Christ should be apt to teach and able to convince gainsayers, and it is dangerous to the pure church of God, when those are novices, whose lips should preserve knowledge. It is base presumption, whatever zeal be pretended to, notwithstanding, for any persons to take this honour to themselves, unless they be called of God, as Aaron. I know most young zealots are apt, through ignorance, inconsideration, and pride of heart, to undertake what they have no proper qualifications for: and, through their imprudences and enthusiasm, the church of God suffers. I think all that fear God, should rise up and crush the enthusiastic creature in the egg. Dear brother, the times we

*live in are dangerous. The churches in America and elsewhere are in great hazard of enthusiasm: we have need to think of the maxim, **principiis obsta**. May Zion's King protect his church! I add no more, but love, and beg a remembrance in your prayers.*

GILBERT TENNENT."

In the September following, Mr. Edwards attended the public commencement at New-Haven, and on the 10th of that month preached his celebrated sermon entitled, "Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God," which, in consequence of a general request from the clergy, and other gentlemen attending the commencement, was published soon after at Boston, accompanied with a Preface from the Rev. Mr. Cooper; and in Scotland the ensuing year, with a preface from the Rev. Mr. Willison. This sermon, by exhibiting the distinguishing marks between an imaginary and a real work of the Spirit of God, and by applying those marks to the work of grace then begun, and rapidly spreading throughout the northern and middle colonies, became an unanswerable defence, not only of that, but of all genuine revivals of religion. It was indeed the object of immediate and reiterated attacks from the press; but being built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, it stands sure, while those attacks and their authors are forgotten. It exhibits the scriptural evidences of a genuine revival of religion, in much the same manner, as his subsequent treatise on "Religious Affections," does those of a genuine conversion. Mr. Cooper thus introduces it to the Christians of New England:

"If any are disposed to receive conviction, have mind open to light, and are really willing to know of the present work, whether it be of God; it is with great satisfaction and pleasure I can recommend to them the following sheets, in which they

will find the "distinguishing marks" of such a work, as they are to be found in the Holy Scriptures, applied to the uncommon operation that has been on the minds of many in this land. Here the matter is tried by the infallible touchstone of the Holy Scriptures, and is weighed in the balance of the sanctuary with great judgment and impartiality.

"A performance of this kind is seasonable and necessary; and I desire heartily to bless God, who inclined this, his servant, to undertake it, and has greatly assisted him in it. The reverend author is known to be 'a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven;' the place where he has been called to exercise his ministry has been famous for experimental religion; and he has had opportunities to observe this work in many places where it has powerfully appeared, and to converse with numbers that have been the subjects of it. These things qualify him for this undertaking, above most. His arguments in favour of the work, are strongly drawn from Scripture, reason, and experience: and I shall believe every candid, judicious reader will say, he writes very free from an enthusiastic or a party spirit. The use of human learning is asserted; a methodical way of preaching, the fruit of study as well as prayer, is recommended; and the exercise of charity, in judging others, pressed and urged: and those things, which are esteemed the blemished, are like to be the hindrances, of the work, are with great faithfulness cautioned and warned against—Many, I believe, will be thankful for this publication. Those who have already entertained favourable thoughts of this work, will be confirmed by it; and the doubting may be convinced and satisfied. But if there be any, after all, who cannot see the signatures of a Divine hand on the work, it is to be hoped they will be prevailed on to spare their censures, and stop their oppositions, lest 'haply they should be found to fight against God.'—I will only add my prayer, That the worthy author of this discourse may long be continued a burning and a shining light, in the golden

candlestick where Christ has placed him, and from thence diffuse his light throughout these provinces! That the Divine Spirit, whose cause is here espoused, would accompany this, and the other valuable publications of his servant, with his powerful influences; that they may promote the Redeemer's interests, serve the ends of vital religion, and so add to the author's present joy and future crown!"

The following is the testimony of the Rev. Mr. Willison, to the churches of Scotland. "The ensuing treatise, by the Rev. Mr. Edwards, of Northampton, in New England, concerning the work and operation of the Holy Spirit on men's consciences, is, in my humble opinion, a most excellent, solid, judicious, and scriptural performance; which I hope, through the Divine blessing, will prove most useful to the church, for discerning a true and real work of the Spirit of God, and for guarding against delusions and mistakes. It is certainly a great mercy to the church, that this subject hath been undertaken and handled by such an experienced, well furnished scribe, that hath been long acquainted with the Spirit of God's dealings with the souls of men, in his own congregation, and the country where he lives. And seeing the extraordinary work there at present, though several thousand miles distant from Scotland, is of the same kind with that at Cambuslang and other places about, and meets with the same opposition; the author doth, with great judgment, answer the common objections which are made against the work, both here and there, so that scarce any thing further needs be added. He warns people very warmly against opposing or reproaching the work of the Holy Spirit. He being the Third Person of the glorious Trinity, and God equal with the Father and the Son, and the great applier of the redemption purchased for us; it becomes all men highly to honour him and his work, and to look upon it as highly dangerous to speak a word against him, according to Matthew 12:32—I shall add no more, but my fervent prayers to God, to bless both the author and his

discourse, and that he would pour out his Spirit yet more abundantly, both on America and all the British dominions; and that he would hasten the glory of the latter days, when the Jews shall be brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles, and that all the kingdoms of the world may become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, that he may reign for ever and ever! Amen and Amen."

It was during this visit to New-Haven, that Mr. Hopkins,^[18] then about to receive the degree of A.B. at Yale college, first saw Mr. Edwards. He soon after became his pupil, and continued his intimate friend through life, and was ultimately his biographer. The impression made on his mind, may be gathered from the following account of the subject, in the Memoirs of his own life. "When I heard Mr. Tennent," (the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, who had preached often at New-Haven in the preceding March.) "I thought he was the greatest and best man, and the best preacher, that I had ever seen or heard. His words were to me 'like apples of gold in pictures of silver.' And I thought that, when I should leave the college, as I was then in my last year, I would go and live with him, wherever I should find him. But just before the commencement in September, when I was to take my degree, on the seventeenth day of which month I was twenty years old, Mr. Edwards, of Northampton, came to New-Haven, and preached. He then preached the sermon on *The Trial of the Spirits*, which was afterwards printed. I had before read his sermons on Justification, etc., and his Narrative of Remarkable Conversions at Northampton, which took place about seven years before this. Though I then did not obtain any personal acquaintance with him, any further than by hearing him preach; yet I conceived such an esteem of him, and was so pleased with his preaching, that I altered my former determination with respect to Mr. Tennent, and concluded to go and live with Mr. Edwards, as soon as I should have opportunity, though he lived

about eighty miles from my father's house."

Chapter X^(TOC)

*Temporary Abatement of Religious Attention—Letter to Mr. Bellamy—
Missionary Tour—Success at Leicester—Mr. Hopkins Becomes a Member of
his Family—Mr. Buell's Successful Labours at Northampton—Mr. Edwards's
Narrative of the Revival at Northampton, in 1740-1742—Covenant Entered
into by the Church.*

FOR about three months, or from November to January, there was an obvious abatement in the attention to religion at Northampton; and although there were instances of conversion from time to time through the winter, yet they were less frequent than before. Mr. Edwards alludes to this fact, in the following

Letter to Mr. Bellamy, of Bethlehem.

"Northampton, January. 21, 1742.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I received yours of January. 11, for which I thank you.

Religion, in this and the neighbouring towns, has now of late been on the decaying hand. I desire your prayers, that God would quicken and revive us again; and particularly, that he would greatly humble, and pardon, and quicken me, and fill me with his own fulness; and, if it may consist with his will, improve me as an instrument to revive his work. There has

been, the year past, the most wonderful work among children here, by far, that ever was. God has seemed almost wholly to take a new generation, that are come on since the late great work, seven years ago—Neither earth nor hell can hinder his work that is going on in the country. Christ gloriously triumphs at this day. You have probably before now heard of the great and wonderful things that have lately been wrought at Portsmouth, the chief town in new Hampshire. There are also appearing great things at Ipswich and Newbury, the two largest towns in this province except Boston, and several other towns beyond Boston, and some towns nearer. By what I can understand, the work of God is greater at this day in the land than it has been at any time. O what cause have we, with exulting hearts, to agree to give glory to him, who thus rides forth in the chariot of his salvation, conquering and to conquer; and earnestly to pray, that now the Sun of righteousness would come forth like a bridegroom, rejoicing as a giant, to run his race from one end of the heavens to the other, that nothing may be hid from the light and heat thereof.

It is not probable that I shall be able to attend your meeting at Guilford. I have lately been so much gone from my people, and don't know but I must be obliged to leave 'em again next week about a fortnight, being called to Leicester, a town about half way to Boston, where a great work of grace has lately commenced; and probably soon after that to another place; and having at this time some extraordinary affairs to attend to at home. I pray that Christ, our good Shepherd, will be with you, and direct you and greatly strengthen and bless you.

Dear Sir, I have none of those books you speak of, to sell. I have only a few, that I intend to send to some of my friends. I have already sent you one of my New-Haven sermons, by Mr —. Nevertheless, I have herewith sent another, which I desire you to give to Mr. Mills, if he has none; but if he has, dispose of it where you think it will do most good. I have also sent one of those sermons I preached at Enfield; as to the other, I have but one of them in the world.

*I am, dear Sir, your affectionate and unworthy brother, and fellow-labourer,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

The absence from his people, alluded to in the preceding letter, occurred in consequence of a missionary tour of some length, in the two preceding months; during which he visited various places, to which he had been invited, in consequence of an unusual attention to religion there, among the people. His own congregation, readily admitting that, at such a time, there was a louder call for his services in those places, than in Northampton, consented, in the true spirit of christian benevolence, that he should listen to these calls of Providence, and go forth into other fields of labour. In so doing, they soon found a fulfilment of the promise, that he who watereth shall be watered himself. On Monday the 25th of January, Mr. Edwards set out for Leicester, and remained there several weeks, preaching with remarkable success. The revival of religion almost immediately pervaded the whole congregation, and great numbers were believed to be the subjects of hopeful conversion. On Wednesday, January 27th, Mr. Buell, a classmate of Mr. Hopkins, who, though he left college in the September preceding, had already been preaching some time, and had gained the reputation of an uncommonly

engaged and animated preacher, came to Northampton, to preach during the absence of Mr. Edwards. Immediately the work of grace, which had for a season declined, was again carried on with even greater power than before. A high degree of religious feeling was excited in the church; a solemn, anxious attention to the salvation of the soul, was witnessed extensively among the congregation; and, soon after the return of Mr. Edwards, the work of conviction and conversion again went forward with renewed success.

Mr. Hopkins alludes to these events, in his own narrative. "In the month of December," he observes, "being furnished with a horse, I set out for Northampton, with a view to live with Mr. Edwards, where I was an utter stranger. When I arrived there, Mr. Edwards was not at home; but I was received with great kindness by Mrs. Edwards and the family, and had encouragement that I might live there during the winter. Mr. Edwards was absent on a preaching tour, as people in general were greatly attentive to religion and preaching, which was attended with remarkable effects, in the conviction and supposed conversion of multitudes. I was very gloomy, and was most of the time retired in my chamber. After some days, Mrs. Edwards came into my chamber, and said, "As I was now become a member of the family for a season, she felt herself interested in my welfare; and, as she observed that I appeared gloomy and dejected, she hoped I would not think she intruded, by her desiring to know, and asking me what was the occasion of it, or to that purpose. I told her the freedom she used was agreeable to me; that the occasion of the appearance which she mentioned, was the state in which I considered myself. I was in a Christless, graceless state, and had been under a degree of conviction and concern for myself, for a number of months; had got no relief, and my case, instead of growing better, appeared to grow worse. Upon which we entered into a free conversation; and on the whole she told me, that she had peculiar exercises in prayer respecting me, since I had

been in the family; that she trusted I should receive light and comfort, and doubted not that God intended yet to do great things by me.

"Religion was now at a lower ebb at Northampton than it had been of late, and than it appeared to be in the neighbouring towns, and in New England in general. In the month of January, Mr. Buell, my classmate, came to Northampton, having commenced a zealous preacher of the gospel; and was the means of greatly reviving the people to zeal in religion. He preached every day, and sometimes twice a day, publicly, Mr. Edwards being out of town, preaching in distant towns. Professing Christians appeared greatly revived and comforted; and a number were under conviction; and I think there were some hopeful new converts. After Mr. Buell had been in Northampton a week or two, he set out on a tour towards Boston."

Having thus alluded to the religious state of Northampton at this period, so far as was necessary to exhibit the order and connexion of events; we now proceed to give Mr. Edwards's own account of the revival of religion in that town, in 1740-1742, as communicated in a letter to a minister of Boston.

"Northampton, December.12, 1743.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Ever since the great work of God, that was wrought here about nine years ago, there has been a great and abiding alteration in this town, in many respects. There has been vastly more religion kept up in the town, among all sorts of persons, in religious exercises, and in common conversation; there has been a great alteration among the youth of the town, with respect to revelry, frolicking, profane and licentious conversation, and lewd songs; and there has also been a great

alteration, amongst both old and young, with regard to tavern-haunting. I suppose the town has been in no measure so free of vice in these respects, for any long time together, for sixty years, as it has been these nine years past. There has also been an evident alteration, with respect to a charitable spirit to the poor; though I think with regard to this, we in this town, as well as the land in general, come far short of gospel rules. And though after that great work nine years ago, there has been a very lamentable decay of religious affections, and the engagedness of people's spirit in religion; yet many societies for prayer and social worship were all along kept up, and there were some few instances of awakening, and deep concern about the things of another world, even in the most dead time.

In the year 1740, in the spring before Mr. Whitefield came to this town, there was a visible alteration: there was more seriousness and religious conversation, especially among young people; those things that were of ill tendency among them, were for-borne; and it was a very frequent thing for persons to consult their minister upon the salvation of their souls; and in some particular persons there appeared a great attention about that time. And thus it continued, until Mr. Whitefield came to town, which was about the middle of October following: he preached here four sermons in the meeting-house, (besides a private lecture at my house,) one on Friday, another on Saturday, and two upon the sabbath. The congregation was extraordinarily melted by every sermon; almost the whole assembly being in tears for a great part of

sermon time. Mr. Whitefield's sermons were suitable to the circumstances of the town; containing a just reproof of our backslidings, and in a most moving and affecting manner, making use of our great professions, and great mercies, as arguments with us to return to God, from whom we had departed. Immediately after this, the minds of the people in general appeared more engaged in religion, showing a greater forwardness to make religion the subject of their conversation, and to meet frequently for religious purposes, and to embrace all opportunities to hear the word preached. The revival at first appeared chiefly among professors, and those that had entertained hope that they were in a state of salvation, to whom Mr. Whitefield chiefly addressed himself; but in a very short time, there appeared an awakening and deep concern among some young persons, that looked upon themselves in a Christless state; and there were some hopeful appearances of conversion, and some professors were greatly revived. In about a month or six weeks, there was a great attention in the town, both as to the revival of professors and the awakening of others. By the middle of December, a considerable work of God appeared among those that were very young; and the revival of religion continued to increase, so that in the spring an engagedness of spirit, about the things of religion, was become very general amongst young people and children, and religious subjects almost wholly took up their conversation when they were together.

In the month of May, 1741, a sermon was preached to a company, at a private house. Near the conclusion of the

discourse, one or two persons, that were professors, were so greatly affected with a sense of the greatness and glory of divine things, and the infinite importance of the things of eternity, that they were not able to conceal it—the affection of their minds overcoming their strength, and having a very visible effect upon their bodies. When the exercises were over, the young people that were present removed into the other room for religious conference; and particularly that they might have opportunity to inquire of those, that were thus affected, what apprehensions they had, and what things they were that thus deeply impressed their minds; and there soon appeared a very great effect of their conversation; the affection was quickly propagated throughout the room; many of the young people and children, that were professors, appeared to be overcome with a sense of the greatness and glory of divine things, and with admiration, love, joy, and praise, and compassion to others, that looked upon themselves as in a state of nature; and many others at the same time were overcome with distress, about their sinful and miserable estate and condition; so that the whole room was full of nothing but outcries, faintings, and the like. Others soon heard of it in several parts of the town, and came to them; and what they saw and heard there, was greatly affecting to them, so that many of them were overpowered in like manner, and it continued thus for some hours; the time being spent in prayer, singing, counselling, and conferring. There seemed to be a consequent happy effect of that meeting, to several particular persons, and on the state of religion in the town in general.

After this, were meetings from time to time, attended with like appearances. But a little after it, at the conclusion of the public exercises on the sabbath, I appointed the children that were under seventeen years of age, to go from the meeting-house to a neighbouring house, that I might there further enforce what they had heard in public, and might give in some counsels proper for their age. The children were there very generally and greatly affected with the warnings and counsels that were given them, and many exceedingly overcome; and the room was filled with cries; and when they were dismissed, they almost all of them went home crying aloud through the streets, to all parts of the town. The like appearances attended several such meetings of children, that were appointed. But their affections appeared by what followed, to be of a very different nature: in many, they appeared indeed but childish affections, and in a day or two would leave them as they were before; others were deeply impressed; their convictions took fast hold of them, and abode by them: and there were some that, from one meeting to another, seemed extraordinarily affected for some time, to but little purpose, their affections presently vanishing from time to time; but yet afterwards, were seized with abiding convictions, and their affections became durable.

About the middle of the summer, I called together the young people that were communicants, from sixteen to twenty-six years of age, to my house; which proved to be a most happy meeting: many seemed to be very greatly and most agreeably affected with those views, which excited humility, self-

condemnation, self-abhorrence, love, and joy: many fainted under these affections. We had several meetings that summer, of young people, attended with like appearances. It was about that time, that there first began to be cryings out in the meeting-house; which several times occasioned many of the congregation to stay in the house after the public exercises were over, to confer with those who seemed to be overcome with religious convictions and affections, which was found to tend much to the propagation of their impressions, with lasting effect upon many; conference being, at these times, commonly joined with prayer and singing. In the summer and autumn, the children in various parts of the town had religious meetings by themselves, for prayer, sometimes joined with fasting; wherein many of them seemed to be greatly and properly affected, and I hope some of them savingly wrought upon.

The months of August and September were the most remarkable of any this year, for appearances of the conviction and conversion of sinners, and great revivings, quickenings, and comforts of professors, and for extraordinary external effects of these things. It was a very frequent thing, to see a house full of outcries, faintings, convulsions, and such like, both with distress, and also with admiration and joy. It was not the manner here to hold meetings all night, as in some places, nor was it common to continue them till very late in the night; but it was pretty often so, that there were some that were so affected, and their bodies so overcome, that they could not go home, but were obliged to stay all night where

they were. There was no difference, that I know of here, with regard to these extraordinary effects, in meetings in the night and in the day time: the meetings in which these effects appeared in the evening, being commonly begun, and their extraordinary effects, in the day, and continued in the evening; and some meetings have been very remarkable for such extraordinary effects, that were both begun and finished in the day time. There was an appearance of a glorious progress of the work of God upon the hearts of sinners, in conviction, and conversion, this summer and autumn, and great numbers, I think we have reason to hope, were brought savingly home to Christ. But this was remarkable: the work of God in his influences of this nature, seemed to be almost wholly upon a new generation—those that were not come to years of discretion in that wonderful season, nine years ago; children, or those that were then children: others, who had enjoyed that former glorious opportunity, without any appearance of saving benefit, seemed now to be almost wholly passed over and let alone. But now we had the most wonderful work among children, that ever was in Northampton. The former outpouring of the Spirit was remarkable for influences upon the minds of children, beyond all that had ever been before; but this far exceeded that. Indeed, as to influences on the minds of professors, this work was by no means confined to a new generation. Many, of all ages, partook of it; but yet, in this respect, it was more general on those that were of the young sort. Many, who had been formerly wrought upon, and in the time of our declension had fallen into decays, and had

in a great measure left God, and gone after the world, now passed under a very remarkable new work of the Spirit of God, as if they had been the subjects of a second conversion. They were first led into the wilderness, and had a work of conviction; having much deeper convictions of the sins of both nature and practice, than ever before; though with some new circumstances, and something new in the kind of conviction in some, with great distress, beyond what they had felt before their first conversion. Under these convictions, they were excited to strive for salvation, and the kingdom of heaven suffered violence from some of them, in a far more remarkable manner than before; and after great convictions and humblings, and agonizing with God, they had Christ discovered to them anew, as an all-sufficient Saviour, and in the glories of his grace, and in a far more clear manner than before; and with greater humility, self-emptiness, and brokenness of heart, and a purer, a higher joy, and greater desires after holiness of life; but with greater self-diffidence and distrust of their treacherous hearts. One circumstance, wherein this work differed from that, which had been in the towns five or six years before, was, that conversions were frequently wrought more sensibly and visibly; the impressions stronger, and more manifest by their external effects; the progress of the Spirit of God in conviction, from step to step, more apparent; and the transition from one state to another, more sensible and plain; so that it might, in many instances, be as it were seen by bystanders. The preceding season had been very remarkable on this account, beyond what had been

before; but this more remarkable than that. And in this season, these apparent or visible conversions, (if I may so call them,) were more frequently in the presence of others, at religious meetings, where the appearances of what was wrought on the heart fell under public observation.

After September, 1741, there seemed to be some abatement of these extraordinary appearances, yet they did not wholly cease, but there was something of them, from time to time, all winter. About the beginning of February, 1742, Mr. Buell came to this town. I was then absent from home, and continued so till about a fortnight after. Mr. Buell preached from day to day, almost every day, in the meeting-house—I had left him the free use of my pulpit, having heard of his designed visit, before I went from home. He spent almost the whole time having religious exercises with the people, either in public or private, the people continually thronging him. When he first came, there came with him a number of the zealous people from Suffield, who continued here for some time. There were very extraordinary effects of Mr. Buell's labours; the people were exceedingly moved, crying out in great numbers in the meeting-house, and a great part of the congregation commonly staying in the house of God, for hours after the public service. Many also were exceedingly moved in private meetings, where Mr. Buell was: almost the whole town seemed to be in a great and continual commotion, day and night, and there was indeed a very great revival of religion. But it was principally among professors; the appearances of a work of conversion were in no measure as great, as they had

been the summer before. When I came home, I found the town in very extraordinary circumstances, such as, in some respects, I never saw it in before. Mr. Buell continued here a fortnight or three weeks after I returned: there being still great appearances attending his labours; many in their religious affections being raised far beyond what they had ever been before: and there were some instances of persons lying in a sort of trance, remaining perhaps for a whole twenty-four hours motionless, and with their senses locked up; but in the mean time under strong imaginations, as though they went to heaven, and had there a vision of glorious and delightful objects. But when the people were raised to this height, Satan took the advantage, and his interposition, in many instances, soon became very apparent: and a great deal of caution and pains were found necessary, to keep the people, many of them, from running wild.

In the month of March, I led the people into a solemn public renewal of their covenant with God. To that end, having made a draft of a covenant, I first proposed it to some of the principal men in the church; then to the people, in their several religious associations in various parts of the town; then to the whole congregation in public; and then I deposited a copy of it in the hands of each of the four deacons, that all who desired it might resort to them, and have opportunity to view and consider it. Then the people in general, that were above fourteen years of age, first subscribed the covenant with their hands; and then, on a day of fasting and prayer, all together presented themselves before the Lord in his house,

and stood up, and solemnly manifested their consent to it, as their vow to God. The covenant was as follows:

Copy of A Covenant

Entered into and subscribed, by the people of God at Northampton, and owned before God in his house as their vow to the Lord, and made a solemn act of public worship, by the congregation in general that were above fourteen years of age, on a day of fasting and prayer for the continuance and increase of the gracious presence of God in that place.

March 16th, 1742.

Acknowledging God's great goodness to us, a sinful, unworthy, people, in the blessed manifestations and fruits of his gracious presence in this town, both formerly and lately, and particularly in the very late spiritual revival; and adoring the glorious majesty, power, and grace of God, manifested in the present wonderful outpouring of his Spirit, in many parts of this land, in this place; and lamenting our past backslidings and ungrateful departings from God, and humbly begging of God that he would not mark our iniquities, but, for Christ's sake, come over the mountains of our sins, and visit us with his salvation, and continue the tokens of his presence with us, and yet more gloriously pour out his blessed Spirit upon us, and make us all partakers of the divine blessings he is, at this day, bestowing here, and in many parts of this land; we do this day present ourselves before the Lord, to renounce our evil ways, we put away our abominations from before God's eyes,

and with one accord, to renew our engagements to seek and serve God: and particularly do now solemnly promise and vow to the Lord as follows—

In all our conversation, concerns, and dealings with our neighbour, we will have a strict regard to rules of honesty, justice, and uprightness, that we don't overreach or defraud our neighbour in any matter, and either wilfully, or through want of care, injure him in any of his honest possessions or rights; and in all our communication will have a tender respect, not only to our own interest, but also to the interest of our neighbour; and will carefully endeavour, in everything, to do to others as we should expect, or think reasonable, that they should do to us, if we were in their case, and they in ours.

And particularly we will endeavour to render every one his due, and will take heed to ourselves, that we don't injure our neighbour, and give him just cause of offence, by wilfully or negligently forbearing to pay our honest debts.

And wherein any of us, upon strict examination of our past behaviour, may be conscious to ourselves, that we have by any means wronged any of our neighbours in their outward estate, we will not rest, till we have made that restitution, or given that satisfaction, which the rules of moral equity require; or if we are, on a strict and impartial search, conscious to ourselves, that we have in any other respect considerably injured our neighbour, we will truly endeavour to do that, which we in our consciences suppose christian rules require, in order to a reparation of the injury, and removing the

offence given thereby.

And furthermore we promise, that we will not allow ourselves any back-biting; and that we will take great heed to ourselves to avoid all violations of those christian rules, Titus 3:2.

'Speak evil of no man;' James 4:11. 'Speak not evil one of another, brethren;' and 2 Corinthians 12:20. 'Let there be no strifes, backbitings, whisperings;' and that we will not only not slander our neighbour, but also will not feed a spirit of bitterness, ill will, or secret grudge against our neighbour, insist on his real faults needlessly, and when not called to it, or from such a spirit, speak of his failings and blemishes with ridicule, or an air of contempt.

And we promise, that we will be very careful to avoid doing anything to our neighbour from a spirit of revenge. And that we will take great care that we do not, for private interest or our own honour, or to maintain ourselves against those of a contrary party, or to get our wills, or to promote any design in opposition to others, do those things which we, on the most impartial consideration are capable of, can think in our consciences will tend to wound religion, and the interests of Christ's kingdom.

And particularly, that so far as any of us, by Divine Providence, have any special influence upon others, to lead them in the management of public affairs, we will not make our own worldly gain, or honour, or interest in the affections of others, or getting the better of any of a contrary party, that are in any respect our competitors, or the bringing or keeping

them down, our governing aim, to the prejudice of the interest of religion, and the honour of Christ.

And in the management of any public affair, wherever there is a difference of opinions, concerning any outward possessions, privileges, rights, or properties, we will not willingly violate justice for private interest: and with the greatest strictness and watchfulness, will avoid all unchristian bitterness, vehemence, and heat of spirit; yea, though we should think ourselves injured by a contrary party; and in the time of the management of such affairs, will especially watch over ourselves, our spirits, and our tongues, to avoid all unchristian inveighings, reproachings, bitter reflecting, judging and ridiculing others, either in public meetings or in private conversation, either to men's faces, or behind their backs; but will greatly endeavour, so far as we are concerned, that all should be managed with christian humility, gentleness, quietness, and love.

And furthermore we promise, that we will not tolerate the exercise of enmity and ill will, or revenge in our hearts, against any of our neighbours; and we will often be strictly searching and examining our own hearts with respect to that matter.

And if any of us find that we have an old secret grudge against any of our neighbours, we will not gratify it, but cross it, and endeavour to our utmost to root it out, crying to God for his help; and that we will make it our true and faithful endeavour, in our places, that a party spirit may not be kept up amongst

us, but that it may utterly cease; that for the future, we may all be one, united in undisturbed peace and unfeigned love.

And those of us that are in youth, do promise, never to allow ourselves in any diversions or pastimes, in meetings, or companies of young people, that we, in our consciences, upon sober consideration, judge not well to consist with, or would sinfully tend to hinder, the devoutest and most engaged spirit in religion, or indispose the mind for that devout and profitable attendance on the duties of the closet, which is most agreeable to God's will, or that we, in our most impartial judgment, can think tends to rob God of that honour which he expects, by our orderly serious attendance on family worship.

And furthermore we promise, that we will strictly avoid all freedoms and familiarities in company, so tending either to stir up or gratify a lust of lasciviousness, that we cannot in our consciences think will be approved by the infinitely pure and holy eye of God, or that we can think, on serious and impartial consideration, we should be afraid to practise, if we expected in a few hours to appear before that holy God, to give an account of ourselves to him, as fearing they would be condemned by him as unlawful and impure.

We also promise, with great watchfulness, to perform relative duties, required by christian rules, in the families we belong to, as we stand related respectively, towards parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, masters or mistresses, and servants.

And we now appear before God, depending on Divine grace and assistance, solemnly to devote our whole lives, to be laboriously spent in the business of religion; ever making it our greatest business, without backsliding from such a way of living, not hearkening to the solicitations of our sloth, and other corrupt inclinations, or the temptations of the world, that tend to draw us off from it; and particularly, that we will not abuse a hope or opinion that any of us may have, of our being interested in Christ, to indulge ourselves in sloth, or the more easily to yield to the solicitations of any sinful inclinations; but will run with perseverance the race that is set before us, and work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

And because we are sensible that the keeping these solemn vows may hereafter, in many cases, be very contrary to our corrupt inclinations and carnal interests, we do now therefore appear before God to make a surrender of all to him, and to make a sacrifice of every carnal inclination and interest, to the great business of religion and the interest of our souls.

And being sensible of our weakness, and the deceitfulness of our own hearts, and our proneness to forget our most solemn vows, and lose our resolutions, we promise to be often strictly examining ourselves by these promises, especially before the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and beg of God that he would, for Christ's sake, keep us from wickedly dissembling in these our solemn vows; and that he who searches our hearts, and ponders the path of our feet, would, from time to time, help us

in trying ourselves by this covenant, and help us to keep covenant with him, and not leave us to our own foolish, wicked, and treacherous hearts.

In the beginning of the summer of 1742, there seemed to be an abatement of the liveliness of people's affections in religion; but yet many were often in a great height of them. And in the fall and winter following, there were at times extraordinary appearances. But in the general, people's engagedness in religion, and the liveliness of their affections, have been on the decline; and some of the young people especially, have shamefully lost their liveliness and vigour in religion, and much of the seriousness and solemnity of their spirits. But there are many that walk as becometh saints; and to this day there are a considerable number in town that seem to be near to God, and maintain much of the life of religion, and enjoy many of the sensible tokens and fruits of his gracious presence.

With respect to the late season of revival of religion amongst us for three or four years past, it has been observable, that in the former part of it, in the years 1740 and 1741, the work seemed to be much more pure, having less of a corrupt mixture than in the former great outpouring of the Spirit, in 1735 and 1736. Persons seemed to be sensible of their former errors, and had learned more of their own hearts, and experience had taught them more of the tendency and consequences of things. They were now better guarded, and their affections were not only stronger, but attended with

greater solemnity, and greater humility and self-distrust, and greater engagedness after holy living and perseverance: and there were fewer errors in conduct. But in the latter part of it, in the year 1742, it was otherwise: the work continued more pure till we were infected from abroad: our people hearing of, and some of them seeing, the work in other places, where there was greater visible commotion than here, and the outward appearances were more extraordinary, were ready to think that the work in those places far excelled what was amongst us, and their eyes were dazzled with the high profession and great show that some made, who came hither from other places.

That those people went so far beyond them in raptures and violent emotions of the affections, and a vehement zeal, and what they call boldness for Christ, our people were ready to think was owing to far greater attainments in grace, and intimacy with heaven: they looked little in their own eyes in comparison with them, and were ready to submit themselves to them, and yield themselves up to their conduct, taking it for granted, that everything was right that they said and did. These things had a strange influence on the people, and gave many of them a deep and unhappy tincture, from which it was a hard and long labour to deliver them, and from which some of them are not fully delivered to this day.

The effects and consequences of things among us plainly show the following things, viz. That the degree of grace is by no means to be judged of by the degree of joy, or the degree of

zeal; and that indeed we cannot at all determine by these things, who are gracious and who are not; and that it is not the degree of religious affections, but the nature of them, that is chiefly to be looked at. Some that have had very great raptures of joy, and have been extraordinarily filled, (as the vulgar phrase is,) and have had their bodies overcome, and that very often, have manifested far less of the temper of Christians in their conduct since, than some others that have been still, and have made no great outward show. But then again, there are many others, that have had extraordinary joys and emotions of mind, with frequent great effects upon their bodies, that behave themselves stedfastly, as humble, amiable, eminent Christians.

'Tis evident that there may be great religious affections in individuals, which may in show and appearance resemble gracious affections, and have the same effects upon their bodies, but are far from having the same effect on the temper of their minds and the course of their lives. And likewise there is nothing more manifest, by what appears amongst us, than that the good estate of individuals is not chiefly to be judged of by any exactness of steps, and method of experiences, in what is supposed to be the first conversion; but that we must judge by the spirit that breathes, the effect wrought upon the temper of the soul in the time of the work and remaining afterwards. Though there have been very few instances among professors, amongst us, of what is ordinarily called scandalous sins, known to me; yet the temper that some of them show, and the behaviour they have been of, together with some things in the

nature and circumstances of their experiences, make me much afraid lest there be a considerable number that have woefully deceived themselves. Though, on the other hand, there is a great number whose temper and conversation is such, as justly confirms the charity others towards them; and not a few, in whose disposition and walk there are amiable appearances of eminent grace. And notwithstanding all the corrupt mixtures that have been in the late work here, there are not only many blessed fruits of it, in particular persons that yet remain, but some good effects of it upon the town in general. A spirit of party has more extensively subsided. I suppose there has been less appearance these three or four years past, of that division of the town into two parties, which has long been our bane, than has been at any time during the preceding thirty years; and the people have apparently had much more caution, and a greater guard on their spirit and their tongues, to avoid contention and unchristian heats, in town-meetings, and on other occasions. And 'tis a thing greatly to be rejoiced in, that the people very lately came to an agreement and final issue, with respect to their grand controversy relating to their common lands; which has been, above any other particular thing, a source of mutual prejudices, jealousies, and debates, for fifteen or sixteen years past. The people also seem to be much more sensible of the danger of resting in old experiences, or what they were subjects of at their supposed first conversion; and to be more fully convinced of the necessity of forgetting the things that are behind, and pressing forward and maintaining earnest labour, watchfulness, and

prayerfulness, as long as they live.

*I am, Rev. Sir,
Your friend and brother,
JONATHAN EDWARDS"*

Chapter XI^(TOC)

Mrs. Edwards. Her Solemn Self-Dedications Her Uncommon Discoveries of the Divine Perfections and Glory; and of the Excellency of Christ Remarks Concerning Them.

IN speaking of Mrs. Edwards, we have already had occasion to remark, that her piety appears to have been in no ordinary degree pure, intense, and elevated, and that her views of spiritual and heavenly things were uncommonly clear and joyful. Near the close of the year 1738, according to the testimony of Mr. Edwards, she was led, under an uncommon discovery of God's excellency, and in an high exercise of love to God, and of rest and joy in him, to make a new and most solemn dedication of herself to his service and glory, an entire renunciation of the world, and a resignation of all to God. After this, she had often such views of the glory of the divine perfections, and of Christ's excellencies, and at times, for hours together, without any interruption, that she was overwhelmed, and as it were swallowed up, in the light and joy of the love of God. In the summer of 1740, after a new and more perfect resignation of herself to God, with yet greater fervency, her views of the glory of God, and of the excellency of Christ, became still more clear and transporting; and in the following winter, after a similar but more perfect resignation of herself, and acceptance of God as the only portion and happiness of her soul, God appeared to vouchsafe to her, for a long period, a degree of spiritual light and enjoyment, which seemed to be, in reality, an anticipation of the joys of the heavenly world. There was so much that was unusual and striking in this state of mind, that her husband requested her to draw up an exact statement of it; which, having been preserved, is now

presented to the reader.

"On Tuesday night, January. 19, 1742," observes Mrs. Edwards, "I felt very uneasy and unhappy, at my being so low in grace. I thought I very much needed help from God, and found a spirit of earnestness to seek help of him, that I might have more holiness. When I had for a time been earnestly wrestling with God for it, I felt within myself great quietness of spirit, unusual submission to God, and willingness to wait upon him, with respect to the time and manner in which he should help me, and wished that he should take his own time, and his own way, to do it.

"The next morning I found a degree of uneasiness in my mind, at Mr. Edwards's suggesting, that he thought I had failed in some measure in point of prudence, in some conversation I had with Mr. Williams, of Hadley, the day before. I found, that it seemed to bereave me of the quietness and calm of my mind, in any respect not to have the good opinion of my husband. This, I much disliked in myself, as arguing a want of a sufficient rest in God, and felt a disposition to fight against it, and look to God for his help, that I might have a more full and entire rest in him, independent of all other things. I continued in this frame, from early in the morning until about 10 o'clock, at which time the Rev. Mr. Reynolds went to prayer in the family.

"I had, before this, so entirely given myself up to God, and resigned up every thing into his hands, that I had, for a long time, felt myself quite alone in the world; so that the peace and calm of my mind, and my rest in God, as my only and all-sufficient happiness, seemed sensibly above the reach of disturbance from any thing but these two: 1st. My own good name and fair reputation among men, and especially the esteem and just treatment of the people of this town; 2dly. And more especially, the esteem, and love, and kind treatment of my husband. At times, indeed, I had seemed to be

considerable elevated above the influence of even these things; yet I had not found my calm, and peace, and rest in God so sensibly, fully, and constantly, above the reach of disturbance from them, until now.

While Mr. Reynolds was at prayer in the family this morning, I felt an earnest desire that, in calling on God, he should say, *Father*, or that he should address the Almighty under that appellation: on which the thought turned in my mind—Why can I say, *Father*?—Can I now at this time, with the confidence of a child, and without the least misgiving of heart, call God my Father?—This brought to my mind two lines of Mr. Erskine's sonnet:

'I see him lay his vengeance by,
'And smile in Jesus' face.'

"I was thus deeply sensible, that my sins did loudly call for vengeance; but I then by faith saw God 'lay his vengeance by, and smile in Jesus' face.' It appeared to be real and certain that he did so. I had not the least doubt, that he then sweetly smiled upon me, with the look of forgiveness and love, having laid aside all his displeasure towards me, for Jesus' sake; which made me feel very weak, and somewhat faint.

"In consequence of this, I felt a strong desire to be alone with God, to go to him, without having any one to interrupt the silent and soft communion, which I earnestly desired between God and my own soul; and accordingly withdrew to my chamber. It should have been mentioned that, before I retired, while Mr. Reynolds was praying, these words, in Romans 8:34 came into my mind, 'Who is he that condemneth; it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;' as well as the following words, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ,' etc.; which occasioned great sweetness and delight in my soul. But when I was alone, the words came to my mind with far greater

power and sweetness; upon which I took the Bible, and read the words to the end of the chapter, when they were impressed on my heart with vastly greater power and sweetness still. They appeared to me with undoubted certainty as the words of God, and as words which God did pronounce concerning me. I had no more doubt of it, than I had of my being. I seemed as it were to hear the great God proclaiming thus to the world concerning me; 'Who shall lay any thing to thy charge,' etc.; and had it strongly impressed on me, how impossible it was for any thing in heaven or earth, in this world or the future, ever to separate me from the love of God which was in Christ Jesus. I cannot find language to express, how *certain* this appeared—the everlasting mountains and hills were but shadows to it. My safety, and happiness, and eternal enjoyment of God's immutable love, seemed as durable and unchangeable as God himself. Melted and overcome by the sweetness of this assurance, I fell into a great flow of tears, and could not forbear weeping aloud. It appeared certain to me that God was my Father, and Christ my Lord and Saviour, that he was mine and I his. Under a delightful sense of the immediate presence and love of God, these words seemed to come over and over in my mind, 'My God, my all; my God, my all.' The presence of God was so near, and so real, that I seemed scarcely conscious of any thing else. God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, seemed as distinct persons, both manifesting their inconceivable loveliness, and mildness, and gentleness, and their great and immutable love to me. I seemed to be taken under the care and charge of my God and Saviour, in an inexpressibly endearing manner; and Christ appeared to me as a mighty Saviour, under the character of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, taking my heart, with all its corruptions, under his care, and putting it at his feet. In all things, which concerned me, I felt myself safe under the protection of the Father and the Saviour; who appeared with supreme kindness to keep a record of every thing that I did, and of every

thing that was done to me, purely for my good.

"The peace and happiness, which I hereupon felt, was altogether inexpressible. It seemed to be that which came from heaven; to be eternal and unchangeable. I seemed to be lifted above earth and hell, out of the reach of every thing here below, so that I could look on all the rage and enmity of men or devils, with a kind of holy indifference, and an undisturbed tranquillity. At the same time, I felt compassion and love for all mankind, and a deep abasement of soul, under a sense of my own unworthiness. I thought of the ministers who were in the house, and felt willing to undergo any labour and self-denial, if they would but come to the help of the Lord. I also felt myself more perfectly weaned from all things here below, than ever before. The whole world, with all its enjoyments, and all its troubles, seemed to be nothing—My God was my all, my only portion. No possible suffering appeared to be worth regarding: all persecutions and torments were a mere nothing. I seemed to dwell on high, and the place of defence to be the munition of rocks.

"After some time, the two evils mentioned above, as those which I should have been least able to bear, came to my mind—the ill treatment of the town, and the ill will of my husband; but now I was carried exceedingly above even such things as these, and I could feel that, if I were exposed to them both, they would seem comparatively nothing. There was then a deep snow on the ground, and I could think of being driven from my home into the cold and snow, of being chased from the town with the utmost contempt and malice, and of being left to perish with the cold, as cast out by all the world, with perfect calmness and serenity. It appeared to me, that it would not move me, or in the least disturb the inexpressible happiness and peace of my soul. My mind seemed as much above all such things, as the sun is above the earth.

"I continued in a very sweet and lively sense of divine things, day and night, sleeping and waking, until Saturday, January. 23. On Saturday morning, I had a most solemn and deep impression on my mind of the eye of God as fixed upon me, to observe what improvement I made of those spiritual communications I had received from him; as well as of the respect shown Mr. Edwards, who had then been sent for to preach at Leicester. I was sensible that I was sinful enough to bestow it on my pride, or on my sloth, which seemed exceedingly dreadful to me. At night, my soul seemed to be filled with an inexpressibly sweet and pure love to God, and to the children of God; with a refreshing consolation and solace of soul, which made me willing to lie on the earth, at the feet of the servants of God, to declare his gracious dealings with me, and breathe forth before them my love, and gratitude, and praise.

"The next day, which was the sabbath, I enjoyed a sweet, and lively, and assured sense of God's infinite grace, and favour, and love to me, in taking me out of the depths of hell, and exalting me to the heavenly glory, and the dignity of a royal priesthood.

"On Monday night, Mr. Edwards, being gone that day to Leicester, I heard that Mr. Buell was coming to this town, and from what I had heard of him, and of his success, I had strong hopes that there would be great effects from his labours here. At the same time, I had a deep and affecting impression, that the eye of God was ever upon my heart, and that it greatly concerned me to watch my heart, and see to it that I was perfectly resigned to God, with respect to the instruments he should make use of to revive religion in this town, and be entirely willing, if it was God's pleasure, that he should make use of Mr. Buell; and also that other Christians should appear to excel me in christian experience, and in the benefit they should derive from ministers. I

was conscious, that it would be exceedingly provoking to God if I should not be thus resigned, and earnestly endeavoured to watch my heart, that no feelings of a contrary nature might arise; and was enabled, as I thought, to exercise full resignation, and acquiescence in God's pleasure, as to these things. I was sensible what great cause I had to bless God, for the use he had made of Mr. Edwards hitherto; but thought, if he never blessed his labours any more, and should greatly bless the labours of other ministers, I could entirely acquiesce in his will. It appeared to me meet and proper, that God should employ babes and sucklings to advance his kingdom. When I thought of these things, it was my instinctive feeling to say, 'Amen, Lord Jesus! Amen, Lord Jesus!' This seemed to be the sweet and instinctive language of my soul.

"On Tuesday, I remained in a sweet and lively exercise of this resignation, and love to and rest in God, seeming to be in my heart from day to day, far above the reach of every thing here below. On Tuesday night, especially the latter part of it, I felt a great earnestness of soul and engagedness in seeking God for the town, that religion might now revive, and that God would bless Mr. Buell to that end. God seemed to be very near to me while I was thus striving with him for these things, and I had a strong hope that what I sought of him would be granted. There seemed naturally and unavoidably to arise in my mind an assurance that now God would do great things for Northampton.

"On Wednesday morning, I heard that Mr. Buell arrived the night before at Mr. Phelps's, and that there seemed to be great tokens and effects of the presence of God there, which greatly encouraged and rejoiced me. About an hour and a half after, Mr. Buell came to our house; I sat still in entire resignedness to God, and willingness that God should bless his labours here as much as he pleased; though it were to the enlivening of every saint, and to

the conversion of every sinner, in the town. These feelings continued afterwards, when I saw his great success; as I never felt the least rising of heart to the contrary, but my submission was even and uniform, without interruption or disturbance. I rejoiced when I saw the honour which God put upon him, and the respect paid him by the people, and the greater success attending his preaching, than had followed the preaching of Mr. Edwards immediately before he went to Leicester. I found rest and rejoicing in it, and the sweet language of my soul continually was, 'Amen, Lord Jesus! Amen, Lord Jesus!'

"At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, a lecture was preached by Mr. Buell. In the latter part of the sermon, one or two appeared much moved, and after the blessing, when the people were going out, several others. To my mind there was the clearest evidence, that God was present in the congregation, on the work of redeeming love; and in the clear view of this, I was all at once filled with such intense admiration of the wonderful condescension and grace of God, in returning again to Northampton, as overwhelmed my soul, and immediately took away my bodily strength. This was accompanied with an earnest longing, that those of us, who were the children of God, might now arise and strive. It appeared to me, that the angels in heaven sung praises, for such wonderful, free, and sovereign grace, and my heart was lifted up in adoration and praise. I continued to have clear views of the future world, of eternal happiness and misery, and my heart full of love to the souls of men. On seeing some, that I found were in a natural condition, I felt a most tender compassion for them; but especially was I, while I remained in the meeting-house, from time to time overcome, and my strength taken away, by the sight of one and another, whom I regarded as the children of God, and who, I had heard, were lively and animated in religion. We remained in the meeting-house about three hours, after the public exercises were over. During most of

the time, my bodily strength was overcome; and the joy and thankfulness, which were excited in my mind, as I contemplated the great goodness of God, led me to converse with those who were near me, in a very earnest manner.

"When I came home, I found Mr. Buell, Mr. Christophers, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Eleanor Dwight, the wife of Mr. Joseph Allen, and Mr. Job Strong, at the house. Seeing and conversing with them on the Divine goodness, renewed my former feelings, and filled me with an intense desire that we might all arise, and with an active, flowing, and fervent heart give glory to God. The intenseness of my feelings again took away my bodily strength. The words of one of Dr. Watts's Hosannas powerfully affected me; and in the course of the conversation, I ***uttered them as the real language of my heart, with great earnestness and emotion.***

'Hosanna to King David's Son,

Who reigns on a superior throne,' etc.

And while I was uttering the words, my mind was so deeply impressed with the love of Christ, and a sense of his immediate presence, that I could with difficulty refrain from rising from my seat, and leaping for joy. I continued to enjoy this intense, and lively, and refreshing sense of divine things, accompanied with strong emotions, for nearly an hour; after which, I experienced a delightful calm, and peace and rest in God, until I retired for the night; and during the night, both waking and sleeping, I had joyful views of divine things, and a complacential rest of soul in God. I awoke in the morning of Thursday, January. 28th, in the same happy frame of mind, and engaged in the duties of my family with a sweet consciousness, that God was present with me, and with earnest longings of soul for the continuance and increase of the blessed fruits of the Holy Spirit in the town. About nine o'clock, these desires became so exceedingly intense, when I saw numbers of

the people coming into the house, with an appearance of deep interest in religion, that my bodily strength was much weakened, and it was with difficulty that I could pursue my ordinary avocations. About 11 o'clock, as I accidentally went into the room where Mr. Buell was conversing with some of the people, I heard him say, 'O that we, who are the children of God, should be cold and lifeless in religion!' and I felt such a sense of the deep ingratitude manifested by the children of God, in such coldness and deadness, that my strength was immediately taken away, and I sunk down on the spot. Those who were near raised me, and placed me in a chair; and from the fulness of my heart, I expressed to them, in a very earnest manner, the deep sense I had of the wonderful grace of Christ towards me, of the assurance I had of his having saved me from hell, of my happiness running parallel with eternity, of the duty of giving up all to God, and of the peace and joy inspired by an entire dependence on his mercy and grace. Mr. Buell then read a melting hymn of Dr. Watts's,^[19] concerning the loveliness of Christ, the enjoyments and employments of heaven, and the Christian's earnest desire of heavenly things; and the truth and reality of the things mentioned in the hymn, made so strong an impression on my mind, and my soul was drawn so powerfully towards Christ and heaven, that I leaped unconsciously from my chair. I seemed to be drawn upwards, soul and body, from the earth towards heaven; and it appeared to me that I must naturally and necessarily ascend thither. These feelings continued while the hymn was reading, and during the prayer of Mr. Christophers, which followed. After the prayer, Mr. Buell read two other hymns, on the glories of heaven, which moved me so exceedingly, and drew me so strongly heavenward, that it seemed as it were to draw my body upwards, and I felt as if I must necessarily ascend thither. At length my strength failed me, and I sunk down; when they took me up and laid me on the bed, where I lay for a considerable time, faint with joy, while

contemplating the glories of the heavenly world. After I had lain a while, I felt more perfectly subdued and weaned from the world, and more fully resigned to God, than I had ever been conscious of before. I felt an entire indifference to the opinions, and representations, and conduct of mankind respecting me; and a perfect willingness, that God should employ some other instrument than Mr. Edwards, in advancing the work of grace in Northampton. I was entirely swallowed up in God, as my only portion, and his honour and glory was the object of my supreme desire and delight. At the same time, I felt a far greater love to the children of God, than ever before. I seemed to love them as my own soul; and when I saw them, my heart went out towards them, with an inexpressible endearedness and sweetness. I beheld them by faith in their risen and glorified state, with spiritual bodies refashioned after the image of Christ's glorious body, and arrayed in the beauty of heaven. The time when they would be so appeared very near, by faith it seemed as if it were present. This was accompanied with a ravishing sense of the unspeakable joys of the upper world. They appeared to my mind in all their reality and certainty, and as it were in actual and distinct vision; so plain and evident were they to the eye of my faith, I seemed to regard them as begun. These anticipations were renewed over and over, while I lay on the bed, from twelve o'clock till four, being too much exhausted by emotions of joy, to rise and sit up; and during most of the time, my feelings prompted me to converse very earnestly with one and another of the pious women, who were present, on those spiritual and heavenly objects, of which I had so deep an impression. A little while before I arose, Mr. Buell and the people went to meeting.

"I continued in a sweet and lively sense of divine things, until I retired to rest. That night, which was Thursday night, January. 28, was the sweetest night I ever had in my life. I never before, for so long a time together, enjoyed so

much of the light, and rest, and sweetness of heaven in my soul, but without the least agitation of body during the whole time. The great part of the night I lay awake, sometimes asleep, and sometimes between sleeping and waking. But all night I continued in a constant, clear, and lively sense of the heavenly sweetness of Christ's excellent and transcendent love, of his nearness to me, and of my dearness to him; with an inexpressibly sweet calmness of soul in an entire rest in him. I seemed to myself to perceive a glow of divine love come down from the heart of Christ in heaven, into my heart, in a constant stream, like a stream or pencil of sweet light. At the same time, my heart and soul all flowed out in love to Christ; so that there seemed to be a constant flowing and reflowing of heavenly and divine love, from Christ's heart to mine; and I appeared to myself to float or swim, in these bright, sweet beams of the love of Christ, like the motes swimming in the beams of the sun, or the streams of his light which come in at the window. My soul remained in a kind of heavenly elysium. So far as I am capable of making a comparison, I think that what I felt each minute, during the continuance of the whole time, was worth more than all the outward comfort and pleasure, which I had enjoyed in my whole life put together. It was a pure delight, which fed and satisfied the soul. It was pleasure, without the least sting, or any interruption. It was a sweetness, which my soul was lost in. It seemed to be all that my feeble frame could sustain, of that fulness of joy, which is felt by those, who behold the face of Christ, and share his love in the heavenly world. There was but little difference, whether I was asleep or awake, so deep was the impression made on my soul; but if there was any difference, the sweetness was greatest and most uninterrupted while I was asleep.

"As I awoke early the next morning, which was Friday, I was led to think of Mr. Williams of Hadley preaching that day in the town, as had been appointed; and to examine my heart, whether I was willing that he, who was

a neighbouring minister, should be extraordinarily blessed, and made a greater instrument of good in the town, than Mr. Edwards; and was enabled to say, with respect to that matter, 'Amen, Lord Jesus!' and to be entirely willing, if God pleased, that he should be the instrument of converting every soul in the town. My soul acquiesced fully in the will of God, as to the instrument, if his work of renewing grace did but go on.

"This lively sense of the beauty and excellency of divine things continued during the morning, accompanied with peculiar sweetness and delight. To my own imagination, my soul seemed to be gone out of me to God and Christ in heaven, and to have very little relation to my body. God and Christ were so present to me, and so near me, that I seemed removed from myself. The spiritual beauty of the Father and the Saviour, seemed to engross my whole mind; and it was the instinctive feeling of my heart, 'Thou art; and there is none beside thee.' I never felt such an entire emptiness of self-love, or any regard to any private, selfish interest of my own. It seemed to me, that I had entirely done with myself. I felt that the opinions of the world concerning me were nothing, and that I had no more to do with any outward interest of my own, than with that of a person whom I never saw. The glory of God seemed to be all, and in all, and to swallow up every wish and desire of my heart.

"Mr. Sheldon came into the house about 10 o'clock, and said to me as he came in, 'The Sun of righteousness arose on my soul this morning, before day;' upon which I said to him in reply, 'That Sun has not set upon my soul all this night; I have dwelt on high in the heavenly mansions; the light of divine love has surrounded me; my soul has been lost in God, and has almost left the body.' This conversation only served to give me a still livelier sense of the reality and excellence of divine things, and that to such a degree, as again to take away my strength, and occasion great agitation of body. So strong were

my feelings, I could not refrain from conversing with those around me, in a very earnest manner, for about a quarter of an hour, on the infinite riches of divine love in the work of salvation; when, my strength entirely failing, my flesh grew very cold, and they carried me and set me by the fire. As I sat there, I had a most affecting sense of the mighty power of Christ, which had been exerted in what he had done for my soul, and in sustaining and keeping down the native corruptions of my heart, and of the glorious and wonderful grace of God in causing the ark to return to Northampton. So intense were my feelings, when speaking of these things, that I could not forbear rising up and leaping with joy and exultation. I felt at the same time an exceedingly strong and tender affection for the children of God, and realized, in a manner exceedingly sweet and ravishing, the meaning of Christ's prayer, in John 17:21. 'That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.' This union appeared to me an inconceivable, excellent, and sweet oneness; and at the same time I felt that oneness in my soul, with the children of God who were present. Mr. Christophers then read the hymn out of the Penitential cries, beginning with

'My soul doth magnify the Lord,
My spirit doth rejoice;'

The whole hymn was deeply affecting to my feelings: but when these words were read,

'My sighs at length are turn'd to songs,
The Comforter is come:—'

So conscious was I of the joyful presence of the Holy Spirit, I could scarcely refrain from leaping with transports of joy. This happy frame of mind continued until two o'clock, when Mr. Williams came in, and we soon went

to meeting. He preached on the subject of the assurance of faith. The whole sermon was affecting to me, but especially when he came to show the way in which assurance was obtained, and to point out its happy fruits. When I heard him say, that *those who have assurance, have a foretaste of heavenly glory*, I knew the truth of it from what I then felt: I knew that I then tasted the clusters of the heavenly Canaan: my soul was filled and overwhelmed with light, and love, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and seemed just ready to go away from the body. I could scarcely refrain from expressing my joy aloud, in the midst of the service. I had, in the mean time, an overwhelming sense of the glory of God, as the Great Eternal All, and of the happiness of having my own will entirely subdued to his will. I knew that the foretaste of glory, which I then had in my soul, came from him, that I certainly should go to him, and should, as it were, drop into the Divine Being, and be swallowed up in God.

"After meeting was done, the congregation waited while Mr. Buell went home, to prepare to give them a lecture. It was almost dark before he came, and, in the mean time, I conversed in a very earnest and joyful manner, with those who were with me in the pew. My mind dwelt on the thought, that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and it appeared to me that he was going to set up a reign of love on the earth, and that heaven and earth were, as it were, coming together; which so exceedingly moved me that I could not forbear expressing aloud, to those near me, my exultation of soul. This subsided into a heavenly calm, and a rest of soul in God, which was even sweeter than what preceded it. Afterwards, Mr. Buell came and preached; and the same happy frame of mind continued during the evening, and night, and the next day. In the forenoon, I was thinking of the manner in which the children of God had been treated in the world—particularly of their being shut up in prison—and the folly of such attempts to make them miserable, seemed to surprise me. It

appeared astonishing, that men should think, by this means, to injure those who had such a kingdom within them. Towards night being informed that Mrs. P—had expressed her fears lest I should die before Mr. Edwards's return, and he should think the people had killed his wife; I told those who were present, that I chose to die in the way that was most agreeable to God's will, and that I should be willing to die in darkness and horror, if it was most for the glory of God.

"In the evening, I read those chapters in John, which contain Christ's dying discourse with his disciples, and his prayer with them. After I had done reading, and was in my retirement, a little before bedtime, thinking on what I had read, my soul was so filled with love to Christ, and love to his people, that I fainted under the intenseness of the feeling. I felt, while reading, a delightful acquiescence in the petition to the Father—'I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.' Though it seemed to me infinitely better to die to go to Christ, yet I felt an entire willingness to continue in this world so long as God pleased, to do and suffer what he would have me.

"After retiring to rest and sleeping a little while, I awoke and had a very lively consciousness of God's being near me. I had an idea of a shining way, or path of light, between heaven and my soul, somewhat as on Thursday night, except that God seemed nearer to me, and as it were close by, and the way seemed more open, and the communication more immediate and more free. I lay awake most of the night, with a constant delightful sense of God's great love and infinite condescension, and with a continual view of God as *near*, and as *my God*. My soul remained, as on Thursday night, in a kind of heavenly elysium. Whether waking or sleeping, there was no interruption, throughout the night, to the views of my soul, to its heavenly light, and

divine, inexpressible sweetness. It was without any agitation or motion of the body. I was led to reflect on God's mercy to me, in giving me, for many years, a willingness to die; and after that, for more than two years past, in making me willing to live, that I might do and suffer whatever he called me to here; whereas, before that, I often used to feel impatient at the thought of living. This then appeared to me, as it had often done before, what gave me much the greatest sense of thankfulness to God. I also thought how God had graciously given me, for a great while, an entire resignation to his will, with respect to the kind and manner of death that I should die; having been made willing to die on the rack, or at the stake, or any other tormenting death, and, if it were God's will, to die in darkness: and how I had that day been made very sensible and fully willing, if it was God's pleasure and for his glory, to die in horror. But now it occurred to me, that when I had thus been made willing to live, and to be kept on this dark abode, I used to think of living no longer than to the ordinary age of man. Upon this I was led to ask myself, Whether I was not willing to be kept out of heaven even longer; and my whole heart seemed immediately to reply, 'Yes, a thousand years, if it be God's will, and for his honour and glory:' and then my heart, in the language of resignation, went further, and with great alacrity and sweetness, to answer as it were over and over again, 'Yes, and live a thousand years in horror, if it be most for the glory of God: yea, I am willing to live a thousand years a hell upon earth, if it be most for the honour of God.' But then I considered with myself, What this would be, to live a hell upon earth, for so long a time; and I thought of the torment of my body being so great, awful, and overwhelming, that none could bear to live in the country where the spectacle was seen, and of the torment and horror of my mind being vastly greater than the torment of my body; and it seemed to me that I found a perfect willingness, and sweet quietness and alacrity of soul, in consenting that it should be so, if it were

most for the glory of God; so that there was no hesitation, doubt, or darkness in my mind, attending the thoughts of it, but my resignation seemed to be clear, like a light that shone through my soul. I continued saying, 'Amen, Lord Jesus! Amen, Lord Jesus! glorify thyself in me, in my body and my soul,'—with a calm and sweetness of soul, which banished all reluctance. The glory of God seemed to overcome me and swallow me up, and every conceivable suffering, and every thing that was terrible to my nature, seemed to shrink to nothing before it. This resignation continued in its clearness and brightness the rest of the night, and all the next day, and the night following, and on Monday in the forenoon, without interruption or abatement. All this while, whenever I thought of it, the language of my soul was, with the greatest fulness and alacrity, 'Amen, Lord Jesus! Amen, Lord Jesus!' In the afternoon of Monday, it was not quite so perceptible and lively, but my mind remained so much in a similar frame, for more than a week, that I could never think of it without an inexpressible sweetness in my soul.

"After I had felt this resignation on Saturday night, for some time as I lay in bed, I felt such a disposition to rejoice in God, that I wished to have the world join me in praising him; and was ready to wonder how the world of mankind could lie and sleep, when there was such a God to praise, and rejoice in, and could scarcely forbear calling out to those who were asleep in the house, to arise, and rejoice, and praise God. When I arose on the morning of the sabbath, I felt a love to all mankind, wholly peculiar in its strength and sweetness, far beyond all that I had ever felt before. The power of that love seemed to be inexpressible. I thought, if I were surrounded by enemies, who were venting their malice and cruelty upon me, in tormenting me, it would still be impossible that I should cherish any feelings towards them but those of love, and pity, and ardent desires for their happiness. At the same time I thought, if I were cast off by my nearest and dearest friends, and if the

feelings and conduct of my husband were to be changed from tenderness and affection, to extreme hatred and cruelty, and that every day, I could so rest in God, that it would not touch my heart, or diminish my happiness. I could still go on with alacrity in the performance of every act of duty, and my happiness remain un-diminished and entire.

"I never before felt so far from a disposition to judge and censure others, with respect to the state of their hearts, their sincerity, or their attainments in holiness, as I did that morning. To do this, seemed abhorrent to every feeling of my heart. I realized also, in an unusual and very lively manner, how great a part of Christianity lies in the performance of our social and relative duties to one another. The same lively and joyful sense of spiritual and divine things continued throughout the day—a sweet love to God and all mankind, and such an entire rest of soul in God, that it seemed as if nothing that could be said of me, or done to me, could touch my heart, or disturb my enjoyment. The road between heaven and my soul seemed open and wide, all the day long; and the consciousness I had of the reality and excellence of heavenly things was so clear, and the affections they excited so intense, that it overcame my strength, and kept my body weak and faint, the great part of the day, so that I could not stand or go without help. The night also was comforting and refreshing.

"This delightful frame of mind was continued on Monday. About noon, one of the neighbours who was conversing with me, expressed himself thus, 'One smile from Christ is worth a thousand million pounds,' and the words affected me exceedingly, and in a manner which I cannot express. I had a strong sense of the infinite worth of Christ's approbation and love, and at the same time of the grossness of the comparison; and it only astonished me, that any one could compare a smile of Christ to any earthly treasure—Towards night, I

had a deep sense of the awful greatness of God, and felt with what humility and reverence we ought to behave ourselves before him. Just then Mr. W— came in, and spoke with a somewhat light, smiling air, of the flourishing state of religion in the town; which I could scarcely bear to see. It seemed to me, that we ought greatly to revere the presence of God, and to behave ourselves with the utmost solemnity and humility, when so great and holy a God was so remarkably present, and to rejoice before him with trembling—In the evening, these words, in the Penitential Cries—"The Comforter is come!"—were accompanied to my soul with such conscious certainty, and such intense joy, that immediately it took away my strength, and I was falling to the floor; when some of those who were near me caught me and held me up. And when I repeated the words to the by-standers, the strength of my feelings was increased. The name—"The Comforter"—seemed to denote that the Holy Spirit was the only and infinite Fountain of comfort and joy, and this seemed real and certain to my mind. These words—"the comforter"—seemed as it were immensely great, enough to fill heaven and earth.

"On Tuesday after dinner, Mr. Buell, as he sat at table, began to discourse about the glories of the upper world; which greatly affected me, so as to take away my strength. The views and feelings of the preceding evening, respecting the Great Comforter, were renewed in the most lively and joyful manner; so that my limbs grew cold, and I continued to a considerable degree overcome for about an hour, earnestly expressing to those around me, my deep and joyful sense of the presence and divine excellence of the Comforter, and of the glories of heaven.

"It was either on Tuesday or Wednesday, that Mr. W—came to the house, and informed what account Mr. Lyman, who was just then come from Leicester, on his way from Boston, gave of Mr. Edwards's success, in making

peace and promoting religion at Leicester. The intelligence inspired me with such an admiring sense of the great goodness of God, in using Mr. Edwards as the instrument of doing good, and promoting the work of salvation, that it immediately overcame me, and took away my strength, so that I could no longer stand on my feet. On Wednesday night, Mr. Clark, coming in with Mr. Buell and some of the people, asked me how I felt. I told him that I did not feel at all times alike, but this I thought I could say, that I had given up all to God; and there is nothing like it, nothing like giving all up to him, esteeming all to be his, and resigning all at his call. I told him that, many a time within a twelve-month, I had asked myself when I lay down, How I should feel, if our house and all our property in it should be burnt up, and we should that night be turned out naked; whether I could cheerfully resign all to God; and whether I so saw that all was his, that I could fully consent to his will, in being deprived of it? and that I found, so far as I could judge, an entire resignation to his will, and felt that, if he should thus strip me of every thing, I had nothing to say, but should, I thought, have an entire calm and rest in God, for it was his own, and not mine. After this, Mr. Phelps gave us an account of his own feelings, during a journey from which he had just returned; and then Mr. Pomeroy broke forth in the language of joy, and thankfulness, and praise, and continued speaking to us nearly an hour, leading us all the time to rejoice in the visible presence of God, and to adore his infinite goodness and condescension. He concluded by saying, 'I would say more if I could; but words were not made to express these things.' This reminded me of the words of Mrs. Rowe:

'More I would speak, but all my words are faint:

Celestial Love, what eloquence can paint?

No more, by mortal words, can be expressed;

But vast Eternity shall tell the rest:'

And my former impressions of heavenly and divine things were renewed with so much power, and life, and joy, that my strength all failed me, and I remained for some time faint and exhausted. After the people had retired, I had a still more lively and joyful sense of the goodness and all-sufficiency of God, of the pleasure of loving him, and of being alive and active in his service, so that I could not sit still, but walked the room for some time, in a kind of transport. The contemplation was so refreshing and delightful, so much like a heavenly feast within the soul, that I felt an absolute indifference as to any external circumstances; and, according to my best remembrance, this enlivening of my spirit continued so, that I slept but little that night.

"The next day, being Thursday, between ten and eleven o'clock, and a room full of people being collected, I heard two persons give a minute account of the enlivening and joyful influences of the Holy Spirit on their own hearts. It was sweet to me to see others before me in their divine attainments, and to follow after them to heaven. I thought I should rejoice to follow the negro servants in the town to heaven. While I was thus listening, the consideration of the blessed appearances there were of God's being there with us, affected me so powerfully, that the joy and transport of the preceding night were again renewed. After this they sang a hymn, which greatly moved me, especially the latter part of it, which speaks of the ungratefulness of not having the praises of Christ always on our tongues. Those last words of the hymn seemed to fasten on my mind, and as I repeated them over, I felt such intense love to Christ, and so much delight in praising him, that I could hardly forbear leaping from my chair and singing aloud for joy and exultation. I continued thus extraordinarily moved until about one o'clock, when the people went away."

I am well aware, that very different views will be formed of the preceding narrative, by different individuals. Those who have no conception of what is meant by the religion of the heart, will doubtless pronounce it the offspring of a diseased body, or a distempered brain. Others, who profess the religion of Christ, but whose minds usually come in contact with nothing which is not merely *palpable*—with nothing but what they can either see, or hear, or feel, or taste—will probably regard it as the effect of mere enthusiasm. While others, who are both more intellectual and more spiritual in their objects of contemplation, will at once perceive that the state of mind therein described, is one to which they themselves are chiefly or wholly strangers; and will therefore very naturally and rationally wish to learn somewhat more minutely the circumstances of the individual, who was the subject of these spiritual discoveries, as well as their actual effect upon her character. On these points, the testimony of Mr. Edwards is full and explicit; and from his authority we state the following facts.

At this time, Mrs. Edwards had been long, in an uncommon manner, growing in grace, and rising by very sensible degrees to higher love to God, weanedness from the world, and mastery over sin and temptation, through great trials and conflicts, and long-continued struggling and fighting with sin, and earnest and constant prayer and labour in religion, and engagedness of mind in the use of all means, attended with a great exactness of life; and this growth had been attended not only with a great increase of religious affections, but with a most visible alteration of outward behaviour; particularly in living above the world, and in a greater degree of stedfastness and strength in the way of duty and self-denial: maintaining the christian conflict against temptations, and conquering from time to time under great trials; persisting in an unmoved, untouched calm and rest, under the changes and accidents of time, such as seasons of extreme pain and apparent hazard of

immediate death. These transports did not arise from bodily weakness, but were greatest in the best state of health. They were accompanied with a lively sense of the greatness of God, and her own littleness and vileness; and had abiding effects in the increase of the sweetness, rest, and humility, which they left upon the soul, and in a new engagedness of heart to live to the honour of God, and to watch and fight against sin. They were attended with no enthusiastical disposition to follow impulses or supposed revelations, nor with any appearance of spiritual pride; but on the contrary with a very great increase of meekness and humility, and a disposition in honour to prefer others, as well as with a great aversion to judging others, and a strong sense of the importance of moral, social duties. They were accompanied with an extraordinary sense of the awful majesty of God, so as frequently to take away the bodily strength; with a sense of the holiness of God, as of a flame infinitely pure and bright, so as oftentimes to overwhelm soul and body, with an extraordinary view of the infinite terribleness of his wrath, of the exceeding sinfulness of her own heart, and of a desert of that wrath for ever; with an intense sorrow for sin, so as entirely to prostrate the strength of the body; with a clear certainty of the truth of the great things revealed in the gospel; with an overwhelming sense of the glory of the work of redemption, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, of the glorious harmony of the divine attributes appearing therein, as that wherein mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other; with a sight of the glorious sufficiency of Christ, a constant immovable trust in God, an overwhelming sense of his glorious unsearchable wisdom, a sweet rejoicing at his being infinitely and unchangeably happy, independent, and all-sufficient, at his reigning over all, and doing his own will with uncontrollable power and sovereignty; with a delightful sense of the glory of the Holy Spirit as the great Comforter; with intense desires for the honour and glory of God's

name, a clear and constant preference of it, not only to her own temporal interests, but to her spiritual comfort; with a willingness to live and die in spiritual darkness, if the honour of God required it, a great lamenting of ingratitude, intense longings and faintings after higher love to Christ, and greater conformity to him—particularly to be more perfect in humility and adoration; with great delight in singing praises to God and Jesus Christ, a desire that this present life might be one continued song of praise, and an overcoming pleasure at the thought of spending eternity in that exercise; with a living by faith in a very unusual manner; with a uniform distrust of her own strength, and a great dependence on God for help; with intense longings that all Christians might be fervent in love, and active in the service of God; with taking pleasure in watchfulness and toil, self-denial and bearing the cross; with a melting compassion for those who were in a state of nature, and for Christians under darkness, a universal benevolence to all mankind, a willingness to endure any suffering for the conversion of the impenitent—her compassion for them being often to that degree, that she could find no support nor rest, but in going to God and pouring out her soul in prayer for them; with earnest desires that the then existing work of Divine grace might be carried on with greater purity, and freedom from all bitter zeal, censoriousness, spiritual pride, and angry controversy, and that the kingdom of Christ might be established through the earth, as a kingdom of holiness, peace, and joy; with unspeakable delight in the thoughts of heaven, as a world of love, where love shall be the saints' eternal food, where they shall dwell in the light of love, and where the very air and breath will be nothing but love; with intense love to the people of God, as to those who will soon wear his perfect image; with earnest desires that others might love God better than herself, and attain to higher degrees of holiness; with a delight in conversing on the most spiritual and heavenly things in religion, often

engaging in such conversation, with a degree of feeling too intense to be long endured; and with a lively sense of the importance of charity to the poor, as well as of the need which ministers have of the influences of the Holy Spirit, and earnest longings and wrestlings with God for them in prayer. She had also, according to Mr. Edwards, the greatest, fullest, longest continued, and most constant assurance of the favour of God, and of a title to future glory, that he ever saw any appearance of, in any person—enjoying, especially near the time in which he made this statement, to use her own expression, the riches of Full Assurance; as well as an uninterrupted, entire resignation to God, with respect to health or sickness, ease or pain, life or death, and an entire resignation of the lives of her nearest earthly friends. These things were attended with a constant, sweet peace and serenity of soul, without a cloud to interrupt it, a continual rejoicing in all the works of nature and providence, a wonderful access to God by prayer, sensibly conversing with him, as much as if Christ were here on earth; frequent, plain, sensible, and immediate answers of prayer, all tears wiped away, all former troubles and sorrows of life forgotten, excepting sorrow for sin, doing every thing for God and his glory, doing it as the service of love, with a continual uninterrupted cheerfulness, peace, and joy. "O how good," she once observed, "is it to work for God in the day time, and at night to lie down under his smiles." Instead of slighting the means of grace in consequence of these discoveries, she was never more sensible of her need of instruction; instead of regarding herself as free from sin, she was led by her clearer sight of the Divine holiness, to perceive more fully the sinfulness of her own heart; instead of neglecting the business of life, she performed it with greater alacrity, as a part of the service of God—declaring that, when thus done, it was as delightful as prayer itself. At the same time, she discovered an extreme anxiety to avoid every sin, and to discharge every moral obligation, was most exemplary in the performance of

every social and relative duty, exhibited great inoffensiveness of life and conversation, great meekness, gentleness, and benevolence of spirit, and avoided, with remarkable conscientiousness, all those things which she regarded as failings in her own character.

To those who, after reading this statement of facts, still regard the preceding narrative as the offspring of enthusiasm, we shall draw our reply from Mr. Edwards himself: "Now if such things are enthusiasm, and the offspring of a distempered brain; let my brain be possessed evermore of that happy distemper! If this be distraction; I pray God that the world of mankind may all be seized with this benign, meek, beneficent, beatific, glorious distraction! What notion have they of true religion, who reject what has here been described? What shall we find to correspond with these expressions of Scripture, *The peace of God, that passeth all understanding: Rejoicing with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: God's shining into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ: With open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of God, and being changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord: Being called out of darkness into marvellous light: and having the day-star arise in our hearts?* What, let me ask, if these things that have been mentioned do not correspond with these expressions; what else can we find that does correspond with them?"

Mr. Edwards adds, that he had witnessed many instances, in Northampton and elsewhere, of other persons, which were in general of the same kind with these, though not so high in degree, in any instance; and, in many of them, not so pure and unmixed, or so well regulated. In some individuals, who discovered very intense religious affections, there was obviously a great mixture of nature with grace, and in some a sad degenerating of religious

affections; yet, in most instances, they were uniform in their character, and obviously the result of fervent piety.

That such full and clear discoveries of the Divine excellency and glory, as those recited in the preceding narrative, are uncommon, is unhappily too true: still they are far from being singular; for accounts of a similar nature may be found in the private diaries of men of distinguished piety, in almost every age of the church.^[20] They are not however probably more uncommon, than are great attainments in piety; and, when enjoyed by those who have made such attainments, ought, in no respect, to be regarded as surprising. There is certainly in God a goodness and a glory, infinitely surpassing the comprehension of the highest created beings. This goodness and glory, which constitutes the Divine beauty and loveliness, God is able to reveal to the mind of every intelligent creature, as far as his faculties extend. If the mind, to which this revelation is made, has a supreme relish for holiness; the discovery of this spiritual beauty of the Divine mind will communicate to it an enjoyment, which is pure and heavenly in its nature; and the degree of this enjoyment, in every case, will be proportioned to the measure of the faculties, and to the fulness of the discovery. This is obviously true in the heavenly world. God there reveals his glory—not in all its infinite brightness: this, he cannot do to a created intelligence: he reveals it—in as strong an effulgence as the minds of saints and angels can endure. Were a revelation, equally clear and full, to be made to one of us here on earth, it would obviously overwhelm and destroy the life of the body; for John, even when he beheld the glorified body of Christ, fell at his feet as dead. In proportion as an individual is possessed of holiness, so much more near does he come to God, and so much more clear and distinct is his perception of his true character. "If a man love me," says Christ, "he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Such discoveries of

the Divine beauty and glory are therefore the ***promised reward***, as well as the natural consequence, of distinguished holiness; and a well authenticated narrative, of the manner in which they were made, in a given instance, even if they were unusual in degree, instead of exciting our distrust or surprise, should lead us, with a noble emulation, to "press forward towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Chapter XII^(TOC)

Extent of the Revival of 1740-1748—Auspicious Opening—Opposed by its Enemies: and Injured by its Friends—"Thoughts on the Revival in New England"—Attestations of Numerous Ministers—Causes of its Decline—Influence of Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Tennent, and Others—Influence of Mr. Edwards's Publications in Scotland—Great Revival of Religion there—His Correspondents in that Country—Letter to Mr. M'Culloch—Answer to do—Letter from Mr. Robe.

THE reader can scarcely need to be informed, that the revival of religion, of which we have been speaking, was not confined to Northampton. It began there, and at Boston, and many other places, in 1740, and in that, and the three following years, prevailed, to a greater or less degree, in more than one hundred and fifty congregations in New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; as well as in a considerable number more, in Maryland and Virginia, in 1744. At its commencement, it appears to have been, to an unusual degree, a silent, powerful, and glorious work of the Spirit of God—the simple effect of truth applied to the conscience, and accompanied by his converting grace. So auspicious indeed was the opening of this memorable work of God, and so rapid its progress, that the promised reign of Christ on the earth was believed, by many, to be actually begun. Had it continued of this unmixed character, so extensive was its prevalence, and so powerful its operation, it would seem that in no great length of time, it would have pervaded the western world. As is usual in such cases, it was opposed by the enemies of vital religion, and with a violence proportioned to its prevalence and power. But its worst enemies were found among its most zealous friends: and Mr. Edwards appear to have been early aware, that the measures too

generally resorted to, by many of them, to extend its influence over the whole country, as well as throughout every town and village where it was actually begun, were only adapted to introduce confusion and disorder, as far as they prevailed. To check these commencing evils, if possible, and to bear his own testimony to the work as a genuine work of the Holy Spirit, he prepared and published his "Thoughts on the Revival of Religion in New England, in 1740." In this treatise, after presenting evidence most clear and convincing that the attention to religion, of which he speaks, was a glorious work of God, and showing the obligations which all were under, to acknowledge and promote it, as well as the danger of the contrary conduct; he points out various particulars in which its friends had been injuriously blamed, then exhibits the errors and mistakes into which they had actually fallen, and concludes by showing positively, what ought to be done to promote it. This work, which was published in 1742, excited a very deep interest in the American churches, and was immediately republished in Scotland. The author, from his uncommon acquaintance with the Scriptures, the soundness of his theological views, his intuitive discernment of the operations of the mind, his knowledge of the human heart both before and after its renovation by the Spirit of God, his familiarity with revivals of religion, his freedom from enthusiasm, and his utter aversion to extravagance and disorder, was admirably qualified to execute it in the happiest manner: and, from the time of its first publication, it has been, to a very wide extent, the common textbook of evangelical divines, on the subject of which it treats. If the reader will examine the various accounts of revivals of religion, he will find that no one of them, anterior to this, furnishes an explanation of the subject, in accordance with the acknowledged principles of mental philosophy.

In 1743, about one hundred and sixty ministers published their attestations to this work, as in their own view a genuine work of the Spirit of God, and as

having been extraordinary and remarkable; on account of the numbers who discovered a deep anxiety for their salvation; on account of its rapid progress from place to place; and on account of the power with which it was carried on. Yet, while they bear witness to the great numbers who appeared to have become real Christians, to the extensive reformation of morals which it occasioned, and to a greater prevalence of religion than they had before witnessed; many of them also regret the extravagances and irregularities, which in some places had been permitted to accompany it. Among these, they particularly point out—a disposition to make secret impulses on the mind a rule of duty laymen invading the ministerial office, and under a pretence of exhorting, setting up preaching—ministers invading each other's provinces—indiscreet young men rushing into particular places, and preaching on all occasions—unscriptural separations of churches, and of ministers from their churches—a rash judging of the religious state of others—and a controversial, uncharitable, and censorious spirit.

There can be no doubt, that both parts of this statement are true. Although this most extensive work of grace opened on New England, in 1740 and 1741, in a manner eminently auspicious; yet in the two following years, it assumed, in various places, a somewhat different aspect, and was unhappily marked with irregularity and disorder. This was doubtless owing, in some degree, to the fact, that many ministers of wisdom and sound discretion, not advertng sufficiently to the extent and importance of the apostolic exhortation, "Let all things be done decently and in order," either encouraged, or did not effectually suppress, outcries, falling down and swooning, in the time of public and social worship, the speaking and praying of women in the church and in mixed assemblies, the meeting of children by themselves for religious worship, and singing and praying aloud in the streets; but far more to the unrestrained zeal of a considerable number of misguided men—some

of them preachers of the gospel, and others lay exhorters—who, intending to take Mr. Whitefield as their model, travelled from place to place, preaching and exhorting wherever they could collect an audience; pronounced definitively and unhesitatingly with respect to the piety of individuals, both ministers and private Christians; and whenever they judged a minister, or a majority of his church, destitute of piety—which they usually did, not on account of their false principles or their irreligious life, but for their want of an ardour and zeal equal to their own—advised, in the one case, the whole church to withdraw from the minister; and in the other, a minority to separate themselves from the majority, and to form a distinct church and congregation. This indiscreet advice had, at times, too much influence, and occasioned in some places the sundering of churches and congregations, in others the removal of ministers, and in others the separation of individuals from the communion of their brethren. It thus introduced contentions and quarrels into churches and families, alienated ministers from each other, and from their people, and produced, in the places where these consequences were most discernible, a wide-spread and riveted prejudice against revivals of religion. It is deserving perhaps of inquiry, Whether the subsequent slumber of the American church, for nearly seventy years, may not be ascribed, in an important degree, to the fatal reaction of these unhappy measures.

There can be no doubt that on Mr. Whitefield (although by his multiplied and successful labours he was the means of incalculable good to the churches of America, as well as to those of England and Scotland) these evils are, to a considerable degree, to be charged, as having first led the way in this career of irregularity and disorder. He did not go as far as some of his followers; but he opened a wide door, and went great lengths, in these forbidden paths; and his imitators, having less discretion and experience, ventured, under the cover of his example, even beyond the limits which he himself was afraid to pass.

His published journals show, that he was accustomed to decide too authoritatively, whether others, particularly ministers, were converted; as well as to insist that churches ought to remove those, whom they regarded as unconverted ministers; and that individual Christians or minorities of churches, where a majority refused to do this, were bound to separate themselves. Mr. Edwards, wholly disapproving of this conduct, conversed with Mr. Whitefield freely, in the presence of others, about his practice of pronouncing ministers, and other members of the christian church, unconverted; and declares that he supposed him to be of the opinion, that unconverted ministers ought not to be continued in the ministry; and that he supposed that he endeavoured to propagate this opinion, and a practice agreeable thereto. The same may be said, in substance, of Mr. G. Tennent, Mr. Finley, and Mr. Davenport, all of whom became early convinced of their error, and with christian sincerity openly acknowledged it. At the same time, while these things were to be regretted in themselves, and still more so in their unhappy consequences, the evidence is clear that, in far the greater number of places, these irregularities and disorders, if in any degree prevalent, were never predominant; and that the attention to religion in these places, while it continued, was most obviously a great and powerful work of the Spirit of God. The testimony of the ministers of those places, on these points, is explicit. It is given with great caution, and with the utmost candour; it acknowledges frankly the evils then experienced; and it details the actual moral change wrought in individuals and in society at large, in such a manner, that no one, who believes in regeneration as the work of the Holy Spirit, can doubt that this change was effected by the finger of God.

Though the attention to religion, at this period, was more powerful and more universal at Northampton, than in almost any other congregation, there was yet scarcely one in which so few of these evils were experienced. The reason

was, that their spiritual guide had already formed, in his own mind, settled principles respecting a genuine revival of religion—as to its cause, its nature, and in the most important points, as to the manner in which it was to be treated. He regarded it as caused—not by appeals to the feelings or the passions, but—by the truth of God brought home to the mind, in a subordinate sense by the preaching of the gospel, but in a far higher sense by the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit. He considered such an event, so far as man is concerned, as the simple effect of a practical attention to truth, on the conscience and the heart. He felt it to be his great, and in a sense his only, duty, therefore, to urge divine truth on the feelings and consciences of his hearers, with all possible solemnity and power. How he in fact urged it, his published sermons will show.

Yet even in Northampton many things occurred, which not only were deviations from decorum and good sense, but were directly calculated, as far as they prevailed, to change that which, in its commencement, was, to an uncommon degree, a silent and powerful work of Divine grace, into a scene of confusion and disorder. This was owing chiefly to contagion from without. "The former part of the revival of religion, in 1740 and 1741, seemed to be much more pure, having less of a corrupt mixture than in that of 1735 and 1736—But in 1742, it was otherwise: the work continued more pure till we were infected from abroad. Our people hearing of, and some of them seeing, the work in other places, where there was a greater visible commotion than here, and the outward appearances were more extraordinary, their eyes were dazzled with the high professions and great show that some made, who came in hither from other places. That these people went so far before them in raptures and violent emotions of the affections, and a vehement zeal, and what they called *boldness for Christ*, our people were ready to think was owing to far greater attainments in grace and intimacy with heaven. These

things had a strange influence on the people, and gave many of them a deep and unhappy tincture, from which it was a hard and long labour to deliver them, and from which some of them are not fully delivered to this day."

In many parishes, where the attention to religion commenced in 1742, it was extensively, if not chiefly, of this unhappy character. This was particularly true in the eastern part of Connecticut, and in the eastern and southeastern part, and some of the more central parishes, of Massachusetts. Churches and congregations were torn asunder, many ministers were dismissed, churches of a separatist character were formed, the peace of society was permanently broken up, and a revival of religion became extensively, in the view of the community, another name for the prevalence of fanaticism, disorder, and misrule. This unhappy and surprising change should prove an everlasting beacon to the church of God.

I have already had occasion to remark, that the "Narrative of Surprising Conversions" was repeatedly published, and extensively circulated, throughout England and Scotland. The same was true of Mr. Edwards's Five Sermons preached during the revival of religion in 1734-5, and of his discourse on "the Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God." The effect of these publications, particularly of the first, was in the latter country great and salutary. The eyes both of ministers and Christians were extensively opened to the fact, that an effusion of the Spirit, resembling in some good degree those recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, might take place, and might rationally be expected to take place, in modern times, in consequence of the direct and powerful application of similar means. Scotland was at that time favoured with the labours of many clergymen, greatly respected for their piety and talents; among whom were the Rev. William M'Culloch of Cambuslang, the Rev. John Robe of Kilsyth, the Rev.

John M'Laurin of Glasgow, the Rev. Thomas Gillespie of Carnock, the Rev. John Willison of Dundee, and the Rev. John Erskine of Kirkintilloch, afterwards Dr. Erskine of Edinburgh. These gentlemen, and many of their associates in the ministry, appear, at the time of which we are speaking, to have preached, not only with great plainness and fervency, but with the strongest confidence of immediate and great success; and, as a natural consequence, the church of Scotland soon witnessed a state of things, to which she had long been a stranger.

In February, 1742, a revival of religion began at Cambuslang, the parish of Mr. M'Culloch, four miles from Glasgow, resembling in its power and rapidity, and the number of conversions, that in Northampton, in 1734-5; and in the course of that year, scenes of a similar nature were witnessed in Kilsyth, Glasgow, Dundee, Carnock, Kirkintilloch, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and upwards of thirty towns and villages, in various parts of that kingdom. Thus the darkness which covers the earth was dispersed, for a season, from over these two countries, and the clear light of heaven shone down upon them, with no intervening cloud. In such circumstances, it might naturally be expected, that the prominent clergymen in both, feeling a common interest, and being engaged in similar labours, would soon open a mutual correspondence.

The first of Mr. Edwards's correspondents in Scotland, was the Rev. Mr. M'Laurin of Glasgow; but, unfortunately, I have been able to procure none of the letters which passed between them. That gentleman, in the early part of 1743, having informed Mr. Edwards that his friend, Mr. M'Culloch of Cambuslang, had intended to write to him with a view of offering a correspondence, but had failed of the expected opportunity; Mr. Edwards addressed to the latter the following letter.

**To the Rev. William M'Culloch,
Cambuslang**

Northampton, May 12, 1743.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Mr. M'Laurin of Glasgow, in a letter he has lately sent me, informs me of your proposing to write a letter to me, and of your being prevented by the failing of the expected opportunity. I thank you Rev. Sir, that you had such a thing in your heart. We were informed last year, by the printed and well attested narrative, of the glorious work of God in your parish; which we have since understood has spread into many other towns and parishes in that part of Scotland; especially are we informed of this by Mr. Robe's Narrative, and I perceive by some papers of the Weekly History, sent me by Mr. M'Laurin of Glasgow, that the work has continued to make glorious progress at Cambuslang, even till it has prevailed to a wonderful degree indeed. God has highly favoured and honoured you, dear Sir, which may justly render your name precious to all that love our Lord Jesus Christ. We live in a day wherein God is doing marvellous things: in that respect, we are distinguished from former generations. God has wrought great things in New England, which, though exceedingly glorious, have all along been attended with some threatening clouds; which, from the beginning, caused me to

apprehend some great stop or check to be put to the work, before it should be begun and carried on in its genuine purity and beauty, to subdue all before it, and to prevail with an irresistible and continual progress and triumph; and it is come to pass according to my apprehensions. But yet I cannot think otherwise, than that what has now been doing, is the forerunner of something vastly greater, more pure, and more extensive. I can't think that God has come down from heaven, and done such great things before our eyes, and gone so much beside and beyond his usual way of working, and wrought so wonderfully, and that he has gone away with a design to leave things thus. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? And will God, when he has wrought so wonderfully, and made the earth to bring forth in one day, bring to the birth and not cause to bring forth? And shall he cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? I live upon the brink of the grave, in great infirmity of body, and nothing is more uncertain, than whether I shall live to see it: but, I believe God will revive his work again before long, and that it will not wholly cease till it has subdued the whole earth. But God is now going and returning to his place, till we acknowledge our offence, and, I hope, to humble his church in New England, and purify it, and so fit it for yet greater comfort, that he designs in due time to be-stow upon it. God may deal with his church, as he deals with a particular saint; commonly, after his first comfort, the clouds return, and there is a season of remarkable darkness, and hiding of God's face, and buffetings of Satan; but all to fit for greater mercy; and as it was with Christ himself, who,

presently after the heavens were opened above his head, and the Spirit was poured out upon him, and God wonderfully testified his love to him, was driven into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil forty days. I hope God will show us our errors, and teach us wisdom by his present withdrawals. Now in the day of adversity, we have time and cause to consider, and begin now to have opportunity to see, the consequences of our conduct. I wish that God's ministers and people, every where, would take warning by our errors, and the calamities that are the issue of them. I have mentioned several things, in my letters to Mr. M'Laurin and Mr. Robe; another I might have mentioned, that most evidently proves of ill consequence, that is, we have run from one extreme to another, with respect to talking of experiences; that whereas formerly there was too great a reservedness in this matter, of late many have gone to an unbounded openness, frequency, and constancy, in talking of their experiences, declaring almost every thing that passes between God and their own souls, every where and before every body. Among other ill consequences of such a practice, this is one, that religion runs all into that channel; and religion is placed very much in it, so that the strength of it seems to be spent in it; that other duties, that are of vastly greater importance, have been looked upon as light in comparison of this, so that other parts of religion have been really much injured thereby: as when we see a tree excessively full of leaves, we find so much less fruit; and when a cloud arises with an excessive degree of wind, we have the less rain. How much, dear Sir, does God's church at such a day need the

constant gracious care and guidance of our good Shepherd; and especially, we that are ministers.

I should be glad, dear Sir, of a remembrance in your prayers, and also of your help, by informations and instructions, by what you find in your experience in Scotland. I believe it to be the duty of one part of the church of God thus to help another.

*I am, dear Sir, your affectionate
Brother and servant in Jesus Christ,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

The following is the answer of Mr. M'Culloch to the preceding letter.

"Cambuslang, August. 13, 1743.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

The happy period in which we live, and the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, wherewith you first were visited, in Northampton, in the year 1734; and then, more generally, in New England, in 1740, and 1741; and then we, in several places in Scotland, in 1742, and 1743; and the strong opposition made to this work, with you and with us, checked by an infinitely superior power; often brings to my mind that prophecy, "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." I cannot help thinking that this prophecy eminently points at our times; and begins to be fulfilled in the multitudes of souls that are bringing in to fear the Lord, to worship God in Christ, in whom his name is, and

to see his glory in his sanctuary. And it is, to me, pretty remarkable, that the prophet here foretells they should do so, in the period he points at, not from east to west, but from west to east; mentioning the west before the east, contrary to the usual way of speaking in other prophecies, as where Malachi foretells, that the name of the Lord should be great among the Gentiles, from the rising of the sun to the west, (Malachi 1:11) and our Lord Jesus, that many should come from the east and west, etc. (Matthew 8:11) And in this order it was, that the light of the gospel came to dawn on the several nations, in the propagation of it through the world. But the prophet here, under the conduct of the Holy Spirit, who chooses all his words in infinite wisdom, puts the west before the east; intending, as I conceive, thereby to signify, that the glorious revival of religion, and the wide and diffusive spread of vital Christianity, in the latter times of the gospel, should begin in the more **westerly** parts, and proceed to these more **easterly**. And while it should be doing so, or shortly after, great opposition should arise, **the enemy should come in as a flood:** Satan should, with great violence, assault particular believing souls; and stir up men to malign and reproach the work of God; and, it's likely also, raise a terrible persecution against the church. But while the enemy might seem, for a time, to be thus carrying all before him, **the Spirit of the Lord should lift up a standard against him;** give a banner to them that fear him, and animate them to display it for the truth, and make his word mightily to prevail, and bear down all opposing power. For on what side soever the Almighty and Eternal Spirit of

Jehovah lifts up a standard, there the victory is certain; and we may be sure he will lift it up in defence of his own work. The Chaldee paraphrase makes the words in the latter part of this verse, to allude to the river Euphrates, when it breaks over all its banks, and overflows the adjacent plains: thus when persecutors shall come in, as the inundation of the river Euphrates, they shall be broke in pieces by the word of the Lord.

The whole of this verse seems to me to have an aspect to the present and past times, for some years. The Sun of righteousness has been making his course from west to east, and shedding his benign and quickening influences, on poor forlorn and benighted souls, in places vastly distant from one another. But clouds have arisen and intercepted his reviving beams. The enemy of salvation has broke in as an overflowing flood, almost overwhelmed poor souls, newly come into the spiritual world, after they had got some glimpse of the glory of Christ, with a deluge of temptations; floods of ungodly men, stirred up by Satan, and their natural enmity at religion, have affrighted them; mistaken and prejudiced friends have disowned them. Many such things have already befallen the subjects of this glorious work of God of late years. But I apprehend more general and formidable trials are yet to come: and that the enemy's coming in as a flood, may relate to a flood of errors or persecutions of fierce enemies, rushing in upon the church and threatening to swallow her up. But our comfort is, that the Spirit of the Lord of hosts will lift up a standard, against all the combined powers of earth and hell,

and put them to flight; and Christ having begun to conquer, so remarkably, will go on from conquering to conquer, till the whole earth be filled with his glory. Revelation 12:15, Isaiah 17:12, 13.

I mention these things, dear Sir, not for your information, for I know that I can add nothing to you; but to show my agreement with you, in what you express as your sentiments, that what has now been a doing is the forerunner of something vastly greater, more pure, and more extensive, and that God will revive his work again, ere long, and that it will not wholly cease, till it has subdued the whole earth: and, without pretending to prophecy, to hint a little at the ground of my expectations. Only I'm afraid (which is a thing you do not hint at) that before these glorious times, some dreadful stroke or trial may yet be abiding us. May the Lord prepare us for it. But as to this, I cannot and dare not peremptorily determine. All things I give up to farther light, without pretending to fix the times and seasons for God's great and wonderful works, which he has reserved in his own power, and the certain knowledge of which he has locked up in his own breast."

The same conveyance brought Mr. Edwards the following letter,

From the Rev. Mr. Robe, of Kilsyth.

"Kilsyth, August. 16, 1743.

REV. SIR, AND VERY DEAR BROTHER,

*We acknowledge, with praise and thanks, the Lord's keeping his work hitherto, **with us**, free from those errors and disorders, which, through the subtlety of the serpent, and corruptions even of good men, were mixed with it in New England. As this was no more just ground of objection against what was among you, being a real work of the Holy Spirit, than the same things were against the work of God in Corinth, and other places, at the first conversion of the pagans, and afterwards at the reformation from popery; so the many adversaries to this blessed work here, have as fully made use of all those errors, disorders, and blemishes, against it **there**, as objections, as if they had really been **here**. The most unseasonable accounts from America, the most scurrilous and bitter pamphlets, and representations from mistaking brethren, were much and zealously propagated. Only it was overruled by Providence, that those letters and papers dropped what was a real testimony to the goodness of the work they designed to defame and render odious. Many thinking persons concluded, from the gross calumnies forged and spread against the Lord's work here, within a few miles of them, that such stories from America could not be much depended on.*

What you write about the trial of extraordinary joys and raptures, by their concomitants and effects, is most solid; and our practice, by all I know, hath been conformable to it. It hath been in the strongest manner declared, that no degree of

such rapturous joys evidenced them to be from God, unless they led to God, and carried with them those things which accompany salvation. Such conditional applications of the promises of grace and glory as you justly recommend, hath been all along our manner. A holy fear of caution and watchfulness, hath been much pressed upon the subjects of this work, who appeared to believe through grace. And what is greatly comfortable, and reason of great praise to our God, is, that there is, as is yet known to any one in these bounds, no certain instance of what can be called apostacy; and not above four instances of any who have fallen into any gross sin.

As to the state and progress of this blessed work here, and in other places, it is as followeth. Since the account given in the several prints of my Narrative, which I understand is or will be at Boston; the awakening of secure sinners hath and doth continue in this congregation; but not in such multitudes as last year, neither can it be reasonably expected. What is ground of joy and praise is, that there scarce hath been two or three weeks, but wherein I have some instance of persons newly awakened, besides several come to my knowledge who have been awakened, and appear in a most hopeful state, before they were known to me. Of which I had an instance yesterday, of a girl awakened, as she saith, in October last. I have, at writing this, an instance of a woman who appears to have obtained a good issue of her awakening last year; though I supposed it had come to nothing, through her intermitting to come to me of a long time. There is this difference in this parish betwixt the awakening last year and now; that some of

their bodies have been affected by their fears, in a convulsive or hysteric way; and yet the inward distress of some of them hath been very sharp. I have seen two or three, who have fainted under apprehension of the hiding of God's face, or of their having received the Lord's supper unworthily. In some of the neighbouring congregations, where this blessed work was last year, there are instances of discernible awakenings this summer. In the large parish of St. Ninians, to the north of this, I was witness to the awakening of some, and conversed with others awakened, the middle of July last. In the parish of Sintrie to the west of St. Ninians there were several newly awakened at the giving the Lord's supper, about the end of July. In Gargunnoch, Kippen, Killern, farther north and west, the Lord's work is yet discernible. At Muthel, which is about twenty miles north from this, the minister wrote me about the middle of July, that this blessed work, which hath appeared there since last summer as at Cambuslang, yet continued; and hath spread into other parishes, and reacheth even to the Highlands bordering upon that parish.

I am not without hopes of having good accounts of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the shires of Rosse and Nairn among the northernmost parts of Scotland. There was more than ordinary seriousness, in some parishes, in hearing the word, and in a concern about their souls, in the spring, when I saw some godly ministers from those bounds. This more than ordinary seriousness in hearing, and about communion times, is observable in several parts in Scotland, this summer. Societies for prayer setting up where there were none, and in

other places increasing. A concern among the young are in some of the least hopeful places in Scotland, particularly in the Meuse near the English borders. There is a great likelihood of the Lord's doing good by the gospel, in this discernible way, in those bounds. Mr. M'Laurin, my dear brother, gives you an account of the progress of this work to the west of Glasgow, and other places. There have been very extraordinary manifestations of the love of God, in Christ Jesus, unto this people, in the use of the holy supper, and in the dispensation of the word about that time, this summer; which hath made the Lord's people desire it a second time in these congregations during the summer season. It was given here upon the first sabbath of July, and is to be given here next Lord's day, a second time, upon such a desire.

*Your affectionate brother and servant
In our dearest Lord,
JAMES ROBE."*

Chapter XIII (TOC)

First Interview with David Brainerd—Separations from Churches—Letter to Rev. Mr. Whitman—Correspondence with Mr. Clap—Character of that Gentleman—Sermon at The Ordination of Mr. Abercrombie—Letter to Mr. M'Culloch—Views of the Prophecies Relative to the Church—Sermon at the Ordination of Mr. Buell.

In September, 1743, Mr. Edwards, while attending the public commencement at New-Haven, first became acquainted with David Brainerd, then a missionary at Kaunaameek. Brainerd, when a sophomore in college, in consequence of some indiscreet remarks, uttered in the ardour of his religious zeal, respecting the opposition of two of the faculty to the preaching of Mr. Whitefield, but which a generous mind would have wholly disregarded, had been expelled from the college. As this was the commencement, at which his class were to receive the degree of A.B., he came to New-Haven to attempt a reconciliation with the faculty, and made to them a truly humble and christian acknowledgment of his fault. "I was witness," says Mr. Edwards, "to the very christian spirit which Brainerd showed at that time; being then at New-Haven, and one whom he thought fit to consult on that occasion. There truly appeared in him a great degree of calmness and humility; without the least appearance of rising of spirit for any ill-treatment which he supposed he had suffered, or the least backwardness to abase himself before those, who, as he thought, had wronged him. What he did was without any objection or appearance of reluctance, even in private to his friends, to whom he freely opened himself. Earnest application was made on his behalf, that he might have his degree then given him; and particularly by the Rev. Mr. Burr of Newark, one of the correspondents of the Honourable Society in Scotland; he

being sent from New Jersey to New-Haven, by the rest of the commissioners, for that end; and many arguments were used, but without success. He desired his degree, as he thought it would tend to his being more extensively useful; but still, when he was denied it, he manifested no disappointment nor resentment."

I have already alluded to the numerous separations of individual members, from the churches to which they belonged, which occurred about this period, and usually for the alleged want of piety, either of the minister or of the church. As these commonly took place without a regular dismissal, it became a practical question of some interest, how the withdrawing members should be treated. Mr. Edwards, having been consulted on this subject, with reference to some of the members of the second church in Hartford, who had thus withdrawn, addressed the following letter to the minister of that church.

***To the Rev. Elnathan Whitman, of
Hartford, Connecticut.***

Northampton, February. 9, 1744.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Mr. P—was here this week, and requested my opinion, with respect to the proper treatment of a number of persons, who have absented themselves from your meeting, and have since attended public worship in W—. I declined giving any opinion, except a very general one, to him; but, on reflection, have

concluded to express my thoughts to you, as a friend, leaving you to attach to them such weight as you may see cause.

"As to differences, among professing Christians, of opinion and practice, about things that appertain to religion, and the worship of God, I am ready to think that you and I are agreed, as to the general principles of liberty of conscience; and that men's using methods with their neighbours, to oblige them to a conformity to their sentiments or way, is in nothing so unreasonable, as in the worship of God; because that is a business, in which each person acts for himself, with his Creator and Supreme Judge, as one concerned for his own acceptance with him; and on which depends his own, and not his neighbour's, eternal happiness, and salvation from everlasting ruin. And it is an affair, wherein every man is infinitely more concerned with his Creator than he is with his neighbour. And so I suppose that it will be allowed, that every man ought to be left to his own conscience, in what he judges will be most acceptable to God, or what he supposes is the will of God, as to the kind, or manner, or means of worship, or the society of worshippers he should join with in worship. Not but that a great abuse may be made of this doctrine of liberty of conscience in the worship of God. I know that many are ready to justify every thing in their own conduct, from this doctrine, and I do not suppose that men's pretence of conscience is always to be regarded, when made use of to justify their charging the society of worshippers they unite with, or the means of their worship, or indeed the kind or manner of their worship. Men may make this pretence at times under such

circumstances, that they may, obviously, be worthy of no credit in what they pretend. It may be manifest from the nature and circumstances of the case, and their own manner of behaviour, that it is not conscience, but petulancy, and malice, and wilfulness, and obstinacy, that influence them. And, therefore, it seems to me evident, that, when such pleas are made, those that are especially concerned with them as persons that are peculiarly obliged to take care of their souls, have no other way to do, but to consider the nature and circumstances of the case, and from thence to judge whether the case be such as will admit of such a plea, or whether the nature of things will admit of such a supposition, that the men act conscientiously in what they do, considering all things that appertain to the case. And in this, I conceive, many things are to be considered and laid together, as—the nature of that thing is the subject of controversy, or wherein they differ from others, or have changed their own practice—the degree in which it is disputable, or how it may be supposed liable to diversity of opinion, one way or the other, as to its agreeableness to the word of God, and as to the importance of it, with regard to men's salvation or the good of their souls—the degree of knowledge or ignorance of the persons, the advantages they had for information, or the disadvantages they have been under, and what has been in their circumstances that might mislead the judgment—the principles that have been instilled into them—the instructions they have received from those, of whose piety and wisdom they have had a high opinion, which might misguide the judgment

of persons of real honesty, and sincerity, and tender conscience—the example of others—the diversity of opinion among ministers—the general state of things in the land—the character of the persons themselves—and the manner of their behaviour in the particular affair in debate.

Now, Sir, with regard to those persons that have gone from you, to W—however you may look upon their behaviour herein as very disorderly, yet, if you suppose (the case being considered with all its circumstances) that there was any room for charity, that it might be through infirmity, ignorance, and error of judgment, so that they might be truly conscientious in it; that is, might really believe it to be their duty, and what God required of them, to do as they have done; you would, I imagine, by no means think, that they ought to be proceeded with, in the use of such means as are proper to be used with contumacious offenders, or those that are stubborn and obstinate in scandalous vice and wilful wickedness; or that you would think it proper to proceed with persons, towards whom there is this room left for charity, that possibly they may be honest and truly conscientious, acting as persons afraid to offend God, so as to cut them off from the communion of the Lord, and cast them forth into the visible kingdom of Satan, to be as harlots and publicans.

Now, it may be well to examine, whether it can positively be determined, when all things are taken into consideration with respect to these persons, who have absented themselves from your assembly, that it is not possible in their case, that this

might really be their honest judgment, that it was their duty to do so, and that God required it of them, and that they should greatly expose the welfare of their own souls, in attending no other public worship but that in your congregation. I suppose these persons are not much versed in casuistical divinity. They are of the common people, whose judgments, in all nations and ages, are exceedingly led and swayed. They are not very capable of viewing things in the extent of their consequences, and of estimating things in their true weight and importance. And you know, dear Sir, the state that things have been in, in the country. You know what opinions have lately prevailed, and have been maintained and propagated, by those that have been lifted up to heaven, in their reputation for piety and great knowledge in spiritual things, with a great part of the people of New England. I do not pretend to know what has influenced these people, in particular; but I think, under these circumstances, it would be no strange thing, if great numbers of the common people in the country, who are really conscientious, and concerned to be accepted with God, and to take the best course for the good of their souls, should really think in their hearts that God requires them to attend the ministry of those that are called New Light Ministers, and that it would be dangerous to their souls, and what God approved not of, ordinarily to attend the ministry of others; yea, I should think it strange if it were otherwise. It ought to be considered, how public controversy, and a great and general cry in matters of religion, strongly influences the conduct of multitudes of the common people, how it blinds their minds,

and wonderfully misleads their judgments. And the rules of the gospel, and the example of the apostles, most certainly require that great allowances be made in such cases. And particularly the example of the apostle Paul, with regard to great numbers of professing Christians, in the church of Corinth; who, in a time of great and general confusion in that church, through the evil instructions of teachers whom they admired, who misled and blinded their judgments, ran into many and great disorders in their worship, and woeful schisms and divisions among themselves—particularly with regard to ministers, and even with regard to the apostle Paul himself, whom many of them seem for a time to have forsaken, to follow others who set up themselves in opposition to him; though, as he says, he had been their father who begat them through the gospel. Yet with how much gentleness does the apostle treat them, still acknowledging them as brethren; and though he required church censures to be used with regard to the incestuous person, yet there is no intimation of the apostle taking any such course, with those that had been misled by these false teachers, or with any that had been guilty of these disorders, except with the false teachers themselves. But as soon as they are brought off from following these false apostles any longer, he embraces them without further ado, with all the love and tenderness of a father; burying all their censoriousness, and schisms, and disorders, at the Lord's supper, as well as their ill treatment of him, the extraordinary messenger of Christ to them. And, indeed, the apostle never so much as gave any direction for the suspension of any one member from the

Lord's supper, on account of these disorders, or from any other part of the public worship of God; but instead of this, gives them directions how they shall go on to attend the Lord's supper, and other parts of worship, in a better manner. And he himself, without suspension or interruption, goes on to call and treat them as beloved brethren, Christians, sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints; and praises God in their behalf, for the grace that is given to them by Christ Jesus; and often and abundantly exhibits his charity towards them, in innumerable expressions which I might mention. And nothing is more apparent than that he does not treat them as persons, with respect to whom there lies a bar in the way of others treating them with the charity that belongs to saints, and good and honest members of the christian church, until the bar be removed by a church process. And, indeed, the insisting on a church process with every member that has behaved disorderly, in such a state of general confusion, is not a way to build up the church of God, (which is the end of church discipline,) but to pull it down. It will not be the way to cure a diseased member, but to bring a disease on the whole body.

I am not alone in these sentiments; but I have reason to think that Col. Stoddard, from the conversation I have had with him, is in the like way of thinking. There came hither, the last fall, two young men belonging to the church at New-Haven, who had been members of Mr. Noyes's church, but had left it and joined the separate church, and entered into covenant with it, when that church was embodied. This was looked upon as a crime, that ought not to be passed over, by Mr. Noyes and the

rector. They declared themselves willing to return to Mr. Noyes's meeting; but a particular confession was required of them in the meeting-house. Accordingly, each of them had offered a confession, but it was not thought sufficient; but it was required that they should add some things, of which they thought hard; and they consulting me about it, I acquainted Col. Stoddard with the affair, and desired his thoughts. He said he looked upon it unreasonable to require any confession at all; and that, considering the general state of confusion that had existed, and the instructions and examples these young men had had, it might well be looked upon enough, that they were now willing to change their practice, and return again to Mr. Noyes's meeting. Not that you, Rev. Sir, are obliged to think as Col. Stoddard does; yet I think, considering his character and relation, his judgment may well be of so much weight, as to engage you the more to attend to and weigh the reasons he gives.

The objections, that these persons may have had against ordinarily attending your meeting, may be very trivial; but yet I suppose that, through infirmity, the case may be so with truly honest Christians, that trivial things may have great weight in their consciences, so as to have fast hold of them, until they are better enlightened: as in the former times of the country, it was with respect to the controversy between presbyterians and congregationalists. It was, as I have heard, in those days real matter of question with some, whether a presbyterian, living and dying such, could be saved. Some presbyterians, that have lived with us, have desired baptism for their children, who yet

lived in neglect of the ordinances of the Lord Jesus Christ, because of a difference in some trivial circumstances of the administration, from the method of the church of Scotland. This matter being discoursed of, it was thought by Col. Stoddard in particular, that their neglect ought to be borne with, and they ought to be looked upon as Christians, and their children received to baptism; because, however trivial the foundation of their scruples were, yet through ignorance they might be honest and conscientious in them.

As to the church covenant, that these persons have entered into, wherein they have obliged themselves ordinarily to join in the worship of that church; I suppose none interpret the promises of a church covenant in such a sense, as to exclude all reserves of liberty, in case of an alteration of the judgment, in the affairs of conscience and religion, in one respect or another. As if a person, after incorporating with a congregational church, should become a conscientious episcopalian, or anabaptist, or should, by any change of judgment, come to think the means or manner of worship unlawful; and so in other respects that might be mentioned.

And if it be so that these persons, in some of their conversation and behaviour, have manifested a contentious, froward spirit, at the time of their with-drawing from your church; I confess this gives greater ground of suspicion of the sincerity of their plea of conscience; yet, as to this, I humbly conceive allowances must be made. It must be considered, that it is possible that persons, in an affair of this nature, may, in the

thing itself, be conscientious, and yet, in the course of the management of it, may be guilty of very corrupt mixtures of passion and every evil disposition; as indeed is commonly the case with men, in long controversies of whatever nature, and even with conscientious men. And therefore it appears to me, that if persons in such a case are not obstinate, in what is amiss in them in this respect, and don't attempt to justify their frowardness and unchristian speeches, they notwithstanding may deserve credit, when they profess themselves conscientious in the affair in general.

Thus, dear Sir, I have freely communicated to you some of my thoughts, with regard to some of the concerns of this difficult day, which prove a trouble to you; not however with any aim at directing your conduct, but merely to comply with the request to which I have alluded. I am fully sensible, that I am not the pastor of the second church of Hartford; and I only desire you would impartially consider the reasons I have offered. Begging of Christ, our common Lord, that he would direct you in your theory and practice, to that which will be acceptable in his sight,

*I remain, Rev. Sir,
Your friend and brother,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

In May, 1743, Mr. Edwards went, as he often did, to Boston, to attend the convention of the clergy, which is held the day after the General Election. He was on horseback, and had his eldest daughter on a pillion behind him. At Brookfield, they fell in company with the Rev. Mr. Clap, rector of Yale

College, his wife and son-in-law, also on horseback, with several others, all traveling in the same direction; and Mr. Edwards, joining the company, rode side by side with Mr. Clap, during a considerable part of the journey. At the commencement of Harvard college in the following year, 1744, Mr. Clap stated, before a large number of gentlemen, both at Boston and Cambridge, that, while riding through Leicester, in May of the year preceding, he was informed by Mr. Edwards, that Mr. Whitefield told him, "that he had the design of turning out of their places the greater part of the ministers of New England, and of supplying their pulpits with ministers from England, Scotland, and Ireland." This statement surprised those who heard it; yet, coming from such a source, it was believed, and extensively circulated. Mr. Edwards heard of it with astonishment, and without hesitation denied that he had said so. Mr. Clap, hearing of this denial, addressed a letter to Mr. Edwards, dated October. 12, 1744, in which he stated anew the alleged conversation, in the same terms; but before the latter received it, he had forwarded a letter to Mr. Clap, dated October. 18, 1744, showing him his mistake, and calling on him to correct it. On October. 29th, he wrote a reply to Mr. Clap's letter of the 12th; and receiving another, dated October. 28th, before he sent it, he replied to that also in the postscript, under date of November. 3d. Mr. Clap, finding that Mr. Edwards's contradiction of his statement was believed; and having heard, though incorrectly, that Mr. Edwards was about to publish such a contradiction; incautiously published a letter to his friend in Boston, in which he not only reasserted his former statement, but declared that Mr. Edwards, in his private correspondence with him on the subject, had made a declaration, equally full and strong, to the same point. Mr. Edwards published a reply, in a letter to his friend in Boston, dated February. 4, 1745; in which he gave his two letters of October. 18, and October. 29, with the postscript of November. 3; from which it appears that,

instead of admitting the truth of Mr. Clap's statement, he had most explicitly and solemnly denied it; and, in order to show how Mr. Clap might have been led into the mistake, acknowledged that he himself supposed that Mr. Whitefield was formerly of the opinion, that unconverted ministers ought not to be continued in the ministry; and that he himself supposed that Mr. Whitefield endeavoured to propagate this opinion, and a practice agreeable to it; and that all he had ever stated to any one was, his own opinion merely, and not any declared design of Mr. White-field. He also admitted, that Mr. Whitefield told him he intended to bring over a number of young men, to be ordained by the Messrs. Tennents, in New Jersey. He then asks, whether this is the same thing as Mr. Clap asserted, and suggests a variety of arguments, which seem absolutely conclusive, that he could never have made such a statement.

Mr. Clap, in reply to this, in a letter to Mr. Edwards, dated April 1, 1745, enters seriously upon the task of showing that Mr. Edwards's assertion—"that Mr. Whitefield told him, that he intended to bring over a number of young men, to be ordained by the Messrs. Tennents, in New Jersey"—connected with the assertion—that Mr. Edwards himself supposed, that Mr. Whitefield was formerly of the opinion, that unconverted ministers ought not to be continued in the ministry, and that Mr. Edwards himself supposed that Mr. Whitefield endeavoured to propagate this opinion, and a practice agreeable to it—was equivalent to Mr. Edwards's saying, that Mr. Whitefield told him, "that he had the design of turning out of their places the greater part of the ministers of New England, and of supplying their places with ministers from England, Scotland, and Ireland."

Mr. Edwards, in a letter to Mr. Clap, of May 20, 1745, after exposing in a few words the desperate absurdity of this attempt, enters on the discussion of

the question—Whether he ever made such a statement to Mr. Clap?—with as much calmness as he afterwards exhibited in examining the question of a self-determining power; and with such logical precision of argument, that probably no one of his readers ever had a doubt left upon his mind, with regard to it—no, not even his antagonist himself; for he never thought proper to attempt a reply; and in the public protest of the faculty of Yale college, against Mr. Whitefield, he and his associates in office say, in alluding to this very conversation, "You told the Rev. Mr. Edwards of Northampton, that you intended to bring over a number of young men from England, to be ordained by the Tennents." Those who have an opportunity of reading these communications, will find, in those of Mr. Edwards, an example of a personal controversy, conducted throughout, and to a very uncommon degree, in the spirit of the gentleman and the Christian.

This occurred at a period of great excitement, when many ministers had been removed, and many churches rent asunder; and when the minds of men were of course prepared beforehand to believe every thing that favoured their own side of the question. Mr. Clap was in this case obviously mistaken; still he was truly a man of respectability and worth. He had a powerful mind, rich in invention, and stored with knowledge, was profoundly versed in mathematics, physics, and astronomy, as well as the principles of law, and proved an able instructor and governor of the institution over which he presided. He was elected by a board of trustees, exclusively Arminian in sentiment, and all his associates in office held the same tenets. At the same time, though he entered warmly into the controversy relative to Mr. Whitefield, from a full conviction that it was his design to occasion the separation of churches, and to procure as far as possible the ejection of all whom he regarded as unconverted ministers; and was doubtless happy in supposing himself able to prove that such was his avowed design, on the

testimony of one of his warmest friends; yet he was far from taking the low ground of orthodoxy assumed by many on the same side, but always adhered to the doctrines of grace, and ultimately became their champion. Some time after this, he showed his magnanimity, by introducing the Essay on the Freedom of the Will, as a classic in the college.

In August, 1744, Mr. Edwards preached the sermon entitled, "The True Excellency of a Gospel Minister," at the ordination of Mr. Robert Abercrombie, to the ministry of the gospel, at Pelham. This gentleman was from Scotland, having been made known to Mr. Edwards by his correspondents in that country; and through his kind offices was introduced to the people at Pelham. The sermon was immediately published.

The reader will probably recollect, that Mr. M'Culloch, in his letter of August 13, 1743, had expressed the opinion, that the church of God, previous to her ultimate extension and triumph, was destined to meet with "more extensive and formidable trials," than she had ever before experienced. Mr. Edwards, from a minute investigation of the scriptural prophecies, having been convinced that this, which was at that time the commonly received opinion of the church, was erroneous; expresses his dissent from it in the following answer.

To the Rev. Mr. M'Culloch.

Northampton, March 5, 1744.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I return you thanks for your most obliging, entertaining, and

instructive letter, dated August. 13, 1743, which I received about the latter end of October: my answering which has been unhappily delayed, by reason of my distance from Boston, and not being able to find any opportunity to send thither, till the ship was gone that brought your letter; which I much regretted. My delaying to answer has been far from arising from any indifference with respect to this correspondence, by which I am sensible I am highly honoured and privileged.

"Tis probable that you have been informed, by other correspondents, before now, what the present state of things in New England is: it is, indeed, on many accounts very melancholy; there is a vast alteration within these two years; for about so long I think it is, since the Spirit of God began to withdraw, and this great work has been on the decline. Great numbers in the land, about two years ago, were raised to an exceedingly great height in joy and elevation of mind; and through want of watchfulness, and sensibleness of the danger and temptation that there is in such circumstances, many were greatly exposed, and the devil taking the advantage, multitudes were soon, and to themselves insensibly, led far away from God and their duty; God was provoked that he was not sanctified in this height of advancement, as he ought to have been; he saw our spiritual pride and self-confidence, and the polluted flames that arose of intemperate, unhallowed zeal; and he soon, in a great measure, withdrew from us; and the consequence has been, that the enemy has come in like a flood, in various respects, until the deluge has overwhelmed the whole land. There had from the beginning been a great

mixture, especially in some places, of false experiences, and false religion with true; but from about this time, the mixture became much greater, many were led away with sad delusions; and this opened the door for the enemy to come in like a flood in another respect, it gave great advantages to these enemies and opposers of this work, furnished them with weapons and gave them new courage, and has laid the friends of the work under such disadvantage, that nothing that they could do would avail any thing to withstand their violence. And now it is come to that, that the work is put to a stop every where, and it is a day of the enemy's triumph; but I believe also a day of God's people's humiliation, which will be better to them in the end than their elevations and raptures. The time has been amongst us when the sower went forth to sow, and we have seen the spring wherein the seed sprang up in different sorts of ground, appearing then fair and flourishing; but this spring is past, and we now see the summer, wherein the sun is up with a burning heat, that tries the sorts of ground; and now appears the difference, the seed in stony ground, where there was only a thin layer of earth on a rock, withers away, the moisture being dried out; and the hidden seeds and roots of thorns, in unsubdued ground, now spring up and choke the seed of the word. Many high professors are fallen, some into gross immoralities, some into a rooted spiritual pride, enthusiasm, and an incorrigible wildness of behaviour, some into a cold frame of mind, showing a great indifference to the things of religion. But there are many, and I hope those the greater part of those that were professed

converts, who appear hitherto like the good ground, and notwithstanding the thick and dark clouds, that so soon follow that blessed sunshine that we have had; yet I cannot but steadfastly maintain a hope and persuasion that God will revive his work, and that what has been so great and very extraordinary, is a forerunner of a yet more glorious and extensive work—It has been slanderously reported and printed concerning me, that I have often said, that the Millennium was already begun, and that it began at Northampton. A doctor of divinity in New England has ventured to publish this report to the world, from a single person, who is concealed and kept behind the curtain: but the report is very diverse from what I have ever said. Indeed I have often said, as I say now, that I looked upon the late wonderful revivals of religion as forerunners of those glorious times so often prophesied of in the Scripture, and that this was the first dawning of that light, and beginning of that work, which, in the progress and issue of it, would at last bring on the church's latter-day glory; but there are many that know that I have from time to time added, that there would probably be many sore conflicts and terrible convulsions, and many changes, revivings, and intermissions, and returns of dark clouds, and threatening appearances, before this work shall have subdued the world, and Christ's kingdom shall be every where established and settled in peace, which will be the lengthening of the Millennium or day of the church's peace, rejoicing, and triumph on earth, so often spoken of. I was much entertained and delighted, dear Sir, with your thoughts on that text in Isaiah 59:19 which you

signify in your letter, and so have many others been to whom I have communicated them; and as to what you say of some dreadful stroke or trial yet abiding, before the happy days of the promised peace and prosperity of the church, I so far agree with you, that I believe that, before the church of God shall have obtained the conquest, and the visible kingdom of Satan on earth shall receive its overthrow, and Christ's kingdom of grace be every where established on its ruins, there shall be a great and mighty struggle between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan, attended with the greatest and most extensive convulsions and commotion, that ever were upon the face of the earth, wherein doubtless many particular Christians will suffer, and perhaps some parts of the church.

"But that the enemies of the church of God should ever gain such advantages against her any more, as they have done in times past, that the victory should ever any more be on their side, or that it shall ever be given to the beast again to make war with the saints, and to prevail against them, and overcome them, (as in Revelation 13:7 and Revelation 11:7 and Daniel 7:21) to such a degree as has been heretofore, is otherwise than I hope. Though in this I would be far from setting up my own judgment, in opposition to others, who are more skilled in the prophecies of Scripture than I am. I think that what has mainly induced many divines to be of that opinion, is what is said in Revelation, chapter 11. concerning the slaying of the witnesses, Verse 7, 8. 'And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast, that ascendeth out of

the bottomless pit, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city,' etc.

The event here spoken of, seems evidently to be that wherein the enemies of the church gain the greatest advantage against her that ever they have, and have the greatest conquest of her that ever they obtained, and bring the church nearest to a total extinction. For a long time the church is very small, represented by two witnesses, and they had been long in a very low state, prophesying in sackcloth; but now they are dead and their enemies triumph over them, as having gotten a complete victory, and look upon it that they are now past all possibility of recovery, there being less prospect of the church's restoration than ever there was before. But are we to expect this, dear Sir, that Satan will ever find means to bring things to pass, that after all the increase of light that has been in the world, since the Reformation, there shall be a return of a more dark time than in the depth of the darkness of popery, before the Reformation, when the church of God shall be nearer to a total extinction, and have less of visibility, all true religion and light be more blotted out of the memories of mankind, Satan's kingdom of darkness be more firmly established, all monuments of true religion be more abolished, and that the state of the world should be such, that it should appear further from any hope of a revival of true religion than it ever has done; is this conceivable or possible, as the state of things now is all over the world, even among papists themselves, without a miracle, a greater than any power short

of divine can effect, without a long tract of time, gradually to bring it to pass, to introduce the grossest ignorance and extinguish all memory and monuments of truth; which was the case in that great extinction of true religion that was before the Reformation. And besides, if we suppose this war of the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit with the witnesses, wherein he overcomes them and kills them, to be that last war which the church shall have with the beast, that great and mighty conflict that shall be just before the final overthrow of antichrist, that we read of in the 16th chapter the 13th and following verses, and in the 19th chapter how shall we make them consist together? In the 11th chapter the church conflicts in sorrow, clothed in sackcloth, and in blood; in the 19th chapter the saints are not represented as fighting in sorrow and blood, though the battle be exceedingly great, but in strength, glory, and triumph. Their Captain goes forth to this battle, in great pomp and magnificence, on a white horse, and on his head many crowns, and on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords; and the saints follow him, not in sackcloth, but coming forth on white horses, clothed in pure linen, clean and white, the raiment of triumph, the same raiment that the saints appear in, Revelation 7:14 when they appear with palms in their hands, after they had washed their robes, that had been stained with their own blood, and made themselves white in the blood of the Lamb. In the conflict spoken of in chapter 11. the beast makes war with the witnesses, and overcomes them, and kills them: the same is foretold, Daniel 7:21 and Revelation 13:7.

But in that last great battle, just before the fall of antichrist, we find the reverse of this; the church shall obtain a glorious victory over the beast, and the beast is taken and cast into the lake of fire. Revelation 17:14. 'These shall make war with the Lamb; and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of Lords and King of Kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful:' compared with chapter 19:16, to the end, and chapter 16:16, 17. In that conflict, Revelation 11 chapter 11. the beast has war with the witnesses, and kills them, and their dead bodies lie unburied, as if it were to be meat for the beasts of the earth and fowls of heaven; but in that last conflict, Christ and his church shall slay their enemies, and give their dead bodies to be meat for the beasts of the earth and fowls of heaven, Revelation 19:17. chapter 19:17. etc. There is no manner of appearance in the descriptions that are given of that great battle, of any great advantages gained in it against the church, before the enemy is overcome, but all appearance of the contrary. The descriptions in the 16th and 19th chapters of Rev. will by no means allow of such an advantage, as that of the overcoming and slaying of the church, or people of God, and their lying for some time unburied, that their dead bodies may be for their enemies to abuse and trample on, and make sport with. In the 16th chapter. we have an account of their being gathered together into the place called Armageddon; and then the first thing we hear of after that, is the pouring out of the seventh vial of God's wrath, and a voice saying, It is done; and so in chapter 19. we read of the beast, and the kings of the

earth and their armies being gathered together, to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army; and then the next thing we hear of is the beast's being taken, etc. The event of the conflict of the beast with the church, chapter 11 is the triumph of the church's enemies, when they of the people, and kindred, and tongues, and nations, and they that dwell on the earth, shall see the dead bodies of the saints lying in the streets, and shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and send gifts one to another. But the event of that great and last battle, before the fall of antichrist, is quite the reverse of this, even the church's triumphing over their enemies, as being utterly destroyed. Those events, that are consequent on the issue of the war with the witnesses, Revelation 11. chapter 11 do in no wise answer to those, that are represented as consequent on that last conflict of antichrist with the church. 'Tis said that when the witnesses ascended into heaven, the same hour there was an earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell; and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand! but this don't seem at all to answer what is described, chapter 16 and 19. The great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath; and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And it had been said before, that there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And in chapter 19 instead of slaying seven thousand men, it seems as if there was a general slaughter of all the

enemies of the church, through the world. And besides, if we read this 11th chapter through, we shall see that the falling of the tenth part of the city and the rising of the witnesses, and their standing on their feet and ascending into heaven, are represented there as entirely distinct from the accomplishment of the church's glory, after the fall of antichrist, and God's judging and destroying the enemies of the church. The judgment here spoken of, as executed on God's enemies, are under another woe, and the benefits bestowed on the church, are under another trumpet: for immediately after the account of the rising and ascending of the witnesses, and its consequences, follow these words, Verse 14, 15. 'The second woe is past, and behold the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.' And in the following verses, we have an account of the praises sung to God on the occasion; and in the last verse we have a brief hint of that same great earthquake, and the great hail, and those thunders, and lightnings, and voices, that we have an account of in the latter part of chapter 16 so that the earthquake mentioned in the last verse of chapter 11 seems to be the great earthquake, that attends the last great conflict of the church and her enemies, rather than that mentioned Verse 13.

The grand objection against all this is, that it is said, that the witnesses should prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sack-cloth; and when they have finished

their testimony, the beast should make war against them, and kill them, etc. and that it seems manifest that after this they are no longer in sackcloth; for henceforward they are in an exalted state in heaven: and that therefore, seeing the time of their wearing sackcloth is one thousand two hundred and sixty days, i.e. during the time of the continuance of antichrist; hence their being slain, and their rising again, must be at the conclusion of this period, at the end of antichrist's reign.

In answer to which I would say, with submission to better judgments, that I humbly conceive that we can justly infer no more from this prophecy than this, viz. that the one thousand two hundred and sixty days is the proper time (as it were) of the church's trouble and bondage, or being clothed in sackcloth, because it is the appointed time of the reign of antichrist; but this don't hinder but that God, out of great compassion to his church, should, in some respect, shorten the days, and grant that his church should in some measure anticipate the appointed great deliverance that should be at an end of these days, as he has in fact done in the Reformation; whereby his church has had a great degree of restoration granted her, from the darkness, power, and dominion of antichrist, before their proper time of restoration, which is at the end of the one thousand two hundred and sixty days; and so the church, through the compassion of her Father and Redeemer, anticipates her deliverance from her sorrows; and has, in some respects, an end put to her testifying in sackcloth, as many parts of the church are henceforward brought out from under the dominion of the antichristian powers, into a

state of liberty; though in other respects, the church may be said still to continue in her sackcloth, and in the wilderness, (as chapter 12:14) till the end of the days. And as to the witnesses standing on their feet, and ascending into heaven; I would propose that it may be considered, Whether any more can be understood by it, than the protestant church's being now (at least as to many parts of it) able to stand on her own legs, and in her own defence, and being raised to such a state, that she hence-forward is out of the reach of the Romish powers; that, let them do what they will, they shall never any more be able to get the church under their power, as they had before; as oftentimes in the Scriptures God's people dwelling in safety, out of the reach of their enemies, is represented by their dwelling on high, or being set on high; Psalms 59:1. Isaiah 33:16. Psalms 69:29 and Psalms 91:14 and Psalms 107:41. Proverbs 29:25.; and the children of Israel, when brought out of Egypt, were said to be carried on eagle's wings, that is lofty in its flight, flies away towards heaven where none of her enemies can reach her.

I might here observe, that we have other instances of God's shortening the days of his church's captivity and bondage, either at the beginning or latter end, in some measure parallel with this. Thus the proper time of the bondage of the posterity of Abraham, in a strange land, was four hundred years, Genesis 15:13.; but yet God in mercy delayed their bondage, whereby the time was much shortened at the beginning. So the time wherein it was foretold, that the whole land of Israel should be a desolation and an astonishment, and the land

should not enjoy her sabbaths, was seventy years, Jeremiah 25:11, 12.; and these seventy years are dated in 2 Chronicles 36:20, 21 from Zedekiah's captivity; and yet from that captivity to Cyrus's decree was about fifty-two years, though it was indeed about seventy years before the temple was finished. So the proper time of the oppression of Antiochus Epiphanes, wherein both the sanctuary and the host should be trodden underfoot by him, was two thousand and three hundred days, Daniel 7:13, 14 and yet God gave Israel a degree of deliverance by the Maccabees, and they were holpen with a little help, and the host ceased to be trodden underfoot before that time was expired. Daniel 11:32, 34.

But in these things, dear Sir, I am by no means dogmatical; I do but humbly offer my thoughts on what you suggested in your letter, submitting them to your censure. 'Tis pity that we should expect such a terrible devastation of the church, before her last and most glorious deliverance, if there be no such thing to be expected. It may be a temptation to some of the people of God, the less earnestly to wish and pray for the near approach of the church's glorious day, and the less to rejoice in the signs of its approach.

But, let us go on what scheme we will, it is most apparent from the Scriptures, that there are mighty strugglings to be expected, between the church of God and her enemies, before her great victory; and there may be many lesser strugglings before that last, and greatest, and universal conflict. Experience seems to show that the church of God, according

to God's method of dealing with her, needs a great deal gradually to prepare her for that prosperity and glory that he has promised her on earth; as the growth of the earth, after winter, needs gradually to be prepared for the summer heat: I have known instances, wherein by the heat's coming on suddenly in the spring, without intermissions of cold to check the growth, the branches, many of them, by a too hasty growth, have afterwards died. And perhaps God may bring on a spiritual spring as he does the natural, with now and then a pleasant sunshiny season, and then an interruption by clouds and stormy winds, till at length, by the sun more and more approaching, and the light increasing, the strength of the winter is broken. We are extremely apt to get out of the right way. A very great increase of comfort that is sudden, without time and experience, in many instances, has appeared to wound the soul, in some respects, though it seems to profit it in others. Sometimes, at the same time that the soul seems wonderfully delivered from those lusts, that are more carnal and earthly, there is an insensible increase of those that are more spiritual; as God told the children of Israel, that he would put out the former inhabitants of the land of Canaan, by little and little, and would not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field should increase upon them—We need much experience, to teach us the innumerable ways that we are liable to err, and to show us the evil and pernicious consequences of those errors. If it should please God, before many years, to grant another great revival of religion in New England, we should perhaps be much upon our guard against

such errors as we have run into, and which have undone us this time, but yet might run insensibly into other errors that now we think not of.

You inquire of me, Rev. Sir, whether I reject all those for counterfeits that speak of visions and trances. I am far from doing of it: I am and always have been, in that matter, of the same opinion that Mr. Robe expresses, in some of those pamphlets Mr. M'Laurin sent me, that persons are neither to be rejected nor approved on such a foundation. I have expressed the same thing in my discourse on 'the Marks of a Work of the True Spirit,' and have not changed my mind.

I am afraid, dear Sir, that I have been too bold with you, in being so lengthy and tedious, and have been too impertinent and forward to express my opinion upon this and that; but I consider myself as writing to a candid, christian friend and brother, with whom I may be free and bold, and from whom I may promise myself excuse and forgiveness. Dear brother, asking your earnest prayers for me and for New England, I am your affectionate brother, and engaged friend and servant,

JONATHAN EDWARDS."

The opinion here expressed by Mr. Edwards, was not the result of a slight and cursory examination of the subject in discussion. He had a considerable time before examined, at great length, the prophecies of Daniel and John, with regard to this very point; and, as we shall soon have occasion to remark, had been convinced that the opinion, then commonly received, that the severest trials of the church were yet future, was erroneous.

The Rev. Samuel Buell, whom I have already mentioned, as having preached at Northampton during the absence of Mr. Edwards, in January, 1742, with uncommon fervour and success, continued his labours, lxxxii as an evangelist among the churches, upwards of four years; and at length accepted of an invitation from the people of East Hampton, a village in the S. E. corner of Long Island, to become their minister. At his request, Mr. Edwards went to East Hampton, and there preached his installation sermon, on the 19th of September, 1746, from Isaiah 62:4, 5.

Chapter XIV (TOC)

Mistakes Extensively Prevalent at this Time, as to the Nature and Evidences of True Godliness—"Treatise on Religious Affections"—Design and Character of the Work—Republished Abroad—Letter from Mr. Gillespie Concerning It—Letter from Mr. Edwards to Mr. M'Culloch—Reply to Mr. Gillespie—Proposal made in Scotland, for United Extraordinary Prayer—Efforts of Mr. Edwards to Promote It—Letter to Mr. M'Culloch—"Humble Attempt to Promote Extraordinary Prayer."

From the facts already recited, it will be obvious to the reader, that few ministers, even in the course of a long ministry, have as full an opportunity of learning, from their own observation, the true nature of a revival of religion, and the differences between imaginary and saving conversion, as Mr. Edwards had now enjoyed. He had early discovered, that there was a radical difficulty attending not only every revival of religion, but, in a greater or less degree, also, every instance of supposed conversion—a difficulty arising from erroneous conceptions, so generally entertained, respecting the question, What is the nature of true religion? or, What are the distinguishing marks of that holiness, which is acceptable in the sight of God?—Perceiving, at an early period of his christian life, that no other subject was equally important to man, that no other was more frequently or variously illustrated by the scriptural writers, and yet, that on no other had professing Christians been less agreed; his attention, as he himself informs us, had been particularly directed to it, from his first commencement of the study of theology; and he was led to examine it with all the diligence, and care, and exactness of search and inquiry, of which his mind was capable. In addition to this, he had not only witnessed, in two successive instances, a solemn and universal attention

to religion, among the young as well as among grown persons in his own congregation, and in both, almost all of the latter, as well as very many of the former, gathered into the church; but he had been the spiritual counsellor and guide of multitudes in other congregations, where he had occasionally laboured, as well as of great numbers who visited him for this purpose at Northampton. These advantages of observation, it may easily be believed, were not lost on a mind like his.

This subject, at the time of which we are speaking, had become, also, a subject of warm and extended controversy. The advocates of revivals of religion, had too generally been accustomed to attach to the mere circumstances of conversion—to the time, place, manner, and means, in and by which it was supposed to be effected—an importance, no where given them in the Scriptures; as well as to conclude, that all affections which were high in degree, and accompanied with great apparent zeal and ardour, were of course gracious in their nature; while their opposers insisted, that true religion did not consist at all in the affections, but wholly in the external conduct. The latter class attributed the uncommon attention to religion, which they could not deny had existed for four years in New England, to artificial excitement merely; while the former saw nothing in it, or in the measures taken to promote it, to condemn, but everything to approve. Mr. Edwards, in his views of the subject, differed materially from both classes. As he knew from his own experience, that sin and the saving grace of God might dwell in the same heart; so he had learned, both from observation and testimony, that much false religion might prevail during a powerful revival of true religion, and that at such a time, multitudes of hypocrites might spring up among real Christians. Thus it was in the revival of religion in the time of Josiah, in that which attended the preaching of John the Baptist, in those which occurred under the preaching of Christ, in the remarkable outpouring of the Spirit in

the days of the apostles, and in that which existed in the time of the Reformation. He clearly saw, that it was this mixture of counterfeit religion with true, which in all ages had given the devil his chief advantage against the kingdom of Christ. "By this," observes Mr. Edwards, "he hurt the cause of Christianity, in and after the apostolic age, much more, than by all the persecutions of both Jews and heathens. By this he prevailed against the Reformation, to put a stop to its progress, more than by all the bloody persecutions of the church of Rome. By this he prevailed against the revivals of religion, that have occurred since the Reformation. By this he prevailed against New England, to quench the love of her espousals, about a hundred years ago. And I think I have had opportunity enough to see plainly, that by this the devil has prevailed against the late great revival of religion in New England, so happy and promising in its beginning. I have seen the devil prevail in this way, against two great revivings of religion in this country. By perverting us from the simplicity that is in Christ, he hath suddenly prevailed to deprive us of that fair prospect we had a little while ago, of a kind of paradisaic state of the church of God in New England."

These evils, it was obvious, must exist in the church, until their cause was removed, and men had learned to distinguish accurately between true and false religion. To contribute his own best endeavours for the accomplishment of this end, Mr. Edwards prepared and published his "Treatise on Religious Affections." The great design of this treatise is, to show, in what true religion consists, and what are its distinguishing marks and evidences; and thus to enable every man, who will be honest and faithful with himself, to decide whether he is, or is not, a real Christian. Similar attempts had been made, by many earlier writers; but it may, I believe, safely be asserted, that no one of their efforts, taken as a whole, and viewed as an investigation of the entire subject would now be regarded as in any high degree important or valuable.

The subject itself is one of the most difficult which theology presents; and demands for its full investigation, not only ardent piety, and a most intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures, but an exact and metaphysical inspection of the faculties and operations of the human mind; which unfortunately few, very few, writers on experimental religion have hitherto discovered. The work of Mr. Edwards is at once a scriptural and a philosophical view of the subject—as truly scientific in its arrangement, and logical in its deductions, as any work on the exact sciences. That it is also a thorough and complete view of it, we have this decisive evidence—that no work of the kind, of any value, has appeared since, for which the author has not been indebted, substantially, to the "Treatise on the Affections;" or which has not been that very treatise, in part, or in whole, diluted to the capacity of weaker understandings. The trial, to which the mind of the honest, attentive, and prayerful reader of its pages is subjected, is the very trial of the final day. He who can endure the trial of the "Treatise on the Affections," will stand unhurt amidst a dissolving universe; and he who cannot will assuredly perish in its ruins. It ought to be the *vade mecum*, not only of every minister, and every Christian, but of every man, who has sobriety of thought enough to realize, that he has any interest in a coming eternity. Every minister should take effectual care that it is well dispersed among the people of his own charge, and that none of them is admitted to a profession of religion, until, after a thorough study of this treatise, he can satisfy both himself and his spiritual guide, not only that he does not rely upon the mere negative signs of holiness, but that he finds within himself those distinguishing marks and evidences of its positive existence, which the Divine Author of holiness has pronounced sure and unerring. It is indeed said, that anxious inquirers will often be discouraged by this course—particularly by a perusal of the Second Part of the treatise—from making a profession of religion, and led to renounce the

hope of their own conversion; and the answer is, that he, who, on finding himself discouraged from a profession of religion by the Second Part, is not encouraged to make it by a perusal of the Third Part, should of course, unless his views are perverted by disease or melancholy, consider the call to repent and believe the gospel, as still addressed immediately to himself; and that he, who on the perusal of this Treatise, is led to renounce the hope which he had cherished of his own piety, while he has the best reason to regard it as a false hope, will find almost of course that that hope is soon succeeded by one which will endure the strictest scrutiny. It is also said that many persons cannot understand this treatise; and the answer is, that he who is too young to understand it in its substance, is too young to make a profession of religion; and that he whose mind is too feeble to receive it substantially, when communicated by a kind and faithful pastor, cannot understandingly make such a profession. Preeminently is this treatise necessary to every congregation during a revival of religion. It was especially designed by its author to be used on every such occasion; and the minister who then uses it as he ought, will find it like a fan in his hand, winnowing the chaff from the wheat. And until ministers, laying aside the miserable vanity which leads them, in the mere number of those whom they denominate their 'spiritual children,' to find an occasion of boasting, and of course to swell that number as much as they can, shall be willing thus faithfully and honestly to make a separation among their inquirers; every revival of religion will open a great and effectual door, through which the enemies as well as the friends of religion, will gain an admission into the house of God. And when they are thus admitted, and the ardour of animal feeling has once subsided, the minister will generally find not only that he has wounded Christ in the house of his friends, but that he has destroyed his own peace, and that of his church, and prepared the way for his own speedy separation from his people.

To prevent this miserable system of deception on the part of ministers and churches, as well as of candidates for a profession of religion, Mr. Edwards wrote the treatise in question. As at first prepared, it was a series of sermons, which he preached from his own pulpit, from the text still prefixed to it, 1 Peter 1:8. "Whom having not seen, ye love: in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." It was thus written and preached, probably in the years 1742 and 1743. Being afterwards thrown into the form of a treatise by the author, it was published early in 1746. In its style it is the least correct of any of the works of Mr. Edwards, published in his life-time; but, as a work exhibiting genuine Christianity in distinction from all its counterfeits, it possesses such singular excellence, that were the books on earth destined to a destruction so nearly universal, that only one beside the Bible could be saved; the church of Christ, if aiming to preserve the volume of the greatest value to man, that which would best unfold to a bereaved posterity the real nature of true religion, would unquestionably select for preservation, the "Treatise on the Affections."

This treatise was immediately republished in England and Scotland, and was cordially welcomed by all the friends of evangelical religion in those countries, as well as in America. Its appearance in Scotland gave rise to an interesting correspondence, between Mr. Edwards and the Rev. Thomas Gillespie, of Carnock, near Edinburgh; which was commenced by the latter gentleman with the following letter.

Letter from Mr. Gillespie.

"Carnock, November. 24, 1746

VERY DEAR SIR,

I have ever honoured you for your work's sake, and what the great Shepherd made you the instrument of, from the time you published the then very extraordinary account of the revival of religion at Northampton, I think in the year 1735. The two performances you published on the subject of the late glorious work in New England, well adapted to that in Scotland, gave me great satisfaction, especially the last of them, for peculiar reasons. This much I think myself bound to say. I have many a time, for some years, designed to claim humbly the privilege of correspondence with you. What has made me defer doing it so long, when some of my brethren and good acquaintances have been favoured with it for a considerable time, it is needless now to mention. I shall only say, I have blamed myself for neglect in that matter. I do now earnestly desire a room in your prayers and friendship, and a letter from you sometimes, when you have occasion to write to Scotland; and I shall wish to be as regular as I can in making a return. With your permission, I propose to trouble you now and then with the proposal of doubts and difficulties that I meet with, and am exercised by; as for other reasons, so because some solutions in the two mentioned performances were peculiarly agreeable to me, and I find from these discourses, that wherein I have differed in some things from many others, my sentiments have harmonized with Mr. Edwards. This especially was the case in some things contained in your 'Thoughts concerning the

Revival of Religion in New England.' All the apology I make for using such freedom, though altogether unacquainted, is that you will find from my short attestation in Mr. Robe's Narrative, I am no enemy to you or to the work you have been engaged in, and which you have defended in a way I could not but much approve of. Also my friend and countryman, the Rev. Mr. Robert Abercrombie, will inform you about me, if you have occasion to see him or hear from him.

I longed to see somewhat about impressions respecting facts and future events, etc. whether by scripture texts or otherwise, made on the minds of good people, and supposed to be from the Lord; for I have had too good occasion to know the hurtful, yea, pernicious tendency of this principle, as commonly managed, upon many persons in manifold instances and various respects. It has indeed surprised me much, that wise, holy, and learned divines, as well as others, have supposed this a spiritual experience, an answer of prayers, an evidence of being highly favoured by the Lord, etc. and I was exceeding glad, that the Lord had directed you to give so seasonable a caveat against what I am assured you had the best reason to term, 'A handle in the hand of the devil,' etc. I was only sorry your then design had not permitted you to say more on that point. It merits a volume; and the proper full discussion of it would be one of the most seasonable and effectual services done the church of Christ, and interest of vital religion through the world, that I know of. I rejoice to find there is a good deal more on that subject interspersed in your 'Treatise of Religious Affections,' which I have got, but

could not as yet regularly peruse. I humbly think the Lord calls you, dear Sir, to consider every part of that point in the most critical manner, and to represent fully the consequences resulting from the several principles in that matter, which good people, as well as others, have been so fond of. And as (if I do not mistake) Providence has already put that in your hand as a part of your generation-work, so it will give me, as well as others, vast satisfaction to find more said on the subject by you, if you do not find what is in the mentioned treatises sufficient, as to which I can form no judgment, because, for myself, I have not as yet considered it. If any other author has treated that subject, I do not remember to have met with it, and I believe hell has been no less delighted than surprised, that a regular attack has not been made on them on that side before now. I doubt not they dread the consequences of such assault with exquisite horror. The neglect or oversight, if not the mistakes, of so many learned authors, who have insisted on doctrines that bear similitude or relation to this matter, while it was passed over, I humbly think should teach us humility, and some other useful lessons I need not name to Mr. Edwards.

I hope, dear Sir, it will not offend you, that I humbly offer some remarks, with all due deference, upon what I have observed in looking into your 'Treatise on Religious Affections:' and, upon further perusal, shall frankly represent what I may find difficulty about, if any such passage should cast up; expecting you will be so good as to set me right, if I shall mistake or not perceive your meaning.

Pages 78, 79, ^[21] there are several passages I do not well understand. Page 78, line 6, **ad finem**, you say, 'That they should confidently believe and trust, while they yet remain without spiritual light or sight, is an anti-scriptural and absurd doctrine you are refuting.' But this doctrine, as it is understood by many, is, that Christians ought firmly to believe and trust in Christ without light or sight, and though they are in a dark, dead frame, and for the present having no spiritual experiences and discoveries. Had you said they could not or would not believe or trust without spiritual light or sight, this is what could not be doubted: but I humbly apprehend, the position will not hold as you have laid it, whether it is applied to a sinner or a saint, as I suppose you understand it; for though the sinner never will believe on the Lord Jesus, till he has received a saving manifestation of his glory by the work of the Spirit, yet every sinner, we know, is indispensably bound, at all seasons, by the divine authority, to believe instantly on the Lord Jesus. The command of the Lord, 1 John 3:23 that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, no less binds the sinner to immediate performance, than the command not to kill, to keep the sabbath day, or any other duty, as to the present performance of which, in way of duty, all agree, the sinner is bound. I suppose none of us think we are authorized, or will adventure to preach, that the sinner should delay to attempt to believe in the Saviour, till he finds light from heaven shining into his mind, or has got a saving sight or discovery of the Lord Jesus, though it is certain he cannot believe, nor will do it eventually, till favoured with such light

or sight; because we should, in that event, put in a qualification where the apostle Paul and Silas did put none; such is their exhortation to the jailor, Acts 16:31. Also, as it may be the last call the sinner is to receive, in the dispensation of the word, we are bound to require him instantly to believe, whatever he does or does not feel in himself. If you did intend not the sinner, but the saint, in the before-mentioned positions, as I am apt to think your scope plainly intimates, still I apprehend these your assertions are not tenable; for I humbly suppose the Christian is bound to trust the divine faithfulness plighted in the promise for needful blessings, be his case with respect to light or darkness, sight, etc. what it will; and that no situation the saint can be in, looses him from obligation to glorify the Lord on all occasions, by trusting in him and expecting the fulfilment of his word suiting his case. Also, I would imagine, in Isaiah 50:10 the saint is required to believe, in the precise circumstances mentioned in your assertion above mentioned. Pardon my freedom. You do indeed say, 'It is truly the duty of those who are thus in darkness to come out of darkness into light and believe,' page 78, line 5; but how to reconcile that with the mentioned assertion that immediately follows, or with Isaiah 50:10 or other scriptures, or said assertions, and the other, of which before, I am indeed at a loss. Sometimes I think it is not believing the promise, or trusting the Lord, and trusting in him, you mean in the positions I have cited; but the belief of the goodness of one's state that he is a saint. If that was what you intended, I heartily wish you had said so much in the book; but as this is

not ordinarily what is meant by believing in Scripture, I must suppose it was not the idea affixed to your words; and an expression of yours seems to make it evident. Had you plainly stated the distinction, betwixt the impossibility of one's actually believing, and its yet being his duty to believe, in the circumstances you mentioned, danger of mistake and a handle for cavil had been cut off.

Page 78, line 20, etc., you say, 'To press and urge them to believe, without any spiritual light or sight, tends greatly to help forward the delusions of the prince of darkness.' Had you said, to press them to believe that the Lord was their God, when going on in a course of sin, or when sinning presumptuously, was of such tendency, which probably was in part what you designed, it would, in my humble apprehension, have been much more safe, for the reasons given. Also, as it is ordinarily and justly observed, that they who are most humbled think they are least so, when under a saving work of the Spirit, perhaps in like manner, spiritual light and sight may, in some instances, be mistaken or not duly apprehended; in which case, the person, upon admitting and proceeding upon your suppositions, may perhaps be apt to give way to unbelief, and to say, If I am not to be urged by the Lord's servants to believe in my present circumstances, it would surely be presumptuous in me to entertain thoughts of attempting it. Or, it may be, he shall think he has not that degree of spiritual light or sight, that is absolutely necessary in order to his believing; and thus the evil heart of unbelief shall make him depart from the living God, and neglect to set

to his seal that he is true, perhaps from the apprehension that it is his duty to remain as he is, or at least in the persuasion it would be in vain to essay to believe, till matters be otherwise with him. If I have deduced consequences from your words and manner of reasoning, which you think they do not justly bear, I will be glad to be rectified by you, dear Sir, and would be satisfied to know from you, how the practice you remark upon in the fore-mentioned passage tends to help forward the delusions of Satan. I am apt to believe the grounds upon which you proceed, in the whole paragraph I have mentioned, is, that you have with you real Antinomians, who teach things about faith and believing, subversive of new obedience and gospel holiness, and inconsistent with the scripture doctrines concerning them. But as we have few, if any such at all, (I believe I might say more,) in this country, and at the same time have numbers who would have the most accurate and judicious evangelical preachers to insist a great deal more upon doing, and less upon believing, Mark 10:17-23, for what reasons you will perceive, I am afraid your words will be misrepresented by them, and a sense put upon your expressions, which you were far from intending. I expect a mighty clamour by the Seceders, if the book shall fall into their hands. All I shall say about what is expressed by you, page 78, line 32, etc. is, that I have frequently heard it taught by those accounted the most orthodox, that the believer was bound to trust in the Lord, in the very worst frame he could be in, and that the exercise of faith was the way to be delivered from darkness, deadness, backsliding, etc. It is impossible one

should err, who follows the course prescribed by the Lord in his word. I suppose no person is bound or allowed to defer believing one single moment, because he finds himself in a bad situation, because the Spirit breathes not on him, or he finds not actual influence from heaven communicated to him at that season, rendering him capable or meet for it; for this reason, that not our ability or fitness, but the Lord's command, is the rule of duty, etc. It merits consideration, whether the believer should ever doubt of his state, on any account whatever; because doubting, as opposed to believing, is absolutely sinful. I know the opposite has been prescribed, when the saint is plunged in prevailing iniquity; but does not doubting strengthen corruption? is not unbelief the leading sin, as faith is the leading grace?

Page 258, (Note,) you cite as an authority Mr. Stoddard, affirming, 'One way of sin is exception enough against men's salvation, though their temptations be great.' I well remember the singularly judicious Dr. Owen somewhere says to this effect, 'Prevalence of a particular sin over a person for a considerable time, shows him to be no saint, except when under the power of a strong temptation.' I would suppose such texts as Isaiah 64:6, page 65, 3, etc. warranted the Doctor to assert as he did. It is, I own, no small difficulty to steer the middle course, betwixt affording hypocrites ground unwarrantably to presume on the one hand, and wounding the Lord's dear children on the other; and all the little knowledge of the Scriptures I would hope the Lord has given me, makes me think Mr. Shepherd, good and great man as he was, verged

not a little to the last extreme, with whom, if I mistake not, Mr. Stoddard symbolizes in the above assertion; for such as I have mentioned, I apprehend is the drift and tendency of Mr. Shepherd's principles. In some instances, daily experience and observation confirm me still more, that we should be very cautious and modest when asserting on that head, and should take care to go no further in the matter, than we have plain Scripture to bear us out. The consideration, that indwelling sin sometimes certainly gets such ascendant, that the new creature is, for the time the Lord seems meet, as fire buried under ashes, undiscerned and inactive, lays foundation, in my humble apprehension, for saying somewhat stronger on that point, than I would choose to utter in public teaching; and how long a saint may have been in the case now hinted, I suppose it belongs not to us precisely to determine.

Page 259, you say, 'Nor can a true saint ever fall away, so that it shall come to this, that ordinarily there shall be no remarkable difference in his walk and behaviour since his conversion, from what was before.' I do not remember that the Scripture any where mentions, that David or Solomon were sanctified from the womb. I think the contrary may be presumed; and it is evident for a considerable time, with the first ordinarily, and for a long time, in the case of the latter ordinarily, there was a remarkable difference for the worse, in the walk and behaviour of both of them, when we are sure they were saints, from what it appears it had been in their younger years. Besides, let us suppose a person of a good natural disposition, bred up in aversion to all vicious practices, by a

religious education and example, and virtuous inclination thus cultivated in him, 2 Peter 2:20 and he is converted when come to maturity, and afterwards corruption in him meets with peculiar temptations; I doubt much if there would be a remarkable difference betwixt his then conversation and walk, and that in unregeneracy. The contrary I think is found in experience, and the principles laid down leave room to suppose it.

I own in what I have above said I have perhaps gone further than becomes a man of my standing in writing to one of Mr. Edwards's experience, and am heartily sorry my first letter to you is in such a strain, and on such a subject. But love to you, dear Sir, and concern lest you should be thought to patronize what I am sure you do not, and to oppose what are your real sentiments, made me write with such freedom, and break over restraints, which modesty, decency, etc. should otherwise have laid me under, that you might have an opportunity to know in what light these things I mention to you appear to some who are your real friends in this country. A valuable minister, in looking into what is noticed in pages 78 and 79, said to me; it would be right some should write you about it; and I take this first opportunity, that you may have access to judge of the matter, and what it may be proper for you to do or not to do in it.

I will expect an answer with your convenience. I hope you will deal freely with me; for I can say, I would sit down and learn at your feet, dear Sir, accounting myself as a child in

knowledge of the Scriptures, when compared with others I will not name, and the longer I live I see the greater advantage in improvements of that kind. Conceal nothing that you think will tend to put me right if you find my views are not just. I proposed in the beginning of this letter to trouble you with some questions or doubts, and shall mention one or two at present. What should one do who is incessantly harassed by Satan; can by no means keep him out of his mind; has used all means prescribed in Scripture and suggested by divines for resistance known to him, in vain; it may be for a long time has cried to Christ, but he hears not, seems not to regard him; all his efforts are swallowed up in the deluge of the foe; do what he will, seems to gain no ground against the powers of darkness; is apt to dread he shall sink under the load, and never shall be delivered in this world? What would you advise such a person to do? What construction, think you, should be put on the sovereign conduct and dispensation of Heaven toward him? I have occasion to be conversant about this case practically demonstrated, of many years continuance, without interruption; and will therefore be glad to have your mind about it in a particular manner, and as much at large as you conveniently can. It is said, all things work for good, etc. As degrees of glory will be in proportion to those of grace, how can it be made appear it is for one's good what sometimes happens to saints, their being permitted to fall under backslidings and spiritual decays, and to die in that state, perhaps after continuing in it a considerable while, and when their situation has been attended with the melancholy

circumstances and consequences that sometimes have place in that state of matters? The solution of this I would gladly receive from you.

Are the works of the great Mr. Boston known in your country, viz. the Fourfold State of Man, View of the Covenant of Grace, and a Discourse on Afflictions, and Church Communion, etc. If not, inform me by your letter. I have now need to own my fault in troubling you with so long a letter, and so I shall end," etc.

Letter from Mr. Edwards to Mr. M'Culloch, of Cambuslang.

"To the Rev. Mr. M'Culloch.

Northampton, January. 21, 1747.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

The time seems long to me since I have received a letter from you; I have had two letters from each of my other correspondents in Scotland since I have had any from you. Our correspondence has been to me very pleasant, and I am very loth it should fail.

Great changes have been, dear Sir, since I have had a letter from you, and God has done great things, both in Scotland

and America; though not of the same nature, with those that were wrought some years ago, by the outpourings of his Spirit, yet those wherein his providence is on many accounts exceedingly remarkable: in Scotland, in the suppression of the late rebellion; and in America, in our preservation from the great French armada, from Brest, and their utter disappointment and confusion, by the immediate and wonderful hand of Heaven against them, without any interposition of any arm of flesh. The nearest akin to God's wonderful works of old, in the defence of his people in Moses's, Joshua's, and Hezekiah's time, perhaps of any that have been in these latter ages of the world. I have been writing some account of it to Mr. M'Laurin; but since then I have seen a thanksgiving sermon of Mr. Prince's, preached on that occasion; in which is a much more distinct, particular, and (I suppose) exact account of the matter (which sermon you will doubtless see). Though there is something that I observed in my letter to Mr. M'Laurin, of the coming of that fleet, its being overruled for our preservation, in this part of the land where I dwell, when eminently exposed, and when we have all reason to think our enemies in Canada had formed designs against us, that Mr. Prince does not mention.

In my last letter to you, I wrote you some thoughts and notions I had entertained, concerning the pouring out of the sixth vial on the river Euphrates, and the approach of the happy day of the church's prosperity and glory, and the utter destruction of antichrist, and other enemies of the church, so often spoken of in the Holy Scriptures: I signified it as what appeared to me

probable, that one main thing intended by the drying up the river Euphrates, was the drying up the temporal supplies and income of the antichristian church and kingdom; and suggested it to consideration whether God, appearing so wonderfully for the taking Cape Breton, and the American fishery, thereon depending, out of the hands of the French, and thereby drying up so great a fountain of the wealth of the kingdom of France, might not be looked upon as one effect of the sixth vial. I would now also propose it to be considered, whether God's so extraordinarily appearing to baffle the great attempt of the French nation, to repossess themselves of this place, be not some confirmation of it; and whether or no the almost ruining the French East India trade, by the dreadful hand of Heaven, in burying their stores at Port L'Orient, and the taking so many of their ships by Commodore Barnet, and also the taking so many of their South Sea ships, vastly rich, and several other things of like nature, that might be mentioned, may not probably be further effects of this vial. But whatever be thought of these particular events, and the application of the prophecies to them; yet it appears to me, that God's late dealings, both with Great Britain and the American plantations, if they be duly considered, as they are in themselves and circumstances, afford just reason to hope that a day is approaching for the peculiar triumphs of divine mercy and sovereign grace, over all the unworthiness, and most aggravated provocations of men. If it be considered what God's past dealings have been with England and Scotland for two centuries past, what obligations he has laid those nations

under, and particularly the mercies bestowed more lately; and we then well consider the kind, manner, and degree, of the provocations and wickedness of those nations, and yet that God so spares them, and has of late so remarkably delivered them, when so exposed to deserved destruction: and if it be also considered what God's dealings have been with this land, on its first settlement, and from its beginning hitherto, and how long we have been revolting and growing worse, and what great mercy he has lately granted us, on the late remarkable striving of his Spirit with us, and how his Spirit has been treated, his mercy and grace despised, and bitterly opposed, how greatly we have backslidden, what a degree of stupidity we are sunk into, and how full the land has been of such kinds of wickedness, as have approached so near to the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, and how obstinate we are still in our wickedness, without the least appearances of repentance or reformation; and it be then considered how God has of late made his arm bare, in almost miraculous dispensations of his providence, in our behalf, to succeed us against our enemies, and defend us from them—I say, if these things be considered, it appears evident to me, not only that God's mercies are infinitely above the mercies of men; but also that he has, in these things, gone quite out of the usual course of his providence and manner of dealings with his professing people, and I confess, it gives me great hope that God's appointed time is approaching, for the triumphs and displays of his infinite, sovereign grace, beyond all that ever has been before, from the beginning of the world; at least I

think there is much in these things, considered together with other remarkable things God has lately done, to encourage and animate God's people unitedly to cry to God, that he would appear for the bringing on those glorious effects of his mercy, so often foretold to be in the latter days; and particularly to continue that concert for prayer, set on foot in Scotland, and which it is now proposed to continue seven years longer. My wife and children join with me in respectful, cordial salutations to you and yours.

*That we may be remembered in your prayers, is the request, dear Sir, of your affectionate brother,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

***To the letter from Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Edwards
returned the following answer.***

"Northampton, September. 4, 1747.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I received your letter of November. 24, 1746, though very long after it was written. I thank you for it, and for your proposing a correspondence. Such an offer I shall gladly embrace, and esteem it a great privilege, more especially from the character I have received of you from Mr. Abercrombie, who I perceive was intimately acquainted with you.

As to the objections you make against some things contained in my work on Religious Affections, I am sorry you did not read the book through before you made them; if you had, perhaps the difficulties would not have appeared quite so great. As to what is contained in the 78th and 79th pages, I suppose there is not the least difference of opinion between you and me, unless it be concerning the signification and propriety of expressions. I am fully of your mind, and always was without the least doubt of it; 'That every one, both saint and sinner, is indispensably bound, at all seasons, by the Divine authority, to believe instantly on the Lord Jesus; and that the command of the Lord, 1 John 3:23 that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, as it is a prescription of the moral law, no less binds the sinner to immediate performance, than the commandment not to kill, to keep the sabbath day, or any other duty, as to the present performance of which, in way of duty, all agree the sinner is bound; and that men are bound to trust the divine faithfulness, be their case with respect to light and darkness, sight, etc. what it will; and that no situation they can be in, looses them from obligation to glorify the Lord at all seasons, and to expect the fulfilment of his words; and that the sinner who is without spiritual light or sight is bound to believe, and that it is a duty at that very time incumbent on him to believe.' But I conceive that there is a great deal of difference between these two things, viz. its being the duty of a man, who is without spiritual light or sight, to believe, and its being his duty to believe without spiritual light or sight, or to believe while he

yet remains without spiritual light or sight. Just the same difference, which there is between these two things, viz. its being his duty who has no faith to believe, and its being his duty to believe without faith, or to believe without believing. I trust none will assert the latter, because of the contradiction which it implies. As it is not proper to say, it is a man's duty to believe without faith, because it implies a contradiction; so I think it equally improper to say, it is a man's duty to believe without those things which are essentially implied in faith, because that also implies a contradiction. But a spiritual sight of Christ, or knowledge of Christ, is essentially implied in the very nature and notion of faith; and therefore it is absurd to talk of believing on Christ, without spiritual light or sight. It is the duty of a man, who is without those things which essentially belong to faith, to believe; and it is the duty of a man, who is without those things which essentially belong to love, to love God; because it is an indispensable obligation that lies on men at all times, and in all circumstances, to love God: but yet it is not a duty to love God without loving him, or continuing without those things which essentially belong to his love. It is the duty of those who have no sense of the loveliness of God and have no esteem of him, to love him, and they are not in the least excused, by the want of this sense and esteem in not loving him one moment; but yet it would be properly nonsense to say it is their duty to love him, without any sense of his loveliness, or esteem of him. It is indeed their duty this moment to come out of their disesteem, and stupid wicked insensibility of his loveliness, and to love him. I made the

distinction (I thought) very plainly, in the midst of those sentences you quote as exceptionable. I say expressly, p. 74, 'It is truly the duty of those who are in darkness, to come out of darkness into light and believe; but, that they should confidently believe and trust, while they yet remain without spiritual light or sight, is an anti-scriptural and absurd doctrine.' The misunderstanding between us, dear Sir, I suppose to be in the different application of the particle without, in my use of it, and your understanding of it, or what we understand as spoken of and supposed in the expression, without spiritual light or sight. As I use it, I apply it to the act of believing, and I suppose it to be very absurd to talk of an act of faith without spiritual light or sight, wherein I suppose you will allow me to be in the right. As you understand it, it is applied to duty or obligation, and you suppose it to be not at all absurd, to talk of an obligation to believe without spiritual light or sight, but that the obligation remains full, where there is no spiritual light or sight, wherein I allow you are in the right. I think, Sir, if you read what I have said in my book on this head again, it will be exceedingly apparent to you, that it is thus that I apply the preposition without, and not as you before understood it. I thought I had very plainly manifested, that what I meant by being in darkness was being in spiritual blindness, and so in a dead, stupid, and unchristian frame, and not what is commonly called being without the light of God's countenance, under the hidings of his face. Great numbers in this country proceed on the supposition, in their opinions and practice, that there really is such a manner of

believing, such a kind of faith as this, viz. a confident believing and firm trusting in God in the dark, in the sense just mentioned, which is the subject matter of Divine prescription, and which many actually have. Indeed there are innumerable instances of such as are apparently in a most negligent, apostate, and every way unchristian and wicked frame; who yet, encouraged by this principle, retain a strong confidence of their piety, and imagine that herein they do their duty and glorify God, under the notion of trusting God in the dark, and hoping against hope, and not relying on their own righteousness; and they suppose it would show a legal spirit to do otherwise. I thought it would be manifest to every reader that I was arguing against such persons as these.

You say, 'It merits consideration, whether the believer should ever doubt of his state, on any account whatever, because doubting, as opposed to believing, is absolutely sinful.' Here, Sir, you seem to suppose that a person's doubting of his own good estate, is the proper opposite of faith; and these and some other expressions in your letter seem to suppose that doubting of one's good estate, and unbelief, are the same thing; and so, that confidence in one's good estate, and faith, are the same thing. This, I acknowledge, I do not understand; I do not suppose faith, and a person's believing that he has faith, to be the same thing. Nor do I take unbelief, or being without faith, and doubting whether he has it, to be the same thing, but entirely different. I should have been glad either that you had taken a little more notice of what I say on this head, p. 79, 80, or that you had said something to convince me

that I am wrong in this point. The exercise of faith is doubtless the way to be delivered from darkness, deadness, backsliding, etc. or rather is the deliverance; as forsaking sin is the way to deliverance from sin, and is the deliverance itself. The exercise of grace is doubtless the way to deliverance from a graceless frame, which consists in the want of the exercise of grace. But as to what you say, or seem to intimate, that a person's being confident of his own good estate, is the way to be delivered from darkness, deadness, backsliding, and prevailing iniquity; I think, whoever supposes this to be God's method of delivering his saints, when sunk into an evil, careless, carnal, and unchristian frame, first to assure them of their good estate and his favour, while they yet remain in such a frame, and to make that the means of their deliverance, does surely mistake God's method of dealing with such persons. Among all the multitudes I have had opportunity to observe, I never knew one dealt with after this manner. I have known many brought back from great declension, who appeared to me to be real saints; but it was in a way very different from this. In the first place, conscience has been awakened, and they have been brought into distressing fears of the wrath of God. Thus they have become the subjects of a new work of humiliation, and have been led deeply to feel that they deserve his wrath, even while they have feared it, before God has delivered them from their apprehensions, and comforted them with a renewed sense of his favour.

As to what I say of the necessity of universal obedience, or of one way of known sin, (i.e. so as properly to be said to be the

way and manner of the man,) being exception enough against a man's salvation; I should have known better what to have said further about it, if you had briefly shown how the passages of Scripture which I mention, and the arguments which I deduce from them, are insufficient for the proof of this point. I confess they appear to me to approve it as fully, as any thing concerning the necessary qualifications of a Christian can be proved from Scripture. You object against my saying, p. 259, 'Nor can a true saint ever fall away to such a degree, that ordinarily there shall be no remarkable difference between his behaviour, after his conversion, and before.' This, I think, implies no more than that his behaviour, in similar circumstances, and under similar trials, will have a remarkable difference. As to the instances of David and Solomon, I am not aware that the Scriptures give us any where so full a history of their behaviour before their conversion, as to enable us to compare it with their subsequent life. These examples are uncertain. But I think those doctrines of the Scriptures are not uncertain, which I mention in the passage you cite, to prove that converts are new men, new creatures, that they are renewed not only within but without, that old things are passed away and all things become new, that they walk in newness of life, that the members of their bodies are new, that whereas they before were the servants of sin, and yielded their members servants of iniquity, now they yield them servants of righteousness unto holiness.

As to the doubts and cases of difficulty you mention, I think it needless for a divine of your character, to apply for the

solution of them to one, who ought rather to take the attitude of a learner. However, since you are pleased to insist on my giving my mind upon them, I would observe, with regard to the first case you mention, that of a person incessantly harassed by Satan, etc. you do not point out the nature of the temptations with which he is harassed; and without this, I think it impossible to give proper advice and directions concerning it. Satan is to be resisted in a very different manner, in different kinds of onsets. When persons are harassed with those strange, horrid impressions, to which persons afflicted with hypochondria are often subject, he is to be resisted in a very different manner, from what is proper in cases of violent temptation to gratify some worldly lust. In the former case, I should by no means advise men to resist the devil by entering the lists with him, and engaging in a violent struggle with the grand adversary; but rather by diverting the mind from his frightful suggestions, by going on stedfastly and diligently in the ordinary course of duty, without allowing themselves time and leisure to attend to his sophistry, and by committing themselves to God in prayer. That is the best way of resisting the devil, which crosses his design most; and he more effectually disappoints him in such cases, who treats him with neglect, than he who engages in a direct conflict, and tries his strength and skill with him, in a violent dispute or combat. The latter course rather gives him an advantage; and if he can get persons thus engaged in a violent struggle, he gains a great point. He knows that hypochondriacal persons are not qualified to maintain it. By this he diverts him from the

ordinary course of duty; and having gained his attention to what he says, he has opportunity to use all his craft and subtlety. By such a struggle he raises a deeper melancholy, weakens the mind still more, gets the unhappy man faster and faster in his snares, and increases his anxiety of mind; which is the very thing by which he mainly accomplishes all his purposes with such persons.

As to the difficulty of verifying Romans 8:28. 'All things shall work together for good to them that love God,' in the case of a Christian who falls under backsliding and spiritual decays; it is not perfectly obvious how this is to be interpreted, and how far it may hence be inferred, that the temptations of Christians from Satan and an evil world, and their declensions and sins, shall surely work for their good. However, since you desire my thoughts, I will endeavour to express them.

Two things may be laid down, as certain and indubitable, concerning this doctrine of the apostle.

First. The meaning cannot be that God's actual dispensations towards each Christian are the best for him of all that are possible; or that all things which are ordered for him, or done with respect to him, are in all respects better for him than any thing which God could have ordered or done, issuing in the highest good and happiness to which he can possibly be brought; for that implies that God will confer on every one of his elect as much happiness as he can confer, in the utmost exercise of his omnipotence; and this sets aside all those different degrees of grace and holiness here, and glory

hereafter, which he bestows according to his sovereign pleasure.

All things work together for good to the saints; all may have a concurring tendency to their happiness, and may finally issue in it, and yet not tend to, or issue in, the highest possible degree of happiness. There is a certain measure of holiness and happiness, to which each one of the elect is eternally appointed, and all things that relate to him work together to bring to pass this appointed measure of good. The text and context speak of God's eternal purpose of good to the elect, predestinating them to a conformity to his Son in holiness and happiness; and the implicit reasoning of the apostle leads us to suppose that all things will purely concur to bring to effect God's eternal purpose. Hence from his reasoning it may be inferred, that all things will tend to, and work together to accomplish, that degree of good which God has purposed to bestow upon them, and not any more. Indeed it would be in itself unreasonable to suppose any thing else; for as God is the supreme orderer of all things, doubtless all things shall be so ordered, that with one consent they shall help to bring to pass his ends and purposes; but surely not to bring to pass what he does not aim at, and never intended. God, in his government of the world, is carrying on his own designs in every thing; but he is not carrying on that which is not his design, and therefore there is no need of supposing, that all the circumstances, means, and advantages of every saint, are the best in every respect that God could have ordered for him, or that there could have been no circumstances or means of

which he could have been the subject, which would with God's usual blessing have issued in his greater good. Every Christian is a living stone, that, in this present state of preparation, is fitting for the place appointed for him in the heavenly temple. In this sense all things undoubtedly work together for good to every one who is called according to God's promise. He is, all the while he lives in this world, by all the dispensations of Providence towards him, fitting for the particular mansion in glory which is appointed and prepared for him.

Secondly. When it is said, that 'all things work together for good to them that love God,' it cannot be intended that all things, both positive and negative, are best for them; in other words, that not only every positive thing, of which Christians are the subjects, or in which they are concerned, will work for their good, but also, that when any thing is absent or withheld from them by God in his providence, that absence or withholding is also for their good, in such a sense, as to be better for them than the presence or bestowment would have been; for this would have the same absurd consequence which was mentioned before, viz. That God makes every Christian as happy as he possibly can make him. And if so, it would follow that God's withholding from his people greater degrees of the sanctifying influences of his Spirit, is for their good, and that it is best for them to live and die with so small a measure of piety as they actually possess, which is the same as to say, that it is for their good to have no more good, or that it is for their happiness to have no more happiness here and hereafter. If we

carefully examine the apostle's discourse in Romans 8, it will be apparent that his words imply no such thing. All God's creatures, and all that he does in disposing of them, is for the good of the Christian; but it will not thence follow, that all God's for-bearing to do is also for his good, or that it is best for him that God does no more for him.

Hence, with regard to the position, that the sins and temptations of Christians are for their good; I suppose the following things to be true:

- 1. That all things, whatsoever, are for their good, things negative as well as positive, in this sense, that God intends that some benefit to them shall arise from every thing, so that somewhat of the grace and love of God will hereafter be seen to have been exercised towards them in every thing. At the same time, the sovereignty of God will also be seen, with regard to the measure of the good or benefit aimed at, in that some other things, if God had seen cause to order them, would have produced a higher benefit. And with regard to negative disposals—consisting, not in God's doing but forbearing to do, not in giving, but withholding—some benefit, in some respect or other, will ever accrue to them, even from these; though sometimes the benefit will not be equal to the benefit withheld, if it had been bestowed. As for instance, when a Christian lives*

and dies comparatively low in grace; some good improvement shall be made even of this, in his eternal state, whereby he shall receive a real benefit, though the benefit shall not be equal to the benefit of a higher degree of holiness, if God had bestowed it.

- 2. God carries on a design of love to his people, and to each individual Christian, not only in all things of which they are the subjects while they live, but also in all his works and dispensations, and in all his acts from eternity to eternity.*
- 3. That the sin, in general, of Christians, is for their good, in this respect, viz. that through the sovereign grace and infinite wisdom of God, the fact that they have been sinful fallen creatures, and not from the beginning perfectly innocent and holy as the elect angels, will issue in a high advancement of their eternal happiness; and that they shall obtain some additional good, on occasion of all the sin of which they have been the subjects, or have committed, beyond what they would have had if they never had been fallen creatures.*
- 4. The sin of Christians cannot in this sense be for their good, that it should finally be best for them, that while they lived in this world, their restoration and recovery from the corruption to*

which they became subject by the fall, was no greater, that the mortification of sin, and spiritual vivification of the soul, was carried on to no higher degree, that they were so deficient in love to God, love to men, humility, and heavenly-mindedness, that they did so few good works, and consequently, that in general, they had so much sin, and so little holiness; for in proportion as one of these is more, the other will be less, as infallibly, as darkness is more or less, in proportion to the diminution or increase of light. It cannot finally be better for Christians, that in general, while they live, they had so much sin of heart and life, rather than more holiness of heart and life; because the reward of all at last will be according to their works. He that sowed sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he that sowed bountifully shall reap also bountifully; and he that builds wood, hay, and stubble, shall finally suffer loss, and have a less reward, than if he had built gold, silver, and precious stones, though he himself shall be saved. But notwithstanding this,

- 5. The sins and falls of Christians may be for their good, and for the better, in this respect, that the issue may be better than if the temptation had not happened, and so the occasion not given, either for the sin of yielding to the temptation, or*

the virtue of overcoming it: and yet not in this respect, (with regard to their sins or falls in general,) that it should be better for them in the issue, that they have yielded to the temptation offered, than if they had overcome. For the fewer victories they obtain over temptation, the fewer are their good works, and particularly of that kind of good works to which a distinguished reward is promised in Revelation 2 and Revelation 3 and in many other parts of Scripture. The word of God represents the work of a Christian in this world as a warfare, and it is evident in the Scriptures, that he who acquits himself as the best soldier, shall win the greatest prize. Therefore, when Christians are brought into back slidings and decays, by being overcome by temptations, the issue of their backslidings may be some good to them, beyond what they would have received if the temptations had never existed; and yet their backslidings in general may be a great loss to them in this respect, that they shall have much less reward, than if the temptations had been overcome, and they had persevered in spiritual vigour and diligence. But yet this don't hinder, but that,

- 6. It may be so ordered by a sovereign and all-wise God, that the falls and backslidings of Christians, through their being overcome by*

temptations in some particular instances, may prove best for them, not only because the issue may be greater good to them, than they would have received if the temptation had not happened, but even greater in that instance, than if the temptation had been overcome. It may be so ordered, that their being overcome by that temptation, shall be the occasion of their having greater strength, and on the whole, obtaining more and greater victories, than if they had not fallen in that instance. But this is no where promised, nor can it be so, that, in the general, it should prove better for them that they were foiled so much, and did overcome so little, in the course of their lives, and that finally their decay is so great, or their progress so small. From these things it appears,

7. That the saying of the apostle, all things work together for good to them that love God, though it be fulfilled in some respects to all Christians, at all times and in all circumstances, yet it is fulfilled more especially and eminently to Christians continuing in the exercise of love to God, not falling from the exercises, or failing in the fruits of divine love in times of trial. Then it is, that temptations, enemies, and suffering, will be best for them, working that which is most for their good every way; and they shall be more

than conquerors over tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword, Romans 8:35-37.

8. As God is carrying on a design of love to each individual Christian, in all his works and dispensations whatsoever, so the particular design of love to them which he is carrying on, is to fit them for and bring them to their appointed place in the heavenly temple, or to that identical degree of happiness and glory in heaven, which his eternal love designed for them, and no other. For God's design of love or of happiness to them, is only just what it is, and is not different from itself; and to fulfil this particular design of love, every thing which God does, or in any respect disposes, whether it be positive, privative, or negative, contributes; because, doubtless, every thing which God does, or in any respect offers, tends to fulfill his aims and designs. Therefore, undoubtedly,

9. All the while the Christian lives in the world, he is preparing for his appointed mansion in glory, and fitting for his place in the heavenly building. All his temptations, though they may occasion, for the present, great spiritual injuries, yet at last shall be an occasion of his being more fitted for his place in glory. Hence we may determine,

that however the Christian may die in some respects under the decay of spiritual comfort, and of some religious affections, yet every Christian dies at that time when his habitual fitness for his place in the heavenly temple is most complete, because otherwise, all things which happen to him while he lives, would not work together to fit him for that place.

10. God brings his people, at the end of their lives, to this greatest fitness for their place in heaven, not by diminishing holiness in their hearts, but by increasing it, and carrying on the work of grace in their souls. If it be not so, that cannot be true, that where God has begun a good work he will perform it, or carry it on to the day of Christ; for if they die with a less degree of holiness than they had before, then it ceases to be carried on before the day of Christ comes. If holiness finally decreases, then Satan so far finally obtains the victory. He finally prevails to diminish the fire in the smoking flax; and then how is that promise verified, that God will not quench the smoking flax, till he bring forth judgment unto victory? So that it must needs be, that although Christians may die under decay, in some respects, yet they never die under a real habitual decay of the work of grace in general. If they fall, they shall rise again before they die,

and rise higher than before, if not in joy, and some other affections, yet in greater degrees of spiritual knowledge, self-abasement, trust in God, and solidity and ripeness of grace.

If these things which have been observed are true, then we may infer from them these corollaries.

- 1. That notwithstanding the truth of the apostle's declaration in Romans 8:28. Christians have cause to lament their leanness and unfruitfulness, and the fact that they are guilty of so much sin, not only as it is to the dishonour of God, but also as it is likely to redound to their own eternal loss and damage.*
- 2. That nothing can be inferred from this promise, which is calculated to set aside or make void the influence of motives to earnest endeavours to avoid all sin, to increase in holiness, and abound in good works, from an aim at a high and eminent degree of glory and happiness in a future world.*
- 3. That though it is to the eternal damage of Christians, ordinarily, when they yield to and are overcome by temptations; yet Satan and the other enemies of Christians, from whom these temptations come, are always wholly disappointed in the temptation, and baffled in*

their design to hurt them, inasmuch as the temptation and the sin which it occasions, are for the saints' good, and they receive a greater benefit in the issue, than if the temptation had not been, and yet less than if the temptation had been overcome.

As to Mr. Boston's View of the Covenant of Grace, I have had some opportunity to examine it, and I confess I do not understand the scheme of thought presented in that book. I have read his Fourfold State of Man, and liked it exceedingly well. I think, in that, he shows himself to be a truly great divine.

Hoping that you will accept my letter with candour, and remember me in your prayers, I subscribe myself

*Your affectionate and obliged
brother and servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

In October, 1744, a number of ministers in Scotland, among whom, I believe, were all the correspondents of Mr. Edwards in that country, thinking that the state of the church and the world called loudly for united extraordinary prayer to God, that he would deliver the nations from their miseries, and fill the earth with his glory; proposed that Christians universally should, for the two years then next ensuing, set apart a portion of time, on Saturday evening and sabbath morning, every week, to be spent in prayer for this purpose; and that they should still more solemnly devote the first Tuesday in the last month of each quarter of the year, to be spent either in private, social, or public prayer to God, for the Your affectionate and obliged bestowment of those blessings

on the world. Mr. Edwards not only welcomed the proposal as soon as he received it, but did all in his power to promote its general acceptance by the American churches; and the following letter, alluding to a more particular account of the subject in one to Mr. M'Laurin, which I have not been able to procure, will in some measure apprise the reader of the efforts which he made for this purpose.

To the Rev. William M'Culloch

Northampton, September. 23, 1747.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter of March 12, 1747, which I suppose lay a long while at Mr. Prince's in Boston, before I received it, through Mr. Prince's forgetfulness. It seems he had forgotten that he had any such letter; and when I sent a messenger to his house, on purpose to inquire whether I had any letter lodged there for me from Scotland, he told him no; when I suppose this letter had been long in his house: and I should probably never have had it at last, had not one of my daughters had occasion to go to Boston, who made a visit at the house, and made a more full inquiry.

I am sorry to hear of your affliction, through your indisposition that you speak of, and desire to be thankful to the God of all mercy for his goodness, in restoring you again to health.

I have, in my letter to Mr. M'Laurin, given a particular account of what I know, concerning the propagation of the Concert for United Prayer, in America; which you will doubtless have opportunity to see. The propagation of it is but slow; but yet so many do fall in with it, and there is that prospect of its being further spread, that it is a great encouragement to me. I earnestly hope, that they, that have begun extraordinary prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and the coming of Christ's kingdom, will not fail, or grow dull and lifeless, in such an affair, but rather that they will increase more and more in their fervency. I have taken a great deal of pains to promote this concert here in America, and shall not cease to do so, if God spares my life, as I have opportunity, in all ways that I can devise. I have written largely on the subject, insisting on persuasions, and answering objections; and what I have written is gone to the press. The undertaker for the publication encourages me that it shall speedily be printed. I have sent to Mr. M'Laurin a particular account of it.

You desire to hear how it was with the people of New England, when we were threatened with an invasion by the French fleet, the last summer. As to the particular circumstances of that wonderful deliverance, the fullest and best account I have ever seen of it, is in Mr. Prince's Thanksgiving Sermon on that occasion; which, in all probability, you have seen long before this time. Nor need you be informed by me, of the repeated mercy of God to us, in confounding our enemies in their renewed attempt this year, by delivering up their fleet, in its

way hither, into the hands of the English. In all probability, that fleet was intended for the execution of a very extensive design, against the English colonies, in conjunction with the French forces in Canada. For there was an army lay waiting at Nova Scotia, which, on the news of the sailing of their fleet, immediately left the country, and returned to Canada, over the lake Champlain, towards New England and New York; and they, or a part of them, attacked Fort Saratoga, in New York government, and killed or took about fifty men that were drawn out of the fort; but desisted from any further attempts, about the time we may suppose they received the news of the defeat of their fleet. And very soon after they received this news in Canada, the French there released most of our captives, and sent one ship loaded with them, to the number of about one hundred and seventy, to Boston, and another ship with about sixty, if I remember right, to Louisburg. The reasons that induced them so to do, are not known, and can only be guessed at by us; but, by their doing it very soon after they received the news of the loss of their fleet, it looks as though that had great influence in the affair. New England has had many other surprising deliverances from the French and Indians; some of which I have given a particular account of, in my letter to Mr. M'Laurin; which it would be needless for me to repeat, seeing you have such frequent opportunities with him. These deliverances are very wonderful and affecting; our enemies own that the heavens are on our side, and fight for us; but there are no such effects of these mercies upon us that are the subjects of them, as God requires, and most justly expects.

The mercies are acknowledged in words, but we are not led to repentance by them; there appears no such thing as any reformation or revival of religion in the land. God's so wonderfully protecting and delivering a people, whose provocations have been so great, and who do so continue in apostasy and provocation, is very marvellous; and I can think of no account that can be given of it, so probable as this, that God has a design of mercy to the rising generation, and that there are a great number of the elect among our children, born and unborn, and that for these elect's sake, God will not suffer us to be destroyed, having a design to bring forth a seed of the posterity of this people, to inherit and dwell in this land, that shall be a holy seed, and a generation of his servants. And so that those words are applicable to us, Isaiah 65:8, 9. 'Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it; so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains; and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.' I am full of apprehensions, that God has no design of mercy to those that were left unconverted, of the generation that were on the stage, in the time of the late extraordinary religious commotion, and striving of God's Spirit; unless it be perhaps a small gleanings from among them. But it may be, when their little ones, the generation that was then in their childhood, are brought fully on the stage of action, God will abundantly pour out his Spirit, and revive and carry on his work, here and elsewhere in the

christian world. ^[22]

I thank you for taking the pains of writing to me your thoughts of the forty-two months of the treading down of the holy city, which are new and entertaining. The chief objection against what you propose, that I can think of, is, that the forty-two months of the treading down the holy city, seems to be the same period with the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, mentioned in the very next verse, in immediate connexion with this; and that the same with the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of the woman's being in the wilderness, chapter 12:6; and that the same with the time, times, and an half of the woman's being in the wilderness, verse 14; and that the same with the time, times, and an half of the reign of the little horn, Daniel 7:25; and with the forty-two months of the reign of the beast, Revelation 13:5; and that this evidently signifies the duration of the reign of antichrist; which is a thing entirely diverse from the sum of the times of the city of Jerusalem's being under the dominion of pagans, Saracens, Persians, and Turks, as you represent. However, it is possible that what you mention may be one way wherein that prophecy, Revelation 11:2 may be fulfilled. For God's word is oftentimes fulfilled in various ways: as one way, wherein the prophetic representation of the beast with the seven heads is fulfilled, is in the seven successive forms of government that idolatrous Rome is under; and another way that it was fulfilled, was by Rome's being built on seven hills. One way that the seventy years captivity of the Jews was fulfilled, was in its being

seventy years from Jehoiachim's captivity to Cyrus's decree; and another way that it was fulfilled, was in its being seventy years from Zedekiah's captivity to Darius's decree, Ezra vi; and another way that it was fulfilled, was in its being seventy years from the last carrying away of all, Jeremiah 52:30, to the finishing and dedication of the temple. But I expect no certainty as to these things, or any of the various conjectures concerning the time of the calling of the Jews, and the fall of the kingdom of the beast, till time and fulfilment shall decide the matter. However, I cannot think otherwise, than that we have a great deal of reason to suppose, that the beginning of that glorious work of God's Spirit, which, before it is finished, shall accomplish these things, is not very far off; and there is very much in the word of God, and in the present aspects of Divine Providence, to encourage us greatly in our begun concert for extraordinary united prayer for the coming of Christ's kingdom. Let us therefore go on with what we have begun in that respect, and continue instant in prayer, with all perseverance, and increase more and more in faith and fervency; and not keep silence, nor give God any rest, till he establish, and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

*And remember in your prayers, dear Sir,
Yours, in great esteem and affection,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

The continuation of this concert for united and extraordinary prayer was proposed in a Memorial from Scotland, dated August 26, 1746, signed by twelve clergymen of that country, and circulated soon after in all the American colonies. To secure the general adoption of the proposed measure,

Mr. Edwards first preached to his people a series of sermons in its favour, and then published them in the form of a treatise, with the title, "An Humble Attempt to promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union among God's People, in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion, and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, pursuant to Scripture Promises, and Prophecies concerning the Last Time." This work was immediately republished in England and Scotland, and extensively circulated in both countries, as well as in America, and had great influence in securing the general adoption of the measures proposed—a measure which was pursued for more than half a century by many of the American churches, and only discontinued on the adoption of a more frequent concert—the monthly concert—for united and extraordinary prayer, for the same great object, proposed at an association of the ministers of the Baptist churches, in the counties of Northampton, Leicester, etc. held at Nottingham in 1784, and observed the first Monday evening of each month; and now extensively adopted throughout the christian world.

In the course of this treatise, Mr. Edwards was led, in answering objections, to examine an interpretation of prophecy, until then most generally if not universally received: viz. That the kingdom of Christ could not come, until there had previously been a time of most extreme calamity to the church of God, and prevalence of her antichristian enemies against her, as represented in Revelation 11, by the slaying of the witnesses. Some years before this, Mr. Edwards had examined the Apocalypse with great care, in connexion with the prophecy of Daniel; in order to satisfy himself whether the slaying of the witnesses was to be regarded as past or future. This he did with his pen in his hand; and a brief abstract of his views on this point, is found in the answers to the 4th and 5th objections in the Humble Attempt. The views of prophecy, here presented by Mr. Edwards, were, I believe, at the time wholly new to the

christian world, and were at first regarded by many as doubtful if not erroneous; but have since produced the general conviction that the downfall of popery and the ultimate extension of the kingdom of Christ, are far less distant than has been supposed—a conviction remarkably supported by the whole series of providential dispensations. And there can be no doubt that this conviction has been a prime cause of the present concentrated movement of the whole church of God, to hasten forward the reign of the Messiah. As long as it was the commonly received opinion of Christians that the church was yet destined to experience far more severe and overwhelming calamities, than any she had hitherto known—calamities amounting to an almost total extinction—before the time of her final prosperity; the efforts and the prayers of Christians for the arrival of that period of prosperity were chiefly prevented: inasmuch as it was, in effect, to labour and pray for the almost total extinction of the church of Christ, during a period of indefinite extent, as well as to labour and pray, if speedy success should crown their efforts, for the destruction, if not of their own lives, yet of those of their children and immediate descendants. In the sections referred to, he endeavours to show, and by arguments which are yet unanswered, that the severest trials announced in prophecy against the church of God were already past, that her warfare was even then almost accomplished, and that the day of her redemption was drawing nigh. By establishing this point; and by presenting the arguments in a manner so clear and convincing, as wholly to supersede the necessity of any subsequent treatise on the subject; the work in question, through the Divine blessing, has exerted an influence, singularly powerful, in rousing the church of Christ to that series of efforts which is to result in her final victory.

Chapter XV (TOC)

Arrival of David Brainerd at Northampton—His Sickness and Death at the House of Mr. Edwards—His Papers—Death of Jerusha, The Second Daughter of Mr. E—Her Character—Correspondence of Mr. E. with Rev. John Erskine—Abstract of Mr. E. 'S First Letter to Mr. Erskine—Plan Conceived of the Freedom of the Will—Death of Col. Stoddard—Kindness of Mr. Erskine—Letter of Mr. E. to Him—Second Letter from Mr. Gillespie—Letter to Mr. M'Culloch—Letter to Mr. Erskine—Letter from Mr. Willison—Life and Diary of Brainerd—Letters to Messrs. Erskine, M'Culloch, and Robe—Ordination of Rev. Job Strong—Anecdote of Rev. Mr. Moody—Letter of Mr. E. to his Daughter Mary—Second Letter to Mr. Gillespie.

THE reader will recollect, that while Mr. Edwards was at New-Haven, in September, 1743, he formed an acquaintance with DAVID BRAINERD, then a missionary to the Indians at *Kaunaumee*,^[23] and became his counsellor at a most interesting period of his life. In March 1747, Brainerd, in consequence of extreme ill health, took leave of his Indians in New Jersey, and in April came into New England; when he was invited by Mr. Edwards to take up his abode in his own house. He came there on the 28th of May, apparently very much improved in health, cheerful in his spirits, and free from melancholy, yet at that time probably in a confirmed consumption. Mr. Edwards had now an opportunity of becoming most intimately acquainted with him, and regarded his residence under his roof as a peculiar blessing to himself and his family. "We enjoyed," he observes, "not only the benefit of his conversation, but had the comfort and advantage of having him pray in the family from time to time." He was at this time very feeble in health; but in consequence of the advice of his physician, he left Northampton for Boston, on the 9th of June, in company with the second daughter of Mr. Edwards. They arrived on

the evening of the 12th, among the family relatives of Mr. Edwards in Boston, and for a few days the health of Brainerd appeared much amended; but a relapse on the 18th convinced his friends that his recovery was hopeless. Contrary to their expectations, however, he so far revived, that on the 20th of July they were able to leave Boston, in company with his brother, Mr. Israel Brainerd, and on the 25th they reached Northampton. Here his health continued gradually to decline, until early in October it was obvious that he would not long survive. "On the morning of Lord's day, October. 4," says Mr. Edwards, "as my daughter Jerusha, who chiefly attended him, came into the room, he looked on her very pleasantly, and said, 'Dear Jerusha, are you willing to part with me?—I am quite willing to part with you: I am willing to part with all my friends: though if I thought I should not see you and be happy with you in another world, I could not bear to part with you. But we shall spend a happy eternity together.'" He died on Friday, October. 9, 1747, and on the Monday following, Mr. Edwards preached the sermon at his funeral, from 2 Corinthians 5:8 entitled, "True Saints when absent from the Body are present with the Lord;" which was published in the December following.

Brainerd, after destroying the early part of his Diary, left the residue in the hands of Mr. Edwards, to dispose of as he thought best. Mr. Edwards concluded to publish it, in connexion with a brief Memoir of his life.

In the ensuing February, Jerusha, the second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, was removed by death. Her father, in a note to the Memoirs of Brainerd, thus alludes to this distressing event. "Since this, it has pleased a holy and sovereign God, to take away this my dear child by death, on the 14th of February, next following, after a short illness of five days, in the 18th year of her age. She was a person of much the same spirit with Brainerd. She

had constantly taken care of and attended him in his sickness, for nineteen weeks before his death; devoting herself to it with great delight, because she looked on him as an eminent servant of Jesus Christ. In this time, he had much conversation with her on the things of religion; and, in his dying state, often expressed to us, her parents, his great satisfaction concerning her true piety, and his confidence that he should meet her in heaven, and his high opinion of her not only as a real Christian, but as a very eminent saint: one whose soul was uncommonly fed and entertained with things which pertain to the most spiritual, experimental, and distinguishing parts of religion: and one, who, by the temper of her mind, was fitted to deny herself for God, and to do good, beyond any young woman whatsoever whom he knew. She had manifested a heart uncommonly devoted to God in the course of her life, many years before her death; and said on her death-bed, that she had not seen one minute, for several years, wherein she desired to live one minute longer, for the sake of any other good in life, but doing good, living to God, and doing what might be for his glory."

In the course of the year 1747, an epistolary correspondence was commenced between Mr. Edwards and the Rev. John Arsine of Kirkintilloch, afterwards the Rev. Dr. Erskine of Edinburgh, which was continued to the close of Mr. Edwards's life. This gentleman, possessing superior talents, and having every advantage of birth, fortune, and education, made choice of the clerical profession, in opposition to the prevailing wishes of his family; and in May, 1744, took charge of the parish of Kirkintilloch near Glasgow. In 1753, he was translated to a parish in the borough of Culross, and, in the autumn of 1758, to one of the parishes in Edinburgh. Distinguished alike for his learning and piety, for his honourable and munificent spirit, and for his firm attachment to evangelical religion, he adorned every station which he filled by a faithful and conscientious discharge of its various duties—private,

social, and public—enjoyed the high respect of the wise and good, not only in Great Britain, but extensively in both continents; and died in 1803, in his 82d year, having been the correspondent, successively, of President Edwards, of his son Dr. Edwards, president of Union College, and of his grandson President Dwight, for the period of fifty-six years.

Mr. Erskine began the correspondence with Mr. Edwards early in 1747, through the intervention of Mr. M'Laurin of Glasgow, by sending him the "Remains of Mr. Hall"—a memoir, written by himself, of a most respectable and beloved fellow-student in theology, a young gentleman of uncommon promise. I have none of the letters of Mr. Erskine to Mr. Edwards, and not having been able to procure the first letter of Mr. Edwards to Mr. Erskine, written in the summer of 1747, must be indebted for the following account of it to the "Life of Dr. Erskine," by the Hon. and Rev. Sir H. M. Wellwood—"On this occasion Mr. Edwards expressed, with great tenderness and delicacy, his sympathy with one, who had lost his most intimate and estimable friend in the prime of life, the companion of his youth, and, for a considerable time before his death, the delightful and affectionate associate of his studies and of his piety.

"In a postscript to this letter, he mentioned his book on Religious Affections, then just published, and at the same time sent his correspondent a copy of it in a book of which it is not too much to say, that it is not only worthy of the talents and sincerity of its author, but that while it shows that he was neither forward nor rash in estimating striking or sudden impressions of religion, it contains more sound instruction on its particular subject, and lays down more intelligible and definite rules to distinguish true from false religion, and to ascertain by distinct characters the genuine spirit of vital piety, separated from all fanatical delusions, than any other book which has yet been given to

the world.

"In the same postscript to Mr. Edwards's first letter to Dr. Erskine, he gave him a general sketch of a plan which he had then formed, and which he afterwards executed with so much ability in his book on the Freedom of the Will—a book which, whether his opinions be questioned or adopted, has certainly given him an eminent station both among philosophers and divines. 'I have thought,' he says, 'of writing something particularly and largely on the Arminian controversy in distinct discourses on the various points in dispute, to be published successively, beginning first with a discourse concerning the Freedom of the Will, and Moral Agency; endeavouring fully and thoroughly to state and discuss those points of liberty and necessity, moral and physical inability, efficacious grace, and the ground of virtue and vice, reward and punishment, blame and praise, with regard to the dispositions and actions of reasonable creatures.'

"Such was the first idea of a work from which Mr. Edwards afterwards derived his chief celebrity as an author; but a considerable time intervened before he found it possible to make any progress in his design."

The death of Col. Stoddard, which occurred at Boston, on the 19th of June this year, was a loss severely felt, not only by Mr. Edwards and the people of Northampton, but by the county and the province at large. He was eminently distinguished for his strength of understanding and energy of character, and had for a long period unrivalled influence in the council of the province. He was also a man of decided piety, and a uniform friend and supporter of sound morals and evangelical religion. Mr. Edwards preached a sermon on his death from Ezekiel 19:12 which was immediately published.

Early in the next year Mr. Edwards received from Mr. Erskine a number of

books which he valued very highly, as containing the ablest exhibition and defence of the system of doctrines usually styled Arminianism, which had at that time appeared before the public. In the following letter he acknowledges the kindness of his correspondent, and at the same time alludes to the decease of his daughter.

To the Rev. John Erskine

Northampton, August. 31, 1748

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I, this summer, received your kind letter of February. 9, 1748, with your most acceptable present of Taylor on Original Sin, and his Key to the Apostolic Writings, with his Paraphrase on the Epistle to the Romans; together with your Sermons and Answer to DOctober. Campbell. I had your Sermons before, sent either by you or Mr. M'Laurin. I am exceedingly glad of those two books of Taylor's. I had before borrowed and read Taylor on Original Sin; but am very glad to have one of my own; if you had not sent it, I intended to have sought opportunity to buy it. The other book, his Paraphrase, etc. I had not heard of; if I had I should not have been easy till I had seen it, and been possessed of it. These books, if I should live, may probably be of great use to me. Such kindness from you was unexpected. I hoped to receive a letter from you, which alone I should have received as a special favour.

I have for the present been diverted from the design I hinted to you, of publishing something against some of the Arminian tenets, by something else that Divine Providence unexpectedly laid in my way, and seemed to render unavoidable, viz. publishing Mr. Brainerd's Life, of which the enclosed paper of proposals give some account.

It might be of particular advantage to me, here in this remote part of the world, to be better informed what books there are that are published on the other side of the Atlantic; and especially if there be any thing that comes out that is very remarkable. I have seen many notable things that have been written in this country against the truth, but nothing very notable on our side of the controversies of the present day, at least of the Arminian controversy. You would much oblige me, if you would inform me what are the best books that have lately been written in defence of Calvinism.

I have herewith sent the two books of Mr. Stoddard's you desired. The lesser of the two was my own; and though I have no other, yet you have laid me under such obligations that I am glad I have it to send to you. The other I procured of one of my neighbours.

I have lately heard some things that have excited hope in me, that God was about to cause there to be a turn in England, with regard to the state of religion there for the better; particularly what we have heard, that one Mr. West, a clerk of the privy council, has written in defence of Christianity, though once a notorious deist; and also what Mr. Littleton, a

member of the house of commons, has written. I should be glad if you would inform me more particularly in your next concerning this affair, and what the present state of infidelity in Great Britain is.

It has pleased God, since I wrote my last to you, sorely to afflict this family, by taking away by death, the last February, my second daughter, in the eighteenth year of her age; a very pleasant and useful member of this family, and one that was esteemed the flower of the family. Herein we have a great loss; but the remembrance of the remarkable appearances of piety in her, from her childhood, in life, and also at her death, are very comfortable to us, and give us great reason to mingle thanksgiving with our mourning. I desire your prayers, dear Sir, that God would make up our great loss to us in himself.

Please to accept of one of my sermons on Mr. Brainerd's death, and also one of my sermons on Mr. Buell's instalment. I desire that for the future your letters to me may be directed to be left with Mr. Edward Bromfield, merchant in Boston. My wife joins with me in respectful and affectionate salutations to you and Mrs. Erskine. Desiring that we may meet often at the throne of grace in supplications for each other,

*I am, dear brother, your obliged friend,
Fellow labourer, and humble servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

P.S. I desired Mr. Prince to send to you one of my books on the subject of the concert for prayer for a general revival of religion the last year; and he engaged to do it; but I perceive he forgot it, and it was long neglected. But I

have since taken some further care to have the book conveyed; so that I hope that ere this time you have received it.

In the conclusion of your letter of February. 9, you mention a design of writing to me again by a ship that was to sail the next month for Boston. That letter I have not received."

Mr. Gillespie, imagining that the difficulties which he had stated in his former letter, were not satisfactorily cleared up in the answer of Mr. Edwards, addressed to him the following reply.

Letter from Mr. Gillespie.

"September. 19, 1748.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I had the favour of yours in spring last, for which I heartily thank you. I did not want inclination to make you a return long ago, as I prize your correspondence, but some things concurred that effectually prevented me, which has given me concern.

It was my desire to be informed, and my inclination to make you understand, how some passages in your book on Religious Affections did appear to me and some others, your real friends and well-wishers in this country, that determined me to presume to offer you some few remarks on the passages mentioned in my former letter; and desire of further

information engages me now, with all respect, to make some observations upon some things in your letter. I hope you will pardon my freedom, and bear with me in it, and set me right wherein you may find me to misapprehend your meaning, or to mistake in any other respect.

You say, 'You conceive that there is a great difference between these two things, viz. its being a man's duty, who is without spiritual light or sight, to believe; and its being his duty to believe without spiritual light or sight, or to believe while he yet remains without spiritual light or sight: it is not proper to say, it is a man's duty to believe without faith,' etc. Now, dear Sir, the difference here, I am not able to conceive; for all are bound to believe the divine testimony and to trust in Christ, which you acknowledge; and the want of spiritual light or sight does not loose from the obligation one is laid under by the divine command to believe instantly on Christ, and at all season, as his circumstances shall require, nor does it excuse him in any degree for not believing. I own that a person who has no spiritual light or sight cannot eventually believe, if by light or sight is meant the influence or grace of the Spirit, by which one's mind is irradiated to take up the object and grounds of faith, so as to be made to have a spiritual sight of Christ, and to act that grace; yet still, even when one wants this, it is his duty, and he is bound to believe, for we know it is a maxim, 'ability is not the rule of duty.' I also acknowledge, that no person who is, and always has been, without spiritual light or sight, is bound, nor is it his duty, to believe that he has actually believed, or to conclude he is really a partaker of the

faith of God's elect. I have some apprehension this is all you meant by the expressions I have noticed, and the reasoning in consequence of them; or else certainly different ideas are affixed to words with you and among us. There is indeed a great deal of difference betwixt its being one's duty to believe, or to act faith, and its being his duty to believe he has believed, or has acted divine faith; i.e. you say you apply the particle without, respecting spiritual light or sight, to the act of believing, by which I suppose you intend, 'all should believe, though none do really believe, without spiritual light or sight;' in which I entirely agree with you. The word duty indeed, which you use when treating that matter, is ordinarily supposed to signify the obligation the person is under by the divine authority to believe, as applied to the matter of faith, and not to the act of faith put forth in consequence of such obligation. Had I not supposed you plainly meant by the expressions I quoted from the book, the duty or obligation to believe, and not an act of faith exerted, I should have made no remarks on them. It is indeed as absurd for one to conclude he has really believed without spiritual light or sight, as to say one should believe he had believed, without those things that are essentially implied in faith. But I must differ from you in thinking it is not very proper to say, it is a man's duty to believe without faith, i.e. while he yet remains without spiritual light or sight, or to put forth an act of faith on the Saviour, however void of spiritual light or sight; for if this was not the truth, the finally impenitent sinner could not be condemned for unbelief, as the Holy Ghost declares he will be,

John 3:19, 20, 24, and that notwithstanding the power of the Spirit of faith must make him believe. I should be glad to know the precise idea you affix to the words faith and believing. I do not remember a person's reflecting on his act of faith, any where in Scripture termed believing. You remark, 'That I seem to suppose that a person's doubting of his good estate is the proper opposite of faith;' and I own, as it is a believer's duty to expect salvation through Christ, which, in other words, is to believe his good estate, Acts 15:11. Galatians 2:20. Ephesians 2:4. Job 19:25, doubting of it must be his sin, an effect of unbelief, a part of it, and thus the proper opposite of faith, considered in its full compass and latitude. Thus once doubting of his good estate by a true believer, and unbelief in one branch of it, or one part and manner of its acting, are the same thing. Faith and unbelief are opposed in Scripture, and what is the opposite of one ingredient in unbelief must be faith in one part of it—one thing that belongs to its exercise. A person's believing is owned to be his indispensable duty, and this comprehends or supposes his being confident of his good estate, and is properly divine faith, because it has the divine testimony now cited, on which it bottoms, Jeremiah 3:19. The Lord says, 'Thou shalt call me, My father, and shalt not turn away from me;' which is evidently faith, and no less manifestly belief of one's good estate, or being confident of it, because the expression must denote the continued exercise of faith, in not turning away from the Lord. Crying Abba Father, Romans 8:15, is faith in the Lord as one's father, which must have a being confident of one's good estate inseparable from it, or

rather enwrapped in it. I suppose what I have mentioned is very consistent with what you say, 'That faith, and persons believing that they have faith, are not the same;' for one's believing that he has faith, simply and by itself, has for its object the man's inward frame, or the actings and exercises of his spirit, and not a divine testimony. This is not divine faith; but, as I have laid the matter, a being confident of one's good estate has for its foundation the word of God, Hebrews 13:5., etc. ultimately—at least; to be sure this is one way in which faith is acted, or one thing in its exercise. I am far from thinking unbelief, or being without faith, and doubting whether they have faith, to be the same thing in an unconverted sinner, whom your words, 'being without faith,' must mean, and therein we entirely agree. But I must think, as to the believer, his doubting whether or not he has faith, is sinful, because it is belying the Holy Ghost, denying his work in him, so there is no sin to which that doubting can so properly be reduced as unbelief. You know, dear Sir, doubting and believing are opposed in Scripture, Matthew 14:31, Matthew 21:21, Mark 11:23, and I cannot exclude from the idea of doubting, a questioning the truth and reality of a work of grace on one's soul; for the Holy Ghost requires us to believe the reality of his work in us, in all its parts, just as it is, and never would allow us, much less call us to sin, or to believe a falsehood, that one is void of grace, when he has it, that good might come of it, i.e. that the person might be awakened from security, etc. 1 John 3:3. 'Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, as he is pure;' I think

intimates, that in proportion to the degree of one's hope, that the Lord is his Father, will be his aim after sanctification, and his attainment of it; if so, to renounce this hope, to throw it up at any season, on any account, must be unlawful; whence I infer, for the believer to doubt of his gracious state, to call it in question for any reason whatever, so as to raze it, it is simply sinful, 1 John 2:12, 15. 'I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you, viz. Love not the world.' Here forgiveness of sin is used as a motive or incitement not to love the world; and this reasoning of the apostle would lose all its force, were it incumbent on a believer, at some seasons, to think he was not within the bond of the new covenant—he is bound ever to hold that conclusion fixed. The exhortation, not to cast away one's confidence, certainly comprehends a call to persevere in believing in our interest in the Lord, and to practise it at all seasons, Hebrews 10:35. Job's friends endeavoured to make him question, whether the root of the matter was in him, and to conclude that he was a hypocrite. He resolved, though the Lord should slay him, he would trust in him, chapter 13:15 being confident of his own good estate, chapter 27:3, 5. 'All the while my breath is in me;' and Verse 5, 'Till I die, I will not remove my integrity from me;' and we see, from the whole tenor of his book, what there he resolved, he actually did practise; he never entertained the thought of supposing the Lord was not his God, notwithstanding the grievous eruptions of iniquity in him, in quarrelling with the sovereignty of God, etc. And in the end, the Lord condemned his friends for speaking of him 'the things that were not right,'

and pronounced that Job, his servant, had said of him the thing 'that is right,' Job 4:1, from which, it is to be presumed, he was approved in guarding against razing his state. Also, 2 Corinthians 1:12, what the apostle terms there, 'his rejoicing,' was what supposed his being confident of his good estate, that he was participant of a principle of grace, which made him capable of acting, as he did, with godly sincerity. All which, with other considerations, do satisfy me, that a believer never should raze his state on any account whatever; and that, as has been mentioned, doubting of his gracious state is sinful, one way of unbelief, its acting in him, though not the direct and immediate opposite of that acting of faith by which a person renounces his own righteousness and closes with Christ, yet the opposite of the posterior exercise of faith in him, and upon the promise, in certain respects. Your book is now lent, and therefore I cannot take notice, as you wish and I incline, of what you say on this head, p. 80, 81. more particularly than I have done. However, I have, I think, touched the precise point in difference between us.

You observe, I seem to intimate, 'A person's being confident of his own good estate is the way to be delivered from darkness, deadness, backsliding, and prevailing iniquity.' And you add, that 'you think whoever supposes this to be God's method of delivering his saints, when sunk into an evil, careless, carnal, and unchristian frame, first to assure them of their good estate and his favour, while they yet remain in such a frame, and so to make that the means of their deliverance, does surely mistake God's method of dealing with such persons.' Here I

think you represent the case too strong; for the words in my letter to which you refer, were, 'I have heard it taught that the believer was bound to trust in the Lord in the very worst frame he could be in, and that the exercise of faith was the way to be delivered from darkness, deadness, back-sliding,' etc. And afterwards, I said, when questioning whether the believer should ever doubt of his estate on any account whatever, 'I know the opposite has been prescribed; when the saint is plunged in the mire of prevailing iniquity.' Now, as a believer may be thus plunged, and yet sin at that instant be his grief and burden, Romans 7:24, and he may have the hope and expectation of being relieved from it even then, Psalm 65:3, I do not think my words convey the idea you affix to them. Also you will observe, I do not say, 'that a person's being confident of his own good estate is the way to be delivered from,' etc. but 'that the believer was bound to trust the Lord in the worst frame,' etc. This I mention, precisely to state my words, and they are, I think, very defensible; for the believer is called 'to trust in the Lord for ever,' Isaiah 26:4, If so, when in the situation mentioned; for this is a trusting in the Lord as one's God. The woman with the issue of blood, her touching Christ, and the success, is, I suppose, a call and encouragement to touch him by faith, for having the worst soul-maladies healed, Mark 5:25, Trusting in the Lord for needful blessings, in the situation mentioned, gives him the glory of his faithfulness, and engages him to act in the believer's behalf; thus to do, it is both duty and interest. Jonah, when in a course of grievous rebellion, and under awful chastisement for it, when perhaps

he had actually disclaimed interest in the Lord, or was in danger of it, said, 'he would look again toward the Lord's holy temple,' chapter 2:4, evidently in exercise of faith in the Lord as his God, the Lord assuring him of his good estate and his favour, by the operation of the Spirit causing him so to act, and to be conscious of it; and, verse 7, 'when my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.' Here is my assertion exemplified in practice, by a believer, I may venture to say, in an evil frame, when the Spirit breathed upon him. Though a prophet, he deliberately disobeyed the express instructions of his Lord, Jonah 1:2, 3, and in a careless frame, for he slept securely in the sides of the ship, during a tempest raised for his sake, and when the heathen mariners every one called upon his god, chapter 1:5, 6, So far was he from dreading, as he had reason to do, that the Lord would plead a controversy with him for the part he acted, that dismal security, awful carelessness, and a carnal frame had seized him; for he declared to the Lord, that he said to him in his country, he would repent of the evil he had said he would do to the Ninevites, if they turned from their evil way, and assigned that for the reason why he fled to Tarshish, chapter 4:2, and thus would rather that the Lord should want the honour, that would redound to his name by the repentance, though only out-ward, of the Ninevites, than that the whole city should be destroyed, one of the largest the sun shone upon, and the most populous, and that himself should lose the honour and comfort of being the instrument of its preservation, than that he should fall

under the imputation of being a false prophet, for which there would yet have been no foundation. Horrid carnality this! for as it was dreadful selfishness, it may, in that view, be termed carnality—astonishing pride! this 'filthiness of the spirit' is worse than that of the flesh; and, all circumstances of his conduct considered, he was not only in an ungodly frame, but in an inhumane one, and he sinned presumptuously in one of the highest degrees, we may suppose, in which it is possible for a believer so to act; not-withstanding it appears the happy turn was begun in him, under the influence of the Spirit, by renewing his faith in the Lord as his God, and being confident of his good estate; upon which he prayed, as already mentioned, and was heard by his God, see verses 7, 8, was delivered out of his then dismal and dangerous circumstances, chapter 2:10—Thus I have done more than I was bound to do, and have proved the point, not only in the manner in which I have expressed it, but in the strong light your words, a comment on mine, had set it; for one plain scripture instance, such certainly as that I have given, is sufficient, as agreed, to prove any thing. It is so far from being a mistaking of God's method of dealing with such persons, as you suggest, (pardon me, dear Sir,) to say, that it is 'the Lord's method of delivering his saints when in a backsliding condition, first to assure them of their good estate and his favour, and so to make that the means of their deliverance;' that I give you the words of the Holy Ghost for it is as express and full as any thing possibly can be, Jeremiah 3:12, 13, 14, verse 14, 'Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you.' This was,

to be sure, the Lord's intimating the new covenant relation in which he stood to the spiritual Israel among them; and verse 22 of that chapter, the Lord says, 'Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings;' and in the close of the verse, we have the Lord's thus assuring them of their good estate and his favour, shown to be the effectual mean of the backsliding being healed: 'Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God.' Hosea 14:4, 'O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.' Here the first words of the Lord's message to his spiritual Israel, are, that 'the Lord was their God,' and the expression, 'fallen by iniquity,' conveys a very strong idea, when applied to a believer, perhaps as strong, as is comprehended in your words, 'evil, etc. frame;' and I must think this verse is so expressed to work on holy ingenuousness in them, for its revival when under the ashes of corruption. It would perhaps be no difficult matter to multiply scripture testimonies of such kind; but these adduced are, I think, full proof of the point, for confirmation of which they are brought. The love of Christ constrains the believer to return from folly, as well as to other things in other respects, 2 Corinthians 5:14, I might argue here from the efficacy of the love of God apprehended, the genius of the new creature, and nature in believers, and a variety of other topics, but choose, without expatiating, to confine myself to precise scripture testimonies. As to what you say, that 'among all the multitudes you have had opportunity to observe, you never knew one dealt with in this manner, but have known many brought back from great declensions, that

appeared to be true saints, but it was in a very diverse way from this: first conscience awakened; they brought into great fear of the wrath of God; his favour hid; the subjects of a kind of new work of humiliation; brought to great sense of deserving God's wrath, while they yet feared it, before God had delivered them from apprehension of it, and comforted with a renewed sense of his favour.' All I observe upon this is, that the way I have laid down, is obviously that which the Lord declares in his word, he takes, for bringing back his people from declensions, and thus that in it mercy is to be expected, whatever the Lord may be pleased to do in sovereignty, and he will not be limited; also, persons do not perceive every thing that passes within them, far less are they capable to give a full distinct account of every thing of each kind. Experiences of Christians are to be brought to the touchstone of the infallible bar, and to stand or fall by it; the Bible is not to be brought to their test, and judged of by them. I own we may mistake the sense of Scripture, but it is so obvious in the passages I have quoted, that I cannot see how it can be misapprehended.

I cannot say any thing now, about the other remarks I made on your book, touched on in your letter, because I have not now the book to look into. I understand the passages about prevalence of sin, so as to denominate a person not in a gracious state, better, by what you have wrote; and, if any difficulty shall remain after comparing your book and letter, I may come to propose it to you afterwards.

What you wrote about the case of temptation was very

agreeable, and I thank you for it. I shall now state the case more plainly, because I want much your further thoughts upon it. It is precisely this. A person finds himself beset by evil angels, what if I remember right Voetius terms **obsessio**, and one in that situation **obsessus**; they incessantly break into his body and mind, sometimes by vain, at other seasons by vile thoughts, now by the thoughts of a business neglected, which was a seasonable thing to be done, then by a scripture text, or an engaging thought of some spiritual truth, when entrance is not to be had another way, and by a variety of other methods. They do all they can, perpetually to tease, defile, and discourage; he is conscious of the whole transaction, and finds his spirit broken by it, and goes not about to reason with Satan, knows the expediency of this course, is aware Satan wants no better, than that he pray much and long against his temptations, and so wont pray himself out of breath, by his instigation; is convinced the remedy is to get them kept out of body and mind; trusts, in dependence on the Lord, to the use of medical, moral, and religious means for that end, because experience shows all of them are expedient and advantageous in their place; but all is in vain, no relief for him, relish of divine things wore off the mind, no comfort, is rendered callous by cruel constant buffetings, he cries, but the Lord hears not. By what I understand, this is a just representation of the case, and will lead you to the knowledge of other circumstances in it. What would you advise such a person to do? How shall he recover savour of spiritual truths and objects?

I wondered you said nothing in your letter, about what I mentioned in mine, respecting supposed immediate revelations of facts and future events, as special favours conferred on some special favourites of heaven. I give in to your sentiments on that point, expressed in the three treatises you have published, and greatly like what Mr. Brainerd said on the subject, as mentioned, I think, by you, in the funeral sermon on him, which I perused with a great deal of pleasure; and shall now mention some things, said in favour of that principle, of which people are very tenacious, that I may have your answers to them, which will be a singular favour done me, for certain reasons: for example, John 16:13, is affirmed to be an express promise of such a thing—it is urged, the thing is not contrary to Scripture, and therefore, may be—it is urged, John 13:24-27, is an example of it, an intimation what the Lord will do in such kind when it pleaseth him, till the end of time. It is pretended, and indeed this is the strength of the cause, that the thing is a matter of fact, has nothing to do with the Bible, therefore nothing about it is to be expected in Scripture, and simply to deny it in all cases, is daringly to limit the power of God. The Lord has not said he will not grant it, and how dare any say it cannot be? It is reasoned, there are numbers of well attested instances of the thing in different ages and places, facts are stubborn things, and to deny them all is shocking, an overturning of all moral evidence. It is insisted on, that the thing has been formerly; it is confessed, and why may it not be now? We are told, a considerable time before a thing happened, that it has been impressed on the mind in all its

circumstances, which exactly happened in every point; if when asked, what one can say to this, he says, perhaps it was from Satan, to this it is answered, does he know future contingent events? The reply is at hand, it is not above him to figure a thing on the fancy long before, which he is resolved by some means to bring about; but to all this it is answered by advocates for immediate revelations, such reasoning tends to sap one of the main pillars of evidence of the divinity of the scripture prophecies.

I have, by what I remember, given you the force of the argument, to establish what has had, I too well know, very bad effects, as commonly managed, in Britain, as well as in New England; a history of instances of them would not be without its use, and materials for it are not wanting. I will long much to see what you say in way of reply to all this. I am sure you cannot employ time better than in framing it. I should have mentioned that the authority of eminent divines is brought to bear upon them, whose stomachs stand at swallowing things, like additions to the Bible—Mr. Fleming, in the Fulfilling of the Scriptures, Dr. Goodwin, etc. But on this, it has been pleasantly observed, that the authority of the worthies in the eleventh of the Hebrews, would have done a good deal better. I have some apprehension this is a point of truth, which the Lord is to clear up in this age.

I have read your Humble Attempt, and with much satisfaction; was charmed with the scriptures of the latter day of glory set in one point of light. I do think humbly your observations on

Lowman have great strength of reason. The killing of the witnesses, as yet to come, has been to me a grievous temptation; for which reason, I peruse with peculiar pleasure what you say on this subject; but if you answer the objection, 'It would appear that the seventh trumpet is to sound soon after the resurrection of the witnesses, and the kingdoms of the world, etc. but that has not happened, therefore the witnesses are not killed;' I say, if this you answer, I have forgot.

I should have also mentioned, that it seems evident, the doctrine of immediate revelations must be simply denied as unscriptural, and thus well-founded in no case; or it must be allowed in its full compass, and latitude, let the consequences of it be what they will, for if the thing is allowed possible, reasonings about its effects will not conclude nor avail; I can see no middle way between the two things. That principle taken for granted by almost all, in all times past, is, as I mentioned in my last letter, to me a surprising thing.

Mr. Whitefield arrived at Edinburgh Wednesday last, and was to preach on Thursday evening; but as I am fifteen miles from that city, of which two miles by sea, I have not yet heard of the effects of his preaching, or the number of the audiences; I wish they may be as frequent as when he was last here. May Divine power specially attend his ministrations! We need it much, as we are generally fallen under great deadness. I believe he will find use for all his prudence and patience in dealing with us, for different reasons. With great pleasure, friends to vital religion, and to him, are informed he is to

make no collections at this time! I was glad to hear you write, that he laboured with success in New England, in rectifying mistakes he had favoured, about intimations made by the Lord to his people, etc. and heartily wish he may be directed to apply an antidote here, where it is also needed.

I have tired you with a long epistle, and shall therefore now break off. What you was pleased to favour me with, upon the difficulty started from Romans 8:28, was very acceptable, and I thank you much for it. I will expect a letter from you the first opportunity after this comes to hand; and in it all the news of New England, particularly some account of the state of religion with you. It gives me pleasure to think, I may write you my sentiments upon every thing without reserve. Please make my affectionate compliments to my friend Mr.

Abercrombie, when you see him, or write to him, and tell him, I remember I am in his debt for a letter. I hope the ship I am informed of, for carrying this, is not sailed, and therefore it will not be so long in coming to your hand, after being writ, as my last.

I am, etc."

Letter to Mr. M'CULLOCH.

"To the Rev. Mr. M'CULLOCH.

Northampton, October. 7, 1748.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter of February. 19, 1748, which I received the week before last. I had also, long before that, received the letter you speak of, which you wrote the spring before, dated March 12, 1747, which I wrote an answer to, and sent it to Mr. Prince of Boston, and committed it to his care; and am very sorry that you never received it. I am far from being weary of our correspondence. I ever looked on myself as greatly honoured and obliged by you, in your beginning this correspondence; and have found it pleasant and profitable; and particularly your last letter, that I have but now received, has been very agreeable and entertaining; especially on account of the good news it contains. I cannot but think many things mentioned in your letter, and the letters of my other correspondents in Scotland, which came with yours, are great things, worthy to be greatly taken notice of, and to be an occasion of much rejoicing and praise to all that love Zion: viz. The remarkable change in one of the clerks of the privy council; God's stirring up him and Mr. Littleton to write in defence of Christianity; the good effect of this among men of figure and character; the good disposition of the king, and the Prince and Princess of Wales; the late awakening of two of the princesses, Amelia and Caroline, and the hopeful conversion of one or both of them; the hopeful, real piety of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and his good disposition towards experimental religion and the dissenters; several of the clergy of the church of England lately appearing to preach the doctrines of grace; several of the magistrates, in various

towns in England, exerting themselves with uncommon zeal to put the laws in execution against vice; and the eminent piety of the Prince of Orange, now the stadtholder of the Seven United Provinces. These things (at least some of them) are great in themselves, and are of that nature that they have a most promising aspect on the interests of Zion, and appear to be happy presages and forerunners of yet better and greater things that are coming. They look as if the tide was turning, and glorious things approaching, by the revolution of the wheel of God's providence. I think we, and all others, who have lately united by explicit agreement in extraordinary prayer for a general revival of religion and the coming of Christ's kingdom, may, without presumption, be greatly encouraged and animated in the duty we have engaged in, by the appearance of such a dawning of light from such great darkness; and should be ungrateful if we did not acknowledge God's great goodness in these things, and faithfulness in fulfilling the promises of his word; such as these in particular, 'If any two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing you shall ask, it shall be done of my Father which is in heaven;' and, 'Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.' I have already communicated these things to some belonging to this town, and other places; some have appeared much affected with them; and one that belongs to another town, has taken extracts of these passages. I design, God willing, to communicate these things to my congregation, before the next quarterly day for prayer, and also to the neighbouring ministers, who, according to our

stated agreement, will be met together on that day, to spend the former part of the day in prayer among ourselves, and the latter part in public services in one of our congregations; and shall also probably communicate these things to some of my correspondents in New Jersey and elsewhere, and I cannot but think they will tend to do a great deal of good, in various respects; and particularly will tend to promote the Concert for Prayer, in these parts of the world. I desired Mr. Prince of Boston to send you one of my books on the Concert, soon after it was published; who engaged to do it; but long forgot it, as I perceived afterwards to my surprise; but since that more thorough care has been taken about that matter; and I hope you, and each of my other correspondents in Scotland, have before now received one of those books.

I thank you, dear Sir, for sending me your thoughts on some things in the prophecies of the Revelation of St. John, and for being at so much trouble as to send it twice (supposing the first letter had miscarried.) This I take as a particular mark of respect, for which I am obliged to you. I received, as I said before, your former letter, (which contained the same observations,) and sent an answer to it, wherein I gave you my thoughts, such as they were, on those subjects. But if you have received my book on United Prayer, etc. therein you have seen more fully my thoughts on some things in the Revelation, that have a near relation to the same matter that you write about; the substance of which I before had written to you in a large letter, desiring your opinion of what I wrote.

The letter I think you received, by some intimations contained in yours of March 12, 1747. But you was not pleased to favour me with any thing at all of your thoughts of what I had so largely communicated to you, to that end, that I might have your opinion. But I am not the less willing again to communicate my thoughts on your remarks.

As to what you observe concerning the number six hundred and sixty-six, and that number being found in the name of the present king of France; it is indeed something remarkable, that that number should be found both in his Latin and French names, as you observe; and I do not know but that the omniscient Spirit of God (who doubtless in his predictions has sometimes his eye on several things in which he knows they will be fulfilled) might have some respect to his name in the prophecy; but I can hardly think that this individual king of France, or any other particular prince in Europe, is what is chiefly intended by the beast, so largely described in the 13th chapter of Revelation, whose number is said to be six hundred and sixty-six. Of all the conjectures concerning the number of the beast, that I have lit on in my small reading, that of Mr. Potter's seems to me the most ingenious, who supposes the true meaning is to be found by extracting the root of the number. But after all, I have ever suspected that the thing chiefly aimed at by the Holy Spirit, was never yet found out, and that the discovery is reserved for later times. Yet one reason why Mr. Potter's conjecture does not fully satisfy me, is, the difficulty without adjusting the fractions in the root, when extracted. With respect to your very ingenious

conjectures, concerning the period of forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty days, of the outer court and holy city's being trodden underfoot of the Gentiles; you know, Sir, that that forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty days, spoken of Revelation 11:2, has been universally understood, as being the very same period with the 1260 days of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, spoken of in the next verse; and the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of the woman's being led in the wilderness, chapter 13:6 and the time, times, and half a time, of her being nourished in the wilderness from the face of the serpent, Verse 14, and the forty-two months of the continuance of the beast, chapter 13:5, But it does not appear to me probable that these forty-two months of the continuance of the beast, means the sum of the diverse periods in which the plat of ground, whereon the ancient literal Jerusalem stood, was under the dominion of the Romans, Saracens, Persians, and Turks; but the space of time during which the reign of antichrist or the popish hierarchy continues; and as to the particular time of the downfall of antichrist, you see my reasons in the forementioned pamphlet, why I think it certain that it will not be known till it be accomplished: I cannot but think that the Scripture is plain in that matter, and that it does, in effect, require us to rest satisfied in ignorance till the time of the end comes.

However, I should be very foolish, if I were dogmatical in my thoughts concerning the interpretation of the prophecies: especially in opposition to those who have had so much more opportunity to be well acquainted with things of this nature.

But since you have insisted on my thoughts, I conclude you will not be displeased that I have mentioned them, though not altogether agreeable to yours. I am nevertheless greatly obliged to you for your condescension in communicating your thoughts to me. If we do not exactly agree in our thoughts about these things, yet in our prayers for the accomplishment of these glorious events in God's time, and for God's gracious presence with us, and his assistance in endeavours to promote his kingdom and interests, in the mean time, we may be entirely agreed and united. That we may be so, is the earnest desire of, dear Sir,

*Your affectionate brother and servant,
in our common Lord,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

In perusing the following letter, while the reader will deeply regret the loss of that from Mr. Erskine to which it is an answer, he will feel a lively interest in the mass of religious intelligence which it contains, as well as in the interesting development which it gives of the character of Governor Belcher.

To the Rev. Mr. Erskine.

Northampton, October. 14, 1748.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

A little while ago I wrote a letter to you, wherein I acknowledged the receipt of your letter, and the books that

came with it, viz. Taylor on Original Sin; and on the Romans: with your sermons, and Answer to Mr. Campbell; for which most acceptable presents I would most heartily and renewedly thank you.

I sent my letter to Boston, together with one of Mr. Stoddard's Benefit of the Gospel to the Wounded in Spirit, and his Nature of Saving Conversion, with a sermon on Mr. Brainerd's death, and some account of a history of his life now in the press, to be sent to Scotland by the first opportunity; whether there has been any opportunity or no, I cannot tell. I have very lately received another letter from you, dated April 4, 1748, which was indeed exceedingly acceptable, by reason of the remarkable and joyful accounts it contains of things, that have a blessed aspect on the interests of Christ's kingdom in the world: such as the good effects of the writings of Mr. West and Mr. Littleton on some at court, and the religious concern in Mr. Randy's and Mr. Gray's parishes, the hopeful true piety of the Archbishop of Canterbury; this and the king's disposition, not only to tolerate but comprehend the dissenters; and their indifference with respect to the liturgy, ceremonies, and episcopal ordination; the piety of the prince who is now advanced to the stadtholdership, and has it established in his family for ever; the awakening of the Princess Caroline; and the good disposition of the Princess of Wales. I think it very fit that those, who have lately entered into an union of extraordinary prayer for the coming of Christ's kingdom and the prosperity of Zion, should inform one another of things which they know of, that pertain to the prosperity of Zion, and

whereby their prayers are in some degree answered; that they may be united in joy and thanksgiving, as well as in supplication; and that they may be encouraged and animated in their prayers for the future, and engaged to continue instant therein with all perseverance. I think these things forementioned, which you have sent me an account of, are worthy greatly to be observed, by those that are united in the Concert for Prayer, for their comfort, praise, and encouragement. I intend to communicate these things to my own people, before the next quarterly season for prayer, and to the neighbouring ministers, who are united in this affair; and also to my correspondents in this province, and other provinces of America. I doubt not but they will have a happy tendency and influence in many respects. I hope, dear Sir, you will continue still to give me particular information of things that appear, relative to the state of Zion and the interests of religion, in Great Britain or other parts of Europe. In so doing, you will not only inform me, but I shall industriously communicate any important informations of that kind, and spread them amongst God's people in this part of the world; and shall endeavour to my utmost to make such a use of them, as shall tend most to promote the interest of religion. And among other things I should be glad to be informed of any books that come out, remarkably tending either to the illustration or defence of that truth, or the promoting the power of godliness, or in any respect peculiarly tending to advance true religion.

I have given an account of some things, which have a

favourable aspect on the interests of religion, in these American parts of the world, in my letters to Mr. Robe, and Mr. M'Laurin, sent with this; which you will have opportunity to see. In your last letter you desired to be particularly informed of the present state of New Jersey college, and of things remarkable of a religious nature respecting the Indians. As to the former, viz. the state of New Jersey college: by the last accounts I had, it was in somewhat of an unsettled state. Governor Belcher had a mind to give them a new charter, that he thought would be more for the benefit of the society. Accordingly a draft of a new charter was drawn; wherein it was proposed to make considerable alteration in the corporation of trustees; to leave out some of the former trustees; and that the governor, for the time being, should be a trustee, and three or four of the council of that province. Those two things made considerable uneasiness, viz. leaving out some of the former trustees, and making it a part of the constitution that the governor and so many of the council should be members of the corporation. Some feared that this would not be for the health of the society; because the men in chief authority in that province have, for the most part been men of no religion, and many of them open and professed contemners of it. How this matter has been settled, or whether these difficulties are got over, I have not been informed. As to Governor Belcher himself, he appears thoroughly engaged to promote virtue and vital religion in those parts, which already has had some good effects; vice and open profaneness, by the means, is become less fashionable among the great men, and

virtue and religion more creditable. The disposition of Governor Belcher may in some measure be seen, by the following extract of a letter from him, in answer to one I wrote to him on a special occasion.

'Burlington, New Jersey, February. 5, 1748.

You will, Sir, be sure of me as a friend and father to the missionaries this way, and of all my might and encouragement for spreading the everlasting gospel of God our Saviour, in all parts and places where God shall honour me with any power or influence.

*As to myself, Sir, it is impossible to express the warm sentiments of my heart, for the mercies without number with which I have been loaded, by the God who has fed me all my life long to this day; and my reflection upon his goodness covers me with shame and blushing, for I know my utter unworthiness, and that I am less than the least of all his mercies. I would therefore abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. You are sensible, my good friend, that governors stand in a glaring light, and their conduct is narrowly watched by friends and enemies: the one often unreasonably applaud them, while the other perhaps too justly censure them. Yet in this I am not anxious; but to approve myself to the Searcher of hearts, from whose mouth I must hear pronounced, at the great and general audit, those joyful words, *Enter thou, etc*—or that terrible sentence, *Depart from me, etc*. Join with me then in thankfulness to God, for all the blessings and talents he has entrusted me with, and in prayer that I may employ*

them to his honour and glory, to the good of the people over whom he hath placed me, and so to the comfort of my own soul: that I may always remember that he ruleth over men, must be just, ruling in the fear of God.'

In another letter which I have received, dated Burlington, N. J. May 31, 1748, he says as follows.

'I will prostrate myself before my God and Saviour, and on the bended knees of my soul, (abhorring myself in every view,) I will beg for a measure of divine grace and wisdom; that so I may be honoured, in being an instrument of advancing the kingdom of the blessed Jesus in this world, and in that way be bringing forth fruit in old age. ^[24] I bless God, my heavenly Father, that I am not ashamed of the cross of Christ; and I humbly ask the assistance of sovereign grace, that, in times of temptation, I may never be a shame to it, I mean that my conversation may always be such as becometh the gospel of Christ. And I tell you again, that all such as minister at the altar, and in the course of their ministry approve themselves faithful to the great Head of the church, will not only find my countenance and protection, but my love and esteem.

'As to our embryo college, it is a noble design; and if God pleases, may prove an extensive blessing. I have adopted it for a daughter, and hope it may in time become an Alma Mater, to this and the neighbouring provinces. I am getting the best advice and assistance I can in the draught of a charter, which I intend to give to our infant college, and I thank you, Sir, for all the kind hints you have given me, for the service of this

excellent undertaking: and as St. Luke says of Mary, She kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart; so you may depend, what you have said about the college will not be lost with me; but, as far as God shall enable me, I shall exert and lay out myself in every way to bring it to maturity, and then to advance its future welfare and prosperity; for this I believe will be acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; a relish for true religion and piety, being great strangers to this part of America. The accounts I receive from time to time, give me too much reason to fear that Arminianism, Arianism, and even Socinianism, in destruction to the doctrines of free grace, are daily propagated in the New England colleges. How horribly and how wickedly, are these poisonous notions rooting out those noble pious principles, on which our excellent ancestors founded those seminaries! and how base a return is it of the present generation, to that God, who is constantly surrounding them with goodness and mercy! and how offensive is it in the eyes of that God, who is jealous of his glory, and will take vengeance on his adversaries, and reserveth wrath for his enemies! And from these things I am led to thank you for your book, wrote in consequence of the Memorial from Scotland, for promoting a Concert in Prayer. I am much pleased with this proposal and imitation to all good Christians, and with your arguments to encourage and corroborate the design. The two missionaries you mention, Messrs. Spencer and Strong, I am told are present at Boston. I have once and again desired Mr. Brainerd to assure them of my kindness and respect. But their affairs have not yet led

them this way. I rejoice in their being appointed to carry the gospel, in its purity, to the Six Nations; and when Mr. Brainerd and they proceed to Susquehannah, they shall have all my assistance and encouragement; by letters to the king's governors where they may pass, and my letters to the sachem or chief of those Indians.'

With regard to the missionaries, Governor Belcher mentions: 'The commissioners in Boston, of the corporation in London, for the propagation of the gospel among the Indians in New England and parts adjacent, a little before Mr. David Brainerd went to Boston, the summer before his death, had received a sum of money from the estate left by the famous Dr. Williams, for the maintenance of two missionaries among the Six Nations: and having entertained a very great esteem of Mr. Brainerd, from the opportunity they had of acquaintance with him while in Boston, the committee entrusted to him the affair of finding and recommending the persons proper to be employed in this business.' Accordingly he, after much deliberation, recommended one Mr. Spencer, belonging to Haddam, his native town; and Mr. Strong, belonging to this town, Northampton; who are undoubtedly well qualified persons, of good abilities and learning, and of pious dispositions. The commissioners, on his recommendation, accepted these persons; and after Mr. Brainerd's death, sent to them; and they went down to Boston, and accepted the mission. But the commissioners did not think proper immediately to send them forth among the Six Nations; but ordered them to go and live, during the winter, in New

Jersey with Mr. John Brainerd, among the christian Indians, there to follow their studies, and get acquaintance with the manners and customs of Indians; and in the spring to go with Mr. Brainerd to Susquehannah, to instruct the Indians on that river, before they went to the Six Nations. Accordingly they went and lived in New Jersey; but were discouraged as to their intended journey to Susquehannah; for they understood that the Susquehannah Indians greatly objected against entertaining missionaries, without the consent of the Six Nations, (to whom they are subject, and of whom they stand it seems in great fear,) and insisted that the missionaries should go to the Six Nations first. Therefore, in the spring, Messrs. Spencer and Strong returned to Boston, for new orders from the commissioners; who saw cause to order them to come and live at my house, till the time of an appointed interview of the governors of Boston and New York with the chiefs of the Six Nations, at Albany, in the latter part of the summer; when it was proposed that some, that should go to Albany with Gov. Shirley, should, on the behalf of the commissioners, treat with the Six Nations concerning their receiving missionaries. Messrs. Spencer and Strong did accordingly; they lived with me in the summer, and went to Albany at the time of the treaty; and the nation of the Oneidas, in particular, were dealt with concerning receiving these missionaries; who appeared free and forward in the matter. Messrs. Spencer and Strong, at that time, got some acquaintance with the chiefs of the tribe; who appeared fond of them, and very desirous of their going with them. But the grand difficulty then in the way, was the

want of an interpreter; which occasioned their not going with the Indians at that time, but returning again to New England. Mr. Strong, also, was taken much out of health, which discouraged him from entertaining any thoughts of throwing himself into the fatigues and hardships of their undertaking, till the next spring. But the difficulty of the want of an interpreter is now got over; a very good one has been found; and Mr. Spencer was ordained on the 14th of the last month, and is gone with the interpreter, to go to the country of the Oneidas, about 170 miles beyond Albany, and about 130 miles distant from all settlements of the white people.

It is a thing, that has a favourable aspect on the design of propagating the gospel among the Indians, that many of late have been remarkably spirited to promote it, and liberally to open their hands in order to it. Mr. Brainerd's going to Boston before his death, and people there having some acquaintance with him, and with his labours and success among the Indians, gave occasion to a considerable number in Boston, men of good substance and of the best character, and some of them principal men in the town, to form themselves into a charitable society, that by their joint endeavours and contributions, they might promote the instruction and spiritual good of the Indians; who have done some very liberal things for the Indians in New Jersey, and also for the Six Nations. The people of Northampton have also had their hearts remarkably opened, to contribute to the maintenance of Mr. Spencer's interpreter; and one individual at Springfield, has been moved to devote a considerable part of his estate, to promote the

propagation of the gospel among the Six Nations.

As to my writing against Arminianism; I have hitherto been remarkably hindered; so that probably it will be a considerable time before I shall have any thing ready for the press; but do intend, God allowing and assisting, to prosecute that design: and I desire your prayers for the Divine assistance in it. The books you sent me, will be a great help to me; I would on no account have been without them.

I condole with you and Mrs. Erskine, on the loss of your noble and excellent father; which is doubtless a great loss to the church of God. But the glorious King of Zion, who was dead, is alive, and lives for evermore, and can raise up others in exalted stations to favour Zion; and seems to be so doing at this day, by things you give an account of in your letter. I have been the subject of an afflictive dispensation of late, tending to teach me how to sympathize with the afflicted; which I think I mentioned in my last letter to you, viz. the death of my second daughter, the last February.

Please to present my most affectionate and respectful salutations to your dear consort. That I and mine may be remembered in your and her prayers, is the request of

*Your affectionate and obliged
Friend and brother,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

Letter from Mr. Willison to Mr. Edwards.

"To the Rev. Mr. Edwards.

Dundee, March 17, 1749.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

I thank you for yours of October last, with your two sermons, which Mr. M'Laurin sent me; which two sermons give me cause to sing of mercy as well as of judgment, that as on shining and successful youth is laid aside from labouring in the gospel, another is sent forth to it. Indeed, worthy Mr. Brainerd was one among a thousand, for carrying the gospel among the heathen, as appears by the account you give of him in your sermon, and by his Journals which have been published here, and prefaced by Dr. Doddridge, and dedicated by him to the Society at Edinburgh. We must be silent; seeing He who hath removed him is holy, just, and wise. We must also lay our hands on our mouths, with respect to the loss of our great and eminent men, such as Dr. Watts, Dr. Colman, Mr. Cowper, and others. But O, it is no loss to be absent from the body, to them who are present with the Lord. Great need have we to cry to the Lord of the vineyard, to send forth others in their room: it is easy for him to do it, from places we little expect. These are hopeful and promising accounts, which you have from your correspondents in Scotland, mentioned in your letter. May they all hold true, and be the forerunners of greater things, and the dawnings of the glory of the latter days. I may add to them, the rising of a burning and shining

light of a church of England minister, in Dr. Doddridge's neighbourhood, viz. Mr. Hervey; for he dates his writings from Weston Favel, near Northampton. He has lately published two volumes of Meditations on all kinds of subjects, in a most orthodox, Calvinistic, and evangelical strain, in which he takes all kinds of occasions of exalting and commending his glorious Master, Christ, in a most rhetorical way, and in a style I think inimitable, and in the most moving expressions, so that it is not easy to read him without tears. He freely taxes his brethren of that church, for departing from the doctrines of grace, and of justification by imputed righteousness, etc. which were taught by the Reformers, and their own articles and homilies. And notwithstanding this uncommon freedom, which he uses with his brethren, great men, etc. never had any books such a run in England, as his; for in a year and a half's time, or thereabouts, there are five editions of them published at London, and still they are greedily bought and read, especially by persons of distinction; the style being a little too high and poetical for the vulgar. His name is James Hervey, A. B. Some say he is of noble descent, from the Earl of Bristol; but I am not sure of this. It is thought he is the man that Dr. Doddridge points at, in the life of Col. Gardiner, pages 37, 38. It looks well, that so many in England should become fond of sound evangelical writings. No doubt the books may have reached Boston by this time. Let us therefore still wait and pray in hope. I should be glad to do any thing in my power, for promoting the Concert for United Prayer, and oh that it were spread both far and near; it would

be a token of a general revival of religion to be fast approaching. I know nothing that hath a greater tendency to promote the aforesaid happy Concert, than the book you lately published about it (a copy whereof you sent me, for which I humbly thank you.) I wish it were universally spread, for I both love and admire the performance upon subjects so uncommon. I approve your remarks on Mr. Lowman. His reason for beginning the antichrist's reign so late as the year 756, is weak, viz. because then King Pepin invested the pope in his temporal dominion over that province in Italy, called St. Peter's Patrimony—when it is evident that the pope had usurped his tyrannical dominion over Christ's church long before, which is the main ground of his being called antichrist; yea, the pope's usurped power was greater before King Pepin's time, than it is at this day—as for instance, in Pope Symmachus' time, anno 501; in Pope Hormisdas' time, anno 516; in Pope Boniface 3d's time, anno 606; in Pope Constantine's time, anno 713. Yea, Mr. Lowman himself gives a dreadful instance of the pope's tyranny and usurpation, both over the church and the emperor, in page 97 of his book, which happened anno 726, thirty years before he begins antichrist's reign; when Pope Gregory 2d excommunicated the Emperor Leo, for ordering images to be removed out of the churches, and forbad obedience or paying of taxes to him. Was not antichrist's reign far advanced by that time? And we have several instances of the pope's tyranny, similar to this, recorded by historians, before that which Mr. Lowman mentions; which more directly denominate him antichrist,

than his temporal doings in Italy. We see how easy it is for the best writers to slip into mistakes and wrong schemes. I agree with you, that antichrist's fall will be gradual, in the way you explain it.

I am sorry to hear of Arminianism growing in New England. But I rejoice to hear of Gov. Belcher's zeal for religion in New Jersey; may the Lord spare him and bless him. As also I am glad to hear of the hopeful prospect of the gospel's growing among the Six Nations of Indians; and of such a youth as Mr. Spencer being sent among them: may the Lord prosper him as he did Mr. Brainerd. I sympathize with you under that affliction of your daughter's death; but it is comfortable she was helped so to live and die, as to afford such grounds of hope concerning her. And though she was the flower of your family, yet the remembering of the gracious hand, that painted the flower, will engage your worthy spouse and you to a becoming silence, like Aaron. As he will do what he will, let us join and say always, Let his will be done. I would fain be at this in my own case: may the Lord help me to more of christian submission and resignation. I am now entered into the 69th year of my age, and fallen under several distresses, whereby I have been shaken over the grave these many months past, and am laid aside from preaching. May the Lord assist me in my preparation for the dissolution of this tabernacle. I find it no easy matter to die, and to die in faith, and to die like Simeon with Jesus in his arms. I very much need your prayers for me. I am glad to hear, dear brother, that your parents are both alive, and that they hold the abilities of both body and

mind so remarkably at so great an age; and particularly that your father, at seventy-nine years of age, and now near eighty, performs the whole of his ministerial work so constantly, without feeling it burdensome, and was able to travel forty miles to see you: his is indeed a wonder of his age, and would be reckoned so in this country, where few ministers come near to that age and vigour. May the Lord still spare him, with your mother, and make them still flourishing in old age; may they be blessed with much of God's precious presence, and with the consolations and fruits of the Spirit, in their aged and declining days. I still kindly remember your worthy spouse and children remaining, and pray they may long be continued for comforts to you, and you continued for a blessing to them, to your flock, and to many others, as you already have been.

*I remain, Rev. and dear brother,
Your most affectionate brother, and serv't
In our Lord,
J. WILLISON."*

"P.S. The Rev. Mr. Whitefield came to Scotland in September last, and preached about two months in and about Edinburgh and Glasgow. But some brethren who employed him, being challenged for it in synods and presbyteries, and debates arising thereupon, Mr. Whitefield returned to London. To give a view of the substance of these debates, and what passed thereupon in the synod of Glasgow, I have sent you herewith a printed pamphlet containing the same, with two other books, as a small acknowledgment of your favours."

The three following letters went in the same packet to Scotland. The religious intelligence, which they communicated, will be found highly interesting at

the present day. In the first of the three, is the earliest allusion, on the part of Mr. Edwards, which I have met with, to a most painful subject; the mention of which I have purposely forborne, that all which relates to it may be presented together.

Letter to Mr. Erskine.

"Northampton, May 20, 1749.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

The day before yesterday, I received your letter of February 14th, with a paquet, containing the pamphlets you mention in your letter; for which I am greatly obliged to you. I have not yet had opportunity to read these books, but promise myself much entertainment by them, from the occasions on which they were written, and the subject they are upon. The last letter I received from you before this, was dated April 6, 1748, so that I suppose the two letters you say you wrote to me, since those which I acknowledge the receipt of, have miscarried, which I much regret, as I much value what comes from your hand.

In one of your last letters which came to hand, you desire to be particularly informed concerning the state of religion, in these parts of the world, and particularly concerning the mission to the Indians, and the infant college in New Jersey. As to the affair of preaching the gospel to the Indians, Mr.

Spencer went, the last fall, far into the western wilderness; to the Oneidas, one of the tribes of Indians called the Six Nations, living on Susquehannah river, towards the head of the river; to a place called by the Indians Onohohquauga, about 180 miles south-west from Albany on Hudson's river, where he continued through the winter; and went through many difficulties and hardships, with little or no success, through the failing of his interpreter; who was a woman that had formerly been a captive among the Caghnauga Indians in Canady, who speak the same language with those Oneidas, excepting some small variation of dialect. She went with her husband, an Englishman, and is one of the people we here call Separatists; who showed the spirit he was of there in that wilderness, beyond what was known before. He differed with and opposed Mr. Spencer in his measures, and had an ill influence on his wife; who I fear was very unfaithful, refusing to interpret for Mr. Spencer more than one discourse in a week, a sermon upon the sabbath; and utterly declined assisting him in discoursing and conversing with the Indians in the week time. And her interpretations on the sabbath were performed very unfaithfully, as at last appeared. So that Mr. Spencer came away in discouragement in the spring, and returned to Boston, and gave the corporation there, who employed him, an account of his unexpected difficulties and disappointments; and became obliged to them to wait three months, to see if they could procure a fellow missionary, and another interpreter, to go with him to the Indians; which I believe is not much expected. If these are not obtained within

the limited time, Mr. Spencer is free from any further engagements to them. Mr. Spencer is now preaching at Elizabeth-town in New Jersey, in the pulpit of the late Mr. Dickinson; and I believe is likely to settle there. He is a person of very promising qualifications: and will hopefully in some measure make up the great loss that people have sustained by the death of their former pastor.

As to the mission in New Jersey, we have from time to time had comfortable accounts of it; and Mr. John Brainerd, who has the care of the congregation of christian Indians there, was about three weeks ago at my house; and informed me of the increase of his congregation, and of their being added to from time to time by the coming Indians from distant places, and settling in the Indian town at Cranberry, for the sake of hearing the gospel; and of something of a work of awakening being all along carried on among the Indians to this day; and of some of the new comers being awakened; and of there being instances, from time to time, of hopeful conversion among them; and of a general good and pious behaviour of the professing Indians. But he gave an account also of some trouble the Indians meet with, from some of the white people; and particularly from Mr. Maurice, the chief justice of the province, a professed deist; who is suing them for their lands under pretext of a will, made by their former king; which was undoubtedly forged. However, he is a man of such craft and influence, that it is not known how the matter will issue.

I have heard nothing new that is very remarkable concerning

the college in New Jersey. It is in its infancy; there has been considerable difficulty about settling their charter. Gov. Belcher, who gave the charter, is willing to encourage and promote the college to his utmost; but differs in his opinion concerning the constitution, which will tend most to its prosperity, from some of the principal ministers that have been concerned in founding the society. He insists upon it that the governor, for the time being, and four of his Majesty's council for the province, should always be of the corporation of trustees; and that the governor should always be the president of the corporation. The ministers are all very willing that the present governor, who is a religious man, should be in this standing; but their difficulty is with respect to future governors, who they suppose are as likely to be men of no religion, and deists, as otherwise. However, so the matter is settled, to the great uneasiness of Mr. Gilbert Tennent in particular, who it is feared will have no further concern with the college on this account. Mr. Burr, the president of the college, is a man of religion and singular learning, and I hope the college will flourish under his care.

I have taken a great deal of pains in communicating to others, in various parts, the pleasing accounts you and my other correspondents in Scotland gave me last year of things of promising aspect on the interest of religion, on your side of the ocean: which have been very affecting to pious ministers and people in New England, and also in the provinces of New York and New Jersey; and hope some considerable good has been done by such tidings; particularly in animating many in

the duty of extraordinary united prayer for a general revival of religion, and promoting the Concert for Prayer proposed from Scotland; which prevails more and more in these parts of the world; which, together with some other things in some places, are cause of thankfulness, and bode well to the interests of Zion, (of which I have given a more particular account in my letters to Mr. M'Laurin, Mr. Robe, and Mr. M'Culloch, sent with this,) though it be in general a very dead time as to religion, and a time of the prevailing of all manner of iniquity.

I shall send orders to Boston, that one of my books on Mr. Brainerd's life may be sent to you with this letter; if any of them are ready, as I hope they are, or will be very speedily.

I have nothing very comfortable to inform you of concerning the present state of religion in this place. A very great difficulty has arisen between my people, relating to qualifications for communion at the Lord's table. My honoured grandfather Stoddard, my predecessor in the ministry over this church, strenuously maintained the Lord's supper to be a converting ordinance; and urged all to come, who were not of scandalous life, though they knew themselves to be unconverted. I formerly conformed to his practice; but I have had difficulties with respect to it, which have been long increasing; till I dared no longer to proceed in the former way; which has occasioned great uneasiness among my people, and has filled all the country with noise, which has obliged me to write something on the subject, which is now in

the press. I know not but this affair will issue in a separation between me and my people. I desire your prayers, that God would guide me in every step of this affair. My wife joins with me in respectful salutations to you and your consort.

*I am, dear Sir, your obliged and affectionate
Brother and servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

Letter to Mr. M'Culloch

"Northampton, May 23, 1749.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

The last letter I received from you was dated February. 10, 1748, to which I wrote an answer the latter end of last summer; which I suppose you received, because I perceive by letters sent me this spring, by some others of my correspondents, your neighbours, they had received letters I sent to them at the same time, and in the same packet. Your letters to me have been very acceptable; I should be glad to receive them oftener.

The letter I last received from you, and others that came with it, were peculiarly agreeable, on account of the good news they contained concerning Messrs. West and Littleton, the Archbishop of Canterbury, some in the royal family, the stadtholder, etc. These things I have taken a great deal of

pains to communicate to others; and they have been very entertaining, and I hope profitable to many. I was at the pains to extract from all the letters I received at that time, those things which appeared with a favourable aspect on the interest of religion in the world, and to draw various copies to send to different parts, to such as I supposed would be most likely to be entertained and improved by them, and to do good with them; and I believe they have been of great benefit, particularly to excite and encourage God's people, in the great duty of praying for the coming of Christ's kingdom, and to promote extraordinary united prayer, in the method proposed in the Memorial from Scotland. I read these articles of good news to my own congregation, and also to the association of ministers to which I belong, when met on one of the quarterly seasons for prayer; and read them occasionally to many others; and sent a copy of one of the forementioned abstracts to Connecticut, which was carried into various parts of that government, and shown to several ministers there. I sent one to Mr. Hall of Sutton, a pious minister about the middle of this province; who, according to my desire, communicated it to other ministers, and I suppose to his people. I sent a copy to Mr. Rogers of Kittery, I suppose about seventy miles to the eastward of Boston; who in reply wrote to me, and in his letter says as follows: 'Yours of the 22d December. came not to my hand till the 19th of this; with which I was well pleased, and had some sweet sense of the sovereign free grace of God in the instances you mentioned, with some going forth of heart after further displays of it, in the mighty and noble of our nation,

and the great ones of our own country; and indeed, that the kingdom of our exalted Redeemer might prevail in all the world. And, dear Sir, I am full in the belief, that so many of the Lord's people agreeing upon a time to unite in prayer for the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, and the coming of the Redeemer's kingdom, is from the Lord; and cannot but hope the day draws near, when he will pour out water upon the thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; as also, that all his ministers and people, who are engaged in so delightful a work, for so noble an end, will give him no rest, till he shall make his Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a name and a praise in the earth.'

I sent another copy into New Jersey to Mr. John Brainerd, missionary to the Indians there, with a desire that he would communicate it to others as he thought would be most serviceable.

He writes in answer, March 4, 1748, as follows: 'I received yours of January. 12, on sabbath morning February. 5, and desire to acknowledge your kindness with much thankfulness and gratitude. It was a great resuscitant, as well as encouragement, to me; and I trust, has been so to many others, in these parts, who are concerned for the prosperity of Zion. The next Tuesday after, (as perhaps, Sir, you may remember,) was the quarterly day appointed for extraordinary prayer; upon which I called my people together, and gave them information of the most notable things contained in your letter. And since I have endeavoured to communicate the same

to several of my neighbouring ministers, and sundry private Christians, as I had opportunity. I have also thought it my duty to send an extract, or rather a copy of it, to Gov. Belcher. I have likewise (for want of time to transcribe) sent the original to Philadelphia by a careful hand, that the Rev. Mr. Gilbert Tennent might have the perusal of it; where a copy was taken, and the original safely returned to me again. I cannot but hope that this letter, as it contains many things wherein the power and goodness of God do appear in a most conspicuous manner, will be greatly serviceable in stirring up the people of God in these parts, and encouraging their hearts to seek his face and favour, and to cry mightily to him, for the further outpouring of a gracious Spirit upon his church in the world. For my part, I think the remarkable things which your letter contains, might be sufficient to put new life into any one who is not past feeling; and as a means to excite a spirit of prayer and praise, in all those who are not buried in ignorance, or under the power of a lethargic stupor. And it is looked upon, by those whom I have had opportunity to converse with, whether ministers or private Christians, that what God has done is matter of great thankfulness and praise, and might well encourage his people to lift up the hand of prayer, and be instant therein.'

Mr. Davenport, minister of a church in Elizabeth-town in New Jersey, writes thus upon it, in a letter dated April 1, 1749: 'I thank you for sending your letter to our Brainerd open, that I might see it, which I took a copy of; and have found it again and again refreshing and animating. I read it to the ministers

who met at my house for prayer, on the first Tuesday of February, and sent it afterwards to Long Island: Mr. Rivel took a copy of it, and read it in his congregation on the Island.'

I hope, dear Sir, these things will encourage you to continue your correspondence, and to go on to give me information of whatever appears in your parts of the world favourable to the interests of the kingdom of Christ. It will not only be entertaining to me; but I shall endeavour, whenever I receive such tidings, to communicate it for the entertainment and profit of God's people, as I have opportunity. I must refer you, dear Sir, to my letters to other correspondents in your neighbourhood, for other particulars relating to the state of religion in these parts of the world. And hope, when you are before the throne of grace, you will not forget

*Your very affectionate friend,
And brother and servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

Letter to Mr. Robe.

"Northampton, May 23, 1749.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Mr. M'Laurin, in a letter I received from him the last week, dated March 10th, 1749, informs me of a letter you had

written to me, sent to him; which he had taken care of. This letter, by some means or other, has failed, and has never reached me. I intend to make inquiry after it, to see if it has not been left at Boston, and forgotten to be sent. I have reason to hope (though I have not received your letter) that you and your family are well, because Mr. M'Laurin and Mr. Erskine (the only correspondents from whom I have received letters this time) inform me of nothing to the contrary.

As to the present state of religion in these parts of the world, it is in the general very dark and melancholy. But yet there are some things which appear comfortable and hopeful; particularly, the Concert for extraordinary Prayer for the coming of Christ's kingdom, is spreading and prevailing—and we hear of awakenings and revivals of religion in some places. We have had accounts, from time to time, of religion's being in a flourishing state, in the Indian congregation in New Jersey, under the care of Mr. John Brainerd; of the congregation's increasing, by the access of Indians from distant parts; of a work of awakening carried on among the unconverted, and additions made to the number of the hopefully converted, and the christian behaviour of professors there. Mr. Brainerd was at my house a little while ago, and represented this to be the present state of things in that congregation. I had a letter from Mr. Davenport, (who is settled now as a minister over a congregation belonging to Elizabeth-town, in New Jersey,) dated April 1, 1749, wherein he says as follows: 'Mr. Lewis told me, that there has been a remarkable work of conviction prevailing in his place, ever since last December. I think he

spoke of about forty under soul concern, a considerable number of them under strong convictions, and some hopefully converted. I heard lately a credible account of a remarkable work of conviction and conversion, among whites and negroes, at Hanover in Virginia, under the ministry of Mr. Davies, who is lately settled there, and has the character of a very ingenious and pious young man; whose support, in his preparation for service, Mr. Robinson^[25] contributed much, if not mostly to; and on his death-bed gave him his books, etc.

Mr. Buell, of East Hampton, on Long Island, was here last week, and gave me an account of a very considerable work of awakening at this time in his congregation, especially among the young people; and also of a yet greater work at Bridgehampton, under the ministry of one Mr. Brown, a very pious and prudent young man, lately settled there. These congregations are both pretty large. He also gave an account of religion's continuing in a very prosperous state at a part of Huntington, another town on Long Island, where there was a great and general awakening, last year.

An association of ministers, between this and Boston, seem of late to have applied themselves somewhat earnestly, to invent means for promoting religion. The following is a copy of something they have agreed upon for this end, as it was sent to me, by a minister that lives that way.

"The sum and substance of the answers, given by the association, to this question, What things shall be done by us, for preventing the awful threatening degeneracy and

backsliding in religion, in the present day?

These, we apprehend, may be reduced to the following heads, viz. Those that respect ourselves personally; those which concern the association, as such; and those which relate to our people, in our respective churches and congregations.

I. As to what respects ourselves personally.

1. We ought surely to get a deep and affecting sense of this: Whether there is not in ourselves defection, and great danger of further degeneracy; for otherwise, we shall with little heartiness undertake, or earnestness endeavour after, reformation.
2. We are not to think it amiss, that we ourselves be excited to look, with a proper attention and concern, into our own estate, into our own experiences in the divine life, and into what little proficiency we make, or declension we fall into, ourselves.
3. We must by all means see to it, that we be sound and clear in the great doctrines of the gospel, which are the life of our holy religion; (we here intend, those doctrines which are exhibited in our excellent Westminster Catechism and Confession of Faith;) and that we all boldly and impartially appear in the defence thereof: at the same time we must take heed and beware of the dangerous errors which many have run into; particularly the Arminian and Neonomian on the one hand, and the Antinomian and Enthusiastical on the other.
4. We must be very faithful in every part of our ministerial

works, and make conscience to magnify our office. In a particular manner, we must take good heed to our preaching; that it be not only sound, but instructive, savoury, spiritual, very awakening and searching, well adapted to the times and seasons which pass over us; labouring earnestly herein. We must therefore dwell much upon the doctrines of repentance and conversion, the nature, necessity, and evidence thereof; and much urge the duty of self-examination, and open the deceits of the heart; bringing the unconverted under the work of the law, that they may be prepared to embrace the offer of the gospel. Moral duties must be treated of in an evangelical strain; and we must give unto every one his portion, and not shrink from it, under the notion of prudence; particularly, in the important duty of reproofing sinners of all sorts, be they who they will. Again, we must not be slight in our private conference with souls, and examining candidates for the communion, or other special privileges; and we must carefully and wisely suit our endeavours to the several ages and conditions of persons, the elder and younger; and in a very particular manner, we must set ourselves to promote religion among our young people. And, in a word, we must see whether we are animated to all these things by the grace of God in us.

5. We are impartially to see what evils are to be found among ourselves, and remove them. Let us be seriously thoughtful, whether (among our defects) we have not been, in some respect or other, the blameable means of discouragement to those who have been under religious concern; or whether we have not given strength and boldness to the ungodly, when we

have been testifying against the extravagances and disorders of the late times.

6. We must be conscientiously exemplary in our whole behaviour and conversation. It is necessary that we be serious and grave, as what highly becomes gospel bishops. And especially, we must be very watchful over our frame and conduct on the Lord's day. We must therefore look well to our sabbatizing, both at home and abroad, both before our own and other people. Our example is of vast consequence, in magnifying our office before recommended.
7. We ought to stir up the gifts which are in us, and to grow more and more, according to the sacred injunction, 2 Timothy 1:6,
8. We should follow all our endeavours with fervent prayer to God; especially our labours in preaching and teaching: the seed of the word is to be steeped in tears.

II. As to what concerns the association as such.

1. We must lay aside discontents one with another, and study brotherly love, that it may revive and continue; we must endeavour to be as near as we can of one mind, and go on harmoniously; and then we shall be the more strongly united in all, but especially in our present proceedings. There must be respectful treatment one of another, of the persons and character of one another; and we must be careful of ministerial character; which is of greater consequence than at first sight may appear. And when we have occasion to dispute, let it be under a very strict guard, avoiding all censuring reflections.

2. That we manifest our approbation of the Westminster Assembly's Catechism, as containing an excellent system of divinity; and we purpose to preach agreeably to the doctrines of the Bible exhibited therein.
3. As we must be very careful of our conversation in general as above said; so especially must we be respecting our conduct while together in association.
4. It is proposed that a course of our association be turned into fasts, upon this great account.
5. We agree to be more especially fervent, in continual prayer for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.
6. Some special, new, and prudent care must be taken to guard our pulpits.
7. It is proposed, that we agree to endeavour to introduce the public reading of the Holy Scriptures. The manner and time to be left to discretion.

III. With regard to what may be done among the people we stand related to.

1. We conceive that whatever public exercises are to be agreed on, or whatever concerns the public, the people are to be informed and acquainted with our design.
2. That it be earnestly recommended to the people, to consider the worth of their privileges, and the danger of being deprived of them; which there is, partly by the spreading of evil doctrines among them, and partly by the conduct of too many

people towards their ministers.

3. Let pragmatical, factious spirits, fomenting division, be duly frowned upon.
4. We must guard them against the temptations of their several employments, and the special seasons wherein they are most exposed.
5. We must consider what evils there are to be found among them, which do especially need reforming; as the profanation of the Lord's day, which is enough to destroy all religion; tavern-haunting, company-keeping, chambering, uncleanness, profaneness, etc.; and we ought loudly to testify against them. And that what we do may be effectual, let us endeavour to convince their consciences of the evil of sin, and of these sins —We are not to fail to warn people solemnly against the dreadful guilt of unthankfulness under God's signal mercies, and of incorrigibleness under heavy and sore judgments. Could we in wisdom do it, we should also warn them against their oppressing the Lord's ministers in their maintenance.
6. Let us endeavour to revive good customs and practices among them; particularly, the ancient good practice of catechising, family order, worship, and government, religious societies under good regulation, godly conference and conversation among Christians; and in brief, whatever is laudable and of good tendency.
7. Church discipline should be revived; brotherly watchfulness, and admonition; nor are we to forget to take special care of the

children and youths of the flock.

8. We may do well to engage, as far as we are able, all persons of distinction and influence to unite with us in this work of reformation; e.g. justices, school-masters, candidates for the ministry; and especially to assist us by their example.
9. Solemn renewal of covenant hath been advised to, as very useful upon this occasion; (vid. Synod, 1679, for Reformation;) but we leave this to each one's discretion.

Finally, in these things we should think ourselves bound to exert ourselves, and use uncommon fervency, to preserve what remains of religion, and prevent further decay.

October, 1748.

Thus far this association.

The members of this association, as their names were sent to me, are as follows:

The Rev. Messrs. Loring, of Sudbury; Cushing, of Shrewsbury; Parkman, of Westborough; Gardiner, of Stow; Martyn, of Westborough; Stone, of Southborough; Seecomb, of Harvard; Morse, of Shrewsbury; Smith, of Marlborough; Goss, of Boston; Buckminster, of Rutland; Davis, of Holden.

I must refer you, dear Sir, for other particulars relating to the state of religion, in these parts of the world, to my letters to my other correspondents in your neighbourhood.

My wife and family join with me in very affectionate and

respectful salutations to you and yours. Desiring an interest in your prayers for us all, and for this part of the Zion of God,

*I remain, dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother,
And obliged friend and servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

In the Memoirs of Brainerd, under the date of September. 13, 1747, the reader will find mention of a Mr. Job Strong, a candidate for the ministry, whom Brainerd, immediately before his death, recommended to the commissioners in Boston, as a missionary to the Indians; and in the 4th Reflection on those Memoirs, an interesting letter of his, giving an account of the Indian mission at Bethel, in New Jersey, in January. 1748. This young gentleman, having ultimately declined that appointment, accepted proposals of settlement in the ministry, the following year, from a church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and invited Mr. Edwards to preach the sermon at his ordination, which was appointed for the 28th of June. Mary, the fourth daughter of Mr. Edwards, then a young lady of fifteen, went before her father to Portsmouth, to visit some of the friends of the family in that place. From her I learned the following anecdote—The Rev. Mr. Moody, of York, a gentleman of unquestioned talents and piety, but perfectly unique in his manners, had agreed, in case of Mr. Edwards's failure, to be his substitute in preaching the sermon. On the morning of the appointed day, Mr. Edwards not having arrived, the council delayed the ordination as long as they well could, and then proceeded to the church; where Mr. Moody had been regularly appointed to make the introductory prayer, which is the prayer immediately before the sermon. That gentleman, knowing that a numerous and highly respectable audience had been drawn together by a strong desire to hear Mr. Edwards, rose up to pray under the not very pleasant impression, that he must

stand in his place; and offered a prayer, which was wholly characteristic of himself, and in some degree also of the times in which he lived. In that part of it, in which it was proper for him to allude to the exercises of the day, he besought the Lord, that they might be suitably humbled under the frown of his providence, in not being permitted to hear on that occasion, a discourse, as they had all fondly expected, from "that eminent servant of God, the Rev. Mr. Edwards, of Northampton;" and proceeded to thank God, for having raised him up, to be such a burning and shining light, for his uncommon piety, for his great excellence as a preacher, for the remarkable success which had attended his ministry, in other congregations as well as his own, for the superior talents and wisdom with which he was endowed as a writer, and for the great amount of good which his works had already done, and still promised to do, to the church and to the world. He then prayed that God would spare his life, and endow him with still higher gifts and graces, and render him still more eminent and useful than he had been; and concluded this part of his prayer, by supplicating the divine blessing on the daughter of Mr. Edwards, (then in the house,) who, though a very worthy and amiable young lady, was still, as they had reason to believe, without the grace of God, and in an unconverted state; that God would bring her to repentance, and forgive her sins, and not suffer the peculiar privileges which she enjoyed to be the means of a more aggravated condemnation. Mr. Edwards, who travelled on horseback, and had been unexpectedly detained on the road, arrived at the church a short time after the commencement of the exercises, and entered the door just after Mr. Moody began his prayer. Being remarkably still in all his movements, and particularly in the house of God, he ascended the stairs, and entered the pulpit so silently, that Mr. Moody did not hear him; and of course was necessitated, before a very numerous audience, to listen to the very high character given of himself by Mr. Moody.

As soon as the prayer was closed, Mr. Moody turned round, and saw Mr. Edwards behind him; and, without leaving his place, gave him his right hand, and addressed him as follows: "Brother Edwards, we are all of us much rejoiced to see you here today, and nobody, probably, as much so as myself; but I wish that you might have got in a little sooner, or a little later, or else that I might have heard you when you came in, and known that you were here. I didn't intend to flatter you to your face; but there's one thing I'll tell you: They say that your wife is a going to heaven by a shorter road than yourself." Mr. Edwards bowed, and after reading the Psalm, went on with the sermon. His text was John 13:15, 16, and his subject, "Christ the Example of Ministers." It was soon after published.

To his daughter, who prolonged her visit some time after the return of her father, he addressed, during her visit at Portsmouth, the following letter.

***To Miss Mary Edwards, [26] at
Portsmouth.***

Northampton, July 26, 1749.

MY DEAR CHILD,

You may well think it is natural for a parent to be concerned for a child at so great a distance, so far out of view, and so far out of the reach of communication; where, if you should be taken with any dangerous sickness, that should issue in death, you might probably be in your grave before we could hear of

your danger. But yet, my greatest concern is not for your health, or temporal welfare, but for the good of your soul. Though you are at so great a distance from us, yet God is every where. You are much out of the reach of our care, but you are every moment in His hands. We have not the comfort of seeing you, but He sees you. His eye is always upon you. And if you may but live sensibly near to God, and have his gracious presence, it is no matter if you are far distant from us. I had rather you should remain hundreds of miles distant from us, and have God near to you by his Spirit, than to have you always with us, and live at a distance from God. And if the next news we should hear of you, should be of your death, though that would be very melancholy; yet, if at the same time we should receive such intelligence concerning you, as should give us the best grounds to hope, that you had died in the Lord, how much more comfortable would this be, though we should have no opportunity to see you, or to take our leave of you in your sickness, than if we should be with you during all its progress, and have much opportunity to attend upon you, and converse and pray with you, and take an affectionate leave of you, and after all have reason to apprehend, that you died without the grace and favour of God! It is comfortable to have the presence of earthly friends, especially in sickness, and on a death-bed; but the great thing is to have God our friend, and to be united to Christ, who can never die any more, and from whom our own death cannot separate us.

My desire and daily prayer is, that you may, if it may consist with the holy will of God, meet with God where you are, and

have much of his divine influences on your heart, wherever you may be; and that, in God's due time, you may be returned to us again, in all respects under the smiles of Heaven, and especially, in prosperous circumstances in your soul, and that you may find us all alive and well. But that is uncertain; for you know what a dying time it has been with us in this town, about this season of the year, in years past. There is not much sickness prevailing among us as yet, but we fear whether mortal sickness is not now commencing. Yesterday, the only remaining son of Mr. C__ died of a fever, and is to be buried today. May God fit us all for his will!

I hope that you will maintain a strict and constant watch over yourself, against all temptations, that you do not forsake and forget God, and particularly, that you do not grow slack in secret religion. Retire often from this vain world, from all its bubbles and empty shadows, and vain amusements, and converse with God alone; and seek effectually for that divine grace and comfort, the least drop of which is worth more than all the riches, gaiety, pleasures, and entertainments of the whole world.

If Mrs. S—, of Boston, or any of that family, should send to you, to invite you to come and remain there, on your return from Portsmouth, until there is opportunity for you to come home, I would have you accept the invitation. I think it probable they will invite you. But if otherwise, I would have you go to Mr. Bromfield's. He and Mrs. B. both told me you should be welcome. After you are come to Boston, I would

have you send us word of it by the first opportunity, that we may send for you without delay.

We are all, through the Divine goodness, in a tolerable state of health. The ferment in the town runs very high, concerning my opinion about the sacrament; but I am no more able to foretell the issue, than when I last saw you. But the whole family has indeed much to put us in mind, and make us sensible, of our dependence on the care and kindness of God, and of the vanity of all human dependences; and we are very loudly called upon to seek his face, to trust in him, and walk closely with him. Commending you to the care and special favour of our heavenly Father, I am

*Your very affectionate father,
JONATHAN EDWARDS.*

Your mother and all the family give their love to you."

***The following letter of Mr. Edwards to Mr. Gillespie, is in reply to the second letter of that gentleman, written in the autumn of
1748.***

"Northampton, April 2, 1750.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I received your favour of September 19, 1748, the last summer, and would now heartily thank you for it. I suppose it may have come in the same ship with letters I had from my other correspondents in Scotland, which I answered the last summer; but it did not come to hand till a long time after most of the others, and after I had finished and sent away my answers to them, and that opportunity for answering was past. I have had no leisure or opportunity to write any letters to Scotland, from that time till now, by reason of my peculiar and very extraordinary circumstances, on account of the controversy which has arisen between me and my people, concerning the profession which ought to be made by persons who come to christian sacraments; which is likely speedily to issue in a separation between me and my congregation. This controversy, in the progress of it, has proved not only a controversy between me and my people, but between me and a great part of New England; there being many far and near who are warmly engaged in it. This affair has unavoidably engaged my mind, and filled up my time, and taken me off from other things. I need the prayers of my friends, that God would be with me, and direct and assist me in such a time of trial, and mercifully order the issue.

As to the epistolary controversy, dear Sir, between you and me, about faith and doubting, I am sorry it should seem to be greater than it is, through misunderstanding of one another's meaning, and that the real difference between us is so great as it is, in some part of the controversy.

As to the dispute about believing without spiritual light or sight, I thought I expressed my meaning in my last letter very plainly; but I kept no copy, and it might perhaps be owing to my dullness that I thought so. However, I perceive I was not understood. I cannot find out by any thing you say to me on this head, that we really differ in sentiments, but only in words. I acknowledge with you that 'all are bound to believe the divine testimony, and trust in Christ; and that want of spiritual light or sight does not loose from the obligation one is laid under by the divine command, to believe instantly on Christ, and at all seasons, nor excuse him, in any degree, for not believing. Even when one wants the influence and grace of the Spirit, still he is bound to believe.' I think the obligation to believe, lies on a person who is remaining without spiritual light or sight, or even in darkness. No darkness, no blindness, no carnality or stupidity, excuses him a moment for not having as strong and lively a faith and love, as ever was exercised by the apostle Paul, or rather renders it not sinful in him, that he is at that same moment without such a faith and love—and yet I believe it is absurd, and of a very hurtful consequence, to urge persons to believe in the dark, in the manner, and in the sense, in which many hundreds have done in America, who plainly intend, a believing with such a sort of strong faith or confidence, as is consistent with continuing still, even in the time of these strong acts of faith, without spiritual light, carnal, stupid, careless, and senseless. Their doctrine evidently comes to this, both in sense and effect, that it is a man's duty strongly to believe with a lightless and sightless

faith; or to have a confident, although a blind, dark, and stupid faith. Such a faith has indeed been promoted exceedingly by their doctrine, and has prevailed with its dreadful effects, answerable to the nature of the cause. We have had, and have to this day, multitudes of such firm believers whose bold, presumptuous confidence, attended with a very wicked behaviour, has given the greatest wound to the cause of truth and vital religion, which it has ever suffered in America.

As to what follows in your letter, that a person's believing himself to be in a good estate is properly of the nature of faith; in this there seems to be some real difference between us. But perhaps there would be none, if distinctness were well observed in the use of words. If by a man's believing that he is in a good estate, be meant no more than his believing that he does believe in Christ, does love God, etc. I think there is nothing of the nature of faith in it; because knowing it or believing it, depends on our own immediate sensation or consciousness, and not on divine testimony. True believers, in the hope they entertain of salvation, make use of the following syllogism: Whosoever believes shall be saved: I believe: Therefore, I shall be saved. Assenting to the major proposition—Whosoever believes shall be saved—is properly of the nature of faith; because the ground of my assent to that, is divine testimony; but my assent to the minor proposition—I believe—is, as I humbly conceive, not of the nature of faith, because that is not grounded on the divine testimony, but on my own consciousness. The testimony, which is the proper

ground of faith, is in the word of God, Romans 10:17, 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' There is a testimony given us in the word of God, that 'he that believeth shall be saved.' But there is no testimony in the word of God, that a given individual, in such a town in Scotland, or New England, believes. There is such a proposition in the Scriptures, as that Christ loves those that love him; and this, therefore, every one is bound to believe and affirm: and believing this, on the divine testimony, is properly of the nature of faith, while for any one to doubt it, is properly the heinous sin of unbelief. But there is no such proposition in the Scriptures, nor is it any part of the gospel of Christ, that such an individual person in Northampton loves Christ. If I know that I have complacency in Christ, I know it the same way that I know I have complacency in my wife and children, viz. by the testimony of my own heart, or my inward consciousness. Evangelical faith has the gospel of Christ for its foundation; but the proposition, that I love Christ, is a proposition not contained in the gospel of Christ.

Hence, that we may not dispute in the dark, it is necessary, that we should explain what we mean by a person's believing that he is in a good estate. If thereby we mean only believing the minor of the foregoing syllogism, or similar syllogisms—I believe; or, I love God—it is not of the nature of faith. But if by a man's believing himself to be in a good estate, be understood his believing not only the minor but the consequence, therefore I shall be saved, or, therefore God will never leave me nor forsake me; then a man's believing his

good estate, partakes of the nature of faith; for these consequences depend on divine testimony in the word of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Yea, I would observe further, that a man's judging of the faith or love which he actually finds in himself, whether it is that sort of faith or love which he finds to be saving, may depend on his reliance on scripture rules and marks, which are divine testimonies, on which he may be tempted not to rely, from the consideration of his great unworthiness. But his judging that he has those individual inward acts of understanding, and exercises of heart, depends on inward sensations, and not on any testimony of the word of God. The knowing of his present acts depends on immediate consciousness, and the knowing of his past acts depends on memory. Hence the fulness of my satisfaction, that I now have such an inward act or exercise of mind, depends on the strength of the sensation; and my satisfaction, that I have had them heretofore, depends on the clearness of my memory, and not on the strength of my reliance on any divine testimony. So likewise, my doubting whether I have, or have had, such individual inward acts, is not of itself of the nature of unbelief, though it may arise from unbelief indirectly; because, if I had had more faith, the actings of it would have been more sensible, and the memory of them more clear, and so I should have been better satisfied that I had them.

God appears to have given Abraham's servant a revelation, that the damsel in whom he found certain marks—her coming to draw water with a pitcher to that well, and her readiness to give him and his camels drink—should be Isaac's wife; and

therefore his assenting to this, was of the nature of faith, having divine testimony for its foundation. But his believing that Rebekah was the damsel who had these individual marks, his knowing that she came to draw water, and that she let down her pitcher, was not of the nature of faith. His knowing this was not from divine testimony, but from the testimony of his own senses. (Vide Genesis 24)

You speak of 'a saint's doubting of his good estate, as a part of unbelief, and the opposite of faith, considered in its full compass and latitude, as one branch of unbelief, one ingredient in unbelief; and of assurance of a man's good estate, as one thing that belongs to the exercise of faith.' I do not know whether I take your meaning in these expressions. If you mean, that a person's believing himself to be in a good estate, is one thing which appertains to the essence of saving faith, or that saving faith, in all that belongs to its essence, yea its perfection, cannot be without implying it, I must humbly ask leave to differ from you. That my believing that I am in a good estate, is no part or ingredient in the essence of saving faith, is evident from this, that the essence of saving faith must be complete in me, before it can be true that I am in a good estate. If I have not as yet acted faith, yea if there be any thing wanting in me to make up the essence of saving faith, then I am not as yet in a state of salvation, and therefore can have no ground to believe that I am so. Any thing that belongs to the essence of saving faith is prior, in the order of nature, to a man's being in a state of salvation, because it is saving faith which brings him into such a state. And therefore believing

that he is in such a state, cannot be one thing which is essential or necessary, in order to his being in such a state; for that would imply a contradiction. It would be to suppose a man's believing that he is in a good estate, to be prior, in the order of nature, to his being in a good estate. But a thing cannot be both prior and posterior, antecedent and consequent, with respect to the very same thing. The real truth of a proposition is in the order of nature first, before its being believed to be true. But, till a man has already all that belongs to the essence of saving faith, that proposition, that he is in a good estate, is not as yet true. All the propositions contained in the gospel, all divine testimonies that we have in God's word, are true already, are already laid for a foundation for faith, and were laid long ago. But that proposition, I am in a good estate, not being one of them, is not true till I have first believed; and therefore this proposition, as it is not true, cannot be believed to be true, till saving faith be first complete. Therefore the completeness of the act of saving faith will not make it take in a belief of this proposition, nor will the strength or perfection of the act cause it to imply this. If a man, in his first act of faith, has ever so full a conviction of God's sufficiency and faithfulness, and ever so strong and perfect a reliance on the divine testimony; all will have no tendency to make him believe that this proposition, I am in a good estate, is true, until it is true; which is not the fact, till the first act of faith is complete, and has made it true. A belief of divine testimony, in the first act of faith, may be to an assignable degree of strength and perfection, without

believing the proposition, for there is no such divine testimony then extant, nor is there any such truth extant, but in consequence of the first act of faith. Therefore, (as I said,) saving faith may exist, with all that belongs to its essence, and that in the highest perfection, without implying a belief of my own good estate. I do not say that it can exist without having this immediate effect. But it is rather the effect of faith, than a part, branch, or ingredient of faith. So I do not dispute whether a man's doubting of his good estate, may be a consequence of unbelief, and I doubt not but it is in those who are in a good estate; because, if men had the exercise of faith in such a degree as they ought to have, it could not but be very sensible and plain that they had it. But yet I think this doubting of one's good estate, is entirely a different thing from the sin of unbelief itself, and has nothing of the nature of unbelief in it, i.e. if we take doubting one's good estate in the sense in which I have before explained it, viz. doubting whether I have such individual principles and acts in my soul. Take it in a complex sense, and it may have the sin of unbelief in it; e.g. If, although I doubt not that I have such and such qualifications, I yet doubt of those consequences for which I have divine testimony or promise; as when a person doubts not that he loves Christ, yet doubts whether he shall receive a crown of life. The doubting of this consequence is properly the sin of unbelief.

You say, dear Sir, 'the Holy Ghost requires us to believe the reality of its works in us in all its parts just as it is;' and a little before, 'the believer's doubting whether or not he has faith, is sinful; because it is belying the Holy Ghost, denying his work

in him, so there is no sin to which that doubting can so properly be reduced as unbelief.'

Here I would ask leave thus to express my thoughts, in a diversity from yours. I think, if it be allowed to be sinful for a believer to doubt whether he has faith, that this doubting is not the sin of unbelief on any such account as you mention, viz. as belying or denying any testimony of the Holy Ghost. There is a difference between doubting of the being of some work of the Holy Ghost, and denying the testimony of the Holy Ghost; as there is a difference between doubting concerning some other works of God, and denying the testimony of God. It is the work of God to give a man great natural abilities; and if we suppose that God requires a man thus endowed to believe the reality of his work in all its parts just as it is, and therefore, that it is sinful for him at all to doubt of his natural abilities being just as good as they are; yet this is no belying any testimony of God, though it be doubting of a work of God, and so is diverse from the sin of unbelief. So, if we suppose that a very eminent Christian is to blame, in doubting whether he has so much holiness as he really has; he indeed does not believe the reality of God's work in him, in all its parts just as it is, yet he is not therein guilty of the sin of unbelief, against any testimony of God, any more than the other.

I acknowledge, that for a true saint, in a carnal and careless frame, to doubt of his good state, is sinful, more indirectly, as the cause of it is sinful, viz. the lowness and insensibility of the actings of grace in him, and the prevalence of carnality and

stupidity. 'Tis sinful to be without assurance, or, (as we say,) it is his own fault; he sinfully deprives himself of it, or foregoes it; as a servant's being without his tools is his sin, when he has carelessly lost them, or as it is his sin to be without strength of body, or without the sight of his eyes, when he has deprived himself of these by intemperance. Not that weakness or blindness of body, in their own nature, are sin, for they are qualities of the body, and not of mind, the subject in which sin is inherent. It is indirectly the duty of a true saint always to rejoice in the light of God's countenance, because sin is the cause of his being without this joy at any time; and therefore it was indirectly David's sin that he was not rejoicing in the light of God's countenance, at that very time when he was committing the great iniquities of adultery and murder. But yet it is not directly a believer's duty to rejoice in the light of God's countenance, when God hides his face. But it rather then becomes him to be troubled and to mourn. So there are, perhaps, many other privileges of saints that are their duty indirectly, and the want of them is sinful, not simply, but complexly considered. Of this kind I take the want of assurance of my good estate to be.

I think no words of mine, either in my book or letter, implied that a person's deliverance from a bad frame, does not begin with renewed acts of faith or trusting in God. If they did, they implied what I never intended. Doubtless if a saint comes out of an ill frame, wherein grace is asleep and inactive, it must be by renewed actings of grace. It is very plainly impossible, that grace should begin to cease to be inactive, in any other

way than by its beginning to be active. It must begin with the renewed actings of some grace or other; and I know nothing that I have said to the contrary, but that the grace which shall first begin sensibly to revive shall be faith, and that this shall lead the way to the renewed acting of all other graces, and to the further acting of faith itself. But a person's coming out of a carnal, careless, dead frame, by, or in the reviving of, grace in his soul, is quite another thing from a saint's having a strong exercise of faith, or strong hope, or strong exercise of any grace, while yet remaining in a carnal, careless, dead frame; or, in other words, in a frame wherein grace is so far from being in strong exercise, that it is asleep, and in a great measure without exercise.

There is a holy hope, a truly christian hope, of which the Scriptures speak, that is reckoned among the graces of the Spirit. And I think I should never desire or seek any other hope but such an one; for I believe no other hope, has any holy or good tendency. Therefore this hope, this grace of hope alone, can properly be called a duty. But it is just as absurd to talk of the exercises of this holy hope, the strong exercise of this grace of the Spirit, in a carnal, stupid, careless frame, such a frame yet remaining, as it would be to talk of the strong exercises of love to God, or heavenly-mindedness, or any other grace, while remaining in such a frame. It is doubtless proper, earnestly to exhort those who are in such a frame to come out of it, in and by the strong exercise of every grace; but I should not think it proper to press a man earnestly to maintain strong hope, notwithstanding the prevailing and

continuance of great carnality and stupidity, which is plainly the case of the people I opposed. For this is plainly to press people to an unholy hope, to a strong hope which is no christian grace, but strong and wicked presumption; and the promoting of this has most evidently been the effect of such a method of dealing with souls in innumerable multitudes of awful instances.

You seem, Sir, to suppose, that God's manner of dealing with his people, while in a secure and careless frame, is first to give assurance of their good state while they remain in such a frame, and to make use of that assurance as a mean to bring them out of such a frame. Here, again, I must beg leave to differ from you, and to think, that none of the instances or texts you adduce from Scripture, do at all prove the point. I think it is his manner, first to awaken their consciences, to bring them to reflect upon themselves, to feel their own calamity which they have brought upon themselves by so departing from God, by which an end is put to their carelessness and security, and again earnestly and carefully to seek God's face before they find him, and before God restores the comfortable and joyful sense of his favour; and I think this is abundantly evident both from Scripture and experience. You much insist on the case of Jonah as a clear instance of the thing you lay down. You observe that he says, chapter 2, 'I said I am cast out of thy sight, yet I will look again towards thy holy temple.' Verse 5, 7, 'When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came in unto thee, even into thine holy temple.' You speak of these words as expressing

an assurance of his good state and of God's favour; (I will not now dispute whether they do or not;) and you speak of this exercise of assurance, as his practice in an evil frame and in a careless frame; for he slept securely in the sides of the ship, manifesting dismal security, awful carelessness in a carnal frame. That Jonah was in a careless secure frame when he was asleep in the sides of the ship, I do not deny. But, my dear Sir, does that prove that he remained still in a careless secure frame, when in his heart he said these things in the belly of the fish; does it prove that he remained careless after he was awakened, and saw the furious storm, and owned it was the fruit of God's anger towards him for his sins; and does it prove, that he still remained careless after the whale had swallowed him, when he seemed to himself to be in the belly of hell, when the water compassed him about, even to the soul, and, as he says, all God's waters and billows passed over him, and he was ready to despair when he went down to the bottoms of the mountains, was ready to think God had cast him out of his sight, and confined him in a prison, that he could never escape, when the earth with her bars was about him for ever, and his soul fainted within him? He was brought into this condition after his sleeping securely in the sides of the ship, before he said, 'I will look again towards thine holy temple,' etc. He was evidently first awakened out of carelessness and security, and brought into distress, before he was comforted.

The other place you also must insist on, concerning the people of Israel, is very similar. Before God comforted them with the

testimonies of his favour after their backslidings, he first, by severe chastisements, together with the awakening influences of his Spirit, brought them out of their carelessness and carnal security. It appears by many passages of Scripture, that this was God's way of dealing with that people. In Hosea. chapter 2, we are told that God first 'hedged up her ways with thorns, and made a wall that she could not find her paths. And took away her corn and wine, and wool and flax, destroyed her vines and fig-trees, and caused her mirth to cease.' By this means, he roused her from her security, carelessness, and deep sleep, and brought her to herself, very much as the prodigal son was brought to himself: thus God 'brought her first into the wilderness, before he spake comfortably to her, and opened to her a door of hope.' By her distress he first led her to say, 'I will go and return to my first husband;' and then when God spake comfortably to her, she called him 'Ishi, my husband;' and God did as it were renewedly betroth her unto him. This passage is parallel with Jeremiah 3, They illustrate and explain each other, and show that it was God's way of dealing with his people Israel, after their apostasy, first to awaken them, and under a sense of their sense and misery, to bring them solicitously to seek his face, before he gave them sensible evidence of his favour; and not first to manifest his favour to them, in order to awaken them out of their security.

[\[27\]](#)

In "Jeremiah 3", the prophecy is not concerning the recovery of backsliding saints, or the mystical church, which, though she had corrupted herself, still continued to be figuratively

God's wife. It is concerning apostate Israel, who had forsaken and renounced her husband, and gone after other lovers, and whom God had renounced, put away, and given her a bill of divorce; (verse 8) so that her recovery could not be, by giving her assurance of her good estate as still remaining his wife, and that God was already married unto her, for that was not true, and is not consistent with the context. And whereas it is said, verse 14, Jeremiah 3:14, 'Return, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you, and I will take you one of a city;' I am married, in the Hebrew, is in the preterperfect tense; but you know, Sir, that in the language of prophecy, the preter tense is very commonly put for the future. And whereas it is said, verse 19, 'How shall I put thee among the children? And I said, Thou shalt call me My father;' I acknowledge this expression here, My Father, and in Romans 8:15, is the language of faith. It is so two ways: 1st. It is such a language of the soul, as is the immediate effect of a lively faith. I acknowledge that the lively exercises of faith do naturally produce satisfaction of a good state, as their immediate effect. 2d. It is a language which, in another sense, does properly and naturally express the very act of faith itself, yea, the first act of faith in a sinner, before which he never was in a good state. As thus, supposing a man in distress, pursued by his enemies that sought his life, should have the gates of several fortresses set open before him, and should be called to from each of them to fly thither for refuge; and viewing them all, and one appearing strong and safe, but the rest insufficient, he should accept the invitation to that one,

and fly thither with this language, 'This is my fortress, this is my refuge. In vain is salvation looked for from others. Behold I come to thee; this is my sure defence.' Not that he means that he is already within the fortress, and so in a good estate. But, this is my chosen fortress, in the strength of which I trust, and to which I betake myself for safety. So if a woman were solicited by many lovers, to give herself to them in marriage, and beholding the superiority of one to all the rest, should betake herself to him, with this language, 'This is my husband, behold I come unto thee, thou art my spouse;' not that she means that she is already married to him, but that he is her chosen husband, etc. Thus God offers himself to sinners as their Saviour, their God and Father; and the language of the heart of him who accepts the offer by faith, is, 'Thou art my Saviour; in vain is salvation hoped for from others: thou art my God and Father.' Not that he is already his child, but he chooses him, and comes to him, that he may be one of his children; as in Jeremiah 3:19, Israel calls God his Father, as the way to be put among the children, and to be one of them, and not as being one already; and in verses 21, 22, 23, she is not brought out of a careless and secure state, by knowing that the Lord is her God, but she is first brought to consideration and sense of her sin and misery, weeping and supplications for mercy, and conviction of the vanity of other saviours and refuges, not only before she has the assurance of her good estate, but before she is brought to fly to God for refuge, that she may be in a good estate.

As to the instance of Job, I would only observe, that while in

his state of sore affliction, though he had some painful exercises of infirmity and impatience under his extreme trials, yet he was very far from being in such a frame as I intended, when I spoke of a secure, careless, carnal frame. I doubt not, nor did I ever question it, that the saints' hope and knowledge of their good estate, is in many cases of great use to help them against temptation, and the exercises of corruption.

With regard to the case of extraordinary temptations and buffetings of Satan, which you mention, I do not very well know what to say further. I have often found my own insufficiency as a counsellor in cases where melancholy and bodily distemper have so much influence, and give Satan so great advantage, as appears to me in the case you mention. If the Lord do not help, whence should we help? If some christian friends of such afflicted and (as it were) possessed persons, would, from time to time, pray and fast for them, it might be a proper exercise of christian charity, and the likeliest way I know for relief. I kept no copy of my former letter to you, and so do not remember fully what I have already said concerning this case. But this I have often found with such melancholy people, that the greatest difficulty does not lie in giving them good advice, but in persuading them to take it. One thing I think of great importance, which is, that such persons should go on in a steady course of performance of all duties, both of their general and particular calling, without suffering themselves to be diverted from it by any violence of Satan, or specious pretence of his whatsoever, properly ordering, proportioning, and timing, all sorts of

duties, duties to God, public, private, and secret, and duties to man, relative duties of business and conversation, family duties, duties of friendship and good neighbourhood, duly proportioning labour and rest, intentness and relaxation, without suffering one duty to crowd out or intrench upon another. If such persons could be persuaded to this, I think in this way they would be best guarded against the devil, and he would soonest be discouraged, and a good state of body would be most likely to be gained, and persons would act most as if they trusted and rested in God, and would be most in the way of his help and blessing.

With regard to what you write concerning immediate revelations, I have thought of it, and I find I cannot say any thing to purpose, without drawing out this letter to a very extraordinary length, and I am already got to such length, that I had need to ask your excuse. I have written enough to tire your patience.

It has indeed been with great difficulty that I have found time to write much. If you knew my extraordinary circumstances, I doubt not you would excuse my not writing any more. I acknowledge the subject you mention is very important. Probably if God spares my life, and gives me opportunity, I may write largely upon it. I know not how Providence will dispose of me; I am going to be cast on the wide world, with my large family of ten children—I humbly request your prayers for me under my difficulties and trials.

As to the state of religion in this place and this land, it is at

present very sorrowful and dark. But I must, for a more particular account of things, refer you to my letter to Mr. M'Laurin of Glasgow, and Mr. Robe. So, asking a remembrance in your prayers, I must conclude by subscribing myself, with much esteem and respect,

*Your obliged brother and servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

Chapter XVI_(TOC)

Commencement of Difficulties at Northampton.

That this world is not a place of rest even to the most excellent of men, is a fact proved by the history of all past ages. How few who have been in prominent situations of usefulness but have experienced a variety of bitter disappointments; which though mysterious in themselves, disgraceful to those who have been the occasions of them, and most distressing to those who have felt their weight, yet have presented to the reflecting mind no unimportant lessons, and have tended to results little anticipated by any party connected with them. Nor should it seem strange to us that neither the world, nor the church of God itself, in its present imperfect state, can be considered as affording a resting-place. All the instruments employed by God in the promotion of his work, have been greatly tried; their labours have been mingled with their tears; and they have not only suffered from their own personal share of human imperfection, but have found in the ignorance, the perverse dispositions, and the unholy practices of others, their sharpest sorrows. They have been grieved by foes, but more injured and vexed by pretended friends. Divine grace has however enabled them honourably to stand amidst these perilous conflicts, and though the storm has fiercely raged around them, they have at length found a calm which can never be endangered; and they place before those who succeed them this grand lesson, that the faithful pursuit of the path of duty, whatever may be its difficulties and trials, will end well; and that this is the only course which can be reviewed with any satisfaction amidst the solemnities of a dying scene.

If any individual might have expected freedom from painful opposition, Mr. Edwards was that person; if unblemished holiness of character, if fervent desires of usefulness in all its varied and delightful forms, and if constant devotedness to every object connected with man's present and eternal good, could have insured uninterrupted satisfaction here, how large was the measure of enjoyment which would have fallen to the lot of this excellent man! All that he was, and all he had, he was disposed to sacrifice upon the altar of God, and to dedicate to the service of his fellow-creatures. No disposition to spare himself, to exalt himself, or place burdens upon others which he was unwilling to share, could be discovered in him; yet afflictions of no common extent attended him; but still he could say, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

Mr. Edwards was for many years unusually happy in the esteem and love of his people; and there was during that period the greatest prospect of his living and dying in the same state of harmony. So admirably was he qualified for the discharge of his official duties, and so faithful in the actual discharge of them, that he was probably the last minister in New England, who would have been thought likely to be opposed and rejected by the people of his charge. His uniform kindness, and that of Mrs. Edwards, had won their affection, and the exemplary piety of both, had secured their confidence; his very able and original exhibitions of truth on the sabbath, had enlightened their understandings and their consciences; his published works had gained him a reputation for powerful talents, both in Europe and America, which left him without a competitor, either in the colonies or the mother country; his labours had been remarkably blessed, he had been the means of gathering one of the largest churches on earth; and of such of the members as had any real

evidence of their own piety, the great body ascribed their conversion to his instrumentality. But the event teaches us the instability of all earthly things, and proves how incompetent we are to calculate those consequences, which depend on a cause so uncertain and changeable as the will of man.

In the year 1744, about six years before the final separation, Mr. Edwards was informed, that some young persons in the town, who were members of the church, had licentious books in their possession which they employed to promote obscene conversation among the young people at home. Upon further inquiry, a number of persons testified that they had heard one and another of them, from time to time, talk obscenely; as what they were led to, by reading books of this gross character which they had in circulation among them. On the evidence thus presented to him, Mr. Edwards thought, that the brethren of the church ought to look into the matter; and in order to introduce it to their attention, he preached a sermon from Hebrews 12:15, 10. "Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled: lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." After sermon, he desired the brethren of the church to stop, told them what information he had received, and put the question to them in form, whether the church, on the evidence before them, thought proper to take any measures to examine into the matter? The members of the church, with one consent and with much zeal: manifested it to be their opinion that it ought to be inquired into; and proceeded to choose a number of individuals as a committee of inquiry, to assist their pastor in examining into the affair. After this Mr. Edwards appointed the time for the committee of the church to meet at his house; and then read to the church a catalogue of the names of the young persons, whom he desired to come to his house at the same time. Some of those whose names were thus read, were the persons accused, and some

were witnesses; but through mere forgetfulness or inadvertence on his part, he did not state to the church, in which of these two classes any particular individual was included; or in what character he was requested to meet the committee, whether as one of the accused, or a witness.

When the names were thus published, it appeared that there were but few of the considerable families in the town, to which some of the persons named, either did not belong, or were not nearly related. Many of the church, however, having heard the names read, condemned what they had done, before they got home to their own houses; and whether this disclosure of the names, accompanied with the apprehension, that some of their own connexions were included in the list of offenders, was the occasion of the alteration or not, it is certain that, before the day appointed for the meeting of the committee arrived, a great number of heads of families altered their minds, and declared they did not think proper to proceed as they had begun, and that their children should not be called to an account in such a way for such conduct; and the town was suddenly all in a blaze. This strengthened the hands of the accused: some refused to appear; others who did appear, behaved with a great degree of insolence, and contempt of the authority of the church; and little or nothing could be done further in the affair.

This was the occasion of weakening Mr. Edwards's hands in the work of the ministry, especially among the young people, with whom, by this means, he greatly lost his influence. It seemed in a great measure to put an end to his usefulness at Northampton, and doubtless laid a foundation for his removal, and will help to account for the surprising events which we are about to relate. He certainly had no great visible success after this; the influences of the Holy Spirit were chiefly withheld, and stupidity and worldly-mindedness were greatly increased among them. That great and singular degree of good

order, sound morals, and visible religion, which had for years prevailed at Northampton, soon began gradually to decay, and the young people obviously became from that time more dissolute.^[28]

There was another difficulty of a far more serious nature. The church of Northampton, like the other early churches of New England, was formed on the plan of strict communion: in other words, none were admitted to the Lord's supper, but those who, after due examination, were regarded as regenerate persons. Such was the uniform practice of the church from its formation during the ministry of Mr. Mather, and for a considerable period after the settlement of Mr. Stoddard, the predecessor of Mr. Edwards. Mr. Stoddard publicly avowed a change in his opinions in 1704, when he had been in the ministry at Northampton thirty-two years, and endeavoured at that time to introduce a corresponding change in the practice of the church. He then declared himself, in the language of Dr. Hopkins, to be "of the opinion, that unconverted persons, considered as such, had a right in the sight of God, or by his appointment, to the sacrament of the Lord's supper; that thereby it was their duty to come to that ordinance, though they knew they had no true goodness or evangelical holiness. He maintained that visible Christianity does not consist in a profession, or appearance of that wherein true holiness, or real Christianity, consists; that therefore the profession, which persons make, in order to be received as visible members of Christ's church, ought not to be such as to express or imply a real compliance with, or consent to, the terms of this covenant of grace, or a hearty embracing of the gospel: so that they who really reject Jesus Christ, and dislike the gospel way of salvation in their hearts, and know that this is true of themselves, may make the profession without lying and hypocrisy," [on the principle that they regard the sacrament as a converting ordinance, and partake of it with the hope of obtaining conversion.] "He formed a short profession for persons to make, in

order to be admitted into the church, and to the sacrament, on these terms. Mr. Stoddard's principle at first made a great noise in the country; and he was opposed, as introducing something contrary to the principles and the practice of almost all the churches in New England, and the matter was publicly controverted between him and Dr. Increase Mather of Northampton. However, through Mr. Stoddard's great influence over the people of Northampton, it was introduced there, though not without opposition: by degrees it spread very much among ministers and people in that county, and in other parts of New England."

At the settlement of Mr. Edwards, in 1727, this alteration in the qualifications required for admission into the church had been in operation about twenty-two or three years; a period during which the great body of the members of any church will be changed. This lax plan of admission has no where been adopted by a church, for any considerable length of time, without introducing a large proportion of members who are destitute of piety; and although Mr. Stoddard was in other respects so faithful a minister, and so truly desirous of the conversion and salvation of his people, there can be no doubt that such must have been the result during so long a period in the church at Northampton.

"Mr. Edwards," observes Dr. Hopkins, "had some hesitation about this matter when he first settled at Northampton, but did not receive such a degree of conviction, as to prevent his adopting it with a good conscience, for some years. But at length his doubts increased; which put him upon examining it thoroughly, by searching the Scriptures, and reading such books as were written on the subject. The result was, a full conviction that it was wrong, and that he could not retain the practice with a good conscience. He was fully convinced that to be a visible Christian, was to put on the visibility or

appearance of a real Christian; that a profession of Christianity was a profession of that wherein real Christianity consists; and therefore that no person, who rejected Christ in his heart, could make such a profession consistently with truth. And as the ordinance of the Lord's supper was instituted for none but visible professing Christians, that none but those who are real Christians have a right, in the sight of God, to come to that ordinance: and, consequently, that none ought to be admitted thereto, who do not make a profession of real Christianity, and so can be received, in a judgment of charity, as true friends to Jesus Christ.

"When Mr. Edwards's sentiments were generally known in the spring of the year 1749, it gave great offence, and the town was put into a great ferment; and before he was heard in his own defence, or it was known by many what his principles were, the general cry was to have him dismissed, as what would alone satisfy them. This was evident from the whole tenor of their conduct, as they neglected and opposed the most proper means of calmly considering, and so of thoroughly understanding, the matter in dispute, and persisted in a refusal to attend to what Mr. Edwards had to say, in defence of his principles. From the beginning to the end, they opposed the measures, which had the best tendency to compromise and heal the difficulty; and with much zeal pursued those, which were calculated to make a separation certain and speedy. He thought of preaching on the subject, that they might know what were his sentiments and the grounds of them, (of both which he was sensible that most of them were quite ignorant,) before they took any steps for a separation. But that he might do nothing to increase the tumult, he first proposed the thing to the standing committee of the church; supposing, that if he entered on the subject publicly with their consent, it would prevent the ill consequences, which otherwise he feared would follow. But the most of them strenuously opposed it. Upon which he gave it over for the present, as what,

in such circumstances, would rather blow up the fire to a greater height, than answer the good ends proposed."

Mr. Edwards was sensible that his principles were not understood, but misrepresented through the country; and finding that his people were too warm, calmly to attend to the matter in controversy, he proposed to print what he had to say on the point, as this seemed the only way left him to have a fair hearing. Accordingly his people consented to put off calling a council, till what he should write was published. With this view he began immediately to prepare a statement and defence of his own sentiments, and in the latter part of April, about two months from the time of its commencement, sent it to the press—an instance of rapidity of composition almost unexampled in an individual, who was at once occupied by the duties of an extensive parish, and involved in the embarrassments of a most perplexing controversy.

Notwithstanding the efforts of Mr. Edwards, the printing of the work was not completed until August. It was entitled, "An Humble Inquiry into the Rules of the Word of God, concerning the Qualifications requisite to a Complete Standing and Full Communion in the Visible Christian Church;" and contains a discussion of the question agitated between himself and his people, "Whether any persons ought to be admitted to full communion in the christian church, but such as, in the eye of a reasonable judgment, are truly Christians?"—a discussion so thorough and conclusive, that it has been the standard work with evangelical divines from that time to the present.

It was a very painful consideration to Mr. Edwards, that, while the circumstances in which he was placed, constrained him to declare his sentiments from the press, the "Appeal to the Learned," the production of a man so much loved and venerated at Northampton, and so much respected throughout New England, his own colleague too, and his own grandfather,

was the work, and the only work of any respectability, on the opposite side of the question, which he should be obliged publicly to examine and refute. But his feelings on this subject he has himself explained. "It is far from a pleasing circumstance of this publication, that it is against what my honoured grandfather strenuously maintained, both from the pulpit and the press. I can truly say, on account of this and some other considerations, it is what I engage in with the greatest reluctance that ever I undertook any public service in my life. But the state of things with me is so ordered by the sovereign disposal of the great Governor of the world, that my doing this appears to me very necessary, and altogether unavoidable. I am conscious that not only is the interest of religion concerned in this affair, but my own reputation, future usefulness, and my very subsistence, all seem to depend on my freely opening and defending myself as to my principles, and agreeable conduct in my pastoral charge, and on my doing it from the press: in which way alone am I able to state, and justify my opinion to any purpose, before the country, (which is full of noise, misrepresentations, and many censures concerning this affair,) or even before my own people, as all would be fully sensible, if they knew the exact state of the case—I have been brought to this necessity in Divine Providence, by such a situation of affairs, and coincidence of circumstances and events, as I choose at present to be silent about; and which it is not needful, nor perhaps expedient, for me to publish to the world."

The people of Northampton manifested great uneasiness in waiting for this publication, before it came out of the press; and when it was published, some of the leading men, afraid of its ultimate effect on the minds of the people, did their utmost to prevent its extensive perusal, and it was read by comparatively a small number. Some of those who read it, of a more cool and dispassionate temper, were led to doubt whether they had not been mistaken.

Mr. Edwards, as Dr. Hopkins observes, being sensible that his treatise had been read but by very few of the people, renewed his proposal to preach upon the subject, and at a meeting of the brethren of the church asked their consent in the following terms: "I desire that the brethren would manifest their consent, that I should declare the reasons of my opinion, relating to full communion in the church, in lectures appointed for that end: not as an act of authority, or as putting the power of declaring the whole counsel of God out of my hands; but for peace sake and to prevent occasion for strife." This was answered in the negative—He then proposed that it should be left to a few of the neighbouring ministers, whether it was not, all things considered, reasonable, that he should be heard in this matter from the pulpit, before the affair should be brought to an issue. But this also passed in the negative.

However, having had the advice of the ministers and messengers of the neighbouring churches who met at Northampton, to advise them under their difficulties, he proceeded to appoint a lecture, in order to preach on the subject, proposing to do so weekly till he had finished what he had to say. On Monday there was a society meeting, in which a vote was passed to choose a committee to go to Mr. Edwards, and desire him not to preach lectures on the subject in controversy, according to his declaration and appointment: in consequence of which a committee of three men, chosen for that purpose, waited upon him. However, Mr. Edwards thought proper to proceed according to his proposal, and accordingly preached a number of sermons, till he had finished what he had to say on the subject. These lectures were very thinly attended by his own people; but great numbers of strangers from the neighbouring towns attended them, so many as to make above half the congregation. This was in February and March, 1750.

The calling of a decisive council, to determine the matter of difference, was

now more particularly attended to on both sides. Mr. Edwards had before this insisted, from time to time, that they were by no means ripe for such a procedure; as they had not yet given him a fair hearing, whereby perhaps the need of such a council would be superseded. He observed, "That it was exceedingly unbecoming to manage religious affairs of the greatest importance in a ferment and tumult, which ought to be managed with great solemnity, deep humiliation, submission to the awful frowns of Heaven, humble dependence on God, with fervent prayer and supplication to him: that therefore for them to go about such an affair as they did, would be greatly to the dishonour of God and religion; a way in which a people cannot expect a blessing." Thus having used all means to bring them to a calm and charitable temper without effect, he consented that a decisive council should be called without any further delay.

But a difficulty attended the choice of a council, which was for some time insuperable. It was agreed, that the council should be mutually chosen, one half by the pastor, and the other half by the church, but the people insisted upon it, that he should be confined to the county for his choice. Mr. Edwards thought this an unreasonable restraint upon him, as it was known that the ministers and churches in that county were almost universally against him in the controversy. He indeed did not suppose that the business of the proposed council would be to determine whether his opinion was right or not; but whether any possible way could be devised for an accommodation between pastor and people, and to use their wisdom and endeavour in order to effect it. And if they found this impracticable, they must determine, whether what ought in justice to be done had already actually been attempted, so that there was nothing further to be demanded by either of the parties concerned, before a separation should take place. And if he was dismissed by them, it would be their business to set forth to the world in what manner, and for what cause, he

was dismissed: all which were matters of great importance to him, and required upright and impartial judges. Now considering the great influence a difference in religious opinions has to prejudice men one against another, and the close connexion of the point, in which most of the ministers and churches in the county differed from him, with the matter to be judged of, he did not think they could be reasonably looked upon so impartial judges, as that the matter ought to be left wholly to them. Besides, he thought that the case, being so new and extraordinary, required the ablest judges in the land. For these, and some other reasons which he offered, he insisted upon liberty to go out of the county, for those members of the proposed council in which he was to have a choice. In this the people strenuously and obstinately opposed him. At length they agreed to leave the matter to a council consisting of the ministers and messengers of the five neighbouring churches; who after they had met twice upon it, and had the case largely debated before them, were equally divided, and therefore left the matter undetermined.

However, they were all agreed, that Mr. Edwards ought to have liberty to go out of the county for some of the council. And at the next church meeting, which was on the 26th of March, Mr. Edwards offered to join with them in calling a council, if they would consent that he should choose two of the churches out of the county, in ease the council consisted of but ten churches. The church however refused to comply with this, at one meeting after another repeatedly; and proceeded to warn a church meeting and choose a moderator, in order to act without their pastor. But to pass by many particulars, at length, at a meeting of the church, warned by their pastor, May 3rd, they voted their consent to his proposal of going out of the county for two of the churches that should be applied to. And they then proceeded to make choice of the ten ministers and churches of which the council should consist.

Chapter XVII^(TOC)

Account of Difficulties at Northampton Continued.

On Friday afternoon, June 22nd, 1750, the result of the council, and the protest of the minority, were publicly read to the people assembled in the church. On the next sabbath but one, July 1st, Mr. Edwards delivered to them his Farewell Sermon, which was soon afterwards published, at the request of some of the hearers. This sermon has been extensively and deservedly styled, "the best farewell sermon that was ever written;" and has been the source from which subsequent discourses, on occasions and in circumstances generally similar, have, to a great extent, been substantially derived. Had it been written in the case of an indifferent person, instead of his own, it could not have discovered less of passion or of irritation, or have breathed a more calm and excellent spirit. Instead of indicating anger under a sense of multiplied injuries, it appears in every sentence to have been dictated by meekness and forgiveness. At the same time, it presents an exhibition of the scenes of the last judgment, singularly solemn and awful. Few, indeed, are the compositions which furnish so many or so unequivocal marks of uncommon excellence in their author; and very few are so well adapted to be practically useful to churches and congregations.

The following postscript to the letter to Mr. Gillespie, of April 2, 1750, and the letters of Mr. Erskine and Mr. M'Culloch, all written immediately after the separation of Mr. Edwards from his people, exhibit also, in a very striking manner, the calm and tranquil state of his mind at the time when they were written.

"P. S. July 3, 1750. Having had no leisure to finish the preparation of my letters to Scotland, before this time, by reason of the extraordinary troubles, hurries, and confusions of my unusual circumstances, I can now inform you, that the controversy between me and my people, which I mentioned in the beginning of my letter, has issued in a separation. An ecclesiastical council was called on the affair, who sat here the week before last, and by a majority of one voice determined an immediate separation to be necessary; and accordingly my pastoral relation to my people was dissolved, on June 22nd. If I can procure the printed accounts from Boston of the proceedings of the council, I will give orders to my friend there, to enclose them with this letter, and direct them to you—I desire your prayers, that I may take a suitable notice of the frowns of Heaven on me and this people, between whom there once existed so great a union, in bringing to pass such a separation between us; that these troubles may be sanctified to me; that God would overrule the event for his own glory (in which doubtless many adversaries will rejoice and triumph); that he would open a door for my future usefulness, provide for me and my numerous family, and take a fatherly care of us in our present unsettled, uncertain circumstances, being cast on the wide world.

J. E."

To the Rev. Mr. Erskine.

Northampton, July 5, 1750.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

I now acknowledge the receipt of three letters from you since I last wrote to you; one of September. 12, another of September. 20, another of December. 22; all of the year 1749. The two first I received in the winter, with Mr. Glass's Notes on Scripture Texts, Ridgeley on Original Sin, Wheatley's Schools of the Prophets, Davidson's Sermon occasioned by the death of Mr. Harrison, and Mr. M'Raile's Sermon. Your letter written in December, I received a little while ago. I have greatly regretted the want of opportunity to answer you till now; but such have been my extraordinary circumstances, the multitude of distracting troubles and hurries that I have been involved in, (which I cannot easily represent to you,) that I have had no leisure. I have been very uneasy in neglecting to write to my correspondents in Scotland; and about two months ago I set myself to the business, but was soon broken off; and have not been able to return to it again till now. And now, my dear Sir, I thank you for your letters and presents. The books you sent me were entertaining to me, and some of them will be of advantage to me, if God should give me opportunity to prosecute the studies I had begun on the Arminian controversy. There were various things pleasing to me in Glass's Notes, tending to give some new light into the sense of Scripture. He seems to be a man of ability; though I cannot fall in with all his singularities.

The account you say Mr. Davidson gave of the absurdities of

the Moravians, are not very surprising to me. I have seen here in America so much of the tendency and issue of such kind of notions, and such sort of religion, as are in vogue among them, and among others in many respects like them, that I expect no other than that sin, folly, absurdity, and things to the last degree reproachful to Christianity, will for ever be the consequence of such things. It seems to me, that enough and enough of this kind has lately appeared, greatly to awaken the attention of christian divines, and make them suspect that the devil's devices in the various counterfeits of vital, experimental religion, have not been sufficiently attended to, and the exact distinctions between the saving operations of the Spirit of God and its false appearances not sufficiently observed. There is something now in the press at Boston, largely handling the subject. I have had opportunity to read the manuscript, and, in my humble opinion, it has a tendency to give as much light in this matter, as any thing that ever I saw. It was written by Mr. Bellamy, minister of Bethlehem, in Connecticut; the minister whom Mr. Brainerd sometimes speaks of as his peculiarly dear and intimate friend (as possibly you may have observed in reading his life). He was of about Mr. Brainerd's age, and it might have been well, if he had had more years over his head. But as he is one of the most intimate friends that I have in the world, and one that I have much acquaintance with, I can say this of him, that he is one of very great experience in religion, as to what has passed between God and his own soul; one of very good natural abilities, of closeness of thought, of extraordinary diligence in

his studies, and earnest care exactly to know the truth in these matters. He has long applied his mind to the subject he has wrote upon, and used all possible helps of conversation and reading. And though his style is not such as is like to please the polite world, yet if his youth, and the obscurity of his original, and the place that he lives in, etc. do not prevent his being much taken notice of, I am persuaded his book might serve to give the church of God considerable light as to the nature of true religion, and many important doctrines of Christianity. From the knowledge I have of him, I am fully satisfied that his aim in this publication is not his own fame and reputation in the world; but the glory of God, and the advancement of the kingdom of his Redeemer.

I suspect the follies of some of the Seceders, which you mention in both your letters of September. 20, and December. 22, arise, in considerable measure, from the same cause with the follies of the Moravians, and the followers of the Wesleys, and many extravagant people in America, viz. false religion, counterfeit conversions, and the want of a genuine renovation of the spirit of their minds. I say, as to many of them, not to condemn all in the gross. The spirit seems to be exactly the same with what appears in many, who apparently, by their own account, have had a false conversion. I am a great enemy to censoriousness, and have opposed it very much in my preaching and writings. But yet I think we should avoid that bastard, mischievous charity, by which Satan keeps men asleep, and hides their eyes from those snares and crafty works of his, which it is of the utmost consequence to the

church of God to discern and be aware of; and by which, for want of their being discovered, the devil has often had his greatest advantages against the interest of religion.

The Scriptures often lead us to judge of true religion, and the gracious sincerity of professors, by the genius, the temper, and spirit of their religion: James 3:17. Ephesians 5:9. Galatians 5:19, 25. 1 Corinthians 13:4 etc. Romans 8:9. 1 John 4:16. John 13:35. 1 John 2:10. 1 John 3:14, 18, 19, 23, 24. 1 John 4:7, 1, John 5:12, 13 and very many other places. I have been greatly grieved at a spirit of censoriousness; but yet I heartily wish that some sorts of charity were utterly abolished.

The accounts you give of Archbishop Herring, of the moderate, generous, truly catholic and christian principles appearing in him, and some other of the dignified clergy, and other persons of distinction in the church of England, are very agreeable. It is to be hoped that these things are forerunners of something good and great to be brought to pass for the church of God.

I have seen some accounts in our public prints, published here in America, of those conversions and baptisms in the Russian empire, which you mention in your last letter; and should be glad of further information about that matter. We have had published here, an extract of a letter, written by Dr.

Doddridge to Mr. Pearsall of Taunton, in Somersetshire, and transmitted by him to Boston, in a letter to Mr. Prince; giving a surprising account of a very wonderful person, a German by nation, a preacher of the gospel to the Jews, lately in London;

whom he (Dr. Doddridge) saw and conversed with, and heard preach (or rather repeat) a sermon there; who had had great success in preaching to those miserable people in Germany, Poland, Holland, Lithuania, Hungary, and other parts; God having so blessed his labours that, in the various parts through which he had travelled, he had been the instrument of the conversion of about six hundred Jews; many of whom are expressing their great concern to bring others of their brethren to the knowledge of the great and blessed Redeemer, and beseeching him to instruct their children, that they may preach Christ also. I should be glad if you hear any thing further of the affair, to be informed of it by you. I think such things may well be improved to animate and encourage those who have engaged in the Concert for Prayer for the reviving of Religion. I rejoice to hear what you write of some appearances of awakening in Mr. Gillies's church in Glasgow, and if it continues should be glad to be informed.

I am very glad to hear of what Mr. M'Laurin informs me of the encouragements likely to be given from Scotland to New Jersey college; a very hopeful society; and I believe what is done for that seminary is doing good in an eminent manner. Mr. M'Laurin tells me of some prospect of your being removed to a congregation in Edinburgh, which I am pleased with, because I hope there you will act in a larger sphere, and will have more opportunity to exert the disposition that appears in you, to promote good public designs for Zion's prosperity.

I thank you for the concern you manifest for me under my

difficulties and troubles, by reason of the controversy between me and my people, about the terms of christian communion.

This controversy has now had that issue which I expected; it has ended in a separation between me and my people. Many things have appeared, that have been exceedingly unhappy and uncomfortable in the course of this controversy. The great power of prejudices from education, established custom, and the traditions of ancestors and certain admired teachers, and the exceeding unhappy influence of bigotry, has remarkably appeared in the management of this affair. The spirit, that has actuated and engaged my people in this affair, is evidently the same that has appeared in your own people in their opposition to winter communions, but only risen to a much higher degree; and some of the arguments, that have been greatly insisted on here, have been very much of the same sort with some of those urged by your people in your affair. There have been many things said and done, during our controversy, that I shall not now declare. But would only say in the general, that there has been that prejudice, and spirit of jealousy, and increasing engagedness of spirit and fixedness of resolution, to gain the point in view, viz. my dismissal from my pastoral office over them, upheld and cherished by a persuasion that herein they only stood for the truth, and did their duty, that it has been an exceedingly difficult thing for me to say or do any thing at all in order to their being enlightened, or brought to a more calm and sedate consideration of things, without its being misinterpreted, and turned to an occasion of increasing jealousy and prejudice; even those things wherein I have

yielded most, and done most to gratify the people, and assuage their spirits and win their charity. I have often declared to the people, and gave it to them under my hand, that if, after all proper means used, and regular steps taken, they continued averse to remaining under my ministry, I had no inclination to do any thing, as attempting to oblige them to it. But I looked on myself bound in conscience, before I left them, (as I was afraid they were in the way to ruin,) to do my endeavour, that proper means should be used to bring them to a suitable temper, and so to a capacity of proceeding considerately, and with their eyes open; properly, and calmly, and prayerfully examining the point in controversy, and also weighing the consequences of things. To this end I have insisted much on an impartial council, in which should be some of the elderly ministers of the land, to look fully into our state, and to view it with all its circumstances, with full liberty to give both me and them such advice as they should think requisite and proper. And therefore I insisted, that the council should not wholly consist of ministers and churches that were professedly against me in the point in controversy; and that it should not consist wholly of ministers and churches of this neighbourhood, who were almost altogether in opposition to me; but that some should be brought from abroad. This I also insisted on, as I thought it most likely an impartial council would do me justice, in the public representation they would make of our affairs, in their result. The people insisted that the council should be wholly of the neighbourhood; undoubtedly because they supposed themselves most sure, that their

judgment and advice would be favourable and agreeable to them. I stood the more against it, because in this country we have no such thing as appeals from one council to another, from a lesser to a larger; and also, because the neighbouring ministers were all youngish men. These things were long the subject matter of uncomfortable troubles and contests. Many were the proposals I made. At last they complied with this proposal, (after great and long-continued opposition to it,) viz. That I should nominate two churches to be of the council, who were not within the bounds of this county. And so it was agreed that a council of ten churches should be called, mutually chosen; and that two of my half should be called from abroad. I might have observed before, that there was a great and long dispute about the business of the council, or what should be left to them; and particularly, whether it should be left to them, or they should have liberty, to give us what advice they pleased for a remedy from our calamities. This I insisted on, not that I desired that we should bind ourselves beforehand to stand to their advice, let it be what it would; but I thought it absurd to tie up and limit the council, that they should not exercise their own judgment, and give us their advice, according to their own mind. The people were willing the council should make proposals for an accommodation; but that, if they did not like them, the council should be obliged immediately to separate us, and would not have them have any liberty to advise to wait longer, or use any further means for light, or to take any further or other course for a remedy from our calamities. At last a vow was passed in

these words—'That a council should be called to give us their last advice, for a remedy from the calamities arising from the present unsettled, broken state of the church, by reason of the controversy here subsisting, concerning the qualifications for full communion in the church: and if upon the whole of what they see and find in our circumstances, they judge it best that pastor and people be immediately separated, that they proceed to dissolve the relation between them.' Accordingly a council was agreed upon, to meet here on this business, on June 19th. I nominated two out of this county; of which Mr. Foxcroft's church in Boston was one. But others were nominated provisionally, in case these should fall. Those that came, were Mr. Hall's church of Sutton, and Mr. Hobby's church in Reading. One of the churches that I nominated within the county, refused to send a delegate, viz. Mr. Billing's church of Cold Spring. However, Mr. Billing himself (though with some difficulty) was admitted into the council. The people, in managing this affair on their side, have made chief use of a young gentleman of liberal education and notable abilities, and a fluent speaker, of about seven or eight and twenty years of age, my grandfather Stoddard's grandson, being my mother's sister's son; a man of lax principles in religion, falling in, in some essential things, with Arminians, and is very open and bold in it. He was improved as one of the agents for the church, and was their chief spokesman before the council. He very strenuously urged before the council the necessity of an immediate separation; and I knowing the church, the most of them, to be inflexibly bent on this event, informed the

council that I should not enter into the dispute, but should refer the matter wholly to the council's judgment; I signified, that I had no desire to leave my people, on any other consideration, any other than their aversion to my being their minister any longer; but, they continuing so averse, had no inclination or desire that they should be compelled, but yet should refer myself to their advice. When the church was convened, in order to the council's knowing their minds with respect to my continuance, about twenty-three appeared for it, others staid away, choosing not to act either way; but the generality of the church, which consists of about 230 male members, voted for my dismissal. My dismissal was carried in the council by a majority of one voice. The ministers were equally divided, but of the delegates one more was for it than against it, and it so happened that all those of the council, who came from the churches of the people's choosing, voted for my dismissal; but all those who came from the churches that I chose, were against it, and there happening to be one fewer of these than of the other, by the church of Cold Spring not sending a delegate, (which was through that people's prejudice against my opinion,) the vote was carried that way by the voice of one delegate. However, on the 22d of the last month, the relation between me and this people was dissolved. I suppose that the Result of the Council, and the Protestation of some of the members, are printed in Boston by this time. I shall endeavour to procure one of the printed accounts, to be sent with this letter to you, together with one of my books on the point that has been in controversy between me and my

people. Two of the members of the council, who dissented from the Result, yet did not sign the Protestation, viz. Mr. Reynolds and his delegate, which I suppose was owing to Mr. Reynolds's extraordinarily cautious and timorous temper. The last sabbath I preached my farewell sermon. Many in the congregation seemed to be much affected, and some are exceedingly grieved. Some few, I believe, have some relentings of heart, that voted me away. But there is no great probability that the leading part of the church will ever change. Beside their own fixedness of resolution, there are many in the neighbouring towns to support their resolution, both in the ministry and civil magistracy; without whose influence I believe the people never would have been so violent as they have been.

I desire that such a time of awful changes, dark clouds, and great frowns of Heaven on me and my people, may be a time of serious consideration, thorough self-reflection and examination, and deep humiliation with me. I desire your fervent prayers for me, and for those who have heretofore been my people. I know not what will become of them. There seems to be the utmost danger, that the younger generation will be carried away with Arminianism as with a flood. The young gentleman I spoke of, is high in their esteem, and is become the most leading man in the town; and is very bold in declaiming and disputing for his opinions; and we have none able to confront and withstand him in dispute; and some of the young people already show a disposition to fall in with his notions. And it is not likely that the people will obtain any

young gentleman of Calvinistic sentiments, to settle with them in the ministry, who will have courage and ability to make head against him. And as to the older people, there never appeared so great an indifference among them, about things of this nature. They will at present be much more likely to be thorough in their care to settle a minister of principles contrary to mine, as to terms of communion, than to settle one that is sound in the doctrines of grace. The great concern of the leading part of the town, at present, will probably be, to come off with flying colours, in the issue of the controversy they have had with me, and of what they have done in it; for which they know many condemn them.

An end is put for the present, by these troubles, to the studies I was before engaged in, and my design of writing against Arminianism. I had made considerable preparation, and was deeply engaged in the prosecution of this design, before I was rent off from it by these difficulties, and if ever God should give me opportunity, I would again resume that affair. But I am now, as it were, thrown upon the wide ocean of the world, and know not what will become of me, and my numerous and chargeable family. Nor have I any particular door in view that I depend upon to be opened for my future serviceableness. Most places in New England that want a minister, would not be forward to invite one with so chargeable a family, nor one so far advanced in years—being 46 the 5th day of last October. I am fitted for no other business but study. I should make a poor hand at getting a living by any secular employment. We are in the hands of God, and I bless him, I

am not anxious concerning his disposal of us. I hope I shall not distrust him, nor be unwilling to submit to his will. And I have cause of thankfulness, that there seems also to be such a disposition in my family. You are pleased, dear Sir, very kindly to ask me, whether I could sign the Westminster Confession of Faith, and submit to the presbyterian form of church government; and to offer to use your influence to procure a call for me, to some congregation in Scotland. I should be very ungrateful, if I were not thankful for such kindness and friendship. As to my subscribing to the substance of the Westminster Confession, there would be no difficulty; and as to the presbyterian government, I have long been perfectly out of conceit of our unsettled, independent, confused way of church government in this land; and the presbyterian way has ever appeared to me most agreeable to the word of God, and the reason and nature of things; though I cannot say that I think, that the presbyterian government of the church of Scotland is so perfect, that it cannot, in some respects, be mended. But as to my removing, with my numerous family, over the Atlantic, it is, I acknowledge, attended with many difficulties that I shrink at. Among other things, this is very considerable, that it would be on uncertainties, whether my gifts and administrations would suit my congregation, that should send for me without trial; and so great a thing as such a removal, had need to be on some certainty as to that matter. If the expectations of a congregation were so great, and they were so confident of my qualifications, as to call me at a venture, having never seen nor heard me; their

disappointment might possibly be so much the greater, and they the more uneasy after acquaintance and trial. My own country is not so dear to me, but that, if there were an evident prospect of being more serviceable to Zion's interests elsewhere, I could forsake it. And I think my wife is fully of this disposition.

I forgot to mention, that, in this evil time in Northampton, there are some of the young people under awakenings; and I hope two or three have lately been converted: two very lately, besides two or three hopefully brought home the last year. My wife and family join with me in most respectful and cordial salutations to you, and your consort; and we desire the prayers of you both for us, under our present circumstances. My youngest child but one has long been in a very infirm, afflicted, and decaying state with the rickets, and some other disorders. I desire your prayers for it.

*I am, dear Sir,
Your most affectionate and obliged
Friend and brother,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

"P. S. For accounts of the state of religion in America, and some reasons of my conduct in this controversy with my people, I must refer you to my letters to Mr. Robe and Mr. M'Laurin."

Chapter XVIII^(TOC)

Letter to Mr. M'Culloch—To Mr. Erskine—An Account of the Troubles at Northampton Concluded.

THE correspondence of Mr. Edwards with some eminent ministers in Scotland, already introduced, has probably been found among the most interesting parts of this Memoir; equally creditable to Mr. Edwards, and to the excellent men, whose enlightened minds at once discerned his uncommon worth. The admirers of Mr. Edwards are under the deepest obligations to Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Erskine, whose name so frequently has occurred, as the individual through whose exertions the various works which principally form these volumes were first introduced in this kingdom—The letters which are found in this chapter will not diminish the interest already felt by the pious and intelligent reader.

To the Rev. Mr. M'Culloch.

Northampton, July 6, 1750.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

It is now long since I have received a letter from you: the last was dated March 10, 1749. However, you having heretofore manifested that our correspondence was not unacceptable to you, I would not omit to do my part towards the continuance

of it. Perhaps one reason of your neglecting to write, may be the failing of such agreeable matter for correspondence, as we had some years ago, when religion was flourishing in Scotland and America, and we had joyful information to give each other, of things pertaining to the city of our God. It is indeed now a sorrowful time on this side of the ocean. Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. Multitudes of fair and high professors, in one place and another, have sadly backslidden; sinners are desperately hardened; experimental religion is more than ever out of credit, with the far greater part, and the doctrines of grace, and those principles in religion that do chiefly concern the power of godliness, are far more than ever discarded. Arminianism and Pelagianism have made a strange progress within a few years. The church of England, in New England, is I suppose treble of what it was seven years ago. Many professors are gone off to great lengths in the enthusiasms and extravagance, in their notions and practices. Great contentions, separations, and confusions, in our religious state, prevail in many parts of the land. Some of our main pillars are broken; one of which was Mr. Webb of Boston, who died in the latter part of last April. Much of the glory of the town of Boston is gone with him; and if the bereavements of that town should be added to, by the death of two or three more of their remaining elder ministers, that place would be in a very sorrowful state indeed, like a city whose walls are broken down, and like a large flock without a shepherd, encompassed with wolves, and many in the midst of it.

These are the dark things that appear. But on the other hand, there are some things that have a different aspect. There have in some places appeared revivals of religion. Some little revivings have been in some places towards Boston. There has been some reformation, not long since, in one of our colleges; and by what I hear there has been much more of this nature in some other parts of the province of New York, near Bedford river; something in several parts of New Jersey, particularly through the labours of Mr. Greenman, a young gentleman educated by the charitable expenses of the pious and eminent Mr. David Brainerd, mentioned in his Life, which I think I sent to you the last summer. And since I last wrote to Scotland, I have had accounts of the prevailing of a religious concern in some parts of Virginia.

And I must not forget to inform you, that, although I think it has of late been the darkest time in Northampton, that ever was since the town stood, yet there have been some overturnings on the minds of some of the young people here, and two or three instances of hopeful conversion the last summer, and as many very lately.

When I speak of its being a dark time here, I have a special reference to the great controversy that has subsisted here, for about a year and a half, between me and my people, about the forms of communion in the visible church; which has even at length issued in a separation between me and my people; for a more particular account of which, I must refer you to my letters to Mr. Robe and Mr. Erskine—Besides, I shall

endeavour to procure the printed copies of the Result of the Council, that sat here the week before last, with the Protestation of some of the members, that these may be sent to you with this letter, together with one of my books, published on the point in debate between me and my people; of which I crave your acceptance.

I am now separated from the people between whom and me there was once the greatest union. Remarkable is the providence of God in this matter. In this event we have a striking instance of the instability and uncertainty of all things here below. The dispensation is indeed awful in many respects, calling for serious reflection and deep humiliation in me and my people. The enemy, far and near, will now triumph; but God can overrule all for his own glory. I have now nothing visible to depend upon for my future usefulness, or the subsistence of my numerous family. But I hope we have an all-sufficient, faithful, covenant God, to depend upon. I desire that I may ever submit to him, walk humbly before him, and put my trust wholly in him. I desire, dear Sir, your prayers for us, under our present circumstances.

*I am, Sir, your respectful and affectionate friend and brother,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

"P.S. My wife and family join with me in cordial salutations to you and yours."

After Mr. Edwards was dismissed from his people, several months elapsed before he received any proposals of settlement. During this interval, the

committee of the church found it very difficult to procure a regular supply of the pulpit. When no other preacher could be procured. Mr. Edwards was for a time applied to by the committee, to preach for them; but always with apparent reluctance, and only for the given sabbath. He alludes to these circumstances in the following letter; in which the reader will find, that he was a decided advocate for the celebration of the Lord's supper every Lord's day.

Letter to Mr. Erskine.

"Northampton, November. 15, 1750.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Some time in July last I wrote to you, and ordered one of my books on the Qualifications for Communion in the Church, to be sent to you from Boston, with the letter. In my letter I informed you of what had come to pass, in the issue of the late controversy between me and my people, in the dissolution of my pastoral relation to them; and ordered the printed Result of the Ecclesiastical Council, that sat upon our affairs, and the Protest against the said Result, to be put up with the letter; and also, at the same time, sent letters to my other correspondents in Scotland, with the books, etc. I have as yet had no call to any stated business elsewhere in the ministry; there has been some prospect of my having invitations to one or two places. The people of Northampton are hitherto destitute of a minister. They have exerted themselves very

much, to obtain some candidate to come and preach to them on probation, and have sent to many different places; but have hitherto been disappointed, and seem to be very much nonplussed. But the major part of them seem to continue without any relenting or misgiving of heart, concerning what has been done; at least the major part of the leading men in the congregation. But there is a number whose hearts are broken at what has come to pass; and I believe are more deeply affected than ever they were at any temporal bereavement. It is thus with one of the principal men in the parish, viz. Col. Dwight; and another of our principal men, viz. Dr. Mather, adheres very much to me; and there are more women of this sort, than men; and I doubt not but there is a number, who in their hearts are with me, who durst not appear, by reason of the great resolution, and high hand, with which things are carried in the opposition, by the prevailing part. Such is the state of things among us, that a person cannot appear on my side, without greatly exposing himself to the resentments of his friends and neighbours, and being the object of much odium. The committee, that have the care of supplying the pulpit, have asked me to preach, the greater part of the time since my dismissal, when I have been at home; but it has seemed to be with much reluctance that they have come to me, and only because they could not get the pulpit supplied otherwise; and they have asked me only from sabbath to sabbath. In the mean time, they have taken much pains to get somebody else to preach to them.

Since I wrote to you in July last, I received your letter, dated

the 30th of April last, with your generous and acceptable presents of Fraser's Treatise of Justifying Faith, Mr. Crawford's Manual against Infidelity, Mr. Randal's Letters on Frequent Communicating, Mr. Blair's Sermon before the Society for propagating Christian Knowledge, with an account of the Society, and the Bishop of London's Letters to the Cities of London and Westminster. The view the last mentioned gives of the wickedness of those cities, is very affecting; and the patience of God towards such cities, so full of wickedness, so heinous and horrid in its kinds, and attended with such aggravations, is very astonishing. That those cities and the nation, and indeed Christendom in general, are come to such a pass as they are, seems to me to argue that some very remarkable dispensation of Divine Providence is nigh, either of mercy or of judgment, or perhaps both; of mercy to an elect number, and great wrath and vengeance towards others; and that those very things you take notice of in Isaiah 59 are approaching, appear to me very probable. However, I cannot but think, that, at such a day, all such as truly love Zion, and lament the wickedness that prevails in the earth, are very loudly called upon to united and earnest prayer to God, to arise and plead his own cause, that he would make bare his arm, that that may bring salvation; that now when the enemy comes in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord may lift up a standard against him. When the church of Christ is like the ship, wherein Christ and his disciples were, when it was tossed with a dreadful tempest, and even covered with waves, and Christ was asleep; certainly it becomes Christians

(though not with doubting and unbelief) to call on their Redeemer, that he would awake out of sleep, and rebuke the winds and waves. There are some things that afford a degree of comfort and hope, in this dark day, respecting the state of Zion. I cannot but rejoice at some things which I have seen, that have been lately published in England, and the reception they have met with in so corrupt a time and nation. Some things of Dr. Doddridge's, (who seems to have his heart truly engaged for the interests of religion,) particularly his Rise and Progress, and Col. Gardiner's Life, and also Mr. Hervey's Meditations. And I confess it is a thing that gives me much hope, that there are so many on this side the ocean united in the Concert for Prayer, proposed from Scotland; of which I may give a more particular account in a letter to Mr.

M'Laurin, which I intend shall be sent with this. I had lately a letter from Governor Belcher, and in the postscript he sent me the following extract of a letter he had lately received from Dr. Doddridge. 'Nor did I ever know a finer class of young preachers, for its number, than that which God has given me this year, to send out into the churches. Yet are not all the supplies, here as elsewhere, adequate to their necessities; but I hope God will prosper the schemes we are forming for their assistance. I bless God, that in these middle parts of our island, peace and truth prevail in sweet harmony; and I think God is reviving our cause, or rather his own, sensibly, though in a gentle and almost unobserved manner.'

This which the Doctor speaks of, I hope is a revival of religion; though many things, in many places, have been

boasted of as glorious revivals, which have been but counterparts of religion; so it has been with many things that were intermingled with and followed our late happy revival. There have been in New England, within these eight years past, many hundreds, if not thousands, of instances very much like that of the boy at Tiptry Heath, mentioned by Mr. Davidson, as you give account in your letter. We ought not only to praise God for every thing that appears favourable to the interests of religion, and to pray earnestly for a general revival, but also to use means that are proper in order to it; and one proper means must be allowed to be, a due administration of Christ's ordinances: one instance of which is that, which you and Mr. Randal have been striving for; viz. a restoring the primitive practice of frequent communicating. I should much wonder (had it not been for what I have myself lately seen of the force of bigotry and prejudice, arising from education and custom) how such arguments and persuasions, as Mr. Randal uses, could be withstood; but however they may be resisted for the present, yet I hope those who have begun will continue to plead the cause of Christ's institutions; and whatever opposition is made, I should think it would be best for them to plead nothing at all short of Christ's institutions, viz. the administration of the Lord's supper every Lord's day—it must come to that at last; and why should Christ's ministers and people, by resting in a partial reformation, lay a foundation for a new struggle, an uncomfortable labour and conflict, in some future generation, in order to a full restoration of the primitive practice.

I should be greatly gratified, dear Sir, by the continuance of your correspondence, and by being informed by you of the state of things, relating to the interests of religion in Europe, and especially in Great Britain; and particularly whether the affair of a comprehension is like to go on, or whether the test act is like to be taken off, or if there be any thing else done, or published, in England or Scotland, that remarkably affects the interests of religion.

I have, with this letter, sent Mr. Bellamy's True Religion Delineated, with a Sermon of mine at Mr. Strong's ordination; of which I ask your acceptance, as a small testimony of gratitude for your numerous favours to me. I ask a constant remembrance in your prayers, that I may have the presence of God under my unusual trials, and that I may make a good improvement of all God's dealings with me. My wife joins with me in most cordial salutations to you and Mrs. Erskine.

*I am, dear Sir,
your affectionate and obliged
friend and brother,
"Mr. Erskine." JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

"At length," observes Dr. Hopkins, "a great uneasiness was manifested, by many of the people of Northampton, that Mr. Edwards should preach there at all. Upon which the committee for supplying the pulpit called the town together, to know their minds with respect to that matter, when they voted, That it was not agreeable to their minds that he should preach among them. Accordingly, while Mr. Edwards was in the town, and they had no other minister to preach to them, they carried on public worship among themselves, and without any preaching, rather than invite him."^[29]

"Every one must be sensible," remarks Dr. Hopkins, who was himself an occasional eyewitness of these scenes, "that this was a great trial to Mr. Edwards. He had been nearly twenty-four years among that people; and his labours had been, to all appearance, from time to time greatly blessed among them: and a great number looked on him as their spiritual father, who had been the happy instrument of turning them from darkness to light, and plucking them as brands out of the burning. And they had from time to time professed that they looked upon it as one of their greatest privileges to have such a minister, and manifested their great love and esteem of him, to such a degree, that, (as saint Paul says of the Galatians,) "if it had been possible, they would have plucked out their own eyes, and given them to him." And they had a great interest in his affection: he had borne them on his heart, and carried them in his bosom for many years; exercising a tender concern and love for them: for their good he was always writing, contriving, labouring; for them he had poured out ten thousand fervent prayers; in their good he had rejoiced as one that findeth great spoil; and they were dear to him above any other people under heaven—Now to have this people turn against him, and thrust him out from among them, stopping their ears, and running upon him with furious zeal, not allowing him to defend himself by giving him a fair hearing; and even refusing so much as to hear him preach; many of them surmising and publicly speaking many ill things as to his ends and designs! Surely this must come very near to him, and try his spirit. The words of the psalmist seem applicable to this case: "It was not an enemy that reproached me, that did magnify himself against me, then I would have hid myself from him. But it was thou—my guide and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." Let us therefore now behold the man!—The calm sedateness of his mind; his meekness and humility in great and violent opposition, and injurious

treatment: his resolution and steady conduct through all this dark and terrible storm; were truly wonderful, and cannot be set in so beautiful and affecting a light by any description, as they appeared in to his friends, who were eye-witnesses.

"Mr. Edwards had a numerous and chargeable family, and little or no income, exclusive of his salary; and considering how far he was advanced in years; the general disposition of people, who want a minister, to prefer a young man, who has never been settled, to one who has been dismissed from his people; and what misrepresentations were made of his principles through the country; it looked to him not at all probable, that he should ever have opportunity to be settled again in the work of the ministry, if he was dismissed from Northampton: and he was not inclined, or able, to take any other course, or go into any other business to get a living: so that beggary as well as disgrace stared him full in the face, if he persisted in his principles. When he was fixed in his principles, and before they were publicly known, he told some of his friends, that if he discovered and persisted in them, it would most likely issue in his dismissal and disgrace; and the ruin of himself and family, as to their temporal interests. He therefore first sat down and counted the cost, and deliberately took up the cross, when it was set before him in its full weight and magnitude; and in direct opposition to all worldly views and motives. And therefore his conduct, in these circumstances, was a remarkable exercise and discovery of his conscientiousness; and of his readiness to deny himself, and to forsake all that he had, to follow Christ—A man must have a considerable degree of the spirit of a martyr, to go on with the steadfastness and resolution with which he did. He ventured wherever truth and duty appeared to lead him, unmoved at the threatening dangers on every side.

"However, God did not forsake him. As he gave him those inward supports,

by which he was able in patience to possess his soul, and courageously row on in the storm, in the face of boisterous winds beating hard upon him, and in the midst of gaping waves threatening to swallow him up; so he soon appeared for him in his providence, even beyond all his expectations. His correspondents, and other friends in Scotland, hearing of his dismissal, and fearing it might be the means of bringing him into worldly straits, generously contributed a considerable sum, and sent it over to him.

"And God did not leave him without tender and valuable friends at Northampton. For a small number of his people, who opposed his dismissal from the beginning, and some, who acted on neither side, but after his dismissal adhered to him, under the influence of their great esteem and love of Mr. Edwards, were willing, and thought themselves able, to maintain him: and insisted upon it, that it was his duty to stay among them, as a distinct and separate congregation from the body of the town who had rejected him.

"Mr. Edwards could not see it to be his duty to remain among them, as this would probably be a means of perpetuating an unhappy division in the town; and there was to him no prospect of doing the good there, which would counterbalance the evil. However, that he might do all he could to satisfy his tender and afflicted friends, he consented to ask the advice of an ecclesiastical council. Accordingly a council was called, and met at Northampton on the 15th of May, 1751—The town on this occasion was put into a great tumult. They, who were active in the dismissal of Mr. Edwards, supposed, though without any good ground, that he was contriving with his friends again to introduce himself at Northampton." A meeting of the church was summoned, and a committee of the church appointed; who, in the name of the church, drew up a remonstrance against the proceedings of the council, and laid it before that body. The character of this instrument may be learned,

from the subsequent confession of one of the committee of the church that signed it, who was principally concerned in drawing it up, and very active in bringing the church to accept of it, and to vote that it should be presented to the council. To use his own language, it was "every where interlarded with unchristian bitterness, and sarcastical and unmannerly insinuations. It contained divers direct, grievous, and criminal charges and allegations against Mr. Edwards, which, I have since good reason to suppose, were all founded on jealous and uncharitable mistakes, and so were really gross slanders; also many heavy and reproachful charges upon divers of Mr. Edwards's adherents, and some severe censures of them all indiscriminately; all of which, if not wholly false and groundless, yet were altogether unnecessary, and therefore highly criminal. Indeed I am fully convinced that the whole of that composure, excepting the small part of it relating to the expediency of Mr. Edwards's resettlement at Northampton, was totally unchristian—a scandalous, abusive, injurious libel against Mr. Edwards and his particular friends, especially the former, and highly provoking and detestable in the sight of God; for which I am heartily sorry and ashamed; and pray I may remember it, with deep abasement and penitence, all my days." After this remonstrance of the church had been read before the council, they immediately invited the committee, by whom it was signed, to come forward, and prove the numerous allegations and insinuations which it contained; but they refused to appear and support any of their charges, or so much as to give the gentlemen of the council any opportunity to confer with them, about the affair depending, though it was diligently sought; and though, by presenting the remonstrance, they had virtually given the council jurisdiction, as to the charges it contained, yet they utterly refused to acknowledge them to be an ecclesiastical council. The council then invited the church, as a body, to a friendly conference, to see if some measures could

not be devised for the removal of the difficulties, in which the ecclesiastical affairs of the town were involved; but although this was earnestly and repeatedly moved for, on the part of the council, it was repeatedly and finally denied on the part of the church.

The council having heard what Mr. Edwards, and those who adhered to him, had to say, advised, agreeably to the judgment of Mr. Edwards, that he should leave Northampton, and accept of the invitations which he had received, to take charge of the Indian mission, as well as of the church and congregation, at Stockbridge; of which a more particular account will be given.

As a proper close to this melancholy story, and to confirm and illustrate what has been related, the following letter from Joseph Hawley, Esq. to the Rev. Mr. Hall, of Sutton, published in a weekly newspaper in Boston, May 9, 1760, is here inserted. This gentleman was a near kinsman of Mr. Edwards,^[30] though his active opponent; he was a lawyer of distinguished talents and eloquence.

To the Rev. Mr. Hall, of Sutton.

Northampton, May 9, 1760.

REV. SIR,

I have often wished that every member of the two ecclesiastical councils, that formerly sat in Northampton, upon the unhappy differences, between our former most worthy and reverend pastor, Mr. Jonathan Edwards, and the church here, whereof you were a member; I say, Sir, I have

often wished every one of them truly knew my real sense of my own conduct in the affair, that the one and the other of the said councils are privy to. As I have long apprehended it to be my duty, not only to humble myself before God, for what was unchristian and sinful in my conduct before the said councils, but also to confess my faults to them, and take shame to myself before them; so I have often studied with myself, in what manner it was practicable for me to do it. When I understood that you, Sir, and Mr. Eaton, were to be at Cold-Spring at the time of the late council, I resolved to improve the opportunity, fully to open my mind there to you and him thereon; and thought that probably some method might be then thought of, in which my reflections on myself, touching the matters above hinted at, might be communicated to most, if not all, the gentlemen aforesaid, who did not reside in this county. But you know, Sir, how difficult it was for us to converse together by ourselves, when at Cold-Spring, without giving umbrage to that people; I therefore proposed writing to you upon the matters, which I had then opportunity only most summarily to suggest; which you, Sir, signified would be agreeable to you. I therefore now undertake what I then proposed, in which I humbly ask the divine aid; and that I may be made most freely willing, fully to confess my sin and guilt to you and the world, in those instances, which I have reason to suppose fell under your notice, as they were public and notorious transactions, and on account whereof, therefore, you, Sir, and all others who had knowledge thereof, had just cause to be offended at me.

And in the first place, Sir, I apprehend that, with the church and people of Northampton, I sinned and erred exceedingly, in consenting and labouring, that there should be so early a dismissal of Mr. Edwards from his pastoral relation to us, even upon the supposition that he was really in a mistake in the disputed point; not only because the dispute was upon matters so very disputable in themselves, and at the greatest remove from fundamental, but because Mr. Edwards so long had approved himself a most faithful and painful pastor to the said church. He also changed his sentiments, in that point, wholly from a tender regard to what appeared to him to be truth; and had made known his sentiments with great moderation, and upon great deliberation, against all worldly motives, from mere fidelity to his great Master, and a tender regard to the souls of his flock, as he had the highest reason to judge. These considerations now seem to me sufficient; and would (if we had been of a right spirit) have greatly endeared him to his people, and made us to the last degree reluctant to part with him, and disposed us to the exercise of the greatest candour, gentleness, and moderation. How much of the reverse whereof appeared in us I need not tell you, Sir, who were an eye-witness of our temper and conduct.

And, although it does not become me to pronounce decisively, on a point so disputable, as was then in dispute; yet I beg leave to say, that I really apprehend, that it is of the highest moment to the body of this church, and to me in particular, most solicitously to inquire, whether, like the Pharisees and lawyers in John Baptist's time, we did not reject the counsel of

God against ourselves, in rejecting Mr. Edwards and his doctrine, which was the ground of his dismissal. And I humbly conceive, that it highly imports us all of this church, most seriously and impartially to examine what that most worthy and able divine published, about that time, in support of the same, whereby he being dead yet speaketh. But there were three things, Sir, especially, in my own particular conduct before the first council, which have been justly matter of great grief and much trouble to me, almost ever since; viz.

In the first place, I confess, Sir, that I acted very immodestly and abusively to you, as well as injuriously to the church and myself, when with much zeal and unbecoming assurance, I moved the council that they would interpose to silence and stop you, in an address you were making one morning to the people, wherein you were, if I do not forget, briefly exhorting them to a tender remembrance of the former affection and harmony, that had long subsisted between them and their reverend pastor, and the great comfort and profit which they apprehended that they had received from his ministry; for which, Sir, I heartily ask your forgiveness; and I think, that we ought, instead of opposing an exhortation of that nature, to have received it with all thankfulness.

Another particular of my conduct before that council, which I now apprehend was criminal, and was owing to the want of that tender affection, and reverend respect and esteem for Mr. Edwards, which he had highly merited of me, was my strenuously opposing the adjournment of the matters

submitted to that council for about two months; for which I declare myself unfeignedly sorry; and I with shame remember, that I did it in a peremptory, decisive, vehement, and very immodest manner.

But, Sir, the most criminal part of my conduct at that time, that I am conscious of, was my exhibiting to that council a set of arguments in writing, the drift whereof was to prove the reasonableness and necessity of Mr. Edwards's dismissal, in case no accommodation was then effected with mutual consent; which writing, by clear implication, contained some severe, uncharitable, and, if I remember right, groundless and slanderous imputations on Mr. Edwards, expressed in bitter language. And although the original draft thereof was not done by me, yet I foolishly and sinfully consented to copy it; and, as agent for the church, to read it, and deliver it to the council; which I could never have done, if I had not had a wicked relish for perverse things: which conduct of mine I confess was very sinful, and highly provoking to God; for which I am ashamed, confounded, and have nothing to answer.

As to the church's remonstrance, as it was called, which their committee preferred to the last of the said councils; (to all which I was consenting, and in the composing whereof I was very active, as also in bringing the church to their vote upon it;) I would, in the first place, only observe, that I do not remember any thing, in that small part of it, which was plainly discursive of the expediency of Mr. Edwards's resettlement

here, as pastor to a part of the church, which was very exceptionable. But as to all the residue, which was much the greatest part thereof, (and I am not certain that any part was wholly free,) it was every where interlarded with unchristian bitterness, sarcastical and unmannerly insinuations. It contained divers direct, grievous, and criminal charges and allegations against Mr. Edwards, which, I have since good reason to suppose, were all founded on jealous and uncharitable mistakes, and so were really gross slanders; also many heavy and reproachful charges upon divers of Mr. Edwards's adherents, and some severe censures of them all indiscriminately; all of which, if not wholly false and groundless, were altogether unnecessary, and therefore highly criminal. Indeed, I am fully convinced, that the whole of that composure, excepting the small part thereof above mentioned, was totally unchristian—a scandalous, abusive, injurious libel, against Mr. Edwards and his particular friends, especially the former, and highly provoking and detestable in the sight of God; for which I am heartily sorry and ashamed; and pray that I may remember it with deep abasement and penitence all my days. Nor do I now think, that the church's conduct in refusing to appear, and attend before that council, to support the charges and allegations in the said remonstrance against Mr. Edwards and the said brethren, which they demanded, was ever vindicated, by all the subtle answers that were given to the said demand; nor do I think that our conduct in that instance was capable of a defence. For it appears to me, that, by making such charges against

them before the said council, we necessarily so far gave that council jurisdiction; and I own with sorrow and regret, that I zealously endeavoured, that the church should perseveringly refuse to appear before the said council, for the purpose aforesaid; which I humbly pray God to forgive.

Another part of my conduct, Sir, of which I have long repented, and for which I hereby declare my hearty sorrow, was my obstinate opposition to the last council's having any conference with the church; which the said council earnestly and repeatedly moved for, and which the church, as you know, finally denied. I think it discovered a great deal of pride and vain sufficiency in the church, and showed them to be very opinionative, especially the chief sticklers, one of whom I was; and think it was running a most presumptuous risk, and acting the part of proud scorers, for us to refuse hearing, and candidly and seriously considering, what that council could say or oppose to us; among whom, there were divers justly in great reputation for grace and wisdom.

In these instances, Sir, of my conduct, and in others, (to which you were not privy,) in the course of that most melancholy contention with Mr. Edwards, I now see that I was very much influenced by vast pride, self-sufficiency, ambition, and vanity. I appear to myself vile, and doubtless much more so to others, who are more impartial; and do, in the review thereof, abhor myself, and repent sorely: and if my own heart condemns me, it behoves me solemnly to remember, that God is greater and knoweth all things. I hereby own, Sir, that such treatment of

Mr. Edwards, wherein I was so deeply concerned and active, was particularly and very aggravatedly sinful and ungrateful in me, because I was not only under the common obligations of each individual of the society to him, as a most able, diligent, and faithful pastor; but I had also received many instances of his tenderness, goodness, and generosity to me as a young kinsman, whom he was disposed to treat in a most friendly manner.

Indeed, Sir, I must own, that, by my conduct in consulting and acting against Mr. Edwards, within the time of our most unhappy disputes with him, and especially in and about that abominable 'remonstrance,' I have so far symbolized with Balaam, Ahitophel, and Judas, that I am confounded and filled with terror, oftentimes, when I attend to the most painful similitude. And I freely confess, that, on account of my conduct above mentioned, I have the greatest reason to tremble at those most solemn and awful words of our Saviour, Matthew 18:6. 'Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea;' and those in Luke 10:16. 'He that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me;' and I am most sorely sensible that nothing but that infinite grace and mercy, which saved some of the betrayers and murderers of our blessed Lord, and the persecutors of his martyrs, can pardon me; in which alone I hope for pardon, for the sake of Christ, whose blood, blessed be God, cleanseth from all sin. On the whole, Sir, I am convinced, that I have the

greatest reason to say as David, 'Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions; wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin: for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities; create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me; cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me; restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit. (Psalms 51:1-3, 9-12)

And I humbly apprehend, that it greatly concerns the church of Northampton most seriously to examine, whether the many hard speeches, spoken by many particular members against their former pastor, some of which the church really countenanced, (and especially those spoken by the church as a body, in that most vile 'remonstrance,') are not so odious and ungodly, as to be utterly incapable of defence; whether the said church were not guilty of a great sin, in being so willing and disposed, for so slight a cause, to part with so faithful and godly a minister as Mr. Edwards was; and whether ever God will hold us guiltless, till we cry to him for Christ's sake to pardon and save us from that judgment, which such ungodly deeds deserve. And I most heartily wish and pray, that the town and church of Northampton would seriously and carefully examinee, Whether they have not abundant cause to judge, that they are now lying under great guilt in the sight of God; and whether those of us, who were concerned in that

most awful contention with Mr. Edwards, can ever more reasonably expect God's favour and blessing, till our eyes are opened, and we become thoroughly convinced that we have greatly provoked the Most High, and have been injurious to one of the best of men; and until we shall be thoroughly convinced, that we have dreadfully persecuted Christ, by persecuting and vexing that just man, and servant of Christ; until we shall be humble as in the dust on account of it, and till we openly, in full terms, and without baulking the matter, confess the same before the world, and most humbly and earnestly seek forgiveness of God, and do what we can to honour the memory of Mr. Edwards, and clear it of all the aspersions which we unjustly cast upon him; since God has been pleased to put it beyond our power to ask his forgiveness. Such terms, I am persuaded, the great and righteous God will hold us to, and that it will be vain for us to hope to escape with impunity in any other way. This I am convinced of with regard to myself, and this way I most solemnly propose to take myself (if God in his mercy shall give me opportunity); that so, by making free confession to God and man of my sin and guilt, and publicly taking shame to myself, I may give glory to the God of Israel, and do what in me lies to clear the memory of that venerable man from the wrongs and injuries I was so active in bringing on his reputation and character; and I thank God, that he has been pleased to spare my life to this time, and am sorry that I have delayed the affair so long. Although I made the substance of almost all the foregoing reflections in writing, but not exactly in the same manner, to

Mr. Edwards and the brethren who adhered to him, in Mr. Edwards's life, and before he removed from Stockbridge, and I have reason to believe that he, from his great candour and charity, heartily forgave me and prayed for me; yet, because that was not generally known, I look on myself obliged to take further steps; for while I kept silence my bones waxed old, etc. For all these my great sins, therefore, in the first place, I humbly and most earnestly ask forgiveness of God; in the next place, of the relatives and near friends of Mr. Edwards. I also ask the forgiveness of all those, who were called Mr. Edwards's adherents; and of all the members of the ecclesiastical councils above mentioned; and lastly, of all christian people, who have had any knowledge of these matters.

I have no desire, Sir, that you should make any secret of this letter; but that you would communicate the same to whom you shall judge proper: and I purpose, if God shall give me opportunity, to procure it to be published in some one of the public newspapers; for I cannot devise any other way of making known my sentiments of the foregoing matters to all who ought to be acquainted therewith, and therefore I think I ought to do it, whatever remarks I may foresee will be made thereon. Probably, when it comes out, some of my acquaintance will pronounce me quite overrun with vapours; others will be furnished with matter for mirth and pleasantry; others will cursorily pass it over, as relating to matters quite stale; but some, I am persuaded, will rejoice to see me brought to a sense of my sin and duty; and I myself shall be conscious,

that I have done something of what the nature of the case admits, towards undoing what is, and long has been, to my greatest remorse and trouble, that it was ever done.

Sir, I desire that none would entertain a thought, from my having spoken respectfully of Mr. Edwards, that I am disaffected to our present pastor; for the very reverse is true; and I have a reverend esteem, real value, and hearty affection for him; and bless God, that he has, notwithstanding all our former unworthiness, given us one to succeed Mr. Edwards, who, as I have reason to hope, is truly faithful.

I conclude this long letter, by heartily desiring your prayers, that my repentance of my sins above mentioned may be unfeigned and genuine, and such as God in infinite mercy, for Christ's sake, will accept; and I beg leave to subscribe myself,

*Sir, your real, though very unworthy friend,
and obedient servant,
JOSEPH HAWLEY."*

On the whole it is evident, that while the dismissal of Mr. Edwards was, in itself considered, an event greatly to be regretted, it was at the same time, in every part of it, most honourable to himself, and proved in its ultimate consequences an essential blessing to the church of God. Probably no one event, of apparently malignant aspect, ever did so much towards reforming the churches of New England. Many difficult subjects of theology, also, needed at that time to be thoroughly examined and illustrated; and to this end, some individual of expanded views and profound penetration, as well as of correct faith and elevated piety, was to be found, who could give the strength of his talents and his time to these investigations. The providence of God had

selected Mr. Edwards for this important office; but so numerous and engrossing were the duties of the ministry at Northampton, that, had he remained there, he could not have fulfilled it but in part. To give him abundant opportunity and advantage for the work assigned him, he was taken from that busy field at the best time of life, when his powers had gained their greatest energy, when the field of thought and inquiry had been already extensively surveyed, and when the labours of the pulpit were fully provided for and anticipated; and was transferred to the retirement and leisure of a remote frontier village. There he prepared, within a little period, four of the ablest and most valuable works which the church of Christ has in its possession.

Chapter XIX^(TOC)

Proposals from Stockbridge, and from the Commissioners—Visit to Stockbridge—Indian Mission—Housatonnucks—Mohawks—Dissensions of English Inhabitants—Mr. Hollis's Munificence.

EARLY in December, 1750, Mr. Edwards received proposals from the church and congregation at Stockbridge, to become their minister; and about the same time, similar proposals from the commissioners, at Boston, of the "Society in London, for Propagating the Gospel in New England, and the Parts adjacent," to become the missionary of the Housatonnucks, or River Indians, a tribe at that time located in Stockbridge and its immediate vicinity. Before deciding on these proposals, he went to Stockbridge, in the beginning of January, 1751, and continued there during the remainder of the winter, and the early part of the spring, preaching both to the English inhabitants, and, by the aid of an interpreter, to the Indians. Soon after his return, he accepted of the invitation both of the commissioners and of the people of Stockbridge.

The Indian mission at Stockbridge commenced in 1735; when the Rev. John Sergeant was ordained their missionary. He continued to reside there until his death, July 27th, 1749. His Indian congregation, originally about fifty in number, gradually increased, by accessions from the neighbouring settlements on the Housatonnuck river, to the number of two hundred and fifty—the actual number in 1751. Mr. Sergeant devoted much of his time to the study of their language; (the Moheekanneew; the common language of all the Indians in New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, except the Iraquois.) yet, at the close of his life, he had not made such progress, that he could preach in it, or even pray in it, except by a form.

He ultimately regretted the time and labour thus lost, and expressed the conviction, that it would be far better for his successor not to learn the language, but to preach by an interpreter, and to teach the children of the Indians the English language, by the aid of schoolmasters. Very little success appears to have attended his labours, either among the Indians or the English congregation.

A school was established, for the instruction of the Indian children, at the commencement of the mission, and placed under the care of Timothy Woodbridge, Esq. one of the original settlers of Stockbridge, and characterized by Mr. Edwards, as "a man of very good abilities, of a manly, honest, and generous disposition, and as having, by his upright conduct and agreeable manners, secured the affections and confidence of the Indians." He was supported by the government of the province, and devoted himself faithfully to the business of instructing the Indian children; yet for a long period, like Mr. Sergeant, he had to lament that so little success attended his labours. This was owing to various causes. The Indians lived in a village by themselves, at a small distance from the English settlement. Their children lived at home with their parents, and not in a boarding-school, and of course made little or no progress in the English language; and they had no books in their own. The English traders sold large quantities of ardent spirits to the Indians, and in this way constantly counteracted the efforts made to do them good. There were also unfortunate dissensions among the people of Stockbridge. The settlement of the town was begun, with a direct reference to the intellectual and moral improvement of the Indians, in the immediate vicinity. The lands of the Indians, comprising a very extensive tract, were secured to them; and important privileges were granted to the families of the original settlers, by the provincial legislature, with reference to this very object. Unfortunately, one of the most wealthy of those settlers appears to have removed to

Stockbridge, with the design of amassing a still larger fortune by his intercourse with the Indian settlement. With this view, he formed a large trading establishment in the neighbourhood. From his wealth and his locality, affairs of some moment, relating to the Indians at Stockbridge, were on various occasions intrusted to his management; in one of which Mr. Woodbridge regarded him as doing so great and palpable an injury, both to the Indians and the province, that, taking it in connexion with the general tenor of his conduct, he felt himself bound to prevent, as far as lay in his power, all intercourse between him and the Indian settlement, as well as all influence which he might attempt to exert over the affairs of the Indians. In return, he endeavoured, in the first instance, to prevent the Indians from sending their children to the school, and to render those parents who actually sent them dissatisfied with Mr. Woodbridge; and at length to procure the dismissal of that gentleman from his appointment. This controversy was of long continuance, and affected the whole settlement. The result was, that although he amassed considerable wealth, he entirely lost the confidence of the Indians; and so completely alienated the minds of the English inhabitants, that every family in the place, his own excepted, sided with his antagonist. This controversy, for a long time, had a most inauspicious effect on the school of Mr. Woodbridge and on the mission of Mr. Sergeant.

In 1739, Mr. Sergeant, despairing of any considerable success under the existing plan of instruction, attempted the establishment of an Indian boarding-school, to be kept at the expense of the English. He proposed, that the children should live in the family of their instructor, and learn the English language; and that their time should be divided between work and study, under different masters. For some time, he made but little progress in raising funds for this purpose, but at length was aided in his design, by the benevolence of the Rev. Isaac Hollis, a clergyman near London, who most

generously offered to defray the expense of the board, clothing, and instruction of twelve Indian children. At this time no boarding-house was built; and for a long period, Mr. Serjeant found it impossible to procure a person duly qualified to take charge of the school. To begin the work, however, Mr. Serjeant hired as a temporary teacher, until a competent one could be procured, a Capt. Martin Kellogg, an illiterate man, originally a farmer, and subsequently a soldier, about sixty years of age, very lame, and wholly unaccustomed to the business of instruction. His sister, Mrs. Ashley, the wife of a Capt. Ashley, of Suffield, who had been taken prisoner, when a child, by the Iroquois, and perfectly understood their language, was the interpreter of the English at Stockbridge; and her brother having come to reside there, in consequence of having no regular business, was employed temporarily by Mr. Sergeant, for the want of a better instructor, because he was on the spot. A school had just been commenced under his auspices, (not however as a boarding-school, as no house could be procured for the purpose,) when the French war of 1744 broke it up; and Capt. Kellogg, that he might continue to receive the money of Mr. Hollis, carried several of the Indian boys to Newington, in Connecticut, where he had previously resided.

After the close of the war, in 1748, Mr. Sergeant began the erection of a house for a boarding-school. He also wrote a letter to the nation of the Mohawks, then residing on the Mohawk river, about forty miles west of Albany, inviting them to bring their children to Stockbridge for instruction. But he did not live to see either of these designs accomplished. At his death, in 1749, several Indian boys were left in the hands of Capt. Kellogg, who in the autumn of 1750, not having heard from Mr. Hollis for a considerable period, and supposing him to be dead, dismissed them for a time, and gave up his attempt to form a school.

In consequence of the letter of Mr. Sergeant to the Mohawk tribe, which had been accompanied by a very kind invitation from the Housatonnuck Indians, offering them a portion of their lands for a place of settlement, if they would come and reside in Stockbridge, about twenty of them, old and young, came to that place in 1750, a short time before the removal of Mr. Edwards and his family. The provincial legislature, learning this fact, made provision for the support and maintenance of the children, and Capt. Kellogg, unfortunately, was employed as the instructor. He never established a regular school, however, but taught the boys occasionally, and incidentally, and employed them chiefly in cultivating his own lands. He was then 65 years of age.

Near the close of Mr. Serjeant's life, the school for the Housatonnuck children, under Mr. Woodbridge, became much more flourishing. His salary was increased, the number of his pupils augmented, and himself left to act with less restraint. The Indians also became less inclined to intemperance. The influence of the—family was likewise extinct; the English inhabitants having to a man taken the opposite side in the controversy; and the Indians regarding Mr. Woodbridge as their best friend, and his opponent as their worst enemy. Mr. Woodbridge was also, at this period, able to avail himself of the assistance of a young Housatonnuck, educated by himself, of the name of John Wonwanonpequunnonnt, a man of uncommon talents and attainments, as well as of sincere piety; who appears to have been raised up by Providence, that he might become the interpreter of Mr. Edwards, in preaching to his countrymen.

Mr. Hollis, having heard of the arrival of the Mohawks at Stockbridge, and supposing that a regular boarding-school was established under the care of Capt. Kellogg, wrote to him to increase the number of the children to twenty-four, who were to be maintained and instructed at his expense. During the

winter of 1750-51, the number of Mohawks, who came to reside at Stockbridge, was increased to about ninety; among whom were Hendrick, and Nicholas, and seven others of their chiefs.

Such was the state of things at Stockbridge, and such the state of the Indian mission, and of the Indian schools, when Mr. Edwards was invited to remove to that place. The—family at first exerted their whole influence, to prevent his receiving an invitation from the people at Stockbridge; but, finding that the church and parish (themselves excepted) were unanimous in giving the invitation, and very anxious that he should accept it, that there was no chance of producing a change in the minds of the commissioners in Boston, and that continued opposition must terminate in their own utter discomfiture, they changed their course, and professed to be highly gratified that he was coming among them.

After his return to Northampton, in the spring of 1751, Mr. Edwards, before coming to a final decision, paid a visit to his Excellency Sir William Pepperell, at Kittery, to learn the actual views of the government, with regard to the Indian establishment at Stockbridge; and having received satisfactory assurances on this subject, he soon after announced to the people of Stockbridge, and to the commissioners in Boston, his acceptance of their respective invitations. In the third week of June, he went again to Stockbridge, and remained there during the greater part of the ensuing month.

While at Stockbridge, he addressed the following letter to the Rev. Mr. Erskine.

"Stockbridge, June 28, 1751.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

I have lately received the 'Treatise on the Restoration of the Jews,' and a pamphlet entitled, 'A Serious Address to the Church of Scotland,' and a 'Sermon on the Qualifications of the Teachers of Christianity,' preached by you before the Synod, with Glass's Notes on Scripture Texts, No. 5. These pamphlets were enclosed in a wrapper, superscribed by your hand There was also in the packet, a brief advertisement concerning one of the pamphlets, written in your hand, though without any date or name, or any letter in the packet. But yet, I conclude these pamphlets were sent by you, and accordingly I now thank you for them. Your discourse on the Qualifications of Teachers of Christianity, is a very acceptable present. Glass's Notes on Scripture Texts contain some things that are very curious, and discover close study, and a critical genius. The Treatise on the Restoration of the Jews, if written by a christian divine, is a strange and unaccountable thing; by reason of there being nothing at all said, or hinted, about the Jews' conversion to the Christian faith, or so much as one mention of Jesus Christ; and his supporting that the prophecies of Ezekiel are to be literally fulfilled, in the building of such a temple and city as is there described, and the springing of such a river from the threshold of the temple, and its running into the east sea, and the Jews offering sacrifices, and observing other rites spoken of in Ezekiel; and that the Messiah is yet to come, and to reign in Jerusalem as a

temporal prince, etc. And I am wholly at a loss, as to the author's real design, whether it was, to promote Judaism, or deism, or only to amuse his readers. Since I received these pamphlets, I have received letters from all my other correspondents in Scotland; but none from you. Mr. M'Laurin speaks of your writing, or designing to write; but suggests that possibly your letter would not arrive so soon as the rest; so that I hope I shall yet, ere long, receive a letter from you. The letters I have received from my other correspondents, make mention of a great revival of religion in Guelderland, and Mr. M'Laurin has sent me printed accounts of it, published, as I understand, by Mr. Gillies, his son-in-law, being extracts of letters from Holland. I had some notice of it before, in a letter from Mr. Davenport, who, for the most part, resides in New Jersey. The account he wrote, was brought over from Holland by a young Dutch minister, whose name is John Frielinghausen, born in New Jersey, second son to an eminent Dutch minister there. His elder brother is settled at Albany, and by all accounts, is an able and faithful minister. This second son has been in Holland two years, I suppose to perfect his education in one of their universities, where his brother at Albany had his education. He came over into America the last summer, having just been married and ordained in Holland, in order to take the pastoral charge of some of the places that had been under his father's care.

The accounts Mr. Davenport gives from him, are not so particular, as those that are published by Mr. Gillies. But there is one material and important circumstance, which he

mentions, not taken notice of in the accounts from Scotland, viz. that the stadtholder was much pleased with the work.

At the same time, that we rejoice in that glorious work, and praise God for it, it concerns us carefully to pray, that God's ministers and people there may be directed in such a state of things, wherein wisdom and great discretion are so exceedingly needed, and great care and skill, to distinguish between true and false religion; between those inward experiences, which are from the saving influence of the Spirit of God, and those that are from Satan, transforming himself into an angel of light. Without this, it may be expected, that the great deceiver will gradually insinuate himself; acting under disguise, he will pretend to be a zealous assistant in building the temple, yea, the chief architect, when his real design will be, to bring all to the ground, and to build Babel, instead of the temple of God, finally to the great reproach and grief of all true friends of religion, and the haughty triumph of its adversaries. If I may be allowed my conjecture in this affair, there lies the greatest danger of the people in Guelderland, who are concerned in this work. I wish they had all the benefit of the late experience of this part of the church of God, here in America. Mr. M'Laurin informs me, dear Sir, that you have a correspondence in the Netherlands; and, as you know something of the calamities we have suffered from this quarter, I wish you would give them some kind admonitions. They will need all the warnings that can be given them. For the temptation to religious people, in such a state of things, to countenance the glaring, shining counterparts of religion,

without distinguishing them from the reality, what is true and genuine, is so strong, that they are very hardly indeed restrained from it. They will at last find the consequences not to be good, of an abundant declaring and proclaiming their experience, on all occasions, and before all companies, if they get into that way, as they will be very likely to do, without special caution in their guides. I am not so much concerned about any danger, the interest of the revival of religion in Guelderland may be in, from violent open opposition, as from the secret, subtle, undiscerned guile of the old serpent. I perceive, pious ministers in the Netherlands are concerned to obtain attestations to the good abiding effect of the awakenings in Scotland and America. I think it is fit they should know the very truth of the case, and that things should be represented neither better nor worse than they are. If they should be represented worse, that would give encouragement to unreasonable opposers; if better, that might prevent a most necessary caution, of the true friends of the awakening. There are, undoubtedly, very many instances in New England, in the whole, of the perseverance of such, as were thought to have received the saving benefits of the late revival of religion; and of their continuing to walk in newness of life, and as becomes saints; instances, which are incontestable, and which men must be most obstinately blind not to see; but I believe the proportion here is not so great as in Scotland. I cannot say, that the greater part of supposed converts give reason, by their conversation, to suppose that they are true converts. The proportion may, perhaps, be more truly represented, by the

proportion of the blossoms on a tree which abide and come to mature fruit, to the whole number of blossoms in the spring.

In the forementioned letter, which I lately received from Mr. Davenport, he mentions some degrees of awakening in some places of New Jersey. The following are extracts from his letter. 'I returned last month from Cape May, where I had been labouring some time, with little or no success, as to the unregenerate; except somewhat encouraging, the last day of my preaching among them. Yet, blessed be God, I hear of the success of several ministers in the Jerseys, and the revival of religion in some places; though it is very dull times in most. Mr. Reed of Boundbrook, has, I hear, some encouragement, by reason of a few in that place being under conviction. Mr. Kennedy, who is likely to settle at Baskingridge, I hear, has still more encouragement; and Mr. John Frielinghausen more yet, among the Dutch. He is the second son of the Mr. Frielinghausen, mentioned in your narrative, who died a few years ago. This second son came over from Holland, where he had been two years, and was ordained a little before he came over, the last summer. Pious ministers among the Dutch, this way, I think increase faster of late, than among other people. I was at the house of such an one, Mr. Varbryk, as I came along in this journey; who was ordained last fall, about five miles beyond Dobbs's Ferry, in New York government. Mr. William Tennent told me, that Mr. John Light, a pious young Dutch minister in New Jersey, was translating the accounts from Holland into English. Mr. Brainerd has had some special success lately, through mercy; so that nine or ten Indians

appear to be under conviction, as he tells me; and about twelve of the white people near them, that used to be stupid like the very heathen; and many others more thoughtful and serious. Mr. Sacket has lately been favoured with peculiar success, in reducing a number drawn away and infected by the separatists; and some endeavours I have used since that, and with him, have, I trust, not been altogether in vain. The good Lord grant, that false religion may cease, and true religion prevail through the earth!' This letter of Mr. Davenport was dated April 26, 1751.

The Dutch people in the provinces of New York and New Jersey, have been famed for being generally exceedingly ignorant, stupid, and profane, little better than the savages of our American deserts. But it is remarkable, that things should now begin to appear more hopeful among them, about the same time that religion is reviving among the Dutch in their mother country; and certainly the revivals of religion which have very lately appeared, especially among the Dutch in Europe, do verify God's holy word, which not only gives such great encouragement to those who have engaged in the Concert for United Prayer, begun in Scotland, to go forward, but binds it strongly upon them so to do; and shows that it will be an aggravated fault, if, after God does such glorious things so soon after we have begun in an extraordinary manner to ask them, we should grow cold and slack, and begin to faint. And I think what God has now done, may well cause those, who seemed at first, with some zeal, to engage in the affair, but have grown careless about it, and have left off, to reflect

on themselves with blushing and confusion. What if you, dear Sir, and other ministers in Scotland, who have been engaged in this affair, should now take occasion to inform ministers in the Netherlands of it, and move them to come into it, and join with us, in our united and extraordinary prayers, for an universal revival of religion?

As to my present circumstances, I came the last week to this place, having undertaken the business of a missionary to the Indians here; having been chosen the pastor of this church, and chosen missionary by the commissioners for Indian affairs in Boston. My instalment is appointed to be on the second Thursday in the next month. ^[31] I don't expect to get ready to remove my family till winter. But I must refer you, dear Sir, to my letters to Mr. M'Laurin and Mr. Robe, for a more full account of my circumstances, and of the things which have passed relating to them. I have, with this, sent you the Gazette, containing the Result of the late Council at Northampton, and intend to order one of my Farewell Sermons to be put up for you. My family were in their usual state of health when I left them, excepting my youngest child, who had something like an intermitting fever.

Please to present my cordial respects, and christian love, to your dear consort, and remember me in your prayers, with regard to the trials and changes I am called to pass through, and the new important business I have undertaken.

*I am, dear Sir, your most
united and obliged friend and brother,*

JONATHAN EDWARDS."

From Mr. Gillespie he received, about this period, a letter most grateful to his own feelings, expressing a lively and affectionate sympathy in his afflictions, as well as surprise and astonishment at the conduct of the people of Northampton. Mr. Edwards, in his reply, communicates a series of facts respecting them, which not only were adapted at the time to remove these impressions of his friend; but will be found, also, to contain a most important and salutary lesson of instruction, to every minister and every church. The solemn caution of the apostle, in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15., to every minister, to take care how he builds up the temple of God, of which Jesus Christ is the foundation—a caution, which refers not only to the nature of the doctrines which he teaches, but also, and even more especially, (as will be obvious from verses 16 and 17.) to the character of the members whom he adds to the church of Christ, which is the temple of God—is here enforced most solemnly, by arguments derived from experience.

***To the Rev. Thomas Gillespie,
Carnock.***

Stockbridge, July 1, 1751.

REV. AND VERY DEAR SIR,

I am very greatly obliged to you for your most kind, affectionate, comfortable, and profitable letter of February. 2, 1751. I thank you, dear Sir, for your sympathy with me, under my troubles, so amply testified, and the many suitable and

proper considerations you suggest me, for my comfort and improvement. May God enable me to make a right improvement of them.

It is not to be wondered at, dear Sir, that you are shocked and surprised at what has happened between me and the people of Northampton. It is surprising to all impartial and considerate persons that live near, and have the greatest advantage to know the circumstances of the affair, and the things that preceded the event, and made way for it. But no wonder if it be much more so to strangers at a distance. I doubt not, but that God intends his own glory, and the safety and prosperity of Zion, and the advancement of the interests of religion, in the issue of this event.

But it is best, that the true state of the case should be known, and that it should be viewed as it is, in order to receiving that instruction which Divine Providence holds forth in it, and in order to proper reflections and right improvement.

As there is a difference among particular persons, as to their natural temper, so there is some difference of this kind to be observed in different countries, and also in different cities and towns. The people of Northampton have, ever since I can remember, been famed for a high-spirited people, and of a difficult and turbulent temper. However, though in some respects they have been a stiff-necked people, yet God has been pleased, in times past, to bestow many distinguishing favours upon them. The town has stood now near one hundred years. Their first minister, Mr. Eleazar Mather, brother to Dr.

Increase Mather of Boston, and Mr. Samuel Mather of Dublin, Ireland; was a very eminent man of God. After him came Mr. Stoddard, my grandfather, a very great man, of strong powers of mind, of great grace and great authority, of a masterly countenance, speech, and behaviour. He had much success in his ministry; there being many seasons in his day, of general awakening among his people. He continued in the ministry, at Northampton, about sixty years. But God was pleased, in some respects, especially, to manifest his power in the weakness of his successor; there having been a more remarkable awakening, since his death, than ever had been till then, in that town: although since that, also, a greater declension, and more awful departures from God, in some respects, than ever before; and so the last minister has had more to humble him, than either of his predecessors. May the effect be answerable to God's just expectations.

The people have, from the beginning, been well instructed; having had a name, for a long time, for a very knowing people; and many have appeared among them, persons of good abilities; and many, born in the town, have been promoted to places of public trust: they have been a people distinguished on this account. These things have been manifestly abused to nourish the pride of their natural temper, which had made them more difficult and unmanageable. There were some mighty contests and controversies among them, in Mr. Stoddard's day; which were managed with great heat and violence: some great quarrels in the church, wherein Mr. Stoddard, great as his authority was, knew not what to do with

them. In one ecclesiastical controversy in Mr. Stoddard's day, wherein the church was divided into two parties, the heat of spirit was raised to such a degree, that it came to hard blows. A member of one party met the head of the opposite party, and assaulted him, and beat him unmercifully. In latter times, the people have had more to feed their pride. They have grown a much greater and more wealthy people than formerly, and are become more extensively famous in the world, as a people that have excelled in gifts and grace, and had God extraordinarily among them; which has insensibly engendered and nourished spiritual pride, that grand inlet of the devil in the hearts of men, and avenue of all manner of mischief among a professing people. Spiritual pride is a most monstrous thing. If it be not discerned, and vigorously opposed, in the beginning, it very often soon raises persons above their teachers, and supposed spiritual fathers, and sets them out of the reach of all rule and instruction, as I have seen in innumerable instances. And there is this inconvenience, attending the publishing of narratives of a work of God among a people, (such is the corruption that is in the hearts of men, and even of good men,) that there is great danger of their making it an occasion of spiritual pride. There is great reason to think that the Northampton people have provoked God greatly against them, by trusting in their privileges and attainments. And the consequences may well be a warning to all God's people, far and near, that hear of them.

Another thing, which probably has contributed in some measure to the unhappiness of the people's manners, was, that Mr. Stoddard, though an eminently holy man, was naturally of

a dogmatical temper; and the people being brought up under him, and with a high veneration for him, were naturally led to imitate him. Especially their officers and leading men, seemed to think it an excellency, to be like him in this respect.

It has been a very great wound to the church of Northampton, that there has been for forty or fifty years, a sort of settled division of the people into two parties, somewhat like the Court and Country party, in England (if I may compare small things with great). There have been some of the chief men in the town, of chief authority and wealth, that have been great proprietors of their lands, who have had one party with them. And the other party, which has commonly been the greatest, have been of those, who have been jealous of them, apt to envy them, and afraid of their having too much power and influence in town and church. This has been a foundation of innumerable contentions among the people, from time to time, which have been exceedingly grievous to me, and by which doubtless God has been dreadfully provoked, and his Spirit grieved and quenched, and much confusion and many evil works have been introduced.

Another thing, that evidently has contributed to our calamities, is, that the people had got so established in certain wrong notions and ways in religion, which I found them in, and could never beat them out of. Particularly; it was too much their method to lay almost all the stress of their hopes in religion, on the particular shape and method of their first work; i.e. the first work of the Spirit of God on their hearts, in

their conviction and conversion; and to look but little at the abiding sense and temper of their hearts, and the course of their exercises, and trials of grace, for evidences of their good estate. Nor had they learned, and many of them never could be made to learn, to distinguish between impressions on the imagination, and lively spiritual experience; and when I came among them, I found it to be too much a custom among them without discretion, or distinction of occasions, places, or companies, to declare and publish their own experiences; and oftentimes to do it in a light manner, without any air of solemnity. This custom has not a little contributed to spiritual pride and many other evils. When I first settled among the people, being young and of little experience, I was not thoroughly aware of the ill consequences of such a custom, and so allowed or at least did not testify against it, as I ought to have done.

And here I desire it may be observed, that I would be far from so laying all the blame of the sorrowful things, that have come to pass, to the people, as to suppose that I have no cause of self-reflection and humiliation before God, on this occasion. I am sensible that it becomes me to look on what has lately happened, as an awful frown of heaven on me, as well as on the people. God knows the sinfulness of my heart, and the great and sinful deficiencies and offences; which I have been guilty of, in the course of my ministry at Northampton. I desire that God would discover them to me more and more, and that now he would effectually humble me, and mortify my pride and self-confidence, and empty me entirely of myself, and

make me to know how that I deserve to be cast away, as an abominable branch, and as a vessel wherein is no pleasure; and, if it may consist with his holy will, that he would sanctify me, and make me a vessel more meet for my Master's use; and yet improve me as an instrument of his glory, and the good of the souls of mankind.

One thing, that has contributed to bring things to such a pass at Northampton, was my youth, and want of more judgment and experience, in the time of that extraordinary awakening, about sixteen years ago. ^[32] Instead of a youth, there was want of a giant, in judgment and discretion, among a people in such an extraordinary state of things. In some respects, doubtless, my confidence in myself was a great injury to me; but in other respects my diffidence of myself injured me. It was such, that I durst not act my own judgment, and had no strength to oppose received notions, and established customs, and to testify boldly against some glaring false appearances, and counterfeits of religion, till it was too late. And by this means, as well as others, many things got footing, which have proved a dreadful source of spiritual pride, and other things that are exceedingly contrary to true Christianity. If I had had more experience, and ripeness of judgment and courage, I should have guided my people in a better manner, and should have guarded them better from Satan's devices, and prevented the spiritual calamity of many souls, and perhaps the eternal ruin of some of them; and have done what would have tended to lengthen out the tranquillity of the town.

However, doubtless at that time, there was a very glorious work of God wrought in Northampton, and there were numerous instances of saving conversion; though undoubtedly many were deceived, and deceived others; and the number of true converts was not so great as was then imagined. Many may be ready, from things that are lately come to pass, to determine, that all Northampton religion is come to nothing; and that all the famed awakenings, and revivals of religion in that place, prove to be nothing but strange tides of a melancholy and whimsical humour. But they would draw no such conclusion, if they exactly knew the true state of the case, and would judge of it with full calmness and impartiality of mind.

There are many things to be considered in the case of Northampton:

- 1. That many of those, who have been most violently engaged, and have chiefly led and excited others in it, though they have been leading men in the town, and have been esteemed considerable for their knowledge, estate, and age, and have been professors of religion, yet have not been the most famed for piety.*
- 2. The leading men, who have been the most engaged in this matter, who have taken vast pains to stir up others that are inferior, have had this great advantage in their hands, that the controversy was a religious controversy; that*

that, which I opposed, was what they always had supposed to be a part of divine truth, a precious and important doctrine of the word of God; and, that the cause of my opposers was the cause of God. This has led the more ignorant and less considerate people to look on their zeal against me as virtue, and to christen even their passions and bitterness in such a cause with sanctified names, and to let them loose, and prosecute the views of their bitterness and violence without a check of conscience.

- 3. They have also had the great advantage of the vast veneration the people had for Mr. Stoddard's memory; which was such, that many looked on him almost as a sort of deity. They were all, (i.e. except the young people,) born and brought up under his ministry, and had been used from their infancy to esteem his sayings all as oracles. And he, they knew, maintained that doctrine which I oppose, with great positiveness and zeal, and opposed the contrary, which I maintain, as an exceedingly pernicious doctrine. Under these circumstances, I naturally appear as a dangerous opposer of the cause of God, and my teaching and insisting on the doctrine, which Mr. Stoddard opposed, appears to them a sort of horrid profaneness.*

4. *Crafty designing men have abundantly filled the ears of the more ignorant with suggestions, that my opinion tends to overthrow all religion, and to ruin the present and future generations, and to make all heathens, shutting them out of the church of Christ.*
5. *Not only many of the leading men of Northampton have used their utmost endeavours, to engage the minds of the common people in this controversy, but they have also been put forward, by the neighbouring ministers all round. My opposers have also been assisted and edged on by some at a great distance, persons of note; and some great men in civil authority have had a great hand in it.*
6. *It is to be considered, that the contrary opinion to mine, had not only long been established in Northampton without so much as one opposer to it; but it had also been fully and quietly established, for a long time, in all the neighbouring churches and congregations, and in all the country round, even to a great distance; so that my opinion when first broached, appeared to the people exceedingly singular. Their views being very narrow, it appeared to them, that all the world, almost, was against me. And my most crafty opposers*

improved this advantage, and abundantly represented me as all alone in my opinion.

- 7. Many of the people, who at length came to have their spirits much raised, and were brought to join in violent measures, yet came slowly into it, after being long practised with, and indefatigable endeavours used, to engage and influence them.*
- 8. There are about twenty heads of families, besides others, women and young people, who ever appeared openly against the proceedings of the town, and many others have appeared friendly to me. And there is not a little reason to think, that there are many more, especially women and youths, that would appear so, if they dare. For a person, by appearing my friend at Northampton, even so much so as openly to discountenance my being turned out of the pulpit, exposes himself to the immediate persecution of his neighbours, and perhaps of his nearest friends. I mean, he falls under their great resentment, loses all their friendship, and is every where the object of reproach.*
- 9. It is to be considered, that these things have happened when God is greatly withdrawn, and religion was very low, not only at Northampton, but all over New England.*

10. *I believe the devil is greatly alarmed, by the opposition made to the lax doctrine of admission to the christian church, and to the corresponding practice, which had been so long established at Northampton, and so extensively in the country; in which he found his account, and hoped for more important consequences, and more agreeable to him. And God, for wise ends, has suffered him to exert himself, in an extraordinary manner, in opposition; as God ordinarily does, when truth is in the birth.*

But I am drawn out to an unexpected length in my observations on these things, and have not left myself room, nor time, for some other things, that I would willingly write, and must therefore refer you to my letters to my other correspondents in Scotland; particularly, Mr. M'Laurin, Mr. Robe, Mr. M'Culloch, and Mr. Erskine. To some of them, I have sent a particular account of my present circumstances, and of things which have lately passed, relating to them. I would only say in general, that I have had a call to settle in Stockbridge, a place in the western borders of New England, next to the province of New York, about thirty-six miles from Albany, and about forty miles from Northampton, the place where Mr. Sergeant was minister and missionary to the Indians. I am both called by the church here, constituted partly of Indians and partly of English, and am appointed missionary to the Indians, by the commissioners of Indian

affairs, in Boston; agreeably to what you suggest in your letter, as though you had been able to foresee future events, when you say—"Perhaps you are to be employed where the gospel has been little understood or attended to." I suppose this place will, for the future, be the place of my ordinary abode, though it will be some months before I can remove my family. I have no leisure, at present, to write on the subject you speak of, viz. Impressions, and supposed immediate revelations, though I own the vast importance of the subject. I had begun to write something against the Arminians, before the late controversy; and now lately, Mr. Williams has written a book, in answer to mine on that subject; which I think myself obliged to answer, if God give me opportunity.

I have much to teach me to behave like a pilgrim and stranger in the earth. But in the midst of troubles and difficulties, I receive many mercies. Particularly, I have great reason, with abundant thankfulness, to take notice of the great kindness of my friends in Scotland. Blessed be God, who never forsakes those that trust in him; and never wants instruments, for the conveyance of his goodness and liberality to those who suffer in his cause!

I shall take care, that there be conveyed, with this letter, to you, one of my Farewell Sermons, and the Result of the Council that sat at Northampton the last May. Remember me, dear Sir, at the throne of grace, with regard to all my trials; and with regard to my new circumstances, and the important service I have undertaken in this place—and please, in your

next, to inform me, what family you have, and of their state.

*I am, dear Sir, your most
affectionate friend and brother,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

***The following letter of Mr. Edwards to the
Rev. Isaac Hollis, the patron of one of the
Indian schools at Stockbridge, will explain
some of the difficulties to which they were
subjected.***

"To Mr. Hollis.

Stockbridge, July 2, 1751.

REV. AND HONOURED SIR,

*Having seen your late letter to Mr. Prince of Boston, and
another to Capt. Kellogg, received this summer, and having
lately been appointed missionary to the Indians in this place, I
thought myself obliged to take the first opportunity to write to
you, who have exerted yourself, in so extraordinary a manner,
to promote our interests here, to serve which I am now
devoted; partly to offer you my thanks for what you have done,
and have lately offered to do, with so fervent and enlarged a
heart, and bountiful a hand, for the advancement and*

enlargement of Christ's kingdom of grace among this poor people, and the eternal welfare of their souls; which may well excite the joy and admiration of all good Christians, the thanks of all who make the interests of Zion their own, and especially of him who has the souls of the Indians committed to his own more immediate care.

I write, also, partly to inform you of what I have had opportunity to observe, of the state of things here, relating to the affair of the instruction of the Indians, which you have a right to know; it being an affair in which you have been pleased so greatly to interest yourself, and which depends so much on the effects of your most generous christian beneficence. I have had considerable opportunity to observe the state of things; for though it is but about a month since I came here, after I had undertaken the work of the ministry here, as the stated missionary, yet I had been here before, two months in the winter, and then spent much time with the Indians, particularly with the Mohawks under the care of Capt. Kellogg.

There are here two schools for the instruction of Indian children: one under the care of Mr. Timothy Woodbridge, which began soon after Mr. Sergeant began to preach to these Indians—this school consists wholly of the proper Housatonnuck Indians; the other, under the care of Capt. Kellogg, which he began with the Housatonnucks, on the plan which Mr. Sergeant projected; but, in the changeable unsettled state, in which things have been since Mr. Sergeant's

death, it has been altered from that form, and the Housatonnuck boys have left it, and it now consists wholly of Mohawk children, which have been brought down hither by their parents, from their own proper country, about eighty miles, to this end, that they might be taught to read, and write, and be instructed in the christian religion.

There are some things, which give a hopeful prospect with regard to these Mohawk Indians; particularly the forward inclination of the children and their aptness to learn. But that, which has evidently been the greatest defect from the beginning in the method of instruction here, is, that no more proper and effectual measures have been taken, to bring the children that are here to the knowledge of the English tongue. For want of this, all the labour and cost, which have been expended in schools here, for about fourteen years, have been consequently to but little effect or benefit. When the children are taught to read, many of them, for want of the English language, know nothing of what they read; their books being all in English. They merely learn to make such and such sounds, on the sight of such and such marks, but know not the meaning of the words, and so have neither profit nor pleasure in reading, and will therefore be apt soon to lose even what they have learned, having no benefit or entertainment in the use of it.

It is on many other accounts of great importance, that they should be brought to know the English language. This would greatly tend to forward their instruction; their own barbarous

languages being exceedingly barren, and very unfit to express moral and divine things. It would likewise open their minds, and, by means of their acquaintance and conversation with the English, would tend to advance them in knowledge and civilization. Some pains has been taken to teach the children the English tongue, but nothing very considerable has been accomplished. And I can think of but two ways in which it can be effected—either by introducing a number of English children into the schools, to learn with them, and be their mates; or by distributing the Indian children into English families, to live there a year or two, where they must be allowed to speak the English and nothing else, and then return into the Indian schools, to perfect them in reading and writing, and the knowledge of the principles of religion, and all other useful knowledge. The latter, if their parents can be persuaded to consent to it, as probably they may, will be much the most effectual.

I would therefore, Sir, humbly propose, that some such method should be taken with regard to the children, who have the benefit of your liberality; and that part of your benefaction should be expended in this way, under the care of prudent and faithful trustees; for, in order to the business being managed thoroughly in future, a great deal of care and activity will be necessary, vastly more than the schoolmaster can have leisure for. There are many things pertaining to the regulation of the affairs of the instruction of the Indian children, which seem greatly to require the care of a number of persons, who shall be intrusted to dispose things according to the best of their

discretion; sending from time to time a particular and exact account of the manner in which they have laid out your money.

I thought myself obliged to give you these intimations; you being at a great distance, and not capable of knowing the exact state of things, any otherwise, than by the information of those who are on the spot; and it being fit that you should know those circumstances, which are of so much importance to the affair, that, without a proper regard to them, the great expense which you incur, is liable to be in a great measure in vain.

I humbly request your prayers to the Fountain of all light and grace, for his guidance and assistance in this important service, which I have lately undertaken in this place.

*I am, Honoured Sir,
Your most humble servant,
And affectionate brother in the gospel ministry,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

A conference was appointed to be held at Albany, the last week in June, 1751, between the commissioners of the governments of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York, and the chiefs of the Iroquois, or Six Nations, for the purpose of making a treaty. The commissioners of Massachusetts were directed to pass through Stockbridge, on their way to Albany, for the purpose of conferring with the Mohawks already there, about their settlement in New England. On their arrival they found that Hendrick, and almost all the heads of families, on account of their disgust at the neglect of their children, on the part of Capt. Kellogg, had returned to their own country. In

consequence of this, they requested Mr. Edwards to go to Albany, and be present at the conference; whither he accordingly went the first week in July. In an interview with Hendrick and Nicholas, he endeavoured to persuade them to influence as many of the Mohawk chiefs, as possible, to go to Stockbridge, and there treat of their removal to New England. This being urged upon them afterwards, by the commissioners of Massachusetts, was agreed to by them and the other chiefs; and a conference appointed to be held at Stockbridge in August. Mr. Edwards then returned to Stockbridge, and in the latter part of July, to his family in Northampton.

The first week in August, he removed his family and effects from Northampton to Stockbridge; and on Thursday, August. 8th, was regularly installed as the minister of the congregation in that place, and inducted into the office of missionary to the Indians residing in its vicinity. His salary was derived from three sources: from the parish of Stockbridge; from the Society in London, for Propagating the Gospel in New England, and the Parts adjacent, whose missionary he was, through their commissioners at Boston; and from the legislature of the colony, as a part of the annual fund devoted to the civilization of the Indians. This latter sum was paid, of course, to the individual, who held the office of minister and missionary at Stockbridge, although the government had no voice in his appointment.

On Tuesday, August. 13th, the chiefs of the Mohawks came from their two principal settlements to Stockbridge, and met the commissioners of the province. The chiefs expressed a very strong desire that their children might be instructed; but objected to the removal to Stockbridge, on the ground that the affairs of the Mohawks there were left in the utmost confusion, that no regular school was established, and no thorough means taken for the education of their children. After reminding the commissioners how often the

English had failed to fulfil their promises, and disappointed the hopes which they had encouraged them to entertain, they requested them to promise nothing, but what the government would certainly perform. The commissioners agreed among themselves, that in consequence of the utter incompetency of Capt. Kellogg, another instructor, a man of learning and skill, must be procured for the Mohawk school; and promised the chiefs that a regular school should be established for their children, and a competent instructor speedily procured. After this, the chiefs declared their acceptance of the proposals made to them, of sending their children to Stockbridge for instruction, and of coming, a number of them, to reside there; and tendered a belt of wampum to the commissioners, in confirmation of the agreement, which was accepted. On Thursday, August. 22, the council was dissolved, and the chiefs went home.

The Mohawks at this time discovered a very strong desire to promote the education of their children, and an unusual willingness to receive religious instruction; as did also a part of the tribe of the Oneiyutas, or Oneidas, residing at Onohohquauga, or Onohquauga, a settlement on the Susquehannah. The French having been apprized of the efforts making by the English, in behalf of the Mohawks, were busily occupied in seducing them, and the other tribes of the Iroquois, to emigrate into Canada; and were actually erecting a chain of forts extending from Canada through New York, Pennsylvania, and the wilderness beyond to the Mississippi. Mr. Edwards, believing that if the utmost good faith was not kept with the Mohawks the whole plan of instructing them would be defeated, and regarding the period as a most critical one for the welfare of the British colonies, addressed a letter on the subject of the Indians, to the Hon. Thomas Hubbard, Speaker of the House of Assembly. In this letter he gave an account of the council held with the chiefs of the Mohawks, at Stockbridge, and their agreement to encourage

the education of their children at that place; mentioned the interest felt in the subject by the Mohawks and the Oneiyutas, and by some of the Tuscaroras; stated the vast importance of the existing crisis, for securing the friendship of the Six Nations; recited the machinations of the French, to seduce them from the English interest, and their hostile movements in the west; pointed out the religious and literary instruction of the Indians as the only means of securing their attachment to the British cause; and detailed the measures necessary to be pursued at Stockbridge, to promote these great objects.

When Mr. Edwards had removed his family to Stockbridge, he found himself exceedingly embarrassed, from the difficulty of procuring the land necessary for his own immediate accommodation. When the town was first settled, it was granted to the Housatonnucks, except six portions, to the late missionary, the school-master, and four other settlers. These portions were now distributed among fourteen proprietors, and could be purchased only at a very high price. He therefore presented a petition to the General Court, at their session in October, 1751, asking leave to purchase the necessary lands, for his own accommodation—a homestead in the centre of the town, and a piece of wood-land in the outskirts. The legislature granted him leave to purchase the homesteads, and recommended to the English inhabitants, to provide the necessary wood-land for their minister.

On the tract of land, which he purchased, near the centre of the town, Mr. Edwards, soon after, erected a commodious dwelling, which is still standing.

Chapter XX^(TOC)

Letter to Sir W. Pepperell—Letter to Lady Pepperell—Letter to his Father—Arrival of Mr. Hawley—Increasing Importance of Indian Establishment—Schemes of its Enemies—Firm Stand Taken by Mr. Edwards—Letter to Mr. Oliver—Letter to Commissioners—Difficulties to the Mission—Answer to Mr. Williams—Letter to the People of Northampton—Marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Burr—Letter to Mr. Erskine—Letter to Mr. Hollis—Letter to Mr. Hubbard.

THE Indian establishment at Stockbridge, being gradually more and more known, excited more and more the attention, and interest, of the benevolent of England. Among these, Joshua Paine, Esq. of London, addressed a letter to Sir William Pepperell, the governor of the province; requesting the information, as to the proper plan of a school for Indian girls at that place. An extract from that letter was forwarded to Mr. Edwards from Sir William, through the secretary of the commissioners, with a request that he would write to Sir William on the subject. He accordingly addressed to him the following letter.

“Stockbridge, November. 28, 1751.

HONOURED SIR,

WHEN I had the opportunity the last spring of waiting on your Excellency at your seat at Kittery, and was there gratified and honoured by the kind and hospitable entertainment of your house, I was favoured with some conversation with you, concerning the affairs of the Indians at Stockbridge, and the business of the mission here, to which I had then been invited.

And you were then pleased generously to assure me of your good offices, in affording me any assistance in this employment, which you could render me, through your acquaintance and correspondence in London.

I have lately been favoured with a letter from the Hon. Andrew Oliver, of Boston, wherein he was pleased to send me an extract of a letter to you from Joshua Paine, Esq. of London, concerning a proper plan of a school for Indian girls in this place, and to propose to me to write to you on the subject of the said extract. This encourages me to hope that a letter from me, on this subject, to your Excellency will be kindly received.

With this hope, I would take leave to say, that I think that, as the boarding-schools here are now in their commencement, and are yet to receive their form and character, and that among a people hitherto unaccustomed to any method of instruction whatever, it is a great pity but that the method actually adopted should be free from the gross defects of the ordinary method of teaching among the English.

One of these grand defects, as I humbly conceive, is this, that children are habituated to learning without understanding. In the common method of teaching, so far as my observation extends, children, when they are taught to read, are so much accustomed to reading, without any kind of knowledge of the meaning of what they read, that they continue reading without understanding, even a long time after they are capable of understanding, were it not for a habit of making such and such sounds, on the sight of such and such letters, with a perfect

inattentiveness to any meaning. In like manner they are taught their catechism, saying over the words by rote, which they began to say, before they were capable of easily and readily comprehending them. Being long habituated to make sounds without connecting any ideas with them, they so continue, until they come to be capable of well understanding the words, and would perhaps have the ideas, properly signified by the words, naturally excited in their minds on hearing the words, were it not for an habitual hearing and speaking them without any ideas; so that, if the question were put in phraseology somewhat new, to which they have not been accustomed, they would not know what to answer. Thus it happens to children, even with regard to the plainest printed catechisms, even those which have been contrived with great care and art, so that they might be adapted to the lowest capacities.

I should therefore think that, in these boarding-schools, the children should never read a lesson, without the master or mistress taking care, that the child be made to attend to, and understand, the meaning of the words and sentences which it reads; at least after the child begins to read without spelling, and perhaps in some degree before. And the child should be taught to understand things, as well as words. After it begins to read in a Psalter, Testament, or Bible, not only the words and phrases should be explained, but the things which the lesson treats of should be, in a familiar manner, opened to the child's understanding; and the master or mistress should enter into conversation with the child about them. Familiar questions should be put to the child about the subjects of the

lesson; and the child should be encouraged, and drawn on, to speak freely, and in his turn also to ask questions, for the resolution of his own doubts.

Many advantages would arise from this method. By this means, the child's learning will be rendered pleasant, entertaining, and profitable, as his mind will gradually open and expand with knowledge, and his capacity for reasoning be improved. His lesson will cease to be a dull, wearisome task, without any suitable pleasure or benefit. This will be a rational way of teaching. Assisting the child's reason enables him to see the use, and end, and benefit of reading, at the same time that he takes pains from day to day to read. It is the way also to accustom the child from its infancy to think and reflect, and to beget in it an early taste for knowledge, and a regularly increasing appetite for it.

So also, with regard to the method of catechizing children; beside obliging them to give the answers in the printed catechism, or in any stated form of words, questions should be asked them from time to time, in the same familiar manner, as they are asked questions commonly about their ordinary affairs, with familiar instructions, explanations, and rehearsals of things, intermixed; and if it be possible, the child should be led, by wise and skilful management, into the habit of conversation on divine things, and should gradually be divested of that shyness and backwardness, usually discovered in children, to converse on such topics with their superiors. And when the printed catechisms are used, as I am far from

thinking they ought to be entirely neglected, care should be taken, that the child should attend to the meaning of the words, and be able to understand them; to this end, not only explaining the words and sentences, but also from time to time varying the phraseology, putting the question in different words of the same sense, and also intermixing with the questions and answers, whether printed or not, some improvement or application, in counsels and warnings given to them, founded on the answers that have been given.

Beside the things already mentioned, there are other things, which, as it appears to me, ought to be done, with regard to the education of children in general, wherein the common methods of instruction in New England are grossly defective. The teacher, in familiar discourses, might, in a little time, give the children a short general scheme of the scriptural history, beginning with the creation of the world, and descending through the various periods of that history, informing them of the larger divisions, and more important events of the story, and giving them some idea of their connexion one with another—first, of the history of the Old Testament, and then of the New. And when the children had in their heads this general scheme, then the teacher might, at certain times, entertain them, in like familiar discourse, with the particular stories of the Scriptures, sometimes with one story, and then with another, before they can obtain the knowledge of them themselves, by reading; for example, at one time the story of the creation, at another time the story of the flood, then the dispersion of the nations, the calling of Abraham, the story of

Joseph, the bringing of the children of Israel out of Egypt: and in the New Testament, the birth of Christ, some of the chief acts of his life, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, the effusion of the Holy Spirit at the day of Pentecost, and some of the chief of the acts of the apostles; withal, pointing out to them the place which each event has in the general scheme, and the connexion it has with other main parts of it. The teacher, in a familiar manner, should apply the events of the story discoursed upon, with the design of informing the child's understanding, influencing his heart, and directing his practice. A child, who is able to read his Bible, might be set to read a particular scriptural history, sometimes one, and sometimes another, diligently observing it, and examining for himself all that is said concerning it. And when he has done, he might be called to the master or mistress, and inquired of, concerning the particulars of the history, to see that he has paid attention, and is able to give a good account of it.

And I can see no good reason, why children in general, beside the scriptural history, should not, in a like familiar manner of conversation, be taught something of the great successive changes and events, in the Jewish nation, and the world at large, which connect the history of the Old and New Testaments. Thus, they might be informed, in short, of the manner in which the four great monarchies succeeded each other, the persecutions which the Jews suffered from Antiochus Epiphanes, and the principal changes which happened to their church and state, before the coming of Christ. And they might be shown, how such and such events

were a fulfilment of such and such prophecies. And when they learn the history of the New Testament, they might, with much profit and entertainment, have pointed out to them many plain prophecies of the Old Testament, which have their fulfilment in him. And I can see no good reason, why children cannot, or may not, be taught something in general of ecclesiastical history, and be informed how things, with regard to the state of religion and the church of God, have gone on, as to some of the main events, from the time when the scriptural history ended, to the present time; and how given prophecies of the Scriptures have been fulfilled in some of these events; or why they may not be told, what may yet be expected to come to pass according to the scriptural prophecies, from this time, to the end of the world.

It appears to me obvious, also, that, in connexion with all this, they should be taught somewhat relating to the chronology of events, which would make the story so much the more distinct and entertaining. Thus, they may be taught how long it was from the creation of the world to the coming of Christ; how long from the creation to the flood; how long from the flood to the calling of Abraham, etc.; how long David lived before Christ; how long before the captivity in Babylon; how long the captivity, before Christ, etc.; how long since the birth of Christ; how old he was when he began to preach, and when he was crucified; how long after his resurrection, before he ascended; how long, also, after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, until Babylon was destroyed by Cyrus; how long after the Persian empire, before that empire was

overthrown by Alexander; when was the great oppression of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes; when Judea was conquered by the Romans; how long after Christ's resurrection before the destruction of Jerusalem; and how long before the empire became christian; how long after Christ before the popes claimed such and such powers; when the worship of images was introduced; how long before the Reformation, etc. etc. All children are capable of being informed, and having an idea of these things, and can much more easily learn them, if endeavours were used to that end, than many things which they do learn.

And with like ease, and with equal benefit, they might be taught some of the main things in geography: which way the land of Canaan lies from this; how far it is; which way Egypt lay from Canaan: which way Babylon lay from Jerusalem, and how far; which way Padan-Aram was from Canaan; where Rome lay from Jerusalem; where Antioch, etc. etc. And I cannot but think it might be a pretty easy thing, if proper means were taken, to teach children to spell well, and girls as well as boys. I should think it may be worth the while, on various accounts, to teach them to write, and also to teach them a little arithmetic, some of the first and plainest rules. Or, if it be judged, that it is needless to teach all the children all these things, some difference might be made in children of different genius, and children of the best genius might be taught more things than others. And all would serve, the more speedily and effectually, to change the taste of Indians, and to bring them off from their barbarism and brutality, to a relish

for those things which belong to civilization and refinement.

Another thing, which properly belongs to a christian education, and which would be unusually popular with them, and which would in several respects have a powerful influence, in promoting the great end in view, of leading them to renounce the coarseness, and filth, and degradation, of savage life, for cleanliness, refinement, and good morals, is teaching them to sing. Music, especially sacred music, has a powerful efficacy to soften the heart into tenderness, to harmonize the affections, and to give the mind a relish for objects of a superior character.

In order to promote the salvation of the children, which is the main design of the whole Indian establishment at this place, I think that, beside their attending public worship on the sabbath, and the daily worship of the family, and catechizing in the school, and frequent counsels and warnings given them, when all together, by their teachers; each child should, from time to time, be dealt with singly, particularly, and closely, about the state and concerns of his soul; and particular care should be taken to teach and direct each child, concerning the duty of secret prayer, and the duty pressed and enforced on every one; and care should be taken, that all may have proper opportunity and convenience for it.

I need say nothing concerning buildings, lodgings, household stuff, cattle, servants, husbandry instruments, and utensils for the children's work; as it is agreed on all hands, that these are necessary; and the providing of them will doubtless be left to

the care and discretion of the trustees that shall be appointed.

But I would beg leave to say further, with regard to methods to forward the proficiency of the children in their learning, that I cannot but think measures might be devised, greatly to encourage and animate them in it, and excite a laudable ambition to excel. One thing I have thought of, which, as appears to me, might have a happy tendency this way, in each of the boarding-schools: at certain periods, there should be a sort of public examination in the school, on a day appointed for the purpose, which shall be attended by all the trustees, and all in the town who are in any respect connected with Indian affairs, and some of the neighbouring ministers, and gentlemen and ladies; and also that the chiefs of the Indians be invited to attend; at which there shall be a public trial of the proficiency which each one has made, in the various branches which have been taught, as in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, knowledge in the principles of religion, knowledge of church history, etc.; and that a premium shall be given to such as are found to excel, which may be done in something that will very much please Indian children, with but little expense. And likewise, that the works of the children be then produced, to be judged of, that it may be determined who has made the greatest proficiency in learning to sew, to spin, to knit, etc.; and that a reward be given to such as have excelled. And perhaps, also, that a reward be then given to such, as, by the testimony of their teachers and governors, have excelled in virtue or diligence, in care to speak the truth, in strictly observing the sabbath, in good manners, in respect

to their superiors, etc. And that, in the day of public trial, there be somewhat of an entertainment made for the members of the school, and those who are invited to attend. This not only might tend greatly to stimulate the children in their learning, but would be very pleasing and animating to the tribes of Indians, and would have great influence in rendering them very favourably disposed to the affairs of the schools.

But your Excellency will easily see that, in order to the practicableness of these things, in any tolerable degree and manner, it is necessary that the children should be taught the English tongue; and indeed this is of the most absolute necessity, on almost every account. The Indian languages are extremely barbarous and barren, and very ill fitted for communicating things moral and divine, or even things speculative and abstract. In short, they are wholly unfit for a people possessed of civilization, knowledge, and refinement.

Besides, without their learning English, their learning to read will be in vain; for the Indians have not the Bible, nor any other book, in their own language. Without this, their teachers cannot converse with them, and so can have no advantage to instruct them. Hence, all possible means must be used, in the first place, to introduce the English tongue among the children. To this end, much pains should be taken to teach them the English name for every thing, and English words that signify such and such actions; and an interpreter might be used for a while, to interpret their lessons to them, and to teach them to construe them, or turn them into Indian. And a

number of English children might be put into the school with the Indian children. But the most effectual method of all would be, to put out some of the Indian children, first, into some good English families, one at a place, to live there a year or two, before they are brought into the school; which would not only be above all others the most successful method, but would be absolutely necessary, at least at first; but truly a great deal of care must be taken to find good places for them, and to look well to them, and to see that they are well taken care of, in the families to which they are sent. It is probable, that the parents of the children might, with proper endeavours, be persuaded to such a measure.

But it will doubtless be very easily and quickly determined, by your Excellency, that, if such methods as those which have been mentioned, or any like them, or indeed any other effectual measures, are taken, it will be absolutely necessary that the school should be under the constant care and inspection of trustees, who live upon the spot, or very near at hand. It will be in vain for any to expect that any woman can look after such a school, and provide for and govern so large a family, and take care continually to order and regulate so many and great affairs pertaining to it, within doors and without, without much assistance of some always at hand, who are able and faithful, and are interested and duly empowered. If she has under her a second, or a kind of usher, and has servants of both sexes, yet still she will be under the necessity of having some superior assistance. And as to the precise method of teaching, and regulating the discipline of the school

and family, it must be left very much to their discretion: for experience alone can certainly determine the fittest methods of ordering such an establishment, so new and untried, though very probable conjectures may be made. And experience will doubtless direct to some new measures, which cannot now be thought of. Hoping that your Excellency will excuse the particularity and minuteness into which I have unintentionally been led on a subject about which I cannot but feel the deepest interest,

*I remain,
With very high respect,
Your most humble servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

In the package to Sir William, Mr. Edwards, in consequence of her own request, forwarded to Lady Pepperell, who was then in very deep affliction, the following letter; which will probably be regarded as one of the happiest specimens of christian sympathy and condolence, to be found in epistolary writing.

To Lady Pepperell.

Stockbridge, November. 28, 1751

MADAM,

When I was at your house in Kittery, the last spring, among other instances of your kind and condescending treatment to

me, was this, that, when I had some conversation with Sir William, concerning Stockbridge and the affairs of the Indians, and he generously offered me any assistance, in the business of my mission here, which his acquaintance and correspondence in London enabled him to afford me, and proposed my writing to him on our affairs; you were also pleased to invite me to write to you at the same time. If I should neglect to do as you then proposed, I should fail not only of discharging my duty, but of doing myself a great honour. But as I am well assured, even from the small acquaintance I had with you, that a letter of mere compliments would not be agreeable to a lady of your disposition and feelings, especially under your present melancholy circumstances; so the writing of such a letter is very far from my intention or inclination.

When I saw the evidences of your deep sorrow, under the awful frown of Heaven in the death of your only son, it made an impression on my mind not easily forgotten; and when you spoke of my writing to you, I soon determined what should be the subject of my letter. It was that which appeared to me to be the most proper subject of contemplation for one in your circumstances; that, which I thought, above all others, would furnish you a proper and sufficient source of consolation, under your heavy affliction; and this was the Lord Jesus Christ—particularly the amiableness of his character, which renders him worthy that we should love him, and take him for our only portion, our rest, hope, and joy; and his great and unparalleled love towards us—And I have been of the same

mind ever since; being determined, if God favoured me with an opportunity to write to your Ladyship, that those things should be the subject of my letter. For what other subject is so well calculated to prove a balm to the wounded spirit.

Let us then, dear Madam, contemplate the loveliness of our blessed Redeemer, which entitles him to our highest love; and, when clearly seen, leads us to find a sweet complacency and satisfaction of soul in him, of whatever else we are deprived. The Scriptures assure us that He, who came into the world in our nature, and freely laid down his life for us, was truly possessed of all the fulness of the Godhead, of his infinite greatness, majesty, and glory, his infinite wisdom, purity, and holiness, his infinite righteousness and goodness. He is called 'the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person.' He is the Image, the Expression, of infinite beauty; in the contemplation of which, God the Father had all his unspeakable happiness from eternity. That eternal and unspeakable happiness of the Deity is represented as a kind of social happiness, in the society of the persons of the Trinity; 'Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.' This glorious Person came down from heaven to be 'the Light of the world,' that by him the beauty of the Deity might shine forth, in the brightest and fullest manner, to the children of men.

Infinite Wisdom also has contrived that we should behold the glory of the Deity, in the face of Jesus Christ, to the greatest advantage, in such a manner as should be best adapted to the

capacity of poor feeble man; in such a manner, too, as is best fitted to engage our attention, and allure our hearts, as well as to inspire us with the most perfect complacency and delight. For Christ having, by his incarnation, come down from his infinite exaltation above us, has become one of our kinsmen and brothers. And his glory shining upon us through his human nature, the manifestation is wonderfully adapted to the strength of the human vision; so that, though it appears in all its effulgence, it is yet attempered to our sight. He is indeed possessed of infinite majesty, to inspire us with reverence and adoration; yet that majesty need not terrify us, for we behold it blended with humility, meekness, and sweet condescension. We may feel the most profound reverence and self-abasement, and yet our hearts be drawn forth sweetly and powerfully into an intimacy the most free, confidential, and delightful. The dread, so naturally inspired by his greatness, is dispelled by the contemplation of his gentleness and humility; while the familiarity, which might otherwise arise from the view of the loveliness of his character merely, is ever prevented by the consciousness of his infinite majesty and glory; and the sight of all his perfections united fills us with sweet surprise and humble confidence, with reverential love and delightful adoration.

This glory of Christ is properly, and in the highest sense, divine. He shines in all the brightness of glory that is inherent in the Deity. Such is the exceeding brightness of this Sun of righteousness, that, in comparison of it, the light of the natural sun is as darkness; and hence, when he shall appear in his

glory, the brightness of the sun shall disappear, as the brightness of the little stars do when the sun rises. So says the prophet Isaiah, 'Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun shall be ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and before his ancients gloriously.' Isaiah 24:23. But, although his light is thus bright, and his beams go forth with infinite strength; yet, as they proceed from the Lamb of God, and shine through his meek and lowly human nature, they are supremely soft and mild, and, instead of dazzling and overpowering our feeble sight, like a smooth ointment or a gentle eyesalve, are vivifying and healing. Thus on them, who fear God's name, 'the Sun of righteousness arises, with healing in his beams,' Malachi 4:2. It is like the light of the morning, a morning without clouds, as the dew on the grass, under whose influence the souls of his people are as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain. Thus are the beams of his beauty and brightness fitted for the support and reviving of the afflicted. He heals the broken in spirit, and bindeth up their wounds. When the spirits of his people are cut down by the scythe, he comes down upon them, in a sweet and heavenly influence, like rain on the mown grass, and like showers that water the earth. (Psalms 72:6)

But especially are the beams of Christ's glory infinitely softened and sweetened by his love to men, the love that passeth knowledge. The glory of his person consists, preeminently, in that infinite goodness and grace, of which he made so wonderful a manifestation, in his love to us. The apostle John tells us, that God is light; (1 John 1:5) and

again, that God is love; (1 John 4:8) and the light of his glory is an infinitely sweet light, because it is the light of love. But especially does it appear so, in the person of our Redeemer, who was infinitely the most wonderful example of love that was ever witnessed. All the perfections of the Deity have their highest manifestation in the work of redemption, vastly more than in the work of creation. In other works, we see him indirectly; but here, we see the immediate glory of his face. (2 Corinthians 3:18) In his other works, we behold him at a distance; but in this, we come near, and behold the infinite treasures of his heart. (Ephesians 3:8, 9, 10) It is a work of love to us, and a work of which Christ is the author. His loveliness, and his love, have both their greatest and most affecting manifestation in those sufferings, which he endured for us at his death. Therein, above all, appeared his holiness, his love to God, and his hatred of sin, in that, when he desired to save sinners, rather than that a sensible testimony should not be seen against sin, and the justice of God be vindicated, he chose to become obedient unto death; even the death of the cross. Thus, in the same act, he manifests, in the highest conceivable degree, his infinite hatred of sin, and his infinite love to sinners. His holiness appeared like a fire, burning with infinite vehemence against sin; at the same time, that his love to sinners appeared like a sweet flame, burning with an infinite fervency of benevolence It is the glory and beauty of his love to us, polluted sinners, that it is an infinitely pure love; and it is the peculiar sweetness and endearment of his holiness, that it has its most glorious manifestation in such an

act of love to us. All the excellencies of Christ, both divine and human, have their highest manifestation in this wonderful act of his love to men—his offering up himself a sacrifice for us, under these extreme sufferings. Herein have abounded toward us the riches of his grace, in all wisdom and prudence.

(Ephesians 1:8) Herein appears his perfect justice. Herein, too, was the great display of his humility, in being willing to descend so low for us. In his last sufferings, appeared his obedience to God, his submission to his disposing will, his patience, and his meekness, when he went as a lamb to the slaughter, and opened not his mouth, but in a prayer that God would forgive his crucifiers. And how affecting this manifestation of his excellency and amiableness to our minds, when it chiefly shines forth in such an act of love to us.

The love of Christ to men, in another way, sweetens and endears all his excellencies and virtues; as it has brought him in to so near a relation to us, as our friend, our elder brother, and our redeemer; and has brought us into an union so strict with him, that we are his friends, yea, members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. (Ephesians 5:30)

We see then, dear Madam, how rich and how adequate is the provision, which God has made for our consolation, in all our afflictions, in giving us a Redeemer of such glory, and such love; especially, when it is considered, what were the ends of this great manifestation of beauty and love in his death. He suffered, that we might be delivered. His soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, to take away the sting of sorrow,

and to impart everlasting consolation. He was oppressed and afflicted, that we might be supported. He was overwhelmed in the darkness of death, that we might have the light of life. He was cast into the furnace of God's wrath, that we might drink of the rivers of his pleasures. His soul was overwhelmed with a flood of sorrow, that our hearts might be overwhelmed with a flood of eternal joy.

We may also well remember, in what circumstances our Redeemer now is. He was dead; but he is alive, and he lives for evermore. Death may deprive us of our friends here, but it cannot deprive us of this our best Friend. We have this best of friends, this mighty Redeemer, to go to, in all our afflictions; and he is not one who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He has suffered far greater sorrows than we have ever suffered; and if we are actually united to him, the union can never be broken, but will continue when we die, and when heaven and earth are dissolved.

Therefore, in this we may be confident, though the earth be removed, in him we shall triumph with everlasting joy. Now, when storms and tempests arise, we may resort to him, who is a hiding-place from the storm, and a covert from the tempest. When we thirst, we may come to him, who is as rivers of water in a dry place. When we are weary, we may go to him, who is as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Having found him, who is as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, we may sit under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit will be sweet to our taste. Christ said to his disciples, 'In the world

ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace! If we are united to him, we shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out its roots by the river, that shall not see when heat cometh, but its leaf shall ever be green, and it shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall it cease from yielding fruit. He will now be our light in darkness; our morning-star, shining as the sure harbinger of approaching day. In a little time, he will arise on our souls, as the sun in his glory; and our sun shall no more go down, and there shall be no interposing cloud—no veil on his face, or on our hearts; but the Lord shall be our everlasting light, and our Redeemer our glory.

That this glorious Redeemer would manifest his glory and love to your mind, and apply what little I have said on this subject to your consolation, in all your afflictions, and abundantly reward your kindness and generosity to me while I was at Kittery, is the fervent prayer, Madam, of

*Your Ladyship's most obliged
and affectionate friend,
and most humble servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

The repeated afflictions of a widowed sister, in the beginning of the next year, occasioned the following letter to his father, containing some allusions to the state and circumstances of his own family.

To the Reverend Timothy Edwards,

East Windsor.

Stockbridge. Jan 27. 1752.

HONOURED SIR,

We have lately heard the sorrowful tidings of the death of two of sister Backus's^[33] children, as we are informed, both at your house; which is the occasion of cousin Eunice returning from Stockbridge at this time; she having a desire to see her mother and surviving sisters at Windsor, on this melancholy occasion. We are much affected with sister's great and heavy afflictions, and lament the death of two such likely, promising children, in their early youth. It is my earnest desire, that it may be sanctified to us of this family. I desire your prayers, that it may be so; particularly to those that are young in the family; that they may be awakened by it to diligent preparation for death; and that we all may take notice of our distinguished mercies, with a becoming thankfulness to God. I look upon it as a great favour of Heaven, that you, my parents, are still preserved in the land of the living, to so great an age. I hope, by the leave of Divine Providence, to make you and sister Backus a visit in the spring. We are, through mercy, in our ordinary state of health, except that little Betty don't seem of late to be so well as she was in the summer. If she lives till spring, I believe we must be obliged to come again to the use of the cold bath with her. My wife and children are well pleased with our present situation. They like the place far

better than they expected. Here, at present, we live in peace; which has of long time been an unusual thing with us. The Indians seem much pleased with my family, especially my wife. They are generally more sober and serious than they used to be. Beside the Stockbridge Indians, here are above sixty of the Six Nations, who live here for the sake of instruction. Twenty are lately come to dwell here, who came from about two hundred miles beyond Albany. We expect our son and daughter Parsons will remove hither in a short time. Many of their goods are already brought up.

[After alluding to the indigent circumstances of his sister Mrs. Backus and her family, and mentioning that himself and Mrs. Edwards had done every thing for his niece which was in their power, he proceeds.]

I hope some of her friends will be kind to her in this respect. There are perhaps none of her uncles but are much better able to help her than I am at this time; who, by reason of lately marrying two children, and the charge of buying, building, and removing, am, I suppose, about £2000 in debt, in this province money. ^[34] I should be glad if sister Mary would suggest it to brother Ellsworth to do something for her. If she don't care to do it in her own name, let her do it in mine, as doing the errand from me. Please to give my duty to my mother, and my love to sister Mary. My wife is at this moment from home. My children give their duty to their grandparents, and aunts, and love and affectionate condolence to their mournful surviving cousins

*I am, honoured Sir,
Your dutiful son,
JONATHAN EDWARDS"*

The allusion to his pecuniary circumstances, made by Mr. Edwards in the preceding letter, requires explanation. What was the actual amount of his salary at Northampton, I have not been able to ascertain; but he speaks of it, in one of his letters, as "the largest salary of any country minister in New England." Soon after his settlement there, he purchased a valuable homestead, with the requisite lands for pasturage and fuel, and erected a commodious dwelling-house. These, by the strictest economy, had all been paid for before his dismissal. It was several years however, after his removal to Stock-bridge, before he could sell his property at Northampton. In the mean time, he was under the necessity of purchasing another homestead, and of erecting another dwelling-house at Stockbridge. The debt thus incurred, added to the expense of removing his family, subjected them for a time to very serious pecuniary embarrassments; and his daughters, who had received not only an enlightened, but a polished education, readily lent their aid, to relieve the family from the existing pressure. For this purpose, they occupied their leisure in making lace and embroidering, in tambouring and other ornamental work, and in making and painting fans; all of which, in the existing state of the country, found a ready market at Boston:^[35] At length, the sale of his property in Northampton relieved him from debt, and placed his family in more pleasant circumstances.

On the 5th of February, O. S. Mr. Gideon Hawley, a young gentleman of a liberal education, and of great prudence, firmness, and integrity, arrived at Stockbridge. He had been appointed, by the commissioners, the schoolmaster of the Mohawk and other Iroquois children, and entered immediately on the duties of his office. He was ordained as a minister and missionary, July 31,

1734, N. S. Mr. Edwards found him a most faithful and useful coadjutor. He also occasionally preached to the Iroquois, as did Mr. Edwards once every sabbath.

Soon after the removal of Mr. Edwards to Stockbridge, in consequence of the misunderstandings and jealousies, subsisting between some of the principal English inhabitants of the town, and the confusion in which he saw the Indian affairs involved, he was led, in a letter to the Hon. Mr. Hubbard, of August. 31, 1751, to recommend the appointment of two or more trustees, "men perfectly impartial, no way interested in, related to, or engaged with, the contending parties." The absolute necessity of this step to the welfare of the mission, and of the Indian schools, soon became apparent.^[36] In consequence of the increasing importance of the Indian establishment at Stockbridge, and the increasing attention of the public to the mission and the schools, the benefactions of the legislature and of individuals, were increasing, and still likely to increase. By the augmented numbers of the Housatonnucks, and the accession of a Mohawk colony, it had become the principal mission of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in New England, and appeared destined to receive the chief amount of its revenue; Mr. Hollis had increased his annual stipend to £160, stg.; Mr. Paine was proposing to support a female boarding-school; the legislature of the province had just voted £500, provincial currency, for the school-house, and would probably aid in the support of the mistress; an adequate support was now given to the instructor of the Housatonnuck school; an annual stipend was given to the Housatonnucks, to be expended at Stockbridge for their benefit; a similar stipend was to be paid for the Mohawks, if they removed in considerable numbers to Stockbridge; a school, to be supported by the colony, for the education of their children, was not only pledged, but actually begun; and hopes were indulged that the yearly stipend of £500, stg. granted by the king,

to the Mohawks, might be expended under the direction of an agent, residing at Stockbridge, and not as before at Albany. It needed no great discernment to discover, that the amount of these numerous items must be great; and the bare possibility of engrossing the agency, through which this large aggregate must pass, and of turning it into a source of great private emolument, might easily excite the strong cupidity of individuals, and lead them to resort to every measure in their power, to secure that emolument to themselves. The opponent of Mr. Woodbridge, (whose influence in the town, and with the Indians, had been long chiefly extinct,) in consequence of the strong recommendation, given of him, by his nephew, while in London, to the directors of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in New England, had been appointed one of the board of commissioners of that society; as had the nephew himself, another of the same board; one of his family, through the same recommendation, had been conditionally nominated as the teacher of the female school;^[37] one of the trustees of the Indian establishment was about to connect himself with the family; and, if the nomination should be confirmed, it was his intention to remove to Stockbridge, in order to take a superintendence of Indian affairs, which, in the absence of his colleagues, would be sole and exclusive. So fair was the prospect at this time, in the view of these individuals, of engrossing the profit and the direction of the whole establishment in their own hands, that they threw off their wonted caution, and made known their purpose of removing every obstacle in the way of their designs.

Mr. Edwards well knew, that the influence of these individuals was most formidable: two of them being now members of the board of commissioners, on which, as Indian missionary, he was dependent; one of them being one of the trustees for the Indians at Stockbridge; one of them being personally acquainted with the directors in London; and two of them having

considerable influence with the principal men in the provincial government. Yet he saw, just as dearly, that, if their plans succeeded, the funds appropriated to the literary and moral improvement of the Indians, would be perverted to the purpose of individual aggrandizement. In such a state of things, he was not at a loss as to his own duty. The question, whether the individual nominated by the board of directors in London, as the teacher of the female school, should be appointed, having been thus submitted, for final decision, to the board of commissioners in Boston; their secretary wrote to Mr. Edwards, for an explicit statement of the facts relating to, the subject. Thus called upon, he did not hesitate to present the whole case, in a reply to the secretary, bearing date February. 18, 1752.

In this letter, after stating it to be absolutely necessary, that his correspondent should be let into some of the secrets of the affairs of Stockbridge, and after alluding to his having, on account of the controversy there subsisting, recommended, formerly, the appointment of two or more impartial trustees, no way interested in, or related to, the contending parties," to inspect those affairs; he states, among other things, the following particulars—When he recommended the appointment of these trustees, he little suspected, that one of them would prove the furthest of any person whatever, from possessing the indispensable qualification of impartiality, in consequence of his being about to become the son-in-law of one of the contending parties—The preceding year, a very formal pacification took place, between Mr. Woodbridge and his opponent, with solemn promises made by the latter, that he would thenceforward live peacefully with Mr. W, and no more speak ill of him, nor in any wise molest him. But the proposed alliance, the nomination of one of his family as teacher of the female school, and the appointment of himself and his nephew to the board of commissioners, had so elated him, that those promises appeared to be wholly forgotten. A sudden and strange alteration

had also appeared, in the temper and conduct of his intended son-in-law, who, in the absence of his colleagues, claimed the sole management of all Indian affairs, so that nothing was done but he was the doer of it—The Indians had a most unfavourable opinion of the opponent of Mr. Woodbridge, and the deepest prejudice against him, in consequence of his having often molested them, with respect to their lands, and other affairs, and, as they thought, having done very unjustly by them. This prejudice was extended to the family; and that to such a degree, that, after offering to feed and clothe such of their children, as should be sent to the school, attempted to be established, only four could be procured, three Housatonnucks and one Mohawk; and the parents of these four complained loudly of the treatment of their children. Whether this prejudice was well or ill founded, it was too deep to be eradicated—Very improper use had been made of the money given by Mr. Hollis. He had made large remittances, and to no good purpose; and was kept in entire ignorance, as to the actual state of things at Stockbridge. The individual who received his money, and boarded, and professed to instruct the children, had never established a regular school, and had never kept any regular accounts of his expenditures. No government was maintained, little attention paid to the manners of the children, and all was suffered to go on in wildness, filth, and confusion, to the great offence of such as visited the place. The generous design of Mr. Hollis had been totally defeated, and the large sum of money he had given, had been wholly lost, and worse than lost. The same boys, without this additional expense, would have been far better instructed and governed at the school of Mr. Woodbridge. There, they would have been taught reading, cleanliness, good manners and good morals; all of which had been wholly neglected, on the part of their professed instructor, who had himself been absent from Stockbridge for a long period—This irregularity, and disorderly management, led the Mohawks to take all their

children away from him, after the arrival of Mr. Hawley, and to place them under the care of the latter. Yet the former, wishing some pretext for drawing the money of Mr. Hollis, and not being able to procure any of the Indian boys to form a school, went regularly into the school kept by Mr. Hawley, and proceeded to treat the boys as if they were under his own care; alleging, that he was the superintendent of the male school—No one had been more open and abundant, in speaking of his uselessness, his exceeding unfitness for the business of an instructor, and the disorder and filthiness in which things were kept under his care, or in declaring, that it was high time that he was dismissed from the employment, than the resident trustee; but, in consequence of his new connexion, he had suddenly changed his mind, and now declared, that he must be retained—A similar change had taken place in his treatment of Mr. Edwards. For many years he had constantly professed the highest respect for him, far beyond what the latter could, with any modesty, expect. He had often expressed a higher esteem of him than of any minister in New England, as well as a very strong desire of living under his ministry. Yet, although Mr. Edwards had never had a word of difference with him, or his new connexions, his whole conduct was suddenly and entirely changed, and he had sided with them, in all their measures of opposition and violence.

Very singular management had been used, with respect to Mr. Hawley. Before his arrival, dark representations were carried to him—misrepresentations of the actual state of things at Stockbridge—to discourage him from accepting his appointment. Soon after his arrival, it was openly given out, that he would soon be removed. Had it not been for his firmness, prudence, and steadiness of temper, he would have been laid under great and permanent disadvantages. The resident trustee had warned him not to depend on Mr. Edwards, and challenged to himself the whole authority of directing

the school, and the affairs of the Indians—When the society in London recommended the proposed teacher of the female school, they could not have been aware, that her nearest kinsmen were to be the committee to examine her accounts. But the actual state of things was soon to be still more preposterous. She being the mistress, her nearest relatives were to be her council, and her husband the sole committee to examine her accounts, and make report to the legislature.

Mr. Edwards then adds, "I write these things, honoured Sir, because I am satisfied you have not heretofore been enlightened, in the true state of things, as you ought to have been It was my knowledge of some of these matters, though but little in comparison, which occasioned me, when last in Boston, so earnestly to press the commissioners frequently to visit this place I have been slow to speak. My disposition has been entirely to suppress what I knew, that would be to the disadvantage of any of the people here. But I dare not hold my peace any longer. You doubtless will own, Sir, that it is but doing you justice, for somebody or other to let you know the true state of things, in a matter of such vast importance, which is under your care, and which you being at so great a distance never can know, but by the information of some that live here; and I know of no one from whom you can more reasonably expect it, than from the missionary you have sent here, to have the special care of the interests of religion among the Indians. I did not intend to interfere with the affair of the teacher of the female school, or to say any thing that should tend to hinder it; and therefore avoided every thing of that nature, in my letter to Sir William Pepperell. But being now questioned again by the honourable commissioners, and the tendency of the measure more and more appearing, I thought that this was the time when God called on me to speak, and that if I should hold my peace now, I should perhaps lay a foundation for great uneasiness to my conscience all my life after; when I

might deeply lament the continued consequences of my silence, and when it would be too late to speak."

The next day Mr. Edwards addressed a letter to the commissioners in Boston, in which, after announcing the arrival of Mr. Hawley, and the high gratification of the Mohawks at the establishment of a regular school for their boys, he states the number of his scholars to be at that time thirty-six, mentions his happy qualifications as an instructor, and in compliance with their request gives, very summarily, his own views respecting a proper teacher for the female boarding-school.

During the spring of 1752, the state of affairs in Stockbridge, instead of improving, only grew worse. The interference of the former school-master with the school of Mr. Hawley, produced so much confusion, that, in the latter part of April, one half of the Mohawks left Stockbridge in utter disgust with him and his friends, and fully resolved never to return. A few days after their departure an intimate friend of the former school-master and his associates, visiting the male Mohawk school, under the care of Mr. Hawley, struck a child of the chief sachem at the Onohquaugas on the head with his cane, without any manner of provocation. The mother of this child was a woman of remarkable piety. This unhappy occurrence excited the universal indignation of the remaining Iroquois; and they appeared resolved, all of them, to pack up their effects immediately, and be gone. Mr. Hawley and the interpreter, finding it impossible to calm them, came to Mr. Edwards for advice, but he, having been often blamed for, interfering with the affairs of the Iroquois, and told that, in doing so, he meddled with that which was none of his business, referred them to the resident trustee; advising them to represent the whole affair to him, that he might use proper means to prevent the fatal consequences which were feared. Their doing so was, however,

regarded as the result of a disposition to find fault with him and his friends. The chiefs of the Onohquaugas, finding no redress, went to Mr. Edwards to make their complaint for this violent assault. There they found the aggressor; who, in order to pacify them, was persuaded to pay them a sum of money. The resident trustee, angry at what had occurred, went to the boarding-school, and proceeded to abuse Mr. Hawley in the presence of the whole school, in a very fervid manner; telling him that he was a man of no judgment, and of no prudence, and that he was unfit for the business he was in; and continued this abuse for three hours together. As his conversation was very loud, the Iroquois heard it, and came to the spot, expressing their fears for the personal safety of Mr. Hawley, to whom they had become much attached. Apprehending that, in consequence of this violence, he might be induced to leave Stockbridge, they declared, in a body, that, if he went away, they would go also. By these occurrences, the Indian were as effectually alienated from the resident trustee, as they had previously been from his new friends.

In consequence of these unhappy measures, and of a settled determination, on his part, to take, in the absence of his colleagues, the whole management of Indian affairs on himself; they also were disgusted. One of them relinquished all connexion with the business, and ceased to visit Stockbridge altogether. The other openly announced his entire discouragement, and declared that he would do his utmost to induce the government to withdraw their support from the establishment of the Iroquois. This led to an attempt to procure the dismissal of the latter, and the appointment of a connexion of the resident trustee; which however proved unsuccessful. At the same time, it was publicly and repeatedly announced, that Mr. Edwards himself would be removed from his mission; and, as soon after appeared, a vigorous attempt was actually made to accomplish this object.^[38]

Having stated these facts in a letter to the secretary of the commissioners, of May, 1752, Mr. Edwards proceeds—"But still I think there is no necessity of the Iroquois establishment being broken up, unless its enemies are resolved to have it so. The dependence of the establishment, as to continuance and prosperity, is chiefly on the Onohquaugas, who are much the best disposed of any of the Iroquois, and most likely to come in considerable numbers. They have not been here so long as the others, to see so much to discourage them, and they alone are willing to settle at the Hoplands. The affair is not at all desperate as to them, nor as to some of the Mohawks, if there be a speedy alteration. But if the two individuals, who challenge to themselves the whole direction of the affairs of the Iroquois, continue here, there is no hope of the continuance of Mr. Hawley, or of Mr. Ashley and his wife. They will not continue under one whom they regard as so despotic an inspector. And there will be no way to retain any of the Indians, unless it be some who are entirely mercenary, who may be persuaded to stay for the sake of the presents that are made them, and to be maintained and live here in mere idleness. This, it is now very apparent, is all that moves many of the Conneenchees, in being and continuing here"

"The resident trustee^[39] has plainly discovered many designs, tending to bring money into his own pocket: viz. a design of taking care of Mr. Hollis's boys himself; a design of being steward of both boarding-schools, by which he will have the opportunity of supplying the Indians out of his own shop, and of getting his pay from the British funds; a design of introducing his son, as the master of the boarding-school, under the idea of a present supply, another proper person not appearing; and an expectation of diverting the king's bounty, of £500 sterling, to the Six Nations, from New York. The former school-master has given hints of an agreement, between himself and him, to resign the care of Mr. Hollis's scholars to him, when things are ripe for it, he

providing for their maintenance, and taking care of their instruction by his son. Beside these things, his wife is to be mistress of the female school; and two of their sons to be maintained and educated at the public expense, and two of their girls, in like manner, to be maintained in the female school; and one of his family to be his wife's usher; and his servants to be paid for, under the character of servants employed in the affairs of the female school; and the house for the boarding-school set on his wife's land; and then the farm to be bought by the country for the school, with the advantage of selling it at a high rate; and yet the family in a great measure to be maintained on the produce of it; beside the advantage of carrying on a trade, both with the Stockbridge Indians and the Mohawks. A man had need to have a great stock of assuredness, to urge a public affair, under so manifold temptations of private interest."

The time of Mr. Edwards had been so much occupied by his removal from Northampton, the comfortable establishment of his family at Stockbridge, the ordinary duties of his parish and his mission, the claims of the Mohawks, the concerns of the various Indian schools, and the unhappy contentions of the whites; that he had, at first, no leisure to attend to the Reply of Mr. Williams. In the latter part of the spring, however, he began an answer to that gentleman, which he sent to the press the beginning of July,^[40] with the following title "Misrepresentations Corrected, and Truth Vindicated, in a Reply to the Rev Mr. Solomon Williams's Book, entitled, The True State of the Question, concerning the Qualifications necessary to Lawful Communion in the Christian Sacraments." It was read with deep interest by both parties, was admitted by both to be a triumphant answer to the "True State of the Question," and, taken in connexion with the "Humble Attempt," was regarded by the friends of strict communion, at that time, as it has ever since been, as an unanswerable defence of their system. If the opposers of that system have

not so regarded it, they have not publicly avowed the opposite opinion; as no attempt to answer it has hitherto appeared. Mr. Williams is said to have asked the advice of some of his friends, among the clergy, whether he had better commence a reply; but, finding that no one would encourage him to an attempt, which must end in reiterated defeat, he is reported to have sat down in mortified silence.

Appended to this publication was a letter from Mr. Edwards to his late flock at Northampton. They had published Mr. Williams's pamphlet at their own expense, and distributed it to every family in the town. That pamphlet, though so unsuccessful an attempt to answer Mr. Edwards, was yet filled with many lax and sceptical notions, derived from the writings of Dr. Taylor of Norwich, and apparently adopted by Mr. Williams, in the existing emergency, though in direct opposition, not only to Mr. Stoddard, whom he professed at once to venerate and defend, but to his own former publications. Though Mr. Edwards knew that the work of Mr. W. must soon go to its proper place, yet he also knew the state of fervid excitement in which his former congregation had long been; that they had printed and dispersed the pamphlet of Mr. W., (even without knowing its contents,) as an answer to his own treatise, and thus, in a sense, had adopted it before the world as their own work. These circumstances led him to fear, that the fatal errors abounding in the work of Mr. Williams might, at a period when the principles of Dr. Taylor of Norwich were gaining many converts in the colonies, mislead many, especially of the young, among his former people. To save them from this danger, he addressed to them an affectionate and truly pastoral letter, which will be found at the close of the Answer to Mr. Williams.^[41]

On the 29th of June, 1752, Mr. Edwards married his third daughter, ESTHER, to the Rev AARON BURR, of Newark, president of the college of

New Jersey, then established in that town, and a few years afterwards removed to Princeton.

In the following letter to Mr. Erskine, which is rich in intelligence, as well as thought, the reader will find one fact not generally known—that Mr. Edwards, in the latter part of the summer of 1751, was applied to, with much earnestness, by some parish in Virginia, to go and settle with them in the ministry. They offered him a handsome support, and sent a messenger with the offer, but his instalment at Stockbridge had taken place before his arrival.

To the Rev. John Erskine.

Stockbridge, July 7, 1752

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

The last spring I received a letter from you, dated, at the beginning, July 17, and at the end, September. 5, 1751 and the week before last I received another letter, dated Feb 11, 1752, with a packet, containing Arnauld de la fréquente Communion, Goodwin's Sermon at the Ordination of Mr. Pickering; Mr. Jarvis's Sermon on Methods for reviving Religion; Reasons of Dissent from the Sentence of the General Assembly; Edwards on Christ, Godman; Mr. Hartley's Sermon, Parish on the Assembly's Catechism; and Dr Gill's Sermon on Isaiah 11:12. I heartily thank you for these letters and pamphlets. Arnauld on frequent Communion will not be very profitable to me, by reason of my not understanding the

French. But several of the rest have been very agreeable to me. That letter which you mention in your last, dated February. 11, as sent about a twelve-month before, containing some Remarks on the Decay of the Power of the Papal Clergy, and an Abstract of Venema's Reasonings to prove that Judas was not present at the Lord's Supper, I never received, and regret it much that I missed it, and request that you would still send me those Remarks on the Decay of the Papal Clergy.

I am obliged to you for the particular information you have given me, concerning Mr. Adam of Falkirk's affair. Though it is a pity so deserving a person should suffer at all from his brethren, only for not acting contrary to his conscience; yet it is a matter of thankfulness, that the Assembly of the year 51 showed so much better temper than that of the preceding year. I shall be glad to hear concerning the temper and conduct of the Assembly of this present year, 1752.

I am sorry to learn, that there is so much reason to fear, that the revival of religion in the Netherlands will be hindered, and brought under a cloud, through the prevailing of imprudences. It is what I was afraid I should hear. I should be glad to see the Pastoral Letter you mention against Fanaticism, though written by one disaffected to the revival. I wish I could see a History of Enthusiasm through all ages written by some good hand, a hearty friend of vital religion, a person of accurate judgment, and large acquaintance with ecclesiastical history. Such a history, well written, might doubtless be exceedingly useful and instructive, and of great benefit to the church of

God; especially, if there were united with it a proper account and history of true religion. I should therefore choose, that the work should be a history of true, vital, and experimental religion, and enthusiasm: bringing down the history from age to age, judiciously and clearly making the distinction between one and the other; observing the difference of source, progress, and issue; properly pointing out the limits, and doing justice to each, in every age, and at each remarkable period. I don't know that there is any such thing extant, or any thing that would, in any good measure, answer the same purpose. If there be, I should be glad to hear of it.

I thank you for the account you give me of Mr. Taylor's writings, and of the things which he is doing to propagate his opinions. It now appears to be a remarkable time in the Christian world; perhaps such an one, as never has been before: things are going downhill so fast, and truth and religion, both of heart and practice, are departing by such swift steps, that I think it must needs be, that a crisis is not very far off, and what will then appear, I will not pretend to determine.

The last week I sent away my answer to Mr. Williams. If I live till it is published, I will endeavour to send one to you, and some other friends in Scotland. I hope now, in a short time, to be at leisure to resume my design, of writing something on the Arminian controversy. I have no thought of going through with all parts of the controversy at once, but the subject which I intended, God willing, first to write something upon, was

Freewill and Moral Agency; endeavouring, with as much exactness as I am able, to consider the nature of that freedom of moral agents, which makes them the proper subjects of moral government, moral precepts, councils, calls, motives, persuasions, promises and threatenings, praise and blame, rewards and punishments: strictly examining the modern notions of these things, endeavouring to demonstrate their most palpable inconsistency and absurdity; endeavouring also to bring the late great objections and outcries against Calvinistic divinity, from these topics, to the test of the strictest reasoning; and particularly that great objection, in which the modern writers have so much gloried, so long triumphed, with so great a degree of insult towards the most excellent divines, and in effect against the gospel of Jesus Christ—viz. That the Calvinistic notions of God's moral government are contrary to the common sense of mankind. In this Essay, I propose to take particular notice of the writings of Dr. Whitby, and Mr. Chubb, and the writings of some others, who, though not properly Pelagians, nor Arminians, yet in their notions of the freedom of the will, have, in the main, gone into the same scheme. But, if I live to prosecute my design, I shall send you a more particular account of my plan after it is perfected.

I suppose there has been a trial before now, whether a national collection can be obtained in Scotland, for New Jersey college: unless it has been thought prudent, by such as are friends of the affair, to put it off a year longer; as some things I have seen seem to argue. There was a design of Mr.

Pemberton's going to England and Scotland. He was desired by the trustees, and it was his settled purpose, to have gone the last year; but his people, and his colleague, Mr. Cummings, hindered it. His intention of going occasioned great uneasiness among his people, and created some dissatisfaction towards him, in the minds of some of them. Since that President Burr has been desired to go, by the unanimous voice of the trustees. Nevertheless. I believe there is little probability of his consenting to it; partly, on the account of his having lately entered into a married state. On the 29th of last month, he was married to my third daughter.

What you write of the appointment of a gentleman, to the office of lieut. governour, of Virginia, who is a friend of religion, is an event that the friends of religion in America have great reason to rejoice in; by reason of the late revival of religion in that province, and the opposition that has been made against it, and the great endeavours to crush it, by many of the chief men of the province. Mr. Davies, in a letter I lately received from him, dated March 2, 1752, mentions the same thing. His words are, 'we have a new governor; who is a candid, condescending gentleman. And, as he has been educated in the church of Scotland, he has a respect for the Presbyterians; which I hope is a happy omen.' I was in the latter part of the last summer applied to, with much earnestness and importunity, by some of the people of Virginia, to come and settle among them, in the work of the ministry; who subscribed handsomely for my encouragement and support, and sent a messenger to me with their request

and subscriptions; but I was installed at Stockbridge before the messenger came I have written some account of the state of things at Stockbridge to Mr. M'Laurin; which you doubtless will have opportunity to see.

July 24. The people of Northampton are still destitute of a minister, and in broken, sorrowful circumstances. They had the last winter Mr. Farrand, a young gentleman from New Jersey college, but contended much about him, so that he has left them They are now in a state of contention; my warmest opposers are quarrelling among themselves. I hear they have lately sent for a young preacher, a Mr. Green of Barnstable, who is soon expected; but I know nothing of his character.

Another minister has lately been dismissed from his people, on the same account that I was dismissed from Northampton: viz. Mr. Billings of Cold Spring. Many of the Cold Spring people were originally of Northampton, were educated in the principles, and have followed the example, of the people there.

I heartily thank you for the accounts you have from time to time sent me of new books, that are published in Great Britain. I desire you would continue such a favour. I am fond of knowing how things are going on in the literary world.

Mr. John Wright, a member of New Jersey college; who is to take the degree of Bachelor of Arts, the next September; is now at my house. He was born in Scotland; has lived in Virginia; is a friend and acquaintance of Mr. Davies; has a great interest in the esteem of the religious people of Virginia,

and is peculiarly esteemed by President Burr, has been admitted to special intimacy with him; and is a person of very good character for his understanding, prudence, and piety. He has a desire to have a correspondence with some divine of his native country, and has chosen you for his correspondent, if he may be admitted to such a favour. He intends to send you a letter with this; of which I would ask a favourable reception, as he has laid me under some special obligations.

My wife joins with me in affectionate salutations to you, and Mrs. Erskine. Hoping that we shall continue to remember each other at the throne of grace, I am,

*Dear Sir,
Your affectionate and obliged
Brother and servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

Soon after he had entered on the mission at Stockbridge, Mr. Edwards addressed the Rev. Mr. Hollis, by letter, concerning the Indian schools, and the state of the mission at large. The observations of a year had now brought him far more intimately acquainted with the actual state of things, and particularly, with the manner in which the annual benefactions of that gentleman had been expended; and he felt himself bound, at whatever hazard, to make the facts known. In doing this, he presented him, in a letter bearing date July 17, 1752, with a succinct and well drawn history of the mission, and stated, in general terms, the unhappy disagreement subsisting among the English inhabitants of Stockbridge, as well as various other circumstances of malignant aspect, which threatened ruin to the mission, and to the Indian schools. Want of room forbids its insertion. With this letter, he forwarded to Mr. Hollis a certificate, from a large number of the most respectable people

of the town, stating the actual conduct of his agent, or instructor, the condition of the Indian boys, and the manner in which his benefactions had been perverted.

The firm and undeviating course of conduct pursued by Mr. Edwards, with regard to the Indian schools, and the general concerns of the mission, at length convinced the resident trustee, and his new friends, that they had nothing to hope from any compliances on his part. They resolved, therefore, if possible, to effect his removal from Stockbridge. With this view, that gentleman repaired to Boston, and endeavoured, in conversation, not only with the commissioners, but with some of the principal men in the government, (and among others, with the secretary of the province,) to produce in their minds very unfavourable impressions concerning him particularly, that he was a man of an unyielding character, and unwilling to be reconciled to those from whom he had differed; and that, by this course, he was likely to ruin the Indian mission. The friends of Mr. Edwards, in Boston, giving him timely notice of this attempt; he addressed a letter to the Hon. Mr. Willard, in his own defence, bearing date July 17, 1752; in which he so effectually refuted these representations, that the influence of that gentleman was permanently secured, in favour of the mission, and its real friends.

Chapter XXI^(TOC)

Vote of Thanks of Commissioners—Sermon at Newark—Measures of the Enemies of the Mission Defeated—Letter to Mr. Oliver—Freedom of the Will—Letter to Mr. Erskine—Deposition of Mr. Gillespie—Letter to do—Letter to Mr. M'Culloch—Report of Indian Agent—Reply of Mr. Edwards—Further Defeat of the Enemies of the Mission.

On the 29th of June, the secretary of the commissioners in Boston forwarded, by their direction, to Mr. Edwards and Mr. Hawley, an official expression of the approbation, entertained by that board, of the firmness and integrity manifested by them, in their conduct relative to the Stockbridge mission.^[42]

The commissioners knew of the attempt made, to shake their own confidence, and that of the public, in their agents in that mission; and doubtless intended, by this prompt and unequivocal act of justice, at once to sustain the hearts of these gentlemen, under their severe trials, and to make it manifest to all men, that, notwithstanding that attempt, they continued to repose in them an undiminished confidence. In his reply, bearing date August. 27, 1752, Mr. Edwards, after returning his thanks to those gentlemen, for this very decisive expression of their favourable opinion, made to their secretary his regular report of the state of the mission.

After observing, that the people of the town, both English and Indians, notwithstanding repeated and vigorous efforts to break up their union, and, particularly, to excite a disaffection in them towards their ministers, were all happily united in opinion and affection, except one individual and his family; he mentions the alliance of the resident trustee with his family, which took place soon after the arrival at Stockbridge of his nephew from Connecticut.

The latter gentleman soon called on Mr. Edwards, and, after alluding to the fact, that he was opposed to the appointment of his cousin, as superintendent of the female boarding-school, insisted, as a member of the society in London, and of the board of commissioners, on knowing his reasons, and, at the same time, offered to be the instrument of settling the differences subsisting at Stockbridge. Mr. Edwards, preferring to answer this demand by letter, declined to make a representation of the case before him, but offered to join with him, in an earnest representation to the board of commissioners, that they would appoint a committee, to come on the spot, to inquire into the existing difficulties; on the ground, that it was more proper to have such a committee, as judges or mediators, than an individual, who was very nearly related to the family chiefly interested in these contentions; and proposed, that the commissioners, by their committee, should be desired to look into the management of the affairs at Stockbridge, from the beginning, by all the living inhabitants and residents of the town, who had had any hand in them, in any respect; declaring himself ready to open himself with freedom before such a committee—His correspondent, in reply, declined this proposal, reasserted his right to know the objections to the proposed teacher of the boarding-school, and intimated the regret which he should feel, if obliged to inform the society in London of the existing state of things at Stockbridge—Mr. Edwards, in his answer, insisted anew on his former proposal, of referring the case to the commissioners, declared himself not satisfied, that his correspondent, acting singly, had authority to demand the reasons of his judgment, as to the teacher of the female school, whatever the society in London, or their commissioners in Boston, acting as a body, might have; and concluded, by referring himself again to the commissioners, who were his constituents, and who had, a little before, informed him, that they looked upon their agents as accountable to them only.

The arrival of this gentleman, and the assurances he gave them of his influence with the society in London, revived for a time the drooping courage of his friends, particularly of the resident trustee, and of the agent of Mr. Hollis, who had, just before that event, resolved on removing from Stockbridge—Having thus alluded to the mischievous consequences growing out of this unhappy state of things, Mr. Edwards proceeds—"Thus things go on, in a state of confusion, of which those at a distance can scarcely have any idea. In the mean time, the affair of the Six Nations is languishing to death. The affair of the Mohawks is, I fear, past recovery, and in a manner dead. They seem to be discouraged, are most of them gone, and I do not expect will come up again; unless it be to get presents, and satisfy their hunger, in the present time of great scarcity in their own country. They have apparently very much given up the idea of coming hither for instruction. The Onohquaugas have not been here so long, to be discouraged by our management. But if things go on in this manner, it may be expected that they will be discouraged also. The management of things has a great while been in wrong hands. They ought to be conducted exclusively by the commissioners, who have had the care of Stock-bridge affairs; but here are others, who seem to aim to engross all to themselves, to be indefatigably active in prosecuting their particular designs, and impatient of every thing that stands in their way.

Very much depends on the appointment of a teacher of the female school. If that affair is settled to their minds, their influence here is well established. They are sensible that affairs depend very much on this simple point, and therefore this is the point they drive at with all their might. The wisdom of the commissioners will easily discover that this is the juncture, in which the foundation is to be laid of the future state of things in Stockbridge; of their prosperity or adversity; and perhaps with no opportunity of future redress. I look upon myself as called upon to speak somewhat freely at such a juncture;

and therefore I hope my so doing will be candidly interpreted by the commissioners. I do not think that our affairs will ever prosper, if they must be under the bands of the resident trustee and his friends."

In the month of September, Mr. Edwards went into New Jersey, and, on the 28th of that month, preached a sermon from James 2:19 before the synod at Newark, entitled, "True Grace distinguished from the Experience of Devils," which was published at their request. It is a clear, condensed, and powerful exhibition of the differences between real religion and its counterfeits, and will be found eminently useful, as a criterion of Christian character.

In the unhappy controversy, between Mr. Woodbridge and his opponent, perhaps no one circumstance had been more mortifying to the latter, or had had a more direct tendency to defeat all his measures, than the fact, that the white inhabitants of the town, (his own immediate family connexions excepted,) as well as the Indians of both nations, were, to a man, opposed to himself, and friendly to his antagonist. This rendered his daily life uncomfortable; it discouraged every attempt to forward his plans at the public meetings of the town; and when any point in controversy was to be decided, or any measure attempted, at Boston, he found that Mr. Woodbridge had a host of substantial witnesses on the spot, who gave in their testimony without fear. In this way, hitherto, every important design had been frustrated.

The winter, that was approaching, was regarded by both parties as a most important and interesting period; during which, in all probability, the affairs of the mission, and of the town, would be brought to a crisis. Those opposed to Mr. Woodbridge, were not ignorant, that, if Mr. Edwards were continued as the missionary at Stockbridge, such was his influence at Boston, and his general weight of character, there was too much probability, that Mr. Woodbridge would be continued the school-master of the Housatonnucks,

and Mr. Hawley of the Iroquois. In that case, there was but little chance of the female school being placed in the desired hands; if that failed, the stewardship of all the schools would fail; and then the whole system of measures, apparently so happily conceived, would be defeated. But if Mr. Edwards could be removed from Stockbridge, the removal of Mr. Woodbridge would be attended with less difficulty; that of Mr. Hawley, a young man, would follow of course, which would make way for the son of the resident trustee: these changes would almost necessarily insure the female school, as well as the stewardship and agency, in the family; and then the other objects in view could scarcely fail to be accomplished. As so much depended on the fact, whether Mr. Edwards was continued at Stockbridge, or not; there seemed to be held out, to minds capable of being influenced by them, very strong inducements to make one vigorous effort to effect his removal. This was accordingly resolved on, and, by some of the persons concerned, incautiously proclaimed.

One of the steps taken to accomplish this so desired object, is mentioned in the following letter. Whether it was one of the measures concerted, or was the self-suggested plan of the individual, who attempted to execute it, does not certainly appear. Could he have succeeded, could the English inhabitants of the town have been changed, and a new set of inhabitants have been introduced, all of them his adherents; no event probably would have so much furthered the objects in view. The almost utter impossibility of its success, connected with its total and immediate discomfiture, rendered the attempt supremely ridiculous, and covered the individual making it, and his party, with confusion.

To Andrew Oliver, Esquire.

Stockbridge, October. 1752.

SIR,

Since my letter of August. 27, various things have occurred among us, of which it may not be improper to inform you. It seems as though there was a resolution, in the people on the hill, to carry their schemes into effect, though the earth should be removed for it. The opponent of Mr. Woodbridge has lately made a vigorous and vehement attempt, suddenly to change the English inhabitants of the town, by buying out, at once, the old inhabitants in general. To thus end, he arose very early in the morning, and went out before day, and called some of them out of their beds, offering to buy their farms. In this manner, he went from one to another, until he had been to almost all the inhabitants in that forenoon; offering very high prices, and cash in hand; vehemently pressing that the bargain should be immediately closed, and the writings drawn, and the affair completed, without delay; urging it most pressingly on each one. One of the inhabitants completed and finished the affair with him. Some others came to a verbal agreement, on conditions. But, notwithstanding the great and extraordinary vigour, with which this matter was carried on, yet the design was discovered, before it could be completed, and so disappointed; and then his friends, and he himself too, were glad to lay this conduct to distraction.

A scheme is plainly laid, entirely to thrust Mr. Hawley out of

the schools; let his friends and constituents do what they will to prevent it. The resident trustee has told Mr. Hawley, that it is the design of Mr. Hollis's former school-master, to set up a distinct independent school, under another teacher, whom he shall provide to keep the school on Mr. Hollis's behalf, and that he intends to take up all boys who come, to board them and clothe them well, better than heretofore. Probably he presumes, that the clothing and presents that will be offered, will tempt them all to subject themselves to himself, rather than to Mr. Hawley.

I have lately been a journey to Newark, in New Jersey, where I saw Mr. Hazzard, a merchant in New York, who told me that he, the last June, received and answered two bills from him, drawn on Mr. Hollis, of £80 sterling apiece. By this, it appears, that he has drawn full pay from Mr. Hollis, for the two years past, as much as he had in the preceding years, without clothing the boys in the least, imposing on Mr. Hollis, in an almost unprecedented manner, considering the greatness of the injury, the plainness of the case, and the obstinacy with which he has proceeded to such a step, after this part of the country had been, so long a time, so full of objections to his being here at Mr. Hollis's expense, without being engaged in the business to which Mr. Hollis appointed him, and for which he agreed to send him his money. In the beginning of the year before last, he professedly threw up Mr. Hollis's school, and dismissed all his boys, supposing that Mr. Hollis was dead; it having been long since he heard any thing from him. In what he did afterwards, in teaching the Mohawks, he did not

pretend to proceed on Mr. Hollis's plan, or with any expectation of any pay from him. And he never pretended to take up any boys on Mr. Hollis's account, till about a year afterwards, viz. The last autumn after he had received a letter from Mr. Hollis; and it is but little he has done since. The charge he has been at, in clothing the boys, is but a trifle. He has never really kept any school at all, though sometimes he has pretended to teach some children to read, in a most confused manner. But, through a great part of the last year, he has not done even that. He has been absent, at least one third of the year, and the greater part of the time that he has been here, he has not had so much as the shadow of a school, nor been in any business whatsoever.

I some time ago wrote a letter to Mr. Hollis, giving him some account of the state of his affairs here, accompanied with letters from some of the inhabitants of Stockbridge. I desired Mr. Prince to show those letters to some of the commissioners.

One of the trustees has lately been here, but staid only two or three days. While he was here, there was little else but altercation, and warm contest, between his colleague and him, concerning the mode of managing affairs, and concerning the female school. And he is gone away entirely discouraged, with a resolution to have no more to do with the affairs of Stockbridge, which, he says, are blown up already. If it be not altogether so, yet I think it is high time the honourable commissioners had full information of the state of things among us. We have long waited for an opportunity to send, but

none has presented. Mr. Hawley meets with many things to discourage him; his circumstances here are very difficult and precarious; he greatly needs the advice of the commissioners; he has a strong inclination to see the commissioners himself, and to confer with them, freely and fully, about the affairs in which he is concerned, and it appears to me necessary that he should do this, both for the public interest, and on his own account. He is kept out of business, and probably very good business, in which he might settle elsewhere, and I do not wonder that he is uneasy, and thinks it necessary to talk with the commissioners. We have had thoughts of his staying, until Mr. Woodbridge went to the general court, the necessity of whose going appears more and more apparent; but the court being prorogued, and we not knowing for how long a time and the important matters of intelligence to the commissioners, and to Mr. Hollis, having been so long delayed for want of opportunity, which so much require their speedy notice; our calamities also continuing, and growing worse and worse; and it being now a time, wherein most of the Mohawks are gone, and so a time in which Mr. Hawley can be absent, with far less inconvenience than some time hence, when many of the Mohawks are expected down, in consequence of the want of provisions in their own country; and considering that probably the commissioners might have a more free opportunity to hear and consider Mr. Hawley's representations now, than in the time of the sitting of the court, and likewise, that it might be some convenience to the commissioners, to have notice of the state of our affairs, so as

to ripen their thoughts with regard to them, before the sitting of the court—I say, considering these things, it was thought advisable for Mr. Hawley not to delay his journey. That the Most High would give wisdom, and counsel, and success to the commissioners, in their consultations on our affairs, and direct and aid those who are here employed, in so important a service, is the humble and earnest prayer of

Their most obedient servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS

From these scenes of unsuccessful intrigue, and disappointed avarice, all notice of which, could the life of Mr. Edwards, as a missionary at Stockbridge, have been fairly exhibited without thus detailing them, would have been most gladly dispensed with; the reader will turn with pleasure, even for a short interval, to communications prompted by friendship, and relating to the more general interests of the church.

Some years before this, through the kindness of Mr. Erskine, he had received the writings of some of the more considerable Arminian writers, particularly of Dr. Taylor of Norwich, and Dr. Turnbull; which, with of Dr. Whitby and those of Chubb and Tindal, already in his possession, furnished him with the means of examining their whole system. This examination he commenced, in form, a considerable time before he left Northampton; and in the summer of 1747, as we have already seen, he announced, in his first letter to Mr. Erskine, the general plan of a Discourse on the Freedom of the Will, and Moral Agency. This subject drew his attention, even while he was a member of college; and, from an investigation of the nature of Power, to which he was led by reading the article, in the Essay on the Human Understanding, relating to that subject, he derived the all-important principle, that men, in a proper

sense, may be said to have power to abstain from sin, and to repent, to do good works, and to live holily; because it depends on their will—After Mr. Edwards had thus announced his plan, his attention was necessarily diverted from its execution, during his residence in Northampton, by the controversy respecting the Qualifications for Communion, his Treatise on that subject, and the many perplexities and embarrassments, which terminated in his dismissal. His removal from Northampton, the establishment of his family at Stockbridge, the Answer to Mr. Williams and his ordinary duties as minister and missionary, and the unhappy controversy subsisting respecting the mission, engrossed his whole time, until July, 1752. In August following, he entered upon the work, and pursued it a short time; but the violence of that controversy, and the attempts of the party hostile to Mr. Woodbridge, to force him from Stockbridge, compelled him to intermit his labours. Some of these circumstances are alluded to, in the following letter to Mr. Erskine, in which the reader will also find some interesting details, relative to the Dutch church, and to the state of religion in New Jersey.

Letter to Mr. Erskine

"Stockbridge, November 23, N. S. 1752.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

In August last I wrote to you, and sent away the letter, (with letters to some of my other correspondents,) to Boston, to be conveyed to Scotland. Therein I acknowledged the receipt of two letters from you, one of July 17, 1751: another of February. 11, 1752; with the pamphlets, put with the last

letter, and now acknowledge the receipt of another letter from you of May 14, 1752; and the pamphlets you sent with the last. The letter I received the latter end of September: the pamphlets I did not receive till very lately: they were forgotten by Mr. Prince. The Treatise against Fanaticism I shall have no benefit from, because I am not acquainted with the French language. What the Jewish convert has published of his conversion, & is very agreeable. And I now heartily thank you for this letter and packet. I am very glad to see what you write concerning the state of religion in the Netherlands. But I believe there is more of a mixture of what is bad with the good, that appears in that land, than Mr. Kennedy, and many other ministers there, are aware of, and that they will find, that the consequences of their not carefully and critically distinguishing between the good and bad, and guarding with the utmost caution and diligence against the latter, will prove worse than they now conceive of. By your account, it is now exactly with Mr. Kennedy, as it was with many pious ministers in America, in the time of the great religious moving here. They looked upon critical inquiries, into the difference between true grace and its counterfeits, or at least a being very busy in such inquiries, and spending time in them, to be impertinent and unseasonable; tending rather to damp the work of the Spirit of God, than promote it; diverting their own minds, and the minds of others, as they supposed, from that to which God, at such an extraordinary time, did loudly call them more especially to attend. The cry was, O, there is no danger, if we are but lively in religion, and full of God's Spirit,

and live by faith, of being misled! If we do but follow God, there is no danger if being led wrong! 'Tis the cold, carnal and lifeless, that are most likely to be blind, and walk in darkness. Let us press forward, and not stay and hinder, the good work, by standing and spending time in these criticisms and carnal reasoning! etc. etc. This was the language of many, till they ran on deep into the wilderness, and were taught by the briers and thorns of the wilderness. However, 'tis no wonder that divines in Europe will not lay very much weight on the admonitions they receive from so obscure a part of the world. Other parts of the church of God must be taught as we have been; and when they see and feel, then they will believe. Not that I apprehend there is in any measure so much enthusiasm and disorder, mixed with the work in Holland, as was in many parts of America, in the time of the last revival of religion here. But yet I believe the work must be more pure, and the people more thoroughly guarded from his wiles, who beguiled Eve through his subtlety, and who corrupts the minds of zealous people from the simplicity that is in Christ, before the work goes on to a general conquest, and is maintained in its power and glory for a great length of time. But God will have his own way—'Who, being his counsellor, hath taught Him?' We must expect confusion and uproar, before we have that abundance of peace and truth, which the Scriptures speak of: many must run to and fro, and knowledge will be increased.

The Dutch ministers in America, whom you mention, whom I have acquaintance with, are some of the younger ministers, and such as were born in America, though several of them

have had part of their education in Holland. I have not acquaintance enough with them, to know their sentiments, particularly, about those corrupt mixtures above mentioned, and the care which is to be used in guarding against them. However, 'tis not very likely, if some of them should write to their brethren in Holland, that their letters would have more influence upon them than letters from you, and some others of the ministers of Scotland. Nevertheless, there is a prospect, that there will in time be very happy effects of the growing acquaintance and union, there is between a very considerable number of very hopeful and pious Dutch ministers, in the province of New York and New Jersey, and many English and Scotch ministers in America. The number of well disposed Dutch ministers in these provinces, has of late remarkably increased; so that I think when they meet together in their Coetus, they make the major part. Some of the elder ministers seem to be of quite contrary sentiment and disposition, not appearing friendly, as the others, to what they esteem the power of religion, nor approving of awakening, searching, strict, and experimental preaching; which has occasioned various contests among them. However, the stricter sort being the prevailing part, are like to carry the day.

The Dutch churches in these provinces have hitherto been so dependent on the Classis in Holland, that, whenever any among them have been educated for the ministry, and any churches have been desirous of their administrations, they could not receive their orders on this side of the water, but have been obliged to go to Holland for ordination; which has

been a great encumbrance, that has attended the settlement of ministers among them, and has undoubtedly been one occasion of such multitudes of the Dutch being wholly without ministers. Application was made not long since, through the influence of the forementioned serious young ministers, (as I take it,) by the Coetus here, to the Classis in Holland, for their consent, that they might unite themselves to the Presbyterian synod of New York, which now consists of English and Scotch. But the success of their application was prevented, by a letter written by one of the elder ministers, remonstrating against it, very falsely representing the New York synod, as no proper Presbyterian synod, but rather a company of independents. On which, the Classis of Holland advised them, by no means, to unite themselves with that synod.

The last September I went a journey into New Jersey, and had opportunity, in my journey, of seeing some of these young ministers, and conversing with them on the subject They seem resolved, by some means or other, to disengage themselves and their churches from the forementioned great encumbrance, of being obliged to cross the ocean for the ordination of every minister. I was much gratified, during the little opportunity I had, to observe the agreeable disposition of these ministers.

There were, also, many other things I had opportunity to observe in those parts, which were very agreeable. I was there, at the time of the public commencement in the college, and the time of the meeting of the trustees of the college, the

time of the meeting of the correspondents of the society for propagating Christian knowledge, and the time of the meeting of the New York synod; so that I had opportunity to converse with ministers from Long Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia The college is in flourishing circumstances; increases apace; and is happily regulated. The trustees seem engaged to their utmost to promote learning, virtue, and true religion, in it; and none more so than Governor Belcher; who is the president of the trustees, and was at the commencement, and at the trustees' meeting. But they very much want further supplies, for the convenient support of the college. I had considerable opportunity to converse with Governor Belcher, and was several times at his house at Elizabeth-town. He labours under many of the infirmities of age, but savours much of a spirit of religion, and seems very de-sirous of doing all the good he can, while he lives. The New York synod is in flourishing circumstances: much more so than the Philadelphia synod. They have the greatest body of ministers now, and increase much faster than the other. They are in higher credit with the people in almost all parts, and are chiefly sought to for supplies by distant congregations.

With respect to the proceedings of the correspondents, they have dismissed Mr. Horton from his mission on Long-Island, and he is about to settle in a congregation in New Jersey. He was dismissed by reason of his very much failing of employment: many of the clans of Indians, he used to preach to, having dwindled away, by death or dispersion, and there

being but little prospect of success among others that remain, and some being so situated, that they may conveniently be taken care of by other ministers. The correspondents have it in their view to employ the money, by which he used to be supported, to support a mission among the Six Nations; after they have found a suitable person to undertake the business of such a mission, and he is fitted for it by learning the language. They used endeavours to obtain a suitable person for the business, in New Jersey; but, meeting with no success, they voted to empower Mr. Bellamy, Mr. Hopkins of Sheffield, and myself; to procure a suitable person, if we can find such an one, in New England, for the present, to come and live at Stockbridge, to be here learning the Mohawk language with Mr. Hawley, our school-master for the Mohawk; to fit him for the mission. Persons proper to be employed, and such as may be obtained, are very scarce; and 'tis doubtful whether we shall be able to obtain one.

There is a very dark cloud, that at present attends the affair, relating to the Indians at Stockbridge, occasioned very much by one of the agents of the province, (who lives at Stockbridge,) pursuing measures very contrary to the measures of the commissioners of the society in London. The opposition is maintained, not with a small degree of stiffness and resolution; and the contest is become so great that it has brought things into very great confusion. This gentleman is a man of some role; and his wife's relations earnestly engage with him, and many of them are persons of considerable figure in the country. The commissioners all very much dislike his

conduct. This contest occasions no misunderstandings among the people in Stockbridge, in general: all, excepting those nearly related to the family, both English and Indians, are happily united to me and my family. It would be very tedious for me to write, and for you to read, all the particulars of this uncomfortable affair. The commissioners are exerting themselves to relieve us of this calamity; and it is probable they will be successful.

I thank you for the account you give of some valuable books published: I desire you would continue to favour me in this manner. I began the last August to write a little on the Arminian controversy, but was soon broke off: and such have been my extraordinary avocations and hinderances, that I have not had time to set pen to paper about this matter since. But I hope that God, in his providence, will favour me with opportunity to prosecute the design. And I desire your prayers, that God would assist me in it, and in all the work I am called to, and enable me to conduct my life to his glory and acceptance, under all difficulties and trials.

My wife joins with me in most hearty and affectionate salutation to you, and Mrs. Erskine.

*I am, dear Sir,
Your affectionate and obliged
Brother and servant.
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

"P. S. I propose with this, to send you Mr. Hobart's second address to the members of the episcopal church in New England, and my answer to Mr.

Williams, which I would desire you to give your neighbours, my correspondents, opportunity to read, if they desire it."

The correspondence of Mr. Edwards and the Rev. Thomas Gillespie of Carnock, in Scotland, has already interested the attention of the reader. This gentleman was born in 1708, pursued his theological studies under Dr. Doddridge, and was ordained and settled in the parish of Carnock, in 1741. He was a faithful and indefatigable minister—"I never (says Dr. Erskine, who was several months his stated hearer at Carnock, and often heard his occasional efforts in other places) sat under a minister better calculated to awaken the thoughtless and secure, to caution convinced sinners against what would stifle their convictions and prevent their issuing in conversion, and to point out the differences between vital Christianity and specious, counterfeit appearances of it."—His popularity and usefulness were very great, not only in his own parish, but in Edinburgh and the west of Scotland. In 1752 an event occurred, which forms an era in the ecclesiastical history of that country. The Rev. Andrew Richardson of Broughton was presented to the charge of the town of Inverkeithing, by the lay patron of the parish—the individual who had that living in his gift—The inhabitants refused to receive him as their minister. The case was appealed from court to court, until the General Assembly, in May, 1752, directed the presbytery of Dunfermline to admit Mr. R. to the charge of Inverkeithing, and appointed Mr. Gillespie to preside on the occasion. Mr. Gillespie, and several others in the presbytery, had conscientious scruples on the subject of lay patronage, and fully believed that no one, on the principles of the gospel, could have any right to place a clergyman over a parish but the people themselves.^[43] He therefore, and those who thought with him, declined obedience to the mandate: and while they were subjected to various ecclesiastical censures, he was deposed from the ministry, and removed from the parish of Carnock. When called to the bar to

receive his sentence, he replied," Moderator, I receive this sentence of the General Assembly with reverence and awe. But I rejoice that it is given to me, on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on his name, but to suffer for his sake"

For about a year he preached to his people out of doors, hoping that the sentence would be reversed; at the close of which, a church having been purchased for him in Dunfermline, a short distance from Carnock, he preached there, as an independent, about six years, unconnected with any associate in the ministry. In 1758 he united with the Rev. Thomas Boston, Jr., and formed a new establishment, called, The Presbytery of Relief; to which some dissenting ministers of England soon acceded. The congregations at present connected with them, and known, as an ecclesiastical body, by the name of the relief, are 65 in number, are found in all the principal towns, and many of the country parishes, of Scotland, and are computed to consist of towards 60,000 individuals.^[44] They provide ministers for the inhabitants of those parishes, which do not submit to ministers introduced by lay patronage; and readily admit to ministerial and church communion, evangelical ministers of the church of Scotland, and of the church of England.

The correspondents of Mr. Edwards had forwarded to him various publications relative to the deposition of Mr. Gillespie; and the views which he formed with regard to it, as expressed in the following letter, while they must, at the time, have been consoling and supporting to the excellent man to whom they were sent, will also probably harmonize with those of every reader of these pages.

To the Rev. Thomas Gillespie,

Carnock.

Stockbridge, November. 24, 1752.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

In letters and pamphlets lately forwarded to me, by some of my correspondents in Scotland, I have received the affecting and surprising account of your deposition, for not assisting in the settlement of Mr. Richardson, at Inverkeithing. The circumstances of which affair seem to be such, as abundantly manifest your cause to be good; at the same time that they plainly show the persecuting spirit with which you have been proceeded against. It is strange, that a protestant church should condemn and depose one of her ministers, for conscientiously declining to act in a forced settlement of a minister, over a congregation that have not chosen him as their pastor, but are utterly averse to his administrations, at least as to a stated attendance upon them. It is to be wondered at, that such a church, at this time of day, after the cause of liberty in matters of conscience has been so abundantly defended, should arrogate to herself such a kind of authority over the consciences of both ministers and people, and use it in such a manner, by such severity, to establish that, which is not only contrary to the liberty of Christians, wherewith Christ has made them free; but so directly contrary to her own professed principles, acts, and resolutions, entered on public record The several steps of this proceeding, and some singular

measures taken, and the hastiness and vehemence of the proceeding, are such, as savour very strongly of the very spirit of persecution, and must be greatly to the dishonour of the church of Scotland; and are such, as will naturally engage the friends of God's people, abroad in the world, in your favour, as suffering very injuriously. It is wonderful, that a church, which has itself suffered so much by persecution, should be guilty of so much persecution. This proceeding gives reason to suspect, that the church of Scotland, which was once so famous, is not what it once was. It appears probable to me, at this distance, that there is something else at the bottom, besides a zeal to uphold the authority of the church. Perhaps many of the clergy of the church of Scotland have their minds secretly infected with those lax principles of the new divinity, and have imbibed the liberal doctrines, as they are accounted, which are so much in vogue at the present day, and so contrary to the strict, mysterious; spiritual, soul-humbling principles of our forefathers. I have observed, that these modern fashionable opinions, however called noble and liberal, are commonly attended, not only with a haughty contempt, but an inward malignant bitterness of heart, towards all the zealous professors and defenders of the contrary spiritual principles, that do so nearly concern the vitals of religion, and the power of experimental godliness. This, be sure, has been the case in this land. I have known many gentlemen, (especially in the ministry,) tainted with these liberal principles; who, though none seem to be such warm advocates as they, for liberty and freedom of thought, or

condemn a narrow and persecuting spirit so much as they; yet, in the course of things, have made it manifest, that they themselves had no small share of a persecuting spirit. They were, indeed, against any body's restraining their liberties, and pretending to control them in their thinking and professing as they please; and that is what they mean, truly, when they plead for liberty. But they have that inward enmity of spirit towards those others mentioned, that, if they see an opportunity to persecute them under some good cloak, and with some false pretext, they will eagerly embrace it, and proceed with great severity and vehemence. Thus far, perhaps, if the truth were known, it would appear, that some of your most strenuous persecutors hate you much more for something else, than they do for your not obeying the orders of the general assembly. I do not pretend to know how the case is. I only speak from what I have seen and found, here in America, in cases somewhat similar. However, it is beyond doubt, that this proceeding will stand on the records of future time, for the lasting reproach of your persecutors; and your conduct, for which you have suffered, will be to your lasting honour in the church of God. And what is much more, that, which has been condemned in you by man, and for which you have suffered from him, is doubtless approved by God, and I trust you will have a glorious reward from him. For the cause you suffer in, is the cause of God; and if God be for us, who can be against us? If he justifies, what need we care who condemns? Not only is the mercy of God, dear brother, manifested, in its being granted you to suffer for his sake, but his mercy is to be taken

notice of, in many of the circumstances of this suffering. Particularly, that he has excited so many to appear for you: that you had the major part of the presbytery, which you belong to, with you in the affair, though God has honoured you above all the rest, in calling you to suffer for his name: that the major part of the commission of the General Assembly did in effect approve of the conduct of the presbytery, judging it no censurable fault: that no greater part of the Assembly had a hand in your deposition: that so many of God's, people have, on this occasion, very boldly appeared to befriend you, as suffering in a righteous cause, openly condemning the conduct of your most bitter prosecutors, and testifying an abhorrence of their conduct: and that many have appeared, liberally to contribute to your outward support; so that, by what I understand, you are likely to be no loser in that respect; by which, your enemies will, perhaps, be entirely disappointed. And, above all, that you have been enabled, through the whole of this affair, to conduct yourself with so much Christian meekness, decency, humility, proper deference to authority, and composure and fortitude of mind; which is an evident token that God will appear for you, and also, that he will appear against your enemies. When I received your kind letter, soon after my dismissal from Northampton, so full of expressions of sympathy towards me under what I suffered, I little thought of your being brought so soon under sufferings so similar. But, seeing God has so ordered it in his providence, my prayer and hope is, that he would abundantly reward your sympathy in my case. 'Blessed are the merciful,

for they shall obtain mercy."

As to myself, I still meet with difficulties in my new station, which arrive partly from private views (as it is to be feared) of some particular persons of some note and distinction, who are concerned with the affair of the Mohawks here, and partly from the same spirit and the same persons, and others nearly related to them, who fomented the contention with me at Northampton. However, all the people, both Indians and English, except the very few of the above-mentioned connexion, are firmly united to me: and the commissioners in Boston, who are my constituents, and from whom I have my support, are altogether on my side; and are endeavouring to the utmost to remove the difficulties that attend our affairs, by which the cause of religion here, especially among the Mohawks, suffers much more than I do, or am like to do, in my personal and temporal interests. These difficulties which have arisen, have, indeed, almost brought the Mohawk affair to ruin, which the last year was attended with so glorious a prospect It would be very tedious to relate the particulars of this unhappy affair. I think that God, by these sufferings, calls me to expect no other than to meet with difficulties and trials while in this world. And what am I better than my fathers, that I should expect to fare better in the world, than the generality of Christ's followers in all past generations. May all our trials be for our justification, and our being more and more meet for our Master's use, and prepared to enter into the joy of our Lord, in a world where all tears shall be wiped from the eyes of God's people. Let us, dear Sir, earnestly pray one for

another, that it may be thus with us; and that, however we may be called to labour and to suffer, we may see peace on God's Israel, and hereafter eternally glory and triumph with his inheritance. God has of late mercifully preserved my wife and youngest daughter, in time of very sore and dangerous sickness, and restored them again. My eldest daughter has also been sick, and is restored in a considerable degree.

The Northampton people remain in sorrowful circumstances, destitute of a settled minister, and without any prospect of a settlement; having met with many disappointments. But all don't as yet seem to be effectual, to bring them to a suitable temper of mind. I much desire to hear from you, and to be informed of your present circumstances.

*I am, dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother in the gospel,
brother in the gospel,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

With the preceding letter was sent the following to Mr. M'Culloch.

"Stockbridge, Nov 24, 1752.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter of March 3, 1752, which I received this fall. I thank you for your friendly and instructive

observations, on God's dealings with me and my family. Though God's dispensations towards me, have been attended with some distinguishing trials, yet the end of the Lord has been very gracious. He has ever manifested himself very pitiful and of tender mercy, in the midst of difficulties we have met with, in merciful circumstances with which they have been attended, and also in the event of them. Our circumstances, here at Stockbridge, are in many respects comfortable. We here live in peace and friendship, with the generality of the people. But we are not without our difficulties and troubles here. The Indian affair, which the last year was attended with so pleasing and glorious a prospect, has since been unspeakably embarrassed, through the particular schemes of certain individuals, who are opposed, in their counsels and measures, to the commissioners of the Society in London, and are, to their utmost, striving to accomplish their designs in opposition to them; and in this great contest I am looked on as a person not a little obnoxious. They belong to a family of some note, who vigorously abetted and set forward my opposers at Northampton, and were a chief occasion of my removal from that town; to whom my settlement at Stockbridge was very grievous; who now take occasion to exert themselves to the utmost to weaken my interest and influence: and I have all reason to think, would, if it were possible, undermine me, and procure my removal far hence. Many endeavours have been used to disaffect my people towards me, but all in vain. They are all firmly united to me, excepting the forementioned family. Endeavours have been used, also, to

disaffect some of the commissioners; but wholly in vain. They seem to have their eyes very wide open, as to their particular designs and schemes, and the true spring of their opposition. We hope for an end of this lamentable contest before long. But its effects hitherto have been very sorrowful, especially with regard to the Mohawks. Some other things have happened, which have much prejudiced the cause of religion among the Indians; and among other things, the discovery of the famous Tartarian root, described in Chambers's dictionary, called Ginseng, which was found in our woods the last summer, and is since found in the woods in many of these western parts of New England, and in the country of the Six Nations. The traders in Albany have been eager to purchase all that they could, of this root, to send to England; where they make great profit by it. This has occasioned our Indians of all sorts, young and old, to spend abundance of time in wandering about the woods, and sometimes to a great distance, in the neglect of public worship, and of their husbandry; and also in going much to Albany, to sell their roots, (which proves worse to them than their going into the woods,) where they are always much in the way of temptation and drunkenness; especially when they have money in their pockets. The consequence has been that many of them have laid out their money, which they have got for their roots of Ginseng, for rum; wherewith they have intoxicated themselves.

God has been very gracious to my family of late, when some of them have been visited with sore sickness. My wife has lately been very dangerously sick, so as to be brought to the very

brink of the grave. She had very little expectation of life, but seemed to be assisted to an unweaned resignation to the Divine will, and an unshaken peace and joy in God, in the expectation of a speedy departure. But God was pleased to preserve her, and mercifully to restore her to a pretty good state of health. My youngest daughter also, who has been a very infirm child, was brought nigh unto death by a sore fit of sickness, and is now also restored to her former state. My daughter Parsons, my eldest daughter, who with her husband has removed from Northampton, and dwells in Stockbridge, has also very lately been very sick, but is in a considerable measure restored. My daughter Esther's marriage with President Burr, of Newark, seems to be very much to the satisfaction of ministers and people in those parts, and also of our friends in Boston, and other parts of New England.

As to the state of religion in America, I have but little to write that is comfortable; but there seems to be better appearances in some other colonies than in New England. When I was lately in New Jersey, in the time of the synod there, I was informed of some small movings and revivals in some places on Long-Island and New Jersey. I there had the comfort of a short interview with Mr. Davies of Virginia, and was much pleased with him and his conversation. He appears to be a man of very solid understanding, discreet in his behaviour, and polished and gentlemanly in his manners, as well as fervent and zealous in religion. He gave an account of the probability of the settlement of a Mr. Todd, a young man of good learning and of a pious disposition, in a part of Virginia

near to him. Mr. Davies represented before the synod, the great necessities of the people in the back parts of Virginia, where multitudes were remarkably awakened and reformed several years ago, and ever since have been thirsting after the ordinances of God. The people are chiefly from Ireland, of Scotch extraction. The synod appointed two men to go down and preach among these people; viz. Mr. Henry, a Scotchman, who has lately taken a degree at New Jersey college, and Mr. Greenman, the young man who was educated at the charge of Mr. David Brainerd.

The people of Northampton are in sorrowful circumstances, are still destitute of a minister, and have met with a long series of disappointments in their attempts for a resettlement of the ministry among them. My opposers have had warm contentions among themselves, Of late, they have been wholly destitute of anybody to preach steadily among them. They sometimes meet to read and pray among themselves, and at other times set travellers or transient persons to preach, that are hardly fit to be employed.

My wife joins with me in most respectful salutations to you and yours. Desiring your prayers, that God would be with us in all our wanderings through the wilderness of this world,

*I am, dear Sir,
Your most affectionate brother,
In the labours of the gospel,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

The chagrin and mortification, and entire loss of influence and respect,

consequent upon the indiscreet attempt to force Mr. Edwards from Stockbridge, by buying out all the English inhabitants, and upon its utter discomfiture, had, in its connexion with the infirmities of age, such an effect upon the individual who made it, that he was soon after induced to part with his property in that town, and remove to a distance. His children, though somewhat disheartened by so untoward an event, and now assured that if help came to them, it could not come from Stockbridge, appear however to have resolved, that they would not lose all their labour, and all their hope; without a struggle. The commissioners in Boston, of the Society in London, were now to a man firmly opposed to them, and resolved to resist them to the utmost. But their kinsman who was a member of the Society in London, was well acquainted with its board of directors, and had written to them in behalf of his cousin. He had also applied to Mr. Hollis, to secure to her husband the management of his benefactions. The latter gentleman also, and the brother of the former, had considerable influence at Boston, and this influence had now been exerted for a considerable period, to procure the removal of Mr. Edwards. At the opening of the general court, in the autumn, all the influence and all the efforts of the family, and its friends, were brought to bear on this one point; and representations most unfavourable to the character and qualifications of Mr. E. were made to many of the principal men of the province. The Annual Report of the resident trustee was drawn up with a direct and immediate reference to this subject, and was read to the legislature, when Mr. Edwards knew nothing of its contents, and when, being at the distance of one hundred and fifty miles, he of course could not at once answer it. Mr. Woodbridge, however, was on the spot, as were the honourable commissioners of the Society in London, and they made such counteracting statements, as the circumstances rendered proper. Of this Report we shall take notice further on.

While Mr. Woodbridge was at Boston, he was informed, and that too most incautiously, by the son of his opponent, who went thither in company with his brother-in-law, the author of the Report, that the latter had solicited his Excellency, Sir William Pepperell, governor of the province, to write to England, and to use his influence, with the corporation in London, that Mr. Edwards might be removed from the office of missionary; and that Sir William had engaged to do it. On this information, coming so directly, Mr. Edwards felt himself bound, from a regard to his own reputation, and to the welfare of his family, to address Sir William on the subject; which he did in a letter, bearing date January 30, 1753.^[45] In this letter, after reciting the preceding facts, as his apology for writing it, and mentioning the great disadvantage under which he lay, in attempting to defend himself, at such a distance, when he did not know what had been said to his prejudice, he states, among other things, the following: That, since the revival of religion in 1734, the family, with which the writer of the Report was now connected, had discovered an unceasing hostility towards himself, and his own family, notwithstanding the best endeavours he could use to remove it; that they deeply engaged themselves in the controversy at Northampton, on the side of his opposers, upholding, directing, and animating them, in all their measures; that two of them, especially, had been the confidential advisers of the opposition, in procuring his dismissal; that when his removal to Stockbridge was proposed, the whole family, there and elsewhere, opposed it, with great vehemence, though, when they saw an entire union and universal engagedness in all the rest of the inhabitants, both English and Indians, for his settlement there, and that there was no hope of preventing it, they appeared as though their minds were changed—that the author of the Report, during the whole controversy at Northampton, in direct opposition to the family, with which he was now connected, had remained his zealous friend

and advocate; that he warmly advocated his removal to Stockbridge, and expressed a strong desire of living under his ministry; (for the evidence of which facts, he refers Sir William to two of the most respectable gentlemen in the province;) that this confidential friendship lasted until his connexion with that family, and then was suddenly changed, first into secret, and afterwards into open opposition; that he had personally blamed him for preaching to the Mohawks, as intermeddling with what was none of his business, although Mr. E. produced the note of the commissioners, expressly desiring him to preach to the Mohawks, until a distinct missionary was appointed over them; that the reason, openly assigned for the very great resentment of the author of the Report, and that of his friends, against Mr. Edwards, was, his having opposed the appointment of the wife of that gentleman, as teacher of the female school, although he neither said nor did any thing respecting it, until his opinion was expressly desired in writing by the commissioners, and then, that he opposed it on the ground, that it was impossible for an individual, who had the care of two numerous families of children, to instruct and govern the children of an Indian school—and that, as to his qualifications for the business of a missionary, his communicative faculty, & which were now denied, he could only appeal to those, who had the best opportunity of judging, from their own experience—particularly, to every man, woman, and child, in Stockbridge, that had any understanding, both English and Indians, except the families of the opponent of Mr. Woodbridge, and of the author of the Report. Mr. Edwards then adds, "Now, Sir, I humbly request, that, if you had resolved on endeavouring to have me removed from my present employment here, you would once more take the matter into your impartial consideration. And I would pray you to consider, Sir, what disadvantages I am under; not knowing what has been said of me in conversation; not knowing, therefore, the accusation, or what to answer to. The ruin of my

usefulness, and the ruin of my family, which has greatly suffered in years past, for righteousness sake, are not indeed things of equal consideration with the public good. Yet, certainly, I should first have an equal, impartial, and candid hearing, before I am executed for the public good. I must leave the matter, dear Sir, to your justice and Christian prudence; committing the affair to Him, who knows all the injuries I have suffered, and how wrongfully I now suffer, and who is the Great Protector of the innocent and oppressed; beseeching him to guide you in your determination, and mercifully to order the end."

In the month of February, 1753, the building erected for the instruction of the Mohawk boys, usually denominated the boarding-school, took fire in a way unknown, and, with considerable furniture in it, was reduced to ashes. Mr. Hawley had furnished a chamber in the building, and resided in it. By this calamity, he lost his clothing, books, and furniture. It was supposed, with some grounds, to have been set on fire by design; and its destruction was, for the time, a very serious interruption to the labours of Mr. Hawley.

The Report of the Indian agent was read early in the session. It contained various insinuations and charges, of a general nature, against Mr. Edwards. Other charges were busily circulated among the members, with the hope of procuring his removal. But it was well understood, that Mr. Edwards was at a great distance, and had had no notice of these charges. He had likewise a character for integrity, too well established, to be shaken by general insinuations, or covert attacks. Mr. Woodbridge, and the commissioners, were also on the spot, and took care that the real state of things should be made known, and the conduct of Mr. Edwards adequately defended. So effectually and satisfactorily was this done, that, when Mr. Edwards received a copy of the Report by Mr. Woodbridge, he appears also to have been

apprized, by his friends in Boston, that the design of his enemies, in this attack, had been completely frustrated. What these insinuations and charges were, we learn from his letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, written for the purpose of being communicated, if he thought necessary, to the legislature. It deserves here to be mentioned, as a singular and very kind dispensation of Providence, that the author of the Report had, some time before, addressed a letter to Mr. Edwards, while he was his friend, and when he hoped for his cooperation; particularly, in the appointment of his son as school-master to the Mohawks; in which he had either furnished the means of contradicting the statements made in the Report, or had expressly requested Mr. Edwards to do the very things, which he now complained of, and made the ground of complaint. Of this letter Mr. Edwards enclosed a copy; offering to forward the original, if desired, and, at the same time, to substantiate every part of his own statement, by numerous witnesses, of the most unexceptionable character.

From his letter to the Speaker, it appears, that the writer of the Report charged him—with introducing Mr. Hawley into the school—with introducing a master, in his absence, and when there was reason to expect his return—with doing this, when he had been at the expense of a journey of his son of 260 miles, to procure Mr. Hawley as master of the boys—with introducing Mr. Ashley, the interpreter, as assistant instructor—and with opposing the appointment of his wife, as teacher of the female school—and that he also alleged, that the school was in very desirable circumstances, until Mr. Hawley took it, and that it then declined—that the Mohawks had been discouraged, through the conduct of the agents of the mission—and that Mr. Edwards was not qualified for his office, because, on account of his age, he could not learn the language of the Indians.

To these charges Mr. Edwards replied—that he introduced Mr. Hawley, because he was directed so to do, by the letter of the commissioners, of December. 31, 1751—that he introduced a master, in the absence of the author of the Report, for two reasons, 1. Because he knew not when he was to return; and, 2. Because the author of the Report, himself, in a letter sent him by his son, requested him, at that very time, to introduce a master into the school; of which letter he enclosed a copy, with the offer of forwarding the original, if desired—that, when the author of the Report sent his son on the specified journey, it was not to procure Mr. Hawley to be a master for the boys, but it was, that the son himself might be the master; for evidence of which, appeal is also made to the copy of the same letter—that, as to the appointment of teacher of the female school, he said nothing about it, until expressly requested to give his opinion by the commissioners—that so far was the school from being in desirable circumstances, before the introduction of Mr. Hawley, that the author of the Report had, himself, represented it as having been, until that time, in most lamentable circumstances, in the very letter of which he enclosed a copy, in which he requested Mr. Edwards to introduce his son into the school, in the room of the former master—that the school continued to flourish under Mr. Hawley, until his opposers used their utmost endeavours to destroy it; for evidence of which, he offers the testimony of the substantial inhabitants of the town—that Hendrick, and the other chiefs, and the Mohawks generally, had expressly assigned their dissatisfaction with the conduct of these individuals, as the reason of their leaving Stockbridge, for evidence of which, he offers the same testimony—and, as to his learning the Housatonnuck language, that the author of the Report knew how the case would be, before he recommended him to the office of missionary; and that Mr. Sergeant, after fourteen years study, had never been able to preach in it, nor even to pray in it except by a form, and

had often expressed the opinion, previous to his death, that his successor ought not to trouble himself in learning the language. He then requests, that the Speaker would communicate his letter to the Assembly, and prays that honourable body, if they proposed to take any order on the case, first to give him opportunity to meet his accuser face to face.

I have no means of ascertaining whether the preceding letter was, or was not, read to the legislature. If not, it was because the honourable Speaker, who was a personal friend of Mr. Edwards, found it to be wholly unnecessary. And it can scarcely be necessary to inform the reader, that the attack, made thus directly upon Mr. Edwards, and indirectly upon all his associates in the mission, not only failed altogether of its intended effect; but, by leading to a development of the mercenary scheme, devised to divert, to the purposes of private emolument, the consecrated charities of the province and of individuals, recoiled with increased violence upon its authors.

Thus far the individuals, opposed to the Stockbridge missionaries, had met with little success to encourage their efforts. They had looked for help to various sources; to the Indians and to the people of Stockbridge, to the commissioners and to the provincial legislature, to Mr. Hollis and to the Society in London; and in every instance, so far as the result was known, they had looked in vain. The Housatonnucks had refused all intercourse with them. From disgust at their management, a part of the Mohawks had actually retired, and the rest were threatening to retire, to their own country. The people of Stockbridge had, to a man, united against them. The commissioners were equally unanimous, in sustaining the individuals whose overthrow they had attempted. And now, before the provincial legislature, they had made their great and united effort, and had failed. In the mean time, Mr. Edwards was even more firmly established as the Indian missionary, and Mr.

Woodbridge as the schoolmaster of the Housatonnucks; Mr. Hawley had not been compelled to resign his place to the son of the resident trustee; the female school had not as yet been secured to his wife, and obviously could not now be, unless secured to her in London; and the stewardship of the three schools was not likely to be conferred on himself. Such was the state of things in the spring of 1753. It looked as though the great struggle was over; and that the party, which had hitherto acted on the offensive, would thenceforward be quiet, from a conviction, that every hostile movement must issue in defeat. The result justified this conclusion.

To Mr. Edwards, and his associates in the mission, as well as to their friends, this result must have been in a high degree satisfactory. On his arrival in Stockbridge, he found this controversy waging, and soon discovered that it was a controversy between the friends and enemies of the mission; between those who aimed at the real welfare of the Indians, and those who endeavoured to use them as instruments of their own private emolument; that one party relied on wealth, and office, and influence, to carry its measures; and the other, on personal integrity, a conscientious discharge of duty, and the protection of God. For a time he avoided taking any part in it; and his own temporal comfort, and the welfare of his family, seemed to require, that he should persevere in the same course. But his conscience forbade it. He must either sit quietly by, and see the charities of the province, of the Society in London, and of Mr. Hollis, diverted from their appointed course, to fill the coffers of private avarice; or he must unite with those who were exerting their whole influence to prevent it. In such a state of things, he could not deliberate, and, through the divine blessing, he and his associates were now permitted to see, that they had not toiled and suffered in vain.

Chapter XXII^(TOC)

Letter to his Eldest Son—Return of Greater Part of the Mohawks—Letter to Commissioners—Mission of Mr Hawley to Onohquauga—Remainder of Mohawks Directed to Return—"Freedom of the Will"—Letter to Mr. Erskine—Proposal of Society in London—Letter to Mr. Gillespie—Design and Character of the "Freedom of the Will"—Letters from Mr. Hollis—Surrender of Mohawk School to Mr. Edwards—Entire Defeat of Enemies of Mission—Return of Remaining Mohawks.

EARLY in the ensuing spring, the eldest son of Mr. Edwards, then a lad of fourteen, went to New York, and thence to New Jersey; and on his way was much exposed to the small-pox. On his return to New York, he was seized with a violent fever His father hearing this, and not knowing whether it an ordinary fever, or the small-pox, addressed to him the following letter; which, like all his letters to his children, indicates that his chief anxiety was for their salvation.

To Master Timothy Edwards, at New York.

Stockbridge, April, 1753

MY DEAR CHILD,

Before you will receive this letter, the matter will doubtless be determined, as to your having the small-pox. You will either

be sick with that distemper, or will be past danger of having it, from any infection taken in your voyage. But whether you are sick or well, like to die or like to live, I hope you are earnestly seeking your salvation. I am sure there is a great deal of reason it should be so, considering the warnings you have had in word and in providence. That which you met with, in your passage from New York to Newark, which was the occasion of your fever, was indeed a remarkable warning, a dispensation full of instruction, and a very loud call of God to you, to make haste, and not to delay in the great business of religion. If you now have that distemper, which you have been threatened with, you are separated from your earthly friends, as none of them can come to see you; and if you should die of it, you have already taken a final and everlasting leave of them while you are yet alive, so as not to have the comfort of their presence and immediate care, and never to see them again in the land of the living. And if you have escaped that distemper, it is by a remarkable providence that you are preserved. And your having been so exposed to it must certainly be a loud call of God, not to trust in earthly friends or any thing here below. Young persons are very apt to trust in parents and friends when they think of being on a death-bed. But this providence remarkably teaches you the need of a better Friend, and a better Parent, than earthly parents are; one who is every where present, and all sufficient, that cannot be kept off by infectious distempers, who is able to save from death, or to make happy in death, to save from eternal misery, and to bestow eternal life. It is indeed comfortable, when one is in

great pain, and languishing under sore sickness, to have the presence, and kind care, of near and dear earthly friends; but this is a very small thing, in comparison of what it is, to have the presence of a heavenly Father, and a compassionate and almighty Redeemer. In God's favour is life, and his loving-kindness is better than life. Whether you are in sickness or health, you infinitely need this. But you must know, however great need you stand in of it, you do not deserve it: neither is God the more obliged to bestow it upon you, for your standing in need of it, your earnest desiring of it, your crying to him constantly for it from fear of misery, and taking much pains. Till you have savingly believed in Christ, all your desires, and pains, and prayers lay God under no obligation; and, if they were ten thousand times as great as they are, you must still know, that you would be in the hands of a sovereign God, who hath mercy on whom he will have mercy. Indeed, God often hears the poor miserable cries of sinful vile creatures, who have no manner of true regard to Him in their hearts; for he is a God of infinite mercy, and he delights to show mercy for his Son's sake, who is worthy, though you are unworthy, who came to save the sinful and the miserable, yea, some of the chief of sinners. Therefore, there is your only hope, and in him must be your refuge, who invites you to come to him, and says, 'Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.' Whatever your circumstances are, it is your duty not to despair, but to hope in infinite mercy, through a Redeemer. For God makes it your duty to pray to him for mercy; which would not be your duty, if it was allowable for you to despair. We are expressly

commanded to call upon God in the day of trouble, and when we are afflicted, then to pray. But, if I hear that you have escaped—either that you have not been sick, or are restored—though I shall rejoice, and have great cause of thankfulness, yet I shall be concerned for you. If your escape should be followed with carelessness and security, and forgetting the remarkable warning you have had, and God's great mercy in your deliverance, it would in some respects be more awful than sore sickness. It would be very provoking to God, and would probably issue in an increasing hardness of heart; and, it may be, divine vengeance may soon overtake you. I have known various instances of persons being remarkably warned, in providence, by being brought into very dangerous circumstances, and escaping, and afterwards death has soon followed in another way. I earnestly desire, that God would make you wise to salvation, and that he would be merciful and gracious to you in every respect, according as he knows your circumstances require. And this is the daily prayer of

*Your affectionate and tender father,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

"P.S. Your mother and all the family send their love to you, as being tenderly concerned for you."

At length the event, so long predicted by Mr. Edwards, actually took place. The Mohawks, who had manifested exemplary patience under the vexatious and embarrassments to which they had been subjected by the whites, were at last wearied out; and, in the month of April, the greater part of them relinquished their lands and settlements at Stockbridge, and returned finally

to their own country. After a brief allusion to this fact, in a letter to the commissioners, Mr. Edwards communicated to them a variety of interesting intelligence relative to the Iroquois, and to the mission proposed to be established among them

To the Commissioners in Boston.

Stockbridge, April 12, 1753.

GENTLEMEN,

The last Tuesday, about two-thirds of the Mohawks, young and old, went away from Stockbridge, and are never likely to return again. They have long manifested a great uneasiness at the management of affairs here, and at the conduct of those persons on whom their affairs have almost wholly fallen; and have shown themselves very much grieved, that others, who used to be concerned, have been excluded. They have, once and again, represented the grounds of their uneasiness to the provincial agent, but without redress. They have been dissatisfied with his answers, and there has appeared in them a growing dislike of the family, who have lately left their own house, and taken up their constant abode among them, in the female boarding-school.

The correspondents, in New York and New Jersey, of the Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge, have determined, if Providence favours, to settle a mission

among the Six Nations. To that end, they have chosen Mr. Gordon, a pious young gentleman, who has lately been a tutor at New Jersey college, to come to Stockbridge, and remain here with Mr. Hawley, to learn the Mohawk language with him, in order to his being fitted for the business. Mr. Gordon is expected here to prosecute this design in the beginning of May.

In addition to this, Mr. Brainerd, the pastor of the Indian congregation at Bethel in New Jersey, who is supported by the correspondents, having met with much trouble from the enemies of religion in those parts; and his Indians being greatly disturbed, with regard to the possession and improvement of their lands; the correspondents have of late had a disposition, that he, with his school-master and whole congregation, should remove, if a door might be opened, and take up a new settlement, somewhere in the country of the Six Nations. Mr. Hawley has seen Mr. Brainerd, and conversed with him on the subject, this spring. He manifests an inclination to such a removal, and says his Indians will be ready for it. If such a thing as this could be brought to pass, it would probably tend greatly to the introduction of the gospel, and the promotion of the interests of religion, among the Six Nations; as his congregation are, I suppose, the most virtuous and religious collection of Indians in America, and some of them have now been long established in religion and virtue.

According to the best information I can get, of the country of the Six Nations, the most convenient place, to be chosen as the

chief seat of missionary operations, is the country about Onohquauga, near the head of the Susquehannah river.

*I apprehend, from some things of which Mr. Woodbridge informed me, that the commissioners have had very wrong information concerning the Onohquauga Indians, as though they were a very despicable company, a kind of renegadoes, scarcely to be reckoned as of the Six Nations, living out of the country of those nations. There are, indeed, some here, who have sometimes spoken very contemptuously of them; which seems to have been, not from any manner of ground in fact, or so much as any colour of reason, but merely because these Indians appeared peculiarly attached to Mr. Ashley and his wife, and under their influence. But there are other persons in Stockbridge, who have had as much opportunity to know what is the true state of these people, as they. The Onohquauga Indians, who have been here, are properly, not only of the Six Nations, but of the five nations, who are the original united tribes of the Iroquois. All, but one or two of them, are of the nation of the **Oneiutas**; and they appear not to be looked upon as contemptible, by the rest of the Five Nations, from what was once openly said of them, at a public council, by the sachems of the **Conneenchees**, or proper **Mohawks**, who advised us to treat the **Onohquaugas** with peculiar care and kindness, as excelling their own tribe in religion and virtue; giving at the same time many instances of their virtue. We have found the testimony which they gave of them to be true. They appear to be far the best disposed Indians with which we have had any connexion. They would be inclined to the utmost,*

to assist, encourage, and strengthen, the hands of missionaries and instructors, should any be sent among them, and to do all they could to forward their success, among themselves, and the other Indians round about.

*There seems to be no room for a missionary, in the country of the **Conneenchees**. The Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, have long since taken them under their care, and pretended to support a mission among them. A mission from the commissioners in Boston would not be borne by them, nor by the Dutch, who are always among them. And as to the country of the **Quinquas**,^[46] and the original seat of the **Oneiutas**, they seem not to be convenient places for settling a mission, on two accounts. They are on the road to Oswego, where the Dutch are incessantly passing and repassing with their rum; with which they are continually making them drunk, and would be, in many other respects, a continual hindrance and affliction to a missionary; for they are exceedingly opposed to the New England people having any thing to do with the Iroquois. The nation of the **Quinquas**, also, are mostly in the French interest, as well as many of the **Oneiutas**; so that a missionary would there be afflicted, and perhaps in danger, by the French. And it is very evident, that the country of the **Onondagas**, is no country for our missionaries to attempt to establish a mission in. It would be like establishing a mission in Canada; for that nation have entirely gone over to the French interest. They are on the road of the French, as they go up a trading to Mississippi, and their distant settlements, and the nations on the great lakes; and the French*

have of late built a fort in their country, and have in effect annexed it to Canada. And the country of the **Senecas** will not be much more convenient for the purpose, both by reason of its very good distance, and also because most of the nation are firmly united to the French, who constantly maintain their missionaries among them.

Onohquauga is within the territory of the Five Nations, and not so far from the other settlements, but that it may be convenient for making excursions to the several tribes; as convenient perhaps as any place that can be found. It is, I suppose, as near to the heart of the country as any place, unless **Oneiuta** and **Quinquah**. They are also much out of the way of the French, and considerably out of the way of the Dutch, are in a pleasant fruitful country, surrounded by many settlements of Indians on every side, and where the way is open by an easy passage down the river, which runs through one of the most pleasant and fruitful parts of America, for four or five hundred miles, exceedingly well peopled on both sides, and on its several branches, by Indians. Onohquauga is the road, by which several of the nations pass, as they go to war with the southern nations. And there will be this advantage, which missionaries will have, that the Onohquauga Indians are fast friends to the English; and though some of the Dutch have tried much to disaffect them to the English, their attempts have been in vain. They are very desirous of instruction, and to have the gospel established in their country.

There are several towns of the Onohquaugas; and several

missionaries might probably find sufficient employment in those parts. If Mr. Brainerd should settle somewhere in that country, with his Christian Indians, and one or two more missionaries, not at a great distance, they might be under advantage to assist one another; as they will greatly need one another's company and assistance, in so difficult a work, in such a strange distant land. They might be under advantage to consult one another, and to act in concert, and to help one another, in any case of peculiar difficulty. Many English people would be found to go from New England, and settle there; and the greatest difficulty would be, that there would be danger of too many English settlers, and of such as are not fit for the place.

*But, in order to accomplish this; especially in order to such a body of new Indians coming from the Jerseys, and settling in the country of the Six Nations; the consent of those nations, or at least of several of them, must be obtained. The method which Mr. Woodbridge, Mr. Hawley, and I, have thought of, which we submit to the wisdom of the commissioners, is this—that Mr. Woodbridge, and Mr. Ashley and his wife, should go, as speedily as possible, into the country of the **Conneenchees**—they being the first tribe in honour, though not in numbers—and there spend some weeks, perhaps a month, among them, to get acquainted with them, and endeavour to gain their approbation of a mission, for settling the gospel in the country of the Six Nations—Mr. Hawley, in the mean time, to keep Mr. Woodbridge's school. Then, that Mr. Hawley and Mr. Gordon should join them there, and go with them from thence to*

Onohquauga, and when they have acquainted themselves well with the people, and the state of the country, and find things agreeable, and see a hopeful prospect, then for Mr.

Woodbridge to return, and leave Mr. Hawley and Mr. Gordon there, and forthwith send word to Mr. Brainerd, and propose to him to come up, with some of his chief Indians, to see the country. And if, on the observations they make, and the acquaintance they get with the people and country, they think there is an encouraging prospect, then to endeavour to gain a conference with some of the chiefs of the Five Nations, at an appointed time, to know whether they will consent to their coming to settle in their territories. All this will occupy some considerable time; so that, if they can obtain their consent, Mr. Brainerd must return home: and he and his chief Indians must come again to the treaty, at the time and place appointed.

You will easily perceive, Gentlemen, that these things will require time, and that, in order to carry these various measures into effect this year, there will be need of expedition, which may show the reason why we think it necessary, that Mr. Hawley should come to Boston; for, if these things are to be done this year, we had need speedily to know the minds of the commissioners, and therefore that the case would not allow of waiting for, and depending on, uncertain accidental opportunities, of sending to them, and hearing from them. It is also proper, that the commissioners should have opportunity to agree with Mr. Hawley, concerning the reward of his services.

Mr. Brainerd told Mr. Hawley, that, if he removed with his Indians, he should choose to do it speedily; and that, the longer it was delayed, the more difficult it would be, by reason of his building, and the Indians increasing their buildings and improvements at Bethel. Probably, if the removal cannot be brought about the next year, it never will be. And if his Indians remove the next year, it will be necessary that they remove as early as the spring, in order to plant there that year. And if so much needs to be done this summer, it is as much as it will be possible to find time for.

Though we project the measures mentioned above, we are sensible they will be attended with much uncertainty. Man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps. Many are the desires of men's hearts, but the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. Unthought of difficulties may arise, to confound all our projects; as unforeseen difficulties have dashed all the pleasing hopes we entertained, and the fair prospects we had, concerning the affairs of the Mohawks at Stockbridge, the year before last. And I would humbly propose it for consideration, whether it will not be necessary, to leave these affairs, in some measure at discretion, to be determined as the complicated, uncertain, changing state of things shall require; to save the trouble and expense of frequently going or sending to Boston, for new instructions; and to prevent the disadvantages, under which our affairs may be laid, through the lengthy, uncertain way of sending for and receiving new orders, by occasional opportunities.

There will be a necessity of Mrs. Ashley's going as an interpreter, and of her husband going with her. He will be qualified to instruct the Indians in their husbandry: having been well instructed in it himself. I believe he will not be very difficult as to his wages, though probably he expects to know what they will be.

*I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your obliged and obedient servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

During the month of April, Mr. Hawley received a letter from the commissioners, directing him to go to Onohquauga, for the purpose of commencing a new mission at that place. He left Stockbridge May 22d, in company with Mr. Woodbridge, and Mr. and Mrs. Ashley, travelling through the wilderness, and on the 4th of June arrived at the place of their destination. The Indians received the intelligence of their proposed mission with strong expressions of satisfaction. Mr. Woodbridge returned soon after to Stockbridge. Mr. Hawley appears to have remained, with his interpreter; and his labours, as a missionary, were attended with considerable success.

In the course of the summer, not long after the return of the larger part of the Mohawks, from Stockbridge to their own country, a general council of the nation was held, at their principal settlement on the Mohawk; in which, after due examination of the facts, it was decided, that the rest of the Mohawks at Stockbridge, should return early in the spring, as soon as the hunting season was over. Instructions, to this effect, were immediately transmitted, from the chief sachem of the tribe, to the residue of the little colony, and made known to the people of Stock-bridge.

About this time, the agent of Mr. Hollis, discouraged, doubtless, by the state of things, as far as it was known, and probably auguring no very favourable result to himself, or his friends, from the application to Mr. Hollis, quitted Stockbridge, and went back to Newington; leaving the few boys, whom, by offering to board and clothe them gratuitously, he had persuaded to live with him, in the hands of the resident trustee.

This unhappy controversy, now drawing to its close, which, during its continuance, had threatened to subvert the whole Indian mission, and to destroy the prosperity of the village, and the temporal welfare of Mr. Edwards and his family, must have occupied so much of his attention, that when our readers remember, that he preached two discourses a week to the whites, as well as one, by an interpreter, to the *Housatonnucks*, and one to the *Mohawks*; and also catechised the children of the whites, the *Housatonnucks*, and the Mohawks; they will be ready to believe, that he found no time for any additional labours. And when they also recollect, that, on the 23d of November, 1752, he says, in his letter to Mr. Erskine—"I began, the last August, to write a little on the Arminian controversy, but was soon broken off: and such have been my extraordinary avocations and hindrances, that I have not had time to set pen to paper, about this matter, since. But I hope God, in his providence, will favour me with opportunity to prosecute the deign, and I desire your prayers that God would assist me in it;"—and that this proposed work, on the Arminian controversy, was none other, than the treatise on the freedom of the will; they will conclude, of course, that the execution of it must have been deferred to some happier period, when, amid the leisure and tranquillity of retirement, he could give his uninterrupted attention, and his individual strength, to its accomplishment. What then will be their surprise, when they find him opening his next letter to Mr. Erskine, under the date of April 14th, 1753,

with the following annunciation—"After many hindrances, delays, and interruptions, Divine Providence has so far favoured me, and smiled on my design of writing on the Arminian controversy, that I have almost finished the first draught of what I first intended; and am now sending the proposals for subscription, to Boston, to be printed." Let it be remembered, that the Essay on the Freedom of the Will, which, in the opinion of Dugald Stewart, raises its author to the same rank as a metaphysician with Locke and Leibnitz, was written within the space of four months and a half; and those, not months of leisure, but demanding the additional duties of a parish, and of two distinct Indian missions; and presenting, also, all the cares, perplexities, and embarrassments of a furious controversy, the design of which was to deprive the author, and his family, of their daily bread. So far as I am aware, no similar example, of power and rapidity united, is to be found on the annals of mental effort."^[47]

"Stockbridge, April 14, 1753.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

After many hinderances, delays, and interruptions, Divine Providence has so far favoured me, and smiled on my design of writing on the Arminian controversy, that I have almost finished the first draught of what I first intended and am now sending the proposals for subscription to Boston to be printed; with a letter of Mr. Foxcroft, to send thirty of those proposals to Mr. M'Laurin, with a letter to him; in which I have desired him to deliver half of them to you, as you have manifested yourself ready to use endeavours to get subscriptions in Scotland. The printing will be delayed to wait for subscriptions from thence. I therefore request that you

endeavour to promote and expedite the affair.

Stockbridge affairs, relating to the Indians, are, in many respects, under a very dark cloud. The affair of the Iroquois, or Six Nations, here is almost at an end, as I have given a more particular account to Mr. M'Laurin. The commissioners in Boston, I believe, are discouraged about it, and have thoughts of sending and settling a missionary in their own country. The correspondents of the Society in Scotland, have also determined to send a missionary there, and have chosen Mr. Gordon a tutor of the college at Newark, for that end. Mr. Gordon is expected here at the beginning of May, to live at my house with Mr. Hawley, in order to learn the Iroquois language with him. It is probable that he and Mr. Hawley will go up, and spend the summer, in the Iroquois country.

The correspondents have also a disposition, that Mr. Brainerd should remove, with the whole congregation of Indians, to settle somewhere in the country of the Six Nations; and he himself and his Indians, are ready for it. 'Tis probable that something will be done to prepare the way for it; and at least to see, whether the way can be prepared, or any door opened for it, this summer. Some of these Indians have a great desire, that the gospel should be introduced and settled in their country.

Some of the Stockbridge Indians have of late been under considerable awakenings—two or three elderly men, that used to be vicious persons. My family is now in usual health. My daughter Burr, in New Jersey has been very ill all the winter

past. We last heard from her about five weeks ago; when it was hoped there was some amendment.

My wife joins with me, in respectful and affectionate salutations to you and Mrs. Erskine. Desiring a remembrance in your prayers,

*I am, dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother,
and obliged friend and servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

The representations of the nephew of the opponent of Mr. Woodbridge, and those of the commissioners of Boston, to the Society in London, the former hostile, and the latter friendly, to Mr. Edwards and his associates, were sent forward, and arrived at their place of destination, in due season. That gentleman had entertained an overweening estimate of his own influence with the board of directors of the Society in London. They gave full credit to the statements of their own commissioners, and sustained them in upholding their missionaries and instructors. Perceiving, however, that an unhappy controversy subsisted at Stockbridge, relative to the mission, and knowing that their commissioners at Boston were 150 miles distant; they endeavoured to devise a plan, by which the existing evils might be remedied. Mr. Edwards, in his letter to Mr. Mauduit, one of their number, had observed, "What renders it the more necessary, that things here should be under the immediate care of trustees on the spot, is, the misunderstanding and jealousy here subsisting, between some of the chief of the present English inhabitants of the town, which is one of our greatest calamities. Things, on this account, do much need careful inspection; and therefore, the gentlemen intrusted ought to be such, as are perfectly impartial, and no way interested in, or related to, these contending parties." The plan suggested by the directors was this, That

eleven persons—two in New York, two in Albany, one in Wethersfield, two in Hartford, one in Windsor, one in Suffield, one in Hadley, and one in Stockbridge—should be a board of consultation, to advise their agents at Stockbridge, and to act, by correspondence, with the commissioners; and they counted upon the preceding extract, as what had confirmed them in the measure.^[48] At the request of the Hon. Mr. Bromfield, one of the commissioners, Mr. Edwards, in a letter, dated October. 19, 1753, expressed his own views of the plan, and pointed out its inconvenience, if not utter impracticability. The commissioners having expressed similar views to the directors; the plan was relinquished. This was the result of the application to the Society in London.^[49]

The General Assembly of the church of Scotland, for the year 1753

Having refused, by a very small majority, to restore Mr. Gillespie to the ministry in the kirk, and to his parish of Carnock—an act of plain justice, which he would not ask them to render him—Mr. Edwards addressed to him the following letter; a part of which must have been sweet and consoling to the feelings of suffering piety.

"Stockbridge, October 18, 1753

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

The last November I wrote you a letter, and desired Mr.

Foxcroft to put up with it, for you, one of my Answers to Mr.

Williams. After that, in the latter part of the winter, I received

a letter from you, dated June 15th, 1752, with Milton on Hirelings; and duplicates of a Letter from a Gentleman in Town, etc.; and Answers to the Reasons of Dissent, etc. I now return you my hearty thanks for these things. Since that, I have received letters from Mr. M'Laurin and Mr. Erskine, with various pamphlets and prints relative to your extraordinary affair I think, dear Sir, although your sufferings are like to continue, the General Assembly having refused to restore you to your former station and employments in the church of Scotland; yet they are attended with many manifestations of the goodness, and fatherly kindness, and favour of the great Governor of the world, in the many alleviations and supporting circumstances of your persecutions; in that so many of God's ministers and people have appeared to be so much concerned for you; and have so zealously, and yet so properly, exerted themselves in your behalf; and have so many ways given their testimony to the goodness of the cause in which you suffer, and the unrighteousness of the hardships which you have been subjected to; and that even so great a part of the General Assembly, themselves, have, in effect, given this testimony for you, there being but a very small majority, but what openly appeared for the taking off of the censure of the former Assembly, without any recantation on your part, or so much as an application from you, desiring them so to do. You have some peculiar reasons to rejoice in your sufferings, and to glorify God on account of them. They having been so greatly taken notice of by so many of the people of God, and there being so much written concerning

them, tends to render them, with their circumstances, and particularly the patience and meekness with which you have suffered, so much the more extensively and durably to the glory of the name of your blessed lord, for whom you suffer. God is rewarding you for laying a foundation, in what has been said and done and written concerning your sufferings, for glory to his own name, and honour to you, in his church, in future generations. Your name will doubtless be mentioned hereafter with peculiar respect, on the account of these sufferings, in ecclesiastical history; as they are now the occasion of a peculiar notice, which saints and angels in heaven take of you, and of their praises to God on your account; and will be the occasion of a peculiar reward, which God will bestow upon you, when you shall be united to their assembly.

As to my own circumstances, I still meet with trouble, and expect no other, as long as I live in this world. Some men of influence have much opposed my continuing a missionary at Stockbridge, and have taken occasion abundantly to reproach me, and endeavour my removal. But I desire to bless God, he seems in some respects to set me out of their reach. He raises me up friends, who are exerting themselves to counteract the designs of my opposers; particularly the commissioners for Indian affairs in Boston; with whom innumerable artifices have been used, to disaffect them towards me; but altogether in vain. Governor Belcher, also, has seen cause much to exert himself, in my behalf, on occasion of the opposition made to me. My people, both English and Indians, stedfastly adhere to

me; excepting the family with whom the opposition began, and those related to them; which family greatly opposed me while at Northampton. Most numerous, continued, and indefatigable endeavours have been used, to undermine me, by attempting to alienate my people from me; innumerable mean artifices have been used with one another, with young and old, men and women, Indians and English: but hitherto they have been greatly disappointed. But yet they are not weary.

As we, dear Sir, have great reason to sympathize, one with another, with peculiar tenderness; our circumstances being in many respects similar; so I hope I shall partake of the benefit of your fervent prayers for me. Let us then endeavour to help one another, though at a great distance, in travelling through this wide wilderness; that we may have the more joyful meeting in the land of rest, when we have finished our weary pilgrimage.

*I am, dear Sir,
Your most affectionate brother,
and fellow-servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

"P. S. My wife joins in most affectionate regards to you and yours."

The proposals for publishing the Essay on the Freedom of the Will, were issued in Massachusetts, in 1753; but in consequence of the kind offer of Mr. Erskine and Mr. M'Laurin, to circulate the papers, and procure subscribers for it in Scotland, the printing was postponed until the success of their efforts was known. What that success was, probably cannot now be ascertained. The work was published early in the year 1754, under the title of "A careful and

strict Inquiry into the modern prevailing Notions of that Freedom of the Will, which is supposed to be essential to Moral Agency, Virtue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame." This work is justly considered as the most laboured and important of the metaphysical investigations undertaken by the author. The subject, as will be obvious from the preceding title, lies at the very foundation of all religion and of all morality. That it was also a subject of no ordinary difficulty, appears generally to have been felt, and in effect acknowledged; for until the time of Mr. Edwards, it had never been thoroughly investigated either by philosophers or theologians, though it was constantly recurring in their reasonings on the great principles connected with the moral government of God, and the character of man. Calvin, in his chapter on the Slavery of the Will, may be taken as an example of the most that had been done to settle the opinions of the orthodox, and refute their opposers on this subject before this period. His defect, and that of his followers, until the time of Mr. Edwards, is seen in this one thing; that they insisted on the great fact, merely that the will of man was not in a state of indifference, but so strongly fixed in its choice as to require supernatural grace for conversion, overlooking in a great measure the nature of moral agency, and what is essential to its nature. Their opposers, on the contrary, were constantly affirming, that freedom of will was necessary to moral agency, and carried their views to the extent that the will determined itself, and could not be enslaved. In this state of ethical and theological science, Mr. Edwards set himself to the task of examining the great subject of moral agency, as connected with the human will; and by the precision of his definitions and statements, the cogency of his reasonings, the fulness of his illustrations, the thorough handling of all objections, and the application of his views to many scriptural truths, he placed the grand points of his subject in a light so overwhelmingly convincing, as to leave little room for any doubt

or dispute afterwards.

In this treatise it is contended, that the power of choosing, or willing, does itself constitute freedom of agency; and that particular acts of will are determined, i.e. are rendered certain, or become such as they are, rather than otherwise, by some sufficient cause or reason, in perfect consistency with their being acts of will, or in perfect consistency with that power of willing which constitutes freedom of agency. On the ground that the power of willing pertains to man, the author asserts a natural ability, which is the just occasion of precept, invitation, etc. or of the will of God being addressed to him, and on the ground that his acts of will are rendered certain, by a sufficient cause, the author asserts a moral inability. The principal point contended for, and which is most essential to the defence of the Calvinistic scheme of faith, in distinction from the Arminian, is the latter one, that the acts of the will are rendered certain by some other cause than the mere power of willing. What the particular cause or causes may be, is not particularly considered, but this question is dismissed with a few brief remarks. The fact, that there is and must be, some such cause, is the great subject argued, and most powerfully demonstrated. This cause he asserts is the foundation of necessity, in the sense merely of certainty of action, and does not therefore destroy natural ability or the power of choice, nor imply that man acts otherwise than electively, or by choice; so that it is a necessity consistent with accountability, demerit, or the contrary and so with rewards and punishments. He asserts that all such terms as must, cannot, impossible, tenable, irresistible, unavoidable, invincible, etc. when applied here, are not applied in their proper signification, and are either used non-sensically, and with perfect insignificance, or in a sense quite diverse from their proper and original meaning, and their use in common speech; and that such a necessity as attends the acts of men's wills, is more properly called certainty than

necessity.

Rightly to understand this controversy, it must be observed, that he and his opponents, alike, considered sin to consist in acts of will. Had this not been the case, it would have been idle for Mr. Edwards to have confined himself, in his whole treatise, to acts of choice, and the manner in which they are determined, i.e. rendered certain. He must, in that case, have agitated the previous question, respecting acts of choice themselves; and have asserted and maintained, that something else of specifically a different nature, enters into moral character, and forms the ground of praise and blame, or retribution. But the question which he considered to be at issue, is this: Does the mind will, in any given manner, without a motive, cause or ground, which renders the given choice, rather than a different choice, certain. Whitby, the writer whom he especially has in view, in his remarks on the freedom of man, asserts, that man, by his own activity alone, decides the choice. Mr. Edwards acknowledges that man chooses; but asserts, in opposition to the opinion of Whitby, and those who side with him, that there must be some other ground or cause, beside the mere activity of man, or his power of choosing, which occasions his choosing in one manner, rather than another. He asserts, that "doubtless common sense requires men's being the authors of their own acts of will, in order to their being esteemed worthy of praise or dispraise, on account of them." The very act of volition itself, is, doubtless, a determination; i.e. it is the mind's drawing up a conclusion, or coming to a choice, between two things or more, proposed to it. But determining among external objects of choice, is not the same as determining the act of choice itself, among various possible acts of choice. The question is, What influences, directs, or determines, the mind or will, to such a conclusion or choice as it does form? Or what is the cause, ground, or reason, why it concludes thus, and not otherwise? This is the question, on his own

statement.

In the latter part of February, 1754, a letter was received from Mr. Hollis, by Mr. Edwards, containing his explicit directions as to the school, for which he had expended so much money, to so little purpose. By this letter, Mr. Hollis withdrew the care of the school, and the expenditure of his benefactions, from the hands of those who had had the charge of them, and placed them in the hands of Mr. Edwards.^[50] On the 25th, Mr. Edwards enclosed a copy of this letter, in a note to the provincial agent, requesting, from him, an account of the existing state of the school, and of the furniture and books belonging to it. On the 27th, he went to the school, to examine into its actual condition, and found in it six Indian boys. The following day, he mentioned this fact, in a second note to the agent, and informed him, that, as the Mohawks had long had the resolution to leave Stockbridge, early in the spring, he had appointed a conference with them, on the 1st of March, to learn whether they still persisted in that resolution; to the end, that, if they did so, he might suspend any further expense upon them, on Mr. Hollis's account. At this conference, which was held with all the Mohawks, men, women, and children, in the presence of many of the people of the town, they informed him, that they had all agreed in the autumn, that they would return, in the spring, to their own country; and that this agreement was owing to the determination of the council of their nation, the sachems of the Conneenchees, and could not be altered, unless by a new determination of their sachems. Of this he gave the agent due notice the day following, as well as of his purpose to expend none of Mr. Hollis's money upon them, so long as they persisted in that resolution.

As the general court had interested themselves in the affairs of Mr. Hollis, and had waited to know his mind concerning them, that they might order their own measures accordingly; Mr. Edwards, in a letter to the secretary of

the province, dated March 8th, enclosed an extract from the letter of Mr. Hollis, and informed him of the actual state of the school, of the determination of the council of the Mohawks, and the consequent resolution of the little colony to return to their own country, and of the notice he had given the agent, that he should withhold any subsequent expense of Mr. Hollis's money upon them. He likewise informed him, that some of the Mohawks had, since the conference, brought their children to him, and earnestly requested that they might be instructed; offering to take the charge of their maintenance themselves; and that he had consented to receive them. ^[51] He also asks the advice of the secretary, whether he might still occupy the schoolhouse, which had been built on the lands of the Indians, at the expense of the province, for the benefit of Mr. Hollis's school.

The individuals opposed to Mr. Edwards and Mr. Woodbridge, thus found every plan, which they had formed of connecting themselves with the Stockbridge mission, defeated, and their last hope extinguished. In 1750, the prospects of the mission, in consequence of the arrival of the two detachments of the *Mohawks* and *Onohquaugas*, which seemed to be mere harbingers of still larger colonies of their countrymen, were uncommonly bright and promising. And could the benevolent intentions of Mr. Hollis, of the Society in London, and of the provincial legislature, in behalf of the Iroquois, have been carried forward to their full completion, with no obstructions thrown in their way, by greedy avarice or unhallowed ambition; it is difficult to conceive of the amount of good which might have been accomplished. A large and flourishing colony of the Iroquois would soon have been established at Stockbridge, drawn thither for the education of their children, and brought directly within the reach of the means of salvation. What would have been the ultimate effect of such a colony on their countrymen at home, and on the more remote Indian tribes, can only be

conjectured. By the steadfast resolution of those persons to oppose these plans of benevolence, unless the management of the funds by which they were to be accomplished could be placed in their own hands, this whole system of beneficence towards the Iroquois, which would only have enlarged with the opportunity of exerting it, was frustrated finally and for ever. We will not cherish the belief, that the disappointed individuals found any thing in this melancholy result, to console them under the shame and mortification of their own defeat; although they thus effectually prevented the benevolent efforts of their opponents, by driving the intended objects of them beyond their reach. A short time after the letter of Mr. Hollis was received, the individual, in whose hands the Mohawk school had been left by the former teacher, removed with his family to his former place of residence; leaving behind him only one of his associates at Stockbridge.

Chapter XXIII^(TOC)

Sickness of Mr. Edwards—"Gods Last End in Creation"—"Nature of Virtue"—Mr. Edwards Second Son Resides at Onohquauga—Dangers of the War—Letter to Mr. Erskine—Letter to Col. Williams—Lord Kaimes—Letter to Mr. Erskine—Letter to Mr. M'Culloch—Letter of Dr. Bellamy—"Treatise on Original Sin"—Letter to his Father—Letter to Mr. Erskine.

IN July, 1754, Mr. Edwards had a most severe attack of the ague and fever, which lasted until January. It wholly disqualified him from writing even to his correspondents, and greatly enfeebled his constitution. In the course of the spring following, he began the preparation of two other treatises, which were entitled, "A Dissertation concerning the End for which God created the World;" and "A Dissertation concerning the Nature of True Virtue." These two subjects are fundamental in a system of theology. On the first, many writers had hazarded occasional remarks; yet it has rarely occupied the space even of a chapter or a section in theological systems; and I know not whether any writer before Mr. Edwards had made it the subject of a formal and separate treatise. From the purest principles of reason, as well as from the fountain of revealed truth, he demonstrates that the chief and ultimate end of the Supreme Being, in the works of creation and providence, was the manifestation of his own glory, in the highest happiness of his creatures. The treatise was left by the author, as at first written, without being prepared for the press; yet it exhibits the subject in a manner so clear and convincing, that it has been the manual of theologians from the time of its publication to the present.

The nature of virtue has been a frequent subject of discussion among ethical

writers of almost every class, heathen, infidel, and Christian. Aristotle, and other ancient moralists, supposed virtue to consist in avoiding extremes, and in following the mean in everything. Others of the ancients defined virtue to be living according to nature. Balguy and Doddridge represent it as consisting in acting agreeably to the moral fitness of things. Wollaston places it in regard to truth. Hutcheson defines it to be "a quality apprehended in some actions which produces approbation and love towards the actor, from those who receive no benefit from the action. Many writers, ancient and modern, have placed virtue in imitation of God; and many others in obedience to the will of God. Waterland, Rutherford, and (John) Brown, have placed it in a wise regard to our own interest. Bishop Butler says, that "a due concern about our own interest or happiness, and a reasonable endeavour to promote it, is virtue;" and that "benevolence, singly considered, is in no sort the whole of virtue." Hume, who appears to have read several of the works of Edwards, and to have made use of them in accommodation to his own views, includes in his description of virtue, whatever is agreeable and useful to ourselves and others. Adam Smith refers it to the principle of sympathy. Paley, who read Edwards with care, defines virtue to be "The doing good to mankind in Obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness." Cumberland, in his Laws of Nature, justly regards it as consisting in the love of God, and of our fellow-creatures, and explains himself thus, "The foundation of all natural law is the greatest benevolence of every rational agent towards all.

Mr. Edwards represents virtue as founded in happiness; and as being love to the greatest happiness, or love to the happiness of universal being. He describes it, as leading its possessor to desire, and to promote, as far as in him lies, the happiness of all beings, and a greater degree of happiness in preference to a less. His account of the subject is in exact accordance with the

decision of reason. Happiness is the end, for which intelligent beings were made, the perfection of their existence; and therefore virtue, or moral excellence, must be love to that happiness. It is also in exact accordance with the Scriptures. The sum of our duty is unquestionably virtue. But Moses sums up our duty in two commands, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:" in other words, Thou shalt love the happiness of universal being.

When the Scriptures had so plainly pointed out the nature of virtue, as consisting in love; and its foundation, as being happiness; it is not a little remarkable, that so many acute writers, with the Scriptures in their hands, should have formed views either so obscure, or so erroneous, of these subjects; and, perhaps not less remarkable, that Mr. Edwards should have been able to discover its true nature, and its real foundation, at a very early age, as clearly as he did in after-life. That this was the case, no one will want evidence, who reads the various articles under the head of Excellency, particularly the last, in the Notes on the Mind.^[52]

These two treatises were first published together in a pamphlet, in Boston, in 1788, without alteration from the rough draught of the author. He designed them both for publication, but never prepared either of them for the press. Though conceived and expressed with great perspicuity, they treat of subjects, which demand close thought in the reader, as well as the writer; and, on this account, have often been imperfectly comprehended, even by divines. But wherever they have been read and understood, they have to such a degree formed and regulated the views of theologians, with regard to the subjects of which they treat, that other treatises are consulted, rather as objects of curiosity, or history, than as guides of opinions and principles.^[53]

In February, or early in March, this year, Mr. Edwards sent his second son,

Jonathan,^[54] then a lad of nine years of age, to Onohquauga, to reside with Mr. Hawley, that he might learn more perfectly the language of the Iroquois. He continued there about a twelvemonth; when, in consequence of the war with France, the danger of attack from the Indians became so imminent, that Mr. Hawley returned with him to his father's house.

The war of 1754 was most disastrous to the colonies; and the frontier settlements of New England, of which Stockbridge was one, were exposed to unceasing anxiety and alarm, from their constant liability to attack from the French savages. In the autumn, several of the inhabitants of Stockbridge were killed by these marauders; in consequence of which it became a garrisoned town; and every family had quartered upon it its own quota of the soldiers, necessary for the defence of the place. The state of things, in this respect, may be learned from the following letter of Mr. Edwards, to the officer who had the command of the troops in that part of the county.

Letter of Mr. Edwards

"Stockbridge, February. 26, 1755.

SIR,

We have not lodgings and provisions, so as to board and lodge more than four soldiers; and being in a low state as to my health, and not able to go much abroad, and upon that and other accounts, under much greater disadvantages than others to get provisions, it is for this reason, and not because I have a disposition to make difficulty, that I told the soldiers of this

province, who had hitherto been provided for here, that we could not board them any longer. I have often been told that you had intimated, that you have other business for them in a short time. Captain Hosmer has sent three of his men to lodge at my house, whom I am willing to entertain, as I choose to board such as are likely to be continued for our defence in times of danger. Stebbins has manifested to us a desire to continue here. Him, therefore, I am willing to entertain, with your consent. Requesting your candid construction of that, which is not intended in any inconsistency with my having all proper honour and respect, I am

*Your humble servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

The subsequent letter to Mr. Erskine will show, still more fully, the state of alarm and terror then existing at Stockbridge.

"Stockbridge, April 15, 1755.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

The last year, in the spring, I received, without a letter, a packet containing the following books: Casaubon on Enthusiasm; Warburton's Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion; Merrick on Christ the True Vine; Campbell's

Apostles no Enthusiasts; Discourse on the Prevailing Evils of the Present Time; Remarks on Apostles no Enthusiasts; Moncrieff's Review and Examination of some Principles in Campbell's Apostles no Enthusiasts; Gilbert on the Guilt and Pardon of Sin; Hervey on the Cross of Christ; An Account of the Orphan School, etc. at Edinburgh; Memorial Concerning the Surgeon's Hospital; Gairdner's Account of the Old People's Hospital; State of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge; Abridgment of the Rules of said Society; Regulations of the Town's Hospital at Glasgow; and Annals of the Persecution of the Protestants in France.

In the beginning of last December, I received another packet without a letter; the wrapper superscribed with your hand. In this were the following pamphlets: A Sermon by a Lay Elder, before the Commission; A Letter to a Gentleman at Edinburgh; Resolutions of the General Assembly, of May 22d, 1736; Rutherford's Power of Faith and Prayer; Inquiry into the Method of Settling Parishes; The Nature of the Covenant and Constitution of the Church of Scotland; Essay on Gospel and Legal Preaching; Necessity of Zeal for the Truth; A Vindication of the Protestant Doctrine of Justification, against the Charge of Antinomianism. The last week I received a letter from you, dated 11th July, 1754; which was found at Mr. Prince's by one that went to Boston from hence, and had lain there Mr. Prince could not tell how long. In this letter you make mention of these last-mentioned pamphlets, received last December. I now return you my hearty thanks for this letter, and these generous presents. I should have written to you long

ago, had I not been prevented by the longest and most tedious sickness that ever I had in my life: It being followed with fits of ague which came upon me about the middle of last July, and were for a long time very severe, and exceedingly wasted my flesh and strength, so that I became like a skeleton. I had several intermissions of the fits by the use of the Peruvian bark; but they never wholly left me till the middle of last January. In the mean time, I several times attempted to write letters to some of my friends about affairs of importance, but found that I could bear but little of such writing. Once, in attempting to write a letter to Mr. Burr, a fit of the ague came upon me while I was writing, so that I was obliged to lay by my pen. When my fits left me they left me in a poor weak state, so that I feared whether I was not going into a dropsy. Nevertheless, I have of late gradually gained strength.

I lately received a letter from Mr. M'Laurin, dated August. 13, 1754; which Mr. Prince sent me, with a letter from himself, wherein he informed me that a captain of a ship from Glasgow, then lately arrived, brought an account of Mr. M'Laurin's death; that he died very suddenly, with an apoplexy, a little before he left Glasgow. Since I received that letter, I sent to Mr. Prince, desiring to know more of the certainty of the account. This is an affecting piece of news. It is an instance of death which I have much cause to lament. He has long shown himself to be a very worthy, kind, and obliging friend and correspondent of mine. And doubtless, the church of Scotland has much cause to lament his death. There is reason to think that he was one of them that stood in the gap

to make up the hedge in these evil times. He was a wise, steady, and most faithful friend of gospel truth and vital piety, in these days of great corruption. I wish that I may take warning by it, as well as by my own late sickness, to prepare for my own departure hence.

I have nothing very comfortable to write respecting my own success in this place. The business of the Indian mission, since I have been here, has been attended with strange embarrassments, such as I never could have expected, or so much as once dreamed of; of such a nature, and coming from such a quarter, that I take no delight in being very particular and explicit upon it. But, beside what I especially refer to, some things have lately happened that have occasioned great disturbance among the Indians, and have tended to alienate them from the English. As particularly, the killing of one of them in the woods, by a couple of travellers, white men, who met him, and contended with him. And though the men were apprehended and imprisoned; yet on their trial they escaped the sentence of death: one of them only receiving a lighter punishment, as guilty of manslaughter: by which these Indians, and also the Indians of some other tribes, were greatly displeased, and disaffected towards the English. Since the last fall, some Indians from Canada, doubtless instigated by the French, broke in upon us, on the sabbath, between meetings, and fell upon an English family, and killed three of them; and about an hour after killed another man, coming into the town from some distant houses; which occasioned a great alarm in the town, and in the country. Multitudes came from

various parts, for our defence, that night, and the next day; and many of these conducted very foolishly towards our Indians on this occasion, suspecting them to be guilty of doing the mischief, charging them with it, and threatening to kill them, and the like. After this, a reward being offered by some private gentlemen, to some that came this way as soldiers, if they would bring them the scalp of a Canada Indian; two men were so extremely foolish and wicked, that they, in the night, dug up one of our Indians, that had then lately died, out of his grave, to take off his scalp; that, by pretending that to be a scalp of a Canada Indian, whom they had met and killed in the woods, they might get the promised reward. When this was discovered, the men were punished. But this did not hinder, but that such an act greatly increased the jealousy and disaffection of the Indians, towards the English. Added to these things, we have many white people, that will, at all times, without any restraint, give them ardent spirits, which is a constant temptation to their most predominant lust.

Though I have but little success, and many discouragements, here at Stock-bridge, yet Mr. Hawley, now a missionary among the Six Nations, who went from New England to Onohquauga, a place more than 200 miles distant from hence, has, of late, had much encouragement. Religion seems to be a growing, spreading thing, among the savages in that part of America, by his means. And there is a hopeful prospect, of way being made for another missionary in those parts, which may have happy consequences, unless the Six Nations should go over to the French; which there is the greatest reason to

expect, unless the English should exert themselves, vigorously and successfully, against the French, in America, this year. They seem to be waiting to see whether this will be so or no, in order to determine, whether they will entirely desert the English, and cleave to the French. And if the Six Nations should forsake the English, it may be expected, that the Stockbridge Indians, and almost all the nations of Indians in North America, will follow them. It seems to be the most critical season, with the British dominions in America, that ever was seen, since the first settlement of these colonies; and all, probably, will depend on the warlike transactions of the present year. What will be done I cannot tell. We are all in commotion, from one end of British America to the other; and various expeditions are projected, and preparing for; one to Ohio, another to the French Forts in Nova Scotia, another to Crown Point. But these affairs are not free from embarrassments: great difficulties arise, in our present most important affairs, through the dispirited state of the several governments. It is hard for them to agree upon means and measures. And we have no reason to think that the French are behind us in their activity and preparations. A dark cloud seems to hang over us: we need the prayers of all our friends, and all friends to the protestant interest. Stockbridge is a place much exposed; and what will become of us, in the struggles that are coming on, God only knows. I have heard that Messrs. Tennent and Davies are arrived in America, having had good success in the errand they went upon. Mr. Bellamy is not likely to go to New York, principally by reason

of the opposition of some of the congregation, and also of some of the neighbouring ministers. I have heard, they have lately unanimously agreed to apply themselves to Mr. M'Gregor, of New Londonderry, alias Nutfield, in New England, to be their minister; who is a gentleman that, I think, if they can obtain him, will be likely to suit them, and competent to fill the place. And I have heard, that there has been some difference in his own congregation, that has lately made his situation there uneasy. If so, he will be more likely to consent to the motion from New York.

My wife joins with me in respectful and affectionate salutations to you and Mrs. Erskine.

*I am, dear Sir, your affectionate and obliged brother,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

"P.S. In a journey I went to Northampton, the last April, I carried the foregoing letter, with others for Scotland, so far, seeking an opportunity to send them from thence to Boston; and there I met another letter from Mr. Prince, with a joyful contradiction of his former account of Mr. M'Laurin's death; which occasioned my bringing my packet home again. Nevertheless, after I had broken open and perused this letter, I thought best to send it along, enclosed in a wrapper to Mr. M'Laurin; who, I hope, is yet living, and will convey it to you.

J.E.

"Stockbridge, June 2, 1755."

In the beginning of September, the danger became so imminent, that Mr. Edwards, at the request of the people of the town, addressed the following

urgent letter to the colonel of the county.

To Col. Israel Williams.

Stockbridge, September. 5, 1755.

SIR,

Yesterday the English inhabitants of the town sent away a letter, directed to you, to be conveyed to Hatfield, respecting the state of the town, stating that it was left very greatly exposed, by the drawing off of all the Connecticut soldiers; that Governor Shirley, by his urgency, had persuaded away almost all the Indian inhabitants fit for war, who objected much against going, on that account, that the departure of so many would leave the town, and their wives and children too, defenceless; that the governor removed their objection, by promising that a sufficient number of English soldiers should be maintained here, during their absence, for the defence of the town; and also, that we had just now information sent in writing, from Mr. Vanschaak, that two large parties of Indians are lately gone out of Crown Point, against our frontiers; and so entreating that soldiers may be speedily sent. But being informed today, that you are gone from Hatfield, and not knowing whether you will seasonably receive the aforementioned letter, I now, at the desire of the people, give you this brief information of what was therein written; earnestly desiring, that we may not be left so easy and open a

prey to our enemies, who, we have reason to think, have the means of learning our situation, and are certainly preparing to attack some of the most defenceless of the frontier villages. We hope that the troops may be forwarded immediately; for, having no adequate means of repelling an attack, we have no security for a single day.

*I am respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

In 1751, an anonymous work was published in Edinburgh, entitled "Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion,"^[55] of which Henry Home,^[56] Esq. soon avowed himself the author. These essays, though written by a member of the church of Scotland, were regarded as decidedly sceptical in their tendency, and brought the author into some difficulties with the particular church with which he was connected. This led to a public discussion of the character of the work at large—particularly of the Essay on Liberty and Necessity. When this discussion was commencing, the Essay on the Freedom of the Will arrived in Scotland. It was extensively read by men of speculative minds; and, though presenting a view of the subject wholly new, gave great satisfaction to men of all classes. Lord Kaimes and his friends, having read the work of Mr. Edwards, endeavoured to show that the view of liberty and necessity, in the Freedom of the Will, was substantially the same with that given by his lordship. Mr. Erskine apprized Mr. Edwards of this fact. In the following letter, the latter barely alludes to the work of Lord Kaimes, as a work of corrupt tendency. In a subsequent letter to his friends, written in the summer of the following year, and now appended to the Treatise on the Freedom of the Will,^[57] he examines the views of liberty and necessity by his lordship, shows their entire discordance with his own

views, as exhibited in the Freedom of the Will, and exposes their inconsistency, not only with reason but with each other. This letter, from a sense of justice to its author, was immediately published, in the form of a pamphlet, by Mr. Erskine, and produced a universal conviction, that Lord Kaimes had wholly misunderstood the view taken of liberty and necessity by Mr. Edwards; and that his own views of it were at war, alike with reason and revelation. Indeed, his lordship himself appears to have been of the same opinion; for, in a subsequent edition, the Essay on Liberty and Necessity is said to have been much changed, as to present essentially different views of those important subjects.

To the Rev. John Erskine, Minister of the Gospel, at Culross, Scotland.

Stockbridge, December. 11, 1755

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I last wrote to you July 24th, 1755. Since that I received a letter from you, dated June 23, 1755, together with the Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion, ^[58] from Mr. Hogg, and the Analysis of the Moral and Religious Sentiments of Sopho, from yourself. I thank you for your letter and present, and shall write a letter of thanks to Mr. Hogg, for his present by your hand, added to former instances of his generosity. I had before read that book of Essays, having borrowed Mr. Bellamy's, and also that book of Mr. David

Hume's, which you speak of. I am glad of an opportunity to read such corrupt books, especially when written by men of considerable genius; that I may have an idea of the notions that prevail in our nation. You say that some people say, that Lord Kaimes's being made a Lord of Session would have been prevented, if Chancellor Hardwick and Archbishop Herring had seasonably seen his book. I should be glad to know who this Chancellor Hardwick is, and what is his character. By your mentioning him in such a manner, I am ready to suppose he may be, in some respects, of good character; and it is a matter of thankfulness, if a man of good character, and a friend to religion, be Lord Chancellor.

As to our warlike concerns, I have not heretofore been very particular in writing about them, in my letters to Scotland, supposing it highly probable that you would have earlier accounts from Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, than any I can send you, living at so great a distance from any of the seaports. Nevertheless, seeing you propose my sending you some account of the present posture of affairs, I would say, that it appears to me that notwithstanding some remarkable favours of Heaven, of which we are very unworthy, it has in the general been a year of great frowns of Providence on British America. Notwithstanding our success at Nova Scotia, and in having the better in the battle near Lake George, and taking the French general prisoner; yet, considering the advantages the enemy hath obtained against us, by General Braddock's defeat, especially in gaining over and confirming the Indians on their side, and disheartening and weakening

our friends, and what we have suffered from our enemies, and how greatly we are weakened and almost sunk with our vast expenses, especially in New England, and the blood as well as money we have expended; I say, considering these things, and how little we have gained by our loss and trouble, our case is no better, but far worse than it was in the beginning of the year. At least, I think it certain, that we have attained no advantage, in any wise, to balance our trouble and expense of blood and treasure. The expedition to the eastward has been remarkably successful; but the other three expeditions, that against the French forts on the Ohio, that against Niagara, and that against Crown Point, have all been unsuccessful, as to their main designs. And though the army under General Johnson had a kind of victory over the French, and took the Baron Dieskau, their general, prisoner; yet we suffered very greatly in the battle, and the taking of the French general probably, was the saving of his army. For, by telling a lie to our army, viz. that the French were in constant expectation of being greatly enforced by a large body, that marched another way, and had appointed to meet them near that place, our army was prevented from pursuing the enemy, after they had repelled them; which, if they had done, the French might have been under great advantages to have cut them off, and prevented the return of almost all of them to Crown Point, which could be no otherwise than through the water in their batteaux. Our army never proceeded any farther than the place of their engagement; but, having built a fort there, near Lake George, alias Lake St. Sacrament, after they had built

another near Hudson's river, about fourteen miles on this side, and left garrisons, has lately returned. As also has the army under General Shirley, (who went with designs against Niagara,) after having built some vessels of force in the lake Ontario, and strengthened the fortifications at Oswego, and sent for the remains of General Braddock's army to Albany, there to go into winter quarters. The governors of the several provinces, in the latter part of the last month, had a meeting to confer together, concerning our warlike affairs, and to agree on a plan of operations to be recommended to the government at home for the next year. But I have heard nothing of their determinations. The Indians have not done much mischief on the frontiers of New England, since our army have been about us; but have been dreadful in their ravages, on the back settlements of Virginia and Pennsylvania.

It is apparent that the ministry at home miss it very much, in sending over British forces to fight with Indians in America, and in sending over British officers, to have the command of our American forces. Let them send us arms, ammunition, money, and shipping; and let New England men manage the business in their own way, who alone understand it. To appoint British officers over them, is nothing but a hindrance and discouragement to them. Let them be well supplied, and supported, and defended by sea, and then let them go forth under their own officers and manage in their own way, as they did in the expedition against Cape Breton. All the provinces in America seem to be fully sensible, that New England men are the only men to be employed against Canada; as I had

opportunity abundantly to observe, in my late journey to New York, New Jersey, and Philadelphia. However, we ought to remember that neither New England men, nor any other, are any thing unless God be with us; and when we have done all, at finding fault with men and instruments employed, we cannot expect prosperity, unless the accursed thing be removed from our camp.

God has lately frowned on my family, in taking away a faithful servant, who was a great help to us; and one of my children has been under threatening infirmities, but is somewhat better. I desire your prayers for us all.

My wife joins with me in affectionate and respectful salutations to you and Mrs. Erskine.

*I am, Rev, and dear Sir,
Your obliged brother,
and affectionate friend,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

***The effect of the war on the Indian mission
will be seen from the following letter to Mr.
M'Culloch.***

"Stockbridge, April 10, 1756.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your favour of August, 1755, with Mr. Imries's letter, which came to hand in the latter part of the last month. It recommends a man, especially a minister of the gospel, to me, to see in him evidences of a disposition to be searching into the prophecies of Scripture, relating to the future advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth. It looks as though he was a man, who felt concern for Christ's kingdom and interests in the world; as though he were one of those, who took pleasure in the stones, and favoured the dust of Zion. But it has proved by events, that many divines, who have been of this character, have been over-forward to fix the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. However, I will not positively charge Mr. Imries with this, before I see what he has to offer, in proof of those things which he has advanced. I think that neither I nor any other person, that knows no more than what is contained in his letter, of the reasons that he builds his opinions upon, have any opportunity to judge of those opinions. And therefore I should think it a pity that his private letter to Mr. Hogg was published to the world, before his reasons were prepared for the press. This letter has been reprinted in Boston; but coming abroad, with so little mention of the grounds of his opinion, it gives occasion to the profane to reproach and ridicule it, and its author.

With respect to Mr. Hawley, and Mr. Brainerd, and their Indians, concerning which you desire to be informed; the correspondents have altered their determination, from time to time, with respect to Mr. Brainerd and his Indians. They

seemed inclined at first to their removal to Wawwoming, alias Wyoming, and then to Onohquauga, and then to Wyoming again; and finally, about a twelve-month ago, they wholly dismissed him from employ as a missionary to the Indians, and pastor to the Indian church at Bethel. I cannot say I am fully satisfied with their conduct in doing this so hastily; nor do I pretend to know so much, concerning the reasons of their conduct, as to have sufficient grounds positively to condemn their proceedings. However, the congregation is not wholly left as sheep without a shepherd, and are in part committed to the care of Mr. William Tennent, who lives not far off, and is a faithful, zealous minister, who visits them, and preaches to them, once a week; but I think not often upon the sabbath. The last fall, I was in New Jersey and Philadelphia, and was present at a meeting of the correspondents; when Mr. Tennent gave an agreeable account of the then present state of these Indians, with respect to religion, and also of their being in better circumstances, as to their lands, than they had been. Mr. Brainerd was then at Newark with his family, where he had been preaching, as a probationer for settlement, ever since Mr. Burr's dismissal from that place, on account of his business as president of the college. But whether Mr. Brainerd is settled, or like to settle there, I have not heard. At the forementioned meeting of the correspondents, I used some arguments, to induce them to reestablish Mr. Brainerd, in his former employ with his Indians, and to send them to Onohquauga. But I soon found it would be fruitless to urge the matter. What was chiefly insisted on, as an insuperable

obstacle to Mr. Brainerd's going, with his family, so far into the wilderness, was Mrs. Brainerd's very infirm state. Whether there was indeed any sufficient objection to such a removal, at that time, or no; Divine Providence has, since that, so ordered the state and consequences of the war, subsisting here in America, that insuperable obstacles are laid in the way of their removal, either to Onohquauga, Wawwoming, or any other parts of America, that way. The French, by their indefatigable endeavours with the nation of the **Delawares**, so called, from their ancient seat about Delaware river, though now chiefly residing on the Susquehannah and its branches, have stirred them up to make war on the English; and dreadful have been the ravages and desolations, which they have made of late, on the back parts of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. They are the principal nation inhabiting the parts about Susquehannah river, on which both Wyoming and Onohquauga stand. The latter indeed is above the bounds of their country, but yet not very far from them; and the Delaware Indians are frequently there, as they go to and fro; on which account there is great danger, that Mr. Hawley's mission and ministry there will be entirely broken up. Mr. Hawley came from there about two months ago, with one of my sons, about ten years old; who had been there with him near a twelvemonth, to learn the Mohawk language. He has since been to Boston, to consult the commissioners for Indian affairs, that have employed him, and returned: and yesterday went from my house, to meet some of his Indians, at an appointed time and place in the Mohawk country; to

determine with them, whether it will be safe for him to return to abide with them. If not, yet will he be under the pay of the commissioners till next fall, and the issue be seen of the two expeditions now in prosecution, one against Crown Point, the other against the French forts at Frontenac and Niagara, near Lake Ontario; which may possibly make a great alteration, as to the state of the war with the Indians. If Mr. Hawley determines not to return to Onohquauga this spring, he will probably go as chaplain to the Indians, in General Shirley's army, in the expedition to Lake Ontario.

You speak of the vast superiority of the numbers of the English, in America, to those of the French; and that some therefore think, the settlements of the former are in no great danger from the latter. Though it be true, that the French are twenty times less than we are in number, yet it may be a question, whether other things, in which they exceed us, when all jointly considered, will not more than counterbalance all our excess of numbers. They vastly exceed us in subtilty and intrigue, in vigilance and activity, in speed and secrecy; in acquaintance with the continent of North America, in all parts west of the British settlements, for many hundred leagues, the rivers, lakes, and mountains, the avenues and passes; and also in the influence they have among the various tribes and nations of Indians, and in their constant skill and indefatigable diligence in managing them, to alienate them from the English, attach them firmly to themselves, and employ them as their tools. Beside the vast advantage they have, in time of war, in having all united under the absolute

command of one man, the governor of Canada; while we are divided into a great many distinct governments, independent of one another, and, in some respects, of clashing interests: interests which unspeakably clog and embarrass our affairs, and make us, though a great, yet an unwieldy, unmanageable body, and an easy prey to our vigilant, secret, subtle, swift and active, though comparatively small, enemy.

As to a description of the situation of those parts you mention, I can give you no better than you have, in many that abound in Great Britain. With respect to the situation of Stockbridge, it is not in the province of New York, as you have been informed, but in the utmost border of the province of Massachusetts, on the west, next to the province of New York; about 40 miles west of Connecticut river, about 25 miles east of Hudson's river, and about 35 miles south east from Albany: a place exposed in this time of war. Four persons were killed here, in the beginning of September, 1754, by Canada Indians; which occasioned a great alarm to us, and to a great part of New England. Since then we have had many alarms; but God has preserved us.

I desire your prayers that we may still be preserved, and that God would be with me and my family, and people, and bless us in all respects. My wife and family join with me, in their respects to you and yours.

*I am, dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother and servant,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

In consequence of the ill success attending the British arms, during the campaign of 1756, the danger of the frontiers became extreme, and the friends of Mr. Edwards were, for a time, exceedingly anxious for his personal safety. Mr. Bellamy, at this period, sent him the following kind invitation, to look to Bethlem, as the place of retreat, for himself and his family.

"Bethlem, May 31, 1756

DEAR SIR,

I am in pain, fearing our army against Crown Point will be defeated. God only knows how it will be. Your own discretion will make you sufficiently speedy, to secure yourself and family. We stand as ready to receive you, and any of your family, to all the comforts our house affords, as if you were our children. I am greatly interested in your safety—I am concerned for Mr. Hawley. I fear he will be too venturesome, and fling away his life for nothing—I wish, if you know how to get one along, you would send him a letter—Our youngest child still remains somewhat unwell. The Indian boys grow more and more easy and content, but they love play too well—are very ignorant—and very stupid, as to the things of religion—and in arithmetic, when I would teach them any thing that is a little difficult, they are soon discouraged, and don't love to try. So I take them off, and put them to writing again—designing, by little and little, to get them along. They will not endure hardship, and bend their minds to business, like English boys. It seems they were never taught their catechism. Shall I teach it? I have got three Bibles; but have not yet given them to the boys, they are so ignorant. I expect you will give

me any instructions you think proper; and remain, Rev. Sir,

J. BELLAMY."

It is probable that Mr. Edwards began his Treatise on Original Sin about this period, and that he devoted the leisure hours of the summer, autumn, and winter, to the preparation of that work. The date of the author's preface, May 26, 1757, shows the time when it was finished for the press.

The views of Mr. Edwards, in this treatise, are these: that there is a tendency in human nature, prevailing and effectual, to that sin, which implies the utter ruin of all; that this tendency originates in the sin of Adam, of which the whole race are imputed the partakers; and that this tendency consists, in their being left of God, at their original, in the possession of merely human appetites and passions, in themselves "innocent," and without the influx of those superior principles, which come from divine influences. The only guilt, attributed by him to mankind, before they come to the exercise of moral agency themselves, is that of participating in the apostasy of Adam, in consequence of the original constitution of God, which made him and his race "one."

He supposes this tendency to sin, pertaining to men, at their original, to constitute the subject of it a sinner, only, because he regards him as a participator in that sin, by which Adam apostatized, with his whole race. This tendency he calls "sinful," "corrupt," "odious," etc., because it is a tendency "to that moral evil, by which the subject of it becomes odious in the sight of God." (Part 1. Chapter II. Sect. III.) He supposes that infants, who have this tendency in their nature, are, as yet, "sinners, only by the one act or offence of Adam"; and, that "they have not renewed the act of sin themselves." (Part I. Chapter IV.) He utterly denies any positive agency of God, in producing sin; and resolves the tendency to sin, into the "innocent principles" of human

nature; (which God might create, without sin;) and the withholding of that positive influence, from which spring superior and divine principles—which act of withholding, is not infusing, or positively creating, any thing. These "innocent principles"—such as hunger and thirst, love and hatred, desire and fear, joy and sorrow, and self-love, as distinguished from self-ishness—which are necessary to the nature of man, and belong to him, whether holy or sinful, are not, in his view, sin. They barely constitute the ground of certainty, that the being, who has them, will sin, as soon as he is capable of sinning, if that positive influence, from which spring superior and divine principles, is withheld; and, in this relation, they are spoken of, under the general designation, "a tendency," "a propensity," etc. to sin.

The views of Imputation, contained in this work, are such, as had been long and extensively entertained; yet some of them, certainly, are not generally received, at present. With this exception, the Treatise on Original Sin is regarded as the standard work, on the subject of which it treats; and is doubtless the ablest defence of the doctrine of human depravity, and of the doctrine that that depravity is the consequence of the sin of Adam, which has hitherto appeared.

The father of Mr. Edwards, as the reader may remember, on account of the increasing infirmities of age, had requested his people to settle a colleague in the ministry in 1752, but continued to preach to them regularly until the summer of 1755, when he was in his eighty-seventh year. The following letter, probably the last ever written to him by his son, shows the gradual decline of his health and strength, during the two following years.

To the Rev Timothy Edwards, East

Windsor.

Stockbridge, March 24, 1757.

HONOURED SIR,

I take this opportunity just to inform you, that, through the goodness of God, we are all in a comfortable state of health, and that we have heard, not long since, of the welfare of our children in New Jersey and Northampton. I intend, God willing, to be at Windsor some time near the beginning of June; proposing then to go a journey to Boston. I intended to have gone sooner; but I foresee such hindrances, as will probably prevent my going till that time. We rejoice much to hear, by Mr. Andrewson, of your being so well as to be able to baptize a child at your own house the sabbath before last. We all unite in duty to you and my honoured mother, and in respectful and affectionate salutations to sisters and cousins; and in a request of a constant remembrance in your prayers.

*I am, honoured Sir,
Your dutiful son,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

Not long after Mr. Edwards had forwarded to Mr. Erskine his vindication of himself, ^[59] against the charge of having advanced, in the Freedom of the Will, the same views of liberty and necessity, with those exhibited by Lord Kaimes; he received from his friend a pamphlet, entitled "Objections to the Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion examined;" in which the opinion was directly advanced, that, if it were really true, (as Mr.

Edwards had insisted and demonstrated in the Freedom of the Will,) that there is no liberty of contingency, nor self-determining power in the will, as opposed to moral necessity, or the certain connexion between motives and volitions; yet it was best for mankind, that the truth, in this respect, should not be known, because, in that case, they would not regard either themselves, or others, as deserving of praise or blame for their conduct. In the following letter, Mr. Edwards exposes the folly and absurdity of this opinion; and explains, in a remarkably clear and convincing manner, the practical bearing of the great principles advanced in the Freedom of the Will, on the subject of salvation. This letter might well have been published at the time, and circulated through the church at large. And we recommend it to the frequent and prayerful perusal both of those ministers, who cannot clearly comprehend the distinction between physical and moral inability, and of those who do not perceive the importance of explaining and enforcing this distinction from the pulpit; as exhibiting the consequences of representing impenitent sinners, to be possessed of any other inability to repent and believe, than mere unwillingness, in a manner too awful to be resisted, by a conscientious mind.

To Mr. Erskine.

Stockbridge, August 3, 1757.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

In June last, I received a letter from you, dated January 22, 1757, with 'Mr. Anderson's Complaint verified,' and 'Objections to the Essays^[60] examined.' For these things, I now return my hearty thanks.

The conduct of the vindicator of the 'Essays,' from objections made against them, seems to be very odd. Many things are produced from Calvin, and several Calvinistic writers, to defend what is not objected against. His book is almost wholly taken up about that which is nothing to the purpose; perhaps only to amuse and blind the common people. According to your proposal, I have drawn up something, stating the difference between my hypothesis, and that of the Essays; which I have sent to you, to be printed in Scotland, if it be thought best; or to be disposed of as you think proper. Essays on the principles of Morality and Natural Religion, by Lord Kaimes^[61] I have written it in a letter to you; and if it be published, it may be as 'A letter from me to a minister in Scotland.' Lord Kaimes's notion of God's deceiving mankind, by a kind of invincible or natural instinct or feeling, leading them to suppose, that they have a liberty of contingence and self-determination of will, in order to make them believe themselves and others worthy to be blamed or praised for what they do, is a strange notion indeed; and it is hard for me to conjecture, what his views could be, in publishing such things to the world.

However, by what I have heard, some others seem to be so far of the same mind, that they think, that if it be really true, that there is no self-determining power in the will, as opposed to any such moral necessity, as I speak of, consisting in a certain connexion between motives and volitions, it is of a mischievous tendency to say any thing of it; and that it is best

that the truth in this matter should not be known by any means. I cannot but be of an extremely different mind. On the contrary, I think that the notion of liberty, consisting in a contingent self-determination of the will, as necessary to the morality of men's dispositions and actions, is almost inconceivably pernicious; and that the contrary truth is one of the most important truths of moral philosophy, that ever was discussed, and most necessary to be known; and that for want of it, those schemes of morality and religion, which are a kind of infidel schemes, entirely diverse from the virtue and religion of the Bible, and wholly inconsistent with, and subversive of, the main things belonging to the gospel scheme, have so vastly and so long prevailed, and have stood in such strength. And I think, whoever imagines that he, or any body else, shall ever see the doctrines of grace effectually maintained against these adversaries, till the truth in this matter be settled, imagines a vain thing. For, allow these adversaries what they maintain in this point, and I think they have strict demonstration against us. And not only have these errors a most pernicious influence, in the public religious controversies that are maintained in the world; but such sort of notions have a more fatal influence many ways, on the minds of all ranks, in all transactions between God and their souls. The longer I live, and the more I have to do with the souls of men, in the work of the ministry, the more I see of this. Notions of this sort are one of the main hindrances of the success of the preaching of the word, and other means of grace, in the conversion of sinners. This especially appears,

when the minds of sinners are affected with some concern for their souls, and they are stirred up to seek their salvation. Nothing is more necessary for men, in such circumstances, than thorough conviction and humiliation; than that their consciences should be properly convinced of their real guilt and sinfulness in the sight of God, and their deserving of his wrath. But who is there, that has had experience of the work of a minister, in dealing with souls in such circumstances, that does not find that the thing, that mainly prevents this, is men's excusing themselves with their own inability, and the moral necessity of those things, wherein their exceeding guilt and sinfulness in the sight of God most fundamentally and mainly consist: such as, living from day to day without one spark of true love to the God of infinite glory, and the fountain of all good; their having greater complacency in the little vile things of this world, than in him; their living in a rejection of Christ, with all his glorious benefits and dying love; and after all the exhibition of his glory and grace, having their hearts still as cold as a stone towards him; and their living in such ingratitude, for that infinite mercy of his laying down his life for sinners. They, it may be, think of some instances of lewd behaviour, lying, dishonesty, intemperance, profaneness, etc. But the grand principles of iniquity, constantly abiding and reigning, from whence all proceeds, are all overlooked. Conscience does not condemn them for those things, because they cannot love God of themselves, they cannot believe of themselves, and the like. They rather lay the blame of these things, and their other reigning wicked dispositions of heart,

to God, and secretly charge him with all the blame. These things are very much for want of being thoroughly instructed in that great and important truth, that a bad will, or an evil disposition of heart, itself, is wickedness. It is wickedness, in its very being, nature, and essence, and not merely the occasion of it, or the determining influence, that it was at first owing to. Some, it may be, will say, 'they own it is their fault that they have so bad a heart, that they have no love to God, no true faith in Christ, no gratitude to him, because they have been careless and slothful in times past, and have not used means to obtain a better heart, as they should have done.' And it may be, they are taught, 'that they are to blame for their wickedness of heart, because they, as it were, brought it on themselves, in Adam, by the sin which he voluntarily committed, which sin is justly charged to their account;' which perhaps they do not deny. But how far are these things from being a proper conviction of their wickedness, in their enmity to God and Christ. To be convinced of the sin of something that, long ago, was the occasion of their enmity to God; and to be convinced of the wickedness of the enmity itself; are quite two things. And if sinners, under some awakening, find the exercise of corruption of heart, as it appears in a great many ways; in their meditations, prayers, and other religious duties, and on occasion of their fears of hell, etc. etc.; still, this notion of their inability to help it, excusing them, will keep them from proper conviction of sin herein. Fears of hell tend to convince men of the hardness of their hearts. But then, when they find how hard their hearts are, and how far from a proper

sensibility and affection in things of religion; they are kept from properly condemning themselves for it, from the moral necessity, or inability, which attends it. For the very notion of hardness of heart implies moral inability. The harder the heart is, the more dead is it in sin, and the more unable to exert good affections and acts. Thus the strength of sin is made the excuse for sin. And thus I have known many under fears of hell, justifying, or excusing, themselves, at least implicitly, in horrid workings of enmity against God, in blasphemous thoughts, etc.

It is of great importance, that they that are seeking their salvation, should be brought off from all dependence on their own righteousness; but these notions above all things prevent it. They justify themselves in the sincerity of their endeavours. They say to themselves, that they do what they can; they take great pains; and though there be great imperfection in what they do, and many evil workings of heart arise, yet these they cannot help: here moral necessity, or inability, comes in as an excuse. Things of this kind have visibly been the main hindrance of the true humiliation and conversion of sinners, in the times of awakening that have been in this land, every where, in all parts, as I have had opportunity to observe, in very many places. When the gospel is preached, and its offers and invitations and motives most powerfully urged, and some hearts stand out, here is their strong hold, their sheet-anchor. Were it not for this, they would either comply, or their hearts would condemn them for their horrid guilt in not complying. And if the law of God be preached in its strictness and

spirituality, yet conscience is not properly convinced by it. They justify themselves with their inability; and the design and end of the law, as a school-master to fit them for Christ, is defeated. Thus both the law and the gospel are prevented from having their proper effect.

The doctrine of a self-determining will, as the ground of all moral good and evil, tends to prevent any proper exercises of faith in God and Christ, in the affair of our salvation, as it tends to prevent all dependence upon them. For, instead of this, it teaches a kind of absolute independence on all those things, that are of chief importance in this affair; our righteousness depending originally on our own acts, as self-determined. Thus our own holiness is from ourselves, as its determining cause, and its original and highest source. And as for imputed righteousness, that should have any merit at all in it, to be sure there can be no such thing. For self-determination is necessary to praise and merit. But what is imputed from another is not from our self-determination or action. And truly, in this scheme, man is not dependent on God; but God is rather dependent on man in this affair: for he only operates consequentially in acts, in which he depends on what he sees we determine and do first.

The nature of true faith implies a disposition to give all the glory of our salvation to God and Christ. But this notion is inconsistent with it, for it in effect gives the glory wholly to man. For that is the very doctrine that is taught, that the merit and praise is his, whose is the original and effectual

determination of the praise-worthy deed. So that, on the whole, I think it must be a miracle, if ever men are converted that have imbibed such notions as these, and are under their influence in their religious concerns.

Yea, these notions tend effectually to prevent men's ever seeking after conversion, with any earnestness. It is manifest that men never will be in earnest in this matter, till their consciences are awakened, and they are made sensible of God's anger, and their danger of suffering the terrible effects of it. But that stupidity, which is opposed to this awakening, is upheld chiefly by these two things: their insensibility of their guilt, in what is past and present; and their flattering themselves, as to what is future. These notions of liberty of indifference, contingency, and self-determination, as essential to guilt or merit, tend to preclude all sense of any great guilt for past or present wickedness. As has been observed already, all wickedness of heart is excused, as what, in itself considered, brings no guilt. And all that the conscience has to recur to, to find any guilt, is the first wrong determination of the will, in some bad conduct, before that wickedness of heart existed, that was the occasion of introducing or confirming it. Which determination arose contingently from a state of indifference. And how small a matter does this at once bring men's guilt to, when all the main things, wherein their wickedness consists, are passed over. And indeed the more these principles are pursued, the more and more must guilt vanish, till at last it comes to nothing, as may easily be shown.

And with respect to self-flattery and presumption, as to what is future, nothing can possibly be conceived more directly tending to it, than a notion of liberty, at all times possessed, consisting in a power to determine one's own will to good or evil; which implies a power men have, at all times, to determine them to repent and turn to God. And what can more effectually encourage the sinner, in present delays and neglects, and embolden him to go on in sin, in a presumption of having his own salvation at all times at his command? And this notion of self-determination and self-dependence, tends to prevent, or enervate, all prayer to God for converting grace; for why should men earnestly cry to God for his grace, to determine their hearts to that which they must be determined to of themselves. And indeed it destroys the very notion of conversion itself. There can properly be no such thing, or any thing akin to what the Scripture speaks of conversion, renovation of the heart, regeneration, etc. if growing good, by a number of self-determined acts, are all that is required, or to be expected.

Excuse me, Sir, for troubling you with so much on this head. I speak from the fulness of my heart. What I have long seen of the dreadful consequences of these prevalent notions every where, and what I am convinced will still be their consequences so long as they continue to prevail, fills me with concern. I therefore wish that the affair were more thoroughly looked into, and searched to the very bottom.

I have reserved a copy of this letter, and also of my other to

you, dated July 25, intending to send them to Mr. Burr, to be by him conveyed, by the way of New York or Philadelphia. Looking on these letters as of special importance, I send duplicates, lest one copy should fail. The packet, in which I enclose this, I cover to Mr. Gillies, and send to Boston, to the care of Mr. Hyslop, to be conveyed to Mr. Gillies. But yet have desired him, if he has a more direct opportunity, to convey the packet to Edinburgh, by the way of London, then to put a wrapper over the whole, inscribed to you; and to write to you, desiring you to break open the packet, and take out the letters which belong to you.

You will see, Sir, something of our sorrowful state, on this side of the water, by my letter to Mr. M'Culloch. O, Sir, pray for us; and pray in particular, for

*Your affectionate and obliged
Friend and brother,
JONATHAN EDWARDS."*

Chapter XXIV (TOC)

Death of President Burr—His Character—Mr. Edwards Chosen his Successor—Letters of Mrs. Burr—To a Gentleman in Scotland—To a Gentleman in Boston—To Her Mother—Letter of Mr. Edwards, to the Trustees of the College—Letter of Mrs. Burr, to Her Father—Letter to Dr. Bellamy—Council Dismiss Mr. Edwards—Inauguration as President—First Sermon at Princeton—Sickness—Death—Letter of Dr. Shippen—Letters of Mrs. Edwards. and of Her Daughter, to Mrs. Burr—Death of Mrs. Burr—Death of Mrs. Edwards.

THE Rev. Aaron Burr, president of the college at Princeton, and the son-in-law of Mr. Edwards, died, on the 24th of September, 1757, two days before the public commencement. He was a native of Fairfield, Connecticut, was born in 1716, and was graduated at Yale college in 1735. In 1738, he was ordained, as pastor of the Presbyterian church at Newark. In 1748, he was unanimously elected president of the college, as successor to Mr. Dickinson. Though possessed of a slender and delicate constitution, he joined, to uncommon talents for the despatch of business, a constancy of mind, that commonly secured to him success. The flourishing state of the college, at the time of his death, was chiefly owing to his great and assiduous exertions. Until the autumn of 1755, he discharged the duties, both of president and pastor of the church.^[62] Mr. Burr was greatly respected, in every station and relation of life. He was a man of acknowledged talents, of sound, practical good sense, of unimpeachable integrity, and of ardent piety. Polished in his manners, he had uncommon powers in conversation, and possessed the happy art of inspiring all around him with cheerfulness. As a reasoner, he was clear and solid: and as a preacher, animated, judicious, fervent, and successful. He

had warm affections, was greatly endeared to his family and friends, and was open, fair, and honourable in all his intercourse with mankind. During the period of his presidency, he secured the high esteem and confidence of all who were interested in the college—In the latter part of July, or the beginning of August, being in a low state of health, he made a rapid and exhausting visit to Stockbridge, in a very hot, sultry season. He soon returned to Princeton, and went immediately to Elizabeth town; where, on the 19th of August, he made an attempt, before the legislature, to procure the legal exemption of the students from military duty. On the 21st, at Newark, being much indisposed, he preached an extemporaneous funeral sermon, in consequence of a death in the family of his successor. He then returned to Princeton, and, in a few days, went to Philadelphia, on the business of the college. On the way, his disorder took the form of an intermittent fever. On his return, he learned that his friend, Governor Belcher, died at Elizabeth-town, on the 31st of August, and that he had been designated to preach the funeral sermon. His wife, perceiving his increasing illness, besought him to spare himself, and decline the undertaking; but he felt himself bound, if possible, to perform it. Having devoted the afternoon of Sept 2d, to the task of preparing the sermon, in the midst of a high fever, which was succeeded by delirium in the night, he rode the next day to Elizabeth-town, about forty miles, and, on the 4th, in a state of extreme languor and exhaustion, when it was obvious to every one, that he ought to have been confined to a sick bed, he with great difficulty preached the sermon. He returned to Princeton the following day; and his disorder immediately assumed the character of a fixed and violent fever, seated on the nerves. At the approach of death, that gospel, which he had preached to others, gave him unfailing support. He was patient and resigned, and cheered with the liveliest hope at a happy immortality.

The corporation of the college met, two days after his death, and on the same

day made choice of Mr. Edwards as his successor.

Some of the circumstances, connected with the sickness and death of her husband, are alluded to in the following letter from Mrs. Burr, to a gentleman in Scotland, written soon after Mr. Burr's decease.

"HONOURED SIR,

I flatter myself I shall not be thought intrusive, if I acknowledge, in a few lines, the receipt of your letter, dated in August, to my late dear husband, which reached me after he was beyond the reach of all mortal things. The affectionate regard that you express for one, who was dearer to me than my own life, was extremely affecting to me; nor can I forgive myself, if I neglect to acknowledge it, in terms of lively gratitude. You, Sir, had a large share, with me, in that dear good man's heart, which he often expressed, with the warmest affection. I thought it might not be improper, to lay your letter before the trustees, as they were then convened, and it chiefly concerned the college; and then I sent it to my honoured father, the Rev. Mr. Edwards, who is chosen to succeed my dear husband; which, I hope, will be grateful to the friends of the college, in Scotland. I here enclose you, Sir, the last

attempt my dear husband made to serve God in public, and to do good to his fellow-creatures—a Sermon, that he preached at the funeral of our late excellent governor. You will not think it strange, if it has imperfections; when I tell you, that all he wrote on the subject, was done in a part of one afternoon and evening, when he had a violent fever on him, and the whole night after, he was irrational.

Give me leave to beg an interest in your prayers, at the throne of grace, for a poor, disconsolate widow, and two fatherless orphans. Please to present, with great respect, my kindest regard to your lady and daughters.

*I am, honoured Sir,
Your most obliged and humble servant,
ESTHER BURR."*

The two following extracts from letters, written soon after the death of Mr. Burr, will show the strength of her own feelings, as well as her religious sentiments, and the exercises of her heart. The first is from a letter to a near friend of the family, in Boston.

"Your most kind letter of condolence gave me inexpressible delight, and at the same time set open afresh all the avenues of grief, and again probed the deep wound death has given me. My loss—Shall I attempt to say how great my loss is—God only can know—And to him alone would I carry my complaint—Indeed, Sir, I have lost all that was or could be desirable in a creature—I have lost all that ever I set my heart on in this world—I need not enlarge on the innumerable amiable qualities of my late dear husband, to

one that was so well acquainted with him, as you were; however pleasing it is to me to dwell on them—Had not God supported me by these two considerations; first, by showing the right he has to his own creatures, to dispose of them when and in what manner he pleases; and secondly, by enabling me to follow him beyond the grave, into the eternal world, and there to view him in unspeakable glory and happiness, freed from all sin and sorrow; I should, long before this, have been sunk among the dead, and been covered with the clods of the valley—God has wise ends in all that he doth. This thing did not come upon me by chance; and I rejoice that I am in the hands of such a God."

The other is from a letter to her mother, dated at Princeton, October. 7, 1757. After giving some account of Mr. Burr's death, and representing the sense she had of the greatness of the loss, which she and her children had sustained; she writes in the following words:

"No doubt, dear Madam, it will be some comfort to you to hear, that God has not utterly forsaken, although he has cast down. I would speak it to the glory of God's name, that I think he has, in an uncommon degree, discovered himself to be an all-sufficient God, a full fountain of all good. Although all streams were cut off, yet the fountain is left full—I think I have been enabled to cast my care upon him, and have found great peace and calmness in my mind, such as this world cannot give nor take—I have had uncommon freedom and nearness to the throne of grace. God has seemed sensibly near in such a

supporting and comfortable manner, that I think I have never experienced the like. God has helped me to review my past and present mercies, with some heart-affecting degree of thankfulness.

I think God has given me such a sense of the vanity of the world, and uncertainty of all sublunary enjoyments, as I never had before. The world vanishes out at my sight! Heavenly and eternal things appear much more real and important than ever before. I feel myself to be under much greater obligations to be the Lord's, than before this sore affliction—The way of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, has appeared more clear and excellent; and I have been constrained to venture my all upon him; and have found great peace of soul in what I hope have been the actings of faith. Some parts of the Psalms have been very comforting and refreshing to my soul—I hope God has helped me to eye his hand, in this awful dispensation; and to see the infinite right he has to his own, and to dispose of them as he pleases.

Thus, dear Madam, I have given you some broken hints of the exercises and supports of my mind, since the death of him, whose memory and example will ever be precious to me as my own life. O, dear Madam! I doubt not but I have your and my honoured father's prayers daily for me; but give me leave to entreat you both, to request earnestly of the Lord, that I may never despise his chastenings, nor faint under this his severe stroke; of which I am sensible there is great danger, if God should only deny me the supports that he has hitherto

graciously granted.

O, I am afraid I shall conduct myself so, as to bring dishonour on my God, and the religion which I profess! No, rather let me die this moment, than be left to bring dishonour on God's holy name—I am overcome—I must conclude, with once more begging, that, as my dear parents remember themselves, they would not forget their greatly afflicted daughter, (now a lonely widow,) nor her fatherless children—My duty to my ever dear and honoured parents, and love to my brothers and sisters.

*From, dear madam,
Your dutiful and affectionate daughter,
ESTHER BURR."*

"The news of his appointment to the presidency," says Dr. Hopkins, "was quite unexpected, and not a little surprising, to Mr. Edwards. He looked on himself in many respects, so unqualified for that business, that he wondered that gentlemen of so good judgment, and so well acquainted with him, as he knew some of the trustees were, should think of him for that place. He had many objections in his own mind, against undertaking the business, both from his unfitness and his particular circumstances; yet could not certainly determine that it was not his duty to accept it. The following extract of a letter which he wrote to the trustees, will give the reader a view of his sentiments and exercises on this occasion, as well as of the great designs he was deeply engaged in and zealously prosecuting"

Stockbridge, Oct 19, 1757.

REV. AND HON. GENTLEMEN,

I was not a little surprised on receiving the unexpected notice

of your having made choice of me to succeed the late President Burr, as the Head of Nassau Hall—I am much in doubt, whether I am called to undertake the business which you have done me the unmerited honour to choose me for—If some regard may be had to my outward comfort, I might mention the many inconveniences and great detriment, which may be sustained by my removing with my numerous family, so far from all the estate I have in the world, (without any prospect of disposing of it, under present circumstances, but with great loss,) now when we have scarcely got over the trouble and damage sustained by our removal from Northampton, and have but just begun to have our affairs in a comfortable situation, for a subsistence in this place; and the expense I must immediately be at to put myself into circumstances tolerably comporting with the needful support of the honours of the office I am invited to; which will not well consist with my ability.

But this is not my main objection. The chief difficulties in my mind, in the way of accepting this important and arduous office, are these two: First, my own defects unfitting me for such an undertaking, many of which are generally known; beside others of which my own heart is conscious—I have a constitution, in many respects, peculiarly unhappy, attended with flaccid solids, vapid, sily, and scarce fluids, and a low tide of spirits; often occasioning a kind of childish weakness and contemptibleness of speech, presence, and demeanour, with a disagreeable dulness and stiffness, much unfitting me for conversation, but more especially for the government of a

college—This makes me shrink at the thoughts of taking upon me, in the decline of life, such a new and great business, attended with such a multiplicity of cares, and requiring such a degree of activity, alertness, and spirit of government; especially as succeeding one so remarkably well qualified in these respects, giving occasion to every one to remark the wide difference. I am also deficient in some parts of learning, particularly in algebra, and the higher parts of mathematics, and the Greek classics; my Greek leaning having been chiefly in the New Testament—The other thing is this; that my engaging in this business will not well consist with those views, and that course of employ in my study, which have long engaged and swallowed up my mind, and been the chief entertainment and delight of my life.

And here, honoured Sirs, (*emboldened by the testimony I have now received of your unmerited esteem, to rely on your candour,*) I will with freedom open myself to you.

My method of study, I from my first beginning the work of the ministry, has been very much by writing; applying myself, in this way, to improve every important hint; pursuing the clue to my utmost, when any thing in reading, meditation, or conversation, has been suggested to my mind, that seemed to promise light in any weighty point; thus penning what appeared to me my best thoughts, on innumerable subjects, for my own benefit—The longer I prosecuted my studies in this method, the more habitual it became, and the more pleasant and profitable I found it—The farther I travelled in this way,

*the more and wider the field opened, which has occasioned my laying out many things in my mind, to do this in manner, if God should spare my life, which my heart hath been much upon; particularly many things against most of the prevailing errors of the present day, which I cannot with any patience see maintained, (to the utter subverting of the gospel of Christ,) with so high a hand, and so long continued a triumph, with so little control, when it appears so evident to me, that there is truly no foundation for any of this glorying and insult. I have already published something on one of the main points in dispute between the Arminians and Calvinists; and have it in view, God willing, (as I have already signified to the public,) in like manner to consider all the other controverted points, and have done much towards a preparation for it—But beside these, I have had on my mind and heart (which I long ago began, not with any view to publication) a great work, which I call a History of the Work of Redemption, a body of divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of a history; considering the affair of Christian theology, as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ; which I suppose to be, of all others, the grand design of God, and the **summum** and **ultimum** of all the divine operations and decrees; particularly considering all parts of the grand scheme, in their historical order—The order of their existence, or their being brought forth to view, in the course of divine dispensations, or the wonderful series of successive acts and events; beginning from eternity, and descending from thence to the great work and*

successive dispensations of the infinitely wise God, in time; considering the chief events coming to pass in the church of God, and revolutions in the world of mankind, affecting the state of the church and the affair of redemption, which we have an account of in history or prophecy; till, at last, we come to the general resurrection, last judgment, and consummation of all things; when it shall be said, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end—Concluding my work, with the consideration of that perfect state of things, which shall be finally settled, to last for eternity—This history will be carried on with regard to all three worlds, heaven, earth, and hell; considering the connected, successive events and alterations in each, so far as the Scriptures give any light; introducing all parts of divinity in that order which is most scriptural and most natural; a method which appears to me the most beautiful and entertaining, wherein every divine doctrine will appear to the greatest advantage, in the brightest light, in the most striking manner, showing the admirable contexture and harmony of the whole.

I have also, for my own profit and entertainment, done much towards another great work, which I call the Harmony of the Old and New Testament, in three parts. The first, considering the prophecies of the Messiah, his redemption and kingdom; the evidences of their references to the Messiah, etc. comparing them all one with another, demonstrating their agreement, true scope, and sense; also considering all the various particulars wherein those prophecies have their exact fulfilment; showing the universal, precise, and admirable

correspondence between predictions and events. The second part, considering the types of the Old Testament, showing the evidence of their being intended as representations of the great things or the gospel of Christ; and the agreement of the type with the antitype. The third and great part, considering the harmony of the Old and New Testament, as to doctrine and precept. In the course of this work, I find there will be occasion for an explanation of a very great part of the Holy Scriptures; which may, in such a view, be explained in a method, which to me seems the most entertaining and profitable, best tending to lead the mind to a view of the true spirit, design, life, and soul of the Scriptures, as well as their proper use and improvement—I have also many other things in hand, in some of which I have made great progress, which I will not trouble you with an account of. Some of these things, if Divine Providence favour, I should be willing to attempt a publication of. So far as I myself am able to judge of what talents I have, for benefiting my fellow-creatures by word, I think I can write better than I can speak.

My heart is so much in these studies, that I cannot find it in my heart to be willing to put myself into an incapacity to pursue them any more in the future part of my life, to such a degree as I must, if I undertake to go through the same coarse of employ, in the office of president, that Mr. Burr did, instructing in all the languages, and taking the whole care of the instruction of one of the classes, in all parts of learning, besides his other labours. If I should see light to determine me to accept the place offered me, I should be willing to take upon me the work

of a president, so far as it consists in the general inspection of the whole society; and to be subservient to the school, as to their order and methods or study and instruction, assisting, myself, in the immediate instruction in the arts and sciences, (as discretion should direct, and occasion serve, and the state of things require,) especially of the senior class; and added to all, should be willing to do the whole work of a professor of divinity, in public and private lectures, proposing questions to be answered, and some to be discussed in writing and free conversation, in meetings of graduates, and others, appointed in proper seasons, for these ends. It would be now out of my way, to spend time in a constant teaching of the languages; unless it be the Hebrew tongue; which I should be willing to improve myself in, by instructing others.

On the whole, I am much at a loss, with respect to the way of duty, in this important affair: I am in doubt, whether, if I should engage in it, I should not do what both you and I would be sorry for afterwards. Nevertheless, I think the greatness of the affair, and the regard due to so worthy and venerable a body, as that of the trustees of Nassau Hall, requires my taking the matter into serious consideration, And unless you should appear to be discouraged, by the things which I have now represented, as to any further expectation from me, I shall proceed to ask advice, of such as I esteem most wise, friendly, and faithful; if, after the mind of the commissioners in Boston is known, it appears that they consent to leave me at liberty, with respect to the business they have employed me in here."

Soon after the death of President Burr, Mr. Edwards addressed a letter to his greatly afflicted daughter, fraught with all the affectionate instruction and consolation which such a father could impart.^[63] To this she returned the following answer:

***To the Rev. Jonathan Edwards,
Stockbridge***

Princeton, November. 2, 1757.

To my ever honoured father.

HONOURED SIR,

Your most affectionate, comforting letter, by my brother Parsons, was exceeding refreshing to me; although I was somewhat damped by hearing, that I should not see you until spring.^[64] But it is my comfort in this disappointment, as well as under all my affliction, that God knows what is best for me, and for his own glory. Perhaps I counted too much on the company, and conversation, of such a near and dear affectionate father and guide. I cannot doubt but all is for the best; and I am satisfied that God should order the affair of your removal, as shall be for his glory, whatever becomes of me.

Since I wrote my mother a letter, God has carried me through new trials, and given me new supports. My little son has been

sick with a slow fever, ever since my brother left us, and has been brought to the brink of the grave; but, I hope in mercy, God is bringing him back again. I was enabled after a severe struggle with nature, to resign the child with the greatest freedom. God showed me that the children were not my own, but his, and that he had a right to recall what he had lent, whenever he thought fit; and that I had no reason to complain, or say that God was hard with me. This silenced me. But O how good is God. He not only kept me from complaining, but comforted me, by enabling me to offer up my child by faith, if ever I acted faith. I saw the fulness there was in Christ for little infants, and his willingness to accept of such as were offered to him. 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not,' were comforting words. God also showed me, in such a lively manner, the fulness there was in himself of all spiritual blessings, that I said, 'Although all streams were cut off, yet so long as my God lives, I have enough.' He enabled me to say, 'Although thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee.' In this time of trial, I was led to enter into a renewed and explicit covenant with God, in a more solemn manner than ever before; and with the greatest freedom and delight, after much self-examination and prayer, I did give myself and my children to God, with my whole heart. Never, until then, had I an adequate sense of the privilege we are allowed in covenanting with God. This act of soul left my mind in a great calm, and steady trust in God. A few days after this, one evening, in talking of the glorious state my dear departed husband must be in, my soul was carried out in such large

desires after that glorious state, that I was forced to retire from the family to conceal my joy. When alone I was so transported, and my soul carried out in such eager desires after perfection and the full enjoyment of God, and to serve him uninterruptedly, that I think my nature would not have borne much more. I think, dear Sir, I had that night a foretaste of heaven. This frame continued, in some good degree, the whole night. I slept but little, and when I did, my dreams were all of heavenly and divine things. Frequently since, I have felt the same in kind, though not in degree. This was about the time that God called me to give up my child. Thus a kind and gracious God has been with me, in six troubles and in seven.

But O, Sir, what cause of deep humiliation and abasement of soul have I, on account of remaining corruption, which I see working continually in me, especially pride. O, how many shapes does pride cloak itself in. Satan is also busy, shooting his darts. But blessed be God, those temptations of his, that used to overthrow me, as yet have not touched me. I will just hint at one or two, if I am not tedious as to length—When I was about to renew my covenant with God, the suggestion seemed to arise in my mind, 'It is better you should not renew it, than break it when you have: what a dreadful thing it will be, if you do not keep it!' My reply was, 'I did not do it in my own strength.' Then the suggestion would return, 'How do you know that God will help you to keep it.' But it did not shake me in the least—Oh, to be delivered from the power of Satan, as well as sin! I cannot help hoping the time is near. God is certainly fitting me for himself; and when I think that it will be

soon that I shall be called hence, the thought is transporting.

I am afraid I have tired out your patience, and will beg leave only to add my need of the earnest prayers of my dear and honoured parents, and all good people, that I may not at last be a castaway; but that God would constantly grant me new supplies of divine grace. I am tenderly concerned for my dear brother Timothy, but I hope his sickness will not be unto death, but for the glory of God—Please to give my duty to my honoured mother, and my love to all my brothers and sisters.

*I am, honoured and dear Sir,
With the greatest respect,
Your affectionate and dutiful daughter,
ESTHER BURR."*

While Mr. Edwards was in a state of suspense alluded to in his letter to the trustees of the college, he determined to ask the advice of a number of gentlemen in the ministry, on whose judgment and friendship he could rely, and to act accordingly. One of those invited, on this occasion, was his old and faithful friend, and former pupil, Mr. Bellamy, of Bethlem: to whom, having received from him, on the last day of November, two letters, dated on the 12th and 17th of that month, he returned, on the next day, the following answer; which, while it refers to the subject of the council, shows also, in a very striking manner, with what ease and readiness he could throw a clear and certain light on any dark and difficult passage of the word of God.

"Stockbridge, December. 1, 1757.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Yesterday I received your two letters, of the 12th and 17th of

November.; but I saw and heard nothing of Mr. Hill. I thank you for your concern, that I may be useful in the world—I lately wrote you a letter, informing you of our choice of a council, to sit here on the 21st of this month; and enclosed in it a letter missive to Mr. Brinsmade, who as one of the council. I hope, before this time, you have received it. Don't fail of letting me see you here; for I never wanted to see you more.

As to the question you ask, about Christ's argument, in John 10:34-36. I observe,

First, *That it is not all princes of the earth, who are called gods, in the Old Testament; but only the princes of Israel, who ruled over God's people. The princes, who are called gods, in here referred to, are, in the same sentence, distinguished from the princes of the nations of the world. 'I have said, Ye are gods; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.'*

Secondly, *That the reason why these princes of Israel were called gods, was, that they, as the rulers and judges of God's Israel, were types and figures of Him, who is the true King of the Jews, and the Prince of God's people, who is to rule over the house of Jacob for ever, the Prince and Saviour of God's church, or spiritual Israel, gathered from all nations of the earth; who is God indeed. The throne of Israel, or of God's people, properly belonged to Christ. He only was the proper Heir to that throne; and therefore, the princes of Israel are said to sit upon the throne of the Lord, 1 Chronicles 29:23; and the kingdom of Israel, under the kings of the house of*

*David, is called the kingdom of the Lord 2 Chronicles 13:8
And because Christ took the throne, as the Antitype of those
kings, therefore he is said, Luke 1:32 to sit upon their throne—
Thus, the princes of Israel, in the Psalms 82 are called gods,
and sons of God, or 'all of them children of the Most High;'
being appointed types and remarkable representations of the
true Son of God, and in him of the true God. They were called
gods, and sons of God, in the same manner as the Levitical
sacrifices were called an atonement for sin, and in the same
manner as the manna was called the bread of heaven, and
angels' food. These things represented, and, by special divine
designation, were figures of, the true Atonement, and of Him
who was the true Bread of heaven, and the true angels food; in
the same sense as Saul, the person especially pointed out in
the Psalms 82, is called 'the Lord's anointed,' or (as in the
original) Messiah, or Christ, which are the same. And it is to
be observed, that these typical gods, and judges of Israel, are
particularly distinguished from the true God, and true Judge,
in the next sentence. Psalms 82:8 'Arise, o god, thou judge of
the earth; for thou shalt inherit all nations.'—This is a wish
for the coming of that King, that should reign in
righteousness, and judge righteously; who was to inherit the
Gentiles, as well as the Jews; and the words, as they stand in
connexion with the two preceding verses, import thus much
—'As to you, the temporal princes and judges of Israel, you
are called gods, and sons of God, being exalted to the place of
kings, judges, and saviours of God's people, the kingdom and
heritage of Christ; but you shall die like men, and fall like*

other princes; whereby it appears that you are truly no gods, nor any one of you the true Son of God, which your injustice and oppression also shows. But oh, that He who is truly God, the Judge of the earth, the true and just Judge and Saviour, who is to be King over Gentiles as well as Jews, would come and reign!'—It is to be observed, that when it is said in this verse—'Arise, O God'—the word rendered God, is Elohim—the same used in Psalms 82:6, 'I have said, Ye are gods,'—I have said, Ye are **elohim**.

Thirdly, As to the words of Christ, in John 10:35 'If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came,' I suppose that, by the word of God coming to these princes of Israel, is meant, their being set forth by special and express divine designation, to be types or figurative significations of God's mind. Those things which God had appointed to be types, to signify the mind of God, were a visible word. Types are called the word of the Lord—as in Zechariah 11:10, 11, and in Zechariah 4:4-6—The word of God came to the princes of Israel, both as they, by God's ordering, became subjects of a typical representation of a divine thing, which was a visible word of God; and also, as this was done by express divine designation, as they were marked out to this end, by an express, audible, and legible word, as in Exodus 22:28 and Psalm 82:1, and besides, the thing, of which they were appointed types, was Christ, who is called 'the word of God'—Thus, the word of God came to Jacob, as a type of Christ, 1 Kings 18:31. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of Jacob, unto whom the word of the lord came, saying,

Israel shall be thy name'—The word Israel is prince of god—Jacob being, by that express divine designation, appointed as a type of Christ, the true Prince of God, (who is called, in Isaiah 49:3, by the name of Israel,) in his prevailing in his wrestling with God, to save himself and his family from destruction by Esau, who was then coming against him, and obtaining the blessing for himself and his seed—Now,

Fourthly, *Christ's argument lies in these words, The Scripture cannot be broken That word of God, by which they are called gods, as types of Him who is truly God, must be verified, which they cannot be, unless the Antitype be truly God—They are so called, as types of the Messiah, or of the Anointed One, (which is the same,) or the Sanctified or Holy One, or Him that was to be sent; which were all known names among the Jews for the Messiah. (See Daniel 9:24, 25. Psalms 89:19, 20. Psalms 16:10. John 9:7) But it was on this account, that those types or images of the Messiah were called gods, because He, whom they represented, was God indeed. If he were not God, the word by which they were called gods could not be verified, and must be broken. As the word, by which the legal sacrifices were called an atonement, and are said to atone for sin, was true in no other sense, than as they had relation to the sacrifice of Christ the true atonement. If Christ's sacrifice had not truly atoned for sin; the word, which called the types or representations of it an atonement, could not be verified. So, if Jesus Christ had not been the true Bread from heaven, and angels' food indeed; the scripture which called the type of him, the bread from heaven, and angels' food, would not have been*

verified, but would have been broken.

These, Sir, are my thoughts on John 10:34. etc.

*I am yours, most affectionately,
J. EDWARDS."*

"**P. S. December.** 5—The opportunity for the conveyance of my letters to the ministers chosen to be of the council, your way, not being very good, I here send other letters, desiring you to take the charge of conveying them with all possible care and speed."

The gentlemen invited to the council, at his desire, and that of his people, met at Stockbridge, January 4, 1758;^[65] and, having heard the application of the agents of the college, and their reasons in support of it;^[66] Mr. Edwards's own representation of the matter; and what his people had to say, by way of objection, against his removal; determined that it was his duty to accept of the invitation to the presidency of the college. When they published their judgment and advice to Mr. Edwards and his people, he appeared uncommonly moved and affected with it, and fell into tears on the occasion, which was very unusual for him, in the presence of others; and soon after, he said to the gentlemen who had given their advice, that it was matter of wonder to him, that they could so easily, as they appeared to do, get over the objections he had made against his removal.^[67] But, as he thought it his duty to be directed by their advice, he should now endeavour cheerfully to undertake it, believing he was in the way of his duty.

"Accordingly, having had, by the application of the trustees of the college, the consent of the commissioners of the 'Society in London, for Propagating the Gospel, in New England and the Parts adjacent,' to resign their mission; he girded up his loins, and set off from Stockbridge for Princeton, in January.

He left his family at Stockbridge, not to be removed till the spring. He had two daughters at Princeton; Mrs. Burr, and Lucy, his eldest daughter that was unmarried. His arrival at Princeton was to the great satisfaction and joy of the college. And indeed all the greatest friends of the college, and to the interests of religion, were highly satisfied and pleased with the appointment."

It was a singular fact, that, soon after his arrival at Princeton, he heard the melancholy tidings of the death of his father. It occurred on the 27th of January, 1758, in the 89th year of his age.

"The corporation met as soon as could be with convenience, after his arrival at the college, when he was by them fixed in the president's chair. While at Princeton, before his sickness, he preached in the college-hall, sabbath after sabbath, to the great acceptance of the hearers,^[68] but did nothing as president, unless it was to give out some questions in divinity to the senior class, to be answered before him; each one having opportunity to study and write what he thought proper upon them. When they came together to answer them, they found so much entertainment and profit by it, especially by the light and instruction Mr. Edwards communicated, in what he said upon the questions, when they had delivered what they had to say, that they spoke of it with the greatest satisfaction and wonder.

"During this time, Mr. Edwards seemed to enjoy an uncommon degree of the presence of God. He told his daughters he once had great exercise, concern, and fear, relative to his engaging in that business; but since it now appeared, so far as he could see, that he was called of God to that place and work, he did cheerfully devote himself to it, leaving himself and the event with God to order what seemed to him good.

"The small-pox had now become very common in the country, and was then

at Princeton, and likely to spread. And as Mr. Edwards had never had it, and inoculation was then practised with great success in those parts, he proposed to be inoculated, if the physician should advise to it, and the corporation would give their consent. Accordingly, by the advice of the physician, and the consent of the corporation, he was inoculated February 13th. He had it favourably, and it was thought all danger was over; but a secondary fever set in and, by reason of a number of pustules in his throat, the obstruction was such, that the medicines necessary to check the fever could not be administered. It therefore raged till it put an end to his life, on the 22d of March, 1758, in the 55th year of his age.

"After he was sensible that he could not survive that sickness, a little before his death, he called his daughter to him, who attended him in his sickness, and addressed her in a few words, which were immediately taken down in writing, as near as could be recollected, and are as follows—'Dear Lucy, It seems to me to be the will of God, that I must shortly leave you; therefore give my kindest love to my dear wife, and tell her, that the uncommon union, which has so long subsisted between us, has been of such a nature, as I trust is spiritual, and therefore will continue for ever: and I hope she will be supported under so great a trial, and submit cheerfully to the will of God. And as to my children, you are now like to be left fatherless; which I hope will be an inducement to you all, to seek a Father who will never fail you. And as to my funeral, I would have it to be like Mr. Burr's; and any additional sum of money, that might be expected to be laid out that way, I would have it disposed of to charitable uses.'^[69]

"He said but very little in his sickness; but was an admirable instance of patience and resignation, to the last. Just at the close of his life, as some persons, who stood by, expecting he would breathe his last in a few minutes,

were lamenting his death, not only as a great frown on the college, but as having a dark aspect on the interest of religion in general; to their surprise, not imagining that he heard, or ever would speak another word, he said, 'Trust in God, and ye need not fear.' These were his last words. What could have been more suitable to the occasion? And what need of more? In these there is as much matter of instruction and support, as if he had written a volume. This was the only consolation to his bereaved friends, deeply sensible as they were of the loss which they and the church of Christ had sustained in his death: GOD IS ALL SUFFICIENT, AND STILL HAS THE CARE OF HIS CHURCH.^[70]

"He appeared to have the uninterrupted use of his reason to the last, and died with as much calmness and composure, to all appearance, as that with which one goes to sleep."

The physician, who inoculated and constantly attended him, in his sickness, addressed the following letter to Mrs. Edwards, on this occasion:

***To Mrs. Sarah Edwards,
Stockbridge.***

Princeton, March 22, 1758.

MOST DEAR AND VERY WORTHY MADAM,

I am heartily sorry for the occasion of writing to you, by this express, but I know you have been informed, by a line from your excellent, lovely, and pious husband, that I was brought

here to inoculate him, and your dear daughter Esther, and her children, for the small-pox, which was then spreading fast in Princeton; and that, after the most deliberate and serious consultation, with his nearest and most religious friends, he was accordingly inoculated with them, the 23rd of last month; and although he had the smallpox favourably, yet, having a number of them in the roof of his mouth and throat, he could not possibly swallow a sufficient quantity of drink, to keep off a secondary fever, which has proved too strong for his feeble frame; and this afternoon, between two and three o'clock, it pleased God to let him sleep in that dear Lord Jesus, whose kingdom and interest he has been faithfully and painfully serving all his life. And never did any mortal man more fully and clearly evidence the sincerity of all his professions, by one continued, universal, calm, cheerful resignation, and patient submission to the Divine will, through every stage of his disease, than he; not so much as one discontented expression, nor the least appearance of murmuring, through the whole. And never did any person expire with more perfect freedom from pain—not so much as one distorted hair—but in the most proper sense of the word; he fell asleep. Death had certainly lost its sting, as to him.

Your daughter, Mrs. Burr, and her children, through the mercy of God, are safely over the disease, and she desires me to send her duty to you, the best of mothers. She has had the small-pox the heaviest of all whom I have inoculated, and little Sally far the lightest; she has but three in her face. I am sure it will prove serviceable to her future health.

I conclude, with my hearty prayer, dear Madam, that you may be enabled to look to that God, whose love and goodness you have experienced a thousand times, for direction and help, under this most afflictive dispensation of his providence, and under every other difficulty, you may meet with here, in order to your being more perfectly fitted for the joys of heaven hereafter.

*I am, dear Madam,
Your most sympathizing
And affectionate friend,
And very humble servant,
WILLIAM SHIPPEN."*

This letter reached Mrs. Edwards while in a feeble state of health, when she was preparing to pay a visit, first to her sister, Mrs. Hopkins, at West Springfield, and then to her mother, Mrs. Edwards, of Windsor, in consequence of the death of Mr. Edwards's father. What her feelings were, and those of her family, under this unexpected and overwhelming dispensation, can be more easily conceived than described.

"She had long told her intimate friends, that she had, after long struggles and exercises, obtained, by God's grace, an habitual willingness to die herself, or part with any of her most near relatives. That she was willing to bring forth children for death; and to resign up him, whom she esteemed so great a blessing to her and her family, her nearest partner, to the stroke of death, whenever God should see fit to take him. And when she had the greatest trial, in the death of Mr. Edwards, she found the help and comfort of such a disposition. Her conduct on this occasion was such as to excite the admiration of her friends; it discovered that she was sensible of the great loss, which she and her children had sustained in his death; and, at the same time, showed

that she was quiet and resigned, and had those invisible supports, which enabled her to trust in God with quietness, hope, and humble joy."

A few days afterwards, she addressed the following letter to Mrs. Burr.

"Stockbridge, April 3, 1758.

MY VERY DEAR CHILD,

What shall I say? A holy and good God has covered us with a dark cloud. O that we may kiss the rod, and lay our hands on our mouths! The Lord has done it. He has made me adore his goodness, that we had him so long. But my God lives: and he has my heart. O what a legacy my husband, and your father, has left us! We are all given to God; and there I am, and love to be.

*Your ever affectionate mother,
SARAH EDWARDS"*

On the same sheet was the following letter from one of her daughters.

"MY DEAR SISTER, WILLIAM SHIPPEN."

My mother wrote this with a great deal of pain in her neck, which disabled her from writing any more. She thought you would be glad of these few lines from her own hand.

O, sister, how many calls have we, one upon the back of

another? O, I beg your prayers, that we, who are young in this family, may be awakened and excited to call more earnestly on God, that he would be our Father, and Friend for ever.

My father took leave of all his people and family as affectionately as if he knew he should not come again. On the sabbath afternoon he preached from these words—We have no continuing city, therefore let us seek one to come. The chapter that he read was Acts the 20th. O, how proper; what could he have done more? When he had got out of doors he turned about—'I commit you to God,'—said he—I doubt not but God will take a fatherly care of us, if we do not forget him.

*I am your affectionate sister,
SUSANNAH EDWARDS.*

Stockbridge, April 3, 1758."

"Mrs. Burr and her children were inoculated at the same time that her father was, and had recovered when he died. But after she was perfectly recovered, to all appearance, she was suddenly seized with a violent disorder, which carried her off in a few days; and which, the physician said, he could call by no name, but that of a messenger, sent suddenly, to call her out of the world. She died April 7, 1758, sixteen days after her father, in the 27th year of her age. She was married to Mr. Burr June 29, 1752. They had two children, a son and a daughter.

"Mrs. Burr exceeded most of her sex in the beauty of her person, as well as in her behaviour and conversation. She

discovered an unaffected, natural freedom, towards persons of all ranks, with whom she conversed. Her genius was much more than common. She had a lively, sprightly imagination, a quick and penetrating discernment, and a good judgment. She possessed an uncommon degree of wit and vivacity; which yet was consistent with pleasantness and good nature; and she knew how to be facetious and sportive, without trespassing on the bounds of decorum, or of strict and serious religion. In short, she seemed formed to please, and especially to please one of Mr. Burr's taste and character, in whom he was exceedingly happy. But what crowned all her excellencies, and was her chief glory, was RELIGION. She appeared to be the subject of divine impressions, when seven or eight years old; and she made a public profession of religion, when about fifteen. Her conversation, until her death, was exemplary, as becometh godliness"—She was, in every respect, an ornament to her sex, being equally distinguished for the suavity of her manners, her literary accomplishments, and her unfeigned regard to religion. Her religion did not cast a gloom over her mind, but made her cheerful and happy, and rendered the thought of death transporting. She left a number of manuscripts, on interesting subjects, and it was hoped they would have been made public; but they are now lost.

Mrs. Edwards did not long survive her husband. In September she set out, in good health, on a journey to Philadelphia, to take care of her two orphan grandchildren, which were now in that city; and had been, since the death of Mrs. Burr. As they had no relations in those parts, Mrs. Edwards proposed to

take them into her own family. She arrived there, by the way of Princeton, Sept 21, in good health, having had a comfortable journey. But, in a few days, she was seized with a violent dysentery, which, on the fifth day, put an end to her life, October 2d 1738, in the 49th year of her age. She said not much in her sickness; being exercised, most of the time, with violent pain. On the morning of the day she died, she apprehended her death was near, when she expressed her entire resignation to God, and her desire that he might be glorified in all things; and that she might be enabled to glorify him to the last: and continued in such a temper, calm and resigned, till she died.

Her remains were carried to Princeton, and deposited with those of Mr. Edwards. Thus they who were in their lives remarkably lovely and pleasant, in their death were not much divided. Here, the father and mother, the son and daughter, were laid together in the grave, within the space of a little more than a year; though a few months before their dwelling was more than 150 miles apart—two presidents of the same college, and their consorts, than whom it will doubtless be hard to find four persons more valuable and useful!

By these repeated strokes, following in quick succession, the American church, within a few months, sustained a loss, which probably, in so short a space of time, will never be equalled.

Mr. and Mrs. Edwards lived together, in the married state, above thirty years; in which time they had eleven children, three sons and eight daughters. The second daughter died February. 14, 1748. The third daughter was Mrs. Burr. The youngest daughter, Elizabeth, died soon after her parents.

The trustees of the college erected a marble monument over the grave of Mr. Edwards, which has the following inscription:

M. S.
Reverendi admodum Viri,
JONATHAN EDWARDS, A. M.
Collegii Novæ Cæsariæ Præsidis.
Natusapud Windsor Connecticutensium V. Octobris.
a. d. mdcciii, s. v.
Patre Reverendo Timotheo Edwards oriundus,
Collegio Yalensi educatus;
Apud Northampton Sacris initiatus, xv Februarii,
mdccxxvi-vii.
Illinc dimissus xxii Junii, mdcccl
Et Munus Barbaros instituendi accepit.
Præses Aulæ Nassovicæ creatus xvi Februarii.
mdccclviii.
Defunctus in hoc Vico XXII Martii sequentis, S.N.
AEtatis LV, heu nimis brevis!
Hic jacet mortalis pars.
Qualis Persona quæris, Viator?
Vir Corpore procero, sed gracili,
Studiis intensissimus, Abstinentia, et Sedulitate,
Attentiato.
Ingenii acumine, Judicio acri, et Prudentiá,
Secundus Nemini Mortalium.
Artium liberalium et Scientiarum peritia insignis,
Critacorum sacrorum optimus, Theologus eximius,

Ut vix alter æqualis; Disputator candidus;
Fidei Christianæ Propugnator validus et invictus;
Conconiator gravis, serius, discriminans;
Et, Deo ferente, Successu
Felicissimus.

Pietate præclarus, Moribus suis severus,
Ast aliis æquus et benignus.

Vixit dilectus, veneratus—

Sed, ah! lugendus

Moriebatur.

Quantos Gemitus discedens ciebat!

Heu Sapia tanta! heu Doctrina et Religio!

Amissum plorat Collegium, plorat et Ecclesia:

At, eo recepto, gaudet

Coelum.

Abi, Viator, et pia sequere Vestigia.

Chapter XXV (TOC)

Concluding Remarks.

THE writer of the preceding pages regrets, at least as sincerely as any of his readers, that the collection of facts, which they contain, is not more full and complete; yet, in consequence of the long interval which has elapsed since the death of President Edwards, they are all, which after much time, and labour, and travel, he has been able to discover. Such as they are, they constitute, with his writings body of materials from which we are to form our estimate of his character, as an intelligent and moral being.

In reviewing them, it is delightful to remember, in the outset, that so far as the human eye could judge, the individuals of both the families from which he derived his descent, were, as far back as we can trace them, distinguished for their piety. Each married pair, in both lines, with that care and conscientiousness which so generally marked the pilgrims of New England, and their puritan ancestors, trained up their children in the fear of God, and continued through life to supplicate daily the divine favour on them and their descendants, in all succeeding generations. Their prayers, ascending separately and successively indeed, were yet embodied in their influence, and from Him, who "showeth mercy to thousands of generations of them that love him, and keep his commandments," called down concentrated blessings on their common offspring. So full, so rich were these blessings, as bestowed on the subject of this Memoir, that, perhaps, no one example on record furnishes a stronger encouragement to parents, to wrestle with God for the holiness and the salvation of their posterity.

It was owing to the moral influence thus exerted, and to the divine favour thus secured, that when we review the childhood and youth of Mr. Edwards, we find them not only passing without a stain upon his memory, but marked by a purity and excellence rarely witnessed at so early a period of life. The religious impressions made upon his mind in childhood, were certainly frequent, deep, and of long continuance, and had a powerful effect upon his ultimate character; yet the estimate formed of their real nature by different persons will probably be different. His own estimate of them was, unquestionably, that they were not the result of real religion.

The circumstances which led him to this conclusion, were these two—First, That, after he had cherished the hope of his own conversion, for a considerable period, and had experienced a high degree of joy, in what he regarded as communion with God, he lost imperceptibly this spirituality of mind, relinquished for a season the "constant performance" of the practice of secret prayer, and cherished many affections of a worldly and sinful character—Secondly, That when he recovered from this state of declension, his views of divine truth, particularly those connected with the sovereignty of God, were in many respects new, and far more clear and delightful than any which he had previously formed.

Without calling in question the fact, that a given individual has, on some accounts, decidedly superior advantages for judging of his own Christian character, than others enjoy; and without presuming to decide on the correctness of the estimate, thus formed by Mr. Edwards; it may not be improper to state various circumstances, which lead me to suspect, that it may perhaps have been erroneous. 1. The declension, of which he complains, appears to have been chiefly, or wholly, a declension in the state of the affections. 2. Those impressions began when he was seven or eight years of

age, and were so powerful and lasting, as to render religion the great object of attention, for a number of years. As made on the mind of such a child, they were very remarkable, even if we suppose them to have resulted in piety. 3. The season of his declension commenced soon after his admission to college, when he was twelve years of age. That a truly pious child, in consequence of leaving his early religious connexions and associations, and especially the altar and the incense of the parental sanctuary; of removing to a new place of residence, of entering on a new course of life, of forming new acquaintances and attachments, of feeling the strong attractions of study, and the powerful incentives of ambition, and of being exposed to the new and untried temptations of a public seminary; should, for a season, so far decline from his previous spirituality, as to lose all hope of his own conversion, is so far from being a surprising event, that, in ordinary cases, it is perhaps to be expected. Piety, at its commencement in the mind, is usually feeble; and especially is it so, in the mind of a child. How often are similar declensions witnessed, even at a later age. Yet the subject of such backsliding, though, during its continuance, he may well renounce the hope of his conversion, does not usually regard the period of his recovery as the commencement of his Christian life—4. He had not, at this period, made a public profession of religion; and, of course, was not restrained from such declension by his own covenant, by communion with Christians, or by the consciousness, that, as a visible Christian, his faults were subjected to the inspection and the censure of the surrounding world. 5. Though charitable in judging others, he was at least equally severe in judging himself. 6. He appears, at a very early period, to have formed views of the purity of the Christian character—of the degree of freedom from sin, and of the degree of actual holiness, requisite to justify the hope of conversion—altogether more elevated in their nature, than the truth will warrant. 7. That his views of divine truth—particularly of the

sovereignty of God—should have opened, after the age of twelve, with so much greater clearness and beauty, as to appear wholly new, was to have been expected from the nature of the case. 8. At a subsequent period, when his mind was incessantly occupied by the unusual perplexities of his tutorship, he complained of a similar declension. 9. The purity, strength, and comprehensiveness of his piety, as exhibited immediately after his public profession of Christianity, was so much superior to what is frequently witnessed, in Christians of an advanced standing, as almost to force upon us the conviction that it commenced—not a few months before, at the time of his supposed conversion, but—at a much earlier period of life. Rare indeed is the fact, that holiness is not, at its commencement in the soul, "as a grain of mustard-seed, which is the least of all seeds;" and though in the rapidity of its growth, it differs widely in different soils, yet time is indispensably necessary, before its fruits can cover the full-grown plant, like the clusters on the vine—These considerations, and particularly the last, have led me to believe, that the early religious impressions of Mr. Edwards are to be regarded, as having been the result of a gracious operation of the Spirit of God upon his heart.

Under this happy influence, exerted in childhood, his character was formed. It prompted him then to study the Scriptures, to love prayer, to sanctify the sabbath, and to pay an unusual attention to the duties of religion. It inspired him with reverence towards God, and made him afraid to sin. It rendered him conscientious in the performance of every relative duty, in manifesting love and gratitude, honour and obedience, towards his parents, kindness and courteousness towards his sisters, and the other companions of his childhood, respect and deference to his superiors, and good will to all around him. It led him also, at a very early period, to overcome that aversion to mental labour, which is so natural to man, and to devote himself with exemplary assiduity to

the great duty, daily assigned him, of storing his mind with useful knowledge. Some of our readers, we are aware, may perhaps regard the recollections of his earlier years, as of little importance; but those, who cherish common sympathies, with the whole body of evangelical Christians, in the deep interest which they feel in his character and efforts, and who reflect, that the foundation of that character and of those efforts was then laid, will requite of us no apology for thus exhibiting the comparative innocence and purity, the docility and amiableness, the tenderness of conscience, the exemplary industry, and the ardent thirst for knowledge, which characterized this vernal season of his life.

The development of mental superiority, in the childhood and youth of Mr. Edwards, was certainly uncommon, if not singular. Boys of the age of eleven and twelve, even when receiving every aid from their parents and instructors, and when feeling the influence of all the motives, which they can present, are usually unwilling, in any branch of natural science, to examine, so as thoroughly to comprehend, the discoveries and investigations of others. Still more unwilling are they to make this examination, when no such aid is furnished, and no such inducements are presented. But rare indeed is the instance, in which the attention of such a boy has been so far arrested, by any of the interesting phenomena, in either of the kingdoms of nature, that he has been led, without prompting, and without aid, to pursue a series of exact observations and discoveries, as to the facts themselves; to search out their causes; and, as the result of the whole, to draw up and present a lucid, systematic, and well digested report of his investigations.

After the lapse of a little more than a year, just as he attained the age of fourteen, we find him entering on pursuits of a still higher character. Few boys of that age have sufficient strength of intellect to comprehend the Essay

on the Human Understanding. Of those who have, but a small proportion can be persuaded to read it; and a much smaller, still, are found to read it voluntarily, and of choice. We find Edwards, however, at this period of life, not only entering on this work of his own accord, and with deep interest, but at once relinquishing every other pursuit, that he may devote himself wholly to the philosophy of the mind; and, to use his own language, "enjoying a far higher pleasure in the perusal of its pages, than the most greedy miser finds, when gathering up handfuls of silver and gold, from some newly discovered treasure." Nor is this all. While reading the work of Locke, he presents himself before us, not as a pupil, nor simply as a critic; but in the higher character of an investigator, exploring for himself the universe of minds, and making new and interesting discoveries. Fortunately his investigations are preserved, and may be compared with the efforts of other distinguished men, at the same period of life, in other countries and in other ages. And if any one of all those efforts discovers greater perspicacity and mental energy, than the "Notes on the Mind;" particularly, the articles entitled, Being, Space, Motion, Genus, the Will, and Excellency we are yet to learn where it is to be found, and who was its author. The discussion of the very important and difficult question, in the last of these articles, What is the foundation of excellency—of excellency in its most enlarged acceptation, in things material and spiritual, in things intellectual, imaginative, and moral—is not only original, as to its youthful author, and profound, but is even now, we believe, in various respects, new to the investigations of philosophy.^[71] The Notes on Natural Science, furnish similar proof of high mental superiority; and, by their variety of topics, their general accuracy, and their originality, evince a power and comprehension, discovered by only here and there an individual, when possessed of the full maturity of his faculties. His habits of thinking and reasoning, at this time of life, appear to have been as severe, as exact, and

as successful, as those of the most accomplished scholars usually are, in the vigour of manhood. The plan of study, itself, which he then formed—of studying with his pen; and of immediately, and of course, employing the principles of the science he was examining, which had been already detailed and demonstrated by others, in the discovery of new principles—is at least equal evidence of the same superiority. So vigorous was the mental soil, that the seeds of thought could not be implanted therein, without being quickened at once, and made to grow into a rich and abundant harvest. Looking at these two series of notes in connexion with the plan of study under which they grew, and then comparing them, by the aid of recollection, with the efforts of other children and youths of uncommon promise; we instinctively ask, When, and where, has the individual lived, who has left behind him substantial proofs, that he has possessed, at the same age, a mind more powerful, comprehensive, or creative?

These conclusions are only confirmed by the survey of his succeeding years. Though drawn away from the entire devotion of his mind to his collegiate studies, by (what were to him) the alluring blandishments of mental philosophy, he yet sustained in his class the first standing as a scholar; and, though leaving college when sixteen, he was not too young to receive its highest honours. Having entered the pulpit at eighteen, he was, after a few trials, designated by a number of gentlemen of a superior character, for a very important and difficult station; to which, as well as to various other interesting fields of labour, he received most pressing invitations.

The extraordinary difficulties and perplexities of the college, while he was one of its officers, sufficient as they were to have overwhelmed a common mind, only served to furnish him and his colleagues a fairer opportunity, to show forth the superiority of their own character. By their wisdom and

fidelity, the college was preserved and enlarged, when in imminent danger of ruin; and the period of their administration will ever be regarded as one of the most important eras in its history.

While the review of the childhood and youth of Mr. Edwards thus forces upon us the conviction, that, in the early development of extraordinary mental powers, he has had few equals; and enables us to reflect, with pleasure, that these powers were never prostituted to folly, or to vice, but from the beginning were faithfully devoted to the great end for which they were given; it also leads us to remark, that his character, as a moral being, was thoroughly formed and established, at a very early period of life. Like a dutiful child, he listened, indeed, to the counsels of his parents, as to the principles by which his conduct should be regulated; but he also examined for himself the foundations of those principles, and, having discovered that they were firm and immovable, formed out of them a series of rules, for the systematic regulation of his own conduct. These rules, particularly as exemplified in the journal of his daily life, evince not only a pure and transparent sincerity, and the greatest openness of soul towards God; as well as an inspection, metaphysically accurate, of his own mind, and a thorough acquaintance with his own heart; but a knowledge of his duty—to God, his fellow-men, and himself—and a conscientiousness in performing it, which are usually the result of great wisdom and piety, combined with long experience. They grew, obviously, out of a disposition to turn every occurrence of life to a religious use, and thus to grow wiser and better, continually, under the course of discipline to which the providence of God subjected him. They appear to have been made under the immediate inspection of the Omniscient eye, with a solemn conviction that he was an immortal being, formed to act on the same theatre with God, and angels, and the just made perfect, in carrying forward the kingdom of holiness and joy, in its ever enlarging progress.

Viewing himself as just entering on this career of glory, he adopted, for the permanent direction of his course, the best and noblest resolution, that an intelligent being can form—"Resolved, That I will do whatsoever I think to be most to the glory of God, and my own good, profit, and pleasure, in the whole of my duration; without any consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriads of ages hence: resolved, to do whatsoever I think to be my duty, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general: resolved, so to do, whatever difficulties I meet with, how many soever, and how great soever." In the spirit of this resolution, we find him, with all the earnestness of which he was capable, giving up himself to God—all that he was, and all that he possessed—so as habitually to feel that he was in no respect his own, and could challenge no right to the faculties of his body, to the powers of his mind, or the affections of his heart; receiving Christ as a Prince and a Saviour, under a solemn covenant to adhere to the faith and obedience of the gospel, however hazardous and difficult the profession and practice of it might be; and taking the Holy Spirit as his Teacher, Sanctifier, and only Comforter. And, in accordance with both, we find him, at this time, regularly making the glory of God the great end for which he lived; habitually trusting in God, to such a degree, as to feel no uneasiness about his worldly condition; maintaining the most open and confidential intercourse with his Maker; cherishing exalted thoughts of Christ and his salvation; feeling himself to be a part of Christ, and to have no separate interest from his; exercising a filial and delightful sense of dependence on the Holy Spirit, for the daily communication of his grace; regarding communion with God as the very life and sustenance of the soul; delighting in praising God, and in singing his praises, and as much when alone, as in the company of others; often observing days of secret fasting, that he might discover, and repent of, and renounce every sin; maintaining a constant warfare against sin and

temptation; frequently renewing his dedication of himself to God; conversing daily and familiarly with his own death and his own final trial; rejoicing habitually in the divine perfections and the divine government; reverentially acknowledging the divine hand in all the works of nature, and in all the events of providence; exhibiting a calm and sweet submission to the divine will under all the afflictions of life, so that he could regard afflictions as real and great blessings; and enabled so to live with God, from day to day, and from hour to hour, as to be delightfully conscious of his presence, to refer his inmost mind to the inspection of his eye, to value his approbation above all things else, to cherish a joyful sense of union to him, to converse with him, as a father, concerning his wants, infirmities, and sins, his dangers, duties, and trials, his joys and sorrows, his fears and desires, his hopes and prospects, and to commune with him in all his works and dispensations, in his perfections and his glory. And, as the result of this, we find the Spirit of God unfolding to him the wonders of divine truth; vouchsafing to him joyful and glorious discoveries of the perfections of God, as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; enabling him to live, as in the immediate presence and vision of the things that are unseen and eternal; and communicating to him a joyful assurance of the favour of God, and of a title to future glory.

This state of his heart towards God, prepared him for a just estimate of his own character, for the formation of the best habits, and for a conscientious and faithful government over himself. The daily and careful survey of his sins, by the light of the divine holiness, enabled him to discover the deceitfulness of his own heart, and led him habitually to abhor himself, to form none but humbling and abasing views of his own attainments in piety, and to esteem others better than himself. There was something extremely delicate in his constitution; which always obliged him to the exactest rules of temperance, and every method of cautious and prudent living. His

temperance was the result of principle. It was not the mere ordinary care and watchfulness of temperate people, but such a degree of self-denial, both as to the quantity and quality of his food, as left his mind, in every part of the day, alike unclouded in its views, and unembarrassed in its movements. We have seen, from his diary, that he rose at a very early hour, throughout the year; that, in the morning, he considered well the business and studies of the day, resolved to pursue that which was the most important; that his habits of punctuality were exact and thorough; that he husbanded his time, as the miser guards his choicest treasures; not losing it even in his walks, his rides, or his journeys; and not allowing himself to leave his study for the table, if his mind would thereby lose its brighter moments, and its happier sequences of thought and discovery; and that, in consequence of this regularity of life, and an exact and punctilious regard to bodily exercise, he was enabled to spend an unusual portion of every day, in severe and laborious mental application.

[72] Let it also be remembered, by every minister, that notwithstanding the exact discipline to which his mind had been subjected, by the course of his education, and by his long devotion to metaphysical pursuits, he continued his attention to mathematical studies, as a source, alike, of recreation and improvement, throughout the whole of his ministerial life.

The habits of his religious life, which he formed in his youth, were not less thorough and exact. His observation of the sabbath was such as to make it, throughout, a day of real religion; so that not only were his conversation and reading conformed to the great design of the day, but he allowed himself in no thoughts or meditations, which were not decidedly of a religious character. It was his rule, not only to search the Scriptures daily, but to study them so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that he might perceive a regular and obvious growth in his knowledge of them. By prayer and self-application, he took constant care to render them the means of progressive sanctification. He

made a secret of his private devotions, observes Dr. Hopkins, and therefore they cannot be particularly known; though there is much evidence that he was punctual, constant, and frequent in secret prayer, and often kept days of fasting and prayer in secret, and set apart time for serious, devout meditations on spiritual and eternal things, as part of his religious exercises in secret. It appears from his diary, that his stated seasons of secret prayer were, from his youth, three times a day—in his journeys, as well as at home. He was, so far as can be known, much on his knees in secret, and in devout reading of God's word, and meditation upon it. And his constant, solemn converse with God, in these exercises of secret religion, made his face, as it were, to shine before others. His appearance, his countenance, his words, and whole demeanour, were attended with a seriousness, gravity and solemnity, which was the natural, genuine, indication and expression, of a deep abiding sense of divine things on his mind, and of his living constantly in the fear of God. His watchfulness over himself—over his external conduct and over his secret thoughts and purposes—was most thorough and exemplary. The fear of God, and a consciousness of his own weakness, made him habitually apprehensive of sin, and led him most carefully to avoid every temptation. His self-examination was regular, universal, and in a sense constant. Every morning he endeavoured to foresee, and to guard against, the dangers of the day. Every night he carefully reviewed the conduct of his mind, during its progress, and inquired, wherein he had been negligent; what sin he had committed; wherein he had denied himself; and regularly kept an account of every thing which he found to be wrong. This record he reviewed at the close of the week, of the month, and of the year, and on the occurrence of every important change in life; that he might know his own condition, and that he might carry his sins in humble confession before God. Whenever he so much questioned whether he had done his duty, as that the quiet of his mind was

thereby disturbed, he regularly set it down, that he might examine its real nature; and, if found in any respect to be wrong, might put it away. Every course of conduct, which led him in the least to doubt of the love of God; every action of his mind, the review of which would give him uneasiness in the hour of death, and on his final trial; he endeavoured, with all his strength, to avoid. Every obvious sin he traced back to its original, that he might afterward know where his danger lay. Every desire, which might prove the occasion of sin—the desire of wealth, of ease, of pleasure, of influence, of fame, of popularity—as well as every bodily appetite, he strove not only to watch against, but habitually and unceasingly to mortify; regarding occasions of great self-denial as glorious opportunities of destroying sin, and of confirming himself in holiness; and uniformly finding that his greatest mortifications were succeeded by the greatest comforts. On the approach of affliction he searched out the sin, which he ought especially to regard, as calling for such a testimony of the divine displeasure, that he might receive the chastisement with entire submission, and be concerned about nothing but his duty and his sin. The virtues and sins of others led him to examine himself, whether he possessed the former, and whether he did not practise the latter. Thus his whole life was a continued course of self-examination; and in the duty of secret fasting, and humiliation, which he very frequently observed—a duty enjoined by Christ, on his followers, as explicitly, and in the same terms, as the duty of secret prayer; enjoined too, for the very purpose of discovery, confession, and purification—he was accustomed, with the greatest unreservedness of which he was capable, to declare his ways to God, and to lay open his soul before him, all his sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, and fears, as well as his desires and hopes; that the light of God's countenance might shine upon him without obstruction.

The fear of God had a controlling influence, also, in regulating his

intercourse with mankind. The basis of that intercourse, in all the relations of life, and indeed of his whole character, was evangelical integrity—a settled unbending resolution to do what he thought right, whatever self-denial or sacrifices it might cost him. This trait of character he early discovered, in the unfavourable estimate, which he formed, of his youthful attainments in religion; and in the severe judgment, which he passed upon the period of his official connexion with college, as a period of marked declension in his Christian life. He discovered it, during that connexion, in his most conscientious and honourable efforts to promote the welfare of that institution, under uncommon difficulties and trials. He discovered it during his ministry at Northampton, in the very laborious performance of every ministerial duty, and in his firm and fearless defence of the truth, in opposition to numbers, power, and influence. He discovered it eminently in the affair of his dismissal. His conscience at first hesitated, as to the lawfulness of the prevailing mode of admission to the church. Still, he regarded the question as altogether doubtful. It had been once publicly discussed; his own colleague and grandfather, who had introduced it at Northampton, being one of the combatants; and the victory had been supposed to be on his side, and in favour of the existing mode. The churches of the county had adopted it; and the whole current of public opinion—the united voice of wealth, fashion, numbers, learning, and influence—was in its favour. If he decided against continuing the practice, all these would certainly be combined against him; his people would demand his dismissal, before a tribunal which had prejudged the case; his only means of supporting a young and numerous family would be taken away, at a time of life, when an adequate provision for their wants would probably involve him in extreme embarrassment. Yet none of these things moved him; and his only anxiety was, to ascertain and to perform his duty. He discovered it, in the same

manner, in the controversy at Stockbridge. There, the same influence, which, in the former case, had effected his dismissal, he knew would be combined against him, with increased hostility, and in all probability would deprive his family a second time of their support; unless he sat quietly, and saw the charities of Christian philanthropy perverted to sources of private emolument. But in such a crisis he could not deliberate for a moment.

"He had a strict and inviolable regard to justice, in all his dealings with his neighbours, and was very careful to provide things honest in the sight of all men; so that scarcely a man had any dealings with him, who was not conscious of his uprightness.

"His great benevolence to mankind discovered itself, among other ways, by the uncommon regard he showed to liberality, and charity to the poor and distressed. He was much in recommending this, both in his public discourses, and in private conversation. He often declared it to be his opinion, that professed Christians were greatly deficient in this duty, and much more so than in most other parts of external Christianity. He often observed how much this is spoken of, recommended, and encouraged, in the Holy Scriptures, especially in the New Testament. And it was his opinion, that every particular church ought, by frequent and liberal contributions, to maintain a public stock, that might be ready for the poor and necessitous members of that church; and that the principal business of deacons is, to take care of the poor, in the faithful and judicious improvement and distribution of the church's contributions, lodged in their hands. And he did not content himself with merely recommending charity to others, but practised it much himself; though, according to his Master's advice, he took great care to conceal his acts of charity; by which means, doubtless, most of his alms-deeds will be unknown till the resurrection, but which, if known, would prove

him to have been as honourable an example of charity, as almost any that can be produced. This is not mere conjecture, but is evident many ways. He was forward to give, on all public occasions of charity; though, when it could properly be done, he always concealed the sum given. And some instances of his giving more privately have accidentally come to the knowledge of others, in which his liberality appeared in a very extraordinary degree. One of the instances was this: upon his hearing that a poor obscure man, whom he never saw, or any of his kindred, was, by an extraordinary bodily disorder, brought to great straits; he, unasked, gave a considerable sum to a friend, to be delivered to the distressed person; having first required a promise of him, that he would let neither the person, who was the object of his charity, nor any one else, know by whom it was given. This may serve both as an instance of his extraordinary charity, and of his great care to conceal it."^[73]

Not less exemplary was his practice of the kindred virtue of hospitality, so much enjoined on all Christians, in the sacred Scriptures. As his acquaintance was very extensive, his house was the frequent resort of gentlemen from all parts of the colonies; and the friend, and the stranger of worth, ever found a kind and cordial welcome at his table, and in the midst of his family.

"He was thought by some to be distant and unsociable in his manners; but this was owing to the want of a better acquaintance. He was not, indeed, a man of many words, and was somewhat reserved in the company of strangers, and of those, on whose candour and friendship he did not know that he could rely. And this was probably owing to two causes. First, the strict guard he set over his tongue, from his youth. From experience and observation he early discovered, that the sins of the tongue make up a very formidable proportion of all the sins committed by men, and lead to a very large proportion of their remaining sins. He therefore resolved to take the

utmost care, never to sin with his tongue; to avoid not only uttering reproaches himself, but receiving them, and listening to them from others; to say nothing for the sake of giving pain, or wounding the feelings or reputation of others; to say nothing evil concerning them, except when an obvious duty required him to do it, and then to speak, as if nobody had been as vile as himself, and as if he had committed the same sins, or had the same infirmities or failings, as others; never to employ himself in idle, trivial, and impertinent talk, which generally makes up a great part of the conversation of those, who are full of words, in all companies; and to make sure of that mark of a perfect man, given by James, 'if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able, also, to bridle the whole body.' He was sensible, that 'in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin,' and therefore refrained his lips, and habituated himself to think before he spoke, and to propose some good end in all his words; which led him, conformably to an apostolic precept, to be, above many others, slow to speak—Secondly, this was in part the effect of his bodily constitution. He possessed but a comparatively small stock of animal life: his spirits were low, and he had neither the vivacity nor strength of lungs to spare, that would have been requisite in order to render him what might be called an affable, sprightly companion, in all circles. They who have a great flow of animal spirits, and so can speak with more ease, and less expense and exhaustion, than others, may doubtless lawfully engage in free conversation, in all companies, for a lower end than that which he proposed: e. g. to please, or to render themselves agreeable to others. But not so he who has not such an abundant supply: it becomes him to reserve what he has for higher and more important service. Besides, the want of animal spirit lays a man under a natural inability of exercising that freedom of conversation, at all times, and in whatever company he is, which those possessed of more vivacity naturally and easily glide into; and the greatest

degree of humility and benevolence, of good sense and social feeling, will not remove this obstacle.

"He was not forward to enter into any dispute before strangers, and in companies where there might be persons of different sentiments; being sensible that such disputes are generally unprofitable, and often sinful, and of bad consequence. He thought he could dispute to the best advantage with his pen; yet he was always free to give his sentiments, on any subject proposed to him, and to remove any difficulties or objections offered by way of inquiry, as lying in the way of what he looked upon to be the truth. But how groundless, with regard to him, the imputation of being distant and unsociable was, his known and tried friends best knew. They always found him easy of access, kind and condescending; and though not talkative, yet affable and free. Among those, whose candour and friendship he had experienced, he threw off all that, which to others had the appearance of reserve, and was most open and communicative; and was always patient of contradiction, while the utmost opposition was made to his sentiments, that could be made by any arguments or objections, whether plausible or solid. And indeed he was, on all occasions, quite sociable and free with all who had any special business with him.

"His conversation with his friends was always savoury and profitable: in this he was remarkable, and almost singular. He was not accustomed to spend his time with them in evil speaking, or foolish jesting, idle chit-chat, and telling stories; but his mouth was that of the just, which bringeth forth wisdom, and whose lips dispense knowledge. His tongue was as the pen of a ready writer, while he conversed about important heavenly and divine things, of which his heart was so full, in a manner so new and original, so natural and familiar, as to be most entertaining and instructive; so that none of his friends could enjoy

his company without instruction and profit unless it was by their own fault.

"He was cautious in choosing his intimate friends, and therefore had not many that might properly he called such; but to them he showed himself friendly in a peculiar manner. He was, indeed, a faithful friend, and able above most others to keep a secret. To them he discovered himself, more than to others, and led them into his views and ends in his conduct in particular instances: by which they had abundant evidence that he well understood human nature, and that his general reservedness, and many particular instances of his conduct, which a stranger might impute to ignorance of men, were really owing to his uncommon knowledge of mankind.

"In his family, he practised that conscientious exactness, which was conspicuous in all his ways. He maintained a great esteem and regard for his amiable and excellent consort. Much of the tender and affectionate was expressed in his conversation with her, and in all his conduct towards her. He was often visited by her in his study, and conversed freely with her on matters of religion; and he used commonly to pray with her in his study, at least once a day, unless something extraordinary prevented. The season for this, commonly, was in the evening, after prayers in the family, just before going to bed. As he rose very early himself, he was wont to have his family up betimes in the morning; after which, before they entered on the business of the day, he attended on family prayers; when a chapter in the Bible was read, commonly by candlelight in the winter; upon which he asked his children questions, according to their age and capacity; and took occasion to explain some passages in it, or enforce any duty recommended, as he thought most proper.

He was careful and thorough in the government of his children; and, as a consequence of this, they revered, esteemed, and loved him. He took the

utmost care to begin his government of them, when they were very young. When they first discovered any degree of self-will and stubbornness, he would attend to them, until he had thoroughly subdued them, and brought them to submit. Such prudent discipline, exercised with the greatest calmness, being repeated once or twice, was generally sufficient for that child; and effectually established his parental authority, and produced a cheerful obedience ever after.

"He kept a watchful eye over his children, that he might admonish them of the first wrong step, and direct them in the right way. He took opportunities to converse with them singly and closely, about the concerns of their souls, and to give them warnings, exhortations, and directions, as he saw them severally need." The salvation of his children was his chief and constant desire, and aim, and effort concerning them. In the evening, after tea, he customarily sat in the parlour, with his family, for an hour, unbending from the severity of study, entering freely into the feelings and concerns of his children, and relaxing into cheerful and animated conversation, accompanied frequently with sprightly remarks, and sallies of wit and humour. But, before retiring to his study, he usually gave the conversation, by degrees, a more serious turn, addressing his children, with great tenderness and earnestness, on the subject of their salvation; when the thought that they were still strangers to religion would often affect him so powerfully, as to oblige him to withdraw, in order to conceal his emotions—"He took much pains to instruct his children in the principles and duties of religion, in which he made use of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism: not merely by taking care that they learned it by heart, but by leading them into an understanding of the doctrines therein taught, by asking them questions on each answer, and explaining it to them. His usual time to attend to this was on the evening before the sabbath. And, as he believed that the sabbath, or holy time, began at sunset, on the

evening preceding the first day of the week, he ordered his family to finish all their secular business by that time, or before; when all were called together, a psalm was sung, and prayer offered, as an introduction to the sanctification of the sabbath. This care and exactness effectually prevented that intruding on holy time, by attending to secular business, which is too common even in families where the evening before the sabbath is professedly observed.

"He was utterly opposed to every thing like unseasonable hours, on the part of young people, in their visiting and amusements; which he regarded as a dangerous step towards corrupting them, and bringing them to ruin. And he thought the excuse offered by many parents, for tolerating this practice in their children—that it is the custom, and that the children of other people are allowed thus to practise, and therefore it is difficult, and even impossible, to restrain theirs—was insufficient and frivolous, and manifested a great degree of stupidity, on the supposition that the practice was hurtful and pernicious to their souls. And when his children grew up, he found no difficulty in restraining them from this improper and mischievous practice; but they cheerfully complied with the will of their parents. He allowed none of his children to be absent from home after nine o'clock at night, when they went abroad to see their friends and companions; neither were they allowed to sit up much after that time, in his own house, when any of their friends came to visit them. If any gentleman desired to address either of his daughters, after the requisite introduction and preliminaries, he was allowed all proper opportunities of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the manners and disposition of the young lady, but must not intrude on the customary hours of rest and sleep, nor on the religion and order of the family."

Perhaps there never was a man more constantly retired from the world, giving himself to reading and contemplation; and it was a wonder that his feeble

frame could subsist under such fatigues, daily repeated, and so long continued. Yet, upon this being alluded to by one of his friends, only a few months before his death, he said to him, "I do not find but that I now am as well able to bear the closest study, as I was thirty years ago; and can go through the exercises of the pulpit with as little uneasiness or difficulty."—In his youth he appeared healthy, and with a good degree of vivacity, but was never robust. In middle life he appeared very much emaciated, by severe study, and intense mental application. In his person he was tall of stature, and of a slender form.^[74] He had a high, broad, bold forehead, and an eye unusually piercing and luminous; and on his whole countenance the features of his mind—perspicacity, sincerity, and benevolence—were so strongly impressed, that no one could behold it without at once discovering the clearest indications of great intellectual and moral elevation. His manners were those of the Christian gentleman, easy, tranquil, modest, and dignified; yet they were the manners of the student, grave, sedate, and contemplative; and evinced an exact sense of propriety, and an undeviating attention to the rules of decorum. "He had," observes one of his contemporaries, "a natural steadiness of temper, and fortitude of mind; which, being sanctified by the Spirit of God, was ever of vast advantage to him, to carry him through difficult services, and to support him under trying afflictions in the course of his life—Personal injuries he bore with a becoming meekness and patience, and a disposition to forgiveness." According to Dr. Hopkins himself an eyewitness, these traits of character were eminently discovered, throughout the whole of his long-continued trials at Northampton. His own narrative of that transaction, his remarks before the council, his letters relating to it, and his farewell sermon, all written in the midst of the passing occurrences, bespeak as calm, and meek, and unperturbed a state of mind, as they would have done, had they been written by a third person, long after the events took

place—"The humility, modesty, and serenity of his behaviour, much endeared him to his acquaintance, and made him appear amiable in the eyes of such as had the privilege of conversing with them—The several relations sustained by him, he adorned with exemplary fidelity; and was solicitous to fill every station with its proper duty—In his private walk as a Christian, he appeared an example of truly rational, consistent, uniform religion and virtue; a shining instance of the power and efficacy of that holy faith, to which he was so firmly attached, and of which he was so zealous a defender. He exhibited much of spirituality, and a heavenly bent of soul. In him one saw the loveliest appearance—a rare assemblage of christian graces, united with the richest gifts, and mutually subserving and recommending one another."

"He had an uncommon thirst for knowledge, in the pursuit of which he spared no cost nor pains. He read all the books, especially books treating of theology, that he could procure, from which he could hope to derive any assistance in the discovery of truth. And in this, he did not confine himself to authors of any particular sect or denomination; but even took much pains to procure the works of the most distinguished writers, who advanced views of religion or morals most contrary to his own principles; particularly the ablest Arminian, Socinian, and infidel writers. But he studied the Bible more than all other books, and more than most other divines do." He studied the Bible, to receive implicitly what it teaches; but he read other books to examine their soundness, and to employ them as helps in the investigation of principles, and the discovery of truth. His uncommon acquaintance with the Bible, appears in his sermons, in his treatises—particularly in the treatises on the Affections, on the History of Redemption, on United and Extraordinary Prayer, on the Types of the Messiah, on the Qualifications for Communion, and on God's Last End in the Creation—in his Notes on the Scriptures, and in his Miscellaneous Observations and Remarks. Any person who will read his

works with close attention, and then will compare them with those of other theological writers, since the days of the apostles, will easily be satisfied that no other divine has as yet appeared, who has studied the Scriptures more thoroughly, or who has been more successful in discovering the mind of the Holy Spirit. He took his religious principles from the Bible, and not from treatises, or systems of theology, or any work of man. On the maturest examination of the different schemes of faith, prevailing in the world, and on comparing them with the sacred Scriptures, he adhered to the main articles of the reformed religion, with an unshaken firmness and with a fervent zeal, yet tempered with charity and candour, and governed by discretion. Few men are less under the bias of education, or the influence of bigotry: few receive the articles of their creed so little upon trust, or discover so much liberality or thoroughness in examining their foundation. His principles have been extensively styled Calvinistic, yet they differ widely from what has usually been denominated Calvinism, in various important points; particularly, in all immediately connected with moral agency; and he followed implicitly, if any man ever followed, the apostolic injunction, to call no man, Father, by receiving nothing on human authority, and examining scrupulously every principle which he adopted. He thought, and investigated, and judged for himself; and from the strength of his reasoning powers, as well as from his very plan of study, he became truly an original writer. As we have already sufficiently seen, reading was not the only, nor the chief, method which he took of improving his mind; but he devoted the strength of his time and of his faculties to writing, without which no student, and, be it remembered, no minister, can make improvements to the best advantage. He preached extensively on subjects, continued through a series of discourses—many of his treatises having been a course of sermons actually delivered from the desk. In this practice, every minister who has a mind fitted for investigation,

would do well to follow him. "Agreeably to the 11th Resolution, he applied himself, with all his might, to find out truth: he searched for it as for silver, and digged for it as for hidden treasures. Every thought, on any subject, which appeared to him worth pursuing and preserving, he pursued as far as he then could, with a pen in his hand. Thus he was, all his days, like the industrious bee, collecting honey from every opening flower, and storing up a stock of knowledge, which was indeed sweet to him, as honey and the honeycomb."

As a scholar, his intellectual furniture exceeded what was common, under the disadvantages experienced at that time, in these remote colonies. He had an extensive acquaintance with the arts and sciences—with classical and Hebrew literature, with physics, mathematics, history, chronology, ethics, and mental philosophy. By the blessing of God on his indefatigable labours, to the last, he was constantly treasuring up useful knowledge, both human and divine.

"Thus he appears to have been uncommonly accomplished for the arduous and momentous province to which he was finally called. And had his precious life been spared, there is every reason to believe, that he would have graced the station on which he had but entered, and proved a signal blessing to the college of New Jersey, and therein extensively served his generation according to the will of God"

His inattention to his style is certainly to be regretted. In earlier life, he appears to have thought neatness and correctness in writing of little consequence,^[75] and to have sent his works to the press very much in the state in which they were first written. Let it here be remembered, that the cultivation of style was not then attended to in the colonies; that the people at large were accustomed to discourses written in the plainest manner; and that

it is extremely doubtful, whether, in the then existing state of the country, it would have been possible for him to have devoted much attention to the style of his sermons, without greatly diminishing their amount of impression. About the time of his leaving Northampton, he received one of the works of Richardson,^[76] which he read with deep interest, and regarded as wholly favourable to good morals and purity of character. The perusal of it led him to attempt the formation of a more correct style, his previous inattention to which he then deeply regretted; and in this attempt he had much success. The style of the Freedom of the Will, though obviously that of a student, and not of a man of the world, is otherwise as correct as that of most of the metaphysical treatises to be found in the language. The same is true, generally, of the Treatise on Original Sin; although it was in the press when he died, and never received his last corrections.^[77] In the two highest excellences of style, perspicuity and precision, he was probably never excelled.

Of the powers of his mind, enough, perhaps, has been said already. They were certainly very varied, and fitted him for high distinction in any of the pursuits of learning or science—His memory was strong, exact, uniform, and comprehensive—His imagination was rich and powerful. I know that the contrary opinion has extensively prevailed, and that for three reasons. First, he paid little or no attention to his style of writing. Secondly, he never cultivated his imagination, and never indulged it but sparingly, and probably in no instance, for mere ornament. Thirdly, his great works are treatises on metaphysical subjects. A writer without imagination, always thinks and writes in a dry manner; and, if his powers are great, like those of Aristotle, he writes like a pure intelligence. Those who are conversant with the writings of Edwards, need not be informed that all his works, even the most metaphysical, are rich in illustration, or that his sermons abound with

imagery of every kind, adapted to make a powerful and lasting impression. In his earlier writings, this faculty of his mind was suffered to act with less restraint. The first production of his pen, on the materiality of the soul, is a constant play of imagination and wit. The boy who could speak of the spiders of the forest, as "those wondrous animals, from whose glistening web so much of the wisdom of the Creator shines,"—who, in describing their operations, could say, "I have seen a vast multitude of little shining webs, and glistening strings, brightly reflecting the sun-beams, and some of them of great length, and of such a height, that one would think they were tacked to the vault of the heavens, and would be burnt like tow in the sun;"—and who, in exposing the absurdity of the supposition, that there can be absolutely nothing, observes, "When we go to form an idea of perfect nothing, we must not suffer our thoughts to take sanctuary in a mathematical point, but we must think of the same, that the sleeping rocks do dream of;"—possessed an imagination at once rich, brilliant, and creative—His taste, if we do not refer to style of writing, but merely to the judgment of the mind, concerning all the varieties of sublimity and beauty, was at once delicate and correct—Few of mankind, hitherto, have possessed either invention, ratiocination, or judgment in so high a degree; and it is difficult to say for which of these he is most distinguished. In comparing him with the metaphysicians of the old world, we must not forget his and their respective advantages for the culture of the mind. He was born in an obscure village, in which the ancient reign of barbarism was only beginning to yield to the inroads of culture and civilization; in a colony comprising but here and there a settlement; and in a country literally in its infancy, constituting with the exception of now and then a white plantation, one vast continuous forest, and distant three thousand miles from Europe, the seat of arts, refinement, and knowledge. He was educated at a seminary but three years older than himself; which had as yet

no domical, and which furnished advantages totally inferior to those now enjoyed at the respectable academies of New England. The rest of his life was passed amid the cares of a most laborious profession, and on the very frontiers (and the latter part of it in the very midst) of savage life; with no libraries to explore, and with no men of eminence with whose minds his could come into daily contact. His greatest work was written in four months and a half while each sabbath he delivered two sermons to his English flock, and two others by interpreters, to two distinct auditories of Indians, and catechised the children of both tribes, and carried on all the correspondence of the mission, and was forced to guard against the measures of a powerful combination, busily occupied in endeavouring to drive him from his office, and thus to deprive his family of their daily bread—With these things in view, instead of drawing any such comparison myself, I will refer my readers to the opinion of a writer of no light authority on such a subject—I mean Dugald Stewart—who, after having detailed the systems of Locke, and Leibnitz, and Berkeley, and Condillac, speaks thus of the subject of this Memoir—"There is, however, one metaphysician, of whom America has to boast, who, in logical acuteness and subtlety, does not yield to any disputant bred in the universities of Europe. I need not say that I allude to Jonathan Edwards."

Mr. Edwards acquired a very high character, as a divine and as a preacher, during his life. "Among the luminaries of the church, in these American regions," says one of his contemporaries,^[78] "he was justly reputed a star of the first magnitude; thoroughly versed in all the branches of theology, didactic, polemic, casuistic, experimental, and practical. In point of divine knowledge and skill, he had few equals, and perhaps no superior; at least in those foreign parts."—"Mr. Edwards," says Dr. Hopkins, "had the most universal character of a good preacher, of almost any minister in America.

There were but few that heard him, who did not call him a good preacher, however they might dislike his religious principles, and be much offended at the same truths when delivered by others; and most people admired him above all the preachers that ever they heard." His character as a laborious and faithful minister, and especially as a powerful and successful preacher, if we may judge from the history of his life, and of the time in which he lived, was such for many years before his death, as to leave him here without a competitor.^[79] This was owing chiefly to his preaching and pastoral labours; for most of his laboured productions were published either a little before, or after, his death; yet, long ere this, his fame as a preacher and minister of Christ, had pervaded the colonies, and was extensively known in Great Britain. Until within these few years, there were many living witnesses, who had heard him in their youth, and who distinctly remembered the powerful impressions left on their minds by his preaching, and particularly described his appearance in the pulpit, the still, unmoved solemnity of his manner, the weight of his sentiments first fixing the attention, and then overwhelming the feelings, of his audience. One of his youthful auditors, afterwards a gentleman of great respectability, informed my father that he was present, when he delivered the sermon in the History of Redemption, in which he describes the day of judgment; and that so vivid and solemn was the impression made on his own mind, that he fully supposed, that as soon as Mr. Edwards should close his discourse, the Judge would descend, and the final separation take place. The late Dr. West, of Stockbridge, who heard him in his childhood, in that village, gave me an account generally similar of the effects of his preaching. On one occasion, when the sermon exceeded two hours in its length, he told me that from the time that Mr. Edwards had fairly unfolded his subject, the attention of the audience was fixed and motionless, until its close; when they seemed disappointed that it should terminate so

soon. There was such a bearing down of truth upon the mind, he observed, that there was no resisting it—In his own congregation, the visible effects of his preaching were such as were never paralleled in New England. Often, also, he was invited to great distances to preach; and these occasional sermons sometimes produced a wonderful effect. One of these instances, which occurred at Enfield, at a time of great religious indifference there, is thus mentioned by the Rev. Dr. Trumbull. "When they went into the meeting-house, the appearance of the assembly was thoughtless and vain. The people hardly conducted themselves with common decency. The Rev Mr. Edwards, of Northampton, preached; and before the sermon was ended, the assembly appeared deeply impressed, and bowed down with an awful conviction of their sin and danger. There was such a breathing of distress and weeping, that the preacher was obliged to speak to the people and desire silence, that he might be heard." This was the commencement of a general and powerful revival of religion.

To what, it may not improperly be asked, are this reputation and this success to be ascribed? It was not to his style of writing: that had no claims to elegance, or even to neatness—It was not to his voice; that, far from being strong and full, was, in consequence of his feeble health, a little languid, and too low for a large assembly; though relieved and aided by a proper emphasis, just cadence, well placed pauses, and great clearness, distinctness, and precision of enunciation—It was not owing to attitude or gesture, to his appearance in the pulpit, or to any of the customary arts of eloquence. His appearance in the pulpit was with a good grace, and his delivery easy, perfectly natural, and very solemn. He wrote his sermons; and in so fine and so illegible a hand, that they could be read only by being brought near to the eye. "He carried his notes with him into the pulpit, and read most that he wrote: still, he was not confined to them; and if some thoughts were

suggested to him while he was preaching, which did not occur to him when writing, and appeared pertinent, he would deliver them with as great propriety and fluency, and often with greater pathos, and attended with a more sensibly good effect on his hearers, than what he had written."^[80] While preaching, he customarily stood, holding his small manuscript volume in his left hand, the elbow resting on the cushion or the Bible, his right hand rarely raised but to turn the leaves, and his person almost motionless—It was not owing to the pictures of fancy, or to any ostentation of learning, or of talents. In his preaching, usually all was plain, familiar, sententious, and practical.

One of the positive causes of his high character, and great success, as a preacher, was the deep and pervading solemnity of his mind. He had, at all times, a solemn consciousness of the presence of God. This was visible in his looks and general demeanour. It obviously had a controlling influence over all his preparations for the pulpit; and was most manifest in all his public services. Its effect on an audience is immediate, and not to be resisted. "He appeared," says Dr. Hopkins, "with such gravity and solemnity, and his words were so full of ideas, that few speakers have been able to command the attention of an audience as he did."—His knowledge of the Bible, evinced in his sermons—in the number of relevant passages which he brings to enforce every position, in his exact discernment of the true scope of each, in his familiar acquaintance with the drift of the whole Scriptures on the subject, and in the logical precision with which he derives his principles from them—is probably unrivalled—His knowledge of the human heart, and its operations, has scarcely been equalled by that of any uninspired preacher. He derived this knowledge from his familiarity with the testimony of God concerning it in the Bible; from his thorough acquaintance with his own heart; and from his profound knowledge of mental philosophy. The effect of it was, to enable him to speak to the consciousness of every one who heard

him; so that each one was compelled to reflect, in language like that of the woman of Sychar, "Here is a man, who is revealing to me the secrets of my own heart and life: is not this man from God?"—His knowledge of theology was so exact and universal, and the extensiveness of his views and of his information was so great, that while he could shed unusual variety and richness of thought over every discourse, he could also bring the most striking and impressive truths, facts, and circumstances, to bear upon the point, which he was endeavouring to illustrate or enforce—His aim, in preparing and delivering his sermons, was single. This is so obvious, that no man probably ever suspected him of writing or delivering a sermon, for the sake of display, or reputation. From the first step to the last, he aimed at nothing but the salvation of his hearers, and at the glory of God as revealed in it. This enabled him to bring all his powers of mind and heart to bear on this one object—His feelings on this subject were most intense. The love of Christ constrained him; and the strong desire of his soul was, that they for whom Christ died might live for Him who died for them. "His words," says Dr. Hopkins, "often discovered a great degree of inward fervour, without much noise or external emotion, and fell with great weight on the minds of his hearers; and he spake so as to reveal the strong emotions of his own heart, which tended, in the most natural and effectual manner, to move and affect others"—The plan of his sermons is most excellent. In his introduction, which is always an explanation of the passage, he exhibits uncommon skill, and the sagacity with which he discovers, and the power with which he seizes at once, the whole drift and meaning of the passage in all its bearings, has rarely if ever been equalled. In the body of the discourse, he never attempts an elaborate proof of his doctrine, from revelation and reason; but rather gives an explanation of the doctrine, or places the truth on which he is discoursing directly before the mind, as a fact, and paints it to the imagination

of his hearers. In the application, where he usually lays out his strength, he addresses himself with peculiar plainness to the consciences of his hearers, takes up and applies to them minutely all the important ideas contained in the body of the discourse, and appropriates them to persons of different characters and situations in life, by a particular explanation of their duties and their dangers: and lastly, by a solemn, earnest, and impressive appeal to every feeling and active principle of our nature, he counsels, exhorts, warns, expostulates, as if he were determined not to suffer his hearers to depart, until they were convinced of their duty, and persuaded to choose and to perform it—His graphic manner of exhibiting truth, is, perhaps, his peculiar excellence. The doctrines of the gospel, in his hands, are not mere abstract propositions, but living realities, distinctly seen by the author's faith, and painted with so much truth and life, and warmth of colouring, as cannot fail to give his hearers the same strong impression of them, which already exists in his own mind. With all this, he preached the real truth of God, in its simplicity and purity, keeping nothing back, with so much weight of thought and argument, so much strength of feeling, and such sincerity of purpose, as must enlighten every understanding, convince every conscience, and almost convert every heart—I inquired of Dr West, Whether Mr. Edwards was an eloquent preacher. He replied, "If you mean, by eloquence, what is usually intended by it in our cities; he had no pretensions to it. He had no studied varieties of the voice, and no strong emphasis. He scarcely gestured, or even moved; and he made no attempt, by the elegance of his style, or the beauty of his pictures, to gratify the taste, and fascinate the imagination. But, if you mean by eloquence, the power of presenting an important truth before an audience, with overwhelming weight of argument, and with such intenseness of feeling, that the whole soul of the speaker is thrown into every part of the conception and delivery; so that the solemn attention of the whole audience is riveted,

from the beginning to the close, and impressions are left that cannot be effaced; Mr. Edwards was the most eloquent man I ever heard speak."—As the result of the whole, we are led to regard him as, beyond most others, an instructive preacher, a solemn and faithful preacher, an animated and earnest preacher, a most powerful and impressive preacher in the sense explained, and the only true sense, a singularly eloquent preacher, and, through the blessing of God, one of the most successful preachers since the days of the apostles. It ought here to be added, that the sermons of Mr. Edwards have been, to his immediate pupils, and to his followers, the models of a style of preaching, which has been most signally blessed by God to the conversion of sinners, and which should be looked to as a standard, by those who wish, like him, to turn many to righteousness, that with him they may shine, as the stars, for ever and ever.

His prayers," says Dr. Hopkins, "were indeed extempore. He was the farthest from any appearance of a form, as to his words and manner of expression, of almost any man. He was quite singular and inimitable in this, by any, who have not a spirit of real and undissembled devotion; yet he always expressed himself with decency and propriety. He appeared to have much of the grace and spirit of prayer; to pray with the spirit and with the understanding; and he performed this part of duty much to the acceptance and edification of those who joined with him. He was not wont, in ordinary cases, to be long in his prayers: an error which, he observed, was often hurtful to public and social prayer, as it tends rather to damp, than to promote, true devotion."

His practice, not to visit his people in their own houses, except in cases of sickness or affliction, is an example, not of course to be imitated by all. That, on this subject, ministers ought to consult their own talents and circumstances, and visit more or less, according to the degree in which they

can thereby promote the great ends of their ministry, cannot be doubted. That his time was too precious to the church at large, to have been devoted, in any considerable degree, to visiting, all will admit. Yet it is highly probable, that, if he had been somewhat less in his study, and seen his people occasionally in the midst of their families, and known more of their circumstances and wants, and entered more into their feelings, his hold on their affections would have been stronger, and more permanent. Certainly this will be true with ministers at large—In other pastoral duties, in preaching public and private lectures, in extraordinary labours during seasons of attention to religion, and in conversing with the anxious and inquiring, he was an uncommon example of faithfulness and success. "At such seasons, his study was thronged with persons, who came to lay open their spiritual concerns to him, and seek his advice and direction. He was a peculiarly skilful guide to those who were under spiritual difficulties; and was therefore sought unto, not only by his own people, but by many at a great distance." For this duty he was eminently fitted, from his own deep personal experience of religion, from his unwearied study of the word of God, from his having had so much intercourse with those who were in spiritual troubles, from his uncommon acquaintance with the human heart, with the nature of conversion, and with revivals of religion, and from his skill in detecting and exposing every thing like enthusiasm and counterfeit religion How great a blessing was it to a church, to a people, and to every anxious inquirer, to enjoy the counsels and the prayers of such a minister!

But it is the theological treatises of Mr. Edwards, especially, by which he is most extensively known, to which he owes his commanding influence, and on which his highest reputation will ultimately depend. It is proper, therefore, before we conclude, to sketch his character as a theologian and controversialist, and to state the actual effects of his writings.

As a theologian, he is distinguished for his scriptural views of divine truth. Even the casual reader of his works can scarcely fail to perceive that, with great labour, patience, and skill, he derived his principles from an extensive and most accurate observation of the word of God. The number of passages which he adduces from the Scriptures, on every important doctrine, the critical attention he has evidently given them, the labour in arranging them, and the skill and integrity with which he derives his general conclusions from them, is truly astonishing. We see no intermixture of his own hypotheses; no confidence in his own reason, except as applied to the interpretation of the oracles of God; nor even that disposition to make extended and momentous inferences, which characterizes some of his successors and admirers.

Another characteristic of his theology, is the extensiveness of his views. In his theology, as in his mind, there was nothing narrow, no partial, contracted views of a subject: all was simple, great, and sublime. His mind was too expanded to regard the distinctions of sects and churches. He belonged, in his feelings, to no church but the church of Christ, he contended for nothing but the truth; he aimed at nothing but to promote holiness and salvation. The effect of his labours so exactly coincides with the effects of the gospel, that no denomination can ever appropriate his name to itself, or claim him as its own.

Viewing Mr. Edwards as a controversialist, the most excellent, if not the most striking, trait in his character, is his integrity. Those who have been most opposed to his conclusions, and have most powerfully felt the force of his arguments, have acknowledged that he is a perfectly fair disputant. He saw so certainly the truth of his positions, and had such confidence in his ability to defend them by fair means, that the thought of employing sophistry in their defence never occurred to him. But, if he had felt the want of sound

arguments, he would not have employed it. His conscience was too enlightened, and his mind too sincere. His aim, in all his investigations, was the discovery and the defence of truth. He valued his positions, only because they were true; and he gave them up at once, when he found that they were not supported by argument and evidence.

Another trait in his character, as a reasoner, is originality, or invention. Before his time, the theological writers of each given class or party, had, with scarcely an exception, followed on, one after another, in the same beaten path, and, whenever any one had deviated from it, he had soon lost himself in the mazes of error. Mr. Edwards had a mind too creative to be thus dependent on others. If the reader will examine carefully his controversial and other theological works, and compare them with those of his predecessors on the same subjects; he will find that his positions are new, that his definitions are new, that his plans are new, that his arguments are new, that his conclusions are new, that his mode of reasoning and his methods of discovering truth are perfectly his own; and that he has done more to render theology a new science, than, with perhaps one or two exceptions, all the writers who have lived since the days of the fathers.

Another characteristic of his controversial writings, is the excellent spirit which every where pervades them. So strikingly is this true, that we cannot but urge every one, who peruses them, to examine for himself, whether he can discover, in them all, a solitary deviation from Christian kindness and sincerity. By such an examination he will discover in them, if I mistake not, a fairness in proposing the real point in dispute, a candour in examining the arguments of his opponents, in stating their objections, and in suggesting others in which had escaped them, and a care in avoiding every thing like personality, and the imputation of unworthy motives, rarely paralleled in the

annals of controversy. It should here be remembered, that he wrote his treatise on the Affections, and his several works on revivals of religion, in the very heat of a violent contest, which divided and agitated this whole country; that in his treatises on the Freedom of the Will, on Original Sin, and on Justification, he handles subjects, which unavoidably awaken the most bitter opposition in the human heart, and opposes those, who had boasted of their victories over what he believed to be the cause of truth, "with no little glorying and insult;" that his treatise on the Qualifications for Communion, was written amid all the violence, and abuse, and injury of a furious parochial controversy; and that, in the Answer to Williams, he was called to reply to the most gross personalities, and to the most palpable misrepresentations of his arguments, his principles, and his motives.

He has, I know, been charged sometimes with handling his antagonists with needless severity. But let it be remembered, that his severity is never directed against their personal character, but merely against their principles and arguments; that his wit is only an irresistible exposition of the absurdity which he is opposing;^[81] that he stood forth as the champion of truth, and the opponent of error; and that, in this character, it was his duty not merely to prostrate error, but to give it a death-blow, that it might never rise again.

But the characteristic of his controversial, and indeed of all his theological, writings, which gives them their chief value and effect, is the unanswerableness of his arguments. He not only drives his enemy from the field, but he erects a rampart, so strong and impregnable, that no one afterwards has any courage to assail it; and his companions in arms find the great work of defending the positions, which he has occupied, already done to their hands

This impossibility of answering his arguments, arises, in the first place, from

the strength and conclusiveness of his reasoning. By first fixing in his own mind, and then exactly defining, the meaning of his terms, by stating his propositions with logical precision, and by clearly discerning and stating the connexion between his premises and conclusions, he has given to metaphysical reasoning very much of the exactness and certainty of mathematical demonstration.

Another cause of the unanswerable character of his reasonings, is, that he usually follows several distinct trains of argument, which all terminate in the same conclusion. Each of them is satisfactory; but the union of all, commencing at different points, and arriving at the same identical result, cannot fail to convince the mind, that that result is not to be shaken.

A third cause of this is, that he himself anticipates, and effectually answers, not only all the objections that have been made, but all that apparently can be made, to the points for which he contends. These he places in the strongest light and examines under every shape which they can assume in the hands of an evasive antagonist, and shows that, in every possible form, they are wholly inconclusive.

A fourth cause is his method of treating the opinions of his opponents. It is the identical method of Euclid. Assuming them as premises, he with great ingenuity shows, that they lead to palpable absurdity. He demonstrates that his opponents are inconsistent with themselves, as well as with truth and common sense—and rarely stops, until he has exposed their error to contempt and ridicule.

This unanswerableness of Mr. Edwards's reasonings, in his controversial works, has been most publicly confessed. The *Essay on the Will* treats of subjects the most contested within the limits of theology; and, unless it can be

answered, prostrates in the dust the scheme of doctrines, for which his antagonists so earnestly contend. Yet, hitherto, it stands unmoved and unassailed; and the waves of controversy break harmless at its base.^[82] The treatise on Original Sin, though written chiefly to overthrow the hypothesis of an individual, is perhaps not less conclusive in its reasonings. That he succeeded in that design, as well as in establishing the great principles for which he contends will not be doubted by any one who examines the controversy; and is said to have been virtually confessed, in a melancholy manner, by Taylor himself. He had indiscreetly boasted, in his larger work, that it never would be answered. The answer was so complete, that it admitted of no reply. His consequent mortification is said to have shortened his days. Whether it was true, or not, that the grasp of his antagonist was literally death, it was at least death to the controversy. The treatise on the Qualifications for Communion, attacked the most favourite scheme of all the lax religionists of this country, the only plausible scheme, ever yet devised, of establishing a communion between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial. They regarded this attack with indignation, from one end of the country to the other. One solitary combatant appeared in the field; and, being left in a state of irrecoverable prostration, he has hitherto found no one adventurous enough to come to his aid. The Treatise, and Reply, of Mr. Edwards, by the conclusiveness of their reasonings, have so changed the opinion and practice of the ministers, and the churches, of New England, that a mode of admission, once almost universal, now scarcely finds a solitary advocate.

But it may not unnaturally be asked, What are the changes in theology, which have been affected by the writings of President Edwards. It gives me peculiar pleasure that I can answer this question, in the words of his son, the late Dr. Edwards, President of Union College, Schenectady.

Clarer Statements of Theological Truth^(TOC)

Made by President Edwards, and Those Who Have Followed his Course of Thought

1. "The important question, concerning the ultimate end of the creation, is a question, upon which Mr. Edwards has shed much light. For ages it had been disputed, whether the end of creation was the happiness of creatures themselves, or the declarative glory of the Creator. Nor did it appear that the dispute was likely to be brought to an issue. On the one hand, it was urged, that reason declared in favour of the former hypothesis. It was said that, as God is a benevolent being, he doubtless acted under the influence of his own infinite benevolence in the creation; and that he could not but form creatures for the purpose of making them happy. Many passages of Scripture also were quoted in support of this opinion. On the other hand, numerous and very explicit declarations of Scripture were produced to prove that God made all things for his own glory. Mr. Edwards was the first, who clearly showed, that both these were the ultimate end of the creation, that they are only one end, and that they are really one and the same thing. According to him, the declarative glory of God is the creation, taken, not distributively, but collectively, as a system raised to a high degree of happiness. The creation, thus raised and

preserved, is the declarative glory of God. In other words, it is the exhibition of his essential glory.

2. "On the great subject of Liberty and Necessity, Mr. Edwards made very important improvements. Before him, the Calvinists were nearly driven out of the field, by the Arminians, Pelagians and Socinians. The Calvinists, it is true, appealed to Scripture, the best of all authority, in support of their peculiar tenets. But how was the Scripture to be understood. They were pressed and embarrassed by the objection—That the sense, in which they interpreted the sacred writings, was inconsistent with human liberty, moral agency, accountableness, praise and blame. It was consequently inconsistent with all command and exhortation, with all reward and punishment. Their interpretation must of course be erroneous, and an entire perversion of Scripture. How absurd, it was urged, that a man totally dead, should be called upon to arise and perform the duties of the living and sound—that we should need a divine influence to give us a new heart, and yet be commanded to make us a new heart, and a right spirit—that a man has no power to come to Christ, and yet be commanded to come to him on pain of damnation! The Calvinists themselves began to be ashamed of their own cause and to give it up, so far at least as relates to liberty and necessity. This was true especially of Dr. Watts and Doddridge, who, in their day, were accounted leaders of the Calvinists. They must needs bow in the house of Rimmon, and admit the self-determining power; which, once admitted and pursued to its ultimate results, entirely overthrows the doctrines of regeneration, of our dependence for renewing and sanctifying grace, of absolute decrees, of the saints perseverance, and the whole system of doctrines, usually denominated the doctrines of

grace—But Mr. Edwards put an end to this seeming triumph of those, who were thus hostile to that system of doctrines. This he accomplished, by pointing out the difference between natural and moral, necessity and inability, by showing the absurdity, the manifold contradictions, the inconceivableness, and the impossibility, of a self-determining power, and by proving that the essence of the virtue and vice, existing in the disposition of the heart and the acts of the will, lies not in their cause, but in their nature. Therefore, though we are not the efficient causes of our own acts of will, yet they may be either virtuous or vicious; and also that liberty of contingency, as it is an exemption from all previous certainty, implies that free actions have no cause, and come into existence by mere chance. But if we admit that any event may come into existence by chance, and without a cause, the existence of the world may be accounted for in this same way; and atheism is established—Mr. Edwards and his followers have further illustrated this subject by showing, that free action consists in volition itself, and that liberty consists in spontaneity. Wherever, therefore, there is volition, there is free action; wherever there is spontaneity there is liberty; however and by whomsoever that liberty and spontaneity are caused. Beasts, therefore, according to their measure of intelligence, are as free as men. Intelligence, therefore, and not liberty, is the only thing wanting, to constitute them moral agents—The power of self-determination, alone, cannot answer the purpose of them who undertake its defence; for self-determination must be free from all control and previous certainty, as to its operations, otherwise it must be subject to what its advocates denominate a fatal necessity, and therefore must act by contingency and mere chance. But even the

defenders of self-determination themselves, are not willing to allow the principle, that our actions, in order to be free, must happen by chance—Thus Mr. Edwards and his followers understand, that the whole controversy concerning liberty and necessity, depends on the explanation of the word liberty, or the sense in which that word is used. They find that all the senses in which the word has been used, with respect to the mind and its acts, may be reduced to these two: 1. Either an entire exemption from previous certainty, or the certain futurity of the acts which it will perform: or, 2. Spontaneity—Those, who use it in the former sense, cannot avoid the consequence, that, in order to act freely, we must act by chance, which is absurd, and what no man will dare to avow. If then liberty means an exemption from an influence, to which the will is or can be opposed, every volition is free, whatever may be the manner of its coming into existence. If, furthermore, God, by his grace, create in man a clean heart and holy volitions, such volitions being, by the very signification of the term itself, voluntary, and in no sense opposed to the divine influence which causes them, they are evidently as free as they could have been, if they had come into existence by mere chance and without cause. We have, of course no need of being the efficient causes of those acts, which our wills perform, to render them either virtuous or vicious. As to the liberty, then, of self-determination or contingency, it implies, as already observed, that actions, in order to be free, must have no cause; but are brought into existence by chance. Thus have they illustrated the real and wide difference between natural and moral necessity. They have proved that this difference consists, not in the degree of previous certainty that an action will be performed—but in the fact, that natural necessity admits an entire opposition of

the will, while moral necessity implies, and, in all cases, secures, the consent of the will. It follows that all necessity of the will, and of its acts, is of the moral kind; and that natural necessity cannot possibly affect the will or any of its exercises. It likewise follows, that if liberty, as applied to a moral agent, mean an exemption from all previous certainty that an action will be performed, then no action of man or any other creature can be free; for on this supposition, every action must come to pass without divine prescience, by mere chance, and consequently without a cause—Now, therefore, the Calvinists find themselves placed upon firm and high ground. They fear not the attacks of their opponents. They face them on the ground of reason, as well as of Scripture. They act not merely on the defensive. Rather they have carried the war into Italy, and to the very gates of Rome—But all this is peculiar to America; except that a few European writers have adopted, from American authors, the sentiments here stated. Even the famous Assembly of Divines had very imperfect views of this subject. This they prove, when they say, "Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the state wherein they were created;"—and "God foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, so as the contingency of second causes is not taken away, but rather established."—These divines unquestionably meant, that our first parents, in the instance, at least, of their fall, acted from self-determination, and by mere contingency or chance. But there is no more reason to believe or even suppose this, than there is to suppose it true of every sinner, in every sin which he commits.

3. "Mr. Edwards very happily illustrated and explained The nature of True Virtue, or Holiness—What is the nature of true virtue, or holiness?—In what does it consist?—and, Whence arises our

obligation to be truly virtuous or holy?—are questions which moral writers have agitated in all past ages. Some have placed virtue in self-love—some in acting agreeably to the fitness of things—some in following conscience, or moral sense—some in following truth—and some in acting agreeably to the will of God. Those who place or found virtue in fitness, and those who found it in truth, do but use one synonymous word for another. For they doubtless mean moral fitness, and moral truth; these are no other than virtuous fitness, and virtuous truth. No one would pretend that it is a virtuous action to give a man poison, because it is fit or direct mode of destroying his life. No person will pretend that the crucifying of Christ was virtuous, because it was true, compared with the ancient prophecies—To found virtue in acting agreeably to conscience, or moral sense, justifies the persecutions of Christians by Saul of Tarsus, as well as a great proportion of heathenish idolatry—If we found virtue in the will of God, the question arises, Whether the will of God be our rule, because it is in fact what it is, wise, good and benevolent; or whether it be our rule, merely because it is his will, without any consideration of its nature and tendency; and whether it would be a rule equally binding, as to observance, if it were foolish and malicious?—Mr. Edwards teaches, that virtue consists in benevolence. He proves that every voluntary action, which, in its general tendency and ultimate consequences, leads to happiness, is virtuous, and that every such action, which has not this tendency, and does not lead to this consequence, is vicious. By happiness, in this case, he does not mean the happiness of the agent only, or principally, but happiness in general, happiness on the large scale. Virtuous or holy benevolence embraces both the agent himself and others—all intelligences,

wherever found, who are capable of a rational and moral blessedness. All actions, proceeding from such a principle, he holds to be fit, or agreeable to the fitness of things—agreeable equally to reason, and, to a well-informed conscience, or moral sense, and to moral truth—and agreeable especially to the will of God, who "is love," or benevolence—In this scheme of virtue or holiness, Mr. Edwards appears to have been original. Much indeed has been said, by most moral writers, in favour of benevolence. Many things they had published, which imply, in their consequences, Mr. Edward's scheme of virtue. But no one before him had traced these consequences to their proper issue. No one had formed a system of virtue, and of morals, built on that foundation.

4. "Mr. Edwards has thrown much light on the inquiry concerning The Origin of Moral Evil. This question, comprehending the influence which the Deity had in the event of moral evil, has always been esteemed most difficult and intricate. That God is the author of sin, has been constantly objected to the Calvinists, as the consequence of their principles, by their opponents. To avoid this objection, some have holden that God is the author of the sinful act, which the sinner commits, but that the sinner himself is the author of its sinfulness. But how we shall abstract the sinfulness of a malicious act from the malicious act itself; and how God can be the author of a malicious act, and not be the author of the malice, which is the sinfulness of that act; is hard to be conceived. Mr. Edwards rejects, with abhorrence, the idea that God either is, or can be, the agent, or actor, of sin. He illustrates and explains this difficult subject, by showing that God may dispose things in such a manner, that sin will certainly take place in consequence of such a disposal. In maintaining this, he

only adheres to his own important doctrine of moral necessity. The divine disposal, by which sin certainly comes into existence, is only establishing a certainty of its future existence. If that certainty, which is no other than moral necessity, be not inconsistent with human liberty; then surely the cause of that certainty, which is no other than the divine disposal, cannot be inconsistent with such liberty.

5. "The followers of Mr. Edwards have thrown new and important light upon 'The Doctrine of Atonement. It has been commonly represented, that the atonement, which Christ made, was the payment of a debt, due from his people. By this payment, they were purchased from slavery and condemnation. Hence arose this question—If the sinner's debt be paid, how does it appear that there is any pardon or grace in his deliverance?—The followers of Mr. Edwards have proved, that the atonement does not consist in the payment of a debt, properly so called. It consists rather in doing that, which, for the purpose of establishing the authority of the divine law, and of supporting in due time the divine government, is equivalent to the punishment of the sinner according to the letter of the law. Now, therefore, God, without the prostration of his authority and government, can pardon and save those who believe. As what was done to support the divine government, was not done by the sinner, so it does not at all diminish the free grace of his pardon and salvation. ^[83]

6. "With respect to The Imputation of Adam's Sin, and The Imputation of Christ's Righteousness, their statements also have been more accurate. The common doctrine had been, that Adam's sin is so transferred to his posterity, that it properly becomes their sin. The

righteousness of Christ, likewise, is so transferred or made over to the believer, that it properly becomes his righteousness. To the believer it is reckoned in the divine account—On this the question arises, How can the righteousness or good conduct of one person be the righteousness or good conduct of another? If, in truth, it cannot be the conduct of that other; how can God, who is omniscient, and cannot mistake, reckon, judge, or think it to be the conduct of that other?—The followers of Mr. Edwards find relief from this difficulty, by proving that to impute righteousness, is, in the language of Scripture, to justify; and that, to impute the righteousness of Christ, is to justify on account of Christ's righteousness. The imputation of righteousness can, therefore, be no transfer of righteousness. They are the beneficial consequences of righteousness, which are transferred. Not therefore the righteousness of Christ itself, but its beneficial consequences and advantages are transferred to the believer—In the same manner they reason with respect to the imputation of Adam's sin. The baneful consequences of Adam's sin, which came upon himself, came also upon his posterity. These consequences were, that, after his first transgression, God left him to an habitual disposition to sin, to a series of actual transgressions, and to a liableness to the curse of the law, denounced against such transgression—The same consequences took place with regard to Adam's posterity. By divine constitution, they, as descending from Adam, become, like himself, the subjects of an habitual disposition to sin. This disposition is commonly called original depravity. Under its influence they sin, as soon as, in a moral point of view, they act at all. This depravity, this disposition to sin, leads them naturally to a series of actual transgressions, and exposes

them to the whole curse of the law—On this subject two questions have been much agitated in the Christian world—1. Do the posterity of Adam, unless saved by Christ, suffer final damnation on account of Adam's sin?—and, if this be asserted, how can it be reconciled with justice?—2. How shall we reconcile it with justice, that Adam's posterity should be doomed, in consequence of his sin, to come into the world, with an habitual disposition themselves to sin?—On the former of these questions, the common doctrine has been, that Adam's posterity, unless saved by Christ, are damned on account of Adam's sin, and that this is just, because his sin is imputed or transferred to them. By imputation, his sin becomes their sin. When the justice of such a transfer is demanded, it is said that the constitution, which God has established, makes the transfer just—To this it may be replied, that in the same way it may be proved to be just, to damn a man without any sin at all, either personal or imputed. We need only to resolve it into a sovereign constitution of God. From this difficulty the followers of Mr. Edwards relieve themselves, by holding that, though Adam was so constituted the federal head of his posterity, that in consequence of his sin they all sin or become sinners, yet they are damned on account of their own personal sin merely, and not on account of Adam's sin, as though they were individually guilty of his identical transgression. This leads us to the second question stated above—viz. How shall we reconcile it with perfect justice, that Adam's posterity should, by a divine constitution, be depraved and sinful, or become sinners, in consequence of Adam's apostasy?—But this question involves no difficulty, beside that, which attends the doctrine of divine decrees. And this is satisfactory; because for God to decree that an event shall take place,

is, in other words, the same thing as if he make a constitution, under the operation of which that event shall take place. If God has decreed whatever comes to pass, he decreed the fall of Adam. It is obvious that, in equal consistency with justice, he may decree any other sin. Consequently he may decree that every man shall sin; and this too, as soon as he shall become capable of moral action. Now if God could, consistently with justice, establish, decree, or make a constitution, according to which this depravity, this sinfulness of disposition, should exist, without any respect to Adam's sin, he might evidently, with the same justice, decree that it should take place in consequence of Adam's sin. If God might consistently with justice decree, that the Jews should crucify Christ, without the treachery of Judas preceding, he might with the same justice decree, that they should do the same evil deed, in consequence of that treachery—Thus the whole difficulty, attending the connexion between Adam and his posterity, is resolved into the doctrine of the divine decrees; and the followers of Mr. Edwards feel themselves placed upon strong ground—ground upon which they are willing, at any time, to meet their opponents—They conceive, furthermore, that, by resolving several complicated difficulties into one simple vindicable principle, a very considerable improvement is made in the representations of theological truth. Since the discovery and elucidation of the distinction, between natural and moral necessity, and inability; and since the effectual confutation of that doctrine, which founds moral liberty on self-determination; they do not feel themselves pressed with the objections, which are made to divine and absolute decrees.

7. "With respect to The State of the Unregenerate, The Use of Means, and The Exhortations, which ought to be addressed to the

Impenitent, the disciples of Mr. Edwards, founding themselves on the great principles of moral agency, established in the Freedom of the Will, have since his day made considerable improvement upon former views—This improvement was chiefly occasioned by the writings of Robert Sandeman, a Scotchman, which were published after the death of Mr. Edwards. Sandeman, in the most striking colours, pointed out the inconsistency of the popular preachers, as he called them; by whom he meant Calvinistic divines in general. He proved them inconsistent, in teaching that the unregenerate are, by total depravity, 'dead in trespasses and sins,'—and yet supposing that such sinners do often attain those sincere desires, make those sincere resolutions, and offer those sincere prayers, which are well pleasing in the sight of God, and which are the sure presages of renewing grace and salvation. He argued, that, if the unregenerate be dead in sin, then all that they do must be sin; and that sin can never be pleasing and acceptable to God. Hence he taught, not only that all the exercises and strivings of the unregenerate are abominable in the Divine view, but that there is no more likelihood, in consequence of their strictest attendance on the means of grace, that they will become partakers of salvation, than there would be in the total neglect of those means. These sentiments were entirely new. As soon as they were published, they gave a prodigious shock to all serious men, both ministers and others. The addresses to the unregenerate, which had hitherto consisted chiefly in exhortations to attend on the outward means of grace, and to form such resolutions, and put forth such desires, as all supposed consistent with unregeneracy, were examined. It appearing that such exhortations were addresses to no real spiritual good; many ministers refrained from all exhortations to

the unregenerate. The perplexing inquiry with such sinners consequently was—'What then have we to do? All we do is sin. To sin is certainly wrong. We ought therefore to remain still, doing nothing, until God bestow upon us renewing grace.' In this state of things, Dr. Hopkins took up the subject. He inquired particularly into the exhortations delivered by the inspired writers. He published several pieces on The character of the Unregenerate; on Using the Means of Grace; and on The Exhortations, which ought to be addressed to the Unregenerate. He clearly showed that, although they are dead in depravity and sin, yet, as this lays them under a mere moral inability to the exercise and practice of true holiness—and as such exercise and practice are their unquestionable duty—to this duty they are to be exhorted. To this duty only, and to those things which imply it, the inspired writers constantly exhort the unregenerate. Every thing short of this duty is sin. Nevertheless, 'as faith cometh by hearing,' those who 'hear,' and attend on the means of grace, even in their unregeneracy, and from natural principles, are more likely than others to become the subjects of divine grace. The Scriptures sufficiently prove, that this is the constitution which Christ has established. It likewise accords perfectly with experience and observation, both in apostolic and subsequent ages.

8. "Mr. Edwards greatly illustrated The Nature of Experimental Religion. He pointed out, more clearly than had been done before, the distinguishing marks of genuine Christian experience, and those religious affections and exercises, which are peculiar to the true Christian. The accounts of Christian affection and experience, which had before been given, both by American and European writers, were general, indiscriminate, and confused. They seldom, if ever,

distinguished the exercises of self-love, natural conscience, and other natural principles of the human mind under conviction of divine truth, from those of the new nature, given in regeneration. In other words, they seldom distinguished the exercises of the sinner under the law work, and the joys afterwards often derived from a groundless persuasion of his forgiveness, from those sincere and evangelical affections, which are peculiar to the real convert. They did not show how far the unregenerate sinner can proceed in religious exercises, and yet fall short of saving grace. But this whole subject, and the necessary distinction, with respect to it, are set in a striking light by Mr. Edwards, in his treatise concerning Religious Affections.

9. "Mr. Edwards has thrown much light upon the subject of affection as disinterested. The word disinterested, is, indeed, capable of such a sense, as affords a ground of argument against disinterested affections; and scarcely perhaps is an instance of its use to be found, in which it does not admit of an equivocation. It seems to be a mere equivocation to say, that disinterested affection is an impossibility; and that, if we are not interested in favour of religion, we are indifferent with respect to it, and do not love it at all. But who ever thought that, when a person professes a disinterested regard for another, he has no regard for him at all. ^[84] The plain meaning is, that his regard for him is direct and benevolent, not selfish, nor arising from selfish motives. In this sense, Mr. Edwards maintained that our religious affections, if genuine, are disinterested; that our love to God arises chiefly—not from the motive that God has bestowed, or is about to bestow, on us favours, whether temporal or eternal, but—from his own infinite excellence and glory. The same explanation

applies to the love which every truly pious person feels for the Lord Jesus Christ, for every truth of divine revelation, and for the whole scheme of the gospel. Very different from this is the representation given by most theological writers before Mr. Edwards. The motives presented by them, to persuade men to love and serve God, to come unto Christ, to repent of their sin; and to embrace and practise religion, are chiefly of the selfish kind. There is, in their works, no careful and exact discrimination upon this subject.

10. "He has thrown great light on the important doctrine of Regeneration. Most writers before him treat this subject very loosely. They do indeed describe a variety of awakenings and convictions, fears and distresses, comforts and joys, as implied in it; and they call the whole, regeneration. They represent the man before regeneration as dead, and no more capable of spiritual action, than a man naturally dead is capable of performing those deeds, which require natural life and strength. From their description, a person is led to conceive, that the former is as excusable, in his omission of those holy exercises, which constitute the christian character and life, as the latter is, in the neglect of those labours, which cannot be performed without natural life. From their account, no one can determine in what the change, effected by regeneration, consists. They do not show the inquirer, whether every awakened and convinced sinner, who afterwards has lively gratitude and joy, is regenerated; or whether a gracious change of heart implies joys of a peculiar kind: neither, if the renewed have joys peculiar to themselves, do the teachers, now referred to, describe that peculiarity; nor do they tell from what motives the joys, that are evidence of regeneration, arise. They represent the whole man, his understanding, and his sensitive faculties, as renewed, no less than his

heart and affections. According to them generally, this change is effected by light. As to this indeed they are not perfectly agreed. Some of them hold, that the change is produced by the bare light and motives exhibited in the gospel. Others pretend, that a man is persuaded to become a Christian, as he is persuaded to become a friend to republican government. Yet others there are, who hold that regeneration is caused by a supernatural and divine light immediately communicated. Their representation of this seems to imply, and their readers understand it as implying, an immediate and new revelation. But, according to Mr. Edwards, and those who adopt his views of the subject, regeneration consists in the communication of a new spiritual sense or taste. In other words, a new heart is given. This communication is made, this work is accomplished, by the Spirit of God. It is their opinion, that the intellect, and the sensitive faculties, are not the immediate subject of any change in regeneration. They believe, however, that, in consequence of the change which the renewed heart experiences, and of its reconciliation to God, light breaks in upon the understanding. The subject of regeneration sees, therefore, the glory of God's character, and the glory of all divine truth. This may be an illustration. A man becomes cordially reconciled to his neighbour, against whom he had previously felt a strong enmity. He now sees the real excellencies of his neighbour's character, to which he was blinded before by enmity and prejudice. These new views of his neighbour, and these different feelings towards him, are the consequence of the change: its evidence, but not the change itself—At the same time, Mr. Edwards and others believe, that in saving experience, the sensitive faculties are brought under the due regulation by the new heart or holy temper. None of the

awakenings, fears, and convictions, which precede the new heart, are, according to this scheme, any part of regeneration; though they are, in some sense, a preparation for it, as all doctrinal knowledge is. The sinner, before regeneration, is allowed to be totally dead to the exercises and duties of the spiritual life. He is nevertheless accounted a moral agent. He is therefore entirely blameable in his impenitence, his unbelief, and his alienation from God. He is therefore, with perfect propriety, exhorted to repent, to become reconciled to God in Christ, and to arise from his spiritual death, that "Christ may give him light."—According to this system, regeneration is produced, neither by moral suasion, i.e. by the arguments and motives of the gospel, nor by any supernatural, spiritual light; but by the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit. Yet the light and knowledge of the gospel are, by divine constitution, usually necessary to regeneration, as the blowing of the rams' horns was necessary to the falling of the walls of Jericho; and the moving of the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre, was necessary to the raising of Lazarus."

Thus it appears, that Mr. Edwards taught us in his writings, in a manner so clear, that mankind have hitherto been satisfied with the instruction, Why God created this material and spiritual universe—What is the nature of that government which he exercises over minds, and how it is consistent with their perfect freedom—What is the nature of that virtue, which they must possess, if they are to secure his approbation—What is the nature, the source, the extent, and the evidences of that depravity, which characterizes man, as a fallen being—What is the series of events by which his redemption is accomplished—What are the qualifications for that church, to which the redeemed belong—What are the grounds on which they are justified—What are the nature and evidences of that religion, which is imparted to them by the Spirit of grace—What are the nature and effects of that revival of religion which accompanies an effusion of his divine influences on a people—And what are the inducements to united and extraordinary prayer, that such

effusions may be abundantly enjoyed by the church of God—By what is thus said, we do not intend, that all his reasonings are solid, or all his opinions sound and scriptural; but we know of no writer, since the days of the apostles, who has better comprehended the word of God; who has more fully unfolded the nature and design of the revelation of his mind, which it contains; who has more ably explained and defended the great doctrines which it teaches; who has more clearly illustrated the religion which it requires; who has done more for the purification and enlargement of that church which it establishes; or who, in consequence of his unfoldings of divine truth, will find, when the work of every man is weighed in the balances of eternity, a larger number to be "his hope, and joy, and crown of rejoicing in that day."—And when we remember, in addition to all this, that we can probably select no individual, of all who have lived in that long period, who has manifested a more ardent or elevated piety towards God, a warmer or more expanded benevolence towards man, or greater purity, or disinterestedness, or integrity of character—one, who gave the concentrated strength of all his powers, more absolutely, to the one end of glorifying God in the salvation of man—and then reflect that at the age of fifty-four, in the highest vigour of all his faculties, in the fulness of his usefulness, when he was just entering on the most important station of his life, he yielded to the stroke of death; we look towards his grave, in mute astonishment, unable to penetrate those clouds and darkness, which hover around it. One of his weeping friends^[85] thus explained this most surprising dispensation—"He was pouring in a flood of light upon mankind, which their eyes, as yet, were too feeble to bear."—If this was not the reason; we can only say—"Even so, Father! for so it seemed good in thy sight."^[1] As he entered college at twelve years of age, this was probably when he was seven or eight.^[2] The place where the booth was built is known at East Windsor.^[3] The first twenty-one were written at once; as were the next ten, at a subsequent sitting. The rest were written occasionally. They are all on two detached pieces of paper.^[4] He mentions, January. 14, his making the book, and annexing the loose reports to it.^[5] Dwight^[6] He refers to slips of paper on which the first part of the Diary is written; as far as January. 15, **at night.**^[7] Perhaps the preparation of a public exercise for the college commencement, when ye received his Master's degree.^[8] I use **spiritual** here in its original and most appropriate sense, as opposed to **material.**^[9] The Rev. Dr. Erskine, the warm friend and the correspondent of Mr. Edwards, being desirous of

procuring a correct portrait, both of him and his wife, and hearing that a respectable English painter was in Boston, forwarded to his agent in that town, the sum requisite, not only for the portraits, but for the expenses of the journey. They were taken in 1740; and after the death of Dr. Erskine, were very kindly transmitted by his executor to Dr. Edwards.^[10] Hopkin's *Life of Edwards*. Dr. H resided in the family a considerable time.^[11] This last was published.^[12] Among those who opposed Mr. Edwards on this occasion, were several members of a family, in a neighbouring town, nearly connected with his own, and possessing, from its numbers, wealth, and respectability, a considerable share of influence. Their religious sentiments differed widely from his, and their opposition to him, in the course which he now pursued, became direct and violent. As his defence of his own opinions was regarded as triumphant, they appear to have felt, in some degree, the shame and mortification of a defeat; and their opposition to Mr. Edwards, though he resorted to every honourable method of conciliation, became, on their part, a settled personal hostility. It is probable, that their advice to Mr. Edwards, to refrain from the controversy, and particularly, not to publish his sentiments with regard to it, was given somewhat categorically, and with a full expectation that he, young as he was, would comply with it. His refusal so to do, was an offence not to be forgiven. We shall have occasion to recur to this subject again.^[13] Of the conversion of this child, whose name was Phoebe Bartlett, a most minute and interesting account is given in the "Narrative of Surprising Conversions." Dr. Edwards, under date of March 30, 1789, in a letter to Dr. Ryland, says, "In answer to your inquiry, in a former letter, concerning Phoebe Bartlett, I have to inform you that she is yet still living, and has uniformly maintained the character of a true convert."^[14] Our author does not say that he *had* more wickedness, and badness of heart, since his conversion, than he had before; but that he had a greater *sense* thereof. Thus a blind man may *have* his garden *full* of noxious weeds, and yet not *see* or *be sensible* of them. But should the garden be in great part cleared of these, and furnished with many beautiful and salutary plants; and supposing the owner now to have the power of discriminating objects of sight; in this case, he would *have less*, but he *see* and have a *sense* of more. And thus it was that St. Paul, though greatly freed from sin, yet *saw* and *felt* himself as "the chief of sinners." To which may be added, that the better the organ, and clearer the light may be, the stronger will be the *sense* excited by sin or holiness.^[15] Mr.

Bellamy was settled at Bethlem in the spring of 1740, in the midst of a general attention to religion, on the part of the people of that place.^[16] This is a very common mistake. The woman here mentioned was not Mary Magdalen.^[17] The superscription and date are gone from the MS. but having Mr. Edwards's hand-writing on the back, I suppose the letter to have been written to him.^[18] Afterwards the Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D. D. of Newport, author of the System of Divinity^[19] Probably the 91st Hymn of the 2d Book, beginning with

"O the delights, the heavenly joys,

The glories of the place."^[20] As examples of this nature, the reader is referred to the writings of Flavel, L. Baxter, and Brainerd, and of Mr. Edwards himself.^[21] See vol I pp. 258, 259^[22] It was postponed to the time of the children of the generation here referred to.^[23] Kannaumeek was an Indian settlement, about five miles N. W. from New Lebanon, on the main road from that village to Albany. The place is now called Brainerd's Bridge, and is a village of a few houses, on the Kayaderosseras creek, where that road crosses it. It was thus named, not after the missionary, but after a relative of his of the name of Brainerd, who some years since planted himself in this spot, and built the bridge across the creek, now a toll bridge. The mountain, about a mile N. W. of the bridge, still bears the name of Kaunaumeek. The creek winds beautifully in the valley beneath, and forms a delightful meadow. In 1823, I found an aged negro on the spot, about one hundred years of age, who had passed his life in the vicinity. He was about twenty-one years old when Brainerd resided at Kaunaumeek, but never saw him, or hillock on the left of the road, and on the W. or N. W. side of the creek immediately after passing the bridge; and that the Indian settlement was down in the meadow, at some distance below the bridge. On following the stream, I discovered an old Indian orchard, the trees of an Indian burying ground, and the ruins of several buildings of long standing. He also informed me, that the Indians had often told him, that Mr. Brainerd was "a very holy man," and that he resided at Kaunaumeek but a short time.^[24] He was 66 years old, the 8th day of January last.^[25] This Mr. Robinson was a young minister of eminent gifts and graces; I think, belonging to Pennsylvania, but had some time preached, with great success, in Virginia, in various parts: but died a few years ago in his youth.^[26] Afterwards Mrs. Dwight of Northampton^[27] This is evident by many passages of scripture: as, Leviticus 26:40-42. Deuteronomy 32:35-39. 1

Kings 8:21, 22. chapter 1:4-8. Ezekiel 20:35, 36, 37. Hosea 5:15 with chapter 6:1-3. chapter 14 throughout.^[28] What an awful warning to all professors, and especially to young people! Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! Little do the giddy and the gay think how their levities operate, and what seeds of distress and sorrow for themselves and others. Woe unto you that thus laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep! How desirable it should be *penitentially* here, and not *despairingly* hereafter—DR. WILLIAMS.^[29] This vote appears to have been passed in the latter part of November, a few weeks before Mr. Edwards received proposals of settlement, which he ultimately accepted.^[30] The father of Mr. Hawley married Rebekah, the fifth daughter of the Rev. Mr. Stoddard, the sister of Mr. Edwards's mother.^[31] This part of the letter must have been written in July, as the installation took place in August.^[32] In 1734-35.^[33] Mrs. Backus, the fifth sister of Mr. Edwards, was now a widow. Her husband, the Rev. Simon Backus of Newington, (Wethersfield,) was designated by the Connecticut legislature, as chaplain to the troops sent to Louisburgh in 1746, to prevent its recapture by the French. He died there soon after his arrival. The vessel, containing his effects, and a considerable sum contributed by the gentlemen of the army for his family, was cast away on its return; and the family were left in very indigent circumstances^[34] I suppose that this means £2000 *old tenor*, as it was then called; the value of which continually varied, but has been commonly estimated at 6s. 8d. sterling to the pound.^[35] So severe was this pressure, for a considerable time, that Mr. Edwards found himself necessitated to practise the most rigid economy, in every thing—even in the article of paper. Much of what he now wrote, for his own use, was written on the margins of useless pamphlets, the covers of letters, and the remnants of the silk paper used in making fans.^[36] A representation having been made to the legislature, in pursuance of this recommendation, three trustees or commissioners were appointed in behalf of the province.^[37] That is, provided the commissioners, in Boston, approved of the appointment.^[38] With reluctance I have yielded to the necessity of this minuteness of detail; but the fact, that Mr. Edwards had no very marked success in his Stockbridge mission, cannot otherwise be adequately explained; and the failure of the Iroquois establishment at Stockbridge cannot otherwise be accounted for, happily the Indians at that place, like all other Indians in the vicinity of the whites, were exposed to the impositions, the seductions, and the oppressions, of their civilized neighbours. In these

counteracting causes, both the friends and the enemies of Indian missions may learn, why it is so difficult to reform and christianize savages.^[39] I have regarded the use of the *antonomasia* as correct in this and some other quotations.^[40] It was not published until November.^[41] This excellent letter, omitted here for want of room, will be found in vol. i. pp. 529-531, and should be read in this place.^[42] The copy designed for Mr. Hawley was enclosed in the letter to Mr. Edwards. Probably a similar vote was forwarded *directly* to Mr. Woodbridge, as that gentleman always enjoyed their fullest confidence.^[43] Lay patronage was wholly rejected by the Scotch reformers, and was not introduced by law until 1711. For a long period, the law was regarded as a public grievance, but is now submitted to.^[44] "Mr. Gillespie died, January. 19th, 1774, in serenity of mind, and good hope through grace."^[45] This letter is too long for insertion.^[46] Now called the *Cayugas*.^[47] Sir Henry Moncrieff Wellwood, who had the MS. Letters of Mr. Edwards to Dr. Erskine in his possession, while writing his Life of the latter, observes, "It was not, however, till the month of July, 1752, that he (Mr. Edwards) appears to have resumed his studies, on the subject of Freewill; for, on the 7th of that month, he writes Dr. Erskine, that *he hoped soon to be at leisure, to resume his design.*" He then adds, "Whatever opinion may, be held, with regard to Mr. Edwards's argument, it must appear astonishing to those, who are capable of appreciating the difficulty of his subject, that, in *nine* months from the date of this letter. (on the 14th of April, 1753,) he could write Dr. Erskine, *that he had almost finished the first draught of what he originally intended.*" The passage, Mr. Edwards's letter of November. 23. 1752, announcing, that he began to write in August, but was soon broke off; and had not, from that time, been able to put pen to paper, about the matter; and that he hoped, that God, in his providence, would favour him with an opportunity to prosecute the design; obviously escaped Sir Henry's notice. If he regarded it as astonishing, that Mr. Edwards should have been able to write the work in *nine* months; what would have been his views of the subject if, after first reading the details of the Stockbridge controversy, he had then discovered, that it was written, not in *nine* months, but in *four and a half*.^[48] The directors, knowing the characters of the respective individuals residing in these places, whom they designated; and perceiving, from an inspection of the map, that Stock-bridge was nearly central to most of the places mentioned; appear to have supposed, that they might all meet there, without

inconvenience.^[49] On this account only, is the plan worthy of being mentioned here.^[50] Many benevolent men, on being apprized of such a wanton and shameful perversion of the funds, appropriated by themselves to a given charity, would, at once, have wholly discontinued their benefactions; but the benevolence of Mr. Hollis, like a living and copious fountain, could neither be dried up, nor obstructed.^[51] These children of the Mohawks, and the children of the Onohquaugas, constituted, from this time, the male Iroquois boarding-school at Stockbridge. How long it was continued I have not been able to ascertain; but suppose it was removed to Onohquauga, soon after the establishment of the mission of Mr. Hawley at that place.^[52] See Appendix IV. In several of the articles under the head of Exceilency, the reader will find, if I mistake not, as striking specimens of powerful metaphysical reasoning, as any to be found in the Essay on the Freedom of the Will.^[53] Bishop Butler has left a "Dissertation on the Nature of Virtue," which the curious reader will do well to examine in connexion with Mr. Edward's "Dissertation on the Nature of True Virtue;" if he wishes to compare the powers of these two distinguished men, when endeavouring to grasp the same subject^[54] Afterwards the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, D. D. President of Union College, Schenectady. He was familiarly acquainted with the Housatonnuck and the Iroquois; in early life, more so than with the English^[55] The subjects treated of in this volume were, Attachment to objects of Distress. Law of Nature. Law of Necessity. Belief. Personal Identity. Authority of our Senses. Idea of Power. Knowledge of Future Events. Dread of Supernatural Powers in the Dark. Our knowledge of the Deity.^[56] Soon after created a lord of session, with the title of Lord Kaimes.^[57] See vol. i. pp. 89-93. Lord Kaimes had a much higher reputation, as a writer, fifty years ago than at present. The perusal of his Essay on Liberty and Necessity, an ' of the remarks upon it, in the letter of Mr. Edwards, here referred to, will inevitably lead to the conviction, that, as a metaphysician, he was neither accurate nor profound.^[58] See Vol. I, pp. 89-93.^[59] Essays on the principles of Morality and Natural Religion, by Lord Kaimes.^[60] By Lord Kaimes.^[61] See the letter in Vol. I. pp. 8^[62] In the autumn of 1756, the college was removed to Princeton.^[63] Unfortunately this letter is lost.^[64] When Mr. Edwards wrote the letter to which she refers, he did not think of going to Princeton till Spring; but he afterwards determined otherwise.^[65] I have ascertained the names of only three of the members of the council—Mr. Bellamy, Mr. Brinsmade, and Mr.

Hopkins. This date is right, though it differs from that mentioned in the letter to Mr. Bellamy.^[66] The agents of the college were Rev. Messrs. Caleb Smith and John Brainerd.^[67] The council, at the request both of the English and Indian congregations at Stockbridge, addressed a letter to the commissioners in Boston, requesting that the Rev. John Brainerd might be appointed Mr. Edwards's successor—the Housatonnucks offering land for a settlement to the Indian congregation at Cranberry, New Jersey, if they would remove to Stockbridge—and another letter to the trustees of the college, requesting that they would use their collective and individual influence, to procure the appointment of Mr. Brainerd, and his removal to Stockbridge.^[68] The first sermon which he reached at Princeton was on the unchangeableness of Christ in Vol. I. P. 949. It was upwards of two hours in the delivery; but is said to have been listened to with such profound attention, and deep interest, by the audience that they were unconscious of the lapse of time, and surprised that it closed so soon.^[69] President Burr ordered, on his death-bed that his funeral should not be attended with pomp and cost; that nothing should be expended but what was agreeable to the dictates of christian decency; and that the sum which must be expended at a fashionable funeral, above the necessary cost of a decent one, should be given to the poor, out of his estate.^[70] The reader may wish to see the notice taken of the death of Mr. Edwards at the time when it occurred. The following is the account of it, in the Boston Gazette of April 10, 1750—"On Wednesday, the 22d of last month, died, by inoculation at Nassau Hall, an eminent servant of God the Rev. pious, Mr. Jonathan Edwards. president of the college of New Jersey; a gentleman of distinguished abilities, and a heavenly temper of mind: a most rational, generous catholic and exemplary Christian admixed by all who knew him. for his uncommon candour and disinterested benevolence; a pattern of temperance, meekness, patience, and chant; always steady, calm, and serene; a very judicious and instructive preacher, and a most excellent divine. And as he lived, cheerfully resigned to the will of Heaven so he died, or rather, as the Scriptures emphatically express it, with respect to good men *he fell asleep* in Jesus, without the least appearance of pain."^[71] The last article under this head, is obviously the foundation of the author's subsequent Treatise on the Nature of true Virtue.^[72] On a preceding page it is stated on the authority of Dr. Hopkins that he regularly spent thirteen hours every day in close study. After receiving the invitation to Princeton, he told his eldest son, that he had

for many years spent fourteen hours a day in study; and mentioned the necessity of giving up part of his time to other pursuits as one of his chief objections against accepting the office of president.^[73] "As both the giver, and the object of his charity, are dead, and all the ends of the proposed secrecy are answered; it is thought not inconsistent with the above-mentioned promise, to make known the fact, as it is here related."^[74] His height was about six feet one inch.^[75] see Preface to Five Sermons, vol. i. p. 621.^[76] Sir Charles Grandison. I had this anecdote from his eldest son.^[77] The treatises on the Affections and on United Extraordinary Prayer, are the most incorrect of all his works, published by himself. In his sermons, published in his lifetime, somewhat of the *limae labor*—is discernible. The works, published by his son Dr. Edwards, in this country, are but little altered from the rough draught; but those first published in Edinburgh, are, generally, more so. The History of Redemption was considerably corrected by my father, and afterwards thrown into the form of a treatise by Dr. Erskine. The sermons published by Dr. Hopkins are the least correct of all his works.^[78] I suppose the writer referred to here, and in various other places, to have been Dr. Finley.^[79] For many of the remarks on the character of Mr. Edwards, as a preacher and writer, I am indebted to a well written review of the Worcester edition of his Works in the Christian Spectator; but they are usually so blended with my own, that it is impossible to designate the passages.^[80] "Though, as has been observed," says Dr. Hopkins, "he was wont to read so considerable a part of what he delivered, yet he was far from thinking this the best way of preaching in general; and looked upon using his notes, so much as he did, a deficiency and infirmity, and in the latter part of his life, he was inclined to think it had been better, if he had never been accustomed to use his notes at all. It appeared to him, that preaching wholly without notes, agreeably to the custom in most protestant countries, and in what seems evidently to have been the manner of the apostles and primitive ministers of the gospel, was by far the most natural way, and had the greatest tendency, on the whole, to answer the end of preaching; and supposed that no one, who had talents, equal to the work of the ministry, was incapable of speaking *memoriter*, if he took suitable pains for this attainment from his youth. He would have the young preacher write all his sermons, or at least most of them, out, at large; and, instead of reading them to his hearers, take pains to commit them to memory: which, though it would require a great deal of labour at first, yet would soon become easier by

use, and help him to speak more correctly and freely, and be of great service to him all his days."^[81] Few men have possessed a greater fund of genuine wit, than Mr. Edwards. In early life, he found it difficult to restrain it. The clear *reductio* ad absurdum, to which he subjects every scheme and argument of his antagonists, in the Freedom of the Will, is usually a brilliant example of true logical wit. The Answer to Williams abounds with it. I doubt whether the annals of metaphysics can show a finer specimen of it, than the following; which is the conclusion of his exposure of the metaphysical notion of an action or act, as defined by Chubb, and his associates:

"So that, according to their notion of an act, considered with regard to its consequences, these following things are all essential to it: viz. That it should be necessary, and yet not necessary; that it should be from a cause, and yet from no cause; that it should be the fruit of choice and design, and yet not the fruit of choice and design; that it should be the beginning of motion or exertion, and yet consequent on previous exertion; that it should be before it is; that it should spring immediately out of indifference and equilibrium, and yet be the effect of pre-ponderation; that it should be self-originated, and also have its original from something else; that it is what the mind causes itself of its own will, and can produce or prevent according to its choice or pleasure, and yet what the mind has no power to prevent, precluding all previous choice in the affair.

"So that an act, according to their metaphysical notion of it, is something of which there is no idea; it is nothing but a confusion of the mind, excited by words without any distinct meaning, and is an absolute nonentity; and that in two respects: 1. There is nothing in the world that ever was, is, or can be, to answer the things which must belong to its description, according to what they suppose to be essential to it. And, 2. There neither is, nor ever was, nor can be, any notion or idea to answer the word, as they use and explain it. For if we should suppose any such notion, it would many ways destroy itself. But it is impossible that any idea or notion should subsist in the mind, whose very nature and essence, which constitutes it, destroys it—If some learned philosopher, who has been abroad, in giving an account of the curious observations he had made in his travels, should say, he had been in Terra del Fuego, and there had seen an animal, which he calls by a certain name, that begat and brought forth himself, and yet had a sire and dam distinct from himself; that he had an appetite, and was hungry, before he had a being; that

his master, who led him, and governed him at his pleasure, was always governed by him, and driven by him where he pleased; that when he moved, he always took a step before the first step; that he went with his head first, and yet always went tail foremost, and this, though he had neither head nor tail it would be no impudence at all to tell such a traveller, though a man of profound learning, that he himself had no idea of such an animal as he gave an account of, and never had, nor ever would have."^[82] Dugald Stewart, alluding to it in conversation, is said, on good authority, to have spoken of it thus—"Edwards on the Will, a work which never was answered, and which never will be answered."^[83] It is proper to remark, that the above statement is not altogether correct. The same views of the atonement appear in Bates on the Harmony of the Divine Attributes in Redemption: in the writings of Howe, Baxter, and some other eminent divines of the seventeenth century.^[84] The whole difficulty is removed by reflecting that disinterested is the converse of selfish; and uninterested, the converse of interested.^[85] Dr. Finley.

THE POWER OF THE BLOOD OF JESUS

BY

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Chapter 1^(TOC)

What the Scriptures Teach About the Blood

"Not Without Blood"—Hebrews 9:7 and 18.

GOD has spoken to us in the Scriptures in divers portions and in divers manners; but the VOICE is ever the same, it is always the WORD of the same GOD.

Hence the importance of treating the Bible as a whole, and receiving the witness it gives in its various portions, concerning certain definite truths. It is thus we learn to recognise the place these truths actually occupy in Revelation, or rather in the HEART OF GOD. Thus, too, we begin to discover what the foundation truths of the Bible are, which above others demand attention. Standing as they do, so prominently, in each new departure in God's revelation; remaining unchanged when the Dispensation changes, they carry a divine intimation of their importance.

It is my object, in the chapters which follow this introductory one, to show what the Scriptures teach us concerning THE GLORIOUS POWER OF THE BLOOD OF JESUS, and the wonderful blessings procured for us by it; and I cannot lay a better foundation for my exposition, nor give a better proof of the superlative glory of THAT BLOOD AS THE POWER OF REDEMPTION, than by asking my, readers to follow me through the Bible, and thus see the unique place which is given to THE BLOOD from the

beginning to the end of God's revelation of Himself to man, as recorded in the Bible.

It will become clear that there is no single scriptural idea, from Genesis to Revelation, more constantly and more prominently kept in view, than that expressed by the words-"THE BLOOD."

Our inquiry then is what the Scriptures teach us about THE BLOOD.

First, In The Old Testament;

Secondly, In The Teaching Of Our Lord Jesus Himself;

Thirdly, In What The Apostles Teach; And

Lastly, What St. John Tells Us Of It In Revelation.

I. Let us learn what the Old Testament Teaches

Its record about THE BLOOD begins at the gates of Eden.

Into the unrevealed mysteries of Eden I do not enter.

But in connection with the sacrifice of Abel all is plain. He brought of "the firstlings of his flock" to the Lord as a sacrifice, and there, in connection with the first act of worship recorded in the Bible, blood was shed. We learn from Hebrews (11:4) that it was "by faith" Abel offered an acceptable sacrifice, and his name stands first in the record of those whom the Bible calls "believers." He had this witness borne to him "that he pleased God." His faith, and God's good pleasure in him, are closely connected with the sacrificial blood.

In the light of later revelation, this testimony, given at the very beginning of human history, is of deep significance. It shows that there can be no approach to God; no fellowship with Him by faith; no enjoyment of His favour, apart from THE BLOOD.

Scripture gives but short notice of the following sixteen centuries. Then came THE FLOOD, which was God's judgement on sin, by the destruction of the world of mankind.

But God brought forth a new earth from that awful baptism of water. Notice, however, that the new earth must be baptised used also with blood, and the first recorded act of Noah, after he had left the ark, was the offering of a burnt sacrifice to God. As with Abel, so with Noah at a new beginning, it was "NOT WITHOUT BLOOD."

Sin once again prevailed, and God laid an entirely new foundation for the establishment of His Kingdom on earth.

By the divine call of Abram, and the miraculous birth of Isaac, God undertook the formation of a people to serve Him. But this purpose was not accomplished apart from the shedding of THE BLOOD. This is apparent in the most solemn hour of Abraham's life.

God had already entered into covenant relationship with Abraham, and his faith had already been severely tried, and had stood the test. It was reckoned, or counted to him, for righteousness. Yet he must learn that Isaac, the son of promise, who belonged wholly to God, can be truly surrendered to God only by death.

Isaac must die. For Abraham, as well as for Isaac, only by death could freedom from the self-life be obtained.

Abraham must offer Isaac on the altar.

That was not an arbitrary command of God. It was the revelation of a divine truth, that it is only through death, that a life truly consecrated to God is possible. But it was impossible for Isaac to die and rise again from the dead; for on account of sin, death would hold him fast. But see, his life was spared, and a ram was offered in his place. Through the blood that then flowed on Mount Moorish his life was spared. He and the people which sprang from him, live before God "NOT WITHOUT BLOOD." By that blood, however, he was in a figure raised again from the dead. The great lesson of substitution is here clearly taught.

Four hundred years pass, and Isaac has become, in Egypt, the people of Israel. Through her deliverance from Egyptian bondage Israel was to be recognised as God's first-born among the nations. Here, also, it is "NOT WITHOUT BLOOD." Neither the electing grace of God, nor His covenant with Abraham, nor the exercise of His omnipotence, which could so easily have destroyed their oppressors, could dispense with the necessity of THE BLOOD.

What THE BLOOD accomplished on Mount Moorish for one person, who was the Father of the nation, must now be experienced by that nation. By the sprinkling of the door frames of the Israelites with the BLOOD of the Paschal lamb; by the institution of the Passover as an enduring ordinance with the words-" When I see the BLOOD I will pass over you," the people were taught that life can be obtained only by the death of a substitute. Life was possible for them only through THE BLOOD of a life given in their place, and appropriated by "the sprinkling of that blood."

Fifty days later this lesson was enforced in a striking manner. Israel had

reached Sinai. God had given His Law as the foundation of His covenant. That covenant must now be established, but as it is expressly stated in Hebrews 9:7, "NOT WITHOUT BLOOD." The Sacrificial BLOOD must be sprinkled, first on the altar, and then on the book of the Covenant, representing God's side of that Covenant; then on the people, with the declaration, "This is THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT" (Exodus 24).

It was in that BLOOD the Covenant had its foundation and power. It is by THE BLOOD alone, that God and man can be brought into covenant fellowship. That which had been foreshadowed at the Gate of Eden, on Mount Ararat, on Moriah, and in Egypt was now confirmed at the foot of Sinai, in a most solemn manner. Without BLOOD there could be no access by sinful man to a Holy God.

There is, however, a marked difference between the manner of applying the blood in the former cases as compared with the latter. On Moriah the life was redeemed by the shedding of the blood. In Egypt it was sprinkled on the door posts of the houses; but at Sinai, it was sprinkled on the persons themselves. The contact was closer, the application more powerful.

Immediately after the establishment of the covenant the command was given, "Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25:8). They were to enjoy the full blessedness of having their God of the Covenant abiding among them. Through His grace they may find Him, and serve Him in His house.

He Himself gave, with the minutest care, directions for the arrangement and service of that house. But notice that THE BLOOD is the centre and reason of all this. Draw near to the vestibule of the earthly temple of the Heavenly King, and the first thing visible is the ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING,

where the sprinkling of blood continues, without ceasing, from morning till evening. Enter the Holy Place, and the most conspicuous thing is the golden altar of incense, which also, together with the veil, is constantly sprinkled with the BLOOD. Ask what lies beyond the Holy Place, and you will be told that it is the MOST HOLY PLACE where God dwells. If you ask how He dwells there, and how He is approached, you will be told "NOT WITHOUT BLOOD." The golden throne where His glory shines, is itself sprinkled with THE BLOOD, once every year, when the High Priest alone enters to bring in THE BLOOD, and to worship God. The highest act in that worship is the sprinkling of THE BLOOD.

If you inquire further, you will be told that always, and for everything, THE BLOOD is the one thing needful. At the consecration of the House, or of the Priests; at the birth of a child; in the deepest penitence on account of sin; in the highest festival; always, and in everything, the way to fellowship with God is through THE BLOOD alone.

This continued for fifteen hundred years. At Sinai, in the desert, at Shiloh, in the Temple on Mount Moriah it continued till our Lord came to make an end of all shadows by bringing in the substance, and try establishing a fellow ship with the Holy One, in spirit and truth.

II. What Our Lord Jesus himself Teaches about the Blood

With His coming old things passed away, and all things became new.

He came from the Father in Heaven, and can tell us in divine words the way to the Father.

It is sometimes said that the words "NOT WITHOUT BLOOD" belong to the Old Testament. But what does our Lord Jesus Christ say? Notice, first, that when John the Baptist announced His coming, he spoke of Him as filling a dual office, as "THE LAMB OF GOD that taketh away the sin of the world"; and then as "the One who would baptize with the Holy Spirit." The outpouring of the BLOOD of the Lamb of God must take place, before the outpouring of the Spirit could be bestowed. Only when all that the Old Testament taught about THE BLOOD has been fulfilled, can the Dispensation of the Spirit begin.

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself plainly declared that His death on the Cross was the purpose for which He came into the world; that it was the necessary condition of the redemption and life which He came to bring. He clearly states that in connection with His death the shedding of His BLOOD was necessary.

In the Synagogue at Capernaum He spoke of Himself as "THE Bread of Life"; of His flesh, "that He would give it for the life of the world." Four times over He said most emphatically, "Except ye ... drink His BLOOD ye have no life in you." "He that drinketh my BLOOD hath everlasting life." "My BLOOD is drink indeed." "He that drinketh my BLOOD dwelleth in me and I in him" (John 6). Our Lord thus declared the fundamental fact that He Himself, as the Son of the Father, who came to restore to us our lost life, can do this in no other way than by dying for us; by shedding His blood for us; and then making us partakers of its power.

Our Lord confirmed the teaching of the Old Testament Offerings-that man can live only through the death of another, and thus obtain a life that through Resurrection has become eternal.

But Christ Himself cannot make us partakers of that eternal life which He has procured for us, save by the shedding of His blood, and causing us to drink it. Marvellous fact! "NOT WITHOUT BLOOD" can eternal life be ours.

Equally striking is our Lord's declaration of the same truth on the last night of His earthly life. Before He completed the great work of His life by giving it "as a ransom for many," He instituted the Holy Supper, saying-" This cup is the New Testament in MY BLOOD that is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins. Drink ye all of it." (Matthew 26:28). "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." Without remission of sins there is no life. But by the shedding of His BLOOD He has obtained a new life for us. By what He calls "the drinking of His blood" He shares His life with us. The blood SHED in the Atonement, which frees us from the SIN, the guilt of sin; and from death, the punishment of sin; the blood, which by faith we drink, bestows on us His life. The BLOOD He shed was, in the first place FOR us, and is then given TO us.

III. The Teaching of the apostles under the inspiration of the holy spirit

After His Resurrection and Ascension, our Lord is not any longer known by the Apostles "after the flesh." Now, all that was symbolical has passed away, and the deep spiritual truths expressed by symbol, are unveiled.

But there is no veiling of THE BLOOD. It still occupies a prominent place.

Turn first to the Epistle to the Hebrews, which was written purposely to show that the Temple service had become unprofitable, and was intended by God to pass away, now that Christ had come.

Here, if anywhere, it might be expected that the Holy Spirit would emphasise the true spirituality of God's purpose, yet it is just here that the Blood of Jesus is spoken of in a manner that imparts a new value to the phrase.

We read concerning our Lord that "by His own blood he entered into the holy place" (Hebrews 9:12).

"The Blood of Christ-shall purge your conscience" (verse 14).

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19).

"Ye are come to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling" (12:24).

"Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood suffered without the gate" (13:12, 23).

"God-brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus-through the blood of the everlasting covenant" (13:20).

By such words the Holy Spirit teaches us that the blood is really the central power of our entire redemption. "NOT WITHOUT BLOOD" is as valid in the New Testament as in the Old.

Nothing but the Blood of Jesus, shed in His death for sin, can cover sin on God's side, or remove it on ours.

We find the same teaching in the writings of the Apostles. Paul writes of "being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ... through faith in his blood" (Romans 3:24, 25), Of "being now justified by his blood" (5:9).

To the Corinthians he declares that the "cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the Blood of Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:16).

In the Epistle to the Galatians he uses the word "CROSS" to convey the same

meaning, while in Colossians he united the two words and speaks of "The Blood of his Cross" (Galatians 6:14; Colossians 1:20).

He reminds the Ephesians that "We have redemption through his blood" and that we "are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 1:7 and 2:13).

Peter reminds his readers that they were "Elect ... unto obedience and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus" (1 Peter 1:2), that they were redeemed by "the precious blood of Christ" (verse 19).

See how John assures his "little children" that "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). The Son is He "who came not by water only but by water and blood" (5:6).

All of them agree together in mentioning the blood, and in glorying in it, as the power by which eternal redemption through Christ, is fully accomplished, and is then applied by the Holy Spirit.

IV. What do we learn from the Book of Revelation concerning The Future Glory and the Blood?

But perhaps this is merely earthly language. What has Heaven to say?

It is of the greatest importance to notice, that in the revelation which God has given in this book, of the glory of His throne, and the blessedness of those who surround it, the blood still retains its remarkably prominent place.

On the throne John saw "A Lamb as it had been slain" (Revelation 5:6). As the Elders fell down before the Lamb they sang a new song saying, "Thou art worthy ... for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood"

(verse 8 and 9).

Later on when he saw the great company which no man could number, he was told in reply to his question as to who they were, "They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Then again, when he heard the song of victory over the defeat of Satan, its strain was, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb" (12:11).

In the glory of heaven, as seen by John, there was no phrase by which the great purposes of God; the wondrous love of the Son of God; the power of His redemption; and the joy and thanksgiving of the redeemed; can be gathered up and expressed save this—"THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB."

From the beginning to the end of Scripture; from the closing of the gates of Eden, to the opening of the gates of the Heavenly Zion, there runs through Scripture a golden thread. It is "THE BLOOD" that unites the beginning and the end; that gloriously restores what sin had destroyed.

It is not difficult to see what lessons the Lord wishes us to learn from the fact that the blood occupies such a prominent place in Scripture.

I. God has no other way of dealing with sin

Or the sinner, save through the blood.

For victory over sin and the deliverance of the sinner God has no other means or thought than "THE BLOOD OF CHRIST." Yes, it is indeed something that surpasses all understanding.

All the wonders of grace are focused here—the Incarnation, by which He took

upon Himself our flesh and blood; the love, that spared not itself but surrendered itself to death; the righteousness, which could not forgive sin till the penalty was borne; the substitution, by which He the Righteous One, atoned for us the unrighteous; the atonement for sin, and the justification of the sinner, thus made possible; renewed fellowship with God; together with the cleansing, and sanctification, to fit us for the enjoyment of that fellowship; the true oneness in life with the Lord Jesus, as He gives us His blood to drink; the eternal joy of the hymn of praise, "Thou hast redeemed us to God"; all these are but rays of the wonderful light which are reflected upon us from "THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS."

II. The blood must have the same place in our hearts which it has with God

From the beginning of God's dealings with man, yes, from before the foundation of the world, the heart of God has rejoiced in that blood. Our heart will never rest, nor find salvation, till we too learn to walk, and glory in the power of that blood.

It is not only the penitent sinner, longing for pardon, who must thus value it. No—the redeemed will experience that just as God in His temple sits upon a throne of grace, where the blood is ever in evidence, so there is nothing that draws our hearts nearer to God, filling them with God's love, and joy, and glory, as living in constant, spiritual view of that blood.

III. Let us take time and trouble to learn the,

full

blessing and power of that blood.

The blood of Jesus is the greatest mystery of eternity, the deepest mystery of the divine wisdom. Let us not imagine that we can easily grasp its meaning. God thought 4,000 years necessary to prepare men for it, and we also must take time, if we are to gain a knowledge of the power of the blood.

Even taking time is of no avail, unless there is definite taking of sacrificial trouble. Sacrificial blood always meant the offering of a life. The Israelite could not obtain blood for the pardon of his sin, unless the life of something that belonged to him was offered in sacrifice. The Lord Jesus did not offer up His own life, and shed His blood to spare us from the sacrifice of our lives. No, indeed 1 but to make the sacrifice of our lives possible and desirable.

The hidden value of His blood is the spirit of self-sacrifice, and where the blood really touches the heart, it works out in that heart, a like spirit of self-sacrifice. We learn to give up ourselves and our lives, so as to press into the full power of that new life, which the blood. has provided.

We give our time in order that we may become acquainted with these things by God's Word. We separate ourselves from sin and worldly-mindedness, and self-will, that the power of the blood may not be hindered, for it is just these things that the blood seeks to remove.

We surrender ourselves wholly to God in prayer and faith, so as not to think our own thoughts, and not to hold our own lives as a prize, but as possessing nothing save what He bestows. Then He reveals to us the glorious and blessed life which has been prepared for us by the blood.

IV. We can rely upon the Lord Jesus to reveal to us the power of His blood

It is by this confident trust in Him that the blessing obtained by the blood becomes ours. We must never, in thought, separate the blood from the High Priest who shed it, and ever lives to apply it.

He who once gave His blood for us, will, oh I so surely, every moment, impart its efficacy. Trust Him to do this. Trust Him to open your eyes, and to give you a deeper spiritual insight. Trust Him to teach you to think about the blood as God thinks about it. Trust Him to impart to you, and to make effective in you, all that He enables you to see.

Trust Him above all, in the power of His eternal High Priesthood, to work out in you, unceasingly, the full merits of His blood, so that your whole life may be an uninterrupted abiding in the sanctuary of God's presence.

Believer, you who have come to the knowledge of the precious blood, hearken to the invitation of your Lord. Come nearer. Let Him teach you; let Him bless you. Let Him cause His blood to become to you spirit, and life, and power, and truth.

Begin now, at once, to open your soul in faith, to receive the full, mighty, heavenly effects of the precious blood, in a more glorious manner than you have ever experienced. He Himself will work these things out in your life.

Chapter 2^(TOC)

Redemption by Blood

"Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things ... but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"—1 Peter 1:18, 19.

THE shedding of His blood was the culmination of the sufferings of our Lord. The atoning efficacy of those sufferings was in that shed blood. It is therefore of great importance that the believer should not rest satisfied with the mere acceptance of the blessed truth that he is redeemed by that blood, but should press on to a fuller knowledge of what is meant by that statement, and to learn what that blood is intended to do in a surrendered soul.

Its effects are manifold, for we read in Scripture of RECONCILIATION through the blood; CLEANSING through the blood; SANCTIFICATION through the blood; UNION WITH GOD through the blood; VICTORY over Satan through the blood; LIFE through the blood.

These are separate blessings but are all included in one sentence:
REDEMPTION BY THE BLOOD.

It is only when the believer understands what these blessings are, and by what means they may become his, that he can experience the full power of REDEMPTION.

Before passing on to consider in detail these several blessings let us first inquire, in a more general way, concerning THE POWER OF THE BLOOD

OF JESUS.

1st. Wherein Does The Power of That Blood Lie?

2nd. What has that Power Accomplished?

3rd. How Can We Experience its Effects?

I. Wherein does The Power of that Blood Lie?

Or what is it that gives to the blood of Jesus such power? How is it that in the blood, alone, there is power possessed by nothing else?

The answer to this question is found in Leviticus 17:11. "The life of the flesh is in the blood" and "I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

It is because the soul, or life, is in the blood; and that the blood is offered to God on the altar, that it has in it redemptive power.

I. The soul or life is in the blood, therefore the value of the blood corresponds to the value of the life that is in it.

The life of a sheep, or goat, is of less value than the life of an ox, and so the blood of a sheep or a goat in an offering, is of less value than the blood of an ox (Leviticus 4:3, 24, 27).

The life of man is more valuable than that of many sheep or oxen.

And now who can tell the value or the power of the blood of Jesus? In that blood, dwelt the soul of the holy Son of God.

The eternal life of the Godhead was carried in that blood (Acts 20:28).

The power of that blood in its divers effects is nothing less than the eternal power of God Himself. What a glorious thought for everyone who desires to experience the full power of the blood

II. But the power of the blood lies above everything else in the fact that it is offered to God on the altar for redemption.

When we think of blood as shed, we think of death; death follows, when the blood or the soul is poured out. Death makes us think of sin, for death is the punishment of sin. God gave Israel the blood on the altar, as the atonement or covering for sin; that means-the sins of the transgressor were laid on the victim, and its death was reckoned as the death or punishment for the sins laid upon it.

The blood was thus the life given up to death for the satisfaction of the law of God, and in obedience to His command. Sin was so entirely covered and atoned for, it was no longer reckoned as that of the transgressor. He was forgiven.

But all these sacrifices and offerings were only types, and shadows, till the Lord Jesus came. His blood was the reality to which these types pointed.

His blood was in itself of infinite value, because it carried His soul or life. But the atoning virtue of His blood was infinite also, because of the manner in which it was shed. In holy obedience to the Father's will He subjected Himself to the penalty of the broken law, by pouring out His soul unto death. By that death, not only was the penalty borne, but the law was satisfied, and the Father glorified. His blood atoned for sin, and thus made it powerless. It has a marvellous power for removing sin, and opening heaven for the sinner; whom it cleanses, and sanctifies, and makes meet for heaven.

It is because of the Wonderful Person whose blood was shed; and because of the wonderful way in which it was shed, fulfilling the law of God, while satisfying its just demands, that the blood of Jesus has such wonderful power. It is the blood of Atonement, and hence has such efficacy to redeem; accomplishing everything for, and in, the sinner, that is necessary to salvation.

II. Our second question is-WHAT HAS THAT POWER ACCOMPLISHED?

As we see something of the wonders that power has accomplished, we shall be encouraged to believe that it can do the same for us. Our best plan is to note how the Scriptures glory in the great things which have taken place through the power of the blood of Jesus.

I. The Blood Of Jesus Has Opened The Grave

We read in Hebrews 13:20 "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus that great Shepherd of the sheep, THROUGH THE BLOOD OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT."

It was through the virtue of the blood, that God raised up Jesus from the dead. God's almighty power was not exerted to raise Jesus from the dead, apart from the blood.

He came to earth as surety, and bearer, of the sin of mankind. It was through the shedding of His blood alone that He had the right, as man, to rise again, and to obtain eternal life through resurrection. His blood had satisfied the law and righteousness of God. By so doing He had overcome the power of sin, and brought it to naught. So, also, death was defeated, as its sting, sin, had been removed, and the devil also was defeated, who had the power of death, having now lost all right over Him and us. His blood had destroyed the power of death, the devil and hell—THE BLOOD OF JESUS HAS OPENED THE GRAVE. He who truly believes that, perceives the close connection which exists between the blood and the almighty power of God. It is only through the blood that God exerts His almightiness in dealing with sinful men. Where the blood is, there the resurrection power of God gives entrance into eternal life. The blood has made a complete end of all the power of death, and hell; its effects surpass all human thought.

II. Again The Blood of Jesus Has Opened Heaven

We read in Hebrews 9:22, Christ "by His own blood entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

We know that in the Old Testament Tabernacle God's manifested presence was inside the veil. No power of man could remove that veil. The High Priest alone could enter there, but only with blood, or the loss of his own life. That was a picture of the power of sin in the flesh, which separates us from God. The eternal righteousness of God guarded the entrance to the Most Holy Place, that no flesh might approach Him.

But now our Lord appears, not in a material but in the true Temple. As High Priest and representative of His People, He asks for Himself, and for sinful children of Adam, an entrance into the presence of the Holy One. "That where I am, there they may be also" is His request. He asks that heaven may be opened for each one, even for the greatest sinner, who believes in Him. His request is granted. But how is that? It is through the BLOOD. He entered THROUGH HIS OWN BLOOD. THE BLOOD OF JESUS HAS OPENED HEAVEN.

Song of Solomon it is ever, and always, through the blood that the throne of grace remains settled in heaven. In the midst of the seven great realities of heaven (Hebrews 12:22, 24), yes, nearest to God the judge of all, and to Jesus the Mediator, the Holy Spirit gives a prominent place to "THE BLOOD OF SPRINKLING."

It is the constant "speaking" of that blood that keeps heaven open for sinners, and sends streams of blessing down on earth. It is through that blood that Jesus, as Mediator, carries on, without ceasing, His mediatorial work. The Throne of grace owes its existence ever, and always, to the power of that blood.

Oh, the wonderful power of the blood of Christ 1 Just as it has broken open the gates of the grave, and of hell, to let Jesus out, and us with Him; so it has

opened the gates of heaven for Him, and us with Him, to enter. The blood has an almighty power over the kingdom of darkness, and hell beneath; and over the kingdom of heaven, and its glory above.

III. The Blood Of Jesus Is All Powerful in the Human Heart

Since it avails so powerfully with God and over Satan, does it not avail even more powerfully with man, for whose sake it was actually shed?

We may be sure of it.

The wonderful power of the blood is especially manifested on behalf of sinners on earth. Our text is but one out of many places in Scripture where this is emphasised. "Ye were redeemed from your vain conversation with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18, 19).

The word REDEEMED has a depth of meaning. It indicates particularly deliverance from slavery, by emancipation or purchase. The sinner is enslaved, under the hostile power of Satan, the curse of the Law, and sin. Now it is proclaimed "ye are redeemed through the blood," which had paid the debt of guilt, and destroyed the power of Satan, the curse, and sin.

Where this proclamation is heard and received, there Redemption begins, in a true deliverance from a vain manner of life, from a life of sin. The word "REDEMPTION" includes everything God does for a sinner from the pardon of sin, in which it begins (Ephesians 1:14; 4:30) to the full deliverances of the body by Resurrection (Romans 8:24).

Those to whom Peter wrote (1 Peter 1:2) were "Elect -to the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." It was the proclamation about the precious blood that had touched their hearts, and brought them to repentance; awakening faith in them, and filling their souls with life and joy. Each believer was an illustration of the wonderful power of the blood.

Further on, when Peter exhorts them to holiness, it is still the precious blood which is his plea. On that he would fix their eyes.

For the Jew, in his self-righteousness, and hatred of Christ; for the heathen, in his godliness, there was only one means of deliverance from the power of sin. It is still the one power that effects daily deliverance for sinners. How could it be otherwise? The blood that availed so powerfully in heaven and over hell, IS ALL-POWERFUL ALSO IN A SINNER'S HEART. It is impossible for us to think too highly, or to expect too much, from the power of Jesus' blood.

III. How does this Power work?

This is our third question

In what conditions, under what circumstances, can that power secure, unhindered, in us, the mighty results it is intended to produce:

The first answer is, that just as it is everywhere in the kingdom of God,

IT IS THROUGH FAITH.

But faith is largely dependent on knowledge. If knowledge of what the blood can accomplish is imperfect, faith expects little, and the more powerful effects of the blood are impossible. Many Christians think that if now,

through faith in the blood, they have received the assurance of the pardon of their sins, they have a sufficient knowledge of its effects.

They have no idea that the words of God, like God Himself, are inexhaustible, that they have a wealth of meaning and blessing that surpasses all understanding.

They do not remember that when the Holy Spirit speaks of cleansing through the blood, such words are only the imperfect human expressions of the effects and experiences by which the blood, in an unspeakably glorious manner, will reveal its heavenly life-giving power to the soul.

Feeble conceptions of its power prevent the deeper, and more perfect manifestations of its effects.

As we seek to find out what the Scripture teaches about the blood, we shall see, that faith in the blood, even as we now understand it, can produce in us greater results than we have yet known, and in future, a ceaseless blessing may be ours.

Our faith may be strengthened by noticing what the blood has already accomplished. Heaven and hell bear witness to that. Faith will grow by exercising confidence in the fathomless fulness of the promises of God. Let us heartily expect that as we enter more deeply into the fountain, its cleansing, quickening, lifegiving power, will be revealed more blessedly.

We know that in bathing we enter into the most intimate relationship with the water, giving ourselves up to its cleansing effects. The blood of Jesus is described as a "fountain opened for sin and uncleanness" (Zechariah 13:1). By the power of the Holy Spirit it streams through the heavenly Temple. By faith I place myself in closest touch with this heavenly stream, I yield myself

to it, I let it cover me, and go through me. I bathe in the fountain. It cannot withhold its cleansing and strengthening power. I must in simple faith turn away from what is seen, to plunge into that spiritual fountain, which represents the Saviour's blood, with the assurance that it will manifest its blessed power in me.

Song of Solomon let us with childlike, persevering, expectant faith, open our souls to an ever increasing experience of the wonderful power of the blood.

But there is still another reply to the question as to what else is necessary, that the blood may manifest its power.

Scripture connects the blood most closely with the Spirit. It is only where the Spirit works that the power of the blood will be manifested.

THE SPIRIT AND THE BLOOD.

We read in St. John that "there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and the water and the blood; and these three are one" (1 John 5:8). The water refers to baptism unto repentance and the laying aside of sin. The blood witnesses to redemption in Christ. The Spirit is He who supplies power to the water and the blood. So also the Spirit and the blood are associated in Hebrews 9:14, where we read, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience." It was by the eternal Spirit in our Lord, that His blood had its value and power.

It is always through the Spirit that the blood possesses its living power in heaven, and in the hearts of men.

The blood and the Spirit ever bear testimony together. Where the blood is honoured in faith or preaching, there the Spirit works; and where He works

He always leads souls to the blood. The Holy Spirit could not be given till the blood was shed. The living bond between the Spirit and the blood cannot be broken.

It should be seriously noticed, that if the full power of the blood is to be manifested in our souls, we must place ourselves under the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

We must firmly believe that He is in us, carrying on His work in our hearts. We must live as those who know that the Spirit of God really dwells within, as a seed of life, and He will bring to perfection the hidden, powerful effects, of the blood. We must allow Him to lead us.

Through the Spirit the blood will cleanse, sanctify and unite us to God.

When the Apostle desired to arouse believers to hearken to God's voice, with His call to holiness, "Be ye holy, for I am holy," he reminded them that they had been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY.

They must know that they have been redeemed, and what that redemption signified, but they must above all know that "it was not by corruptible things such as silver and gold," things in which there was no power of life, "but by the precious blood of Christ."

To have a correct perception of what the preciousness of that blood was, as the power of a perfect redemption, would be to them the power of a new and holy life.

Beloved Christians, that statement concerns us also. We must know that we are redeemed by the precious blood. We must know about redemption and

the blood before we can experience its power

In proportion as we more fully understand what redemption is, and what the power and preciousness of the blood are, by which redemption has been obtained, we shall the more fully experience its value.

Let us betake ourselves to the School of the Holy Spirit to be led into a deeper knowledge of redemption through the precious blood.

NEED AND DESIRE.

Two things are needful for this.

First: a deeper sense of need, and a desire to understand the blood better. The blood has been shed to take away sin. The power of the blood is to bring to naught the power of sin.

We are, alas, too easily satisfied with the first beginnings of deliverance from sin.

Oh, that what remains of sin in us might become unbearable to us!

May we no longer be contented with the fact that we, as redeemed ones, sin against God's will in so many things.

May the desire for holiness become stronger in us. Should not the thought that the blood has more power than we know of, and can do for us greater things than we have yet experienced, cause our hearts to go out in strong desire? If there were more desire for deliverance from sin; for holiness and intimate friendship with a Holy God; it would be the first thing that is needful for being led further into the knowledge of what the blood can do.

EXPECTATION.

The second thing will follow.

Desire must become expectation.

As we inquire from the Word, in faith, what the blood has accomplished, it must be a settled matter with us, that the blood can manifest its full power also in us. No sense of unworthiness, or of ignorance, or of helplessness must cause us to doubt. The blood works. in the surrendered soul with a ceaseless power of life.

Surrender yourself to God the Holy Spirit. Fix the eyes of your heart on the blood.

Open your whole inner being to its power.

The blood on which the Throne of Grace in heaven is founded, can make your heart the temple and throne of God.

Shelter under the ever-continuing sprinkling of the blood.

Ask the Lamb of God Himself to make the blood efficacious in you.

You will surely experience that there is nothing to compare with the wonder-working power of the blood of Jesus.

Chapter 3^(TOC)

Reconciliation Through the Blood

" Being justified freely by his grace through the REDEMPTION that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth as a PROPITIATION through faith in his blood."—3:24, 25.

As we have seen, several distinct blessings have been procured for us by the power of the blood of Jesus, which are all included in the one word "REDEMPTION." Among these blessings, RECONCILIATION takes the first place. "God hath set forth Jesus as a RECONCILIATION through faith in his blood." In our Lord's work of REDEMPTION, RECONCILIATION naturally comes first. It stands first also among the things the sinner has to do, who desires to have a share in REDEMPTION. Through it, a participation in the other blessings of Redemption is made possible.

It is of great importance also, that the believer, who has already received RECONCILIATION, should obtain a deeper, and more spiritual conception of its meaning, and blessedness. If the power of the blood in REDEMPTION is rooted in RECONCILIATION, then a fuller knowledge of what RECONCILIATION is, is the surest way to obtain a fuller experience of the power of the blood. The heart that is surrendered to the teaching of the Holy Spirit will surely learn what RECONCILIATION means. May our hearts be opened wide to receive it.

To understand what RECONCILIATION BY THE BLOOD means let us consider:

1. Sin, Which Has Made Reconciliation Necessary.
2. God'S Holiness Which Fore-Ordained It;
3. The Blood Of Jesus Which Obtained It;
4. The Pardon Which Results From It.

1. Sin, Which made Reconciliation Necessary

In all the work of Christ, and above all in RECONCILIATION, God's object is the removal and destruction of sin. Knowledge of sin is necessary for the knowledge of RECONCILIATION.

We want to understand what there is in sin that needs RECONCILIATION, and how RECONCILIATION renders sin powerless. Then faith will have something to take hold of, and the experience of that blessing is made possible.

Sin has had a twofold effect. It has had an effect on God, as well as on man. We emphasise generally its effect on man. But the effect it has exercised on God is more terrible and serious. It is because of its effect on God that sin has its power over us. God, as Lord of all, could not overlook sin. It is His unalterable law that sin must bring forth sorrow and death. When man fell into sin, he, by that law of God, was brought under the power of sin. Song of Solomon it is with the law of God that REDEMPTION must begin, for if sin is powerless against God, and the law of God gives sin no authority over us, then its power over us is destroyed. The knowledge that sin is speechless before God, assures us that it has no longer authority over us.

What then was the effect of sin upon God? In His divine nature, He ever remains unchanged, and unchangeable, but in His relationship and bearing towards man, an entire change has taken place. Sin is disobedience, a contempt of the authority of God; it seeks to rob God of His honour, as God and Lord. Sin is determined opposition to a Holy God. It not only can, but must awaken His wrath.

While it was God's desire to continue in love and friendship with man, sin has compelled Him to become an opponent. Although the love of God towards man remains unchanged, sin made it impossible for Him to admit man into fellowship with Himself. It has compelled Him to pour out upon man His wrath, and curse, and punishment, instead of His love. The change which sin has caused in God's relationship to man is awful.

Man is guilty before God. Guilt is debt. We know what debt is. It is something that one person can demand from another, a claim which must be met and settled.

When sin is committed its after-effects may not be noticed, but its guilt remains. The sinner is guilty. God cannot disregard His own demand that sin must be punished; and His glory, which has been dishonoured, must be upheld. As long as the debt is not discharged, or the guilt expiated, it is, in the nature of the case, impossible for a Holy God to allow the sinner to come into His presence.

We often think that the great question for us is, how we can be delivered from the indwelling power of sin; but that is a question of less importance than, how can we be delivered from the guilt which is heaped up before God? Can the guilt of sin be removed? Can the effect of sin upon God, in awakening His wrath, be removed? Can sin be blotted out before God? If

these things can be done, the power of sin will be broken in us also. It is only through RECONCILIATION that the guilt of sin can be removed.

The word translated "RECONCILIATION" means actually "to cover." Even heathen people had an idea of this. But in Israel God revealed a RECONCILIATION which could so truly cover and remove the guilt of sin, that the original relationship between God and man can be entirely restored. This is what true RECONCILIATION must do. It must so remove the guilt of sin, that is, the effect of sin on God, that man can draw near to God, in the blessed assurance that there is not any longer the least guilt resting on him to keep him away from God.

2. The Holiness of God which fore ordained the Reconciliation

This must also be considered if we are to understand RECONCILIATION aright.

God's Holiness is His infinite, glorious perfection, which leads Him always to desire what is good in others as well as in Himself. He bestows, and works out what is good in others, and hates and condemns all that is opposed to what is good.

In His holiness both the LOVE and WRATH of God are united; His LOVE which bestows itself; HIS WRATH which, according to the divine law of righteousness, casts out and consumes what is evil.

It is, as the Holy One, that God ordained RECONCILIATION in Israel, and took up His abode on the Mercy Seat.

It is as the Holy One that He, in expectation of New Testament times, said so

often, "I am thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel."

It is as the Holy One that God wrought out His counsel of RECONCILIATION in Christ.

The wonder of this counsel is, that both the holy love and the holy wrath of God find satisfaction in it. Apparently they were in irreconcilable strife with one another. The holy love was unwilling to let man go. Notwithstanding all his sin, it could not give him up. He must be redeemed. The holy wrath could not surrender its demands. The law had been despised. God had been dishonoured. God's right must be upheld. There could be no thought of releasing the sinner as long as the law was not satisfied. The terrible effect of sin in heaven-on God, must be counteracted; the guilt of sin must be removed; otherwise the sinner could not be delivered. The only solution possible was RECONCILIATION.

We have seen that RECONCILIATION means COVERING. It means that something else has taken the place where sin was established, so that sin can no longer be seen by God.

But because God is the Holy One, and His eyes as a flame of fire, that which covered sin must be something of such a nature that it really counteracted the evil that sin had done, and also that it so blotted out sin before God that it was really destroyed, and was not now to be seen.

RECONCILIATION for sin can take place only by satisfaction. Satisfaction is RECONCILIATION. And as satisfaction is through a substitute, sin can be punished, and the sinner saved. God's holiness also would be glorified, and its demands met, as well as the demand of God's love in the redemption of the sinner; and the demand of His righteousness in the maintenance of the glory of God and of His law.

We know how this was set forth in the Old Testament laws of the offerings. A clean beast took the place of a guilty man. His sin was laid, by confession, on the head of the victim, which bore the punishment by surrendering its life unto death. Then the blood, representing a clean life that now through the bearing of punishment is free from guilt, can be brought into God's presence; the blood or life of the beast that has borne the punishment in place of the sinner. That blood made RECONCILIATION, and covered the sinner and his sin, because it had taken his place, and atoned for his sin.

There was RECONCILIATION IN THE BLOOD.

But that was not a reality. The blood of cattle or of goats could never take away sin; it was only a shadow, a picture, of the real RECONCILIATION.

Blood of a totally different character was necessary for an effectual covering of guilt. According to the counsel of the Holy God, nothing less than the blood of God's own Son could bring about RECONCILIATION.

Righteousness demanded it; Love offered it. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God hath set forth for a RECONCILIATION through faith in his blood."

3. The Blood that wrought out the Reconciliation

RECONCILIATION must be the satisfaction of the demands of God's holy law.

The Lord Jesus accomplished that. By a willing, and perfect obedience, He fulfilled the law under which He had placed Himself. In the same spirit of complete surrender to the will of the Father, He bore the curse which the law

had pronounced against sin. He rendered, in fullest measure of obedience or punishment, all that the law of God could ever ask or desire. The law was perfectly satisfied by Him. But how can His fulfilling of the demands of the law be RECONCILIATION for the sins of others? Because, both in Creation and in the holy covenant of grace that the Father had made with Him, He was recognised as the head of the human race. Because of this, He was able, by becoming flesh, to become a second Adam. When He, the WORD, became FLESH, He placed Himself in a real fellowship with our flesh which was under the power of sin, and He assumed the responsibility for all that sin had done in the flesh against God. His obedience and perfection was not merely that of one man among others, but that of Him who had placed Himself in fellowship with all other men, and who had taken their sin upon Himself.

As Head of mankind through Creation, as their representative in the Covenant, He became their surety. As a perfect satisfaction of the demands of the law was accomplished by the shedding of His blood, this was THE RECONCILIATION; the covering of our sin.

Above all, we must never forget that He was God. This bestowed a divine power on Him, to unite Himself with His creatures, and to take them up into Himself. It bestowed on His sufferings a virtue of infinite holiness and power. It made the merit of His blood-shedding more than sufficient to deal with all the guilt of human sin. It made His blood such a real RECONCILIATION, such a perfect covering of sin, that the holiness of God no longer beholds it. It has been, in truth, blotted out. The Blood of Jesus, God's Son, has procured a real, perfect and eternal RECONCILIATION.

What does that mean?

We have spoken of the awful effect of sin on God, of the terrible change

which took place in heaven, through sin. Instead of favour, and friendship, and blessing, and the life of God, from Heaven, man had nothing to look for except wrath, and curse, and death, and perdition. He could think of God only with fear and terror; without hope, and without love. Sin never ceased to call for vengeance, guilt must be dealt with in full.

But see the blood of Jesus, God's Son, has been shed. Atonement for sin has been made. Peace is restored. A change has taken place again, as real and widespread as that which sin had brought about. For those who receive the RECONCILIATION, sin has been brought to naught. The wrath of God turns round and hides itself in the depth of divine love.

The Righteousness of God no longer terrifies man. It meets him as a friend, with an offer of complete justification. God's countenance beams with pleasure and approval as the penitent sinner draws near to Him, and He invites him to intimate fellowship. He opens for him treasure of blessing. There is nothing now that can separate him from God.

The RECONCILIATION through the blood of Jesus has covered his sins; they appear no longer in God's sight. He no longer imputes sin. RECONCILIATION has wrought out a perfect and eternal redemption.

Oh 1 who can tell the worth of that precious blood?

It is no wonder that for ever mention will be made of that blood in the song of the redeemed, and through all eternity, as long as heaven lasts, the praise of the blood will resound. "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood."

But here is the wonder, that the redeemed on earth do not more heartily join in that song, and that they are not abounding in praise for the

RECONCILIATION that the power of the Blood has accomplished.

4. The Pardon which follows from Reconciliation

That the blood has made RECONCILIATION for sin, and covered it, and that as a result of this such a wonderful change has taken place in the heavenly realms -all this will avail us nothing, unless we obtain a personal share in it.

It is in the pardon of sin this takes place.

God has offered a perfect acquittal from all our sin and guilt. Because RECONCILIATION has been made for sin, we can now be RECONCILED to Him. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Following this word of RECONCILIATION is the invitation, "Be ye reconciled to God." Whoever receives RECONCILIATION for sin, is RECONCILED to God. He knows that all his sins are forgiven.

The Scriptures use sundry illustrations to emphasise the fulness of forgiveness, and to convince the fearful heart of the sinner, that the blood has really taken his sin away. "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins" (Isaiah 44:22). "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back" (Isaiah 38:17). "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:9). "The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah and they shall not be found for I will pardon them" (Jeremiah 50:20).

This is what the New Testament calls justification. It is thus named in

Romans 3:23-26, "For all have sinned ... being justified freely (for nothing) through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth as a RECONCILIATION, THROUGH FAITH IN HIS BLOOD, to declare his righteousness ... that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

So perfect is the RECONCILIATION and so really has sin been covered and blotted out, that he who believes in Christ is looked upon, and treated by God, as entirely righteous. The acquittal which he has received from God is so complete that there is nothing, absolutely nothing, to prevent him approaching God with the utmost freedom.

For the enjoyment of this blessedness nothing is necessary save faith in the blood. The blood alone has done everything.

The penitent sinner who turns from his sin to God, needs only faith in that blood. That is, faith in the power of the blood, that it has truly atoned for sin, and that it really has atoned for him. Through that faith, he knows that he is fully RECONCILED to God, and that there is now not the least thing to hinder God pouring out on him the fulness of His love, and blessing.

If he looks towards heaven which formerly was covered with clouds, black with God's wrath, and a coming awful judgment; that cloud is no longer to be seen, everything is bright in the gladsome light of God's face, and God's love. Faith in the blood manifests in his heart the same wonder-working power that it exercised in heaven. Through faith in the blood he becomes partaker of all the blessings which the blood has obtained for him, from God.

Fellow believers ! pray earnestly that the Holy Spirit may reveal to you the glory of this RECONCILIATION, and the pardon of your sins, made yours through the blood of Jesus. Pray for enlightened hearts to see how completely

the accusing and condemning power of your sin has been removed, and how God in the fulness of His love and good pleasure has turned towards you. Open your hearts to the Holy Spirit that He may reveal in you the glorious effects which the blood has had in heaven. God hath set forth JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF as a RECONCILIATION through faith in His blood. He is the RECONCILIATION for our sins. Rely on Him, as having already covered your sin before God. Set Him between yourselves and your sins, and you will experience how complete the Redemption is, which He has accomplished, and how powerful the RECONCILIATION is through faith in His blood.

Then through the LIVING CHRIST, the powerful effects which the blood has exercised in heaven will increasingly be manifested in your hearts, and you will know what it means to walk, by the Spirit's grace, in the full light and enjoyment of forgiveness.

And you who have not yet obtained forgiveness of your sins, does not this word come to you as an urgent call to faith in His blood?

Will you never allow yourselves to be moved by what God has done for you as sinners? "Herein is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the reconciliation for our sins" (1 John 4:20).

The precious blood, divine, has been shed, RECONCILIATION is complete, and the message comes to you, "Be ye reconciled to God."

If you repent of your sins, and desire to be delivered from sin's power and bondage, exercise faith in the blood. Open your heart to the influence of the word that God has sent to be spoken unto you. Open your heart to the message, that the blood can deliver you, yes, even you, this moment. Only believe it. Say "that blood is also for me." If you come as a guilty, lost sinner,

longing for pardon, you may rest assured that the blood which has already made a perfect RECONCILIATION covers your sin and restores you, immediately, to the favour and love of GOD.

So I pray you, exercise faith in the blood. This moment bow down before God, and tell Him that you do believe in the power of the blood for your own soul. Having said that, stand by it, cling to it. Through faith in His blood, Jesus Christ will be the RECONCILIATION for your sins also.

Chapter 4^(TOC)

Cleansing Through the Blood

"If ye walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin"—1 John 1:7

WE have already seen that the most important effect of the Blood is RECONCILIATION for sin.

The fruit of knowledge about, and faith in RECONCILIATION, is the PARDON of sin. Pardon is just a declaration of what has already taken place in heaven on the sinner's behalf, and his hearty acceptance of it.

This first effect of the Blood is not the only one. In proportion as the soul, through faith, yields itself to the Spirit of God to understand and enjoy the full power of RECONCILIATION, the Blood exerts a further power, in the imparting of the other blessings which, in Scripture, are attributed to it.

One of the first results of RECONCILIATION is CLEANSING FROM SIN. Let us see what God's Word has to say about this. CLEANSING is often spoken about, among us, as if it were no more than the pardon of sins, or the cleansing from guilt. This, however, is not so. Scripture does not speak of being CLEANSED FROM GUILT. CLEANSING from sin means deliverance from the pollution, not from the guilt of sin. The guilt of sin concerns our relationship to God, and our responsibility to make good our misdoings,-or to bear the punishment of them. The pollution of sin, on the

other hand, is the sense of defilement and impurity, which sin brings to our inner being, and it is with this that CLEANSING has to do.

It is of the greatest importance for every believer who desires to enjoy the full salvation which God has provided for him, to understand aright what the Scriptures teach about this CLEANSING.

Let us consider:

I. What The Word Cleansing Means In The Old Testament?

II. What Is The Blessing Indicated By That Word In The New Testament?

III. How may we Experience the full enjoyment of this Blessing?

I. Cleansing in the Old Testament

In the service of God as ordained by the hand of Moses for Israel, there were two ceremonies to be observed by God's people in preparation for approach to Him. These were the OFFERINGS or SACRIFICES and the CLEANSINGS or PURIFICATIONS. Both were to be observed but in different manners. Both were intended to remind man how sinful he was, and how unfit to draw near to a holy God. Both were to typify the REDEMPTION by which the Lord Jesus Christ would restore to man fellowship with God. As a rule it is only the OFFERINGS which are regarded as typical of REDEMPTION through Christ. The Epistle to the Hebrews, however, emphatically mentions THE CLEANSINGS as figures "for the time being in which were offered SACRIFICES and DIVERS WASHINGS" (Hebrews 9:9, 10).

If we can imagine the life of an Israelite we shall understand that the

consciousness of sin, and the need for REDEMPTION, were awakened not less by the CLEANSINGS than the OFFERINGS.

We must also learn from them what the power of the Blood of Jesus actually is.

We may take one of the more important cases of CLEANSING as an illustration. If anyone was in a hut or house where a dead body lay, or if he had even touched a dead body, or bones-he was unclean for seven days. Death, as the punishment for sin, made everyone who came into association with it unclean. CLEANSING was accomplished by using the ashes of a young heifer which had been burned, as described in Numbers 19. (Compare Hebrews 9:13, 14.) These ashes, mixed with water, were sprinkled by means of a bunch of hyssop on the one who was unclean; he had then to bathe himself in water, after which he was once more ceremonially clean.

The words "UNCLEAN," "CLEANSING," "CLEAN," were used in reference to the healing of leprosy, a disease which might be described as a living death. Leviticus, chapters 13 and 14: Here also he who was to be CLEANSED must bathe in water, having been first sprinkled with water, in which the blood of a bird, sacrificially offered, had been mixed. Seven days later he was again sprinkled with sacrificial blood.

An attentive contemplation of the laws of CLEANSING will teach us that the difference between THE CLEANSINGS and THE OFFERINGS was twofold. First: the OFFERING had definite reference to the transgression for which RECONCILIATION had to be made. CLEANSING had more to do with conditions which were not sinful in themselves, but were the result of sin, and therefore must be acknowledged by God's holy people as defiled. Secondly: In the case of the OFFERING, nothing was done to the offerer

himself. He saw the blood sprinkled on the altar or carried into the Holy Place; he must believe that this procures RECONCILIATION before God. But nothing was done to himself. In CLEANSING, on the other hand, what happened to the person was the chief thing. Defilement was something that either through internal disease, or outward touch, had come upon the man; so the washing or sprinkling with water must take place on himself as ordained by God.

CLEANSING was something that he could feel and experience. It brought about a change not only in his relationship to God, but in his own condition. In the OFFERING something was done FOR him; by CLEANSING something was done IN him. The OFFERING had respect to his guilt. The CLEANSING to the pollution of sin.

The same meaning of the words "CLEAN," "CLEANSING," is found elsewhere in the Old Testament. David prays in Psalm li, "CLEANSE me from my sin," "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be CLEAN." The word used by David here is that which is used most frequently for the CLEANSING of anyone who had touched a dead body. Hyssop also was used in such cases. David prayed for more than pardon. He confessed that he had been "shapen in iniquity," that his nature was sinful. He prayed that he might be made pure within. "CLEANSE me from my sin," was his prayer. He uses the same word later on when he prays, "Create in me a CLEAN heart, O God." CLEANSING is more than pardon.

In the same manner this word is used by Ezekiel, and refers to an inner condition which must be changed. This is evident from Ezekiel 24:11, 13, where, speaking of uncleanness being melted out, God says "Because I have purged thee and thou wast not purged." Later on, speaking of the New Covenant (chap. xxxvi. z5), He says, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon

you, and ye shall be CLEAN: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I CLEANSE you."

MALACHI uses the same word, connecting it with fire (chapter 3:3), "HE shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, he shall purify (CLEANSE) the sons of Levi."

CLEANSING by water; by blood; by fire; all typical of the CLEANSING which would take place under the New Covenant-an inner CLEANSING and deliverance from the stain of sin.

II. The Blessing indicated in the New Testament by Cleansing

Mention is often made in the New Testament of a clean or pure heart. Our Lord said, "Blessed are the PURE in heart" (Matthew 5:8). Paul speaks of "love out of a PURE heart" (1 Timothy 1:5). He speaks also of a "PURE conscience."

Peter exhorts his readers to "love one another with a PURE heart fervently." The word CLEANSING is also used.

We read of those who are described as God's people that God purified (CLEANSED) their hearts through faith (Acts 15:9).

That the purpose of the Lord Jesus concerning those who were His was "to purify (CLEANSE) to himself a people of his own possession" (Titus 2:14).

As regards ourselves we read "Let us CLEANSE ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit" (2 Corinthians 7:1).

All these places teach us that CLEANSING is an inward word wrought in the

heart, and that it is subsequent to pardon.

We are told in 1 John 1:7 that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son CLEANSETH us from all sin." This word CLEANSETH does not refer to the grace of PARDON received at conversion; but to the effect of grace IN God's children who walk in the light. We read, "If we walk in the light as he is in the light ... the blood of Jesus Christ his Son CLEANSETH us from all sin." That it refers to something more than pardon appears from what follows in verse 9—"He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to CLEANSE us from all unrighteousness." Cleansing is something that comes after pardon and is the result of it, by the inward and experimental reception of the power of the blood of Jesus in the heart of the believer.

This takes place according to the Word, first in the purifying of the conscience. "How much more shall the blood of Christ ... PURGE your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Hebrews 9:14). The mention already made of the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean typifies a personal experience of the precious blood of Christ. Conscience is not only a judge to give sentence on our actions, it is also the inward voice which bears witness to our relationship to God, and to God's relationship to us. When it is CLEANSED by the blood then it bears witness that we are well pleasing to God. It is written in Hebrews 10:2, "The worshippers once PURGED should have no more conscience of sins." We receive through the Spirit an inward experience that the blood has so fully delivered us from the guilt and power of sin that we, in our regenerated nature, have escaped entirely from its dominion. Sin still dwells in our flesh, with its temptations, but it has no power to rule. The conscience is CLEANSED, there is no need for the least shadow of separation between God and us; we look up to Him in the full power of REDEMPTION. The conscience CLEANSED by the blood

bears witness to nothing less than a complete redemption; the fulness of God's good-pleasure.

And if the conscience is CLEANSED so also is the HEART, of which the conscience is the centre. We read of having the heart CLEANSED from an evil conscience (Hebrews 10:22). Not only must the conscience be CLEANSED but the heart also must be CLEANSED, including the understanding, and the will, with all our thoughts and desires. Through the blood, by the shedding of which Christ delivered Himself up to death, and by virtue of which He entered again into heaven, the death and resurrection of Christ are ceaselessly effectual. By this power of His death and resurrection, sinful lusts, and dispositions, are slain.

"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," from original, as well as from actual sin. The blood exercises its spiritual, heavenly power in the soul. The believer in whose life the blood is fully efficacious, experiences that the old nature is hindered from manifesting its power. Through the blood, its lusts and desires are subdued and slain, and everything is so CLEANSED that the Spirit can bring forth His glorious fruit. In case of the least stumbling, the soul finds immediate CLEANSING and restoration. Even unconscious sins are rendered powerless through its efficacy.

We have noted a difference between the guilt and the pollution of sin. This is of importance for a clear understanding of the matter; but in actual life we must ever remember that they are not thus divided. God through the blood deals with sin as a whole, Every true operation of the blood manifests its power simultaneously over the guilt and the pollution of sin. Reconciliation and cleansing always go together, and the blood is ceaselessly operative.

Many seem to think that the blood is there, so that if we have sinned again,

we can turn again to it to be cleansed. But this is not so. Just as a fountain flows always, and always purifies what is placed in it or under its stream, so it is with this Fountain, opened for sin and uncleanness (Zechariah 13:1). The eternal power of life of the Eternal Spirit works through the blood. Through Him the heart can abide always under the flow, and CLEANSING of the Blood.

In the Old Testament CLEANSING was necessary for each sin. In the New Testament CLEANSING depends on Him who ever lives to intercede. When faith sees and desires and lays hold of this fact, the heart can abide every moment under the protecting and CLEANSING tower of the blood.

III. How may we Experience the full enjoyment of this Blessing?

Everyone who through faith obtains a share in the atoning merit of the blood of Christ, has a share also in its CLEANSING efficacy. But the experience of its power to cleanse, is, for several reasons, sadly imperfect. It is therefore of great importance to understand what the conditions are for the full enjoyment of this glorious blessing.

I. First of all knowledge is necessary

Many think that pardon of sin is all that we receive through the blood. They ask for and so obtain nothing more.

It is a blessed thing to begin to see that the Holy Spirit of God has a special purpose in making use of different words in Scripture concerning the effects

of the blood. Then we begin to inquire about their special meaning. Let everyone who truly longs to know what the Lord desires to teach us by this one word CLEANSING, attentively compare all the places in Scripture where the word is used, where CLEANSING is spoken of. He will soon feel that there is more promised to the believer than the removal of guilt. He will begin to understand that CLEANSING through washing can take away stain, and although he cannot fully explain in what way this takes place, he will, however, be convinced that he may expect a blessed inward operation of the CLEANSING away of the effects of sin, by the blood. Knowledge of this FACT is the first condition of experiencing it.

II. Secondly: There must be desire.

It is to be feared that our Christianity is only too pleased to postpone to a future life the experience of the Beatitude which our Lord intended for our earthly life—"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

It is not sufficiently recognised that PURITY OF HEART is a characteristic of every child of God, because it is the necessary condition of fellowship with Him, of the enjoyment of His salvation. There is too little inner longing to be really in all things, at all times, well pleasing to the Lord. Sin and the stain of sin trouble us too little.

God's Word comes to us with the promise of blessing which ought to awaken all our desires. Believe that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. If you learn how to yield yourself up aright to its operation it can do great things in you. Should you not every hour desire to experience its glorious cleansing efficacy to be preserved, in spite of your depraved nature, from the many

stains for which your conscience is constantly accusing you? May your desires be awakened to long for this blessing. Put God to the test to work out in you what He as the Faithful One has promised—CLEANSING from all unrighteousness.

III. The third condition is a willingness to separate

Yourselves from every thing that is unclean. Through sin everything in our nature, and in the world, is defiled. CLEANSING cannot take place where there is not an entire separation from, and giving up of everything unclean. "Touch not the unclean thing" is God's command to His chosen ones. I must recognise that all the things surrounding me are unclean.

My friends, my possessions, my spirit, must all be surrendered that I may be CLEANSED in each relationship by the precious blood, and that all the activities of my spirit, soul, and being, may experience a thorough CLEANSING.

He who will keep back anything however small cannot obtain the full blessing. He who is willing to pay the full price so as to have his whole being baptised by the blood is on the way to understand fully this word, The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin.

IV. The last condition is exercising faith in the power of the blood

It is not as if we, through our faith, bestow its efficacy upon the blood. No, the blood ever retains its power and efficacy, but our unbelief closes our hearts, and hinders its operation, Faith is simply the removal of that hindrance, the setting open of our hearts, for the divine power by which the living Lord will bestow His blood.

Yes, let us believe that there is CLEANSING through the blood.

You have perhaps seen a spring in the midst of a patch of grass. From the much travelled road that runs by that patch, dust is constantly falling over the grass that grows by the side of the road, but where the water from the spring falls in refreshing and cleansing spray, there is no sign of dust, everything is green and fresh. So the precious blood of Christ carries on its blessed work without ceasing in the soul of the believer, who by faith appropriates it. He who by faith commits himself to the Lord, and believes that this can and will take place, it will be given to him.

The heavenly, spiritual effect of the blood can be really experienced every moment. Its power is such that I can always abide in the fountain, always dwell in the wounds of my Lord.

Believer, come, I entreat of you, put it to the proof how the blood of Jesus can cleanse your heart from all sin.

You know with what joy a weary traveller would bathe in a fresh stream, plunging into the water to experience its cooling, and cleansing, and strengthening effect. Lift up your eyes and see by faith how ceaselessly a stream flows from heaven above to earth beneath. It is the blessed Spirit's influence, through whom the power of the blood of Jesus flows earthwards over souls, to heal and to purify them. Oh! place yourself in this stream, simply believe that the words, "The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin,"

have a divine meaning, deeper, wider, than you have ever imagined. Believe that it is the Lord Jesus Himself who will cleanse you in His blood, and fulfil His promise in power in you. And reckon on the cleansing from sin by His blood, as a blessing, in the daily enjoyment of which you can confidently abide.

Chapter 5^(TOC)

Sanctification Through the Blood

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate"—Hebrews 13:12.

"Cleansing through the blood" was the subject of our last chapter.

SANCTIFICATION THROUGH THE BLOOD must now occupy our attention.

To a superficial observer it might seem that there is little difference between CLEANSING and SANCTIFICATION, that the two words mean about the same thing; but the difference is great and important.

CLEANSING has to do chiefly with the old life, and the stain of sin which must be removed, and is only preparatory.

SANCTIFICATION concerns the new life and that, characteristic of it which must be imparted to it by God. SANCTIFICATION, which means union with God, is the peculiar fulness of blessing purchased for us by the blood.

The distinction between these two things is clearly marked in Scripture. Paul reminds us that "Christ gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it" (Ephesians 5:25, R. V.). Having first CLEANSED it, then He SANCTIFIES it. Writing to Timothy he says, "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use" (2 Timothy 2:21). SANCTIFICATION is a blessing which

follows after, and surpasses CLEANSING.

It is also strikingly illustrated by the ordinances connected with the consecration of the Priests, compared with that of the Levites. In the case of the latter, who took a lower position than the Priests in the service of the Sanctuary, no mention is made of SANCTIFICATION; but the word CLEANSING is used five times (Numbers 8).

In the consecration of the Priests, on the other hand, the word "to SANCTIFY" is often used; for the Priests stood in a closer relationship to God than the Levites (Exodus 29; Leviticus 8).

This record at the same time emphasises the close connection between the sacrificial blood, and SANCTIFICATION. In the case of the consecration of the Levites-RECONCILIATION for sin was made, and they were sprinkled with the water of purification for CLEANSING, but they were not sprinkled with blood. But in the consecration of the Priests, blood had to be sprinkled upon them. They were SANCTIFIED by a more personal and intimate application of the blood.

All this was typical of SANCTIFICATION through the BLOOD OF JESUS, and this is what we now seek to understand, that we may obtain a share in it. Let us then consider:

I. What Sanctification is.

II. That It Was The Great Object Of The Sufferings Of Christ.

III. That It Can Be Obtained Through The Blood.

I. What Sanctification is

To understand what the SANCTIFICATION of the redeemed is, we must first learn what the holiness of God is. He alone is the HOLY ONE. Holiness in the creature must be received from Him.

God's holiness is often spoken of as though it consisted in His hatred of, and hostility to sin; but this gives no explanation of what holiness actually is. It is a merely negative statement that God's holiness cannot bear sin.

Holiness is that attribute of God because of which He always is, and wills, and doer what is supremely good; because of which also He desires what is supremely good in His creatures, and bestows it upon them.

God is called "The Holy One" in Scripture, not only because He punishes sin, but also because He is the Redeemer of His people. It is His holiness, which ever wills what is good for all, that moved Him to redeem sinners. Both the WRATH of God which punishes sin, and LOVE of God which redeems the sinner, spring from the same source—His holiness. Holiness is the perfection of God's nature.

Holiness in man is a disposition in entire agreement with that of God; which chooses in all things to will as God wills: as it is written—"As he is holy, so be ye holy" (1 Peter 1:15). Holiness in us is nothing else than oneness with God. The Sanctification of God's people is effected by the communication to them of the holiness of God. There is no other way of obtaining SANCTIFICATION, save by the Holy God bestowing what He alone possesses. He alone is the HOLY ONE. He is the Lord who sanctifies.

By the different meanings which Scripture attaches to the words sanctification, and "to sanctify"—a certain relationship with God, into which we are brought, is pointed out.

The first and simplest meaning of the word SANCTIFICATION is "separation." That which is taken out of its surroundings, by God's command, and is set aside or separated as His own possession and for His service—that is holy. This does not mean separation from sin only, but from all that is in the world, even from what may be permissible. Thus God sanctified the seventh day. The other days were not unclean, for God saw all that He had made and "beheld it was very good." But that day alone was holy, which God had taken possession of by His own special act. In the same way God had separated Israel from other nations, and in Israel, had separated the priests, to be holy unto Him. This separation unto SANCTIFICATION is always God's own work, and so the electing grace of God is often closely connected with SANCTIFICATION. "Ye shall be holy unto me ... I have separated you ... that ye should be mine" (Leviticus 20:26). "The man whom the Lord shall choose shall be holy" (Numbers 16:7). "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord, the Lord thy God hath chosen thee" (Deuteronomy 7:6). God cannot take part with other lords. He must be the sole possessor, and ruler, of those to whom He reveals and imparts His holiness.

But this separation is not all that is included in the word SANCTIFICATION. It is only the indispensable condition of what must follow. When separated, man stands before God in no respect differing from an object without life that has been sanctified to the service of God. If the separation is to be of value, something more must take place. Man must surrender himself willingly, and heartily, to this separation. SANCTIFICATION includes personal consecration to the Lord to be His.

SANCTIFICATION can become ours only when it sends down its roots into, and takes up its abode in the depths of our personal life; in our will, and in our love. God sanctifies no man against his will, therefore the personal,

hearty, surrender to God is an indispensable part of SANCTIFICATION.

It is for this reason that the Scriptures not only speak of God sanctifying us, but they say often, that we must sanctify ourselves.

But even by consecration, true SANCTIFICATION is not yet complete. Separation and consecration are together only the preparation for the glorious work that God will do, as He imparts His own holiness to the soul.

"PARTAKING OF THE DIVINE NATURE" is the blessing which is promised to believers in SANCTIFICATION. "That we might be partakers of his holiness" (Hebrews 12:10)-that is the glorious aim of God's work in those whom He separates for Himself. But this impartation of His holiness is not a gift of something that is apart from God Himself; no 1 it is in personal fellowship with Him, and partaking of His divine life, that SANCTIFICATION can be obtained.

As the Holy ONE, God dwelt among the people of Israel to sanctify his people (Exodus 29:45, 46). As the Holy ONE, He dwells in us. It is the presence of God alone that can sanctify. But so surely is this our portion, that Scripture does not shrink from speaking of God dwelling in our hearts in such power that we may be "filled unto all the fulness of God." True SANCTIFICATION is fellowship with God and His dwelling in us. Song of Solomon it was necessary that God in Christ should take up His abode in the flesh, and that the Holy Spirit should come to dwell in us. This is what SANCTIFICATION means.

Let us now notice:

II. This Sanctification was the Object for which Christ suffered

This is plainly stated in Hebrews 13:12: "Jesus suffered that he might sanctify his people." In the wisdom of God a participation in His holiness is the highest destiny of man. Therefore, also, this was the central object of the coming of our Lord Jesus to earth; and above all, of His sufferings and death. It was "that he might sanctify his people" and "that they might be holy and without blame" (Ephesians 1:4).

How the sufferings of Christ attained this end, and became our SANCTIFICATION, is made plain to us by the words which He spake to His Father, when He was about to allow Himself to be bound as a sacrifice. "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth" (John 17:19). It was because His sufferings and death were a SANCTIFICATION of Himself, that they can become SANCTIFICATION for us.

What does that mean? Jesus was the HOLY ONE OF GOD, "The Son whom the Father had sanctified and sent into the world," and must He sanctify Himself? He must do so; it was indispensable.

The SANCTIFICATION which He possessed was not beyond the reach of temptation. In His temptation He must maintain it, and show how perfectly His will was surrendered to the holiness of God. We have seen that true holiness in man is the perfect oneness of His will with that of God. Through all our Lord's life, from the temptation in the wilderness onwards, He had subjected His will to the will of His Father, and had consecrated Himself as a sacrifice to God. But it was chiefly in Gethsemane He did this. There was the hour, and the power of darkness; the temptation to put away the terrible cup of wrath from His lips, and to do His own will came with almost irresistible power, but He rejected the temptation. He offered up Himself, and His will, to the will and holiness of God. He sanctified Himself, by a perfect oneness

of will, with that of God. This sanctification of Himself has become the power by which we also may be sanctified through the truth. This is in perfect accord with what we learn from the Epistle to the Hebrews, where, speaking of the words used by Christ, we read, "I come to do thy will, O God," and then it is added, "By the which will we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:9, 10). It was because the offering of His body was His surrender of Himself to do the will of God, that we become sanctified by that will. He sanctified Himself there, for us, that we might be sanctified through the truth. The perfect obedience in which He surrendered Himself, that God's holy will might be accomplished in Him, was not only the meritorious cause of our salvation, but is at the same time the power by which sin was for ever conquered, and by which the same disposition, and the same sanctification, may be created in our hearts.

Elsewhere in this Epistle to the Hebrews, the true relationship of our Lord to His own people is even more clearly characterised as having SANCTIFICATION for its chief end after speaking of how becoming it was, that our Lord should suffer as He did, we read—"For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one" (Hebrews 2:11). The unity between the Lord Jesus and His people consists in the fact, that they both receive their life from one Father, and both have a share in one and the same SANCTIFICATION. Jesus is the sanctifier, they become the sanctified. SANCTIFICATION is the bond that unites them. "Therefore Jesus also suffered that he might sanctify his people with his own blood."

If we are willing to really understand, and experience what SANCTIFICATION by THE BLOOD means, then it is of the utmost importance for us, to first lay fast hold of the fact that SANCTIFICATION is the characteristic, and purpose of the entire sufferings of our Lord, of which

sufferings the blood was the fruit, and means of blessing. His SANCTIFICATION of Himself has the characteristic of those sufferings, and therein lay its value and power. Our SANCTIFICATION is the purpose of those sufferings, and only to attain that purpose do they work out the perfect blessing. In proportion as this is clear to us, we shall press forward into the true meaning and blessing of His sufferings.

It was as the holy ONE that God foreordained redemption. It was His will to glorify His holiness in victory over sin, by the sanctification of man after His own image. It was with the same object that our Lord Jesus endured, and accomplished His sufferings; we must be consecrated to God. And if the Holy Spirit, the holy God as Spirit-comes into us to reveal in us the redemption that is in Jesus, this continues to be with Him, also, the main object. As the Holy Spirit He is the spirit of holiness.

RECONCILIATION, PARDON, and CLEANSING from sin, have all an unspeakable value; they all, however, point onwards to SANCTIFICATION. It is God's will that each one who has been marked by the precious blood, should know that it is a divine mark, characterising his entire separation to God; that this blood calls him to an undivided consecration to a life, wholly for God, and that this blood is the promise, and the power of a participation in God's holiness, through which God Himself will make His abiding place in him, and be his God.

Oh, that we might understand, and believe that:

"Jesus also suffered, that he might sanctify his people, with his own blood"
(Hebrews 13:12).

III. How Sanctification in the Blood is

to be Obtained

An answer to this question, in general, is that every one who is a partaker of the virtue of the blood, is also a partaker of SANCTIFICATION, and is in God's sight a sanctified person.

In proportion as he lives in close and abiding contact with the blood, he continues to experience, increasingly, its sanctifying effects; even though he still understands but little of how those effects are produced. Let no one think that he must first understand how to lay hold of, or explain everything, before he may, by faith, pray that the blood might manifest its sanctifying power in him. No; it was just in connection with the bath of cleansing-the washing of the disciples' feet-that the Lord Jesus said, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." It is the Lord Jesus Himself who sanctifies His people "by His own blood." He who heartily gives himself up to believing worship of, and intercourse with, the LAMB, who has bought us with His blood, will experience through that blood a SANCTIFICATION beyond his conception. The Lord Jesus will do this for him.

But the believer ought to grow in knowledge also; thus only can he enter into the full blessing which is prepared for him. We have not only the right, but it is our duty to inquire earnestly what the essential connection is between the blessed effect of the blood, and our SANCTIFICATION, and in what way the Lord Jesus will work out in us, by His blood, those things which we have ascertained to be the chief qualities of SANCTIFICATION.

We have seen that the beginning of all SANCTIFICATION is SEPARATION to God, as His entire possession, to be at His disposal. And is not this just what the blood proclaims?that the power of sin is broken; that we are loosed from its bonds; that we are no longer its bond-servants; but belong

to Him who purchased our freedom with His blood? "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price" this is the language in which the blood tells us that we are God's possession. Because He desires to have us entirely for Himself, He has chosen and bought us, and set upon us the distinguishing mark of the blood, as those who are separated from all around them, to live only for His service. This idea of separation is clearly expressed in the words we so often repeat, "Jesus, that he might sanctify his people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp bearing his reproach." "Going out" from all that is of this world, was the characteristic of Him who was holy, undefiled, separate from sinners; and it must be the characteristic of all His followers.

Believer, the Lord Jesus HAS SANCTIFIED you through His own blood, and He desires to make you experience, through that blood, the full power of this SANCTIFICATION. Endeavour to gain a clear impression of what has taken place in you through the sprinkling of that blood. The holy God desires to have you entirely for Himself. No one, nothing, may any longer have the least right over you, nor have you any right over yourself. God has separated you unto HIMSELF, and that you might feel this He set His mark upon you. That mark is the most wonderful thing that is to be found on earth or in heaven THE BLOOD OF JESUS. The blood in which the life of the eternal Son of God is; the blood that on the throne of grace is ever before God's face; the blood that assures you of full redemption from the power of sin; that blood is sprinkled upon you, as a sign that you belong to God.

Believer, I pray you, let every thought about the blood awaken in you the glorious confession, "By his own blood, the Lord Jesus has sanctified me, he has taken complete possession of me for God, and I belong entirely to God."

We have seen that SANCTIFICATION is more than separation. That is only

the beginning. We have seen also that personal consecration and hearty and willing surrender to live only for, and in God's holy will, is part of SANCTIFICATION.

In what way can the blood of Christ work out this surrender in us, and SANCTIFY us in that surrender? The answer is not difficult. It is not enough to believe in the power of the blood to redeem us, and to free us from sin, but we must, above all, notice the source of this power.

We know that it has this power, because of the willingness with which the Lord Jesus surrenders Himself. In the shedding of His blood He sanctifies: Himself, offered Himself entirely to God and His holiness. It is because of this that the blood is so holy, and possesses such sanctifying power. In the blood we have an impressive representation of the self-surrender of Christ. The blood ever speaks of the consecration of Jesus to the Father, as the opening of the way, and supplying the power for victory over sin. And the closer we come into contact with the blood, and the more we live under the deep impression of having been sprinkled by the blood, we shall hear more clearly the voice of the blood, declare that "Entire surrender to God is the way to full redemption from sin."

The voice of the blood will not simply teach us or to awaken thought; the blood speaks with a divine and life giving power. What it commands, that it bestows. It works out in us the same disposition that was in our Lord Jesus. By His own blood Jesus sanctifies us, that we, holding nothing back, might surrender ourselves with all our hearts to the holy will of God.

But CONSECRATION itself even along with any; following SEPARATION is still only a preparation, Entire Sanctification takes place when God takes possession of and fills with His glory the temple that is consecrated to Him.

"There will I meet with the children of Israel, and they shall be sanctified by my glory" (Exodus 29:43). Actual, complete SANCTIFICATION consists in God's impartation of His own holiness-of Himself.

Here also the blood speaks—It tells us that heaven is opened, that the powers of the heavenly life have come down to earth, that every hindrance has been removed, and God can make His abode with man.

Immediate nearness and fellowship with God, are made possible by the blood. The believer who surrenders himself unreservedly to the blood, obtains the full assurance that God will bestow Himself wholly, and will reveal His holiness in him.

How glorious are the results of such a SANCTIFICATION! Through the Holy Spirit, the soul's intercourse is in the living experience of God's abiding nearness; accompanied by the awakening of the tenderest carefulness against sin; guarded by caution and the fear of God.

But to live in watchfulness against sin does not satisfy the soul. The temple must not only be cleansed but it must be filled with God's glory. All the virtues of divine holiness, as manifested in the Lord Jesus, are to be sought for and found, in fellowship with God. Sanctification means union with God; fellowship in His will; sharing His life; conformity to His image.

Christians—"Wherefore Jesus also ... suffered without the gate that he might sanctify his people with his own blood. Let us go forth unto him without the camp." Yes; it is He who sanctifies His people. "Let us go forth unto him." Let us trust Him to make known to us the power of the blood. Let us yield ourselves wholly to its blessed efficacy. That blood, through which He sanctified Himself, has entered heaven to open it for us. It can make our hearts also a throne of God, that the grace and glory of God may dwell in us.

Yes; "let us go forth unto him without the camp." He who is willing to lose, and say farewell to everything, in order that Jesus may sanctify him, will not fail to obtain the blessing. He who is willing at any cost to experience the full power of the precious blood, can confidently reckon that he will be sanctified by Jesus Himself, through that blood.

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Amen.

Chapter 6^(TOC)

Cleansed by the Blood to Serve the Living God

"Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by THE BLOOD OF CHRIST"—Ephesians 2:13.

"How much more shall THE BLOOD OF CHRIST ... purge your conscience ... to serve the living God? Hebrews 9:14.

AFTER our study of SANCTIFICATION through the blood, we are now to be engaged in the consideration of what the intimate INTERCOURSE WITH GOD into which we are introduced by SANCTIFICATION, involves.

SANCTIFICATION and INTERCOURSE are closely related facts in Scripture. Apart from SANCTIFICATION there can be no such INTERCOURSE. How could one who is unholy have fellowship with a holy God? On the other hand, without this INTERCOURSE there can be no growth in holiness; it is always, and only in fellowship with the Holy ONE, that holiness can be found.

The intimate connection between SANCTIFICATION and INTERCOURSE appears plainly in the story of the revolt of Nadab and Abihu. God made this the occasion of a clear statement concerning the peculiar nature of the priesthood in Israel. He said, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me" (Leviticus 10:3). Then again in the conspiracy of Korah against Moses and

Aaron; Moses speaking for God said—"To-morrow the Lord shall show who are his, and who is holy: and will cause him to come near unto him, even him whom he hath chosen, will he cause to come near unto him" (Numbers 16:5).

We have already seen that God's election and separation unto Himself of His own, are closely bound up with SANCTIFICATION. It is evident here, also, that the glory and blessing secured by this election to holiness, is nothing else than INTERCOURSE with God. This is indeed the highest, the one perfect blessing for man, who was created for God, and to enjoy His love. The Psalmist sings—"Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts" (Psalm 65:4). In the nature of the case, consecration to God, and nearness to Him are the same thing.

The sprinkling of the blood which sanctifies man unto, and takes possession of him for God bestows, at the same time, the right of INTERCOURSE.

It was thus with the priests in Israel. In the record of their consecration we read—"And Moses brought Aaron's sons, and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands" (Leviticus 7:24). Those who belong to God may, and indeed MUST, live in nearness to Him; they belong to Him. This is illustrated in the case of our Lord, our Great High Priest, who "through his own blood entered, once for all, into the holy place." It is the same with every believer, according to the Word—"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, LET US DRAW NEAR, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" (Hebrews 10:19, 22). The word "enter," as used in this verse, is the peculiar word used of the approach of the priest to God. In the same way, in the Book of Revelation, our right to draw near as priests is declared to be by the power of the blood. We were "Redeemed from our sins by his own

blood" who "has made us kings and priests unto God ... to him be the glory for ever" (Revelation 5:9, 10). "These are they ... who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, therefore are they before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple" (Revelation 7:14).

One of the most glorious blessings made possible for us by the power of the blood, is that of drawing near the throne, into the very presence of God. That we may understand what this blessing means let us consider what is contained in it. It includes—

I. The Right to Dwell in the Presence of God;

II. The Vocation of Offering Spiritual Sacrifices to God;

III. The Power to procure Blessing for others.

I. The Right to Dwell in the Presence of God

Although this privilege belonged exclusively to the priests in Israel, we know that they had free access to the dwelling place of God. They had to abide there continually. As members of the household of God, they ate the shew-bread, and partook of the sacrifices. A true Israelite thought there was no higher privilege than this. It is thus expressed by the Psalmist, "Blessed -or happy-is the man whom thou choolest, and causest to approach unto thee that he may dwell in thy courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple" (Psalm 65:4).

It was because of the manifested presence of God there that believers, in those old days, longed after the house of God with such strong desire. The

cry was, "When shall I come and appear before God (Psalm 42:2). They understood something of the spiritual meaning of the privilege, "Drawing near to God." It represented to them the enjoyment of His love, and fellowship, and protection, and blessing. They could exclaim, "Oh, how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence" (Psalm 31:19, 20).

The precious blood of Christ has opened the way for the believer into God's presence; and INTERCOURSE with Him is a deep, spiritual reality. He who knows the full power of the blood is brought so nigh that he can always live in the immediate presence of God, and in the enjoyment of the unspeakable blessings attached to it. There, the child of God has the assurance of God's love; he experiences and enjoys it. God Himself imparts it. He lives daily in the friendship, and fellowship of God. As God's child he makes known to the Father, with perfect freedom, his thoughts and wishes. In this INTERCOURSE with God he possesses all that he needs; he wants no good thing. His soul is kept in perfect rest and peace, because God is with him. He receives all requisite direction and teaching. God's eye is ever upon him, guiding him. In intercourse with God, he is able to hear the softest whispers of the Holy Spirit. He learns to understand the slightest sign of his Father's will, and to follow it. His strength continually increases, for God is his strength, and God is ever with him.

Fellowship with God exercises a wonderful influence on his life and character. The presence of God fills him with humility, and fear, and a holy circumspection. He lives as in the presence of a king. Fellowship with God produces in him godlike dispositions. Beholding the image of God, he is changed into the same image. Dwelling with the holy One makes him holy. He can say, "It is good for me to draw nigh to God (Psalm 73:28).

O you who are the children of the New Covenant, have not you a thousand times more reason to speak thus, now that the veil has been rent asunder, and the way opened for living always in God's holy presence? May this high privilege awaken our desires. Intercourse with God; fellowship with God; dwelling with God; and He with us: may it become impossible for us to be satisfied with anything less. This is the true Christian life.

But INTERCOURSE with God is not only so blessed because of the salvation enjoyed in it, but also on account of the service that may be rendered, because of that INTERCOURSE.

Let us therefore consider—

II. The Vocation of Offering Spiritual Sacrifices to God

Our vocation to bring to God spiritual sacrifices is a further privilege.

The enjoyment of the priests in drawing near to God in His dwelling place was subordinated entirely to something higher. They were there as servants of the Holy Place, to bring to God, in His house, that which belonged to Him. Only as they found joy, in drawing near to God, could that service become truly blessed.

The service consisted in—The bringing in of the blood of sprinkling; the preparation of the incense to fill the house with its fragrance; and, further, in the ordering of everything that pertained, according to God's word, to the arrangement of His house.

They must so guard, and serve, and provide for, the dwelling place of the Most High, that it should be worthy of Him, and of His glory, and that His

good pleasure in it might be fulfilled.

If the blood of Jesus brings us near, it is also, chiefly, that we should live before God as His servants, and bring to Him the spiritual sacrifices which are well pleasing in His sight.

The priests brought the blood into the Holy Place before God. In our intercourse with God there is no offering that we can bring more pleasing to Him, than a believing honouring of the blood of the Lamb. Every act of humble trust, or of hearty thanksgiving, in which we direct the attention of the Father to the blood, and speak its praises, is acceptable to Him.

Our whole abiding there, and INTERCOURSE, from hour to hour must be a glorifying of the blood before God.

The priests brought the incense into the Holy Place, so as to fill God's house with fragrance. The prayers of God's people are the delightful incense, with which He desires to be surrounded in His habitation. The value of prayer does not consist merely in its being the means of obtaining things we need. No ! it has a higher aim than that. It is a ministry of God, in which He delights.

The life of a believer who truly enjoys drawing near to God through the blood, is a life of unceasing prayer. In a deep sense of dependence, for each moment, for each step, grace is sought for and expected. In the blessed conviction of God's nearness and unchanging goodness, the soul pours itself out in the confident assurance of faith that every promise will be fulfilled. In the midst of the joy which the light of God's face bestows, there arises at the same time, along with prayer, thanksgiving, and adoration.

These are the spiritual offerings-the offerings of the lips of the priests of God,

continually presented to Him -they having been SANCTIFIED AND BROUGHT NIGH BY THE BLOOD-that they might ever live and walk in His presence.

But there is still something more. It was the duty of the priests to attend to everything far cleansing or provision that was necessary, in the ministry of the House. What is the ministry now, under the New Covenant? Thanks be to God, there are no outward nor exclusive arrangements for divine worship. No! The Father has so ordered, that whatever any one does who is walking in His presence, just because of that, it becomes a spiritual offering. Everything the believer does, if only he does it as in God's presence, and inspired by the priestly disposition, which offers it to God as a service, it is a priestly sacrifice, well pleasing to God. "Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17). In this way, all our actions become thankofferings to God.

How little Christians recognise the glory of a life of complete consecration, to be spent always in intercourse with God!

CLEANSED, SANCTIFIED, and BROUGHT NIGH, by the power of the blood, my earthly calling, my whole life, even my eating and drinking, are a spiritual service. My work, my business, my money, my house, everything with which I have to do, becomes sanctified by the presence of God, because I, myself, walk in His presence. The poorest earthly work is a priestly service, because it is performed by a priest of God's temple.

But even this does not exhaust the glory of the blessing of INTERCOURSE. The highest blessing of the priesthood is, that the priest appears as the

REPRESENTATIVE of OTHERS, BEFORE GOD.

III. The Power to procure Blessing for others is what gives to nearness to God its full glory

In Israel the priests were the mediators between God and the people. They carried into the presence of God the sins and needs of the people: they obtained from God the power to declare the pardon of sin and the right of blessing the people.

This privilege now belongs to all believers, as the priestly family of the New Covenant. When God permitted His redeemed ones to approach Him through the blood, it was that He might bless them, in order that they might become a blessing to others. Priestly mediation; a priestly heart that can have the needed sympathy with those who are weak; a priestly power to obtain the blessing of God in the temple, and convey it to others; in these things, INTERCOURSE, the drawing near to God through the blood, manifests its highest power and glory.

We can exercise our priestly dignity in a twofold manner—

(a) By Intercession

The ministry of intercession is one of the highest privileges of the child of God. It does not mean, that in this ministry we, having ascertained that there is a need in the world, or in some particular person, pour out our wishes in

prayer to God, asking; or the necessary supply. That is good, so far as it goes, and brings a blessing with it. But the peculiar ministry of intercession is something more wonderful than that, and finds its power in " the prayer of faith." This "prayer of faith" is a different thing from the outpouring of our wishes to God, and leaving them with Him.

In the true "prayer of faith" the intercessor must spend time with God to appropriate the promises of His word, and must permit himself to be taught by the Holy Spirit, whether the promises can be applied to this particular case. He takes upon himself, as a burden, the sin and need which are the subject of prayer, and lays fast hold of the promise concerning it, as though it were for himself. He remains in the presence of God, till God, by His Spirit, awakens the faith that in this matter the prayer has been heard. In this way parents sometimes pray for their children; ministers for their congregations; labourers in God's vineyard for the souls committed to them; till they know that their prayer is heard. It is the blood, that by its power of bringing us near to God, bestows such wonderful liberty to pray until the answer is obtained. Oh! if we understood more perfectly what it really means to dwell in the presence of God, we should manifest more power in the exercise of our holy priesthood.

(b) Instrumentally

A further manifestation of our priestly mediation is that we not only obtain some blessing for others by INTERCESSION, but become the INSTRUMENTS by whom it is ministered. Every believer is called, and feels himself compelled by love, to labour on behalf of others. He knows that God has blessed him that he might be a blessing to others; and yet-the complaint is

general that believers have no power for this work of bringing blessing to others. They are not, they say, in a condition to exercise an influence over others by their words. This is not to be wondered at, if they will not dwell in the sanctuary. We read that " The Lord separated the tribe of Levi-to stand before the Lord-and to bless in his name " (Deuteronomy 10:8). The priestly power of blessing depends on the priestlike life in the presence of God. He who experiences there the power of the blood to preserve him, the helpless one-will have courage to believe that the blood can really deliver others. The holy life-giving power of the blood will create in him the same disposition as that in which Jesus shed it-th sacrifice of himself to redeem others. In intercourse with God, our love will be set on fire: by the love of God, our belief that God will surely make use of us will be strengthened; the spirit of Jesus will take possession of us, to enable us to labor. in humility, in wisdom, and in power; and our weakness and poverty become the vessels in which God's power can work. From our word and example blessing will flow, because we dwell with Him who is pure blessing, and He will not permit anyone to be near Him without being also filled with His blessing. Beloved, is not the life prepared for us a glorious a blessed one? The enjoyment of the blessedness: of being near to God; the carrying out of the ministry s of His house; the imparting of His blessing to other: Let no one think that the full blessing is not for him that such a life is too high for him. IN THE POWER.. OF JESUS' BLOOD we have the assurance that this-, "DRAWING NEAR" is for us also, if only we wholly yield ourselves to it. For those who truly desire this blessing I give the following advice—

- i. Remember that this, and nothing less, is designed for you. All of us who are God's children have been brought nigh by the blood. All of us can desire the full experience of it. Let us only hold this fast the. life in INTERCOURSE with God is for rye.

The Father does not wish that one of His children should be afar off: We cannot please our God as we ought if we live without this blessing. We are priests, grace lives as priests is prepared for us; free entrance into the sanctuary as our abiding place, is for us; we can—be assured of this, God bestows on us His holy presence. For indwelling, as our right, as His children. Let us lay fast hold of this.

- ii. Seek to make the full power of the blood your own possession in all its blessed effects. **IT IS IN THE POWER OF THE BLOOD THAT INTERCOURSE** is possible. Let your heart be filled with faith in the power of the blood of **RECONCILIATION**. Sin has been so entirely atoned for, and blotted out, that its power to keep you away from God has been completely, and for ever, taken away. Live in the joyful profession that sin is powerless to separate you one moment from God. Believe that by the blood you have been fully justified, and thus have a righteous claim to a place in the sanctuary. Let the blood also cleanse you. Expect from the fellowship that follows, the inner deliverance from the defilement of sin which still dwells in you. Say with the Scriptures "How much more shall the blood of Christ cleanse **YOUR** conscience to serve the living God." Let the blood sanctify you, separate you for God, in undivided consecration, to be filled by Him. Let the **PARDONING, CLEANSING, SANCTIFYING** power of the blood have free course in you. You will discover how this brings you, as it were, automatically near to God, and protects you.

iii. Do not fear to expect that JESUS HIMSELF will reveal in you the power of the blood to bring you nigh to God.

The blood was shed to unite us to God.

The blood has accomplished its work, and will perfect it in you.

The blood has unspeakable virtue and glory in God's sight.

The Mercy Seat sprinkled with blood is the chosen place of God's abode and is His throne of grace. He draws near with joy and good pleasure to the heart that surrenders itself entirely to the efficacy of the blood.

The blood has irresistible power. Through the blood Jesus was raised up from the grave, and carried into heaven. Be assured the blood is able to preserve you every day in God's presence by its divine life-giving power. As precious and all powerful as the blood is, so sure and certain is also your abiding with God, if only you trust is steadfast. "Washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb-therefore are they before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple." That word about the eternal glory has a bearing also upon our life on earth. The fuller our faith and experiences: of the power of the blood, just the closer the INTERCOURSE, and the more sure the abiding near the throne: the wider the entrance to the unbroken ministry of God in His sanctuary; and here on earth just the greater the power to serve the living God just the richer the priestly blessing which you will spread around you. O Lord! may this word have its full power over

us now, here, and hereafter!

Chapter 7^(TOC)

Dwelling in The Holiest Through the Blood

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he bath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, and having a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water"—Hebrews 10:19-22.

In these words we have a summary of the chief contents of this Epistle, and of the "Good News" about God's grace, as the Holy Spirit thus caused it to be presented to the Hebrews, and also to us.

Through sin, man was driven out of Paradise, away from the presence and fellowship of God. God in His mercy sought, from the beginning, to restore the broken fellowship.

To this end He gave to Israel, through the shadowy types of the Tabernacle, the expectation of a time to come, when the wall of partition should be removed, so that His people might dwell in His presence. "When shall I come and appear before God" was the longing sigh of the saints of the Old Covenant.

It is the sigh also of many of God's children under the New Covenant who do not understand that the way into "THE HOLIEST" has really been opened,

and that every child of God may, and ought, to have his real dwelling-place there.

Oh, my brothers, and sisters, who long to experience the full power of the REDEMPTION which Jesus has accomplished, come with me, to hear what our God says to us about the opened Holy Place, and the freedom with which we can enter through the blood.

The passage at the head of this chapter shows us in a first series of four words what God has prepared for us, as the sure ground on which our fellowship with Him may rest. Then in a second series of four word: which follow, we learn how we may be prepared to enter into that fellowship, and to live in it.

Read the text with attention, and you will see that the words "LET US DRAW NEAR" are the centre of it all. This outline may be helpful.

I. What God has Prepared for Us

I. "The Holiest"-that is The Sanctuary: the Holy Place.

II. The Blood of Jesus.

III. A new and living way.

IV. A Great Priest.

II. How God Prepares Us For What He Has Prepared For Us.

I. A true heart.

II. Full assurance of faith.

III. Hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.

IV. Bodies washed with pure water.

Read the text now with an eye on this outline. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into THE HOLIEST, by THE BLOOD OF JESUS, by A NEW AND LIVING WAY, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, and having A GREAT PRIEST over the house of God.

"LET US DRAW NEAR WITH A TRUE HEART, IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH, having our hearts CLEANSED FROM AN EVIL CONSCIENCE, and our bodies WASHED WITH PURE WATER."

I. What God has Prepared for Us

(1) The Holiest

"HAVING THEREFORE BOLDNESS TO ENTER INTO 'THE HOLIEST'—LET US DRAW NEAR."

To bring us into "The Holiest" is the end of the Redemptive work of Jesus, and he who does not know what "The Holiest" is, cannot enjoy the full benefit of Redemption.

What is this "Holiest"? It is just the place where God dwells: "The Holiest"—the dwelling place of the Most High. This does not refer only to heaven but to the spiritual "Holiest" place of God's presence.

Under the Old Covenant there was a material Sanctuary (Hebrews 9:1 and 8:2)—the dwelling place of God, in which the priests dwelt in God's presence and served Him. Under the New Covenant there is the true spiritual Tabernacle, not confined to any place—"The Holiest" is where God reveals

Himself (John 4:23-25).

What a glorious privilege it is to enter into "The Holiest" and dwell there; to walk all the day in the presence of God. What a rich blessing is poured out there. In "The Holiest" the favour and fellowship of God are enjoyed—the life and blessing of God are experienced; the power and joy of God are found. Life is spent in "The Holiest" in priestly purity and consecration; there the incense of sweet savour is burned, and sacrifices acceptable to God are offered. It is a Holy life of prayer and blessedness. Under the Old Covenant everything was material, the Sanctuary also was material and local; under the New Covenant everything is spiritual, and the true Sanctuary owes its existence to the power of the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit a real life in "The Holiest" is possible, and the knowledge that God walks there can be as certain as in the case of the priests of old. The Spirit makes real in our experience the work Jesus has accomplished.

Believer in Jesus Christ, have you liberty to enter, and abide in "The Holiest"? As one who has redeemed, it is a fitting thing for you to make your home there, and not elsewhere; for Christ cannot, elsewhere, reveal the full power of His redemption. But there, oh! there, He can bless you richly. Oh! understand it then, and let the object of God and our Lord Jesus be yours also. May it be the desire of our hearts to enter into "The Holiest," to live in "The Holiest," to minister in "The Holiest." We can confidently expect the Holy Spirit to give us at conception of the glory of entering into a dwelling in "The Holiest."

(2) Liberty Through The Blood

Admission to "The Holiest," like "The Holiest" itself, belongs to God. God Himself thought of it, and prepared it; we have the liberty, the freedom, the right, to enter by the Blood of Jesus. The Blood of Jesus exercises such a wonderful power, that through it a son of perdition may obtain full freedom to enter into the divine Sanctuary-"The Holiest." "Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh the a blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13).

And how is it the Blood exercises this wonderful power?

Scripture says "the life is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11). The power of the Blood is in the worth of the life. In the Blood of Jesus the power of the divine dwelt, and worked; the Blood has already in I-lire. almighty and unceasing power.

But that power could not be exercised for RECONCILIATION until it was first shed. By bearing the punishment of sin, unto death, the Lord Jesus conquered the power of sin, and brought it to naught. "The power of sin is the Law," by perfectly fulfilling the law, when He shed His Blood under its curse, His Blood has made sin entirely powerless. So the Blood has its wonderful power, not only because the life of God's Son was in it, but because it was given as an atonement for sin. This is the reason Scripture speaks so highly about the Blood. Through the blood of the everlasting covenant God has brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus (Hebrews 13:20).

Through his own blood he has entered into "The Holiest" (Hebrews 9:12). The power of the Blood has entirely destroyed the power of sin, death, the grave and hell; so that our Surety could go out. The power of the Blood has opened heaven so that our Surety could freely enter.

And now we also have liberty to enter through the Blood. Sin took away our

liberty of approach to God, the Blood perfectly restores to us this liberty. He who will take time to meditate upon the power of that Blood, appropriating it believingly for himself, will obtain a wonderful view of the liberty and directness with which we can now have intercourse with God.

Oh, the divine, wonderful power of the Blood! Through the Blood we enter into "The Holiest." The Blood pleads for us, and in us, with an eternal, a ceaseless effect. It removes sin from God's sight, and from our conscience. Every moment we have free, full entrance, and we can have intercourse with God through the Blood.

Oh, that the Holy Spirit might reveal to us the full power of the Blood! Under His teaching what a full entrance we enjoy to intimate fellowship with the Father. Our life is in "The Holiest" through the Blood.

(3) New And Living Way

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into "The Holiest" by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, i.e. his flesh," the Blood bestows our right of entrance. The way, as a living and life-giving one, bestows the power. That He has consecrated this way by His flesh, does not mean that this is merely a repetition in other words of the same thought as "through His blood." By no means.

Jesus has shed His Blood for us: in that particular we cannot follow Him. But the Way by which He walked when He shed His Blood, the rending of the veil of His flesh, in that way we must follow Him. What He did in the opening of that way, is a living power which draws and carries us as we enter "The Holiest." The lesson we have to learn here is this—the way into "The

Holiest" is through the RENT VEIL OF THE FLESH.

It was so with Jesus. The veil that separated God and us was the flesh. Sin has its power in the flesh, and only through the taking away of sin, the veil may be removed. When Jesus came in the flesh, He could rend the veil only by dying; and so to bring to nought the power of the flesh and sin, "He offered up the flesh, and delivered it to death." This is what gave to the shedding of His blood its worth and power.

And this remains now the law for each one who desires to enter "The Holiest" through His Blood—must be through the rent veil of the flesh. The Blood demands, the Blood accomplishes, the rending of the flesh. Where the Blood of Jesus works powerfully, there follows, always, the putting to death of the flesh. He who desires to spare the flesh cannot enter into "The Holiest." The flesh must be sacrificed, given over to death. In proportion as the believer perceives the sinfulness of his flesh, and puts to death all that is in the flesh, he will better understand the power of the Blood. The believer does this, not in his own strength, he comes by a living way which Jesus has consecrated; the life-giving power of Jesus works in this "way." The Christian is crucified and dead with Jesus, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh." It is in fellowship with Christ that we enter through the veil.

Oh! glorious way, "the new and living way," full of life-giving power, "which Christ has consecrated for us!" By this way we have the liberty to enter into "the Holiest" by the Blood of Jesus. May the Lord God lead us along this "way," through the rent veil, through the death of the flesh, to the full life of the Spirit, then we shall find our dwelling place within the veil, in "The Holiest" with God. Each sacrifice of the flesh leads us, through the Blood, further into "The Holiest."

(NOTE—Compare further, with care, 1 Peter 3:18, "Christ was put to death in the flesh"; 4:1, "Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, but living in the Spirit"; 4:6, "Condemned sin in the flesh.")

(4) The Great Priest

"And having an high Priest over the house of God, let us draw near."

Praised be God, we have not only the work, but the living person of Christ, as we enter "The Holiest"; not only the Blood and the living way, but Jesus Himself, as "High Priest over the House of God."

The priests who went into the earthly Sanctuary could do so only because of their relationship to the High Priest; none but the sons of Aaron were priests. We have an entrance into "The Holiest," because of our relationship to the Lord Jesus. He said to the Father, "Behold here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me."

HE IS THE GREAT PRIEST. The Epistle to the Hebrews has shown us that He is the true Melchisedek, the Eternal Son, who has an eternal and changeless priesthood, and as Priest is seated on the Throne He lives there to pray always, therefore also He is able "to save to the uttermost them that come to God through him." A great and all-powerful Priest.

A HIGH PRIEST OVER THE HOUSE OF GOD, He is appointed over the entire ministry of "The Holiest," of the House of God. All the people of God are under His care. If we desire to enter "The Holiest," He is there to receive us, and to present us to the Father. He Himself will complete in us the sprinkling of the Blood. Through the Blood He has entered, through the

Blood He brings us also in. He will teach us all the duties of "The Holiest," and of our intercourse there. He makes acceptable our prayers, our offerings, and the duties of our ministry, however weak they are. What is more, He bestows on us heavenly light, and heavenly power, for our work and life in "The Holiest." It is He who imparts the life, and the Spirit of "The Holiest." Just as His Blood procured an entrance, His sacrifice of His flesh is the living way. As we enter, it is He by whom we are kept abiding there, and are able always to walk well pleasing to God. As the sympathetic High Priest He knows how to stoop to each one, even the weakest. Yes I that is what makes intercourse with God in "The Holiest" so attractive, we find Jesus there, as a "High Priest over the house of God."

And just when it seems to us as if "The Holiest" is too high, or too holy for us, and that we cannot understand what the power of the Blood is, and how we are to walk on "the new and living way," just then, we may look up to the living Saviour Himself to teach us, and to bring us Himself into "The Holiest." He is the Priest over the House of God. You have only to cleave to Him, and you will be in "The Holiest."

"LET US DRAW NEAR," seeing we have "The Holiest" where God waits for us; and the Blood which gives us liberty; and the living way which carries us, and the High Priest to help us. "Let us draw near," yes! "let us draw near." Let nothing hold us back from making use of these wonderful blessings which God has designed for us. It is into "The Holiest" that we are to enter; our right has been obtained for us by the Blood of Jesus; by His own footsteps He has consecrated the way. He lives in His eternal priesthood to receive us in "The Holiest"; to sanctify, to preserve, to bless us. Oh! let us not any longer hesitate or turn back. Let us sacrifice all for this one thing, in view of what God has prepared for us "let us draw near," by the hand of Jesus, to

appear before our Father, and to find our life in the light of His countenance.

And do we desire to know how we can now be prepared to enter? Our text gives us a glorious answer to this question.

II. How we are Prepared

Let us draw near.

(I) With A True Heart

This is the first of the four demands made on the believer who wishes "to draw near." It is coupled with the second demand, "FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH," and it is chiefly in its union with the second, that we understand aright what "a true heart" means.

The preaching of the Gospel begins always with repentance and faith. Man cannot receive God's grace by faith, if at the same time sin is not forsaken. In the progress of the life of faith this law is always binding. The full assurance of faith cannot be reached without "a true heart"-a heart that is wholly honest u with God, that is surrendered entirely to Him. "The Holiest" cannot be entered without "a true heart," a heart that is truly desirous of seeking what it professes seek.

Let us draw near with a true heart." A heart that:: ly desires to forsake everything, to dwell in "The Holiest"; forsaking everything, to possess God. A heart that truly abandons everything in order to yield itself to the authority and power of the Blood. A heart that truly chooses "the new and living way" in order to go through the veil with Christ, by the rending of the flesh. A

heart that truly and entirely gives itself to the indwelling and lordship of Jesus.

"Let us draw near with a true heart." Without a true heart there is no entrance into "The Holiest."

But who has a true heart? The new heart that God has given is a true heart. Recognise that. By the power of the Spirit of God, who dwells in that new heart, place yourself, by an exercise of your will, on the side of God against the sin that is still in your flesh. Say to the Lord Jesus, the High Priest, that you submit, and cast down before Him every sin, and all of your self life, forsaking all to follow Him.

And as regards the hidden depths of sin in your flesh, of which you are not yet conscious, and the malice of your heart-for them also provision is made. "Search me, O God, and know my heart." Subject yourself continually to the heart-searching light of the Spirit. He will uncover what is hidden from you. He who does this has a true heart to enter into "The Holiest."

Let us not be afraid to say to God that we draw near with a true heart. Let us be assured that God will not judge us according to the perfection of what we do, but according to the honesty with which we

yield ourselves in-lie-aside every known sin, and with which we accept conviction by the Holy Spirit of all our hidden sin. A heart that does this honestly is, in God's sight, a true heart. And with a true heart "The Holiest" is approached through the Blood. Praised be God ! through His Spirit we have a true heart.

(2) In Full Assurance Of Faith

We know what place faith occupies in God's dealings with man. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." Here at the entrance into "The Holiest" all depends on "the full assurance of faith."

There must be "a full assurance of faith" that there is a Holy Place where we can dwell and walk with God, and that the power of the precious Blood has conquered sin so perfectly that nothing can prevent our undisturbed fellowship with God; and that the way which Jesus has sanctified through His flesh is a living way, which carries those who tread on it with eternal living power; and that the great Priest over the house of God can save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him; that He by His Spirit works in us everything that is needful for life in "The Holiest." These things we must believe and hold fast in "the full assurance of faith."

But how can I get there? How can my faith grow to this full assurance? By fellowship with "Jesus who is the finisher of faith" (Hebrews 12:2). As the great Priest over the house of God, He enables us to appropriate faith. By considering Him, His wonderful love, His perfect work, His precious and allpowerful Blood, faith is sustained and strengthened. God has given Him to awaken faith. By keeping our eyes fixed on Him, faith and the full assurance of faith become ours.

In handling the Word of God, remember that his faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Faith comes by the Word and grows by the Word, but not the Word as letter, but as the voice of Jesus; only "the words that I speak unto you" are spirit-life, only in Him are the promises of God "Yea and Amen." Take time to meditate on the Word and treasure it in your heart, but always with a heart set on Jesus Himself. It is faith in Jesus that saves. The Word that is taken to Jesus in prayer, and talked over with Him, is the Word that is effective.

Remember that "to him that hath shall be given." Take use of the faith that you have; exercise it; declare it; and let your believing trust in God become the chief occupation of your life. God wishes to have children who believe Him; He desires nothing so much as faith. Get accustomed to say with each prayer, "Lord I believe that I shall obtain this." As you read each promise in Scripture say, "Lord I believe Thou wilt fulfil this in me." The whole day through, make it your holy habit in everything-yes, everything-to exercise trust in God's guidance, and God's blessing.

To enter into "The Holiest" "full assurance of faith" is necessary. "Let us draw near in full assurance of faith." Redemption through the Blood is so perfect and powerful; the love and grace of Jesus so overflowing; the blessedness of dwelling in "The Holiest" is so surely for us and within our reach-"Let us draw near in full assurance of faith."

(3) The Heart Cleansed

Let us draw near, having "OUR HEART CLEANSED FROM AN EVIL CONSCIENCE."

The heart is the centre of human life, and the conscience is the centre of the heart. By his conscience man realises his relationship to God, and an evil conscience tells him that all is not right between God and himself; not merely that he commits sin, but that he is sinful, and alienated from God. A good or clear conscience bears witness that he is well pleasing to God (Hebrews 11:5). It bears witness not only that his sins are forgiven, but that his heart is sincere before God. He who desires to enter "The Holiest" must have his heart cleansed from an evil conscience. The words are translated "our hearts

sprinkled from an evil conscience." It is the sprinkling of the Blood that avails. The Blood of Christ will purify your conscience to serve the living God.

We have already seen that entrance to "The Holiest" is by the Blood, by which Jesus went in to the Father. But that is not enough. There is a twofold sprinkling -the priests who drew near to God were not only reconciled through the sprinkling of Blood before God on the altar, but their very persons must be sprinkled with the Blood. The Blood of Jesus must be so brought by the Holy Spirit into direct contact with our hearts that our hearts become cleansed from an evil conscience. The Blood removes all self-condemnation. It cleanses the conscience. Conscience then witnesses that the removal of guilt has been so perfectly completed, there is no longer the least separation between God and us. Conscience bears witness that we are well pleasing to God; that our heart is cleansed; that we through the sprinkling of the Blood are in true living fellowship with God. Yes, the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin, not only from the guilt but also from the stain of sin.

Through the power of the Blood our fallen nature is prevented from exercising its power, just as a fountain by its gentle spray cleanses the grass, that otherwise would be covered with dust, and keeps it fresh and green, so the Blood works with a ceaseless effect to keep the soul clean. A heart that lives under the full power of the Blood is a clean heart, cleansed from a guilty conscience, prepared to "draw near" with perfect freedom. The whole heart, the whole inner being, is cleansed by a divine operation.

"Let us draw near, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." Let us "in full assurance of faith, "believe that our hearts are cleansed. Let us honour the Blood greatly, by confessing before God that it cleanses us. The

High Priest will, by Ibis Holy Spirit, make us understand the full meaning and power of the words-"having the heart cleansed by the Blood"; the entrance to the Holy Place prepared through the Blood; and further, our hearts prepared by the Blood for entrance; oh! how glorious then, having the heart cleansed, to enter into, and to abide in "The Holiest."

(4) The Body Washed

Let us draw near, having the body washed with dear water.

We belong to two worlds, the seen and the unseen. We have an inner, hidden life, that brings us into touch with God; and an outer, bodily life by which we are in relationship with man. If this word refers to the body, it refers to the entire life in the body with all its activities.

The heart must be sprinkled with blood, the body must be washed with pure water. When the priests were consecrated they were washed with water, as well as sprinkled with blood (Exodus 29:4, 20, 21). And if they went into the Holy Place there was not only the altar with its blood, but also the laver with its water. So also Christ came by water, and blood (1 John 5:6). He had His baptism with water and later with blood (Luke 12:50).

There is for us also a twofold cleansing; with water, and. blood. Baptism with water is unto repentance for laying aside of sin, "Be baptised and wash away your sins." While the Blood cleanses the heart, the inner man, baptism is the yielding of the body, with all its visible life, to separation from sin.

So "Let us draw near, having our hearts cleansed from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." The power of the Blood to cleanse

inwardly cannot be experienced unless we also cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh. The divine work of cleansing, by the sprinkling of Blood, the human work of cleansing by laying aside sin, are inseparable.

We must be clean, to enter into "The Holiest." Just as you would never dream of entering in to the presence of a king unwashed, so you cannot imagine that you could come into the presence of God, in the Holy Place, if you are not cleansed from every sin. In the Blood of Christ that cleanses from all sin, God has bestowed on you the power to cleanse yourself. Your desire to live with God in "The Holiest" must always be united with the most careful laying aside of even the least sin. The unclean may not enter "The Holiest."

Praised be God, He desires to have us there. As His priests we must minister to Him there. He desires our purity, that we may enjoy the blessing of "The Holiest." That is, His Holy fellowship; and He has taken care that through the Blood, and by the Spirit, we may be clean.

Let us draw near, having our heart cleansed, and the body washed with pure water.

"LET US DRAW NEAR."

The Holiest Place is open even for those in our congregations who have not yet truly turned to the Lord. For them also the Sanctuary has been opened. The Precious Blood, the living way, and the High Priest are for them also. With great confidence we dare to invite even them-"Let us draw near." Oh, despise not, my friends still far from God, oh, despise no longer God's wonderful grace-draw near to the Father who has so earnestly sent this invitation try you; who at the cost of the Blood of His Son, has opened a way for you into "The Holiest"; who waits in love to receive you again into His dwelling place, as His child. Oh! I beseech you, let us all draw near. Jesus

Christ the High Priest over the House of God is a perfect Saviour.

"LET US DRAW NEAR."

"Let us draw near." The invitation comes especially to all believers. Be not satisfied to stand in the porch. It is not sufficient to cherish the hope that your sins are forgiven. "Let us draw near," let us enter within the veil, let us in spirit press on to real nearness to our God. "Let us draw near" and live nearer to God, and wholly take our abode in His Holy Presence "Let us draw near," our place is the innermost Sanctuary.

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." He who gives himself sincerely and entirely, to God will through the Holy Spirit experience "the full assurance of faith" to take for himself, freely and gladly, all that the Word has promised. Our weakness of faith arises from duplicity of heart. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance" that the blessing is ours. The Blood has so perfectly atoned for and conquered sin, that nothing can hold the believer back from free admission to God.

"Let us draw near, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." Let us receive into our hearts faith in the perfect power of the Blood, and let us lay aside every thing that is not in accord with the purity of the Holy Place. Then we begin to feel ourselves daily more at home in "The Holiest." In Christ, who is our Life, we are also there. Then we learn to carry on all our work in "The Holiest." All that we do is a spiritual sacrifice well pleasing to God in Jesus Christ. Brethren, "let us draw near" as God waits for us in "The Holiest."

"LET US DRAW NEAR."

That call has special reference to prayer. Not as though we, as priests, were

not always in "The Holiest" but there are moments of more immediate fellowship, when the soul turns itself entirely to God to be engaged with Him alone. Alas ! our prayer is too often a calling out to God from a distance, so there is little power in it. Let us with each prayer first see that we are really in "The Holiest." Let us with hearts perfectly sprinkled from an evil conscience, in silent faith appropriate the full effect of the Blood, by which sin as a separation between God and us is entirely removed. Yes ! let us take time till we know that, now, I am in "The Holiest" through the Blood and then-pray. Then, we can lay our desires and wishes before our Father, in the assurance that they are an acceptable incense. Then, prayer is a true "drawing near" to God, an exercise of inner fellowship with Him; then, we have courage and power to carry on our work of priestly intercession, and to pray down blessings on others. He who dwells in the Holy Place through the power of the Blood is truly one of God's saints, and the power of God's Holy and Blessed presence goes out from him, upon those who are round about him.

Brethren, "let us draw near," let us pray for ourselves, for one another, for everyone. Let "The Holiest" so become our fixed abode that we may carry about with us everywhere the presence of our God. Let this be the fountain of life for us, that grows from strength to strength, from glory to glory, always in "THE HOLIEST" BY THE BLOOD. Amen.

Chapter 8^(TOC)

Life in the Blood

*"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. I-He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him"—
John 6:53, 56.*

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?"—1 Corinthians 10:16.

The drinking of the blood of the Lord Jesus is the subject brought before us in these words. Just as water has a twofold effect, so is it also with this holy blood.

When water is used for washing it cleanses, but if we drink it we are refreshed and revived. He who desires to know the full power of the blood of Jesus must be taught by Him what the blessing of drinking the blood is. Everyone knows the difference there is between washing and drinking. Necessary and Pleasant as it is to use water for cleansing, it is much more necessary and reviving to drink it. Without its cleansing it is not possible to live as we ought; but without drinking we cannot live at all. It is only by drinking that we enjoy the full benefit of its power to sustain life.

Without drinking the blood of the Son of God—is without the most hearty appropriation of it—life cannot be obtained.

To many there is something unpleasant in the phrase "drinking the blood of the Son of man," but it was still more disagreeable to the Jews, for the use of blood was forbidden by the law of Moses, under severe penalties. When Jesus spoke of "drinking his blood," it naturally annoyed them-but it was an unspeakable offence to their religious feelings. Our Lord, we may be sure, would not have used the phrase, had He been able otherwise to make plain to them, and to us, the deepest and most glorious truths concerning salvation by the blood.

In seeking to become partakers of the salvation here spoken of, as "DRINKING THE BLOOD OF OUR LORD" let us endeavour to understand

I. What The Blessing Is, Which Is Described As 'Drinking The Blood'

II. How this Blessing is wrought Out in Us.

III. What Should Be Our Attitude Towards It.

I. What the Blessing is which is described as Drinking the Blood

We saw just now that drinking expresses a much more intimate connection with water than washing, and hence produces a more powerful effect. There is a blessing in the fellowship with the blood of Jesus which goes much farther than CLEANSING, or SANCTIFICATION; or rather we are enabled to see how far reaching is the influence of the blessing indicated by this phrase.

Not only must the blood do something FOR us, by placing us in a new

relationship to God; but it must do something IN us, entirely renewing us within. It is to this that the words of the Lord Jesus draw our attention when He says: "Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Our Lord distinguishes two kinds of life. The Jews, there, in His presence, had a natural life of body and soul. Many among them were devout, well intentioned men, but He said they had no life in them unless they "ate his flesh and drank his blood." They needed another life, a new, a heavenly life, which He possessed and which He could impart. All creature life must obtain nourishment outside of itself. The natural life was naturally nourished, by bread and water. The heavenly life must be nourished by heavenly food and drink, by Jesus Himself. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Nothing less must become ours, than His life the life that He, as Son of man, lived on earth.

Our Lord emphasised this still more strongly in words which follow, in which He again explained what the nature of that life is: "Whoso eateth my flesh and DRINKETH MY BLOOD shall have eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day." Eternal life is the life of God. Our Lord came to earth, in the first place, to reveal that eternal life in the flesh and then to communicate it to us who are in the flesh. In Him we see the eternal life dwelling in its divine power, in a body of flesh; which was taken up into heaven. He tells us that those who eat His flesh and drink His blood, who partake of His body as their sustenance, will experience also in their own bodies the power of eternal life. "I will raise him up at the last day." The marvel of the eternal life in Christ is that it was eternal life in a human body. We must be partakers of that body, not less than in the activities of His Spirit, then our body, also, possessing that life, will one day be raised from the dead.

Our Lord said: "My flesh is meat indeed and MY BLOOD is drink indeed."

The word translated "indeed" here is the same as that He used when He spoke His parable of the True Vine, "I am the true (the indeed) vine," thus indicating the difference; between what was only a symbol and what is actual truth. Earthly food is no REAL food, for it imparts no real life. The one true food is the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ which imparts and sustains life and that in no shadowy or merely symbolical manner. No, this word so frequently repeated, indicates that in a full and real sense the flesh and blood of the Lord Jesus are the food by which eternal life is nourished and sustained in us: = ' My flesh is meat INDEED, and my blood is drink INDEED."

In order to point out the reality and power of this food our Lord added—"He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him." Nourishment by His flesh and blood effects the most perfect union with Him. This is the reason that His flesh and blood have such power of eternal life. Our Lord declares here, that those who believe in Him are to experience not only certain influences from Him in their hearts, but are to be brought into the most close and abiding union with Him. "HE that DRINKETH MY BLOOD DWELLETH IN ME AND I IN HIM."

This then is the blessing of drinking the blood of the Son of man-becoming one with Him: becoming a partaker of the divine nature in Him. How real this union is may be seen from the words which follow—"As I live by the Father, so he that eateth me even he shall live by me." Nothing save the union which exists between our Lord and the Father, can serve as a type of our union with Him. Just as in the invisible, divine nature, the two Persons are truly one, so man becomes one with Jesus; the union is just as real as that in the divine nature, only with this difference, that as human nature cannot exist apart from the body, this union includes the body also.

Our Lord "prepared for himself" a body into which He took up a human body. This body became by the body and blood of Jesus a sharer in eternal life, in the life of our Lord Himself. Those who desire to receive fulness of this blessing must be careful to enjoy all that the Scripture offers them in the holy, mysterious: expression "to drink the blood of Christ."

We shall now try to understand:

II. How this Blessing is wrought Out in Us: or what the "drinking of the blood of Jesus" really is

The first idea that here presents itself is that "drinking" indicates the deep, true appropriation in our spirit, by faith, of all we understand concerning the power of the blood.

We speak sometimes of "drinking in" the words of a speaker, when we heartily give ourselves up to listen and receive them. So when the heart of anyone is filled with a sense of the preciousness and power of the blood; when he with real joy, is lost in the contemplation of it; when he, with wholehearted faith, takes it for himself, and seeks to be convinced in his inner being of the life-giving power of that blood; then it may be rightly said that he "drinks the blood of Jesus." All that faith enables him to see of REDEMPTION, of CLEANSING, of SANCTIFICATION by the blood he absorbs into the depths of his soul.

There is a deep truth in this representation, and it gives us a very glorious demonstration of the way in which the full blessing by the blood may be obtained. And yet it is certain that our Lord intended something more than

this by so repeatedly making use of the expression about "eating his flesh and drinking his blood." What this further truth is becomes clear by his institution of THE LORD'S SUPPER. For, although our Saviour did not actually deal with that Supper when He taught in Capernaum, yet He spoke on the subject of which later on The Supper was made the visible confirmation. In the Reformed Churches there are two aspects of viewing the Holy Supper. According to one which is called after the name of the Reformer Zwingli, the bread and wine in the Supper are merely tokens, or representations of a spiritual truth, to teach us that JUST AS, AND AS SURE AS, bread and wine when eaten or drunk, nourish and revive, so surely-and even more surely-the body and blood recognised and appropriated by faith, nourish and quicken the soul.

According to the other view which bears the name of Calvin, there is something more than this in the eating of the Supper. He teaches that in a hidden and incomprehensible way, but yet really, we, through the Holy Spirit, become so nourished by the body and blood of Jesus in heaven, that even our body, through the power of His body, becomes a partaker in the power of eternal life. Hence He connects the resurrection of the body with the eating of Christ's body in the Supper. He writes thus—"The bodily presence which the Sacrament demands is such, and exercises such a power here (in the Supper) that it becomes not only the undoubted assurance in our spirit of eternal life, but also assures the immortality of the flesh. If anyone asks me how this can be, I am not ashamed to acknowledge that it is a mystery too high for my spirit to comprehend, or my words to express. I feel it more than I can understand it."

"It may seem incredible indeed that the flesh of Christ should reach us from such immense local distance so as to become our food. But we must

remember how far the power of the Holy Spirit transcends all our senses. Let faith then embrace what the understanding cannot grasp, namely—The sacred communication of His flesh and blood by which Christ transfuses His life into us, just as if it penetrated our bones and marrow."

The communion of the flesh and blood of Christ is necessary for all who desire to inherit eternal life. The Apostle says—"The Church ... is his body" (Ephesians 1:23); "He is the head from whom the whole body fitly joined together maketh increase of the body" (Ephesians 4:15, 16). Our bodies are members of Christ (2 Corinthians 6:15, 16). We see that all this cannot take place if He is not attached to us in body and spirit. The Apostle again makes use of a glorious expression, "We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." Then He cries out, "The mystery is great." It would therefore be folly not to recognise the communion of believers in the body and blood of the Lord; a communion which the Apostle esteemed so great that he wondered at it, rather than explained it.

There is something more in the Supper than simply the believer appropriating the redemptive work of Christ. This is made clear in the Heidelberg catechism in Question 76: "What is it then to eat the crucified body of Christ and to drink His shed blood?" The answer is, "It is not only to embrace with a believing heart all the sufferings and death of Christ, and thereby to receive pardon of sin and eternal life; but, also, besides that, to become more and more united to His sacred body, by the Holy Spirit who dwells at once both in Christ and in us; so that we, though Christ is in heaven and we on earth, are, notwithstanding, flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bones; and we live and are governed for ever by one Spirit."

The thoughts that are expressed in this teaching are in entire agreement with Scripture.

In the creation of man, the remarkable thing which should distinguish him from the spirits which God had previously created, and which should make man the crowning work of God's wisdom and power was, that he should reveal the life of the spirit and the glory of God in a body formed out of dust. Through the body lust and sin came into the world. Full redemption is designed to deliver the body, and to make it God's abode. Redemption will be perfect and God's purpose accomplished only then. This was the purpose for which the Lord Jesus came in the flesh, and in Him dwelt "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." For this He bore our sins in His body on the tree, and by His death and resurrection He delivered the body, as well as the spirit, from the power of sin and death. As the first fruits of this redemption, we are now one body, as well as one Spirit, with Him. We are of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. It is because of this, that in the observance of the Holy Supper the Lord comes to the body also, and takes possession of it. Not only does He work by His Spirit on our spirit, so as to make out body share in redemption at the resurrection. No, already, here, the body is the temple of the Spirit, and the Sanctification of soul and spirit will progress the more gloriously, just in proportion as the undivided personality, including the body, which exercises such an opposing influence, has a share in it.

Thus we are in the Sacrament so intentionally fed, by "the real natural body, and the real blood of Christ "-not following the teaching of Luther, that the body of Christ is so in the bread, that even an unbeliever eats the holy body; but in such wise "real," that faith, in a secret way, by the Spirit, really receives THE POWER OF THE I-DLY BODY AND BLOOD FROM HEAVEN, as the food by which soul and body become partakers of eternal life.

(NOTE: The words within inverted commas, "the real natural body and the

real blood of Christ," are quoted by Dr. Murray from the Articles of the Confession of Faith of the Reformed Churches of Holland, but Dr. Murray did not add the words immediately following, which declare that "the manner of our partaking of the same is not by the mouth, but by the Spirit through faith." Dr. Murray remained true to the Reformed Faith. His own view is expressed on page 99 by the words quoted from the Heidelberg Catechism.)

All that has now been said about the Supper, must have its full application to- "The drinking of the blood of Jesus." It is a deep spiritual mystery in which the most intimate, the most perfect union with Christ, is effected. It takes place where the soul, through the Holy Spirit, fully appropriates the communion of the blood of Christ, and becomes a true partaker of the very disposition which He revealed in the shedding of His blood. The blood is the soul, the life of the body; where the believer as one body with Christ desires to abide perfectly in Him, there, through the Spirit, in a superhuman powerful way, the blood will support and strengthen the heavenly life. The life that was poured out the blood, becomes his life. The life of the old "I" dies to make room for the life of Christ in him. By perceiving how this drinking is the highest participation in the heavenly life of the Lord, faith has one of its highest and most glorious offices.

It remains to inquire:

III. What should be our attitude towards this Drinking?

Beloved brethren, you have already heard that we have here one of the deepest mysteries of the life of God in us. It behoves us to draw near with very deep reverence while we ask the Lord Jesus to teach us and bestow upon

us what He means by this "drinking of His blood."

ONLY HE WHO LONGS FOR FULL UNION WITH JESUS WILL LEARN ARIGHT WHAT IT IS TO DRINK THE BLOOD OF JESUS. "He that drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him." He who is satisfied with just the forgiveness of his sins; he who does not thirst to be made to drink abundantly of the love of Jesus; he who does not desire to experience redemption for soul and body, in its full power, so as to have truly in himself the same disposition that was in Jesus, will have but a small share in this "drinking of the blood." He who, on the other hand, sets before him as his chief object, that which is also the object of Jesus: "abide in me and I in you"; who desires that the power of eternal life should operate in his body; he will not suffer himself to be frightened by an impression that these words are too high or too mysterious. He longs to become heavenly minded because he belongs to heaven, and is going there; therefore he desires to obtain his meat and drink also from heaven. Without thirst, there is no drinking. The longing after Jesus and perfect fellowship with Him is the thirst which is the best preparation for being made to drink the blood.

IT IS BY THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT THE THIRSTY SOUL WILL BE MADE TO DRINK OF THE HEAVENLY REFRESHMENT OF THIS LIFE-GIVING DRINK. We have already said that this drinking is a heavenly mystery. In heaven, where God the judge of all is, and where Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant is, there also is "the blood of sprinkling" (Hebrews 12:23, 24). When the Holy Spirit teaches us-taking us, as it were, by the hand-He bestows more than our merely human understanding can grasp. All the thoughts that we can entertain about the blood or the life of Jesus about our share in that blood, as members of His body; and about the impartation to us of the living power of that blood; all are but feeble rays of

the glorious reality, which He-the Holy Spirit-will bring into being in us through our union with Jesus.

Where, I pray, in our human bodies, do we find that the blood is actually received, and as it were drunk in? Isaiah it not where one member of the body after another, through the veins, receives the blood-stream which is continually renewed from the heart? Each member of a healthy body ceaselessly and abundantly drinks in the blood. So the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus who unites us to Him, will make this drinking of the blood the natural action of the inner life. When the Jews complained that what the Lord had spoken concerning eating His flesh and drinking His blood was " a hard saying," He said " it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." It is the Holy Spirit who makes this divine mystery LIFE AND POWER in us; a true living experience, in which we abide in Jesus and He in us.

THERE MUST BE ON OUR PART A QUIET, STRONG, SETTLED EXPECTANCY OF FAITH, THAT THIS BLESSING WILL BE BESTOWED ON US. We must believe that all the precious blood can do, or bestow, is really for us.

Let us believe that the Saviour Himself will cause us, through the Holy Spirit, to drink His blood unto life. Let us believe, and very heartily and continuously appropriate those effects of the blood which we understand better, namely, its Reconciling, Cleansing, Sanctifying effects.

We may then with the greatest certainty and joy, say to the Lord: "O Lord, Thy blood is my life drink. Thou who hast washed and cleansed me by that blood, Thou wilt teach me every day ' to eat the flesh of the Son of man, and to drink His blood' so that I may abide in Thee and Thou in me." He will surely do this.

Chapter 9^(TOC)

Victory Through the Blood

"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death"—Revelation 12:11.

FOR thousands of years there had been a mighty conflict for the possession of mankind, between the Old Serpent, who led man astray, and "The seed of the woman."

Often it seemed as though the kingdom of God had come in power; then at other times the might of evil obtained such supremacy that the strife appeared to be hopeless.

It was thus also in the life of our Lord Jesus. By His coming, His wonderful words and works, the most glorious expectations of a speedy redemption were awakened. How terrible was the disappointment which the death of Jesus brought to all who had believed in Him! It seemed, indeed, as if the powers of darkness had conquered, and had established their kingdom for ever.

But, behold! Jesus is risen from the dead, an apparent victory proved to be the terrible downfall of the prince of darkness. By bringing about the death of "The Lord of Life," Satan permitted Him, who alone was able to break open the gates of death, to enter his kingdom. "Through death he has destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil," In that holy moment when our Lord shed His blood in death, and it seemed as if Satan

were victorious—the adversary was robbed of the authority he had hitherto possessed.

Our text gives a very grand representation of these memorable events. The best commentators, notwithstanding differences in details of exposition, are united in thinking, that we have here a vision of the casting out of Satan from heaven, as a result of the Ascension of Christ.

We read in verses 5-9: The woman "brought forth a man-child, who ... was caught up unto God, and to his throne And there was war in heaven; and Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

Then follows the song from which the text is taken: "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ, for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the BLOOD OF THE LAMB, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives even unto death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell therein."

The point which deserves our special attention is, that while the conquest of Satan, and his being cast out of heaven, is first represented as the result of the Ascension of Jesus and the war in heaven which followed, yet in the song of triumph which was heard in heaven, victory is ascribed chiefly to THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB; this was the power by which the victory was gained.

Through the whole book of the Revelation we see the Lamb on the Throne. It

is as the slain Lamb that He has gained that position; THE VICTORY OVER SATAN AND ALL HIS AUTHORITY IS BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB.

We have spoken about the blood in its manifold effects; it is fitting that we should seek to understand how it is that victory is always ascribed to THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB.

We shall consider victory:

I. As Gained Once For All.

II. As Being Ever Carried On.

III. As One In Which We Have A Share.

I. The Victory which was gained once for all

In the exalted representation given in our text we see what a high position was once occupied by Satan, the great enemy of the human race. He had entrance into heaven, and appeared there as the accuser of the brethren and as the opponent of whatever was done in the interests of God's people.

We know how this is taught in the Old Testament. In the book of job we see Satan coming, with the Sons of God, to present himself before the Lord; and to obtain permission from Him to tempt His servant job (Job 2). In the book of Zechariah (3:1 and 2) we read that he saw "Joshua the High Priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him" (R.V., "be his adversary"). Then there is the statement of our Lord, recorded in Luke 10:18, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Later

on, in His agony of soul, as He felt beforehand His approaching sufferings, He said, "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John 12:32).

It may, at first thought, seem strange that the Scriptures should represent Satan as being in heaven; but to understand this aright it is necessary to remember that heaven is not a small, circumscribed dwelling place, where God and Satan had intercourse as neighbours. No 1 heaven is an illimitable sphere, with very many different divisions, filled with innumerable hosts of angels, who carry out God's will in nature. Among them, Satan also still held a place. Then remember, he is not represented in Scripture to be the black, grisly figure in outward appearance as he is generally pictured, but as "an angel of light." He was a prince, with ten thousands of servants.

When he had brought about the fall of man, and had also transferred the world to himself and became its prince, he had real authority over all that was in it. Man had been destined to be king of this world, for God has said, "Have thou authority." When Satan had conquered the king, he took his entire kingdom under his authority; and this authority was recognised by God. God, in His holy will, had ordained that if man listened to Satan, he must suffer the consequences, and become subject to his tyranny. God never in this matter used His power or exercised force, but always took the way of Law and Right; and so Satan retained his authority until it was taken from him in a lawful manner.

This is the reason why he could appear before God in heaven, as accuser of the brethren and in opposition to them for the 4,000 years of the Old Covenant.

He had obtained authority over all flesh, and only after he was conquered IN

FLESH, AS THE SPHERE OF HIS AUTHORITY, could he be cast out for ever, as accuser, from the Court of Heaven.

So the Son of God, also, had to come IN FLESH, in order to fight and conquer Satan, on his own ground.

For this reason also, at the commencement of His public life, our Lord after His anointing, being thus openly recognised as the Son of God, "was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." Victory over Satan could be gained only after He had personally endured and resisted his temptations.

But ever this victory was not sufficient. Christ came in order that "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." The devil had that power of death because of the Law of God. That law had installed him as jailor of its prisoners. Scripture says: "The sting of death is sin, and the POWER OF SIN IS THE LAW." Victory over, and the casting out of Satan, could not take place till the righteous demands of the law were perfectly fulfilled. The sinner must be delivered from the power of the law, before he could be delivered from the authority of Satan.

It was through His death, and the shedding of His blood, that the Lord Jesus fulfilled the law's demands. Ceaselessly, the law had been declaring that "The wages of sin is death"; "The soul that sinneth if: shall die." By the typical ministry of the Temple, by the sacrifices with the blood-shedding and blood sprinkling, the Law had foretold, that RECONCILIATION and REDEMPTION could take place only by the shedding of blood. As our Surety, the Son of God was born under the law. He obeyed it perfectly. He resisted the temptations of Satan to withdraw Himself from under its authority. He willingly gave Himself up to bear the punishment of sin. He

gave no ear to the temptation of Satan, to refuse the cup of suffering. When He shed His blood He had devoted His whole life, to its very end, to the fulfilling of the law. When the law had been thus perfectly fulfilled, the authority of sin and Satan was brought to an end. Therefore death could not hold Him. "Through the blood of the everlasting covenant " God brought Him "again from the dead." So also He "entered heaven by his own blood," to make His RECONCILIATION effective for us.

The text gives us a striking description of the glorious result of the appearing of our Lord in heaven. We read concerning the mystic woman: "She brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne There was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: and he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast our with him." Then follows the: song of victory in which the words of our text occur: "They overcame him by the BLOOD OF THE LAMB."

In the book of Daniel we read of a previous conflict between this Michael, who stood on the side of God's people Israel; and the opposing world powers. But only now can Satan be cast out because of the blood of the Lamb. Reconciliation for sin and the fulfilment of the law have taken from him all his authority, and. right. The blood, as we have already seen, that had done such wonderful things in heaven, with God, in blotting out sin, and bringing it to naught, had a similar power over Satan. He has now no longer any right to accuse. "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ, for the accuser of our brethren is cast down

... And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb."

II. There is A Progressive Victory: which follows on this first victory

Satan having been cast down to earth, the heavenly victory must now be carried out here

This is indicated in the words of the Song of Victory, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb." This was primarily spoken concerning "the brethren" mentioned, but it refers also to the victory of the angels. The victory in heaven and on earth progresses simultaneously, resting on the same ground.

We know from the portion in Daniel already mentioned (Daniel 10:12, 13) what fellowship there exists between heaven and earth in carrying on the work of God. As soon as Daniel prayed the angel became active, and the three weeks' strife in the heavenlies, were three weeks of prayer and fasting on earth. The conflict here on earth is the result of a conflict in the invisible region of the heavenlies. Michael and his angels, as well as the brethren on earth, gained the victory "by the blood of the Lamb."

In the twelfth chapter of Revelation we are clearly taught how the conflict was removed from heaven to earth. "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth" exclaimed the voice in heaven, "for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." "And when the dragon saw that he was cast down unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child."

The woman signifies nothing else than the church of God, out of which Jesus was born: when the devil could not harm Him any more, he persecutes His

church. The disciples of our Lord, and the church in the first three centuries had experience of this. In the bloody persecutions in which hundreds of thousands of Christians perished as martyrs, Satan did his utmost to lead the church into apostasy, or to root it out altogether; but in its full sense, the statement that "they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives even unto death" applies to the martyrs.

After the centuries of persecution, there came to the church centuries of rest and worldly prosperity. Satan had tried force in vain. By the favour of the world he might have better success. In the church conformed to the world everything became darker and darker, till in the Middle Ages the Romish apostasy reached its climax. Nevertheless during all these ages there were not a few who in the midst of surrounding misery, fought the fight of faith, and by the piety of their lives and witness for the Lord the statement was often established: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives even unto death."

This was no less the secret power by which, through the blessed Reformation, the mighty authority which Satan had gained in the church was broken down. "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb." It was the discovery, and experience, and preaching of the glorious truth that we are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood," that gave to the Reformers such wonderful power, and such a glorious victory.

Since the days of the Reformation it is still apparent that in proportion as the blood of the Lamb is gloried in, the church is constantly inspired by a new life to obtain the victory over deadness or error. Yes, even in the midst of the wildest heathen, where the throne of Satan has been undisturbed for

thousands of years, this is still the weapon by which its power must be destroyed. The preaching of "the blood of the cross" as the RECONCILIATION for the sin of the world, and the ground of God's free, forgiving love, is the power by which the most darkened heart is opened and softened, and from being a dwelling place of Satan is changed into a temple of the Most High.

What avails for the church, is available also for each Christian. In "the blood of the Lamb," he always has victory. It is when the soul is convinced of the power which that blood has with God, in heaven, to effect a perfect RECONCILIATION, and the blotting out of sin; and to rob the devil of his authority over us completely and for ever; and to work out in our hearts a full assurance of the favour of God; and to destroy the power of sin it is, I say, when the soul lives in the power of the blood, that the temptations of Satan cease to ensnare.

Where the holy blood of the Lamb is sprinkled, there God dwells, and Satan is put to flight. In heaven, and on earth, and in our hearts, that word as the announcement of a PROGRESSIVE VICTORY is valid—" They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb."

III. We also have a share in this Victory

If we are reckoned among those who have been cleansed "in the blood of the Lamb."

To have the full enjoyment of this we must pay attention to the following facts—

I. There Can Be No Victory Without Conflict

We must recognise that we dwell in an enemy's territory. What was revealed to the apostle in his heavenly vision must hold good in our daily lives. Satan has been cast down into the earth, he has great wrath because he has but a short time. He cannot now reach the glorified Jesus, but seeks to reach Him by attacking His people. We must live always under the holy consciousness that we are watched, every moment, by an enemy of unimaginable cunning and power; who is unwearied in his endeavour to bring us entirely, or even partially-however little it may be-under his authority. He is literally "the prince of this world." All that is in the world is ready to serve him, and he knows how to make use of it in his attempts to lead the church to be unfaithful to her Lord; and to inspire her with his spiritthe spirit of the world.

He makes use, not only of temptations to what is commonly esteemed to be sin, but he knows how to gain an entrance into our earthly engagements and businesses; in the seeking for our daily bread and necessary motley; in our politics; our commercial combinations; our literature and science; in our knowledge; and all things, and, so, to make all that is lawful in itself into a tool to forward his devilish deceptions.

The believer who desires to share in the victory over Satan "through the blood of the Lamb" must be a fighter. He must take pains to understand the character of his enemy. He must allow himself to be taught by the Spirit through the Word what the secret cunning of Satan is, which is called in Scripture "The depths of Satan," by which he so often blinds and deceives men. He must know that this strife is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, 'c against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places " (Ephesians 6:12). He

must devote himself, in every way, and at all costs, to carry on the strife till death. Then only will he be able to join in the song of victory, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives even unto death."

II. Victory Is Through Faith

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4 and 5). "Be of good cheer," said our Lord Jesus, "I have overcome the world." Satan is an already conquered enemy. He has nothing, absolutely nothing by right, to say to one who belongs to the Lord Jesus. By unbelief, or by ignorance of, or letting go my hold of the fact that I have a participation in the victory of Jesus, I may give Satan, again, an authority over me which otherwise he does not possess. But when I know, by a living faith, that I am one with the Lord Jesus, and that the Lord Himself lives in me, and that He maintains and carries on in me that victory which He gained; then Satan has no power over me. Victory "through the blood of the Lamb" is the power of my life.

Only this faith can inspire courage and joy in the strife. By thinking of the terrible power of the enemy; of his never sleeping watchfulness; of the way in which he has taken possession of everything on earth by which to tempt us; it might well be said-as some Christians think-that the strife is too severe; it is not possible to live always under such tension; that life would be impossible. This is perfectly true, if we in our weakness had to meet the enemy, or gain the victory by our own might. But that is not what we are called upon to do. JESUS IS THE VICTOR; so we need only to have our souls filled with the

heavenly vision of Satan being cast out of heaven by Jesus; filled with faith in the blood by which Jesus Himself conquered, and with faith that He Himself is with us, to maintain the power and victory of His blood: then we also "are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

III. This Victory Of Faith Is In Fellowship With The Blood of the Lamb

Faith is not merely a thought of which I lay hold, a conviction that possesses me-it is a life. Faith brings the soul into direct contact with God, and the unseen things of heaven, but above all, with the blood of Jesus. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO BELIEVE IN VICTORY OVER SATAN BY THE BLOOD WITHOUT BEING MYSELF BROUGHT ENTIRELY UNDER ITS POWER.

Belief in the power of the blood awakens in me a desire for an: experience of its power in myself; each experience of its power makes belief in victory more carious.

Seek to enter more deeply into the perfect RECONCILIATION WITH GOD which is yours. Live, Constantly, exercising faith in the assurance that "the blood cleanseth from all sin"; yield yourself to be sanctified and brought nigh to God through the blood; let it be your life-giving nourishment and Dower. You will thus have an unbroken experience of victory over Satan and his temptations. He who, as a consecrated priest, walks with God, will rule as a conquering king over Satan.

Believers, our Lord Jesus by His blood has made Las not only priests but

kings unto God, that we may draw near to God not only in priestly purity and Ministry, but that also in kingly power we may rule with God. A kingly spirit must inspire us; a kingly courage to rule over our enemies. The blood of the Lamb must increasingly be a token and seal, not only of.

RECONCILIATION for all guilt, but of victory over all the power of sin.

The Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus, and the casting out of Satan, were the results of the shedding of His blood. In you also, the sprinkling of the blood will open the way for the full enjoyment of Resurrection with Jesus, and of being seated with Him in the heavenly places.

I once more, therefore, beseech you to open your entire being to the incoming of the power of the blood of Jesus, then your life will become a continual observance of the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, and a continual victory over all the powers of hell. Your heart, too, will constantly unite with the song of heaven, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ, for the accuser of the brethren is cast down.. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 12:10, 11).

Chapter 10^(TOC)

Heavenly Joy Through the Blood

*"After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number ... which stood before the throne, and before the Lamb... and they cried with a loud voice saying, g Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.' These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"—
Revelation 7:9-14.*

These words occur in the well-known vision of the great multitude in heavenly glory, which no man could number. In spirit, the Apostle saw them standing before the throne of God, and of the Lamb, clothed with long white robes, and with palms in their hands; and they sang with a loud voice, "Salvation to our God which sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb." All the angels answered this song by falling down on their faces before the throne, to worship God, and to offer eternal praise and glory to Him.

Then one of the Elders, pointing out the great multitude, and the clothing which distinguished them, put the question to John, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they?" John replied, "Sir, thou knowest." Then the Elder said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple."

This explanation, given by one of the Elders who stood round the throne,

concerning the state of the redeemed in their heavenly glory, is of great value.

It reveals to us the fact that not only in this world of sin and strife is the blood of Jesus the one hope of the sinner, but that in heaven when every enemy has been subdued that precious blood will be recognised for ever as the ground of our salvation. And we learn that the blood must exercise its power with God in heaven, not only as long as sin has still to be dealt with here beneath, but that through all eternity each one of the redeemed to the praise and glory of the blood will bear the sign of how the blood has availed for him and that he owes his salvation entirely to it.

If we have a clear insight into this we shall understand better what a true and vital connection there is between "the sprinkling of the blood" and the joys of heaven; and that a true intimate connection with the blood on earth, will enable the believer while still on earth to share the joy and glory of heaven.

JOY IN HEAVEN THROUGH THE BLOOD, is because it is the blood that:

I. Bestows The Right to A Place In Heaven.

II. Makes Us Fit For The Pleasures Of Heaven.

III. That Provides Subject—Matter for the Song of Heaven.

I. It is the blood that bestows on us the right to a place in heaven

It is clear that this is the leading thought in the text. In the question, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes and whence come they?" the Elder desires to awaken attention and inquiry as to who these favoured persons really are, who stand thus before the throne, and before the Lamb, with palms

in their hands. And, as he himself gives the reply, we expect that he will surely mention what might be thought to be the most remarkable thing in their appearance. He replies to the question-" Whence come they?" by saying that "they come out of the great tribulation." To the question, "Who are these?" he replies, that they have washed their long white robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

That is the one thing to which, as their distinguishing mark, he draws attention. This alone, gives them the right to the place which they occupy in glory. This becomes plainly evident, if we notice the words which immediately follow: "therefore are they before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." "Therefore "-it is because of that blood that they are before the throne. They owe it to the blood of the Lamb, that they occupy that place so high in glory. The blood gives the right to beaven.

RIGHT to heaven 1 Can such a thing be spoken of in connection with a condemned sinner? Would it not be better to glory in the mercy of God only, who, by free grace, admits a sinner to heaven, than to speak of a RIGHT to heaven? No 1 it would not be better -for then we should not understand the value of the blood, or why it had to be shed. We should also entertain false conceptions both of our sin and of God's grace, and remain unfit for the full enjoyment of the glorious Redemption which the Saviour has accomplished for us.

We have already spoken of "the casting out of Satan from heaven," and have shown from this incident, that a holy God acts always according to law. Just as the devil was not "cast out" otherwise than according to law and right, so the sinner cannot be admitted in any other way. The Prophet said, "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness" (Isaiah

1:27). St. Paul tells us that "grace reigns THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Romans 5:21 This was the purpose for which God sent His Son into the world. Instead of being afraid that speaking of having a RIGHT to enter heaven might belittle grace, it will be seen that the highest glory of grace consists in bestowing that RIGHT.

The lack of this insight is sometimes found in the church where it might be least expected. Recently I asked a man who spoke of the hope he had of going to heaven when he died, on what ground he rested his hope. He was not by any means a careless man, nor did he trust to his own righteousness, and yet he replied, "Well, I think that I strive my best to seek the Lord, and to do His will." When I told him that this was no ground on which to stand before the judgment seat of a holy God, he appealed to the mercy of God. When I told him, again, that he needed more than mercy-it appeared to him to be something new to hear that it was the righteousness of God, only, that could grant him entrance into heaven. It is to be feared that there are many who listen to the preaching of "Justification by faith," but who have no idea that they cannot have a share in eternal blessedness save by being declared legally righteous.

Entirely different was the testimony of a certain lad who had not the full use of his intellectual faculties, but whose heart the Spirit of God had enlightened to understand the meaning of the crucifixion of Jesus.

When on his death-bed he was asked about his hope, he intimated that there was a great book, on one of the pages of which his many sins, very many, had been written. Then with the finger of his right hand he pointed to the palm of his left hand, indicating the print of the nail there. Taking, as it were, something from the pierced hand-he was thinking of the blood that marked it-be showed how all that was written on that page was now blotted out. The

blood of the Lamb was the ground of his hope.

The blood of the Lamb gives the believing sinner a RIGHT to heaven. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." By shedding His blood He really bore the punishment of sin. He gave Himself up to death really in our place. He gave His life as a ransom for many. Now that the punishment is borne, and our Lord's blood has really been shed as a ransom, and appears before the throne of God in heaven, now the righteousness of God declares that as the sinner's Surety had fulfilled all the requirements of the law, both as regards punishment and obedience, God pronounces the sinner who believes in Christ to be righteous. Faith is just the recognition that Christ has really done everything for me; that God's declaration of righteousness is just His declaration that, according to the law and right, I have a title to salvation. God's grace bestows on me the RIGHT to heaven. The blood of the Lamb is the evidence of this RIGHT. If I have been cleansed by that blood, I can meet death with full confidence-I have a RIGHT to heaven.

You desire and hope to get to heaven. Listen then to the answer given to the question-Who are they who will find a place before the throne of God? "They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." That washing takes place, not in heaven, and not at death, but here, during our life on earth. Do not deceive yourselves by a hope of heaven, if you have not been cleansed, really cleansed, by that precious blood. Do not dare to meet death without knowing that Jesus Himself has cleansed you by His blood.

II. The Blood also Bestows the meetness for heaven

It is of little use for men to have a right to anything unless they are fitted to enjoy it. However costly the gift, it is of little use if the inner disposition necessary to the enjoyment of it is wanting. To bestow the right to heaven on those who are not at the same time prepared for it, would give them no pleasure, but would be in conflict with the perfection of all God's works.

The power of the blood of Jesus not only sets open the door of heaven for the sinner but it operates on him in such a divine way that, as he enters heaven, it will appear that the blessedness of heaven and he have been really fitted for each other.

What constitutes the blessedness of heaven, and what the disposition is that is fitted for it, we are told by words connected with our text. "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Nearness to and fellowship with God and the Lamb, constitute the blessedness of heaven. To be before the throne of God, and to see His face; to serve Him day and night in His temple; to be overshadowed by Him who sits upon the throne; to be fed and led by the Lamb; all these expressions point out how little the blessedness of heaven depends on anything else than on GOD AND THE LAMB. To see them, to have intercourse with them, to be acknowledged, loved, cared for by them—that is blessedness.

What preparation is needed for having such intercourse with God and the Lamb? It consists in two things—

I. Inner agreement in mind and will, and

II. Delight in His nearness and fellowship and both are purchased by the blood.

I. There can be no thought of fitness for heaven apart from oneness with God's will

How could two dwell together unless they agreed? And because God is the holy One, the sinner must be cleansed from his sin, and sanctified, otherwise he remains utterly unfit for what constitutes the happiness of heaven.

"Without holiness no man can see the Lord." Man's entire nature must be renewed, so that he may think, and desire, and will, and do, what pleases God; not as a matter of mere obedience, in keeping a commandment, but from natural pleasure, and because he cannot do or will otherwise. Holiness must become his nature.

Is not this just what we have seen that the blood of the Lamb does? "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Where reconciliation and pardon are applied by the Holy Spirit, and are retained by a living faith, there the blood operates with a divine power, killing sinful lusts and desires; the blood exercises constantly a wonderful cleansing power. In the blood, the power of the death of Jesus operates; we died with Him to sin; through a believing intercourse with the blood, the power of the death of Jesus presses into the innermost parts of our hidden life. The blood breaks the power of sin, and cleanses from all sin.

The blood sanctifies also. We have seen, that cleansing is but one part of

salvation, the taking away of sin. The blood does more than this; it takes possession of us for God, and inwardly bestows the very same disposition which was in Jesus when He shed His blood. In shedding that blood, He sanctified Himself for us, that we also should be sanctified by the truth. As we delight and lose ourselves in that holy blood, the power of entire surrender to God's will and glory; the power to sacrifice everything, to abide in God's love., which inspired the Lord Jesus, is efficacious in us.

The blood sanctifies us for the emptying and surrender of ourselves, so that God may take possession of us, and fill us with Himself. This is true holiness; to be possessed by, and filled with God. This is wrought out by the blood of the Lamb, and so we are prepared here on earth to meet God in heaven with unspeakable joy.

II. In addition to having one will with God

We said that fitness for heaven consisted in the desire and capacity for enjoying fellowship with, God. In this, also, the blood bestows, here, on earth, the true preparation for heaven. We have seen how the blood brings us near to God; leading to a priestlike approach, yea, we have liberty, by the blood, to enter into "The Holiest" of God's presence, and to make our dwelling place there. We have seen that God attaches to the blood such incomprehensible value, that where the blood is sprinkled, there is His throne of grace. When a heart places itself under the full operation of the blood, there God dwells, and there His salvation is experienced. **THE BLOOD MAKES POSSIBLE THE PRACTICE OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD,** and not less with the Lamb-with the Lord Jesus Himself. Have we forgotten His word: "he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in

him?" The full blessing of the power of the blood, in its highest effect, is FULL ABIDING UNION WITH JESUS. It is only our unbelief that separates the work from the person; and the blood from the Lord Jesus. It is I-3E, HIMSELF, who cleanses by His blood, and brings us near, and causes us to drink. It is only through the blood that we are fitted for full fellowship with Jesus in heaven, just as with the Father.

Ye who are redeemed 3 Here you can see what is needed to mould you for heaven; to make you, even here, heavenly minded. See that the blood, which always has a place at the throne of grace above, manifests its power, always, also in your hearts; and your lives will become an unbroken fellowship with God and the Lamb: the foretaste of life in eternal glory. Let the thought enter deeply into your soul the blood bestows already in the heart, here on earth, the blessedness of heaven. The precious blood makes life on earth and life in heaven one.

II. The Blood provides subject matter for the song of heaven

What we have hitherto said has been taken from what the Elder stated about the redeemed. But how far is this their experience and testimony? Have we anything out of their own mouths concerning this? Yes, they themselves bear witness. In the song, contained in our text, they were heard to cry with loud voice, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." It is as the slain Lamb, that the Lord Jesus is in the midst of the throne, as a Lamb whose blood had been shed. As such, He is the object of the worship of the redeemed.

This appears still more clearly in the new song that they sing, "Thou art

worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou hast redeemed us TO God BY THY BLOOD, out of every kindred, and tongue, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests" (Revelation 5:9 and 10).

Or in words somewhat different, used by the Apostle in the beginning of the book, where he, under the impression of all that he had seen and heard in heaven concerning the place which the Lamb occupied, at the first mention of the name of the Lord Jesus, cried out, "Unto him that loved us and WASHED US FROM OUR SINS IN HIS OWN BLOOD, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever, Amen." (Revelation 1:5 and 6).

Without ceasing, the blood of the Lamb continues to be the power to awaken the saved, to their song of joy and thanksgiving; because in the death of the Cross the sacrifice took place in which He gave Himself for them, and won them for Himself; because, also, the blood is the eternal seal of what He did, and of the love which moved Him to do it, it remains also the inexhaustible, overflowing fountain of heavenly bliss.

That we may the better understand this, notice the expression: "Him that loved us and washed us from our sins IN HIS OWN BLOOD." In all our consideration about the blood of Jesus, we have had till now no occasion intentionally to stop there. And of all the glorious things which the blood means, this is one of the most glorious-His blood is the sign, the measure, yes, the impartation of His love. Each application of His blood, each time that He causes the soul to experience its power, is a fresh outflowing of His wonderful love. The full experience of the power of the blood in eternity will be nothing else than the full revelation of how He gave Himself up for us, and gives Himself to us, in a love eternal, unending, incomprehensible-as God Himself.

"Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood." This love is indeed incomprehensible. What has not that love moved Him to do? He gave Himself for us; He became sin for us; He was made a curse for us. Who would dare to use such language, who could ever have dared to think such a thing if God had not revealed it to us by His Spirit? That He really gave Himself up for us, not because it was laid upon Him to do so, but by the impulse of a love that really longed for us, that we might for ever be identified with Him. Because it is such a divine wonder, therefore we feel it so little. But, blessed be the Lord ! there is a time coming when we shall feel it, when under the ceaseless and immediate love-sharing of the heavenly life, we shall be filled and satisfied with that love. Yes, praised be the Lord ! even here on earth there is hope that through a better knowledge of, and more perfect trust in the blood, the Spirit will more powerfully shed abroad "the love of God in our hearts." There is nothing to prevent our hearts being filled with the love of the Lamb, and our mouths with His praise here on earth, by faith, as is done in heaven by sight. Each experience of the power of the blood will become increasingly an experience of the love of Jesus.

It has been said that it is not desirable to lay too much emphasis on the word "blood"; that it sounds coarse, and the thought expressed by it can be conveyed in a way more in accordance with our modern habit of speaking or thinking.

I must acknowledge that I do not share in this view. I receive that word as coming, not just from John, but from the Lord Himself. I am deeply convinced that the word chosen by the Spirit of God, and by Him made living and filled with the power of that eternal life whence the song containing it comes to us, carries in itself a power of blessing surpassing our understanding. Changing the expression into our way of thinking has all the

imperfection of a human translation. He who desires to know and experience "what the Spirit says unto the churches" will accept the word by faith, as having come from heaven, as the word in which the joy and power of eternal life is enfolded in a most peculiar manner. Those expressions, "THY BLOOD," and "THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB" will make "THE HOLIEST," the place of God's glory, resound eternally with the joyful notes of "The New Song."

Heavenly joy through THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB: that will be the portion of all, here on earth, who with undivided heart yield to its power; and of all above, in heaven, who have become worthy to take a place among the multitude around the throne.

My Comrades in Redemption! we have learned what those in heaven say, and how they sing about the blood. Let us pray earnestly that these tidings may have the effect on us, which our Lord intended. We have seen that to live a real heavenly life it is necessary to abide in the full power of the blood. The blood bestows the right to enter heaven.

As the blood of RECONCILIATION it works out in the soul the full, living consciousness which belongs to those who are at home in heaven. It brings us really into "THE HOLIEST," near to God. It makes us fit for heaven.

As the CLEANSING BLOOD it delivers from the lust and power of sin, and preserves us in the fellowship of the light and life of the Holy God. The blood inspires the song of praise in heaven. As the blood of the Lamb "who loved us and gave himself for us" it speaks not only of WHAT He has done for us, but chiefly of HIM who has done all. In the blood, we have the most perfect impartation of Himself. He who by faith gives himself up to experience, to the full, what the blood is able to do, will soon find an entrance into a life of

happy singing of praise, and love, that heaven itself, alone, can surpass.

My Comrades in Redemption ! this life is for you and me. May THE BLOOD BE ALL OUR GLORY, not only at the Cross with its awful wonders, but also at the Throne. Let us plunge deep, and ever deeper, into the living fountain of the blood of the Lamb. Let us open our hearts wide, and ever wider, for its operation. Let us firmly, and ever more firmly, believe in the ceaseless CLEANSING by which the Great Eternal Priest Himself will apply that blood to us. Let us pray with burning, and ever more burning, desire that nothing, yes, nothing, may be in our heart that does not experience the power of the blood. Let us unite joyfully, and ever more joyfully, in the song of the great multitude, who know of nothing so glorious as this-" Thou hast redeemed us to God, by thy blood."

May our life on earth become what it ought to be, O OUR BELOVED LORD I one ceaseless song to x' Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood" "and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father."

"To him be the glory and dominion for ever and ever." Amen.

THE MASTER'S INDWELLING

BY

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Chapter I_(TOC)

Carnal Christians

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal—1 Corinthians 3:1

The apostle here speaks of two stages of the Christian life, two types of Christians: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." They were Christians, in Christ, but instead of being spiritual Christians, they were carnal. "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet are ye able, for ye are yet carnal." Here is that word a second time. "For whereas"—this is the proof—"there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" Four times the apostle uses that word carnal. In the wisdom which the Holy Ghost gives him, Paul feels—I can not write to these Corinthian Christians unless I know their state, and unless I tell them of it. If I give spiritual food to men who are carnal Christians, I am doing them more harm than good, for they are not fit to take it. I cannot feed them with meat, I must feed them with milk. And so he tells them at the very outset of the epistle what he sees to be their state. In the two previous chapters he had spoken about his ministry being by the Holy Spirit; now he begins to tell them what must be the state of a people in order to accept spiritual truth, and he says: "I have not liberty to speak to you as I would, for you are carnal, and you cannot receive Spiritual truth." That suggests to us the solemn thought,

that in the Church of Christ there are two classes of Christians. Some have lived many years as believers, and yet always remain babes; others are spiritual men, because they have given themselves up to the power, the leading and to the entire rule of the Holy Ghost. If we are to obtain a blessing, we must first decide to which of these classes we belong. Are we, by the grace of God, in deep humility living a spiritual life, or are we living a carnal life? Then, let us first try to understand what is meant by the carnal state in which believers may be living.

We notice from what we find in Corinthians, four marks of the carnal state. First: It is simply a condition of protracted infancy. You know what that means. Suppose a beautiful babe, six months old. It cannot speak, it cannot walk, but we do not trouble ourselves about that; it is natural, and ought to be so. But suppose a year later we find the child not grown at all, and three years later still no growth; we would at once say: "There must be some terrible disease;" and the baby that at six months old was the cause of joy to every one who saw him, has become to the mother and to all a source of anxiety and sorrow. There is something wrong; the child can not grow. It was quite right at six months old that it should eat nothing but milk; but years have passed by, and it remains in the same weakly state. Now this is just the condition of many believers. They are converted; they know what it is to have assurance and faith; they believe in pardon for sin; they begin to work for God; and yet, somehow, there is very little growth in spirituality, in the real heavenly life. We come into contact with them, and we feel at once there is something wanting; there is none of the beauty of holiness or of the power of God's Spirit in them. This is the condition of the carnal Corinthians, expressed in what was said to the Hebrews: "You have had the Gospel so long that by this time you ought to be teachers, and yet you need that men should teach you the very rudiments of the oracles of God." Isaiah it not a sad

thing to see a believer who has been converted five, ten, twenty years, and yet no growth, and no strength, and no joy of holiness?

What are the marks of a little child? One is, a little child cannot help himself, but is always keeping others occupied to serve him. What a tyrant a baby in a house often is! The mother cannot go out, there must be a servant to nurse it; it needs to be cared for constantly. God made a man to care for others, but the baby was made to be cared for and to be helped. So there are Christians who always want help. Their pastor and their Christian friends must always be teaching and comforting them. They go to church, and to prayer-meetings, and to conventions, always wanting to be helped—a sign of spiritual infancy.

The other sign of an infant is this: he can do nothing to help his fellow-man. Every man is expected to contribute something to the welfare of society; every one has a place to fill and a work to do, but the babe can do nothing for the common weal. It is just so with Christians. How little some can do! They take a part in work, as it is called, but there is little of exercising spiritual power and carrying real blessing. Should we not each ask, "Have I outgrown my spiritual infancy?" Some must reply, "No, instead of having gone forward, I have gone backward, and the joy of conversion and the first love is gone." Alas! They are babes in Christ; they are yet carnal.

The second mark of the carnal state is this: that there is sin and failure continually. Paul says: "Whereas there is strife and division among you, and envying, are ye not carnal?" A man gives way to temper. He may be a minister, or a preacher of the Gospel, or a Sunday-school teacher, most earnest at the prayer-meeting, but yet strife or bitterness or envying is often shown by him. Alas! Alas! In Galatians 3:5 we are told that the works of the flesh are specially hatred and envy. How often among Christians, who have to work together, do we see divisions and bitterness! God have mercy upon

them, that the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, is so frequently absent from His own people. You ask, "Why is it, that for twenty years I have been fighting with my temper, and can not conquer it?" It is because you have been fighting with the temper, and you have not been fighting with the root of the temper. You have not seen that it is all because you are in the carnal state, and not properly given up to the Spirit of God. It may be that you never were taught it; that you never saw it in God's Word; that you never believed it. But there it is; the truth of God remains unchangeable. Jesus Christ can give us the victory over sin, and can keep us from actual transgression. I am not telling you that the root of sin will be eradicated, and that you will have no longer any natural tendency to sin; but when the Holy Spirit comes not only with His power for service as a gift, but when He comes in Divine grace to fill the heart, there is victory over sin; power not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. And you see a mark of the carnal state not only in unlovingness, self-consciousness and bitterness, but in so many other sins. How much worldliness, how much ambition among men, how much seeking for the honor that comes from man—all the fruit of the carnal life—to be found in the midst of Christian activity! Let us remember that the carnal state is a state of continual sinning and failure, and God wants us not only to make confession of individual sins, but to come to the acknowledgment that they are the sign that we are not living a healthy life—we are yet carnal.

A third mark which will explain further what I have been saying, is that this carnal state may be found in existence in connection with great spiritual gifts. There is a difference between gifts and graces. The graces of the Spirit are humility and love, like the humility and love of Christ. The graces of the Spirit are to make a man free from self; the gifts of the Spirit are to fit a man for work. We see this illustrated among the Corinthians. In the first chapter Paul says, "I thank God that you are enriched unto all utterance, and all

knowledge, and all wisdom." In the 12th and 14th chapters we see that the gifts of prophecy and of working miracles were in great power among them; but the graces of the Spirit were noticeably absent.

And this may be in our days as well as in the time of the Corinthians. I may be a minister of the Gospel; I may teach God's Word beautifully; I may have influence, and gather a large congregation, and yet, alas! I may be a carnal man; a man who may be used by God, and may be a blessing to others, and yet the carnal life may still mark me. You all know the law that a thing is named according to what is its most prominent characteristic. Now, in these carnal Corinthians there was a little of God's Spirit, but the flesh predominated; the Spirit had not the rule of their whole life. And the spiritual men are not called so because there is no flesh in them, but because the Spirit in them has obtained dominance, and when you meet them and have intercourse with them, you feel that the Spirit of God has sanctified them. Ah, let us beware lest the blessing God gives us in our work deceive us and lead us to think that because he has blessed us, we must be spiritual men. God may give us gifts that we use, and yet our lives may not be wholly in the power of the Holy Ghost.

My last mark of the carnal state is that it makes a man unfit for receiving spiritual truths. That is what the apostle writes to the Corinthians: "I could not preach to you as unto spiritual; you are not fit for spiritual truth after being Christians so long; you can not yet bear it; I have to feed you with milk." I am afraid that in the church of the nineteenth century we often make a terrible mistake. We have a congregation in which the majority are carnal men. We give these men spiritual teaching, and they admire it, understand it, and rejoice in such ministry; yet their lives are not practically affected. They work for Christ in a certain way, but we can scarce recognize the true sanctification

of the Spirit; we dare not say they are spiritual men, full of the Holy Spirit.

Now, let us recognize this with regard to ourselves. A man may become very earnest, may take in all the teaching he hears; he may be able to discern, for discernment is a gift; he may say, "That man helps me in this line, and that man in another direction, and a third man is remarkable for another gift;" yet, all the time, the carnal life may be living strongly in him, and when he gets into trouble with some friend, or Christian worker, or worldly man, the carnal root is bearing its terrible fruit, and the spiritual food has failed to enter his heart. Beware of that. Mark the Corinthians and learn of them. Paul did not say to them, "You can not bear the truth as I would speak it to you," because they were ignorant or a stupid people. The Corinthians prided themselves on their wisdom, and sought it above everything, and Paul said: "I thank God that you are enriched in utterance, in knowledge, and in wisdom; nevertheless, you are yet carnal, your life is not holy; your life is not sanctified unto the humility of the life of the Lamb of God, you can not yet take in real spiritual truth."

We find the carnal state not only at Corinth, but throughout the Christian world to-day. Many Christians are asking, "What is the reason there is so much feebleness in the Church?" We can not ask this question too earnestly, and I trust that God Himself will so impress it upon our hearts that we shall say to Him, "It must be changed. Have mercy upon us." But, ah! that prayer and that change can not come until we have begun to see that there is a carnal root ruling in believers; they are living more after the flesh than the Spirit; they are yet carnal Christians.

There is a passage "from carnal to spiritual." Did Paul find any spiritual believers? Undoubtedly he did. Just read the 6th chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians! That was a church where strife, and bitterness, and envy were

terrible. But the apostle says in the first verse: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." There we see that the marks of the spiritual man are that he will be a meek man; and that he will have power, and love to help and restore those that are fallen. The carnal man can not do that. If there is a true spiritual life that can be lived, the great question is: Is the way open, and how can I enter into the spiritual state? Here, again, I have four short answers.

First, we must know that there is such a spiritual life to be lived by men on earth. Nothing cuts the roots of the Christian life so much as unbelief. People do not believe what God has said about what He is willing to do for His children. Men do not believe that when God says, "Be filled with the Spirit," He means it for every Christian. And yet Paul wrote to the Ephesians each one: "Be filled with the Spirit, and do not be drunk with wine." Just as little as you may be drunk with wine, so little may you live without being filled with the Spirit. Now, if God means that for believers, the first thing that we need is to study, and to take home God's Word, to our belief until our hearts are filled with the assurance that there is such a life possible which it is our duty to live; that we can be spiritual men. God's Word teaches us that God does not expect a man to live as he ought for one minute unless the Holy Spirit is in him to enable him to do it.

We do not want the Holy Spirit only when we go to preach, or when we have some special temptation of the devil to meet, or some great burden to bear; God says: "My child can not live a right life unless he is guided by my Spirit every minute." That is the mark of the child of God: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." In Romans V. we read: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us." That is to be the common, every-day experience of the believer, not his life at

set times only. Did ever a father or mother think, "For to-day I want my child to love me?" No, they expect the love every day. And so God wants His child every moment to have a heart filled with love of the Spirit. In the eyes of God, it is most unnatural to expect a man to love as he should if he is not filled with the Spirit. Oh, let us believe a man can be a spiritual man. Thank God, there is now the blessing waiting us. "Be filled with the Spirit." "Be led by the Spirit." There is the blessing. If you have to say, "Oh, God, I have not this blessing," say it; but say also, "Lord, I know it is my duty, my solemn obligation to have it, for without it I can not live in perfect peace with Thee all the day; without it I can not glorify Thee, and do the work Thou wouldst have me do." This is our first step from carnal to spiritual—to recognize a spiritual life, a walk in the Spirit, is within our reach. How can we ask God to guide us into spiritual life, if we have not a clear, confident conviction that there is such a life to be had?

Then comes the second step; a man must see the shame and guilt of his having lived such a life. Some people admit there is a spiritual life to live, and that they have not lived it, and they are sorry for themselves, and pity themselves, and think, "How sad that I am too feeble for it! How sad that God gives it to others, but has not given it to me!" They have great compassion upon themselves, instead of saying, "Alas! it has been our unfaithfulness, our unbelief, our disobedience, that has kept us from giving ourselves utterly to God. We have to blush and to be ashamed before God that we do not live as spiritual men."

A man does not get converted without having conviction of sin. When that conviction of sin comes, and his eyes are opened, he learns to be afraid of his sin, and to flee from it to Christ, and to accept Christ as a mighty deliverer. But a man needs a second conviction of sin; a believer must be convicted of

his peculiar sin. The sins of an unconverted man are different from the sins of a believer. An unconverted man, for instance, is not ordinarily convicted of the corruption of his nature; he thinks principally about external sins—"I have sworn, been a liar, and I am on the way to hell." He is then convicted for conversion. But the believer is in quite a different condition. His sins are far more blamable, for he has had the light and the love and the Spirit of God given to him. His sins are far deeper. He has striven to conquer them and he has grown to see that his nature is utterly corrupt, that the carnal mind, the flesh, within him, is making his whole state utterly wretched. When a believer is thus convicted by the Holy Spirit, it is specially his life of unbelief that condemns him, because he sees that the great guilt connected with this has kept him from receiving the full gift of God's Holy Spirit. He is brought down in shame and confusion of face, and he begins to cry: "Woe is me, for I am undone. I have heard of God by the hearing of the ear; I have known a great deal of Him and preached about Him, but now mine eye seeth Him." God comes near him. Job, the righteous man, whom God trusted, saw in himself the deep sin of self and its righteousness that he had never seen before. Until this conviction of the wrongness of our carnal state as believers comes to each one of us; until we are willing to get this conviction from God, to take time before God to be humbled and convicted, we never can become spiritual men.

Then comes the third mark, which is that out of the carnal state into the spiritual is only one step. One step; oh, that is a blessed message I bring to you—it is only one step. I know many people will refuse to admit that it is only one step; they think it too little for such a mighty change. But was not conversion only one step?

Song of Solomon it is when a man passes from carnal to spiritual. You ask if

when I talk of a spiritual man I am not thinking of a man of spiritual maturity, a real saint, and you say: "Does that come in one day? Is there no growth in holiness?" I reply that spiritual maturity cannot come in a day. We can not expect it. It takes growth, until the whole beauty of the image of Christ is formed in a man. But still I say that it needs but one step for a man to get out of the carnal life into the spiritual life. It is when a man utterly breaks with the flesh; when he gives up the flesh into the crucifixion death of Christ; when he sees that everything about it is accursed and that he can not deliver himself from it; and then claims the slaying power of Christ's cross within him—it is when a man does this and says: "This spiritual life prepared for me is the free gift of my God in Christ Jesus," that he understands how one step can bring him out of the carnal into the spiritual state.

In that spiritual life there will be much still to be learned. There will still be imperfections. Spiritual life is not perfect; but the predominant characteristic will be spiritual. When a man has given himself up to the real, living, acting, ruling power of God's Spirit, he has got into the right position in which he can grow. You never think of growing out of sickness into health; you may grow out of feebleness into strength, as the little babe can grow to be a strong man; but where there is disease, there must healing come if there is to be a cure effected. There are Christians who think that they must grow out of the carnal state into the spiritual state. You never can. What could help those carnal Corinthians? To give them milk could not help them, for milk was a proof they were in the wrong state. To give them meat would not help them, for they were unfit to eat it. What they needed was the knife of the surgeon. Paul says that the carnal life must be cut out. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh." When a man understands what that means, and accepts it in the faith of what Christ can do, then one step can bring him from carnal to spiritual. One simple act of faith in the power of Christ's death, one act of

surrender to the fellowship of Christ's death as the Holy Spirit can make it ours, will make it ours, will bring deliverance from the power of your efforts.

What brought deliverance to that poor condemned sinner who was most dark and wretched in his unconverted state? He felt he could do nothing good of himself. What did he do? He saw set before him the almighty Saviour and he cast himself into His arms; he trusted himself to that omnipotent love and cried, "Lord, have mercy upon me." That was salvation. It was not for what he did that Christ accepted him. Oh, believers, if any of us who are conscious that the carnal state predominates have to say: "It marks me; I am a religious man, an earnest man, a friend of missions; I work for Christ in my church, but, alas! temper and sin and worldliness have still the mastery over my soul," hear the word of God. If any will come and say: "I have struggled, I have prayed, I have wept, and it has not helped me," then you must do one other thing. You must see that the living Christ is God's provision for your holy, spiritual life. You must believe that that Christ who accepted you once, at conversion, in His wonderful love is now waiting to say to you that you may become a spiritual man, entirely given up to God. If you will believe that, your fear will vanish and you will say: "It can be done; if Christ will accept and take charge, it shall be done."

Then, my last mark. A man must take that step, a solemn but blessed step. It cost some of you five or ten years before you took the step of conversion. You wept and prayed for years, and could not find peace until you took that step. So, in the spiritual life, you may go to teacher after teacher, and say, "Tell me about the spiritual life, the baptism of the Spirit, and holiness," and yet you may remain just where you were. Many of us would love to have sin taken away. Who loves to have a hasty temper? Who loves to have a proud disposition? Who loves to have a worldly heart? No one. We go to Christ to

take it away, and he does not do it; and we ask, "Why will he not do it? I have prayed very earnestly." It is because you wanted Him to take away the ugly fruits while the poisonous root was to stay in you. You did not ask Him that the flesh should be nailed to His cross, and that you should henceforth give up self entirely to the power of His Spirit.

There is deliverance, but not in the way we seek it. Suppose a painter had a piece of canvas, on which he desired to work out some beautiful picture. Suppose that piece of canvas does not belong to him, and any one has a right to take it and to use it for any other purpose; do you think the painter would bestow much work on that? No. Yet people want Jesus Christ to bestow His trouble upon them in taking away this temper, or that other sin, though in their hearts they have not yielded themselves utterly to His command and His keeping. It can not be. But if you will come and give your whole life into His charge, Christ Jesus is mighty to save; Christ Jesus waits to be gracious; Christ Jesus waits to fill you with His Spirit.

Will you not take the step? God grant that we may be led by His Spirit to a yielding up of ourselves to Him as never before. Will you not come in humble confession that, alas! the carnal life has predominated too much, has altogether marked you, and that you have a bitter consciousness that with all the blessing God has bestowed, He has not made you what you want to be—a spiritual man? It is the Holy Spirit alone who by His indwelling can make a spiritual man. Come then and cast yourself at God's feet, with this one thought, "Lord, I give myself an empty vessel to be filled with Thy Spirit." Each one of you sees every day at the tea table an empty cup set there, waiting to be filled with tea when the proper time comes. So with every dish, every plate. They are cleansed and empty, ready to be filled. Emptied and cleansed. Oh, come! and just as a vessel is set apart to receive what it is to

contain, say to Christ that you desire from this hour to be a vessel set apart to be filled with His Spirit, given up to be a spiritual man. Bow down in the deepest emptiness of soul, and say, "Oh, God, I have nothing!" and then surely as you place yourself before Him you have a right to say, "My God will fulfill His promise! I claim from Him the filling of the Holy Spirit to make me, instead of a carnal, a spiritual Christian." If you place yourself at His feet, and tarry there; if you abide in that humble surrender and that childlike trust, as sure as God lives the blessing will come.

Oh, have we not to bow in shame before God, as we think of His whole Church and see so much of the carnal prevailing? Have we not to bow in shame before God, as we think of so much of the carnal in our hearts and lives? Then let us bow in great faith in God's mercy. Deliverance is nigh, deliverance is coming, deliverance is waiting, deliverance is sure. Let us trust; God will give it.

Chapter II^(TOC)

The Self Life

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me—Matthew 16:24

In the 13th verse we read that Jesus at Caesarea Philippi asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" When they had answered, He asked them, "But whom say ye that I am?" And in verse 16 Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Jesus answered and said unto him: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonas, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven. And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Then in verse 21 we read how Jesus began to tell His disciples of His approaching death; and in verse 22 how Peter began to rebuke Him, saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee." But Jesus turned and said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me, for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Then said Jesus unto His disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."

We often hear about the compromise life and the question comes up What lies at the root of it? What is the reason that so many Christians are wasting their lives in the terrible bondage of the world instead of living in the manifestation and the privilege and the glory of the child of God? And

another question perhaps comes to us: What can be the reason that when we see a thing is wrong and strive against it we cannot conquer it? What can be the reason that we have a hundred times prayed and vowed, yet here we are still living a mingled, divided, half-hearted life? To those two questions there is one answer: it is self that is the root of the whole trouble. And therefore, if any one asks me, "How can I get rid of this compromise life?" the answer would not be, "You must do this, or that, or the other thing," but the answer would be, "A new life from above, the life of Christ, must take the place of the self-life; then alone can we be conquerors."

We always go from the outward to the inward; let us do so here; let us consider from these words of the text the one word, "self." Jesus said to Peter: "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, his own self, and take up the cross and follow me." That is a mark of the disciple; that is the secret of the Christian life—deny self and all will come right. Note that Peter was a believer, and a believer who had been taught by the Holy Spirit. He had given an answer that pleased Christ wonderfully: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Do not think that that was nothing extraordinary. We learn it in our catechisms; Peter did not; and Christ saw that the Holy Spirit of the Father had been teaching him and He said: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonas." But note how strong the carnal man still is in Peter. Christ speaks of His cross; He could understand about the glory, "Thou art the Son of God;" but about the cross and the death he could not understand, and he ventured in his self-confidence to say, "Lord, that shall never be; Thou canst not be crucified and die." And Christ had to rebuke him: "Get thee behind me, Satan. Thou savorest not the things that be of God." You are talking like a mere carnal man, and not as the Spirit of God would teach you. Then Christ went on to say, "Remember, it is not only I who am to be crucified, but you; it is not only I who am to die, but you also. If a man would be my disciple, he

must deny self, and he must take up his cross and follow me." Let us dwell upon this one word, "self." It is only as we learn to know what self is that we really know what is at the root of all our failure, and are prepared to go to Christ for deliverance.

Let us consider, first of all, the nature of this self life, then denote some of its works and then ask the question: "How may we be delivered from it?"

Self is the power with which God has created and endowed every intelligent creature. Self is the very center of a created being. And why did God give the angels or man a self? The object of this self was that we might bring it as an empty vessel unto God; that He might put into it His life. God gave me the power of self-determination, that I might bring this self every day and say: "Oh, God, work in it; I offer it to thee." God wanted a vessel into which He might pour out His divine fullness of beauty, wisdom and power; and so He created the world, the sun, and the moon, and the stars, the trees, and the flowers, and the grass, which all show forth the riches of His wisdom, and beauty, and goodness. But they do it without knowing what they do. Then God created the angels with a self and a will, to see whether they would come and voluntarily yield themselves to Him as vessels for Him to fill. But alas! they did not all do that. There was one at the head of a great company, and he began to look upon himself, and to think of the wonderful powers with which God had endowed him, and to delight in himself. He began to think: "Must such a being as I always remain dependent on God?" He exalted himself, pride asserted itself in separation from God, and that very moment he became, instead of an angel in Heaven, a devil in hell. Self turned to God is the glory of allowing the Creator to reveal Himself in us. Self turned away from God is the very darkness and fire of hell.

We all know the terrible story of what took place further; God created man,

and Satan came in the form of a serpent and tempted Eve with the thought of becoming as God, having an independent self, knowing good and evil. And while he spoke with her, he breathed into her, in those words, the very poison and the very pride of hell. His own evil spirit, the very poison of hell, entered humanity, and it is this cursed self that we have inherited from our first parents. It was that self that ruined and brought destruction upon this world, and all that there has been of sin, and of darkness, and of wretchedness, and of misery; and all that there will be throughout the countless ages of eternity in hell, will be nothing but the reign of self, the curse of self, separating man and turning him away from his God. And if we are to understand fully what Christ is to do for us, and are to become partakers of a full salvation, we must learn to know, and to hate, and to give up entirely this cursed self.

Now what are the works of self? I might mention many, but let us take the simplest words that we are continually using—self-will, self-confidence, self-exaltation. Self-will, pleasing self, is the great sin of man, and it is at the root of all that compromising with the world which is the ruin of so many. Men can not understand why they should not please themselves and do their own will. Numbers of Christians have never gotten hold of the idea that a Christian is a man who is never to seek his own will, but is always to seek the will of God, as a man in whom the very spirit of Christ lives. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, oh, my God!" We find Christians pleasing themselves in a thousand ways, and yet trying to be happy, and good, and useful; and they do not know that at the root of it all is self-will robbing them of the blessing. Christ said to Peter, "Peter, deny yourself." But instead of doing that, Peter said, "I will deny my Lord and not myself." He never said it in words, but Christ said to him in the last night, "Thou shalt deny Me," and he did it. What was the cause of this? Self-pleasing. He became afraid when the woman servant charged him with belonging to Jesus, and three times said, "I know

not this man, I have nothing to do with Him." He denied Christ. Just think of it! No wonder Peter wept those bitter tears. It was a choice between self, that ugly, cursed self, and that beautiful, blessed Son of God; and Peter chose self. No wonder that he thought: "Instead of denying myself, I have denied Jesus; what a choice I have made!" No wonder that he wept bitterly.

Christians, look at your own lives in the light of the words of Jesus. Do you find there self-will, self-pleasing? Remember this: every time you please yourself, you deny Jesus. It is one of the two. You must please Him only, and deny self, or you must please yourself and deny Him. Then follows self-confidence, self-trust, self-effort, self-dependence. What was it that led Peter to deny Jesus? Christ had warned him; why did he not take warning? Self-confidence. He was so sure: "Lord, I love Thee. For three years I have followed Thee. Lord, I deny that it ever can be. I am ready to go to prison and to death." It was simply self-confidence. People have often asked me, "What is the reason I fail? I desire so earnestly, and pray so fervently, to live in God's will." And my answer generally is, "Simply because you trust yourself." They answer me: "No, I do not; I know I am not good; and I know that God is willing to keep me, and I put my trust in Jesus." But I reply, "No, my brother; no; if you trusted God and Jesus, you could not fall, but you trust yourself." Do let us believe that the cause of every failure in the Christian life is nothing but this. I trust this cursed self, instead of trusting Jesus. I trust my own strength, instead of the almighty strength of God. And that is why Christ says, "This self must be denied."

Then there is self-exaltation, another form of the works of self. Ah, how much pride and jealousy is there in the Christian world; how much sensitiveness to what men say of us or think of us; how much desire of human praise and pleasing men, instead of always living in the presence of

God, with the one thought: "Am I pleasing to Him?" Christ said, "How can ye believe who receive honor one of another?" Receiving honor of one another renders a life of faith absolutely impossible. This self started from hell, it separated us from God, it is a cursed deceiver that leads us astray from Jesus.

Now comes the third point. What are we to do to get rid of it? Jesus answers us in the words of our text: "If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me." Note it well—I must deny myself and take Jesus himself as my life—I must choose. There are two lives, the self life and the Christ life; I must choose one of the two. "Follow me," says our Lord, "make me the law of your existence, the rule of your conduct; give me your whole heart; follow me, and I will care for all." Oh, friends, it is a solemn exchange to have set before us; to come and, seeing the danger of this self, with its pride and its wickedness, to cast ourselves before the Son of God, and to say, "I deny my own life, I take Thy life to be mine."

The reason why Christians pray and pray for the Christ life to come in to them, without result, is that the self life is not denied. You ask, "How can I get rid of this self life?" You know the parable: the strong man kept his house until one stronger than he came in and cast him out. Then the place was garnished and swept, but empty, and he came back with seven other spirits worse than himself. It is only Christ Himself coming in that can cast out self, and keep out self. This self will abide with us to the very end. Remember the Apostle Paul; he had seen the Heavenly vision, and lest he should exalt himself, the thorn in the flesh was sent to humble him. There was a tendency to exalt himself, which was natural, and it would have conquered, but Christ delivered him from it by His faithful care for His loving servant. Jesus Christ is able, by His divine grace, to prevent the power of self from ever asserting

itself or gaining the upper hand; Jesus Christ is willing to become the life of the soul; Jesus Christ is willing to teach us so to follow Him, and to have heart and life set upon Him alone, that He shall ever and always be the light of our souls. Then we come to what the apostle Paul says; "Not I, but Christ liveth in me." The two truths go together. First "Not I," then, "but Christ liveth in me."

Look at Peter again. Christ said to him, "Deny yourself, and follow me." Whither had he to follow? Jesus led him, even though he failed; and where did he lead him? He led him on to Gethsemane, and there Peter failed, for he slept when he ought to have been awake, watching and praying; He led him on towards Calvary, to the place where Peter denied Him. Was that Christ's leading? Praise God, it was. The Holy Spirit had not yet come in His power; Peter was yet a carnal man; the Spirit willing, but not able to conquer; the flesh weak. What did Christ do? He led Peter on until he was broken down in utter self-abasement, and humbled in the depths of sorrow. Jesus led him on, past the grave, through the Resurrection, up to Pentecost, and the Holy Spirit came, and in the Holy Spirit Christ with His divine life came, and then it was, "Christ liveth in me."

There is but one way of being delivered from this life of self. We must follow Christ, set our hearts upon Him, listen to His teachings, give ourselves up every day, that He may be all to us, and by the power of Christ the denial of self will be a blessed, unceasing reality. Never for one hour do I expect the Christian to reach a stage at which he can say, "I have no self to deny;" never for one moment in which he can say, "I do not need to deny self." No, this fellowship with the cross of Christ will be an unceasing denial of self every hour and every moment by the grace of God. There is no place where there is full deliverance from the power of this sinful self. We are to be crucified with

Christ Jesus. We are to live with Him as those who have never been baptized into His death. Think of that! Christ had no sinful self, but He had a self and that self He actually gave up unto death. In Gethsemane He said, "Father, not My will." That unsinning self He gave up unto death that He might receive it again out of the grave from God, raised up and glorified. Can we expect to go to Heaven in any other way than He went? Beware! remember that Christ descended into death and the grave, and it is in the death of self, following Jesus to the uttermost, that the deliverance and the life will come.

And now, what is the use that we are to make of this lesson of the Master? The first lesson will be that we should take time, and that we should humble ourselves before God, at the thought of what this self is in us; put down to the account of the self every sin, every shortcoming, all failure, and all that has been dishonoring to God, and then say, "Lord, this is what I am;" and then let us allow the blessed Jesus Christ to take entire control of our life, in the faith that His life can be ours.

Do not think it is an easy thing to get rid of self. At a consecration meeting, it is easy to make a vow, and to offer a prayer, and to perform an act of surrender, but as solemn as the death of Christ was on Calvary—His giving up of His unsinning self life to God—just as solemn must it be between us and our God—the giving up of self to death. The power of the death of Christ must come to work in us every day. Oh, think what a contrast between that self-willed Peter, and Jesus giving up His will to God! What a contrast between that self-exaltation of Peter, and the deep humility of the Lamb of God, meek and lowly in heart before God and man! What a contrast between that self-confidence of Peter, and that deep dependence of Jesus upon the Father, when He said: "I can do nothing of myself." We are called upon to live the life of Christ, and Christ comes to live His life in us; but one thing

must first take place; we must learn to hate this self, and to deny it. As Peter said, when he denied Christ, "I have nothing to do with him," so we must say, "I have nothing to do with self," that Christ Jesus may be all in all. Let us humble ourselves at the thought of what this self has done to us and how it has dishonored Jesus; and let us pray very fervently: "Lord, by Thy light discover this self; we beseech Thee to discover it to us. Open our eyes, that we may see what it has done, and that it is the only hindrance that has been keeping us back." Let us pray that fervently, and then let us wait upon God until we get away from all our religious exercises, and from all our religious experience, and from all our blessings, until we get close to God, with this one prayer: "Lord God, self changed an archangel into a devil, and self ruined my first parents, and brought them out of Paradise into darkness and misery, and self has been the ruin of my life and the cause of every failure; oh, discover it to me." And then comes the blessed exchange, that a man is made willing and able to say: "Another will live the life for me, another will live with me, another will do all for me," Nothing else will do. Deny self; take up the cross, to die with Jesus; follow Him only. May He give us the grace to understand, and to receive, and to live the Christ life.

Chapter III^(TOC)

Waiting on God

My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him—Psalm 62:5

The solemn question comes to us, "Is the God I have, a God that is to me above all circumstances, nearer to me than any circumstance can be?" Brother, have you learned to live your life having God so really with you every moment, that in circumstances the most difficult He is always more present and nearer than anything around you? All our knowledge of God's Word will help us very little, unless that comes to be the question to which we get an answer.

What can be the reason that so many of God's beloved children complain continually: "My circumstances separate me from God; my trials, my temptations, my character, my temper, my friends, my enemies, anything can come between my God and me?" Is God not able so to take possession that He can be nearer to me than anything in the world? Must riches or poverty, joy or sorrow, have a power over me that my God has not? No. But why, then, do God's children so often complain that their circumstances separate them from Him? There can be but one answer, "They do not know their God." If there is trouble or feebleness in the Church of God, it is because of this. We do not know the God we have. That is why in addition to the promise, "I will be thy God," the promise is so often added, "And ye shall know that I am your God." If I know that, not through man's teaching, not

with my mind or my imagination; but if I know that, in the living evidence which God gives in my heart, then I know that the divine presence of my God will be so wonderful, and my God Himself will be so beautiful, and so near, that I can live all my days and years a conqueror through Him that loved me. Is not that the life which we need?

The question comes again: Why is it that God's people do not know their God? And the answer is: They take anything rather than God—ministers, and preaching, and books, and prayers, and work, and efforts, any exertion of human nature, instead of waiting, and waiting long if need be, until God reveals Himself. No teaching that we may get, and no effort that we may put forth, can put us in possession of this blessed light of God, all in all to our souls. But still it is attainable, it is within reach, if God will reveal Himself. That is the one necessity. I would to God that every one would ask his heart whether he has said, and is saying every day: "I want more of God. Do not speak to me only of the beautiful truth there is in the Bible. That can not satisfy me. I want God." In our inner Christian life, in our every-day prayers, in our Christian living, in our churches, in our prayer-meetings, in our fellowship, it must come to that—that God always has the first place; and if that be given Him, He will take possession. Oh, if in our lives as individuals every eye were set upon God, upon the living God, every heart were crying, "My soul thirsteth for God," what power, what blessing and what presence of the everlasting God would be revealed to us! Let me use an illustration. When a man is giving an illustrated lecture he often uses a long pointer to indicate places on a map or chart. Do the people look at that pointer? No, that only helps to show them the place on the map, and they do not think of it—it might be of fine gold; but the pointer can not satisfy them. They want to see what the pointer points at. And this Bible is nothing but a pointer, pointing to God; and—may I say it with reverence—Jesus Christ came to point us, to

show us the way, to bring us to God. I am afraid there are many people who love Christ and who trust in Him, but who fail of the one great object of His work; they have never learned to understand what the Scripture saith: "He died, that He might bring us unto God."

There is a difference between the way and the end which I am aiming at. I might be traveling amid most beautiful scenery, in the most delightful company; but if I have a home to which I want to go, all the scenery, and all the company, and all the beauty and happiness around me can not satisfy me; I want to reach the end; I want my home. And God is meant to be the home of our souls. Christ came into the world to bring us back to God, and unless we take Christ for what God intended we should, our religion will always be a divided one. What do we read in Hebrews vii? "He is able to save to the uttermost."—Whom? "Them that come to God by Him;" not them that only come to Christ. In Christ—bless His name—we have the graciousness, the condescension, and the tenderness of God. But we are in danger of standing there, and being content with that, and Christ wants to bring us back to rejoice as much as in the glory of God Himself, in His righteousness, His holiness, His authority, His presence and His power. He can save completely those who come to God through Him!

Now, just a very few thoughts on the way by which I can come to know God as this God above all circumstances, filling my heart and life every day. The one thing needful is: I must wait upon God. The original is—it is in our Dutch version, and it is in the margin, too—"My soul is silent into God." What ought to be the silence of the soul unto God? A soul conscious of its littleness, its ignorance, its prejudices and its dangers from passion, from all that is human and sinful—a soul conscious of that, and saying, "I want the everlasting God to come in and to take hold of me and to take such hold of

me that I may be kept in the hollow of His hand for my life long; I want Him to take such possession of me that every moment He may work all in all in me." That is what is implied in the very nature of our God. How we ought to be silent unto Him, and wait upon Him!

May I ask, with reverence: What is God for? A God is for this: to be the light and the life of creation, the source and power of all existence. The beautiful trees, the green grass, the bright sun, God created that they might show forth His beauty, His wisdom and His glory. The tree of one hundred years old—when it was planted God did not give it a stock of life by which to carry on its existence. Nay, verily, God clothes the lilies every year afresh with their beauty; every year God clothes the tree with its foliage and its fruit. Every day and every hour it is God who maintains the life of all nature. And God created us, that we might be the empty vessels in which He could work out His beauty, His will, His love, and the likeness of His blessed Son. That is what God is for, to work in us by His mighty operation, without one moment's ceasing. When I begin to get hold of that, I no longer think of the true Christian life as a high impossibility, and an unnatural thing, but I say, "It is the most natural thing in creation that God should have me every moment, and that my God should be nearer to me than all else." Just think, for a moment, what folly it is to imagine that I can not expect God to be with me every moment. Just look at the sunshine; have you ever had any trouble as you were working or as you were studying or reading a book in the light the sun gives? Have you ever said, "Oh, how can I keep that light, how can I hold it fast, how can I be sure that I shall continue to have it to use?" You never thought that. God has taken care that the sun itself should provide you with light; and without your care; the light comes unbidden. And I ask you: What think you? Has God arranged that the light of that sun that will one day be burned up, can come to you unconsciously and abide in you blessedly and

mightily; and is God not willing, or is He not able, to let His light and His presence so shine through you that you can walk all the day with God nearer to you than anything in nature? Praise God for the assurance; He can do it. And why does He not do it? Why so seldom, and why in such feeble measure? There is but one answer: you do not let Him. You are so occupied and filled with other things, religious things, preaching and praying, studying and working, so occupied with your religion, that you do not give God the time to make Himself known, and to enter in and to take possession. Oh, brother, listen to the word of the man who knew God so well, and begin to say: "My soul, wait thou only upon God."

I might show that this is the very glory of the Creator, the very life Christ brought into the world, the life He lived, and the very life Christ wants to lift us up to in its entire dependence on the Father. The very secret of the Christ-life is this: such a consciousness of God's presence that whether it was Judas, who came to betray Him, or Caiaphas, who condemned Him unjustly, or Pilate, who gave Him up to be crucified, the presence of the Father was upon Him, and within Him, and around Him, and man could not touch His spirit. And that is what God wants to be to you and to me. Does not all your anxious restlessness, and futile effort, prove that you have not let God do His work? God is drawing you to Himself. This is not your own wish, and the stirring of your own heart, but the everlasting Divine magnet is drawing you. These restless yearnings and thirstings, remember, are the work of God. Come and be still, and wait upon God. He will reveal Himself.

And how am I to wait on God? In answer I would say: first of all, in prayer take more time to be still before God without saying one word. What is, in prayer, the most important thing? That I catch the ear of Him to whom I speak. We are not ready to offer our petition until we are fully conscious of

having secured the attention of God. You tell me you know all that. Yes, you know it; but you need to have your heart filled by the Holy Spirit with the holy consciousness that the everlasting, almighty God is indeed come very near you. The loving one is longing to have you for His own. Be still before God, and wait, and say: "Oh, God, take possession. Reveal Thyself, not to my thoughts or imaginations, but by the solemn, awe-bringing, soul-subduing consciousness that God is shining upon me bring me to the place of dependence and humility."

Prayer may be indeed waiting upon God, but there is a great deal of prayer that is not waiting upon God. Waiting on God is the first and the best beginning for prayer. When we bow in the humble, silent acknowledgment of God's glory and nearness, ere we begin to pray there will be the very blessing that we often get only at the end. From the very beginning I come face to face with God; I am in touch with the everlasting omnipotence of love and I know my God will bless me. Let us never be afraid to be still before God; we shall then carry that stillness into our work; and when we go to church on Sunday, or to the prayer-meeting on week-days, it will be with the one desire that nothing may stand betwixt us and God, and that we may never be so occupied with hearing and listening as to forget the presence of God.

Oh, that God might make every minister what Moses was at the foot of Mount Sinai; "Moses led the people out to meet God," and they did meet Him until they were afraid. Let every minister ask with all the earnestness his soul can command, that God may deliver him from the sin of preaching and teaching without making the people feel first of all: "The man wants to bring us to God Himself." It can be felt, not only in the words, but in the very disposition of the humble, waiting, worshiping heart. We must carry this waiting into all our worship; we will have to make a study of it; we will have

to speak about it; we will have to help each other, for the truth has been too much lost in the Church of Christ; we must wait upon God about it. Then we shall be able to carry it out into our daily life. There are so many Christians who wonder that they fail; but think of the ease with which they talk and join in conversation, spending hours in it, never thinking that all this may be dissipating the soul's power and leading them to spend hours not in the immediate presence of God. I am afraid this is the great difficulty: that we are not willing to make the needed sacrifice for a life of continual waiting upon God. Are there not some of us who would feel it an impossibility to spend every moment under the covering of the Most High, "in the secret of His pavilion?" Beloved, do not think it too high, or too difficult. It is too difficult for you and me to attain, but our God will give it to us. Let us begin even now to wait more earnestly and intensely upon God. Let us in our homes sometimes bow a little in silence; let us in our closets wait in silence, and make a covenant, it may be, without words, that with our whole hearts we will seek God's presence to come in upon us.

What is religion? Just as much as you have of God working in you, that alone is religion. And if you want more religion, more grace, more strength and more fruitfulness, you must have more of God. Let that be the cry of our hearts—More of God! More of God! More of God! And let us say to our souls, "My soul, wait thou upon God, for my expectation is from Him."

Chapter IV (TOC)

Entrance Into Rest

*Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest,
any of you should seem to come short of it—Hebrews 4:1
Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same
example of unbelief—Hebrews 4:11*

I want, in the simplest way possible, to answer the question: "How does a man enter into that rest?" and to point out the simple steps that he takes, all included in the one act of surrender and faith.

And the first step, I think, is this: that a man learns to say, "I believe, heartily, there is rest in a life of faith." Israel passed through two stages. This is beautifully expressed in the fifth of Deuteronomy: "He brought us out, that He might bring us in"—two parts of God's work of redemption—"He brought us out from Egypt, that He might bring us into Canaan." And that is applicable to every believer. At your conversion, God brought you out of Egypt, and the same almighty God is longing to bring you into the Canaan life. You know how God brought the Israelites out, but they would not let Him bring them in and they had to wander for forty years in the wilderness—the type, alas! of so many Christians. God brings them out in conversion, but they will not let Him bring them in into all that He has prepared for them. To a man who asks me, "How can I enter into the rest?" I say, first of all, speak this word, "I do believe that there is a rest into which Jesus, our Joshua, can bring a trusting soul." And if you would know what the difference is between

the two lives—the life you have been leading, and the life you now want to lead, just look at the wilderness and Canaan. What are the points of difference? In the wilderness, wandering for forty years, backward and forward; in Canaan, perfect rest in the land that God gave them. That is the difference between the life of a Christian who has, and one who has not entered into Canaan. In wandering backward and forward; going after the world, and coming back and repenting; led astray by temptation, and returning only to go off again—a life of ups and downs. In Canaan, on the other hand, a life of rest, because the soul has learned to trust: "God keeps me every hour in His mighty power." There is the second difference: the life in the wilderness was a life of want; in Canaan, a life of plenty. In the wilderness there was nothing to eat; there was often no water. God graciously supplied their wants by the manna, and the water from the rock. But, alas! they were not content with this, and their life was one of want and murmurings. But in Canaan God gave them vineyards that they had not planted, and the old corn of the land was there waiting for them; a land flowing with milk and honey; a land that lived by the rain of Heaven and had the very care of God Himself. Oh, Christian, come and say to-day, "I believe there is a possibility of such a change out of that life of spiritual death, and darkness, and sadness, and complaining, that I have often lived, into the land of supply of every want; where the grace of Jesus is proved sufficient every day, every hour." Say to-day: "I believe in the possibility that there is such a land of rest for me."

And then, the third difference: In the wilderness there was no victory. When they tried, after they had sinned at Kadesh, to go up against their enemies, they were defeated. In the land they conquered every enemy; from Jericho onward, they went from victory to victory. And so God waits, and Christ waits, and the Holy Spirit waits, to give victory every day; not freedom from

temptation; no, not that; but in union with Christ a power that can say, "I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me." "We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." May God help every heart to say that.

Then comes the second step. I want you to say not only, "I believe there is such a life," but, second, "I have not had it yet." Say that. "I have never yet got that." Some may say, "I have sought it;" some may say, "I have never heard about it;" some may say, "At times I thought I had found it, but I lost it again." Let every one be honest with God.

And now, will all who have never yet found it honestly, begin to say, "Lord, up to this time I have never had it?" And why is it of such consequence to speak thus? Because, dear friends, some people want to glide into this life of rest gradually; and just quietly to steal in; and God won't have it. Your life in the wilderness has not only been a life of sadness to yourself, but of sin and dishonor to God. Every deeper entrance into salvation must always be by the way of conviction and confession; therefore, let every Christian be willing to say: "Alas! I have not lived that life, and I am guilty; I have dishonored God; I have been like Israel; I have provoked Him to wrath by my unbelief and disobedience. God have mercy upon me!" Oh, let it go up before God—the secret confession: "I haven't it; alas! I have not glorified God by a life in the land of rest."

Then comes the third word I want you to speak and that is: "Thank God, that life is for me." Some say, "I believe there is such a life, but not for me."

There are people who continually say: "Oh, my character is so unstable; my will is naturally very weak; my temperament is nervous and excitable, it is impossible for me always to live without worry, resting in God." Beloved brother, do not say that. You say so only for one reason: You do not know what your God will do for you. Do begin to look away from self, and to look

up to God, Take that precious word: "He brought them out that he might bring them in." The God who took them through the Red Sea was the God who took them through Jordan into Canaan. The God who converted you is the God who is able to give you every day this blessed life. Oh, begin to say, with the beginnings of a feeble faith, even before you claim it, begin even intellectually to say: "It is for me; I do believe that. God does not disinherit any of His children. What He gives is for every one. I believe that blessed life is waiting for me. It is meant for me. God is waiting to bestow it, and to work it in me. Glory be to His blessed name! My soul says it is for me, too." Oh, take that little word "me," and looking up in the very face of God dare to say: "This inestimable treasure—it is for me, the weakest and the unworthiest; it is for me." Have you said that? Say it now: "This life is possible to me, too."

And then comes the next step, and that is: "I can never, by any effort of mine, grasp it; it is God must bestow it on me." I want you to be very bold in saying, "It is for me." But then I want you to fall down very low and say, "I can not seize it; I can not take it to myself." And how can you then get it? Praise God, if once He has brought you down in the consciousness of utter helplessness and self-despair, then comes the time that He can draw nigh and ask you, "Will you trust your God to work this in you?" Dearly beloved Christians, say in your heart: "I never, by any effort, can take hold of God, or seize this for myself; it is God must give it." Cherish this blessed impotence. It is He who brought us out, who Himself must bring us in. It is your greatest happiness to be impotent. Pray God by the Holy Spirit to reveal to you this true impotence, and that will open the way for your faith to say, "Lord, Thou must do it, or it will never be done." God will do it. People wonder, when they hear so many sermons about faith, and such earnest pleading to believe, and ask why it is they can not believe. There is just one answer: It is self. Self is working; is trying; is struggling, and self must fail. But when you come to

the end of self and can only cry, "Lord, help me! Lord, help me!"—then the deliverance is nigh; believe that. It was God brought the people in. It is God who will bring you in.

One should be willing, for the sake of this rest, to give up everything. The grace of God is very free. It is given without money and without price. And yet, on the other hand, Jesus said that every man who wants the pearl of great price must sacrifice his all, must sell all that he has to buy that pearl. It is not enough to see the beauty, the attractiveness and the glory, and almost to taste the gladness and the joy of this wonderful life as it has been set before you. You must become the possessor, the owner of the field. The man who found the field with a treasure, and the man who found the great pearl, were both glad; but they had not yet got it. They had found it, seen it, desired it, rejoiced in it; but they had not yet got it. Not until they went and sold all, gave up everything, and bought the ground, and bought the pearl. Ah, friends, there is a great deal that has to be given up: the world, its pleasures, its favor, its good opinion. You are to stand to the world in the same relation as Jesus did. The world rejected Him, and cast Him out, and you are to take up the position of your Lord, to whom you belong, and to follow with the rejected Christ. You have to give up everything. You have to give up all that is good in yourself and to be humbled in the dust of death. And that is not all. Your past religious life and experience and successes—you have to give all up and become nothing, that God alone may have the glory. God has brought you out in conversion; it was God's own life given you: but you defiled it with disobedience and with unbelief. Give it all up. Give up all your own wisdom, and your own thoughts about God's work. How hard it is for the minister of the Gospel to give up all his wisdom, and to lay it at the feet of Jesus, to become a fool and to say: "Lord, I know nothing as I should know it. I have been preaching the Gospel, and how little I have seen of the glory of the

blessed land, and the blessed life!"

Why is it that the blessed Spirit can not teach us more effectually? No reason but this: the wisdom of man prevents it; the wisdom of man prevents the light of God from shining in. And so we could say of other things; give up all. Some may have an individual sin to give up. There may be a Christian man who is angry with his brother. There may be a Christian woman who has quarreled with her neighbor. There may be friends who are not living as they should. There may be Christians holding fast some little doubtful thing, not willing to surrender and leave behind the whole of the wilderness life and lust. Oh, do take this step and say: "I am ready to give up everything to have this pearl of great price; my time, my attention, my business, I count all subordinate to this rest of God as the first thing in my life; I yield all to walk in perfect fellowship with God." You can not get that and live every day in perfect fellowship with God, without giving up time to it. You take time for everything. How many hours a day has a young lady spent for years and years that she may become proficient on the piano? How many years does a young man study to fit himself for the profession of the law or medicine? Hours, and days, and weeks, and months, and years, gladly given up to perfect himself for his profession. And do you expect that religion is so cheap that without giving time you can find close fellowship with God? You can not. But, oh, my brothers and sisters, the pearl of great price is worth everything. God is worth everything. Christ is worth everything. Oh, come to-day, and say, "Lord, at any cost help me; I do want to live this life." And if you find it difficult to say this, and if there is a struggle within the heart, never mind; say to God, "Lord, I thought I was willing, but I see how much unwillingness there is; come and discover what the evil is still in the heart." By His grace, if you will lie at His feet and trust Him you may depend upon it deliverance will come.

Then comes the next step, and that is to say: "I do now give up myself to the holy and everlasting God, for Him to lead me into this perfect rest." Ah, friends, we must learn to meet God face to face. My sin has been against God. David felt that when he said, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned." It is God on the judgment seat whose face you will have to meet personally. It is God Himself, personally, who met you to pardon your sins. Come to-day and put yourself into the hands of the living God. God is love. God is near. God is waiting to give you His blessing. The heart of God is yearning over you. "My child," God says, "you think you are longing for rest; it is I that am longing for you, because I desire to rest in your heart as My home, as My temple." You need your God. Yes, but your God needs you, to find the full satisfaction of His Father heart in Christ in you. Come to-day and say: "I do now give up myself to Christ. I have made the choice. I deliberately say, 'Lord God, I am the purchaser of the pearl of great price. I give up everything for it. In the name of Jesus I accept that life of perfect rest.'"

And then comes my last thought. When you have said that, then add: "And now, I trust God to make it all real to me in my experience. Whether I am to live one year, or thirty years, I have heard it to-day again: 'God is Jehovah, the great I AM of the everlasting future, the eternal One; and thirty years hence is to Him just the same as now;' and that God gives Himself to me, not according to my power to hold Him, but according to His almighty power of love to hold me." Will you trust God to-day for the future? Oh, will you look up to God in Christ Jesus once again? A thousand times you have heard, and thought, and thanked—"God has given us His Son;" but will you not to-day say, "How shall He not with Him give me all things, every moment and every day of my life?" Say that in faith. "How shall God not be willing to keep me in the light of His countenance, in the full experience of Christ's saving power? Did God make the sun to shine so brightly, and is the light so willing

to pour itself into every nook and corner where it can find entrance? And will not my God, who is love, be willing all the day to shine into this heart of mine, from morning to night, from year's end to year's end?" God is love, and longs to give Himself to us.

Oh, come, Christians, you have hitherto lived a life in your own strength. Will you not begin to-day? Will you not choose a life in which God shall be all, and in which you rest in Him for all? Will you not choose a life in which you shall say: "Oh, God, I ask, I expect, I trust Thee for it. I enter this day into the rest of God to let God keep me; to let God keep me every hour. I enter into the rest of God." Are you ready to say that? Be of good courage; fear not, you can trust God. He brings into rest. Listen to God's word in the Prophets once again: "Take heed, and be quiet. Fear not, neither be faint-hearted." Joshua brought Israel into the land. God did it through Joshua; and Joshua is Jesus, your Jesus, who washed you in His blood; your Jesus, whom you have learned to know as a precious Saviour. Trust Him to-day afresh: "O my Joshua, take me, bring me in and I will trust Thee, and in Thee the Father." You may count upon it. He will take you and the work will be done.

Chapter V (TOC)

The Kingdom First

Seek ye first the kingdom of God—Matthew 6:33

You have heard what need there is of unity in Christian life and Christian work. And where is the bond of unity between the life of the Church, the life of the individual believer and the work to be done among the heathen? One of the expressions for that unity is: "Seek first the Kingdom of God," That does not mean, as many people take it, "Seek salvation; seek to get into the Kingdom, and then thank God, and rest there." Ah, no; the meaning of that word is entirely different and infinitely larger. It means: Let the Kingdom of God, in all its breadth and length, in all its Heavenly glory and power; let the Kingdom of God be the one thing you live for, and all other things will be added unto you. "Seek first the Kingdom of God." Let me just try to answer two very simple questions; the one: "Why should the Kingdom of God be first?" and the other: "How can it be?" The one, "Why should it be so?" God has created us as reasonable beings, so that the more clearly we see that according to the law of nature, according to the fitness of things, something that is set before us is proper, and an absolute necessity, we so much the more willingly accept it, and aim after it. And now, why does Christ say this: "Seek first the Kingdom of God?" If you want to understand the reason, look at God, and look at man. Look at God. Who is God? The great Being for whom alone the universe exists; in whom alone it can have its happiness. It came from Him. It can not find any rest or joy but in Him. Oh, that Christians

understood and believed that God is a fountain of happiness, perfect, everlasting blessedness! What would the result be? Every Christian would say, "The more I can have of God, the happier. The more of God's will, and the more of God's love, and the more of God's fellowship, the happier." How Christians, if they believed that with their whole heart, would, with the utmost ease, give up everything that would separate them from God! Why is it that we find it so hard to hold fellowship with God? A young minister once said to me, "Why is it that I have so much more interest in study than in prayer, and how can you teach me the art of fellowship with God?" My answer was: "Oh, my brother, if we have any true conception of what God is, the art of fellowship with Him will come naturally, and will be a delight." Yes, if we believed God to be only joy to the one who comes to Him, only a fountain of unlimited blessing, how we should give up all for Him! Has not joy a far stronger attraction than anything in the world? Isaiah it not in every beauty, or in every virtue, in every pursuit, the joy that is set before us that draws? And if we believe that God is a fountain of joy, and sweetness, and power to bless, how our hearts will turn aside from everything, and say: "Oh, the beauty of my God! I rejoice in Him alone." But, alas! the Kingdom of God looks to many as a burden, and as something unnatural. It looks like a strain, and we seek some relaxation in the world, and God is not our chief joy. I come to you with a message. It is right, on account of what God is as Infinite Love, as Infinite Blessing; it is right and more, it is our highest privilege to listen to Christ's words, and to seek God and His Kingdom first and above everything.

And then look at man again; man's nature. What was man created for? To live in the likeness of God, and as His image. Now, if we have been created in the image and likeness of God, we can find our happiness in nothing except that in which God finds His happiness. The more like Him we are the happier.

And in what does God find His happiness? In two things: Everlasting righteousness and everlasting beneficence. God is righteousness everlasting. "He is Light, and in Him is no darkness." The Kingdom, the domination, the rule of God will bring us nothing but righteousness. "Seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." If men but knew what sin is, and if men really longed to be free from everything like sin, what a grand message this would be! Jesus comes to lead me to God and His righteousness. We were created to be like God, in His perfect righteousness and holiness. What a prospect! And in His love too. The Kingdom of God means this: that there is in God a rule of universal love. He loves, and loves, and never ceases to love; and He longs to bless all who will yield to His pleadings. God is Light, and God is Love. And now the message comes to man. Can you think of a higher nobility; can you think of anything grander than to take the position that God takes, and to be one with God in His Kingdom; i.e., to have His Kingdom fill your heart; to have God Himself as your King and portion? Yes, my friends, let us remember that we must not just try to get here and there one and another of the blessings of the Kingdom. But the glory of the Kingdom is this: that it is the Kingdom of God where God is all in all. The French Empire, when Napoleon lived, had military glory as the ideal. Every Frenchman's heart thrilled at the name of Napoleon as the man who had given the empire its glory. If we realized what it means—our God takes us up into His Kingdom and puts His Kingdom into us and with the Kingdom we have God Himself, that blessed One, possessing us—surely there would be nothing that could move our hearts to enthusiasm like this. The Kingdom of God first! Blessed be His name I Look at man. I don't speak about man's sins, and about man's wretchedness, and about man's seeking everywhere for pleasure, and for rest, and for deliverance from sin, but I just say: Think what man is by creation and think what man is now by redemption; and let every heart say: "It is

right. There is no blessedness or glory like that of the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God ought to be first in my whole life and being."

But now comes the important question, "How can I attain this?" Here we come to the great question that is troubling the lives of tens of thousands of Christians throughout the world. And it is strange that it is so very difficult for them to find the answer; that tens of thousands are not able to give an answer; and others, when the answer is given, can not understand it; The day the centurion found his joy in being devoted to the Roman Empire, it took charge of him with all its power and glory. Dear friends, how are we to attain to this blessed position in which the Kingdom of God shall fill our hearts with such enthusiasm that it will spontaneously be first every day? The answer is, first of all give up everything for it. You have heard of the Roman soldier who gave up his soul, his affection, his life, who gave up everything, to be a soldier; and you have often seen, in history ancient and modern, how men who were not soldiers gave up their lives in sacrifice for a king or a country. You have heard how in the South African Republic not many years ago the war of liberty was fought. After three years of oppression by the English the people said they would endure it no longer, and so they gathered together to fight for their liberty. They knew how weak they were, as compared with the English power, but they said, "We must have our liberty." They bound themselves together to fight for it, and when that vow had been made, they went to their homes to prepare for the struggle. Such a thrill of enthusiasm passed through that country that in many cases women, when their husbands might have been allowed to stay at home, said to them: "No, go, even though you have not been commanded." And there were mothers who, when one son was called out to the front, said: "No, take two, three." Every man and woman was ready to die. It was in very deed "Our country first, before everything." And even so, friends, must it be with you if you

want this wonderful Kingdom of God to take possession of you. I pray you by the mercies of God, give up every-thing for it. You do not know at once what that may mean, but take the words and speak them out at the footstool of God: "Anything, everything, for the Kingdom of God." Persevere in that, and by the Holy Spirit your God will begin to open to you the double blessing: on the one hand, the blessedness of the Kingdom which comes to possess your heart; and on the other hand, the blessedness of being surrendered to Him, and sacrificing and giving up all for Him.

"The Kingdom of God first!" How am I to reach that blessed life? The answer is: "Give up everything for it." And then a second answer would be this: Live every day and hour of your life in the humble desire to maintain that position. There are people who hear this test, and who say it is true, and that they want to obey it. But if you were to ask them how much time they spend with God day by day, you would be surprised and grieved to hear how little time they give up to Him. And yet they wonder that the blessedness of the divine life disappears. We prove the value we attach to things by the time we devote to them. The Kingdom should be first every day, and all the day. Let the Kingdom be first every morning. Begin the day with God, and God Himself will maintain His Kingdom in your heart. Do believe that. Rome did its utmost to maintain the authority of the man who gave himself to live for it. And God, the living God, will He not maintain His authority in your soul if you submit to Him? He will, indeed. Come to Him; only come, and give yourself up to Him in fellowship through Christ Jesus. Seek to maintain that fellowship with God all the day. Ah, friends, a man cannot have the Kingdom of God first, and at times, by way of relaxation, throw it off and seek his enjoyment in the things of this world. People have a secret idea life will become too solemn, too great a strain; it will be too difficult every moment of the day, from morning to evening, to have the Kingdom of God first. One

sees at once how wrong it is to think thus. The presence of the love of God must every moment be our highest joy. Let us say: "By the help of God, it shall ever be the Kingdom of God first."

And then, my last remark, in answer to that question, "How can it be?" is this: it can be only by the power of the Holy Ghost. Let us remember that God's Word comes to us with the language, "Be filled with the Spirit;" and if you are content with less of the Spirit than God offers, not utterly and entirely yielding to be filled with the Spirit, you do not obey the command. But listen: God has made a wonderful provision. Jesus Christ came preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and proclaimed "The Kingdom is at hand." "Some," He said, "are standing here who will not see death until they see the Kingdom come in power." He said to the disciples, "The Kingdom is within you." And when did the Kingdom come—that Kingdom of God upon earth? When the Holy Ghost descended. On Ascension Day the King went and sat down upon the throne at the right hand of God, and the Kingdom of God, in Christ, the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, was inaugurated. When the Holy Ghost came down He brought God into the heart, and Christ, and established the rule of God in power. I am afraid sometimes, that in speaking of the Holy Spirit we forget one thing. The Holy Spirit is very much spoken of in connection with power; and it is right that we should seek power. It is not so much spoken of in connection with the graces. And yet these are always more important than the gifts of power—the holiness, the humility, the meekness, the gentleness, and the lovingness; these are the true marks of the Kingdom. We speak rightly of the Holy Spirit as the only one who can breathe all this into us. But I think there is a third thing almost more important, that we forget, and that is: in the Spirit, the Father and the Son themselves come. When Christ first promised the Holy Spirit, and spoke about His approaching coming, He said: "In that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in

me, and I in you. He that loveth me keepeth my commandments; and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him." Brother, would you have the Kingdom of God first in your life, you must have the Kingdom in your hearts. If my heart be set upon a thing I may be bound with chains, but the moment the chains are loosened I fly towards the object of my affection and desire. And just so the Kingdom must be within us, and then it is easy to say: "The Kingdom first." But to have the Kingdom within us in truth, we must have God the Father, and Christ the Son, by the Holy Ghost within us too. No Kingdom without the King.

You are called to likeness with Christ. Oh, how many Christians strive after this part and that part of the likeness of Christ, and forget the root of the whole! What is the root of all? That Christ gave Himself up utterly to God, and His Kingdom and glory. He gave His life, that God's Kingdom might be established. Do you the same to-day and give your life to God to be every moment a living sacrifice, and the Kingdom will come with power into your heart. Give yourself up to Christ. Let Christ the King reign in your heart, and the heavenly Kingdom will come there and the Presence and the Rule of God be known in power. Oh, think of that wonderful thing that is going to happen in the great eternity. We read of it in 1st Corinthians: God has entrusted Christ with the Kingdom, but there is coming a day when Christ shall come Himself again to be subjected unto the Father, and He shall give up the Kingdom to the Father, that God may be all, and in that day Christ shall say before the universe: "This is my glory, I give back the Kingdom to the Father!" Christians, if your Christ finds His glory here on earth in dying and sacrificing Himself for the Kingdom and then in eternity again in giving the Kingdom to God, shall not you and I come to God to do the same and count anything we have as loss, that the Kingdom of God may be made manifest, and that God may be glorified.

Chapter VI_(TOC)

Christ Our Life

Christ who is our life—Colossians 3:4

One question that rises in every mind is this: "How can I live that life of perfect trust in God?" Many do not know the right answer, or the full answer. It is this: "Christ must live it in me." That is what He became man for; as a man to live a life of trust in God, and so to show to us how we ought to live. When He had done that upon earth, He went to heaven, that He might do more than show us, might give us, and live in us that life of trust. It is as we understand what the life of Christ is and how it becomes ours, that we shall be prepared to desire and to ask of Him that He would live it Himself in us. When first we have seen what the life is, then we shall understand how it is that He can actually take possession, and make us like Himself. I want especially to direct attention to that first question. I wish to set before you the life of Christ as He lived it, that we may understand what it is that He has for us and that we can expect from Him. Christ Jesus lived a life upon earth that He expects us literally to imitate. We often say that we long to be like Christ. We study the traits of His character, mark His footsteps, and pray for grace to be like Him, and yet, somehow, we succeed but very little. And why? Because we are wanting to pluck the fruit while the root is absent. If we want really to understand what the imitation of Christ means, we must go to that which constituted the very root of His life before God. It was a life of absolute dependence, absolute trust, absolute surrender, and until we are one

with Him in what is the principle of His life, it is in vain to seek here or there to copy the graces of that life.

In the Gospel story we find five great points of special importance; the birth, the life on earth, the death, the resurrection, and the ascension. In these we have what an old writer has called "the process of Jesus Christ;" the process by which He became what He is to-day—our glorified King, and our life. In all this life process we must be made like unto Him. Look at the first. What have we to say about His birth? This: He received His life from God. What about His life upon earth? He lived that life in dependence upon God. About His death? He gave up His life to God. About His resurrection? He was raised from the dead by God. And about His ascension? He lives His life in glory with God.

First, He received His life from God. And why is it of consequence that we should look to that? Because Christ Jesus had in that the starting-point of His whole life. He said: "The Father sent me;" "The Father hath given the Son all things;" "The Father hath given the Son to have life in Himself." Christ received it as His own life, just as God has His life in Himself. And yet, all the time it was a life given and received. "Because the Father almighty has given this life unto me, the Son of man on earth, I can count upon God to maintain it and to carry me through all." And that is the first lesson we need. We need often to meditate on it, and to pray, and to think, and to wait before God, until our hearts open to the wonderful consciousness that the everlasting God has a divine life within us which can not exist but through Him. I believe God has given His life, it roots in Him. I shall feel it must be maintained by Him. We often think that God has given us a life which is now our own, a spiritual life, and that we are to take charge; and then we complain that we can not keep it right. No wonder. We must learn to live, learn to live as Jesus

did. I have a God-given treasure in this earthen vessel. I have the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. I have the life of God's Son within me given me by God Himself, and it can only be maintained by God Himself as I live in fellowship with Him. What does the Apostle Paul teach us in Romans VI.; there where he has just told us that we must reckon ourselves dead unto sin, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus? He goes on at once to say: "Therefore yield, present yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead." How often a Christian hears solemn words about his being alive to God, and his having to reckon himself dead indeed to sin, and alive to God in Christ! He does not know what to do; he immediately casts about: "How can I keep it, this death and this life?" Listen to what Paul says. The moment that you reckon yourself dead to sin and alive to God, go with that life to God Himself, and present yourself as alive from the dead, and say to God: "Lord, Thou hast given me this life. Thou alone canst keep it. I bring it to Thee. I cannot understand all. I hardly know what I have got, but I come to God to perfect what He has begun." To live like Christ, I must be conscious every moment that my life has come from God, and He alone can maintain it.

Then, secondly, how did Christ live out His life during the thirty-three years in which He walked here upon earth? He lived it in dependence on God. You know how continually He says: "The Son can do nothing of Himself. The words that I speak, I speak not of Myself." He waited unceasingly for the teaching, and the commands, and the guidance of the Father. He prayed for power from the Father. Whatever He did, He did in the name of the Father. He, the Son of God, felt the need of much prayer, of persevering prayer, of bringing down from heaven and maintaining the life of fellowship with God in prayer. We hear a great deal about trusting God. Most blessed! And we may say: "Ah, that is what I want," and we may forget what is the very secret

of all—that God, in Christ, must work all in us. I not only need God as an object of trust, but I must have Christ within as the power to trust; He must live His own life of trust in me. Look at it in that wonderful story of Paul, the Apostle, the beloved servant of God. He is in danger of self-confidence, and God in heaven sends that terrible trial in Asia to bring him down, lest he trust in himself and not in the living God. God watched over his servant that he should be kept trusting. Remember that other story about the thorn in the flesh, in 2 Corinthians XII., and think what that means. He was in danger of exalting himself, and the blessed Master came to humble him, and to teach him: "I keep thee weak, that thou mayest learn to trust not in thyself, but in Me." If we are to enter into the rest of faith, and to abide there; if we are to live the life of victory in the land of Canaan, it must begin here. We must be broken down from all self-confidence and learn like Christ to depend absolutely and unceasingly upon God. There is a greater work to be done in that than we perhaps know. We must be broken down, and the habit of our souls must be unceasingly: "I am nothing; God is all. I cannot walk before God as I should for one hour, unless God keep the life He has given me." What a blessed solution God gives then to all our questions and our difficulties, when He says: "My child, Christ has gone through it all for thee. Christ hath wrought out a new nature that can trust God; and Christ the Living One in heaven will live in thee, and enable thee to live that life of trust." That is why Paul said: "Such confidence have we toward God, through Christ." What does that mean? Does it only mean through Christ as the mediator, or intercessor? Verily, no. It means much more; through Christ living in and enabling us to trust God as He trusted Him.

Then comes, thirdly, the death of Christ. What does that teach us of Christ's relation to the Father? It opens up to us one of the deepest and most solemn lessons of Christ life, one which the Church of Christ understands all too

little. We know what the death of Christ means as an atonement, and we never can emphasize too much that blessed substitution and bloodshedding, by which redemption was won for us. But let us remember, that is only half the meaning of His death. The other half is this: just as much as Christ was my substitute, who died for me, just so much He is my head, in whom, and with whom, I die; and just as He lives for me, to intercede, He lives in me, to carry out and to perfect His life. And if I want to know what that life is which He will live in me, I must look at His death. By His death He proved that He possessed life only to hold it, and to spend it, for God. To the very uttermost; without the shadow of a moment's exception, He lived for God—every moment, everywhere, He held life only for His God. And so, if one wants to live a life of perfect trust, there must be the perfect surrender of his life, and his will, even unto the very death. He must be willing to go all lengths with Jesus, even to Calvary. When a boy twelve years of age Jesus said: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" and again when He came to Jordan to be baptized: "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." So on through all His life, He ever said: "It is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father. I come not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me." "Lo, I am come to do Thy will, O God." And in the agony of Gethsemane, His words were: "Not my will, but Thine, be done."

Some one says: "I do indeed desire to live the life of perfect trust; I desire to let Christ live it in me; I am longing to come to such an apprehension of Christ as shall give me the certainty that Christ will forever abide in me; I want to come to the full assurance that Christ, my Joshua, will keep me in the land of victory." What is needful for that? My answer is: "Take care that you do not take a false Christ, an imaginary Christ, a half Christ." And what is the full Christ? The full Christ is the man who said, "I give up everything to the death that God may be glorified. I have not a thought; I have not a wish; I

would not live a moment except for the glory of God." You say at once, "What Christian can ever attain that?" Do not ask that question, but ask, "Has Christ attained it and does Christ promise to live in me?" Accept Him in His fullness and leave Him to teach you how far He can bring you and what He can work in you. Make no conditions or stipulations about failure, but cast yourself upon, abandon yourself to this Christ who lived that life of utter surrender to God that He might prepare a new nature which He could impart to you and in which He might make you like Himself. Then you will be in the path by which He can lead you on to blessed experience and possession of what He can do for you. Christ Jesus came into the world with a commandment from the Father that He should lay down His life, and He lived with that one thought in His bosom His whole life long. And the one thought that ought to be in the heart of every believer is this: "I am in the death with Christ; absolutely, unchangeably given up to wait upon God, that God may work out His purpose and glory in me from moment to moment." Few attain the victory and the enjoyment and the full experience at once. But this you can do: Take the right attitude and as you look to Jesus and what He was, say: "Father, Thou hast made me a partaker of the divine nature, a partaker of Christ. It is in the life of Christ given up to Thee to the death, in His power and indwelling, in His likeness, that I desire to live out my life before Thee." Death is a solemn thing, an awful thing. In the Garden it cost Christ great agony to die that death; and no wonder it is not easy to us. But we willingly consent when we have learned the secret; in death alone the life of God will come; in death there is blessedness unspeakable. It was this made Paul so willing to bear the sentence of death in himself; he knew the God who quickeneth the dead. The sentence of death is on everything that is of nature. But are we willing to accept it, do we cherish it? and are we not rather trying to escape the sentence or to forget it? We do not believe fully that the

sentence of death is on us. Whatever is of nature must die. Ask God to make you willing to believe with your heart that to die with Christ is the only way to live in Him. You ask, "But must it then be dying every day?" Yes, beloved; Jesus lived every day in the prospect of the cross, and we, in the power of His victorious life, being made conformable to His death, must rejoice every day in going down with Him into death. Take an illustration. Take an oak of some hundred years' growth. How was that oak born? In a grave. The acorn was planted in the ground, a grave was made for it that the acorn might die. It died and disappeared; it cast roots downward, and it cast shoots upward, and now that tree has been standing a hundred years. Where is it standing? In its grave; all the time in the very grave where the acorn died; it has stood there stretching its roots deeper and deeper into that earth in which its grave was made, and yet, all the time, though it stood in the very grave where it had died, it has been growing higher, and stronger, and broader, and more beautiful. And all the fruit it ever bore, and all the foliage that adorned it year by year, it owed to that grave in which its roots are cast and kept. Even so Christ owes everything to His death and His grave. And we, too, owe everything to that grave of Jesus. Oh! let us live every day rooted in the death of Jesus. Be not afraid, but say: "To my own will I will die; to human wisdom, and human strength, and to the world I will die; for it is in the grave of my Lord that His life has its beginning, and its strength and its glory."

This brings us to our next thought. First, Christ received life from the Father; second, Christ lived it in dependence on the Father; third, Christ gave it up in death to the Father; and now, fourth, Christ received it again raised by the Father, by the power of the glory of the Father. Oh, the deep meaning of the resurrection of Christ! What did Christ do when He died? He went down into the darkness and absolute helplessness of death. He gave up a life that was without sin; a life that was God-given; a life that was beautiful and precious;

and He said, "I will give it into the hands of my Father if He asks it;" and He did it; and He was there in the grave waiting on God to do His will; and because He honored God to the uttermost in His helplessness, God lifted Him up to the very uttermost of glory and power. Christ lost nothing by giving up His life in death to the Father. And so, if you want the glory and the life of God to come upon you, it is in the grave of utter helplessness that that life of glory will be born. Jesus was raised from the dead, and that resurrection power, by the grace of God, can and will work in us. Let no one expect to live a right life until he lives a full resurrection life in the power of Jesus. Let me state in a different way what this resurrection means.

Christ had a perfect life, given by God. The Father said: "Will you give up that life to me? Will you part with it at my command?" And He parted with it, but God gave it back to Him in a second life ten thousand times more glorious than that earthly life. So God will do to every one of us who willingly consents to part with his life. Have you ever understood it? Jesus was born twice. The first time He was born in Bethlehem. That was a birth into a life of weakness. But the second time, He was born from the grave; He is the "first-born from the dead." Because He gave up the life that He had by His first birth, God gave him the life of the second birth, in the glory of heaven and the throne of God. Christians, that is exactly what we need to do. A man may be an earnest Christian; a man may be a successful worker; he may be a Christian that has had a measure of growth and advance; but if he has not entered this fullness of blessing, then he needs to come to a second and deeper experience of God's saving power; he needs, just as God brought him out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, to come to a point where God brings him through Jordan into Canaan. Beloved, we have been baptized into the death of Christ. It is as we say: "I have had a very blessed life, and I have had many blessed experiences, and God has done many things for me; but I am

conscious there is something wrong still; I am conscious that this life of rest and victory is not really mine." Before Christ got His life of rest and victory on the throne, He had to die and give up all. Do you it, too, and you shall with Him share His victory and glory. It is as we follow Jesus in His death, that His resurrection, power and joy will be ours.

And then comes our last point. The fifth step in His wondrous path was: He was lifted up to be forever with the Father. Because He humbled Himself, therefore God highly exalted Him. Wherein cometh the beauty and the blessedness of that exaltation of Jesus? For Himself perfect fellowship with the Father; for others participation in the power of God's omnipotence. Yes, that was the fruit of His death. Scripture promises not only that God will, in the resurrection life, give us joy, and peace that passeth all understanding, victory over sin, and rest in God, but He will baptize us with the Holy Ghost; or, in other words, will fill us with the Holy Ghost. Jesus was lifted to the throne of heaven, that He might there receive from the Father the Spirit in His new, divine manifestation, to be poured out in His fullness. And as we come to the resurrection life, the life in the faith of Him who is one with us, and sits upon the throne—as we come to that, we too may be partakers of the fellowship with Christ Jesus as He ever dwells in God's presence, and the Holy Spirit will fill us, to work in us, and out of us in a way that we have never yet known.

Jesus got this divine life by depending absolutely upon the Father all His life long, depending upon Him even down into death. Jesus got that life in the full glory of the Spirit to be poured out, by giving Himself up in obedience and surrender to God alone, and leaving God even in the grave to work out His mighty power; and that very Christ will live out His life in you and me. Oh, the mystery! Oh, the glory! And oh, the Divine certainty. Jesus Christ means

to live out that life in you and me. What think you, ought we not to humble ourselves before God? Have we been Christians so many years, and realized so little what we are? I am a vessel set apart, cleansed, emptied, consecrated; just standing, waiting every moment for God, in Christ, by the Holy Spirit, to work out in me as much of the holiness and the life of His Son as pleases Him. And until the Church of Christ comes to go down into the grave of humiliation, and confession, and shame; until the Church of Christ comes to lay itself in the very dust before God, and to wait upon God to do something new, and something wonderful, something supernatural, in lifting it up, it will remain feeble in all its efforts to overcome the world. Within the Church what lukewarmness, what worldliness, what disobedience, what sin! How can we ever fight this battle, or meet these difficulties? The answer is: Christ, the risen One, the crowned One, the almighty One, must come, and live in the individual members. But we can not expect this except as we die with Him. I referred to the tree grown so high and beautiful, with its roots every day for a hundred years in the grave in which the acorn died. Children of God, we must go down deeper into the grave of Jesus. We must cultivate the sense of impotence, and dependence, and nothingness, until our souls walk before God every day in a deep and holy trembling. God keep us from being anything. God teach us to wait on Him, that He may work in us all He wrought in His Son, till Christ Jesus may live out His life in us! For this may God help us!

Chapter VII^(TOC)

Christ's Humility Our Salvation

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Philippians 2:5-8

All are familiar with this wonderful passage. Paul is speaking about one of the most simple, practical things in daily life—humility; and in connection with that, he gives us a wonderful exhibition of divine truth. In this chapter we have the eternal Godhead of Jesus—He was in the form of God, and one with God. We have His incarnation—He came down, and was found in the likeness of man. We have his death with the atonement—He became obedient unto death. We have His exaltation—God hath highly exalted Him. We have the glory of His Kingdom—that every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess Him. And in what connection? Isaiah it a theological study? No. Isaiah it a description of what Christ is? No; it is in connection with a simple, downright call to a life of humility in our intercourse with each other. Our life on earth is linked to all the eternal glory of the Godhead as revealed in the exaltation of Jesus. The very looking to Jesus, the very bowing of the knee to Jesus, ought to be inseparably connected with a spirit of the very deepest humility. Consider the humility of Jesus. First of all, that humility is our salvation; then, that humility is just the salvation we need; and again, that humility is the salvation which the Holy Spirit will give us.

Humility is the salvation that Christ brings. That is our first thought. We

often have very vague—I might also say visionary—ideas of what Christ is; we love the person of Christ, but that which makes up Christ, which actually constitutes Him the Christ, that we do not know or love. If we love Christ above everything, we must love humility above everything, for humility is the very essence of His life and glory, and the salvation He brings. Just think of it. Where did it begin? Is there humility in heaven? You know there is, for they cast their crowns before the throne of God and the Lamb. But is there humility on the throne of God? Yes, what was it but heavenly humility that made Jesus on the throne willing to say: "I will go down to be a servant, and to die for man; I will go and live as the meek and lowly Lamb of God?" Jesus brought humility from heaven to us. It was humility that brought Him to earth, or He never would have come. In accordance with this, just as Christ became a man in this divine humility, so His whole life was marked by it. He might have chosen another form in which to appear; He might have come in the form of a king, but He chose the form of a servant. He made Himself of no reputation; He emptied Himself; He chose the form of a servant. He said: "The Son of Man is not come to be ministered unto, to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." And you know, in the last night, He took the place of a slave, and girded Himself with a towel, and went to wash the feet of Peter and the other disciples. Beloved, the life of Jesus upon earth was a life of the deepest humility. It was this gave His life its worth and beauty in God's sight. And then His death—possibly you haven't thought of it much in this connection—but His death was an exhibition of unparalleled humility. "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." My Lord Christ took a low place all the time of His walk upon earth; He took a very low place when He began to wash the disciples' feet; but when He went to Calvary, He took the lowest place there was to be found in the universe of God, the very lowest,

and He let sin, and the curse of sin, and the wrath of God, cover Him. He took the place of a guilty sinner, that He might bear our load, that He might serve us in saving us from our wretchedness, that He might by His precious blood win deliverance for us, that He might by that blood wash us from our stain and our guilt.

We are in danger of thinking about Christ, as God, as man, as the atonement, as the Saviour, and as exalted upon the throne, and we form an image of Christ, while the real Christ, that which is the very heart of His character, remains unknown. What is the real Christ? Divine humility, bowed down into the very depths for our salvation. The humility of Jesus is our salvation. We read, "He humbled Himself, therefore God hath highly exalted Him." The secret of His exaltation to the throne is this: He humbled Himself before God and man. Humility is the Christ of God, and now in Heaven, to-day, that Christ, the Man of humility, is on the throne of God. What do I see? A Lamb standing, as it had been slain, on the throne; in the glory He is still the meek and gentle Lamb of God. His humility is the badge He wears there. You often use that name—the Lamb of God—and you use it in connection with the blood of the sacrifice. You sing the praise of the Lamb, and you put your trust in the blood of the Lamb. Praise God for the blood. You never can trust that too much. But I am afraid you forget that the word "Lamb" must mean to us two things: it must mean not only a sacrifice, the shedding of blood, but it must mean to us the meekness of God, incarnate upon earth, the meekness of God represented in the meekness and gentleness of a little Lamb.

But the salvation that Christ brought is not only a salvation that flows out of humility; it also leads to humility. We must understand that this is not only the salvation which Christ brought; but that it is exactly the salvation which you and I need. What is the cause of all the wretchedness of man? Primarily

pride; man seeking his own will and his own glory. Yes, pride is the root of every sin, and so the Lamb of God comes to us in our pride, and brings us salvation from it. We need above everything to be saved from our pride and our self-will. It is good to be saved from the sins of stealing, murdering, and every other evil; but a man needs above all to be saved from what is the root of all sin, his self-will and his pride. It is not until man begins to feel that this is exactly the salvation he needs, that he really can understand what Christ is, and that he can accept Him as his salvation. This is the salvation that we as Christians and believers specially need. We know the sad story of Peter and John; what their self-will and pride brought upon them. They needed to be saved from nothing except themselves, and that is the lesson which we must learn, if we are to enter the life of rest. And how can we enter that life, and dwell there in the bosom of the Lamb of God, if pride rules? Have we not often heard complaints of how much there is of pride in the Church of Christ? What is the cause of all the division, and strife, and envying, that is often found even among God's saints? Why is it that often in a family there is bitterness—it may be only for half an hour, or half a day; but what is the cause of hard judgments and hasty words? What is the cause of estrangement between friends? What is the cause of evil speaking? What is the cause of selfishness and indifference to the feelings of others? Simply this: the pride of man. He lifts himself up, and he claims the right to have his opinions and judgments as he pleases. The salvation we need is indeed humility, because it is only through humility that we can be restored to our right relation to God.

"Waiting upon God,"—that is the only true expression for the real relation of the creature to God; to be nothing before God. What is the essential idea of a creature made by God? It is this: to be a vessel in which He can pour out His fullness, in which He can exhibit His life, His goodness, His power, and His love. A vessel must be empty if it is to be filled, and if we are to be filled

with the life of God we must be utterly empty of self. This is the glory of God, that He is to fill all things, and more especially His redeemed people. And as this is the glory of the creature, so this is the only redemption, and the only glory of every redeemed soul, to be empty and as nothing before God; to wait upon Him, and to let God be all in all.

Humility has a prominent place in almost every epistle of the New Testament. Paul says: "Walk with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The nearer you get to God, and the fuller of God, the lowlier you will be; and equally before God and man, you will love to bow very low. We know of Peter's early self-confidence; but in his epistles what a different language he speaks! He wrote there: "Let the younger be subject to the elder, and all of you be subject one to another; humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in His own time." He understood, and he dared to preach, humility to all. It is indeed the salvation we need. What is it that prevents people from coming to that entire surrender that we speak of? Simply that they dare not abandon themselves, and trust themselves, to God; that they are not willing to be nothing, to give up their wishes, and their will, and their honor to Christ. Shall we not accept the salvation that Jesus offers? He gave up His own will; He gave up His own honor; He gave up any confidence in Himself; He lived dependent upon God as a servant whom the Father had sent. There is the salvation we need, the Spirit of humility that was in Christ.

What is it that often disturbs our hearts, and our peace? It is pride seeking to be something. And God's decree is irreversible, "God resisteth the proud; He gives grace only to the humble." How often Jesus had to speak to his disciples about it! You will find repeatedly in the Gospel those simple words:

"He that humbleth Himself shall be exalted; he that exalteth himself shall be humbled." He taught His disciples: "He that would be chiefest among you, let him be the servant of all." This should be our one cry before God: "Let the power of the Holy Ghost come upon me, with the humility of Jesus, that I may take the place that He took." Brother, do you want a better place than Jesus had? Are you seeking a higher place than Jesus? Or will you say: "Down, down, as deep as ever I can go. By the help of God I will be nothing before God; I will be where Jesus was."

And now comes the third thought—This is the salvation the Holy Ghost brings. You know what a change took place in those disciples. Let us praise God for it; the Holy Spirit means this: the life, the disposition, the temper, and the inclinations of Jesus, brought down from heaven into our hearts. That is the Holy Ghost. He has His mighty workings to bestow as gifts; but the fullness of the Holy Ghost is this: Jesus Christ in His humility coming to dwell in us. When Christ was teaching His disciples, all His instructions may have helped in the way of preparation, breaking them down, and making them conscious of what was wrong, and awakening desire; but the instruction could not do it, and all their love to Jesus and their desire to please Him could not do it, until the Holy Ghost came. That is the promise Christ gave. He says, in connection with the coming of the Holy Ghost: "I will come again to you." Christ said to His disciples: "I have been three years with you, and you have been in the closest contact with me, and I have done the utmost to reach your hearts; I have sought to get into your hearts, yet I have failed; but fear not, I will come again. In that day ye shall see me, and your hearts shall rejoice, and no man shall take your joy from you. I will come again to dwell in you, and live my life in you." Christ went to heaven that He might get a power which He never had before. And what was that? The power of living in men. God be praised for this! It was because Jesus, the humble One, the

Lamb of God, the meek, the lowly and gentle One, came down in the Holy Spirit into the hearts of His disciples, that the pride was expelled, and that the very breath of Heaven breathed through Him in the love that made them one heart and one soul.

Dear friends, Christ is yours. Christ as He comes in the power of the Holy Spirit is yours. Are you longing to have Him, to have the perfect Christ Jesus? Come, then, and see how, amid the glories of His Godhead—His having been in the form of God, and equal to God; amid the glories of His incarnation—His having become a man; amid the glories of His atonement—His having been obedient to death; and amid the glories of His exaltation, which is the chief and brightest glory, He humbled Himself from Heaven down to earth and on earth down to the cross. He humbled Himself to bear the name and show the meekness, and die the death of the Lamb of God. And what is it we now need to do? How are we to be saved by this humility of Jesus? It is a solemn question, but, thank God, the answer can be given. First we must desire it above everything. Let us learn to pray God to deliver us from every vestige of pride, for this is a cursed thing. Let us learn to set aside for a time other things in the Christian life, and begin to plead with the Lamb of God day by day, "O Lamb of God, I know Thy love, but I know so little of Thy meekness." Come day after day, and lay your heart against His heart, and say to Him with strong desire: "Jesus, Lamb of God, give, oh, give me Thyself, with Thy meekness and humility," and He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him. It is not enough to desire it and to pray for it; claim and accept it as yours. This humility is given you in Christ Jesus. Christ is our life. What does that mean? Oh, that God might give you and me a vision of what that means. The air is our life, and the air is everywhere, universal. We breathe without difficulty because God surrounds us with the air; and is the air nearer to me than Christ is? The sun gives light to every green leaf and

every blade of grass, shining hour by hour and moment by moment. And is the sun nearer to the blade of grass than Christ is to man's soul? Verily, no; Christ is around us on every side; Christ is pressing on us to enter, and there is nothing in heaven, or earth, or hell, that can keep the light of Christ from shining into the heart that is empty and open. If the windows of your room were closed with shutters, the light could not enter; it would be on the outside of the building, streaming and streaming against the shutters; but it could not enter. But leave the windows without shutters, and the light comes, it rejoices to come in and fill the room. Even so, children of God, Jesus and His light, Jesus and His humility, are around you on every side, longing to enter into your hearts. Come and take Him to-day in His blessed meekness and gentleness. Do not be afraid of Him; He is the Lamb of God. He is so patient with you, He is so kindly towards you, He is so tender and loving. Take courage to-day and trust Jesus to come into your heart and take possession of it. And when He has taken possession, there will be a life day by day of blessed fellowship with Him, and you will feel a necessity ever deeper for your quiet time with Him, and for worshiping and adoring Him, and for just sinking down before Him in helplessness and humility, and saying: "Jesus, I am nothing, and Thou art all." It will be a blessed life, because you will be conscious of being at the feet of Jesus. At this moment you can claim Jesus in His divine humility as the life of your soul. Will you? Will you not open your heart, and say: "Come in; come in?"

Come to-day, and take Him up afresh in this blessed power of His wonderful humility, and say to Him: "Oh, Thou who didst say, 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls,' my Lord, I know why it is that I have not the perfect life; it is my pride, but to-day, come Thou and dwell in my heart. Thou who didst lead even Peter and John into the blessedness of Thy heavenly humility; Thou wilt not refuse me. Lord,

here I am; do Thou, who by Thy wonderful humility alone canst save, come in. O Lamb of God, I believe in Thee; take possession of my heart, and dwell in me." When you have said that, go out in quiet, and retire, walking gently as holding the Lamb of God in your heart, and say: "I have received the Lamb of God; He makes my heart His care; He breathes His humility and dependence on God in me, and so brings me to God. His humility is my life and salvation."

Chapter VIII^(TOC)

The Complete Surrender

Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him at the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither. And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian, and his master saw that the Lord was with him—Genesis 39:1-

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We have in this passage an object lesson which teaches us what Christ is to us. Note: Joseph was a slave, but God was with him so distinctly that his master could see it. "And his master saw the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did prosper in his hands; and Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him,"—that is to say, he was his slave about his person—"and he made him overseer over his house,"—that was something new. Joseph had been a slave, but now he becomes a master. "And he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hands. And it came to pass, from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake, and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not all he had, save the bread which he did eat."

We find Joseph in two characters in the house of Potiphar: first as a servant and a slave, one who is trusted and loved, but still entirely a servant; second, as master. Potiphar made him overseer over his house and his lands, and all

that he had, so that we read afterward that he left everything in his hands, and he knew of nothing except the bread that came upon his table. I want to call your attention to Joseph as a type of Christ. We sometimes speak in the Christian life, of entire surrender, and rightly, and here we have a beautiful illustration of what it is. First, Joseph was in Potiphar's house to serve him and to help him, and he did that, and Potiphar learned to trust him, so that he said, "All that I have I will give into his hands." Now, that is exactly what is to take place with a great many Christians. They know Christ, they trust Him, they love Him, but He is not Master, He is a sort of helper. When there is trouble they come to Him, when they sin they ask Him for pardon in His precious blood, when they are in darkness they cry to Him; but often and often they live according to their own will, and they seek help from themselves. But how blessed is the man who comes and, like Potiphar, says, "I will give up everything to Jesus!" There are many who have accepted Christ as their Lord, but have never yet come to the final, absolute surrender of everything. Christians, if you want perfect rest, abiding joy, strength to work for God, oh, come and learn from that poor heathen Egyptian what you ought to do. He saw that God was with Joseph and he said, "I will give up my house to him." Oh, learn you to do that. There are some who have never yet accepted Christ, some who are seeking after Him, thirsting and hungering, but they do not know how to find Him.

Let me direct your attention to four thoughts regarding this surrender to Christ: First, its motives; second, its measures; third, its blessedness; lastly, its duration.

First of all, its motives. What moved Potiphar to do this? I think the answer is very easy: he was a trusted servant of the king and he had the king's work to take care of, and he very likely could not take care of his own house. All his

time and attention were required at the court of Pharaoh. He had his duty there; he was in high honor; but his own house got neglected. Very likely he had had other overseers, one slave appointed to rule the others, and perhaps that one had been unfaithful, or dishonest, and somehow his house was not as he would have it. So he buys another slave, just as he had formerly done, but in this case he sees what he had never seen before. There is something unusual about the man. He walks so humbly, he serves so faithfully and so lovingly, and withal so successfully. Potiphar begins to look into the reason for this, and finally concludes that God is with him.

It is a grand thing to have a man with whom God is, to entrust one's business to. The heathen realized this, and between the need of his own house and what he saw in Joseph, he decided to make him overseer. I ask you, do not these two motives plead most urgently that you should say: "I will make Jesus master over my whole being?" Your house, Christian, your spiritual life, the dwelling, the temple of God in your heart—in what state is that? Isaiah it not often like the temple of old, in Jerusalem, that had been defiled and made a house of merchandise, and afterwards a den of thieves? Your heart, meant to be the home of Jesus, is it not often full of sin and darkness, full of sadness, full of vexation? You have done your very best to get it changed, and you have called in the help of man, and the help of means; you have used every method you could think of for getting it put right; but it will not come right until He whose it is, comes in to take charge.

If there is any trouble in your heart, if you are in darkness, or in the power of sin, I bring to you the Son of God, with the promise that He will come in and take charge. As Potiphar took Joseph, will you not take Jesus? Has He not proven Himself worthy to be trusted? Come and say, "Jesus shall have entire charge; He is worthy." Think not only of His Divine power, but think of His

wonderful love; think of His coming from heaven to save you; think of His dying on Calvary and shedding His blood out of intense love for you. Oh, think of it; Christ in heaven loves every one who is given to Him, and whom He has made a child of God. "Having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end."

Must I plead in the name of the love of the crucified Jesus; must I plead with you Christians, and say, Look at Jesus, the Son of God, your Redeemer, and ask you to make Him overseer over all? Give Him charge of your temper, your heart's affections, your thoughts, your whole being, and He will prove Himself worthy of it. Joseph had been for a time just a common slave, and with the other slaves had served Pharaoh. Alas! many a Christian has used Christ for his own advancement and comfort, just as he uses everything in the world. He uses father and mother, minister, money, and all else the world will give, to comfort and make him happy; there is danger of his using Christ Jesus in the same way. But oh, brethren, this is not right. You are His house, and He has a right to dwell therein. Will you not come and surrender all, and say, "Lord Jesus, I have made Thee overseer over all?"

But now, secondly, the measure of that surrender. We read in the 4th verse: "All that he had he put into his hands." Then in verse 5: "And it came to pass from the time that he made him overseer over all that he had"—there you have it the second time—"the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house, and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had"—there the third time. Then in verse 6: "And he left all that he had"—there you have the words the fourth time—"in Joseph's hand, and he knew not all he had, save the bread which he did eat." What do I see here? That Potiphar actually gave everything into Joseph's hands. He made him master over his slaves. All the money was put into Joseph's hands, for we read that Potiphar had care of nothing. When

dinner was brought upon the table, he ate of it, and that was all he knew of what was going on in his house. Is not this entire surrender?—he gives up everything into the hands of Joseph. Ah, beloved Christians, I want you to ask yourselves: "Have I done that?" You have offered more than one consecration prayer, and you have more than once said: "Jesus, all I have I give to Thee." You have said it, and meant it; but very probably you did not realize fully what it meant.

With the word surrender there seems always to be a larger and more comprehensive meaning. We do not succeed in carrying out our intentions, and afterward we take back one thing and another until we have lost sight of our original intention. Beloved Christians, let Christ Jesus have all. Let Him have your whole heart, with its affections; He Himself loves, with more than the love of Jonathan. Let Him have your whole heart, saying, "Jesus, every fiber of my being, every power of my soul, shall be devoted to Thee." He will accept that surrender. He spoke a solemn word: "You must hate father and mother." Say you to-day: "Lord Jesus, the love to father and mother, to wife and child, to brother and sister, I give up to Thee. Teach Thou me how to love Thee. I have only one desire, which is to love Thee. I want to give my whole heart to be full of Thy love."

But when you have given your heart, there is yet more to give. There is the head—the brain with its thoughts. I believe Christians do not know how much they rob Christ of in reading so much of the literature of the world. They are often so occupied with their newspapers that the Bible gets a very small place. Oh, friends, I beseech you bring this noble power which God has given you, the power of a mind that can think heavenly, eternal, and infinite things, and lay it at the feet of Jesus, saying, "Lord Jesus, every faculty of my being I want to surrender to Thee, that Thou shouldst teach me what to think,

and how to think, for Thee and Thy Kingdom." Bless God, there are men who have given their intellect to Jesus, and it has been accepted by Him. And in this connection there is my whole outer life. There is my relation to society, my position among men, my intercourse in my own home, with friends and family; there is my money, my time, my business; all these should be put in the hands of Jesus. One cannot know beforehand the blessedness of this surrender, but blessed it surely is. Come, because He is worthy; come because you know you can not keep things right yourself, and make Christ master over all you have. Give father and mother, wife and child, house and land, and money, all to Jesus, and you will find that in giving all you receive it back an hundred fold.

Thirdly, look at the blessing of the entire surrender. You have here the remarkable words: "And it came to pass from the time that Potiphar made Joseph overseer over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake, and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field." I ask you Christians, If God did this to that heathen man, because he honored Joseph; if God, for Joseph's sake, blessed that Egyptian in this wonderful way, may a Christian not venture to say: "If I put my life into the hands of Jesus, I am sure God will bless all that I have?" Oh, dare to say it. Potiphar trusted Joseph implicitly and absolutely, and there was prosperity everywhere, because God was with Joseph. Beloved friends, if you but surrender everything, depend upon it, the blessing from that time will be yours. There will be a blessing within your own inner life, and a blessing in your outer life. He blessed Potiphar in the house, in the field, everywhere.

Oh, Christian, what is that blessing you will get? I can not tell all, but I can tell you this: if you will come to Christ Jesus and surrender all, the blessing of God will be on all that you have. There will be a blessing for your own

soul. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." Try that; trust Jesus for everything, and trust everything to Him, and the blessing of God will come upon you—the sweet rest, the rest of faith. It is all in the hands of Jesus; He will guide you; He will teach you; He will work in you; He will keep you; He will be everything to you. What a blessed rest and freedom from responsibility and from care, because it is all in the hands of Jesus! I do not say trouble and trial will never come; but in the midst of trial and trouble you will have the all-sufficiency of the presence of Jesus to be your comfort, your help, and your guide. Joseph was sold by his brethren, but he saw God in it, and he was quite content. Christ was betrayed by Judas, condemned by Caiaphas, and given over to execution by Pilate; but in all that, Christ saw God, and He was content. Give over your life, in all its phases, into the hands of Jesus; remembering that the very hairs of your head are numbered, and not a sparrow falls to earth without the Father's notice. Consent now and say: "I will give up everything into the hands of Jesus. Whatever happens is His will regarding me. Whether He comes in the light or in the dark, in the storm or on the troubled sea, I will rest in that blessed assurance. I give up my whole life entirely to Him."

In reading the Book of Jonah, we find God's hand in each step of Jonah's experience. It was God who sent the storm when Jonah went aboard the ship, who appointed a whale to swallow him, who ordered the whale to cast him out; and then afterwards it was God who caused the hot wind to blow when the sun was sending down its scorching rays, until the soul of Jonah was grieved, and made the gourd to grow, and sent the worm to kill the gourd, and set a sea-wind to dry the gourd up quickly. Do we not thus see that every circumstance of our living, every comfort and every trial, comes from God in Christ? There is nothing can touch a hair of my head. Not a sharp word comes against me; not an unexpected flurry surrounds me, but it is all Jesus.

With my life in His hands, I need care for nothing. I can be content with what Jesus gives.

God blessed Potiphar in the field; in the visible life outside of his house; and God will bless you, that, in your intercourse with men, you may be a blessing; that by your holy, humble, respectful, quiet walk, you may carry comfort; that by your loving readiness to be a servant and a helper to all, you may prove what the Spirit of God has done within you. Oh, my brother, my sister, you have no conception of it—I have not—how God is willing to bless the soul utterly given up to Jesus. God can delight in nothing but Jesus. God delights infinitely in Jesus. God longs to see nothing in us but Jesus, and if I give up my heart and life to Jesus, and say, "My God, I want that Thou shouldst see in me nothing but Jesus," then I bring to the Father the sacrifice that is the most acceptable of all. Oh, believers, come to-day; come out of all your troubles, and all your self-efforts and your self-confidence, and let the blessed Son of God take possession.

Let me direct your thoughts, lastly, to the duration of this surrender. I want to emphasize this—because in many cases the surrender does not last. Some go away, and for a time have much gladness and joy, but it soon begins to decrease, and in a few weeks or perhaps months is all gone. Others who do not lose it entirely, complain sadly at times, that it goes away and comes again. They say: "My life has been very much blessed since that surrender I made to God, but it has not always been on the same level." What did Potiphar do? We read in the 4th verse: "He made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he left in Joseph's hands." What a simple word! He left it there.

And oh, children of God, if you will only get to that point and say, "For all eternity I leave it in the hands of Jesus," you will find what a blessing it is.

Potiphar found now that he could do the king's business with two hands and an undivided heart. I might try to rescue a drowning man by holding fast somewhere with one hand, while I reached out the other hand to the man, but it is a grand thing for a person to be able to stretch out both hands, and that person is the one who has left all with Jesus—all his inner life, all his cares and troubles, and has given himself up entirely to do the will of God. Will you leave it there? I must press this, because I know temptations will come. One temptation will be that the feelings you had in your act of surrender will pass away; they will not be so bright; another, that circumstances will tempt you. Beloved, temptations will come; God means it for your good. Every temptation brings you a blessing. Do understand that. Learn the lesson of giving up everything to Jesus, and letting Jesus take charge of everything. Leave all with Jesus. Do not think that by a surrender to-day or on any day, however powerful, however mighty, things will keep right themselves. You need every morning afresh, when God wakes you up out of sleep, to put your heart, and your life, and your house, and your business, into the hands of Jesus. Wait on Him, if need be, in silence, or in prayer, until He gives you the assurance, "My child, for to-day all is safe; I take charge." And morning by morning He will renew to you the blessing, and morning by morning you will go out from your quiet time in the consciousness, "To-day I have had fellowship with my King, and it is all right." Jesus has taken charge. And so, day by day, you can have grace to leave all in the hands of Jesus.

In conclusion let me speak to two classes. There are times when your heart is restless; there are times when you are afraid to die.

There are some true believers who have perhaps never yet understood that it was their duty to give up everything to Christ. Beloved fellow Christians, I come with a message from your Father, to come and to-day take that word

into your hearts and upon your lips, even though you do not understand it. "Jesus, I make Thee Master of everything and I will wait at Thy feet, that Thou wilt show me what Thou wouldst have me be and do." Do it now. And let me say to believers who have done it before, and who long with an unutterable longing to do it fully and perfectly—Child of God, you can do it, for the Holy Spirit has been sent down from Heaven for this one purpose, to glorify Jesus; to glorify Jesus in your heart, by letting you see how perfectly Jesus can take possession of the whole heart; to glorify Jesus by bringing Him into your very life, that your whole life may shine out with the glory of Jesus. Depend upon it, the Father will give it to you by the Holy Spirit, if you are ready. Oh, come, and let your intercourse with God be summed up in a simple prayer and answer—"My God, as much as Thou wilt have of me to fill with Christ, Thou shalt have to-day." "My child, as much of Christ as thy heart longeth to have, thou shalt have; for it is My delight that My Son be in the hearts of My children."

Chapter IX^(TOC)

Dead With Christ

I am crucified with Christ—Galatians 2:20

The Revised Version properly has the above text "I have been crucified with Christ." In this connection, let us read the story of a man who was literally crucified with Christ. We may use all the narrative of Christ's work upon earth in the flesh as a type of His spiritual work. Let us take in this instance the story of the penitent thief, Luke 23:39-43, for I think we may learn from him how to live as men who are crucified with Christ. Paul says: "I have been crucified with Christ." And again: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom I have been crucified to the world, and the world to me." We often ask earnestly: How can I be free from the self life? The answer is, "Get another life." We often speak about the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon us, but I doubt if we fully realize that the Holy Spirit is a heavenly life come to expel the selfish, and fleshly, and the earthly life. If we want, in very deed, to enjoy fully the rest that there is in Jesus, we can only have it as He comes in, in the power of His death, to slay what is in us of nature, and to take possession, and to live His own life in the fullness of the Holy Ghost. God's Word takes us to the cross of Christ, and it teaches us about that cross, two things. It tells us that Christ died for sin. We understand what that means, that in His atonement He died as I never die, as I never can die, as I never need die; He died for sin and for me. But what gave His death such power to atone? It was this: the spirit in which He died, not

the physical suffering, not the external act of death, but the spirit in which He died. And what was that spirit? He died unto sin. Sin had tempted Him, and surrounded Him, and had brought Him very nigh to saying, "I cannot die." In Gethsemane He cried: "Father, is it not possible that the cup pass from me?" But God be praised, He gave up His life rather than yield to sin. He died to sin, and in dying He conquered. And now, I can not die for sin like Christ, but I can and I must die to sin like Christ. Christ died for me. In that He stands alone. Christ died to sin, and in that I have fellowship with Him. I have been crucified, I am dead.

And here is the great subject to which I want to lead you—What it is to be dead with Christ, and how it is that I can practically enter into this death with Christ. We know that the great characteristic of Christ is His death. From eternity He came with the commandment of the Father that He should lay down His life on earth. He gave Himself up to it, and He set His face towards Jerusalem. He chose death, and He lived and walked upon earth to prepare Himself to die. His death is the power of redemption; death gave Him His victory over sin; death gave Him His resurrection, His new life, His exaltation, and His everlasting glory. The great mark of Christ is His death. Even in Heaven, upon the throne, He stands as the Lamb that was slain, and through eternity they ever sing, "Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain." Beloved brother, your Boaz, your Christ, your all-sufficient Saviour, is a Man of whom the chief mark and the greatest glory is this: He died. And if the Bride is to live with her husband as His wife, then she must enter into His state, and into His spirit, and into His disposition, and ever be as He is. If we are to experience the full power of what Christ can do for us, we must learn to die with Christ. I ought not, perhaps, to use that expression, "We must learn to die with Christ;" I ought, rather, to say, "We must learn that we are dead with Christ." That is a glorious thought in the 6th chapter of Romans; to

every believer in the Church of Rome—not to the select ones, or the advanced ones, but to every believer in the Church of Rome, however feeble, Paul writes, "You are dead with Christ." On the strength of that he says, "Reckon yourselves dead unto sin." What does that mean—You are dead to sin? We can not see it more clearly than by referring to Adam. Christ was the second Adam. What happened in the first Adam? I died, in the first Adam; I died to God; I died in sin. When I was born, I had in me the life of Adam, which had all the characteristics of the life of Adam after he had fallen. Adam died to God, and Adam died in sin, and I inherit the life of Adam, and so I am dead in sin as he was, and dead unto God. But at the very moment I begin to believe in Jesus, I become united to Christ, the second Adam, and as really as I am united by my birth to the first Adam, I am made partaker of the life of Christ. What life? That life which died unto sin on Calvary, and which rose again; therefore God by his apostle tells us: "Reckon yourselves indeed dead unto sin and alive unto God in Christ Jesus." You are to reckon it as true, because God says it—for your new nature is indeed, in virtue of your vital union to Christ, actually and utterly dead to sin.

If we want to have the real Christ that God has given us, the real Christ that died for us, in the power of His death and resurrection, we must take our stand here. But many Christians do not understand what the 6th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans teaches us. They do not know that they are dead to sin. They do not know it, and therefore Paul instructs them: "Know ye not that as many of you as are baptized into Christ Jesus, are baptized into His death." How can we who are dead to sin in Christ live any longer therein? We have indeed the death and the life of Christ working within us. But, alas! most Christians do not know this, and therefore do not experience or practice it. They need to be taught that their first need is to be brought to the recognition, to the knowledge, of what has taken place in Christ on Calvary, and what has

taken place in their becoming united to Christ. The man must begin to say, even before he understands it, "In Christ I am dead to sin." It is a command: "Reckon ye yourselves indeed to be dead unto sin." Get hold of your union to Christ; believe in the new nature within you, that spiritual life which you have from Christ, a life that has died and been raised again. A man's acts are always in accordance with his idea of his state. A king acts like a king, otherwise we say, "That man has forgotten his kingship," but if a man is conscious of being a king, he behaves like a king. And so I cannot live the life of a true believer unless I am filled with a consciousness of this every day: "I thank God that I am dead in Christ. Christ died unto sin, and I am united with Christ, and Christ lives in me and I am dead to sin." What is the life Christ lives in me? Ask what is the life Adam lives in me? Adam lives in me the death life, a life that has fallen under the power of sin and death, death to God. That life Adam lives in me by nature as an unconverted man. And Christ, the second Adam, has come to me with a new life, and I now live in His life, the death-life of Christ. As long as I do not know it, I can not act according to it, though it be in me. Praise God, when a man begins to see what it is, and begins in obedience to say, "I will do what God's Word says; I am dead, I reckon myself dead," he enters upon a new life. On the strength of God's everlasting Word, and your union to Christ, and the great fact of Calvary, reckon, know yourself as dead indeed unto sin. A man must see this truth; this is the first step. The second is—he must accept it in faith. And what then? When he accepts it in faith, then there comes in him a struggle, and a painful experience, for that faith is still very feeble, and he begins to ask, "But why, if I am dead to sin, do I commit so much sin?" And the answer God's Word gives is simply this: You do not allow the power of that death to be applied by the Holy Spirit. What we need is to understand that the Holy Spirit came from Heaven, from the glorified Jesus, to bring His death and His

life into us. The two are inseparably connected. That Christ died, He died unto sin, and that He liveth, He liveth unto God. The death and the life in Him are inseparable; and even so in us the life to God in Christ is inseparably connected with the death to sin. And that is what the Holy Ghost will teach us and work in us. If I have accepted Christ in faith by the Holy Ghost, and yield myself to Him, Christ every day keeps possession, and reveals the full power of my fellowship in His death and life in my heart. To some this comes undoubtedly in one moment of supreme power and blessing; all at once they see and accept it, and enter in, and there is death to sin as a Divine experience. It is not that the tendency to evil is rooted out. No; but the power of Christ's death keeps from sin, and destroys the power of sin; the power of Christ's death can be manifested in the Holy Spirit's unceasingly mortifying the deeds of the body.

Some one asks me if there is still growth needed. Undoubtedly. By the Holy Spirit a man can now begin to live and grow, deeper and deeper, into the fellowship of Christ's death. New things are discovered by him in spheres of which he never thought. A man may at times be filled with the Holy Ghost, and yet there may be great imperfections in him. Why? For this reason: because his heart, perhaps, had not been fully prepared by a complete discovery of sin. There may be pride, or self-consciousness, or forwardness, or other qualities of this nature which he has never noticed. The Holy Spirit does not always cast these out at once. No. There are different ways of entering into the blessed life. One man enters into the blessed life with the idea of power for service; another with the idea of rest from worry and weariness; another with the idea of deliverance from sin. In all these aspects there is something limited, and therefore every believer is to give himself up after he knows the power of Christ's death, and say continually: "Lord Jesus, let the power of Thy death work through, let it penetrate my whole being." As

the man gives himself unreservedly up, he will begin to bear the marks of a crucified man. The apostle says: "I have been crucified," and he lives like a crucified man.

What are the marks of a crucified man? The first is, deep, absolute humility. Christ humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. When the death to sin begins to work mightily, that is one of its chief and most blessed proofs. It breaks a man down, down, and the great longing of his heart is, "Oh, that I could get deeper down before my God, and be nothing at all, that the life of Christ might be exalted. I deserve nothing but the cursed cross; I give myself over to it." Humility is one of the great marks of a crucified man.

Another mark is impotence, helplessness. When a man hangs on the cross, he is utterly helpless, he can do nothing. As long as we Christians are strong, and can work, or struggle, we do not get into the blessed life of Christ; but when a man says, "I am a crucified man, I am utterly helpless, every breath of life and strength must come from my Jesus," then we learn what it is to sink into our own impotence, and say, "I am nothing."

Still another mark of crucifixion is restfulness. Yes. Christ was crucified, and went down into the grave, and we are crucified and buried with Him. There is no place of rest like the grave; a man can do nothing there, "My flesh shall rest in hope," said David, and said the Messiah. Yes, and when a man goes down into the grave of Jesus, it means this: that he just cries out, "I have nothing but God, I trust God; I am waiting upon God; my flesh rests in Him; I have given up everything, that I may rest, waiting upon what God is to do to me." Remember, the crucifixion, and the death, and the burial are inseparably one. And remember the grave is the place where the mighty resurrection power of God will be manifested. And remember those precious words in the

11th of John: "Said I not unto thee"—when did Christ say that? It was at the grave of Lazarus—"that if thou believest, thou shalt see the glory of God?" Where shall I see the glory of God most brightly? Beside the grave. Go down into death believing, and the glory of God will come upon thee, and fill thy heart.

Dear friends, we want to die. If we are to live in the rest, and the peace, and the blessedness of our great Boaz; if we are to live a life of joy and of fruitfulness, of strength and of victory, we must go down into the grave with Christ, and the language of our life must be: "I am a crucified man. God be praised, though I have nothing but sin in myself, I have an everlasting Jesus, with His death and His life, to be the life of my soul."

How can I enter into this fellowship of the cross? We find an illustration in the story of the penitent thief. Thomas said, before Christ's death, "Let us go and abide with Him." And Peter said, "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee to prison, or to death." But the disciples all failed, and our Lord took a man who was the offscouring of the earth, and he hung him upon the cross of Calvary beside Himself, and He said to Peter, and to all: "I will let you see what it is to die with Me." And He says that word to-day, to the weakest and the humblest; if you are longing to know what it is to enter into death with Jesus, come and look at the penitent thief. And what do we see there? First of all, we see there the state of a heart prepared to die with Christ. We see in that penitent thief, a humble, whole-hearted confession of sin. There he hung upon the cursed tree, and the multitudes were blaspheming that man beside him, but he was not ashamed publicly to make confession: "I am dying a death that I have deserved; I am suffering justly; this cross is what I have deserved." Here is one of the reasons why the Church of Christ enters so little into the death of Christ; men do not want to believe that the curse of God is

upon everything in them that has not died with Christ. People talk about the curse of sin, but they do not understand that the whole nature has been infected by sin, and that the curse is on everything. My intellect, has that been defiled by sin? Terribly, and the curse of sin is on it, and therefore my intellect must go down into the death. Ah, I believe that the Church of Christ suffers more to-day from trusting in intellect, in sagacity, in culture, and in mental refinement, than from almost anything else. The Spirit of the world comes in, and men seek by their wisdom, and by their knowledge, to help the Gospel, and they rob it of its crucifixion mark. Christ directed Paul to go and preach the Gospel of the cross, but to do it not with wisdom of words. The curse of sin is on all that is of nature. If there be a minister who has delighted in preaching, who has done his very best, who has given his very best in the way of talent and of thought, and who asks, "Must that go down into the grave?" I say, "Yes, my brother, the whole man must be crucified." And so with the heart's affection. What is more beautiful than the love of a child to his mother? In that lovely nature there is something unsanctified, and it must be given up to die. God will raise it from the dead and give it back again, sanctified and made alive unto God. So I might go through the whole of our life. People often say to me: "But has God made all things so beautiful, and is it not right that we should enjoy them? Are not His gifts all good?" I answer, yes, but remember what it says; they are good, if sanctified by the Word of God and prayer. The curse of sin is on them; the blight of sin is on everything most beautiful, and it takes much of God's Word, and much of prayer to sanctify them. It is very hard to give up a thing to the death, and it is hardest of all to give up my life to the death, and I never will until I have learned that everything about that life is stamped by sin, and let it go down into the death as the only way to have it quickened and sanctified.

The penitent thief confessed his sin, and that he deserved death. Then, next,

he had faith in the almighty power of Christ. A wonderful faith. It has no parallel in the Bible. There hangs the cursed malefactor with Jesus of Nazareth, and he dares speak, and say: "I am dying here, under the just curse of my sins, but I believe Thou canst take me into Thy heart, and remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom." Oh, that we might learn to believe in the almighty power of Christ! That man believed that Christ was a King, and had a Kingdom, and that He would take him up in His arms, and in His heart, and remember him when He came into His Kingdom. He believed that, and believing that, he died. Brother, you and I need to take time to come to a much larger and deeper faith in the power of Christ, that the almighty Christ will indeed take us in His arms and carry us through this death life, revealing the power of His death in us. I cannot live it without personal contact with Christ every hour of the day. Christ must do it; Christ can do it. Come therefore and say: "Is He not the Almighty One; did He not come from the throne of God; did He not prove His omnipotence, and did the Father not prove it when He rose from the dead?" Would you be afraid, now that Christ is on the throne, of doing what the malefactor did when Christ was upon the cross, and entrusting yourself to Him to live as one dead with Him? Christ will carry you through the very process He went through; will make His death work in you every day of your life.

I note one thing more in the penitent thief—his prayer. There was his conviction of sin, and his faith, but there was, further, the utterance of his faith in prayer. He turned to Jesus. Remember that the whole world, with perhaps the exception of Mary and the women, was turned against Christ that day. Of the whole world of men as far as I know, there was but that one praying to Christ. Do not wait to see what others do; if you wait for that—alas! I desire to say it in love and tenderness—you will not find much company in the Church of Christ. Pray incessantly: "Lord Christ, let the

power of Thy death come into me." For God's sake, pray the prayer. If you want to live the life of Heaven, there must be death to sin in the power of Jesus. There must be personal entrustment of the soul into His death to sin, personal acceptance of Jesus to do the mighty work.

We have seen what the preparation is on the part of this man; let us look, secondly, at how Christ met him. He met him, you know, with that wonderful promise, with its three wonderful parts: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." A promise of fellowship with Christ—"Thou shalt be with me;" a promise of rest in eternity, in the Paradise from which sin had cast man out—"With me in Paradise;" a promise of immediate blessing—"To-day shalt thou be with Me." With that three-fold blessing Jesus comes to you and me, and He says: "Believer, are you longing to live the Paradise life, where I give souls to eat of the Tree of Life, in the Paradise of God, day by day? Are you longing for that uninterrupted communion with God that there was in Paradise before Adam fell? Are you longing for perfect fellowship with me, longing to live where I am living, in the love of the Father? To-day, to-day; even as the Holy Ghost says: 'To-day shalt thou be with me!' Longest thou for Me? I long more for thee. Longest thou for fellowship? I long unceasingly for thy fellowship, for I need thy love, my child, to satisfy my heart. Nothing can prevent My receiving thee into fellowship. I have taken possession of Heaven for thee, as the Great High Priest, that thou mightest live the Heavenly life, that thou mightest have access into the holiest of all and an abiding dwelling place there. To-day, if thou wilt, thou shalt be with me in Paradise." Thank God, the Jesus of the penitent thief is my Jesus. Thank God, the cross of the penitent thief is my cross. I must confess my sinfulness if I want to come into the closest communion with my blessed Lord. There was not a man upon earth during the thirty-three years of Christ's life that had such wonderful fellowship with the Son of God, as the penitent thief, for with the Son of God

he entered the glory. What made him so separate from others? He was on the cross with Jesus and entered Paradise with Him. And if I live upon the cross with Jesus, the Paradise life shall be mine every day.

And now, if Jesus gives me that promise, what have I to do? Let go. When a ship is moored alongside the dock, with everything ready for the start and all standing on the quay, the last bell is rung and the order is given, "Let go." Then the last rope is loosened, and the steamer moves. There are things that tie us to the earth, to the flesh-life, and to the self-life; but to-day the message comes: "If thou wouldst die with Jesus, let go." Thou needst not understand all. It may not be perfectly clear; the heart may appear dull, but never mind; Jesus carried that penitent thief through death to life. The thief did not know where he was going, he did not know what was to happen, but Jesus, the mighty conqueror, took him in His arms, and landed him, in his ignorance, in Paradise. Oh, I have sometimes said in my soul, bless God for the ignorance of that penitent thief. He knew nothing about what was going to happen, but he trusted Christ; and if I can not understand all about this crucifixion with Christ, and the death to sin, and the life to God, and the glory that comes into the heart, never mind, I trust my Lord's promise, I cast myself helpless into His arms, I maintain my position on the cross. Given up to Jesus, to die with Him, I can trust Him to carry me through.

Shall we not each one take the blessed opportunity of doing what Ruth did when she, in obedience to the advice of her mother, just cast herself at the feet of the great Boaz, the Redeemer, to be His? Shall we not come into personal contact with Jesus, and shall not each one of us just speak before the world these simple words: "Lord, here is this life; there is much in it still of self, and sinfulness, and self-will, but I come to Thee; I long to enter fully into Thy death; I long to know fully that I have been crucified with Thee; I

long to live Thy life every day." Then say: "Lord Jesus, I have seen Thy glory, what Thou didst for the penitent one at Thy side on the cross; I am trusting Thee, that Thou wilt do it for me. Lord, I cast myself into Thy arms."

Chapter X^(TOC)

Joy in the Holy Ghost

For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost—Romans 14:17

In this text we have the earthly revelation of the work of the Trinity. The Kingdom of God is righteousness; that represents the work of the Father. The foundations of His throne are justice and judgment. Then comes the work of the Son: He is our peace, our Shiloh, our rest. The Kingdom of God is peace; not only the peace of pardon for the past, but the peace of perfect assurance as to the future. Not only the work of atonement is finished, but the work of sanctification is finished in Christ, and I may receive and enjoy what is prepared for me. The new man has been created, and I may in Him live out my life; if a kingdom is established in righteousness, if the rule is perfect, there can be perfect rest. If there be peace, no war from without, and no civil dissension within, a nation can be happy and prosperous. And so there comes here, after righteousness and peace, the joy, the blessed happiness in which a man can live; "The Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." May we regard this joy of the Holy Ghost, not only as a beautiful thing to admire, not only as a thing to have beautiful thoughts about, but as a blessing that we are going to claim.

We often see a fruiterer's or confectioner's shop, with beautiful fruit or cake temptingly displayed in the window. There is a great pane of plate glass before it, and the hungry little boys stand there and look, and long, but they

cannot reach it. If you were to say to one, "Now, little boy, take that fruit," he would look at you in surprise. He has learned that there is something between. If he had never known of glass he might attempt it. The plate glass is sometimes so clear that even a grown man might for a moment be deceived and stretch out his hand. But he soon finds there is something invisible between him and the fruit. This represents exactly the life of many Christians; they see, but they cannot take. And what now is this invisible pane of plate glass, that hinders my taking the beautiful things I see? It is nothing but the self-life; I see divine things but cannot reach them, the self-life is the invisible plate glass. We are willing, we are working, we are striving, and yet we are holding back something; we are afraid to give up everything to God. We do not know what the consequences may be. We have not yet comprehended that God and Christ Jesus are worth everything. Whatever is told us of the blessed life of peace and joy, we say, "Praise God; God's Word is true; I believe the Word;" and yet, day by day, we stand back. When some one says, "Take it," we say, "I can't take it; there is something between." Would we were willing to give up the self-life; would we had the courage to give up today, and let the joy of the Holy Ghost be our religion. That is the religion God has prepared for us; that is the religion we can claim; not only righteousness, not only peace, but the joy of the Holy Ghost. That is the Kingdom of God.

What is this joy? First of all, it is the joy of the presence of Jesus. We are often inclined to speak most of two other things, the power for sanctification, and the power for service. But I find there is a thing more important than either of those two, and that is that the Holy Ghost came from Heaven to be the abiding presence of Christ in His disciples, in the Church, and in the heart of every believer. The Lord Jesus was going away, and His disciples were very sad; their hearts was sorrowful; but He said to them, "I will come back

again, and I will come to you. Your hearts shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you." What took place with them, may take place with us too. The Holy Spirit is given to make the presence of Jesus an abiding reality, a continual experience. And what was that joy that no man could ever touch? It was the joy of Pentecost. And what was Pentecost? The coming of the Lord Jesus in the Holy Ghost to dwell with His disciples. While Jesus was with His disciples on earth, He could not get into their hearts in the right way. They loved Him, but they could not take in His teaching, they could not partake of His disposition, and they could not receive His very spirit into their being. But when He had ascended to Heaven, He came back in the Spirit to dwell in their hearts. It is this alone that will help us to go, the minister to his congregation with its difficulties, the business man to his counter, the mother to her large family with its care, the worker to her Bible class. It is this only that will help us to feel, "I can conquer, I can live in the rest of God." Why? "Because I have the almighty Jesus with me every day." With God's people, there seems to be one hindrance, they do not know their Saviour. They do not realize that this blessed Christ is an ever present, all-pervading, in-dwelling Christ, who wants to take charge of their entire lives. They do not know, they do not believe that He is an Almighty Christ, and ready in the midst of any difficulties and any circumstances to be their keeper and their God. This is absolutely true. Many Christians are asked as to how one may have the joy unspeakable, the joy that nothing can take away, the joy of the friendship and nearness and love of Jesus filling his heart. We complain that the rush of competition is so terrible that we can not get time for private prayer. Brother, the Lord Jesus Christ, if He comes to you as a brother and a friend and an abiding guest, can give your heart the joy of the Holy Ghost, so that business will take its right place under your feet. Your heart is too holy to have it filled with business; let the business be in the head and under the feet, but let Christ

have the whole heart, and He will keep the whole life. Our glorious, exalted, almighty, ever present Christ! why is it that you and I can not trust Him fully, perfectly to do His work? Shall we not say before God that we do trust Him, that we will trust Christ to be to us every moment all that we can desire? On the Cross of Calvary Christ was all alone, and you believe He did a perfect and a blessed work; and Christ in Heaven is all alone, as high priest and intercessor, and you trust Him for His work there. But, praise God! it is equally true, Christ in the heart is able all alone to keep it all the days. May it please God to reveal to His children the nearness of Christ standing and knocking at the door of every heart, ready to come in and rest forever there and to lead the soul into His rest.

We all know what the power of joy is; we know there is nothing so attractive as joy, there is nothing can help a man to bear and endure so much as joy; we know that the Lord Jesus Himself for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross. One is not living aright if he is living a sighing, trembling, doubting life. Come to-day and believe the joy of the Holy Ghost is meant for you. Does not the Scripture say, "Whom not having seen we love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Do you not believe that this blessed, adorable, inconceivably beautiful Son of God, the delight of the Father—do you not believe that this Son of God could fill your heart with delight day and night, if He were always present? And do you not believe that He loves you more than a bridegroom loves his bride? Do you not believe that, having bought you with His blood, Jesus is longing for you? He needs you to satisfy His heart of love. Begin to believe with your whole heart, "The joy of the Holy Ghost is my portion," for the Holy Ghost secures to me without interruption the presence and the love of Jesus.

But secondly, there is the joy of deliverance from sin. The Holy Ghost comes to sanctify us. Christ is our sanctification, and the Holy Ghost comes to communicate Him to us, to work out all that is in Christ and to reproduce it in us. Let us remember that in the sight of God there is something more than work. There is Christlikeness—the likeness and the life of Christ in us. That is what God wants; that will fit us for work. God asks not that Christ should live in us as separate persons; temples full of filthy, impure, foul creatures, with Christ hidden away somewhere there—that is not the intention of God, but He wants Christ so formed in us that we are one with Christ, and that in our thinking, feeling and living, the image of His blessed Son is manifest before Him. The Holy Spirit is given to sanctify us. My brother, are you willing to be sanctified from every sin, be that sin great or small? I am not asking, do you feel that you have the power to conquer it? I am not even asking, do you feel the power to cast it out? It may be that you feel no power; that won't hinder if you are willing. I can not cast out sin, but I can get the Almighty Christ by the Holy Spirit to do it, and it is my work to say to Christ, "There is the sin, there is the evil thing, I lay it at Thy feet, I cast it there, I cast it into Thy very bosom. Lord, I am ready to cut off the right hand, anything, only deliver me from it." Then Christ will cast out the evil spirit and give deliverance. The Spirit of God is a holy spirit and His work is to make free from the power of sin and death. And if you want to live in the joy of the Holy Ghost, the question comes: "Are you willing to surrender everything that is sinful, even what appears good—but has the stain of sin on it?" You may be involved in relationships that make your life very difficult. A pastor with his people maybe brought into very difficult relationships; or a business man with his partner or those with whom he has to associate, may be in an exceedingly trying position. But is not the blessed Lamb of God worth it all? What is the Christ worth to you? The question was once asked the

disciples, "What think ye of Christ?" I ask, "What is Christ worth to you?" And I beseech you, whatever prospective difficulties there may be, and whatever perplexities surround you, take the whole world to-day and cast it at His feet. To have Him is worth any difficulty; to have Him will be the solution of every difficulty. There are not only such external, manifest difficulties and perplexities, there are a thousand little things that come in our life and that often disturb us, temptations to unloving feelings, and sharp words, and hasty judgments. Oh, come, and believe that the Holy Spirit, the sanctifier, can come in and rule, and give grace to pass through all without sinning, and you shall know what the joy of the Holy Ghost is. Our body, we read in 1st Corinthians, is the temple of the Holy Ghost. It is to be holy in things like eating and drinking. How often a Christian comes to the consciousness that he takes or seeks too much enjoyment in that eating, eating for pleasure, with no self-denial or self-sacrifice in his feeding the body! How often we tempt one another to eat, and how often the believer forgets that this body is the very secret temple of the Holy Ghost and that every mouthful we eat and drink must be for the glory of God in such a way as to be perfectly well pleasing to Him! Beloved, I bring you a message: There is access for you into the rest of God, and the Holy Spirit is given to bring you in, and the Holy Spirit will fill your heart with the unutterable joy of Christ's presence; and with the joy of deliverance from sin, of victory over sin; the unutterable joy of knowing that you are doing God's will and are pleasing in His sight; the unutterable joy of knowing that He is sanctifying and keeping the temple for Christ to dwell in. Believers, the joy of the Holy Ghost, the joy of that holiness of God, is His blessedness, His purity, His perfection, that nothing can mar or stain or disturb. The Holy Ghost waits to bring and to manifest it in our lives. He wants to come so into our hearts that we shall live, as Holy Ghost men, the sanctified life, with the sanctifying

power of Jesus running through our whole beings.

My third thought is: the joy of the Holy Ghost is the joy of the love of the saints. The Holy Ghost was not given to any man on the day of Pentecost separate from the others; He came and filled the whole company. We know how much division and separation and pride there had been among them, but on that day the Holy Ghost so filled their hearts that we find it was afterward said: "Behold how these men love one another." There was a love in the primitive church that the very heathen noticed, and could not understand. Why was that? The Holy Spirit is the bond of union between the Father and Son; and that bond is love. The Holy Spirit is just the love of God come to dwell in the heart. When He dwells with me and my brother we learn to love each other. Though I be unloving naturally, and though I have very little grace, if the heart of my brother is full of the Holy Spirit he loves me through it all. You know love is a wonderful thing. As long as a man tries to love it is not real love, but when real love comes, the more opposition it meets the more it triumphs, for the more it can exercise itself and perfect itself, the more it rejoices. Take a mother with a son dishonoring her. How her love follows him! When she sees that he has fallen deeper than ever before, how the dear mother heart only loves him the more intensely through all the wretchedness! Does not the Scripture say, "If He gave His life for us, we are bound to give our life for the brethren?" The Holy Spirit comes as a spirit of love, and if you want to know the joy of the Holy Ghost, and want Him to lead you into the rest of God and keep you there, beware above everything on earth or in hell of being unloving. One sharp word to your brother or sister brings a cloud upon you without your knowing it. People are so accustomed to talk just as they like about each other that they say sharp and unkind and unloving things, and when a cloud comes in consequence they cannot understand it. If there is one thing that grieves God, if there is one thing that

hinders the Spirit—the fruit of the Spirit is love—it is the want of lovingness. If you want to live in the joy of the Holy Ghost make your covenant with God. "But," you say, "there is a Christian man who makes me so impatient; he does trouble me and vex me so with his stupidity. And there are those worldly men; how they have tempted me in times past and done me harm! And there is that business man who is trying to ruin me." Take them all, and your own wife and children and every one around you and say, "I understand it, love is rest, and rest is love. God resteth in His love. Love is rest and rest is love, and where there is no love the rest must be disturbed." And let us say to-day, "I see what the joy is; it is the joy of always loving, it is the joy of losing my own life in love to others." In connection with humility, some one asks, "How about that text, 'In honor preferring one another?'" When a soul comes into perfect humility before God it becomes nothing, and God becomes all in all. I am nothing. There is no self to be affronted; I have said before God: "I am nothing; it is only Thy life and light that shines. The honor is Thine, and nothing may touch me but what is against the glory of my God."

Beloved, are you living in the joy of the Holy Ghost? Come and accept a blessing and give yourself up to live a life of humility in which you are nothing, and a life of love like Christ's in which you only live for your fellow-men, for the kingdom of God is the joy of the Holy Ghost.

My last thought is that the joy of the Holy Ghost is the joy of working for God. The joy of the presence of Jesus, the joy of deliverance from sin, the joy of love for the brethren, and then the joy of working for God. Some of us have at times felt what an incomprehensible thing it is that the everlasting God should work through us; and we have said, "Lord, what is this, that Thou the Almighty One dost work in me and through me, a vile worm by nature?" It is a mystery that passeth knowledge, and yet it is so true. The joy of the

Holy Ghost comes when a man gives himself up to the Christlike work of carrying the love of God to men. Let us seek the perishing, let us live and die for souls, let us live and die that our fellow-men may be reclaimed and brought back to their God. There is no joy like hearing the joy-song of a newborn soul. But yes, there is another joy that may be as deep. Even if God does not give me the blessing of hearing the newborn soul sing its song, I may have the joy, the sympathy with Jesus in His rejected life, and the assurance that the Father looks with good pleasure on me. When I think of the thousands of believers in the Christian world and then think of the heathen world, the cry comes up in my heart: "What are we doing?" Ah, we need to be crying to God day and night, "Lord God, wake us up. Lord God, let the Holy Spirit burn within us." Are we the true successors of Jesus Christ? Are we indeed the followers and successors of Christ who went all the way to Calvary to give His blood for men? Do let us remember the joy of the Holy Ghost is the joy of working for God in Christ. I believe that God has new ways and new leadings and new power for His people, if they will only wait on Him. But what most of us do is this: we thank God for all He has given, we look at all the ways of working we have, and we say that we will try to do our work better. But oh, if we had a sense of the need, if we had any sense, by the vision of the Holy Ghost, of the state of the millions around us, I am sure we would fall on our faces before God and say, "God help me to something new. Oh that every fiber of my being may be taken possession of for this great work with God!" The great need is that all Christians should consecrate themselves wholly to God for His work. May God help us to know what is the joy of the Holy Ghost.

Concluding, I ask again: "Do you believe that it is possible for the Lord Jesus, our Shiloh, of whom Jacob prophesied, our Joshua, our glorious King and High Priest—do you believe it is possible for Christ Jesus to bring you

to-day into the rest of God?" Remember that word in Hebrews, "Even as the Holy Ghost saith, to-day." To-day, summon up courage and take up your ministry, and take up your business, and take up your surroundings, and take up your natural temperament, and take up your home, and take up your life for the days to come upon earth, and say, "I do not understand it, I know not what will come, but one thing I know, I do absolutely give everything into the hands of the crucified Lamb of God; He shall have me in my entirety." And oh, remember, beloved, that Christ will be to you more than you can think or understand, more than you can ask or desire.

Come, let us cast ourselves into those blessed, loving arms, and let us believe even now that our Joshua leads us into the rest of God, the rest in which we are saved from self-care and self-seeking and self-trusting and self-loving, the rest in which we do not think of ourselves, but where He who is almighty and omnipresent is always going to be with us and is always going to work within us. And let us when we have done that, claim the promise, that as we have sought first the kingdom and God's righteousness, all things shall be added unto us. Beloved, the kingdom of God is within you, and it is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Come, let us claim it even now in simple, childlike, humble faith.

Chapter XI^(TOC)

Triumph of Faith

And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him—John 4:50

Let me quote from the Gospel according to St. John, the 4th chapter, beginning at the 46th verse: "So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come up out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." There you have the word "believe" the first time. "The nobleman saith unto Him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way." There you have that word the second time. "And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house." There you have the word "faith".

This story has often been used to illustrate the different steps of faith in the spiritual life. It was this use made of it in an address that brought the sainted Canon Battersby into the full enjoyment of rest. He had been a most godly man, but had lived the life of failure. He saw in the story what it was to rest

on the Word and trust the saving power of Jesus, and from that night he was a changed man. He went home to testify of it, and under God, he was allowed to originate the Keswick Convention.

Let me point out to you the three aspects of faith which we have here: first, faith seeking; then, faith finding; and then, faith enjoying. Or, still better: faith struggling; faith resting; faith triumphing. First of all, faith struggling. Here is a man, a heathen, a nobleman, who has heard about Christ. He has a dying son at Capernaum, and in his extremity leaves his home, and walks some six or seven hours away to Cana of Galilee. He has heard of the Prophet, possibly, as one who has made water wine; he has heard of His other miracles round Capernaum, and he has a certain trust that Jesus will be able to help him. He goes to Him, and his prayer is that the Lord will come down to Capernaum and heal his son. Christ said to him, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." He saw that the nobleman wanted Him to come and stand beside the child. This man had not the faith of the centurion—"Only speak a word." He had faith. It was faith that came from hearsay, and it was faith that did, to a certain extent, hope in Christ; but it was not the faith in Christ's power such as Christ desired. Still Christ accepted and met this faith. After the Lord had thus told him what He wished—a faith that could fully trust Him—the nobleman cried the second time, "Sir, come down ere my child die." Seeing his earnestness and his trust, Christ said, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." And then we read that the nobleman believed. He believed, and he went his way. He believed the word that Jesus had spoken. In that he rested and was content. And he went away without having any other pledge than the word of Jesus. As he was walking homeward, the servants met him, to tell him his son lived. He asked at what hour he began to amend. And when they told him, he knew it was at the very hour that Jesus had been speaking to him. He had at first a faith that was seeking, and

struggling, and searching for blessing; then he had a faith that accepted the blessing simply as it was contained in the word of Jesus. When Christ said, "Thy son liveth," he was content, and went home, and found the blessing—the son restored.

Then came the third step in his faith. He believed with his whole house. That is to say, he did not only believe that Christ could do just this one thing, the healing of his son; but he believed in Christ as his Lord. He gave himself up entirely to be a disciple of Jesus. And that not only alone, but with his whole house. Many Christians are like the nobleman. They have heard about a better life. They have met certain individuals by whose Christian lives they have been impressed, and consequently have felt that Christ can do wonderful things for a man. Many Christians say in their heart, "I am sure there is a better life for me to live; how I wish I could be brought to that blessed state!" But they have not much hope about it. They have read, and prayed, but they have found everything so difficult, If you ask them, "Do you believe Jesus can help you to live this higher life?" they say, "Yes; He is omnipotent." If you ask, "Do you believe Jesus wishes to do it?" they say, "Yes, I know He is loving." And if you say, "Do you believe that He will do it for you?" they at once say, "I know He is willing, but whether He will actually do it for me I do not know. I am not sure that I am prepared. I do not know if I am advanced enough. I do not know if I have enough grace for that." And so they are hungering, struggling, wrestling, and often remain unblest. This state of things sometimes goes on for years—they are expecting to see signs and wonders, and hoping that God, by a miracle, will put them all right. They are just like the Israelites; they limit the Holy One of Israel. Have you ever noticed that it is the very people whom God has blessed so wonderfully who do that? What did the Israelites say? "God hath provided water in the wilderness. But can He provide the table in the wilderness? We

do not think He can." And so we find believers who say, "Yes, God has done wonders. The whole of redemption is a wonder, and God has done wonders for some whom I know. But will God take one so feeble as I, and put me entirely right?" The struggling and wrestling and seeking are the beginnings of faith in you—a faith that desires and hopes. But it must go on further. And how can that faith advance? Look at the second step. There is the nobleman, and Christ speaks to him this wonderful word: "Go thy way; thy son liveth;" and the nobleman simply rests upon that word of the living Jesus. He rests on it, and without any proof of what he is to get, and without one man in the world to encourage him. He goes away home with the thought, "I have received the blessing I sought; I have got life from the dead for my son. The living Christ promised it me, and on that I rest." The struggling, seeking faith has become a resting faith. The man has entered into rest about his son.

And now, dear believers, this is the one thing God asks you to do: God has said that in Christ you have eternal life, the more abundant life; Christ has said to you, "I live, and ye shall live also." The Word says to us that Christ is our Peace, our Victory over every enemy, who leads us into the rest of God. These are the words of God, and His message has come to us that Christ can do for us what Moses could not have done. Moses had no Christ to live in him. But it is told you that you can have what Moses had not; you can have a living Christ within you. And are you going to believe that, apart from any experience, and apart from any consciousness of strength? If the peace of God is to rule in your heart, it is the God of peace Himself must be there to do it. The peace is inseparable from the God. The light of the sun—can I separate that from the sun? Utterly impossible. As long as I have the sun I have the light. If I lose the sun; I lose the light. Take care! Do not seek the peace of God or the peace of Christ apart from God and Christ. But how does Christ come to me? He comes to me in this precious Word; and just as He

said to the nobleman, "Go thy way home; thy son liveth," so Christ comes to me to-day, and He says, "Go thy way; thy Saviour liveth." "Lo, I am with you always." "I live, and ye shall live also." "I wait to take charge of your whole life. Will you have me do this? Trust to me all that is evil and feeble; your whole sinful and perverse nature—give it up to Me; that dying, sin-sick soul—give it up to Me, and I will take care of it." Will you not listen and hear Him speak to your soul? "Child, go forward into all the circumstances of life that have tempted you; into all the difficulties that threaten you." Your soul lives with the life of God; your soul lives in the power of God; your soul lives in Christ Jesus. Will you not, like the nobleman, take the simple step of faith, and believe the word Jesus hath spoken? Will you not say, "Lord Jesus, Thou hast spoken: I can rest on Thy Word. I have seen that Christ is willing to be more to me than I ever knew; I have seen that Christ is willing to be my life in the most actual and intense meaning of the words." All that we know about the Holy Ghost sums itself up in this one thing: The Holy Ghost comes to make Christ an actual, indwelling, always-abiding Saviour.

Lastly, comes the triumphant faith. The man went home holding fast the promise. He had only one promise, but he held it fast. When God gives me a promise, He is just as near me as when He fulfills it. That is a great comfort. When I have the promise I have also the pledge of the fulfillment. But the whole heart of God is in His promise, just as much as in the fulfillment of it, and sometimes God, the promiser, is more precious because I am compelled to cling more to Him, and to come closer, and to live by simple faith, and to adore His love. Do not think this is a hard life, to be living upon a promise. It means living upon the everlasting God. Who is going to say that is hard? It means living upon the crucified, the loving Christ. Be ashamed to say that is a difficult thing. It is a blessed thing.

The nobleman went home and found the child living. And what happened then? Two things. First: he gave up his whole life to be a believer in Jesus. If there had been a division among the people of Capernaum, and thousands of them had hated Christ, this man would still have stood on His side. He believed in the Lord. This is what must take place with us. Let us go forward with our trust in the living Christ, knowing that He will keep us. Then we will get grace to carry the life of Christ into our whole conduct, into all our walk and conversation. The faith that rests in Jesus, is the faith that trusts all to Him, with all we have. Do we not read that when God had finished His work, and rested, it was only to begin new work? Yes; the great work was to be carried on—watching over and ruling His world and His church. And is it not so with the Lord Jesus? When He had finished His work, He sat upon the throne to do His work of perfecting the body, through the Holy Spirit. And now, the Holy Spirit is carrying on that blessed work, teaching us to rest in Christ, and in the strength of that rest to go on, and to cover our whole life with the power, and the obedience, and the will, and the likeness of the Lord Jesus. The nobleman gave up his whole life to be a believer in Christ; and from that day it was a believer in Jesus who walked about the streets of Capernaum; not only a man who could say, "Once He helped me," but, "I believe in Him with my whole life." Let that be so with us everywhere; let Christ be the one object of our trust.

One thought more—he believed with his whole house. That was triumphant faith. He took up his position as a believer in Christ; and his wife, his children, his servants—he gathered them all together, and laid them at the feet of Christ. And if you want power in your own house, if you want power in your Bible-class, if you want power in your social circle, if you want power to influence the nation and if you want power to influence the Church of Christ, see where it begins. Come into contact with Jesus in this rest of

faith that accepts His life fully, that trusts Him fully, and the power will come by faith to overcome the world; by faith to bless others; by faith to live a life to the glory of God. Go thy way, thy soul liveth; for it is Jesus Christ who liveth within you. Go thy way; be not trembling and fearful, but rest in the word and the power of the Son of God. "Lo, I am with you always." Go thy way, with the heart open to welcome Him, and the heart believing He has come in. Surely we have not prayed in vain. Christ has listened to the yearnings of our hearts and has entered in. Let us go our way quietly, restfully, full of praise, and joy, and trust; ever hearing the words of our Master, "Go thy way, thy soul liveth;" and ever saying, "I have trusted Christ to reveal His abundant life in my soul; by His grace I will wait upon Him to fulfill His promise." Amen.

Chapter XII^(TOC)

The Source of Power In Prayer

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God—Romans 8:26-27

Here we have the teaching of God regarding the help the Holy Spirit will give us in prayer. The first half of this chapter is of much importance in connection with the teaching of God's word regarding the Spirit. In Romans 6 we read about being dead to sin and alive to God, and in Romans 7, about being dead to the law and married to Christ, and also about the impotency of the unregenerate man to do God's will. This is only a preparation to show us how helpless we are; and then in the eighth chapter comes the blessed work of the Spirit, expressed chiefly in the following words: "The Spirit hath made us free from the law of sin and death." The Spirit makes us free from the power of sin, and teaches and leads us so that we walk after the Spirit. In our inner disposition we may become spiritually minded, and enabled to mortify the deeds of the body. The Holy Spirit helps our infirmities. Prayer is the most necessary thing in the spiritual life. Yet we do not know how to pray nor what to pray for as we ought. The Spirit, Paul tells us, prays with groanings unutterable. And again he tells us that we ourselves often do not know what the Spirit is doing within us, but there is one, God, who searches the hearts. Words often reveal my thought and my wishes, but not what is

deep in my heart, and God comes and searches my heart, and deep down, hidden, what I can not see and what was to me an unutterable longing, God finds.

Powerful prayer! The confession of ignorance! Ah, friends, I am often afraid for myself as a minister that I pray too easily. I have been praying for these forty or fifty years and it becomes, as far as man is concerned, an easy thing to pray. We all have been taught to pray, and when we are called upon we can pray, but it gets far too easy, and I am afraid we think we are praying often when there is little real prayer. Now if we are to have the praying of the Holy Ghost in us one thing is needed; we must begin by feeling, "I can not pray." When a man breaks down and can not pray, and there is a fire burning in his heart, and a burden resting upon him, there is something drawing him to God. "I know not what to pray,"—oh, blessed ignorance! We are not ignorant enough. Abraham went out not knowing whither he went; in that was an element of ignorance and also an element of faith. Jesus said to His disciples when they came with their prayer for the throne, "You know not what you ask." Paul says, "No man knoweth the things of God but the Spirit of God." You say, "If I am not to pray the old prayers I learned from my mother or from my professor in college or from my experience yesterday and the day before, what am I to pray?" I answer, pray new prayers, rise higher into the riches of God. You must begin to feel your ignorance. You know what we think of a student who goes to college fancying he knows everything. He will not learn much. Sir Isaac Newton said, "I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me." When I see a man who can not pray glibly and smoothly and readily, I say that is a mark of the Holy Spirit. When

he begins in his prayers to say, "Oh, God, I want more, I want to be led deeper in. I have prayed for the heathen, but I want to feel the burden of the heathen in a new way," it is an indication of the presence of the Holy Spirit. I tell you, beloved, if you will take time and let God lay the burden of the heathen heavier upon you until you begin to feel, "I have never prayed," it will be the most blessed thing in your life. And so with regard to the church: We want to take up our position as members of the church of Christ in this land; and as belonging to that great body, to say, "Lord God, is there nothing that can be done to bless the church of this land and to revive it and bring it out of its worldliness and out of its feebleness?" We may confer together and conclude faithlessly, "No, we do not know what is to be done; we have no influence and power over all these ministers and their churches." But on the other hand, how blessed to come to God and say, "Lord, we know not what to ask. Thou knowest what to grant." The Holy Spirit could pray a hundred fold more in us if we were only conscious of our ignorance, because we would then feel our dependence upon Him. May God teach us our ignorance in prayer and our impotence, and may God bring us to say, "Lord, we can not pray; we do not know what prayer is." Of course some of us do know in a measure what prayer is, many of us, and we thank God for what he has been to us in answer to prayer, but oh, it is only a little beginning compared to what the Holy Spirit of God teaches.

There is the first thought: our ignorance. "We know not what we should pray for as we ought;" but "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." We often hear about the work of God the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost in working out and completing the great redemption, and we know that when God worked in the creation of the world, He was not weary, and yet we read that wonderful expression in the book of Exodus about the Sabbath day, "God rested and was refreshed." He

was refreshed, the Sabbath day was a refreshment to Him. God had to work and Christ had to work, and now the Holy Spirit works, and His secret working place, the place where all work must begin, is in the heart where He comes to teach a man how to pray. When a man begins to get an insight into that which is needed and that which is promised and that which God waits to perform, he feels it to be beyond his conception; then is the time he will be ready to say, "I can not limit the holy one of Israel by my thoughts; I give myself up in the faith that the Holy Spirit can be praying for me with groanings, with longings, that can not be expressed." Apply that to your prayers.

There are different phases of prayer. There is worship, when a man just bows down to adore the great God. We do not take time to worship. We need to worship in secret, just to get ourselves face to face with the everlasting God, that He may overshadow us and cover us and fill us with His love and His glory. It is the Holy Spirit that can work in us such a yearning that we will give up our pleasures and even part of our business, that we may the oftener meet our God.

The next phase of prayer is fellowship. In prayer there is not only the worship of a king, but fellowship as of a child with God. Christians take far too little time in fellowship. They think prayer is just coming with their petitions. If Christ is to make me what I am to be, I must tarry in fellowship with God. If God is to let his love enter in and shine and burn through my heart, I must take time to be with Him. The smith puts his rod of iron into the fire. If he leaves it there but a short time it does not become red hot. He may take it out to do something with it and after a time put it back again for a few minutes, but this time it does not become red hot. In the course of the day he may put the rod into the fire a great many times and leave it there two or three minutes

each time, but it never becomes thoroughly heated. If he takes time and leaves the rod ten or fifteen minutes in the fire the whole iron will become red hot with the heat that is in the fire. Song of Solomon if we are to get the fire of God's holiness and love and power we must take more time with God in fellowship. That was what gave men like Abraham and Moses their strength. They were men who were separated to a fellowship with God, and the living God made them strong. Oh, if we did but realize what prayer can do!

Another, and a most important phase of prayer is intercession. What a work God has set open for those who are His priests—intercessors! We find a wonderful expression in the prophecy of Isaiah; God says, "Let him take hold of me;" and again, "There is none that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee." In other passages God refers to the intercessors for Israel. Have you ever taken hold of God? Thank God, some of us have; but oh, friends, representatives of the church of Christ in the United States, if God were to show us how much there is of intense prayer for a revival through the church, how much of sincere confession of the sins of the church, how much of pleading with God and giving Him no rest till He make Jerusalem a glory in the earth, I think we should all be ashamed. We need to give up our hearts to the Holy Spirit, that He may pray for us and in us with groanings that can not be uttered.

What am I to do if I am to have this Holy Spirit within me? The Spirit wants time and room in the heart; He wants the whole being. He wants all my interest and influence going out for the honor and the glory of God; He wants me to give myself up. Beloved friend, you do not know what you could do if you would give yourself up to intercession. It is a work that a sick one lying on a bed year by year may do in power. It is a work that a poor one who has

hardly a penny to give to a missionary society can do day by day. It is a work that a young girl who is in her father's house and has to help in the housekeeping can do by the Holy Spirit. People often ask: What does the Church of our day do to reach the masses? They ask, though they ask it tremblingly, for they feel so helpless: What can we do against the materialism and infidelity in places like London and Berlin and New York and Paris? We have given it up as hopeless. Ah, if men and women could be called out to band themselves together to take hold upon God! I am not speaking of any prayer union or any prayer time stately set apart, but if the Spirit could find men and women who would give up their lives to cry to God, the Spirit would most surely come. It is not selfishness and it is not mere happiness that we seek when we talk about the peace and the rest and the blessing Christ can give. God wants us, Christ wants us, because He has to do a work; the work of Calvary is to be done in our hearts, we are to sacrifice our lives to pleading with God for men. Oh, let us yield ourselves day by day and ask God that it may please Him to let His Holy Spirit work in us.

Then comes the last thought, that God Himself comes to look with complacency upon the attitude of His child. Perhaps that poor man does not know that he is praying; perhaps he is ashamed of his prayers. So much the better. Perhaps he feels burdened and restless, but God hears, God discovers what is the mind of the Spirit, and will answer. Oh, think of this wonderful mystery, God the Father on the throne ready to grant unto us His blessings according to the riches of His glory; Christ the almighty high priest pleading day and night. His whole person is one intercession, and there goes up from Him without ceasing the pleading to the Father, "Bless thy church," and the answer comes from the Father to the Son, and from the Son down to the church, and if it does not reach us, it is because our hearts are closed. Let us open and enlarge our hearts and say to God, "Oh that I might be a priest, to

enter God's presence continually and to take hold of God and to bring down a blessing to my perishing fellowmen!" God longs to find the intercession of Jesus reflected in the hearts of His children, and where He finds it, it is a delight. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth the mind of the Spirit, because he prayeth for the saints, according to the will of God. Some one has spoken of that word, "for the saints," as meaning the spirit of praise in the believer for the saints throughout the world. God's word continually comes to us to pray for all not to be content with ourselves. Think upon the hundreds of church members in this land, multitudes unconverted, multitudes just converted, but yet worldly and careless. Think of the thousands of nominal Christians—Christians in name, but robbing God! and can we be happy? If we bear the burden of souls, can we have this peace and joy? God gives you peace and joy with no other object than that you should be strong to bear the burden of souls in the joy of Christ's salvation.

We do not wish to say, "I am trying to be as holy as I can; what have I to do with those worldly people about me?" If there is a terrible disease in my hand, my body can not say, "I have nothing to do with it." When the people had sinned Ezra rent his garments and bowed in the dust and made confession. He repented on the part of the people. And Nehemiah, when the nation sinned, made confession, and cast himself before God, deploring their disobedience to the God of their fathers. Daniel did the very same. And think you that we as believers have not a great work to do? Suppose we were each, persons without a single sin; just suppose it; could we then make confession? Look at Christ, without sin! He went down into the waters of baptism with sinners; He made Himself one with them. God has spoken to us to ask us if we realize what we are. He now asks us whether we belong to the church of this land, whether we have borne the burden of sin around us. Let us go to God and may He by the Holy Spirit fill our hearts with unutterable sorrow at

the state of the church, and may God give us grace to mourn before Him. And when we begin to confess the sins of the church, we will begin to feel our own sins as never before. In five of the epistles to the seven churches in Asia the keynote was "Repent;" there was to be no idea of overcoming and getting a blessing unless they repented. Let us on behalf of the church of Christ repent, and God will give us courage to feel that He will revive His work.

Chapter XIII^(TOC)

That God May Be All In All

"Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith, All things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him, that God may be all in all."—1 Corinthians 15:24-28

This will be the grand conclusion of the great drama of the world's history, and of Christ's redemption. There will come a day—the glory is such we can form no conception of it, the mystery is so deep we can not realize it, but there is a day coming, when the Son shall deliver up the Kingdom that the Father gave Him, and that He won with His blood, and that He hath established and perfected from the throne of His glory. "He shall deliver up the Kingdom unto the Father." The Son Himself shall be subject also unto the Father, "that God may be all in all." I cannot understand it—the ever blessed Son equal with God, from eternity, and through eternity; the ever blessed Son on the throne shall be subject unto the Father; and in some way utterly beyond our comprehension, it shall then be made manifest, as never before, that God is all in all. It is this that Christ has been working for; it is this that He is working for to-day in us; it is this that He thought it worth while to give His blood for; it is this that His heart is longing for in each of us; this is the very essence and glory of Christianity, "that God may be all in all." And now,

if this is what fills the heart of Christ; if this expresses the one end of the work of Christ, then, if I want to have the spirit of Christ in me, the motto of my life must be: Everything made subject, and swallowed up in Him, "that God may be all in all." What a triumph it would be if the Church were fighting really with that banner floating over her! What a life ours could be if that were really our banner! To serve God fully, wholly, only, to have Him all in all! How it would ennoble, and enlarge, and stimulate our whole being! I am working, I am fighting, "that God may be all in all;" that the day of glory may be hastened. I am praying, and the Holy Spirit makes His wrestling in me with unutterable longing, "that God may be all in all." Would that we Christians realized in connection with what a grand cause we are working and praying; that we had some conception of what a Kingdom we are partakers of, and what a manifestation of God we are preparing for. To illustrate what a grand thing it is to belong to the Kingdom of God, and to the glorious Church of Christ on earth, John McNeill tells how when he was a boy twelve years of age, working on a railway line and earning the grand wages of six shillings a week, he used to go home to his mother and sisters, who thought no end of their little Johnnie, and delight them by telling of the position he had. He would say with great pride, "Oh, our company—it has so many thousands of pounds passing through its hands every year; it carries so many hundreds of thousands of passengers every year; and it has so many miles of railway, and so many engines and carriages; and so many thousands in its employ!" And the mother and the sisters had great pride in him, because he was a partner in such an important business. Christians, if we would only rouse ourselves to believe that we belong to the Kingdom that Christ is preparing to deliver up to the Father, that God may be all in all, how the glory would fill our hearts, and expel everything mean, and low, and earthly! How we should be borne along in this blessed faith! I am living for this: that Christ

may have the Kingdom to deliver to the Father. I am living for this, and I will one day see Him made subject to the Father, and then God all in all. I am living for Him, and I shall be there not only as a witness, but I will have a part in it all. The Kingdom delivered up, the Son made subject, and God all in all! I shall have a part in it, and in adoring worship share the glory and the blessedness.

Let us take this home to our hearts, that it may rule in our lives—this one thought, this one faith, this one aim, this one joy: Christ lived, and died, and reigns; I live and die and in His power I reign; only for this one thing, "that God may be all in all." Let it possess our whole heart, and life. How can we do this? It is a serious question, to which I wish to give you a few simple answers. And I say, first of all: Allow God to take His place in your heart and life. Luther often said to people, when they came troubling him about difficulties, "Do let God be God." Oh, give God His place. And what is that place? "That God may be all in all." Let God be all in all every day, from morning to evening. God to rule and I to obey. Ah, the blessedness of saying, "God and I!" What a privilege that I have such a partner! God first, and then I! And yet there might be secret self-exaltation in associating God with myself. And I find in the Bible a more precious word still. It is, "God and not I." It is not, "God first, and I second;" God is all, and I am nothing. Paul said, "I labored more abundantly than they all; though I be nothing." Let us try to give God His place—begin in our closet, in our worship, in our prayer. The power of prayer depends almost entirely upon our apprehension of who it is with whom I speak. It is of the greatest consequence, if we have but half an hour in which to pray, that we take time to get a sight of this great God, in His power, in His love, in His nearness, just waiting to bless us. This is of far more consequence than spending the whole half hour in pouring out numberless petitions, and pleading numberless promises. The great thing is to

feel that we are putting our supplications into the bosom of omnipotent Love. Before and above everything, let us take time ere we pray to realize the glory and presence of God. Give God His place in every prayer. I say, allow God to have His place. I can not give God His place upon the throne—in a certain sense I can, and I ought to try. The great thing, however, is for me to feel that I can not realize what that place is, but God will increasingly reveal Himself and the place He holds. How do I know anything about the sun? Because the sun shines, and in its light I see what the sun is. The sun is its own evidence. No philosopher could have told me about the sun if the sun did not shine. No power of meditation and thought can grasp the presence of God. Be quiet, and trusting, and resting, and the everlasting God will shine into your heart, and will reveal Himself. And then, just as naturally as I enjoy the light of the sun, and as naturally as I look upon the pages of a book knowing that I can see the letters because the light shines; just as naturally will God reveal Himself to the waiting soul, and make His presence a reality. God will take His place as God in the presence of His child, so that absolutely and actually the chief thing in the child's heart shall be: "God is here, God makes Himself known." Beloved, is not this what you long for—that God shall take a place that He has never had; and that God shall come to you in a nearness that you have never felt yet; and, above all, that God shall come to you in an abiding and unbroken fellowship? God is able to take His place before you all the day. I repeat what I have referred to before, because God has taught me a lesson by it: As God made the light of the sun so soft, and sweet, and bright, and universal, and unceasing, that it never costs me a minute's trouble to enjoy it; even so, and far more real than the light shining upon me, the nearness of my God can be revealed to me as my abiding portion. Let us all pray "that God may be all in all," in our everyday life.

"That God may be all in all," I must not only allow Him to take His place, but

secondly, I must accept His will in everything. I must accept His will in every providence. Whether it be a Judas that betrays, or whether it be a Pilate in his indifference, who gives me up to the enemy; whatever the trouble, or temptation, or vexation, or worry, that comes, I must see God in it, and accept it as God's will to me. Trouble of any sort that comes to me is God's will for me. It is not God's will that men should do the wrong, but it is God's will that they should be in circumstances of trial. There is never a trial that comes to us but it is God's will for us, and if we learn to see God in it, then we bid it welcome.

Suppose away in South Africa there is a woman whose husband has gone on a long journey into the interior. He is to be away for months from all posts. The wife is anxious to receive news. In weeks she has had no letter or tidings from him. One day, as she stands in her door, there comes a great, savage Kafir. He is frightful in appearance, and carries his spears and shield. The woman is alarmed and rushes into the house and closes the door. He comes and knocks at the door, and she is in terror. She sends her servant, who comes back and says, "The man says he must see you." She goes, all affrighted. He takes out an old newspaper. He has come a month's journey on foot from her husband, and inside the dirty newspaper is a letter from her husband, telling her of his welfare. How that wife delights in that letter! She forgets the face that has terrified her. And now as weeks are passing away again, how she begins to long for that ugly Kafir messenger! After long waiting he comes again, and this time she rushes out to meet him because he is the messenger that comes from her beloved husband, and she knows that with all his repelling exterior, he is the bearer of a message of love. Beloved, have you learned to look at tribulation, and vexation, and disappointment, as the dark, savage-looking messenger with a spear in his hand, that comes straight from Jesus? Have you learned to say, "There is never a trouble, and never a hurt by

which my heart is touched or even pierced, but it comes from Jesus, and brings a message of love?" Will you not learn to say from to-day, "Welcome every trial, for it comes from God?" If you want God to be all in all, you must see and meet God in every providence. Oh, learn to accept God's will in everything! Come learn to say of every trial, without exception, "It is my Father who sent it. I accept it as His messenger," and nothing in earth or hell can separate you from God.

If God is to be all in all in your heart and life, I say not only, Allow Him to take His place, and accept all His will, but, thirdly, Trust in His power. Dear friends, it is "God who worketh to will and to do according to His good pleasure." It is "the God of peace," according to another passage, "who perfects you in every good thing to do His will, working in you what is well-pleasing in His sight." You complain of weakness, of feebleness, of emptiness. Never mind; that is what you are made for—to be an emptied vessel, in which God can put His fullness and His strength. Do learn the lesson. I know it is not easy. Long after Paul had been an apostle, the Lord Jesus had to come in a very special way to teach him to say, "I do gladly glory in my infirmities." Paul was in danger of being exalted, owing to the revelations from Heaven, and Jesus sent him a thorn in the flesh—yes, Jesus sent it—a messenger of Satan—to buffet him. Paul prayed, and struggled, and wanted to get rid of it. And Jesus came to him, and said, "It is my doing that you may not be free from that. You need it. I will bless you wonderfully in it." Paul's life was changed from that moment in this one respect, and he said, "I never knew it so before, from henceforth I glory in my infirmities; for when I am weak, then am I strong." Do you indeed desire God to be all in all? Learn to glory in your weakness. Take time to say every day as you bow before God, "The almighty power of God that works in the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the flowers, is working in me. It is as sure as that I

live. The almighty power of God is working in me. I only need to get down, and be quiet; I need to be more submissive, and surrendered to His will; I need to be more trustful, and to allow God to do with me what He will." Give God His way with you, and let God work, and He will work mightily. The deepest quietness has often been proved to be the inspiration for the highest action. It has been seen in the experience of many of God's saints, and it is just the experience we need—that in the quietness of surrender and faith, God's working has been made manifest.

Fourthly: If God is to be all in all, sacrifice everything for His kingdom and glory. "That God may be all in all." This is such a noble, glorious, holy aim that Christ said, "For this I will give my life. For this I will give my all, even to the death of the cross. For this I will give myself." If it was worth that to Christ, is it worth less to you? If one had asked Jesus of Nazareth, "What is it Thou hast a body for; what is to Thee the highest use of the body?" He would have said, "The use and the glory of my body is that I can give it a sacrifice to God. That is every thing." What is the use of having a mind; and what is the use of having money; and what is the use of having children? That I can give them to God; for God must be all in all in everything. I pray God that He may give us such a sight of His kingdom, and His glory, that everything else may disappear. Then, if you had ten thousand lives, you would say, "This is the beauty and the worth of life, 'that God may be all in all' to me, and that I may prove to men that God is more than everything, that life is only worth living as it is given to God to fill." Do let us sacrifice everything for His kingdom and glory. Begin to live day by day with the prayer, "My God, I am given up to Thee. Be Thou my all in all." You say, "Am I able to realize that?" Yes, in this way: Let the Holy Spirit dwell in you; let the Holy Spirit burn in you as a fire, and burn in you with unutterable groanings, crying unto God, Himself to reveal His presence and His will in you. In the eighth of Romans, Paul spoke

about the groanings of the whole creation. And what is the whole creation groaning for? For the redemption, the glorious liberty of the children of God. And I am persuaded that was what Paul meant when he spoke of the groanings of the Holy Spirit—the unutterable groanings for the coming time of glory when God should be all in all. Christians, sacrifice your time; sacrifice your interests; sacrifice your heart's best powers in praying, and desiring, and crying that "God may be all in all."

And lastly: if God is to be all in all, wait continually on Him all the day. My first point had reference to giving God His place; but I want to bring this out more pointedly in conclusion. Wait continually on God all the day. If you are to do that, you must live always in His presence. That is what we have been redeemed for. Do we not read in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Let us draw near within the veil, through the blood, where the high priest is?" The holy place in which we are to live in the heavens is the immediate presence of God. The abiding presence of God is certainly the heritage of every child of God, as that the sun shines. The Father never hides His face from His child. Sin hides it, and unbelief hides it, but the Father lets His love shine all the day on the face of His children. The sun is shining day and night. Your sun shall never go down. Begin to seek for this. Come and live in the presence of God. There is indeed an abiding place in His presence, in the secret of His pavilion, of which some one has sung very beautifully:

With me, wheresoe'er I wander,
That great Presence goes;
That unutterable gladness,
Undisturbed repose.

Everywhere, the blessed stillness
Of that Holy Place;
Stillness of the love that worships,

Dumb before His face.

This is the portion of those to whom the prayer is granted—"One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after; that I may dwell all my days in the house of the Lord; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple." "In the secret of His pavilion He hideth me." God Himself will take you up, and will keep you there, so that all your work shall be done in God. Beloved, wait continually upon God. You can not do this unless you are in His presence. You must live in His presence. Then the blessed habit of waiting upon God will be learned. The real difficulty of getting to the point of real waiting upon God, is because most Christians have not sought to realize the nearness of God, and to give God the first place. But let us strive after this, let us trust God to give it to us by His grace, let us wait on God all the day. "My eyes," says one, "are ever towards Thee." Wait upon God for guidance, and God, if you wait much upon Him, will lead you up into new power for His service, into new gladness in His fellowship. He will lead you out into a larger trust in Him; He will prepare you to expect new things from Him. Beloved, there is no knowing what God will do for a man who is utterly given up to Him. Praise His name! Let each one of us say, "May my life be to live and die, to labor and to pray continually for this one thing: that in me, and around me, and in the church; that throughout the world 'God may be all in all.'" A little seed is the beginning of a great tree. A mustard seed becomes a tree in which the birds of the air can nestle. That great day of which the text speaks, when Christ Himself shall be subject to the Father, and deliver up the Kingdom to the Father, and God shall be all in all—that is the great tree of the Kingdom of God reaching its perfect consummation and glory. Oh, let us take the seed of that glory into our hearts, and let us bow in lowly surrender and submission, and say, "Amen, Lord; this be my one thought. This be my life—to speak and to work, to pray and to exist only that others may be

brought to know Him too. This be my life—to yield myself to the unutterable yearnings of the Holy Spirit, that I may not rest, but ever keep my eye on that day—the day of glory, when in very deed God shall be all in all."

God help every one of us. God help us all to yield ourselves to Him, and to Christ, and to make it our every-day life; for His name's sake. Amen.

LIKE CHRIST

BY

ANDREW MURRAY

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Preface^(TOC)

In sending forth this little book on the Image of our blessed Lord, and the likeness to Him to which we are called, I have only two remarks by way of preface.

The one is that no one can be more conscious than myself of the difficulty of the task I have undertaken, and its very defective execution. There were two things I had to do. The one was to draw such a portrait of the Son of God, as "in all things made like unto His brethren," as to show how, in the reality of His human life, we have indeed an exact Pattern of what the Father wants us to be. What was wanted was such a portrait as should make likeness to Him infinitely and mightily attractive, should rouse desire, awaken love, inspire hope, and strengthen faith in all who are seeking to imitate Jesus Christ. And then I had to sketch another portrait—that of the believer as he really, with some degree of spiritual exactness, reflects this Image, and amid the trials and duties of daily life proves that likeness to Christ is no mere ideal, but through the power of the Holy Ghost a most blessed reality.

How often and how deeply I have felt, after having sought to delineate some one trait of the blessed Life, how utterly insufficient human thoughts are to grasp, or human words to express, that spiritual beauty of which one at best only has seen faint glimpses! And how often our very thoughts deceive us, as they give us some human conception in the mind of what the Word reveals, while we lack that true vision of the spiritual glory of Him who is the brightness of the Father's glory!

The second remark I wish to make is a suggestion as to what I think is needed

really to behold the glory of the blessed Image into which we are to be changed. I was very much struck some time ago, in an infant school examination, with the practice a little class in object lessons was put through. A picture was shown them, which they were told to look at carefully. They then had to shut their eyes, and take time to think and remember everything they had seen. The picture was now removed, and the little ones had to tell all they could. Again the picture was shown, and they had to try and notice what they had not observed before; again to shut their eyes and think, and again to tell what more they had noticed. And so once more, until every line of the picture had been taken in. As I looked at the keen interest with which the little eyes now gazed on the picture, and then were pressed so tightly shut as they tried to realize, and take in, and keep what they had been looking at, I felt that if our Bible reading were more of such an object-lesson, the unseen spiritual realities pictured to us in the Word would take much deeper hold of our inner life. We are too easily content with the thoughts suggested by the words of the Bible, though these are but forms of truth, without giving time for the substantial spiritual reality, which the Word as the truth of God contains, to get lodged and rooted in the heart. Let us, in meditating on the Image of God in Christ, to which we are to be conformed, remember this. When some special trait has occupied our thoughts, let us shut our eyes, and open our hearts; let us think, and pray, and believe in the working of the Holy Spirit, until we really see the blessed Master in that special light in which the Word has been setting Him before us and can carry away for that day the deep and abiding impression of that heavenly beauty in Him which we know is to be reproduced in us. Let us gaze, and gaze again, let us worship and adore; the more we see Him as He is, the liker Him we must become. To study the image of God in the man Christ Jesus, to yield and set open our inmost being for that image to take possession and live in us, and then to go

forth and let the heavenly likeness reflect itself and shine out in our life among our fellow-men—this is what we have been redeemed for, let this be what we live for.

And now I entrust the little book to the gracious care of the blessed Lord of whose glory it seeks to tell May He give us to see that there is no beauty or blessedness like that of a Christ-like life. May He teach us to believe that in union with Him the Christ-like life is indeed for us. And as each day we listen to what His Word tells us of His image, may each one of us have grace to say, "O my Father! even as Thy beloved Son lived in Thee, with Thee, for Thee on earth, even so would I also live."

A. M.

P.S —As the tone of the meditations is mostly personal, I have, at the close of the volume, added some more general thoughts. "On Preaching Christ as our Example."

Chapter 1^(TOC)

Because we Abide in Him

"He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked."—1 John 2:6

Abiding in Christ and walking like Christ: these are the two blessings of the new life which are here set before us in their essential unity. The fruit of a life ***in Christ*** is a life ***like Christ***.

To the first of these expressions, ***abiding in Christ***, we are no strangers. The wondrous parable of the Vine and the branches, with the accompanying command, "Abide in me, and I in you," has often been to us a source of rich instruction and comfort. And though we feel as if we had but very imperfectly learned the lesson of abiding in Him, yet we have tasted something of the joy that comes when the soul can say: Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I do abide in Thee. And He knows too how often the fervent prayer still arises: Blessed Lord, do grant me the complete unbroken abiding.

The second expression, ***walking like Christ***, is not less significant than the first. It is the promise of the wonderful power which the abiding in Him will exert. As the fruit of our surrender to live wholly in Him, His life works so mightily in us, that our walk, the outward expression of the inner life, becomes like His. The two are inseparably connected. The abiding in always precedes the walking like Him. And yet the aim to walk like Him must

equally precede any large measure of abiding. Only then is the need for a close union fully realized, or is the Heavenly Giver free to bestow the fulness of His grace, because He sees that the soul is prepared to use it according to His design. When the Saviour said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love," He meant just this: the surrender to walk like me is the path to the full abiding in me. Many a one will discover that just here is the secret of his failure in abiding in Christ; he did not seek it with the view of walking like Christ. The words of St. John invite us to look at the two truths in their vital connection and dependence on each other.

The first lesson they teach is: He that seeks; to abide in Christ must **walk even as He walked**. We all know that it is a matter of course that a branch bears fruit of the same sort as the vine to which it belongs. The life of the vine and the branch is so completely identical, that the manifestation of that life must be identical too. When the Lord Jesus redeemed us with His blood, and presented us to the Father in His righteousness, He did not leave us in our old nature to serve God as best we could. No; in Him dwelt the eternal life, the holy divine life of heaven, and every one who is in Him receives from Him that same eternal life in its holy heavenly power. Hence nothing can be more natural than the claim that he that abides in Him, continually receiving life from Him, must **also so walk even as He walked**.

This mighty life of God in the soul does not, however, work as a blind force, compelling us ignorantly or involuntarily to act like Christ. On the contrary, the walking like Him must come as the result of a deliberate choice, sought in strong desire, accepted of a living will. With this view, the Father in heaven showed us in Jesus' earthly life what the life of heaven would be when it came down into the conditions and circumstances of our human life. And with the same object the Lord Jesus, when we receive the new life from Him,

and when He calls us to abide in Him, that we may receive that life more abundantly, ever points us to His own life on earth, and tells us that it is to walk even as He walked that the new life has been bestowed. "Even as I, so ye also:" that word of the Master takes His whole earthly life, and very simply makes it the rule and guide of all our conduct. If we abide in Jesus, we may not act otherwise than He did. "Like Christ" gives in one short all-inclusive word the blessed law of the Christian life. He is to think, to speak, to act as Jesus did; as Jesus was, *even so* is he to be.

The second lesson is the complement of the first: He that seeks to walk like Christ, must *abide in Him*.

There is a twofold need of this lesson. With some there is the earnest desire and effort to follow Christ's example, without any sense of the impossibility of doing so, except by deep, real abiding in Him. They fail because they seek to obey the high command to live like Christ, without the only power that can do so—the living in Christ. With others there is the opposite error; they know their own weakness, and count the walking like Christ an impossibility. As much as those who seek to do it and who fail, do those who do not seek because they expect to fail, need the lesson we are enforcing. To walk like Christ one must abide in Him; he that abides in Him has the power to walk like Him; not indeed in himself or his own efforts, but in Jesus, who perfects His strength in our weakness. It is just when I feel my utter impotence most deeply, and fully accept Jesus in His wondrous union to myself as my life, that His power works in me, and I am able to lead a life completely beyond what my power could obtain. I begin to see that abiding in Him is not a matter of moments or special seasons, but the deep life process in which, by His keeping grace, I continue without a moment's intermission, and from which I act out all my Christian life. And I feel emboldened really to take

Him in everything as my example, because I am sure that the hidden inner union and likeness must work itself out into a visible likeness in walk and conduct.

Dear reader! if God give us grace, in the course of our meditations, truly to enter into the meaning of these His words, and what they teach of a life in very deed like Christ's, we shall more than once come into the presence of heights and depths that will make us cry out, How can these things be? If the Holy Spirit reveal to us the heavenly perfection of the humanity of our Lord as the image of the unseen God, and speaks to us, " **so, even so** ought ye also to walk," the first effect will be that we shall begin to feel at what a distance we are from Him. We shall be ready to give up hope, and to say with so many, It avails not to attempt it: I never can walk like Jesus. At such moments we shall find our strength in the message, **He that abideth** in Him, he must, he can, also so walk even as He walked. The word of the Master will come with new meaning as the assurance of strength sufficient: He that abideth in me beareth much fruit.

Therefore, brother, abide in Him! Every believer is in Christ; but not every one abides in Him, in the consciously joyful and trustful surrender of the whole being, to His influence. You know what abiding in Him is. It is to consent with our whole soul to His being our life, to reckon upon Him to inspire us in all that goes to make up life, and then to give up everything most absolutely for Him to rule and work in us. It is the rest of the full assurance that He does, each moment, work in us what we are to be, and so Himself enables us to maintain that perfect surrender, in which He is free to do all His will. Let all who do indeed long to walk like Christ take courage at the thought of what He is and will prove Himself to be if they trust Him. He is the **True Vine**; no vine ever did so fully for its branches what He will do for

us. We have only to consent to be branches. Honour Him by a joyful trust that He is, beyond all conception, the **True Vine**, holding you by His almighty strength, supplying you from His infinite fulness. And as your faith thus looks to Him, instead of sighing and failure, the voice of praise will be heard repeating the language of faith: Thanks be to God! he that abideth in Him does walk even as He walked. Thanks be to God! I abide in Him, and I walk as He walked. Yes, thanks be to God! in the blessed life of God's redeemed these two are inseparably one: abiding in Christ and walking like Christ.

Blessed Saviour! Thou knowest how often I have said to Thee, Lord, I do abide in Thee! And yet I sometimes feel that the full joy and power of life in Thee is wanting. Thy word this day has reminded me of what may be the reason of failure. I sought to abide in Thee more for my own comfort and growth than Thy glory. I did not apprehend fully how the hidden union with Thee had for its object perfect conformity to Thee, and how only he who wholly yields himself to serve and obey the Father as completely as Thou didst, can fully receive all that the heavenly love can do for him. I now see something of it: the entire surrender to live and work like Thee must precede the full experience of the wondrous power of Thy life.

Lord, I thank Thee for the discovery. With my whole heart I would accept Thy calling, and yield myself in everything to walk even as Thou didst walk. To be Thy faithful follower in all Thou wert and didst on earth, be the one desire of my heart.

Blessed Lord! he that truly yields himself to walk as Thou didst walk, will receive grace wholly to abide in Thee. O my Lord! here I am. **To walk like Christ!** for this I do indeed consecrate myself to Thee. **To abide in Christ!** for this I trust in Thee with full assurance of faith. Perfect in me Thine own

work.

And let Thy Holy Spirit help me, O my Lord each time I meditate on what it is to walk like Thee, to hold fast the blessed truth: as one who abides in **Christ**, I have the strength to walk like **Christ**. Amen.

Chapter 2^(TOC)

He Himself Calls us to it

"I have given you an example, that ye also should do even as I have done to you."—John 13:15

It is Jesus Christ, the beloved Redeemer of our souls, who speaks thus. He had just, humbling Himself to do the work of the slave washed His disciples' feet. In doing so His love had rendered to the body the service of which it stood in need at the supper table. At the same time He had shown, in a striking symbol, what He had done for their souls in cleansing them from sin. In this twofold work of love He had thus set before them, just before parting, in one significant act, the whole work of His life as a ministry of blessing to body and to soul. And as He sits down He says: "***I have given you an example, that YE ALSO should do, EVEN AS I have done to you.***" All that they had seen in Him, and experienced from Him, is thus made the rule of their life: "EVEN As I have done, do YE ALSO."

The word of the blessed Saviour is for us too. To each one who knows that the Lord has washed away his sin the command comes with all the touching force of one of the last words of Him who is going out to die for us: "EVEN AS I have done to you, SO DO YE ALSO." Jesus Christ does indeed ask every one of us in everything to act just as we have seen Him do. What He has done to ourselves, and still does each day, we are to do over again to others. In His condescending, pardoning, saving love, He is our example; each of us is to be the copy and image of the Master.

The thought comes at once: Alas! how little have I lived thus; how little have I even known that I was expected thus to live! And yet, He is my lord; He loves me, and I love Him; I dare not entertain the thought of living otherwise than He would have me. What can I do but open my heart to His word, and fix my gaze on His example, until it exercises its divine power upon me, and draws me with irresistible force to cry: Lord, even as Thou hast done, so will I do also.

The power of an example depends chiefly on two things. The one is the attractiveness of what it gives us to see, the other the personal relation and influence of him in whom it is seen. In both aspects, what power there is in our Lord's example!

Or, is there really anything very attractive in our Lord's example? I ask it in all earnest, because, to judge by the conduct of many of His disciples, it would really seem as if it were not so. O that the Spirit of God would open our eyes to see the heavenly beauty of the likeness of the only-begotten Son!

We know who the Lord Jesus is. He is the Son of the all-glorious God, one with the Father in nature and glory and perfection. When He had been on earth it could be said of Him, "We show you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." In Him we see God. In Him we see how God would act were He here in our place on earth. In Him all that is beautiful and lovely and perfect in the heavenly world is revealed to us in the form of an earthly life. If we want to see what is really counted noble and glorious in the heavenly world, if we would see what is really Divine, we have only to look at Jesus; in all He does the glory of God is shown forth.

But oh, the blindness of God's children: this heavenly beauty has to many of them no attraction; there is no form or comeliness that they should desire it.

The manners and the way of living, in the court of an earthly king exercise influence throughout the empire. The example it gives is imitated by all who belong to the nobility or the higher classes. But the example of the King of heaven, who came and dwelt in the flesh, that we might see how we might here on earth live a God-like life, alas! with how few of His followers does it really find imitation. When we look upon Jesus, His obedience to the will of the Father, His humiliation to be a servant of the most unworthy, His love as manifested in the entire giving up and sacrifice of Himself, we see the most wondrous and glorious thing heaven has to show; in heaven itself we shall see nothing greater or brighter. Surely such an example, given of God on very purpose to make the imitation attractive and possible, ought to win us. Is it not enough to stir all that is within us with a holy jealousy and with joy unutterable as we hear the message, "I have given you an example, that even as I have done, ye should also do"?

This is not all. The power of an example consists not only in its own intrinsic excellence, but also in the personal relation to him who gives it. Jesus had not washed the feet of others in presence of His disciples; it was when He had washed *their feet* that He said: "Even as I have done *to you*, ye should also do." It is the consciousness of a personal relationship to Christ that enforces the command: Do as I have done. It is the experience of what Jesus has done to me that is the strength in which I can go and do the same to others. He does not ask that I shall do more than has been done to me. But not less either: *EVEN AS I have done to you*. He does not ask that I shall humble myself as servant deeper than He has done. It would not have been strange if He had asked this of such a worm. But this is not His wish: He only demands that I shall just do and be what He, the King, has done and been. He humbled Himself as low as humiliation could go, to love and to bless me. He counted this *His highest honour and blessedness*. And now He invites me to partake

of the same honour and blessedness, in loving and serving as He did. Truly, if I indeed know the love that rests on me, and the humiliation through which alone that love could reach me, and the power of the cleansing which has washed me, nothing can keep me back from saying: "Yes, blessed Lord, even as Thou hast done to me, I will also do." The heavenly loveliness of the great Example, and the Divine lovingness of the great Exemplar, combine to make the example above everything attractive.

Only there is one thing I must not forget. It is not the remembrance of what Jesus has once done to me, but the living experience of what He is now to me, that will give me the power to act like Him. His love must be a present reality, the inflowing of a life and a power in which I can love like Him. It is only as by the Holy Spirit I realize WHAT Jesus is doing for me, and HOW He does it, and that it is HE who does it, that it is possible for me to do to others what He is doing to me.

"EVEN AS I have done to you, do YE ALSO!" What a precious word! What a glorious prospect! Jesus is going to show forth in me the Divine power of His love, that I may show it forth to others. He blesses me, that I may bless others. He loves me that I may love others. He becomes servant to me that I may become a servant to others. He saves and cleanses me that I may save and cleanse others. He gives Himself wholly for and to me, that I may wholly give myself for and to others. I have only to be doing over to others what He is doing to me—nothing more. I can do it, just because He is doing it to me. What I do is nothing but the repeating, the showing forth of what I am receiving from Him.

*How beautifully the principle is expressed in the words of Moses to Hobab (Numbers 10:3), "And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, if thou go with us, that **what goodness the Lord***

shall do unto us, the same will we do unto them"!

Wondrous grace! which thus calls us to be like our Lord in that which constitutes His highest glory. Wondrous grace! which fits us for this calling by Himself first being to us and in us what we are to be to others. Shall not our whole heart joyously respond to His command? Yes, blessed Lord I even as Thou doest to me will I also do to others.

Gracious Lord! what can I now do but praise and pray? My heart feels overwhelmed with this wondrous offer, that Thou wilt reveal all Thy love and power in me, if I will yield myself to let it flow through me to others. Though with fear and trembling, yet in deep and grateful adoration, with joy and confidence, I would accept the offer and say: Here I am; show me how much Thou lovest me, and I will show it to others by loving them even so.

And that I may be able to do this, blessed Lord, grant me these two things. Grant me, by Thy Holy Spirit, a clear insight into Thy love to me, that I may know how Thou lovest me, how Thy love to me is Thy delight and blessedness, how in that love Thou givest Thyself so completely to me, that Thou art indeed mine to do for me all I need. Grant this, Lord, and I shall know how to love and how to live for others, even as Thou lovest and livest for me.

And then grant me to see, as often as I feel how little love I have, that it is not with the love of my little heart, but with Thy love shed abroad in me, that I have to fulfil the command of loving like Thee. Am I not Thy branch, O my heavenly Vine? it is the fulness of Thy life and love that flows through me in love and blessing to those around. It is Thy Spirit that, at the same moment, reveals what Thou art to me, and strengthens me for what I am to be to others in Thy name. In this faith I dare to say, Amen, Lord, even as Thou doest to

me, I also do. Yea, Amen.

Chapter 3^(TOC)

As one that Serveth

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet."—John 13:14

"I am among you as he that serveth."—Luke 22:27

Yesterday we thought of the right that the Lord has to demand and expect that His redeemed ones should follow His example. Today we will more specially consider in what it is we have to follow Him.

"Ye also ought to wash one another's feet," is the word of which we want to understand the full meaning. The form of a servant in which we see Him, the **cleansing** which was the object of that service, the love, which was its motive power—these are the three chief thoughts.

First, the form of a servant. All was ready for the last supper, to the very water to wash the feet of the guests, according to custom. But there was no slave to do the work. Each one waits for the other: none of the twelve thinks of humbling himself to do the work. Even at the table they were full of the thought, who should be greatest in the kingdom they were expecting (Luke 22:26, 27) All at once Jesus rises (they were still reclining at the table), lays aside His garments, girds Himself with a towel, and begins to wash their feet. O wondrous spectacle! on which angels gazed with adoring wonder. Christ, the Creator and King of the universe, at whose beck legions of angels are ready to serve Him, who might with one word of love have said which one of the twelve must do the work—Christ chooses the slave's place for His own,

takes the soiled feet in His own holy hands, and washes them. He does it in full consciousness of His divine glory, for John says, "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God, rose." For the hands into which God had given all things, nothing is common or unclean. The meanness of a work never lowers the person; the person honours and elevates the work, and imparts his own worth even to the meanest service. In such deep humiliation, as we men call it, our Lord finds divine glory, and is in this the Leader of His Church in the path of true blessedness. It is as the Son that He is the servant. Just because He is the beloved of His Father, in whose hands all things are given, it is not difficult for Him to stoop so low. In thus taking the form of a servant, Jesus proclaims the law of rank in the Church of Christ. The higher one wishes to stand in grace, the more it must be his joy to be servant of all. "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Matthew 20:27); "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matthew 23:11). The higher I rise in the consciousness of being like Christ, God's beloved child, the deeper shall I stoop to serve all around me.

A servant is one who is always caring for the work and interest of his master, is ever ready to let his master see that he only seeks to do what will please or profit him. Thus Jesus lived: "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45): "I am among you as he that serveth." Thus I must live, moving about among God's children as the servant of all. If I seek to bless others, it must be in the humble, loving readiness with which I serve them, not caring for my own honour or interest, if I can but be a blessing to them. I must follow Christ's example in washing the disciples' feet. A servant counts it no humiliation, and is not ashamed of being counted an inferior: it is his place and work to serve others. The reason why we so often do not bless others is

that we wish to address them as their superiors in grace or gifts, or at least their equals. If we first learnt from our Lord to associate with others in the blessed spirit of a servant, what a blessing we should become to the world! When once this example is admitted to the place it ought to have in the Church of Christ, the power of His presence would soon make itself felt.

And what is now the work the disciple has to perform in this spirit of lowly service? The foot washing speaks of a double work—the one, for the cleansing and refreshing of the body; the other, the cleansing and saving of the soul. During the whole of our Lord's life upon earth these two things were ever united: "The sick were healed, to the poor the gospel was preached." As with the paralytic, so with many others, blessing to the body, was the type and promise of life to the spirit.

The follower of Jesus may not lose sight of this when he receives the command, "Ye ought also to wash one another's feet." Remembering that the external and bodily is the gate to the inner and spiritual life, he makes the salvation of the soul the first object in his holy ministry of love, at the same time, however, seeking the way to the hearts by the ready service of love in the little and common things of daily life. It is not by reproof and censure that he shows that he is a servant; no, but by the friendliness and kindness with which he proves in daily intercourse that he always thinks how he can help or serve, he becomes the living witness of what it is to be a follower of Jesus. From such a one the word when spoken comes with power, and finds easy entrance. And then, when he comes into contact with the sin and perverseness and contradiction of men, instead of being discouraged, he perseveres as he thinks with how much patience Jesus has borne with him, and still daily cleanses him; he realizes himself to be one of God's appointed servants, to stoop to the lowest depth to serve and save men, even to bow at the feet of

others if this be needed.

The spirit which will enable one to live such a life of loving service, can be learned from Jesus alone. John writes, "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end" (John 13:1). For love nothing is too hard. He never speaks of sacrifice. To bless the loved one, however unworthy, it willingly gives up all. It was love made Jesus a servant. It is love alone will make the servant's place and work such blessedness to us, that we shall persevere in it at all costs. We may perhaps, like Jesus, have to wash the feet of some Judas who rewards us with ingratitude and betrayal. We shall probably meet many a Peter, who first, with his "Never my feet" refuses, and then is dissatisfied when we do not comply with his impatient "Not only the feet, but also the head and the hands." Only love, a heavenly unquenchable love, gives the patience, the courage, and the wisdom for this great work the Lord has set before us in His holy example: "Wash ye one another's feet." Try above all to understand that it is only as a son you can be truly a servant. It was as the Son Christ took the form of a servant: in this you will find the secret of willing, happy service. Walk among men *as a Son of the Most High God*. A Son of God is only in the world to show forth His Father's glory, to prove how God-like and how blessed it is to live only and at any cost to find a way for love to the hearts of the lost.

O my soul, thy love cannot attain to this; therefore listen to Him who says, "Abide in *my love*." Our one desire must be that He may show us how He loves us, and that He Himself may keep us abiding in "*His love*." Live every day, as the beloved of the Lord, in the experience that His love washes and cleanses, bears and blesses you all the day long. This love of His flowing into you, will flow out again from you, and make it your greatest joy to follow His example in washing the feet of others. Do not complain much of the want of

love and humility in others, but pray much that the Lord would awaken His people to their calling, truly so to follow in His footsteps that the world may see that they have taken Him for their example. And if you do not see it as soon as you wish in those around you, let it only urge you to more earnest prayer, that in you at least the Lord may have one who understands and proves that to love and serve like Jesus is the highest blessedness and joy, as well as the way, like Jesus, to be a blessing and a joy to others.

My Lord, I give myself to Thee, to live this blessed life of service. In Thee I have seen it, the spirit of a servant is a kingly spirit, come from heaven and lifting up to heaven, yea, the Spirit of God's own Son. Thou everlasting Love, dwell in me, and my life shall be like Thine, and the language of my life to others as Thine, "I am in the midst of you as he that serveth."

O Thou glorified Son of God, Thou knowest how little of Thy Spirit dwells in us, how this life of a servant is opposed to all that the world reckons honourable or proper. But Thou hast come to teach us new lessons of what is right, to show us what is thought in heaven of the glory of being the least, of the blessedness of serving. O Thou, who dost not only give new thoughts but implant new feelings, give me a heart like Thine, a heart full of the Holy Spirit, a heart that can love as Thou dost. O Lord, Thy Holy Spirit dwells within me; Thy fulness is my inheritance; in the joy of the Holy Spirit I can be as Thou art. I do yield myself to a life of service like Thine. Let the same mind be in me which was also in Thee, when Thou didst make Thyself of no reputation, and didst take upon Thee the form of a servant, and being, found in fashion as a man, didst humble Thyself. Yea, Lord, that very same mind be in me too by Thy grace. As a son of God let me be the servant of men. Amen.

Chapter 4^(TOC)

Our Head

"For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness."—1 Peter 2:21

The call to follow Christ's example, and to walk in His footsteps, is so high that there is every reason to ask with wonder, How can it be expected of sinful men that they should walk like the Son of God? The answer that most people give is practically, that it cannot really be expected: the command sets before us an ideal, beautiful but unattainable.^[1]

The answer Scripture gives is different. It points us to the wonderful relationship in which we stand to Christ. Because our union to Him sets in operation within us a heavenly life with all its powers, therefore the claim may be made in downright earnest that we should live as Christ did. The realization of this relationship between Christ and His people is necessary for every one who is in earnest in following Christ's example.

And what is now this relationship? It is threefold. Peter speaks in this passage of Christ as our **Surety**, our **Example**, and our **Head**.

Christ is our **Surety**. "Christ suffered for us"—"Who His own self **bare our sins** in His own body on the tree." As Surety, Christ suffered and died in our **stead**. He bore our sin, and broke at once its curse and power. As Surety, He

did what we could not do, what we now need not do.

Christ is also our **Example** too. In one sense His work is unique; in another we have to follow Him in it; we must do as He did, live and suffer like Him. "Christ **suffered for us, leaving us an Example** " that we should follow in His footsteps. His suffering as my Surety calls me to a suffering like His as my Example. But is this reasonable? In His suffering as Surety He had the power of the Divine nature, and how can I be expected in the weakness of the flesh to suffer as He did? **Is** there not an impassable gulf between these two things which Peter unites so closely, the suffering as Surety and the suffering, 7 as Example? No, there is a blessed third aspect of Christ's work, which bridges that gulf, which is the connecting link between Christ as Surety and Christ as Example, which makes it possible for us in very deed to take the Surety as Example, and live and suffer and die like Him.

Christ is also our **Head**. In this His Suretyship and His Example have their root and unity. Christ is the second Adam. As a believer I am spiritually one with Him. In this union He lives in me, and imparts to me the power of His finished work, the power of His sufferings and death and resurrection. It is on this ground we are taught in Romans 6 and elsewhere that the Christian is indeed dead to sin and alive to God. The very life that Christ lives, the life that passed through death, and the power of that death, work in the believer, so that he is dead, and has risen again with Christ. It is this thought Peter gives utterance to when he says: "Who His own self bore our sins upon the tree," not alone that we through His death might receive forgiveness, but "that we, being **dead to sins, should live** unto righteousness." As we have part in the spiritual death of the first Adam, having really died to God in him, so we have part in the second Adam, having really died to sin in Him, and in Him being made alive again to God. Christ is not only our Surety who lived and

died for us, our Example who showed us how to live and die, but also our Head, with whom we are one, in whose death we have died, with whose life we now live. This gives us the power to follow our Surety as our Example: Christ being our Head is the bond that makes the believing on the Surety and the following of the Example inseparably one.

These three are one. The three truths may not be separated from each other. And yet this happens but too often. There are some who wish to follow Christ's Example without faith in His atonement. They seek within themselves the power to live like Him: their efforts must be vain. There are others who hold fast to the Suretyship but neglect the Example. They believe in redemption through the blood of the cross, but neglect the footsteps of Him who bore it. Faith in the atonement is indeed the foundation of the building, but it is not all. Theirs too is a deficient Christianity, with no true view of sanctification, because they do not see how, along with faith on Christ's atonement, following His Example is indispensably necessary.

There are still others who have received these two truths—Christ as Surety and Christ as Example—and yet want something. They feel constrained to follow Christ as Example in what He did as Surety, but want the power. They do not rightly understand how this following His Example can really be attained. What they need is, the clear insight as to what Scripture teaches of Christ as Head. Because the Surety is not some one outside of me, but One in whom I am, and who is in me, therefore it is that I can become like Him. His very life lives in me. He lives Himself in me, whom He bought with His blood. To follow His footsteps is a duty, because it is a possibility, the natural result of the wonderful union between Head and members. It is only when this is understood aright that the blessed truth of Christ's Example will take its right place. If Jesus Himself through his life union will work in me the life

likeness, then my duty becomes plain, but glorious. I have, on the one side, to gaze on His Example so as to know and follow it. On the other, to abide in Him, and open my heart to the blessed workings of His life in me. As surely as He conquered sin and its curse for me, will He conquer it in its power in me. What He began by His death for me, He will perfect by His life in me. Because my Surety is also my Head, His Example must and will be the rule of my life.

There is a saying of Augustine that is often quoted: "Lord I give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt." This holds good here. If the Lord, who lives in me, **gives** what He requires of me, then no requirement can be too high. Then I have the courage to gaze upon His holy Example in all its height and breadth, and to accept of it as the law of my conduct. It is no longer merely a command telling what I must be, but a promise of what I shall be. There is nothing that weakens the power of Christ's Example so much as the thought that we cannot really walk like Him. Do not listen to such thoughts. The perfect likeness in heaven is begun on earth, can grow with each day, and become more visible as life goes on. As certain and mighty as the work of surety which Christ, your Head, completed once for all, is the renewal after His own Image, which He is still working out. Let this double blessing make the cross doubly precious: Our Head suffered as a Surety, that in union with us he might bear sin for us. Our Head offered as an Example, that He might show us what the path is in which, in union with Himself, He would lead us to victory and to glory. The suffering Christ is our Head, our Surety, and our Example.

And so the great lesson I have to learn is the wonderful truth that it is just in that mysterious path of suffering, in which He wrought out our atonement and redemption, that we are to follow His footsteps, and that the full

experience of that redemption depends upon the personal fellowship in that suffering. "Christ suffered for us, leaving us an Example." May the Holy Spirit reveal to me what this means.

Precious Saviour! how shall I thank Thee for the work that Thou hast done as Surety? Standing in the place of me a guilty sinner, Thou hast borne my sins in Thy body on the cross. That cross was my due. Thou didst take it, and wast made like unto me, that thus the cross might be changed into a place of blessing and life.

And now Thou callest me to the place of crucifixion as the place of blessing and life, where I may be made like Thee, and may find in Thee power to suffer and to cease from sin. As my Head, Thou wert my Surety to suffer and die with me; as my Head, Thou art my Example that I might suffer and die with Thee.

Precious Saviour! I confess that I have too little understood this. Thy Suretyship was more to me than Thy Example. I rejoiced much that Thou hadst borne the cross for me, but too little that I like Thee and with Thee might also bear the cross, The atonement of the cross was more precious to me than the fellowship of the cross; the hope in Thy redemption more precious than the personal fellowship with Thyself.

Forgive me this, dear Lord, and teach me to find my happiness in union with Thee, my Head, not more in Thy Suretyship than in thine Example. And grant, that in my meditations as to how I am to follow Thee, my faith may become stronger and brighter: Jesus is my Example because He is my life. I must and can be like Him, because I am one with Him. Grant this, my blessed Lord, for Thy love's sake. Amen.

Chapter 5^(TOC)

In Suffering Wrong

"For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently I but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."—1 Peter 2:19, 20.

It is in connection with a very everyday matter that Peter gave utterance to those weighty words concerning Christ as our Surety and Example. He is writing to servants, who at that time were mostly slaves. He teaches them "to be subject with all fear," not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For, so he writes, if any one do wrong and be punished for it, to bear it patiently is no special grace. No; but if one do well, and suffer for it, and take it patiently, this is acceptable with God; such bearing of wrong is Christ-like. In bearing our sins as Surety, Christ suffered wrong from man; after His example we must be ready to suffer wrongfully too.

There is almost nothing harder to bear than injustice from our fellow-men. It is not only the loss of pain: there is the feeling of humiliation and injustice, and the consciousness of our rights asserts itself. In what our fellow-creatures do to us, it is not easy at once to recognise the will of God, who thus allows us to be tried, to see if we have truly taken Christ as our example. Let us study that example. From Him we may learn what it was that gave Him the power to bear injuries patiently.

Christ believed in suffering as the will of God. He had found it in Scripture

that the servant of God should suffer. He had made Himself familiar with the thought, so that when suffering came, it did not take Him by surprise. He expected it. He knew that thus He must be perfected; and so His first thought was not how to be delivered from it, but how to glorify God in it. This enabled Him to bear the greatest injustice quietly. He saw God's hand in it.

Christian! would you have strength to suffer wrong in the spirit in which Christ did? Accustom yourself in everything, that happens, to recognise the hand and will of God. This lesson is of more consequence than you think. Whether it be some great wrong that is done you, or some little offence that you meet in daily life, before you fix your thoughts on the person who did it, first be still, and remember, ***God allows me to come into this trouble to see if I shall glorify Him in it.*** This trial, be it the greatest or least, is allowed by God, and is His will concerning, me. Let us first recognise and submit to ***God's will*** in it. Then in the rest of soul which this gives, I shall receive wisdom to know how to behave in it. With my eye turned from man to God, suffering wrong is not so hard as it seems.

Christ also believed that God would care for His rights and honour. There is an innate sense of right within us that comes from God. But he who lives in the visible, wants his honour to be vindicated at once here below. He who lives in the eternal, and as seeing the Invisible, is satisfied to leave the vindication of his rights and honour in God's hands; he knows that they are safe with Him. It was thus with the Lord Jesus. Peter writes, "He committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." It was a settled thing between the Father and the Son, that the Son was not to care for His own honour, but only for the Father's. The Father would care for the Son's honour. Let the Christian just follow Christ's example in this, it will give him such rest and peace. Give your right and your honour into God's keeping. Meet every offence that man

commits against you with the firm trust that God will watch over and care for you. Commit it to Him who judgeth righteously.

Further, ***Christ believed in the power of suffering love.*** We all admit that there is no power like that of love. Through it Christ overcomes the enmity of the world. Every other victory gives only a forced submission: love alone gives the true victory over an enemy, by converting him into a friend. We all acknowledge the truth of this as a principle, but we shrink from the application. Christ believed it, and acted accordingly. He said too, I shall have my revenge: but His revenue was that of love, bringing enemies as friends to His feet. He believed that by silence and submission, and suffering and bearing wrong, He would win the cause, because thus love would have its triumph.

And this is what He desires of us too. In our sinful nature there is more faith in might and right than in the heavenly power of love. But he who would be like Christ must follow Him in this also, that He seeks to conquer evil with good. ***The more another does him wrong, the more he feels called to love him.*** Even if it be needful for the public welfare that justice should punish the offender, he takes care that there be in it nothing of personal feeling; as far as he is concerned, he forgives and loves.

Ah, what a difference it would make in Christendom and in our churches, if Christ's example were followed! If each one who was reviled, "reviled not again if each one who suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously." Fellow-Christians, this is literally what the Father would have us do. Let us read and read again the words of Peter, until our soul be filled with the thought, "If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, ***this is acceptable with God.***"^[2]

In ordinary Christian life, where we mostly seek to fulfil our calling as redeemed ones in our own strength, such a conformity to the Lord's image is an impossibility. But in a life of full surrender, where we have given all into His hands, in the faith that He will work all in us, there the glorious expectation is awakened, that the imitation of Christ in this is indeed within our reach. For the command to suffer like Christ has come in connection with the teaching, "Christ also suffered for us, so that we, being dead to sins, might live unto righteousness."

Beloved fellow-Christian! wouldst thou not love to be like Jesus, and in bearing injuries act as He Himself would have acted in thy place? Is it not a glorious prospect in everything, even in this too, to be conformed to Him? For our strength it is too high; in His strength it is possible. Only surrender thyself day by day to Him to be in all things just what He would have thee to be. Believe that He lives in heaven to be the life and the strength of each one who seeks to walk in His footsteps. Yield thyself to be one with the suffering, crucified Christ, that thou mayest understand what it is to be dead to sins, and to live unto righteousness. And it will be thy joyful experience what wonderful power there is in Jesus' death, not only to atone for sin, but to break its power; and in His resurrection, to make thee live unto righteousness. Thou shalt find it ***equally blessed to follow fully the footsteps of the suffering Saviour***, as it has been to trust fully and only in that suffering for atonement and redemption. Christ will be as precious as thy Example as He has ever been as thy Surety. Because He took thy sufferings upon Himself, thou wilt lovingly take His sufferings upon thyself. And bearing wrong will become a glorious part of the fellowship with His holy sufferings; a glorious mark of being conformed to His most holy likeness; a most blessed fruit of the true life of faith.

O Lord my God, I have heard Thy precious word: If any man endure grief, suffering wrongfully, and take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. This is indeed a sacrifice that is well-pleasing to Thee, a work that Thine own grace alone hath wrought, a fruit of the suffering of Thy beloved Son, of the example He left, and the power He gives in virtue of His having destroyed the power of sin.

O my Father, teach me and all Thy children to aim at nothing less than complete conformity to Thy dear Son in this trait of His blessed image. Lord my God, I would now, once for all, give up the keeping of my honour and my rights into Thy hands, never more again myself to take charge of them. Thou wilt care for them most perfectly. May my only care be the honour and the rights of my Lord!

I specially beseech Thee to fill me with faith in the conquering power of suffering love. Give me to apprehend fully how the suffering Lamb of God teaches us that patience and silence and suffering avail more with God, and therefore with man too, than might or right. O my Father, I must, I would walk in the footsteps of my Lord Jesus. Let Thy Holy Spirit, and the light of Thy love and presence, be my guide and strength. Amen.

Chapter 6^(TOC)

Crucified with him

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."—Galatians 2:20; 6:14

Taking up the cross was always spoken of by Christ as the test of discipleship. On three different occasions (Matthew 10:38; 16:24; Luke 14:27) we find the words repeated, "If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me." While the Lord was still on His way to the cross, this expression—taking up the cross, was the most appropriate to indicate that conformity to Him to which the disciple is called.

^[3] Christians entirely miss the point of the Lord's command when they refer the taking up of the cross only to the crosses or trials of life. It means much more. The cross means death. Taking up the cross means going out to die. It is just in the time of prosperity that we most need to bear the cross. Taking up the cross and following Him is nothing less than living every day with our own life and will given up to death.

But now that He has been crucified, the Holy Spirit gives another expression, in which our entire conformity to Christ is still more powerfully set forth—the believing disciple is himself crucified with Christ. The cross is the chief mark of the Christian as of Christ: the crucified Christ and the crucified

Christian belong to each other. One of the chief elements of likeness to Christ consists in being crucified with Him. Whoever wishes to be like Him must seek to understand the secret of fellowship with His cross.

At first sight the Christian who seeks conformity to Jesus is afraid of this truth: he shrinks from the painful suffering and death with which the thought of the cross is connected. As His spiritual discernment becomes clearer, however, this word becomes all his hope and joy, and he glories in the cross, because it makes him a partner in a death and victory that has already been accomplished, and in which the deliverance from the powers of the flesh and of the world has been secured to him. To understand this we must notice carefully the language of Scripture.

"I am crucified with Christ," Paul says; "nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"! Through faith in Christ we become partakers of Christ's life. That life is a life that has passed through the death of the cross, and in **which the power of that death is always working**. When I receive that life, I receive at the same time the full power of the death on the cross working in me in its never-ceasing energy. "I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me" (R.V.); the life I now live is not my own life, but the life of the Crucified One, is the life of the cross. The being crucified is a thing past and done: "Knowing this, that our old man **was** (R.V.) crucified with Him;" "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh;" "I glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world **hath been** (R.V.) crucified unto me, and I unto the world." These texts all speak of something that has been done in Christ, and into which I am admitted by faith.

It is of great consequence to understand this, and to give bold utterance to the truth: I have been crucified with Christ; I have crucified the flesh. I thus learn

how perfectly I share in the finished work of Christ. If I am crucified and dead with Him, then I am a partner in His life and victory. I learn to understand the position I must take to allow the power of that cross and that death to manifest itself in mortifying or (R.V.) making dead the old man and the flesh, in destroying the body of sin (Romans 6:6).

For there is still a great work for me to do. But that work is not to crucify myself: I have been crucified; the old man was crucified, so the Scripture speaks. But what I have to do is always to regard and treat it as crucified, and not to suffer it to come down from the cross. I must maintain my crucifixion position; I must keep the flesh in the place of crucifixion. To realize the force of this I must notice an important distinction. I have been crucified and am dead: the old Adam was crucified, but is not yet dead. When I gave myself to my crucified Saviour, sin and flesh and all, He took me wholly; I with my evil nature was taken up with Him in His crucifixion. But here a separation took place. In fellowship with Him I was freed from the life of the flesh; I myself died with Him; in the inmost centre of my being I received new life: Christ lives in me. But the flesh, in which I yet am, the old man that was crucified with Him, remained condemned to an accursed death, but is not yet dead. And now it is my calling, in fellowship with and in the strength of my Lord, to see that the old nature be kept nailed to the cross, until the time comes that it is entirely destroyed. All its desires and affections cry out, "Come down from the cross, save thyself and us." It is my duty to glory in the cross, and with my whole heart to maintain the dominion of the cross, and to set my seal to the sentence that has been pronounced, to make dead every uprising of sin, as already crucified, and so not to suffer it to have dominion. This is what Scripture means when it says, "If ye through the spirit do make to die (R.V.) the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Romans 8:13). "Make dead therefore your members which are upon the earth." Thus I continually and

voluntarily acknowledge that in my flesh dwells no good thing; that my Lord is Christ the Crucified One; that I have been crucified and am **dead** in Him; that the flesh has been crucified and, though not yet dead, has been for ever given over to the death of the cross. And so I live like Christ, in very deed crucified with Him.

In order to enter fully into the meaning and the power of this fellowship of the crucifixion of our Lord, two things are specially necessary to those who are Christ's followers. The first is the clear consciousness of this their fellowship with the Crucified One through faith. At conversion they became partakers of it without fully understanding it. Many remain in ignorance all their life long through a want of spiritual knowledge. Brother, pray that the Holy Spirit may reveal to you your union to the Crucified One. "I have been crucified with Christ;" "I glory in the cross of Christ, through which I have been crucified to the world." Take such words of Holy Scripture, and by prayer and meditation make them your own, with a heart that expects and asks the Holy Spirit to make them living and effectual within you. Look upon yourself in the light of God as what you really are, "crucified with Christ." Then you will find the grace for the second thing you need to enable you to live as a crucified one, in whom Christ lives. You will be able always to look upon and to treat the flesh and the world as nailed to the cross. The old nature seeks continually to assert itself, and to make you feel as if it is expecting too much that you should always live this crucifixion life. Your only safety is in fellowship with Christ. "Through Him and His cross," says Paul, "I have been crucified to the world." In Him the crucifixion is an accomplished reality; in Him you have died, but also have been made alive: Christ lives in you. With this fellowship of His cross let it be with you, the deeper the better: it brings you into deeper communion with His life and His love. To be crucified with Christ means freed from the power of sin: a redeemed one, a conqueror.

Remember that the Holy Spirit has been specially provided to glorify Christ in you, to reveal within you, and make your very own all that is in Christ for you. Do not be satisfied, with so many others, only to know the cross in its power to atone: the glory of the cross is, that it was not only to Jesus, but is to us too, the path to life, but that each moment it can become to us the power that destroys sin and death, and keeps us in the power of the eternal life.

Learn from your Saviour the holy art of using it for this. Faith in the power of the cross and its victory will day by day make dead the deeds of the body, the lusts of the flesh. This faith will teach you to count the cross, with its continual death to self. all your glory. Because you regard the cross, not as one who is still on the way to crucifixion, with the prospect of a painful death, but as one to whom the crucifixion is past, who already lives in Christ, and now only bears the cross as the blessed instrument through which the body of sin is done away (Romans 6:6, R.V.). The banner under which complete victory over sin and the world is to be won is the cross.

Above all, remember what still remains the chief thing, It is Jesus, the living loving Saviour, who

Himself enables you to be like Him in all things. His sweet fellowship, His tender love, His heavenly power, make it a blessedness and joy to be like Him, the Crucified One, make the crucifixion life a life of resurrection—joy and power. In Him the two are inseparably connected. In Him you have the strength to be always singing the triumphant song: God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Precious Saviour, I humbly ask Thee to show me the hidden glory of the fellowship of Thy cross. The cross was my place, the place of death and curse. Thou didst become like us, and hast been crucified with us. And now

the cross is Thy place, the place of blessing and life. And Thou callest me to become like Thee, and as one who is crucified with Thee, to experience how entirely the cross has made me free from sin.

Lord, give me to know its full power. It is long since I knew the power of the cross to redeem from the curse. But how long I strove in vain as a redeemed one to overcome the power of sin, and to obey the Father as Thou hast done! I could not break the power of sin. But now I see, this comes only when Thy disciple yields himself entirely to be led by Thy Holy Spirit into the fellowship of Thy cross. There Thou dost give him to see how the cross **has broken for ever** the power of sin, and has made him free. There Thou, the Crucified One, dost live in him and impart to him Thine own Spirit of whole-hearted self-sacrifice, in casting out and conquering sin. Oh, my Lord, teach me to understand this better. In this faith I say, "I have been crucified with Christ." Oh, Thou who loved'st, me to the death, not Thy cross, but Thyself the Crucified One, Thou art He whom I seek, and in whom I hope. Take me, Thou Crucified One, and hold me fast, and teach me from moment to moment to look upon all that is of self as condemned, and only worthy to be crucified. Take me, and hold me, and teach me, from moment to moment, that in Thee I have all I need for a life of holiness and blessing. Amen.

Chapter 7^(TOC)

In his Self-Denial

"We then that we strong ought to bear the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me. Wherefore receive ye one another, even as Christ also received us to the glory of God."—Romans 15:1-3, 7.

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."—Matthew 16:24.

Even Christ pleased not Himself: He bore the reproaches, with which men reproached and dishonoured God, so patiently, that He might glorify God and save man. Christ pleased not Himself: with reference both to God and man, this word is the key of His life. In this, too, His life is our rule and example; we who are strong ought not to please ourselves.

To deny self—this is the opposite of pleasing self. When Peter denied Christ, he said: I know not the man; with Him and His interests I have nothing to do; I do not wish to be counted His friend. In the same way the true Christian denies himself, the old man: I do not know this old man; I will have nothing to do with him and his interests. And when shame and dishonour come upon him, or anything be exacted that is not pleasant to the old nature, he simply says: Do as you like with the old ties of the Adam, I will take no notice of it. Through the cross of Christ I am crucified to the world, and the flesh, and self: to the friendship and interest of this old man I am a stranger; I deny him to be my friend; I deny his every claim and wish; I know him not.

The Christian who only thinks of his salvation from curse and condemnation cannot understand this; he finds it impossible to deny self. Although he may sometimes try to do so, his life mainly consists in pleasing himself. The Christian who has taken Christ as his pattern cannot be content with this. He has surrendered himself to seek the most complete fellowship with the cross of Christ. The Holy Spirit has taught him to say, I have been crucified with Christ, and so am dead to sin and self. In fellowship with Christ he sees the old man crucified, a condemned malefactor; he is ashamed to own him as a friend: it is his fixed purpose, and he has received the power for it too, no longer to please his old nature, but to deny it. ***Because the crucified Christ is his life, self-denial is the law of his life.***

This self-denial extends itself over the whole domain of life. It was so with the Lord Jesus, and is so with every one who longs to follow Him perfectly. This self-denial has not so much to do with what is sinful, and unlawful, and contrary to the laws of God, as with what is lawful, or apparently indifferent. To the self-denying spirit the will and glory of God and the salvation of man are always more than our own interests or pleasure.

Before we can know how to please our neighbour, self-denial must first exercise itself in our own personal life. It must rule the body. The holy fasting of Him who said, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God; and who would not eat until His Father gave Him food, and His Father's work was done, teaches the believer a holy temperance in eating and drinking. The holy poverty of Him who had not where to lay His head, teaches him so to regulate the possession, and use, and enjoyment of earthly things, that he may always possess as not possessing. After the example of the holy suffering of Him who bore all our sins in His own body on the tree, he learns to bear all suffering patiently:

even in the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, he desires to bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus; with Paul he keeps under the body and brings it into subjection; all its desires and appetites he would have ruled by the self-denial of Jesus. He does not please himself.

This self-denial keeps watch over the spirit too. His own wisdom and judgment the believer brings into subjection to God's word: he gives up his own thoughts to the teaching of the Word and the Spirit. Towards man he manifests the same self-denial of his own wisdom in a readiness to hear and learn, in the meekness and humility with which, even when he knows he is in the right, he gives his opinion, in the desire ever to find and to acknowledge what is good in others.

And then self-denial has special reference to the heart. All the affections and desires are placed under it. The will, the kingly power of the soul is specially under its control. As little as self-pleasing could be a part of Christ's life, may Christ's follower allow it ever to influence his conduct. "We ought not to please ourselves. For even Christ pleased not Himself." Self-denial is the law of his life.

Nor does he find it hard when once he has truly surrendered himself to it. To one who, with a divided heart, seeks to force himself to a life of self-denial, it is hard indeed; but to one who has yielded himself to it unreservedly, because he has with his whole heart accepted the cross to destroy the power of sin and self, the blessing it brings more than compensates for apparent sacrifice or loss. He hardly dare any longer speak of self-denial, there is such blessedness in becoming conformed to the image of Jesus.

Self-denial has not its value with God, as some think, from the measure of pain it causes. No, for this pain is very much caused by the remaining

reluctance to practise it. But it has its highest worth in that meek or even joyful acquiescence which counts nothing a sacrifice for Jesus' sake, and feels surprised when others speak of self-denial.

There have been ages when men thought they must fly to the wilderness or cloister to deny themselves. The Lord Jesus has shown us that the best place to practise self-denial is in our ordinary intercourse with men. So Paul also says here, "We ***ought not to please ourselves***, let every one please his ***neighbour unto edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself***. Therefore receive ye one another, ***even as Christ*** has received you." Nothing less than the self-denial of our Lord, who pleased not Himself, is our law. What He was we must be. What He did we must do.

What a glorious life will it be in the Church of Christ when this law prevails! each one considers it the object of existence to make others happy. Each one denies himself, seeks not his own, esteems others better than himself. All thought of taking offence, of wounded pride, of being slighted or passed by, would pass away. As a follower of Christ, each would seek to bear the weak and to please his neighbour. The true self-denial would be seen in this, that no one would think of himself, but live in and for others.

"If any man will ***come after*** me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and ***follow*** me." This word not only gives us the will, but also the power for self-denial. He who does not simply wish to reach heaven through Christ, but comes after Him for His own sake, will ***follow*** Him. And in his heart Jesus speedily takes the place that self had. ***Jesus only*** becomes the centre and object of such a life. The undivided surrender to follow Him is crowned with this wonderful blessing, that Christ by His Spirit Himself becomes his life. Christ's spirit of self-denying love is poured out upon him, and to deny self is the greatest joy of his heart, and the means of the deepest communion with

God. Self-denial is no longer a work he simply does as a means of attaining perfection for himself. Nor is it merely a negative victory, of which the main feature is the keeping self in check. Christ has taken the place of self, and His love and gentleness and kindness flow out to others, now that self is parted with. No command becomes more blessed or more natural than this: "***We ought not to please ourselves, for even Christ pleased not Himself.***" "If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and FOLLOW ME."

Beloved Lord, I thank Thee for this new call to follow Thee and not to please myself, even as Thou didst not please Thyself. I thank Thee that I have now no longer, as once, to hear it with fear. Thy commandments are no longer grievous to me; Thy yoke is easy, and Thy burden light. What I see in Thy life on earth as my example, is the certain pledge of what I receive from Thy life in heaven. I did not always so understand it. Long after I had known Thee, I dared not think of self-denial. But for him who has learned what it is to take up the cross, to be crucified with Thee, and to see the old man nailed to the cross, it is no longer terrible to deny it. Oh, my Lord! who would not be ashamed to be the friend of a crucified and accursed criminal? Since I have learned that Thou art my life, and that Thou dost wholly take charge of the life that is wholly entrusted to Thee, to work both to will and to do, I do not fear but Thou wilt give me the love and wisdom in the path of selfdenial joyfully to follow Thy footstep. Blessed Lord, Thy disciples are not worthy of this grace; but since Thou hast chosen us to it, we will gladly seek not to please ourselves, but every one his neighbour, as Thou hast taught us. And may Thy Holy Spirit work it in us mightily. Amen.

Chapter 8^(TOC)

In his Self-Sacrifice

*"Walk in love, even as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour."—
Ephesians 5:2.*

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John 3:16.

What is the connection between self-sacrifice and self-denial? The former is the root from which the latter springs. In self-denial, self-sacrifice is tested, and thus strengthened and prepared each time again to renew its entire surrender. Thus it was with the Lord Jesus. His incarnation was a self-sacrifice; His life of self-denial was the proof of it; through this, again, He was prepared for the great act of self-sacrifice in His death on the cross. Thus it is with the Christian. His conversion is to a certain extent the sacrifice of self, though but a very partial one, owing to ignorance and weakness. From that first act of self-surrender arises the obligation to the exercise of daily self-denial. The Christian's efforts to do so show him his weakness, and prepare him for that new and more entire self-sacrifice in which he first finds strength for more continuous self-denial.

Self-sacrifice is of the very essence of true love. The very nature and blessedness of love consist in forgetting self, and seeking its happiness in the loved one. Where in the beloved there is a want or need, love is impelled by its very nature to offer up its own happiness for that of the other, to unite itself to the beloved one, and at any sacrifice to make him the sharer of its

own blessedness.

Who can say whether this is not one of the secrets which eternity will reveal, that sin was permitted because otherwise God's love could never so fully have been revealed? The highest glory of God's love was manifested in the self-sacrifice of Christ. It is the highest glory of the Christian to be like his Lord in this. Without entire self-sacrifice the new command, the command of love, cannot be fulfilled. Without entire self-sacrifice we cannot love as Jesus loved. "Be ye imitators of God," says the apostle, "and walk in love, even as Christ hath loved us, and given Himself a sacrifice for us." Let all your walk and conversation be, according to Christ's example, in love. It was this love that made His sacrifice acceptable in God's sight, a sweet-smelling savour, As His love exhibited itself in self-sacrifice, let your love prove itself to be conformable to His in the daily self-sacrifice for the welfare of others, so will it also be acceptable in the sight of God. "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

Down even into the daily affairs of home life, in the intercourse between husband and wife, in the relation of master and servant, Christ's self-sacrifice must be the rule of our walk. "Likewise, ye husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church, and ***gave Himself for it.*** "

And mark specially the words, "Hath given Himself ***for us*** an offering ***to God.*** " We see that self-sacrifice has here two sides. Christ's self-sacrifice had a Godward as well as a manward aspect. It was ***for us***, but it was ***to God*** that He offered Himself as a sacrifice. In all our self-sacrifice there must be these two sides in union, though now the one and then again the other may be more prominent.

It is only when we sacrifice ourselves ***to God*** that there will be the power for

an entire self-sacrifice. The Holy Spirit reveals to the believer the right of God's claim on us, how we are not our own, but His. The realization of how absolutely we are God's property, bought and paid for with blood, of how we are loved with such a wonderful love, and of what blessedness there is in the full surrender to Him, leads the believer to yield himself a whole burnt-offering. He lays himself on the altar of consecration, and finds it his highest joy to be a sweet-smelling savour *to his God*, God-devoted and God-accepted. And then it becomes his first and most earnest desire to know how God would have him show this entire self-sacrifice in life and walk.

God points him to Christ's example. He was a sweet-smelling savour to God when He gave Himself a sacrifice *for us*. For every Christian who gives himself entirely to His service, God has the same honour as He had for His Son, He uses him as an instrument of blessing to others. Therefore John says, "He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" The self-sacrifice in which you have devoted yourself to God's service, binds you also to serve your fellow-men; the same act which makes you entirely God's, makes you entirely theirs.^[4]

It is just this surrender to God that gives the power for self-sacrifice towards others, and even makes it a joy. When faith has first appropriated the promise, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," I understand the glorious harmony between sacrifice *to God* and sacrifice for men. My intercourse with my fellow-men, instead of being, as many complain, a hindrance to unbroken communion with God, becomes an opportunity of offering myself unceasingly to Him.

Blessed calling! to walk in love EVEN AS Christ loved us, and gave Himself for us a sacrifice and sweet-smelling savour to God. Only thus can the Church fulfil its destiny, and prove to the world that she is set apart to

continue Christ's work of self-sacrificing love, and fill up that which remaineth behind of the afflictions of Christ.

But does God really expect us to deny ourselves so entirely for others? Is it not asking too much? Can any one really sacrifice himself so entirely? Christian! God does expect it, Nothing less than this is the conformity to the image of His Son, to which He predestinated you from eternity. This is the path by which Jesus entered into His glory and blessedness and by no other way can the disciple enter into the joy of His Lord. ***It is in very deed our calling to become exactly like Jesus in His love and self-sacrifice.*** "Walk in love, EVEN AS Christ loved." It is a great thing when a believer sees and acknowledges this. That God's people and even God's servants understand it so little, is one great cause of the impotence of the Church. In this matter the Church indeed needs a second reformation. In the great Reformation three centuries ago, the power of Christ's atoning death and righteousness were brought to light, to the great comfort and joy of anxious souls. But we need a second reformation to lift on high the banner of Christ's example as our law, to restore the truth of the power of Christ's resurrection as it makes us partakers of the life and the likeness of our Lord. Christians must not only believe in the full union with their Surety for their reconciliation, but with their Head as their example and their life. They must really represent Christ upon earth, and let men ***see in the members*** how the Head lived when He was in the flesh. Let us earnestly pray that God's children everywhere may be taught to see their holy calling.

And all ye who already long after it, oh, fear not to yield yourselves to God in the great act of a Christ-like self-sacrifice! In conversion you gave yourself to God. In many an act of self-surrender since then you have again given yourselves to Him. But experience has taught you how much is still wanting.

Perhaps you never knew how entire the self-sacrifice must be and could be. Come now and see in Christ your example, and in His sacrifice of Himself on the cross, **what your Father expects of you**. Come now and see in Christ—for He is your head and life—**what He will enable you to be and do**. Believe in Him, that what He accomplished on Earth in His life and death as your example, He will now accomplish in you from heaven. Offer yourself to the Father in Christ, with the desire to be, as entirely and completely as He, an offering and a sacrifice unto God, given **up to God for men**. Expect Christ to work this in you and to maintain it. Let your relation to God be clear and distinct; you, like Christ, wholly given up to Him. Then it will no longer be impossible to walk in love as Christ loved us. Then all your intercourse with the brethren and with the world will be the most glorious opportunity of proving before God how completely you have given yourself to Him, an offering and a sacrifice for a sweet-smelling savour.

O my God, who am I that Thou shouldest have chosen me to be conformed to the image of Thy Son in His self-sacrificing love? In this is His divine perfection and glory, that He loved not His own life, but freely offered it for us to Thee in death. And in this I may be like Him; in a walk in love I may prove that I too have offered myself wholly to God.

O my Father, Thy purpose is mine; at this solemn moment I affirm anew my consecration to Thee. Not in my own strength, but in the strength of Him who gave Himself for me. Because Christ, my example, is also my life, I venture to say it: Father, in Christ, like Christ, I yield myself a sacrifice to Thee for men.

Father, teach me how Thou wouldest use me to manifest Thy love to the world. Thou wilt do it by filling me full of Thy love. Father, do it that I may walk in love, **even as** Christ loved us. May I live every day as one who has

the power of Thy Holy Spirit to enable me to love every one with whom I come into contact, under every possible circumstance, to love with a love which is not of me, but of Thyself. Amen.

Chapter 9^(TOC)

Not of the World

"These are in the world." "The world hath hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."—John 17:11, 14, 16.

"Even as He is, so are we in this world."—1 John 4:17.

If Jesus was not of the world, why was He in the world? If there was no sympathy between Him and the world, why was it that He lived in it and did not remain in that high and holy and blessed world to which He belonged? The answer is, The Father had sent Him into the world. In these two expressions, "In the world," "Not of the world," we find the whole secret of His work as Saviour, of His glory as the God-man.

"In the world"; in human nature, because God would show that this nature belonged to Him, and not to the god of this world, that it was most fit to receive the divine life, and in this divine life to reach its highest glory.

"In the world"; in fellowship with men, to enter into loving relationship with them, to be seen and known of them, and thus to win them back to the Father.

"In the world"; in the struggle with the powers which rule the world, to learn obedience, and so to perfect and sanctify human nature.

"Not of the world"; but of heaven, to manifest and bring nigh the life that is in God, and which man had lost, that men might see and long for it.

"Not of the world"; witnessing against its sin and departure from God, its impotence to know and please God.

"Not of the world"; founding a kingdom entirely heavenly in origin and nature, entirely independent of all that the world holds desirable or necessary, with principles and laws the very opposite of those that rule in the world.

"Not of the world"; in order to redeem all who belong to Him, and bring them into that new and heavenly kingdom which He had revealed.

"In the world," "Not of the world." In these two expressions we have revealed to us the great mystery of the person and work of the Saviour. "Not of the world," in the power of His divine holiness judging and overcoming it; still in the world, and through His humanity and love seeking and saving all that can be saved. The most entire separation from the world, with the closest fellowship with those in the world; these two extremes meet in Jesus, in His own person He has reconciled them. And it is the calling of the Christian in his life to prove that these two dispositions however much they may seem at variance, can in our life too be united in perfect harmony. In each believer there must be seen a heavenly life shining out through earthly forms.

To take one of these two truths and exclusively cultivate it, is not so difficult. So you have those who have taken "Not of the world" as their motto. From the earliest ages, when people thought they must fly to cloisters and deserts to serve God, to our own days, when some seek to show the earnestness of their piety by severity in judging all that is in the world, there have been those who counted this the only true religion. There was separation from sin, but then there was also no fellowship with sinners. The sinner could not feel that he was surrounded with the atmosphere of a tender heavenly love. It was a one-sided and therefore a defective religion.

Then there are those who, on the other side, lay stress on "In the world," and very specially appeal to the words of the apostle, "For then must ye needs go out of the world." They think that, by showing that religion does not make us unfriendly or unfit to enjoy all that there is to enjoy, they will induce the world to serve God. It has often happened that they have indeed succeeded in making the world very religious, but at too high a price—religion became very worldly.

The true follower of Jesus must combine both. If he does not clearly show that he is not of the world, and prove the greater blessedness of a heavenly life, how will he convince the world of sin, or prove to her that there is a higher life, or teach her to desire what she does not yet possess? Earnestness, and holiness, and separation from the spirit of the world must characterize him. His heavenly spirit must manifest that he belongs to a kingdom not of this world. An unworldly, an other-worldly, a heavenly spirit must breathe in him.

And still he must live as one who is "in the world." Expressly placed here of God, among those who are of the world, to win their hearts, to acquire influence over them, and to communicate to them of the Spirit which is in him, it must be the great study of his life how he can fulfil this his mission. Not, as the wisdom of the world would teach, by yielding, and complying, and softening down the solemn realities of religion, will he succeed. No, but only by walking in the footsteps of Him who alone can teach how to be in the world and yet not of it. Only by a life of serving and suffering love, in which the Christian distinctly confesses that the glory of God is the aim of his existence, and in which, full of the Holy Spirit, he brings men into direct contact with the warmth and love of the heavenly life, can he be a blessing to the world.

Oh, who will teach us the heavenly secret, of uniting every day in our lives what is so difficult to unite—to be in the world, and not of the world? He can do it who has said: "They are not of the, world, EVEN AS I am not of the world." That "EVEN AS" has a deeper meaning and power than we know. If we suffer the Holy Spirit to unfold that word to us, we shall understand what it is to be in the world as He was in the world. That "EVEN AS" has its root and strength in a life union. In it we shall discover the divine secret, that the ***more entirely one is not of the world, the more fit he is to be in the world.*** The freer the Church is of the spirit and principles of the world, the more influence she will exert in it.

The life of the world is self-pleasing and self-exaltation. The life of heaven is holy, self-denying love. The weakness of the life of many Christians who seek to separate themselves from the world, is that they have too much of the spirit of the world. They seek their own happiness and perfection more than ought else. Jesus Christ was not of the world, and had nothing of its spirit; this is why He could love sinners, could win them and save them. The believer is as little of the world as Christ. The Lord says: "Not of the world, EVEN AS I am not of the world." In his new nature he is born from heaven, has the life and love of heaven in him; his supernatural heavenly life gives him power to be in the world without being of it. The disciple who believes fully in the Christ-likeness of his inner life, will experience the truth of it. He cultivates and gives utterance to the assurance: "EVEN AS Christ, so am I not of the world, because I am in Christ." He understands that alone in close union with Christ can his separation from the world be maintained; in as far as Christ lives in him can he lead a heavenly life. He sees that the only way to answer to his calling is, on the one side, as crucified to the world to withdraw himself from its power; and, on the other, as living in Christ to go into it and bless it. He lives in heaven and walks on earth.

Christians! see here the true imitation of Jesus Christ. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord." Then the promise is fulfilled, "I will dwell in them and walk in them." Then Christ sends you, as the Father sent Him, to be in the world as the place ordained of your Father to glorify Him, and to make known His love. Not so much in the desire to leave earth for heaven, as in the willingness to live the life of heaven here on earth, does a truly unworldly, a heavenly spirit, manifest itself.

"Not of the world" is not only separation from and testimony against the world, but is the living manifestation of the spirit, and the love, and the power of the other world, of the heaven to which we long, in its divine work of making this world partaker of its blessedness.

O Thou great High Priest! who in Thy high priestly power didst pray for us to the Father, as those who, no more than Thyself, belong to the world, and still must remain in it, let Thy all-prevailing intercession now be effectual in our behalf.

The world has still entrance to our hearts, its selfish spirit is still too much within us. Through unbelief the new nature has not always full power. Lord, we beseech of Thee, as fruit of Thy all-powerful intercession, let that word be fully realized in us: "Not of the world, EVEN AS I am not of the world." In our likeness to Thee is our only power against the world.

Lord, we can only be like Thee when we are one with Thee. We can only walk like Thee when we abide in Thee. Blessed Lord, we surrender ourselves to abide in Thee alone. A life entirely given to Thee Thou dost take entire possession of. Let Thy Holy Spirit, who dwells in us, unite us so closely with Thyself that we may always live as not of the world. And let Thy Spirit so make known to us Thy work in the world, that it may be our joy in deep

humility and fervent love to exhibit to all what a blessed life there is in the world for those who are not of the world. May the proof that we are not of the world be the tenderness and fervency with which, like Thee, we sacrifice ourselves for those who are in the world. Amen.

Chapter 10^(TOC)

In his Heavenly Mission

"As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."—John 17:18.

"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."—John 20:21.

The Lord Jesus lived here on earth under a deep consciousness of having a mission from His Father to fulfil. He continually used the expression, "The Father hath sent me."

It will repay the trouble to compare carefully the following passages: John 5:24, 30, 37, 38; 6:38, 39, 40, 44; 7:16, 28, 29, 30; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; 9:4; 11:42; 12:44, 45, 49; 13:20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:25; 17:8, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21.

Christ wanted men to know that He did not act independently, but on behalf of Another who had sent Him. The consciousness of a mission never left Him for a moment.

He knew what this mission was. He knew the Father had chosen Him, and sent Him into the world with the one purpose of fulfilling that mission, and He knew the Father would give Him all that He needed for it. Faith in the Father having sent Him was the motive and power for all that He did.

In earthly things it is a great help if an ambassador knows clearly what his mission is; that he has nothing to do but to care for its accomplishment; and

that he has given himself undividedly to do this one thing. For the Christian it is of no less consequence that he should know that he has a mission, what its nature is, and how he is to accomplish it.

Our heavenly mission is one of the most glorious parts of our conformity to our Lord. He says it plainly in the most solemn moments of His life; "that EVEN AS the Father sent Him," so He sends His disciples. He says it to the Father in His high-priestly prayer, as the ground upon which He asks for their keeping and sanctification. He says it to the disciples after His resurrection, as the ground on which they are to receive the Holy Spirit. Nothing will help us more to know and fulfil our mission than to realize how perfectly it corresponds to the mission of Christ, how they are, in fact, identical.

Our mission is like His *in its object*. Why did the Father send His Son? To make known His love and His will in the salvation of sinners. He was to do this, not alone by word and precept, but in His own person, disposition, and conduct to exhibit, the Father's holy love. He was so to represent the unseen Father in heaven, that men on earth might know what like the Father was.

After the Lord had fulfilled His mission He ascended into heaven, and became to the world like the Father, the Unseen One. And now He has made over His mission to His disciples, after having shown them how to fulfil it. They must so represent Him, the Invisible One, that from seeing them men can judge what He is. Every Christian must so be the image of Jesus—must so exhibit in his person and conduct the same love to sinners, and desire for their salvation, as animated Christ, that from them the world may know what like Christ is. Oh, my soul! take time to realize these heavenly thoughts: Our mission is like Christ's in its object, the showing forth of the holy love of heaven in earthly form.

Like Christ's *in its origin too*. It was the Father's love that chose Christ for this work, and counted Him worthy of such honour and trust. We also are chosen by Christ for this work. Every redeemed one knows that it was not he who sought the Lord, but the Lord who sought and chose him. In that seeking and drawing the Lord had expressly this heavenly mission in view. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." Believer! whoever thou art, and wherever thou dwellest, the Lord, who knows thee and thy surroundings, has need of thee, and has chosen thee to be His representative in the circle in which thou movest. Fix thy heart on this. He has fixed His heart on thee and saved thee, in order that thou shouldst bear and exhibit to those who surround thee the very image of His unseen glory. Oh, think of this origin of thy heavenly mission in His everlasting love, as His had its origin in the love of the Father. Thy mission is in very truth just like His.

Like it, too, *in the fitting for it*. Every ambassador expects to be supplied with all that he needs for his embassy. "He who hath sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone"; that word tells us how, when the Father sent the Son, He was always with Him, His strength and comfort. Even so the Church of Christ in her mission: "Go ye and teach all nations," has the promise: "Lo, I am with you always." The Christian need never hold back because of unfitness. The Lord does not demand anything which He does not give the power to perform. Every believer may depend on it, that as the Father gave His Holy Spirit to the Son to fit Him for His work, so the Lord Jesus will give His people too all the preparation they need. The grace to show forth Christ evermore, to exhibit the lovely light of His example and likeness, and like Christ Himself to be a Fountain of love and life and blessing to all around, is given to every one who only heartily and believingly takes up his heavenly calling. In this too, that the sender cares for all that is

needful for the sent ones, is our mission like His.

And like also ***in the consecration which it demands***. The Lord Jesus gave Himself entirely and undividedly over to accomplish His work; He lived for it alone. "I must work the work of Him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." The Father's mission was the only reason of His being on earth; for that alone He would live; to reveal to mankind what a glorious blessed God the Father in heaven was.

As with Jesus, so with us. Christ's mission is ***the only reason for our being on earth***; were it not for that, He would take us away. Most believers do not believe this. To fulfil Christ's mission is with them at best something to be done along with other things, for which it is difficult to find time and strength. And yet it is so certainly true: to accomplish Christ's mission is the only reason of my being upon earth. Then first when I believe this, and like my Lord in His mission consecrate myself undividedly to it, shall I indeed live well-pleasing to Him. This heavenly mission is so great and glorious, that without an entire consecration to it we cannot accomplish it. Without this, the powers which fit us for it cannot take possession of us. Without this, we have no liberty to expect the Lord's wonderful help and the fulfilment of all His blessed promises. Just as with Jesus, our heavenly mission demands nothing less than entire consecration. Am I prepared for this? Then I have indeed the key through which the holy hidden glories of this word of Jesus will be revealed to my experience: "As the Father sent me, even so send I you."

O brothers! this heavenly mission is indeed worthy that we devote ourselves entirely to it as the only thing we live for.

O Lord Jesus! Thou didst descend from heaven to earth to show us what the

life of heaven is. Thou couldst do this because thou wert of heaven. Thou didst bring with Thee the image and Spirit of the heavenly life to earth. Therefore didst Thou so gloriously exhibit what constitutes the very glory of heaven: the will and love of the unseen Father.

Lord! Thou art now the Invisible One in heaven, and sendest us to represent Thee in Thy heavenly glory as Saviour. Thou dost ask that we should so love men that from us they may form some idea of how Thou lovest them in heaven.

Blessed Lord! our heart cries out: How canst Thou send us with such a calling? How canst Thou expect it of us who have so little love? How can we, who are of the earth earthy, show what the life of heaven is?

Precious Saviour! our souls do bless Thee that we know that Thou dost not demand more than Thou givest. Thou who art Thyself the Life of heaven, Thou livest Thyself in Thy disciples. Blessed be Thy holy name, they have from Thee Thy Holy Spirit from heaven as their life-breath. He is the heavenly life of the soul: whoever surrenders himself to the leading of the Spirit can fulfil his mission. In the joy and power of the Holy Spirit we can be Thy image-bearers, can show to men in some measure what Thy likeness is.

Lord, teach me and all Thy people to understand that we are not of the world, as Thou wert not of the world, and therefore are sent of Thee, even as Thou wert sent of the Father, to prove in our life that we are of that world, full of love, and purity, and blessing, of which Thou wert. Amen.

Chapter 11^(TOC)

As the Elect of God

"Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."—Romans 8:29

Scripture teaches us a personal election. It does this not only in single passages: its whole history of the working out here in time of the counsels of eternity proves it. We see continually how the whole future of God's kingdom depends upon the faithful filling of His place by some single person: the only security for the carrying out of God's purpose is His foreordaining of the individual. In predestination alone the history of the world and of God's kingdom, as of the individual believer, has its sure foundation.

There are Christians who cannot see this. They are so afraid of interfering with human responsibility, that they reject the doctrine of divine predestination, because it appears to rob man of his liberty of will and action. Scripture does not share this fear. It speaks in one place of man's free will as though there were no election, in another of election as though there were no free will. Thus it teaches us that we must hold fast both these truths alongside each other, even when we cannot understand them, or make them perfectly to harmonize. In the light of eternity the solution of the mystery will be given. He who grasps both in faith will speedily experience how little they are in conflict. He will see that the stronger his faith is in God's everlasting purpose, the more his courage for work will be strengthened; while, on the other side, the more he works and is blessed, the clearer it will become that all is of God.

For this reason it is of so much consequence for a believer to make his election sure. The Scriptures give the assurance that if we do this, "we shall never stumble" (R.V.). The more I believe not only in general that I am elected of God, but see how this election has reference to every part of my calling, the more shall I be strengthened in the conviction that God Himself will perfect His work in me, and that therefore it is possible for me to be all that God really expects. With every duty Scripture lays upon me, with every promise for whose fulfilment I long, I will go to find in God's purposes the firm footing upon which my expectations may rest, and the true measure by which they are to be guided. I shall understand that my life on earth is to be a copy of the heavenly life-plan, that the Father has drawn out, of what I am to be on earth. Christian! make your calling and election sure; let it become clear to you that you are elected, and to what: "If ye do these things, ye shall never stumble." Quiet communion with God on the ground of His unchangeable purpose imparts to the soul an immoveable firmness that keeps from stumbling.

One of the most blessed expressions in regard to God's purpose concerning us in Christ is this word: "Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son." The man Christ Jesus is the elect of God; in Him election has its beginning and ending. "In Him we are chosen;" for the sake of our union with Him and to His glory our election took place. The believer who seeks in election merely the certainty of his own salvation, or relief from fear and doubt, knows very little of its real glory. The purposes of election embrace all the riches that are prepared for us in Christ, and reach to every moment and every need of our lives. "Chosen in Him that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love" "it is only when the connection between election and sanctification is rightly apprehended in the Church that the doctrine of election will bring its full blessing" (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter

1:2). It teaches the believer how it is God who must work all in him, who will work all in him, and how he may rely even in the smallest matters upon the unchangeable purpose of God to work out itself in the accomplishment of everything that He expects of His people. In this light the word "Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son" gives new strength to every one who has begun to take *what Christ is* as the rule of *what he himself is to be*.

Christian! would you in very deed be *like Christ*, fix your mind upon the thought of how certainly this is God's will concerning you; how the whole of redemption has been planned with the view of your becoming so; how God's purpose is the guarantee that your desires must be fulfilled. There, where your name is written in the book of life, there stands also, "Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son." All the powers of the Deity which have already wrought together in the accomplishment of the first part of the eternal purpose, the revealing of the Father's perfect likeness in the man Christ Jesus, are equally engaged to accomplish the second part, and work that likeness in each of God's children. In the work of Christ there is the most perfect provision possible for the carrying out of God's purposes in this. Our union to Christ, held fast in a living faith, will be an all-prevailing power. We can depend upon it as something ordained with a divine certainty, and that must come if we yield ourselves to it. Has not God elected us to be conformed to the image of His Son?

It can easily be understood what a powerful influence the living consciousness of this truth will have. It teaches us to give up ourselves to the Eternal Will, that it may, with divine power, effect its purpose in us. It shows us how useless and impotent our own efforts are to accomplish this work: all that is *of* God must also be *through* Him. He who is the beginning, must be

the middle and the end. In a very wonderful manner it strengthens our faith with a holy boldness to glory in God alone, and to expect from God Himself the fulfilment of every promise and every command, of every part of the purpose of His blessed will.

And where does this likeness to Christ consist? In Sonship. It is to the image of **His Son** we are to be conformed. All the different traits of a Christ-like life resolve themselves into this one as their spring and end. We are "predestinated unto the adoption of **children** by Jesus Christ." It was **as the Son** Christ lived and served and pleased the Father. It is only **as a son** with the spirit of His own Son in my heart, that I can live and serve and please the Father. I must each day walk in the full and clear consciousness: like Christ, I am a son of the Most High God, born from above, the beloved of the Father. As a son the Father is engaged to provide my every need. As a son I live in dependence and trust, in love and obedience, in joy and hope. It is when I live with the Father as a son, that it becomes possible to make any sacrifice and to obey every command.

Believer! take time and prayer to take in this truth, and let it exercise its full power in your soul Let the Holy Spirit write it into your inmost being, that you are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. The Father's object was the honour of His Son, "that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." Let this be your object too in all your life, so to show forth the image of your Elder Brother, that other Christians may be pointed to Him alone, may praise Him alone, and seek to follow Him more closely too. Let it be the fixed and only purpose of your life, the great object of your believing prayer, that "Christ be magnified in my body." This will give you new confidence to ask and expect all that is necessary to live like Christ. Your conformity to Christ will be one of the links connecting the eternal purpose of

the Father with the eternal fulfilment of it in the glorifying of the Son. Your conformity to Christ becomes then such a holy, heavenly, divine work, that you realize that it can come only from the Father, but that from Him you can and shall most certainly receive it. What God's purpose has decreed, God's power will perform. What God's love has ordained and commanded, God's love will most certainly accomplish. A living faith in His eternal purpose will become one of the mightiest powers in urging and helping us to live LIKE CHRIST.

O Thou incomprehensible Being, I bow before Thee in deepest humility. It has been such a strength to know that Thy Son has chosen me, in order to send me into the world as Thou hadst sent Him. But here Thou hast led me still higher, and shown that this mission to be as He was in the world was from eternity decreed by Thyself. O my God, my soul bows prostrate in the dust before Thee.

Lord God, now that Thy child comes to Thee for the fulfilment of Thy own purpose, he dares confidently look for an answer. Thy will is stronger than every hindrance. The faith that trusts Thee will not be put to shame. Lord, in holy reverence and worship, but with childlike confidence and hope, I utter this prayer: Father, give me the desire of my soul, conformity to the image of Thy Son; Father, likeness to Jesus, this is what my soul desires of Thee. Let me, like Him, be Thy holy child.

O my Father, write it in Thy book of remembrance, and write it in my remembrance too, that I have asked it of Thee as what I desire above all things, conformity to the image of Thy Son.

Father, to this Thou hast chosen me; Thou wilt give it me, to Thine own and His glory. Amen.

Chapter 12^(TOC)

In Doing God's Will

"For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me."—John 6:38; 5:30.

In the will of God we have the highest expression of His divine perfection, and at the same time the highest energy of His divine power. Creation owes its being and its beauty to it; it is the manifestation of God's will. In all nature the will of God is done. In heaven the angels find their highest blessedness in doing God's will. For this man was created with a free will, in order that he might have the power to choose, and of his own accord do God's will. And, lo! deceived by the devil, man committed the great sin of rather doing his own than God's will. **Yes, rather his own than God's will!** in this is the root and the wretchedness of sin.

Jesus Christ became man to bring us back to the blessedness of **doing God's will**. The great object of redemption was to make us and our will free from the power of sin, and to lead us again to live and do the will of God. In His life on earth He showed us what it is to live only for the will of God; in His death and resurrection He won for us the power to live and do the will of God as He had done.

"Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." These words, uttered through the Holy Spirit by the mouth of one of His prophets long ages before Christ's birth, are the key to His life on earth. At Nazareth in the carpenter's shop, at the Jordan

with John the Baptist, in the wilderness with Satan, in public with the multitude, in living and dying, it was this that inspired and guided and gladdened Him; the glorious will of the Father was to be accomplished in Him and by Him.

Let us not think that this cost Him nothing. He says repeatedly, "**Not my will,** but the will of the Father," to let us understand that there was in very deed a denial of His own will. In Gethsemane the sacrifice of His own will reached its height, but what took place there was only the perfect expression of what had rendered His whole life acceptable to the Father. Not herein is sin, that man has a creature-will different from the Creator's, but in this, that he clings to his own will when it is seen to be contrary to the will of the Creator. As man, Jesus had a human will, the natural, though not sinful desires which belong to human nature. As man, He did not always know beforehand what the will of God was. He had to wait, and be taught of God, and learn from time to time what that will was. But when the will of His Father was once known to Him, then He was always ready to give up His own human will, and do the will of the Father. It was this that constituted the perfection and the value of His self-sacrifice. He had once for all surrendered Himself as a man, to live only in and for the will of God, and was always ready, even to the sacrifice of Gethsemane and Calvary, to do that will alone.

It is **this life of obedience**, wrought out by the Lord Jesus in the flesh, that is not only imputed to us, but **imparted through the Holy Spirit**. Through His death our, Lord Jesus has atoned for our self-will and disobedience. It was by conquering it in His own perfect obedience that He atoned for it. He has thus not only blotted out the guilt of our self-will before God, but broken its power in us. In His resurrection He brought from the dead a life that had conquered and destroyed all selfwill. And the believer who knows the power of Jesus'

death and resurrection, has the power to consecrate himself entirely to God's will. He knows that the call to follow Christ means nothing less than to take and speak the words of the Master as his own solemn vow, "I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father."

To attain this we must begin by taking the same stand that our Lord did. Take God's will as one great whole, as the only thing for which you live on earth. Look at the sun and moon, the grass and flowers, what glory each of them has, only because it is just doing God's will. But they do it without knowing it. Thou canst do it still more gloriously, because knowing and willing to do it. Let thine heart be filled with the thought of the glory of God's will concerning His children, and concerning thee, and say that it is thy one purpose that that will should be done in thee. Yield thyself to the Father frequently and distinctly, with the declaration that with thee, as with Jesus, it is a settled thing that His beautiful and blessed will must and shall be done. Say it frequently in thy quiet meditations, with a joyful and trusting heart: PRAISE GOD! I MAY LIVE ONLY TO DO THE WILL OF GOD.

Let no fear keep us back from this. Think not that this will be too hard for us to do; God's will only seems hard as long as we look at it from a distance, and are unwilling to submit to it. Just look again how beautiful the will of God makes everything in nature. Ask yourself, now that He loves and blesses you as a child, if it is right to distrust Him. The will of God is the will of His love, how can you fear to surrender yourself to it?

Nor let the fear that you will not be able to obey that will, keep you back. The Son of God came on earth to show what the life of man must and may become. His resurrection life gives us power to live as He lived. Jesus Christ enables us, through His Spirit, to walk not after the flesh, but according to the will of God.

"I come to do Thy will, O God": before ever the Lord Jesus was come down to earth, a believer in the Old Testament was able, through the Spirit, to speak that word of himself as well as for Christ. Christ took it up and filled it with new life-power. And now He expects of His redeemed ones that, since He has been on earth, they will even more heartily and entirely make it their choice. Let us do so. We must not first try and see whether, in single instances, we succeed in doing God's will, in the hope of afterwards attaining to the entire consecration that can say: "I come to do Thy will." No, this is not the right way. Let us first recognise God's will as a whole, and the claims it has upon us, as well as its blessedness and glory. Let us surrender ourselves to it as to God Himself, and consider it as one of the first articles of our creed: I am in the world, like Christ, only to do the Father's will. This surrender will teach us with joy to accept every command and every providence as part of the will we have already yielded ourselves to. This surrender will give us courage to wait for God's sure guidance and strength, because the man who lives only for God's will may depend upon it that God takes him for his reckoning. This surrender will lead us deeper into the consciousness of our utter impotence, but also deeper into the fellowship and the likeness of the beloved Son, and make us partakers of all the blessedness and love that the Son has prepared for us. There is nothing that will bring us closer to God in union to Christian loving and keeping and doing the will of God.

Child of God! one of the first marks of conformity to Christ is obedience, simple and implicit obedience to all the will of God. Let it be the most marked thing in thy life. Begin by a willing and wholehearted keeping of every one of the commands of God's holy Word. Go on to a very tender yielding to everything that conscience tells thee to be right, even when the Word does not directly command it. So shalt thou rise higher: a hearty obedience to the commandments, as far as thou knowest them, and a ready

obedience to conscience wherever it speaks, are the preparation for that divine teaching of the Spirit which will lead thee deeper into the meaning and application of the Word, and into a more direct and spiritual insight into God's will with regard to thyself personally. It is to those **who obey** Him God gives the Holy Spirit, through whom the blessed will of God becomes the light that shines ever more brightly on our path. "If any man will **do His** will, he shall know." Blessed will of God! blessed obedience to God's will! oh that we knew to count and keep these as our most precious treasures!

And if ever it appear too hard to live only for God's will, let us remember wherein Christ found His strength: it was because it was **the Father's** will that the Son rejoiced to do it. "This commandment have I received **of my Father**." This made even the laying down of His life possible. Our union to Jesus, and our calling to live like Him, ever point us to **His Sonship** as the secret of His life and strength. Let it be our chief desire to say each day: I am the Father's beloved child, and to think of each commandment as **the Father's** will; a Christ-like sense of sonship will lead to a Christ-like obedience.

O my God, I thank Thee for this wondrous gift, Thy Son become man, to teach us how man may do the will of his God. I thank Thee for the glorious calling to be like Him in this too, with Him to taste the blessedness of a life in perfect harmony with Thy glorious and perfect will. I thank Thee for the power given in Christ to do and to bear all that will. I thank Thee that in this too I may be like the first-begotten Son.

I come now, O my Father, afresh to take up this my calling in childlike joyous trust and love. Lord, I would live wholly and only to do Thy will. I would abide in the Word and wait upon the Spirit. I would, like Thy Son, live in fellowship with Thee in prayer, in the firm confidence that Thou wilt day

by day make me to know Thy will more clearly. O my Father, let this my desire be acceptable in Thy sight. Keep it in the thoughts of my heart for ever. Give me grace with true joy continually to say: Not my will, but the will of my Father must be done: I am here on the earth only to do the will of my God. Amen.

Chapter 13^(TOC)

In his Compassion

"Then Jesus said, I have compassion on the multitude."—Matthew 15:32
"Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow. servant, even as I had compassion on thee?"—Matthew 18:32

On three different occasions Matthew tells us that our Lord was moved with compassion on the multitude. His whole life was a manifestation of the compassion with which He had looked on the sinner from everlasting, and of the tenderness with which He was moved at the sight of misery and sorrow. He was in this the true reflection of our compassionate God, of the father who, moved with compassion towards his prodigal son, fell on his neck and kissed him.

In this compassion of the Lord Jesus we can see how He did not look upon the will of God He came to do as a duty or an obligation, but had that divine will dwelling within Him as His own, inspiring and ruling all His sentiments and motives. After He had said, "I came from heaven **not to do my own will**, but the will of Him that sent me," He at once added, "And **this is the will** of the Father, that of all He hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." "And **this is the will** of Him that sent me, that every one which believeth on the Son may have everlasting life." For the Lord Jesus the will of God consisted not in certain things which were forbidden or commanded. No, He had entered into that which truly forms the very heart of God's will, and that is, that to lost sinners He should give eternal

life. Because God Himself is love, His will is that love should have full scope in the salvation of sinners. The Lord Jesus came down to earth in order to manifest and accomplish this will of God. He did not do this as a servant obeying the will of a stranger. In His personal life and all His dispositions He proved that the loving will of His Father to save sinners was His own. Not only His death on Golgotha, but just as much the compassion in which He took and bore the need of all the wretched, and the tenderness of His intercourse with them, was the proof that the Father's will had truly become His own. In every way He showed that life was of no value to Him but as the opportunity of doing the will of His Father.

Beloved followers of Christ, who have offered yourselves to imitate Him, let the will of the Father be to you what it was to your Lord. The will of the Father in the mission of His Son was the manifestation and the triumph of divine compassion in the salvation of lost sinners. Jesus could not possibly accomplish this will in any other way than by having and showing this compassion. ***God's will is for us what it was for Jesus: the salvation of the perishing.*** It is impossible for us to fulfil that will otherwise than by having, and bearing about, and showing in our lives, the compassion of our God. The seeking of God's will must not be only denying ourselves certain things which God forbids, and doing certain works which God commands, but must consist specially in this, that we surrender ourselves to have the same mind and disposition towards sinners as God has, and that we find our pleasure and joy alone in living for this. By the most personal devotion to each poor perishing sinner around us, and by our helping them in compassionate love, we can show that the will of God is become our will. With the compassionate God as our Father, with Christ who was so often moved with compassion as our life, nothing can be more just than the command that the life of every Christian should be one of compassionate love.

Compassion is the spirit of love which is awakened by the sight of need or wretchedness. What abundant occasion is there every day for the practice of this heavenly virtue, and what a need of it in a world so full of misery and sin! Every Christian ought therefore by prayer and practice to cultivate a compassionate heart, as one of the most precious marks of likeness to the blessed Master. Everlasting love longs to give itself to a perishing world, and to find its satisfaction in saving the lost. It ***seeks for vessels which it may fill with the love of God, and send out among the dying that they may drink and live for ever.*** It asks hearts to fill with its own tender compassion at the sight of all the need in which sinners live, hearts that will reckon it their highest blessedness, as the dispensers of God's compassion, to live entirely to bless and save sinners. O my brother, the everlasting compassion which has had mercy on thee calls thee, as one who has obtained mercy, to come and let it fill thee. It will fit thee, in thy compassion on all around, to be a witness to God's compassionate love.

The opportunity for showing compassion we have all around us. How much there is of temporal want! There are the poor and the sick, widows and orphans, distressed and despondent souls, who need nothing so much as the refreshment a compassionate heart can bring. They live in the midst of Christians, and sometimes complain that it is as if there are children of the world who have more sympathy than those who are only concerned about their own salvation. O brothers, pray earnestly for a compassionate heart, always on the look-out for an opportunity of doing some work of love, always ready to be an instrument of the divine compassion. It was the compassionate sympathy of Jesus that attracted so many to Him upon earth; that same compassionate tenderness will still, more than anything, draw souls to you and to your Lord.^[5]

And how much of spiritual misery surrounds us on all sides! Here is a poor rich man. There is a foolish, thoughtless youth. There is again a poor drunkard, or a hopeless unfortunate. Or perhaps none of these, but simply people entirely wrapt up in the follies of the world which surround them. How often are words of unloving indifference, or harsh judgment, or slothful hopelessness, heard concerning all these! The compassionate heart is wanting. Compassion looks upon the deepest misery as the place prepared for her by God, and is attracted by it. Compassion never wearies, never gives up hope. Compassion will not allow itself to be rejected, for it is the self-denying love of Christ which inspires it.

The Christian does not confine his compassion to his own circle: he has a large heart. His Lord has shown him the whole heathen world as his field of labour. He seeks to be acquainted with the circumstances of the heathen: he carries their burden on his heart; he is really moved with compassion, and means to help them. Whether the heathenism is near or far off, whether he witnesses it in all its filth and degradation, or only hears of it, compassionate love lives only to accomplish God's will in saving the perishing.

LIKE CHRIST *in His compassion*: let this now be our motto. After uttering the parable of the Compassionate Samaritan, who, "moved with compassion," helped the wounded stranger, the Lord said, "Go and do likewise." He is Himself the compassionate Samaritan, who speaks to every one of us whom He has saved, "Go and do likewise." EVEN AS I have done to you, do ye likewise. We, who owe everything to His compassion, who profess ourselves His followers, who walk in His footsteps and bear His image, oh let us exhibit His compassion to the world. We can do it. He lives in us; His Spirit works in us. Let us with much prayer and firm faith look to *His example* as the sure promise of what we can be. It will be to Him an unspeakable joy, if

He finds us prepared for it, not only to show His compassion to us, but through us to the world. And ours will be the unutterable joy of having a Christ-like heart, full of compassion and of great mercy.

O my Lord! my calling is becoming almost too high. In Thy compassionate love, too, I must follow and imitate and reproduce Thy life. In the compassion wherewith I see and help every bodily and spiritual misery, in the gentle, tender love wherewith every sinner feels that I long to bless men, must the world form some idea of Thy compassion. Most merciful One! forgive me that the world has seen so little of it in me. Most mighty Redeemer! let Thy compassion not only save me, but so take hold of me and dwell in me that compassion may be the very breath and joy of my life. May Thy compassion towards me be within me a living fountain of compassion towards others.

Lord Jesus, I know Thou canst only give this on one condition, that I let go my own life and my efforts to keep and sanctify that life, and suffer Thee to live in me, to be my life. Most merciful One, I yield myself to Thee! Thou hast a right to me, Thou alone. There is nothing more precious to me than Thy compassionate countenance; what can be more blessed than to be like Thee!

Lord, here I am. I have faith in Thee, that Thou Thyself wilt teach and fit me to obey Thy word: "Thou shouldest have had compassion, even as I had compassion on thee." In that faith I go out this very day to find in my intercourse with others the opportunity of showing how Thou hast loved me. In that faith it will become the great object of my life to win men to Thee. Amen.

Chapter 14^(TOC)

In his Oneness with the Father

"Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are. That they all may be one; even as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me. And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one. I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, even as Thou hast loved me."—John 17:11, 21, 22

What an unspeakable treasure we have in this high-priestly prayer! There the heart of Jesus is laid open to our view, and we see what His love desires for us. There the heavens are opened to us, and we learn what He as our Intercessor is continually asking and obtaining for us from the Father.

In that prayer the mutual union of believers has a larger place than anything else. In His prayer for all who in future shall believe, this is the chief petition, Verse 20-26. Three times He repeats this prayer for their unity.

The Lord tells us plainly why He desires it so strongly. ***This unity is the only convincing proof to the world that the Father had sent Him.*** With all its blindness, the world knows that selfishness is the curse of sin. It helps but little that God's children tell that they are born again, and that they are happy, that they can do wonders in Jesus' name, or prove that what the Scriptures teach is the truth. When the world sees a church from which selfishness is banished, then it will acknowledge the divine mission of Christ, because He

has wrought such a wonder, a community of men who truly and heartily love one another.

The Lord speaks of this unity three times as the reflection of His own oneness with the Father. He knew that this was the perfection of the Godhead: the Father and Son, as persons separate, and yet perfectly one in the living fellowship of the Holy Spirit. And He cannot imagine anything higher than this, that His believing people should with Him and in Him be one with each other, EVEN AS He and the Father are one.

The intercession of the Lord Jesus avails much; it is all-prevailing. What He asks He receives of His Father. But lo! the blessing which descends finds no entrance in hearts where there is no open door, no place prepared, to receive it. How many believers there are who do not even desire to be one even as the Father and the Son are one! They are so accustomed to a life of selfishness and imperfect love, that they do not even long for such perfect love: they put off that union until they meet in heaven. And yet the Lord thought of a life on earth when He twice said, "That the world may know."

That "they may be one, EVEN AS We are one." The Church must be awakened to understand and to value this prayer aright. This union is one of life and love at once. Some explain it as having reference to the hidden life-union which binds all believers even under external divisions. But this is not what the Lord means; He speaks of something that the world can see, something that resembles the union between God the Father and God the Son. The hidden unity of life must be manifest in the visible unity and fellowship of love. Only when it becomes impossible for believers, in the different smaller circles in which they are associated, not to live in the full oneness of love with the children of God around them; only when they learn that a life in love to each other, such as Christ's to us, and the Father's to Him, is simple

duty, and begin to cry to God for His Holy Spirit to work it in them, then only will there be a hope of change in this respect. The fire will spread from circle to circle and from church to church, until all who truly do the will of God will consecrate themselves to abide in love, even as God is love.

And what are we to do now, while we wait for and wish to hasten that day? Let every one who takes up earnestly the word of the Master, "EVEN AS I, so also ye," let him begin with his own circle. And in that circle with himself first. However weak or sickly, however perverse or trying the members of Christ's body may be with whom he is surrounded, let him live with them in close fellowship and love. Whether they are willing for it or not, whether they accept or reject, let him love them with a Christ-like love. Yes, to love them as Christ does must be the purpose of his life. This love will find an echo in some hearts at least, and awaken in them the desire, too, to seek after the life of love and perfect oneness.

But what discoveries such effort will bring of the impotence of the believer, who has been hitherto satisfied with the ordinary Christian life, at all to reach this standard! He will soon find that nothing will avail but a personal, undivided consecration. To have a love like Christ's, I must truly have a life like Christ's: ***I must live with His life.*** The lesson must be learnt anew, that Christ in the fullest sense of the word will be the life of those who dare to trust Him for it. Those who cannot trust with a full trust, cannot love with a full love.

Believer, listen once more to the simple way to such a life. First of all acknowledge your calling to live and love just like Christ. Confess your inability to fulfil this calling, even in the very least. Listen to the word, that Christ is waiting to fit you to fulfil this calling, if you will give yourself unreservedly to Him. Make the surrender in this, that conscious of being

utterly unable to do anything in your own strength, you offer yourself to your Lord to work in you both to will and to do. And count then most confidently upon Him, who in the power of His unceasing intercession can save completely, to work in you what He has asked of His Father for you. Yes, count on Him who has said to the Father, "Thou in me and I in them, that they may be one, EVEN AS we are one," that He will manifest His life in you with heavenly power. As you live with His life, you will love with His love.

Beloved fellow-Christians, the oneness of Christ with the Father is our model: even as they, so must we be one. Let us love one another, serve one another, bear with one another, help one another, live for one another. For this our love is too small: but we will earnestly pray that Christ give us His love wherewith to love. With God's love shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, we shall be so one that the world will know that it is indeed the truth, that the Father sent Christ into the world, and that Christ has given in us the very life and love of heaven.

Holy Father, we know now with what petitions He, who ever liveth to make intercession, continually approaches Thee. It is for the perfect unity of His disciples. Father, we too would cry to Thee for this blessing. Alas, how divided is Thy Church! It is not the division of language or country that we deplore, not even the difference of doctrine or that so much grieves us. But, Lord! the want of that unity of spirit and love whereby Thy Church should convince the world that she is from heaven.

O Lord! we desire to confess before Thee with deep shame the coldness, and selfishness, and distrust, and bitterness that is still at times to be seen among Thy children. We confess before Thee our own want of that fervent and perfect love to which Thou hast called us. O forgive, and have mercy upon us.

Lord God! visit Thy people. It is through the one Spirit that we can know and show our unity in the one Lord. Let Thy Holy Spirit work powerfully in Thy believing people to make them one. Let it be felt in every circle where God's children meet each other, how indispensable a close union in the love of Jesus is. And let my heart, too, be delivered from self, to realize, in the fellowship with Thy children, how we are one, EVEN AS Thou, Father, and Thy Son art one. Amen.

Chapter 15^(TOC)

In his Dependence on the Father

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing: for what things soever He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth: and greater works than these will He show Him, that ye may marvel."—John 5:19, 20

"I know mine own, and mine own know me, even as the Father knoweth me and I know the Father."—John 10:15 (R.V.)

Our relation to Jesus is the exact counterpart of His to the Father. And so the words in which He sets forth His intercourse with the Father have their truth in us too. And as the words of Jesus in John 5 describe the natural relation between every father and son, whether on earth or in heaven, they are applicable not only to the Only-begotten, but to every one who in and like Jesus is called a son of God.

We cannot better catch the simple truth and force of the illustration than by thinking of Jesus with His earthly father in the carpenter's shop learning his trade. The first thing you notice is the entire **dependence**: "The son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the father doing." Then you are struck by the implicit **obedience**, that just seeks to imitate the father: "for whatsoever things the father doeth, these doeth the son in like manner." You then notice the loving intimacy to which the father admits him, keeping back none of his secrets: "for the father loveth the son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth." And in this dependent obedience on his son's part, and

the loving teaching on the father's part, you have the pledge of an ever-growing advance to greater works: step by step the son will be led up to all that the father himself can do: "Greater works than these will he show him, that ye may marvel."

In this picture we have the reflection of the relationship between God the Father and the Son in His blessed humanity. If His human nature is to be something real and true, and if we are to understand how Christ is in very deed to be our example, we must believe fully in what our blessed Lord here reveals to us of the secrets of His inner life. The words He speaks are literal truth. His dependence on the Father for each moment of His life was absolutely and intensely real: "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing." He counted it no humiliation to wait on Him for His commands: He rather considered it His highest blessedness to let Himself be led and guided of the Father as a child. And accordingly He held Himself bound in strictest obedience to say and do only what the Father showed Him: "Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner."

The proof of this is the exceeding carefulness with which in everything He seeks to keep to Holy Scripture. In His sufferings He will endure all in order that the Scriptures may be fulfilled. For this He remained the whole night in prayer. In such continued prayer He presents His thoughts to the Father, and waits for the answer, that He may know the Father's will. No child in his ignorance, no slave in his bondage, was ever so anxious to keep to what the father or master had said, as the Lord Jesus was to follow the teaching and guidance of His Heavenly Father. On this account the Father kept nothing hid from Him: the entire dependence and willingness always to learn were rewarded with the most perfect communication of all the Father's secrets.

"For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things, and will show Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel." The Father had formed a glorious life plan for the Son, that in Him the Divine life might be shown forth in the conditions of human existence: this plan was shown to the Son piece by piece until at last all was gloriously accomplished.

Child of God, it is not only for the only-begotten Son that a life plan has been arranged, but for each one of His children. Just in proportion as we live in more or less entire dependence on the Father will this life plan be more or less perfectly worked out in our lives. The nearer the believer comes to this entire dependence of the Son, "doing nothing but what He sees the Father do," and then to His implicit obedience, "whatsoever He doeth, doing these in like manner," so much more will the promise be fulfilled to us: "The Father showeth Him all things that He Himself doeth, and will show Him greater works than these." LIKE CHRIST! that word calls us to a life of conformity to the Son in His blessed dependence on the Father. Each one of us is invited thus to live.

To such a life in dependence on the Father, the first thing that is necessary is a firm faith that He will make known His will to us. I think this is something that keeps many back: they cannot believe that the Lord cares for them so much that He will indeed give Himself the trouble every day to teach them and to make known to them His will, just as He did to Jesus. Christian, thou art of more value to the Father than thou knowest. Thou art as much worth as the price He paid for thee, that is, the blood of His Son; He therefore attaches the highest value to the least thing that concerns thee, and will guide thee even in what is most insignificant. He longs more for close and constant intercourse with thee than thou canst conceive. He can use thee for His glory, and make something of thee, higher than thou canst understand. The Father

loves His child, and shows him what He does. That He proved in Jesus; and He will prove it in us too. There must only be the surrender to expect His teaching. Through His Holy Spirit He gives this most tenderly. Without removing us from our circle, the Father can so conform us to Christ's image, that we can be a blessing and joy to all. Do not let unbelief of God's compassionate love prevent us from expecting the Father's guidance in all things.

Let the unwillingness to submit yourself as little keep you back. This is the second great hindrance. The desire for independence was the temptation in paradise, is the temptation in each human heart. It seems hard to be nothing, to know nothing, to will nothing. And yet it is so blessed. This dependence brings us into most blessed communion with God: of us it becomes true as of Jesus, "The Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things whatsoever He doeth." This dependence takes from us all care and responsibility: we have only to obey orders. It gives real power and strength of will, because we know that He works in us to will and to do. It gives us the blessed assurance that our work will succeed, because we have allowed God alone to take charge of it.

My brother, if you have hitherto known but little of this life of conscious dependence and simple obedience, begin to-day. Let your Saviour be your example in this. It is His blessed will to live in you, and in you to be again what He was here on earth. He only longs for your acquiescence: He will work it in you. Offer yourself to the Father this day, after the example of the First-begotten, to do nothing of yourself but only what the Father shows you. Fix your gaze on Jesus as also did this the Example and Promise of what you shall be. Adore Him who, for your sake, humbled Himself, and showed how blessed the dependent life can be.

Blessed dependence! it is indeed the disposition which becomes us towards such a God. It gives Him the glory which belongs to Him as God. It keeps the soul in peace and rest, for it allows God to care for all. It keeps the mind quiet and prepared to receive and use the Father's teaching. And it is so gloriously rewarded in the deeper experience of holy intercourse, and the continued ever-advancing discoveries of His will and work with which the Father crowns it. Blessed dependence! in which the Son lived on earth, thou art the desire of my soul.

Blessed dependence! it was because Jesus knew that He was *a Son* that He thus loved to be dependent on *the Father*. Of all the teaching in regard to the likeness to Christ this is the centre and sum: I must live as a Son with my Father. If I stand clear in this relationship, *as a son realizing that the Father is everything to me*, a son-like life, living through the Father, living for the Father, will be its natural and spontaneous outcome.

O my Father, the longer I fix my gaze upon the image of the Son, the more I discover the fearful ruin of my nature, and how far sin has estranged me from Thee. To be dependent upon Thee: there can be no higher blessedness than this; to trust in all things in a God such as Thou art, so wise and good, so rich and powerful. And lo! it has become the most difficult thing there can be; we would rather be dependent on our own folly than the God of all glory. Even Thine own children, O most blessed Father! often think it so hard to give up their own thoughts and will, and to believe that absolute dependence on God, to the very least things, is alone true blessedness.

Lord! I come to Thee with the humble prayer: teach me this. He who purchased with His own blood for me the everlasting, blessedness, hath shown me in His own life wherein that blessedness consists. And I know He will now lead and keep me in it. O my Father! in Thy Son I yield myself to

Thee, to be made like Him, like Him to do nothing of myself, but what I see the Father doing. Father! Thou wilt take even me too, like the Firstborn, and for His sake, into Thy training, and show me what Thou doest. O my God! be Thou a Father unto me as unto Christ, and let me be Thy son, as He was.
Amen.

Chapter 16^(TOC)

In his Love

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another: even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."—John 13:34

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, even as I have loved you."—John 15:12

EVEN AS: We begin to understand somewhat of the blessedness of that little word. It is not the command of a law which only convinces of sin and impotence; it is a new command under a new covenant, that is established upon better promises. It is the command of Him who asks nothing that He has not provided, and now offers to bestow. It is the assurance that He expects nothing from us, that He does not work in us: EVEN AS I have loved you, and every moment am pouring out that love upon you through the Holy Spirit, EVEN so do ye love one another. The measure, the strength, and the work of your love you will find in my love to you.

EVEN AS I have loved you: that word gives us the *measure* of the love wherewith we must love each other. True love knows no measure: it gives itself entirely. It may take into consideration the time and measure of showing it; but love itself is ever whole and undivided. This is the greatest glory of Divine Love that we have, in the Father and Son, two persons, who in love remain One Being, each losing Himself in the other. This is the glory of the love of Jesus, who is the image of God, that He loves us even as the Father loves Him. And this is the glory of brotherly love, that it will know of

no other law, than to love even as God and Christ.

He who would be like Christ must unhesitatingly accept this as his rule of life. He knows how difficult, how impossible it often is thus to love brethren, in whom there is so much that is offensive or unamiable. Before going out to meet them in circumstances where his love may be tried, he goes in secret to the Lord, and with his eye fixed on his own sin and unworthiness asks: How much owest thou thy Lord? He goes to the cross and seeks there to fathom the love wherewith the Lord has loved him. He lets the light of the immeasurable love of Him who is in heaven, his Head and his Brother, shine in upon his soul, until he learns to feel Divine Love has but one law: love seeks not its own, love gives itself wholly. And he lays himself on the altar before his Lord: even as Thou hast loved me, so will I love the brethren. In virtue of my union with Jesus, and in Jesus with them, there can be no question of anything less: I love them as Christ did. Oh that Christians would close their ears to all the reasonings of their own hearts, and fix their eyes only on the law which He who loves them has promulgated in His own example; they would realize that there is nothing for them to do but this—to accept His commands and to obey them.

Our love may recognise no other measure than His, because His love is ***the strength*** of ours. The love of Christ is no mere idea or sentiment: it is a real divine life power. As long as the Christian does not understand this, it cannot exert its full power in him. But when his faith rises to realize that Christ's love is nothing less than the imparting of Himself and His love to the beloved, and he becomes rooted in this love as the source whence his life derives its sustenance, then he sees that his Lord simply asks that he should allow His love to flow through him. He must live in a Christ-given strength: the love of Christ constrains him, and enables him to love as He did.

From this love of Christ the Christian also learns what **the work** of his love to the brethren must be. We have already had occasion to speak of many manifestations of love: its loving service, its self-denial, its meekness. Love is the root of all these. It teaches the disciple to look upon himself as really called upon to be, in his little circle, just like Jesus, the one who lives solely to love and help others. Paul prays for the Philippians: "That your love may abound more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment" (Philippians 1:9). Love does not comprehend at once what the work is that it can do. The believer who prays that his love may abound in knowledge, and really takes Christ's example as his rule of life, will be taught what a great and glorious work there is for him to do. The Church of God, and every child of God, as well as the world, has an unspeakable need of love, of the manifestation of Christ's love. The Christian who really takes the Lord's word, "Love one another, **even as** I have loved you," as a command that must be obeyed, carries about a power for blessing and life for all with whom he comes in contact. Love is the explanation of the whole wonderful life of Christ, and of the wonder of His death: Divine Love in God's children will still work its mighty wonders.

"Behold what manner of love!" "Behold how He loved!" These words are the superscription over the love of the Father and of the Son. They must yet become the keywords to the life of every Christian. They will be so where in living faith and true consecration the command of Christ to love, even as He loved, is accepted as the law of life. As early as the call of Abraham this principle was deposited as a living seed in God's kingdom, that what God is for us, we must be for others. "I will bless thee," "and thou shalt be a blessing." If "I have loved you" is the highest manifestation of what God is for us, then "Even so love ye" must be the first and highest expression of what the child of God must be. In preaching, as in the life, of the Church, it

must be understood: *The love which loves like Christ is the sign of true discipleship.*

Beloved Christians! Christ Jesus longs for you in order to make you, amid those who surround you, a very fountain of love. The love of Heaven would fain take possession of you, in order that, in and through you, it may work its blessed work on earth. Yield to its rule. Offer yourself unreservedly to its indwelling. Honour it by the confident assurance that it can teach you to love as Jesus loved. As conformity to the Lord Jesus must be the chief mark of your Christian walk, so love must be the chief mark of that conformity. Be not disheartened if you do not attain it at once. Only keep fast hold of the command, "Love, even as I have loved you." It takes time to grow into it. Take time in secret to gaze on that image of love. Take time in prayer and meditation, to fan the desire for it into a burning flame. Take time to survey all around you, whoever they be, and whatever may happen, with this one thought, "I must love them." Take time to become conscious of your union with your Lord, that every fear as to the possibility of thus loving, may be met with the word: "Have not I commanded you: Love as I have loved"? Christian, take time in loving communion with Jesus your loving example, and you will joyfully fulfil this command, too, to love even as He did.

Lord Jesus, who hast loved me so wonderfully, and now commandest me to love even as Thou, behold me at Thy feet. Joyfully would I accept Thy commands, and now go out in Thy strength to manifest Thy love to all.

In Thy strength, O my Lord! Be therefore pleased to reveal Thy love to me. Shed abroad Thy love in my heart through Thy Holy Spirit. Let me live each moment in the experience that I am the beloved of God.

Lord, let me understand that I can love, not with my own, but with Thy love.

Thou livest in me, Thy Spirit dwells and works in me; from Thee there streams into me the love with which I can love others. Thou dost only ask of me that I understand and accept my calling, and that I surrender myself to live as Thou didst. Thou wouldest that I look upon my old nature with its selfishness and unlovingness as crucified, and in faith prepare to do as Thou commandest.

Lord, I do it. In the strength of my Lord, I would live *to love even as Thou hast loved me.* Amen.

Chapter 17^(TOC)

In his Praying

"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed."—Mark 1:35

"And He saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile."—Mark 6:31

In His life of secret prayer, too, my Saviour is my example. He could not maintain the heavenly life in His soul without continually separating Himself from man, and communing with His Father. With the heavenly life in me it is no otherwise: it has the same need of entire separation from man, the need not only of single moments, but of time enough for intercourse with the Fountain of Life, the Father in Heaven.

It was at the commencement of His public ministry that the event happened which so attracted the attention of His disciples that they wrote it down. After a day full of wonders and of work at Capernaum (Verse 21-32), the press in the evening became still greater. The whole town is before the door; sick are healed, and devils are cast out. It is late before they get to sleep: in the throng there is little time for quiet or for secret prayer. And lo, as they rise early in the morning, they find Him gone. In the silence of the night He has gone out to seek a place of solitude in the wilderness; when they find Him there, He is still praying.

And why did my Saviour need these hours of prayer? Did He not know the blessedness of silently lifting up His soul to God in the midst of the most

pressing business? Did not the Father dwell in Him? and did He not in the depth of His heart enjoy unbroken communion with Him? Yes, that hidden life was indeed His portion. But that life, as subject to the law of humanity, had need of continual refreshing and renewing from the fountain. It was a life of dependence; just because it was strong and true, it could not bear the loss of direct and constant intercourse with the Father, with whom and in whom it had its being and its blessedness.

What a lesson for every Christian! Much intercourse with man is dissipating and dangerous to our spiritual life: it brings us under the influence of the visible and temporal. Nothing can atone for the loss of secret and direct intercourse with God. Even work in the service of God and of love is exhausting: we cannot bless others without power going out from us; this must be renewed from above. The law of the manna, that what is heavenly cannot remain good long upon earth, but must day by day be renewed afresh from heaven, still holds good. Jesus Christ teaches it us: I need every day time to have communion with my Father in secret. My life is like His a life hid in heaven, in God; it needs time day by day to be fed from heaven. It is **from heaven** alone that the power to lead a **heavenly life** on earth can come.

And what may have been the prayers that occupied our Lord there so long? If I could hear Him pray, how I might learn how I too must pray! God be praised! of His prayers we have more than one recorded, that in them too we might learn to follow His holy example. In the high-priestly prayer (John 17) we hear Him speak, as in the deep calm of heaven, to His Father: in His Gethsemane prayer, a few hours later, we see Him call out of the depths of trouble and darkness unto God. In these two prayers we have all: the highest and the deepest that there is to be found in the communion of prayer between Father and Son.

In both these prayers we see how He addresses God. Each time it is ***Father!*** ***O my Father!*** In that word lies the secret of all prayer. The Lord knew that He was a Son, and that the Father loved Him: with that word He placed Himself in the full light of the Father's countenance. This was to Him the greatest need and greatest blessing of prayer, to enter into the full enjoyment of the Father's love. Let it be thus with me too. Let the principal part of my prayer be, the holy silence and adoration of faith, in which I wait upon God, until He reveals Himself to me, and gives me, through His Spirit, the loving assurance that He looks down upon me as a Father, that I am well-pleasing to Him. He who in prayer has not time in quietness of soul, and in full consciousness of its meaning, to say Abba Father, has missed the best part of prayer. It is in prayer that the witness of the Spirit, that we are children of God, and that the Father draws nigh and delights in us, must be exercised and strengthened. "If our heart condemn us not, we have confidence toward God; and whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we obey His commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in His sight."

In both these prayers I also see what He desired: ***that the Faaer may be glorified.*** He speaks: "I have glorified Thee; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son ***also may glorify Thee.*** " That will assuredly have been the spirit of every prayer; the entire surrender of Himself only to live for the Father's will and glory. All that He asked had but one object, "That God might be glorified." In this too He is my example. I must seek to have the spirit of each prayer I offer: Father! bless Thy child, and glorify Thy grace in me, only that Thy child may glorify Thee. Everything in the universe must show forth God's glory. The Christian who is inspired with this thought, and avails himself of prayer to express it, until he is thoroughly imbued with it, will have power in prayer. Even of His work in heaven our Lord says: "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, ***that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*** " O

my soul, learn from thy Saviour, ere ever thou pourest out thy desires in prayer, first to yield thyself as a whole burnt-offering, with the one object that God may be glorified in thee.

Then thou hast sure ground on which to pray. Thou wilt feel the strong desire, as well as the full liberty, to ask the Father that in each part of Christ's example, in each feature of Christ's image, thou mayest be made like Him, that so God may be glorified. Thou wilt understand how, only in continually renewed prayer, the soul can surrender itself to wait that God may from heaven work in it what will be to His glory. Because Jesus surrendered Himself so entirely to the glory of His Father, He was worthy to be our Mediator, and could in His high-priestly prayer ask such great blessings for His people. Learn like Jesus only to seek God's glory in prayer, and thou shalt become a true intercessor, who can not only approach the throne of grace with his own needs, but can also pray for others the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man that availeth much. The words which the Saviour put into our mouth in the Lord's Prayer: "Thy will be done," because He was made like unto His brethren in all things, He took from our lips again and made His own in Gethsemane, that from Him we might receive them back again, in the power of His atonement and intercession and so be able to pray them even as He had done. Thou too shalt become Christ-like in that priestly intercession, on which the unity and prosperity of the Church and the salvation of sinners so much depend.

And he who in every prayer makes God's glory the chief object will also, if God calls him to it, have strength for the prayer of Gethsemane. Every prayer of Christ was intercession, because He had given Himself for us; all He asked and received was in our interest: every prayer He prayed was in the spirit of self-sacrifice. Give thyself too wholly to God for man, and as with Jesus so

with us, the entire sacrifice of ourselves to God in every prayer of daily life is the only preparation for those single hours of soul-struggle in which we may be called to some special act of the surrender of the will that costs us tears and anguish., But he who has learnt the former will surely receive strength for the latter.

O my brother! if thou and I would be like Jesus, we must especially contemplate Jesus praying alone in the wilderness. ***There is the secret of His wonderful life.*** What He did and spoke to man, ***was first Spoken and lived through with the Father.*** In communion with Him, the anointing with the Holy Spirit was each day renewed. He who would be like Him in his walk and conversation, must simply begin here, that he follows Jesus into solitude. Even though it cost the sacrifice of night rest, of business, of intercourse with friends, ***the time must be found to be alone with the Father.*** Besides the ordinary hour of prayer, he will feel at times irresistibly drawn to enter into the holy place, and not to come thence until it has anew been revealed to him that God is his portion. In his secret chamber, with closed door, or in the solitude of the wilderness, God must be found every day, and our fellowship with Him renewed. If Christ needed it, how much more we I What it was to Him it will be for us.

What it was to Him is apparent from what is written of His baptism: "It came to pass that, Jesus also being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him: and a voice came from heaven which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased." Yes, this will be to us the blessing of prayer: the opened heaven, the baptism of the Spirit, the Father's voice, the blessed assurance of His love and good pleasure. ***As with Jesus, so with us; from above, from above, must it all come in answer to prayer.***

Christ-like praying in secret will be the secret of Christ-like living in public. O let us rise and avail ourselves of our wonderful privilege—the Christ-like boldness of access into the Father's presence, the Christ-like liberty with God in prayer.

O my blessed Lord, Thou hast called me, and I have followed Thee, that I may bear Thy image in all things. Daily would I seek Thy footsteps, that I may be led of Thee whithersoever Thou goest. This day I have found them, wet with the dew of night, leading to the wilderness. There I have seen Thee kneeling for hours before the Father. There I have heard Thee, too, in prayer. Thou givest up all to the Father's glory, and from the Father dost ask, and expect, and receive all Impress, I beseech Thee, this wonderful vision deep in my soul: my Saviour rising up a great while before day to seek communion with His Father, and to ask and obtain in prayer all that He needed for His life and work.

O my Lord! who am I that I may thus listen to Thee? Yea, who am I that Thou dost call me to pray, even as Thou hast done? Precious Saviour, from the depths of my heart I beseech Thee, awaken in me the same strong need of secret prayer. Convince me more deeply that, as with Thee so with me, the Divine life cannot attain its full growth without much secret communion with my heavenly Father, so that my soul may indeed dwell in the light of His countenance. Let this conviction awaken in me such burning desire that I may not rest until each day afresh my soul has been baptized in the streams of heavenly love. O Thou, who art my Example and Intercessor! teach me to pray like Thee. Amen.

Chapter 18^(TOC)

In his use of Scripture

"That all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me."—Luke 24:44

What the Lord Jesus accomplished here on earth as man He owed greatly to His use of the Scriptures. He found in them the way marked in which He had to walk, the food and the strength on which He could work, the weapon by which He could overcome every enemy. The Scriptures were indeed indispensable to Him through all His life and passion: from beginning to end His life was the fulfilment of what had been written of Him in the volume of the Book.

It is scarcely necessary to adduce proofs of this. In the temptation in the wilderness it was by His **"It is written"** that He conquered Satan. In His conflicts with the Pharisees He continually appealed to the Word **"What saith the Scripture?"** **"Have ye not read?"** **"Is it not written?"** In His intercourse with His disciples it was always from the Scriptures that He proved the certainty and necessity of His sufferings and resurrection: **"How otherwise can the Scriptures be fulfilled?"** And in His intercourse with His Father in His last sufferings, it is in the words of Scripture that He pours out the complaint of being forsaken, and then again commends His spirit into the Father's hands. All this has a very deep meaning. He was Himself the living Word. He had the Spirit without measure. If ever any one, He could have done without the written Word. And yet we see that it is everything to Him.

More than any one else He thus shows us that ***the life of God in human flesh and the word of God in human speech*** are inseparably connected. Jesus would not have been what He was, could not have done what He did, had He not yielded Himself step by step to be led and sustained by the Word of God.

Let us try and understand what this teaches us. The Word of God is more than once called Seed; it is the seed of the Divine life. We know what seed is. It is that wonderful organism in which the life, the invisible essence of a plant or tree, is so concentrated and embodied that it can be taken away and made available to impart the life of the tree elsewhere. This use may be twofold. As fruit we eat it, for instance, in the corn that gives us bread: and the life of the plant becomes our nourishment and our life. Or we sow it, and the life of the plant reproduces and multiplies itself. In both aspects the Word of God is seed.

True life is found only in God. But that life cannot be imparted to us unless set before us in some shape in which we know and apprehend it. It is in the Word of God that the Invisible Divine life takes shape, and brings itself within our reach, and becomes communicable. The life, the thoughts, the sentiments, the power of God are embodied in His words. And it is only through His Word that the life of God can really enter into us. His Word is the seed of the Heavenly life.

As the bread of life we eat it, we feed upon it. In eating, our daily bread, the body takes in the nourishment which visible nature, the sun and the earth, prepared for us in the seed-corn. We assimilate it, and it becomes our very own, part of ourselves, it is our life. In feeding upon the Word of God, the powers of the Heavenly life enter into us, and become our very own; we assimilate them, they become a part of ourselves, the life of our life.

Or we use the seed to plant. The words of God are sown in our heart. They have a Divine power of reproduction and multiplication. The very life that is in them, the Divine thought, or disposition, or powers that each of them contains, takes roots in the believing heart and grows up; and the very thing of which the word was the expression, is produced within us. The words of God are the seeds of the fulness of the Divine life.

When the Lord Jesus was made man, He became entirely dependent upon the Word of God, He submitted Himself wholly to it. His mother taught it Him. The teachers of Nazareth instructed Him in it. In meditation and prayer, in the exercise of obedience and faith, He was led, during His silent years of preparation, to understand and appropriate it. The Word of the Father was to the Son the life of His soul. What He said in the wilderness was spoken from His inmost personal experience: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He felt He could not live but as the Word brought Him the life of the Father. His whole life was a life of faith, depending on the Word of the Father. The Word was to Him not instead of the Father, but the vehicle for the living fellowship with the living God. And He had His whole mind and heart so filled with it, that the Holy Spirit could at each moment find within Him, all ready for use, the right word to suggest just as He needed it.

Child of God! would you become a man of God, strong in faith, full of blessing, rich in fruit to the glory of God, be full of the Word of God. Like Christ, make the Word your bread. Let it dwell richly in you. Have your heart full of it. Feed on it. Believe it. Obey it. It is only by believing and obeying that the Word can enter into our inward parts, into our very being. Take it day by day as the Word that proceedeth, not has proceeded, but proceedeth, is proceeding out of the mouth of God, as the Word of the living God, who in it

holds living fellowship with His children, and speaks to them in living power. Take your thoughts of God's will, and God's work, and God's purpose with you, and the world, not from the Church, not from Christians around you, but from the Word taught you by the Father, and like Christ, you will be able to fulfil all that is written in the Scripture concerning you.

In Christ's use of Scripture the most remarkable thing is this: ***He found Himself there; He saw there His own image and likeness.*** And He gave Himself to the fulfilment of what He found written there. It was this that encouraged Him under the bitterest sufferings, and strengthened Him for the most difficult work. Everywhere He saw traced by God's own hand the Divine waymark: a rough ***suffering to glory.*** He had but one thought: to be what the Father had said He should be, to have His life correspond exactly to the image of what He should be as He found it in the Word of God.

Disciple of Jesus, in the Scriptures ***thy likeness too is to be found,*** a picture of what the Father means thee to be. Seek to have a deep and clear impression of what the Father says in His word that thou shouldst be. If this is once fully understood, it is inconceivable what courage it will give to conquer every difficulty. To know: it is ordained of God; I have seen what has been written concerning me in God's book; I have seen the image of what I am called in God's counsel to be: this thought inspires the soul with a faith that conquers the world.

The Lord Jesus found His own image not only in the institutions, but specially in the believers of the Old Testament. Moses and Aaron, Joshua, David, and the Prophets, were types. And so He is Himself again the image of believers in the New Testament. It is especially in ***Him and His*** example that we must find our own image in the Scriptures. "To be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord," we must in the

Scripture-glass gaze on that image as our own. In order to accomplish His work in us, the Spirit teaches us to take Christ as in very deed our Example, and to gaze on every feature as the promise of what we can be.

Blessed the Christian who has truly done this; who has not only found Jesus in the Scriptures, but also in His image the promise and example of what he is to become. Blessed the Christian who yields himself to be taught by the Holy Spirit not to indulge in human thoughts as to the Scriptures and what it says of believers, but in simplicity to accept what it reveals of God's thoughts about His children.

Child of God! it was "according to the Scriptures" that Jesus Christ lived and died; it was "according to the Scriptures" that He was raised again: all that the Scriptures said He must do or suffer He was able to accomplish, because He knew and obeyed them. All that the Scriptures had promised that the Father should do for Him, the Father did. O give thyself up with an undivided heart to learn in the Scriptures what God says and seeks of thee. Let the Scriptures in which Jesus found every day the food of His life, be thy daily food and meditation. Go to God's Word each day with the joyful and confident expectation, that through the blessed Spirit who dwells in us, the Word will indeed accomplish its Divine purpose in thee. Every word of God is full of a Divine life and power. Be assured that when thou dost seek to use the Scriptures as Christ used them, they will do for thee what they did for Him. God has marked out the plan of thy life in His Word; each day thou wilt find some portion of it there. Nothing makes a man more strong and courageous than the assurance that he is just living out the will of God. God Himself, who had thy image portrayed in the Scriptures, will see to it that the Scriptures are fulfilled in thee, if like His Son thou wilt but surrender thyself to this as the highest object of thy life.

O Lord, my God! I thank Thee for Thy precious Word, the Divine glass of all unseen and eternal realities. I thank Thee that I have in it the image of Thy Son, who is Thy image, and also, O wonderful grace! my image. I thank Thee that as I gaze on Him I may also see what I can be.

O my Father I teach me rightly to understand what a blessing Thy Word can bring me. To Thy Son, when here on earth, it was the manifestation of Thy will, the communication of Thy life and strength, the fellowship with Thyself. In the acceptance and the surrender to Thy Word He was able to fulfil all Thy counsel. May Thy Word be all this to me too. Make it to me, each day afresh through the unction of the Holy Spirit, the Word proceeding from the mouth of God, the voice of Thy living presence speaking to me. May I feel with each word of Thine that it is God coming to impart to me somewhat of His own life. Teach me to keep it hidden in my heart as a Divine seed, which in its own time will spring up and reproduce in me in Divine reality the very life that was hid in it the very thing which I at first only saw in it as a thought. Teach me above all, O my God, to find in it Him who is its centre and substance, Himself the Eternal Word. Finding Him, and myself in Him, as my Head and Exemplar, I shall learn like Him to count Thy Word my food and my life.

I ask this, O my God, in the name of our blessed Christ Jesus. Amen.

Chapter 19^(TOC)

In Forgiving

"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, If any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."—Colossians 3:18

In the life of grace forgiveness is one of the first blessings we receive from God. It is also one of the most glorious. It is the transition from the old to the new life; the sign and pledge of God's love: with it we receive the right to all the spiritual gifts which are prepared for us in Christ. The redeemed saint can never forget, either here or in eternity, that he is a forgiven sinner. Nothing works more mightily to inflame his love, to awaken his joy, or to strengthen his courage, than the experience, continually renewed by the Holy Spirit as a living reality, of God's forgiving love. Every day, yes, every thought of God reminds him: I owe all to pardoning grace.

This forgiving love is one of the greatest marvels in the manifestation of the Divine nature. In it God finds His glory and blessedness. And it is in this glory and blessedness God wants His redeemed people to share, when He calls upon them, as soon and as much as they have received forgiveness, also to bestow it upon others.

Have you ever noticed how often and how expressly the Lord Jesus spoke of it? If we read thoughtfully our Lord's words in Matthew 6:12, 15; 18:2-25; Mark 11:25, we shall understand how inseparably the two are united: God's forgiveness of us and our forgiveness of others. After the Lord was ascended

to grant repentance and forgiveness of sins, the Scriptures say of Him just what He had said of the Father, we must forgive like Him. As our text expresses it, *even as Christ* has forgiven you, *so also do ye*. We must be like God, like Christ, in forgiving.

It is not difficult to find the reason for this. When forgiving, love comes to us, it is not only to deliver us from punishment. No, much more; it seeks to win us for its own, to take possession of us and to dwell in us. And when thus it has come down to dwell in us, it does not lose its own heavenly character and beauty: it still is forgiving love seeking to do its work not alone towards us, but in us, and through us, leading and enabling us to forgive those who sin against us. So much so is this the owe, that we are told that not to forgive is a sure sign that one has himself not been forgiven. He who only seeks forgiveness from selfishness and as freedom from punishment, but has not truly accepted forgiving love to rule his heart and life, proves that God's forgiveness has never really reached him. He who, on the other hand, has really accepted forgiveness will have in the joy with which he forgives others, a continual confirmation, that his faith in God's forgiveness of himself is a reality. From Christ to receive forgiveness, and *like Christ* to bestow it on others: these two are one.

Thus the Scriptures and the Church teach: but what do the lives and experience of Christians say? Alas! how many there are who hardly know that thus it is written, or who, if they know it, think it is more than can be expected from a sinful being; or who, if they agree in general to what has been said, always find a reason, in their own particular case, why it should not be so. Others might be strengthened in evil; the offender would never forgive had the injury been done to him; there are very many eminent Christians who do not act so; such excuses are never wanting. And yet the

command is so very simple, and its sanction so very solemn: "Even as Christ has forgiven you, so also do ye:" "If ye forgive not, neither will your Father forgive you." With such human reasonings the Word of God is made of none effect. As though it were not just through forgiving love that God seeks to conquer evil, and therefore forgives even unto seventy times seven. As though it were not plain, that not what the offender would do to me, **but what Christ has done**, must be the rule of my conduct. As though conformity to the example not of Christ Himself, but of pious Christians, were the sign that I have truly received the forgiveness of sins.

Alas! what Church or Christian circle in which the law of forgiving love is not grievously transgressed? How often in our Church assemblies, in philanthropic undertakings as well as in ordinary social intercourse, and even in domestic life, proof is given that to many Christians the call to forgive, just as Christ did, has never yet become a ruling principle of their conduct. On account of a difference of opinion, or opposition to a course of action that appeared to us right, on the ground of a real or a fancied slight, or the report of some unkind or thoughtless word, feelings of resentment, or contempt, or estrangement, have been harboured, instead of loving, and forgiving, and forgetting like Christ.

In such the thought has never yet taken possession of mind and heart, that the law of compassion and love and forgiveness, in which the relation of the head to the members is rooted, must rule the whole relation of the members to each other.

Beloved followers of Jesus! called to manifest His likeness to the world, learn that as forgiveness of your sins was one of the first things Jesus did for you, forgiveness of others is one of the first that you can do for Him. And remember that to the new heart there is a joy even sweeter than that of being

forgiven; even the joy of forgiving others. The joy of being forgiven is only that of a sinner and of earth: the joy of forgiving is Christ's own joy, the joy of heaven. Oh, come and see that it is nothing less than the work that Christ Himself does, and the joy with which He Himself is satisfied that thou art called to participate in.

It is thus that thou canst bless the world. It is as the forgiving One that Jesus conquers His enemies, and binds His friends to Himself. It is as the forgiving One that Jesus has set up His kingdom and continually extends it. It is through the same forgiving love, not only preached but ***shown in the life of His disciples***, that the Church will, convince the world of God's love. If the world see men and women loving and forgiving as Jesus did, it will be compelled to confess that God is with them of a truth.

And if it still appear too hard and too high, remember that this will only be as long as we consult the natural heart. A sinful nature has no taste for this joy, and never can attain it. But in union with Christ we can do it: He who abides in Him walks even as He walked. If you have surrendered yourself to follow Christ in everything, then He will by His Holy Spirit enable you to do this too. Ere ever you come into temptation, accustom yourself to fix your gaze on Jesus, in the heavenly beauty of His forgiving love as your example: "Beholding the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory." Every time you pray or thank God for forgiveness, make the vow that to the glory of His name you will manifest the same forgiving love to all around you. Before ever there is a question of forgiveness of others, let your heart be filled with love to Christ, love to the brethren, and love to enemies: a heart full of love finds it blessed to forgive. Let, in each little circumstance of daily life when the temptation not to forgive might arise, the opportunity be joyfully welcomed to show how truly you live in God's

forgiving love, how glad you are to let its beautiful light shine through you on others, and how blessed a privilege you feel it to be thus too to bear the image of your beloved Lord.

To forgive like Thee, blessed Son of God! I take this as the law of my life. Thou who hast given the command, givest also the power. Thou who hadst love enough to forgive me, wilt also fill me with love and teach me to forgive others. Thou who didst give me the first blessing, in the joy of having my sins forgiven, wilt surely give me the second blessing, the deeper joy of forgiving others as Thou hast forgiven me. Oh, fill me to this end with faith in the power of Thy love in me, to make me like Thyself, to enable me to forgive the seventy times seven, and so to love and bless all around me.

O my Jesus! Thy example is my law: I must be like Thee. And Thy example is my gospel too. I can be as Thou art. Thou art at once my Law and my Life. What Thou demandest of me by Thy example, Thou workest in me by Thy life. I shall forgive like Thee.

Lord, only lead me deeper into my dependence on Thee, into the all-sufficiency of Thy grace and the blessed keeping which comes from Thy indwelling. Then shall I believe and prove the all-prevailing power of love. I shall forgive even as Christ has forgiven me. Amen.

Chapter 20^(TOC)

In Beholding Him^[6]

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."—2 Corinthians 3:18

Moses had been forty days on the mount in communion with God. When he came down, his face shone with Divine glory. He did not know it himself, but Aaron and the people saw it (Exodus 34:30). It was so evidently God's glory that Aaron and the people feared to approach him. In this we have an image of what takes place in the New Testament. The privilege Moses there alone enjoyed is now the portion of every believer. When we behold the glory of God in Christ, in the glass of the Holy Scriptures, His glory shines upon us, and into us, and fills us, until it shines out from us again. By gazing on His glory the believer is changed through the Spirit into the same image.

Beholding Jesus makes us like Him.

It is a law of nature that the eye exercises a mighty influence on mind and character. The education of a child is carried on greatly through the eye; he is moulded very much by the manners and habits of those he sees continually. To form and mould our character the Heavenly Father shows us His Divine glory in the face of Jesus. He does it in the expectation that it will give us great joy to gaze upon it, and because He knows that, gazing on it, we shall be conformed to the same image. Let every one who desires to be like Jesus note how he can attain to it.

Look continually to the Divine glory as seen in Christ. What is the special characteristic of that glory? ***It is the manifestation of Divine perfection in human form.*** The chief marks of the image of the Divine glory in Christ are these two: His humiliation and His love.

There is the glory of His humiliation. When you see how the eternal Son emptied Himself and became man, and how as man He humbled Himself as a servant and was obedient even unto the death of the cross, you have seen the highest glory of God. The glory of God's omnipotence as Creator, and the glory of God's holiness as King, is not so wonderful as this: the glory of grace which humbled itself as a servant to serve God and man. We must learn to look upon this humiliation as really glory. ***To be humbled like Christ must be to us the only thing worthy the name of glory on earth.*** It must become in our eyes the most beautiful, the most wonderful, the most desirable thing that can be imagined; a very joy to look upon or to think of. The effect of thus gazing upon it and admiring it will be that you will not be able to conceive of any glory greater than to be and act like Jesus, and will long to humble yourself even as He did. Gazing on Jesus, admiring, and adoring Him, will work in us the same mind that there was in Him, and so we shall be changed into His image.

Inseparable from this is the glory of His love. The humiliation leads you back to the love as its origin and power. It is from love that the humiliation has its beauty. Love is the highest glory of God. But this love was a hidden mystery, until it was manifest in Christ Jesus. It is only in His humanity, in His gentle, compassionate, and loving intercourse with men, with foolish, sinful, hostile men, that the glory of Divine love was first really seen. The soul that gets a glimpse of this glory, and that understands that ***to love like Christ is alone worthy the name of glory,*** will long, to become like Christ in this. Beholding

this glory of the love of God in Christ, he is changed to the same image.

You would be like Christ? Here is the path, Gaze on the glory of God in Him. In Him, that is to say: do not look only to the words and the thoughts and the graces in which His glory is seen, but look to Himself, the living, loving, Christ. Behold Him, look into His very eye, look into His face, as a loving friend, as the living God.

Look to Him in adoration. Bow before Him as God, His glory has an almighty living power to impart itself to us, to pass over into us and to fill us.

Look to Him in faith. Exercise the blessed trust that He is yours, that He has given Himself to you, and that you have a claim to all that is in Him, It is His purpose to work out His image in you. Behold Him with the joyful and certain expectation: the glory that I behold in Him is destined for me. He will give it me: as I gaze and wonder and trust, I become like Christ.

Look to Him with strong desire. Do not yield to the slothfulness of the flesh that is satisfied without the full blessing of conformity to the Lord. Pray God to free you from all carnal resting content with present attainments, and to fill you with the deep unquenchable longing for His glory. Pray most fervently the prayer of Moses, "show me Thy glory." Let nothing discourage you, not even the apparently slow progress you make, but press onwards with ever growing desire after the blessed prospect that God's Word holds out to you: "We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory."

And as you behold Him, above all, let the look of love not be wanting. Tell Him continually how He has won your heart, how you do love Him, how entirely you belong to Him. Tell Him that to please Him, the beloved One, is your highest, your only joy. Let the bond of love between you and Him be drawn continually closer. Love unites and makes like.

Like Christ! we can be it, we shall be it, each in our measure. The Holy Spirit is the pledge that it shall be. God's Holy Word has said, "We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by **the Spirit of the Lord.**" This is the Spirit that was in Jesus, and through Whom the Divine glory lived and shone on Him. This Spirit is called "The Spirit of Glory." This Spirit is in us as in the Lord Jesus, and it is His work, in our silent adoring, contemplation, to bring over into us and work within us, what we see in our Lord Jesus. Through this Spirit we have already Christ's life in us, with all the gifts of His grace. But that life must be stirred up and developed: it must grow up, pass into our whole being, take possession of our entire nature, penetrate and pervade it all. We can count on the Spirit to work this in us, if we but yield ourselves to Him and obey Him. As we gaze on Jesus in the Word, He opens our eyes to see the glory of all that Jesus does and is. He makes us willing to be like Him. He strengthens our faith, that what we behold in Jesus can be in us, because Jesus Himself is ours. He works in us unceasingly the life of abiding in Christ, a wholehearted union and communion with Him. He does according to the promise: "The Spirit shall glorify me: for He shall take of mine and shall show it unto you." We are changed into the image on which we gaze, from glory to glory, **as by the Spirit of the Lord.** Let us only understand, that the fulness of the Spirit is given to us, and that he who believingly surrenders himself to be filled with Him, will experience how gloriously He accomplishes His work of stamping on our souls and lives the image and likeness of Christ.

Brother! beholding Jesus and His glory, you can confidently expect to become like Him: only trust yourself in quietness and restfulness of soul to the leading of the Spirit. "**The Spirit of glory rests upon you.**" Gaze on and adore the glory of God in Christ; you will be changed with Divine power from glory to glory; in the power of the Holy Ghost the mighty

transformation will be wrought by which your desires will be fulfilled, and *like Christ* will be the blessed God-given experience of you life.

O my Lord! I do thank Thee for the glorious assurance that while I am engaged with Thee, in my work of beholding Thy glory, the Holy Spirit is engaged with me, in His work of changing me into that image, and of laying of Thy glory on me.

Lord! grant me to behold Thy glory aright, Moses had been forty days with Thee when Thy glory shone upon Him. I acknowledge that my communion with Thee has been too short and passing, that I have taken too little time to come under the full impression of what Thine image is. Lord! teach me this. Draw me in these my meditations too, to surrender myself to contemplate and adore, until my soul at every line of that image may exclaim: This is glorious! this is the glory of God! O my God, show me Thy glory.

And strengthen my faith, blessed Lord! that, even when I am not conscious of any special experience, the Holy Spirit will do His work. Moses knew not that his face shone. Lord! keep me from looking at self: May I be so taken up only with Thee as to forget and lose myself in Thee. Lord I it is he who is dead to self who lives in Thee.

O my Lord, as often as I gaze upon Thine image and Thine example, I would do it in the faith, that Thy Holy Spirit will fill me, will take entire possession of me, and so work Thy likeness in me, that the world may see in me somewhat of Thy glory. In this faith I will venture to take Thy precious word, "FROM GLORY TO GLORY," as My watch. word, to be to me the promise of a grace that grows richer every day, of a blessing that is ever ready to surpass itself, and to make what has been given only the pledge of the better that is to come. Precious Saviour! gazing on Thee it shall indeed be so, "From

glory to glory." Amen.

Chapter 21^(TOC)

In his Humility

"In lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself. Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross."—Philippians 2:3-8 (R.V.)

In this wonderful passage we have a summary of all the most precious truths that cluster round the person of the blessed Son of God. There is first, His adorable Divinity: "***in the form of God,***" "***equal with God.***" Then comes the mystery of His incarnation, in that word of deep and inexhaustible meaning: "***He emptied Himself.***" The atonement follows, with the humiliation, and obedience, and suffering, and death, whence it derives its worth: "***He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.***" And all is crowned by his glorious exaltation: "***God hath highly exalted Him.***" Christ as God, Christ becoming man, Christ as man in humiliation working out our redemption, and Christ in glory as Lord of all: such are the treasures of wisdom this passage contains.

Volumes have been written on the discussion of some of the words the passage contains. And yet sufficient attention has not always been given to the connection in which the Holy Spirit gives this wondrous teaching. It is not in the first place as a statement of truth for the refutation of error, or the strengthening of faith. The object is a very different one. Among the Philippians there was still pride and want of love: it is with the distinct view

of setting Christ's example before them, and teaching them to humble themselves as He did, that this portion of inspiration was given: "In lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus." He who does not study this portion of God's Word with the wish to become lowly as Christ was, has never used it for the one great purpose for which God gave it. Christ descending from the throne of God, and seeking His way back there as man through the humiliation of the cross, reveals the only way by which we ever can reach that throne. The faith which, with His atonement, accepts His example too, is alone true faith. Each soul that would truly belong to Him must in union with Him have His Spirit, His disposition, and His image.

"Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God emptied self, and as a man humbled himself." We must be like Christ in His self-emptying and self humiliation. The first great act of self-abnegation in which as God He emptied Himself of His Divine glory and power and laid it aside, was followed up by the no less wondrous humbling of Himself as man, to the death of the cross. And in this amazing twofold humiliation, the astonishment of the universe and the delight of the Father, Holy Scripture with the utmost simplicity tells us we must, as a matter of course, be like Christ.

And does Paul, and do the Scriptures, and does God really expect this of us? Why not? or rather, how can they expect anything else? They know indeed the fearful power of pride and the old Adam in our nature. But they know also that Christ has redeemed us not only from the curse but from the power of sin, and that He gives us His resurrection life and power to enable us to live as He did on earth. They say that He is not only our Surety, but our Example also; so that we not only live through Him, but like Him. And

further, not only our Example but also our Head, who lives in us, and continues in us the life He once led on earth. With such a Christ, and such a plan of redemption, can it be otherwise? The follower of Christ must have the same mind as was in Christ; he must especially be like Him in His humility.

Christ's example teaches us that it is not sin that must humble us. This is what many Christians think. They consider daily falls are necessary to keep us humble. This is not so. There is indeed a humility that is very lovely, and so of great worth, as the beginning of something more, consisting in the acknowledgment of transgression and shortcomings. But there is a humility which is more heavenly still, even like Christ, which consists, even when grace keeps us from sinning, in the self-abasement that can only wonder that God should bless us, and delights to be as nothing before Him to whom we owe all. It is grace we need, and not sin, to make and keep us humble. The heaviest-laden branches always bow the lowest. The greatest flow of water makes the deepest river-bed. The nearer the soul comes to God, the more His majestic Presence makes it feel its littleness. It is this alone that makes it possible for each to count others better than himself. Jesus Christ, the Holy One of God, is our example of humility: it was, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God, that He washed the disciples' feet. It is the Divine presence, the consciousness of the Divine life and the Divine love in us, that will make us humble.

It appears to many Christians an impossibility to say: I will not think of self, I will esteem others better than myself. They ask grace to overcome the worst ebullitions of pride and vain glory, but an entire self-renunciation, such as Christ's, is too difficult and too high for them. If they only understood the deep truth and blessedness of the word, "He who humbles himself still be

exalted," "He who loses his life shall find it," they would not be satisfied with anything less than entire conformity to their Lord in this. And they would find that there is a way to overcome self and self-exaltation: to see it nailed to Christ's cross, and there keep it crucified continually through the Spirit (Galatians 5:24; Romans 8:13). He only can grow to such humility, who heartily yields himself to live in the fellowship of Christ's death.

To attain this, two things are necessary. The first is a fixed purpose and surrender henceforth to be nothing and seek nothing for oneself; but to live only for God and our neighbour. The other is the faith that appropriates the power of Christ's death in this also, as our death to sin and our deliverance from its power. This fellowship of Christ's death brings an end to the life, where sin *is too strong for us*; it is the commencement of a life in us where *Christ is too strong for sin*.

It is only under the teaching and powerful working of the Holy Spirit that one can realize, accept, and keep hold of this truth. But God be thanked, we have the Holy Spirit. Oh that we may trust ourselves fully to His guidance. He will guide us, it is His work; He will glorify Christ in us. He will teach us to understand that we are dead to sin and the old self, that Christ's life and humility are ours.

Thus Christ's humility is appropriated in faith. This may take place at once. But the appropriation in experience is gradual. Our thoughts and feelings, our very manners and conversation, have been so long under the dominion of the old self, that it takes time to imbue and permeate and transfigure them with the heavenly light of Christ's humility. At first the conscience is not perfectly enlightened, the spiritual taste and the power of discernment have not yet been exercised. But with each believing renewal of the consecration in the depth of the soul: "I have surrendered myself to be humble like Jesus," power

will go out from Him, to fill the whole being, until in face, and voice, and action the sanctification of the Spirit will be observable, and the Christian will truly be clothed with humility.

The blessedness of a Christ-like humility is unspeakable. It is of great worth in the sight of God: "He giveth grace to the humble." In the spiritual life it is the source of rest and joy. To the humble all God does is right and good. Humility is always ready to praise God for the least of His mercies. Humility does not find it difficult to trust. It submits unconditionally to all that God says. The two whom Jesus praises for their great faith are just those who thought least of themselves. The centurion had said, "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof;" the Syrophenician woman was content to be numbered with the dogs. In intercourse with men it is the secret of blessing and love. The humble man does not take offence, and is very careful not to give it. He is ever ready to serve his neighbor, because he has learnt from Jesus the Divine beauty of being a servant, He finds favour with God and man.

Oh what a glorious calling for the followers of Christ! To be sent into the world by God to prove that there is nothing more divine than self-humiliation. The humble glorifies God, he leads others to glorify Him, he will at last be glorified with Him. Who would not be humble like Jesus?

O Thou, who didst descend from heaven, and didst humble Thyself to the death of the cross, Thou callest me to take Thy humility as the law of my life.

Lord, teach me to understand the absolute need of this. A proud follower of the humble Jesus this I cannot, I may not be. In the secrecy of my heart, and of my closet, in my house, in presence of friends or enemies, in prosperity or adversity, I would be filled with Thy humility.

O my beloved Lord! I feel the need of a new, a deeper insight into Thy crucifixion, and my part in it. Reveal to me how my old proud self is crucified with Thee. Show me in the light of Thy Spirit how I, God's regenerate child, am dead to sin and its power, and how in communion with Thee sin is powerless. Lord Jesus, who hast conquered sin, strengthen in me the faith that Thou art my life, and that Thou wilt fill me with Thy humility if I will submit to be filled with Thyself and Thy Holy Spirit.

Lord, my hope is in Thee. In faith in Thee I go into the world to show how the same mind that was in Thee is also in Thy children, and teaches us in lowliness of mind each to esteem others better than himself. May God help us. Amen.

Chapter 22^(TOC)

In the Likeness of his Death^[7]

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of resurrection—For in that He died, He died unto sin once—Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans 6:5, 10, 11

It is to the death of Christ we owe our salvation. The better we understand the meaning of that death, the richer will be our experience of its power. In these words we are taught what it is to be one with Christ in the likeness of His death. Let every one who truly longs to be like Christ in his life, seek to understand aright what the likeness of His death means.

Christ had a double work to accomplish in His death. The one was, to work out righteousness for us, the other to obtain life for us. When Scripture speaks of the first part of this work, it uses the expression, ***Christ died for our sin:*** He took sin upon Himself, bore its punishment; so He made atonement, and brought in a righteousness in which we could stand before God. When Scripture speaks of the second part of this work, it uses the expression: ***He died to sin.*** Dying ***for sin*** has reference to the judicial relation between Him and sin: God laid our sin upon Him: through His death atonement is made for us before God. ***Dying to sin*** has reference to a personal relation: through His death the connection in which He stood to sin was entirely dissolved. During His life had great power to cause Him conflict and suffering: His death made an end of this. Sin had now no more power to tempt or to hurt Him. He was

beyond its reach. Death had completely separated between Him and sin. Christ died to sin.

Like Christ, the believer too has died to sin; he is one with Him, in the likeness of His death. And as the knowledge that Christ died for sin as our atonement is indispensable to our justification so the knowledge that Christ, and we with Him in the likeness of His death, are dead to sin, is indispensable to our sanctification. Let us endeavour to understand this.

It was as the second Adam that Christ died. With the first Adam we had been planted together in the likeness of *his* death: he died, and we with him, and the power of his death works in us; we have in very deed died in him, as truly as he himself died. We understand this. Just so we are one plant with Christ in the likeness of His death: He died to sin, and we in Him; and now the power of His death works in us. We are indeed dead to sin, as truly so as He Himself is.

Through our first birth we were made partakers in Adam's death; through our second birth we become partakers in the death of the second Adam. Every believer who accepts of Christ is partaker of the power of His death, and is dead to sin. But a believer may have much of which he is ignorant. Most believers are in their conversion so occupied with Christ's death for sin as their justification, that they do not seek to know what it means, that in Him they are dead to sin. When they first learn to feel their need of Him as their sanctification, then the desire is awakened to understand this likeness of His death. They find the secret of holiness in it: that as Christ, so they also have died to sin.

The Christian who does not understand this always imagines that sin is too strong for Him, that sin has still power over him, and that he must sometimes

obey it. But he thinks this because he does not know that he, like Christ, is dead to sin. If he but believed and understood what this means, his language would be, "Christ has died to sin. Sin has nothing more to say to Him. In His life and death sin had power over Him: it was sin that caused Him the sufferings of the cross, and the humiliation of the grave. But He is dead to sin: it has lost all claim over Him, He is entirely and for ever freed from its power. Even so I as a believer. The new life that is in me, is the life of Christ from the dead, a life that has been begotten through death, a ***life that is entirely dead to sin.*** " The believer as a new creature in Christ Jesus can glory and say: "like Christ I am dead to sin. Sin has no right or power over me whatever. I am freed from it, therefore I need not sin."

And if the believer still sins, it is because he does not use his privilege to live as one who is dead to sin. Through ignorance or unwatchfulness or unbelief, he forgets the meaning and the power of this likeness of Christ's death, and sins. But if he holds fast what his participation with Christ's death signifies, he has the power to overcome sin. He marks well that it is not said, "sin is dead." No, sin is not dead; sin lives and works still in the flesh. But he himself is dead to sin, and alive to God; and so sin cannot for a single moment, without his consent, have dominion over him. If he sin, it is because he allows it to reign, and submits himself to obey it.

Beloved Christian, who seekest to be like Christ, take the likeness of His death as one of the most glorious parts of the life you covet. Appropriate it first of all in faith. Reckon that you are indeed dead to sin. Let it be a settled thing; God says it to every one of His children, even the weakest; say it before Him too: "Like Christ I am dead to sin." Fear not to say it; it is the truth. Ask the Holy Spirit earnestly to enlighten you with regard to this part of your union with Christ, so that it may not only be a doctrine, but power

and truth.

Endeavour to understand more deeply what it says to live as dead to sin, as one who, in dying, has been freed from its dominion, and who can now reign in life through Jesus Christ over it. Then there will follow upon the likeness of His death, accepted in faith, the conformity to His death (Philippians 3),

***The likeness of Christ's death** in Romans 6 precedes the likeness of His resurrection; no one can be made alive in Him who has not given himself up to die with Him. **The conformity to Christ's death** in Philippians 3: is spoken of as coming after the knowing Him in the power of His resurrection: the growth of the resurrection life within us leads to a deeper experience of the death. The two continually act and react.*

something that is gradually and increasingly appropriated, as Christ's death manifests its full power in all the faculties and powers of your life.

And in order to have the full benefit of this likeness of Christ's death, notice particularly two things. The one is the obligation under which it brings you, "How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?" Endeavour to enter more deeply into the meaning of this death of Christ into which you have been baptized. His death meant: Rather die than sin: willing to die in order to overcome sin: dead, and therefore released from the power of sin. Let this also be your position: "Know ye not, that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?" Let the Holy Spirit baptize you continually deeper into His death, until the power of God's Word, dead to sin until the conformity to Christ's death, is discernible in all your walk and conversation.

The other lesson is this: The likeness of Christ's death is not only an

obligation but a power. O Christian longing to be Christ-like, if there be one thing you need more than and above all else, it is this: to know the exceeding greatness of God's power that worketh in you. It was in the power of eternity that Christ in His death wrestled with the powers of hell and conquered. You have part with Christ in His death; you have part in all the powers by which He conquered. Yield yourself joyfully and believingly to be led more deeply into the conformity to Christ's death, then you cannot but become like Him.

O my Lord! how little I have understood Thy grace. I have often read the words, "planted into the likeness of His death," and seen that as Thou didst die to sin, so it is said to Thy believing people, "Likewise also ye." But I have not understood its power. And so it came that, not knowing the likeness of Thy death, I knew not that I was free from the power of sin, and as a conqueror could have dominion over it. Lord, Thou hast indeed opened to me a glorious prospect. The man who believingly accepts the likeness of Thy death, and according to Thy Word reckons himself dead to sin—sin shall not have dominion over him; he has power to live for God.

Lord, let Thy Holy Spirit reveal this to me more perfectly. I wish to take Thy word in simple faith, to take the position Thou assignest me as one who in Thee is dead to sin. Lord, in ***Thee*** I am dead to sin. Teach me to hold it fast, or rather to hold Thee fast in faith, until my whole life is a proof of it. O Lord, take me up and keep me in communion with Thyself, that, abiding in Thee, I may find in Thee the death unto sin and the life unto God. Amen.

Chapter 23^(TOC)

In the Likeness of his Resurrection^[8]

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His Death, we should be also in the likeness of His resurrection, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of His Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."—Romans 6:5, 4

On the likeness of His death there follows necessarily the likeness of His resurrection. To speak alone of the likeness of His death, of bearing the cross, and of self-denial, gives a one-sided view of following Christ. It is only the power of His resurrection that gives us strength to go on from that likeness of His death as what we receive at once by faith, to that conformity to His death which comes as the growth of the inner life. Being dead with Christ refers more to the death of the old life to sin and the world which we abandon; risen with Christ refers to the new life through which the Holy Spirit expels the old. To the Christian who earnestly desires to walk as Christ did, the knowledge of this likeness of His resurrection is indispensable. Let us see if we do not here get the answer to the question as to where we shall find strength to live in the world as Christ did.

We have already seen how our Lord's life before His death was a life of weakness. As our Surety, sin had great power over Him It had also power over His disciples, so that He could not give them the Holy Spirit, or do for them what He wished. But with the resurrection all was changed. Raised by the Almighty power of God, His resurrection life was full of the power of

eternity. He had not only conquered death and sin for Himself but for His disciples, so that He could from the first day make them partakers of His Spirit, of His joy, and of His heavenly power.

When the Lord Jesus now makes us partakers of His life, then it is not the life that He had before His death, but the resurrection life that He won through death. A life in which sin is already made an end of and put away, a life that has already conquered hell and the devil, the world and the flesh, a life of Divine power in human nature, This is the life that likeness to His resurrection gives us: "In that He liveth, He liveth unto God. ***Ye also likewise,*** reckon yourselves alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Oh that through the Holy Spirit God might reveal to us the glory of the life in the likeness of Christ's resurrection! In it we find the secret of power for a life of conformity to Him.

To most Christians this is a mystery, and therefore their life is full of sin and weakness and defeat. They believe in Christ's resurrection as the sufficient proof of their justification. They think that He had to rise again, to continue His work in heaven as Mediator. But that He rose again, in order that His glorious resurrection life might now be ***the very power of their daily life,*** of this they have no idea. Hence their hopelessness when they hear of following Jesus fully, and being, perfectly conformed to His image. They cannot imagine how it can be required of a sinner, that he should in all things act as Christ would have done. They do not know Christ in the power of His resurrection, or the mighty power with which His life now works in those, who are willing to count all things but loss for His sake (Philippians 3:8; Ephesians 1:19, 20). Come, all ye who are weary of a life unlike Jesus, and long to walk always in His footsteps, who begin to see that there is in the Scriptures a better life for you than you have hitherto known, come and let

me try to show you the unspeakable treasure that is yours, in your likeness to Christ in His resurrection. Let me ask three questions.

The first is: Are you ready to surrender your life to the rule of Jesus and His resurrection life? I doubt not that the contemplation of Christ's example has convinced you of sin in more than one point. In seeking your own will and leory instead of God's, in ambition and pride and selfishness and want of love towards man, you have seen how far you are from the obedience and humility and love of Jesus. And now it is the question, whether in view of all these things, in which you have acknowledged sin, you are willing to say: If Jesus will take possession of my life, then I resign all right or wish ever in the least to have or to do my own will. I give my life with all I have and am entirely to Him, always to do what He through His Word and Spirit commands me. If He will live and rule in me, I promise unbounded and hearty obedience.

For such a surrender faith is needed; therefore the second question is: Are you prepared to believe that Jesus will take possession of the life entrusted to Him, and that He will rule and keep it? When the believer entrusts his entire spiritual and temporal life completely to Christ, then he learns to understand aright Paul's words: "I am dead; I live no more: Christ liveth in me." Dead with Christ and risen again, the living Christ in His resurrection life takes possession of and rules my new life. The resurrection life is not a thing that I may have if I can undertake to keep it: No, just this is what I cannot do. But blessed be God! JESUS CHRIST himself *is the resurrection and the life*, is the resurrection life. *He Himself will from day to day and hour to hour see to it and ensure that I live as oil who is risen with Him.* He does it through that Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of His risen life. The Holy Spirit is in us, and will, if we trust Jesus for it, maintain within us every moment the presence and power of the risen Lord. We need not fear, that we never can

succeed in leading such a holy life as becomes those who are temples of the living God. ***We are indeed not able.*** But it is not required of us. The living Jesus, who is the resurrection, has shown His power over all our enemies; He Himself, who so loves us, He will work it in us. He gives us the Holy Spirit as our power, and He will perform His work in us with Divine faithfulness, if we will only trust Him; ***Christ Himself is our life.***

And now comes the third question: are you ready to use this resurrection life for the purpose for which God gave it Him, and gives it to you, as a power of blessing to the lost? All desires after the resurrection life will fail, if we are only seeking our own perfection and happiness. God raised up and exalted Jesus to give repentance and remission of sins. He ever lives to pray for sinners. Yield yourself to receive His resurrection life with the same aim. Give yourself wholly to working and praying for the perishing: then will you become a fit vessel and instrument in which the resurrection life can dwell and work out its glorious purposes.

Brother! thy calling is to live like Christ. To this end ***thou hast already been made one with Him*** in the likeness of His resurrection. The only question is now, whether thou art desirous after the full experience of His resurrection life, whether thou art willing to surrender thy whole life that He Himself may manifest resurrection power in every part of it. I pray thee, do not draw back. Offer thyself unreservedly to Him, with all thy weakness and unfaithfulness. Believe that as His resurrection was a wonder above all thought and expectation, so He as the Risen One will still work in thee exceeding abundantly above all thou couldst think or desire.

What a difference there was in the life of the disciples before Jesus' death and after His resurrection! Then all was weakness and fear, self and sin: with the resurrection all was power and joy, life and love, and glory. Just as great will

the change be, when a believer, who has known Jesus' resurrection only as the ground of his justification, but has not known of the *likeness* of His resurrection, discovers how the Risen One will Himself be his life, and in very deed take on Himself the responsibility for the whole of that life. Oh, brother, who hast not yet experienced this, who art troubled and weary because thou art called to walk like Christ, and canst not do it, come and taste the blessedness of giving thy whole life to the Risen Saviour in the assurance that He will live it for thee.

O Lord! my soul adores Thee as the Prince of life! On the cross Thou didst conquer each one of my enemies, the devil, the flesh, the world, and sin. As Conquerer thou didst rise to manifest and maintain the power of Thy risen life in Thy people. Thou hast made them one with Thyself in the likeness of Thy resurrection; now Thou wilt live in them, and show forth in their earthly life the power of Thy heavenly life.

Praised be Thy name for this wonderful grace. Blessed Lord, I come at Thy invitation to offer and surrender to Thee my life, with all it implies. Too long have I striven in my own strength to live like Thee, and not succeeded. The more I sought to walk like Thee, the deeper was my disappointment. I have heard of Thy disciples who tell how blessed it is to cast all care and responsibility for their life on Thee. Lord, I am risen with Thee, one with Thee in the likeness of Thy resurrection; come and take me entirely for Thy own, and be Thou my life.

Above all, I beseech Thee, O my Risen Lord, reveal Thyself to me, as Thou didst to Thy first disciples, in the power of Thy resurrection. It was not enough that after Thy resurrection Thou didst appear to Thy disciples; they knew Thee not till *Thou didst make Thyself known*. Lord Jesus! I do believe in Thee; *be pleased, O be pleased to make thyself known to me as my Life*. It

is Thy work; Thou alone canst do it. I trust Thee for it. And so shall my resurrection life be, like Thine own, a continual source of light and blessing to all who are needing Thee. Amen.

Chapter 24^(TOC)

Being made Conformable to his Death

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings being made conformable to His death."—Philippians 3:10

We know that the death of Christ was the death of the cross. We know that that death of the cross is His chief glory. Without that death He would not be the Christ. The distinguishing characteristic, the one mark by which He is separated here in earth and in heaven, from all other persons, both in the Divine Being and in God's universe, is this one: He is the Crucified Son of God. Of all the articles of conformity, this must necessarily be the chief and most glorious one—conformity to His death.

This is what made it so attractive to Paul. What were Christ's glory and blessedness must be his glory too: he knows that the most intimate likeness to Christ is conformity to His death. What that death had been to Christ it would be to him as he grew conformed to it.

Christ's death on the cross had been the end of sin. During His life it could tempt Him: when He died on the cross, He died to sin; it could no more reach Him. Conformity to Christ's death is the power to keep us from the power of sin. As I by the grace of the Holy Spirit am kept in my position as crucified with Christ, and live out my crucifixion life as the Crucified One lives it in me, I am kept from sinning.

Christ's death on the cross was to the Father a sweet-smelling sacrifice,

infinitely pleasing. Oh, if I want to dwell in the favour and love of the Father, and be His delight, I am sure there is nothing gives such deep and perfect access to it as being conformable to Christ's death. There is nothing in the universe to the Father so beautiful, so holy, so heavenly, so wonderful as this sight, the Crucified Jesus. And the closer I can get to Him, and the liker, the more conformed to His death I can become, the more surely shall I enter into the very bosom of His love.

Christ's death on the cross was the entrance to the power of the resurrection life, the unchanging life of eternity. In our spiritual life we often have to mourn the breaks, and failures, and intervals that prove to us that there is still something wanting that prevents the resurrection life asserting its full power. The secret is here: there is still some subtle self-life that has not yet been brought into the perfect conformity of Christ's death. We can be sure of it, nothing is needed but a fuller entrance into the fellowship of the cross to make us to the full partakers of the resurrection joy.

Above all, it was Christ's death on the cross that made Him the life of the world, gave Him the power to bless and to save (John 12:24, 25). In the conformity to Christ's death there is an end of self: we give up ourselves to live and die for others: we are full of the faith that our surrender of ourselves to bear the sin of others is accepted of the Father. Out of this death we rise, with the power to love and to bless.

And now, what is this conformity to the death of the cross that brings such blessings, and wherein does it consist? We see it in Jesus. The cross means entire self-abnegation. The cross means the death of self—the utter surrender of our own will and our life to be lost in the will of God, to let God's will do with us what it pleases. This was what the cross meant to Jesus. It cost Him a terrible struggle before He could give Himself up to it. When He was sore

amazed and very heavy, and His soul exceeding sorrowful unto death, it was because His whole being shrank back from that cross and its curse. Three times he had to pray before He could fully say, "yet not my will, but Thine be done." But He did say it. And His giving Himself up to the cross is to say: Let me do anything, rather than that God's will should not be done. I give up everything, only God's will must be done.

And this is being made conformable to Christ's death, that we so give away ourselves and our whole life, with its power of willing and acting, to God, that we learn to be and work, and do nothing but what God reveals to us as His will. And such a life is called conformity to the death of Christ, not only because it is somewhat similar to His, but because it is Himself by His Holy Spirit just repeating and acting over again in us the life that animated Him in His crucifixion. Were it not for this, the very thought of such conformity would be akin to blasphemy.

But now it is not so. In the power of the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of the Crucified Jesus, the believer knows that the blessed resurrection life has its power and its glory from its being a crucifixion life, begotten from the cross. He yields himself to it, he believes that it has possession of him. Realizing that he himself has not the power to think or do anything that is good or holy: nay, that the power of the flesh asserts itself and defiles everything that is in him, he yields and holds every power of his being as far as his disposal of them goes in the place of crucifixion and condemnation. And so he yields and holds every power of his being, every faculty of body, soul, and spirit, at the disposal of Jesus. The distrust and denial of self in everything, the trust of Jesus in everything, mark his life. The very spirit of the cross breathes through his whole being.

And so far is it from being, as might appear, a matter of painful strain and

weary effort thus to maintain the crucifixion position, to one who knows Christ in the power of His resurrection—for Paul puts this first—and so is made conformed to His death, it is rest and strength and victory. Because it is not the dead cross, not self's self-denial, not a work in his own strength, that he has to do with, but the living Jesus, in whom the crucifixion is an accomplished thing, already passed into the life of resurrection. "I have been crucified with Christ: Christ liveth in me;" this it is that gives the courage and the desire for an ever-growing, ever deeper entrance into most perfect conformity with His death.

And how is this blessed conformity to be attained? Paul will give us the answer. "***What things were gain to me***, these I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, I count all ***things*** but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord, that I may know Him, being made conformed to His death." The pearl is of great price; but oh I it is worth the purchase. Let us give up all, yes, all, to be admitted by Jesus to a place with Him on the cross

And if it appear hard to give up all, and then as our reward only have a whole lifetime on the cross, oh let us listen again to Paul as he tells us what made him so willingly give up all, and so intently choose the cross. It was Jesus—Christ Jesus, my Lord. The cross was the place where he could get into fullest union with his Lord. To know ***Him***, to win ***Him***, to be found in ***Him***, to be made ***like to Him***—this was the burning passion that made it easy to cast away all, that gave the cross such mighty attractive power. Anything to come nearer to Jesus. All for Jesus, was his motto. It contains the twofold answer to the question, How to attain this conformity to Christ's death? The one is, Cast out all. The other, And let Jesus come in. ALL for JESUS.

Yes, it is only knowing Jesus that can make the conformity to His death at all possible. But let the soul win Him, and be found in Him, and know Him in

the power of the resurrection, and it becomes more than possible, a blessed reality. Therefore, beloved follower of Jesus, look to Him, look to Him, the Crucified One. Gaze on Him until thy soul has learnt to say: O my Lord, I must be like Thee. Gaze until thou hast seen how He Himself, the Crucified One, in His ever present omnipotence, draws nigh to live in thee and breathe through thy being His crucifixion life. It was through the Eternal Spirit that He offered Himself unto God; that Spirit brings and imparts all that that death on the cross is, and means, and effected, to thee as thy life. By that Holy Spirit Jesus Himself maintains in each soul, who can trust Him for it, the power of the cross as an abiding death to sin and self, and a never-ceasing source of resurrection life and power. Therefore, once again, look to Him, the Living Crucified Jesus.

But remember, above all, that while thou hast to seek the best and the highest with all thy might, the full blessing comes not as the fruit of thy efforts, but unsought, a free gift to whom it is given from above. It is as it pleases the Lord Jesus to reveal Himself, that we are made conformable to His death. Therefore, seek and get it FROM HIMSELF.

O Lord, such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain to it. To know Thee in the power of Thy resurrection, and to be made conformable to Thy death: these are of the things which are hid from the wise and prudent, and are revealed unto babes, unto those elect souls alone to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom.

O my Lord! I see more than ever what utter folly it is to think of likeness to Thee as an attainment through my effort. I cast myself on Thy mercy: look upon me according to the greatness of Thy loving-kindness; and of Thy free favour reveal Thyself to me. If Thou wilt be pleased to come forth from Thy heavenly dwelling-place, and to draw nigh to me, and to prepare me, and take

me up into the full fellowship of Thy life and death, O my Lord, then will I live and die for Thee, and the souls Thou hast died to save.

Blessed Saviour! I know Thou art willing. Thy love to each of Thy redeemed ones is infinite. O teach me, draw me to give up all for Thee, and take eternal possession of me for Thyself. And oh! let some measure of conformity to Thy death, in its self-sacrifice for the perishing, be the mark of my life.

Amen.

Chapter 25^(TOC)

Giving his Life for Men

"Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your slave: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."—Matthew 20:26, 27, 28

"Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John 3:16

In speaking of the likeness of Christ's death, and of being made conformable to it, of bearing the cross and being crucified with Him, there is one danger to which even the earnest believer is exposed, and that is of seeking after these blessings for his own sake, or, as he thinks, for the glory of God in His own personal perfection. The error would be a fatal one; he would never attain the close conformity to Jesus' death he hoped for; for he would be leaving out just that which is the essential element in the death of Jesus, and in the self-sacrifice it inculcates; that characteristic is its absolute unselfishness, its reference to others. To be made conformable to Christ's death implies a dying to self, a losing sight of self altogether in giving up and laying down our life for others. To the question, how far we are to go in living for, in loving, in serving, in saving men, the Scriptures do not hesitate to give the unequivocal answer: We are to go as far as Jesus' even to the laying down of our life. We are to consider this so entirely as the object for which we are redeemed, and are left in the world, the one object for which we live, that the laying down of the life in death follows as a matter of course. Like Christ, the only thing that

keeps us in this world is to be the glory of God in the salvation of sinners. Scripture does not hesitate to say that it is in His path of suffering, as He goes to work out atonement and redemption, that we are to follow Him.

Compare Matthew 20:28 with Ephesians 5:2, 25, 26; Philippians 2:5-8; 1 Peter 2:21-23, and note how distinctly it is in connection with His redemptive work that Christ is set before us as our example: the giving His life away for others is its special significance.

How clearly this comes out in the words of the Master Himself: "Whoever will be chief among, you, let him be your bond-servant, As the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." The highest in glory will be he who was lowest in service, and likest to the Master in His giving His life a ransom. And so again, a few days later, after having spoken of His own death in the words: "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit;" He at once applied to His disciples what He had said by repeating what they had already heard spoken to themselves, "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." The corn of wheat dying to rise again, losing its life to regain it multiplied manifold, is clearly set forth as the emblem not only of the Master but of each one of His followers. Loving life, refusing to die, means remaining alone in selfishness: losing life to bring forth much fruit in others is the only way to keep it for ourselves. There is no way to find our life but as Jesus did, in giving it up for the salvation of others. Herein is the Father, herein shall we be glorified. The deepest underlying thought of conformity to Christ's death is, giving our life to God for saving others.

Without this, the longing, for conformity to that death is in danger of being a refined selfishness.

How remarkable the exhibition we have in the Apostle Paul of this spirit, and how instructive the words in which the Holy Spirit in him expressed to us its meaning! To the Corinthians he says: "Always bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then **death worketh in us, but life** in you." "Though **-Ye was crucified through weakness, YET HE LIVETH** by the power of God. For **we also are weak in Him**, but we shall LIVE WITH HIM BY THE POWER OF GOD TOWARD YOU" (2 Corinthians 4:10-12; 13:4). "I now rejoice in **my sufferings for you**, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church" (Colossians 1:24). These passages teach us how the vicarious element of the suffering that Christ bore in His body on the tree, to a certain extent still characterizes the sufferings of His body the Church. Believers who give themselves up to bear the burden of the sins of men before the Lord, who suffer reproach and shame, weariness and pain, in the effort to win souls, are filling up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in their flesh. The power and the fellowship of His suffering and death work in them, the power of Christ's life through them in those for whom they labour in love. There is no doubt that in the fellowship of His sufferings, and the conformity to His death in Philippians 3. Paul had in view not only the inner spiritual, but also the external bodily participations in the suffering of Christ.

And so it must be with each of us in some measure. Self-sacrifice not merely for the sake of our own sanctification, but for the salvation of our fellow-

men, is what brings us into true fellowship with the Christ who gave Himself for us.

The practical application of these thoughts is very simple. Let us first of all try and see the truth the Holy Spirit seeks to teach us. As the most essential thing in likeness to Christ is likeness to His death, so the most essential thing in likeness to His death is the giving up our life to win others to God. It is a death in which all thought of saving self is lost in that of saving others. Let us pray for the light of the Holy Ghost to show us this, until we learn to feel that we are in the world just as Christ was, to give up self, to love and serve, to live and die, "EVEN AS the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Oh that God would give His people to know their calling; that they do not belong to themselves, but to God and *to their fellow-men*; that, even as Christ, they are only to live to be a blessing to the world.

Then let us *believe* in the grace that is waiting to make our experience of this truth a reality. Let us believe that God accepts of our giving up of our whole life for His glory in the saving of others. Let us believe that conformity to the death of Jesus in this, its very life-principle, is what the Holy Ghost will work out in us. Let us above all believe in Jesus: it is He Himself who will take up every soul that in full surrender yields itself to Him, into the full fellowship of His death, of His dying, in love to bring forth much fruit. Yes, let us believe, and believing seek from above, as the work and the gift of Jesus, likeness to Jesus in this too.

And let us at once begin and act this faith. let us put it into practice. Looking upon ourselves now as wholly given up, just like Christ, to live and die for God in our fellow-men, let us with new zeal exercise the ministry of love in winning souls. As we wait for Christ to work out His likeness, as we trust the

Holy Spirit to give His mind in us more perfectly, let us, in faith begin at once to act as followers of Him who only lived and died to be a blessing to others. Let our love open the way to the work it has to do by the kindness, and gentleness, and helpfulness, with which it shines out on all whom we meet in daily life. Let it give itself to the work of intercession, and look up to God to use us as one of His instruments in the answering of those prayers. Let us speak and work for Jesus as those who have a mission and a power from on high which make us sure of a blessing. Let us make soul-winning our object. Let us band ourselves with the great army of reapers the Lord is sending out into His harvest. And ere we thought of it, we shall find that giving our life to win others for God is the most blessed way of dying to self, of being even as the Son of man was, a servant and a Saviour of the lost.

O most wonderful and inconceivably blessed likeness to Christ! He gave Himself to men, but could not really reach them, until, giving Himself *a sacrifice to God* for them, the seed-corn died, the life was poured out; then the blessing flowed forth in mighty power. I may seek to love and serve men; I can only really influence and bless them as I yield myself unto **God** and give up my life into His hands for them; as I lose myself as an offering on the altar, I become in His spirit and power in very deed a blessing. My spirit given into His hands, He can use and bless me.

O most blessed God! dost Thou in very deed ask me to come and give myself, my very life, wholly, even unto the death, to Thee for my fellowmen? If I have heard the words of the Master aright, Thou dost indeed seek nothing less.

O God I wilt Thou indeed have me? Wilt Thou in very deed in Christ permit me, like Him, as a member of His body, to live and die for those around me? to lay myself, I say it in deep reverence, beside Him on the altar of death,

crucified with Him, and be a living sacrifice to Thee for men I Lord! I do praise Thee for this most wonderful grace. And now I come, Lord God! and give myself. Oh for the grace of Thy Holy Spirit to make the transaction definite and real! Lord! here I am, given up to Thee, to live only for those whom Thou art seeking to save.

Blessed Jesus! come Thyself, and breathe Thine own mind and love within me. Take possession of me, my thoughts to think, my heart to feel, my powers to work, my life to live, as given away to God for men. Write it in my heart: it is done, I am given away to God, He has taken me. Keep Thou me each day as in His hands, expecting and assured that He will use me. On Thy giving up Thyself followed the life in power, the outbreaking of the blessing in fulness and power. It will be so in Thy people too. Glory be to Thy name. Amen.

Chapter 26^(TOC)

In his Meekness

"Behold, thy King cometh, meek."—Matthew 21:5

"Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest for your soul."—Matthew 11:29

It is on His way to the cross that we find the first of these two words written of our Lord Jesus. It is in His sufferings that the meekness of Jesus is specially manifested. Follower of Jesus! who art so ready to take Thy place under the shadow of His cross, there to behold the Lamb slain for thy sins, is it not a precious thought, that there is one part of His work, as the suffering Lamb of God, in which Thou mayest bear His image and be like Him every day? thou canst be meek and gentle even as He was.

Meekness is the opposite of all that is hard or bitter or sharp. It has reference to the disposition which animates us towards our inferiors. "With meekness," ministers must instruct those that oppose themselves, teach and bring back the erring (Galatians 6:1; 2 Timothy 2:25). It expresses our disposition towards superiors: we must "receive the word with meekness" (James 1:21); if the wife is to be in subjection to her husband, it must be in a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price (1 Peter 3). As one of the fruits of the Spirit, meekness ought to characterize all our daily intercourse with fellow-Christians, and extend to all with whom we have to do (Ephesians 4:2; Galatians 5:22; Colossians 3:12; Titus 3:2). It is mentioned in Scripture along with humility, because that is the inward

disposition concerning oneself, out of which meekness towards others springs.

There is perhaps none of the lovely virtues which adorn the image of God's Son, which is more seldom seen in those who ought to be examples. There are many servants of Jesus, in whom much love to souls, much service for the salvation of others, and much zeal for God's will, are visible, and yet who continually come short in this. How often, when offence comes unexpectedly, whether at home or abroad, they are carried away by temper and anger, and have to confess that they have lost the perfect rest of soul in God! There is no virtue, perhaps, for which some have prayed more earnestly: they feel they would give anything, if in their intercourse with partner, or children, or servants, in company or in business, they could always keep their temper perfectly, and exhibit the meekness and gentleness of Christ. Unspeakable is the grief and disappointment experienced by those who have learnt to long for it, and yet have not discovered where the secret of meekness lies.

The self-command needed for this seems to some so impossible, that they seek comfort in the belief that this blessing belongs to a certain natural temperament, and is too contrary to their character for them ever to expect it. To satisfy themselves they find all sorts of excuses. They do not mean it so ill: though the tongue or the temper be sharp, there is still love in their hearts: it would not be good to be too gentle: evil would be strengthened by it. And thus the call to entire conformity to the holy gentleness of the Lamb of God is robbed of all its power. And the world is strengthened in its belief, that Christians are after all not very much different from other people, because, though they do indeed say, they do not show, that Christ changes the heart and life after His own image. And the soul suffers itself, and causes unspeakable harm in Christ's Church, through its unfaithfulness in

appropriating this blessing of salvation: the bearing the image and likeness of God.

This grace is of great price in the sight of God. In the Old Testament there are many glorious promises for the meek, which were by Jesus gathered up into this one, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (see Psalms 25:9; 76:9; Proverbs 3:34; Jeremiah 2:3). In the, New Testament, its praise consists in this, that it is His meekness that gives its supernatural incomparable beauty to the image of our Lord. A meek spirit is of great price in God's sight; it is the choicest ornament of the Beloved Son. The Father could surely offer no higher inducement to His children, to seek it above all things.

For every one who longs to possess this spirit, Christ's word is full of comfort and encouragement: "Learn of me that I am meek." And what will it profit us to learn that **He is meek** ? Will not just the experience of His meekness make the discovery of our want of it all the more painful? What we ask, Lord, is that Thou shouldst teach us how we may be meek. The answer is again: "Learn of me, that I AM MEEK."

We are in danger of seeking meekness and the other graces of our Lord Jesus as gifts of which we must be conscious, before we practice them. This is not the path of faith. "Moses knew not that his face shone," he had only seen the glory of God. The soul that seeks to be meek, must learn that Jesus is meek. We must take time to gaze on His meekness, until the heart has received the full impression: He only is meek: with Him alone can meekness be found. When we begin to realize this, we next fix our hearts upon the truth: This meek One is **Jesus the Saviour**. All He is, all He has, is for His redeemed ones; His meekness is to be communicated to us. But He does not impart it, by giving, as it were from Himself, something of it away to us. No I we must

learn that He alone is meek, and that only when He enters and takes possession of heart and life, He brings His meekness with Him. It is with the meekness of Jesus that we can be meek.

We know how little He succeeded in making His disciples meek and lowly while on earth. It was because He had not yet obtained the new life, and could not yet bestow, through His resurrection, the Holy Spirit. But now He can do it. He has been exalted to the power of God from thence to reign in our hearts, to conquer every enemy, and continue in us His own holy life. Jesus was our visible Example on earth, that we might see in Him what like the hidden life is that He would give us from heaven, that He Himself would be within us.

"Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart:" without ceasing the word sounds in our ears as our Lord's answer to all the sad complaints of His redeemed ones, as to the difficulty of restraining temper. O my brother! why is Jesus, your Jesus, your life, and your strength, why is He the meek and lowly One, if it be not to impart to you, to whom He so wholly belongs, His own meekness?

Therefore, only believe! Believe that Jesus is able to fill your heart with His own spirit of meekness. Believe that Jesus Himself will, through His own Spirit, accomplish in you the work that you have in vain endeavoured to do. "BEHOLD! THY KING COMETH TO THEE, MEEK." Welcome Him to dwell in your heart. Expect Him to *reveal Himself to* you. Everything depends on this. Learn of Him that He is meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest to your soul.

Precious Saviour, grant me now, under the overshadowing of Thy Holy Spirit, to draw near unto Thee, and to appropriate Thy heavenly meekness as

my life. Lord, Thou hast not shown me Thy meekness as a Moses who demands but does not give Thou art Jesus who savest from all sin, giving in its stead Thy heavenly holiness. Lord, I claim Thy meekness as a part of the salvation that Thou hast given me. I cannot do without it. How can I glorify Thee if I do not possess it? Lord, I will learn from Thee that Thou art meek. Blessed Lord, teach me. And teach me that Thou art always with me, always in me as my life. Abiding in Thee, with Thee abiding in me, I have Thee the meek One to help me and make me like thyself O holy meekness! Thou art not come down to earth only for a short visit, then to disappear again in the heavens. Thou art come to seek a home. I offer Thee my heart; come and dwell in it.

Thou blessed Lamb of God, my Saviour and Helper, I count on Thee. Thou wilt make Thy meekness to dwell in me. Through Thy indwelling Thou dost conform me to Thy image. O come, and as an act of Thy rich free grace even now, as I wait on Thee, reveal Thyself as my King, meek, and coming in to take possession of me for Thyself.

"Precious, gentle, holy Jesus,
Blessed Bridegroom of my heart,
In Thy secret inner chamber,
Thou wilt show me *what Thou art*. Amen."

Chapter 27^(TOC)

Abiding in the Love of God

"Even as the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: abide in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love."—John 15:9, 10

Our blessed Lord not only said, "Abide in me," but also, "Abide in my love." Of the abiding in Him, the principal part is the entering into and dwelling and being rooted in that wonderful love with which He loves us and gives Himself to us. "Love seeketh not its own;" it always goes out of itself to live and be at one with the beloved; it ever opens itself and stretches its arms wide to receive and hold fast the object of its desire: Christ's love longs to possess us. The abiding, in Christ is an intensely personal relationship, the losing ourselves in the fellowship of an Infinite Love, finding, our life in the experience of being loved by Him, being nowhere at home but in His love.

To reveal this life in His love to us in all its Divine beauty and blessedness, Jesus tells us that this love of His to us in which we are to abide is just the same as the Father's love to Him in which He abides. Surely, if anything were needed to make the abiding in His love more wonderful and attractive, this ought to do so. "EVEN AS the Father loved me, so have I loved you: abide in my love." Our life may be Christ-like, unspeakably blessed in the consciousness of an Infinite Love embracing and delighting in us.

We know how this was the secret of Christ's wonderful life, and His strength in prospect of death. At His baptism the voice was heard, the Divine message

which the Spirit brought and unceasingly maintained in living power, "This is my BELOVED Son, in whom I am well pleased." More than once we read: "The Father loveth the Son" (John 3:35; 5:20). Christ speaks of it as His highest blessedness: "That the world may know that Thou hast loved them, even as ***Thou had loved me; Thou lovedst me*** before the foundation of the world;" "That ***the love wherewith Thou lovedst*** me may be in them." Just as we day by day walk and live in the light of the sun shining around us, so Jesus just lived in the light of the glory of the Father's love shining on Him all the day. It was as THE BELOVED OF GOD that He was able to do God's will, and finish His work. He dwelt in the love of the Father.

And just so we are THE BELOVED OF JESUS. EVEN AS the Father loved Him, He loves us. And what we need is just to take time, and, shutting our eyes to all around us, to worship and to wait until we see the Infinite Love of God in all its power and glory streaming forth upon us through the heart of Jesus, seeking to make itself known, and to get complete possession of us, offering itself to us as our home and resting-place. Oh, if the Christian would but take time to let the wondrous thought fill him, "I AM THE BELOVED OF THE LORD, Jesus loves me every moment, just as the Father loved Him," how the faith would grow, that one who is loved as Christ was, must walk as He walked!

But there is a second point in the comparison. Not only is the Love we are to abide in like that in which He abode, but the way to our abiding is the same as His. As Son, Christ was in the Father's love when He came into the world; but it was only through obedience He could secure its continued enjoyment, could abide in it. Nor was this an obedience that cost Him nothing; no, but it was in giving up His own will, and learning obedience by what He suffered, in becoming obedient unto the death, even the death of the cross, that He kept

the Father's commandments and **abode in His love**. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life. This **commandment** have I received of my Father." "The Father hath not left me alone; **for I do** always those things that please Him." And having thus given us His example, and proved how surely the path of obedience takes us up into the presence and love and glory of God, He invites us to follow Him. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, EVEN AS I kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

Christ-like obedience is the way to a Christ-like enjoyment of Love Divine. How it secures our boldness of access into God's presence! "Let us love in **deed** and in **truth, hereby** shall we assure our hearts before Him." "Beloved! if our heart condemn us not, then have we **confidence towards God**; and whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, **because we keep His** commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." How it gives us boldness before men, and lifts us above their approval or contempt, because we move at God's bidding, and feel that we have but to obey orders! And what boldness too in the face of difficulty or danger we are doing God's will, and dare leave to Him all responsibility as to failure or success. The heart filled with the thought of direct and entire obedience to God alone, rises above the world into the will of God, into the place where God's love rests on him: like Christ, he has his abode in the love of God.

Let us seek to learn from Christ what it means to have this spirit of obedience ruling our life. It implies the spirit of dependence; the confession that we have neither the right nor the desire in anything to do our own will. It involves teachableness of spirit. Conscious of the blinding influence of tradition, and prejudice, and habit, it takes its law not from men but from God Himself. Conscious of how little the most careful study of the Word can reveal God's

will in its spiritual power, it seeks to be led, and for this end to be entirely under the rule of the Holy Spirit. It knows that its views of truth and duty are very partial and deficient, and counts on being led by God Himself to deeper insight and higher attainment.

It has marked God's word, "If thou wilt diligently **hearken to the voice** of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight," and understood that it is only when the commands do not come from conscience, or memory, or the book, but from the **living voice** of the Lord heard speaking through the Spirit, that the obedience will be possible and acceptable. It sees that it is only as a following out of the Father's personal directions, and as a service rendered to Himself, that obedience has its full value and brings its full blessing. Its great care is to live on the altar, given up to God; to keep eye and ear open to God for every indication of His blessed will. It is not content with doing right for its own sake: it brings everything in personal relation to God Himself, doing it as unto the Lord. It wants every hour and every step in life to be a fellowship with God. It longs in little things and daily life to be consciously obeying the Father, because this is the only way to be prepared for higher work. Its one desire is the glory of God in the triumph of His will: its one means for obtaining that desire, with all its heart and strength to be working out that will each moment of the day. And its one but sufficient reward is this, it knows that through the will of God lies the road, opened up by Christ Himself, deeper into the love of God: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love."

Oh this blessed Christ-like obedience, leading to a Christ-like abiding in the Divine Love! To attain it we must just study Christ more. He emptied Himself, and humbled Himself, and **became obedient**. May He empty us and humble us too! He **learned obedience** in the school of God, and being made

perfect, became the author of eternal salvation to all **that obey Him**. We must yield ourselves to be taught obedience by Him! We just need to listen to what He has told us how He did nothing of Himself, but only what He saw and heard from the Father; how entire dependence and continual waiting on the Father was the root of implicit obedience, and this again the secret of ever-growing knowledge of the Father's deeper secrets. (John 5:19, 20. See Fifteenth Day.) God's love and man's obedience there are as the lock and key fitting into each other. It is God's grace that has fitted the key to the lock, it is man who uses the key to unlock the treasures of love.

In the light of Christ's example and words, what new meaning comes to God's words spoken to His people from of old! "In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thee, **became thou hast obeyed my voice**." "If ye will indeed **obey my voice**, ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me." "The Lord shall **greatly bless** thee, if thou **only carefully hearken** unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all these commandments." Love and obedience indeed become the two great factors in the wonderful intercourse between God and man. The Love of God, giving Himself and all He has to man; the obedience of the believer in that Love, giving himself and all he has to God.

We have heard a good deal in these later years of full surrender and entire consecration, and thousands praise God for all the blessing He has given them through these words. Only let us beware that we be not led too much, in connection with them, to seek for a blessed experience to be enjoyed, or a state to be maintained, while the simple downright doing of God's will to which they point is overlooked. Let us take hold and use this word which God loves to use: obedience. "To obey is better than sacrifice:" self-sacrifice is nothing without, is nothing but, obedience. It was the meek and lowly

obedience of Christ, as of a servant and a son, that made His sacrifice such a sweet-smelling savour: it is humble, childlike obedience, first hearkening gently to the *Father's voice*, and then doing that which is right *in His sight*, that will bring us the witness that we please Him.

Dear reader! shall not this be our life? so simple, and sublime: obeying Jesus, and abiding in His Love.

O my God! what shall I say to the wonderful interchange between the life of heaven and the life of earth Thou hast set before me? Thy Son, our blessed Lord, has shown and proved to us how it is possible on this earth of ours, and how unspeakably blessed, for a man to live with the love of God always surrounding him, by just yielding himself to obey Thy voice and will. And because He is ours, our Head and our Life, we know that we can indeed in our measure live and walk as we see Him do; our souls every moment abiding and rejoicing in Thy Divine Love, because Thou acceptest our feeble keeping of Thy commandments for His sake. O my God, it is indeed too wonderful, that we are called to this Christ-like dwelling in love through the Christ-like obedience Thy Spirit works!

Blessed Jesus! how can I praise Thee for coming and bringing such a life on earth and making me a sharer in it. O my Lord I can only yield myself afresh to Thee to keep Thy commandments, as Thou didst keep the Father's. Lord! only impart to me the secret of Thine own blessed obedience; the open ear, the watchful eye, the meek and lowly heart; the childlike giving up of all as the beloved Son to the beloved Father. Saviour! fill my heart with Thy love; in the faith and experience of that love I will do it too. Yes, Lord, this only be my life: keeping Thy commandments, and abiding in Thy love. Amen.

Chapter 28^(TOC)

Led by the Spirit

"And Jesus being full of the Holy Spirit, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness."—Luke 4:1

"Be filled with the Spirit."—Ephesians 5:18

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Romans 8:14

From His very birth the Lord Jesus had the Spirit dwelling in Him. But there were times when he needed special communications of the Spirit from the Father. Thus it was with His baptism. The descent of the Holy Spirit on Him, the baptism of the Spirit, given in the baptism with water, was a real transaction: He was filled with the Spirit. He returned from the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit, and experienced more manifestly than ever the leading of the Spirit. In the wilderness He wrestled and conquered, not in His own Divine power, but as a man who was strengthened and led by the Holy Spirit. In this also "He was in all things made like unto His brethren."

The other side of the truth also holds good: the brethren are in all things made like unto Him. They are called to live like Him. This is not demanded from them without their having the same power. This power is the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, whom we have of God. Even as Jesus was filled with the Spirit, and then led by the Spirit, so must we be also filled with the Spirit and be led by the Spirit.

More than once, in our meditations on the different traits of Christ's

character, it has seemed to us almost impossible to be like Him. We have lived so little for it: we feel so little able to live thus. Let us take courage in the thought: Jesus Himself could only live thus through the Spirit. It was after He was filled with the Spirit that He was led forth by that Spirit to the place of conflict and of victory. And this blessing is ours as surely as it was His: we may be filled with the Spirit; we may be led by the Spirit. Jesus, who was Himself baptized with the Spirit, to set us an example how to live, has ascended into heaven to baptize us into the likeness with Himself. He who would live like Jesus must begin here: He must be baptized with the Spirit. What God demands from His children He first gives. He demands entire likeness to Christ because He will give us, as He did Jesus, the fulness of the Spirit. We must be filled with the Spirit.

We have here the reason why the teaching of the imitation and likeness to Christ has so little prominence in the Church of Christ. Men sought it in their own strength, with the help of some workings of the Holy Spirit: they did not understand that nothing less was needed than being filled with the Spirit. No wonder that they thought that real conformity to Christ could not be expected of us, because they had mistaken thoughts about being ***filled with the Spirit***. It was thought to be the privilege of a few, and not the calling and duty ***of every child of God***. It was not sufficiently realized that "Be ye filled with the Spirit," is a command to every Christian. Only when the Church first gives the baptism of the Spirit, and Jesus, as the Saviour ***who baptizes with the Spirit*** each one who believes in Him, their right place, only then will likeness to Christ be sought after and attained. People will then understand and acknowledge: to be like Christ we must be led by the same Spirit, and to be led by the Spirit as He was, we must be filled with the Spirit. Nothing less than the fulness of the Spirit is absolutely necessary to live a truly Christian, Christ-like life.

The way to arrive at it is simple. It is Jesus who baptizes with the Spirit: he who comes to Him desiring it will get it. All that He requires of us is, the surrender of faith to receive what He gives

The surrender of faith. What He asks is, whether we are indeed in earnest to follow in His footsteps, and for this to be baptized of the Spirit. Do not let there be any hesitation as to our answer. First, look back on all the glorious promises of His love and of His Spirit, in which the blessed privilege is set forth: *EVEN AS I, YE ALSO*. Remember that it was of this likeness to Himself in everything He said to the Father: "The glory which Thou gavest me have I given them." Think how the love of Christ and the true desire to please Him, how the glory of God and the needs of the world, plead with us not through our sloth to despise this heavenly birthright of being Christ-like. Acknowledge the sacred right of ownership Christ has in you, His blood-bought ones: and let nothing prevent your answering: "Yes, dear Lord, as far as is allowed to a child of dust, I will be like Thee. I am entirely Thine; I must, I will, in all things bear Thy image. It is for this I ask to be filled with the Spirit."

The surrender of faith: only this; but nothing less than this He demands. Let us give what He asks. If we yield ourselves to be like Him, in all things, let it be in the quiet trust that He accepts, and at once begins in secret to make the Spirit work more mightily in us. Let us believe it although we do not at once experience it. To be filled with the Holy Spirit, we must wait on our Lord in faith. We can depend upon it that His love desires to give us more than we know. Let our surrender be made in this assurance.

And let this surrender of faith be entire. The fundamental law of following, Christ is this: "He who loses his life shall find it." The Holy Spirit comes to take away the old life, and to give in its place the life of Christ in you.

Renounce the old life of self-working and self-watching, and believe that, as the air you breathe renews your life every moment, so naturally and continually the Holy Spirit will renew your life. In the work of the Holy Spirit in you there are no breaks or interruptions: you are in the Spirit as your vital air: the Spirit is in you as your life-breath: through the Spirit God works in you both to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Oh, Christian, have a deep reverence for the work of the Spirit who dwells within you. Believe in God's power, which works in you through the Spirit, to conform you to Christ's life and image moment by moment. Be occupied with Jesus and His life, that life which is at the same time your example and your strength, in the full assurance that the Holy Spirit knows in deep quiet to fulfil His office of communicating Jesus to you. Remember that the fulness of the Spirit is yours in Jesus, a real gift which you accept and hold in faith, even when there is not such feeling as you could wish, and on which you count to work in you all you need. The feeling may be weakness and fear and much trembling, and yet the speaking, and working, and living in demonstration of the Spirit and of power (1 Corinthians 2:3, 4). Live in the faith that the fulness of the Spirit is yours, and that you will not be disappointed if, looking unto Jesus, you rejoice every day in the blessed trust that the care of your spiritual life is in the hands of the Holy Spirit the Comforter. Thus, with the loving presence of Jesus in you, the living likeness to Jesus will be seen on you; the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus dwelling within, the likeness of the life of Christ Jesus will shine around.

And if it do not appear that in thus believing and obeying your desires are fulfilled, remember that it is in the fellowship with the members of Christ's body, and in the full surrender to Christ's server in the world, that the full power of the Spirit is made manifest. It was when Jesus gave Himself to enter into full fellowship with men around Him, and like them to be baptized with

water, that He was baptized with the Holy Ghost. And it was when He had given Himself in His second baptism of suffering, a sacrifice for us, that He received the Holy Spirit to give to us. Seek fellowship with God's children, who will with thee plead and believe for the baptism of the Spirit: the disciples received the Spirit not singly, but when they were with one accord in one place. Band thyself with God's children around thee to work for souls; the Spirit is the power from on high to fit for that work: the promise will be fulfilled to the believing servants, who want Him not for their enjoyment, but for that work. Christ was filled with the Spirit that He might be fitted to work and live and die for us. Give thyself to such a Christ-like living and dying for men, and thou mayest depend upon it, a Christ-like baptism of the Spirit, a Christ-like fulness of the Spirit, will be thy portion.

Blessed Lord I how wondrously Thou hast provided for our growing likeness to Thyself, in giving us Thine own Holy Spirit. Thou hast told us that it is His work to reveal Thee, to give us Thy Real Presence within us. It is by Him that all Thou hast won for us, all the life and holiness and strength we see in Thee, is brought over and imparted and made our very own. He takes of Thine, and shows it to us, and makes it ours. Blessed Jesus! we do thank Thee for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

And now, we beseech Thee, fill us, oh fill us full, with Thy Holy Ghost! Lord! nothing less is sufficient. We cannot be led like Thee, we cannot fight and conquer like Thee, we cannot love and serve like Thee, we cannot live and die like Thee, unless like Thee we are full of the Holy Ghost. Blessed, blessed be Thy name I Thou hast commanded, Thou hast promised it; it may, it can, it shall be.

Holy Saviour! draw Thy disciples together to wait and plead for this. Let their eyes be opened to see the wondrous unfulfilled promises of floods of the

Holy Spirit. Let their hearts be drawn to give themselves, like Thee, to live and die for men. And we know it will be Thy delight to fulfil Thine office, as He that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Glory be to Thy Name. Amen.

Chapter 29^(TOC)

In his Life Through the Father

"Even as I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."—John 6:57

Every contemplation of a walk in the footsteps of Christ, and in His likeness, reveals anew the need of fixing the eye on the deep living union between the Forerunner and His followers. **Like Christ:** the longer we meditate on the word, the more we realize how impossible it is without that other: **In Christ.** The outward likeness can only be the manifestation of a living inward union. To do the same works as Christ, I must have the same life. The more earnestly I take Him for my example, the more I am driven to Him as my Head. Only an inner life essentially like His, can lead us to a visible walk like His.

What a blessed word we have here, to assure us that His life on earth and ours are really like each other: "**Even as** I live by the Father, **so** he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." If you desire to understand your life in Christ, what He will be for you and how He will work in you, you have only to contemplate what the Father was for, and how He worked in Him. Christ's life in and through the Father is the image and the measure of what your life in and through the Son may be. Let us meditate on this.

As Christ's life was a life **hidden in God in heaven**, so must ours be. When He emptied Himself of His Divine glory, He laid aside the free use of His

Divine attributes. He needed thus as a man to live by faith; He needed to wait on the Father for such communications of wisdom and power, as it pleased the Father to impart to Him. He was entirely dependent on the Father; His life was hid in God. Not in virtue of His own independent Godhead, but through the operations of the Holy Spirit, He spoke and acted as the Father from time to time taught Him.

Exactly so, believer, must your life be hid with Christ in God. Let this encourage you. Christ calls you to a life of faith and dependence, because it is the life He Himself led. He has tried it and proved its blessedness; He is willing now to live over again His life in you, to teach you also to live in no other way. He knew that the Father was His life, and that He lived through the Father, and that the Father supplied His need moment by moment. And now He assures you that as He lived through the Father, even so you shall live through Him. Take this assurance in faith. Let your heart be filled with the thought of the blessedness of this fulness of life, which is prepared for you in Christ, and will be abundantly supplied as you need it. Do not think any more of your spiritual life, as something that you must watch over and nourish with care and anxiety. Rejoice every day that you need not live on your own strength, but in your Lord Jesus, even as He lived through His Father.

Even as Christ's life was a ***life of Divine power***, although a life of dependence, so ours will ***also be***. He never repented having laid aside His glory, to live before God as a man upon earth. The Father never disappointed His confidence, He gave Him all He needed to accomplish His work. Christ experienced that blessed as it was to be like God in heaven, and to dwell in the enjoyment of Divine perfection, it was no less blessed to live in the relation of entire dependence on earth, and to receive everything day by day

from His hands.

Believer, if you will have it so, your life can be the same. The Divine power of the Lord Jesus will work in and through us. Do not think that your earthly circumstances make a holy life to God's glory impossible. It was just to manifest, in the midst of earthly surroundings which were even more difficult, the Divine life, that Christ came and lived on earth. As He lived so blessed an earthly life through the Father, so may ye also live your earthly life through Him. Only cultivate large expectations of what the Lord will do for you. Let it be your sole desire to attain to an entire union with Him. ***It is impossible to say what the Lord Jesus would do for a soul who is truly willing to live as entirely through Him as He through the Father.*** Because just as He lived through the Father, and the Father made that life with all its work so glorious, so will you experience in all your work how entirely He has undertaken to work all in you.

As the life of Christ was the ***manifestation of His real union with the Father, so ours also.*** Christ says "Even as the Father has sent me, and I live by the Father." When the Father desired to manifest Himself on earth in His love, He could entrust that work to no one less than His beloved Son, who was one with Him. It was because He was Son that the Father sent Him: it was because the Father had sent Him that it could not be otherwise, but He must care for His life. In the union upon which the mission rested, rested the blessed certainty that Jesus would live on earth through the Father.

"Even so," Christ said, "He that eateth me, liveth by me." He had said before, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in Him." In death He had given His flesh and blood for the life of the world; through faith the soul partakes of the power of His death and resurrection, and receives its right to His life, as He had a right to His Father's life. In the

words, "Whosoever eateth Me," is expressed the intimate union and unbroken communion with the Lord Jesus, which is the power of a life in Him. The one great work for the soul, who truly longs to live entirely and only by Christ, is to eat Him, daily to feed on Him, to make Him his own.^[9]

To attain this, seek continually to have your heart filled with a believing and lively assurance that all Christ's fulness of life is truly yours. Rejoice in the contemplation of His humanity in heaven, and the wonderful provision God has made through the Holy Spirit for the communication of this life of your Head in heaven, to flow unbroken and unhindered down upon you. Thank God unceasingly for the redemption in which He opened the way to the life of God, and for the wonderful life now provided for you in the Son. Offer yourself unreservedly to Him with an open heart and consecrated life that seeks His service alone. In such trust and consecration of faith, in the outpouring of love and cultivation of communion, with His words abiding in you, let Jesus be your daily food. He who eateth me shall live by me: even as the Father has sent me, and I live by the Father.

Beloved Christian! what think you? Does not the imitation of Christ begin to seem possible in the light of this promise? He who lives through Christ can also live like Him. Therefore let this wonderful life of Christ on earth through the Father be the object of our adoring contemplation, until our whole heart understands and accepts the word, "***Even so***, He who eateth me shall live through me." Then we shall dismiss all care and anxiety, because the same Christ who set us the example works in us from heaven that life which can live out the example. And our life will become a continual song: To Him who lives in us, in order that we may live like Him, be the love and praise of our hearts. Amen.

O my God I how shall I thank Thee for this wonderful grace! Thy Son

became man to teach us the blessedness of a life of human dependence on the Father; He lived through the Father. It has been given us to see in Him how the Divine life can live and work, and conquer on earth. And now He is ascended into heaven, and has all power to let that life work in us, we are called to live even as He did on earth: we live through Him. O God, praised be Thy name for this unspeakable grace.

Lord, my God, hear the prayer that I now offer to Thee. If it may be, show me more, much more of Christ's life through the Father. I need to know it, O my God, if I am to live as He did! Oh, give me the spirit of wisdom in the knowledge of Him. Then shall I know what I may expect from Him, what I can do through Him, It will then no longer be a struggle and an effort to live according to Thy will, and His example. Because I shall then know that this blessed life on earth is now mine, according to the word, "Even as I through the Father, so ye through me." Then shall I daily feed upon Christ in the joyful experience: I live through Him. O my Father! grant this in full measure for His name's sake. Amen.

Chapter 30^(TOC)

In Glorifying the Father

"Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee. I have glorified Thee on the earth."—John 17:1, 4

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."—John 15:8

The glory of an object is, that in its sort its intrinsic worth and excellence answers perfectly to all that is expected of it. That excellence or perfection may be so hidden or unknown, that the object has no glory to those who behold it. To **glorify** is to remove every hindrance, and so to reveal the full worth and perfection of the object, that its glory is seen and acknowledged by all.

The highest perfection of God, and the deepest mystery of Godhead, is His holiness. In it righteousness and love are united. As the Holy One He hates and condemns sin. As the Holy One He also frees the inner from its power, and raises Him to communion with Himself His name is, "The Holy One of Israel, thy Redeemer." The song of redemption is: "Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." To the Blessed Spirit, whose special work it is to maintain the fellowship of God with man, the title of Holy in the New Testament belongs more than to the Father or the Son. It is this holiness, judging sin and saving sinners, which is the glory of God. For this reason the two words are often found together. So in the song of Moses: "Who is like Thee, **glorious** in **holiness**?" So in the song of the Seraphim: "**Holy, Holy,**

Holy, Lord God of hosts; the whole earth is full of His **glory**. " And so in the song of the Lamb: "Who shall not **glorify** Thy Name? for Thou only art **Holy**. " As has been well said: "God's glory is His manifested holiness; God's holiness is His hidden glory."

When Jesus came to earth, it was that He might glorify the Father, that He might again show forth in its true light and beauty that glory which sin had so entirely hid from man. Man himself had been created in the image of God, that God might lay of His glory upon him, to be shown forth in him-that God might be glorified in him. The Holy Ghost says, "Man is the image and glory of God." Jesus came to restore man to his high destiny: He laid aside the glory which He had with the Father, and came in our weakness and humiliation, that He might teach us how to glorify the Father on earth. God's glory is perfect and infinite: man cannot contribute any new glory to God, above what He has: he can only serve as a glass in which the glory of God is reflected. God's holiness is His glory: as the holiness of God is seen in him, God is glorified; His glory as God is shown forth.

Jesus glorified God **by obeying Him**. In giving His commandments to Israel, God continually said, "Be ye holy, for I am holy:" in keeping them they would be transformed into a life of harmony with Him, they would enter into fellowship with Him as the Holy One. In His conflict with sin and Satan, in His sacrifice of His own will, in His waiting for the Father's teaching, in His unquestioning obedience to the Word, Christ showed that He counted nothing worth living for, but that men might understand what a blessed thing it is to let this holy God really BE GOD, His will alone acknowledged and obeyed. Because He alone is holy, His will alone should be done, and so His glory be shown in us.

Jesus glorified God **by confessing Him**. He not only in His teaching made

known the message God had given Him, and showed us who the Father is. There is something far more striking. He continually spoke of His own personal relation to the Father. He did not trust to the silent influence of His holy life; He wanted men distinctly to understand what the root and aim of that life was. Time after time He told them that He came as a servant sent from the Father, that He depended upon Him and owed everything to Him, that He only sought the Fathers honour, and that all His happiness was to please the Father, to secure His love and favour.

Jesus glorified God *by giving Himself for the work of His redeeming love.* God's glory is His holiness, and God's holiness is His redeeming love: love that triumphs over sin by conquering the sin and rescuing the sinner. Jesus not only told of the Father being, the Righteous One, whose condemnation must rest on sin, and the Loving One who saves every one who turns from his sin, but He gave Himself to be a sacrifice to that righteousness, a servant to that love, even unto the death. It was not only in acts of obedience, or words of confession, that He glorified God, but in giving Himself to magnify the holiness of God, to vindicate at once His law and His love by His atonement. He gave Himself, His whole life and being, HIMSELF wholly, to show how the Father loved, and longed to bless, how the Father must condemn the sin, and yet would save the sinner. He counted nothing too great a sacrifice, He lived and died only for this, that the glory of the Father, the glory of His holiness, of His redeeming love, might break through the dark veil of sin and flesh, and shine into the hearts of the children of men. As He Himself expressed it in the last week of His life, when the approaching anguish began to press in upon Him: "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say— Father, save me from this hour? But for this came I unto the world: FATHER. GLORIFY THY NAME." And the assurance came that the sacrifice was well-pleasing and accepted, in the answer: "I have both

glorified it, and will glorify it again."

It was thus Jesus as man was prepared to have part in the glory of God: He sought it in the humiliation on earth; He found it on the throne of heaven. And so He is become our forerunner, leading many children to glory: He shows us that the sure way to the glory of God in heaven is to live only for the glory of God on earth. Yes, this is the glory of a life on earth: glorifying God here, we are prepared to be glorified with Him for ever.

Beloved Christian! is it not a wonderful calling, blessed beyond all conception, like Christ to live only to glorify God, to let God's glory shine out in every part of our life? let us take time to take in the wondrous thought: our daily life, down to its most ordinary acts, may be transparent with the glory of God. Oh! let us study this trait as one that makes the wondrous image of our Jesus specially attractive to us: He glorified the Father. Let us listen to Him as He points us to the high aim, *that your Father in heaven may be glorified*, and as He shows us the way, *Herein is my Father glorified*. Let us remember how He told us that, when in heaven He answers our prayer, this would still be His object, and let in every breathing of prayer and faith it be our object too: "*That the Father may be glorified in the Son.*" Let our whole life, like Christ's, be animated by this as its ruling principle, growing stronger until in a holy enthusiasm our watchword has become: ALL, ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD. And let our faith hold fast the confidence that in the fulness of the Spirit there is the sure provision for our desire being fulfilled: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you?—*therefore* glorify God in your body and in your spirit."

If we want to know the way, let us again study Jesus. He obeyed the Father. Let simple downright obedience mark our whole life. Let an humble, childlike waiting for direction, a soldier-like looking for orders, a Christ-like

dependence on the Father's showing us His way, be our daily attitude. Let everything be done to the Lord, according to His will, for His glory, in direct relationship to Himself. Let God's glory shine out in the holiness of our life.

He confessed the Father: He did not hesitate to speak often of His personal relationship and intercourse, just as a little child would do of an earthly parent. It is not enough that we live right before men: how can they understand, if there be no interpreter? They need, not as a matter of preaching,, but as a personal testimony, to hear that what we are and do is ***became we love the Father, and are living for Him.*** The witness of the life and the words must go together.^[10]

And He gave Himself to the Father's work. So He glorified Him He showed sinners that God has a right to have us wholly and only for Himself, that God's glory alone is worth living and dying for, and that as we give ourselves to this, God will roost wonderfully use and bless us in leading others to see and confess His glory too. It was that men might glorify the Father in heaven, might find their blessedness also in knowing and serving this glorious God, that Jesus lived, and that we must live too. Oh I let us give ourselves to God for men; let us plead, and work, and live, and die, that men, our fellowmen, may see that God is glorious in holiness, that the whole earth may be filled with His glory.

Believer! "the Spirit of God and of glory, the spirit of holiness, rests upon you." Jesus delights to do in you His beloved work of glorifying the Father. Fear not to say: O my Father, in Thy Son, ***like Thy Son,*** I will only live to glorify Thee.

O my God! I do pray Thee, show me Thy glory! I feel deeply how utterly impossible it is, by any resolution or effort of mine, to lift myself up or bind

myself to live for Thy glory alone. But if Thou wilt reveal unto me Thy glory, if Thou wilt make all Thy goodness pass before me, and show me how glorious Thou art, how there is no glory but Thine; if, O my Father! Thou wilt let Thy glory shine into my heart, and take possession of my inmost being, I never will be able to do anything but glorify Thee, but live to make known what a glorious holy God Thou art.

Lord Jesus! who didst come to earth to glorify the Father in our sight, and ascend to heaven leaving us to do it now in Thy name and stead, oh! give us by Thy Holy Spirit a sight of how Thou didst it. Teach us the meaning of Thy obedience to the Father, Thine acknowledgment that, at any cost, His will must be done. Teach us to mark Thy confession of the Father, and how Thou didst in personal testimony tell men of what He was to Thee, and what Thou didst feel for Him, and let our lips too tell out what we taste of the love of the Father, that men may glorify Him. And above all, oh I teach us that it is in saving sinners that redeeming love has its triumph and its joy, that it is in holiness casting out sin that God has His highest glory. And do Thou so take possession of our whole hearts that we may love and labour, live and die, for this one thing, "That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER."

O my Father, let the whole earth, let my heart, be filled with Thy glory.
Amen.

Chapter 31^(TOC)

In his Glory

"We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."—1 John 3:2, 3

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father hath appointed unto me."—Luke 22:29

God's glory is His holiness. To glorify God is to yield ourselves that God in us may show forth His glory. It is only by yielding ourselves to be holy, to let His holiness fill our life, that His glory can shine forth from us. The one work of Christ was to glorify the Father, to reveal what a glorious Holy God He is. Our one work is, like Christ's, so by our obedience, and testimony, and life, to make known our God as "glorious in holiness," that He may be glorified in heaven and earth.

When the Lord Jesus had glorified the Father on earth, the Father glorified Him with Himself in heaven. This was not only His just reward; it was a necessity in the very nature of things. There is no other place for a life given up to the glory of God, as Christ's was, than in that glory. The law holds good for us too: a heart that yearns and thirsts for the glory of God, that is ready to live and die for it, becomes prepared and fitted to live in it. ***Living to God's glory*** on earth is the gate to living ***in God's glory*** in heaven. If with Christ we glorify the Father, the Father will with Christ glorify us too. Yes, we shall be like Him in His glory.

We shall be like Him in ***His spiritual glory***, the glory of His holiness. In the union of the two words in the name of the Holy Spirit, we see that what is HOLY and what is SPIRITUAL stand in the closest connection with each other. When Jesus as man had glorified God by revealing, and honouring, and giving Himself up to His holiness, he was as man taken up into and made partaker of the Divine glory.

And so it will be with us. If here on earth we have given ourselves to have God's glory take possession of us, and God's holiness, God's Holy Spirit, dwell and shine in us, then our human nature with all our faculties, created in the likeness of God, shall have poured into and transfused through it, in a way that passes all conception, the purity and the holiness and the life, the very brightness of the glory of God.

We shall be like Him in ***His glorified body***. It has been well said: Embodiment is the end of the ways of God. The creation of man was to be God's masterpiece. There had previously been spirits without bodies, and animated bodies without spirits, but in man there was to be a spirit in a body lifting up and spiritualizing the body into its own heavenly purity and perfection. Man as a whole is God's image, his body as much as his spirit. In Jesus a human body—O mystery of mysteries!—is set upon the throne of God, is found a worthy partner and container of the Divine glory. Our bodies are going to be the objects of the most astonishing miracle of Divine transforming power: "He will fashion our vile body like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." The glory of God as seen in our bodies, made like Christ's glorious body, will be something almost more wonderful than in our spirits. We are "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

We shall be like Him in ***His place of honour***. Every object must have a fit

place for its glory to be seen. Christ's place is the central one in the universe: the throne of God. He spake to His disciples, "Where I am, there shall my servant be. If any man serve me, him *will my Father honour*." "I appoint you a kingdom, EVEN AS my Father hath appointed me; that ye may eat and drink at my table, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." To the Church at Thyatira He says: "He that overcometh and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, EVEN AS I received of my Father." And to the Church at Laodicca: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit on my throne, EVEN AS I overcame, and am set down with my Father on His throne." Higher and closer it cannot be: I EVEN AS we have borne the image of the earthly, we also of the heavenly: The likeness will be complete and perfect.

Such Divine God-given glimpses into the future reveal to us, more than all our thinking, what intense truth, what Divine meaning there is in God's creative word: "Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness." To show forth the likeness of the Invisible, to be partaker of the Divine Nature, to share with God His rule of the universe, is man's destiny. His place is indeed one of unspeakable glory. Standing between two eternities, the eternal purpose in which we were predestinated to be conformed to the image of the first-born Son, and the eternal realization of that purpose when we shall be like Him in His glory, we hear the voice from every side: O ye image-bearers of God! on the way to share the glory of God and of Christ. live a God-like, live a Christ-like life!

"I shall be satisfied when I awake with THY LIKENESS," so the Psalmist sung of old. Nothing can satisfy the soul but God's image, because for that it was created. And this not as something external to it, only seen but not possessed; it is as partaker of that likeness that we shall be satisfied. Blessed

they who here long for it with insatiable hunger; they shall be filled. This, the very likeness of God, this will be the glory, streaming down on them from God Himself, streaming through their whole being, streaming, out from them through the universe. "When Christ who is our life shall be manifested, we also shall be manifested with Him in glory."

Beloved fellow-Christians! nothing can be made manifest in that day that has not a real existence here in this life. If the glory of God is not our life here, it cannot be hereafter. It is impossible; him alone who glorifies God here, can God glorify hereafter. "Man is the image and glory of God." It is as you bear the image of God here, as you live in the likeness of Jesus, who is the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, that you will be fitted for the glory to come. If we are to be as the image of the heavenly, the Christ in glory, we must first bear the image of the earthly, the Christ in humiliation.

Child of God! Christ is the uncreated image of God. Man is His created image. On the throne in the glory the two will be eternally one. You know what Christ did, how He drew near, how He sacrificed all, to restore us to the possession of that image. Oh, shall we not at length yield ourselves to this wonderful love, to this glory inconceivable, and give our life wholly to manifest the likeness and the glory of Christ Shall we not, like Him, make the Father's glory our aim and hope, living to His glory here, as the way to live in His glory there.

The Father's glory: it is in this that Christ's glory and ours have their common origin. Let ***the Father*** be to us what He was to Him, and the Father's glory will be ours as it is His. All the traits of the life of Christ converge to this as their centre. He was Son; He lived as Son; God was to Him FATHER. As Son He sought the Father's glory; as Son He found it. Oh! let this be our

conformity to the image of the Son, that THE FATHER is the all in all of our life; the Father's glory must be our everlasting home.

Beloved brethren! who have accompanied me thus far in these meditations on the image of our Lord, and the Christ-like life in which it is to be reflected, the time is now come for us to part let us do so with the word, "WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM, for we shall see Him as He is. He who hath this hope in Him purifieth Himself, EVEN AS He is pure." LIKE CHRIST! let us pray for each other, and for all God's children, that in ever-growing measure this may be the one aim of our faith, the one desire of our heart, the one joy of our life. Oh, what will it be when we meet in the glory, when we see Him as He is, and see each other all like Him!

Ever blessed and most glorious God I what thanks shall we render Thee for the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, and for the light of Thy glory which shines upon us in Him! And what thanks shall we render Thee, that in Jesus we have seen the image not only of Thine, but of our glory, the pledge of what we are to be with Thee through eternity!

O God! forgive us, forgive us for Jesus' blood's sake, that we have so little believed this, that we have so little lived this And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst reveal to all who have had fellowship with each other in these meditations, what THE GLORY is in which they are to live eternally, in which they can be living, even now, as they glorify Thee. O Father! awaken us and all Thy children to see and feel what Thy purpose with us is. We are indeed to spend eternity in Thy glory: Thy glory is to be around us, and on us, and in us; we are to be like Thy Son in His glory. Father! we beseech Thee, oh visit Thy Church! Let Thy Holy Spirit, the Spirit of glory, work mightily in her; and let this be her one desire, the one mark by which she is known: the glory of God resting upon her.

Our Father! grant it for Jesus' sake. Amen

Chapter 32^(TOC)

On Preaching Christ our Example

"Let us make man IN OUR IMAGE; AFTER OUR LIKENESS:" in these words of the Council of Creation, with which the Bible history of man opens, we have the revelation of the Eternal purpose to which man owes his existence, of the glorious eternal future to which he is destined. God proposes to make a GODLIKE CREATURE, a being who shall be His very image and likeness, the visible manifestation of the glory of the Invisible One.

To have a being, at once created and yet Godlike, was indeed a task worthy of Infinite Wisdom. It is the nature and glory of God that He is absolutely independent of all else, having life in Himself, owing His existence to none but Himself alone. If man is to be Godlike, he must bear His image and likeness in this too, that he must become what he is to be, of his own free choice; he must make himself. It is the nature and glory of the creature to be dependent, to owe everything to the Blessed Creator. How can the contradiction be reconciled?—a being at once dependent and yet self-determined, created and yet Godlike. In man the mystery is solved. As a creature God gives him life, but endows him with the wonderful power of a free will; it is only in the process of a personal and voluntary appropriation that anything so high and holy as likeness to God can really become his very own.

When sin entered, and man fell from his high destiny, God did not give up His purpose. Of His revelation in Israel the central thought was: "Be ye holy,

as I am holy." Likeness to God in that which constitutes His highest perfection is to be Israel's hope. Redemption had no higher ideal than Creation had revealed; it could only take up and work out the Eternal purpose.

It was with this in view that the Father sent to the earth the Son who was the express Image of His person. In Him the God-likeness to which we had been created, and which we had personally to appropriate and make our own, was revealed in human form: He came to show to us at once the Image of God and our own image. In looking upon Him, the desire after our long-lost likeness to God was to be awakened, and that hope and faith begotten which gave us courage to yield ourselves to be renewed after that Image. To accomplish this, there was a twofold work He had to do. The one was **to reveal in His life the likeness of God**, so that we might know what a life in that likeness was, and understand what it was we had to expect and accept from Him as our Redeemer. When He had done this, and shown us the **likeness of the life of God** in human form, He died that He might win for us, and impart to us, His own life as **the life of the likeness of God**, that in its power we might live in the likeness of what we had seen in Him. And when He ascended to heaven, it was to give us in the Holy Spirit the power of that life He had first set before us and then won to impart to us.

It is easy to see how close the connection is between these two parts of the work of our Lord, and how the one depends upon the other. For what as our Example He had in His life revealed, He as our Redeemer by His death purchased the power. His earthly life showed the path, His heavenly life gives the power, in which we are to walk. What God hath joined together no man may separate. Whoever does not stand in the full faith of the Redemption, has not the strength to follow the Example. And whoever does

not seek conformity to the Image as the great object of the Redemption, cannot fully enter into its power. Christ lived on earth that He might show forth ***the image of God in His life***: He lives in heaven that we may show forth ***the image of God in our lives***.

The Church of Christ has not always maintained the due relation of these two truths. In the Catholic Church the former of the two was placed in the foreground, and the following of Christ's example pressed with great earnestness. As the fruit of this, she can point to no small number of saints who, notwithstanding many errors, with admirable devotion sought literally and entirely to bear the Master's image. But to the great loss of earnest souls, the other half of the truth was neglected, that only they who in the power of Christ's death receive His life within them, are able to imitate His life as set before them.

The Protestant Churches owe their origin to the revival of the second truth. The truth of God's pardoning and quickening grace took its true place to the great comfort and joy of thousands of anxious souls. And yet here the danger of one-sidedness was not entirely avoided. The doctrine that Christ lived on earth, not only to die for our redemption, but to show us how we were to live, did not receive sufficient prominence. While no orthodox Church will deny that Christ is our Example, ***the absolute necessity*** of following the example of His life is not preached with the same distinctness as that of trusting the atonement of His death. Great pains are taken, and that most justly, to lead men to accept the merits of His death. As great pains are not taken, and this is what is not right to lead men to accept the imitation of His life as the one mark and test of true discipleship.

It is hardly necessary to point out what influence the mode of presenting this truth will exercise in the life of the Church. If atonement and pardon be

everything, and the life in His likeness something secondary, that is to follow as a matter of course, the chief attention will be directed to the former.

Pardon and peace will be the great objects of desire; with these attained, there will be a tendency to rest content. If, on the other hand, conformity to the image of God's Son be the chief object, and the atonement the means to secure this end, as the fulfilment of God's purpose in creation, then in all the preaching of repentance and pardon, the true aim will ever be kept in the foreground; faith in Jesus and conformity to character will be regarded as inseparable. Such a Church will produce real followers of the Lord.

In this respect the Protestant Churches need still to go on unto perfection. Then only will the Church put on her beautiful garments, and truly shine in the light of God's glory, when these two truths are held in that wondrous unity in which they appear in the life of Christ Himself. ***In all He suffered for us, He left us an example*** that we should follow in His footsteps. As the banner of the cross is lifted high, the ***atonement of the cross*** and the ***fellowship of the cross*** must equally be preached as the condition of true discipleship.

It is remarkable how distinctly this comes out in the teaching of the blessed Master himself. In fact, in speaking of the cross, He gives its fellowship more prominence than its atonement. How often He told the disciples that they must bear it with Him and like Him; only thus could they be disciples, and share in the blessings His crossbearing was to win. When Peter rebuked Him as He spoke of His being crucified, He did not argue as to the need of the cross in the salvation of men, but simply insisted on its being borne, because to Him as to us the death of self is the only path to the life of God. The disciple must be as the Master. He spoke of it as the instrument of self-sacrifice, the mark and the means of giving up our own life to the death, the

only path for the entrance upon the new Divine life He came to bring. It is not only I who must die, He said, but you too; the cross, the spirit of daily self-sacrifice, is to be the badge of your allegiance to me. How well Peter learnt the lesson we see in his Epistle, Both the remarkable passages in which he speaks of the Saviour suffering for us—"Christ suffered for us; who bare our sins upon the tree;" "He suffered, the **just for the unjust** ")—are brought in almost incidentally in connection with our suffering like Him. He tells us that as we gaze upon the Crucified One, we are not only to think of the cross as the path in which Christ found His way to glory, but as that in which each of us is to follow Him.

The same thought comes out with great prominence in the writing of the Apostle Paul. To take one Epistle, that to the Galatians; we find four passages in which the power of the cross is set forth. In one we have one of the most striking expressions of the blessed truth of substitution and atonement: "Being made **a curse for us**, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." This is indeed one of the foundation-stones on which the faith of the Church and the Christian rests. But a house needs more than foundation-stones. And so we find that no less than three times in the Epistle the fellowship of the cross, as a personal experience, is spoken of as the secret of the Christian life. "I have been crucified with Christ." "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts." "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." That Christ bore the cross for us is not all; it is but the beginning of His work. It does but open the way to the full exhibition of what the cross can do as we are taken up into a lifelong, fellowship with Him the Crucified One, and in our daily life we experience and prove what it is to be crucified to the world. And yet how many earnest and eloquent sermons have been preached on glorying in the cross of Christ,

in which Christ's dying on the cross for us has been expounded, but our dying with Him, in which Paul so gloried, has been forgotten!

The Church does indeed need to have this second truth sounded out as clearly as the first. Christians need to understand that bearing the cross does not in the first place refer to the trials which we call crosses, but to that daily giving up of life, of dying to self, which must mark us as much as it did Jesus, which we need in times of prosperity almost more than in adversity, and without which the fulness of the blessing of the cross cannot be disclosed to us. It is the cross, not only as exhibited on Calvary, but as gloried in on account of its crucifying us, its spirit breathing through all our life and actions, that will be to the Christian and the Church as it was to Christ, the path to victory and to glory, the power of God for the salvation of men.

The Redemption of the cross consists of two parts—Christ bearing the cross, Christ's crucifixion for us, as our atonement, the opening up of the way of life; our crucifixion, our bearing the cross with Christ, as our sanctification, our walking in the path of conformity to His blessed likeness. Christ the Surety and Christ the Example must equally be preached.

But it will not be sufficient that these two truths be set forth as separate doctrines; they can exercise their full power only as their inner unity is found in the deeper truth of Christ our Head. As we see how union with the Lord Jesus is the root in which the power of both the Surety and the Example has its life, and how the one Saviour makes us partakers both of the atonement and the fellowship of His cross, we shall understand how wonderful their harmony is, and how indispensable both are to the welfare of the Church. We shall see that as it is Jesus who opened up the way to heaven *as much by the footsteps He left us to tread in as by the atonement He gave us to trust in*, so it is the same Jesus who gives us pardon through His blood, and

conformity to Himself through His Spirit. And we shall understand how for both faith is the only possible path. The life-power of this atonement comes through faith alone; the life-power of the example no less so. Our Evangelical Protestantism cannot fulfil its mission until the grand central truth of **salvation by faith alone** has been fully applied, not only to justification, but to sanctification too, that is, to the conformity to the likeness of Jesus.

The preacher who desires in this matter to lead his people in the path of entire conformity to the Saviour's likeness, will find a very wide field indeed opened up to him. The Christ-like life is like a tree, in which we distinguish the **fruit**, the **root**, and the **stem** that connects the two. As in individual effort, so in the public ministry, THE FRUIT will probably first attract attention. The words of Christ, "Do ye even as I have done," and the frequent exhortations in the Epistles to love, and forgive, and forbear, even as Christ did, lead first to a comparison of the actual life of Christians with His, and to the unfolding and setting up of that only rule and standard of conduct which the Saviour's example is meant to supply. The need will be awakened of taking time and looking distinctly at each of the traits of that wonderful Portrait, so that some clear and exact impressions be obtained from it of what God actually would have us be. Believers must be brought to feel that the life of Christ is in very deed the law of their life, and that complete conformity to His example is what God expects of them. There may be a difference in measure between the sun shining in the heavens and a lamp lighting our home here on earth; still the light is the same in its nature, and in its little sphere the lamp may be doing its work as beautifully as "the sun itself". The conscience of the Church must be educated to understand that the humility and self-denial of Jesus, His entire devotion to His Father's work and will, His ready obedience, His self-sacrificing love and kindly beneficence, are nothing more than what each believer is to consider it his simple duty as well

as his privilege to exhibit too. There is not, as so many think, one standard for Christ and another for His people. No; as branches of the vine, as members of the body, as partakers of the same spirit, we may and therefore must bear the image of the Elder Brother.

The great reason why this conformity to Jesus is so little seen, and in fact so little sought after among a large majority of Christians, is undoubtedly to be found in erroneous views as to our impotence and what we may expect Divine grace to work in us. Men have such strong faith in the power of sin, and so little faith in the power of grace, that they at once dismiss the thought of our being expected to be just as loving, and just as forgiving, and just as devoted to the Father's glory as Jesus was, as an ideal far beyond our reach; beautiful indeed, but never to be realized. God cannot expect us to be or do what is so entirely beyond our power. They confidently point to their own failure in earnest attempts to curb temper and to live wholly for God, as the proof that the thing cannot be.

It is only by the persistent preaching of Christ our Example, in all the fulness and glory of this blessed truth, that such unbelief can be overcome. Believers must be taught that God does not reap where He has not sown, that the fruit and THE ROOT are in perfect harmony. God expects us to strive to speak and think and act exactly like Christ, because ***the life that is in us is exactly, the same as that which was in Him.*** We have a life like His within us; what more natural than that the outward life should be like His too? Christ living in us is the root and strength of Christ's acting and speaking through us, shining out from us so as to be seen by the world.

It is specially the preaching of Christ our Example, ***to be received by faith alone,*** that will be needed to lead God's people on to what their Lord would have them be. The prevailing idea is that we have to believe in Jesus as our

Atonement and our Saviour, and then, under the influence of the strong motives of gratitude and consistency, to strive to imitate His example. But motives cannot supply the strength; the sense of impotence remains; we are brought again under the law: we ought to, but cannot. These souls must be taught what it means **to believe in Christ their Example**. That is, to claim by faith His Example, His Holy Life, as part of the salvation He has prepared for them. They must be taught to believe that this Example is not a something, not even a some one outside of them, but the living Lord Himself, their very Life, who will work in them what He first gave them to see in His earthly life. They must learn to believe that if they will submit themselves to Him, He will manifest Himself in them and their life-walk in a way passing all their thoughts; to believe that **the Example of Jesus and the conformity to Him** is a part of that Eternal Life which came down from heaven, and **is freely given to every one that believeth**. It is because we are one with Christ, and abide in Him, because we have in us the same Divine life He had, that we are expected to walk like Him.

The full insight into this truth, and the final acceptance of it, is no easy matter. Christians have become so accustomed to a life of continual stumbling and unfaithfulness, that the very thought of their being able with at least such a measure of resemblance as the world must recognise, to show forth the likeness of Christ, has become strange to them. The preaching that will conquer their unbelief, and lead God's people to victory, must be told by a joyous and triumphant faith. For it is only to faith, a faith larger and deeper than Christians ordinarily think needful for salvation, that the power of Christ's example taking possession of the whole life will be given. But when Christ in His fulness, Christ as the Law and the Life of the believer, is preached, this deeper faith, penetrating, to the very root of our oneness of life with Him, will come, and with it the power to manifest that life.

The growth of this faith may in different cases vary much. To some it may come in the course of quiet persevering waiting upon God. To others it may come as a sudden revelation, after seasons of effort, of struggling and failure; just one full sight of what Jesus as the Example really is, ***Himself being and giving*** all He claims. To some it may come in solitude where there is none to help but the living God Himself alone. To others it will be given, as it has been so often, in the communion of the saints, where amid the enthusiasm and love which the fellowship of the Spirit creates, hearts are melted, decision is strengthened, and faith is stirred to grasp what Jesus offers when He reveals and gives Himself to make us like Himself. But, in whatever way it come, it will come when Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit is preached as God's revelation of what His children are to be. And believers will be led, in the deep consciousness of utter sinfulness and impotence, to yield themselves and their life as never before into the hands of an Almighty Saviour, and to realize in their experience the beautiful harmony between the apparently contradictory words: "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;" and, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me."

But root and fruit are ever connected by a STEM, with its branches and leaves. In the life of Christ this was so too. The connection between His hidden life rooted in God, and that life manifesting itself in the fruit of holy words and works, was maintained by His life of conscious and continual personal fellowship with the Father. In His waiting on the Father, to see and hear what He had to make known, in His yielding Himself to the leadings of the Spirit, in His submission to the teachings of the Word which He came to fulfil, in His watching unto prayer, and in His whole life of dependence and faith, Christ became our Example. He had so truly been made like unto us in all things, become one with us in the weakness of the flesh, that it was only thus that the life of the Father could be kept flowing freely into Him and

manifesting itself in the works He did. And just so it will be with us. Our union to Jesus, and His life in us, will most certainly secure a life like His. This not, however, in the way of an absolute necessity, as a blind force in nature works out its end; but in the way of an intelligent, willing, loving cooperations continual coming and receiving from Him in the surrender of faith and prayer, a continual appropriating and exercising of what we receive in watchful obedience and earnest effort, a continual working because we know He works in us. The faith in the vitality and the energy of the life in which we are eternally rooted will not lead to sloth or carelessness, but, as with Christ, rouse our energies to their highest power. It is the faith in the glorious possibilities that open up to us in Christ our life, that will lead to the cultivation of all that constitutes true personal fellowship and waiting upon God.

It is in these three points of similarity that the Christ-like life must be known; our life like Christ's hidden *in God*, maintained like His in fellowship *with God*, will in its external manifestation be like His too, a life *for God*. As believers rise to apprehend the truth, we are indeed like Christ in the life we have in God through Him; we can be like Christ in the keeping up and strengthening of that life in fellowship with God; we shall be like Christ in the fruits which such a life must bear; the name of followers of Christ, the imitation of Christ, will not be a profession but a reality, and the world will know that the Father has indeed loved us as He loved the Son.

I venture to suggest to all ministers and Christians who may read this, the inquiry whether, in the teaching and the thought of the Church, we have sufficiently lifted up Christ as the Divine Model and Pattern, in likeness to whom alone we can be restored to the Image of God in which we were created. The more clearly the teachers of the Church realize the eternal

ground on which a truth rests, its essential importance to other truths for securing their complete and healthy development, and the share it has in leading into the full enjoyment of that wonderful salvation God has prepared for us, the better will they be able to guide God's people into the blessed possession of that glorious life of high privilege and holy practice which will prepare them for becoming such a blessing to the world as God meant them to be. It is the one thing that the world needs in these latter daysmen and women of Christ-like lives, who prove that they are in the world as He was in the world, that the one object of their existence is nothing other than what was Christ's object—the glorifying of the Father and the saving of men.

One word more. Let us above all beware lest in the preaching and seeking of Christ-likeness that secret but deadly selfishness creeps in, which leads men to seek it for the sake of getting for themselves as much as is to be had, and because they would fain be as eminent in grace and as high in the favour of God as may be. God is love: the image of God is God-like love. When Jesus said to His disciples: "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect," He told them that perfection was loving and blessing the unworthy. His very names tell us that all the other traits of Christ-likeness must be subordinate to this one: seeking the will and glory of God in loving and saving men. He is Christ the Anointed: the Lord hath anointed Him—for whom I for the broken—hearted and the captive; for them that are bound and them that mourn. He is Jesus; living and dying to save the lost. There may be a great deal of Christian work with little of true holiness or of the spirit of Christ. But there can be no large measure of real Christ-like holiness without a distinct giving up oneself to make the salvation of others for the glory of God the object of our life. He gave HIMSELF FOR US, that He might claim US FOR HIMSELF, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. HIMSELF FOR US, and US FOR HIMSELF: an entire exchange, a perfect union, a complete

identity in interest and purpose. HIMSELF FOR US as Saviour, US FOR HIMSELF still as Saviour; like Him and for Him to continue on earth the work He began. Whether we preach the Christ-like life in its deep inner springs, where it has its origin in our oneness with Him in God, or in its growth and maintenance by a life of faith and prayer, of dependence and fellowship with the Father, or in its fruits of humility and holiness and love, let us ever keep this in the foreground. The one chief mark and glory of the Christ is that He lived and died and lives again for this one thing alone: THE WILL AND THE GLORY OF THE GOD OF LOVE IN THE SALVATION OF SINNERS. And to be Christ-like means simply this: to seek the life and favour and Spirit of God only, that we may be entirely given up to to same object: THE WILL AND THE GLORY OF THE GOD OF LOVE IN THE SALVATION OF SINNERS.

^[1] "Thomas à Kempis has said, "All men wish to be with Christ, and to belong to His people; but few are really willing to follow the life of Christ." There are many who imagine that to imitate Jesus Christ is a specially advanced state in the Christian life, to which only a few elect can attain: they think that one can be a real Christian if he only confesses his weakness and sin, and holds fast to the Word and Sacrament, **without attaining any real confirm to tlte life of Christ**; they even count it pride and fanaticism if one venture to say that **conformity to the likeness of Jesus Christ is an indispensable sign of the true Christian**. And yet our Lord says to all without exception: "He that doth not take his cross, and follow after me, is not worthy of me;" He mentions expressly the most difficult thing in His life—the cross, that which includes all else. And Peter writes not to some, but to the whole Church: Christ hath left us an Example that ye should follow His footsteps. It is a sad sign that these unmistakable commands have been so darkened in our modern Christianity, that our leading ministers and church members have quietly, as by common consent, agreed to rob these words of their sting. A false dogmatic must bear no small share of the blame. To defend the Divinity of our Saviour against unbelief, men have presented and defended His Divine nature with such exclusiveness, that it became

impossible to form any real living conception of His humanity. It is not enough that we admit that Christ was a true man; no one can form any true idea of this humanity who is ever afraid to lose the true Christ, if he does not every moment ascribe to Him Divine power and omniscience. For, of a truth, if Christ's suffering and cross be only and altogether something supernatural, we must cease to speak of the imitation of Christ in any true or real sense of the word. Oh, the gulf of separation which comes between the life of Christ and the life of Christians, when the relation between them is only an external one! And how slow and slothful the Church of our day is to apply the great and distinct rule so clearly laid down in the life of Christ, to the filling of these gulfs and the correcting of the disorders of our modern life. The Church of Christ will not be brought again out of its confusions until ***the faithful actual imitation of her Lord and Head again become the banner round which she rallies His disciples.*** "-From M. Diemer, *Een nieuw boek over de navolging van Jesus Christus* (A new book on the imitation of Jesus Christ).

^[2] "What is it thou sayest, my son? Cease from complaining, when thou considerest my passion, and the sufferings of my other saints. Do not say, "To suffer this from such a one, it is more than I can or may do. He has done me great wrong, and accused me of things I never thought of. Of another I might bear it, if I thought I deserved it, but not from him!" Such thoughts are very foolish: instead of thinking of patience in suffering, or of Him by whom it will be crowded, we only are occupied with the injury done to us, and the person who has done it. No, he deserves not the name of patient ***who is only willing to suffer as much as he thinks proper, and from whom he pleases.*** The truly patient man asks not from whom he suffers, his superior, his equal, or his inferior; whether from a good and holy man, or one who is perverse and unworthy. But from whomsoever, how much soever, or how often soever wrong is done him, he accepts it all as from the hand of God, and counts it gain. For with God it is impossible that anything suffered for His sake should pass without its reward.

"O Lord, let that become possible to me by Thy grace, which by nature seems impossible. Grant that the suffering wrong may by Thy love be made pleasant to me. To suffer for Thy sake is most healthful to my soul."-From Thomas à Kempis, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, 3. 19, ***That the suffering of wrong is the***

proof of true patience.

[3] "Jesus hath now many lovers of His heavenly kingdom, but few bearers of His cross. He hath many who desire His consolation, few His tribulation; many who are willing to share His table, few His fasting. All are willing to rejoice with Him, few will endure anything for Him. Many follow Jesus into the breaking of bread, but few to drink of the cup whereof He drank. Many glory in His miracles, few in the shame of His cross."-From Thomas à Kernpis, ***Of the Imitation of Christ***, 2. 11. ***That the lovers of the Cross of Jesus are few.***

"To many it seems a hard speech, "Deny thyself, take up thy cross, and follow Jesus." But it will be much harder to bear that other word, "Depart from me, ye cursed;" for only they who now hear and follow the word of the cross shall then have no fear of the word of condemnation. For the sign of the cross will be seen in the heaven when the Lord cometh to judgment, and all the servants of the cross, who in their lifetime have been conformed to Christ crucified, will then draw near to Christ their judge with great confidence. Why, then, dost thou fear to take up the cross which fitteth thee for the kingdom? In the cross is life, in the cross is salvation: the cross defends against all enemies: in the cross there is the infusion of all heavenly sweetness; in the cross is strength of mind, joy of spirit; the cross is the height of virtue and the perfection of sanctity. There is no happiness for the soul but in the cross. Take up, therefore, thy cross and follow Jesus, and thou shalt live for ever.

"If thou bear the cross cheerfully, it will bear thee. If thou bear it unwillingly, thou makest for thyself a burden which still thou hast to bear. What saint was there ever who did not bear the cross? Even Christ must needs suffer. How then dost thou seek any other way than this, which is the royal way, the way of the sacred cross?

"He that willingly submits to the cross, to him its whole burden is changed into a sweet assurance of divine comfort. And the more the flesh is broken down by the cross, the more the spirit is strengthened by inward grace. It is not in man by nature, to bear the cross, to love the cross, to deny self, to bring

the body into subjection, and willingly to endure suffering. If thou look to thyself, thou canst accomplish nothing of all this. But if thou trust in the Lord, strength shall be given thee from heaven, and the world and the flesh shall be made subject to thy rule. Set thyself, therefore, to bear manfully the cross of thy Lord, who out of love was crucified for thee.

"Know for certain thou oughtest to lead a dying life, for the more any man dieth unto himself, the more he liveth unto God. Surely, if there had been any better thing, and more profitable to man's salvation, than bearing the cross, Christ would have showed it us by word and example. But now He calleth all who would follow Him plainly to do this one thing, daily to bear the cross."- From Thomas à Kempis, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, 2, 12. *Of the Royal Way of the Sacred Cross*.

^[4] One of the most earnest and successful labourers in the work of saving the lost writes as follows: "If I had not been led to a clearer and fuller experience of what salvation is, I never could have gone through the work of the last few years. But, at the same time, one thing has continually been becoming clearer, that we cannot speak of unbroken *fellowship* with our Lord unless we give up ourselves, and that *without ceasing*, to a world lying in the wicked one, to save in the strength of our Lord what He gives us to save. A consecration to the Lord without a *consecration to our neighbour* becomes an illusion or leads to fanaticism. It is this giving up of ourselves to the world to be its light and salt, to love it, even when it hates us, that constitutes for all really consecrated souls the true battle of life. To find in labour our rest, and in fighting the sin around us in the power of Jesus our highest joy, to rejoice more in the happiness of others than our own, and so not to seek anything for ourselves, but everything for others, this, this is our holy calling."

May God help us not only to admire such thoughts, but at once to join the little bands among His children who are really giving up everything, and making their life work the winning of souls for Jesus.

^[5] "Evil can only be overcome by the contact of a most personal self-devotion, never by a love that stands at a distance. "Ye are the salt of the earth," Jesus said: *ye yourselves* just as you are, in the midst of society; in

every place and every moment a sanctifying power must flow out from you and your presence. Christ **Himself** is the life and the light. In all that He does, or says, or suffers, it is always **Himself**; whoever separates ought from Himself no longer preserves it, it vanishes in his hands. And just this is the radical error of our modern Christianity. Men separate the words and works of Christ from Himself, and so it comes that many, with all they do as Christians, have never found Christ Himself. So there are many who trust in His suffering and merit, who cannot show that they have any real fellowship with Him, or truly follow Him. Christ had His abode not only in Cana of Galilee, but also in Gethsemane and on Calvary. Alas! are there not many who make their boast of the cross, and yet are more afraid of the real cross than they are of the devil? They have so wisely arranged their profession of Christ's cross, that no loss to their honour, their goods, or their liberty can ever come from it. Christ's true and actual imitation must once again, as in the olden times, become the standard of Christendom. Only and alone in this way will faith again conquer unbelief and superstition. Many are labouring hard at present to prove to a doubting world the inspiration of Holy Scripture, the truth of the words and the life of the Lord Jesus. It is labour in vain, to try and prove by words and argument that which can alone **be made known by its own self-evidencing power and its actual presence!** Let the proof be given in your deeds, that the spirit of the miracles dwells in you; **prove above all in your life, that Jesus Christ is continuing in you His heavenly eternal life;** and your words will bring many to believe. But if you are wanting in this demonstration of the Spirit and of power, be not surprised if the world bestow little attention on your eloquent arguments. The hour is come that all Christendom must rise up as one man, and in **the power of Christ repeat over again what Christ Himself did to a perishing world.** This is the need there is for the imitation of Jesus Christ; this is the only valid proof for the truth of Christianity."-From M. Diemer, ***Een nieuw boek van de navolging van Jesus Christus.***

^[6] I have left the preceding piece as it was originally published in Dutch. The English Revised Version translates: "But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit;" and gives in the margin "beholding as in a mirror." It is difficult to settle which is the better

translation, as the original can bear both meanings I confess that beholding appears to me better to suit the passage: the reflecting the image can only come after we have been, or at least as we are being, "transformed into the same image." It is only as we are transformed into it we can reflect it: the means of the transformation appear to be almost better expressed by **beholding** than **reflecting**. However this may be, even if we prefer to translate reflecting, what has been said on beholding does not lose its force: it is the intent, longing, loving, adoring gaze on the glory of God in the face of the Beloved Son that transforms.

What rich instruction in regard to the Divine Photography of which the text speaks there is in what we see in the human art! In the practice of the photographer we see two things: faith in the power and effects of light, and the wise adjustment of everything in obedience to its laws. With what care the tenderly sensitive plate is prepared to receive the impression! with what precision its relative position to the object to be portrayed is adjusted! how still and undisturbed it is then held face to face with that object! Having done this, the photographer leaves the light to do its wonderful work: his work is indeed a work of faith.

May we learn the precious lessons. Let us believe in the light, in the power of the light of God, to transcribe Christ's image on our heart. "We are **changed** into the same image as by the Spirit of the Lord." Let us not seek to do the work the Spirit must do: let us simply trust Him to do it. Our duty is, to seek the prepared heart, waiting, longing, praying for the likeness; to take our place face to face with Jesus, studying, gazing, loving, worshipping, and believing that the wonderful vision of that Crucified One is the sure promise of what we can be; and then, putting aside all that can distract, in stillness of soul, silent unto God, just to allow the Blessed Spirit as the Light of God to do the work. Not less surely or wonderfully than in the light-printing which is done here on earth, will our souls receive and show the impress of that wonderful likeness.

I feel tempted to add one thought: what a solemn calling that of ministers as the servants of this Heavenly Photography, "ministers of the Spirit" in His work (see 2 Corinthians 4:6): to lead believers on, and point them to Jesus

and every trait in that blessed face-and life as what they are to be changed to; to help them to that wistful longing, that deep thirsting for conformity to Jesus, which is the true preparation of soul; to teach them how, both in public worship and private prayer, they have just to place themselves face to face with their Lord, and give Him time, as they unbare and expose, their whole inner being to the beams of His love and His glory, to come in and take possession, by His Spirit to transform them into His own likeness.

"Who is sufficient for these things? Our sufficiency is of God, who hath made us able ministers of the Spirit."

^[7] At a meeting of ministers, where these words in Romans 6:11 were being discussed, the question was asked by the reader, which of the five different thoughts of the verse was the most important. He pointed out what these thoughts were. The first, *likewise also ye*, suggesting the complete likeness to Him of whom it had just been said, "In that He died, He died unto sin once; in that He liveth, He liveth unto God." The second, *reckon yourselves*, the command in which the duty of a large but simple faith is laid upon us. Then, *dead indeed to sin*, the truth in which the teaching of the previous verses is summed up. Next, *alive unto God*, the never-failing accompaniment and the blessing of the death to sin. And then, *through Jesus Christ our Lord*, in Him who is ever root and centre of all Scripture teaching. Which of these clauses must be considered as that the right understanding of which is most essential to the full experience of the whole?

The first answer was at once given, "*dead unto sin*." It is certainly this expression, the leader remarked, that above all has created such deep interest in this verse, and stirred so much earnest striving to realize what it implies. And yet it does not appear to me the most important.

"*Alive unto God*," was the answer of a second. For it is the life of Jesus given to us in regeneration that makes its partakers of His death and its power over sin. "Dead unto sin" is only the negative aspect of what we have as a positive reality in being alive unto God, If we looked more at the "I alive unto God," the "dead unto sin" would be better understood.

"Reckon yourselves" was suggested by a third. Is not this command to act faith in what has been prepared us of God the chief thought of the verse, and that, therefore, to which our chief attention must be given?

Another brother now said, **"Through Jesus Christ our Lord."** Our leader said: I think I have lately been taught that this is indeed that on the right apprehension of which the power of the whole verse depends.

How many have been looking most earnestly for the full insight into the blessedness of being dead unto sin and alive unto God, and yet have failed! How often we have heard them pray, "Lord, we are not yet utterly dead, but we long to be so"! many others, who have better understood the text. and have seen that everything depends upon the "Reckon yourselves to be dead," upon the faith that accepts God's statement of what is already true and sure, yet confess that their faith is not followed by the power and the blessing they hoped for!

The mistake has been this: they have been more occupied with the blessings to be had in Jesus, "dead unto sin," "alive unto God," and the question as to their experience of them, or even with the effort to exercise a strong abiding faith in these blessings as theirs, than with JESUS HIMSELF, IN WHOM both the blessings, and the faith that sees them are ours. The death unto sin, the life unto God, are **His** (see Verse 10), are IN HIM, accomplished, living, actual, mighty realities; it is as **we are** IN HIM, and know ourselves to be in Him, and so come away out of ourselves to be and abide in Him only and always, that the blessings which there are in Him will, in the most simple and natural way possible, spontaneously become ours in experience, and that we shall be strengthened in faith to claim and enjoy them. It must be Christ Jesus first and Christ Jesus last. He must be all.

See how clearly this comes out in the third verse of the chapter: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into **Jesus Christ**, were baptized into **His** death?" The baptism into Jesus Christ was the first thing—**that** they had understood and accepted; the baptism into His death followed from it—**this** they were now yet to learn the meaning of. The Lord Jesus had been baptized with water and with the Holy Spirit, and yet He spoke of a baptism yet to

come; the full outcome of His first baptism was to be the death of the cross. Even so it is with us. When baptized unto Christ we "put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27), we are made partakers of Him and all He is and was, of His death too. But it is only in course of time that we got to understand this, and really to claim the power of **His** death unto sin and His living unto God. But we can do this successfully only as we hold fast the initial all-comprehensive blessing, baptized INTO CHRIST. It is the faith that goes away out to take its abode consciously and permanently **in Jesus** that will have the power to say, "IN CHRIST JESUS" we are dead unto sin, and alive unto God; "I in Christ Jesus," we do boldly reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God.

"Baptized into His death:" what a word! The death of our Lord Jesus was the chief thing about Him; it gives Him His beauty, His glory, His victory, His power. In the complete conformity to this, the highest privilege of the Christian consists. To be immersed, plunged into, steeped in the death of Christ, the whole being penetrated with the spirit of that death, its obedience, its self-sacrifice, its utter giving up of everything that is of nature, that has been in contact with sin, to pass through the death into the new life that God gives: this must be the highest longing of the Christian.

He has been baptized into the death: He yields himself to the Holy Spirit to have all that it contains unfolded and applied. And he does this in simple faith: he knows that in **Christ Jesus** he is dead unto sin and alive unto God. Just as the life unto God is a complete and perfect thing, and yet subject to the law of growth and increase, so that he goes on to life more abundant, so with the death to sin. In Christ he **is dead** unto sin, completely and entirely, and yet the full enjoyment of what that death means and works in all its extent is matter of growing intelligence and experience.

But let us beware of wearying ourselves—how often we have done so!—with trying more to comprehend exactly, and to realize feelingly, what this death to sin is, and what the conscious reckoning ourselves dead is, than to remember that all this comes only as we are and abide IN CHRIST JESUS, IN WHOM alone these blessings are ours. I may be so occupied with the blessings and their pursuit, that I lose sight and hold of Him in whom I must be abiding most entirely if I am to enjoy them. Let my first aim be in

wholehearted faith and obedience to dwell in *Jesus*, in whom are the death unto sin and the life unto God: the whole state of being which is implied in these words is His—*He lives it, it is His alone*—as I lose myself in Him, I may rest assured that the blessing I long for will come, or rather, I shall know that in Him I have the thing itself, that Divine life out of death working in me, even when I know not exactly to describe it in words. And I shall see how the whole power and blessedness of the command gathers itself into the closing clause, "Likewise also ye, reckon yourselves to be indeed dead unto sin, and alive unto God, IN CHRIST JESUS." IN CHRIST is the root of LIKE CHRIST.

^[8] I add here an extract from Marshall *On Sanctification*, in which the reality of our being partakers with Jesus of the very nature in which He lived and died and rose again, is very clearly put.

I have often regretted that the somewhat antiquated style of this writer, and the introduction of questions not of immediate interest to the soul seeking the path of holiness, prevents his book from being as well known as it deserves to be. It is on all hands acknowledged to be the one standard work on the subject. It has been given him by God's Spirit with wonderful simplicity to set forth the great truth that holiness is a new life, a new nature, prepared for us in Christ Jesus, and that therefore every step in the pathway of holiness, whether in the use of the means of grace or in obeying God's commands, must be one of faith. I have thought that an abridgment of the work in which all that is essential is provided in the author's own words, would supply a real want, and might be a blessing to many. I have prepared such an abridgment, which has been issued by the publishers of the present work, under the title of *The Highway of Holiness*.

"The end of Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection was *to prepare and form an holy nature and frame for us in Himself, to be communicated to us by union* and fellowship with Him; and not to enable us to produce in ourselves the first original of such an holy nature by our own endeavours.

"1. By His incarnation there was a man created in a new holy frame, after the holiness of the first Adam's frame had been marred and abolished by the first

transgression; and this **new frame** was far more excellent than ever the first Adam's was, because man was really joined to God by a close, inseparable union of the divine and human nature in one person—Christ; so that these natures had communion each with other in their actings, and Christ was able to act in His human nature by power proper to the divine nature, wherein He was one God with the Father.

"Why was it that Christ set up the fallen **nature of man in such a wonderful frame of holiness, in bringing it to live and act by communion with God living and acting in it?** One great end was, **that He might this excellent frame to His seed** that should by His Spirit be born of Him and be in Him as the quickening Spirit; that, as we have borne the image the earthly man, so we might also bear the image of the heavenly (1 Corinthians 15:45, 49), in holiness here and in glory hereafter. Thus He was born Emmanuel, God with us; because **the fulness of the Godhead with all holiness did first dwell** in Him bodily, even in **His** human nature, that we might be filled with that fulness in Him (Matthew 1:23; Colossians 2:9, 10). Thus He came down from heaven as living bread, that, as He liveth by the Father, so those that eat Him may live by Him (John 6:51, 57); by the **same life of God** in them that was first in Him.

"2. By His **death** He freed Himself from the guilt of our sins imputed to Him, and from all that innocent weakness of human nature which He had borne for a time for our sakes. And, by freeing Himself, **He prepared a freedom for us from our whole natural condition;** which is both weak as His was, and also polluted with our guilt and sinful corruption. Thus the corrupt natural state which is called in Scripture the "old man" was crucified together with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed. And it is destroyed in us, not by any wounds which we ourselves can give it, but by our partaking of that freedom from, and death unto it, that **is already wrought out for us** by the death of Christ; as is signified by our baptism, wherein we are buried with Christ by the application of His death to us (Romans 6:2, 3, 4, 10, 11).

"God" sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, for sin (or "by a sacrifice for sin," as in the margin) condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh,

but after the spirit" (Romans 8:3, 4). Observe here, that though Christ died that we might be justified by the righteousness of God and of faith, not by our own righteousness, which is of the law (Romans 10:4-6; Philippians 3:9), yet **He died also**, that the righteousness of the law and by walking after His Spirit, as those that are in Christ (Romans 8:4). He is resembled in His death to a corn of wheat dying in the earth that it may propagate its own nature by bringing forth much fruit (John 12:24): to the passover that was slain, that a feast might be kept upon it; and to be broken that it may be nourishment to those that eat it (1 Corinthians 5:7, 8, and 11:24); to the rock smitten that water might gush out of it for us to drink (1 Corinthians 10:4).

"He died that He might make of Jew and Gentile one new man in Himself (Ephesians 2:15); and that He might see His seed, *i.e.* such as derive their holy nature from Him. (Isaiah 53:10). Let these Scriptures be well observed, and they will sufficiently evidence that Christ died, not that we might be able to form an holy nature in ourselves, but that we might receive one nady **prepared and** formed in **Christ for** us, by union and fellowship with Him.

"3. By His resurrection He took possession of spiritual life for us, as now fully procured for us, and made to be our right and property by the merit of His death, and therefore we are said to be quickened together with Christ. His resurrection was our resurrection to the life of holiness, as as fall was our fall into spiritual death. And we are not ourselves the first makers and formers of our new holy nature, any more than of our original corruption, but both **are formed ready for us to partake of them**. And, by union with Christ, **we partake of that spiritual life that He took possession of for us** at His resurrection, and thereby we are enabled to bring forth the fruit of it; as the Scripture showeth by the similitude of a marriage union, Romans 7:4: 'We are married to Him that is raised from the dead that we might bring forth fruit unto God.'"

^[9] Though the words of our Lord Jesus in the sixth of John were not spoken directly of the Lord's Supper, they are yet applicable to it, because they set forth that spiritual blessing of which the Holy Supper is the communication in a visible form. In eating the bread and drinking the wine, our spiritual life is not only strengthened because therein the pardon of our sins is signified

and sealed to us, but because the Holy Spirit does indeed make us partakers of the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus as a spiritual reality. So one of our Reformed Church Catechisms, the Heidelberg (Qu. 78), puts it, "What is it then to eat the broken body and drink the shed blood of Christ" "It is **not only** to embrace with a believing heart the sufferings and death of Christ, and so to obtain the pardon of sin and life eternal; but **moreover also** that we are united **to His sacred body** by the Holy Ghost, who dwells both in Christ and in us, **so that we**, though Christ be in heaven and we on earth, are nevertheless **flesh of His flesh and bones of His bones.** "

It is known that there are in our Protestant Churches three views of the Lord's Supper. On the one hand, the Lutheran with its consubstantiation, teaching that the body of our Lord is so present **in the bread**, that even an unbeliever eats no longer only bread, but the body of the Lord. On the other the Zwinglian view, according to which the effect of the Sacrament is a very impressive exhibition of the truth that the death of Christ is to us what wine and bread are to the body, and a very expressive confession of our faith in this truth, and so of our interest in the blessings of that death. As the Holy Spirit in the Word speaks to us through the ear, so in the Sacrament through the eye. Midway between these views is that of Calvin, who strongly urges that there is in it a mysterious blessing, not well to be expressed in words; that it is not enough to speak of the life which the Spirit gives to our spirit through faith but that there is a real communication by the Holy Spirit of the very flesh and blood of Jesus in heaven to our very body, so that in virtue of this we are called members of His body, and have His body in us as the seed of the spiritual body of the resurrection. While avoiding, on the one hand, the sacramentarian view of a change in the bread, it seeks to hold fast, on the other, the reality of a spiritual substantial participation of the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus.

This is not the place to enter on this more fully. But I am persuaded that, when a more scriptural view prevails as to the relation between **body** and **spirit**, it will not be thought strange to believe that without anything like a real presence in the bread itself. we are indeed fed with the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus. The **body** of our Lord is now a spiritual body, transfigured and glorified into the spirit-life of the heavenly world, the spirit

and the body in perfect, unity and harmony, so that now the Holy Spirit can freely dispense and communicate that body as He will. Our **body** is the temple of the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us; our **bodies** are members of Christ; our mortal board are even now being quickened and prepared by the indwelling Spirit for the resurrection (Romans 8:11): why should it be thought strange that "by the Holy Spirit the communion" **of the body** of Christ, so distinctly promised, should be, not an Old Testament symbol or shadow, but a blessed heavenly reality?

Calvin's words are as follows: "I am not satisfied with the view of those who, while acknowledging that we have some kind of communion with Christ, only make us partakers of the Spirit, omitting all mention of flesh and blood." "In His humanity also the fulness of life resides, so that every one who communicates in His flesh and blood, at the same time enjoys the participation of life". **The flesh** of Christ is like a perennial fountain which transfuses into us the life flowing forth from the Godhead into itself. The communion of the flesh and blood of Christ is necessary to all who aspire to the Christian life. Hence these expressions: "The Church is 'the body of Christ.' " "Our bodies are 'the members of Christ.' " "We are members of His body, of His flesh and His bones." "What our mind does not comprehend, let faith receive, that the Spirit unites things separated by space. That sacred communion of flesh and blood by which Christ transfuses His life into us, just as if it penetrated our bones and marrow, He testifies and seals in the Supper, not by representing a vain or empty sign, but by these exerting an efficacy of the Spirit by which He fulfils what He promises." "I willingly admit anything which helps to express the true and substantial communication of the body and blood of the Lord, as exhibited to believers under the sacred symbols of the Supper, understanding that they are not received by the imagination or the intellect merely, but are enjoyed in reality as the food of eternal life." "We say that Christ descends to us, as well by the external symbol as by His Spirit, that He may truly quicken our souls by the substance of His flesh and blood." "Such is the corporeal presence which the sacrament requires, and which we say is here displayed in such power and efficacy, that it not only gives our minds undoubted assurance of heavenly life, but also secures the immortality of our flesh."-Calvin's **Institutes** 4. 17, § 7, 9, 10, 19, 24.

To the soul who seeks fully to live by Christ as He did by the Father, the sacrament is a real spiritual blessing, something more than what faith in the word gives. Let all the praying and believing and living in which we seek to realize the wonderful blessing of living just as Christ did by the Father, ever culminate in our communion of the body and blood at the Lord's table. And let us go forth from each such celebration with new confidence, that what has been given and confirmed on the great day of the feast, will by Jesus Himself be maintained in power in the daily life through the more ordinary channels of His grace—the blessed fellowship with Himself in the word and prayer.

^[10] "Let us begin by considering what was the groundwork of the whole beauty and harmony of our blessed Saviour's character. Love to the Father was the ruling motive of His life. It so pervaded His nature as to find expression, directly or indirectly, in every word as well as every action. It will be well if we try to realize something of the perfect simplicity with which that love was so continually shown forth in daily life.

"We especially need to remind ourselves of how entirely this was the case, because, in these days of artificial manners, and of false shame, we are so frequently tempted to conceal our true motives, and to think it a disgrace if we are led into any sign of betraying our deepest religious feelings. We conceal them from those who would not understand them, lest perchance they should scorn our judgment, and wound our self-respect; and we too frequently even hide them from those who are of like mind with ourselves, lest they too might think us lacking in good taste. Self fears the slightest rebuke, the merest breath of disapproval. So long as our love to God is weak enough to allow of its being hidden, self will carefully hide it, rather than run the least risk of being considered deficient in discretion.

"Of true discretion, which is quite a different thing, we shall find abundant examples in our Master's life. But that false discretion, which strives to divert notice, not from ourselves, but from the deepest principles of our conduct, and in order to save our own selfish feelings from being wounded, finds no counterpart whatever in the life of our Lord. In His earthly nature, as man, Christ loved the Lord His God with all His heart and with all His strength.

And this all-pervading, love could not but assert itself continually. Our lord simply and unhesitatingly referred to it as a simple fact, whenever the slightest occasion for doing so arose. It was His avowed object ***that the world should know that He loved the Father.*** He frequently and emphatically alluded to ***His personal connection with the Father*** as the means by which He lived: it was His consciousness of that union which gave Him unfailing support.

"Jesus Christ made known the Father's love; He was sent that He might reveal ***the deep blessedness of belonging wholly to God.*** Even so are we sent, each one of us into the world, in order that we may make the Saviour known to those around us. Through our own intimate and personal connection with Himself, we are each one of us to reveal the Son, even as He revealed the Father. And this we can only do by acting as He did, by continually ***proving how all-sufficient is the sense of union with Himself.***"-From a chapter on the example left us by Christ, in a little book containing many precious thoughts, ***Steps on the Upward Path; or, Holiness unto the Lord.*** By A. M. James. Religious Tract Society.

WITH CHRIST IN THE SCHOOL OF PRAYER

THOUGHTS ON OUR TRAINING FOR
THE MINISTRY OF INTERCESSION

BY

ANDREW MURRAY

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Preface^(TOC)

OF ALL THE PROMISES CONNECTED WITH THE COMMAND, ABIDE IN ME,' there is none higher, and none that sooner brings the confession, 'Not that I have already attained, or am already made perfect,' than this: 'If ye abide in me, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you.' Power with God is the highest attainment of the life of full abiding.

And of all the traits of a life like CHRIST there is none higher and more glorious than conformity to Him in the work that now engages Him without ceasing in the Father's presence-His all-prevailing intercession. The more we abide in Him, and grow unto His likeness, will His priestly life work in us mightily, and our life become what His is, a life that ever pleads and prevails for men.

Thou hast made us kings and priests unto God. Both in the king and the priest the chief thing is power, influence, blessing. In the king it is the power coming downward; in the priest the power rising upward, prevailing with God. In our blessed Priest-King, Jesus Christ, the kingly power is founded on the priestly 'He is able to save to the uttermost, because He ever liveth to make intercession.' in us, His priests and kings, it is no otherwise: it is in intercession that the Church is to find and wield its highest power, that each member of the Church is to prove his descent from Israel, who as a prince had power with God and with men, and prevailed

It is under a deep impression that the place and power of prayer in the Christian life is too little understood that this book has been written. I feel sure that as long as we look on prayer chiefly as the means of maintaining our

own Christian life, we shall not know fully what it is meant to be. But when we learn to regard it as the highest part of the work entrusted to us, the root and strength of all other work, we shall see that there is nothing that we so need to study and practice as the art of praying aright. If I have at all succeeded in pointing out the progressive teaching of our Lord in regard to prayer and the distinct reference the wonderful promises, of the last night (John 16:16) have to the works we are to do in His name, to the greater works, and to the bearing much fruit, we shall all admit that it is only when the Church gives herself up to this holy work of intercession that we can expect the power of Christ to manifest itself in her behalf. It is my prayer that God may use this little book to make clearer to some of His children the wonderful place of power and influence which He is waiting for them to occupy, and for which a weary world is waiting too.

In connection with this there is another truth that has come to me with wonderful clearness as I studied the teaching of Jesus on prayer. It is this: that the Father waits to hear every prayer of faith, to give us whatsoever we will and whatsoever we ask in Jesus' name. We have become so accustomed to limit the wonderful love and the large promises of our God, that we cannot read the simplest and clearest statements of our Lord without the qualifying clauses by which we guard and expound them. If there is one thing I think the Church needs to learn, it is that God means prayer to have an answer, and that it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive what God will do for His child who gives himself to believe that his prayer will be heard. God hears prayer; this is a truth universally admitted, but of which very few understand the meaning, or experience the power. If what I have written stirs my reader to go to the Master's words, and take His wondrous promises simply and literally as they stand, my object has been attained.

And then just one thing more. Thousands have in these last years found an unspeakable blessing in learning how completely Christ is our life, and how He undertakes to be and to do all in us that we need. I know not if we have yet learned to apply this truth to our prayerlife. Many complain that they have not the power to pray in faith, to pray the effectual prayer that availeth much. The message I would fain bring them is that the blessed Jesus is waiting, is longing, to teach them this. Christ is our life: in heaven He ever liveth to pray; His life in us is an ever-praying life, if we will but trust Him for it. Christ teaches us to pray not only by example, by instruction, by command, by promises, but by showing us HIMSELF the ever-living Intercessor, as our Life. It is when we believe this, and go and abide in Him for our prayer-life too, that our fears of not being able to pray aright will vanish, and we shall joyfully and triumphantly trust our Lord to teach us to pray, to be Himself the life and the power of our prayer.

May God open our eyes to see what the holy ministry of intercession is, to which, as His royal priesthood, we have been set apart. May He give us a large and strong heart to believe what mighty influence our prayers can exert. And may all fear as to our being able to fulfil our vocation vanish as we see Jesus, living ever to pray, living and standing surety for our prayer-life.

ANDREW MURRAY

Chapter 1^(TOC)

Lord, teach us to pray or The Only Teacher

"And it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, that when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray."—Luke 11:1

THE DISCIPLES HAD BEEN WITH CHRIST, AND SEEN HIM pray. They had learnt to understand something of the connection between His wondrous life in public, and His secret life of prayer. They had learnt to believe in Him as a Master in the art of prayer—none could pray like Him. And so they came to Him with the request, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' And in after years they would have told us that there were few things more wonderful or blessed that He taught them than His lessons on prayer.

And now still it comes to pass, as He is praying in a certain place, that disciples who see Him thus engaged feel the need of repeating the same request, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' As we grow in the Christian life, the thought and the faith of the Beloved Master in His never-failing intercession becomes ever more precious, and the hope of being Like Christ in His intercession gains an attractiveness before unknown. And as we see Him pray, and remember that there is none who can pray like Him, and none who can teach like Him, we feel the petition of the disciples, 'Lord, teach us to pray,' is just what we need. And as we think how all He is and has, how He Himself is our very own, how He is Himself our life, we feel assured that we have but to

ask, and He will be delighted to take us up into closer fellowship with Himself, and teach us to pray even as He prays.

Come, my brothers! Shall we not go to the Blessed Master and ask Him to enroll our names too anew in that school which He always keeps open for those who long to continue their studies in the Divine art of prayer and intercession? Yes, let us this very day say to the Master, as they did of old 'Lord, teach us to pray.' As we meditate we shall find each word of the petition we bring to be full of meaning.

'Lord, teach us to pray.' Yes, to pray. This is what we need to be taught. Though in its beginnings prayer is so simple that the feeblest child can pray, yet it is at the same time the highest and holiest work to which man can rise. It is fellowship with the Unseen and Most Holy One. The powers of the eternal world have been placed at its disposal. It is the very essence of true religion the channel of all blessings, the secret of power and life. Not only for ourselves, but for others, for the Church for the world, it is to prayer that God has given the right to take hold of Him and His strength. It is on prayer that the promises wait for their fulfilment the kingdom for its coming, the glory of God for its full revelation. And for this blessed work, how slothful and unfit we are. It is only the Spirit of God can enable us to do it aright. How speedily we are deceived into a resting in the form, while the power is wanting. Our early training, the teaching of the Church, the influence, of habit, the stirring of the emotions—how easily these lead to prayer which has no Spiritual power, and avails but little. True prayer—that takes hold of God's strength; 'that availeth much, to which the gates of heaven are really opened wide—who would not cry, Oh for some one to teach me thus to pray?

Jesus has opened a school, in which He trains His redeemed ones, who specially desire it, to have power in prayer. Shall we not enter it with the

petition, Lord! it is just this we need to be taught! O teach us to pray.

'Lord, teach us to pray.' Yes, us, Lord. We have read in Thy Word with what power Thy believing people of old used to pray, and what mighty wonders were done in answer to their prayers. And if this took place under the Old Covenant, in the time of preparation, how much more wilt Thou not now, in these days of fulfilment, give Thy people this sure sign of Thy presence in their midst. We have heard the promises given to Thine apostles of the power of prayer in Thy name, and have seen how gloriously they experienced their truth: we know for certain. they can become true to us too. We hear continually even in these days what glorious tokens of Thy power Thou dost still give to those who trust Thee fully. Lord! these all are men of like passions with ourselves; teach us to pray so too. The promises are for us, the powers and gifts of the heavenly world are for us. O teach us to pray so that we may receive abundantly. To us too Thou hast entrusted Thy work, on our prayer too the coming of Thy kingdom depends, in our prayer too Thou canst glorify Thy name; 'Lord, teach us to pray.' Yes, us, Lord; we offer ourselves as learners; we would indeed be taught of Thee. 'Lord, teach us to pray.'

'Lord, teach us to pray.' Yes, we feel the need now of being taught to pray. At first there is no work appears so simple; later on, none that is more difficult; and the confession is forced from us: We know not how to pray as we ought. It is true we have God's Word, with its clear and sure promises; but sin has so darkened our mind, that we know not always how to apply the Word. In spiritual things we do not always seek the most needful things, or fail in praying according to the law of the sanctuary. In temporal things we are still less able to avail ourselves of the wonderful liberty our Father has given us to ask what we need. And even when we know what to ask, how much there is still needed to make prayer acceptable. It must be to the glory of God, in full

surrender to His will, in full assurance of faith, in the name of Jesus, and with a perseverance that, if need be, refuses to be denied. All this must be learned. It can only be learned in the school of much prayer, for practice makes perfect. Amid the painful consciousness of ignorance and unworthiness, in the struggle between believing and doubting, the heavenly art of effectual prayer is learned. Because, even when we do not remember it, there is One, the Beginner and Finisher of faith and prayer, who watches over our praying, and sees to it that in all who trust Him for it their education in the school of prayer shall be carried on to perfection. Let but the deep undertone of all our prayer be the teachable—that comes from a sense of ignorance, and from faith in Him as a perfect teacher, and we may be sure we shall be taught, we shall learn to pray in power. Yes, we may depend upon it, HE teaches to pray.

'Lord, teach us to pray.' None can teach like Jesus, none but Jesus; therefore we call on Him, 'LORD, teach us to pray.' A pupil needs a teacher, who knows his work, who has the gift of teaching, who in patience and love will descend to the pupil's needs. Blessed be God! Jesus is a this and much more. He knows what prayer is. It is Jesus, praying Himself, who teaches to pray. He knows what prayer is. He learned it amid the trials and tears of His earthly life. In heaven it is still His beloved work: His life there is prayer. Nothing delights Him more than to find those whom He can take with Him into the Father's presence, whom He can clothe with power to pray down God's blessing on those around them, whom He can train to be His fellow-workers in the intercession by which the kingdom is to be revealed on earth. He knows how to teach. Now the urgency of felt need, then by the confidence with which joy inspires. Here by the teaching of the Word, there by the testimony of another believer who knows what it is to have prayer heard. By His Holy Spirit, He has access to our heart, and teaches us to pray by showing us the sin that hinders the prayer, or giving us the assurance that we

please God. He teaches, by giving not only thoughts of what to ask or how to ask, but by breathing within us the very spirit of prayer, by living within us as the Great Intercessor. We may indeed and most joyfully say, 'Who teacheth like Him?' Jesus never taught His disciples how to preach, only how to pray. He did not speak much of what was needed to preach well but much of praying well. To know how to speak to God is more than knowing how to speak to man. Not power with men; 'but power with God is, the first thing. Jesus loves to teach us how to pray:

What think you, my beloved fellow-disciples! would it not be just what we need, to ask the Master for a month to give us a course of special lessons on the art of prayer? As we meditate on the words He spake on earth, let us yield ourselves to His teaching in the fullest confidence that, with such a teacher, we shall make progress. Let us take time not only to meditate, but to pray, to tarry at the foot of the throne, and be trained to the work of intercession. Let us do so in the assurance that amidst our, stammerings and fears He is carrying on His work most beautifully. He will breathe His own life which is all prayer, into us. As he makes us partakers of His righteousness and His life, He will of His intercession too. As the members of His body, as a holy priesthood, we shall take part in His priestly work of pleading and prevailing with God for men. Yes, let us joyfully say, ignorant and feeble though we be, 'Lord, teach us to pray:

Blessed Lord! who ever livest to pray, Thou canst teach me too to pray, me too to live ever to pray. In this Thou lovest to make me share Thy glory in heaven, that I should pray without ceasing, and ever stand as a priest in the presence of my God.

Lord Jesus! I ask Thee this day to enroll my name among those who confess that they know not how to pray as they ought, and specially ask Thee for a

course of teaching in prayer. Lord! teach me to tarry with Thee in the school, and give Thee time to train me. May a deep sense of my ignorance, of the wonderful privilege and power of prayer, of the need of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of prayer, lead me to cast away my thoughts of what I think I know, and make me kneel before Thee in true teachableness and poverty of spirit.

And fill me, Lord, with the confidence that with such a teacher as Thou art I shall learn to pray. In the assurance that I have as my teacher, Jesus, who is ever praying to the Father, and by His prayer rules the destinies of His Church and the world, I will not be afraid. As much as I need to know of the mysteries of the prayer-world, Thou wilt unfold for me. And when I may not know, Thou wilt teach me to be strong in faith, giving glory to God.

Blessed Lord! Thou wilt not put to shame Thy scholar who trusts Thee, nor, by Thy grace, would he Thee either. Amen.

Chapter 2^(TOC)

In Spirit and truth or The True Worshippers

"The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for such doth the Father seek to be worshippers. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth."—John 4:23-24

THESE WORDS OF JESUS TO THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA ARE His first recorded teaching on the subject of prayer. They give us some wonderful first glimpses into the word prayer. The Father seeks worshippers: our worship satisfies His loving heart and is a joy to Him. He seeks true worshippers, but finds many not as He would have them. True worship is that which is in spirit and truth. The Son has come to open the way for this worship in spirit and truth, and teach it to us. And so one of our first lessons in the school of prayer must be to understand what it is to pray in spirit and in truth and to know how we can attain to it.

To the woman of Samaria our Lord spoke of a threefold worship. There is first, the ignorant worship of the Samaritans: 'Ye worship that which ye know not.' The second, intelligent worship of the Jew, having the true knowledge of God: 'We worship that which we know; for salvation is of the Jews. And then the new, the spiritual worship which He Himself has come to introduce: 'The hour is coming, and is now, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth.' From the connection it is evident that the words 'in

spirit and truth do not mean, as is often thought, earnestly., from the heart, in sincerity. The Samaritans had the five books of Moses and some knowledge of God: there was doubtless more than one among them who honestly and earnestly sought God in prayer. The Jews had the true full revelation of God in His word, as thus given; there were among them godly men, who called upon God with their whole heart. And yet not 'in spirit and truth,' in the full meaning of the words. Jesus says, 'The hour is coming, and now is:' it is only in and through Him that the worship of God will be in spirit and truth.

Among Christians one still finds the three classes of worshippers. Some who in their ignorance hardly know what they ask: they pray earnestly, and yet receive but little. Others there are, who have more correct knowledge, who try to pray with all their mind and heart, and often pray more earnestly, and yet do not attain to the full blessedness of worship in spirit and truth. It is into this third class we must ask our Lord Jesus to take us; we must be taught of them how to worship in spirit and truth. This alone is spiritual worship; this makes us worshippers such as the Father seeks. In prayer everything will depend on our understanding well and practising the worship in spirit and truth.

'God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and truth.' The first thought suggested here by the Master is that there must be harmony between God and His worshipers—such as God is; must His worship be. This is according to a principle which prevails throughout the universe: we look for correspondence between an object and the organ to which it reveals or yields itself. The eye has an inner fitness for the light, the ear for sound. The man who would truly worship God, who would find and know and possess and enjoy God, must be in harmony with Him, must have the capacity for receiving Him. Because God is Spirit, we must worship in

spirit. As God is, so His worshipper.

And what does this mean? The woman had asked our Lord whether Samaria or Jerusalem was the true place of worship. He answers that henceforth worship is no longer to be limited to a certain place: 'Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father.' As God is Spirit, not bound by space or time but in His infinite perfection always and everywhere the same, so His worship would henceforth no longer be confined by place or form, but importance. How much our Christianity suffers from this, that it is confined to certain times and places. A man, who seeks to pray earnestly in the church or in the closet, spends the greater part of the week or the day in a spirit entirely at variance with that in which he prayed. His worship was the work of a fixed place or hour, not of his whole being. God is a Spirit: He is the Everlasting and Unchangeable One; what He is, He is always and in truth. Our worship must even so be in spirit and truth: His worship must be the spirit of our life; our life must be worship in spirit as God is Spirit.

God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth.' The second thought comes to us is that this worship in the spirit must come from God Himself. God is Spirit: He alone has Spirit to give: It was for this He sent His Son, to fit us for spiritual worship, by giving us the Holy Spirit. It is of His own work that Jesus speaks when He says twice, 'The hour cometh,' and then adds, 'and is now.' He came to baptize with the Holy Spirit; the Spirit could not stream forth until He was glorified (John 1:33, 7:37, 38, 16:7). It was when He had made an end of sin, and entering into the Holiest of all with His blood, had there on our behalf received the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33), that He could send Him down to us as the Spirit of the Father. It was when Christ redeemed us, and we in Him had received the position of

children, that the Father sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts to cry, 'Abba, Father.' The worship in spirit is the worship of the Father in the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Sonship.

This is the reason why Jesus here uses the name Father. We never find one of the Old Testament saints personally appropriate the name of child or call God Father. The worship of the Father is only possible to those to whom the Spirit of the Son has been given. The worship in spirit is only possible to those to whom Son has revealed the Father, and who have received the spirit of Sonship. It is only Christ who opens the way and, teaches the worship in spirit.

And in truth. That does not only mean, in sincerity. Nor does it only signify, in accordance with the truth of God's Word. The expression is one of deep and Divine meaning. Jesus is 'the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth: 'The law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ: Jesus says, 'I am the truth and the life: In the Old Testament all was shadow and promise; Jesus brought and gives the reality, the substance, of things hoped for. In Him the blessings and powers of the eternal life are our actual possession and experience. Jesus is full of grace and truth; the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth; through Him the grace that is in Jesus is ours in deed and truth, a positive communication out of the Divine life. And so worship in spirit is worship in truth; actual living fellowship with God, a real correspondence and harmony-between the Father, who is a Spirit, and the child praying in the spirit.

What Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, she could not at once understand. Pentecost was needed to reveal its full meaning. We are hardly prepared at our first entrance into the school of prayer to grasp such teaching. We shall understand it better later on. Let us only begin and take the lesson as He gives

it. We are carnal and cannot bring God the worship He seeks. But Jesus came to give the Spirit: He has given Him to us. Let the disposition in which we set ourselves to pray be what Christ's words have taught us. Let there be the deep confession of our inability to bring God the worship that is pleasing to Him; the childlike teachableness that waits on Him to instruct us; the simple faith that yields itself to the breathing of the Spirit. Above all, let us hold fast the blessed truth—we shall find that the Lord has more to say to us about it—that the knowledge of the Fatherhood of God, the revelation of His infinite Fatherliness in our hearts, the faith in the infinite love that gives us His Son and His Spirit to make us children, is indeed the secret of prayer in spirit and truth. This is the new and living way Christ opened up for us. To have Christ the Son, and the Spirit of the Son, dwelling within us, and revealing the Father, this makes us true, spiritual worshippers.

Blessed Lord! I adore the love with which Thou didst teach a woman, who had refused Thee a cup of water, what the worship of God must be. I rejoice in the assurance that Thou wilt no less now instruct Thy disciple, who comes to Thee with a heart that longs to pray in spirit and in truth. O my Holy Master! do teach me this blessed secret.

Teach me that the worship in spirit and truth is not of man, but only comes from Thee; that it is not only a thing of times and seasons, but the outflowing of a life in Thee. Teach me to draw near to God in prayer under the deep impression of my ignorance and my having nothing in myself to offer Him, and at the same time of the provision Thou my Saviour, makest for the Spirit's breathing in my childlike stammerings. I do bless Thee that in Thee I am a child, and have a child's liberty of access; that in Thee I have the spirit of Sonship and of worship in truth. Teach me, above all, Blessed Son of the Father, how it is the revelation of the Father that gives confidence in prayer;

and let the infinite Fatherliness of God's Heart be my joy and strength for a life of prayer and of worship. Amen.

Chapter 3^(TOC)

Pray to thy Father, Which is in Secret or Alone with God

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee."—Matthew 6:6

After Jesus had called His first disciples, He gave them their first public teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. He there expounded to them the kingdom of God, its laws and its life. In that kingdom God is not only King, but Father; He not only gives all, but is Himself all. In the knowledge and fellowship of Him alone is its blessedness. Hence it came as a matter of course that the revelation of prayer and the prayer-life was a part of His teaching concerning the New Kingdom He came to set up. Moses gave neither command nor regulation with regard to prayer: even the prophets say little directly of the duty of prayer; it is Christ who teaches to pray.

And the first thing the Lord teaches His disciples is that they must have a secret place for prayer; every one must have some solitary spot where he can be alone with his God. Every teacher must have a schoolroom. We have learned to know and accept Jesus as our only teacher in the school of prayer. He has already taught us at Samaria that worship is no longer confined to times and places; that worship, spiritual true worship, is a thing of the spirit and the life; the whole man must in his whole life be worshipping in spirit and truth. And yet He wants each one to choose for himself the fixed spot

where He can daily meet him. That inner chamber, that solitary place, is Jesus' schoolroom. That spot may be anywhere; that spot may change from day to day if we have to change our abode; but that secret place there must be, with the quiet time in which the pupil places himself in the Master's presence, to be by Him prepared to worship the Father. There alone, but there most surely, Jesus comes to us to teach us to pray.

A teacher is always anxious that his schoolroom should be bright and attractive, filled with the light and air of heaven, a place where pupils long to come, and love to stay. In His first words on prayer in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus seeks to set the inner chamber before us in its most attractive light. If we listen carefully, we soon notice what the chief thing He has to tell us is of our tarrying there. Three times He uses the name of Father: 'Pray to thy Father;' 'Thy Father shall recompense thee;' 'Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of.' The first thing in closet-prayer is: I must meet my Father. The light that shines in the closet must be: the light of the Father's countenance. The fresh air from heaven with which Jesus would have it filled, the atmosphere in which I am to breathe and pray, is: God's Father-love, God's infinite Fatherliness. Thus each thought or petition we breathe out will be simple, hearty, childlike trust in the Father. This is how the Master teaches us to pray: He brings us into the Father's living presence. What we pray there must avail. Let us listen carefully to hear what the Lord has to say to us.

First 'Pray to thy Father which is in secret.' God is a God who hides Himself to the carnal eye. As long as in our worship of God, we are chiefly occupied with our own thoughts and, exercises; we shall not meet Him who is a Spirit, the unseen One. But to the man who withdraws himself from all that is of the world and man, and prepares to wait upon God alone, the Father will reveal

Himself. As he forsakes and gives up and shuts out the world, and the life of the world, and surrenders himself to be led of Christ into the secret of God's presence, the light of the Father's love will rise upon him. The secrecy of the inner chamber and the closed door, the entire separation from all around us, is an image of, and so a help to that inner spiritual sanctuary, the secret of God's tabernacle, within the veil, where our spirit truly comes into contact with the invisible One. And so we are taught, at the very outset of our search after the secret of effectual prayer, to remember that it is in the inner chamber; where we are alone with the Father, that we shall learn to pray aright. The Father is in secret: in these words Jesus teaches us where He is waiting for us, where He is always to be found. Christians often complain that private prayer is not what it should be. They feel weak and sinful, the heart is cold and dark; it is as if they have so little to pray, and in that little no faith or joy. They are discouraged and kept from prayer by the thought that they cannot come to the Father as they ought or as they wish. Child of God! listen to your Teacher. He tells you that when you go to private prayer your first thought must be: The Father is in secret, the Father awaits me there. Just because your heart is cold and prayerless, get into the presence of the loving Father. As a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth you. Do not be thinking of how little you have to bring God, but of how much He wants to give you. Just place yourself before, and look up into, His face; think of His love, His wonderful, tender, pitying love. Just tell Him how sinful and cold and dark all is: it is the Father's loving heart that will give light and warmth to yours. O do what Jesus says: Just shut the door, and pray to thy Father which is in secret. Is it not wonderful? to be able to go alone with God the infinite God, and then to look up and say: My Father!

'And thy Father, which seeth in secret, will recompense thee.' Here Jesus assures us that secret prayer cannot be fruitless: its blessing will show itself in

our life. We have but in secret, alone with God, to entrust our life before men to Him; He will reward us openly; He will see to it that the answer to prayer be made manifest in His blessing upon us. Our Lord would thus teach us that as infinite Fatherliness and Faithfulness is that with which God meets us in secret, so on our part there should be the childlike simplicity of faith, the confidence that our prayer does bring down a blessing. He that cometh to God must believe that He is a rewarder of them that seek Him.' Not on the strong or the fervent feeling with which I pray does the blessing of the closet depend, but upon the love and the power of the Father to whom I there entrust my needs. And therefore the Master has but one desire: Remember your Father is, and sees and hears in secret; go there and stay there, and go again from there in the confidence: He will recompense. Trust Him for it; depend upon Him: prayer to the Father cannot be vain; He will reward you openly.

Still further to confirm this faith in the Father-love of God, Christ speaks a third word: 'Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him.' At first sight it might appear as if this thought made prayer less needful: God knows far better than we what we need. But as we get a deeper insight into what prayer really is, this truth will help much to strengthen our faith. It will teach us that we do not need, as the heathen, with the multitude and urgency of our words, to compel an unwilling God to listen to us. It will lead to a holy thoughtfulness and silence in prayer as it suggests the question: Does my Father really know that I need this? It will, when once we have been led by the Spirit to the certainty that our request is indeed something that, according to the Word, we do need for God's glory, give us wonderful confidence to say, My Father knows I need it and must have it. And if there be any delay in the answer, it will teach us in quiet perseverance to hold on: Father thou knowest I need it. O the blessed liberty and simplicity of a child

that Christ our Teacher would fain cultivate in us as we draw near to God: let us look up to the Father until His Spirit works it in us. Let us sometimes in our prayers, when we are in danger of being so occupied with our fervent, urgent petitions, as to forget that the Father knows and hears, let us hold still and just quietly say: My Father sees, my Father hears, my Father knows; it will help our faith to take the answer, and to say: We know that we have the petitions we have asked of Him.

And now, all ye who have anew entered the school of Christ to be taught to pray, take these lessons, practise them, and trust Him to perfect you in them. Dwell much in the inner chamber, with the door shut-shut in from men, shut up with God; it is there the Father waits you, it is there Jesus will teach you to pray. To be alone in secret with THE FATHER: this be your highest joy. To be assured that THE FATHER will openly reward the secret prayer, so that it cannot remain unblessed: this be your strength day by day. And to know that the Father knows that you need what you ask: this be your liberty to bring every need, in the assurance that your God will supply it according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Blessed Saviour! with my whole heart I do bless Thee for the appointment of the inner chamber, as the school where Thou meetest each of Thy pupils alone, and revealest to him the Father. O my Lord! strengthen my faith so in the Father's tender love and kindness, that as often as I feel sinful or troubled, the first instinctive thought may be to go where I know the Father wafts me, and where prayer never can go unblessed. Let the thought that He knows my need before I ask, bring me, in great restfulness Of faith, to trust that He will give what His child requires. O let the place of secret prayer become to me the most beloved spot of earth.

And, Lord! hear me as I pray that Thou wouldest everywhere bless the

closets of Thy believing people. Let Thy wonderful revelation of a Father's tenderness free all young Christians from every thought of secret prayer as a duty or a burden, and lead them to regard it as the highest privilege of their life, a joy and a blessing. Bring back all who are discouraged, because they cannot find ought to bring Thee in prayer. O give them to understand that they have only to come with their emptiness to Him who has all to give, and delights to do it. Not, what they have to bring the Father, but what the Father waits to give them, be their one thought.

And bless especially the inner chamber of all Thy servants who are working for Thee, as the place where God's truth and God's grace are revealed to them, where they are daily anointed with fresh oil, where their strength is renewed, and the blessings are received in faith, with which they are to bless their fellow-men. Lord; draw us all in the closet nearer to Thyself and the Father. Amen.

Chapter 4^(TOC)

After this manner pray or the Model Prayer

*"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father, which art in heaven."—
Matthew 6:9*

EVERY TEACHER KNOWS THE POWER OF EXAMPLE. HE NOT only tells the child what to do and how to do it, but shows him how it really can be done. In condescension to our weakness, our Heavenly Teacher has given us the very words we are to take with us as we draw near to our Father. We have in them a form of prayer in which there breathe the freshness and fulness of the Eternal Life. So simple that the child can lisp it, so divinely rich that it comprehends all that God can give. A form of prayer that becomes the model and inspiration for all other prayer, and yet always draws us back to itself as the deepest utterance of our souls before our God.

'Our Father which art in heaven!' To appreciate this word of adoration aright, I must remember that none of the saints had in Scripture ever ventured to address God as their Father. The invocation places us at once in the centre of the wonderful revelation the Son came to make of His Father as our Father too. It comprehends the mystery of redemption—Christ delivering us from the curse that we might become the children of God. The mystery of regeneration—the Spirit in the new birth giving us the new life. And the mystery of faith—ere yet the redemption is accomplished or understood the

word is given on the lips of the disciples to prepare them for the blessed experience still to come. The words are the key to the whole prayer, to all prayer. It takes time, it takes life to study them; it will take eternity to understand them fully. The knowledge of God's Father-love is the first and simplest, but also the last and highest lesson in the school of prayer. It is in the personal relation to the living God, and the personal conscious fellowship of love with Himself, that prayer begins. It is in the knowledge of God's Fatherliness, revealed by the Holy Spirit, that the power of prayer will be found to root and grow. In the infinite tenderness and pity and patience of the infinite Father, in His loving readiness to hear and to help, the life of prayer has its joy. O let us take time, until the Spirit has made these words to us spirit and truth, filling heart and life: Our Father which art in heaven.' Then we are indeed within the veil, in the secret place of power where prayer always prevails.

'Hallowed be Thy name.' There is something here that strikes us at once. While we ordinarily first bring our own needs to God in prayer, and then think of what belongs to God and His interests, the Master reverses the order. First, Thy name, Thy kingdom, Thy will; then, give us, forgive us, lead us, deliver us. The lesson is of more importance than we think. In true worship the Father must be first, must be all. The sooner I learn to forget myself in the desire that HE may be glorified, the richer will the blessing be that prayer will bring to myself. No one ever loses by what he sacrifices for the Father.

This must influence all our prayer. There are two sorts of prayer: personal and intercessory. The latter ordinarily occupies the lesser part of our time and energy. This may not be. Christ has opened the school of prayer specially to train intercessors for the great work of bringing down, by their faith and prayer, the blessings of His work and love on the world around. There can be

no deep growth in prayer unless this be made our aim. The little child may ask of the father only what it needs for itself; and yet it soon learns to say, give some for sister too. But the grownup son, who only lives for the father's interest and takes charge of the father's business, asks more largely, and gets all that is asked. And Jesus would train us to the blessed life of consecration and service, in which our interests are all subordinate to the Name, and the Kingdom, and the Will of the Father. O let us live for this and let, on each act of adoration, Our Father! there follow in the same breath, Thy Name, Thy Kingdom, Thy Will—for this we look up and long.

Hallowed be Thy name.' What name? This new name of Father. The word Holy is the central word of the Old Testament; the name Father of the New. In this name of Love all the holiness and glory of God are now to be revealed. And how is the name to be hallowed? By God Himself: 'I will hallow My great name which ye have profaned.' Our prayer must be that in ourselves in all God's children, in presence of the world, God Himself would reveal the holiness, the Divine power, the hidden glory of the name of Father. The Spirit of the Father is the Holy Spirit: it is only when we yield ourselves to be led of Him, that the name will be hallowed in our prayers and our lives. Let us learn the prayer: 'Our Father, hallowed be Thy name.'

'Thy kingdom come.' The Father is a King and has a kingdom. The son and heir of a king has no higher ambition than the glory of his father's kingdom. In time of war or danger this becomes his passion; he can think of nothing else. The children of the Father are here in the enemy's territory, where the kingdom, which is in heaven, is not yet fully manifested. What more natural than that, when they learn to hallow the Father-name, they should long and cry with deep enthusiasm: 'Thy kingdom come. The coming of the kingdom is the one great event on which the revelation of the Father's glory, the

blessedness of His children, the salvation of the world depends. On our prayers too the coming of the kingdom waits. Shall we not join in the deep longing cry of the redeemed: 'Thy kingdom come'? Let us learn it in the school of Jesus.

'Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.' This petition is too frequently applied alone to the suffering of the will of God. In heaven God's will is done, and the Master teaches the child to ask that the will may be done on earth just as in heaven: in the spirit of adoring submission and ready obedience. Because the will of God is the glory of heaven the doing of it is the blessedness of heaven. As the will is done—the kingdom of heaven comes into the heart. And wherever faith has accepted the Father's love, obedience accepts the Father's will. The surrender to, and the prayer for a life of heaven-like obedience, is the spirit of childlike prayer.

'Give us this day our daily bread! When first the child has yielded himself to the Father in the care for His Name, His Kingdom, and His Will, he has full liberty to ask for his daily bread. A master cares for the food of his servant, a general of his soldiers, a father of his child. And will not the Father in heaven care for the child who has in prayer given himself up to His interests? We may indeed in full confidence say: Father, I live for Thy honour and Thy work; I know Thou carest for me. Consecration to God and His will gives wonderful liberty in prayer for temporal things: the whole earthly life is given to the Father's loving care.

'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. As bread is the first need of the body, so forgiveness for the soul, And the provision for the one is as sure as for the other. We are children, but sinners too; our right of access to the Father's presence we owe to the precious blood and the forgiveness it has won for us. Let us beware of the prayer for forgiveness

becoming a formality: only what is really confessed is really forgiven. Let us in faith accept the forgiveness as promised: as a spiritual reality, an actual transaction between God and us, it is the entrance into all the Father's love and all the privileges of children. Such forgiveness, as a living experience, is impossible without a forgiving spirit to others: as forgiven expresses the heavenward, so forgiving the earthward, relation of God's child. In each prayer to the Father I must be able to say that I know of no one whom I do not heartily love.

'And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' Our daily bread, the pardon of our sins, and then our being kept from all sin and the power of the evil one, in these three petitions all our personal need is comprehended. The prayer for bread and pardon must be accompanied by the surrender to live in all things in holy obedience to the Father's will, and the believing prayer in everything to be kept by the power of the indwelling Spirit from the power of the evil one.

Children of God! it is thus Jesus would have us to pray to the Father in heaven. O let His Name, and Kingdom, and Will, have the first place in our love; His providing, and pardoning, and keeping love will be our sure portion, So the prayer will lead us up to the true childlike: the Father all to the child, the Father all for the child. We shall understand how Father and child, the Thine and the our, are all one, and how the heart that begins its prayer with the God-devoted Thine, will have the power in faith to speak out the Our too. Such prayer will, indeed, be the fellowship and interchange of love, always bringing us back in trust and worship to Him who is not only the Beginning but the End:' For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power, and the Glory, for ever Amen.' Son of the Father, teach us to pray, 'Our Father'.

O Thou who art the only-begotten Son, teach us, we beseech Thee, to pray,

'Our FATHER.' We thank Thee, Lord, for these Living Blessed Words which Thou hast given us. We thank Thee for the millions who in them have learnt to know and worship the Father, and for what they have been to us. Lord! it is as if we needed days and weeks in Thy school with each separate petition; so deep and full are they. But we look to Thee to lead us deeper into their meaning: do it, we pray Thee, for Thy Name's sake; Thy name is Son of the Father.

Lord! Thou didst once say: 'No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son willeth to reveal Him.' And again: 'I made known unto them Thy name, and will make it known, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them.' Lord Jesus! reveal to us the Father. Let His name, His infinite Father-love, the love with which He loved Thee, according to Thy prayer, BE IN us. Then shall we say aright, 'OUR Father!'

Then shall we apprehend Thy teaching and the first spontaneous breathing of our heart will be: 'Our Father, Thy Name, Thy Kingdom, Thy Will.' And we shall bring our needs and our sins and our temptations to Him in the confidence that the love of such a Father cares for all.

Blessed Lord! we are Thy scholars, we trust Thee; do teach us to pray, 'Our Father.' Amen.

Chapter 5^(TOC)

Ask and it Shall be Given You or the Certainty of the Answer to Prayer

'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall opened.'—Matthew 7:7-8

'Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss.'—James 4:3

OUR Lord returns here in the Sermon the Mount a second time to speak of prayer. The first time He had spoken of the Father who is to be found in secret, and rewards openly, and has given us the pattern prayer (Matthew 6:5). Here He wants to teach us what in all Scripture is considered the chief thing in prayer: the assurance that prayer will be heard and answered. Observe how He uses words which mean almost the same thing, and each time repeats the promise distinctly: 'Ye shall receive, ye shall find, it shall be opened unto you;' and then gives us ground for such assurance the law of the kingdom: 'He that asketh receiveth; he that seeketh, findeth to him that knocketh, it shall he opened. We cannot but feel how in this sixfold repetition He wants to impress deep on our minds this one truth, that we may and must most confidently expect an answer to our prayer. Next to the revelation of the Father's love, there is, in the whole course of the school of prayer, not a more important lesson than this: Every one that asketh, receiveth.

In the three words the Lord uses, ask, seek, knock, a difference in meaning has been sought. If such was indeed His purpose, then the first, ASK, refers

to the gifts we pray for. But I may ask and receive the gift without the Giver. Seek is the word Scripture uses of God Himself; Christ assures me that I can find Himself. But it is not enough to find God in time of need, without coming to abiding fellowship: KNOCK speaks of admission to dwell with Him and in Him. Asking and receiving the gift would thus lead to seeking and finding the Giver, and this again to the knocking and opening of the door of the Father's home and love. One thing is sure: the Lord does want us to count most certainly on it that asking, seeking, knocking, cannot be in vain: receiving an answer, finding God, the opened heart and home of God, are the certain fruit of prayer.

That the Lord should have thought it needful in so many forms to repeat the truth, is a lesson of deep import. It proves that He knows our heart, how doubt and distrust toward God are natural to us, and how easily we are inclined to rest in prayer as a religious work without an answer. He knows too how even when we believe that God is the Hearer of prayer, believing prayer that lays hold of the promise, is something spiritual, too high and difficult for the halfhearted disciple. He therefore at the very outset of His instruction to those who would learn to pray, seeks to lodge this truth deep into their hearts: prayer does avail much; ask and ye shall receive; every one that asketh, receiveth. This is the fixed eternal law of the kingdom: if you ask and receive not, it must be because there is something amiss or wanting in the prayer. Hold on; let the word and Spirit teach you to pray aright, but do not let go the confidence He seeks to waken: Every one that asketh, receiveth.

'Ask, and it shall be given you.' Christ has no mightier stimulus to persevering prayer in His school than this. As a child has to prove a sum to be correct, so the proof that we have prayed aright is, the answer. If we ask and receive not, it is because we have not learned to pray aright. Let every learner

in the school of Christ therefore take the Master's word in all simplicity: Every one that asketh, receiveth. He had good reasons for speaking so unconditionally. Let us beware of weakening the Word with our human wisdom. When He tells us heavenly things, let us believe Him. His Word will explain itself to him who believes it fully. If questions and difficulties arise, let us not seek to have them settled before we accept the Word. No; let us entrust them all to Him: it is His to solve them: our work is first and fully to accept and hold fast His promise. Let in our inner chamber, in the inner chamber of our heart too, the Word be inscribed in letters of light, Every one that asketh, receiveth.

According to this teaching of the Master, prayer consists of two parts, has two sides, a human and a Divine. The human is the asking, the Divine is the giving. Or, to look at both from the human side, there is the asking and the receiving—the two halves that make up a whole. It is as if He would tell us that we are not to rest without an answer, because it is the will of God, the rule in the Father's family: every childlike believing petition is granted. If no answer comes, we are not to sit down in the cloth that calls itself resignation, and suppose that it is not God's will to give an answer. No; there must be something in the prayer that is not as God would have it, childlike and believing; we must seek for grace to pray so that the answer may come. It is far easier to the flesh to submit without the answer than to yield itself to be searched and purified by the Spirit, until it has learnt to pray the prayer of faith.

It is one of the terrible marks of the diseased state of Christian life in these days, that there are so many who rest content without the distinct experience of answer to prayer. They pray daily, they ask many things, and trust that some of them will be heard, but know little of direct definite answer to prayer

as the rule of daily life. And it is this the Father wills; He seeks daily intercourse with His children in listening to and granting their petitions. He wills that I should come to Him day by day with distinct requests; He wills day by day to do for me what I ask. It was in His answer to prayer that the saints of old learned to know God as the Living One, and were stirred to praise and love (Psalm 34, Psalm 66:19, Psalm 116:1) Our Teacher waits to imprint this upon our minds; prayer and its answer, the child asking and the father giving, belong to each other.

There may be cases in which the answer is a refusal, because the request is not according to God's Word, as when Moses asked to enter Canaan. But still there was an answer: God did not leave His servant in uncertainty as to His will. The gods of the heathen are dumb and cannot speak. Our Father lets His child know when He cannot give him what he asks, and he withdraws his petition, even as the Son did in Gethsemane. Both Moses the servant and Christ the Son knew that what they asked was not according to what 'the Lord had spoken: their prayer was the humble supplication whether it was not possible for the decision to be changed. God will teach those who are teachable and give Him time, by His Word and Spirit, whether their request be according to His will or not. Let us withdraw the request, if it be not according God's mind, or persevere till the answer come. Prayer is appointed to obtain the answer. It is in prayer and its answer that the interchange of love between the Father and His child takes place.

How deep the estrangement of our heart from God must be, that we find it so difficult to grasp such promises, even while we accept the words and believe their truth, the faith of the heart, that fully has them and rejoices in them, comes so slowly. It is because our spiritual life is still so weak, and the capacity for taking God's thoughts is so feeble. But let us look to Jesus to

teach us as none but He can teach. If we take His words in simplicity, and trust Him by his Spirit to make them within us life and power, they will so enter into our inner being, to the spiritual Divine reality of the truth they contain will indeed take possession of us, and we shall not rest content until every petition we offer is borne heavenward on Jesus' own words 'Ask, and it shall be given you.'

Beloved fellow-disciples in the school of Jesus, let us set ourselves to learn this lesson well. Let us take these words just as they were spoken. Let us not suffer human reason to weaken their force. Let us take these words as Jesus gives them, and believe them. He will teach us in due time how to understand them fully: let us begin by implicitly believing them. Let us take time, often as we pray, to listen to His voice: Every one that asketh, receiveth. Let us not make the feeble experiences of our unbelief the measure of what our faith may expect. Let us seek, not only just in our seasons of prayer, but at all times, to hold fast the joyful assurance: man's prayer on earth and God's answer in heaven are meant for each other. Let us trust Jesus to teach us so too pray, that the answer can come. He will do it, if we hold fast the word He gives today: 'Ask, and ye shall receive.'

LORD, TEACH UP TO PRAY!

O Lord Jesus! teach me to understand and believe what Thou hast now promised me. It is not hid from Thee, O my Lord, with what reasonings my heart seeks to satisfy itself, when no answer comes. There is the thought that my prayer is not in harmony with the Father's secret counsel; that there is perhaps something better Thou wouldest give me; or that prayer as fellowship with God is blessing enough without an answer And yet, my blessed Lord, I find in Thy teaching on prayer that Thou didst not speak of these things, but didst say so plainly, that prayer may and must expect an answer. Thou doth

assure us that this is the fellowship of a child with the Father; the child asks and the Father gives.

Blessed Lord! Thy words are faithful and true. It must be, because I pray amiss, that my experience of answered prayer is not clearer. It must be, because I live too little in the Spirit, that my prayer is too little in the Spirit, and that the power for the prayer of faith is wanting.

Lord! teach me to pray. Lord Jesus! I trust Thee for it; teach me to pray in faith. Lord teach me this lesson of to-day! Every one that asketh, receiveth. Amen.

Chapter 6^(TOC)

'How much more?' or The Infinite Fatherliness of God

*'Or what man is there of you, who, if his son ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone; or if he shall ask for a fish, will give him a serpent! If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him!'—
Matthew 7:9-11*

In these words our Lord proceeds further to confirm what He said of the certainty of an answer to prayer. To remove all doubt, and show us on what sure ground His promise rests, He appeals to what every one has seen and experienced here on earth. We are all children, and know what we expected of our fathers. We are fathers, or continually see them; and everywhere we look upon it as the most natural thing there can be, for a father to hear his child. And the Lord asks us to look up from earthly parents, of whom the best are but evil, and to calculate How much more the heavenly Father will give good gifts to them that ask Him. Jesus would lead us up to see, that as much greater as God is than sinful man, so much greater our assurance ought to be that He will more surely than any earthly father grant our childlike petitions. As much greater as God is than man, so much surer is that prayer will be heard with the Father in heaven than with a father on earth.

As simple and intelligible as this parable is, so deep and spiritual is the teaching it contains. The Lord would remind us that the prayer of a child

owes its influence entirely to the relation in which he stands to the parent. The prayer can exert that influence only when the child is really living in that relationship, in the home, in the love, in the service of the Father. The power of the promise, 'Ask, and it shall be given you,' lies in the loving relationship between us as children and the Father in heaven; when we live and walk in that relationship, the prayer of faith and its answer will be the natural result. And so the lesson we have today in the school of prayer is this: Live as a child of God, then you will be able to pray as a child, and as a child you will most assuredly be heard.

And what is the true child-life? The answer can be found in any home. The child that by preference forsakes the father's house, that finds no pleasure in the presence and love and obedience of the father, and still thinks to ask and obtain what he will, will surely be disappointed. On the contrary, he to whom the intercourse and will and honour and love of the father are the joy of his life, will find that it is the father's joy to grant his requests. Scripture says, 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God:' the childlike privilege of asking all is inseparable from the childlike life under the leading of the Spirit. He that gives himself to be led by the Spirit in his life, will be led by Him in his prayers too. And he will find that Fatherlike giving is the Divine response to childlike living.

To see what this childlike living is, in which childlike asking and believing have their ground, we have only to notice what our Lord teaches in the Sermon on the Mount of the Father and His children. In it the prayer-promises are imbedded in the life-precepts; the two are inseparable. They form one whole; and He alone can count on the fulfilment of the promise, who accepts too all that the Lord has connected with it. It is as if in speaking the word, 'Ask, and ye shall receive,' He says: I give these promises to those

whom in the beatitudes I have pictured in their childlike poverty and purity, and of whom I have said, 'They shall be called the children of God' (Matthew 5:3-9): to children, who 'let your light shine before men, so that they may glorify your Father in heaven:' to those who walk in love, 'that ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven,' and who seek to be perfect 'even as your Father in heaven is perfect' (5:45): to those whose fasting and praying and almsgiving (6:1-18) is not before men, but 'before your Father which seeth in secret;' who forgive even as your Father forgiveth you' (6:15); who trust the heavenly Father in righteousness (6:26-32); who not only say, Lord, Lord, but do the will of my Father which is in heaven (7:21). Such are the children of the Father, and such is the life in the Father's love and service; in such a child-life, answered prayers are certain and abundant.

But will not such teaching discourage the feeble one? If we are first to answer to this portrait of a child, must not many give up all hope of answers to prayer? The difficulty is removed if we think again of the blessed name of father and child. A child is weak; there is a great difference among children in age and gift. The Lord does not demand of us a perfect fulfilment of the law; no, but only the childlike and whole-hearted surrender to live as a child with Him in obedience and truth. Nothing more. But also, nothing less. The Father must have the whole heart. When this is given, and He sees the child with honest purpose and steady will seeking in everything to be and live as a child, then our prayer will count with Him as the prayer of a child. Let any one simply and honestly begin to study the sermon on the Mount and take it as his guide in life, and he will find, notwithstanding weakness and failure, an ever-growing liberty to claim the fulfilment of its promises in regard to prayer. In the names of father and child he has the pledge that his petitions will be granted.

This is the one chief thought on which Jesus dwells here, and which He would have all His scholars take in. He would have us see that the secret of effectual prayer is: to have the heart filled with the Father-love of God. It is not enough for us to know that God is a Father: He would have us take time to come under the full impression of what that name implies. We must take the best earthly father we know; we must think of the tenderness and love with which he regards the request of his child, the love and joy with which he grants every reasonable desire; we must then, as we think in adoring worship of the infinite Love and Fatherliness of God, consider with how much more tenderness and joy He sees us come to Him, and gives us what we ask aright. And then, when we see how much this Divine arithmetic is beyond our comprehension, and feel how impossible it is for us to apprehend God's readiness to hear us, then He would have us come and open our heart for the Holy Spirit to shed abroad God's Father-love there. Let us do this not only when we want to pray, but let us yield heart and life to dwell in that love. The child who only wants to know the love of the father when he has something to ask, will be disappointed. But he who lets God be Father always and in everything, who would fain live his whole life in the Father's presence and love, who allows God in all the greatness of His love to be a Father to him, oh! he will experience most gloriously that a life in God's infinite Fatherliness and continual answers to prayer are inseparable.

Beloved fellow-disciple! we begin to see what the reason is that we know so little of daily answers to prayer, and what the chief lesson is which the Lord has for us in His school. It is all in the name of Father. We thought of new and deeper insight into some of the mysteries of the prayerworld as what we should get in Christ's school; He tells us the first is the highest lesson; we must learn to say well, 'Abba, Father!' 'Our Father which art in heaven.' He that can say this, has the key to all prayer. In all the compassion with which a

father listens to his weak or sickly child, in all the joy with which he hears his stammering child, in all the gentle patience with which he bears with a thoughtless child, we must, as in so many mirrors, study the heart of our Father, until every prayer be borne upward on the faith of this Divine word: 'How much more shall your heavenly Father give good gifts to them that ask Him.'

'LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY.'

Blessed Lord! Thou knowest that this, though it be one of the first and simplest and most glorious lessons in Thy school, is to our hearts one of the hardest to learn: we know so little of the love of the Father. Lord! teach us so to live with the Father that His love may be to us nearer, clearer, dearer, than the love of any earthly father. And let the assurance of His hearing our prayer be as much greater than the confidence in an earthly parent, as the heavens are higher than earth, as God is infinitely greater than man. Lord! show us that it is only our unchildlike distance from the Father that hinders the answer to prayer, and lead us on to the true life of God's children. Lord Jesus! it is fatherlike love that wakens childlike trust. O reveal to us the Father, and His tender, pitying love, that we may become childlike, and experience how in the child-life lies the power of prayer.

Blessed Son of God! the Father loveth Thee and hath given Thee all things. And Thou lovest the Father, and hast done all things He commanded Thee, and therefore hast the power to ask all things. Lord! give us Thine own Spirit, the Spirit of the Son. Make us childlike, as Thou wert on earth. And let every prayer be breathed in the faith that as the heaven is higher than the earth, so God's Father-love, and His readiness to give us what we ask, surpasses all we can think or conceive. Amen,

Chapter 7^(TOC)

How much more the Holy Spirit or the all Comprehensive Gift

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him!"—Luke 11:13

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord had already given utterance to His wonderful How much more? Here in Luke, where He repeats the question, there is a difference. Instead of speaking, as then, of giving good gifts, He says, 'How much more shall the heavenly Father give THE HOLY SPIRIT?' He thus teaches us that the chief and the best of these gifts is the Holy Spirit, or rather, that in this gift all others are comprised. The Holy Spirit is the first of the Father's gifts, and the one He delights most to bestow. The Holy Spirit is therefore the gift we ought first and chiefly to seek.

The unspeakable worth of this gift we can easily understand. Jesus spoke of the Spirit as 'the promise of the Father;' the one promise in which God's Fatherhood revealed itself. The best gift a good and wise father can bestow on a child on earth is his own spirit. This is the great object of a father in education—to reproduce in his child his own disposition and character. If the child is to know and understand his father; if, as he grows up, he is to enter into all his will and plans; if he is to have his highest joy in the father, and the father in him—he must be of one mind and spirit with him. And so it is impossible to conceive of God bestowing any higher gift on His child than

this, His own Spirit. God is what He is through His Spirit; the Spirit is the very life of God. Just think what it means—God giving His own Spirit to His child on earth.

Or was not this the glory of Jesus as a Son upon earth, that the Spirit of the Father was in Him? At His baptism in Jordan the two things were united—the voice, proclaiming Him the Beloved Son, and the Spirit, descending upon Him, And so the apostle says of us, 'Because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' A king seeks in the whole education of his son to call forth in him a kingly spirit. Our Father in heaven desires to educate us as His children for the holy, heavenly life in which He dwells, and for this gives us, from the depths of His heart, His own Spirit. It was this which was the whole aim of Jesus when, after having made atonement with His own blood, He entered for us into God's presence. that He might obtain for us, and send down to dwell in us, the Holy Spirit. As the Spirit of the Father, and the Son, the whole life and love of the Father and the Son are in Him; and coming down into us, He lifts us up into their fellowship. As Spirit of the Father, He sheds abroad the Father's love, with which He loved the Son, in our hearts, and teaches us to live in it. As Spirit of the Son, He breaths in us the childlike liberty, and devotion, and obedience in which the Son lived upon earth. The Father can bestow no higher or more wonderful gift than this: His own Holy Spirit, the Spirit of sonship.

This truth naturally suggests the thought that this first and chief gift of God must be the first and chief object of all prayer. For every need of the spiritual life this is the one thing needful: the Holy Spirit. All the fulness is in Jesus; the fulness of grace and truth, out of which we receive, grace for grace. The Holy Spirit is the appointed conveyancer, whose special work it is to make Jesus and all there is in Him for us ours in personal appropriation, in blessed

experience. He is the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus; as wonderful as the life is, so wonderful is the provision by which such an agent is provided to communicate it to us. If we but yield ourselves entirely to the disposal of the Spirit, and let Him have His way with us, He will manifest the life of Christ within us. He will do this with a Divine power, maintaining the life of Christ in us in uninterrupted continuity. Surely, if there is one prayer that should draw us to the Father's throne and keep us there, it is this: for the Holy Spirit, whom we as children have received, to stream into us and out from us in greater fulness.

In the variety of the gifts which the Spirit has to dispense, He meets the believer's every need: Just think of the names He bears. The Spirit of grace, to reveal and impart all of grace there is in Jesus. The Spirit of faith, teaching us to begin, and go on and increase in ever believing. The Spirit of adoption and assurance, who witnesses that we are God's children, and inspires the confiding and confident Abba Father! The Spirit of truth, to lead into all truth, to make each word of God ours in deed and in truth. The Spirit of prayer, through whom we speak with the Father; prayer that must be heard. The Spirit of judgment and burning, to search the heart, and convince of sin. The Spirit of holiness, manifesting and communicating the Father's holy presence within us. The Spirit of power, through whom we are strong to testify boldly and work effectually in the Father's service. The Spirit of glory, the pledge of our inheritance, the preparation and the foretaste of the glory to come. Surely the child of God needs but one thing to be able really to live as a child: it is, to be filled with this Spirit.

And now, the lesson Jesus teaches us today in His school is this: That the Father is just longing to give Him to us if we will but ask in the childlike dependence on what He says: 'If ye know to give good gifts unto your

children, HOW MUCH MORE shall your heavenly Father gave the holy Spirit to them that ask Him.' In the words of God's promise, 'I will pour out my Spirit abundantly; 'and of His command, 'Be ye filled with the Spirit,' we have the measure of what God is ready to give, and what we may obtain. As God's children, we have already received the Spirit. But we still need to ask and pray for His special gifts and operations as we require them. And not only this, but for Himself to take complete and entire possession; for His unceasing momentary guidance. Just as the branch, already filled with the sap of the vine, is ever crying for the continued and increasing flow of that sap, that it may bring its fruit to perfection, so the believer, rejoicing in the possession of the Spirit, ever thirsts and cries for more. And what the great Teacher would have us learn is, that nothing less than God's promise and God's command may be the measure of our expectation and our prayer; we must be filled abundantly. He would have us ask this in the assurance that the wonderful How much more of God's Father-love is the pledge that, when we ask, we do most certainly receive.

Let us now believe this. As we pray to be filled with the Spirit, let us not seek for the answer in our feelings. All spiritual blessings must be received, that is, accepted or taken in faith.' Let me believe, the Father gives the Holy Spirit to His praying child. Even now, while I pray, I must say in faith: I have what I ask, the fulness of the Spirit is mine. Let us continue stedfast in this faith. On the strength of God's Word we know that we have what we ask. Let us, with thanksgiving that we have been heard, with thanksgiving for what we have received and taken and now hold as ours, continue stedfast in believing prayer that the blessing, which has already been given us, and which we hold in faith, may break through and fill our whole being. It is in such believing thanksgiving and prayer, that our soul opens up for the Spirit to take entire and undisturbed possession. It is such prayer that not only asks and hopes, but

takes and holds, that inherits the full blessing. In all our prayer let us remember the lesson the Saviour would teach us this day; that, if there is one thing on earth we can be sure of, it is this, that the Father desires to have us filled' with His Spirit, that He delights to give us His Spirit.

And when once we have learned thus to believe for ourselves, and each day to take out of the treasure, we hold in heaven, what liberty and power to pray for the outpouring of the Spirit on the Church of God, on all flesh, on individuals, or on special efforts! He that has once learned to know the Father in prayer for himself, learns to pray most confidently for others too. The Father gives the Holy Spirit to them that asks Him, not least, but most, when they ask for others.

LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY!

Father in heaven! Thou didst send Thy Son to reveal Thyself to us, Thy Father-love, and all that that love has for us. And He has taught us, that the gift above all gifts which Thou wouldest bestow in answer to prayer is, the Holy Spirit.

O my Father! I come to Thee with this prayer; there is nothing I would—may I not say, I do—desire so much as to be filled with the Spirit, the Holy Spirit. The blessings He brings are so unspeakable and just what I need. He sheds abroad Thy love in the heart, and fills it with Thyself. I long for this. He breathes the mind and life of Christ in me, so that I live as He did, in and for the Father's love. I long for this. He endues with power from on high for all my walk and work. I long for this, O Father! I beseech Thee, give me this day the fulness of Thy Spirit.

Father! I ask this, resting on the words of my Lord: 'How much more the Holy Spirit!' I do believe that Thou hearest my prayer; I receive now what I

ask; Father! I claim and I take it: the fulness of Thy Spirit as mine. I receive the gift this day again as a faith gift; in faith I reckon my Father works through the Spirit all He has promised. The Father delights to breathe His Spirit into His waiting child as He tarries in fellowship with Himself. Amen

Chapter 8^(TOC)

Because of his Importunity or the Boldness of God's Friends

"And He said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine is come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him; and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth:"—Luke 11:5-8.

THE FIRST TEACHING TO HIS DISCIPLES WAS GIVEN BY OUR Lord in the Sermon on the Mount. It was nearly a year later that the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. In answer He gave them a second time the Lord's prayer, so teaching them what to pray. He then speaks of how they ought to pray, and repeats what he formerly said of God's Fatherliness and the certainty of an answer. But in between He adds the beautiful parable of the friend at midnight, to teach them the twofold lesson, that God does not only want us to pray for ourselves, but for the perishing around us, and that in such intercession great boldness of entreaty is often needful, and always lawful yea, pleasing to God.

The parable is a perfect storehouse of instruction in regard to true intercession. There is, first, the love which seeks to help the needy around us: 'my friend is come to me.' Then the need which urges to the cry: I have

nothing to set before him.' Then follows the confidence that help is to be had: 'which of you shall ask a friend and say, Friend, lend me three loaves.' Then comes the unexpected refusal; 'I cannot rise and give thee.' Then again the Perseverance that takes no refusal: 'because of his importunity. And lastly, the reward of such prayer: 'he will give him as many as he needeth.' A wonderful setting forth of the way of prayer and faith in which the blessing of God has so often been sought and found.

Let us confine ourselves to the chief thought: prayer as an appeal to the friendship of God; and we shall find that two lessons are specially suggested. The one, that if we are God's friends and come as such to Him we must prove ourselves the friends of the needy; God's friendship to us and ours to others go hand in hand. The other, that when we come thus we may use the utmost liberty in claiming an answer.

There is a twofold use of prayer: the one, to obtain strength and blessing for our own life; the other, the higher, the true glory of prayer, for which Christ has taken us into His fellowship and teaching, is intercession, where prayer is the royal power a child of God exercises in heaven on behalf of others and even of the kingdom. We see it in Scripture how it was in intercession for others that Abraham and Moses, Samuel and Elijah, with all the holy men of old, proved that they had power with God and prevailed. It is when we give ourselves to be a blessing that we can specially count on the blessing of God. It is when we draw near to God as the friend of the poor and the perishing that we may count on His friendliness; the righteous man who is the friend of the poor is very specially the friend of God. This gives wonderful liberty in prayer. Lord! I have a needy friend whom I must help. As a friend I have undertaken to help him. In Thee I have a Friend, whose kindness and riches I know to be infinite: I am sure Thou wilt give me what I ask. If I, being evil,

am ready to do for my friend what I can, how much more wilt Thou, O my heavenly Friend, now do for Thy friend what he asks?

The question might suggest itself, whether the Fatherhood of God does not give such confidence in prayer, that the thought of His Friendship can hardly teach us anything more: a father is more than a friend. And yet, if we consider it, this pleading the friendship of God opens new wonders to us. That a child obtains what he asks of his father looks so perfectly natural, we almost count it the father's duty to give. But with a friend it is as if the kindness is more free, dependent, not on nature, but on sympathy and character. And then the relation of a child is more that of perfect dependence; two friends are more nearly on a level. And so our Lord, in seeking to unfold to us the spiritual mystery of prayer, would fain have us approach God in this relation too, as those whom He has acknowledged as His friends, whose mind and life are in sympathy with His.

But then we must be living as His friends. I am still a child even when a wanderer; but friendship depends upon the conduct. 'Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.' 'Thou seest that faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect; and the scripture was fulfilled which saith, And Abraham believed God and he was called the friend of God.' It is the Spirit, 'the same Spirit,' that leads us that also bears witness to our acceptance With God; 'likewise, also,' the same Spirit helpeth us in prayer. It is a life as the friend of God that gives the wonderful liberty to say: I have a friend to whom I can go even at midnight. And how much more when I go in the very spirit of that friendliness, manifesting myself the very kindness I look for in God, seeking to help my friend as I want God to help me. When I come to God in prayer, He always looks to what the aim is of my petition. If it be merely for my own comfort or joy I seek His grace, I do not

receive. But if I can say that it is that He may be glorified in my dispensing His blessings to others, I shall not ask in vain. Or if I ask for others, but want to wait until God has made me so rich, that it is no sacrifice or act of faith to aid them, I shall not obtain. But if I can say that I have already undertaken for my needy friend, that in my poverty I have already begun the work of love, because I know I had a friend Who would help me, my prayer will be heard. Oh, we know not how much the plea avails: the friendship of earth looking in its need to the friendship of heaven: 'He will give him as much as he needeth.'

But not always at once. The one thing by which man can honour and enjoy his God is faith. Intercession is part of faith's training-school. There our friendship with men and with God is tested. There it is seen whether my friendship with the needy is so real, that I will take time and sacrifice my rest, will go even at midnight and not cease until I have obtained for them what I need. There it is seen whether my friendship with God is so clear, that I can depend on Him not to turn me away and therefore pray on until He gives.

O what a deep heavenly mystery this is of perseverance prayer. The God who has promised, who longs, whose fixed purpose it is to give the blessing, holds it back. It is to Him a matter of such deep importance that His friends on earth should know and fully trust their rich Friend in heaven, that He trains them, in the school of answer delayed, to find out how their perseverance really does prevail, and what the mighty power is they can wield in heaven, if they do but set themselves to it. There is a faith that sees the promise, and embraces it, and yet does not receive it (Hebrews 11:13, 39). It is when the answer to prayer does not come, and the promise we are most firmly trusting appears to be of none effect, that the trial of faith, more precious than of gold, takes place. It is in this trial that the faith that has embraced the promise is purified and strengthened and prepared in personal, holy fellowship with the

living God, to see the glory of God. It takes and holds the promise until it has received the fulfilment of what it had claimed in a living truth in the unseen but living God.

Let each child of God who is seeking to work the work of love in his Father's service take courage. The parent with his child, the teacher with his class, the visitor with his district, the Bible reader with his circle, the preacher with his hearers, each one who, in his little circle, has accepted and is bearing the burden of hungry, perishing souls—let them all take courage. Nothing is at first so strange to us as that God should really require persevering prayer, that there should be a real spiritual needs—be for importunity. To teach it us, the Master uses this almost strange parable. If the unfriendliness of a selfish earthly friend can be conquered by importunity, how much more will it avail with the heavenly Friend, who does so love to give, but is held back by our spiritual unfitness, our incapacity to possess what He has to give. O let us thank Him that in delaying His answer He is educating us up to our true position and the exercise of all our power with Him, training us to live with Him in the fellowship of undoubting faith and trust, to be indeed the friends of God. And let us hold fast the threefold cord that cannot be broken: the hungry friend needing the help, and the praying friend seeking the help, and the Mighty Friend, loving to give as much as he needeth.

O my Blessed Lord and Teacher! I must come to Thee in prayer. Thy teaching is so glorious, and yet too high for me to grasp. I must confess that my heart is too little to take in these thoughts of the wonderful boldness I may use with Thy Father as my Friend. Lord Jesus I trust Thee to give me Thy Spirit with Thy Word, and to make the Word quick and powerful in my heart. I desire to keep Thy Word of this day: 'Because of his importunity he will give him as many as he needeth.'

Lord! teach me more to know the power of persevering prayer. I know that in it the Father suits Himself to our need of time for the inner life to attain its growth and ripeness, so that His grace may indeed be assimilated and made our very own. I know that He would fain thus train us to the exercise of that strong faith that does not let Him go even in the face of seeming disappointment. I know He wants to lift us to that wonderful liberty, in which we understand how really He has made the dispensing of His gift dependent on our prayer. Lord! I know this: O teach me to see it in spirit and truth.

And may it now be the joy of my life to become the almoner of my Rich Friend in heaven, to care for all the angry and perishing, even at midnight, because I know my friend who always gives to him who perseveres, because of his importunity, as many as he needeth. Amen.

Chapter 9^(TOC)

Prayer Provides Laborers

"Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is 'plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest"—Matthew 9:37-38

The Lord frequently taught His disciples that they must pray and how they should pray. But He seldom told them what to pray. This He left to their sense of need and the leading of the Spirit. But in the above scripture He expressly directs them to remember one thing. In view of the abundant harvest, and the need for reapers, they must cry to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers. Just as in the parable of the friend at midnight, He wants them to understand that prayer is not to be selfish; it is the power through which blessing can come to others. The Father is Lord of the harvest. When we pray for the Holy Spirit, we must pray for Him to prepare and send laborers for the work.

Why does He ask His disciples to pray for this? Could He not pray Himself? Would not one prayer of His achieve more than a thousand of theirs? Is God, the Lord of the harvest, not aware of the need? And would He not, in His own good time, send laborers without the disciples' prayers? Such questions lead us into the deepest mysteries of prayer and its power in the Kingdom of God. The answer to such questions will convince us that prayer is indeed a power on which the gathering of the harvest and the coming of the Kingdom do in very truth depend.

Prayer is no form or show. The Lord Jesus was Himself the truth; everything He spoke was the truth. It was when "He saw the multitude, and was moved with compassion on them, because they were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd," that He called on the disciples to pray for laborers to be sent to them (see Matthew 9:36). He did so because He really believed that their prayer was needed and would help.

The veil which hides the invisible world from us was wonderfully transparent to the holy human soul of Jesus. He had looked long and deep and far into the hidden connection of cause and effect in the spiritual world. He had marked in God's Word how God called men like Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and Daniel, giving them authority over men in His Name. God also gave these men the authority to call the powers of heaven to their aid as they needed them. Jesus knew that the work of God had been entrusted to these men of old and to Himself for a time here upon earth. Now it was about to pass over into the hands of His disciples. He knew that where they were given responsibility for this work, it would not be a mere matter of form or show. The success of the work would actual depend on them and their faithfulness.

As a single individual, within the limitations of a human body and a human life, Jesus feels how little a short visit can accomplish among these wandering sheep He sees around Him. He longs for help to have them properly cared for. He therefore tells His disciples to begin to pray. When they have taken over the work from Him on earth, they are to make this one of their chief petitions in prayer: that the Lord of the harvest Himself would send laborer into His harvest. But since He entrusted them with the work and made it to a large extent dependent on them, He gives them authority to apply to Him for laborers and makes the supply dependent on their prayer.

How little Christians really feel and mourn the need of laborers in the fields of the world, so ripe for the harvest. How little they believe that our labor supply depends on prayer and that prayer will really provide "as many as he needeth." The dearth of labor is known and discussed. Efforts are sometimes made to supply the need. But how little the burden of the sheep wandering without a Shepherd is really assumed in the faith that the Lord of the harvest will send forth the laborers in answer to prayer. Without this prayer, fields ready for reaping will be left to perish. And yet it is so. The Lord has surrendered His work to His Church. He has made Himself dependent on them as His Body, through whom His work must be done. The power which the Lord gives His people to exercise in heaven and earth is real; the number of laborers and the measure of the harvest does actually depend on their prayer.

Why don't we obey the Master's instruction more heartily and cry more earnestly for laborers? There are two reasons. The one is: We miss the compassion of Jesus which gave rise to this request for prayer. Believers must learn to love their neighbors as themselves and to live entirely for God's glory in their relationships with fellow-men. The Father's first commandment to His redeemed ones is that they accept those who are perishing as the charge entrusted to them by their Lord. Accept them not only as a field of labor, but as the objects of loving care and interest. Soon, compassion towards the hopelessly perishing will touch your heart, and the cry will ascend with a new sincerity.

The other reason for the neglect of the command is: We believe too little in the power of prayer to bring about definite results. We do not live close enough to God to be capable of the confidence that He will answer. We have not surrendered entirely to His service and Kingdom. But our lack of faith

will be overcome as we plead for help. Let us pray for a life in union with Christ, so that His compassion streams into us and His Spirit assures us that our prayer is heard.

Such prayer will obtain a twofold blessing. There will first be a desire for an increase in the number of men entirely given up to the service of God. That there are times when men actually cannot be found for the service of the Master as ministers, missionaries, or teachers of God's Word is a terrible blot upon the Church of Christ. As God's children make this a matter of supplication in their own circles or churches, it will be given. The Lord Jesus is now Lord of the harvest. He has been exalted to bestow the gifts of the Spirit. He wants to make gifts of men filled with the Spirit. But His supply and distribution of these gifts depend on the cooperation of the members with Him. Prayer will lead to such cooperation and will stir those praying to believe that they will find the men and the means for the work.

The other blessing will be equally great. Every believer is a laborer. As God's children, we have been redeemed for service and have our work waiting. It must be our prayer that the Lord would fill all His people with the spirit of devotion, so that no one may be found standing idle in the vineyard.

Wherever there is a complaint about the lack of fit helpers for God's work, prayer has the promise of a supply. God is always ready and able to provide. It may take time and importunity, but Christ's command to ask the Lord of the harvest is the pledge that the prayer will be heard. "I say unto you, he will arise and give him as many as he needeth."

This power to provide for the needs of the world and secure the servants for God's work has been given to us in prayer. The Lord of the harvest will hear. Christ Who taught us to pray this way will support the prayers offered in His Name and interest. Let us set apart time and give all of ourselves to this part

of our intercessory work. It will lead us into the fellowship of that compassionate heart of His that led Him to call for our prayers. It will give us the insight of our royal position as children of the King whose will counts for something with the great God in the advancement of His Kingdom. We will feel that we really are God's fellow workers on earth, that we have earnestly been entrusted with a share in His work. We will become partakers in the work of the soul. But we will also share in the satisfaction of the soul as we learn how, in answer to prayer, blessing has been given that otherwise would not have come.

Lord, teach us to pray.

Blessed Lord! Once again You have given us another wondrous lesson to learn. We humbly ask that you let us see these spiritual realities. There is a large harvest which is perishing as it waits for sleepy disciples to give the signal for laborers to come. Lord, teach us to view it with a heart full of compassion and pity. There are so few laborers, Lord. Show us what terrible sin the lack of prayer and faith is, considering there is a Lord of the harvest so able and ready to send them forth. Show us how He does indeed wait for the prayer to which He has promised an answer. We are the disciples to whom the commission to pray has been given. Lord, show us how You can breathe Your Spirit into us, so that Your compassion and the faith in Your promise will rouse us to unceasing, prevailing prayer.

O Lord! We cannot understand how You can entrust such work and give such power to men so slothful and unfaithful. We thank You for all those whom You are teaching day and night to cry for laborers to be sent. Lord, breathe Your Spirit into all Your children. Let them learn to live only for the Kingdom and glory of their Lord and become fully awake to the faith in what their prayer can accomplish. And let our hearts be filled with the assurance

that prayer offered in living faith in the living God will bring certain and abundant answer. Amen.

Chapter 10_(TOC)

Prayer Must Be Specific

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, What would thou that I should do unto thee?"—Mark 10:51; Luke 18:41.

The blind man had been crying out loud repeatedly, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me." The cry had reached the ear of the Lord. He knew what the man wanted and was ready to grant it to him. But before He did it, He asked him, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" He wanted to hear not only the general petition for mercy, but the distinct expression of what the man's desire was that day. Until he verbalized it, he was not healed.

There are still petitioners to whom the Lord puts the same question who cannot get the aid they need until they answer that question. Our prayers must be a distinct expression of definite need, not a vague appeal to His mercy or an indefinite cry for blessing. It isn't that His loving heart does not understand or is not ready to hear our cry. Rather, Jesus desires such definite prayer for our own sakes because it teaches us to know our own needs better. Time; thought, and self-scrutiny are required to find out what our greatest need really is. Our desires are put to the test to see whether they are honest and real and are according to God's Word. We also consider whether we really believe we will receive the things we ask. Such reflective prayer helps us to wait for the special answer and to mark it when it comes.

So much of our prayer is vague and pointless. Some cry for mercy, but do not

take the trouble to know exactly why they want it. Others ask to be delivered from sin, but do not name any sin from which a deliverance can be claimed. Still others pray for God's blessing on those around them—for the outpouring of God's Spirit on their land or on the world—and yet have no special field where they can wait and expect to see the answer. To everyone the Lord says, "What do you really want, and what do you expect Me to do?"

Every Christian has only limited power. Just as he must have his own specific field of labor in which to serve God, he must also make his prayers specific. Each believer has his own circle, family, friends, and neighbors. If he were to take one or more of these by name, he would find himself entering the training school of faith which leads to personal dealing with his God. When we have faithfully claimed and received answers in such distinct matters, our more general prayers will be believing and effectual. Not many prayers will reach the mark if we just pour out our hearts in a multitude of petitions, without taking time to see whether every petition is sent with the purpose and expectation of getting an answer.

Bow before the Lord with silence in your soul and ask such questions as these:

What is really my desire?

Do I desire it in faith, expecting to receive an answer?

Am I ready to present it to the Father and leave it there in His bosom?

Is there agreement between God and me that I will get an answer?

We should learn to pray in such a way that God will see, and we will know what we really expect.

The Lord warns us against the vain repetitions of the Gentiles, who expect to be heard because they pray so much. We often hear prayers of great earnestness and fervor, in which a multitude of petitions are poured forth. The Savior would undoubtedly have to respond to some of them by asking: "What do you want?"

If I am in a foreign country on business for my father, I would certainly write two different sorts of letters home. There will be family letters with typical affectionate expressions in them, and there will be business letters containing orders for what I need. There may also be letters in which both are found. The answers will correspond to the letters. To each sentence of the letters containing the family news I do not expect a special answer. But for each order I send I am confident of an answer regarding the forwarding of the desired article. In our dealings with God, the business element must be present. Our expressions of need, sin, love, faith, and consecration must be accompanied by an explicit statement of what we are asking for and what we expect to receive. In response, the Father loves to give us a token of His approval and acceptance.

But the word of the Master teaches us more. He does not say, "What dost thou wish?" but, "What dost thou will?" One often wishes for a thing without willing it. I wish to have a certain article but the price is too high, so I decide not take it. I wish, but do not will to have it. The lazy man wishes to be rich, but does not will it: Many people wish to be saved, but perish because they do not will it.

The will rules the whole heart and life. If I really will to have something that is within my reach, I do not rest until I have it. When Jesus asks us, "What wilt thou?" He asks whether it is our intention to get what we ask for at any price, however great the sacrifice. Do you really will to have it enough to

pray continuously until He hears you, no matter how long it takes? How many prayers are wishes sent up for a short time and then forgotten! And how many are sent up year after year as a matter of duty, while we complacently wait without the answer.

One may ask if it wouldn't be better to make our wishes known to God, leaving it to Him to decide what is best, without our seeking to assert our wills. The answer is: by no means. The prayer of faith which Jesus sought to teach His disciples does not simply proclaim its desire and then leave the decision to God. That would be the prayer of submission for cases in which we cannot know God's will. But the prayer of faith, finding God's will in some promise of the Word, pleads for that promise until it comes.

In Matthew 9:28, Jesus said to the blind man, "Believe ye that I can do this?" In Mark He said, "What wilt thou that I should do?" (Mark 10:51). In both cases He said that faith had saved them. And He said to the Syrophenician woman, too, "Great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Faith is nothing but the purpose of the will resting on God's Word and saying, "I must have it." To believe truly is to will firmly.

Such a will is not at variance with our dependence on God and our submission to Him. Rather, it is the true submission that honors God. It is only when the child has yielded his own will in entire surrender to the Father that he receives from the Father the liberty and power to will what he desires. Once the believer has accepted the will of God, as revealed through the Word and the Spirit, as his will, too, then it is the desire of God that His child use this renewed will in His service. The will is the highest power of the soul. Grace desires above everything to sanctify and restore this will to full and free exercise because it is one of the chief traits of God's image. God's child is like a son who lives only for his father's interests, seeks his father's will

rather than his own, and is trusted by the father with his business. God speaks to that child in all truth, "What wilt thou?"

It is often spiritual sloth that, under the appearance of humility, professes to have no will. It fears the trouble of searching for the will of God, or, when found, the struggle of claiming it in faith. True humility is always accompanied by strong faith. Seeking to know only the will of God, that faith then boldly claims the fulfillment of the promise, "Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

Lord, teach us to pray.

Lord Jesus! Teach me to pray with all my heart and strength that there may be no doubt with You or with me about what I have asked. I want to know what I desire so well that as my petitions are being recorded in heaven, I can also record them here on earth and note each answer as it comes. Make my faith in what Your Word has promised so clear that the Spirit may work within me the liberty to will that it will come. Lord! Renew, strengthen, and sanctify my entire will for the work of effectual prayer.

Blessed Savior! I pray that You reveal to me the wonderful grace You show us, the grace that asks us to say what we desire and then promises to do it. Son of God! I cannot fully understand it. I can only believe that You have indeed redeemed us wholly for Yourself, and that You want to mold our wills, making them Your most efficient servant. Lord! I unreservedly yield my will to You as the channel through which Your Spirit is to rule my whole being. Let Him take possession of it, lead it into the truth of Your promises, and make it so strong in prayer that I may always hear Your voice saying, "Great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Amen.

Chapter 11^(TOC)

The Faith That Takes

"Therefore I say unto you, All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye have received them, and ye shall have them"—Mark 11:24

What a promise! It is so large, so Divine, that our little hearts cannot comprehend it. In every possible way we seek to limit it to what we think is safe or probable. We don't allow it to come in just as He gave it to us with its quickening power and energy. If we would allow it, that promise would enlarge our hearts to receive all of what His love and power are really ready to do for us.

Faith is very far from being a mere conviction of the truth of God's Word or a conclusion drawn from certain premises. It is the ear which has heard God say what He will do and the eye which has seen Him doing it. Therefore, where there is true faith it is impossible for the answer not to come. We must do this one thing that He asks of us as we pray: "Believe that ye have received. "He will see to it that He does the thing He has promised: "Ye shall have them. "

The essence of Solomon's prayer (2 Chronicles 6:4) is, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath with His hands fulfilled that which He spake with His mouth to my father David." This should be the essence of all true prayer. It is the joyful adoration of a God whose hand always secures the fulfillment of what His mouth has spoken. Let us in this spirit listen to the promise Jesus

gives because each part of it has a Divine message.

"All things whatsoever. "From the first word our human wisdom begins to doubt and say, "This can't possibly be literally true." But if it isn't, why did the Master say it? He used the very strongest expression He could find: "All things whatsoever." And He said it more than once: "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23); "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed ... nothing shall be impossible to you" (Matthew 17:20). Faith is completely the work of God's Spirit through His Word in the prepared heart of the believing disciple. It is impossible for the fulfillment not to come, because faith is the pledge and forerunner of the coming answer.

"All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye receive. "The tendency of human reason is to intervene here with certain qualifiers, such as "if expedient," "if according to God's will," to break the force of a statement which appears dangerous. Beware of dealing this way with the Master's words. His promise is most literally true. He wants His frequently repeated "all things" to enter our hearts and reveal how mighty the power of faith is. The Head truly calls the members of His Body to share His power with Him. Our Father places His power at the disposal of the child who completely trusts Him. Faith gets its food and strength from the "all things" of Christ's promise. As we weaken it, we weaken faith.

The whatsoever is unconditional except for what is implied in the believing. Before we can believe, we must find out and know what God's will is. Believing is the exercise of a soul surrendered to the influence of the Word and the Spirit. Once we do believe, nothing is impossible. Let us pray that we do not limit Christ's "all things" with what we think is possible. Rather, His "whatsoever" should determine the boundaries of our hope and faith. It is seed—word which we should take just as He gives it and keep it in our

hearts. It will germinate and take root, filling our lives with its fullness and bearing abundant fruit.

"All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for." It is in prayer that these "all things" are to be brought to God. The faith that receives them is the fruit of the prayer. There must be a certain amount of faith before there can be prayer, but greater faith is the result of prayer. In the personal presence of the Savior and in conversation with Him, faith rises to grasp what at first appeared too high. Through prayer we hold up our desires to the light of God's Holy Will, our motives are tested, and proof is given whether we are indeed asking in the Name of Jesus and only for the glory of God. The leading of the Spirit shows us whether we are asking for the right thing and in the right spirit. The weakness of our faith becomes obvious as we pray. But we are encouraged to say to the Father that we do believe and that we prove the reality of our faith by the confidence with which we persevere. It is in prayer that Jesus teaches and inspires faith. Whoever waits to pray, or loses heart in prayer because he doesn't feel the faith needed to get an answer, will never learn that faith. Whoever begins to pray and ask will find the Spirit of faith is given nowhere so surely as at the foot of the throne.

"Believe that ye have received." Clearly we are to believe that we receive the very things we ask. The Savior does not say that the Father may give us something else because He knows what is best. The very mountain that faith wants to remove is cast into the sea.

There is one kind of prayer in which we make known our request in everything, and the reward is the sweet peace of God in our hearts and minds. This is the prayer of trust. It makes reference to the countless desires of daily life which we cannot find out if God will give. We leave it to Him to decide whether or not to give, as He knows best.

But the prayer of faith of which Jesus speaks is something higher and different. Nothing honors the Father like the faith that is assured that He will do what He has said in giving us whatever we ask. Such faith takes its stand on the promise delivered by the Spirit. It knows most certainly that it receives exactly what it asks, whether in the greater interest of the Master's work or in the lesser concerns of daily life. Notice how clearly the Lord states this in Mark 11:23 : "Whosoever shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass, he shall have it." This is the blessing of the prayer of faith of which Jesus speaks.

"Believe that ye have received." This word of central importance is too often misunderstood. Believe that you have received what you're asking for now, while praying! You may not actually see it manifested until later. But now, without seeing it, you are to believe that it has already been given to you by the Father in heaven. Receiving or accepting an answer to prayer is just like receiving or accepting Jesus. It is a spiritual thing, an act of faith separate from all feeling. When I go to Jesus, asking Him for forgiveness for a sin, I believe He is in heaven for just that purpose, and I accept His forgiveness. In the same way, when I go to God asking for any special gift which is according to His Word, I must believe that what I desire is mine. I believe that I have it; I hold it in faith; and I thank God that it's mine. "If we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him"(1 John 5:15).

"And ye shall have them. "The gift which we first hold in faith as ours from heaven will become ours in personal experience. But will it be necessary to pray longer once we know we have been heard and have received what we asked? Additional prayer will not be necessary when the blessing is on its way. In these cases we should maintain our confidence, proving our faith by

praising God for what we have received, even though we haven't experienced it yet.

There are other cases in which faith needs to be further tried and strengthened in persevering prayer. Only God knows when everything is fully ripe for the manifestation of the blessing that has been given to faith. Elijah knew for certain that rain would come. God had promised it. And yet he had to pray the seven times. That prayer was not just for show. It was an intense spiritual reality both in the heart of Elijah as he lay there pleading and in heaven where it has its effectual work to do. It is through faith and patience we inherit the promises (Hebrews 6:12). Faith says most confidently, "I have received it." Patience perseveres in prayer until the gift bestowed in heaven is seen on earth. "Believe that ye have received, and ye shall have. "Between the have received in heaven, and the shall have of earth, the key word is believe. Believing praise and prayer is the link. Remember that it is Jesus Who said this. As we see heaven opened to us and the Father on the throne offering to give us whatever we ask for in faith, we are ashamed that we have so little availed ourselves of the privilege. We feel afraid that our feeble faith will still not be able to grasp what is so clearly placed within our reach. One thing must make us strong and full of hope: It is Jesus Who brought us this message from the Father. He Himself lived the life of faith and prayer when He was on earth. When the disciples expressed their surprise at what He had done to the fig tree, He told them that the very same life He led could be theirs. They could command not only the fig tree, but the very mountain, and they would obey.

Jesus is our life. In us He is everything now that He was on earth. He really gives everything He teaches. He is the Author and the Perfecter of our faith. He gives the spirit of faith. Don't be afraid that such faith isn't meant for us.

Meant for every child of the Father, it is within the reach of anyone who will be childlike, yielding himself to the Father's will and love and trusting the Father's Word and power. Dear fellow Christian! Have courage! This word comes through Jesus, Who is God's Son and our Brother. Let our answer be, "Yes, blessed Lord, we do believe Your Word that we receive whatever we ask."

Lord, teach us to pray.

Blessed Lord! The Father sent You to show us all His Love and all the treasures of blessing that Love is waiting to bestow. Lord! You've given us such abundant promises concerning our liberty in prayer. We are ashamed that our poor hearts have accepted so little of it. It has simply seemed too much for us to believe.

Lord! Teach us to take and keep and use Your precious Word: "All things whatsoever ye ask, believe that ye have received." Blessed Jesus! It is in You that our faith must be rooted if it is to grow strong. Your work has completely freed us from the power of sin and has opened the way to the Father. Your love is longing to bring us into the full fellowship of Your glory and power. Your Spirit is constantly drawing us into a life of perfect faith and confidence. We are sure that through Your teaching we will learn to pray the prayer of faith. You will train us to pray so that we will believe that we really have what we ask for. Lord! Teach me to know and trust and love You in such a way that I live and dwell in You. Through You, may all my prayers rise up and go before God, and may my soul have the assurance that I am heard. Amen.

Chapter 12^(TOC)

The Secret of Believing Prayer

"Jesus, answering, saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, ... Whosoever shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith"—Mark 11:22-23

Answer to prayer is one of the most wonderful lessons in all Scripture. In many hearts it must raise the question, "How can I ever attain the faith that knows it receives everything it asks for?" It is this question our Lord will answer today.

Before He gave that wonderful promise to His disciples, Christ shows where faith in the answer to prayer originates and finds its strength. Have faith in God. This faith precedes the faith in the promise of an answer to prayer. The power to believe a promise depends entirely on faith in the promiser. Trust in the person engenders trust in what he says. We must live and associate with God in personal, loving communication. God Himself should be everything to us. His Holy Presence is revealed where our whole being is opened and exposed to His mighty influence. There the capacity for believing His promises will be developed.

The connection between faith in God and faith in His promise will become clear to us if we consider what faith really is. It is often compared to the hand or the mouth, by which we take and use what is given to us. But it is important that we understand that faith is also the ear by which we hear what

is promised and the eye by which we see what is offered. The power to take depends on this. I must hear the person who gives me the promise because the very tone of his voice gives me courage to believe. I must see him because the light of his face melts all my qualms about my right to take. The value of the promise depends on the promiser. It is on my knowledge of what the promiser is that faith in the promise depends.

For this reason Jesus says, "Have faith in God," before He gives the wonderful prayer-promise. Let your eye be open to the living God. Through this eye we yield ourselves to God's influence. Just allow it to enter and leave its impression on our minds. Believing God is simply looking at God and what He is, allowing Him to reveal His presence to us. Give Him time and completely yield to Him, receiving and rejoicing in His love. Faith is the eye through which the light of God's presence and the vigor of His power stream into the soul. As that which I see lives in me, so by faith God lives in me, too.

Faith is also the ear through which the voice of God is always heard. The Father speaks to us through the Holy Spirit. The Son is the Word—the substance of what God says—and the Spirit is the living voice. The child of God needs this secret voice from heaven to guide him, and teach him, as it taught Jesus, what to say and what to do. An ear opened towards God is a believing heart that waits to hear what He says.

The words of God will be not only the words of a book, they will be spirit, truth, life, and power. They will make mere thoughts come to life. Through this opened ear, the soul abides under the influence of the life and power of God Himself. As His words enter the mind, dwelling and working there, through faith God enters the heart, dwelling and working there.

When faith is in full use as eye and ear—the faculties of the soul by which

we see and hear God—then it will be able to exercise its full power as hand and mouth—the faculties by which we take God and His blessings. The power of reception will depend entirely on the power of spiritual perception. For this reason, before Jesus gave the promise that God would answer believing prayer, He said, "Have faith in God." Faith is simply surrender. I yield myself to the suggestions I hear. By faith I yield myself to the living God. His glory and love fill my heart and have mastery over my life.

Faith is fellowship. I give myself up to the influence of the friend who makes me a promise and become linked to him by it. When we enter into living fellowship with God Himself, in a faith that always sees and hears Him, it becomes easy and natural to believe His promise regarding prayer. Faith in the promise is the fruit of faith in the promiser. The prayer of faith is rooted in the life of faith. And in this way the faith that prays effectively is indeed a gift of God. It is not something He bestows or infuses all at once, but is far deeper and truer. It is the blessed disposition or habit of soul which grows up in us through a life of communion with Him. Surely for one who knows his Father well and lives in constant close communion with Him, it is a simple thing to believe the promise that He will do what His child wishes.

Because very many of God's children do not understand this connection between the life of faith and the prayer of faith, their experience of the power of prayer is limited. Sincerely desiring to obtain an answer from God, they concentrate wholeheartedly on the promise and try their utmost to grasp that promise in faith. When they do not succeed, they are ready to give up hope. The promise is true, but it is beyond their power to accept it in faith.

Listen to the lesson Jesus teaches us: Have faith in God, the Living God. Let faith focus on God more than on the thing promised, because it is His love, His power, His living presence that will awaken and work the faith. To

someone asking to develop more strength in his hands and arms, a physician would say that his whole constitution must be built up. So the cure of feeble faith can be found only in the invigoration of our whole spiritual lives through communication with God. Learn to believe in God, hold on to God, and to let God take possession of our life. It will become easy to grasp the promise. Whoever knows and trusts God finds it easy to also trust the promise.

Note how distinctly this comes out in former saints. Every exhibition of the power of faith was the fruit of a special revelation from God. We see it in Abraham: "And the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield ... And He brought him forth abroad, and said ... And he believed the Lord" (Genesis 15:1, 5, 6). And later again: "The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God ... And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold my covenant is with thee" (Genesis 17:1, 3, 4). It was the revelation of God Himself that gave the promise its living power to enter the heart and cultivate the faith. Because they knew God, these men of faith could not do anything but trust His promise. God's promise will be to us what God Himself is. The man who walks before the Lord and falls on his face to listen while the living God speaks to him will receive the promise. We have God's promises in the Bible with full liberty to claim them. Our spiritual power depends on God Himself speaking those promises to us. He speaks to those who walk and live with Him.

Therefore, have faith in God. Let faith be all eyes and ears. Surrender to God and let Him make His full impression on you, revealing Himself fully in your soul. Consider it a blessing of prayer that you can exercise faith in God as the living mighty God Who is waiting to give us the good pleasure of His will

and faith with power. Regard Him as the God of love, Whose delight it is to bless and impart His love. In such faithful worship of God, the power will speedily come to believe the promise, too. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive." Make God your own through faith; the promise will become yours, also.

Jesus is teaching us a precious lesson today. We seek God's gifts, but God wants to give us Himself first. We think of prayer as the means of extracting good gifts from heaven, and we think of Jesus as the means to draw ourselves up to God. We want to stand at the door and cry. Jesus wants us to enter in and realize that we are friends and children. Accept His teaching. Let every experience of the weakness of our faith in prayer incite us to have and exercise more faith in the living God, and in such faith to yield ourselves to Him. A heart full of God has power for the prayer of faith. Faith in God fosters faith in the promise, including the promise of an answer to prayer.

Therefore, child of God, take time to bow before Him and wait for Him to reveal Himself. Take time to let your soul exercise and express its faith in the Infinite One in holy worship. As He shares Himself with and takes possession of you, the prayer of faith will crown your faith in God.

Lord, teach us to pray.

O my God! I do believe in You. I believe You are the Father, infinite in Your love and power. As the Son, You are my redeemer and my life. And as the Holy Spirit, You are my comforter, my guide, and my strength. I have faith that You will share everything You are with me and that You will do everything You promise.

Lord Jesus! Increase my faith! Teach me to take time to wait and worship in God's Holy presence until my faith absorbs everything there is in Him for me.

Let my faith see Him as the fountain of all life, working with almighty strength to accomplish His will in the world and in me. Let me see Him in His love longing to meet and fulfill my desires. Let faith take possession of my heart and life to the extent that through it God may dwell there. Lord Jesus, help me! I want with my whole heart to believe in God. Fill me every moment with faith in God.

O my Blessed Savior! How can Your Church glorify You and fulfill the work of intercession through which Your Kingdom will come unless our whole lives consist of faith in God. Blessed Lord! Speak Your Word, "Have faith in God," into the depths of our souls. Amen.

Chapter 13^(TOC)

Prayer and Fasting

"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief. For verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth nor out but by prayer and fasting"—Matthew 17:19-21

When the disciples saw Jesus cast the evil spirit out of the epileptic whom they could not cure, they asked the Master why they had failed. He had given them "power and authority over all devils, and to cure all diseases." They had often exercised that power, and joyfully told how the devils were subject to them. And yet now, while He was on the Mount, they had utterly failed. Christ's casting the evil spirit out proved that there had been nothing in the will of God or in the nature of the case to make the miracle impossible. From their expression, "Why could we not?", it is evident that the disciples had wanted and tried to cast the spirit out. They had probably called upon it, using the Master's Name. But their efforts had been in vain. They had been put to shame in front of the crowd.

Christ's answer was direct and plain: "Because of your unbelief." Christ's success was not a result of His having a special power to which the disciples had no access. He had so often taught them that there is one power—the power of faith—to which, in the kingdom of darkness as in the Kingdom of God, everything must bow. In the spiritual world failure has only one cause:

lack of faith. Faith is the one condition on which all Divine power can enter man and work through him. It is the sensitivity of man's will yielded to and molded by the will of God.

The power the disciples had received to cast out devils did not belong to them as a permanent gift or possession. The power was in Christ, to be received, held, and used by faith alone, living faith in Himself. Had they been full of faith in Him as Lord and Conqueror in the spirit world, had they been full of faith in Him as having given them authority to cast out in His Name, their faith would have given them the victory. "Because of your unbelief" was, for all time, the Master's explanation and reproof of impotence and failure in His Church.

Such a deficiency of faith must have a cause. The disciples may have asked, "Why couldn't we believe? Our faith has cast out devils before this. Why did we fail in believing this time?" The Master answers them before they can ask, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

Though faith is the simplest exercise of the spiritual life, it is also the highest. The spirit must yield itself in perfect receptivity to God's Spirit and become strengthened for this activity. Such faith depends entirely on the state of the spiritual life. Only when this is strong and in good health when the Spirit of God has total influence in our lives does faith have the power to do its mighty deeds.

Therefore Jesus adds, "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." The faith that can overcome stubborn resistance such as you have just seen in this evil spirit, Jesus tells them, is not possible except for men living in very close fellowship with God and in very special separation from the world—in prayer and fasting. And so He teaches us two lessons in regard

to prayer of deep importance. The one is that faith needs a life of prayer in which to grow and keep strong. The other is that prayer needs fasting for its full and perfect development.

Faith needs a life of prayer for its full growth. In all the different parts of the spiritual life there is a close union between unceasing action and reaction, so that each may be both cause and effect. Thus it is with faith. There can be no true prayer without faith; some measure of faith must precede prayer. And yet prayer is also the way to more faith: There can be no higher degrees of faith except through much prayer. This is the lesson Jesus teaches here.

Nothing needs to grow as much as our faith. "Your faith groweth exceedingly" is said of one church. When Jesus spoke the words, "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29), He announced the law of the Kingdom, which tells us that different people have different degrees of faith, that one person may have varying degrees, and that the amount of faith will always determine the amount of one's power and blessing. If we want to know where and how our faith is to grow, the Master points us to the throne of God. It is in prayer, exercising one's faith in fellowship with the living God, that faith can increase. Faith can only live by feeding on what is Divine, on God Himself.

It is in the adoring worship of God—the waiting on Him and for Him in the deep silence of soul that yields itself for God to reveal Himself—that the capacity for knowing and trusting God will be developed. As we take His Word from the Blessed Book and ask Him to speak it to us with His living, loving voice, the power to believe and receive the Word as God's own word to us will emerge in us. It is in prayer, in living contact with God in living faith, that faith will become strong in us. Many Christians cannot understand, nor do they feel the need, of spending hours with God. But the Master says

(and the experience of His people has confirmed) that men of strong faith are men of much prayer.

This brings us back again to the lesson we learned when Jesus, before telling us to believe that we receive what we ask for, first said, "Have faith in God." It is God—the living God—into Whom our faith must strike its roots deeply and broadly. Then it will be strong enough to remove mountains and cast out devils. "If ye have faith, nothing shall be impossible to you." If we could only give ourselves up to the work God has for us in the world! As we came into contact with the mountains and the devils that are to be cast away and cast out, we would soon comprehend how much we need great faith and prayer. They alone are the soil in which faith can be cultivated. Christ Jesus is our life and the life of our faith. It is His life in us that makes us strong and ready to believe. The dying to self which much prayer implies allows a closer union to Jesus in which the spirit of faith will come in power. Faith needs prayer for its full growth.

The second lesson is that prayer needs fasting for its full growth. Prayer is the one hand with which we grasp the invisible. Fasting is the other hand, the one with which we let go of the visible. In nothing is man more closely connected with the world of sense than in his need for, and enjoyment of, food. It was the fruit with which man was tempted and fell in Paradise. It was with bread that Jesus was tempted in the wilderness. But He triumphed in fasting.

The body has been redeemed to be a temple of the Holy Spirit. In body as well as spirit, Scripture says, we are to glorify God in eating and drinking. There are many Christians to whom this eating for the glory of God has not yet become a spiritual reality. The first thought suggested by Jesus' words in regard to fasting and prayer is that only in a life of moderation and self-denial will there be sufficient heart and strength to pray much.

There is also a more literal meaning to His words. Sorrow and anxiety cannot eat, but joy celebrates its feasts with eating and drinking. There may come times of intense desire, when it is strongly felt how the body and its appetites still hinder the spirit in its battle with the powers of darkness. The need is felt of keeping it subdued. We are creatures of the senses. Our minds are helped by what comes to us in concrete form. Fasting helps to express, to deepen, and to confirm the resolution that we are ready to sacrifice anything, even ourselves, to attain the Kingdom of God. And Jesus, Who Himself fasted and sacrificed, knows to value, accept, and reward with spiritual power the soul that is thus ready to give up everything for Him and His Kingdom.

There is still a wider application of Christ's words. Prayer is reaching out for God and the unseen. Fasting is letting go of everything that can be seen and touched. Some Christians imagine that everything that isn't positively forbidden and sinful is permissible to them. So they try to retain as much as possible of this world with its property, its literature, and its enjoyments. The truly consecrated soul, however, is like a soldier who carries only what he needs for battle. Because he frees himself of all unnecessary weight, he is easily capable of combatting sin. Afraid of entangling himself with the affairs of a worldly life, he tries to lead a Nazarite life as one specially set apart for the Lord and His service. Without such voluntary separation, even from what is lawful, no one will attain power in prayer. Such power comes only through fasting and prayer.

Disciples of Jesus!—You have asked the Master to teach you to pray, so come now and accept His lessons! He tells you that prayer is the path to faithstrong faith that can cast out devils. He tells you: "If ye have faith, nothing shall be impossible to you." Let this glorious promise encourage you to pray much. Isn't the prize worth the price? Give up everything to follow

Jesus in the path He opens to us! Fast if you need to! Do anything you must so that neither the body nor the world can hinder us in our great life-work—talking to God in prayer, so that we may become men of faith whom He can use in His work of saving the world.

Lord, teach us to pray.

O Lord Jesus! How continually You must reprimand us for our unbelief. Our terrible inability to trust our Father and His promises must appear quite strange to You. Lord! Let Your words, "Because of your unbelief," sink into the very depths of our hearts and reveal how much of the sin and suffering around us is our fault. Then teach us, Blessed Lord, that faith can be gained and learned in the prayer and fasting that brings us into living fellowship with Yourself and the Father.

O Savior! You are the Author and the Perfecter of our faith. Teach us what it means to let You live in us by Your Holy Spirit. Lord! Our efforts and prayers for grace to believe have been so ineffective. We know it is because we want You to give us strength in ourselves. Holy Jesus! Teach us the mystery of Your life in us—how You, by Your Spirit, live the life of faith in us, insuring that our faith will not fail. Make our faith a part of that wonderful prayer-life which You give to those who expect their training for the ministry of intercession to come from not only words and thoughts, but from the Spirit of Your own life. And teach us how, in fasting and prayer, we can mature in the faith for which nothing will be impossible. Amen.

Chapter 14^(TOC)

Prayer and Love

"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses"—Mark 11:25

These words immediately follow the great prayer promise, "What things so ever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). We have already seen how the words that preceded that promise, 'Have faith in God,' taught us that, in prayer, everything depends: on the clarity of our relationship with God. These words that follow it remind us that our relationships: with our fellow-men must be clear, too. Love of God and love of our neighbor are inseparable. The prayer from a heart that is not right with God or with men will not succeed.

Faith and love are essential to each other. This is thought to which our Lord frequently gave expression. In the Sermon on the Mount, when speaking of the sixth commandment, He taught His disciples that acceptable worship of the Father was impossible if everything was not right with one's brother: "If thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matthew 5:23-24). After having taught us to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors," Christ added, "If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." At the close of

the parable of the unmerciful servant, He applies His teaching in the words, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses" (Matthew 18:35).

Here, in Mark 11, beside the dried-up fig tree, as Jesus speaks of the power and the prayer of faith, He abruptly introduces the thought, "When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" (Mark 11:25). Perhaps the Lord had learned during His life that disobedience to the law of brotherly love was the great sin of even praying people, and the great cause of the ineffectiveness of their prayer. It is as if He wanted to lead us into His own blessed experience that nothing strengthens faith as much as the consciousness that we have given ourselves in love and compassion for those whom God loves.

The first lesson we are taught here is to have a forgiving disposition. We should pray, "Forgive us just as we have forgiven others." Scripture says, "Forgive one another, even as God also in Christ forgave you." God's full and free forgiveness should be the model of our forgiveness of men. Otherwise our reluctant, half-hearted forgiveness, which is not forgiveness at all, will be God's rule with us. All of our prayers depend on our faith in God's pardoning grace. If God dealt with us while keeping our sins in mind, not one prayer would be heard. Pardon open the door to all God's love and blessing. Because God has pardoned all our sins, our prayers can go through to obtain all we need.

The deep sure ground of answer to prayer is God's forgiving love. When it has taken possession of our hearts, we pray in faith. But also, when it has taken possession of our hearts, we live in love. God's forgiving nature, revealed to us in His love, becomes our nature. With the power of His

forgiving love dwelling in us, we forgive just as He forgives.

If great injury or injustice occurs, try first of all to assume a Godlike disposition. Avoid the sense of wounded honor, the desire to maintain your rights, and the need to punish the offender. In the little annoyances of daily life, never excuse a hasty temper, a sharp word, or a quick judgment with the thought that we mean no harm, or that it is too much to expect feeble human nature to really forgive the way God and Christ do. Take the command literally: "Even as Christ forgave, so also do ye." The blood cleanses selfishness from the conscience. The love it reveals is a pardoning love that takes possession of us and flows through us to others. Our forgiving love toward men is the evidence of God's forgiving love in us. It is a necessary condition of the prayer of faith.

There is a second, more general lesson: Our daily life in the world is the test of our communication with God in prayer. How often the Christian, when he comes to pray, does his utmost to cultivate certain frames of mind which he thinks will be pleasing. He doesn't understand (or he forgets) that life does not consist of a lot of loose pieces which can be picked up at random and then be discarded. Life is a whole. The hour of prayer is only a small part of daily life. God's opinion of what I really am and desire is not based on the feeling I conjure up, but on the tone of my life during the day.

My relationship with God is part of my relationships with men. Failure in one will cause failure in the other. It isn't necessary that it be a distinct consciousness of something wrong between my neighbor and myself. An ordinary current of thinking and judging—the unloving thoughts and words I allow to pass unnoticed—can hinder my prayer. The effective prayer of faith comes from a life given up to the will and the love of God. Not as a result of what I try to be when praying, but because of what I am when I'm not

praying, is my prayer answered by God.

All these thoughts can be gathered into a third lesson: In life among human beings, the one thing on which everything depends is love. The spirit of forgiveness is the spirit of love. Because God is love, He forgives. It is only when we are dwelling in love that we can forgive as God forgives. In love for our brothers we have the evidence of love for the Father, the basis for our confidence before God, and the assurance that our prayer will be heard. "Let us love in deed and truth; hereby shall we assure our heart before Him. If our heart condemn us not, we have boldness toward God, and whatever we ask, we receive of Him" (1 John 4:20; 3:18-22, 23). Neither faith nor work will profit if we don't have love. Love unites us with God; it proves the reality of faith. "Have faith in God" and "Have love to men" are both essential commandments. The right relationships with the living God above me and the living men around me are the conditions for effective prayer.

This love is of special consequence when we are praying for our fellowmen. We sometimes commit ourselves to work for Christ out of zeal for His cause or for our own spiritual health, without giving ourselves in personal self-sacrificing love for those whose souls we seek. No wonder our faith is powerless and without victory! View each wretched one, however unlovable he is, in the light of the tender love of Jesus the Shepherd searching for the lost. Look for Jesus Christ in him and take him into a heart that really loves, for Jesus' sake. This is the secret of believing prayer and successful effort. Jesus speaks of love as the root of forgiveness. It is also the root of believing prayer.

There is nothing as heart-searching as believing prayer, or even the honest effort to pray in faith. Don't deflect that self-examination by the thought that God does not hear your prayer. "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask

amiss" (James 4:3). Let that Word of God search us. Ask whether our prayer is indeed the expression of a life completely given over to the will of God and the love of man. Love is the only soil in which faith can take root and thrive. Only in the love of fixed purpose and sincere obedience can faith obtain the blessing. Whoever gives himself to let the love of God dwell in him, whoever in daily life loves as God loves, will have the power to believe in the love that hears his every prayer. That almighty love is the Lamb Who is in the midst of the throne. It is suffering and enduring love that exists with God in prayer. The merciful shall obtain mercy; the meek shall inherit the earth.

Lord, teach us to pray.

Blessed Father! You are love, and only he who dwells in love can come into fellowship with You. Your blessed Son has taught me again how deeply true this. O my God! Let the Holy Spirit flood my heart with Your love. Be a fountain of love inside me that flows out to everyone around me. Let the power of believing prayer spring out of this life of love. O my Father! Grant by the Holy Spirit that this love may be the gate through which I find life in Your love. Let the joy with which I daily forgive whom ever might offend me be the proof that Your forgiveness is my power and life.

Lord Jesus! Blessed Teacher! Teach me how to forgive and to love. Let the power of Your blood make the pardon of my sins a reality, so that Your forgiveness of me and my forgiveness of others may be the very joy of heaven. Point out the weaknesses in my relationships with others that might hinder my fellowship with God. May my daily life at home and in society be the school in which strength and confidence are gathered for the prayer of faith. Amen.

Chapter 15^(TOC)

The Power of United Prayer

"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall risk, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"—Matthew 18:19-20

One of the first lessons of our Lord in His school of prayer was not to pray visibly. Go into your closet and be alone with the Father. When He has taught us that the meaning of prayer is personal, individual contact with God, He gives us a second lesson: You also need public, united prayer. He gives us a very special promise for the united prayer of two or three who agree in what they ask. As a tree has its root hidden in the ground and its stem growing up into the sunlight, so prayer needs secrecy in which the soul meets God alone and public fellowship with those who find their common meeting place in the Name of Jesus.

The reason why this must be so is plain. The bond that unites a man with his fellow-men is no less real and close than that which unites him to God: He one with them. Grace renews not only our relationship with God, but our relationships with our fellow human beings, too. We not only learn to say "My Father." It would be unnatural for the children of family to always meet their father separately, never expressing their desires or their love jointly. Believers are not only members of one family, but of one Body. Just as each member of the Body depends on the other, the extent to which the Spirit can

dwell in the Body depends on the union and cooperation of everyone. Christians cannot reach the full blessing God is ready to bestow through His Spirit until they seek and receive it in fellowship with each other. It was to the hundred and twenty praying together in total agreement under the same roof that the Spirit came from the throne of the glorified Lord. In the same way, it is in the union and fellowship of believers that the Spirit can manifest His full power.

The elements of true, united prayer are given to us in these words of our Lord. The first is agreement as to the thing asked. It isn't enough to generally consent to agree with anything another may ask. The object prayed for must be some special thing, a matter of distinct, united desire. The agreement must be, as in all prayer, in spirit and in truth. In such agreement exactly what we are asking for becomes very clear. We find out whether we can confidently ask for it according to God's will, and whether we are ready to believe that we have received it.

The second element is the gathering in the Name of Jesus. Later, we will learn much more about the necessity and the power of the Name of Jesus in prayer. Here our Lord teaches us that His Name must be the center and the bond of the union that makes them one, just as a home contains and unites all who are in it. "The Name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10). That Name is such a reality to those who understand and believe in it, that to meet within it is to have Him present. Jesus is powerfully attracted by the love and unity of His disciples: "Where two or three are gathered in my Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). The presence of Jesus, alive in the fellowship of His loving, praying disciples, gives united prayer its power.

The third element is the sure answer: "It shall be done for them of my

Father." Although a prayer meeting for maintaining religious fellowship, or for our own edification, may have its use, this was not the Savior's reason for recommending it. He meant it as a means of securing special answer to prayer. A prayer meeting without recognized answer to prayer ought to be the exception to the rule. When we feel too weak to exercise the faith necessary to attain a distinct desire, we ought to seek strength in the help of others. In the unity of faith, love, and the Spirit, the power of the Name and the presence of Jesus acts more freely, and the answer comes more surely. The evidence that there has been true, united prayer is the fruit—the answer, the receiving of the thing for which we have asked. "I say unto you, It shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

What an extraordinary privilege united prayer is! What a potential power it has! Who can say why blessing might be gained:

if the believing husband and wife knew they were joined together in the Name of Jesus to experience His presence and power in united prayer (1 Peter 33);

if friends were aware of the mighty help two or three praying in concert could give each other;

if in every prayer meeting the coming together in the Name, the faith in His presence, and the expectation of the answer stood in the foreground;

if in every church united, effective prayer were regarded as one of the chief purposes for which they are banded together;

if in the universal Church the coming of the Kingdom and of the King Himself were really matter of unceasing, united

crying to God!

The Apostle Paul had great faith in the power of united prayer. To the Romans he writes, "I beseech you, brethren, by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayer to God for me (Romans 15:30). He expects in answer to be delivered from his enemies and to prosper in his work. To the Corinthians he declares, "God will still deliver us, ye also helping together on our behalf by your supplications" (2 Corinthians 1:11). He expects their prayer to have a real share in his deliverance. To the Ephesians he writes, "With all prayer and supplication, praying at all seasons in the Spirit for all the saints and on my behalf, that utterance may be given unto me" (Ephesians 6:18-19). He makes the power and success in his ministry dependent on their prayers. With the Philippians he expects that his trials will become his salvation and increase the progress of the gospel, "through your supplications and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:19). When telling the Colossians to continue praying constantly, he adds, "Withal praying for us too, that God may open unto us a door for the word" (Colossians 4:3). And to the Thessalonians he writes, "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable men" (2 Thessalonians 3:1-2).

It is quite evident that Paul perceived himself as the member of a Body whose sympathy and cooperation he depended on. He counted on the prayers of these churches to gain for him what otherwise might not be given. The prayers of the Church were to him as real a factor in the work of the Kingdom as the power of God.

Who can say what power a church could develop and exercise if it would assume the work of praying day and night for the coming of the Kingdom, for

God's power, or for the salvation of souls? Most churches think their members gather simply to take care of and edify each other. They don't know that God rules the world by the prayers of His saints, that prayer is the power by which Satan is conquered, and that through prayer the Church on earth has access to the powers of the heavenly world. They do not remember that Jesus has, by His promise, made every assembly in His Name a gate to heaven, where His presence is to be felt, and His power experienced by the Father fulfilling their desires.

We cannot sufficiently thank God for the blessed work of united prayer, with which Christendom, in our days, opens every year. It is of unspeakable value as proof of our unity and our faith in the power of united prayer, as a training school for the enlargement of our hearts to take in all the needs of the Church, and as a help to united persevering prayer. But it has been a special blessing as stimulus to continued union in prayer in the smaller circles. When God's people realize what it means to meet as one in the Name of Jesus, with His presence in the midst of a Body united in the Holy Spirit, they will boldly claim the promise that the Father will do what they agree to request.

Lord, teach us to pray.

Blessed Lord! You ask so earnestly for the unity of Your people. Teach us how to encourage our unity with Your precious promise regarding united prayer. Show us how to join together in love any desire, so that Your presence is in our faith in the Father's answer.

O Father! We pray for those smaller circles of people who meet together so that they may become one. Remove all selfishness and self-interest, all narrowness of heart and estrangement that hinders their unity. Cast out the spirit of the world and the flesh through which Your promise loses all its

power. Let the thought of Your presence and the Father's favor draw us all nearer to each other.

Grant especially, blessed Lord, that Your Church may believe that it is by the power of united prayer that she can bind and loose in heaven, cast out Satan, save souls, remove mountains, and hasten the coming of the Kingdom. And grant, good Lord, that my prayer circle may indeed pray with the power through which Your Name and Word are glorified. Amen.

Chapter 16^(TOC)

The Power of Persevering Prayer

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying there was in a city a judge, which feared not God neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.

Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"—Luke 18:1-8

Of all the mysteries of the prayer world, the need for persevering prayer is one of the greatest. We cannot easily understand why the Lord, Who is so loving and longing to bless us, should have to be petitioned time after time, sometimes year after year, before the answer comes. It is also one of the greatest practical difficulties in the exercise of believing prayer. When our repeated prayers remain unanswered, it is easy for our lazy flesh maintaining the appearance of pious submission—to think that we must stop praying because God may have a secret reason for withholding His answer to our request. Faith alone can overcome difficulty. Once faith has taken its stand on God's Word and the Name of Jesus, and has yielded itself to the leading of the Spirit to seek only God's will and honor in its prayer, it need not be discouraged by delay. It knows from Scripture that the power of believing,

prayer is considerable; real faith can never be disappointed. It knows that to exercise its power, it must be gathered up, just like water, until the stream can come down in full force. Prayer must often be "heaped up" until God sees that its measure is full. Then the answer comes. Just as each of ten thousand seeds is a part of the final harvest, frequently repeated, persevering prayer is necessary to acquire a desired blessing. Every single believing prayer has its influence. It is stored up toward an answer which comes in due time to whomever perseveres to the end. Human thoughts and possibilities have nothing to do with it; only the Word of the living God matters. Abraham for so long "in hope believed against hope" and then "through faith and patience inherited the promise." Wait and pray often for the coming of the Lord to fulfill His promise.

When the answer to our prayer does not come at once we should combine quiet patience and joyful confidence in our persevering prayer. To enable us to do this, we must try to understand two words in which our Lord describes the character and conduct of our God and Father towards those who cry day and night to Him: "He is long-suffering over them. He will avenge them speedily."

The Master uses the word speedily. The blessing is all prepared. The Father is not only willing, but most anxious to give them what they ask. His everlasting love burns with His longing desire to reveal itself fully to His beloved and to satisfy their need. God will not delay one moment longer than is absolutely necessary. He will do everything in His power to hasten the answer.

But why—if this is true and God's power is infinite does it often take so long to get an answer to prayer? And why must God's own elect so often, in the midst of suffering and conflict, cry day and night? "He is long-suffering over

them." "Behold! the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, being long-suffering over it, till he receive the early and the latter rain" (James 5:7). Of course the husbandman longs for his harvest. But he knows it must have its full term of sunshine and rain, so he has plenty of patience. A child so often wants to pick the half-ripe fruit, while the farmer knows to wait until the proper time.

In his spiritual nature, man, too, is under the law of gradual growth that reigns in all created life. Only on the path of development can he reach his divine destiny. And only the Father, Who determines the times and seasons, knows the moment when the soul, or the Church is ripened to that fullness of faith in which it can really take and keep a blessing. As a father who longs to have his only child home from school, and yet waits patiently until the time of, training is completed, so it is with God and His children.

Insight into this truth should lead the believer to cultivate the corresponding attitudes of patience, faith, waiting, and praise, which are the secret of his perseverance. By faith in the promise of God, we know that we have the petitions we have asked of Him. Faith holds the answer in the promise as an unseen spiritual possession. It rejoices in it and praises God for it. But there is a difference between this kind of faith and the clearer, fuller, riper faith that obtains the promise as a present experience. It is in persevering, confident, and praising prayer that the soul grows up into full union with its Lord in which it can possess the blessing in Him.

There may be things around us that have to be corrected through prayer before the answer can fully happen. The faith that has, according to the command, believed that it has received, can allow God to take His time. It knows it has and must succeed. In quiet, persistent, and determined perseverance it continues in prayer and thanksgiving until the blessing comes.

And so we see a combination of what at first sight appears to be so contradictory: the faith that rejoices in God's answer as a present possession combined with the patience that cries day and night until that answer comes. The waiting child meets God triumphantly with his patient faith.

The great danger in this school is the temptation to think that it may not be God's will to give us what we desire. If our prayer agrees with God's Word and is led by the Spirit, don't give way to these fears.

Learn to give God time. He needs time with us. In daily fellowship with Him, we must give Him time to exercise the full influence of His presence in us. Day by day, as we are kept waiting, it is necessary that faith be given time to prove its reality and fill our beings entirely. God will lead us from faith to vision; we will see His glory.

Don't let delay shake your faith, for it is faith that will provide the answer in time. Each believing prayer is a step nearer to the final victory! It ripens the fruit, conquers hindrances in the unseen world, and hastens the end. Child of God! Give the Father time! He is long-suffering over you. He wants your blessing to be rich, full, and sure. Give Him time, but continue praying day and night. And above all, remember the promise: "I say unto you, He will avenge them speedily."

The blessing of such persevering prayer is indescribable. There is nothing that examines the heart more closely than the prayer of faith. It teaches you to discover, confess, and give up everything that hinders the coming of the blessing everything that is not in accordance with the Father's will. It leads to closer fellowship with Him, Who alone can teach you to pray. Complete surrender becomes possible under the covering of the blood and the Spirit. Christian! Give God time! He will perfect whatever concerns you!

Let your attitude be the same whether you are praying for yourself or for others. All labor, bodily or mental, needs time and effort. We must give ourselves up to it. Nature reveals her secrets and yields her treasures only to diligent and thoughtful labor. However little we can understand it, spiritual husbandry is always the same: The seed we sow in the soil of heaven, the efforts we put forth, and the influence we seek to exert in the world above all require our complete surrender in prayer. Maintain great confidence that when the time is right, we will reap abundantly if we don't give up (Galatians 6:9).

Let us especially learn this lesson as we pray for the Church of Christ. She is indeed like a poor widow in the absence of her Lord, apparently at the mercy of her adversary and helpless to correct the situation. When we pray for His Church or any portion of it that is under the power of the world, let us ask Him to visit her with mighty workings of His Spirit to prepare her for His coming. Pray in the assured faith that prayer does help. Unceasing prayer will bring the answer. Just give God time. And remember this day and night: "Hear what the unrighteous judge saith. And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry to Him day and night, and He is longsuffering over them. I say unto you, He will avenge them speedily."

Lord, teach us to pray.

O Lord my God! Teach me how to know Your way and in faith to learn what Your beloved Son has taught: "He will avenge them speedily." Let Your tender love, and the delight You have in hearing and blessing Your children, lead me implicitly to accept the promise that we may have whatever we ask for, and that the answer will be seen in due time. Lord! We understand nature's seasons; we know how to wait for the fruit we long for. Fill us with the assurance that You won't delay one moment longer than is necessary, and

that our faith will hasten the answer.

Blessed Master! You have said that God's elect appeal to Him day and night. Please teach us to understand this. You know how quickly we become tired. Perhaps we feel that the Divine Majesty of the Father is so far beyond the reach of our continued prayer that it isn't becoming for us to plead with Him too much. O Lord! Teach me how real the labor of prayer is! I know that here on earth, when I fail at something, I can often succeed by renewed and more continuous effort, and by taking more time and thought. Show me how, by giving myself more entirely to prayer—by actually living in prayer I can obtain what I have asked for.

Above all, O blessed Teacher, Author and Perfecter of my faith, let my whole life be one of faith in the Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself for me! In You my prayer gains acceptance and I have the assurance of the answer. Lord Jesus! In such faith I will pray always, ceasing never. Amen.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The need of persevering prayer appears to be at variance with the faith which knows that it has received what it asks (Mark 11:24). One of the mysteries of the Divine life is the harmony between sudden, complete possession and slow, imperfect appropriation. Here persevering prayer appears to be the school in which the soul is strengthened for the boldness of faith. Considering the diversity of operations of the Spirit, there may be some in whom faith takes the form of persistent waiting. For others, triumphant thanksgiving appears the only proper expression of the assurance of having been heard.

Chapter 17^(TOC)

Prayer in Harmony with God

"Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always"—John 11:41-42

"Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee"—Psalm 2:7-8

In the New Testament we find a distinction made between faith and knowledge. "To one is given, through the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to another faith, in the same Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:8-9). In a child or an uninformed Christian there may be much faith with little knowledge. Childlike simplicity accepts the truth without difficulty, and often cares little to give any reason for its faith but this: God said it. But it is the will of God that we should love and serve Him, not only with all the heart but also with all the mind. He wants us to develop an insight into the Divine wisdom and beauty of all His ways, words, and works. Only in this way will the believer be able to fully approach and rightly adore the glory of God's grace. And only thus can our hearts intelligently understand the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, that exist in redemption, preparing us to join in the, highest note of the song that rises before the throne: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

This truth has its full application in our prayer life. While prayer and faith are so simple that the newborn convert can pray with power, more mature

Christians may find in the doctrine of prayer some of their deepest questions. How extensive is the power of prayer? How can God grant to prayer such mighty power? How can prayer be harmonized with the will of God? How can God's sovereignty and our will God's liberty and ours—be reconciled? These and similar questions are appropriate subjects for Christian meditation and inquiry. The more earnestly and reverently we approach such mysteries, the more we will fall down in adoring wonder to praise Him Who has in prayer given such power to man.

One of the difficulties with regard to prayer is the result of the perfection of God. He is absolutely independent of everything outside of Himself. He is an infinite being Who owes what He is to Himself alone. With His wise and holy will, He has determined Himself and everything that is to be. How can our prayer influence Him? How can He be moved by prayer to do what He otherwise would not do? Isn't the promise of an answer to prayer simply a condescension to our weakness? Is the power of prayer anything more than an accommodation of our mode of thought, because the accomplishments of Deity are never dependent of any outside action? And isn't the real blessing of prayer simply the influence it exerts on us?

Seeking answers to such questions provides the key to the very being of God in the mystery of the Holy Trinity. If God were only one Person, shut up within Himself, there could be no thought of nearness to Him or influence on Him. But in God there are three Persons: Father and Son, Who have in the Holy Spirit their living bond of unity and fellowship. When the Father gave the Son a place next to Himself as His equal and His counselor, He opened a way for prayer and its influence into the very inmost life of Deity itself.

On earth, just as in heaven, the whole relationship between Father and Son is that of giving and taking. If the taking is to be as voluntary and self-

determined as the giving, the Son must ask and receive. "Thou art my Son; this day I have begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee" (Psalm 2:7-8). The Father gave the Son the place and the power to influence Him. The Son's asking wasn't just for show. It was one of those life—movements in which the love of the Father and the Son met and completed each other. The Father had determined that He would not be alone in His counsels. Their fulfillment would depend on the Son's asking and receiving. Thus asking was in the very Being and Life of God. Prayer on earth was to be the reflection and the outflow of this.

Jesus said, "I knew that Thou hearest me always" (John 11:42). Just as the Sonship of Jesus on earth cannot be separated from His Sonship in heaven, His prayer on earth is the continuation and the counterpart of His asking in heaven. His prayer is the link between the eternal asking of the only begotten Son in the bosom of the Father and the prayer of men on earth. Prayer has its rise and its deepest source in the very Being of God. In the bosom of Deity nothing is ever done without prayer—the asking of the Son and the giving of the Father.

This may help us to understand how the prayer of man, coming through the Son, can have an effect on God. God's decrees are not made without reference to the Son, His petition, or a petition sent up through Him. The Lord Jesus is the first-begotten, the Head and Heir of all things. As the Representative of all creation, He always has a voice in the Father's decisions. In the decrees of the eternal purpose, room was always left for the liberty of the Son as Mediator and Intercessor. The same holds true for the petitions of all who draw near to the Father through the Son.

If Christ's liberty and power to influence the Father seems to be at variance with the immutability of the Divine decrees, remember that God doesn't leave

a past, as man does, to which He is irrevocably bound. The distinctions of time have no meaning to Him Who inhabits eternity. Eternity is an everpresent now, in which the past never passes and the future is always present. To meet our human comprehension of time, Scripture must speak of past decrees and a coming future.

In reality, the unchanging nature of God's plan is still in perfect harmony with His liberty to do whatever He wills. The prayers of the Son and His people weren't included in the eternal decrees simply for show. Rather, the Father listens with His heart to every prayer that rises through the Son. God really does allow Himself to be moved by prayer to do what He otherwise would not have done.

This perfect, harmonious union of Divine sovereignty and human liberty is an unfathomable mystery because God as the Eternal One transcends all our thoughts. But let it be our comfort and strength to know that in the eternal fellowship of the Father and the Son, the power of prayer has its origin and certainty. Through our union with the Son, our prayer is taken up and can have its influence in the inner life of the Blessed Trinity. God's decrees are no iron framework against which man's liberty struggles vainly. God Himself is living love, Who in His Son as man has entered into the tenderest relationship with all that is human. Through the Holy Spirit, He takes up everything human into the Divine life of love, leaving Himself free to give every human prayer its place in His government of the world.

In the light of such thoughts, the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity is no longer an abstract speculation, but the living manifestation of how man is taken up into the fellowship of God, his prayer becoming a real factor in God's rule of this earth. We can catch a glimpse of the light shining out from the eternal world in words such as these: "Through Him, we have access by one Spirit

unto the Father."

Lord, teach us to pray.

Everlasting God! In deep reverence I worship before the holy mystery of Your Divine being. If it pleases You, most glorious God, to reveal some of that mystery to me, I would bow with fear and trembling rather than sin against You as I meditated on Your glory.

Father! I thank You for being not only the Father of Your children here on earth, but the Father of Jesus Christ through eternity. Thank You for hearing our prayers and for having given Christ's asking a place in Your eternal plan. Thank You also for sending Christ to earth and for His blessed communication with You in heaven. There has always been room in Your counsel for His prayers and the answers to those prayers. And I thank You above all that through Christ's true human nature on Your throne above, and through Your Holy Spirit in our human nature here below, a way has been opened by which every human cry of need can be received into the life and love of God, always obtaining an answer.

Blessed Jesus! As the Son, You have opened this path of prayer and assured us of an answer. We beseech You to teach us how to pray. Let our prayers be the sign of our sonship, so that we, like You, know that the Father always hears us. Amen.

Chapter 18^(TOC)

Prayer in Harmony with the Destiny of Man

"And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?"—Matthew 22:20

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"—Genesis 1:26

"Whose is this image?" It was with this question that Jesus foiled His enemies when they tried to trick Him, settling the matter of responsibility in regard to paying taxes. The question and the principle it involves are universally applicable, particularly to man himself. Bearing God's image decides man's destiny. He belongs to God and prayer to God is what he was created for. Prayer is part of the wondrous likeness he bears to His Divine original. It is the earthly likeness of the deep mystery of the fellowship of love in which the Trinity has its blessedness.

The more we meditate on what prayer is and on the wonderful power it has with God, the more we have to ask how man is so special, that such a place in God's plan has been allotted to him. Sin has so degraded him that we can't conceive of what he was meant to be based on what he is now. We must turn back to God's own record of man's creation to find what God's purpose was, and what capacities man was given to fulfill that purpose.

Man's destiny appears clearly in God's language at creation. It was to fill, to

subdue, and to have dominion over the earth and everything in it. These three expressions show us that man was intended, as God's representative, to rule here on earth. As God's deputy, he was to fill God's place, keeping everything in subjection to Him. It was the will of God that everything done on earth should be done through man, i.e., the history of the earth was to be entirely in his hands.

In accordance with such a destiny was the position he was to occupy and the power at his disposal. When an earthly sovereign sends a representative to a distant province, that representative advises the sovereign as to the policy to be adopted there. The sovereign follows that advice, doing whatever is necessary to enact the policy and maintain the dignity of his empire. If the sovereign, however, doesn't approve of the policy, he replaces the representative with someone who better understands his desires for the empire. But as long as the representative is trusted, his advice is carried out.

As God's representative, man was to have ruled. Everything was to have been done according to his will. On his advice and at his request, heaven was to have bestowed its blessing on earth. His prayer was to have been the natural channel through which the Lord in heaven and man, as lord of this world, communicated. The destinies of the world were given into the power of the wishes, the will, and the prayers of man.

With the advent of sin, all this underwent a terrible change: Man's fall brought all creation under the curse. Redemption brought the beginning of a glorious restoration. In Abraham, God began to make Himself a people from whom kings (not to mention the Great King) would emerge. We see how Abraham's prayer power affected the destinies of those who came into contact with him. In Abraham we see how prayer is not only the means of obtaining blessing for ourselves. It is the exercise of a royal prerogative to

influence the destinies of men and the will of God which rules them. We do not once find Abraham praying for himself. His prayers for Sodom and Lot, for Abimelech, and for Ishmael prove that a man who is God's friend has the power to control the history of those around him.

This had been man's destiny from the first. But Scripture tells us more: God could entrust man with such a high calling because He had created him in His own image and likeness. The external responsibility was not committed to him without the inner fitness. The root of man's inner resemblance to God was in his nature to have dominion, to be lord of all. There was an inner agreement and harmony between God and man, an embryonic Godlikeness, which gave man a real fitness for being the mediator between God and His world.

Man was to be prophet, priest, and king, to interpret God's will, to represent nature's needs, to receive and dispense God's bounty. It was in bearing God's image that he could bear God's rule. He was indeed so much like God—so capable of entering into God's purposes and carrying out His plans that God could trust him with the wonderful privilege of asking for and obtaining what the world might need.

Although sin has for a time frustrated God's plans, prayer still remains what it would have been if man had never fallen: the proof of man's Godlikeness, the vehicle of his communication with the Father, and the power that is allowed to hold the hand that holds the destinies of the universe. Man is of Divine origin, created for and capable of possessing kinglike liberty. His prayer is not merely a cry for mercy. It is the greatest execution of his will.

What sin destroyed, grace has restored. What the first Adam lost, the second has won back. In Christ, man regains his original position, and the Church,

abiding in Christ, inherits the promise: "Ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

To begin with, such a promise does by no means refer to the grace or blessing we need for ourselves. It has reference to our position as the fruit-bearing branches of the heavenly Vine, who, like Him, only live for the work and glory of the Father. It is for those who abide in Him, who have forsaken themselves for a life of obedience and self-sacrifice in Him, who have completely surrendered to the interests of the Father and His Kingdom. They understand how their redemption through Christ has brought them back to their original destiny, restoring God's image and the power to have dominion.

Such men indeed have the power—each in his own area—to obtain and dispense the powers of heaven here on earth. With holy boldness they may make known what they will. They live as priests in God's presence. They are kings possessing the powers of the world to come.^[1] They enter upon the fulfillment of the promise: "Ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

Church of the living God! Your calling is higher and holier than you know! God wants to rule the world through your members. He wants you to be His kings and priests. Your prayers can bestow and withhold the blessings of heaven. In His elect who are not content just to be saved, but who surrender themselves completely, the Father will fulfill all His glorious counsel through them just as He does through the Son. In His elect, who cry day and night to Him, God wants to prove how wonderful man's original destiny was. Man was the image—bearer of God on earth, which was indeed given to him to rule. When he fell, everything fell with him. Now the whole creation groans and travails in pain together.

But now man is redeemed. The restoration of the original dignity has begun. It is God's purpose that the fulfillment of His eternal purpose and the coming of His Kingdom should depend on His people. They abide in Christ and are ready to accept Him as their Head, their great Priest-King. In their prayers they boldly say what they desire God to do for them. As God's image—bearer and representative on earth, redeemed man has the power to determine the history of this earth through his prayers. Man was created and then redeemed to pray, and by his prayer to have dominion.

"Priesthood is the appointed link between heaven and earth, the channel of communication between the sinner and God. Such a priesthood, insofar as expiation is concerned, is in the hands of the Son of God alone; insofar as it is to be the medium of communication between Creator and creature, is also in the hands of redeemed men—of the Church of God.

"God is seeking kings. Not out of the ranks of angels. Fallen man must furnish Him with the rulers of His universe. Human hands must wield the scepter, human heads must wear the crown." (The Rent Veil, by Dr. H. Bonar.)

Lord, teach us to pray.

"Lord! What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? for thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy lands; thou hast put all things under his feet ... O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" (Psalm 8:4-6, 9).

Lord God! Man has sunk so low because of sin. And how terribly it has darkened his mind. He doesn't even know his Divine destiny: to be Your servant and representative. How sad it is that, even when their eyes are

opened, men are so unready to accept their calling! They could have such power with God and with men, too!

Lord Jesus! Through You, the Father has again crowned man with glory and honor; opening the way for us to be what He wants us to be. O Lord! Have mercy on Your people—Your heritage! Work mightily with us in Your Church! Teach Your believing disciples to accept and to go forth in their royal priesthood. Teach us to use the power of prayer to which You have given such wonderful promises, to serve Your Kingdom, to have rule over the nations, and to make the Name of God glorious on the earth. Amen.

Chapter 19^(TOC)

Power for Praying and Working

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it"—John 14:12-14

The Savior opened His public ministry in the Sermon on the Mount with the same subject He uses here in His parting address from the Gospel of John: prayer. But there is a difference. The Sermon on the Mount is directed to disciples who have just entered His school, scarcely knowing that God is their Father, whose prayers have reference chiefly to their personal needs. In His closing address, He speaks to disciples whose training time is coming to an end, who are ready as His messengers to take over His place and His work.

Christ's first lesson had been: Be childlike, pray believingly, and trust the Father to give you everything good. Here He points to something higher. The disciples are now His friends. He has told them everything He knows about the Father. They are His messengers into whose hands the care of His work and Kingdom on earth is to be entrusted. Now they must assume that role, performing even greater works than Christ in the power of His approaching exaltation. Prayer is to be the channel through which that power is received. With Christ's ascension to the Father, a new epoch for both their working and their praying commences.

This connection comes out clearly in our text from John, chapter fourteen. As His Body here of earth, as those who are one with Him in heaven, the disciples are now to do greater works than He had done. Their successes and their victories are to be greater than His. Christ mentions two reasons for this. One is that He was going to the Father to receive all power; the other is that they could now ask for and expect that power in His Name "Because I go to the Father, and" (notice this and "and whatever ye shall ask, I will do." His going to the Father brings a double blessing: The disciple; could ask for and receive everything in His Name and as a consequence, would do the greater works This first mention of prayer in our Savior's parting words teaches us two most important lessons. Whoever wants to do the works of Jesus must pray in His Name. Whoever prays in His Name must work in His Name.

In prayer the power for work is obtained. When Jesus was here on earth, He did the greatest works Himself. Devils that the disciples could not cast out fled at His word. When He went to be with the Father, He was no longer here in body to work directly. The disciples were now His Body. All His work from the throne in heaven must and could be done here on earth through them.

Now that Christ was leaving the scene and could only work through commissioners, it might have been expected that the works would be fewer and weaker. He assures us of the contrary: "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12). His approaching death was to be a breaking down of the power of sin. With the resurrection, the powers of the eternal life were to take possession of the human body and obtain supremacy over human life. With His ascension, Christ was to receive the power to communicate the Holy Spirit completely to

His Body. The union—the oneness between Himself on the throne and those on earth was to be so intensely and divinely perfect, that He meant it as the literal truth: "Greater works than these shall he do, because I go to the Father."

And how true it was! Jesus, during three years of personal labor on earth, gathered little more than five hundred disciples, most of whom were so powerless that they weren't much help to His cause. Men like Peter and Paul did much greater things than He had done. From the throne He could do through them what He Himself in His humiliation could not yet do. He could ask the Father, receiving and bestowing new power for the greater works. And what was true for the disciples is true for us: As we believe and ask in His Name, the power comes and takes possession of us also to do the greater works.

Alas! There is little or nothing to be seen of the power to do anything like Christ's works, not to mention anything greater. There can only be one reason: the belief in Him and the believing prayer in His Name are absent. Every child of God must learn this lesson: Prayer in the Name of Jesus is the only way to share in the mighty power which Jesus has received from the Father for His people. It is in this power alone that the believer can do greater works. To every complaint about difficulties or lack of success, Jesus gives this one answer: "He that believeth on me shall do greater works, because I go to the Father, and whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do." If you want to do the work of Jesus, believe and become linked to Him, the Almighty One. Then pray the prayer of faith in His Name. Without this our work is just human and carnal. It may have some use in restraining sin or in preparing the way for a blessing, but the real power is missing. Effective working first needs effective praying.

The second lesson is this: Whoever prays must work. It is for power to work that prayer has such great promises. Power for the effective prayer of faith is gained through working. Our blessed Lord repeats no less than six times (John 14:13-14; 15:7, 16; 16:23-24) those unlimited prayer-promises which evoke anxious questions as to their real meaning: "whatsoever," "anything," "what ye will," "ask and ye shall receive." Many a believer has read these with joy and hope, and in deep earnestness of soul has attempted to plead them for his own need, and has come out disappointed. The simple reason was that he separated the promise from its context.

The Lord gave the wonderful promise of the free use of His Name with the Father in conjunction with doing His works. The disciple who lives only for Jesus' work and Kingdom, for His will and honor, will be given the power to appropriate the promise. Anyone grasping the promise only when he wants something very special for himself will be disappointed, because he is making Jesus the servant of his own comfort. But whoever wants to pray the effective prayer of faith because he needs it for the work of the Master will learn it, because he has made himself the servant of his Lord's interests. Prayer not only teaches and strengthens one for work, work teaches and strengthens one for prayer.

This is true in both the natural and the spiritual worlds. "Unto every one which hath (more) shall be given" (Luke 19:26). Whoever is "faithful over a few things, I will make ... ruler over many things" (Matthew 25:21). With the small amount of grace we have already received, let us give ourselves to the Master for His work! It will be to us a real school of prayer. When Moses had to take full charge of a rebellious people, he felt the need, but also the courage, to speak boldly to God and to ask great things of Him (Exodus 33:12, 15, 18). As you give yourself entirely to God for His work, you will

feel that these great promises are exactly what you need and that you may most confidently expect nothing less.

Believer in Jesus! You are called—you are appointed—to do the works of Jesus, and even greater works He has gone to the Father to get the power to do them in and through you. Remember His promise "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do. "Give yourself and live to do the works of Christ and you will learn how to obtain wonderful answers to prayer. You will learn to do not only what He did but much more. With disciples full of faith in Himself, boldly asking great things in prayer, Christ can conquer the world.

Lord, teach us to pray.

O my Lord! Once again, I am hearing You say things that are beyond my comprehension. I can do nothing but accept them and keep them in simple childlike faith as Your gift to me. You have said that because of Your going to be with the Father, anyone who believes in You can do not only the things You have done, but greater things as well.

Lord! I worship You as the Glorified One and eagerly await the fulfillment of Your promise. May my whole life be one of continued believing in You. Purify and sanctify my heart. Make it so tenderly susceptible to Yourself and Your love that believing in You will become its very breath.

You have said that because You went to the Father, You will do whatever we ask You to do. You want Your people to share Your power. From Your throne, You want to work through them, as members of Your Body, in response to their believing prayer in Your Name. You have promised us power in our prayers to You and power in our work here on earth.

Blessed Lord! Forgive us for not believing You and Your promise more. Because of our lack of faith, we have failed to demonstrate how You are faithful to fulfill that promise. Please forgive us for so little honoring Your all—prevailing Name in heaven or on earth.

Lord! Teach me to pray so that I can prove Your Name is all powerful with God, with men, and with devils. Teach me to work and to pray in a way that glorifies You, and do Your great works through me. Amen.

Chapter 20^(TOC)

The Chief End of Prayer

"I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son"—John 14:12-13

"That the Father may be glorified in the Son': It is to this end that Jesus on His throne in glory will do everything we ask in His Name. Every answer to prayer He gives will have this as its object. When there is no prospect of this object being obtained, He will not answer. It follows as a matter of course that with us, as with Jesus, this must be the essential element in our petitions. The glory of the Father must be the aim—the very soul and life—of our prayer.

This was Jesus' goal when He was on earth: "I seek not mine own honor: I seek the honor of Him that sent me." In such words we have the keynote of His life. The first words of His High-Priestly prayer voice it: "Father glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee. I have glorified Thee on earth: glorify me with Thyself" (John 17:1, 4). His reason for asking to be taken up into the glory He had with the Father is a twofold one: He has glorified Him on earth; He will still glorify Him in heaven. All He asks is to be able to glorify the Father more.

As we begin to share Jesus' feeling on this point, ratifying Him by making the Father's glory our chief object in prayer, too, our prayer cannot fail to get an answer. The Beloved Son has said that nothing glorifies the Father more than

His doing what we ask. Therefore, Jesus won't miss any opportunity to do what we request. Let us make His aim ours! Let the glory of the Father be the link between our asking and His doing!

Jesus' words come indeed as a sharp two-edged word, dividing the soul and the spirit, and quickly discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart. In His prayers on earth, His intercession in heaven, and His promise of an answer to our prayers, Jesus makes His first object the glory of His Father. Is this our object, too? Or are self-interest and selfwill the strongest motives urging us to pray? A distinct, conscious longing for the glory of the Father must animate our prayers.

The believer does at times desire it. But he doesn't desire it enough. The reason for this failure is that the separation between the spirit of his daily life and the spirit of his hour of prayer is too wide. Desire for the glory of the Father is not something we can arouse and present to our Lord when we prepare ourselves to pray. Only when the whole life in all its parts is given up to God's glory can we really pray to Christ's glory, too. "Do all to the glory of God," and "Ask all to the glory of God." These twin commands are inseparable. Obedience to the former is the secret of grace for the latter. Living for the glory of God is the condition of the prayers that Jesus can answer.

This demand that prayer be to the glory of God is quite right and natural. Only the Lord is glorious. There is no glory but His, and what He allots to His creations. Creation exists to show forth His glory. Everything that doesn't glorify Him is sinful, dark, and dead. It is only in the glorifying of God that creatures can find glory. What the Son of Man did—giving Himself wholly to glorify the Father—is nothing but the simple duty of every redeemed one. He will also receive Christ's reward.

We cannot attain a life with God's glory as our only aim by any effort of our own. It is only in the man Christ Jesus that such a life can be found. Yes, blessed be God! His life is our life. He gave Himself for us. He is now our life. It is essential to discover, confess, and deny the self because it takes God's place. Only the presence and rule of the Lord Jesus in our hearts can cast out all self-glorification, replacing it with His own God-glorifying life and Spirit. It is Jesus, Who longs to glorify the Father in hearing our prayers, Who will teach us to live and to pray to the glory of God.

What power is there that can urge our slothful hearts to yield themselves to our Lord to work this in us? Surely nothing more is needed than a glimpse of how worthy of glory the Father is. Our faith should learn to bow before Him in adoring worship, ascribing to Him alone the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, yielding ourselves to life in His light. Surely we will be stirred to say, "To Him alone be glory." And we will look to our Lord Jesus with new intensity of desire for a life that refuses to recognize anything but the glory of God. When there isn't enough prayer to be answered, the Father is not glorified. It is our duty to live and pray so that our prayer can be answered. For the sake of God's glory, let us learn to pray well.

What a humbling thought it is, that so often there is earnest prayer in which the desire for our own joy or pleasure is far stronger than many desire for God's glory. No wonder there are so many unanswered prayers! Here we have the secret. God cannot be glorified when that glory is not the object of our prayers. Whoever wants to pray the prayer of faith must give himself to live literally so that the Father in all things is glorified in him. This must be his aim; without it there cannot be a prayer of faith.

"How can ye believe," said Jesus, "which receive honor of one another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" (John 5:44). When we seek

our own glory among men, we make faith impossible. Only the deep, intense self-sacrifice that gives up its own glory and seeks the glory of God awakens in the soul that spiritual susceptibility to Divine faith. The surrender to God and the expectation that He will show His glory in hearing us are essential. Only he who seeks God's glory will see it in the answer to his prayer.

How do we accomplish this? Let us begin with a confession. The glory of God hasn't really been an all-absorbing passion in our lives and our prayers. How little we have lived in the likeness of the Son and in sympathy with Him for God and His glory alone. Take time to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal how deficient we have been in this. True knowledge and confession of sin are the sure path to deliverance.

And then let us look to Jesus. In death He glorified God; through death He was glorified with Him. It is by dying—being dead to self and living for God—that we can glorify Him. This death to self, this life to the glory of God, is what Jesus gives and lives in each one who can trust Him for it. Let the spirit of our daily lives consist of the decision to live only for the glory of the Father as Christ did, the acceptance of Him with His life and strength working it in us, and the joyful assurance that we can live for the glory of God because Christ lives in us. Jesus helps us to live this way. The Holy Spirit is waiting to make it our experience, if we will only trust and let Him. Don't hold back through unbelief! Confidently do everything for the glory of God! Our obedience will please the Father. The Holy Spirit will seal us within with the consciousness that we are living for God and His glory.

What quiet peace and power will be in our prayers when we know that we are in perfect harmony with Christ, Who promises to do what we ask, "That the Father may be glorified in the Son." With our whole beings consciously yielded to the inspiration of the Word and Spirit, our desires will no longer be

ours. They will be His, and their main purpose will be the glory of God. With increasing liberty we will be able in prayer to say, "Father! You know we ask it only for Your glory. Answers to prayer, instead of being mountains we cannot climb, will give us greater confidence that we are heard. And the privilege of prayer will become doubly precious because it brings us into perfect unison with the Beloved Son in the wonderful partnership He proposes: "You ask, and I do, that the father may be glorified in the Son."

Lord, teach us to pray.

Blessed Lord Jesus! Once again I am coming to You. Every lesson you give me convinces me all the more deeply that I don't know how to pray properly. But every lesson also inspires me with hope that You are going to teach me what prayer should be. O my Lord! I look to You with courage. You are the Great Intercessor. You alone pray and hear prayer for the sole purpose of glorifying the Father. Teach me to pray as You do.

Savior! I want to be nothing, yielding myself totally to You. I am giving myself to be crucified with You. Through the Spirit the works of self will be made dead. Let your life and Your love of the Father take Possession of me. A new longing is filling my soul that every day and every hour prayer to the glory of the Father will become everything to me. O my Lord! Please teach me this!

My God and my Father! Accept the desire of Your child who has seen that Your glory is alone worth living for. Show me Your glory. Let it overshadow me and fill my heart! May I dwell in it as Christ did. Tell me what pleases You, fulfill in me Your own good pleasure, so that I may find my glory in seeking the glory of my Father. Amen.

Chapter 21^(TOC)

The All-Inclusive Condition

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you"—John 15:7

In all God's relations with us, the promise and its conditions are inseparable. If we fulfill the conditions He fulfills the promise. What He is to be to us depends on what we are willing to be to Him: "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you." Therefore, in prayer the unlimited promise, "Ask what ye will," has one simple and natural condition, "if ye abide in me." It is Christ Whom the Father always hears. God is in Christ. To reach God, we must be in Christ, too. Fully abiding in Him, we have the right to ask whatever we want and the promise that we will get an answer.

There is a terrible discrepancy between this promise and the experience of most believers. How many prayers bring no answer? The cause must be either that we do not fulfill the condition, or God does not fulfill the promise. Believers are not willing to admit either, and therefore have devised a way of escape from the dilemma. They put a qualifying clause into the promise that our Savior did not put there—if it be God's will. This maintains both God's integrity and their own. If they could only accept it and hold fast to it as it stands, trusting Christ to make it true! And if only they would confess their failure in fulfilling the condition as the one explanation for unanswered prayer. God's Spirit would then lead them to see how appropriate such a promise is to those who really believe that Christ means it. The Holy Spirit

would then make our weakness in prayer a mighty motivation for us to discover the secret and obtain the blessing of fully abiding in Christ.

"If ye abide in me. "As a Christian grows in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus, he is often surprised to find how God's words grow, too, into new and deeper meaning. He can look back to the day when some word of God was opened up to him, and he rejoiced in the blessing he had found in it. After a time, some deeper experience gave it a new meaning, and it was as if he never had seen what it contained. And yet once again, as he advanced in the Christian life, the same word stood before him as a great mystery, until the Holy Spirit led him still more deeply into its Divine fullness.

The Master's precious "Abide in me" is one of these ever growing, never—exhausted words. Step by step, it opens the fullness of the Divine life to us. As the union of the branch with the vine is one of never-ceasing growth, so our abiding in Christ is a life process in which the Divine life takes more and more complete possession of us. The young believer may really be abiding in Christ to the limited extent which is possible for him. If he reaches onward to attain what the Master means by full abiding, he will inherit all the promises connected with it.

In the growing life of abiding in Christ, the first stage is that of faith. As the believer sees that Christ's command is really meant for him, his great aim is simply to believe that abiding in Christ is his immediate duty and a blessing within his reach. He is especially occupied with the love, power, and faithfulness of the Savior. He feels his one basic need is to believe.

It isn't long before he sees something more is needed. Obedience and faith must go together. But faith can't simply be added to obedience; it must be revealed in obedience. Faith is obedience at home, looking to the Master;

obedience is faith going out to do His will.

The privilege and the blessings of this abiding are often of more interest than its duties and its fruit. Much self-will passes unnoticed. The peace which a young disciple enjoys in believing leaves him. In practical obedience the abiding must be maintained: "If ye keep my commands, ye shall abide in my love." Before, the truth that the mind believed was enough to let the heart rest on Christ and His promises. Now, in this stage, his chief effort is to get his will united with the will of his Lord, with his heart and life brought entirely under Christ's rule.

And yet there still seems to be something missing. The will and the heart are on Christ's side; the disciple obeys and loves his Lord. But why does the fleshly nature still have so much power? Why aren't his spontaneous actions and emotions what they should be? Where is the beauty of holiness, the zeal of love, and the conformity with Jesus and His death, in which the life of self is lost? There must surely be something which he has not yet experienced through abiding in Christ.

Faith and obedience are just the pathway to blessing. Before giving us the parable of the vine and the branches, Jesus had very distinctly told what that full blessing is. Three times over He said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," promising threefold blessing with which He would crown such obedient love: the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the manifestation of the Son, the Father and Son coming to make Their abode within us.

As our faith grows into obedience, and in obedience and love our whole being reaches out and clings to Christ, our inner life opens up. The capacity is formed within us of receiving the life and the Spirit of the glorified Jesus, through a distinct and conscious union with Christ and with the Father. The

word is fulfilled in us: "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:20) God and Christ exist in each other, not only in will and in love, but in identity of nature and life. We come to understand that because of this union between the Father and the Son, so we are in Christ and Christ is in us in exactly the same way.

After Jesus had spoken thus, He said, "Abide in me, and I in you. Accept, consent to receive that Divine life of union with myself, in virtue of which, as you abide in me, I also abide in you, even as I abide in the Father. So that your life is mine and mine is yours." True abiding consists of two parts: occupying a position into which Christ can come and abide, and abiding in Him so that the soul lets Him take the place of the self to become our life. Like little children who have no cares, we find happiness in trusting and obeying the love that has done everything for us.

To those who thus abide, the promise, "Ask whatsoever ye will," comes as their rightful heritage. It cannot be otherwise. Christ has full possession of them. He dwells in their love, their wills, and their lives. Not only have their wills been given up, Christ has entered them, dwelling and breathing there by His Spirit. These people pray in Him. He prays in them, and the Father always hears Him. What they ask will be done for them.

Beloved fellow-believer! Let us confess that because we do not abide in Christ as He would like us to, the Church is impotent in the face of infidelity, worldliness, and heathendom. In the midst of such enemies, the Lord could make her more than a conqueror. We must believe that He means what He promises, and accept the conviction the confession implies.

But don't be discouraged. The abiding of the branch in the Vine is a life of never-ceasing growth. The abiding (as the Master meant it) is within our

reach, for He lives to give it to us. Let us but be ready to count all things as loss and to say, "What I have attained so far is hardly anything. I want to learn to perceive Christ the same way He perceives me." It is not be occupied so much with the abiding as with Him to Whom the abiding links us and His fullness. Let it be Christ—the whole Christ, in His obedience and humiliation, in His exaltation and power, Whom our soul moves and acts. He Himself will fulfill His promise in us.

As we abide and grow into fuller and fuller abiding, let us exercise our right—the will to enter into God's will. Obeying what that will commands, let us claim what it promises. Let us yield to the teaching of the Holy Spirit. He will show each of us what the will of God is so that we may claim it prayer. And let us be content with nothing less than the personal experience of what Jesus gave when said, "If ye abide in me, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

Lord, teach us to pray.

Beloved Lord! Make Your promise in all simplicity new to men. Teach me to accept it, letting the only limitation on Your holy giving be my own willingness. Lord! Let each word of Your promise be, in a new way, made quick and powerful in soul.

You say, "Abide it? me!" O my Master, my Life my All—I do abide in You. Allow me to grow up in all your fullness. It is not the effort of faith, trying to cling to You and trusting You to protect me; nor my will, obeying You and keeping Your commandments, that alone can satisfy me. Only You Yourself, living in me as You do in the Father, can satisfy me. It is You, my Lord, no longer before me and above me, but united with me, that I need. I trust You for this.

You say, "Ask whatever you will." Lord! I know that a life of complete, deep abiding will renew, sanctify, and strengthen my will in such a way that I will have the desire and the liberty to ask for great things. Lord! Let my will—dead in Your death, living in Your life—be bold and large in its petitions.

You say, "It shall be done." O Jesus! You are the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness. Give me in Yourself the joyous confidence that You will make this promise even more wonderfully true to me than ever before, because it has not entered into the heart of man to conceive what God has prepared for those who love Him. Amen.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Many books and sermons on prayer emphasize the blessing of prayer as a spiritual exercise, even if there is no answer. God's fellowship ought to be more important to us than the gift we ask for. But a careful examination of what Christ said about prayer reveals that He wanted us to think of prayer more as the means to an end. The answer was to be the proof that we and our prayer are acceptable to the Father in heaven. It is not that Christ would have us consider the gifts of higher value than the fellowship and favor of the Father. By no means. But the Father intends the answer to be a token of His favor and of the reality of our fellowship with Him.

Daily answer to prayer is the proof of our spiritual maturity. It shows that we have attained the true abiding in Christ, that our will is truly one with God's will. It also reveals that our faith is strong enough to see and take what God has prepared for us, that the Name of Christ and His nature have taken full possession of us, and that we have been found fit to take a place among those whom God admits to His counsels, according to whose prayer He rules the world. Prayer is very blessed; the answer is more blessed still. It is the response from the Father that our prayer, our faith, and our will are indeed as He would wish them to be.

I make these remarks with the one desire of leading my readers to put together for themselves everything that Christ has said about prayer. Accept the truth that when prayer is what it should be, or rather when we are what we should be, the answer must be expected. It will bring us out from those refuges where we have comforted ourselves with unanswered prayer. It will show us the place of power to which Christ has appointed His Church, that

place which it occupies so little. It will reveal the terrible weakness of our spiritual life as the cause of our not praying boldly in Christ's Name. It will urge us mightily to rise to a life in full union with Christ and in the fullness of the Spirit as the secret of effective prayer. And it will so lead us to realize our destiny: "At that day: Verily, verily I say unto you, If ye shall ask anything of the Father, He will give it you in my Name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be fulfilled." Prayer that is really, spiritually, in union with Jesus is always answered.

Chapter 22^(TOC)

The Word and Prayer

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you"—John 15:7

The vital connection between the Word and prayer is one of the simplest and earliest lessons of the Christian life. As that newly—converted heathen put it: "I pray—I speak to my Father; I read—my Father speaks to me." Before prayer, God's Word strengthens me by giving my faith its justification and its petition. And after prayer, God's Word prepares me by revealing what the Father wants me to ask. In prayer, God's Word brings me the answer, for in it the Spirit allows me to hear the Father's voice.

Prayer is not monologue, but dialogue. Its most essential part is God's voice in response to mine. Listening to God's voice is the secret of the assurance that He will listen to mine. "Incline thine ear and hear," "Give ear to me," and "Hearken to my voice," are words which God speaks to man as well as man to God. His hearkening will depend on ours. My willingness to accept His words will determine the power my words have with Him. What God's words are to me is the test of what He Himself is to me. It shows the uprightness of my desire to meet Him in prayer.

It is this connection between His Word and our prayer that Jesus points to when He says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." The deep importance of this

truth becomes clear if we notice the expression which this one replaces. More than once Jesus had said, "Abide in me and I in you." His abiding in us was the complement and the crown of our abiding in Him. But here, instead of "Ye in me and I in you," He says, "Ye in me and my words in you." The abiding of His words is the equivalent of Himself abiding.

What a view this opens up to us of the place the words of God in Christ are to have in our spiritual lives, especially in our prayer. A man's words reveal himself. In his promises, he gives himself away, binding himself to the one who receives his promises. In his commands, he proclaims his will, seeking to make himself master of those whose obedience he claims, to guide and use them as if they were part of himself. Through our words, spirit holds fellowship with spirit. If a man's words are heard, accepted, held fast, and obeyed, he can impart himself to someone else through them. But with human beings, this can happen only in a limited sense.

God, however, is the infinite Being in Whom everything is life, power, spirit, and truth, in the very deepest meaning of the words. When God reveals Himself in His words, He does indeed give Himself—love and His life, His will and His power to those who receive these words, in a reality passing comprehension. In every promise, He gives us the power to grasp and possess Himself. In every command, He allows us to share His will, His holiness, and His perfection. God's Word gives us God Himself. That Word is nothing less than the Eternal Son, Christ Jesus. Therefore, all of Christ's words are God's words, full of a Divine, quickening life and power. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

Those who study the deaf and mute tell us how much the power of speaking depends on that of hearing, and how the loss of hearing in children is followed by a loss of speaking, too. This is also true in a broader sense: Our

speech is based on what we hear. In the highest sense, this is true of our conversation with God. To offer a prayer—to utter certain wishes and appeal to certain promises—is an easy thing that man can learn with human intelligence. But to pray in the Spirit—to speak words that reach and touch God, affecting and influencing the powers of the unseen world—depends entirely on our hearing God's voice. We must listen to the voice and language that God uses and, through the words of God, receive His thoughts, His mind, and His life into our hearts. The extent to which we listen will determine the extent to which we learn to speak in the voice and the language that God hears. The ear of the learner, wakened morning by morning, prepares him to speak to God. (Isaiah 1:4).

This hearing the voice of God is something more than the thoughtful study of the Word. One can study and gain knowledge of the Word having little real fellowship with the living God. But there is also a reading of the Word, in the very presence of the Father and under the leading of the Spirit, in which the Word comes to us in living power from God Himself. It is to us the very voice of the Father, a real, personal fellowship with Himself. The living voice of God enters the heart, bringing blessing and strength, and awakening the response of a living faith that reaches back to the heart of God.

The power both to obey and believe depends on hearing God's voice this way. The chief thing isn't knowing what God has said we must do, but that God Himself says it to us. Neither the law nor the book nor the knowledge of what is right works obedience. This can be accomplished only by the personal influence of God through His living fellowship. The presence of God Himself as the Promiser, not the knowledge of what He has promised, awakens faith and trust in prayer. It is only in the full presence of God that disobedience and unbelief become impossible.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." In these words, the Savior gives Himself. We must have the words in us taken up into our wills and lives, reproduced in our inner natures and conduct. They must abide in us. Our lives must be one continuous display of the words that fill us. The words reveal Christ inside and our lives reveal Him outside. As the words of Christ enter our very hearts, becoming and influencing our lives, our words will enter His heart and influence Him. My prayer will depend on my life: Whatever God's words are to me and in me will determine what my words will be to God and in God. If I do what God says, God will do what I say.

The Old Testament saints understood this connection between God's words and ours quite well. Their prayer really was a loving response to what they had heard God speak. If the word were a promise, they counted on God to do as He had spoken. "Do as Thou hast said"; "For Thou, Lord, hast spoken it"; "According to Thy promise"; "According to Thy word": In such expressions they showed that what God spoke in promise was the root and the life of what they spoke in prayer. If the word was a command, they simply did as the Lord had spoken: "So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken." Their lives were fellowship with God, the exchange of word and thought. What God spoke they heard and did; what they spoke God heard and did. In each word, He speaks to us, and the whole Christ gives Himself to fulfill it. For each word, He asks no less than that we give the whole man to keep that word and to receive its fulfillment." If my words abide in you." The condition is simple and clear. In His words His will is revealed. As the words abide in me, His will rules me. My will becomes the empty vessel which His will fills, and the willing instrument which His will rules. He fills my inner being. In the exercise of obedience and faith, my will becomes stronger and is brought into deeper inner harmony with Him. Because He can fully trust it to will nothing

but what He wills, He is not afraid to give the promise, "If my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." To all who believe it and act upon it, He will make it literally true. Disciples of Christ! While we have been excusing our unanswered prayers with a fancied submission to God's wisdom and will, the real reason has been that our own feeble lives have been the cause of our feeble prayers! Nothing can make men strong but the word coming from God's mouth. By that we must live. The word of Christ makes us one with Him and fits us spiritually for touching and taking hold of God. We must love and live in that Word, letting it abide in and become part of us. All that is of the world passes away. Whoever does God's will lives forever. Let us yield heart and life to the words of Christ, the words in which He gives Himself, the personal living Savior. His promise will become our rich experience: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

Lord, teach us to pray.

Blessed Lord! I see why my prayer has not been more believing and effective. I was more occupied with my speaking to You than with Your speaking to me. I did not understand that the secret of faith is this: There can be only as much faith as there is of the living Word dwelling in the soul.

Your Word taught me so clearly to be swift to hear and slow to speak, and not to be hasty to say just anything to God. Lord, teach me that it is only when I take Your Word into my life that my words can be taken into Your heart. Teach me that if Your Word is a living power within me, it will be a living power with You, also. Show me that what Your mouth has spoken Your hand will perform.

Lord Jesus! Deliver me from the uncircumcised ear! Give me the opened ear

of the learner, wakened morning by morning to hear the Father's voice. Just as You speak only what You hear from the Father, may my speaking be the echo of Your speaking to me. "When Moses went into the tabernacle to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking unto him from off the mercy seat." Lord, may it be so with me, too. Let my life and character reveal that Your words abide and are seen in me. May this be my preparation for the complete blessing: "Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Amen.

Chapter 23^(TOC)

Obedience: The Path to Power in Prayer

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the father in my name, he may give it you"—John 15:16

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"—James 5:16

The promise of the Father's giving whatsoever we ask is here once again renewed, showing us to whom such wonderful influence in the council chamber of the Most High is to be granted. "I chose you," the Master says, "and appointed you that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain." He then adds, to the end "that whatsoever ye," (the fruit bearing ones) "shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you." This is nothing but a fuller expression of what He meant by the words, "If ye abide in me." He had spoken of the object of this abiding as the bearing of "fruit," "more fruit," and "much fruit." In this, God would be glorified and the mark of discipleship would be seen. He now adds that the reality of the abiding, as seen in fruit abounding and abiding, is the qualification for our praying so as to obtain what we ask. Entire dedication to the fulfillment of our calling is the key to effective prayer and the unlimited blessings of Christ's wonderful prayer-promises.

There are Christians who fear that such a statement is at variance with the

doctrine of free grace. But surely it doesn't disagree with free grace rightly understood or the many express statements of God's blessed Word. Take the words of St. John, "Let us love in deed and truth; hereby shall we assure our heart before Him. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him because we keep His commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in His sight" (1 John 3:18-19, 22). Or take the often—quoted words of James: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). This describes a man of whom, according to the definition of the Holy Spirit, it can be said, "He that doeth righteousness, is righteous even as He is righteous." Mark the spirit of so many of the Psalms, with their confident appeal to the integrity and righteousness of the supplicant. In Psalm 18 David says: "The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me ... I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity. Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness" (Psalm 18:20, 23). See also Psalms 7:3-5; 15:1-2; 17:3, 6; 25:16; 119:121, 153). If we carefully consider these scriptures in the light of the New Testament, we find them in perfect harmony with the explicit teaching of the Savior's parting words: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love"; "Ye are my friends if ye do what I command you." The words are indeed meant literally: "I appointed you that ye should go and bear fruit, that, "then, "whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you."

Let us seek to enter into the spirit of what the Savior teaches us here. There is a danger in our evangelical religion of looking too much at what it offers from one side, as a certain experience obtained in prayer and faith. There is another side which God's Word puts very strongly, that of obedience as the only path to blessing. What we need to realize is that in our relationship to God He is the Infinite Being Who created and redeemed us. The first

sentiment that ought to motivate us is that of subjection, surrender to His supremacy, His glory, His will, and His pleasure. This ought to be the first and uppermost thought of our lives.

The question is not, however, how we are to obtain and enjoy His favor, for in this the main thing may still be self. What this Being in the very nature of things rightfully claims, and is infinitely and unspeakably worthy of, is that His glory and pleasure should be my only object. Surrender to His perfect and blessed will—a life of service and obedience—is the beauty and the charm of heaven. Service and obedience were the thoughts that were uppermost in the mind of the Son when He was on earth. Service and obedience must become the chief objects of our desires and aims, even more so than rest, light, joy, or strength. In them we will find the path to all the higher blessedness that awaits us.

Note what a prominent place the Master gives it, not only in this fifteenth chapter, in connection with the abiding, but in the fourteenth, where He speaks of the indwelling of the Trinity. John 14:15 says: "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and the Spirit will be given to you by the Father. Then verse 21: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." He will have the special love of the Father and the special manifestation of Christ. Verse 23 is one of the highest of all the great and precious promises: "If a man loves me he will keep my words, and the Father and I will come and take up our abode with him." Could words put it more clearly that obedience is the way to the indwelling of the Spirit, to His revealing the Son within us, and to His preparing us to be the abode, the home of the Father? The indwelling of the Trinity is the heritage of those who obey.

Obedience and faith are simply two parts of one act—surrender to God and

His will. As faith strengthens itself in order to be obedient, it is in turn strengthened by obedience. Faith is made perfect by works. Often our efforts to believe are unsuccessful because we don't assume the only position in which a large faith is legitimate or possible—that of entire surrender to the honor and the will of God. The man who is entirely consecrated to God and His will finds the power to claim everything that His God has promised to be for him.

The application of this in the school of prayer is very simple but very solemn. "I chose you," the Master says, "and appointed you that ye should go and bear fruit," much fruit (verses 5, 8), "and that your fruit should abide, "that your life might be one of abiding fruit and abiding fruitfulness, "that" as fruitful branches abiding in me, "whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you. "

How often we've tried to pray an effective prayer for grace to bear fruit and have wondered why the answer didn't come. It was because we were reversing the Master's order. We wanted to have the comfort, the joy, and the strength first, so we could do the work easily and without any feeling of difficulty or self-sacrifice. But He wanted us to do what He said in the obedience of faith, without worrying about whether we felt weak or strong, or whether the work was hard or easy. The path of fruit-bearing leads us to the place and the power of successful prayer.

Obedience is the only path that leads to the glory of God. Obedience doesn't replace faith or supply its shortcomings. But faith's obedience gives access to all the blessings our God has for us. In the Gospel of John, the baptism of the Spirit (John 14:16), the manifestation of the Son (14:21), the indwelling of the Father (14:23), the abiding in Christ's love (15:10), the privilege of His holy friendship (15:14), and the power of effective prayer (15:16), all wait for

the obedient.

Now we know the great reason why we have not had power in faith to pray successfully. Our lives weren't as they should have been. Simple obedience-abiding fruitfulness—was not its chief mark. We whole-heartedly approve of the Divine appointment of men to whom God gives the power to rule the world. At their request, He does what otherwise would not have taken place. Their will guides the path in which God's will is to work. These men must have learned obedience themselves. Their loyalty and submission to authority must be above all suspicion. If we approve the law, that obedience and fruit-bearing are the path to prevailing prayer, we must with shame acknowledge how little our lives have exemplified this.

Let us yield ourselves to take up the appointment the Savior gives us. If we concentrate on our relationship to Him as our Master, we should no longer begin each new day with thoughts of comfort, joy, or blessing. Our first thought should be: "I belong to the Master." Every moment I must act as His property, as a part of Himself, as one who only seeks to know and do His will. I am a servant, a slave of Jesus Christ. Let this be the spirit that animates me. If He says, "No longer do I call you servants, but I have called you friends," let us accept the place of friends, because, "Ye are my friends if ye do the things which I command you."

The one thing He commands us as His branches is to bear fruit. Live to bless others, to testify of the life and the love there is in Jesus. In faith and obedience give your whole life to that which Jesus chose us for and appointed us to—fruit-bearing. Think of His electing us to this, accepting your appointment as coming from Him Who always gives us everything He demands of us. We will grow strong in the confidence that a life of fruit-bearing and abiding is within our reach. And we will understand why this

fruit-bearing alone can be the path to the place of all effective prayer. The man who, in obedience to Christ, proves that he is doing what his Lord wills, will receive whatever he desires from the Father. "Whatsoever we ask we receive, because we keep His commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in His sight."

Lord, teach us to pray.

Blessed Master! Teach me to understand fully what I only partly realize, that only by obeying the will of God can we obtain His promises and use them effectively in our prayers. Show me how bearing fruit perfects the deeper growth of the branch into the Vine, allowing us to experience that perfect union with—God in which we can ask for whatever we want.

O Lord! Reveal to us how with all the hosts of heaven, with all the saints here on earth, and even with Yourself on earth, that obedience to God is the highest privilege. It gives access to oneness with the Father Himself in that which is His highest glory—His all-perfect will. And show us how, if we keep Your commandments and bear fruit according to Your will, our spiritual natures will grow to the full stature of a perfect man, having power to ask and receive anything.

O Lord Jesus! Reveal Yourself to us! Through Your purpose and power, make Your wonderful promises the daily experience of everyone who completely yields himself to You and Your words. Amen.

Chapter 24^(TOC)

The All-Powerful Plea

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do ... If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it ... that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it to you ... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you ... Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive ... At that day ye shall ask in my name"—John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24, 26.

Until now the disciples had not asked in the Name of Christ, nor had He Himself ever used the expression. Here in His parting words, He repeats the word unceasingly in connection with those promises of unlimited meaning: "Whatsoever," "Anything," "What ye will." He wanted to teach them and us that His Name is our only, but also our completely sufficient, plea. The power of prayer and its answer depend on the right use of the Name.

What is a person's name? It is a word or expression in which a person is represented to us. When I mention, or hear a name, it brings to mind the whole man, what I know of him, and also the impression he has made on me. The name of a king includes his honor, his power, and his kingdom. His name is the symbol of his power. And so each name of God embodies and represents some part of the glory of the Unseen One. The Name of Christ is the expression of everything He has done and everything He is and lives to do as our Mediator.

What does it mean to do a thing in the name of another? It is to come with his

power and authority, as his representative and substitute. Using another's name always presupposes a common interest. No one would give another the free use of his name without first being assured that his honor and interests were as safe with that other person as with himself.

What does it mean when Jesus gives us power over His Name—the free use of it—with the assurance that whatever we ask in it will be given to us? The ordinary comparison of one person giving another, on some special occasion, the liberty to ask something in his name, comes altogether short here. Jesus solemnly gives to all His disciples a general and unlimited power to use His Name at all times for everything they desire. He could not do this if He did not know that He could trust us with His interests and that His honor would be safe in our hands.

The free use of someone else's name is always a token of great confidence and close union. Someone who gives his name to another stands aside to let that person act for him. Someone who takes the name of another gives up his own as of no value. When I go in the name of another, I deny myself. I take not only his name, but himself and what he is, instead of myself and what I am.

Such use of a person's name may be the result of a legal union. A merchant leaving his home and business gives his chief clerk a general power by which he can withdraw thousands of dollars in the merchant's name. The clerk does this, not for himself, but only in the interests of the business. Because the merchant knows and trusts him as wholly devoted to his interests and business, he dares put his name and property at his command.

When the Lord Jesus went to heaven, He left His work—the management of His Kingdom on earth in the hands of His servants. He also gave them His

Name to draw all the supplies they needed for the due conduct of His business. Christ's servants have the spiritual power to use the Name of Jesus only insofar as they yield themselves to live only for the interests and the work of the Master. The use of the Name always supposes the surrender of our interests to Him Whom we represent.

Another use of a name may be because of a life union.(In the case of the merchant and his clerk, the union is temporary.) Oneness of life on earth gives oneness of name: A child has the father's name because he has his life. Often the child of a good father is honored or helped by others for the sake of the name he bears. But this would not last long if it were found that it was only a name, and that the father's character wasn't present in it. The name and the character or spirit must be in harmony. When such is the case, the child will have a double claim on the father's friends. The character secures and increases the love and esteem extended at first for the name's sake.

It is the same with Jesus and the believer: We are one; we have one life and one Spirit with Him. For this reason we may proceed in His Name. Our power in using that Name, whether with God, men, or devils, depends on the measure of our spiritual life union with Christ. Our use of His Name rests on the unity of our lives with Him.

The Name and the Spirit of Jesus are one. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name" means "in my nature." With God, things are requested according to their nature. Asking in Christ's Name doesn't mean that at the end of some request we say, "This I ask in the Name of Jesus Christ." It means we are praying according to His nature, which is love that doesn't seek its own will, but only the will of God and the good of all creatures. Such asking is the cry of Christ's own Spirit in our hearts.

The union that gives power to the use of the Name may be the union of love. When a bride whose life has been one of poverty becomes united to the bridegroom, she gives up her own name to be called by his, and has the full right to use it. She purchases in his name, and that name is not refused. This is done because the bridegroom has chosen her for himself, counting on her to care for his interests because they are now one.

The heavenly Bridegroom does nothing less. Having loved us and made us one with Himself, what can He do but give those who bear His Name the right to present it before the Father, or to come with it to Himself for all they need? No one really gives himself up to live in the Name of Jesus without receiving in ever-increasing measure the spiritual capacity to ask for and receive in that Name whatever he desires. My bearing of the name of another shows that I have given up my own name and, with it, my own independent life. But just as surely, it shows I have possession of everything belonging to the name I have taken instead of my own.

The common comparison to a messenger sent to ask in the name of another, or a guilty person using the name of a guardian in his appeal, is defective. We are not praying in the name of someone who is absent. Jesus Himself is with the Father. When we pray to the Father, it must be in Jesus' Name. The Name represents the person. To ask in His Name is to ask in full union of interest, life, and love with Himself, as one who lives in and for Him.

Let the Name of Jesus have undivided supremacy in my heart and life! My faith will grow to the assurance that what I ask for in that Name cannot be refused. The Name and the power of asking go together. When the Name of Jesus has become the power that rules my life, its power in prayer with God will be seen, too.

Everything depends on my own relationship to the Name. The power it has on my life is the power it will have in my prayers. There is more than one expression in Scripture which can make this clear. "Do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus" is the counterpart of "Ask all." To do all and ask all in His Name go together. "We shall walk in the Name of our God" means the power of the Name must rule in the whole life. Only then will it have power in prayer. God looks not to our lips, but to our lives to see what the Name is to us. When Scripture speaks of "men who have given their lives for the Name of the Lord Jesus," or of one "ready to die for the Name of the Lord Jesus," we see what our relationship to the Name must be. When it is everything to me, it will obtain everything for me. If I let it have all I have, it will let me have all it has.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do." Jesus means that promise literally. Christians have sought to limit it because it looked too free. It was hardly safe to trust man so unconditionally. They did not understand that the phrase "in my Name" is its own safeguard. It is a spiritual power which no one can use further than his living and acting in that Name allows.

As we bear the Name before men, we have the power to use it before God. Let us plead for God's Holy Spirit to show us what the Name means, and what the right use of it is. It is through the Spirit that the Name, which is above every name in heaven, will take the place of supremacy in our hearts and lives, too. Disciples of Jesus! Let the lessons of this day go deeply into your hearts. The Master says, "Only pray in my Name; whatsoever ye ask will be given. Heaven is opened to you! The treasures and power of the spiritual world are placed at your disposal to help those around you.

Learn to pray in the Name of Jesus. He says to us as He said to the disciples, "Hitherto ye have not asked in my Name: ask, and ye shall receive." Let each

disciple of Jesus seek to avail himself of the rights of his royal priesthood, to use the power placed at his disposal for his work. Let Christian awake and hear this message: Your prayers can obtain what would otherwise be withheld! They can accomplish what would otherwise remain undone O awake, and use the Name of Jesus to open the treasures of heaven for this perishing world!

Lord, teach us to pray!

Blessed Lord! It seems as if each lesson You give me has such depth of meaning that if I could just learn that one, I would be able to pray properly. Right now I feel as if I only need to pray for one thing: Lord, please teach me what it is to pray in Your Name. Teach me to live and act, to walk and speak, to do everything in the Name of Jesus, so that my prayer cannot be anything else but in that blessed Name, too.

Lord! Teach me to fully grasp the precious promise that whatever I ask in Your name You will do. and the Father will give. I realize that I haven't fully attained, and that I don't completely understand, the wondrous union You mean when You say, "In my Name." Let me hold on to the promise until it fills my heart with the undoubting assurance that I can ask for anything in the Name of Jesus.

O my Lord! Let the Holy Spirit teach me this! You did describe Him as "the Comforter, Whom the Father shall send in My Name. "He knows what it is to be sent from heaven in Your Name, to reveal and to honor the power of that Name in Your servants; and to use that Name alone to glorify You. Lord Jesus! Let Your Spirit dwell in me and fill me! I yield my whole being to His rule and leading. Your Name and Your Spirit are one. Through Him, Your Name will be the strength of my life and my prayer. Then I will be able to

forsake everything for Your Name's sake, speaking to men and to God in Your Name, and proving that this, indeed, is the Name above every name.

Lord Jesus! Please teach me by Your Holy Spirit to pray in Your Name.
Amen.

Chapter 25^(TOC)

The Holy Spirit and Prayer

"And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full"—John 16:23-24

"At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: For the Father himself loveth you"—John 16:26-27

"Praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God"—Jude 20-21

The words of John (1 John 2:12-14) to little children, young men, and fathers suggest the thought that often in the Christian life there are three great stages of experience. The first, that of the new-born child, is filled with the assurance and the joy of forgiveness. The second, the transition stage of struggle and growth in knowledge and strength, is comparable to young men growing strong. God's Word is doing its work in them and giving them victory over the evil one. The final stage of maturity and ripeness is that of the fathers, who have entered deeply into the knowledge and fellowship of the Eternal One.

In Christ's teaching on prayer, three similar stages in prayerlife are apparent. The Sermon on the Mount describes the initial stage. All of His teaching is comprised in one word: Father. Pray to your Father; your Father sees, hears, knows, and will reward. How much more than any earthly father He is! Simply be childlike and trustful.

Then comes something like a transition stage of conflict and conquest. Words like these refer to it: "This sort goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" "Shall not God avenge His own elect who cry day and night unto Him?"

Finally, we have in the parting words a higher stage: The children have become men. They are now the Master's friends, from whom He has no secrets, and to whom He says, "All things that I heard from my Father I made known unto you." In the frequently repeated "whatsoever ye will," He hands them the keys of the Kingdom. Now the time has come for the power of prayer in His Name to be proved.

The contrast between this final stage and the previous preparatory ones is marked most distinctly in the words: "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my Name"; "At that day ye shall ask in my Name." "At that day" means the day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The great work Christ was to do on the cross—the mighty power and the complete victory to be manifested in His resurrection and ascension would allow the glory of God to come down from heaven as never before, to dwell in men. The Spirit of the glorified Jesus was to come and be the life of His disciples. And one of the signs of that wonderful, new flow of the Spirit was to be a power in prayer that was up to that time unknown. Prayer in the Name of Jesus—asking for and obtaining everything—is to be the evidence of the reality of the Spirit's indwelling.

The coming of the Holy Spirit indeed began a new epoch in the prayer world. To understand this, we must remember Who He is, what His work is, and why His not being given until Jesus was glorified is significant. It is in the Spirit that God exists, for He is Spirit. It is in the Spirit that the Son was begotten of the Father, because in the fellowship of the Spirit, the Father and the Son are one. The Father's prerogative is eternal, continuous giving to the Son. The Son's right and blessedness is to ask and receive eternally. Through

the Spirit, this communion of life and love is maintained. This has been true from all eternity.

It is especially true now, when the Son as Mediator lives to pray. The great work which Jesus began on earth of reconciling God and man in His own body, He carries on in heaven. To accomplish this, He took the conflict between God's righteousness and our sin into His own person. On the cross, He ended the struggle once and for all in His own body. Then He ascended to heaven, where He carries out the deliverance He obtained and manifests His victory in each member of His Body. This is why He lives to pray. In His unceasing intercession, He places Himself in living fellowship with the unceasing prayer of His redeemed ones. Or rather, it is His unceasing intercession which shows itself in their prayers, giving them a power they never had before.

He does this through the Holy Spirit. This Spirit of the glorified Jesus was not manifested and could not be until Jesus had been glorified (John 7:39). This gift of the Father was something distinctively new, entirely different from what the Old Testament saints had known. The work that the blood effected in heaven when Christ entered within the veil was totally true and new. The redemption of human nature into fellowship with His resurrection power and His glory was intensely real. The taking up of our humanity through Christ into the life of the triune God was an event of such inconceivable significance, that the Holy Spirit was indeed no longer only what He had been in the Old Testament.

That "the Holy Spirit was not yet, for Christ was not yet glorified" was literally true. The Holy Spirit had come from Christ's exalted humanity to testify in our hearts of what Christ had accomplished. Just as Jesus, after having come to earth as a man, returned to heaven with power He didn't have

before, so the Holy Spirit came to us with a new life which He hadn't had before. He came to us with that new life—as the Spirit of the glorified Jesus. Under the Old Testament He was invoked as the Spirit of God. At Pentecost He descended as the Spirit of the glorified Jesus, bringing down and communicating to us the full fruit and power of the accomplished redemption.

Christ's continuing intercession maintains the effectiveness and application of His redemption. The Holy Spirit descending from Christ to us draws us up into the great stream of His ascending prayers. The Spirit prays for us without words in the depths of a heart where even thoughts are at times formless. He takes us up into the wonderful flow of the life of the triune God. Through the Spirit, Christ's prayers become ours, and ours are made His. We ask for what we desire, and it is given to us. We then understand from experience, "Hitherto ye have not asked in my Name. At that day ye shall ask in my Name."

Brother! What we need in order to pray in the Name of Christ to ask that we may receive that our joy may be full—is the baptism of this Holy Spirit. This is more than the Spirit of God under the Old Testament. This is more than the Spirit of conversion and regeneration the disciples had before Pentecost. This is more than the Spirit with a portion of Christ's influence and power. This is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the glorified Jesus in His exaltation and power, coming to us as the Spirit of the indwelling Jesus, revealing the Son and the Father within us (John 14:16-23). This Spirit cannot simply be the Spirit of our hours of prayer. It must be the Spirit of our whole life and walk, glorifying Jesus in us by revealing the completeness of His work and making us wholly one with Him and like Him. Then we can pray in His Name, because we are in very deed one with Him. Then we have that immediate

access to the Father of which Jesus says, "I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you" (John 16:26).

Oh! We need to understand and believe that to be filled with the Spirit of the Glorified One is the one need of God's believing people. Then we will be able "with all prayer and supplication to be praying at all seasons in the Spirit," and "praying in the Holy Ghost, to keep ourselves in the love of God." "At that day ye shall ask in my Name."

Once again, we learn this lesson: What our prayer achieves depends on what we are and what our lives are. Living in the Name of Christ is the secret of praying in the Name of Christ; living in the Spirit is necessary for praying in the Spirit. Abiding in Christ gives the right and power to ask for what we desire. The extent of our abiding is equivalent to our power in prayer. The Spirit dwelling within us prays, not always in words and thoughts, but in a breathing and a being that is deeper than utterance. There is as much real prayer in us as there is of Christ's Spirit. Let our lives be full of Christ and full of His Spirit, so that the wonderfully unlimited promises to our prayers will no longer appear strange. "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my Name. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. At that day ye shall ask in my Name. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, He will give it you."

Lord, teach us to pray.

O my God! In holy awe I bow before You, the Three in One. Again I see how the mystery of prayer is the mystery of the Holy Trinity. I adore the Father Who always hears. I adore the Son Who lives eternally to pray. And I love the Holy Spirit Who comes from the Father and the Son, lifting us up into the fellowship of that blessed, never-ceasing asking and receiving. I bow, my

God, in adoring worship before the infinite power which, through the Holy Spirit, takes us and our prayers into Your Divine life and its fellowship of love.

O my blessed Lord Jesus! Teach me to understand this lesson: The indwelling Spirit streaming from You and uniting us to You is the Spirit of prayer. Teach me how, as an empty, wholly consecrated vessel, to yield myself to His being my life. Teach me to honor Him and to trust Him, as a living Person, to lead my life and my prayer. Teach me especially in prayer to wait in holy silence, giving Him time to breathe His unutterable intercession within me. And teach me that through Him it is possible to pray without ceasing and to pray without failing, because He makes me a partaker of the never-ceasing and never-failing intercession in which You appear before the Father.

O Lord! Fulfill in me Your promise, "At that day ye shall ask in my Name. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, that will He give." Amen.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Prayer has often been compared to breathing. We have to carry out the comparison fully to see how wonderful the place is which the Holy Spirit occupies. With every breath, we expel impure air which would soon cause our death, and inhale fresh air to which we owe our life. In confession we release our sins, and in prayer we release the needs and desires of our hearts. And we inhale the fresh air of the promises, the love, and the life of God in Christ. We do this through the Holy Spirit, Who is the breath of our life.

He is also the breath of God. The Father breathes Him into us to unite Himself with our life. Just as every expiration is followed by the inhaling of the next breath, so God inhales His breath, and the Spirit returns to Him laden with the desires and needs of our hearts.

Thus the Holy Spirit is the breath of the life of God and the breath of the new life in us. As God breathes Him out, we receive Him in answer to prayer: as we breathe Him back again, He rises to God carrying our petitions. It is through the Holy Spirit that the Father and the Son are one, and that the intercession of the Son reaches the Father. He is our Spirit of prayer. True prayer is the living experience of the truth of the Holy Trinity. The Spirit's breathing, the Son's intercession, and the Father's will become one in us.

Chapter 26^(TOC)

Christ the Intercessor

"But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not"—Luke 22:32

"I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you"—John 16:26

"He ever liveth to make intercession for them"—Hebrews 7:25

All growth in the spiritual life is connected with clearer insight into what Jesus is to us. The more I realize that Christ must be everything to me and in me, that everything in Christ is indeed for me, the more I learn to live the real life of faith. This life dies to self and lives wholly in Christ. The Christian life is no longer a vain struggle to live right, but a resting in Christ to find strength in Him as life. He helps us fight and gain the victory of faith!

This is especially true of the life of prayer. It, too, comes under the law of faith alone, and is seen in the light of the fullness and completeness there is in Jesus. The believer understands that prayer is no longer a matter of strain or anxious care, but an experience of what Christ will do for him and in him. It is a participation in the life of Christ, which is the same on earth as in heaven, always ascending to the Father as prayer. So he begins to pray. Such a believer not only trusts the merits of Jesus, or His intercession, by which our unworthy prayers are made acceptable: He also trusts in that near and close union through which He prays in us and we in Him. Having Him within us, we abide in Him and He in us through the Holy Spirit perfecting our union with Him, so that we ourselves can come directly to the Father in His Name.

The whole of salvation is Christ Himself: He has given Himself to us. He

Himself lives in us. Because He prays, we pray, too. Just like the disciples, when they saw Jesus praying and asked Him to make them partakers of what He knew of prayer, we know that He makes us participate with Himself in the life of prayer. He is now our Intercessor on the throne.

This comes out quite clearly in the last night of His life. In His high-priestly prayer (John 17), He shows us how and what He has to pray to the Father, and what He will pray when He ascends to heaven. He had in His parting address repeatedly connected His going to the Father with their new life of prayer. The two would be ultimately connected. His entrance on the work of His eternal intercession would be the commencement and the power of their new prayer-life in His Name. It is the sight of Jesus in His intercession that gives us power to pray in His Name. All right and power of prayer is Christ's; He makes us share in His intercession.

To understand this, think first of His intercession. He lives to intercede. The work of Christ on earth as Priest was just a beginning. As Aaron, who offered the blood sacrifice, Jesus shed His blood. As Melchizedek, He now lives within the veil to continue His work for the power of the eternal life.

"It is Christ that died: yea rather, who is even at the right hand of God, who maketh intercession for us." That intercession is an intense reality—a work that is absolutely necessary—and without which the continued application of redemption cannot take place. Through the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus, the wondrous reconciliation took place, and man became partaker of the Divine life and blessedness.

But the real, personal use of this reconciliation cannot take place without the unceasing exercise of His Divine power by the Head in heaven. In all conversion and sanctification, in every victory over sin and the world, there is

a real exercise of Christ's power. This exercise takes place only through His prayer: He asks of the Father and receives from the Father. "He is able to save them to the uttermost because He ever liveth to make intercession" (Hebrews 7:25). He receives every need of His people in intercession, extending to them what the Godhead has to give. His mediation on the throne is as real and indispensable as it was on the cross. Nothing takes place without Christ's intercession. It engages all His time and all His power. It is His unceasing occupation at the right hand of the Father.

We participate, not only in the benefits of HIS work, but in the work itself. This is because we are His Body. The Head and the members are one: "The head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of thee" (1 Corinthians 12:21). We share with Jesus everything He is and has. "The glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them" (John 17:22). We are partakers of His life, His righteousness, and His work. We share His intercession, too. He cannot do it without us.

"Christ is our life"; "No longer I, but Christ liveth in me." The life in Him and in us is identical; it is one and the same. His life in heaven is a life of continuous prayer. When it descends and takes possession of us, it does not lose its character. It becomes a life of continuous prayer in us, too. It is a life that without ceasing asks and receives from God.

This is not as if there were two separate currents of prayer rising upwards—one from Him and one from His people. A substantial life—union is also a prayer-union. What He prays passes through us, and what we pray passes through Him. He is the angel with the golden censer. "Unto Him there was given much incense"—the secret of acceptable prayer—"that He should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar" (Revelation 8:3). We live and abide in Him, the Interceding One.

The Only-begotten is the only One Who has the right to pray. To Him alone it was said, "Ask, and it shall be given Thee." Just as the fullness for all things dwells in Him, a true fullness in prayer dwells in Him, too. He alone has the power of prayer. Growth of the spiritual life consists of a deeper belief that all treasures are in Him, and that we, too, are in Him. We receive each moment what we possess in Him. Prayer-life is the same. Our faith in the intercession of Jesus must not only be in His praying for us when we do not or cannot pray. As the Author of our life and our faith, He draws us to pray in unison with Himself. Our prayer must be a work of faith in the sense that as we know that Jesus communicates His whole life in us, He also breathes our praying into us.

To many a believer, it was a new epoch in his spiritual life when it was revealed to him how truly and entirely Christ was his life, standing responsible for his remaining faithful and obedient. It was then, that he really began to live a life of faith. No less blessed will be the discovery that Christ is responsible for our prayer-life, too. As the center and embodiment of all prayer, it is communicated by Him through the Holy Spirit to His people.

"He ever liveth to make intercession" as the Head of the Body. He is the Leader in that new and living way which He has opened up as the Author and the Perfecter of our faith. He provides everything for the life of His redeemed ones by giving His own life in them. He cares for their life of prayer by taking them up into His heavenly prayer-life, giving and maintaining His prayer-life within them. "I have prayed for thee," not to render thy faith needless, but "that thy faith fail not." Our faith and prayer of faith is rooted in His. If we pray with and in the eternal Intercessor, abiding in Him, "ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

The thought of our fellowship in the intercession of Jesus reminds us of what

He has taught us more than once before. All these wonderful prayer-promises have the glory of God, in the manifestation of His Kingdom and the salvation of sinners, as their aim. As long as we pray chiefly for ourselves, the promises of the last night must remain a sealed book to us. The promises are given to the fruit-bearing branches of the Vine, to disciples sent into the world to live for perishing men as the Father sent Him, to His faithful servants and intimate friends who take up the work He leaves behind. Like their Lord, they have become seed-corn, losing their lives to multiply them.

Let us each find out what our work is, and which souls are entrusted to our special prayers. Let us make our intercession for them our life of fellowship with God. We will not only discover the truth to the promises of power in prayer. We will begin to realize how our abiding in Christ and His abiding in us makes us share in His own joy of blessing and saving men.

O most wonderful intercession of our Blessed Lord Jesus! We not only owe everything to that intercession, but in it we are taken up as active partners and fellow-workers! Now we understand what it is to pray in the Name of Jesus, and why it has such power. To pray in His Name, in His Spirit, in Himself, and in perfect union with Him is the active and effective intercession of Christ Jesus. When will we ever be wholly taken up into it?

Lord, teach us to pray!

Blessed Lord! In lowly adoration I again bow before You. All of Your work of redemption has now passed into prayer. You are completely occupied with praying, to maintain and dispense what You purchased with Your blood. You live to pray. And because we abide in You, we have direct access to the Father. Our lives can be lives of unceasing prayer, and the answer to our prayer is certain.

Blessed Lord! You have invited Your people to be Your fellow-workers in a life of prayer. You have united Yourself with Your people. As Your Body, they share the ministry of intercession with You. Only through this ministry can the world be filled with the fruit of Your redemption and the glory of the Father. With more liberty than ever I come to You, my Lord, and plead with You to teach me to pray. Your life is prayer; Your life is mine. Lord! Teach me to pray in You and like You.

And, O my Lord! Let me know, just as You promised Your disciples, that You are in the Father, I am in You, and You are in me. Let the uniting power of the Holy Spirit make my whole life an abiding in You and in Your intercession. May my prayer be its echo, so that the Father hears me in You and You in me. Lord Jesus! In everything, let Your mind be in me! In everything, let my life be in You! In this way, I will be prepared to be the channel, Through which Your intercession pours its blessing on the world. Amen.

Chapter 27^(TOC)

Christ the High Priest

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am"—John 17:24

In His parting address, Jesus gives His disciples the full revelation of what the new life was to be when the Kingdom of God had come in power. They were to find their calling and their blessedness in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, in union with Jesus, the heavenly Vine, and in their witnessing and suffering for Him. As He described their future life, the Lord had repeatedly given the most unlimited promises as to the power their prayers might have.

Now in closing, He Himself proceeds to pray. To let His disciples have the joy Of knowing what His intercession for them in heaven as their High Priest will be, He gives them this precious legacy of His prayer to the Father. He does this because, as priests, they are to share in His work of intercession, and they must know how to perform this holy work.

In the teaching of our Lord on this last night (John, chapter 17), we recognize that these astonishing prayer-promises have not been given for our benefit, but in the interest of the Lord and His Kingdom. Only from the Lord Himself can we learn what prayer in His Name is to be and what it can obtain. To pray in His Name is to pray in perfect unity with Himself. The High-Priestly prayer will teach everyone that prayer in the Name of Jesus may ask for and expect everything. This prayer is ordinarily divided into three parts. Our Lord

first prays for Himself (verses 1-5), then for His disciples (verses 6-19), and last for all the believing people of all ages (verses 20-26). The follower of Jesus who gives himself to the work of intercession, and who would like to know how much of a blessing he can pray down upon his circle in the Name of Jesus, should in all humility let himself be led of the Spirit to study this wonderful prayer as one of the most important lessons of the school of prayer.

First of all, Jesus prays for Himself, for His being glorified, so that He may glorify the Father. "Father! Glorify Thy Son. And now, Father, glorify Me." He presents reasons for His praying this way. A holy covenant was concluded between the Father and the Son in heaven. The Father promised Him power over all flesh as the reward for His work. Now Jesus had done the work, He had glorified the Father, and His one purpose was to further glorify Him. With the utmost boldness He asks the Father to glorify Him, so that He may now be and do for His people everything He has undertaken.

Disciple of Jesus! Here you have the first lesson in your work of priestly intercession, to be learned from the example of your great High Priest. To pray in the Name of Jesus is to pray in unity and in sympathy with Him. The Son began His prayer by clarifying His relationship to the Father, speaking of His work and obedience and His desire to see the Father glorified. You should pray like this. Draw near to the Father in Christ. Plead His finished work. Say that you are one with it, that you trust it, and live in it. Say that you, too, have given yourself to finish the work the Father has given you to do, and to live alone for His glory. Then ask confidently that the Son may be glorified in you.

This is praying in the Name, in the very words, and in the Spirit of Jesus, in union with Jesus Himself. Such prayer has power. If with Jesus you glorify

the Father, the Father will glorify Jesus by doing what you ask in His Name. It is only when your own personal relationship, like Christ's, is clear with God—when you are glorifying Him and seeking everything for His glory—that, like Christ, you will have power to intercede for those around you.

Our Lord next prays for the circle of His disciples. He speaks of them as those whom the Father has given Him. Their distinguishing characteristic is that they have received Christ's Word. He says He is now sending them into the world in His place, just as the Father had sent Him. He asks two things for them: that the Father would keep them from the evil one, and that He would sanctify them through His Word.

Just like the Lord, each believing intercessor has his own immediate circle for whom he prays first. Parents have their children, teachers their pupils, pastors their flocks, and all believers have those whose care lies on their hearts. It is of great consequence that intercession should be personal, pointed, and definite. Our first prayer must always be that they receive the Word.

But this prayer will not work unless we say to the Lord, "I have given them Your Word." This gives us liberty and power in intercession for souls. Don't just pray for them, but speak to them. When they have received the Word, pray for their being kept from the evil one and for their being sanctified through that Word. Instead of being hopeless or judging, or giving up on those who fall, let us pray, "Father! Keep them in Your Name! Sanctify them through Your truth!" Prayer in the Name of Jesus accomplishes much: "What ye will shall be done unto you."

Next our Lord prays for a still wider circle. "I pray not only for these, but for them who through their word shall believe." His priestly heart enlarges itself to embrace all places and all time. He prays that everyone who belongs to

Him may everywhere be one, as God's proof to the world of the divinity of His mission. He then prays that they may always be with Him in His glory. Until then, He asks "that the love wherewith Thou last loved me may be in them, and I in them."

The disciple of Jesus who has first proved the power of prayer in his own circle cannot confine himself within its limits. He then prays for the universal Church and its different branches. He prays especially for the unity of the Spirit and of love. He prays for its being one in Christ, as a witness to the world that Christ, Who has made love triumph over selfishness and separation, is indeed the Son of God sent from heaven. Every believer ought to pray that the unity of the Church, not in external organizations, but in spirit and in truth, is manifested.

Jesus says, "Father! I will (or I desire)." Based on His right as Son, the Father's promise to Him, and His finished work, He can do so. The Father had said to Him, "Ask of me, and I will give Thee." He simply availed Himself of the Father's promise. Jesus has given us a similar promise: "Whatsoever ye will shall be done unto you." He asks me in His Name to say what I will, what I desire. Abiding in Him, in a living union with Him in which man is nothing and Christ is everything, the believer has the liberty to take up that word of His High Priest. In answer to the question, "What wilt thou?" to say, "Father! I will all that You have promised."

This is nothing but true faith. It honors God that I have such confidence in saying what I desire is indeed acceptable to Him. At first sight, our hearts shrink from the expression. We feel neither the liberty nor the power to speak in such a manner. But grace will most assuredly be given to each one who loses his will in his Lord's. Whoever gives up his will entirely will find it again renewed and strengthened with a Divine strength.

"Father! I will." This is the keynote of the everlasting, ever-active, all—powerful intercession of our Lord in heaven. It is only in union with Him that our prayer is effective and accomplishes much. If we abide in Him, living, walking, and doing all things in His Name; if we take each separate petition, tested and touched by His Word and Spirit, and cast it into the mighty stream of intercession that goes up from Him to be presented before the Father; then we will have the full confidence that we receive what we ask for. The cry "Father! I will "will be breathed into us by the Spirit Himself. We will lose ourselves in Him and become nothing, finding that in our impotence we have power to succeed.

Disciples of Jesus! You are called to be like your Lord in His priestly intercession! When will we awaken to the glory of our destiny to pray to God for perishing men and be answered? When will we shake off the sloth that clothes itself in the pretense of humility and yield ourselves wholly to God's Spirit, that He might fill our wills with light and power to know, to take, and to possess everything that our God is waiting to give?

Lord, teach us to pray.

O my Blessed High Priest! Who am I that You should invite me to share Your power of intercession? And why, O my Lord, am I so slow of heart to understand, believe, and exercise this wonderful privilege to which You have redeemed Your people? O Lord! Give me Your grace, that my life's work may become praying without ceasing, to draw down the blessing of heaven on all my surroundings on earth.

Blessed Lord! I come now to accept my calling, for which I will give up everything and follow You. Into Your hands I will believingly yield my whole being. Form, train, and inspire me to be one of Your prayer force,

those who watch and strive in prayer, who have power and victory. Take possession of my heart, and fill it with the desire to glorify God in the gathering, sanctification, and union of those whom the Father has given You. Take my mind and give me wisdom to know when prayer can bring a blessing. Take me wholly and prepare me as You would a priest, to stand always before God and to bless His Name.

Blessed Lord! Now and through all my spiritual life, let me want everything for You, and nothing for myself. Let it be my experience that the person who has and asks for nothing for himself, receives everything, including the wonderful grace of sharing Your everlasting ministry of intercession. Amen.

Chapter 28^(TOC)

Christ the Sacrifice

"And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt"—Mark 14:36

What a contrast within the space of a few hours! What a transition from the quiet elevation of that, "He lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father! I will," to that falling on the ground and crying in agony, "My Father! not what I will." In the one we see the High Priest within the veil in His all powerful intercession; in the other, the sacrifice on the altar opening the way through the rent veil. The High-Priestly "Father! I will" precedes the sacrificial "Father! not what I will," but this was only to show what the intercession would be once the sacrifice was brought. The prayer before the throne, "Father! I will," had its origin and its power in the prayer at the altar, "Father! not what I will." From the entire surrender of His will in Gethsemane, the High Priest on the throne has the power to ask what He will, and the right to make His people share that power, asking what they will.

For everyone who wants to learn to pray in the school of Jesus, this Gethsemane lesson is one of the most sacred and precious. To a superficial scholar, it may appear to take away the courage to pray in faith. If even the earnest supplication of the Son was not heard, if even He had to say, "Not what I will!" how much more we must need to say it! Thus it appears impossible that the promises which the Lord had given only a few hours previously, "Whatsoever ye shall ask," "Whatsoever ye will," could have

been meant literally.

A deeper insight into the meaning of Gethsemane would teach us the sure way to the assurance of an answer to our prayers. Gaze in reverent and adoring wonder on this great sight: God's Son praying through His tears, and not obtaining what He asks. He Himself is our Teacher and will open up to us the mystery of His holy sacrifice, as revealed in this wondrous prayer.

To understand the prayer, let us note the infinite difference between what our Lord prayed earlier as royal High Priest, and what He here prays in His weakness. There He prayed to glorify the Father and to glorify Himself and His people as the fulfillment of distinct promises that had been given to Him. He asked what He knew would be according to the Word and the will of the Father. He could boldly say, "Father! I will."

Here He prays for something in regard to which the Father's will is not yet clear to Him. As far as He knows, it is the Father's will that He should drink the cup. He had told His disciples of the cup He must drink. A little later He would again say, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" It was for this He had come to this earth. But in the unutterable agony of soul that gripped Him as the power of darkness overcame Him, He began to taste the first drops of death—the wrath of God against sin. His human nature, as it shuddered in the presence of the awful reality of being made a curse, gave utterance in this cry of anguish. Its desire was that, if God's purpose could be accomplished without it, He might be spared the awful cup: "Let this cup pass from me." That desire was the evidence of the intense reality of His humanity.

The "Not as I will" kept that desire from being sinful. He pleadingly cries, "All things are possible with Thee," and returns again to still more earnest

prayer that the cup may be removed. "Not what I will," repeated three times, constitutes the very essence and worth of His sacrifice. He had asked for something of which He could not say, "I know it is Thy will." He had pleaded God's power and love, and had then withdrawn his plea in His final, "Thy will be done." The prayer that the cup should pass away could not be answered. The prayer of submission that God's will be done was heard and gloriously answered in His victory first over the fear, and then over the power of death.

In this denial of His will, this complete surrender of His will to the will of the Father, Christ's obedience reached its highest perfection. From the sacrifice of the will in Gethsemane, the sacrifice of the life on Calvary derives its value. It is here, as Scripture says, that He learned obedience and became the Author of everlasting salvation to everyone who obeys Him. Because in that prayer He became obedient until death—the death of the cross—God exalted Him highly and gave Him the power to ask what He will. It was in that "Father! not what I will," that He obtained the power for the "Father! I will." By Christ's submittal in Gethsemane, He secured for His people the right to say to them, "Ask whatsoever ye will."

Let us look at the deep mysteries that Gethsemane offers. First, the Father offers His Well—beloved the cup of wrath. Second, the Son, Who is always so obedient, shrinks back and implores that He may not have to drink it. Third, the Father does not grant the Son His request, but still gives the cup. And last, the Son yields His will, is content that His will be not done, and goes out to Calvary to drink the cup. O Gethsemane! In you I see how my Lord could give me such unlimited assurance of an answer to my prayers. He won it for me by His consent to have His petition unanswered.

This is in harmony with the whole scheme of redemption. Our Lord always

wins for us the opposite of what He suffered. He was bound so that we could go free. He was made sin so that we could become the righteousness of God. He died so that we could live. He bore God's curse so that God's blessing would be ours. He endured God's not answering His prayer, so that our prayers could find an answer. He said, "Not as I will, "so that He could say to us, "If ye abide in me, ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

"If ye abide in me": Here in Gethsemane the word acquires new force and depth. Christ is our Head, Who stands in our place and bears what we would otherwise have had to bear forever. We deserved that God should turn a deaf ear to us and never listen to our cries. Christ came and suffered for us. He suffered what we had merited. For our sins, He suffered beneath the burden of that unanswered prayer. But now His suffering succeeds for me. What He has borne is taken away from me. His merit has won for me the answer to every prayer, if I abide in Him.

Yes, in Him, as He bows there in Gethsemane, I must abide. As my Head, He not only once suffered for me, but He always lives in me, breathing and working His own nature in me. The Spirit through which He offered Himself to God is the Spirit that dwells in me, too. He makes me a partaker of the very same obedience and the sacrifice of the will to God. That Spirit teaches me to yield my will entirely to the will of the Father, to give it up even unto death. He teaches me to distrust whatever is of my own mind, thought, and will, even though it may not be directly sinful. He opens my ear to wait in great gentleness and teachableness of soul for what the Father day by day has to speak and to teach. He shows me how union with God's will (and the love of it) is union with God Himself. Entire surrender to God's will is the Father's claim, the Son's example, and the true blessedness of the soul.

The Spirit leads my will into the fellowship of Christ's death and resurrection.

My will dies in Him, and in Him is made alive again. He breathes into it a holy insight into God's perfect will, a holy joy in yielding itself to be an instrument of that will, and a holy liberty and power to lay hold of God's will to answer prayer. With my whole will, I learn to live for the interests of God and His Kingdom and to exercise the power of that will—crucified but risen again—in nature and in prayer, on earth and in heaven, with men and with God.

The more deeply I enter into the "Father! not what I will" of Gethsemane, and into Him Who said it, the fuller is my spiritual access to the power of His "Father! I will." The soul experiences that the will has become nothing in order that God's will may be everything. It is now inspired with a Divine strength to really will what God wills, and to claim what has been promised to it in the Name of Christ.

Listen to Christ in Gethsemane as He calls, "If ye abide in me, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Be of one mind and spirit with Him in His giving up everything to God's will; live like Him in obedience and surrender to the Father. This is abiding in Him—the secret of power in prayer.

Lord, teach us to pray

Blessed Lord Jesus! Gethsemane was the school where You learned to pray and to obey. It is still Your school, where You lead all Your disciples who wish to learn to obey and to pray just like You Lord! Teach me there to pray, in the faith that You have atoned for and conquered our self-will and can indeed give us grace to pray like you.

O Lamb of God! I want to follow You to Gethsemane! There I want to become one with You and abide in You, as You to the very death yield Your

will to the Father. With You, through You, and in You, I yield my will in absolute and entire surrender to the will of the Father. Conscious of my own weakness and the secret power with which self-will would assert itself and again take its place on the throne, I claim in faith the power of Your victory. You have triumphed over it and delivered me from it. In Your death, I will daily live. In Your life, I will daily die. Abiding in You, may my will, through the power of Your eternal Spirit, become a finely tuned instrument which yields to every touch of the will of my God. With my whole soul, I say with You and in You. "Father! not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

Blessed Lord! Open my heart, and the hearts of all Your people, to fully take in the glory of the truth: That a will, given up to God, is a will God accepts for use in His service, to desire, determine, and will what is according to God's will. Let mine be a will which, by the power of the Holy Spirit, exercises its royal prerogative in prayer. Let it loose and bind in heaven and on earth, asking whatever it chooses, and saying it will be done.

O Lord Jesus! Teach me to pray. Amen.

Chapter 29^(TOC)

Our Boldness in Prayer

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him"—1 John 5:14-15

One of the greatest hindrances to believing prayer is undoubtedly this: Many don't know if what they ask is according to the will of God. As long as they are in doubt on this point, they cannot have the boldness to ask in the assurance that they will certainly receive. They soon begin to think that, once they have made known their requests and receive no answer, it is best to leave it to God to do according to His good pleasure. The words of John, "If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us," as they understand them, make certainty as to an answer to prayer impossible, because they cannot be sure of what the will of God really may be. They think of God's will as His hidden counsel: How can man fathom the purpose of a God Who is wise in all things?

This is the very opposite of John's purpose writing this. He wanted to stir boldness and confidence in us, until we had the full assurance of faith in prayer. He says that we should have the boldness to the Father that we know we are asking according to His will, and we know that He hears us. With such boldness, He will hear us no matter what we ask for, as long as it is according to His will. In faith we should know that we have the answer. And

even as we are praying, we should be able to receive what we have asked.

John supposes that when we pray, we first find if our prayers are according to the will of God. They may be according to God's will, and yet not answered at once, or without the persevering prayer of faith. It is to give us courage to persevere and to be strong in faith that He tells us we can have boldness or confidence in prayer, because if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. It is evident that if we are uncertain whether our petitions are according to His will, we cannot have the comfort of His promise, "We know that we have the petitions which we have asked of Him."

But this is just the difficulty. More than one believer says, "I do not know if what I desire is according to the will of God. God's will is the purpose of His infinite wisdom. It is impossible for me to know whether He considers something else better for me than what I desire. He may have reasons for holding what I asked." Everyone should understand that with such thoughts the prayer of faith becomes an impossibility. There may still be a prayer of submission or of trust in God's wisdom. But there cannot be a prayer of faith.

The great mistake here is that God's children do not really believe that it is possible to know God's will. Or if they believe this, they do not take the time and trouble to find it out. What we need is to see clearly how the Father leads His waiting, teachable child to know that his petition is according to His will. Through God's holy Word—taken up and kept in the heart, the life, and the will—and through God's Holy Spirit accepted in His dwelling and leading we will learn to know that our petitions are according to His will.

First, let us consider the Word. There is a secret will of God, with which we often fear that our prayers may be at variance. But this is not the will of God that we should be concerned with in our prayers. His will as revealed in His

Word should be our concern. Our notions of a secret will that makes decrees, rendering the answers to our prayers impossible, are erroneous. Childlike faith in what He is willing to do for His children simply accepts the Father's assurance that it is His will to hear prayer and to do what faith in His Word desires and accepts. In the Word, the Father has revealed in general promises the great principles of His will with His people. The child has to take the promise and apply it to the special circumstances in His life to which it has reference. Whatever he asks within the limits of that revealed will, he may confidently expect, knowing it to be according to the will of God.

In His Word, God has given us the revelation of His will. He shows us His plans for us, His people, and for the world. With the most precious promises of grace and power, He carries out these plans through His people. As faith becomes strong and bold enough to claim the fulfillment of the general promise in the special case, we may have the assurance that our prayers are heard, because they are according to God's will. Take the words of John the verse following our text as an illustration: "If any man sees his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and God will give him life." This is the general promise. The believer who pleads on the grounds of this promise, prays according to the will of God, and John wants him to feel the boldness to know that he has the petition for which he asks.

God's will is something spiritual and must be spiritually discerned. It is not a matter of logic that we can argue about. Not every Christian has the same gift or calling. While the general will revealed in the promises is the same for everyone, each person has a specific, individual role to fulfill in God's purpose. The wisdom of the saints is in knowing the specific will of God according to the measure of grace given us, and to ask in prayer just what God has prepared and made possible for each. The Holy Spirit dwells in us to

communicate this wisdom. The personal application of the general promises of the Word to our specific personal needs is given to us by the leading of the Holy Spirit.

It is this union of the teaching of the Word and the Spirit that many do not understand. This causes a twofold difficulty in knowing what God's will may be. Some seek the will of God in an inner feeling or conviction, and expect the Spirit to lead them without the Word. Others seek it in the Word, without the living leading of the Holy Spirit. The two must be united. Only in the Word and in the Spirit can we know the will of God and learn to pray according to it. In the heart, the Word and Spirit must meet. Only by indwelling can we experience their teaching. The Word must abide in us; our heart and life must be under its influence daily.

The quickening of the Word by the Spirit comes from within, not from without. Only he who yields himself entirely, in his whole life, to the supremacy of the Word and the will of God can expect to discern what that Word and will permit him to ask boldly in specific cases. The same is true of the Spirit. If I desire His leading in prayer to assure me what God's will is, my whole life must be yielded to that leading. Only in this way can mind and heart become spiritual and capable of knowing God's holy will. He who through Word and Spirit lives in the will of God by doing it; will know to pray according to that will in the confidence that He hears.

If only Christians could see what incalculable harm they do themselves by thinking that because their prayer is possibly not according to God's will, they must be content without an answer. God's Word tells us that the great reason for unanswered prayer is that we do not pray right: "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss." In not granting an answer, the Father tells us that there is something wrong in our praying. He wants us to discover it and confess it,

and so to teach us true believing and effective prayer. He can only attain this object when He brings us to the place where we see that we are to blame for the withholding of the answer. Our aims, our faith, or our lives are not what they should be. God is frustrated as long as we are content to say "Perhaps it is because my prayer is not according to His will that He does not hear me."

O let us no longer throw the blame for our unanswered prayers on the secret will of God, but on our own faulty praying! Let that word, "Ye receive not because ye ask amiss," be a lantern of the Lord, searching heart and life to prove that we are indeed those to whom Christ gave His promises of certain answers! Let us believe that we can know if our prayers are according to God's will! Let us yield our hearts to the indwelling of the Word of the Father to have Christ's Word abiding in us. We should live day by day with the anointing that teaches all things. If we yield ourselves unreservedly to the Holy Spirit as He teaches us to abide in Christ and to dwell in the Father's presence, we will soon understand how the Father's love longs for the child to know His will. In the confidence that that will includes every thing His power and love have promised to do, we should know, too, that He hears all of our prayers. "This is the boldness which we have, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us."

Lord, teach us to pray.

Blessed Master! With my whole heart I thank You for the blessed lesson that the path to a life full of answers to prayer is through the will of God. Lord! Teach me to know this blessed will by living it, loving it, and always doing it. In this way, I will learn to offer prayers according to that will. In their harmony with God's blessed will, I will find boldness in prayer and confidence in accepting the answer.

Father! It is Your will that Your child should enjoy Your presence and blessing. It is Your will that everything in Your child's life should be in accordance with Your will, and that the Holy Spirit should work this in him. It is Your will that Your child should live in the daily experience of distinct answers to prayer, in order to enjoy living and direct fellowship with Yourself. It is Your will that Your Name should be glorified in and through Your children, and that it will be in those who trust You. O my Father! Let this will of Yours be my confidence in everything I ask.

Blessed Savior! Teach me to believe in the glory of this will. That will is the eternal love that, with Divine power, works out its purpose in each human will that yields itself to it. Lord! Teach me this! You can make me see how every promise and every command of the Word is indeed the will of God, and that its fulfillment is given to me by God Himself. Let His will become the sure rock on which prayer and my assurance of an answer always rest
Amen.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

There is often great confusion as to the will of God. People think that what God wills must inevitably take place. This is by no means the case. God wills a great deal of blessing to His people which never comes to them. He wills it most earnestly, but they do not will it. Hence, it cannot come to them. This is the great mystery of man's creation with a free will and the renewal of his will in redemption. God has made the execution of His will dependent on the will of man. God's will as revealed in His promises will be fulfilled as much as our faith allow. Prayer is the power by which something comes to pass which otherwise would not have taken place. And faith the power which determines how much of God's will is done in us. Once God reveals to a soul what He is willing to do for it, the responsibility for the execution of that will rests with us.

Some are afraid that this is putting too much power into the hands of man. But all power is put into the hands of man through Christ Jesus (Luke 10:19). The key to prayer and all power is His. When we learn to understand that He is just as much one with us as with the Father, see how natural, right, and safe it is that such power is given. Christ the Son has the right to ask whatever I chooses. Through our abiding in Him and His abiding in us, His Spirit breathes in us what He wants to ask and obtain through us. We pray in His Name. The prayers are as much ours as they are His.

Others fear that to believe that prayer has such power limits the liberty and the love of God. O if we only knew how we are limiting His liberty and His love by not allowing Him to act in the only way in which He chooses to act, now that He has taken us up into fellowship with Himself! Our prayer is like

pipes, though which water is carried from a large mountain stream to a town some distance away. Such water pipes don't make the water willing to flow down from the hills, nor do they give it its power of blessing and refreshment. This is its very nature. All they do is to determine its direction.

In the same way, the very nature of God is to love and to bless. His love longs to come down to us with its quickening and refreshing streams. But He has left it to prayer to say where the blessing is channeled. He has committed it to His believing people to bring the living water to the desert places. The will of God to bless is dependent on the will of man to say where the blessing goes.

Chapter 30^(TOC)

The Ministry of Intercession

"A holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ—1 Peter 2:5

"Ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord."—Isaiah 61:6

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me: because the Lord hath anointed me." These are the words of Jesus in Isaiah, chapter sixty-one. As the fruit of His work, all redeemed ones are priests-fellow—partakers with Him of His anointing with the Spirit as High Priest. This anointing is "Like the precious ointment upon the beard of Aaron, that went down to the skirts of his garments" (Psalm 133:2). Like every son of Aaron, every member of Jesus' Body has a right to the priesthood. But not everyone exercises it. Many are still entirely ignorant of it. And yet it is the highest privilege of a child of God, the mark of greatest nearness and likeness to Him "Whoever liveth to pray." Do you doubt this? Think of what constitutes priesthood.

There is, first, the work of the priesthood. This has two sides: one Godward, the other manward. "Every priest is ordained for men in things pertaining to God" (Hebrews 5:1). Or, as it is said by Moses (Deuteronomy 10:8, 21:5, 33:10; Malachi 2:6): "The Lord separated the tribe of Levi, to stand before the Lord to minister unto Him, and to bless His Name." On the one hand, the priest had the power to draw nigh to God, to dwell with Him in His house, and to present Him with the blood of the sacrifice or the burning incense. This work he did not do, however, on his own behalf, but for the sake of the

people whose representative he was. This is the other side of his work. He received people's sacrifices, presented them to God, and then came out to bless in His Name, giving the assurance of His favor and teaching them His law.

A priest is thus a man who does not live for himself. He lives with God and for God. His work as God's servant is to care for His house, His honor, and His worship, making known to men His love and His will. He lives with men and for men (Hebrews 5:2). His work is to find out their sins and needs, bring these before God, offer sacrifice and incense in their names, obtain forgiveness and blessing for them, and then to come out and bless them in His Name.

This is the high calling of every believer. They have been redeemed with the one purpose of being God's priests in the midst of the perishing millions around them. In conformity to Jesus, the Great High Priest, they are to be the ministers and stewards of the grace of God.

Secondly, there is the walk of the priesthood, harmony with its work. As God is holy, so the priest was to be especially holy. This means not only separated from everything unclean, but holy unto God—being set apart and given up to God for His use. Separation from the world and being given to God were indicated in many ways.

It was seen in the clothing. The holy garment made according to God's own orders, marked the priests as His (Exodus 28). It was seen in the command as to their special purity and freedom from contact with death and defilement. Much that was allowed to an ordinary Israelite was forbidden them. Priests could have no bodily defects or blemishes. Bodily perfection was to be the model wholeness and holiness in God's service. The priestly tribes were to

have no inheritance with the other tribes. God was to be their inheritance. Their life was to be one of faith—set apart unto God; they were to live on Him as well as for Him. All this symbolic of what the character of the New Testament priest is to be. Our priestly power with God depends on our personal life and walk. Jesus must be able to say of our walk on earth, "They have not defiled their garments."

In our separation from the world, we must prove that our desire to be holy to the Lord is whole—hearted and entire. The bodily perfection of the priest must have its counterpart in our also being "without spot or blemish." We must be "the man of God, perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," "perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (Leviticus 21:17-21; Ephesians 5:27; 2 Timothy 3:17; James 1:4). Above all, we must consent to give up all inheritance on earth. We must forsake everything and like Christ have need only of God and keep everything for Him alone. This marks the true priest, the man who only lives for God and his fellow-men.

Thirdly, there is the way to the priesthood. God had chosen all of Aaron's sons to be priests. Each of them was a priest by birth. Yet he could not begin his work without a special act of ordinance—his consecration. Every child of God is a priest by right of his birth—his blood relationship to the Great High Priest. But he can exercise his power only as he accepts and realizes his consecration.

With Aaron and his sons it took place thus (Exodus 29): After being washed and clothed, they were anointed with the holy oil. Sacrifices were then offered, and the right ear, the right hand, and the right foot were touched with the blood. They and their garments were then sprinkled with the blood and the oil together. In the same way, as the blood and the Spirit work more fully in the child of God, the power of the Holy Priesthood will also work in him.

The blood will take away all sense of unworthiness; the Spirit will take away all sense of unfitness.

Notice what was new in the application of the blood to the priest. If he had ever as a penitent sought forgiveness by bringing a sacrifice for his sin, the blood was sprinkled on the altar, but not on his person. But now, for priestly consecration, there was to be closer contact with the blood. The ear, hand and foot were by a special act brought under its power, and the whole being sanctified for God. When the believer is led to seek full priestly access God, he feels the need of a fuller and more enduring experience of the power of the blood. Where he had previously been content to have the blood sprinkled only on the mercy seat as what he needed for pardon, he now needs a more personal sprinkling a cleansing of his heart from an evil conscience. Through this, he has "no more conscience of sin" (Hebrews 10:2); he is cleansed from all sin. As he gets to enjoy this, his consciousness is awakened to his wonderful right of intimate access to God, and the full assurance that his intercessions are acceptable.

As the blood gives the right, the Spirit gives the power for believing intercession. He breathes into the priestly spirit a burning love for God's honor and the saving of souls. He makes us one with Jesus to the extent that prayer in His Name is reality. The more the Christian is truly filled with the Spirit of Christ, the more spontaneous will be his giving himself up to the life of priestly intercession.

Beloved fellow-Christians! God needs priests who can draw close to Him, live in His presence, and by their intercession draw down the blessings of His grace on others. And the world needs priests who will bear the burden of the perishing ones and intercede on their behalf.

Are you willing to offer yourself for this holy work? You know the surrender it demands—nothing less than the Christ—like giving up of everything, so that the salvation of God's love may be accomplished among men. Don't be one of those who are content with being saved, just doing enough work to keep themselves warm and lively! Let nothing keep you back from giving yourselves to be wholly and only priests of the Most High God!

The thought of unworthiness or of unfitness need not keep you back. In the blood, the objective power of the perfect redemption works in you. In the Spirit, the full, subjective, personal experience of a Divine life is secured. The blood provides an infinite worthiness to make your prayers acceptable. The Spirit provides a Divine fitness, teaching you to pray exactly according to the will of God.

Every priest knew that when he presented a sacrifice according to the law of the sanctuary, it was accepted. Under the covering of the blood and the Spirit, you have the assurance that all the wonderful promises of prayer in the Name of Jesus will be fulfilled in you. Abiding in union with the Great High Priest, "You shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you." You will have power to pray the effective prayer of the righteous man that accomplishes a great deal. You will not only join in the general prayer of the Church for the world, but be able in your own sphere to take up your own special work in prayer. As priests, you will work on a personal basis with God to receive and know the answer, and so to bless in His Name.

Come, brother, come! Be a priest, only a priest, and all priest! Walk before the Lord in the full consciousness that you have been set apart for the holy ministry of intercession. This is the true blessedness of conformity to the image of God's Son.

Lord, teach us to pray.

O my blessed High Priest! Accept the consecration in which my soul responds to Your message! I believe in the holy priesthood of Your saints I believe that I am a priest, having the power to appear before the Father in prayer that will bring down many blessings on the perishing souls around me.

I believe in the power of Your precious blood to cleanse me from all sin. It gives me perfect confidence in God and brings me near to Him in the full assurance of faith that my intercession will be heard.

I believe in the anointing of the Spirit. It comes down to me daily from You, my Great High Priest, to sanctify me. It fills me with the consciousness my priestly calling and with the love of souls. It also teaches me what is according to God's will and how to pray the prayer of faith.

I believe that, just as You are in all things in life, You are in my prayer life, drawing me up in it the fellowship of Your wondrous work of intercession.

In this faith, I yield myself today to my God as one of His anointed priests. I stand before Him to intercede on behalf of sinners, and then return to bless them in His Name.

Holy Lord Jesus! Accept and seal my consecration. Lay Your hands on me and consecrate me Yourself to this holy work. Let me walk among men with the consciousness and the character of a priest or the Most High God.

And to Him Who loved us—Who washed us from our sins in His own blood, and Who made us kings and priests before God, His Father—to Him be glory and power forever! Amen.

Chapter 31^(TOC)

A Life of Prayer

*"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks"—1
Thessalonians 5:16-18*

Our Lord told the parable of the widow and the unjust judge to teach us that men ought to pray without ceasing. The widow persevered in seeking one definite thing. The parable appears to refer to persevering in prayer for some special blessing, when God delays or appears to refuse. The Epistles, which speak of continuing in prayer, watching for the answer, and praying always in the Spirit, appear to refer to something different—the whole life being one of prayer. As the soul longs for the manifestation of God's glory to us, in us, through us, and around us, the inmost life of the soul is continually rising upward in dependence, faith, longing desire, and trustful expectation.

What is needed to live such a life of prayer? The first thing is undoubtedly an entire sacrifice of one's life to God's Kingdom and glory. If you try to pray without ceasing because you want to be very pious and good, you will never succeed. Yielding ourselves to live for God and His honor enlarges the heart and teaches us to regard everything in the light of God and His will. We instinctively recognize in everything around us the need for God's help and blessing, and an opportunity for His being glorified.

Everything is weighed and tested by the one thing that fills the heart: the glory of God. The soul has learned that only what is of God can really glorify

Him. Through the heart and soul, the whole life becomes a looking up, a crying from the inmost heart, for God to prove His power and love, and reveal His glory. The believer awakes to the consciousness that he is one of the watchmen on Zion's walls, whose call really does touch and move the King in heaven to do what would otherwise not be done. He understands how real Paul's exhortation was: "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit for all the saints and for me," and "continue in prayer, with all praying also for us." To forget oneself—to live for God and His Kingdom among men—is the way to learn to pray without ceasing.

This life devoted to God must be accompanied by the deep confidence that our prayer is effective. In His prayer lessons, our Blessed Lord insisted on faith in the Father as a God Who most certainly does what we ask. "Ask and ye shall receive." To count confidently on an answer is the beginning and the end of His teaching. (Compare Matthew 7:8 and John 16:24)

As we gain the assurance that our prayers are effective and that God does what we ask, we dare not neglect the use of this wonderful power. Our souls should turn wholly to God, and our lives should become prayer. The Lord needs and takes time, because we and everyone around us are creatures of time, subject to the law of growth. But know that not one single prayer of faith can possibly be lost, and that sometimes there is a necessity for accumulating prayer. Know that persevering prayer pleases God. Prayer becomes the quiet, persistent living of our life of desire and faith in the presence of our God.

Don't limit such free and sure promises of the living God with your reasoning any longer! Don't rob them of their power, and ourselves of the wonderful confidence they are meant to inspire! The hindrance is not in God, not in His secret will, and not in the limitations of His promises. It is in us. We are not

what we should be to obtain the promise. Open your whole heart to God's words of promise in all their simplicity and truth! They will search us and humble us. They will lift us up and make us glad and strong. To the faith that knows it gets what it asks for, prayer is not a work or a burden, but a joy and a triumph. It becomes a necessity and a second nature.

This union of strong desire and firm confidence is nothing but the life of the Holy Spirit within us. The Holy Spirit dwells in us, hides Himself in the depths of our being, and stirs our desire for the Unseen and the Divine—God Himself. It is always the Holy Spirit Who draws out the heart to thirst for God and to long for His being recognized and glorified. Sometimes He speaks through us in groanings that cannot be uttered, sometimes in clear and conscious assurance, sometimes in distinct petitions for the deeper revelation of Christ to ourselves, and sometimes in pleas for a soul, a work, the Church or the world. Where the child of God really lives and walks in the Spirit—where he is not content to remain carnal, but tries to be a fit, spiritual organ for the Divine Spirit to reveal the life of Christ and Christ Himself—there the never-ceasing life of intercession of the Blessed Son must reveal and repeat itself. Because it is the Spirit of Christ Who prays in us, our prayers must be heard. Because it is we who pray in the Spirit, there is need of time, patience, and continual renewing of the prayer until every obstacle is conquered, and the harmony between God's Spirit and ours is perfect.

The chief thing we need for a life of unceasing prayer is to know that Jesus teaches us to pray. We have begun to understand a little of what His teaching is. It isn't the communication of new thoughts or views, the discovery of failure or error, nor the arousal of desire and faith, however important all this may be. Jesus' teaching takes us up into the fellowship of His own prayer-life before the Father. This is how Jesus really teaches. It was the sight of Jesus

praying that made the disciples ask to be taught to pray. The faith of Jesus' continuous prayer truly teaches us to pray.

We know why: He Who prays is our Head and our life. All He has is ours and is given to us when we give ourselves completely to Him. By His blood, He leads us into the immediate presence of God. The inner sanctuary is our home; we live there. Living so close to God and knowing we have been taken there to bless those who are far away, we cannot help but pray.

Christ makes us partakers with Himself of His prayer-power and prayer-life. Our true aim must not be to work a great deal and pray just enough to keep the work right. We should pray a great deal and then work enough for the power and blessing obtained in prayer to find its way through us to men. Christ lives to pray eternally; He saves and reigns. He communicates His prayer-life to us and maintains it in us if we trust Him. He is responsible for our praying without ceasing. Christ teaches us to pray by showing us how He does it, by doing it in us, and by leading us to do it in Him and like Him. Christ is everything—the life and the strength—for a never-ceasing prayer-life. Seeing Christ's continuous praying as our life enables us to pray without ceasing. Because His priesthood is the power of an endless life—that resurrection life that never fades and never fails—and because His life is our life, praying without ceasing can become the joy of heaven here on earth. The Apostle says, "Rejoice evermore: pray without ceasing: in everything give thanks." Supported by never-ceasing joy and never-ceasing praise, never-ceasing prayer is the manifestation of the power of the eternal life where Jesus always prays.

The union between the Vine and the branch is indeed a prayer union. The highest conformity to Christ—the most blessed participation in the glory of His heavenly life—is that we take part in His work of intercession. He and

we live forever to pray. In union with Him, praying without ceasing becomes a possibility—a reality, the holiest and most blessed part of our holy and blessed fellowship with God. We abide within the veil in the presence of the Father. What the Father says, we do. What the Son asks, the Father does. Praying without ceasing is the earthly manifestation of heaven, a foretaste of the life where they rest neither day nor night in their song of worship and adoration.

Lord, teach us to pray.

O my Father! With my whole heart I praise You for this wondrous life of continuous prayer, continuous fellowship, continuous answers, and continuous oneness with Him Who lives to pray forever! O my God! Keep me abiding and walking in the presence of Your glory, so that prayer may be the spontaneous expression of my life with You.

Blessed Savior! With my whole heart I praise You for coming from heaven to share my needs and my pleas, so that I could share Your all—powerful intercession. Thank You for taking me into Your school of prayer, teaching me the blessedness and the power of a life that is totally comprised of prayer. And most of all, thank You for taking me up into the fellowship of Your life of intercession. Now through me, too, Your blessings can be dispensed to those around me.

Holy Spirit! With deep reverence I thank You for Your work in me. Through You I am lifted up into communication with the Son and the Father, entering the fellowship of the life and love of the Holy Trinity.

Spirit of God! Perfect Your work in me! Bring me into perfect union with Christ, My Intercessor! Let Your unceasing indwelling make my life one of unceasing intercession. And let my life unceasingly glorify the Father and

bless those around me. Amen.

^[1]"God is seeking priests among the sons of men. A human priesthood is one of the essential parts of His eternal plan. To rule creation by man is His design.

THE NEW LIFE

ORIGINAL TITLE: THE NEW LIFE: WORDS OF GOD
FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

BY

ANDREW MURRAY

*“They Go from Strength to Strength, Every One of them Appeareth Before
God in Zion”*

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Preface_(TOC)

In speaking with young converts, I have very frequently longed for a suitable book in which the most important truths concerning the *new life* were presented briefly and simply. I could not find anything that entirely corresponded to what I desired. During the services in which I have been permitted to take part, I felt this need even more keenly. There I spoke with so many who professed to have found the Lord yet were still very weak in knowledge and faith. In the course of my journey, I have felt myself pressed to take my pen in hand.

Under a vivid impression of the infirmities and the distorted thoughts concerning the *new life*, with which almost all young Christians have to wrestle, I wished to offer them words of instruction and encouragement. I wanted to let them see what a glorious life of power and joy is prepared for them in their Lord Jesus, and how simple the way is to enjoy all this blessing.

I have confined myself in these reflections to some of the most important topics. The first is *the Word of God* as the glorious and sure guide, even for the simplest souls who will surrender themselves to it. Then, as the chief element in the Word, there is *the Son, the gift of the Father*, to do all for us. Then follows what the Scriptures teach concerning *sin* as the only thing that we have to bring to Jesus, as that which we must give to Him, and from which He will set us free. Further, there is *faith*, the great word in which our inability to bring or to do anything is expressed, and that teaches us that all our salvation must be received every day of our lives as a gift from above. The young Christian must also make acquaintance with the *Holy Spirit* as the Person through whom the Word and Jesus—With all His work and faith in

Him—can become power and truth. Then there is the *holy life* of obedience and fruitfulness, in which the Spirit teaches us to walk.

It is to these six leading thoughts of the *new life* that I have confined myself. In ceaseless prayer, I have asked that God use what I have written to make His young children understand what a glorious and mighty life they have received from their Father. It was often very unwillingly that I took leave of the young converts who had to go back to lonely places, where they could have little counsel or help, and seldom mingle in the preaching of the Word. It is my sure and confident expectation that what the Lord has given me to write will prove a blessing to many of these young confessors.

While writing this book, I have had a second wish abiding with me. I have wondered what I could possibly do to insure that my book would not draw attention away from the Word of God, but rather, help to make the Word more precious. I resolved to furnish the work with footnotes, so that, on every point that was referred to, the reader might be stirred up still to listen to *the Word itself, to God Himself*.

I am hopeful that this arrangement will yield a double benefit. Many a one does not know, and has nobody to teach him, how to examine the Scriptures properly. This book may help him in his loneliness. If he will only meditate on one point or another and then look up the texts that are quoted, he will get into the habit of consulting God's Word itself on whatever topic he wishes to understand. But, this book may just as readily be of service in prayer meetings or social gatherings for the study of the Word. Let each person read the chosen chapter at home and review the scripture verses that seem to be the most important to him. Let the leader of the meeting read the chapter aloud once. He should then invite each person who desires to, to share the verse or point which has meant the most to him.

We have found in my congregation that the benefit of such meetings for bringing and reading aloud verses on a point previously announced is very great. This practice leads to the searching of God's Word as even preaching does not. It stirs up the members of the congregation, especially the young people, to independent dealing with the Word. It leads to a more living fellowship among the members of Christ's body and also helps their upbuilding in love. It prepares the way for a social recognition of the Word as the living communication of the thoughts of God which, with divine power, will work in us what is pleasing to God.

I am persuaded that there are many believing men and women who ask what they can accomplish for the Lord—who along this path could become the channel of great blessing. Let them once a week bring together some of their neighbors and friends to read aloud the texts for which they have been previously searching. The Lord will certainly give His blessing there.

With respect to the use of this book in private, I would like to request one more thing. I hope that no one will think it strange. Let every portion be read over at least three times. The great poison of our conversation with divine things is superficiality. When we read anything and understand it somewhat, we think that this is enough. No, we must give it *time* so that it may make an impression and exercise its influence on us.

Read every portion *the first time* with consideration, to understand the good that is in it, and then see if you receive benefit from the thoughts that are expressed there.

Read it *the second time* to see if it is really in accordance with God's Word. Take some, if not all, of the texts that are cited on each point and ponder them in order to come under the full force of what God has said on the point.

Let your God, through His Word, teach you what you must think and believe concerning Him and His will.

Read it ***the third time*** to find out the corresponding place, not in the Bible, but in your own life, in order to know if your life has been in harmony with the ***new life***, and to direct your life in the future entirely according to God's Word. I am fully persuaded that the time and effort spent on such personal contact with the Word of God under the teaching of this or some other book that helps you in dealing with it, will be rewarded tenfold.

I conclude with a cordial, brotherly greeting to all with whom I have been permitted to mingle during the past year, in speaking about the precious Savior and His glorious salvation. Greetings also to all in other congregations, who in this last season have learned to know the beloved Lord Jesus as their Redeemer. With a heart full of peace and love, I think of all of you, and I pray that the Lord may confirm His work in you. I have not become weary of crying out to you: the blessedness and the power of the ***new life*** that is in you are greater than you know—are wonderfully great. Only, learn to trust in Jesus, ***the gift of God***, and to know aright the Scriptures, ***the Word of God***. Only give Him time to hold communion with you and to work in you, and your heart will overflow with the blessedness of God.

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly more than we can ask or think, to Him be glory in the Church to all eternity.

Andrew Murray
Wellington, August 12, 1885

Chapter 1^(TOC)

The New Life

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life"—John 3:16.

"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Christ is our life"—Colossians 3:3, 4.

"We declare unto you the life, eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. God hath given us eternal life; and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life"—1 John 1:2; 5:11, 12.

A glorious blessing is given to all who believe in the Lord Jesus. Along with a change in his disposition and manner of living, he also receives an entirely new life from God. He is born anew. Born of God. He has passed from death into life.^[1]

This new life is nothing less than eternal life.^[2] This does not mean, as many suppose, that our life will no longer die, enduring into eternity. No, eternal life is nothing else than the very life of God. It is the life that He has had in Himself from eternity and that has been visibly revealed in Christ. This life is now the inheritance of every child of God.^[3]

This life is a life of inconceivable power. Whenever God gives life to a young plant or animal, that life has within itself the power to grow. The plant or animal as of itself becomes large. Life is power. In a new life—in your heart—there is the power of eternity.^[4] More certain than the healthful growth of any tree or animal is the growth and increase of the child of God who

surrenders himself to the working of the new life.

Two things hinder this power and the reception of the new spiritual life. The one is ignorance of its nature—its laws and workings. Man, even the Christian, cannot conceive of the new life which comes from God. It surpasses all of his thoughts. His own distorted thoughts of the way to serve and to please God—namely, by what he does and is—are deeply rooted in him. Although he believes that he understands and receives God's Word, he still thinks humanly and carnally on divine things.^[5] God must give salvation and life. He must also give the Spirit to make us understand what He gives. He must point out the way to the land of Canaan. We must also, like the blind, be led by Him every day.

The young Christian must try to cherish a deep conviction of his ignorance concerning the new life, and of his inability to form correct thoughts about it. This will bring him to the meekness and to the childlike spirit of humility, to which the Lord will make His secret known.^[6]

There is a second hindrance in the way of faith. In the life of every plant and every animal and every child of God, there lies sufficient power by which it can become big. In the new life, God has made the most glorious provision of a sufficient power. With this power His child can grow and become all that he must be. Christ Himself is his life and his power of life.^[7] Yet, because this mighty life is not visible or cannot be felt, the young Christian often becomes doubtful. He then fails to believe that he will grow with divine power and certainty. He does not understand that the believing life is a life of faith. He must depend on the life that is in Christ for him, although he neither sees, feels, nor experiences anything.^[8]

Let everyone then that has received this new life cultivate these great

convictions. It is eternal life that works in me. It works with divine power. I can and will become what God will have me be. Christ Himself is my life. I have to receive Him every day as my life, given to me by God, and He will be my life in full power.

Father, You have given me Your Son so that I may have life in Him. I thank You for the glorious new life that is now in me. I pray that You will teach me to properly know this new life. I will acknowledge my ignorance and the distorted thoughts which are in me concerning Your service. I will believe in the heavenly power of the new life that is in me. I will believe that my Lord Jesus, who Himself is my life, will, by His Spirit, teach me to know how I can walk in that life. Amen.

Notes

Try to understand and plant the following lessons in your heart:

1. It is eternal life, the very life of God, that you have now received through faith.
2. This new life is in Christ, and the Holy Spirit is in you to convey to you all that is in Christ. Christ lives in you through the Holy Spirit.
3. This life is a life of wonderful power. However weak you may feel, you must believe in the divine power of the life that is in you.
4. This life needs time to grow in you and to take possession of you. Give it time, it will surely increase.
5. Do not forget that all the laws and rules of this new life are in

conflict with all human thoughts of the way to please God. Be very much in dread of your own thoughts. Let Christ, who is your life and also your wisdom, teach you all things.

Chapter 2^(TOC)

The Milk of the Word

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation"—1 Peter 2:2.

Beloved young Christians, hear what your Father has to say in this word. You have just recently given yourselves to the Lord and have believed that He has received you. You have received the new life from God. You are now as newborn infants. He will teach you in this word what is necessary so that you may grow strong.

The first point is: ***you must know that you are God's children.*** Hear how distinctly Peter says this to those just converted: "You have been born again," "you are newborn infants," "you are now converted," "you are now the people of God."^[9] A Christian, however young and weak, must know that he is God's child. Only then can he have the courage to believe that he will make progress and the boldness to use the food provided in the Word. All Scripture teaches us that we must know and can know that we are children of God.^[10] The assurance of faith is indispensable for a healthy, powerful growth in the Lord.^[11]

The second point which this word teaches you is: ***you are still very weak,*** weak as newborn children. The joy and love which a new convert sometimes experiences do indeed make him think that he is very strong. He runs the risk of exalting himself and of trusting in what he experiences. He should

nevertheless learn much about how he should become strong in his Lord Jesus. Endeavor to deeply feel that you are still young and weak.^[12] Out of this sense of weakness comes the humility which has nothing in itself.^[13] It therefore expects all from its Lord.^[14]

The third lesson is: ***the young Christian must not remain weak.*** He must make progress and become strong. He must grow and increase in grace. God lays it upon us as a command. Concerning this point, His Word gives us the most glorious promises. It lies in the nature of the thing—a child of God must and can make progress. The new life is a life that is healthy and strong. When a disciple surrenders himself to it, the growth certainly follows.^[15]

The fourth and principal lesson, the lesson which young disciples of Christ have the most need of, is: ***it is through the milk of the Word that God's newborn infants can grow.*** The new life from the Spirit of God can be sustained only by the Word of God. Your life, my young brothers and sisters, will largely depend on whether you learn to deal wisely and well with God's Word, whether you learn to use the Word from the beginning as your milk.^[16]

See what a charming parable the Lord has given us here in the mother's milk. Out of her own life does the mother give food and life to her child. The feeding of the child is the work of the tenderest love. The child is pressed to the breast and is held in the closest fellowship with the mother. The milk is just what the weak child requires, food—gentle and yet strong.

Even so, the very life and power of God is found in His Word.^[17] Through the Word, His tender love will receive us into the gentlest and most intimate fellowship with Himself.^[18] From the Word, His love will give us what is needed for our weakness. Let no one suppose that the Word is too high or too hard for him. For the disciple who receives the Word and trustfully relies on

Jesus to teach him by the Spirit, the Word of God will prove to be as gentle, sweet milk for newborn infants.^[19]

Dear young Christians, would you continue standing, would you become strong, would you always live for the Lord? Then hear this day the voice of your Father-"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word." Receive this Word into your heart and hold it firmly as the voice of your Father. Your spiritual life will depend on your use of the Word of God. Let the Word of God be precious to you above everything.^[20]

Above all, do not forget, the Word is the milk. The sucking or drinking on the part of the little child is the inner, living, blessed fellowship with the mother's love. Through the Holy Spirit, your use of the milk of the Word can become warm, living fellowship with the living love of your God. Long very eagerly for the milk. Do not consider the Word something hard and troublesome to understand-in that way you lose all delight in it. Receive it with trust in the love of the living God. With a tender motherly love, the Spirit of God will teach and help you in your weakness. Always believe that the Spirit will make the Word in you life and joy-a blessed fellowship with your God.

Precious Savior, You have taught me to believe Your Word, and You have made me a child of God by that faith. Through that Word, as the milk of the newborn babes, You will also feed me. Lord, for this milk I will be very eager. I will long after it everyday.

Teach me, through the Holy Spirit and the Word, to walk and converse everyday in living fellowship with the love of the Father. Teach me to always believe that the Spirit has been given to me with the Word. Amen.

Notes

1. What texts do you consider the best for proving that the Scriptures teach us that we must know we are children of God?
2. What are the three points in which the sucking child is to us an example of the young child in Christ in his dealing with the Word?
3. What must the young Christian do when he has little blessing in the reading of God's Word? He must set himself down through faith in fellowship with Jesus Himself and believe that Jesus will teach him through the Spirit, and so trustfully continue in the reading.
4. One verse chosen to meet our needs, read ten times and then laid up in the heart, is better than ten verses read once. Only as much of the Word as I actually receive and inwardly appropriate for myself is food for my soul.
5. Choose for yourselves what you consider one of the most glorious promises about making progress and becoming strong, and learn it by heart. Repeat it continually as the language of your positive expectation.
6. Have you learned to understand well what the great means for growth in grace is?

Chapter 3^(TOC)

God's Word in Our Heart

*"Therefore shall ye lay up these My words in your heart and in your soul"—
Deuteronomy 11:18.*

*"Son of man, all My words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine
heart"—Ezekiel 3:10.*

*"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee"—
Psalm 119:11.*

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby"(1 Peter 2:2). Every young Christian is taught that he must receive the Word of God as milk—as the living participation of the life and vine of God—if he is to grow. On this account it is of great importance to know how we must deal with the Word. The Lord says that we must receive it and lay it up in our heart.^[21] The Word must possess and fill the heart. What does that mean?

The heart is the temple of God. In the temple there was an outer court and an inner sanctuary. So it is in the heart. The gate of the court is understanding. What I do not understand cannot enter into the heart. The Word enters into the court through the outer gate of understanding.^[22] There it is kept by memory and reflection.^[23] Still it is not properly in the heart. From the court there is an entrance into the innermost sanctuary. The entrance of the door is faith. What I believe, that will I receive into my heart.^[24] Here it becomes secure in love and in the surrender of the will. Where this takes place, there the heart becomes the sanctuary of God. His law is there, as in the ark, and

the soul cries out, "Thy law is within my heart."^[25]

Young Christian, God has asked for your heart, your love, your whole self. You have given yourself to Him. He has received you and would have you and your heart entirely for Himself. He will make your heart full of His Word. What lies in the heart is dear because it is filled with joyful thoughts. God would have the Word in the heart. The Lord and His might are where His Word is. He considers Himself bound to fulfill His Word. When you have the Word, you have God Himself at work in you.^[26] He wills that you would receive and lay up His words in your heart. Then He will greatly bless you.^[27]

How I wish that I could bring all young Christians to simply receive that Word of their Father, "Lay up these My words in your heart." I wish they would give their whole heart to become full of God's Word. Resolve then to do this. Take pains to understand what you read. When you understand it, always take one or another word to remember and consider. Learn the words of God by heart. Repeat them to yourself in the course of the day. The Word is seed and the seed must have time, must be kept in the ground. Likewise, the Word must be carried in the heart. Give the best powers of your heart, your love, your desire, the willing and joyful activity of your will, to God's Word.

"Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night" (Psalm 1:1, 2). Let the heart be a temple—not for the world and its thoughts but for God and His thoughts.^[28] If you faithfully open your heart to God's voice, hear His Word and carry it with you, you will discover how faithfully God will open His heart to you and hear your prayer.

Dear Christian, read once again the words at the beginning of this section. Receive them as God's Word to you—the Word of the Father who has received you as a child, of Jesus who has made you God's child. God asks of you, as His child, that you give your heart to become filled with His Word. Will you do this? What do you say? In this manner of power, the Lord Jesus will complete His holy work in you.^[29] Let your answer be distinct and continuous, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart." "How love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Psalm 119:97). Even if it appears difficult for you to understand the Word, continue to read it. The Father has promised to make it a blessing in your heart. But you must take it into your heart first. Believe that God will then, by the Holy Spirit, make the Word living and powerful in you.

My Father who has said to me, "My son, give Me your heart," I will give You my heart. Now that You charge me to lay up and keep Your Word in that heart, I answer, "I keep Your commands with my whole heart." Father, teach me to receive Your Word in my heart everyday so that it can exercise its blessed influence there. Strengthen me in the deep conviction that even though I do not yet fully understand its meaning and power, I can still depend on You to make the Word living and powerful in me. Amen.

Notes

1. What is the difference between the reading of the Word to increase knowledge and the receiving of it in faith?
2. The Word is as a seed. Seed requires time before it springs up. During this time it must be kept silently and constantly in the earth. I must not only read God's Word, but ponder it and reflect on it. Then it will work in me. The Word must be with

me the whole day, must abide in me, must live in me.

3. What are the reasons that the Word of God sometimes has so little power in those who read it and really long for blessing? One of the principal reasons is surely that they do not give the Word time to grow. They do not keep it and reflect on it in the believing assurance that the Word itself will have its working.
4. What is the first characteristic of His disciples that Jesus mentions in the high-priestly prayer (John 17)?
5. What are the blessings of a heart filled with the Word of God?

Chapter 4^(TOC)

Faith

"Blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a performance of the things which were told her from the Lord"—Luke 1:45.

"I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me"—Acts 27:25.

"Abraham was strong in faith, being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform"—Romans 4:20, 21.

God has asked you to take and lay up His Word in your heart. The Word is taken and received into the innermost depths of your heart through the avenue of faith. Let the young Christian take pains to better understand what faith is. He will, then gain an insight into the reasons why such great things are connected to faith. He will have a perfect belief in the idea that full salvation is dependent upon faith.^[30]

Let me now ask my reader to read over the three texts which stand above. Find out what the principal thought is that they teach about faith. Please, do not read beyond them. First read these words of God and ask yourself what they teach you about faith.

They help us to see that faith always attaches itself to what God has said or promised. When an honorable man says anything, he also does it. So it is with God. Before He does anything, He reveals it through His Word. When the Christian becomes possessed with this conviction-established in it-God always does what He has said. With God, speaking and doing always go together. The deed always follows the Word. "Hath He said, and shall He not

do it?" (Numbers 23:19).^[31] When I have a Word of God in which He promises to do something, I can always be sure that He will do it. I simply have to believe the Word and wait upon God. God will fulfill His Word to me. Before I feel or experience anything, I hold onto that promise. I know by faith that God will make it good to me.^[32]

What then is faith? ***Nothing other than the certainty that what God says is true.*** When God says that something exists, then faith rejoices although it sees nothing of it.^[33] When God says that He has given me something, that something in heaven is mine, I know by faith that it truly is mine.^[34] With faith, I am able to believe God when He says that something will come to pass, or that He will do something for me.^[35] Faith secures those things that are, but that I have not yet seen, and that are not yet, but will come. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Faith always asks only for what God has said, and then relies on His faithfulness and power to fulfill His Word.

Let us review again the words of Scripture. Of Mary we read, "Blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a performance of the things which were told her from the Lord." All things that have been spoken in the Word will be fulfilled for me. Therefore, I believe them.

It is reported that Abraham was fully assured that God would fulfill what He had promised him. This is the assurance of faith—to be assured that God will do what He has promised.

It is written in the Word about Paul, "I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." It stood fixed with him that God would do what He had spoken.

Young disciples in Christ, the new and eternal life in you is a life of faith.

And do you not see how simple and blessed that life of faith is? Every day I go to the Word and hear what God has said that He has done and will do.^[36] I take time to house in my heart the Word in which God says that. I hold it firmly, entirely assured that what God has promised He is able to perform. And then, in a childlike spirit, I await the fulfillment of all the promises of His Word. And my soul experiences—Blessed is she that believed, for the things that have been spoken to her from the Lord will be fulfilled. God promises-I believe-God fulfills. That is the secret of the new life.

Father, Your child thanks You for this blessed life of faith in which we have to walk. I can do nothing, but You can do all. All that You can do has been spoken in Your Word. Every Word that I take and trustfully bring to You is fulfilled. Father, in this life of faith, so simple, so glorious, I will walk with You. Amen.

Notes

1. The Christian must read and search the Scriptures to increase his knowledge. For this reason, he reads one or more principal passages daily. He reads the Scriptures to also strengthen his faith. To achieve this he must take one or two verses and make them the subject of special reflection.
2. Do not allow yourselves to be led astray by those who speak of faith as something great and unintelligible. Faith is nothing more than the certainty that God speaks the truth. Take some promises of God and say to Him, "I know for certain that this promise is truth, and that You will fulfill it." He will do it.
3. Never mourn over unbelief as if it were a weakness which you

cannot help. As God's child, however weak you may be, you have the power to believe because the Spirit of God is in you. Keep this in mind—no one understands anything unless he has the power to believe. He must simply begin and continue to say to the Lord that he is sure that His Word is truth. He must securely hold the promise and trust God for the fulfillment.

Chapter 5^(TOC)

The Power of God's Word

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"—(Romans 10:17).

*"Receive with meekness the implanted, which is able to save your souls"—
(James 1:21).*

"We also thank God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it 'is in truth, the word of God, which effectively worketh also in you that believe"—(1 Thessalonians 2:13).

"For the word of God is living and active"—(Hebrews 4:12).

The new life of a child of God depends so much on the correct usage of God's Word, that I will once again speak of it with my young brothers and sisters in the Lord.

It is a great thing when the Christian realizes that he can receive and accomplish all only through faith. He has to believe. God will look to the fulfilling of what is promised. Every morning the Christian must trust in Jesus and in the new life given to him. Jesus will see to it that the new life works in him.

But now he runs the risk of another error. He thinks that the faith that does such great things must be something great—that he must have a great power in order to exercise such a great faith.^[37] And, because he does not feel this power, he thinks that he cannot believe as he should. This error may prove to be a loss to him throughout his life.

Hear how distorted this thought is. You must not bring this mighty faith to get the Word fulfilled. Instead, the Word comes and brings you this faith which you must have. "The word is quick and powerful." The Word works faith in you. The Scripture says, "Faith is by the word."

Think on what we have said of the heart as a temple-of its two divisions. There is the outer court, with understanding as its gate or entrance. There is the innermost sanctuary, with the faith of the heart as its entrance. There is a natural faith—the historic faith-which every man has. It is with this that I must first receive the Word into my keeping and my consideration. I must say to myself, "The Word of God is certainly true. I can stand upon it." In this way, I bring the Word into the outer court. From *within* the heart, desire reaches out to the Word, seeking to receive it *into the heart*. The Word now exercises its divine power of life. It begins to grow and shoot out roots. As a seed in the earth sends forth roots and presses still deeper into the soil, the Word presses inwardly into the holy place. The Word thus works true saving faith.^[38]

Young Christian, please understand this-the Word is living and powerful. Through the Word you are born again. The Word works faith in you. Through the Word comes faith. Receive the Word simply, with the thought that it will work in you. Keep yourselves occupied with the Word and give it time. The Word has a divine life in itself. Carry it in your innermost parts, and it will work life in you. It will work in you a strong faith, able for anything.

Be resolved never to say, I cannot believe. You *can believe*. You have the Spirit of God in you. Even the natural man can say, "This Word of God is certainly true or certainly not true." If, with desire in your soul, you say, "It is true. I will believe it," the living Spirit-through whom the Word is living and

powerful will work this living faith. Besides, the Spirit is not only in the Word, but is also in you. Although you do not feel as if you were believing, know for certain that you can believe.^[39] Begin to actually receive the Word. It will work a mighty faith in you. Depend on God's Word, it can surely be trusted to work faith in you as you receive it.

And not only the promises, but also the commands, have this living power. When I first receive a command from God, I do not feel the power to accomplish it. If I simply receive the Word as God's Word, and trust in its workings, the commandment will work in me the desire and power for obedience. God's Word works for those who believe. When I weigh and firmly hold the command, it works the desire and the will to obey. It strongly urges me toward the conviction that I can certainly do what my Father says. The Word works both faith and obedience. The obedience of the Christian is the obedience of faith. I must believe that through the Spirit I have the power to do what God wills. In the Word, the power of God works in me. The Word, as the command of the living God who loves me, is my power.^[40]

Therefore, my young disciples in Christ, learn to receive God's Word trustfully. Even though at first you do not understand it, continue to meditate on it. It has a living power in it, and it will glorify itself. Although you feel no power to believe or to obey, the Word is living and powerful. Take it and hold it fast. It will accomplish its work with divine power, The Word inspires and strengthens our faith and obedience.

Lord God, I begin to conceive how You are in Your Word with Your life and power, and how that Word itself works faith and obedience in the heart that receives and keeps it. Lord, teach me to carry Your every Word as a living seed in my heart, in the assurance that it will work in me all Your good pleasure. Amen.

Notes

1. Do not forget that it is one and the same to believe in the Word, or in the person who speaks the Word, or in the thing which is promised in the Word. The very same faith that receives the promises also receives the Father who promises, and the Son with the salvation that is given in the promises. Please see to it that you never separate the Word and the living God from each other.
2. Also, see to it that you thoroughly understand the distinction between the reception of the Word as the "word of man" and as the "Word of God, which works in you that believe."
3. I think you now know what is necessary to become strong in faith. Exercise as much faith as you have. Take a promise of God. Say to yourself that it is certainly true. Go to God and say to Him that you rely on Him for the fulfillment. Ponder the promise, and cleave to it in conversation with God. Rely on Him to do for you what He says. He will surely do it.
4. The Spirit and the Word always go together. I can be sure concerning all of what the Word says that I must do it and can do it through the Spirit. I must receive the Word, and also the command, in the confidence that it is the living Word of the living God which works in us who believe.

Chapter 6^(TOC)

God's Gift of his Son

*"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"—
John 3:16.*

"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift"—2 Corinthians 9:15.

God held the world so dear that He gave His only begotten Son for everyone who will trust in Him. And how did He give Him? He gave Him in His birth as man, in order to be forever one with us. He gave Him in His death on the cross as surety, in order to take away our sin and curse. He gave Him on the throne of heaven, in order to arrange for our welfare, as our Representative and Intercessor over all the powers of heaven. He gave Him in the outpouring of the Spirit, in order to dwell in us—to be entirely and altogether our own.^[41] Yes, that is the love of God. He gave His Son to us, for us, and in us.

Nothing less than His Son Himself. This is the love of God. It is not that He gives us something, but that He gives us Someone—a living person—not one or another blessing, but Him, who is all life and blessing—Jesus Himself. He does not simply give us forgiveness, revival, sanctification, or glory—He gives us His own Son, Jesus. The Lord Jesus is the beloved, the equal, the bosom friend, the eternal blessedness of the Father. And it is the will of God that we should have Jesus as ours, even as He has Him.^[42] For this reason He gave Him to us. The whole of salvation consists of this—to have, to possess, to enjoy Jesus. God has given His Son, given Him wholly to become ours.^[43]

What do we have to do? To take Him, to receive and to take possession of the gift—to enjoy Jesus as our own. This is eternal life. "He that hath the Son hath life."^[44]

How I wish that all young Christians would understand this. The one great work of God's love for us is, He gives us His Son. In Him we have all. Therefore, the one great work of our heart must be to receive this Jesus who has been given to us, and to consider and use Him as ours. I must begin every day anew with the thought, I have Jesus to do all for me.^[45] In all weakness or darkness or danger—in the case of every desire or need—let your first thought always be, I have Jesus to make everything right for me. God has given Him to me for this purpose. Whether your need is forgiveness, consolation, or confirmation, remember, the Father gave you Jesus to care for you. Whether you have fallen, or are tempted to fall, into danger, remember, Jesus has been given to you for your care. Whether you do not know the will of God in one matter or another, or whether you are unsure of your strength and courage to do His will, remember, Jesus will care for you.

For this reason, rely every day on this gift from God. It has been presented to you in the Word. Appropriate the Son by faith in the Word. Take Him again every day. Through faith you have the Son.^[46] The love of God has given the Son. Take Him and hold Him steadily in the love of your heart.^[47] It is to bring life, eternal life, to you that God has given Jesus. Take Him up into your life. Let your heart and tongue and whole walk be under the might and guidance of Jesus.^[48]

Young Christian, so weak and so sinful, please listen to that word. God has given you Jesus. He is yours. Taking is nothing else but the fruit of faith. The gift is for you. He will do all for you.

Lord Jesus, today and every day, I take You. In all Your fullness and in all Your relations, without ceasing, I take You for myself. You are my Wisdom, my Light, my Leader. I take You as my Prophet. You, who perfectly reconciles me and brings me near to God, who purifies and sanctifies me and prays for me, I take as my Priest. You, who guides and keeps and blesses me, I take as my King. You, Lord, are all, and You are wholly mine. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift. Amen.

Notes

1. Often ponder the word "give." God gives in a wonderful way—from the heart, completely and for nothing—to the unworthy. And He gives effectively. What He gives He will truly make our possession, inwardly and entirely. Believe this, and you will have the certainty that Jesus will come into your possession with all that He brings.
2. Also ponder the word "take." Our great work is to take Jesus, to hold Him firmly, and to appropriate Him when received. That taking is nothing but trusting. He is mine with all that He has. The secret of the life of faith is to take Jesus—the full Jesus-as yours every day.
3. Let the word "have" weigh heavily with you. "He that hath the Son hath life" (1 John 5:12). What I have is mine, for my use and service. I can have the full enjoyment of it.
4. Especially notice what God gives and what you take. What you have now is nothing less than the living Son of God. Do you receive this?

Chapter 7^(TOC)

Jesus' Surrender of himself

*"Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it; that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle; but that it should be holy and without blemish"—
Ephesians 5:25-27.*

Jesus' work for the sinner was so great and wonderful that it was necessary for Him to give Himself on the cross for that work. Jesus' love for us was so great and wonderful that He actually gave Himself for us and to us. Jesus' surrender is so great and wonderful that all which He gave Himself for can be truly and entirely ours. For Jesus, the Holy, the Almighty, has taken it upon Himself to do it. He gave **Himself** for us.^[49] And now the one necessary thing is that we should rightly understand and firmly believe in His surrender for us.

To what end, then, was it that He gave Himself for the Church? Hear what God says. The aim of Jesus is that He might sanctify the Church so that it would be without blemish.^[50] He will attain His aim in the soul as long as the soul falls into His will, makes His will its most important consideration, and relies on Jesus' surrender of Himself to do so.

Hear this word of God, "Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). Jesus gave Himself in order to prepare for Himself a **pure** people, a people **of His own**, a **zealous** people. When I

receive Him, and when I believe that He gave Himself for me, I will certainly experience it. I will be purified through Him. I will be held securely as His possession and be filled with zeal and joy to work for Him.

And notice how the operation of this surrender of Himself will result in His having us entirely for Himself—"that He might present us to Himself," "that He might purify us to Himself, a people of His own." The more I understand and contemplate Jesus' surrender of Himself for me, the more I give myself again to Him. The surrender is a mutual one—the love comes from both sides. His giving of Himself makes such an impression on my heart, that my heart, with the self-same love and joy, becomes entirely His. Through giving Himself to me, He takes possession of me. He becomes mine and I become His. I know that I have Jesus wholly for me, and that He has me wholly for Himself.^[51]

And how do I come to the full enjoyment of this blessed life? "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).^[52] Through faith, I reflect on and contemplate His surrender to me as sure and glorious. Through faith, I believe it. Through faith, I trust in Jesus to confirm this surrender, to communicate Himself to me, and to reveal Himself within me. Through faith, I await—with certainty—for the full experience of salvation which comes from having Jesus as mine, to do all for me. Through faith, I live in Jesus who loved me and gave Himself for me. And I say, "No longer do I live, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20). Christian, please believe with your whole heart that Jesus gives Himself for you. He is wholly yours. He will do all for you.^[53]

Lord Jesus, what wonderful grace is this, that You gave Yourself for me. In You there is eternal life. You are the life, and You give Yourself to be all that I need in my life. You purify me, sanctify me, and make me zealous in good

works. You take me wholly for Yourself and give Yourself wholly for me. Yes, my Lord, in all You are my life. Make me rightly understand this. Amen.

Notes

1. It was in His great love that the Father gave the Son. It was out of love that Jesus gave Himself (Romans 3:16; Ephesians 5:26). The taking, the having of Jesus, is the entrance into a life in the love of God. This is the highest life (John 14:21, 28; 17:23, 26; Ephesians 3:17, 18). Through faith we must press into love and live there (1 John 4:16-18).
2. Do you think that you have now learned all the lesson and how to begin every day with a childlike trust? I take Jesus this day to be my life and to do all for me.
3. Understand that to take and to have Jesus presupposes a personal communion with Him. To have pleasure in Him, to gladly hold conversation with Him, to rejoice in Him as my friend and in His love—this leads to the faith that truly takes Him.

Chapter 8^(TOC)

Children of God

"As many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name"—John 1:12.

What is given must be received, otherwise it does not profit. If the first great deed of God's love is the gift of His Son, then the first work of man must be to receive this Son. And if all the blessings of God's love come to us only in the ever-new, ever-living Son of the Father, then all these blessings enter into us daily through the always new, always continuing reception of the Son.

You, beloved young Christians, know what is necessary for this reception because you have already received the Lord Jesus. But all that this reception involves must become clearer and stronger—the unceasing, living action of your faith.^[54]

Within this action lies the increase of faith. Your first receiving of Jesus rested on the certainty provided by the Word—that He was for you. Through the Word your soul must be further filled with the assurance that all that is in Him is literally and truly for you, given to you by the Father; He is to be your life.

The impulse to your first receiving was based on your want and necessity. Now, through the Spirit, you become still poorer in spirit, and you see how much you have need of Jesus for everything, every moment. This leads to a ceaseless, ever-active taking of Him as your all.^[55]

When you first received, it was by faith in that which you could not yet see or feel. That same faith must be continually exercised in saying, "All that I see in Jesus is for me. I take it as mine, although I do not yet experience it." The love of God is a communicating—a ceaseless outstreaming of His light of life over the soul. It is a very powerful and genuine giving of Jesus. Our life is nothing but a continuous blessed understanding and reception of Him.^[56]

And this is the way to live as children of God. To as many as receive Him, to them He gives the power to become children of God. This holds true, not only of conversion and regeneration, but also every day of my life. If to walk in all things as a child of God and to exhibit the image of my Father is indispensable, then I must take Jesus, the only begotten Son. It is He who makes me a child of God. The way to live as a child of God is to have the heart and life full of Jesus. I go to the Word to learn all the characteristics of a child of God.^[57] After each one of them I write—"Jesus will work in me; I have **Him** to help me to be a child of God."

Beloved young Christian, I implore you to learn to understand the simplicity and the glory of being a true Christian. It is to receive Jesus in all His fullness and in all the glorious relations in which the Father gives Him to you. Take Him as your Prophet, as your wisdom, your light, your guide. Take Him as your Priest, who renews you, purifies you, sanctifies you, brings you near to God, takes you, and forms you wholly for His service. Take Him as your King, who governs you, protects you, and blesses you. Take Him as your Head, your example, your Brother, your life, your all. The giving of God is a divine and an ever-progressive, effectual communication to your soul. Let your taking be the childlike, cheerful, continuous opening of mouth and heart for what God gives—the full Jesus and all His grace. To every prayer the answer of God is Jesus. All is in Him, and all in Him is for you. Let your

response always be, "Jesus, in Him I have all." You are and you live, in all things, as children of God through faith in Jesus.

Father, open the eyes of my heart to understand what it is to be a child of God and to live always as a child, through always believing in Jesus, Your only Son. Let every breath of my soul be faith in Jesus, a confidence in Him, a resting in Him, a surrender to Him, so that He may work all in me. Amen.

Notes

1. By the grace of God, you now know that you have received Jesus and are God's child; you must now take pains to make His salvation known. There is many a one who longs to know and cannot find out how he can become a child of God.
2. Endeavour to make two things plain to him. First, that the new birth is something so high and holy that he can do nothing in it. He must receive eternal life from God through the Spirit. He must be born from above. This Jesus teaches (John 3:1-8). Then, make it clear to him how low God has descended to us with this new life, and how near He brings it to us. In Jesus there is life for everyone who believes in Him. This Jesus teaches (John 3:14-18). And Jesus and the life are in the Word.
3. Tell the sinner that when he takes the Word, he then has Jesus and life in the Word (Romans 10:8). Take pains to tell the glad tidings that we become children of God only through faith in Jesus.

Chapter 9^(TOC)

Our Surrender to Jesus

"They gave their own selves to the Lord"—2 Corinthians 8:5.

The chief element of what Jesus has done for me—always does for me—lies in His surrender of Himself for me. I have the main element of what He would have me do in my surrender to Him. For young Christians who have given themselves to Jesus, it is of great importance to always hold fast—to confirm and renew this surrender. This is the special life of faith which says again every day, "I have given myself to Him. I will follow and serve Him."^[58] He has taken me. I am His and entirely at His service."^[59]

Young Christian, hold firm your surrender and continue to make it firmer. When a stumbling or a sin recurs after you have surrendered yourself, do not think that the surrender was insincere. No, the surrender to Jesus does not make us perfect at once. You have sinned because you were not thoroughly or firmly enough in His arms. Adhere to this, even though it is with shame, "Lord, You know I have given myself to You, and I am Yours."^[60] Confirm this surrender again. Say to Him that you now begin to see better how complete the surrender to Him must be. Every day, renew the voluntary, entire, and undivided offering up of yourselves to Him.^[61]

The longer we continue as Christians, the deeper our insight into God's Word will lead us to surrender to Jesus. We will see more clearly that we do not yet fully understand or contemplate it. The surrender must become more

undivided and trustful. The language which Ahab once used must be ours, "My Lord, O King, according to thy saying, I am Yours, and all that I have" (1 Kings 20:4). This is the language of undivided dedication—I am thine, and all that I have. Keep nothing back. Keep back no single sin that you do not confess and turn from. Without conversion there can be no surrender.^[62] Lay upon the altar all of your thoughts, your utterances, your feelings, your labours, your time, your influence, and your property.^[63] Jesus has a right to all—He demands the whole. Give yourself, with all that you have, to be guided and used and kept, undivided and blessed. "My Lord, O King, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have."

That is the language of trustful dedication. It is on the Word of the Lord—which calls upon you to surrender yourself—that you have done this. That Word is your guarantee that He will take and guide and keep you. As surely as you give yourself does He take you. And what He takes He can keep. Only we must not take it out of His hand again. Let it remain fixed with you, that your surrender is in the highest degree pleasing to Him. Be assured of it, your offering is a sweet smelling savour. Not on what you are or what you experience or discover in yourselves do you say this, but on His Word. According to His Word you are able to stand on this—what you give He will take, and what He takes He will keep.^[64]

Therefore, every day let this be the childlike joyful activity of your life of faith. Surrender yourselves continually to Jesus, and you are safe in the certainty that He, in His love, takes and holds you securely. His answer to your giving is the renewed and always deeper surrender of Himself to you.

According to Your Word, my Lord and King, I am Yours, and all that I have. Every day, this day, I will confirm it. I am not my own, but am my Lord's. Fervently I implore You to take full possession of Your property so that no

one may doubt whose I am. Amen.

Notes

1. Ponder once again the words giving and taking and having. What I give to Jesus, He takes with a divine taking. And what He takes, He has and thereafter cares for. Now it is absolutely no longer mine. I must have no thought of it. I may not dispose of it. Let your faith find full expression in adoration. Jesus takes me. Jesus has me.
2. Should a time of doubting or darkness overtake you, and your assurance that the Lord has received you has come to be lost, do not allow yourself to become discouraged. Come simply as a sinner and confess your sins. Believe in His promises that He will by no means cast out those who come to Him, and begin simply on the ground of the promises to say, "I know that He has received me."
3. Do not forget what the chief element in surrender is-it is a surrender to Jesus and to His love. Fix your eye not on your activity in surrender, but on Jesus who calls you, who takes you, and who can do all for you. This is what makes faith strong.
4. Faith is always a surrender. Faith is the eye for seeing the invisible. When I look at something, I surrender myself to the impression which it makes upon me. Faith is the ear that hearkens to the voice of God. When I believe a message; I surrender myself to the influence, whether cheering or

saddening, which the words exercise on me. When I believe in Jesus, I surrender myself to Him, in reflection, in desire, in expectation, in order that He may be in me and do in me that for which He has been given to me by God.

Chapter 10^(TOC)

A Saviour from Sin

"Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins"—Matthew 1:21.

"Ye know that He was manifest to take away sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not"—1 John 3:5, 6.

It is sin that is the cause of our misery. It is sin that provoked God and brought His curse on man. He hates sin with a perfect hatred and will do everything to root it out.^[65] It is to take away sin that God gave His Son—that Jesus gave Himself.^[66] It is God who sets us free. Not only free from punishment, curse, uneasiness and terror, but also free from sin itself.^[67] You know that He was manifested so that He might take away our sins. Let us receive this thought deep into our hearts—it is God who takes away our sins. The better we grasp this the more blessed our life will be.

All do not receive this. They chiefly seek to be freed from the consequences of sin, from fear and darkness; and the punishment that sin brings.^[68] It is for this reason that they do not come to the true rest of salvation. They do not understand that to be saved is to be freed from sin. Let us hold it firmly. Jesus saves through the taking away of sin. Then we will learn two things.

The first is to come to Jesus with every sin.^[69] Now that you have given yourself over to the Lord, do not lose heart over the sin which still attacks and rules you. Make no endeavour to take away and overcome sin merely by your own strength. Bring every sin to Jesus. He has been ordained by God to

take away sin. He has already brought it to nothingness upon the cross and has broken its power.^[70] It is His work—is His desire to set you free from it. Learn, then, to always come to Jesus with every sin. Sin is your deadly foe. If you confess it to Jesus—surrender it to Him—you will certainly overcome it.^[71]

Learn to believe this firmly. This is the second point. Understand that Jesus Himself is the Saviour from sin. It is not you who must overcome sin with the help of Jesus, but Jesus Himself—Jesus in you.^[72] If, in this way, you become free from sin and enjoy full salvation, then endeavour to always stand in full fellowship with Jesus. Do not wait until you enter into temptation to ask for the help of Jesus. But let your life beforehand always be through Jesus. Let His nearness be your one desire. Jesus saves from sin, and to have Jesus is salvation from sin.^[73] O that we could rightly understand this! The saving from sin is not an occasional event, but, rather, it is a blessing through Jesus, to us and in us.^[74] When Jesus fills me, when Jesus is all for me, sin has no hold on me. "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not."

Yes, sin is driven out and kept out only through the presence of Jesus. It is Jesus Himself, through His giving to me and His living in me, who is my salvation from sin.

Precious Lord, let Your light stream over me. Let it become clearer to my soul that You Yourself are my salvation. To have You with me, in me—this keeps sin out. Teach me to bring every sin to You. Let every sin drive me to a closer alliance with You. Then Your name will truly become my salvation from sin. Amen.

Notes

1. See of what importance it is that the Christian should always

grow in the knowledge of sin. The sin that I do not know, I cannot bring to Jesus. The sin that I do not bring to Him is not taken out of me.

2. To know sin better the following things are required:

The constant prayer, "Examine me; make known to me my transgression and my sin" (Job 13:23; Psalm 139:23, 24).

A tender conscience that is willing to be convinced of sins through the Spirit, as He also uses the conscience for this end.

The very humble surrender to the Word, to think about sin only as God thinks.

3. The deeper knowledge of sin will be found in these results:

That we will see as sin things which we previously did not regard in this light.

That we will more exceedingly perceive the detestable character of sin (Romans 7:13).

That with the overcoming of external sins we come to understand more clearly the deep sinfulness of our nature, of the enmity of our flesh against God. Then we give up all hope of being or of doing anything good, and we are turned wholly to live in faith through the Spirit.

4. Let us thank God very heartily that Jesus is a Saviour from sin. The power that sin has had over us, Jesus now has. The place that sin has taken in the heart, Jesus will now take. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from

the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2).

Chapter 11^(TOC)

The Confession of Sin

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"—1 John 1:9.

The one thing which God hates is sin. It grieves and provokes Him, and He will destroy it. The one thing that makes man unhappy is sin.^[75] The one thing which Jesus had to give His blood for was sin. In all the communication between the sinner and God, this is the first thing which the sinner must bring to his God—sin.^[76]

When you first came to Jesus, you perceived this in some measure. But you should learn to understand this lesson more deeply. The one counsel concerning sin is—bring it daily to the only One who can take it away, God Himself. You should learn that one of the greatest privileges of a child of God is the confession of sin. It is only the holiness of God that can consume sin. Through confession I must hand over my sin to God, lay it down in God, and get God's acquittal of it. I must cast it into the fiery oven of God's holy love which burns against sin like a fire. God, yes, God Himself, and He alone, takes away sin.^[77]

The Christian does not always understand this. He has an inborn tendency to want to cover sin, or to make it less, or to root it out only when he desires to draw near to God. He considers covering the sin with repentance, self-blame, or with contempt for the temptation which caused him to sin. He tries to

conceal sin with the fruits of the works he has done or still hopes to do.^[78]

Young Christian, if you want to enjoy the peacefulness of a complete forgiveness and a divine cleansing of sin, see to it that you correctly use the confession of sin. In the true confession of sin, you have one of the most blessed privileges of a child of God, and one of the deepest roots of a powerful spiritual life.

For this end, let your confession be a precise one.^[79] The continued, uncertain confession of sin does more harm than good. It is much better to say to God, "I have nothing to confess," than to say, "I do not know what to confess." Begin with one sin. Let it come to a complete harmony between God and you concerning this one sin. Let it be fixed with you that this sin is—through confession—placed in God's hands. You will experience that in such confessions there is both power and blessing.

Let the confession be a righteous one.^[80] Deliver up the sinful deed to be laid aside. Deliver up the sinful feeling with trust in the Lord. Confession implies renunciation—the putting off of sin. Give up sin to God, who forgives you of it, and cleanses you from it. Do not confess, if you are not prepared, or if you do not heartily desire to be freed from it. Confession has value only if it is a giving up of sin to God.

Let the confession be one of trust.^[81] Depend entirely on God to actually forgive you, and to cleanse you from sin. Continue in confession by casting the sin you desire to be rid of into the fire of God's holiness until your soul has the firm confidence that God takes it on His own account to forgive and to cleanse. It is this faith which truly overcomes the world and sin. It is the faith that God, in Jesus, actually frees us from sin.^[82]

Brothers and sisters, do you understand it now? What must you do with sin,

with every sin? Bring it in confession to God, and give it to God. God alone takes away sin.

Lord God, what thanks I will express for this unspeakable blessing-that I may come to You with sin. It is known to You, Lord, how sin before Your holiness causes terror and flight. It is known to You how it is our deepest thought, first to have sin covered, and then to come to You with our desire and endeavour for good. Lord, teach me to come to You with sin-every sin-and in confession to lay it down before You and give it up to You. Amen.

Notes

1. What is the distinction between the covering of sin by God and by man? How does man do it? How does God do it?
2. What are the great hindrances in the way of the confession of sin?

Ignorance about sin,

Fear to come with sin to the Holy Father,

The endeavour to come to God with something good,

Unbelief in the power of the blood of Jesus and in the riches of grace.

3. Must I immediately confess an oath or a lie or a wrong word, or wait until my feeling has first cooled and become correctly disposed? Confess it immediately; come in full sinfulness to God, without first desiring to make it less!
4. Is it also necessary to confess before man? It is indispensable

if our sin has been against man. Also, we must be careful, for it is often easier to acknowledge a wrong before God than before man (James 5:16).

Chapter 12_(TOC)

The Forgiveness of Sins

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered"—Psalm 32:1.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul.... who forgiveth all thine iniquities"—Psalm 103:2, 3.

In connection with surrender to the Lord, it was said that the first great blessing of the grace of God was this—the free, complete, everlasting forgiveness of all your sins. For the young Christian, it is of great importance that he should stand firm in this forgiveness of his sins. He should always carry the certainty of it about with him. For this reason, he must especially consider the following truths.

The forgiveness of our sin is a complete forgiveness.^[83] God does not partially forgive. Even with man, we believe that half forgiveness is not true forgiveness. The love of God is so great, and the atonement in the blood of Jesus so complete and powerful, that God always forgives completely. Take time with God's Word so that you may fully understand that your guilt has been blotted out completely. God absolutely thinks no more about your sins. "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."^[84]

The forgiveness of our sin restores us entirely again to the love of God.^[85] Not only does God no longer attribute us with sin, but He also restores us to the righteousness of Jesus—for His sake we are as dear to God as He is. Not only is wrath turned away from us, but the fullness of love now rests upon us. "I

will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him" (Hosea 14:4). Forgiveness is the access to all of God's love. On this account, forgiveness is also an introduction to all the other blessings of redemption.

Live in the full assurance of forgiveness, and let the Spirit fill your heart with the certainty and the blessedness of it. Then you will have great confidence in expecting all from God. Learn from the Word of God—through the Spirit—to know God correctly, and to trust Him as the ever-forgiving God. That is His name and His glory. To one to whom much, yes, all is forgiven, He will also give much. He will give all.^[86] Therefore, let it be your joyful thanksgiving every day. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities." Then forgiveness becomes the power of a new life. "Her sins which are many, are forgiven: for she loved much" (Luke 7:47). The forgiveness of sins, received in living faith every day, is a bond which binds you to Jesus and His service.^[87]

Then, the forgiveness of former sins supplies the courage to immediately confess every new sin and to trustfully receive forgiveness.^[88] Look, however, to one thing—the certainty of forgiveness must not be a matter of memory or understanding, but must be the fruit of life. It must be our living relationship with the forgiving Father and with Jesus in whom we have forgiveness.^[89] It is not enough to know that I once received forgiveness. My life in the love of God, my living communion with Jesus by faith—this makes the forgiveness of sin again always new and powerful. It is the joy and the life of my soul.

Lord God, this is the wonder of Your grace—that You are a forgiving God. Teach me every day to know in this the glory of Your love. Let the Holy Spirit seal forgiveness to me as a blessing, everlasting, ever fresh, living, and powerful. And let my life be like a song of thanksgiving. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities." Amen.

Notes

1. Forgiveness is one with justification. Forgiveness is the word that looks more to the relation of God as Father. Justification looks more to His acquittal as Judge. Forgiveness is a word that is more easily understood by the young Christian. But he must also endeavour to understand the word justification and to become familiar with all that the Scriptures teach about it.

2. About justification we must understand:

That man in himself is totally unrighteous;

That he cannot be justified by works, that is, pronounced righteous before the judgement seat of the Father;

That Christ Jesus has brought righteousness for our sake. His obedience is our righteousness;

That we, through faith, receive Him, are united with Him, and then are pronounced righteous before God;

That we, through faith, have the certainty of this, and, as justified, draw near to God;

That union with Jesus is a life by which we are not only pronounced righteous, but are truly righteous and act righteously.

3. Let the certainty of your part in justification, in the full forgiveness of your sins, and full restoration to the love of God, be your confidence in drawing near to God every day.

Chapter 13^(TOC)

The Cleansing of Sin

"If we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"—1 John 1:7, 9.

The same God who forgives sin also cleanses from it. Cleansing is no less a promise of God than is forgiveness; therefore, it is a matter of faith. Cleansing, as well as forgiveness, is as obtainable from God as it is indispensable and impossible for man.

And what now is this cleansing? The word comes from the Old Testament. While forgiveness was a sentence of acquittal passed on the sinner, cleansing was something that happened to him and in him. Forgiveness came to him through the Word. Cleansing was something done to him that he could experience.^[90] Consequently, we are liberated from unrighteousness and from the pollution and the working of sin by the inner revelation of the power of God—cleansing. Through cleansing we obtain the blessing of a pure heart—a heart in which the Spirit can complete His operations with a view to sanctifying us and revealing God within us.^[91]

Forgiveness and cleansing are both through the blood of Jesus. The blood breaks the power that sin has in heaven to condemn us. The blood also breaks the power of sin in the heart which holds us captive. The blood has a ceaseless operation in heaven from moment to moment. The blood has likewise a ceaseless operation in our heart—to purify the heart from the sin

which always seeks to penetrate from the flesh. The blood cleanses the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. The marvellous power that the blood has in heaven, it also has in the heart.^[92]

Cleansing is also through the Word—the Word testifies of the blood and of the power of God.^[93] Therefore, cleansing is also through faith. It is a divine and effectual cleansing, but it must be received in faith before it can be experienced and felt. I believe that I am cleansed with a divine cleansing, even while I still perceive sin in the flesh. Through faith in this blessing, cleansing itself will be my daily experience.

Cleansing is sometimes ascribed to God, or to the Lord Jesus, or sometimes to man.^[94] That is because God cleanses us by making us active in our own cleansing. Through the blood, the lust which leads to sin is mortified, the certainty of power against sin is awakened, and the desire and the will are thus made alive. Happy is the person who understands this. He is protected against the useless pursuit of self purification in his own strength, because he knows God alone can do it. He is protected against discouragement, for he knows God will certainly do it.

Accordingly, our chief emphasis occurs in two things—the desire and the reception of cleansing. The desire must be strong for a real purification. Forgiveness must be only the gateway or beginning of a holy life. I have remarked several times that the secret of progress in the service of God is a strong yearning to become free from every sin—a hunger and thirst after righteousness.^[95] Blessed are they who thus yearn. They will understand and receive the promise of a cleansing through God.

They also learn what it means to do this in faith. Through faith they know that an unseen, spiritual, heavenly, but very real cleansing through the blood

is being worked in them by God Himself.

Child of God, you remember how we have seen that it was to cleanse us that Jesus gave Himself.^[96] Let Him, the Lord God, cleanse you. Having these promises of a divine cleansing, receive this cleansing for yourself. Believe that every sin, when it is forgiven you, is also cleansed away. It will be to you according to your faith. Let your faith in God, in the Word, in the blood, in your Jesus, continually increase. "God is faithful and just to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Lord God, I thank You for these promises. You not only give forgiveness, but also cleansing. As surely as forgiveness comes first, does cleansing follow for everyone who desires it and believes. Lord, let Your Word penetrate my heart, and let a divine cleansing from every sin that is forgiven me be the continual expectation of my soul.

Beloved Saviour, let the glorious, ceaseless cleansing of Your blood, through Your Spirit in me, be made known to me and shared by me every moment. Amen.

Notes

1. What is the connection between cleansing by God and cleansing by man himself?
2. What, according to 1 John 1:9, are the two things that must precede cleansing?
3. Is cleansing, as well as forgiveness, the work of God in us? If this is the case, of what inexpressible importance is it to trust God for it? To believe that God gives me a divine cleansing in

the blood when He forgives me is the way to become partaker of it.

4. What, according to Scripture, are the evidences of a pure heart?

5. What are "clean hands" (Psalm 24:4)?

Chapter 14^(TOC)

Holiness

"But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation: because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy"—1 Peter 1:15, 16.

"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us sanctification"—1 Corinthians 1:30.

"God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."—2 Thessalonians 2:13.

Not only has God chosen and called us for salvation, but also for holiness—salvation in holiness. The goal of the young Christian must not only be safety in Christ, but also holiness in Christ. Safety and salvation are, in the long run, found only in holiness. The Christian who thinks that his salvation consists merely in safety and not in holiness will find himself deceived. Young Christian, listen to the Word of God—Be ye holy.

And why must I be holy? Because He who called you is holy and summons you to fellowship and conformity with Himself. How can anyone be saved in God when he does not have the same disposition as God?^[97]

God's holiness is His highest glory. In His holiness, His righteousness and His love are united. His holiness is the flaming fire of His zeal against all that is sin. This is how He keeps Himself free from sin, and in love makes others also free from it. It is as the Holy One of Israel that He is the Redeemer, and that He lives in the midst of His people.^[98] Redemption is given to bring us to

Himself and to the fellowship of His holiness. We cannot possibly take part in the love and salvation of God if we are not holy as He is holy.^[99] Young Christians, be holy.

And what is this holiness that I must have? Christ is your sanctification. The life of Christ in you is your holiness.^[100] In Christ you are sanctified—you are holy. In Christ you must continually be sanctified. The glory of Christ must penetrate your whole life.

Holiness is more than purity. In Scripture we see that cleansing precedes holiness.^[101] Cleansing is the taking away of that which is wrong—liberation from sin. Holiness is the filling with that which is good and divine—the disposition of Jesus. Holiness is conformity to Him. It is separation from the spirit of the world and being filled with the presence of the Holy God. The tabernacle was holy because God lived there. We are holy, as God's temple, after we have God living within us. Christ's life in us is our holiness.^[102]

And how do we become holy? By the sanctification of the Spirit. The Spirit of God is named the Holy Spirit because He makes us holy. He reveals and glorifies Christ in us. Through Him, Christ dwells in us, and His holy power works in us. Through this Holy Spirit, the workings of the flesh are mortified, and God works in us both the will and the accomplishment.^[103]

And what work do we have to do to receive this holiness of Christ through the Holy Spirit? "God hath chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and ***belief of the truth***".^[104] The holiness of Christ becomes ours through faith. Naturally, there must first be the desire to become holy. We must cleanse ourselves from all pollutions of flesh and spirit by confessing them—giving them up to God—and having them cleansed away in the blood. Then, holiness can be perfected.^[105] Then, in belief of the truth that Christ

Himself is our sanctification, we have to take and receive from Him what is prepared in His fullness for us.^[106] We must be deeply convinced that Christ is wholly and alone our sanctification as He is our justification. We must believe that He will actually and powerfully work in us what is pleasing to God. In this faith, we must know that we have sufficient power for holiness, and that our work is to receive this power from Him by faith every day.^[107] He gives His Spirit, the Holy Spirit, in us to communicate the holy life of Jesus to us.

Young Christian, the Trinity is three times holy.^[108] And this Trinity is the God who sanctifies you. The Father sanctifies by giving Jesus to you and confirming you in Jesus. The Son sanctifies by becoming your sanctification and giving you the Spirit. The Spirit sanctifies by revealing the Son in you, preparing you as a temple for the indwelling of God, and making the Son live in you. Be holy, for God is holy.

Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, what thanks will I render to You for the gift of Your Son as my sanctification, and that I am sanctified in Him. And what thanks for the Spirit of sanctification to live in me, and transplant the holiness of Jesus into me. Lord, help me to understand this correctly, and to long for the experience of it. Amen.

Notes

1. What is the distinction between forgiveness and cleansing, and between cleansing and holiness?
2. What made the temple a sanctuary? The indwelling of God. What makes us holy? Nothing less than the indwelling of God in Christ by the Holy Spirit. Obedience and purity are the way

to holiness; nothing is higher than holiness itself.

3. In Isaiah 57, verse 17, there is a description of the man who will become holy. It is he who, in poverty of spirit, acknowledges that even when he is living as a righteous man he has nothing, and he looks to God to come and dwell in Him.
4. No one is holy but the Lord. You have as much holiness as you have God in you.
5. The word "holy" is one of the most profound words in the Bible, the deepest mystery of the Godhead. Do you desire to understand something of it and to obtain part of it? Then take these two thoughts, "I am holy," "Be ye holy," and carry them in your heart as a seed of God that has life.
6. What is the connection between the perseverance of the saints and the perseverance in holiness?

Chapter 15^(TOC)

Righteousness

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Micah 6:8.

"Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.... Being then made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness. Even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness"—Romans 6:13, 18, 19.

The word of Micah teaches us that the fruit of the salvation of God is chiefly seen in three things. The new life must be characterised, in my relation to God and His will, by righteousness and doing right. It must be characterised in my relation to my neighbour, by love and benevolence. It must be characterised in relation to myself, by humility and lowliness. For the present, we will meditate on righteousness.

Scripture teaches us that no man is righteous before God, or has any righteousness that can stand before God.^[109] It says that man receives the rightness or righteousness of Christ for nothing, and that by this righteousness—received in faith—he is justified before God.^[110] This righteous sentence of God is something binding by which the life of righteousness is implanted in man, and he learns to live a righteous life.^[111] Being right with God is followed by doing right. "The just shall live by faith" a righteous life (Galatians 3:11).

It is to be feared that this is not always understood. One sometimes thinks more of justification than of righteousness in life and walk. To understand the will and the thoughts of God, let us trace what the Scriptures teach us on this point. We will be convinced that the man who is clothed in a divine righteousness before God must also walk before God and man in a divine righteousness.

Consider how, in the Word, the servants of God are praised as righteous^[112]—how the favour and blessing of God are pronounced on the righteous^[113]—how the righteous are called to confidence, to joy.^[114] See this especially in the Book of Psalms. See how often in Proverbs all blessing is pronounced upon the righteous.^[115] See how everywhere men are divided into two classes—the righteous and the godless.^[116] See how, in the New Testament, the Lord Jesus demands this righteousness.^[117] See how Paul, who announces most of the doctrine of justification by faith alone, insists that this is the aim of justification—to form righteous men, who do right.^[118] See how John names righteousness along with love as the two indispensable marks of the children of God.^[119] When you put all these facts together, it must be very evident to you that a true Christian is a man who does righteousness in all things, even as God is righteous.

Scripture will also teach you what this righteousness is. It is a life in accordance with the commands of God, in all their depth and profoundness. The righteous man does what is right in the eyes of the Lord.^[120] He does not obey the rules of human action—he does not ask what man considers lawful. A man who stands right with God, who walks uprightly with God, dreads, above all things, even the least unrighteousness. He is afraid, above all, of being partial to himself and of doing any wrong to his neighbour for the sake of his own advantage. In great and little things alike, he takes the Scriptures

as his measure and line. As an ally of God, he knows that the way of righteousness is the way of blessing and life and joy.

Consider, further, the promises of blessing and joy which God has for the righteous. Then live as one who—in friendship with God, and clothed with the righteousness of His Son through faith—has no alternative but to do righteousness.

O Lord, You have said, "There is no God else beside Me: a just God and a Saviour" (Isaiah 45:21). You are my God. It is as a righteous God that You are my Saviour and have redeemed me in Your Son. As a righteous God, You make me righteous also, and say to me that the righteous will live by faith. Lord, let the new life in me be the life of faith, the life of a righteous man. Amen.

Notes

1. Observe the connection between the doing of righteousness and sanctification in Romans 6:19, 22—"Yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." "Having become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification." The doing of righteousness, righteousness in conduct and action, is the way to holiness. Obedience is the way to become filled with the Holy Spirit. And the indwelling of God through the Spirit is holiness.
2. "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15). It was when Jesus had spoken that word that He was baptised with the Spirit. Let us set aside every temptation not to walk in full obedience toward God as

He did, and we too will be filled with the Spirit. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6).

3. Take pains to set before yourselves the image of a man who so walks that the name of "righteous" is involuntarily given to him. Think of his uprightness, his conscientious care to cause no one to suffer the least injury, his holy fear and carefulness to transgress none of the commands of the Lord—righteous and walking blamelessly in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. Then say to the Lord that you should so live.
4. You understand now the great word, "The Just shall live by faith" (Galatians 3:11). By faith the godless man is justified and becomes a righteous man. By faith he lives as a righteous man.

Chapter 16_(TOC)

Love

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another"—John 13:34, 35.

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law"—Romans 13:10.

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us"—1 John 4:11, 12.

In the word of Micah, in the previous section, righteousness is the first thing which God demands. To love mercy is the second. Righteousness stood more in the foreground in the Old Testament. Love is first seen as supreme in the New Testament. Passages to this effect are not difficult to find. In the advent of Jesus, the love of God is first revealed, the new, eternal life is first given, and we become children of the Father and kindred to each other. On this ground the Lord can then, for the first time, speak of the New Commandment—the commandment of brotherly love. Righteousness is not required less in the New Testament than in the Old.^[121] Yet the burden of the New Testament is that we have been given a power for love which was unattainable in the early days.^[122]

Let every Christian take it deeply to heart that in the first and the great commandment—the new commandment given by Jesus at His departure—the unique characteristic of a disciple of Jesus is brotherly love. And let him,

with his whole heart, yield himself to Him to obey that command. For the right exercise of this brotherly love, one must pay attention to more than one thing.

Love of the brethren arises from the love of the Father. By the Holy Spirit, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, and the wonderful love of the Father is unveiled to us, so that His love becomes the life and the joy of our soul. Our love of God springs out of the fountain of His love for us.^[123] And our love of Him naturally causes us to love the brethren.^[124] Do not attempt to fulfil the commandment of brotherly love by yourselves—you are not in a position to do this. But believe that the Holy Spirit, who is in you to make known the love of God to you, also certainly enables you to yield this love. Never say, "I feel no love. I do not feel as if I can forgive this man." Your decision to act should not be based on feelings. Rather, it is your duty to believe the command and to have faith in God to give you the power with which to obey the command. In obedience to the Father—with the choice of your will, and in faith that the Holy Spirit gives you power—begin to say, "I **will** love him. I **do** love him." The feeling will follow the faith. Grace gives power for all that the Father asks of you.^[125]

Brotherly love has its measure and rule in the love of Jesus. "This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you."^[126] The eternal life that works in us is the life of Jesus. It knows no other law than what we see in Him. It works with power in us what it worked in Him. Jesus Himself lives in us, and loves in and through us. We must believe in the power of this love in us, and, in that faith, love as He loved. Do believe that this is true salvation—to love even as Jesus loves.

Brotherly love must be in deed and in truth.^[127] It is not mere feeling. The power in Christ arises from faith which works by love. It manifests itself in

all the Christ-like characteristics that are specified in the Word of God. Contemplate its glorious image in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Notice all the glorious encouragements to gentleness, to longsuffering, to mercy.^[128] In all your conduct, let it be seen that the love of Christ lives in you. Let your love be a helpful, self-sacrificing love—like that of Jesus. Hold all children of God, however sinful or wrong they may be, fervently dear. Let your love for them teach you to love all men.^[129] Show your family, the Church, and the world that within you "love is greatest" (1 Corinthians 13:13). Show all that the love of God has a full dwelling and a free working in your life.

Christian, God is love. Jesus is the gift of this love—to bring love to you, to transplant you into that life of godlike love. Live in that faith, and you will not complain that you have no power to love. The love of the Spirit will be your power and your life.

Beloved Saviour, I discern more clearly that the whole of the new life is a life in love. You are the Son of God's love—the gift of His love—who has come to introduce us into His love, and give us a dwelling there. And the Holy Spirit is given to shed abroad the love of God in our hearts, to open a spring out of which love will stream to You and to the believers and to all mankind. Lord, here am I, one redeemed by love, to live for it and, in its might, to love all. Amen.

Notes

1. Those who reject the Word of God sometimes say that it is of no importance what we believe if we but have love, and so they are for making love the one condition of salvation. In their zeal against this view, the orthodox party have sometimes presented faith in justification, as if love were not of so much

importance. This is likely to be very dangerous. God is love. His Son is the gift, the bringer, of His love to us. The Spirit sheds the love of God in the heart. The new life is a life in love. Love is the greatest thing. Let it be the chief element in our life—true love which is known in the keeping of God's commandments (see 1 John 3:10, 23, 24; 5:2).

2. Do not wonder why I have said that you must love even though you do not feel the least bit of love. Not the feeling, but the will, is your power. It is not in your feeling, but in your faith, that the Spirit in you is the power of your will to work in you all that the Father bids you. Therefore, although you feel absolutely no love for your enemy, say in the obedience of faith, "Father, I love him; in faith in the hidden working of the Spirit in my heart, I do love him.
3. Do not think that this is love, if you wish no evil to anyone, or if you should be willing to help, if he were in need. No, love is much more. Love is **His love**. Love is the disposition with which God addressed you when you were His enemy, and afterward ran to you with tender longing to caress you.

Chapter 17^(TOC)

Humility

"And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Micah 6:8

"Learn of me that I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls"—Matthew 11:29.

One of the most dangerous enemies the young Christian must guard against is pride or self-exaltation. There is no sin that works more cunningly and more hiddenly. It knows how to penetrate into everything, into our service for God, our prayers, and even into our humility. Self-exaltation can extract the nutrients out of even the smallest thing in earthly life and the holiest thing in spiritual life.^[130] The Christian must therefore be on his guard against it. He must listen to what the Scriptures teach about it and about the humility by which it is driven out.

Man was created to have part in the glory of God. He obtains this by surrendering himself to the glorification of God. The more he seeks the glory of God to be his only trait, the more of this glory he will know for himself.^[131] The more he forgets and loses himself—desiring to be nothing so that God may be all and be alone glorified—the happier he will be.

Because of sin this design has been thwarted. Man seeks himself and his own will.^[132] Grace has come to restore what sin has corrupted. Grace will bring man to glory if he will deny himself and live solely for the glory of God. Jesus is the example of this humility or lowliness. He gave no thought to

Himself—He gave Himself over wholly to glorify the Father.^[133]

He who wants to be freed from self-exaltation must not consider obtaining it by striving against its mere workings. No, pride must be driven out and kept out by humility. The Spirit of life in Christ, the Spirit of His lowliness, will work in us true humility.^[134]

He will most often use the Word to bring about this sense of humility. We understand that it is by the Word that we are cleansed from sin. It is by the Word that we are sanctified and filled with the love of God.

Now observe what the Word says about this point. It speaks of God's dislike of pride and the punishment that comes with it.^[135] It gives the most glorious promises to the meek.^[136] In almost every Epistle, humility is commended to Christians as one of the first virtues.^[137] The most important characteristic which Jesus seeks to impress upon His disciples is humility. His whole incarnation and redemption have their roots in His humiliation.^[138]

Take singly some of these words of God from time to time and lay them up in your heart. The tree of life yields many different kinds of seed—among them, the seed of the heavenly plant called humility. The seeds are the words of God. Carry them in your heart. They will shoot up and bear fruit.^[139]

Consider, moreover, how lovely, how becoming, how well-pleasing humility is to God. As man, created for the honour of God, you find it suitable to you.^[140] As a sinner, deeply unworthy, you have nothing more to urge against it.^[141] As a redeemed soul, who knows that only through the death of the natural "I" does the way to the new life lie, you find it indispensable.^[142] As a child of the Father, overwhelmed with His love, you must consider it above all else.^[143]

But here, as everywhere in the life of grace, let faith be the chief thing.

Believe in the power of the eternal life which works in you. Believe in the power of Jesus, who is your life. Believe in the power of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you. Do not attempt to hide your pride, or to forget it, or to root it out yourself. Confess this sin—and all its workings that you can find—in the sure confidence that the blood cleanses and that the Spirit sanctifies. Learn that Jesus is meek and lowly in heart. Consider that He is your life, with all that He has. Believe that He gives His humility to you. Be clothed with humility, so that you may be clothed with Jesus. It is Christ in you that will fill you with humility.

Blessed Lord Jesus, there never was anyone among the children of men so high, so holy, so glorious as You. And never was there anyone who was so humble and ready to deny Himself as the servant of all. Lord, when will we learn that humility is the grace by which man can be most closely conformed to the divine glory? Teach me this. Amen.

Notes

1. Take heed that you do nothing to encourage pride on the part of others. Take heed that you do not allow others to feed your pride. Take heed, above all, that you do nothing yourself to feed your pride. Let God alone, always and in all things, obtain the honour. Endeavour to observe all that is good in His children, and to thank Him heartily for it. Thank Him for all that helps you to hold yourself in small esteem, whether it is sent through friend or foe. Resolve, especially, not to be eagerly bent on your own honour when this is not accorded to you as it ought to be. Commit this to the Father. Take heed only to His honour.

2. By no means suppose that faint-heartedness or doubting is humility. Deep humility and strong faith go together. The centurion who said, "I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof," and the woman who said, "Yea, Lord, yet even the dogs eat of the crumbs," these two were the most humble and the most trustful that the Lord found (see Matthew 8:10; 15:28). The reason is this—the nearer we are to God, the less we are in ourselves, but the stronger we are in Him. The more I see of God, the less I become, the deeper is my confidence in Him. To become humble, let God fill eye and heart. Where God is all, there is no time or place for man.

Chapter 18^(TOC)

Stumblings

"In many things we all stumble"—James 3:2.

This word of God by James is the description of what man is—even the Christian—when he is not kept by grace. It serves to take away from us all hope in ourselves.^[144] "Now unto Him that is able to guard you from stumbling... be glory, majesty, dominion, and power... for evermore" (Jude 24, 25). This word of God by Jude points to Him who keeps us from falling, and who stirs our soul to give Him the honor and the power. It serves to confirm our hope in God.^[145] "Brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble" (2 Peter 1:10). This word of God by Peter teaches us the way in which we can become recipients of the care of the Almighty, and it confirms our having been chosen by God to walk as He did (see verses 4, 8, 11). It serves to lead us into diligence and conscientious watchfulness.^[146]

For the young Christian, what he should think about his stumblings is often a difficult question. On this point, he should especially be on his guard against two errors. Some become discouraged when they stumble—they think that their surrender was not sincere, and they lose their confidence toward God.^[147] Others again take it too lightly. They think that it cannot be any other way. They seldom concern themselves with stumblings and, therefore, continue to live in them.^[148] Let us take these words of God to teach us what we should think of our stumblings. There are three lessons.

Do not let stumblings discourage you. You are called to perfection—yet this does not come at once. Time and patience are needed for it. Therefore, James says, "Let patience have its perfect work that ye may be perfect and entire."

[149] Do not think that your surrender was insincere—acknowledge only how weak you still are. Do not think that you must continue to stumble—acknowledge only how strong your Savior is. [The Dutch version has it: "Let endurance have a perfect work, that ye may be perfect and wholly sincere"—Tr.]

Let stumbling arouse you to faith in the mighty Keeper. It is because you have not relied on Him with a sufficient faith that you have stumbled. [150] Let stumbling drive you to Him. The first thing that you must do with a stumbling is to go with it to your Jesus. Tell it to Him. [151] Confess it, and receive forgiveness. Confess it, and commit yourself with your weakness to Him, and depend on Him to keep you. Continually sing the song, "To Him that is mighty to keep you, be the glory."

And then, ***let stumbling make you very wise.*** [152] By faith you will strive and overcome. In the power of your Keeper, and in the joy and security of His help, you will have courage to watch. The firmer you make your commitment, the stronger the certainty that He has chosen you—He will not let you go. You will become more conscientious to live in all thing: only for Him, in Him, through Him. [153] By doing this the Word of God says, you will never stumble.

Lord Jesus, as a sinner who is capable of stumbling, I give honor to You every moment. You are mighty to keep men from stumbling. Yours is the might and the power—I take You as my Keeper. I look to Your love which has chosen me and wait for the fulfillment of Your word, "Ye shall never stumble." Amen.

Notes

1. Let your thoughts about what the grace of God can do for you be taken only from the Word of God. Our natural expectations-that we must always be stumbling-are wrong. They are strengthened by more than one thing. There is secret unwillingness to surrender everything. There is the example of so many sluggish Christians. There is the unbelief that cannot quite understand that God will really keep us. There is the experience of so many disappointments when we have striven in our own power.
2. Let no stumbling be tolerated just because it seems to be a small or insignificant thing.

Chapter 19^(TOC)

Jesus the Keeper

"The Lord is thy keeper... The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil,... He shall preserve thy soul"—Psalm 121:5, 7.

"I know Him whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day"—2 Timothy 1:12.

The Lord has not only received you, but He will also keep you.^[154] For young disciples of Christ who are still weak, there is no lesson that is more necessary than this. The lovely name, "the Lord thy keeper," must be carried in the heart until the assurance of an Almighty keeping becomes as strong with us as it was with Paul, when he spoke that glorious word, "I know Him in whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Come and learn this lesson from him.

Learn from Paul to ***deposit your pledge with Jesus***. Paul had surrendered himself, body and soul, to the Lord Jesus—that was his pledge which he had deposited with the Lord. You have also surrendered yourselves to the Lord, but perhaps not with the clear understanding that it is in order to be kept every day. Do this now daily. Deposit your soul with Jesus as a dear pledge that He will keep it secure. Do this same thing with every part of your life. Is there something that you cannot properly hold? Your heart, because it is too worldly?^[155] Your tongue, because it is too idle?^[156] Your temper, because it is too passionate?^[157] Your calling to confess the Lord because you are too

weak?^[158] Learn, then, to deposit it as a pledge to be kept with Jesus, so that He may fulfill in you the promise of God concerning it. You often pray and strive against a sin in vain. It is because—although this too is done with God's help—**you** want to be the person who overcomes. No, entrust the matter wholly to Jesus, "the battle is not yours, but God's."^[159] Leave it in His hands. Believe in Him to do it for you. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith."^[160] But you must first place it wholly out of your hands and into His.

Learn from Paul to set your confidence **only on the power of Jesus**. I am persuaded that **He is able** to keep my pledge. You have an Almighty Jesus to keep you. Faith keeps itself occupied only with His omnipotence.^[161] Let your faith be especially strengthened in what God is able to do for you.^[162] Expect, with certainty, that He will do great and glorious things for you, entirely above your own strength. See in the Holy Scriptures how constantly the power of God was the foundation for the trust of His people. Take these words and hide them in your heart. Let the power of Jesus fill your soul. Ask only, "What is my Jesus able to do?" What you really trust Him with, He is able to keep.^[163]

And learn also from Paul where he obtained the assurance that this power would keep his pledge. He found it **in his knowledge of Jesus**. "I know Him whom I have believed," therefore I am assured.^[164] You can trust the power of Jesus, if you **know** that He is yours, if you converse with Him as your friend. Then you can say, "I know whom I have believed. I know that He holds me very dear. I know and am assured that He is able to keep my pledge." This is the sure way to the full assurance of faith. Deposit your pledge with Jesus, and give yourselves wholly into His hands. Think much on His might, and rely upon Him. Live with Him so that you may always know in whom you

have believed.

Young disciples of Christ, please receive this word, "The Lord is thy keeper." For every weakness, every temptation, learn to deposit your soul with Him as a pledge. You can depend on it, you can shout joyfully over it. "The Lord shall keep you from all evil."^[165]

Holy Jesus, I take You as my Keeper. Let Your name, "The Lord thy keeper, "sound as a song in my heart the whole day. Teach me to deposit my case as a pledge with You in every need, and to be assured that You are able to keep it. Amen.

Notes

1. There was once a woman who for years, and with much prayer, had striven against her temper but could not obtain the victory. On a certain day she resolved not to come out of her room until by earnest prayer she had the power to overcome. She went out in the opinion that she would succeed. Scarcely had she been in the household when some thing gave her offence and caused her to be angry. She was deeply ashamed, burst into tears and hastened back to her room. A daughter, who understood the way of faith better than she, went to her and said, "Mother, I have observed your conflict. May I tell you what I think the hindrance is?" "Yes, my child." "Mother, you struggle against temper and pray that the Lord may **help** you to overcome. This is wrong. The Lord must do it alone. You must give your temper wholly into His hands. Then He takes it wholly and He keeps you." The mother could not understand this at first, but later it was made clear to her. And

she enjoyed the blessedness of the life in which Jesus keeps us, and we by faith have the victory. Do you understand this?

2. The expression, "The Lord must help me to overcome," is altogether outside of the New Testament. The grace of God in the soul does not become a help to us. He will do everything. "The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin" (Romans 8:2).

3. When you surrender anything to the Lord for keeping, take heed to two things:

that you give it wholly into His hands,

and that you keep it there.

Let Him have it wholly. He will carry out your case gloriously!

Chapter 20_(TOC)

Power and Weakness

"He said unto me, My strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore will I rather glory in my weakness, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in weakness: for when I am weak, then am I strong"—2 Corinthians 12:9, 10.

There is almost no word that is so imperfectly understood in the Christian life as the word **weakness**. Sin and shortcoming, sluggishness and disobedience, are given as the reasons for our weakness. With this interpretation of weakness, the true feeling of guilt and the sincere endeavour after progress are impossible. How can I be guilty, when I do not do what it is not in my power to do? The Father cannot demand of His child what He can certainly do independently. That, indeed, was done by the law under the Old Covenant, but the Father, under the New Covenant, does not do that. He requires nothing more of us than what He has prepared for us to do in His Holy Spirit. The new life is a life in the power of Christ through the Spirit.

The error of this mode of thinking is that people estimate their weakness, not too highly, but too meagrely. They would still do something by the exercise of all their powers, and with the help of God. They do not know that they must be nothing before God.^[166] You think that you have still a little strength, and that the Father must help you by adding something of His own power to your feeble energy. This thought is wrong. Your weakness appears in the fact that you **can do nothing**. It is better to speak of utter inability, for that is what

the Scriptures mean by the word "weakness." "Without me ye can do nothing." "In us is no power."^[167]

Whenever the young Christian acknowledges and admits to his weakness, then he learns to understand the secret of the power of Jesus. He then sees that he is not to wait and pray to become stronger, to feel stronger. No, in his inability, he is to have the power of Jesus. By faith he is to receive it. He is to believe that it is for him, and that Jesus Himself will work in and by him.^[168] It then becomes clear to him what the Lord means when He says, "My power is made perfect in your weakness." He knows to return the answer, "When I am weak, then am I—yes, then am I—strong." Yes, the weaker I am, the stronger I become. And he learns to sing with Paul, "I shall glory in my weaknesses." "I take pleasure in weaknesses." "We rejoice when we are weak."^[169]

It is wonderful how glorious that life of faith becomes for him who is content to have nothing. How glorious to feel nothing in himself and to always live on the power of his Lord. He learns to understand what a joyful thing it is to know God as his strength. "The Lord is my strength and song"^[170] He lives in what the Psalms so often express, "I love Thee, O Lord, my strength." "I will sing of Thy strength: unto Thee, O my strength, will I sing praises."^[171] He understands what is meant when a psalm says, "Give strength to the Lord: the Lord will give strength to His people," and when another says, "Give strength to God: the God of Israel, He giveth strength and power to His people."^[172] When we give or attribute all the power to God, then He gives it to us again.

"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:14). The Christian is strong in his Lord.^[173] Not sometimes strong and sometimes weak, but always weak, and therefore always strong. He has merely to know

and use his strength trustfully. To be strong is a command, a mandate that must be obeyed. From obedience there comes more strength. "Be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart" (Psalm 31:24). In faith, the Christian must simply obey the command, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."^[174]

O God of the Lord Jesus, the Father of glory give unto us the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Jesus, so that we may know the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe. Amen.

Notes

1. As long as the Christian thinks of the service of God or of sanctification as something that is hard and difficult, he will make no progress. He must see that this very thing is ***impossible*** for him. Then he will cease endeavouring to do something. He will surrender himself so that Christ may work all in him.
2. The complaint about weakness is often nothing else except an apology for our idleness. There is power to be obtained in Christ for those who will take the energy to have it.
3. "Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might" (Ephesians 6:10). Mind that. I must abide in the Lord and in the power of His might, then I become strong. To have His power I must have Himself. The strength is His, and continues to be His. The weakness continues to be mine. He, the strong, works in me, the weak. I, the weak, abide by faith in Him, the strong, so that I, in the same moment, know myself to be weak

and strong.

4. Strength is for work. He who wants to be strong simply to be pious will not be so. He who, in his weakness, begins to work for the Lord, will become strong.

Chapter 21_(TOC)

The Life of Feeling

"We walk by faith, not by sight"—2 Corinthians 5:7.

"Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed"—John 20:29.

"Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God"—John 11:40.

In connection with your conversion, there was no greater hindrance than your feelings. You thought, perhaps for years, that you must experience something, must feel and perceive something in yourselves. It seemed to you as if it were too hazardous to simply, and without some feeling, believe in the Word, and to be sure that God had received you—that your sins were forgiven. But finally you had to acknowledge that the way of faith, without feeling, was the way of the Word of God. And it has been the way to salvation for you. Through faith alone you have been saved, and your soul has found rest and peace.^[175]

In the further life of the Christian, there is no temptation that is more persistent and more dangerous than this same feeling. We do not find the word "feeling" in Scripture. What we call "feeling" the Scripture calls "seeing." And it tells us without ceasing that not seeing yet still believing—believing in opposition to what we see—gives salvation."(Abraham), not being weak in faith, considered not his own body" (Romans 4:19). Faith simply adheres to what God says. Those who see, yet have no faith, will not partake of the glory of God. Those who have faith in God, but do not see, will

witness His glory.^[176] The man who seeks for feeling and mourns about it will not find it. The man who does not care for feeling will have it overflowing. "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 10:39). Faith in the Word later on becomes sealed with true feeling by the Holy Spirit.^[177]

Child of God, learn to live by faith. Let it be firmly implanted in you that faith is God's way to a blessed life. When there is no feeling of liveliness in prayer, when you feel cold and dull in the inner chamber, live by faith. Let your faith look upon Jesus as near and upon His power and faithfulness. Though you have nothing to bring to Him, believe that He will give you all. Feeling always seeks something in itself. Faith keeps itself occupied with what Jesus is.^[178] When you read the Word and have no feeling of interest or blessing, read it yet again in faith. The Word will work and bring blessing, "the word effectually worketh in those that believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:13). When you feel no love, believe in the love of Jesus, and say in faith that He knows that you still love Him. When you have no feeling of gladness, believe in the inexpressible joy that there is for you in Jesus. Faith is blessedness and will give joy to those who are not concerned about the self-sufficiency which springs from joy, but about the glorification of God which springs from faith.^[179] Jesus will surely fulfill His Word, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"

Every day the Christian has to choose between the life of feeling and the life of faith. Happy is he who, once and for all, has made the firm choice. For every morning, he renews the choice not to seek or listen for feeling, but only to walk by faith, according to the will of God. The faith that occupies itself with the Word—with what God has said—and, through the Word—with God

Himself and Jesus His Son—will taste the blessedness of a life in God above. Feeling seeks and aims at itself. Faith honours God and will be honoured by Him. Faith pleases God. Through faith the believer will receive from Him the witness in the heart that he is acceptable to God.

Lord God, the one, the only thing that You desire of Your children is that they should trust You, and that they should always hold conversation with You in that faith. Lord, let it be the one thing in which I seek my happiness, to honour and to please You by a faith that firmly holds You, the Invisible, and trusts You in all things. Amen.

Notes

1. There is indeed something marvellous in the new life. It is difficult to make it clear to the young Christian. The Spirit of God teaches him to understand it after he perseveres in grace. Jesus has laid the foundation of that life in the first word of the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3). A feeling of deep poverty and of royal riches, of utter weakness and of kingly might, exist together in the soul. To have nothing in itself, to have all in Christ—that is the secret of faith. And the true secret of faith is to bring this into exercise and, in hours of emptiness, to know that we still have all in Christ.
2. Do not forget that the faith God's Word speaks so much of does not stand in opposition to works alone, but also in opposition to feelings. Therefore, for a pure life of faith, you must cease to seek your salvation, not only in works, but also in feelings. Let faith always speak against feeling. When

feeling says, "In myself I am sinful; I am dark; I am weak; I am poor; I am sad," let faith say, "In Christ I am holy; I am light; I am strong; I am rich; I am joyful."

Chapter 22^(TOC)

The Holy Spirit

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father"—Galatians 4:6.

The great gift of the Father, through whom He obtained salvation and brought it near to us, is the Son. On the other hand, the great gift of the Son—whom He sends to us from the Father to apply to us an inner and effectual salvation—is the Holy Spirit.^[180] As the Son reveals and glorifies the Father, so the Spirit reveals and glorifies the Son.^[181] The Spirit is in us to transfer to us the life and the salvation that are prepared in Jesus—to make them wholly ours.^[182] Jesus, who is in heaven, is made present in us, dwells in us, by the Spirit. We have seen that in order to partake of Jesus two things are always necessary—the knowledge of the sin that is in us, and the understanding of the redemption that is in Him. It is the Holy Spirit who continually promotes this double work in believers. He reproves and comforts. He convicts of sin and He glorifies Christ.^[183]

The Spirit convicts us of sin. He is the light and the fire of God. Through Him sin is unveiled and consumed. He is "the Spirit of judgement and of burning," by whom God purifies His people.^[184] There is no limit as to how deep repentance must be for the anxious soul who complains of not feeling his sin deeply enough. He must come daily just as he is.

The deepest conviction often occurs after conversion. To the young convert

we simply have to say let the Spirit who is in you always convince you of sin. He will make you hate sin, which formerly you knew only by name. He will make you know—and with shame confess—sin, which you had not seen in the hidden depths of your heart. He will point out to you sin, which you fancied was not with you, and which you had judged severely in others.^[185] With repentance and self-condemnation, He will teach you to cast yourself upon grace as being entirely sinful. In this way, you will be redeemed and purified from sin.

Beloved brothers and sisters, the Holy Spirit is in you as the light and fire of God to unveil and to consume sin. The temple of God is holy, and you are this temple. Let the Holy Spirit in you have full mastery to point out and expel sin.^[186] After He makes you know sin, He will, at every turn, make you know Jesus as your life and your sanctification.

And then the Spirit, who rebukes, will also comfort. He will glorify Jesus in you, and will take what is in Jesus and make it known to you. He will give you knowledge concerning the power of Jesus' blood to cleanse,^[187] and the power of Jesus' indwelling to keep.^[188] He will make you see how literally, how completely, how certainly Jesus is with you every moment, so that He may do all his own Jesus-work in you. Yes, in the Holy Spirit, the living, almighty, and ever-present Jesus will be your portion. You will also know this, and have the full enjoyment of it. The Holy Spirit will teach you to bring all your sin and sinfulness to Jesus. He will teach you to know Jesus with His complete redemption from sin as your own. As the Spirit of sanctification, He will drive out sin in order that He may cause Jesus to live within you.^[189]

Beloved young Christian, take time to understand and to become filled with the truth—***the Holy Spirit is in you.*** Review all the assurances of God's Word that this is so.^[190] Please, do not think, for even a moment, of living as a

Christian without the indwelling of the Spirit. Take pains to have your heart filled with the faith that the Spirit lives in you and will do His mighty work. It is through faith that the Spirit comes and works.^[191] Have a great reverence for the work of the Spirit in you. Seek Him every day to believe, to obey, to trust, and He will take and make known to you all that there is in Jesus. He will make Jesus very glorious to you and in you.

Father, I thank You for this gift which Jesus sent to me from You. I thank You that I am now the temple of Your Spirit, and that He dwells in me. Lord, teach me to believe this with my whole heart, and to live in the world as one who knows that the Spirit of God is in him to lead him. Teach me to think on this with deep reverence and loving awe, that God is in me. Lord, in that faith I have the power to be holy.

Holy Spirit, reveal to me all that is sin in me. Holy Spirit, reveal to me all that is Jesus in me. Amen.

Notes

1. The knowledge of the person and the work of the Holy Spirit is for us of just as much importance as the knowledge of the person and the work of Christ.
2. Concerning the Holy Spirit, we must endeavor to hold firm the truth that He is given as the fruit of the work of Jesus for us, that He is the power of the life of Jesus in us, and that through Him, Jesus Himself, with His full salvation, lives in us.
3. In order to enjoy all of this, we must be filled with the Holy Spirit. This simply means emptied of all else and full of Jesus. The way to be filled with the Spirit is to deny ourselves, take

up the cross, and to follow Jesus. Or rather, this is the way in which the Spirit leads us to His fullness. No one has the power to enter fully into the death of Jesus unless he is led by the Spirit. But He takes him who desires this by the hand and brings him into it.

4. As the whole of salvation, the whole of the new life, is by faith, so is this also true of the gift and the working of the Holy Spirit. By faith—not by works, not in feeling—do I receive Him, am led by Him, and am filled with Him.
5. As clear and definite as my faith is in the work that Jesus only and alone finished for me, so clear and definite must my faith be in the work that the Holy Spirit accomplishes in me—to work in me the willing and the performing of all that is necessary for my salvation.

Chapter 23^(TOC)

The Leading of the Spirit

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God"—Romans 8:14, 16.

The very same Spirit who **leads** us as children also assures us that we **are** children. Without His leading there can be no assurance of our relationship as children of God. True, full assurance of faith is enjoyed by him who surrenders himself entirely to the leading of the Spirit.

Of what does this leading consist? Mainly of this, that our whole, hidden, inner life is guided by Him so that it may be what it ought to be. We must firmly believe this. Our growth and increase, our development and progress, is not **our** work but His. We are to trust Him for this. As a tree or animal grows by the spirit of life given to it by God, so does the Christian grow by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.^[192] We have to cherish the joyful assurance that the Spirit—whom the Father gives to us—guides our hidden life with His divine wisdom and power. He brings it where God will have it.

Then there are also special directions of this leading. "He will guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13). When we read the Word of God, we are to wait for the Spirit to make us experience the truth and the essential power of what God says. He makes the Word living and powerful. He leads us into a life corresponding to the Word.^[193]

When you pray, you can rely on His leading, "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities" (Romans 8:26). He leads us to what we must desire. He leads us to the way in which we are to pray—trustfully, persistently, and mightily.^[194]

He leads us in the way of sanctification. He leads us in the path of righteousness. He leads us into all the will of God.^[195]

He will lead in our speaking and working for the Lord. Every child has need of Him to know and to do the work of the Father. Without Him, no child can please or serve the Father. The leading of the Spirit is the blessed privilege, the sure token, and the only power of a child of God.^[196]

And how can you fully enjoy this leading? The first thing that is necessary for this is ***faith***. You must take time, young Christian, to have your heart filled with the deep and living consciousness that the Spirit lives within you. Concerning what the Spirit is in you and for you, you are to read God's glorious declarations in the Word until you are filled with the conviction that you truly are a temple of the Spirit. Ignorance or unbelief on this point makes it impossible for the Spirit to speak in you and to lead you. Cherish an ever-abiding assurance that the Spirit of God lives in you.^[197]

Then the second thing that is necessary is this—***hold yourself still***, so that you may hear the voice of the Spirit, "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street" (Isaiah 42:2). He whispers gently and quietly. Only the soul that sets itself very silently toward God can perceive His voice and guidance. When we become needlessly involved with the world—its business, its cares, its enjoyments, its literature, its politics—the Spirit cannot lead us. When our service for God is a bustling and working in our own wisdom and strength, the Spirit cannot be heard in us. The weak and the simple—who are willing to have themselves taught in humility—receive

the leading of the Spirit. Sit down every morning, and often in the day, to say, "Lord Jesus, I know nothing; I will be silent. Let the Spirit lead me."^[198]

And then—***be obedient***. Listen to the inner voice, and do what it says to you. Fill your heart every day with the Word. When the Spirit reveals to you what the Word says, take it upon yourself to do it. Therefore, you will become capable of further teaching. The full blessing of the Spirit is promised to the obedient.^[199]

Young Christian, know that you are a temple of the Spirit. Know that it is only through the daily leading of the Spirit that you can walk as a child of God, with the witness that you are pleasing the Father.

Precious Saviour, imprint this lesson deeply on my mind. The Holy Spirit is in me. His leading is every day and everywhere indispensable for me. I cannot hear His voice in the Word when I do not wait silently upon Him. Lord, encircle me with Your holy love; keep watch over me so that I may always walk as a pupil of the Spirit. Amen.

Notes

1. It is often asked, "How do I know that I will continue standing, that I will be kept, that I will increase?" The question dishonours the Holy Spirit—it is the sign that you do not know Him or do not trust Him. The question indicates that you are seeking the secret of strength for perseverance in yourself, and not in the Holy Spirit, your heavenly guide.
2. As God sees to it that every moment there is air for me to breathe, so the Holy Spirit will increasingly maintain life in the hidden depths of my soul. He will not break off His own

work.

3. From the time that we receive the Holy Spirit, we have nothing to do but to honour His work, to keep our hands off of it, and to trust Him and let Him work.
4. The beginning and the end of the work of the Spirit is to reveal Jesus to me and to cause me to abide in Him. As soon as I become concerned with the work of the Spirit in me, I hinder Him. He cannot work when I am not willing to look upon Jesus.
5. The voice of the Father, the voice of the good Shepherd, the voice of the Holy Spirit, is very gentle. We must learn to become deaf to other voices, to the world and its news, to friends and their thoughts, to our own ego and its desires. Then we will recognise the voice of the Spirit. Let us often set ourselves silent in prayer, entirely silent, to offer up our will and our thoughts, and with our eyes upon Jesus, to keep ear and heart open for the voice of the Spirit.

Chapter 24^(TOC)

Grieving the Spirit

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption"—Ephesians 4:30.

It is by the Holy Spirit that the child of God is sealed, separated, stamped, and marked as the possession of God. This sealing is not a dead or external action that is finished once and for all. It is a living process, which has power in the soul, and gives a firm assurance of faith, only when it is experienced through the life of the Spirit in us. Because of this, we are to take great care not to grieve the Holy Spirit. In Him alone can you have the joyful certainty and the full blessing of your childship every day.^[200] It is the very same Spirit who leads us and witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

How can anyone grieve the Spirit? Above all, by yielding to sin. He is the Holy Spirit, given to sanctify us, and—for every sin from which the blood cleanses us—to fill us with the holy life of God, with God Himself. Sin grieves Him.^[201] For this reason, the Word of God names the sins which, above all, we are to guard against. Notice the four great sins which Paul mentions in connection with our text.

The first is **lying**. There is no single sin in the Bible that is so brought into connection with the devil as lying. Lying is from hell, and it goes back to hell. God is the God of truth. And the Holy Spirit cannot possibly carry forward His blessed working in a man or woman who lies, who is insincere,

who does injury to the truth. Young Christian, review with care what the Word of God says about lying and liars. Pray God that you may never speak anything but the literal truth. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.^[202]

Then there is **anger**. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you" (Ephesians 4:31). Along with lying, the most common sin which keeps the Christian from increasing in grace is the sin of temper—hastiness, the proneness to anger.^[203] Christian, let all ill-temperedness be put away from you. This follows from the command not to grieve the Spirit. Believe that the Holy Spirit, the great power of God, is in you. Surrender yourself every day to His indwelling in faith that Jesus can keep you by Him. He will make and keep you gentle. Yes, believe in the power of the Father, the power of Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome temper.^[204] Confess the sin. God will cleanse you from it. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

Then there is **stealing**. This is all sin against the property or possession of my neighbour, and all deception and dishonesty in trade, in which I wrong my neighbour and seek my own advantage at his cost. Christ's law is love which works to the advantage of my neighbour as well as myself. The love of money and property—inseparable from self-seeking—is incompatible with the leading of the Holy Spirit. The Christian must be a man who is known to be honest, righteous, and who loves his neighbour as himself.^[205]

Then the apostle says, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29). Even the tongue of God's child belongs to his Lord. He must be known by his manner of speech. By his speaking, he can grieve or please the Spirit. The sanctified tongue is a blessing not only to his neighbour, but to the speaker himself. Foul talk, idle

words, foolish jests—they grieve the Holy Spirit. They make it impossible for the Spirit to sanctify, to comfort, and to fill the heart with the love of God.^[206]

Young Christian, please do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by these or other sins. If you have committed such sins, confess them, and God will cleanse you from them. By the Holy Spirit you are sealed. If you want to walk in the stability and joy of faith, listen to the word, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."

Lord God, my Father in heaven, I pray that you would cause me to understand what marvellous grace You are manifesting to me, giving me Your Holy Spirit in my heart. Lord, let this faith be the argument and the power for cleansing me from every sin. Holy Jesus, sanctify me, that in my thinking, speaking, acting—in all things—Your image may appear. Amen.

Notes

1. The thought of the Christian about this word, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit," is a test of whether or not he understands the life of faith. For some it is a word of terror and fear. A father once brought his child to a train to go on a journey with the new governess with whom she was to remain. Before her departure he said, "I hear that she is very sensitive and takes things amiss. Take care that you do nothing to grieve her." The poor child did not have a pleasant journey. It appeared to her very grievous to be in anxious fear of one who was so prone to take everything amiss. Many have this same view of the Holy Spirit. They think that He is a Being whom it is difficult to satisfy, who thinks little of our weakness, and who, even though we take pains, is discontented when our work is not

perfect.

2. Another father also brought his daughter to a train to go on a journey, and to be a time away from home, but in the company of her mother whom she loved very deeply. "You are to be a good child," said the father, "and do everything to please your mother. Otherwise you will grieve her and me." "Oh, certainly Papa!" was the joyful answer of the child. For she felt happy to be with her mother and was willing to do her utmost to be agreeable to her.
3. These are children of God to whom the Holy Spirit is so well-known in His tender, helpful love as the Comforter and the good Spirit—that the word, "Grieve not the Spirit of God," has for them a gentle and encouraging power. May our fear to grieve Him always be the tender, childlike fear of trustful love.

Chapter 25^(TOC)

Flesh and Spirit

"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ"—1 Corinthians 3:1.

"I am carnal, sold unto sin: to will is present with me, but to perform that which is good I find not. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you"—Romans 7:14, 18; 8:2, 9.

"Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit"—Galatians 3:3; 5:18, 25.

It is of great importance for the young Christian to understand that within him there are two natures which strive against one another.^[207] If we study the texts noted above, we will see that the Word of God teaches us the following truths on this point.

Sin comes from the flesh. The reason why the Christian still sins is that he yields to the flesh and does not walk by the Spirit. Every Christian has the Spirit and lives by the Spirit, but every Christian does not walk by the Spirit. If he walks by the Spirit, he will not fulfil the desires of the flesh.^[208]

So long as there are strife and envy in the Christian, the Word of God calls him carnal. He would like to do good, but he cannot. He does what he should not, because he still strives in his own strength and not in the power of the Spirit.^[209]

The flesh remains under the law and seeks to obey the law. But through the flesh the law is powerless, and the endeavour to do good is vain. Its language is, "I am carnal, sold under sin: to will is present with me, but to perform that which is good is not."^[210]

This is not the condition in which God would have his child remain. The Word says, "It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). The Christian must not only *live* by the Spirit, but also *walk* by the Spirit. He must be a spiritual man, and live entirely under the leading of the Spirit.^[211] If he walks in this way, he will no longer do what he should not. He will no longer be as in Romans 7—a newborn babe seeking to fulfil the law. But, as in Romans 8, the Spirit will set him free from the law which gives no power but brings death, and he will no longer walk in the oldness of the letter but, rather, in the newness of the Spirit.^[212]

There are Christians who begin with the Spirit, but end with the flesh. They are converted, born again through the Spirit, but fall unconsciously into a life in which they endeavour to overcome sin and be holy through their own exertion—through doing their best. They ask God to help them in these endeavours and think that this is faith. They do not understand what it means to say, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Romans 7:18). They do not know that they are to cease from their own endeavours so that they may do God's will, wholly and only through the Spirit.^[213]

Child of God, please learn what it means to say to yourself just as you are, even after the new birth—"I am carnal, sold under sin." No longer strive to do your best under your own strength, merely asking God to help you in your endeavours. No, learn to say, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Every day, let your goal be

to have the Spirit work in you. Walk by the Spirit, and you will be redeemed from the life of complaining about your inability to do good into a life of faith, in which it is God who works in you both to will and to do (Philippians 2:13).

Lord God, teach me to acknowledge with all my heart that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells nothing good. Teach me also to cease from every thought, as if I could with my own endeavours serve or please You. Teach me to understand that the Spirit is the Comforter, who frees me from all anxiety and fear about my own powerlessness, in order that He may work the strength of Christ in me. Amen.

Notes

1. In order to understand the conflict between flesh and Spirit, we must especially seek to have a clear insight into the connection between Romans, chapters 7 and 8. In Romans 7, verse 6, Paul spoke of the twofold way of serving God, the one in the oldness of the letter, the other in the newness of the Spirit. In Romans 7, verses 14-16, he describes the first way; in Romans 8, verses 1-16, he describes the second. This appears clearly when we observe that in chapter 7 he mentions the Spirit only once, the law more than twenty times; while in chapter 8, he mentions the Spirit sixteen times. In Romans 7 we see the regenerate soul, just as he is in himself with his new nature—desirous, but powerless to fulfil the law, and mourning as one who "is captive under the law of sin." In Romans 8 we hear him say, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and

death." Romans 7 describes the ever-abiding condition of the Christian, contemplated as renewed, but not experiencing by faith the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 8 describes his life in the freedom which the Spirit of God really gives from the power of sin.

2. It is important to understand that the conflict between grace and works, between faith and one's own power, between the Holy Spirit and confidence in ourselves and the flesh, always continues to go on. This applies not only to conversion and the reception of the righteousness of God, but even further into a walk in this righteousness. The Christian has to watch very carefully against the deep inclination of his heart to still work in his own behalf when he sees anything wrong in himself, or when he would follow after holiness, instead of always and only trusting in Jesus Christ, and so serving God in the Spirit.
3. In order to clarify the opposition between the two methods of serving God, let me consecutively cite, in their entirety, the passages in which they are expressed with special distinctions. Compare them with care. Pray to God for the Spirit in order to make you understand them. Take deeply to heart the lesson as to how you are to serve God well, and how not to serve Him.

"The circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter" (Romans 2:29).

"To him that worketh not but believeth, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4:5).

"Ye are not under the law but under grace" (Romans 6:14).

"We are delivered from the law, that we should serve in newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter" (Romans 7:6).

"We know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin" (Romans 7:14).

"The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:4).

"Ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption" (Romans 8:15).

"The righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? Who shall descend into the deep? But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart" (Romans 10:5-8).

"If by grace, then it is no more of works" (Romans 11:6).

"I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20).

"The just shall live by faith; yet the law is not of faith; but the man that doeth them shall live in them" (Galatians 3:11, 12).

"If the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise" (Galatians 3:18).

"So that thou art no more a servant, but a son" (Galatians 4:7).

"Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman,

but of the free" (Galatians 4:31).

"Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16).

"If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (Galatians 5:18).

"Who worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Philippians 3:3).

"Another priest, who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:16).

4. Beloved Christian, you have received the Holy Spirit from the Lord Jesus to reveal Him and His life in you, and to mortify the working of the body of sin. Pray often to be filled with the Spirit. Live in the joyful faith that the Spirit is in you, as your Comforter and Teacher, and that through Him all will be right. Learn this text by heart, and let it live in your heart and on your lips, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Philippians 3:3).

Chapter 26^(TOC)

The Life of Faith

"The just shall live by his faith"—Habakkuk 2:4.

"We are delivered from the law, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter"—Romans 7:6.

"I live; and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me"—Galatians 2:20.

The word from Habakkuk is quoted three times in the New Testament as the divine representation of salvation in Christ by faith alone.^[214] But that word is very often misunderstood—as if it ran, Man will be justified by faith on his conversion. The word includes this, but signifies much more. It says that the just will **live** by faith—the whole life of the righteous, from moment to moment, will be by faith.^[215]

As presented in God's Word, we all know how sharp the opposition is between the grace that comes by **faith** and the law that demands our **works**. This is generally noted with reference to justification. But that distinction holds just as much for the whole life of sanctification. The just will live by faith alone. That is, they will have power to live according to the will of God. At his conversion, the sinner found it necessary to understand that there was nothing good in him—that he must receive grace as one who was powerless and godless. As a believer, he must understand just as clearly that in him there is nothing good—that every moment he must receive his power for good from above.^[216] And his work must therefore be to look up and believe

and receive his power from above—from his Lord in heaven—every morning and every hour. ***I am not to do what I can, and hope in the Lord to supply strength.*** No, as one who has been dead—literally able for nothing in himself, and whose life is in his Lord above—I am to lean by faith on Him who will work mightily in me.^[217]

Happy is the Christian who understands that his greatest danger is to fall under the law—to be eager to serve God in the flesh with his own strength. Happy is he when he realises that he is not under the law—which demands and yet is powerless through the flesh—but is under grace where he simply has to receive what has been given. Happy is he when he fully accepts for himself the promise of the Spirit who transfers all that is in Christ to him. Yes, happy is he when he understands what it is to live by faith—to serve, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit.^[218]

Let us make the words of Paul our own. They present the true life of faith to us, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live" (Galatians 2:20). Not only my sin, but my flesh, all that is of myself—my own living and willing, my own power and working—I have given up to death. I no longer live of myself. I cannot. I will not live or do anything.^[219] Christ lives in me. He Himself—by His Spirit—is my power, and teaches and strengthens me to live as I ought to. And that life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in Him. It is my responsibility to believe in Him to work the willing as well as the accomplishment.

Young Christian, let this life of faith be your faith.

Lord Jesus, You are my life. Yes, my life. You live in me, and are willing to take my whole life into Your own hands. And my whole life may be a joyful trust and experience that You are working all in me daily.

Precious Lord, to that life of faith I will surrender myself. Yes, to You I surrender myself, to teach me and to reveal Yourself fully in me. Amen.

Notes

1. Do you understand the error in saying—if the Lord helps me? The Lord must help me. In natural things we speak like this because we have a certain measure of power, and the Lord will increase it. But the New Testament never uses the word "help" of the grace of God in the soul. We have absolutely no power—God is not to help us, because we are weak. No, He is to give His life and His power in us because we are entirely powerless. He who discerns this correctly will learn to live by faith alone.
2. "Without faith it is impossible to please God; Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23). Such words of the Spirit of God teach us how every deed and disposition of our life is to be full of faith.
3. Hence, our first work every day is to exercise faith in Jesus as our life, to believe that He dwells in us, and will do all for us and in us. This faith must be the mood of our soul the whole day. This faith cannot be maintained except in the fellowship and nearness of Jesus Himself.
4. This faith has its power in the mutual surrender of Jesus and the believer to each other. Jesus first gives Himself wholly for us. Then, the believer gives himself wholly in order to be taken into possession and to be guided by Jesus. Then the soul

cannot even doubt if He will do all for it.

Chapter 27^(TOC)

The Might of Satan

"Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: but I prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not"—Luke 22:31, 32.

Nothing makes an enemy more dangerous than the fact that he remains hidden or forgotten. Of the three great enemies of the Christian—the world, the flesh, and the devil—the last is the most dangerous. Not only because it is he who lends the others what power they have, but also because he is not seen and, therefore, little known or feared. The devil has the power of darkness. He darkens the eyes, so that men do not know him. He surrounds himself with darkness, so that he is not observed. Yes, he even has the power to appear as an angel of light.^[220] It is by the faith that recognises things unseen that the Christian is to endeavour to know Satan—even as the Scriptures have revealed him.

When the Lord Jesus was living on earth, His great work was to overcome Satan. When He was filled with the Spirit at His baptism, the Spirit brought Him into contact with Satan as head of the world of evil spirits, and He was to combat and overcome him.^[221] After that time, the eyes of the Lord were always open to the power and working of Satan. In all sin and misery He saw the revelation of the mighty kingdom of the evil one. He saw the enemy of God and man, not only in the demoniacs, but also in the sick.^[222] Jesus saw the work of Satan in Peter's advice to avoid the cross, and in his denial of the Lord. Yet, we would have considered those events to be the natural revelation

of Peter's character.^[223] In His own suffering—where we rather speak of the sin of man and the permission of God—Jesus perceives the power of darkness. His whole work in living and in dying was to destroy the works of Satan. As likewise, He will utterly destroy Satan himself at His second coming.^[224]

His word to Peter, compared with the personal experience of the Lord, gives us a fearful insight into the work of the enemy. "Satan hath desired to have you," says Jesus. "As a roaring lion, he walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," says Peter himself later on (1 Peter 5:8).^[225] He does not have unlimited power, but he is always eager to make use of every weak or unguarded moment. "That he might sift you as wheat." What a picture! This world, even the Church of Christ, is the threshing floor of Satan. The corn belongs to God—the chaff is Satan's own. He sifts and sifts continually, and all that falls through with the chaff, he tries to take for himself. And many a Christian falls through in a terrible fashion and, were it not for the intercession of his Lord, would perish forever.^[226]

Satan has more than one sieve. The first is generally worldly-mindedness—the love of the world. Many are spiritual in time of poverty, but when they become rich, they again eagerly strive to win the world. Or in the time of conversion and awakening they appear very zealous, but through the cares of the world, they are led astray.^[227]

A second sieve is self-love and self-seeking. Whenever anyone does not give himself undividedly to serve his Lord and his neighbour—to love his neighbour in the Lord—it soon appears that he lacks the principal characteristic of a disciple. It will be made clear that many who profess devotion to the service of God utterly fail on this point and must be regarded with the chaff. Lovelessness is the sure sign of the power of Satan.^[228]

Still another sieve, a very dangerous one, is self-confidence. Under the name of following the Spirit, one may listen to the thoughts of his own heart. He is zealous for the Lord, but with a carnal zeal, in which the gentleness of the Lamb of God is not seen. Without being observed, the movements of the flesh mingle with the workings of the Spirit. While he boasts that he is overcoming Satan, he is being secretly ensnared by him.^[229]

What a serious life here on earth, where God gives Satan permission to set his threshing floor even in the Church. Happy are they who, with deep humility, fear, and trembling, distrust themselves. Our only security is in the intercession and guidance of Him who overcame Satan.^[230] Far be it from us to think that we know all the depths of Satan and are a match for all his cunning strategies. As well as in the visible, he works and has power in the region of the spirit—the invisible. Let us fear that while we have known and overcome him in the visible, he might prevail over us in the spiritual. May our only security be the conviction of our frailty and weakness, and our confidence in Him who certainly keeps the humble heart.

Lord Jesus, open our eyes to know our enemy and his wiles. Cause us to see him and his realm, that we may dread all that is of him. And open our eyes to see how You have overcome him, and how in You we are invincible. Teach us what it is to be in You, to mortify all that is of the mere ego and the will of the flesh, and to be strong in weakness and lowliness. And teach us to bring into prayer the conflict of faith against every stronghold of Satan, because we know that You will destroy him under our feet. Amen.

Notes

1. What comfort does the knowledge of the existence of Satan give us? We know that sin is derived from a foreign power

which has thrust itself into our nature and does not naturally belong to us. We know, besides, that he has been entirely vanquished by the Lord Jesus, and thus has no power over us so long as we abide trustfully in Christ.

2. The whole of this world, with all that is in it, is under the domination of Satan. Therefore, there is nothing, even what appears to be good and fair, that may not be dangerous for us. In all things, even in what is lawful and right, we must be led and sanctified by the Spirit if we want to continue to be liberated from the power of Satan.
3. Satan is an evil spirit. Only by the good Spirit, the Spirit of God, can we offer resistance to him. He works in the invisible. In order to combat him, we have to enter into the invisible by prayer. He is a mighty prince. Only in the name of One who is mightier, and in fellowship with Him, can we overcome.
4. What a glorious work is labour for souls, for the lost, for drunkards, for heathen—a battle to rescue them from the might of Satan (Acts 26:18).
5. In the book of Revelation, the victory over Satan is ascribed to the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 12:11). Christians have also testified that there is no power in temptation, because Satan readily retreats when one appeals to the blood. It is by the blood that sin has been entirely expiated, and we are thus also wholly freed from his power.

Chapter 28^(TOC)

The Conflict of the Christian

"Strive to enter in by the narrow door"—Luke 13:24.

"Fight the good fight of faith"—1 Timothy 6:12.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith"—2 Timothy 4:7.

These texts speak of a twofold conflict. The first is addressed to the unconverted—"Strive to enter in by the narrow door." Entrance by a door is the work of a moment. The sinner is not to strive to enter during his whole lifetime. He is to strive and do it immediately. He is not to allow anything to hold him back—he must enter in.^[231]

Then comes the second, the lifelong conflict—by the narrow door I come upon the new way. On the new way there will always be enemies. Of this lifelong conflict Paul says, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." With respect to the continuous conflict, he gives the charge, "Fight the good fight of faith."

There is much misunderstanding about this twofold conflict. Many strive all their life against the Lord and His summons. Because they are not at rest, but feel an inner conflict, they think that this is the conflict of a Christian. Assuredly, it is not. This is one—not willing to abandon everything and surrender himself to the Lord—who struggles against God.^[232] This is not the conflict that the Lord would have. What He says is that the conflict is concerned with entering in—but not a conflict for long years. No, He desires

that you should break through the enemies who hold you back, and immediately enter in.

Then follows the second conflict, which endures for life. Twice Paul calls this the fight of faith. The chief characteristic of it is faith. He who well understands that the principal element in the battle is to believe, and who acts accordingly, will certainly succeed. In another passage Paul says to the Christian combatant, "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one."^[233]

And what then does it mean, this "fight of faith"? That, while I strive, I must believe that the Lord will help me? No, it is not so, although it is often misunderstood as such.

In a conflict, it is of supreme importance that I be in a stronghold or fortress which cannot be taken. With such a stronghold, a weak garrison can offer resistance to a powerful enemy. Our conflict as Christians is now no longer concerned with going into the fortress. No, we have gone in, are now in, and so long as we remain in it, we are invincible. The stronghold, this stable fort, is Christ.^[234] By faith we are in Him. By faith we know that the enemy can make no progress against our fortress. All of Satan's wiles go forth on the line of enticing us out of our fortress—engaging us in conflict with him on the open plain. There he always overcomes. But if, in faith, we strive and abide in Christ, then we overcome Satan, because he has to deal with Him who fights and overcomes.^[235] "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). Our first and greatest work is thus *to believe*. As Paul said before he mentions the warlike equipment of the Christian, "My brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might" (Ephesians 6:10).

The reason why the victory is only by faith, and why the fight of faith is the good fight, is this—it is the Lord Jesus who purchased the victory, and who alone gives power and dominion over the enemy. If we abide in Him, surrender ourselves to live in Him, and by faith appropriate what He is, then the victory is in itself our own. Then we understand—"The battle is not yours, but God's. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace" (2 Chronicles 20:15; Exodus 14:14). Except that we be in Christ, pleasing Him, opposition to Satan can achieve nothing good. In ourselves we achieve nothing, but ⁷⁷in Christ we are more than conquerors. By faith we stand in Him, righteous before God, and likewise so in Him, we are strong against our enemies. ^[236]

In this light we can read and understand all the noble passages in the Old Testament—especially in the Psalms—where the glorious conflict of God in behalf of his people is spoken of. Fear or spiritlessness or uncertainty weakens and cannot overcome. Faith in the living God is equal to everything. ^[237] In Christ this truth is now still more real. God has come near. His power works in us who believe—it is really He who fights for us.

Lord Jesus, who is the Prince of the army of the Lord, the Hero, the Victor, teach me to be strong in You, my stronghold, and in the power of Your might. Teach me to understand what the good fight of faith is. Teach me that the one thing I need is to always look to You, the supreme Guide of faith. And consequently, in me, too, let this be the victory that overcomes the world, namely, my faith. Amen.

Notes

1. The conflict of faith is no civil war, in which one half of the kingdom is divided against the other. This would be

insurrection. This is the one conflict that many Christians know—the unrest of the conscience, and the powerless wrestling of a will which consents to that which is good, but does not perform it. The Christian does not have to overcome himself. This his Lord does when he surrenders himself. Then he is free and strong to combat and overcome the enemies of his Lord and of the Kingdom. No sooner, however, are we willing that the Lord should have His way with us than we are found striving against God. This also is truly conflict, but it is not the good fight of faith.

2. In Galatians 5, reference is made to the inner conflict because the Galatians had not yet entirely surrendered themselves to the Spirit—to walk after the Spirit. The believer must not strive against the flesh to overcome it. This he cannot do. What he is to do is to choose to whom he will subject himself. By the surrender of faith in Christ, to strive in Him through the Spirit, he has a divine power for overcoming.
3. Hence, as we have seen in connection with the beginning of the new life, our one work every day and the whole day is to believe. Out of faith come all blessings and powers, and also the victory for overcoming.

Chapter 29^(TOC)

Be A Blessing

"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee; and thou shalt be a blessing"—Genesis 12:1, 2.

In these first words that God spoke to Abraham, we have the short summary of all that God has to say to him and to us as His children. We see the goal to which God calls us, the power that carries us to that goal, and the place where that power is found.

Be a blessing—that is the goal for which God separates Abraham and every believing child of His.

God would have him and us understand that, when He blesses us, it is not to simply make us happy, but so that we would still further communicate His blessing.^[238] God Himself is love, and therefore He blesses. Love does not seek itself. When the love of God comes to us, it will seek others through us.^[239] From the beginning, the young Christian must understand that he has received grace with the definite aim of becoming a blessing to others. Please, do not keep for yourself what the Lord gives to you for others. Offer yourself expressly and completely to the Lord—to be used by Him for others. That is the way to be blessed overflowingly yourself.^[240]

The power for this work will be given. "Be a blessing," "I will bless thee," says the Lord. You are to be personally blessed and sanctified. You are to be

filled with the Spirit, peace, and power of the Lord. Then you have power to bless.^[241] In Christ, God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3. Let Jesus fill you with these blessings, and you will certainly **be** a blessing. You do not need to doubt or fear. The blessing of God includes in it the power of life for multiplication, for expansion, for communication. See in the Scriptures how blessing and multiplication go together.^[242] Blessing always includes the power to bless others. Only give the word of the Almighty God, "I will bless thee," time to sink into your spirit. Wait upon God, so that He Himself may say to you, "I will bless thee." Let your faith cleave firmly to this. God will make it truth to you, above all asking and thinking.^[243]

But for this reason you must also take yourself to the place of blessing—the land of promise, and the simple life of faith in those promises. "Get thee out of thy country and thy father's house," says the Lord. God would have departure and separation from the life of nature and the flesh, in which we are born of Adam. The offering up of what is most precious to man is the way to the blessing of God.^[244] "Get thee to a land that I will show thee," says the Lord, "out of the old life into a new life, where I alone am your guide." That is, a life where God can have me wholly for Himself alone, and where I walk only on the promises of God—a life of faith.

Christian, God will in a divine fashion fulfil to you His promise, "I will bless thee." Leave your homeland, your father's house, and your life and involvement with the world and the ways of the flesh. Enter into the **new life**—the life of the Spirit, the life in fellowship with God—to which He will lead you. There you become receptive to His blessing. There your heart becomes open to full faith in His word, "I will bless thee." There He can fulfill that word to you, and make you full of His blessing and power to be a

blessing to others. Live with God, separated from the world. Then you will hear the voice of God speak with power: "I will bless thee"; "Be thou a blessing."

Father, show me the way to that promised land where You bring Your people to have them wholly for Yourself. I will abandon everything to follow You, to hold converse with You alone, in order that You may fill me with Your blessing. Lord, let Your word, "I will bless thee," live in my heart as a Word of God. Then will I give myself wholly to live for others and to be a blessing. Amen.

Notes

1. God is the great, the only Fountain of blessing. As much of God as I have in me, so much blessing can I bring. I can work much for others without blessing. To actually be a blessing, I must begin with that word, "I will bless thee," then the other, "Be a blessing," becomes easy.
2. In order to become a blessing, begin on a small scale. Yield yourself up for others. Live to make others happy. Believe that the love of God lives in you by the Spirit, and give yourself wholly to be a blessing and a joy to those who are around you. Pray God to shed abroad His love in you still further by the Spirit. And believe very firmly that God can make you a greater blessing than you can think if you surrender yourself to Him for this purpose.
3. But this surrender must have time in solitary prayer so that God may obtain possession of your spirit. This is for you the

departure from your Father's house. Separate yourself from men so that God may speak with you.

4. What do you think? Was Abraham ever filled with regret that he placed himself so entirely under the leading of God? Then do the same.
5. Do you now know the two words which are the source of all promises and all commands to the children of believing Abraham? The promise is: "I will bless thee." The command is: "Be a blessing." Please take them both firmly for yourself.
6. And do you now understand where these two words to Abraham are fulfilled? In separation from his father's house—in the walk in fellowship with God.

Chapter 30_(TOC)

Personal Work

"Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation: and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee"—Psalm 51:12, 13.

"I believe, therefore have I spoken"—Psalm 116:10.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you"—Acts 1:8.

Every redeemed man is called to be a witness for his Lord. Not only by a godly walk, but by personal effort I should serve and make my Lord known. My tongue—my speech—is one of the principal means of communicating with and influencing others. When I do not offer up my lips to speak for the Lord, I am serving Him with only a partial dedication.^[245]

There is an inconceivably great need for this work. There are thousands of Christians who continually enjoy the preaching of the Word, and yet they do not understand the way of salvation. The Lord Jesus not only preached to the multitudes, but He also spoke to individuals according to their needs.^[246]

Scripture is full of examples of those who told others what the Lord had done for them, and who then became a blessing themselves.^[247] The teacher alone cannot do his work of personal speaking. Every redeemed soul must cooperate with him. He is in the world as a witness for his Lord. His own life cannot come to its full healthy increase, if he does not confess his Lord and work for Him.

That witness for the Lord must be a personal witness. We must have the courage to say, "He has redeemed me; He will also redeem you. Will you not accept this redemption? Come, let me show you the way."^[248] There are hundreds who would be glad if the personal question were put to them, "Are you redeemed? What keeps you back? Can I help you go to the Lord?" Parents should personally speak with their children, and ask them the question, "My child, have you already received the Lord Jesus?" When teaching the Word of God, Sunday school teachers and day school teachers should ask the children if they have really received salvation. They should also seek the opportunity to individually ask each child this personal question. Friends must speak with their friends. Yes, this work should be done before all else.

Such work must be the work of love. Let others feel that you love them tenderly. Let the humility and gentleness of love, as was seen in Jesus, be also seen in you. At every turn, surrender yourself to Jesus so that you will be filled with His love. Not by feeling, but by faith in this love, can you do your work. "Beloved, keep yourselves in the love of God. And on some have compassion, and others save, pulling them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear" (Jude 21-23). The flesh often thinks that strength and force do more than love and patience. But that is not so. Love achieves everything—it has overcome on the cross.^[249]

Such work must be the work of faith—faith working by love. Faith that the Lord desires to use you and will use you. Do not be afraid on account of your weakness. Learn in the Scriptures what glorious promises God gave to those who had to speak for Him.^[250] Surrender yourself continually to God to be used for the rescue of souls. Take your stand on the fact that He, who has redeemed you for this end, will for this end also bless you. Although your

work is in weakness and fear, and although no blessing appears to come, be of good courage—at His time, we will reap.^[251] Be filled with faith in the power of God, in His blessing upon you, and in the certainty that He hears prayer. "If any man see his brother sinning a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and God shall give him life" (1 John 5:16). Whether he that does not know sin is the most miserable and neglected, or whether he is decent but indifferent, take courage—the Lord is mighty to bless. He hears prayer.

But above all—for this is the principal point—carry out this work in fellowship with Jesus. Live closely with Him—live entirely for Him. Let Jesus be all in your own life, and He will speak and work in you.^[252] Be full of the blessing of the Lord, full of His Spirit and His love, and it can be no other way than that you will be a blessing. You will be able to share what He continually is for you. You will have the love and the courage—with all humility—to ask souls the question, "Is it well with you? Have you indeed received the Lord Jesus as your Saviour?" And the Lord will have you experience the rich blessing which is promised to those who live to bless others.

Young Christian, be a witness for Jesus. Live as one who is wholly given to Him, to watch and to work for His honour.

Blessed Lord, who has redeemed me to serve the Father in the proclamation of His love, I will, with a free spirit, offer myself to You for this end. Fill my heart with love for Him, for You, and for souls. Cause me to see what an honour it is to do the work of redeeming love, even as You did it. Strengthen my confidence that You are working with Your power in my weakness. And let my joy be to help souls to find You. Amen.

Notes

1. The question is often asked, "What can I do to work for the Lord?" Can you not teach a class in the Sunday school? Perhaps you live in the country where there are children who have no hour of the Lord's day devoted to them. Perhaps there are heathen children, or even grown-up people of the farms, who do not go to church. See whether you cannot gather them together in the name of Jesus. Make it a matter of prayer and faith. Although you do this work with trembling, you may be sure that to begin to work will make you strong. Or, can you do nothing for the circulation of books and tracts? When you have a book that has been useful to you, order six or twelve copies of it. Speak of it, and offer it to others. You can do great service by this means. So also with tracts. If you are too poor to give them for nothing, have them to sell. You may procure blessing by this method. It will especially help you to speak to others if you begin with telling them what is in a book.
2. But the main thing is personal speaking. Do not hold back because you feel no freedom. The Lord will give you freedom in His own time. It is incredible how many are lost through ignorance. No one has ever personally made it clear to them how they can be saved. The thought that a change must first be sought and felt is so deeply rooted that the most faithful preaching is often of no avail against it. By their erroneous ideas, people misunderstand everything. Begin then to speak and to help souls to understand that they are to receive Jesus just as they are, that they can certainly know that He receives them, and that this is the power of a new and holy life.

Chapter 31^(TOC)

Missionary Work

"And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following"—Mark 16:15, 20.

Every friend of Jesus is a friend of missions. Where there is a healthy spiritual life, there is a love for the missionary cause. When you consider the reasons for this, you obtain an insight into the glory of missions and into your calling to embrace this cause as a part of your soul's life. Come and hear how much there is to make missionary work glorious and precious.

1. It is the cause for which Jesus left the throne of heaven. The heathen are His inheritance, given to Him by His Father. The power of Satan has been established in heathendom. Jesus must have Himself vindicated as the Conqueror. His glory, the coming and manifestation of His Kingdom, depend on missions. ^[253]
2. Missionary work is the principal aim of the Church on earth. All the last words of the Lord Jesus teach us this. ^[254] The Lord is the head, and He has made himself dependent upon His body, His members—by whom alone He can do His work. ^[255] As a member of Christ, as a member of the Church, will I not give myself to take part in the work, so that this goal may

be reached?

3. It is the work for which the Holy Spirit was given. See this in the promise of the Spirit—in the leading of the Spirit—graciously given to Peter and Barnabas and Saul. ^[256] In the history of the Church, we find that times of revival go hand in hand with a new zeal for the missionary cause. The Holy Spirit is always a holy enthusiasm for the extension of the Kingdom.
4. Missionary work brings blessing on the Church. It enthuses heroic deeds of faith and self-denial. It has furnished the most glorious instances of the wondrous power of the Lord. It gives heavenly joy over the conversion of sinners to those who watch for it with love and prayer. It cleanses the heart to understand God's great plans, and to await the fulfilment of them in supplication. Missionary work is an example of life in a church, and brings more life. ^[257]
5. What a blessing it is for the world. What would we have been if missionaries had not come to our heathen forefathers in Europe? What a glorious blessing missionary work has already won in some lands. What help is there for the hundred millions of heathen, if not in missions? ^[258] Heaven and hell look on missions as being the battlefield where the powers of Jesus Christ and Satan encounter one another. Alas! that the conflict should be carried on so feebly.
6. There will be a blessing for your own soul in love for missionary work. ^[259]

You will have the opportunity to exercise your faith. Missionary work is a

cause for faith, where everything goes on slowly, and not according to the inclinations of men. You will learn to cling to God and His Word.

Love will be awakened. You will learn to go out of yourselves and your little circle with an open eye and a large heart—to live in the interests of your Lord and King. You will realise how little true love you have, and you will receive more of that love.

You will be drawn into prayer. Your calling and power as an intercessor will become clearer to you, and you will receive the blessedness of working for the Kingdom. You will discover that the highest conformity to Him, who came to seek the lost, is the surrender of your own ease and rest to the loving fight of prayer—in behalf of the heathen—against Satan.

Young Christian, missionary work is more glorious and holy than you suppose. There is more blessing in it than you are aware of. The new life in you depends on it more than you can yet understand. Yield yourself again in obedience to the Word to give missions a large place in your heart—yes, in your heart. The Lord Himself will further teach and bless you.

And if you want to know how to increase your love for missions as the work of your Lord, devote yourself to the following guidelines. Become acquainted with the missionary cause. Read writings and books to know the condition and needs of the heathen, to know what, by the blessing of the Lord, has already been done for them, and what work is now being done. Speak with others about this cause. Perhaps a little missionary society could be instituted in your neighbourhood. Perhaps one of your prayer meetings, say, once a month, could be set apart for prayer in behalf of the missionary cause. Also pray for this in private. Let the coming of the Kingdom have a definite place in your personal prayers. Strive to follow the material for prayer that is

provided in the promises of God's Word—in the whole of Scripture and especially in the prophet Isaiah—in regards to the heathen.^[260] Give also for missions. Not only when you are asked—not merely when you can spare without feeling it—but set apart a portion of what you possess or earn for this cause. Let the Lord see that you are earnest about His work. If there is missionary work that is being done in your neighbourhood, be a friend to it. Although there may be much imperfection in that work—and where is there work of man that is perfect?—do not complain of the imperfection.

Son of God, when You did breathe Your Spirit upon Your disciples, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," You added, "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. "Lord, here I am—send me also. Breathe Your Spirit into me also, so that I may live for Your Kingdom. Amen.

Notes

1. "Unknown makes unbeloved" is a saying that is especially true of missionary work. He who is acquainted with the wonders that God has worked in some lands will praise and thank God for what the missionary enterprise has achieved and will be strengthened in his faith that missionary work is really God's own cause. Among the books that help to awaken interest in missions are biographies of missionaries. Books on missions are generally found in church libraries (or Christian bookstores).
2. We should never forget that the missionary cause is an enterprise of faith. It requires faith in the promises of God, in the power of God. It has need of love-love to Jesus, by which the heart is filled with desire for His honour, and love to souls,

with a heart that longs for their safety. It is a work of the Spirit of God, "whom the world cannot receive" (John 14:17). Therefore, the world can approve of missions only when they go forward with the highest prosperity.

3. Let no friend of missions become discouraged when the work proceeds slowly. Although all baptised men in the heathen nations are not truly converted, although even among the converts there is still much distortion, although some fall back after a fair profession, everything is by no means perfect among the civilised either. Among our forefathers in Europe, a whole century was required for the introduction of Christianity. Sometimes a nation received Christianity only to cast it off again after thirty or forty years. It required a thousand years to bring them up to the height at which we now stand. Let us not expect too much from the heathen at once but with love and patience and firm faith, pray and work and expect the blessing of God.

Chapter 32_(TOC)

Light and Joyfulness

*"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance. In Thy name shall they rejoice all the day"—
Psalm 89:15, 16.*

*"Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart"—
Psalm 97:11.*

"I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life"—John 8:12.

"I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you"—John 16:22.

"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing"—2 Corinthians 6:10.

A father will always be eager to see his children joyful. He does all that he can to make them happy. Likewise, God also desires that His children should walk before Him with a joyful heart. He has promised them joy—He will give it.^[261] He has commanded it—we must take it and walk in it at all times.
^[262]

The reason for this is not difficult to find. Joy is always the evidence that something really satisfies me and has great value for me. Joy, more than anything else, recommends its cause to others. And joy in God is the strongest proof that I have in God what satisfies and satiates me. It shows that I do not serve Him with dread, or remain faithful only because He is my salvation. Joy is the mark of the truth, the worth of obedience, and shows whether I have pleasure in the will of God.^[263] It is for this reason that joy in God is so acceptable to Him, so strengthening to believers themselves and to

all who are exposed to the most eloquent testimony of what we think of God.
[264]

In the Scriptures, light and joy are frequently connected with each other.^[265] It is so in nature. The joyful light of the morning awakens the birds to their song and gladdens the watchers who, in the darkness, have longed for the day. It is the light of God's countenance that gives the Christian his joy. In fellowship with his Lord, he can, and always will, be happy. The love of the Father shines like the sun on His children.^[266] When darkness comes over the soul, it is always through one of two things—through sin or through unbelief. Sin is darkness and makes life dark. Unbelief also makes life dark, for it turns us from Him, who alone is the light.

The question is sometimes asked, "Can the Christian always walk in the light?" The answer of our Lord is clear, "He that followeth Me shall **not** walk in darkness." It is sin, the turning from Jesus to our own way, that makes darkness. But at the moment we confess sin, and have it cleansed in the blood, we are again in the light.^[267]

Other times it is unbelief that causes darkness. When we look to ourselves and our strength, when we seek comfort in our own feelings, or our own works, then all becomes dark. As soon as we look to Jesus, to the fullness—the perfect provision for our needs that is in Him—all is light. He says, "I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." So long as I believe, I have light and joy.^[268]

Christians, who want to walk according to the will of the Lord, hear what His Word says, "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice in the Lord always: again, I will say, Rejoice."^[269] In the Lord Jesus there is unspeakable joy—full of glory. Believing in Him, rejoice in this. Live the life of faith. That life is salvation and glorious joy. A heart that gives itself undividedly to

follow Jesus, that lives by faith in Him and His love, will have light and joy. Therefore, soul, only believe. Do not seek joy—in that case you will not find it, because you are seeking feeling. But seek Jesus, follow Jesus, believe in Jesus, and joy will be given to you. "Ye see him not, yet believing, rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8).

Lord Jesus, You are the Light of the world, the radiance of the unapproachable light, in whom we see the light of God. From Your countenance radiates upon us the illumination of the knowledge of the love and glory of God. And You are ours, our light and our salvation. Teach us to believe more firmly that with You we can never walk in the darkness. Let joy in You be the proof that You are all to us and our strength to do all that You would have us do. Amen.

Notes

1. The joy that I have in anything is the measure of its worth in my eyes—the joy in a person is the measure of my pleasure in him; the joy in a work is the measure of my pleasure in it. Joy in God and His service is one of the surest signs of a healthy spiritual life.
2. Joy is hindered by ignorance, when we do not understand God and His love and the blessedness of His service. Joy is hindered by unbelief, when we still seek something in our own strength or feeling. Joy is also hindered by double-heartedness, when we are not willing to give up and lay aside everything for Jesus.
3. Understand this saying, "He that seeks gladness shall not find

it; he that seeks the Lord and His will, shall find gladness unsought." Think this over. He who seeks joy as a thing of feeling, seeks himself. He who wants happiness will not find it. He who forgets himself to live in the Lord and His will, will be taught of himself to rejoice in the Lord. It is God, God Himself, who is the God of the joy of our gladness. Seek God and you will have joy. You have then simply to take and enjoy it by faith.

4. To thank God much for what He is and does, to believe much in what God says and will do, is the way to continual joy.
5. "The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart" (Proverbs 15:30). God has not intended that His children should walk in the darkness. Satan is the prince of the darkness. God is light. Christ is the light of the world. We are children of the light, so let us walk in the light. Let us believe in the promise, "The Lord shall be to thee an everlasting light. Thy sun shall no more go down; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended" (Isaiah 60:19, 20).

Chapter 33^(TOC)

Chastisement

"Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest out of Thy law; that Thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity"—Psalm 94:12, 13.

"Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept Thy word.... It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes"—Psalm 119:67, 71.

"He chastens us for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness"—Hebrews 12:10.

"Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience"—James 1:2, 3.

Every child of God must at one time or another enter the school of trial. What the Scriptures teach us is confirmed by experience. And the Scriptures teach us further, that we are to count it a joy when God takes us into this school. It is a part of our heavenly blessedness to be educated and sanctified by the Father through chastisement.

Not that trial in itself brings a blessing.^[270] Just as there is no profit in watering or plowing seedless ground, so there are children of God who enter into trial and have little blessing from it. The heart is softened for a time, but they do not know how to obtain an abiding blessing from it. They do not know what the Father has in mind for them in the school of trial.

In a good school four things are necessary—a definite aim, a good textbook, a capable teacher, and a willing pupil.

1. Let the aim of any trial be clear to you. Holiness is the highest glory of the Father and also of the child. He "chastens us for our profit that we may be partakers of **His holiness.**" ^[271] In trial, the Christian often wants to have only comfort. Or he seeks to be quiet and contented under the special chastisement. This is indeed the beginning—but the Father desires something else, something higher. He wants to make him **holy**—holy for his whole life. When Job said, "Blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21), this was still just the beginning of his school time. The Lord still had more to teach him. God desires to unite our will with His holy will, not only on the one point in which He is trying us, but in everything. God wants to fill us with His Holy Spirit—with His holiness. This is the aim of God. This must also be your aim in the school of trial.
2. Especially during this time of trial, let the Word of God be your reading book. Notice how God desires to teach us His Word in our trials and afflictions. The Word will reveal to you why the Father chastens you, how deeply He loves you in the midst of it, and how rich His promises of consolation are. Trial will give new glory to the promises of the Father. In chastisement, return to the Word for counsel. ^[272]
3. Let Jesus be your teacher. He Himself was sanctified by suffering. It was in suffering that He learned full obedience. He has a wonderfully sympathetic heart. Have much communion with Him. Do not seek your comfort from the words spoken to or with other men. **Give Jesus the**

opportunity of teaching you. Speak and meditate often with Him in solitude. ^[273] The Father has given you the Word, the Spirit, and the Lord Jesus as your sanctification, so that you may be set apart for Him. Affliction and chastisement are meant to bring you to the Word—to Jesus Himself—so that He may make you a partaker of His holiness. It is in fellowship with Jesus that consolation comes of itself. ^[274]

4. Be a willing pupil. Acknowledge your ignorance. Do not think that you understand the will of God. Ask and expect that the Lord will teach you the lesson that you are to learn in affliction. To the meek there is the promise of teaching and wisdom. Seek to have the ear open, the heart very quiet and turned toward God. Know that it is the Father who has placed you in the school of trial. Yield yourself with all willingness to hear what He says, and to learn what He would teach you. He will bless you greatly in this. ^[275]

"Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, and teacheest out of Thy law" (Psalm 94:12). "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.... that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James 1:2, 4). Regard the time of trial as a time of blessing, as a time of close communication with the Father, of being made a partaker of His holiness, and you will also rejoicingly say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted" (Psalm 119:71).

Father, what thanks I will express to You for the glorious light that Your Word casts upon the dark trials of this life. You will teach me by this means and make me a partaker of Your holiness. You have not considered the suffering and the death of Your beloved Son too much to bring holiness near to me. And I will be willing to endure Your chastisement to become a

partaker of that holiness. Father, thanks be to You for Your precious work. Only fulfil Your counsel in me. Amen.

Notes

1. In chastisement it is first of all necessary that we should be possessed by the thought—this is the will of God. Although the trial comes through our own folly or the perversity of men, we must acknowledge that it is the will of God that we should be in that suffering by means of that folly or perversity. We see this clearly in Joseph and the Lord Jesus. Nothing will give us rest but the willing acknowledgement—this is the will of God.
2. The second thought is—God wills not only the trial, but also the consolation, the power, and the blessing in it. He who acknowledges the will of God in the chastisement itself is on the way to see and experience the accompaniments also as the will of God.
3. The will of God is as perfect as He Himself. Let us not be afraid to surrender ourselves to it. No one suffers loss by deeming the will of God unconditionally good.
4. This is holiness—to know and to adore the will of God, to unite one's self wholly with it.
5. Do not seek comfort in trial in connection with men. Do not mingle too much with them. Rather, see to it that you deal with God and His Word. The object of trial is just to draw you away from what is earthly so that you may turn to God and

give Him time to unite your will with His perfect will.

Chapter 34^(TOC)

Prayer

"Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly"—Matthew 6:6.

The spiritual life with its growth depends a great deal on prayer. My life will flourish or decay according to how much or how little I pray, if I pray with pleasure or from duty, and if I pray according to the Word or according to my own inclination. In the word of Jesus quoted above, we have the principal ideas of true prayer.

Alone with God—that is the first thought. The door must be shut, with the world and man outside, because I am to hold communion with God undisturbed. When God met with His servants in the olden time, He took them alone.^[276] Let the first thought in your prayer be—God and I are here in the chamber with each other. The power of your prayer will be in accordance with your conviction of the nearness of God.

In the presence of **your Father**—this is the second thought. You come to the inner chamber, because your Father with His love awaits you there. Although you are cold, dark, sinful—although it is doubtful whether you can pray at all—come because the Father is there, and He looks upon you. Set yourself beneath the light of His eye. Believe in His tender, fatherly love, and out of this faith prayer will be born.^[277]

Count certainly upon an answer—that is the third point in the word of Jesus. "Your Father will reward you openly." There is nothing which the Lord Jesus has spoken so positively about as the certainty of an answer to prayer. Review the promises.^[278] Observe how constantly in the Psalms—that prayerbook of God's saints—God is called the God who hears prayer and gives answers.^[279]

It may be that there is much in you that prevents the answer. Delay in the answer is a very blessed discipline. It leads to self-searching as to whether we are praying improperly, and whether our life is truly in harmony with our prayer. It leads to a purer exercise of faith.^[280] It draws us into a closer and more persistent relationship with God. The sure confidence of an answer is the secret of powerful praying. Let us always keep this as the chief thing in prayer. When you pray, stop in the midst of your prayer to ask, "Do I believe that I am receiving what I pray for?" Let your faith receive and hold firm the answer as given. It will turn out according to your faith.^[281]

Beloved young Christians, if there is one thing about which you must be conscientious, it is this—secret conversation with God. Your life is hidden with Christ in God. Everyday you must, in prayer, ask from above and by faith receive what you need for that day. Every day personal communion with the Father and the Lord Jesus must be renewed and strengthened. God is our salvation and our strength. Christ is our life and our holiness. Only in personal fellowship with the living God is our blessedness found.

Christian, pray much, pray continually, pray without ceasing. When you have no desire to pray, **go just then to the inner chamber**. Go as one who has nothing to bring to the Father, to set yourself before Him in faith in His love. Coming in that manner to the Father, and abiding before Him, is already a prayer which He understands. Be assured that to appear before God, however

passively, always brings a blessing. The Father not only hears—He sees in secret, and He will reward openly.

My Father, You have so certainly promised in Your Word to hear the prayer of faith—give me the Spirit of prayer so that I may know how to offer that prayer. Graciously reveal to me Your wonderful, fatherly love. Make me aware of the complete blotting out of my sins in Christ, by which every hindrance in this direction is taken away. And reveal to me the intercession of the Spirit in me, by which my ignorance or weakness cannot deprive me of the blessing. Teach me with faith in You, the Trinity, to pray in fellowship with You. And confirm in me the strong, living certainty that I receive what I believingly ask. Amen.

Notes

1. The principal thing in prayer is faith. The whole of salvation, the whole of the new life is by faith, therefore also by prayer. There is all too much prayer that brings nothing, because there is little faith in it. Before I pray, and while I pray, and after I have prayed, I must ask, "Do I pray in faith?" I must say, "I believe with my whole heart."
2. To arrive at this faith we must take time in prayer. We must take the time to set ourselves silently and trustfully before God, and to become awake to His presence. We must take time to have our soul sanctified in fellowship with God. We must take time for the Holy Spirit to teach us to hold firm and to trustfully use the Word of promise. No earthly knowledge, no earthly possessions, no earthly food, no conversations with friends can we have without time—sufficient time. Let us not

think to learn how to pray, how to enjoy the power and the blessedness of prayer, if we do not take time with God.

3. And then there must be not only time every day, but perseverance from day to day. Time is required to grow in the certainty that we are acceptable to the Father, and that our prayer has power, in the loving confidence which knows that our prayer is according to His will and is heard. We must not suppose that we know how to pray well enough, and can but ask and it is over. No, prayer is conversation and fellowship with God, in which God has time and opportunity to work in us, in which our souls die to their own will and power and become bound up and united with God.
4. For encouragement in persistent prayer, the following instance may be of service. In an address delivered at Calcutta, George Muller said that in 1844 five persons were laid upon his heart, and that he began to pray for their conversion. Eighteen months passed by before the first was converted. He prayed five more years and the second was converted. After twelve and a half years, yet another was converted. At the time the address was given he had already prayed forty years for the other two, without letting a day go by, and they still were not converted. He was, nevertheless, full of courage in the sure confidence that these two would also be given him in answer to his prayer.
5. I have endeavoured in thirty-one meditations to explain the principal points of the life of prayer in the book, ***With Christ in the School of Prayer.***

Chapter 35^(TOC)

The Prayer Meeting

"Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree an earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them"—Matthew 18:19, 20.

The Lord Jesus has told us to go into the inner chamber and hold our personal conversation with God by praying privately—not to be seen by men. The very same voice tells us that we are also to pray in fellowship with one another.^[282] And when He went to heaven, the birth of the Christian Church took place in a prayer meeting which one hundred and twenty men and women held for ten days.^[283] The Day of Pentecost was the fruit of unanimous, persevering prayer.

Everyone desiring to please the Lord Jesus, longing for the gift of the Spirit—with power for their congregation or church—and wanting the blessing of fellowship with other children of God, should attach themselves to a prayer meeting and prove that the Lord will make good His Word, bestowing a special blessing upon it.^[284] And let them take part in it, so that the prayer meeting may be such as the Lord presented it to us.

For a blessed prayer meeting, there must be, first of all, agreement concerning that which we desire. There must be something that we really desire to have from God. We are to be in harmony concerning this. There must be inner love and unity among the petitioners—all that is strife, envy,

wrath, lovelessness, makes prayer powerless^[285]—and then agreement on the definite object that is desired.^[286] To achieve this, it is entirely proper that what people are to pray for should be stated in the prayer meeting. Whether one of the members wants to have his particular needs brought forward, or whether others would bring more general needs to the Lord—such as the conversion of the unconverted, the revival of God's children, the anointing of the teacher, the extension of the Kingdom—let the objects be announced beforehand. And let no one think that there is complete agreement whenever **one** is content to pray for these objects. No, we are all to take them into our heart and life, and to bring them continually before the Lord. We are to be inwardly eager that the Lord should give them. Then, we are on the way to the prayer which has power.

The second feature that characterises a proper prayer meeting is the coming together in the name of Jesus with awareness of His presence. The Scripture says, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10). The name is the expression of the person. When they come together, believers are to enter into the name of Jesus, and to find within this name their fortress and abode. In this name, they mingle with one another before the Father, and out of this name they pray. This name also makes them truly one with each other. And when they are thus in this name, the living Lord Himself is in their midst. He says that this is the reason why the Father certainly hears them.^[287] They are in Him, and He is in them. Out of Him they pray, and their prayer comes before the Father in His power. Let the name of Jesus truly be the point of union—the meeting-place—in our prayer meetings. Then we will be conscious that He is in our midst.

Then there is the third feature of united prayer of which the Lord has told us—our request will certainly be done by the Heavenly Father. The prayer will

certainly be answered. We may well cry out in these days, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" (2 Kings 2:14), for He was a God that answered. "The God that answereth by fire, let Him be God," said Elijah to the people (1 Kings 18:24). And he said to God, "Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the Lord God" (1 Kings 18:37). When we are content with much praying, with continuous praying, without answer, then little answer will be given. But when we understand that the answer is the principal thing—the token of God's pleasure in our prayer—and are not willing to be content without it, we will discover what our prayer lacks and begin to pray that an answer may come. And we may firmly believe this—the Lord takes delight in answering. It is a joy to Him when His people so enter into the name of Jesus, and pray out of it, that He can give them what they desire.^[288]

Children of God, however young and weak you may still be, here is one of the institutions prepared for you by the Lord Jesus Himself to supply you with help in prayer. Let everyone make use of the prayer meeting. Let everyone go in a praying and believing frame of mind, seeking the name and the presence of the Lord. Let everyone seek to live and pray with his brothers and sisters. And let everyone expect to surely see glorious answers to prayer.

Blessed Lord Jesus, who has given us a commandment to pray—in the solitary inner chamber as well as in public fellowship with one another—let the one habit always make the other more precious as a complement and confirmation. Let the inner chamber prepare us and awaken the need for union with Your people in prayer. Let Your presence there be our blessedness. And let fellowship with Your people strengthen us to expect and receive answers. Amen.

Notes

1. There are many places in our country where prayer meetings might be a great blessing. A Christian man or woman, who once a week, or on Sunday, gathers together the inhabitants on a farm, or the neighbours of two or three homes that are not far from one another, might be able to attain great blessing. Let every believing reader of this portion inquire if there is not already some such need in his neighbourhood. Let him make a beginning in the name of the Lord. Let me therefore earnestly put the question to every reader—is there a prayer meeting in your district? Do you faithfully take part in it? Do you know what it is to come together with the children of God in the name of Jesus, to experience His presence and His hearing of prayer?
2. You could obtain a book on prayer with suitable passages to be read aloud in such gatherings. Or read this book, *The New Life*, which will certainly give material for prayer.
3. Will the prayer meeting do harm to the inner chamber? is a question sometimes asked. My experience is just the opposite of this result. The prayer meeting is a school of prayer. The weak learn from more advanced petitioners. Material for prayer is given, as is the opportunity for self-searching and encouragement to more prayer.
4. If only it were more common in prayer meetings for people to speak of definite objects for which to pray—things in which one can definitely and trustfully look out for an answer, and

concerning which one can know when an answer comes. Such announcements would greatly further agreement and believing expectation.

Chapter 36^(TOC)

The Fear of the Lord

*"Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid"—Psalm 102:1, 7, 8.
"So the Church, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, was multiplied"—Acts 9:31.*

The Scriptures use the word "fear" in a twofold way. In some places it speaks of "fear" as something wrong and sinful, and in the strongest terms it forbids us to "fear."^[289] The word occurs in almost one hundred places—"Fear not." In many other places, on the contrary, fear is praised as one of the surest signs of true godliness, acceptable to the Lord, and full of His blessing for us.^[290] The people of God bear the name—those who fear the Lord. The distinction between these two lies in this simple fact—the one is unbelieving fear, the other is believing.

Where fear is found connected with lack of trust in God, there it is sinful and very hurtful.^[291] The fear, on the other hand, that is coupled with trust and hope in God is, for the spiritual life, entirely indispensable. The fear that man has for what is worldly is condemned. The fear that with childlike confidence and love honours the Father is commanded.^[292] It is the believing fear of the Lord—not as a slave, but as a child—that the Scriptures present as a source of blessing and power. He who fears the Lord will fear nothing else. The fear of the Lord will be the beginning of all wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the sure way to the enjoyment of God's favour and protection.^[293]

There are some Christians who, by their upbringing, are led into the reverent fear of the Lord even before they come to faith. This is a very great blessing. Parents can give a child no greater blessing than to bring him up in the fear of the Lord. When those who are thus brought up are brought to faith, they have a great advantage. They are, as it were, prepared to walk in the joy of the Lord. When, on the contrary, others that have not had this preparation come to conversion, they need special teaching and vigilance, in order to pray for and awaken this holy fear.

This fear is composed of many great elements. The principal are the following:

Holy reverence and awe before the glorious majesty of God and before His almighty holiness. These guard against the superficiality that forgets who God is and takes no pains to honour Him as God.^[294]

Deep humility that is afraid of itself, and couples deep confidence in God with an entire distrust in itself. Conscious weakness that knows the subtlety of its own heart always dreads doing anything contrary to the will or honour of God. But just because he fears God, such a believer firmly depends on Him for protection. And this same humility inspires him in all his dealings with his fellow men.^[295]

Cautiousness or vigilance. With holy forethought, it seeks to know the correct path, to watch against the enemy, and to guard against all frivolity or hastiness in speech, resolve, and conduct.^[296]

Holy zeal and courage in watching and striving. The fear of displeasing the Lord by not conducting one's self as His servant in all things encourages faithfulness in that which is least expected. The fear of the Lord takes away all other fear and gives inconceivable courage in the certainty of victory.^[297]

And out of this reverent fear is then born joy. "Rejoice with trembling" (Psalm 2:11). The fear of the Lord gives joy its depth and stability. Fear is the root, joy is the fruit. The deeper this fear, the higher the joy. On this account, it is said, "Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him" (Psalm 22:23). "Ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord" (Psalm 135:20).

Young disciples of Christ, hear the voice of your Father. "Fear the Lord, ye His saints." Let reverent fear of the Lord, and dread of all that might displease or grieve Him, fill you. Then you will never have to fear any evil. He who fears the Lord and seeks to do all that pleases Him, for him God will also do all that he desires. The childlike, believing fear of God will lead you into the love and joy of God, while slavish, unbelieving, cowardly fear is utterly cast out.

O God, unite my heart for the reverent fear of Your name. May I always be among those who fear the Lord, and who hope in His mercy. Amen.

Notes

1. What are some of the blessings of the reverent fear of God? (Psalm 31:20; 115:13; 127:5; 114:8; Proverbs 1; 7; 8; 13; 14; 27; Acts 10:35.)
2. What are the reasons why we are to fear God? (Deuteronomy 10:17, 20, 21; 1 Samuel 12:24; Jeremiah 5:22; 10:6, 7; Matthew 10:28; Revelation 15:4.)
3. It is especially the knowledge of God in His greatness, power, and glory that will fill the soul with fear. But for this purpose we must set ourselves silently before Him and take time for our soul to come under the impression of His majesty.

4. "He delivered me from all my fears" (Psalm 34:4). Does this apply to every different sort of fear by which you are hindered? There is the fear of man (Isaiah 2:12, 13; Hebrews 13:16); the fear of heavy trial (Isaiah 11:1, 2); the fear of our own weakness (Isaiah 12:6); the fear for the work of God (1 Chronicles 28:20); the fear of death (Psalm 23:4).
5. Do you now understand the word, "Blessed is the man that fears the Lord. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid...."?

Chapter 37^(TOC)

Undivided Consecration

"And Ittai answered the king and said, As the Lord liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be"—2 Samuel 15:21.

"Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple"—Luke 14:33.

"Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you"—2 Corinthians 6:17, 18.

"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord"—Philippians 3:8.

We have already said that surrender to the Lord is something that always obtains newer and deeper significance for the Christian. When this takes place, he comes to understand how this surrender involves nothing less than a complete and undivided consecration to live only, always, and wholly for Jesus. As entirely as the temple was dedicated to the service of God alone, so that everyone knew that it existed for that purpose only, likewise, you belong entirely to your Lord. As entirely as the offering on the altar could be used only according to God's command, and no one had a right to dispose of one portion other than He had said, your consecration to Him must be equally as undivided. God continually reminded Israel that He had redeemed them to be His possession.^[298] Let us see what this implies.

There is **personal attachment** to Jesus, and fellowship with Him in secret. He will be—He must be—the beloved, the desire, the joy of our souls. We are to

be first consecrated to the service of Jesus as our Friend and King, our Redeemer and God.^[299] It is only the spiritual impulse of a personal, cordial love that can place us in a condition for a life of complete consecration. Continually Jesus used the words, "For My sake," "Follow Me," "My disciple." He Himself must be the central point.^[300] He gave Himself. The characteristic of a disciple is to desire to have Him, to love and to depend on Him.

Then there is ***public confession***. What has been given to any one will be acknowledged by all as his property. His possessions are his glory. When the Lord Jesus manifests His great grace to a soul in redeeming it, He desires that the world should see and know it. He wants to be known and honoured as its proprietor. He desires that everyone who belongs to Him would confess Him and proclaim that Jesus is King.^[301] Without this public confession, the surrender is but a half-hearted one. As a part of this public confession, it is also required that we join His people and acknowledge them as our people. The one new commandment that the Lord gave—the sure sign by which all should recognise that we are His disciples—is brotherly love. Although the children of God in a locality are few or despised or full of imperfection, you are to join them. Love them. Hold fellowship with them. Attach yourself to them in prayer meetings and otherwise. Love them fervently. Brotherly love has wonderful power to open the heart for the love and the indwelling of God.^[302]

To complete your consecration, there also must be separation from sin and the world. Do not touch the unclean thing. Know that the world is under the power of the Evil One. Do not ask how much of it you can retain without being lost. Do not always ask what is sin and what is lawful. Even that which is lawful the Christian must often make a willing renunciation of, in order to

be able to live wholly for his God.^[303] Abstinence even from lawful things is often indispensable for the full imitation of the Lord Jesus. Live as one who is really separated for God and His holiness. He who renounces everything, who counts everything loss for Jesus' sake, will receive a hundredfold even in this life.^[304]

And what I separate from everything, I will use. Entire consecration has its eye on making us useful and fit for God and His service. Let there not be the least amount of doubt as to whether God has need of you and will make you a great blessing. Only give yourself unreservedly into His hands. Present yourself to Him, so that He may fill you with His blessing, His love, His Spirit. You *will* be a blessing.^[305]

Let no one fear that this demand for a complete consecration is too high for him. You are not under the law which demands, but gives no power. You are under grace, which itself works what it requires.^[306] Like the first surrender, every fresh dedication is yielded to Jesus, whom the Father has given to do all things for you. Consecration is an act of faith, a part of the glorious life of faith. It is on this account that you have to say—it is not I, but the grace of God in me, that will do it. I live only by faith in Him who works in me the willing as well as the performance.^[307]

Blessed Lord, open the eyes of my heart so that I may see how completely You would have me for Yourself. May you be, in the hidden depths of my heart, the one power that keeps me occupied and holds me in possession. Let all know You are my King, that I ask only for Your will. In my separation from the world, in my surrender to Your people and to Your will, let it be manifest that I am wholly, yes wholly, the Lord's. Amen.

Notes

1. There is almost no point of the Christian life in connection with which I should more desire to urge you to pray to God that He may enlighten your eyes, than this of the entire consecration that God desires. In myself and others, I discover that with our own thoughts we can form no conception of how completely God Himself wants to take possession of our will and live in us. The Holy Spirit must reveal this in us. Only then indeed does a conviction arise of how little we understand this. We are not to think, "I see truly how entirely I must live for God, but I cannot accomplish this." No, we are to say, "I am still blind; I have still no view of what is the glory of a life in which God is all. Once I see that, I would strongly desire and believe that not I, but God, should work it in me."
2. Let there be no doubt in your mind as to whether you have given yourself to God, to live wholly and only as His. Express this conviction before him often. Acknowledge that you do not yet see or understand what it means, but abide by this, that you desire it to be so. Rely on the Holy Spirit to seal you, to stamp you as God's entire possession. Even if you stumble and discover self-will, hold your integrity tightly, and trustfully affirm that the deep, firm choice of your heart is to live for God in all things.
3. Always keep before your eyes that the power to give all to the Lord, and to be all for the Lord, arises from the fact that He has given all for you, that He is all for you. Faith in what He did for you is the power of what you do for Him.

Chapter 38_(TOC)

Assurance of Faith

"Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform"—Romans 4:20, 21.

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and truth. Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him"—1 John 3:18, 19.

"And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us"—1 John 3:24.

Every child of God needs the assurance of faith—the full certainty of faith—that the Lord has received him and made him His child. The Holy Scriptures always speak to Christians as those who know that they are redeemed and as those who know they are now children of God and have received eternal life. ^[308] How can a child love or serve his father while he is uncertain whether his father will really acknowledge him as a child? We have already spoken on this point in a previous chapter—but often, by ignorance or distrust, a Christian again comes into darkness. For this reason, we will now deal with it once again with a set purpose.

Scripture names three things by which we have our certainty. First, there is ***faith*** in the Word. After that, there are ***works***. And then, in and with both of these, there is ***the Holy Spirit***.

First, ***faith*** in the Word. Abraham is to us the great example of faith and of the assurance of faith. And what then says the Scripture about the certainty

that he had? He was fully assured that what God had promised He was also able to perform. His expectation was only from God, and what God had promised. He relied upon God to do what He had said. The promise of God was for him his only, but sufficient, assurance of faith.^[309]

There are many young Christians who think that faith in the Word is not sufficient to give full assurance. They would gladly have something more. They imagine that assurance—a sure inward feeling or conviction—is what is given above or outside of faith. This is wrong. As I have need of nothing more than the word of a trustworthy man to give me complete certainty, so must the Word of God be my assurance. People err because they seek something in themselves and in their feeling. No, the whole of salvation comes from God. The soul must not be occupied with itself or its work, but with God. He who forgets himself to hear what God says, and to rely on His promise as something worthy of credit, has the fullest assurance of faith.^[310] He does not doubt the promises but is strong in faith. He gives God the glory and is fully assured that what was promised, God is also able to perform.

Then the Scripture also names **works**—by unfeigned love we will assure our hearts.^[311] Carefully observe this—assurance by faith in the promise, without works, comes first. The godless man who receives grace knows this only from the Word. But then, later on, assurance is to follow from works. "By works was faith made perfect" (James 2:22).^[312] The tree is planted in faith, without fruits. But when the time of fruit arrives, and no fruit appears, then I may doubt. At the outset, the more clearly I hold the assurance of faith on the Word alone—without works—the more certainly works will follow.

And both assurance by faith and by works come by **the Spirit**. A child of God has the heavenly certification that he is the Lord's.^[313] This comes, not by the Word alone, and not by works as something that he does himself, but by the

Word as the instrument of the Spirit and by works as the fruit of the Spirit.

Let us believe in Jesus as our life and abide in Him, and assurance of faith will never be lacking in us.

Father, teach me to find my assurance of faith in a life with You, in a cordial reliance upon Your promises, and in cordial obedience to Your commands.

Let Your Holy Spirit also witness with my spirit that I am a child of God.

Amen.

Notes

1. The importance of the assurance of faith lies in the fact that I cannot possibly love or serve, as a child, a God of whom I do not know whether He loves and acknowledges me as His child.
2. The whole Bible is one great proof for the assurance of faith. Just because it speaks of itself so, it is not always regarded as such. Abraham and Moses knew that God had redeemed them—for this reason they had to serve God. How much more must this be the case in the greater redemption of the New Testament? All the Epistles are written to men of whom it is presupposed that they know and confess that they are redeemed, holy children of God.
3. Faith and obedience are inseparable, as root and fruit. First, there must be the root, and it must have time to be without fruit. Then later on the fruits come. First, assurance without fruits by living faith in the Word. Then, further assurance from fruits. It is in a life with Jesus that assurance of faith is exalted firmly above all doubt.

4. Assurance of faith is helped by confession. What I express becomes for me more evident. I am bound to confirm it.
5. It is at the feet of Jesus, looking up into His friendly countenance, listening to His loving promises, in fellowship with Jesus Himself in prayer, that all doubtfulness of mind falls away. Go there for the full assurance of faith.

Chapter 39_(TOC)

Conformity to Jesus

*"Predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son"—Romans 8:29.
"I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you"—
John 13:15.*

The Bible speaks of two types of conformity, a twofold likeness which we bear. We may be conformed to the world or to Jesus. The one excludes and drives out the other. More than anything else, conformity to Jesus will be secretly prevented by conformity to the world. And conformity to the world can be overcome by nothing but conformity to Jesus.

Young Christian, the new life of which you have become partaker is the life of God in heaven. That life is revealed and made visible in Christ. What the workings and fruits of eternal life were in Jesus, they will also be in you. In His life you get to see what eternal life will work in you. It cannot be otherwise. If for this reason you surrender yourself unreservedly to Jesus and the dominion of eternal life, it will bring forth in you a walk of wonderful conformity to that of Jesus.^[314]

Two things, especially, are necessary for a true imitation of Jesus in His example and for growth in inward conformity to Him. These are, **a clear insight** that I am really called to this, and **a firm trust** that it is possible for me.

One of the greatest hindrances in the spiritual life is that we do not know—

we do not see-what God desires that we should be.^[315] Our understanding is still enlightened so little, and we still have so many of our own human thoughts and imaginations about the true service of God. We know so little of waiting for the Spirit who alone can teach us. We do not acknowledge that even the clearest words of God do not have for us the meaning and power that God desires. And as long as we do not spiritually discern what likeness to Jesus is, and how utterly we are called to live like Him, little can be said of true conformity. If only we could understand how very much we need divine instruction on this point.^[316]

For this reason, let us earnestly examine the Scriptures in order to know what God says and desires about our conformity to Christ.^[317] Let us unceasingly ponder such words of Scripture, and keep our heart in contact with them. Let it remain fixed with us that we have given ourselves wholly to the Lord—to be all that He desires. Let us trustfully pray that the Holy Spirit would inwardly enlighten us and bring us to a full awareness of the life of Jesus, so far as can be seen in a believer.^[318] The Spirit will convince us that we, no less than Jesus, are absolutely called to live only for the will and glory of the Father. We are called to be in the world even as He is.

The other thing that we have need of is the belief that it is really possible for us to bear the image of our Lord. Unbelief is the cause of weakness. We can put this matter another way. We think that because we are powerless, we dare not believe that we can be conformed to our Lord. This thought is in conflict with the Word of God. We do not have it in our own power to carry ourselves after the image of Jesus. No, He is our head and our life. He lives in us and will have His life work from within outwards-with divine power through the Holy Spirit.^[319]

Yet this cannot be separate from our faith. Faith is the consent of the heart,

the surrender to Him to work, and the reception of His working. "Be it unto you according to your faith" (Matthew 9:29) is one of the fundamental laws of the Kingdom of God.^[320] It is incredible what power unbelief has in hindering the working and the blessing of Almighty God. The Christian who wants to become conformed to Christ must cherish the firm trust that this blessing is within his reach and is entirely within the range of possibility. He must learn to look to Jesus as Him in whom, by the grace of God, he can be truly conformable. He must believe that the same Spirit that was in Jesus is also in him. He must believe that the same Father that led and strengthened Jesus also watches over him, and that the same Jesus that lived on earth now lives in him. He must cherish the strong assurance that the Trinity is at work in changing him into the image of the Son.^[321]

He who believes this will receive it. It will not be without much prayer. It will especially require ceaseless communion with the Father and Jesus. Yet he who desires it, and is willing to give time and sacrifice to it, certainly receives it.

Son of God, radiance of the glory of God, the very Image of His substance, I must be changed into Your image. In You I see the image and the likeness of God in which we were created, in which we are by You created anew. Lord Jesus, let conformity to You be the one desire, the one hope of my soul.
Amen.

Notes

1. Conformity to Jesus—we think that we understand the Word, but how little do we comprehend that God really expects us to live even as Jesus did. It requires much time with Him, in prayer and pondering of His example, to correctly understand

it. The writer of these precepts has written a book on this theme, has often spoken of it, and yet he sometimes feels as if he must cry out—Is it really true? Has God indeed called us to live even as Jesus?

2. Conformity to the world is strengthened especially by association with it. It is in fellowship with Jesus that we will adopt His mode of thinking, His disposition, His manners.
3. The main feature of the life of Jesus is that He surrendered Himself wholly to the Father in behalf of man. The chief feature of conformity to Him is the offering up of ourselves to God for the redemption and blessing of the lost.
4. The chief feature of His inner disposition was childlikeness—absolute dependence on the Father, great willingness to be taught, cheerful preparedness to do the will of the Father. Be especially like Him in this.

Chapter 40_(TOC)

Conformity to the World

"I beseech you, brethren, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"—Romans 12:1, 2.

Do not be conformed to this world. But what is conformity to the world? The opposite of conformity to Jesus, for Jesus and the world stand directly opposed to each other. The world crucified Him. He and His disciples are not of the world. The spirit of this world and the Spirit of God exclude each other. The world cannot receive the Spirit of God, for it does not see Him and does not know Him.^[322]

And what is the spirit of this world? The spirit of this world is the disposition which encourages mankind to continue in their natural condition, where the Spirit of God has not yet renewed them. The spirit of this world comes from the Evil One—the prince of this world—and has dominion over all who are not renewed by the Spirit of God.^[323]

And in what does the spirit of this world, or conformity to it, manifest itself? The Word of God gives the answer, "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:16). The three chief forms of the spirit of the world are: the craving for pleasure or the desire **to enjoy** the world, the craving for property or the desire **to possess** the world, and the craving for glory or the

desire *to be honoured* in the world.^[324]

And these three are one in root and essence. The spirit of this world is—that man makes himself his own end. He makes himself the central point of the world. All creation, so far as he has power over it, must serve him; he seeks his life in the visible. This is the spirit of the world—to seek one's self and the visible.^[325] And the Spirit of Jesus is—to live not for one's self and not for the visible, but for God and the things that are invisible.^[326]

It is a very terrible and serious thought that one can live a busy, fashionable life—free from obvious sin or unrighteousness and yet remain a friend to the world, and therefore an adversary to God.^[327]

We are conformed to this world if our care for the earthly—for what we eat and drink, for what we possess or may possess, and for what we have brought forth in the earth and have made to increase—is the chief element in our life. It is a terrible and very serious thought that one can maintain the appearance of a Christian life—think that one is trusting in Christ—while yet living with the world for self and the visible.^[328] For this reason the command comes to all Christians with great emphasis—Be conformed, not to this world, but to Jesus.

And how can I not come to be conformed to the world? Read our text over again with consideration. There we read two things. One, it is those who have presented their bodies to God as a sacrifice on the altar that have it said to them—Be not conformed to the world. Offer yourself to God—that is conformity to Jesus. Live every day as one who is offered up to God, crucified in Christ to the world. Then you will not be conformed to the world.^[329]

Then, two, it says: Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may

prove what is the perfect will of God. There must be a continuous growing renewal of our mind. This takes place by the Holy Spirit, when we let ourselves be led by Him. Then we learn to spiritually judge what is according to the will of God and what is according to the spirit of the world. A Christian who strives after the progressive renewal of his whole mind will not be conformed to the world. The Spirit of God makes him conformed to Jesus.^[330]

Christians, please believe that Jesus has obtained for you the power to overcome the world, with its deep hidden seductions to living for ourselves. Believe this. Believe in Him as Victor and that you also have the victory.^[331]

Precious Lord we have presented ourselves to You as living sacrifices. We have offered up ourselves to God. We are not of the world, even as You are not of the world. Lord, let our mind be enlightened by the renewing of the Holy Spirit, so that we may rightly see what the spirit of this world is. And let it be seen in us that we are not of the world, but are conformed to Jesus.
Amen.

Notes

1. ***Worldly pleasures.*** Is dancing sin? What harm is there in playing billiards? One has sometimes wished that there were in the Scriptures a distinct law to forbid such things. God has intentionally not given this. If there were such a law, it would only make men outwardly spiritual. God puts each one on trial as to whether his inner disposition is worldly or heavenly. Learn Romans 12, verses 1 and 2 by heart and ask the Spirit of God to make it living in you. The Christian who offers himself up to God and becomes transformed by the renewing of the mind to prove the perfect will of God will speedily learn

whether he may dance or play billiards. The Christian who is afraid only of hell, but not of conformity to the world, cannot see what the Spirit of God gives His children to see.

2. It is remarkable that the trinity of the god of this world, in John's Epistle, is seen as well in the temptation in Paradise as in that of the Lord Jesus.

The lust of the flesh:

The woman saw that the tree was good for food (Genesis 3:6).

Command that those stones be made bread (Matthew 4:3).

The lust of the eyes:

And that it was pleasant to the eyes (Genesis 3:6).

The devil showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world (Matthew 4:8).

And the vainglory of life:

And that the tree was to be desired to make one wise (Genesis 3:6).

Cast Thyself down (Matthew 4:6).

3. Consider what I say to you-it is only conformity to Jesus that will keep out conformity to the world. Let conformity to Jesus be the study and the endeavor of your soul.

Chapter 41_(TOC)

The Lord's Day

"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all His work which God had created"—Genesis 2:3.

"On that day, the first day of the week, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you"—John 20:19.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day"—Revelation 1:10.

Man lives under the law of time. He must have time for what he wants to do or obtain. In a wonderful way God gives him time for communion with Himself. One day in seven God separated for fellowship with Himself.

The great object of God's gift of this day is that it may serve as a sign that God desires to sanctify man.^[332] Endeavour to understand well the word "holy." It is one of the most important words in the Bible.

God is the Holy One. By revealing Himself, God communicates His holiness to that which is holy. We know that the temple was holy, because God dwelt there. God had taken possession of it. He gave Himself to dwell there. In this way, God also wants to sanctify man. He wants to take possession of him and fill him with Himself—with His own life, His disposition, His holiness. For this reason, God took possession of the seventh day, appropriating it to Himself. He sanctified it. He also calls man to sanctify it and to acknowledge it as the Lord's day—the day of the Lord's presence and special working. He who does this—who sanctifies this day—will be sanctified by Him, as God has promised. (Read with attention, Exodus 31:12-17, especially verse 13.)

God blessed the seventh day by sanctifying it. The blessing of God is the power of life, lodged by Him in everything. He blesses grass and cattle and man with the power to multiply.^[333] And so He lodged in the seventh day a power to bless, and the promise that everyone who sanctifies this day will be sanctified and blessed by it. We must accustom ourselves to always think of the Sabbath as a blessed day that certainly brings blessing. The blessing bound up with it is very great.^[334]

There is still a third word that is used when speaking of the Sabbath. "God rested on the seventh day," and, as it stands in Exodus, "was refreshed" or gladdened. God will sanctify and bless us by introducing us into His rest. He wants to bring us to see that we are not to burden ourselves with our cares and weaknesses. We are to rest in Him, in His finished work, in His rest, which He takes because all is in order. This rest is not the outward termination of employments. No, it is the rest of faith, by which we cease from our works as God did from His, because all is finished. Into this rest we enter by faith in the finished work of Jesus, in surrender to be sanctified by God.^[335]

The seventh day is changed into the first day of the week because Jesus finished the second creation in His resurrection, and we enter into life and rest by the power of His resurrection. There is no specific command on this point. In the New Testament, the Spirit takes the place of the law. The Spirit of the Lord led His disciples to the celebration of this day. It was the day, not only on which the Lord was raised, but also on which, in all likelihood, the Spirit was poured out. It was the day not only on which the Lord manifested Himself during the forty days, but on which the Spirit also specially worked.^[336]

The chief lessons that we have to learn about this day are the following:

The principal aim of the Sabbath is to make you holy, as God is holy. God would have you holy—this is glory, this is blessedness—this is His blessing, this His rest. God would have you holy, filled with Himself and His holiness. [\[337\]](#)

In order to sanctify you, God must have you with Him, in His presence and fellowship. You are to come away from all your struggling and working to rest with Him. You are to rest quietly, without exertion or anxiety, in the certainty that the Son has finished everything, that the Father cares for you in everything, and that the Spirit will work everything in you. God can reveal Himself in the holy rest of a soul that is converted to God, remains silent before His presence to hear what He speaks to him, and depends on God to achieve all. [\[338\]](#) It is thus that He sanctifies us.

We sanctify the day of rest, first by withdrawing from all external business and distraction. Then, by employing it especially as God's day—belonging to the Lord—for what He destined it to be, fellowship with Himself.

Take care that you do not use the day of rest only as a day for the public observance of divine worship. It is especially in private personal communion that God can bless and sanctify you. In the church, the understanding is kept active, and you have the ordinances of preaching, united prayer, and praise to keep you occupied. But there we do not always know whether the heart is really dealing with God—is taking delight in Him. This takes place in solitude. Accustom yourself, then, to be alone with the Lord your God. Not only speak to Him, but let Him speak to you. Let your heart be the temple in whose holy silence His voice is heard. Rest in God. Then God will say of your heart: This is my rest, here will I dwell. [\[339\]](#)

Young Christian, hold in high regard the holy, the blessed day of rest. Long for it. Thank God for it. Keep it very holy. And, above all, let it be a day of

inner fellowship with your God—living conversation with His love.

Holy God, I thank You for the holy day which You give me as a token that You will sanctify me. Lord God, it is You who did sanctify the day by taking it for Yourself. Sanctify me in like manner by taking me for Yourself. Teach me so to enter into Your rest, so to find my rest in Your love, that my whole soul will be silent before You, in order that You may make Yourself and Your love known in me. And let every Sabbath be to me a foretaste of the eternal rest with You. Amen.

Notes

1. The Sabbath was the first of all the ways of grace, instituted even before the Fall. You cannot set too high a value on it.
2. Observe how specially the Trinity has revealed Himself on the day of rest. The Father rested on this day. The Son rose from the dead on it. The Spirit sanctified this day by His special workings. You may expect the fellowship and the powerful workings of the Trinity on this day.
3. What is meant by the word "holy"? What is the day of rest a representation of according to Exodus 31, verse 13? How did God sanctify the day of rest? How does He sanctify us?
4. There are in this country certain difficulties in the way of the quiet celebration of the day of rest in a village where the church is often very full. Yet one can lay aside that which is unnecessary and receive the influx of company. We can fix an hour in which there will be reading and singing.

5. It is a matter of great importance to bring up children correctly for the sanctification of the Lord's day, by avoiding worldly society and conversation, by accustoming them to read something that may be useful for them. For the younger children, there should be a place in every Sunday school. It would be beneficial for the older children to come in contact with a book such as this, or a Bible, and have help to review the texts.
6. There is no better day than the Lord's day for giving food to body and soul. Let the work of Satan on this day come to an end. Work for the heathen and the ignorant so that they may be carried forward.
7. The principal point is that the day of rest is the day of God's rest, of rest in and with God, and of fellowship with Him. It is God who will sanctify us. He does this by taking possession of us.

Chapter 42^(TOC)

Holy Baptism

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"—Matthew 28:19.

"He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved"—Mark 16:16.

We find the meaning of the institution of baptism summarised in these words. The word "teach" means, "make disciples of all the nations, baptising them." The believing disciple, as he is baptised in the water, is also to be baptised or introduced into the name of the Trinity.

By the name of the Father, the new birth and life as a child in the love of the Father are secured to him.^[340] By the name of the Son, participation in the forgiveness of sins and the life that is in Christ are promised to him.^[341] By the name of the Holy Spirit, the indwelling and progressive renewal of the Spirit are assured him.^[342] And every baptised believer must always look upon baptism as his entrance into a covenant with the Trinity, and as a pledge that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit will, in course of time, do for him all that they have promised. It requires a lifelong study to know and enjoy all the blessing that is presented in baptism.

In other passages of Scripture, the blessing is again set forth. We find bound up with it the new birth required to make a child of God. "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (John 3:5). The baptised disciple has in God a Father, and he has to live as a child

in the love of this Father.^[343]

Then, again, baptism is brought more directly into connection with the redemption that is in Christ. Consequently, the first and simplest representation of it is the forgiveness or washing away of sins. Forgiveness is always the gateway or entrance into all blessing. Therefore, baptism is also the sacrament of the beginning of the Christian life—a beginning that is maintained through the whole life. It is on this account that in Romans, chapter 6, baptism is represented as the secret of the whole of sanctification, the entrance into a life in union with Jesus. "Know ye not that all we who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death?" (Romans 6:3). The more precise explanation of what it is to be baptised into the death of Jesus, and to arise out of this with Him, for a new life in Him follows in verses 4-11. This is very powerfully comprehended elsewhere in this word, "As many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27). This alone is the right life of a baptised disciple. He has put on Christ.^[344] As one is plunged into water and passes under it, so is the believing confessor baptised into the death of Christ, in order then to live and walk clothed with the new life of Christ.

And there are other passages where again the promise of the Spirit is connected with baptism. It is promised not only as the Spirit of regeneration but also as the gift from heaven bestowed on believers for indwelling and sealing—for progressive renewal. "He saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly" (Titus 3:5, 6). Here, renewal is the activity of the Spirit, by which the new life that is planted in the new birth penetrates our whole being, so that all our thinking and doing is sanctified by Him.^[345]

And all this rich blessing which lies in baptism is received by faith. "He that

believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved." Baptism was not only a confession on man's part of the faith that he already had, but equally a seal on God's part for the confirmation of faith—a covenant sign in which the whole treasury of grace lay open, to be enjoyed throughout life. As often as a baptised believer sees a baptism administered, or reflects on it, it is to be to him an encouragement to press, by an ever-growing faith, into the full life of salvation that the Trinity desires to work in him. The Holy Spirit is given to appropriate within us all the love of the Father and all the grace of the Son. The believing candidate for baptism is baptised into the death of Christ and has put on Christ. The Holy Spirit is in the disciple to give him all this as his daily experience.^[346]

Lord God, make Your holy baptism always operative in my soul as the experience that I am baptised into the death of Christ. And let Your people everywhere understand by Your Spirit what rich blessing lies in this baptism. Amen.

Chapter 43_(TOC)

The Lord's Supper

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"—1 Corinthians 10:16.

"He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me, and I in him. He that eateth Me, even shall he live by Me"—John 6:56, 57.

All life has need of food—it is sustained by nourishment which it takes in from without. The heavenly life must have heavenly food. Nothing less than Jesus Himself is the bread of life, "He that eateth Me even shall he live by Me."^[347]

This heavenly food—Jesus—is brought near to us in two of the means of grace, the Word and the Lord's Supper. The Word comes to present Jesus to us from the side of the intellectual life, by our thoughts. The Lord's Supper comes in like manner to present Jesus to us from the side of the emotional life, by the physical senses. Man has a double nature—he has spirit and body. Redemption begins with the spirit, but it also penetrates to the body.^[348] Redemption is not complete until this mortal body also shares in glory.

The Supper is the pledge that the Lord will also change our body of humiliation and make it like His own glorified body by subduing all things to Himself. In the Supper, Christ would take possession of the whole man—body and soul—to renew and sanctify him by the power of His holy body and blood. Even His body shares in His glory. Even His body is communicated

by the Holy Spirit. Even our body is fed with His holy body and renewed by the working of the Holy Spirit. ^[349]

This feeding with the body of Christ takes place, on the side of the Lord, by the Spirit; on our side, by faith.

This takes place on the side of the Lord by the Spirit. The Spirit communicates to us the power of the glorified body, by which our bodies become members of His body. ^[350] The Spirit also gives us to drink of the life-power of His blood, so that that blood becomes the life and the joy of our soul. The bread is a participation in the body. The cup is a participation in the blood.

And this takes place on our side by faith. A faith that, beyond what can be seen or understood, relies on the wonder-working power of the Holy Spirit to unite us with our Lord, in soul and body, by communicating Him inwardly to us. ^[351]

"What is it to eat the glorified body of Christ and to drink His shed blood?"

"It is not only to receive with a believing heart the whole suffering and dying of Christ, but also to be united more and more with His blessed body. It is to obtain forgiveness of sin and eternal life through the Holy Spirit who dwells in Christ and also in us. Even though He is in heaven and we are on earth, it is to become flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone, and to live and be governed eternally by one Spirit." ^[352]

This deeply inward union with Jesus, even with His body and blood, is the great aim of the Lord's Supper. All that it teaches and gives us of the forgiveness of sin, of the remembrance of Jesus, of the confirmation of the divine covenant, of union with one another, of the announcement of the

Lord's death till He comes, must lead this—complete oneness with Jesus through the Spirit.^[353] He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in me, and I in him. He that eateth Me, even shall he live by Me."

It is readily understood that the blessing of the supper depends very much on preparation within the inner chamber and on the hunger and thirst with which one longs for the living God.^[354] Do not imagine, however, that the Supper is nothing but an outward symbol of what we already have by faith in the Word. No, it is an actual spiritual communication from the exalted Lord in heaven of the powers of His life. And it is this only according to the measure of desire and faith. Prepare for the Lord's Supper, therefore, with very earnest separation and prayer. And then surely expect that the Lord will, with His heavenly power, in a way incomprehensible to you, renew your life.

Blessed Lord, who instituted the Supper in order to communicate Yourself to Your redeemed as their food and their power of life, teach us to use the Supper. Teach us at every opportunity to eat and to drink with great hunger and thirst for Yourself and for full union with You, believing that the Holy Spirit feeds us with Your body and gives us to drink of Your blood. Amen.

Notes

1. In connection with the Supper, let us be especially on our guard against the idea of a mere divine service of the congregation or transitory emotion. Peaching and addresses may make an edifying impression, while there is little power or blessing.
2. For a meal, the first requisite is hunger. A strong hunger and thirst for God is indispensable.

3. In the Supper, Jesus desires to give Himself to us and would have us give ourselves to Him. These are great and holy things.
4. The lessons of the Supper are many. It is a feast of remembrance; a feast of reconciliation; a feast of covenant; a feast of hope; a feast of love. But all these separate thoughts are only subordinate parts of the principal element—the living Jesus wants to give Himself to us in the most inward union. The Son of God wants to descend into our innermost parts. He wants to come to celebrate the Supper with us. "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him."
5. And then union with Jesus is union with His people in love and sympathy.
6. The preparatory address is not itself the preparation. It is only a help to the private preparation which one must have in communion with Jesus.
7. To hold festival with God at His table is something of unspeakable importance. Please do not suppose that because you are a Christian it is easy for you to go and sit down. No, take time for solitude with Jesus so that He may speak to you and tell you how you should prepare your heart to eat with Him. It is very useful to take the whole week before the Supper for preparation and the whole week after for reflection.

Chapter 44^(TOC)

Obedience

"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people"—Exodus 19:5.

"The Lord shall greatly bless thee, if thou only carefully hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God"—Deuteronomy 15:4, 5.

"By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed"—Hebrews 11:8.

"Learned he obedience by the things which He suffered: and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him"—Hebrews 5:8, 9.

Obedience is one of the most important words in the Bible and in the life of the Christian. It was in the way of disobedience that man lost the favour and the life of God. It is only in the way of obedience that that favour and that life can again be enjoyed.^[355] God cannot possibly take pleasure in, or bestow His blessing on, those who are not obedient. "If ye will obey My voice indeed, ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me"; "The Lord shall greatly bless thee, if thou only carefully hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God." These alone are the eternal principles according to which man can enjoy God's favour and blessing.

We see this in the Lord Jesus. He says, "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love" (John 15:10). He was in the love of the Father, but could not remain there except by obedience. And He says that this is equally for us the one way to continue in His love. We must keep His commandments. He

came to open for us the way back to God. This way was the way of obedience. Only he who, through faith in Jesus, walks in this way will come to God.^[356]

How gloriously this connection between the obedience of Jesus and our own is expressed in Hebrews 5, verses 8 and 9, "He learned obedience, and became unto all them that obey Him the author of eternal salvation." This is the bond of unity between Jesus and His people, the point of conformity and inward agreement. He was obedient to the Father—they, on the other hand, are obedient to Him. He and they are both obedient. His obedience not only atones for, but drives out their disobedience. He and they bear one mark—obedience to God.^[357]

This obedience is a characteristic of the life of faith. It is called the obedience of faith.^[358] There is nothing in earthly things that so spurs men to work as faith. The belief that there is advantage or joy to be found is the secret of all work. "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed." My works will be according to what I believe. The faith that Jesus made me free from the power of sin for obedience, and sets me in a suitable condition for it, has a mighty power to make me obedient. Obedience is strengthened by faith: Faith in the overflowing blessing which the Father gives to obedience, in the promises of the love and indwelling of God, and in the promise of the fullness of the Spirit which comes by this channel.^[359]

The power of this faith, again, as of obedience, lies especially in fellowship with the living God Himself. There is but one Hebrew word for "**obeying** voice" and "**hearing** voice." To hear correctly prepares one to obey. It is when I learn the will of God—not in the words of a man or a book—but from God Himself, and when I hear the **voice** of God, that I will surely believe what is promised and do what is commanded. The Holy Spirit is the voice of

God. When we hear the living voice speak, obedience becomes easy.^[360] Let us wait in silence on God, and set our soul open before Him, so that He may speak by His Spirit. When, in our Bible reading and praying, we learn to wait more upon God so that we can say, "My God has spoken this to me, has given me this promise, has commanded this," then we will also obey. "To listen to the voice" earnestly, diligently, is the sure way to obedience.

With a servant, a warrior, a child, a subject, obedience is indispensable—the first sign of integrity. And will God, the living, glorious God, find no obedience with us?^[361] No, let cheerful, punctual, precise obedience from the beginning be the mark of the genuineness of our fellowship with the Son whose obedience is our life.

Father, You make us Your children in Christ, make us in Him obedient children, as He was obedient. Let the Holy Spirit make the obedience of Jesus so glorious and powerful in us, that obedience will be the highest joy of our life. Teach us in everything only to seek to know what You desire and then to do it. Amen.

Notes

For a life of obedience, these things are required:

1. ***Decisive surrender.*** I must no longer have to ask in every single case, will I or will I not, must I, can I, be obedient? Now it must be such an unquestionable thing that I will know of nothing else than to be obedient. He who cherishes such a disposition, and thinks of obedience as a thing that stands firm, will find it easy, will literally taste great joy in it.
2. ***The knowledge of God's will through the Spirit.*** Please, do

not imagine that because you know the Bible in some manner you know the will of God. The knowledge of God's will is something spiritual. Let the Holy Spirit make known to you the knowledge of God's will.

3. ***The doing of all that we know to be right.*** All doing teaches man. All doing of what is right teaches man obedience. All that the Word or conscience or the Spirit tells you is right, actually do it. It helps to form doing into a holy habit and is an exercise leading to more power and more knowledge. Do what is right, Christian, out of obedience to God, and you will be blessed.
4. ***Faith in the power of Christ.*** You have the power to obey. Be sure of this. Although you do not feel it, you have it in Christ your Lord by faith.
5. ***The glad assurance of the blessing of obedience.*** It unites us with our God; it wins His good pleasure and love; it strengthens our life; it brings the blessedness of heaven into our heart.

Chapter 45^(TOC)

The Will of God

"Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven"—Matthew 6:10.

The glory of heaven, where the Father dwells, is that His will is done there. He who wants to taste the blessedness of heaven must know the Father who is there, and do His will, as it is done in heaven.^[362]

Heaven is an unending holy Kingdom, of which the throne of God is the central point. Around this throne there are innumerable multitudes of pure, free beings, all ordered under powers and dominions. An indescribably rich and many-sided activity fills their life. All the highest and noblest that keeps man occupied is but a faint shadow of what takes place in this heavenly world. All these beings possess their free personal will. However, the will has, by its own choice, become one with the holy will of the Father, so that, in the midst of a diversity that flashes out in a million forms, only one will is accomplished—the will of God. All the rich, blessed movement of the inhabitants of heaven has its origin and its aim in the will of God.

And why is it then that His children on earth do not regard this will as their highest joy? Why is it that the petition, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," is often coupled with thoughts of the severe, trying elements in the will of God? Why is it coupled with thoughts of the impossibility of our continually rejoicing in God's will? It is because we do not take pains to know the will of God in its glory and beauty. It is also because we do not

know His will as the origin of love, as the source of power and joy, and as the expression of the perfection of God. We think of God's will only in the law that He gave and that we cannot keep, or in the trials in which His will appears in conflict with our own. Let us no longer do this, but take pains to understand that, in the will of God, all His love and blessedness can be comprehended and understood by us.^[363]

Hear what the Word says about the will of God and the glorious things that are destined for us in this Will.

"This is the will of my Father, that every one that seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life" (John 6:40). The will of God is the rescue of sinners by faith in Christ. He who surrenders himself to this glorious will to seek souls will have the assurance that God will bless his work to others—for he carries out God's will, even as Jesus did it.^[364]

"It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish" (Matthew 18:14). The will of God is the maintenance, the strengthening, and the keeping of the weakest of His children. What courage will he have who unites himself cordially with this will!

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thessalonians 4:3). With His whole heart, with all the power of His will, God is willing to make us holy. If we but open our heart and believe that it is not the law, but the will of God—something He certainly gives and does if we permit Him—then we will rejoice that our sanctification is stable and sure.^[365]

"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). A joyful, thankful life is what God has destined for us and is what He will work in us. That which He desires, He certainly does for those who do not resist Him but receive and allow His will

to work in them.

We must surrender our spirit to be filled with the thought what God would have He will certainly bring to pass when we do not resist Him. And if we further consider how glorious and good and perfect the will of God is, then we will yield ourselves wholeheartedly so that this will may find its accomplishment in us.^[366]

To this end, let us believe that the will of God is His love. Let us see what blessings in the Word are connected with the doing of this will.^[367] Let us think of the glory of heaven as consisting of doing God's will, and make the choice that our life on earth will be in accordance with that will. And let us with prayer and meditation permit ourselves to be led by the Spirit to know this will completely.^[368]

When we have learned to know the will of God on its glorious heavenly side in the Word—and have done it—it will not be difficult for us to also bear this will where it appears to be contrary to our nature. We will be so filled with the adoration of God and His will, that we will resolve to see and approve and love this will in everything. And it will be the most glorious thought of our life that there is to be nothing, **nothing**, in which the will of God must not be known and honored.^[369]

Father, this was the glory of the Lord Jesus, that He did not do His own will, but the will of His Father. This glory I desire to have as mine. Father, open my eyes and my heart to know the perfection, the glory of Your will, and the glory of a life in this will. Teach me to understand Your will correctly, then willingly and cheerfully to execute it. When it becomes difficult for me, teach me to do Your will with loving adoration. Amen.

Notes

1. To do the will of God from the heart in prosperity is the only way to bear this will from the heart in suffering.
2. To do the will of God I must know it spiritually. The light and the power of the Spirit go together. What He teaches to see as God's will, He certainly teaches all to do. Meditate much on Romans 12:2, and pray earnestly to see God's will correctly.
3. Always learn to adore the will of God in the least and the worst thing that man does to you. It is not the will of God that man should do what is sinful. When man does sin, it is the will of God that His child should be thereby chastened. Say then always in the least as well as the greatest trials—it is the will of God that I am in this difficulty. This brings the soul to rest and silence, and teaches it to honour God in the trial.
4. When God gave a will to man, He gave him a power whereby he could accept or reject the will of God with its full power. This is heavenly glory and blessedness, to be conscious that my will is in harmony with God's will. God's will lives in me. It is the will of God to work this in you.

Chapter 46^(TOC)

Self-Denial

"There said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me"—Matthew 16:24.

Self-denial was an exercise which the Lord Jesus often spoke about. Several times He mentioned it as an indispensable characteristic of every true disciple. He associates it with cross-bearing and losing our life.^[370] Our old life is so sinful, and remains to the end so sinful, that it is never in a condition for anything good. Therefore, it must be denied and mortified so that the new life—the life of God—may have free reign in our lives.^[371] From the very beginning, let the young Christian resolve to deny himself totally, in accordance with the command of his Lord. At the outset, it seems severe, but he will find that it is the source of inconceivable blessing.

Let self-denial reach our carnal understanding. It was when Peter had spoken according to the thought of the natural understanding that the Lord had to say to him, "Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men" (Matthew 16:23). You must deny yourselves and your own thoughts. In endeavouring to attain the knowledge of what God's will is, we must be careful that the activity of our understanding the Word and prayer does not deceive us with a service of God that is not in His Spirit and truth. Deny your carnal understanding. Bring it to silence, and in holy silence give place to the Holy Spirit. Let the voice of God be heard in your heart.^[372]

Also, deny your own will, with all its lusts and desires. Once and for all, let it be unquestionable that the will of God is your choice in everything.

Therefore, every desire that does not fall in with this will must be mortified. Please believe that in the will of God there is heavenly blessedness, and that therefore self-denial appears severe only at the outset. When you exercise yourself heartily in it, it becomes a great joy. Let the body with all its life remain under the law of self-denial.^[373]

Also deny your own honour. Seek the honour of God. This brings such a rest into the soul. "How can ye believe," says Jesus, "which receive glory one of another?" (John 5:44). Although your honour may be hurt or reviled, commit it to God to watch over it. Be content to be little—to be nothing. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3).^[374]

Deny, in like manner, your own power. Cherish the deep conviction that it is those who are weak—those who are nothing—that God can use. Be very much afraid of your own endeavours in the service of God, however sincere they may be. Although you feel as if you had power, say before God that you do not have it—that your power is nothing. Continuous denial of your own power is the way to enjoy the power of God. It is in the heart which dies to its own power that the Holy Spirit decides to live and bring the power of God.^[375]

Especially deny your own interests. Do not live to please yourself, but your neighbour. He who seeks his own life will lose it. He who lives for himself will not find life. But he who truly imitates Jesus—to share in His joy—let him give his life as He did. Let him sacrifice his own interests.^[376]

Beloved Christian, at conversion you had to make a choice between your own self and Christ. You said then, "Not I, but Christ" (Galatians 2:20). Now you are to confirm this choice every day. The more you do so, the more joyful

and blessed it will be for you to renounce the sinful self—to cast aside unholy self-working—and allow Jesus to be all. The way of self-denial is a way of deep heavenly blessedness.

There are very many Christians who observe nothing of this way. They want Jesus to make them free from punishment, but not to liberate them from themselves—from their own will. But the invitation to discipleship always rings, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."

We find the reason as well as the power for self-denial in the little word **Me**. "If any man will come after **Me**, let him deny **himself**, and follow **Me**." The old life is in ourselves. The new life is in Jesus. The new life cannot rule without driving out the old. Once one's own self had everything to say, now it must be nothing. But it would rather not be this.

Because of this there must be denial of one's self and imitation of Jesus all day long. He, with His teaching, His will, and His honour, and His interests, must fill the heart. But he who has and knows Him willingly denies himself. Christ is so precious to him that he sacrifices everything, even himself, to win Him.^[377]

This is the true life of faith. Not according to what nature sees or thinks to be acceptable, do I live, but according to what Jesus says and would have. Every day and every hour I confirm the wonderful thought, "Not I, but Christ" (Galatians 2:20). I am nothing, Christ is everything. "Ye are dead," and no longer have power, or will, or honour, "your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3). Christ's power and will alone prevail. Christians, cheerfully deny that sinful wretched self so that the glorious Christ may dwell in you.

Precious Saviour, teach me what self-denial is. Teach me so to distrust my

heart that in nothing will I yield to its fancy. Teach me to know You so that it will be impossible for me to do anything else than to offer up myself to possess You and Your life. Amen.

Notes

1. Of the denial of the natural understanding Tersteegen said, "God and His truth are never understood correctly except by the one who, by the dying of his carnal nature, his inclinations, passions, and will, is made very earnest and silent before God. This same soul must abandon the manifold deliberations of the understanding and become very simple and childlike. We must give our heart and our will entirely to God, forsaking our own will in all things, releasing ourselves especially from the manifold imaginations and activities of the understanding, even in spiritual things. Our understanding collects itself silently in the heart, and dwells as in the heart with God. Not in the head, but in the heart, does the true understanding display itself in acquiring the knowledge of God. In the head are the barren ideas of truth: in the heart is found the living truth itself, the anointing that teaches us all things. In the heart is found the living fountain of light. Anyone who lives in a heart entertained with God will often, with a glance of the eye, discern more truth than another with the greatest exertion."
2. Read the above passage with care. You will find in it the reason why we have said several times that when you read or pray you must at every opportunity keep quiet for a little while

and set yourself in entire silence before God. This is necessary to bring the activity of the natural understanding to silence and to set the heart open before God so that He may speak there. The heart is the temple in which worship in spirit and truth takes place. Distrust and deny your understanding in spiritual things. The natural understanding is in the head. The spiritual understanding is in the heart, the temple of God. Preserve in the temple of God a holy silence before His countenance. Then He will speak.

3. The peculiar mark of Christian self-denial is inward cheerfulness and joy in the midst of turmoil. The Word of God makes unceasing joy a duty. This joyful disposition, hailing from eternity, has all change and variance under control and will hold its ground, not only in times of severe suffering, but also in the self-denial of every day and hour that is inseparable from the Christian life.
4. What all am I to deny? Deny yourself. How will I know where and when to deny myself? Do so always and in everything. And if you do not understand that answer, know that no one can give you the right explanation of it but Jesus Himself. To imitate Jesus, to be taught of Him, is the only way to self-denial. Only when Jesus comes in does self go out.

Chapter 47^(TOC)

Discretion

"For wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul, discretion shall reserve thee, understanding shall keep thee"—Proverbs 2:10, 11.

"My son, keep sound wisdom and discretion: so shall they be life unto thy soul"—Proverbs 3:21, 22.

"Ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rash"—Acts 19:36.

Indiscretion is not merely the sin of the unconverted. It often causes much evil and misery among the people of God. We read of Moses, "They angered him also at the waters of Meribah, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: because they were rebellious against his spirit, and he spake unadvisedly with his lips." So of Uzzah's touching the ark, "And God smote him there for his error" (2 Samuel 6:7).^[378]

Discretion, and why it is so necessary, may be easily explained. When an army marches into the province of an enemy, its safety depends on the guards which are always on watch. The guards are to know and to give warning when the enemy approaches. Advance guards are sent out so that the territory and power of the enemy may be known. This prudence, which looks out beforehand and looks around, is dispensable.

The Christian lives in the province of the enemy. All that surrounds him may become a snare or an occasion for sin. Therefore his whole walk is to be carried out in a holy reserve and watchfulness so that he may do nothing

indiscreet. He watches and prays that he may not enter into temptation.^[379]
Prudence keeps guard over him.^[380]

Discretion keeps watch over the lips. What loss many a child of God endure by thinking that if he speaks nothing wrong, he may speak what he will. He does not know how—through much speaking—the soul becomes ensnared in the distractions of the world. In the multitude of words there is not a lack of sin (Proverbs 10:19). Discretion endeavours not to speak unless it be for the glory of God and a blessing to neighbors.^[381]

Discretion also keeps guard over the ear. All the news of the world comes to me through the gate of the ear—all the indiscreet speech of others—to infect me. Eagerness for news is very hurtful for the soul. Because of it, one can no longer look into one's self. One lives wholly in the world. Corinth was much more godless than Athens. But in the latter, where they "spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing" (Acts 17:21), very few were converted. Take heed, says Jesus, what ye hear.^[382]

On this account, discretion keeps watch over the society in which the Christian mingles. "Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh all wisdom" (Proverbs 18:1). The child of God does not have the freedom to yield himself to the society of he world. He must know the will of his Father.
^[383]

Discretion keeps watch over all lawful occupations and possessions. It knows how gradually and secretly the love of money, worldly mindedness, and he secret power of the flesh, obtains the upper hand. It knows that it can never consider itself free from this temptation.^[384]

And, above all, discretion keeps watch over the heart, because it is our life's fountain. Remembering the word, "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool"

(Proverbs 28:26), discretion walks in deep humility, and it works out salvation with fear and trembling.^[385]

What source gives the soul the power to be endlessly on its guard against the thousand dangers surrounding it on all sides? Is it not fatiguing, exhausting, and harassing to have to thus watch always, and never to be at rest in the certainty that there is no danger? No, absolutely not. Discretion brings the highest restfulness. It has its security and strength in its heavenly Keeper, who does not slumber or sleep. In confidence in Him, under the inspiration of His Spirit, discretion does its work. The Christian walks wisely. The dignity of a holy prudence adorns him in all his actions. The rest of faith, the faith that Jesus watches and guards, binds us to Him in love. Holy discretion springs, as of its own accord, from a love that would not grieve or abandon Him, from a faith that has its strength for everything in Him.

Lord my God, guard me so that I may not be indiscreet in heart. Let the prudence of the righteous always characterise me, in order that in everything I may be kept from giving offence. Amen.

Notes

1. It was once said to one who gave great care to having his horse and cart in thoroughly good order, "Come, it is not necessary to be taking so much trouble with this." His answer was, "I have always found that my prudence paid." How many a Christian has need of this lesson. How many a young Christian may well pray for this—that his conversion may be according to God's Word, "to the wisdom of the just" (Luke 1:17).

2. Discretion has its root in self-knowledge. The deeper my knowledge of my weakness and the sinfulness of my flesh is, the greater is the need for watchfulness. It is our element of true self-denial.
3. Discretion has its power in faith. The Lord is our Keeper and He does His keeping through the Spirit. It is from Him that our discretion comes.
4. Its activity is not limited to ourselves. Discretion reaches out to our neighbour, in the way of giving him no offence, and in laying no stumbling block in his way (Romans 14:13; 1 Corinthians 8:9; 10:32; Philippians 1:10).
5. Discretion finds great delight in silence so as to commit its way to the Lord with composure and deliberation. It esteems highly the word of the townclerk of Ephesus, "Ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rash" (Acts 19:36).
6. In great generals and their victories we see that discretion is not timidity. It is consistent with the highest courage and the most joyful certainty of victory. Discretion watches against rashness but enhances the courage of faith.

Chapter 48_(TOC)

Money

"Money answereth all things"—Ecclesiastes 10:19.

"I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the Lord from my hand"—Judges 17:3.

"Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury."—Matthew 25:27.

In his dealing with the world and its possessions, the Christian finds an opportunity to manifest his self-denial and the spirit of discretion.^[386] Since all value or property on earth still finds its expression in money, it is in his dealings with money that he can especially show he is free from worldliness by denying himself to serve his God. In order to thoroughly comprehend this, we must consider what is to be said about money.

What does money represent? It represents the work by which a man earns it and his industry, zeal, and ability in that work. It is indicative of his success and the blessing of God upon the work. It also represents all that I can do with money and the work that others would do for me. It signifies the power that I have to accomplish what I desire and the influence which I exercise on those who are dependent on me for my money. It is a representation of all the possessions or enjoyments that are to be obtained by money and of all on earth that can make life desirable. Yes, it represents life itself, without which the purchase of indispensable food cannot be supported.

Money is, indeed, one of the most desirable and fruitful of earthly things. No

wonder that it is so esteemed by all.

What is the danger of money? What sin does it lead to, that the Bible and experience should so warn us to be prudent in dealing with it? There is the anxiousness that occurs when one does not know if there will be sufficient money.^[387] There is the covetousness that longs too much for it.^[388] There is the dishonesty that, without gross deception or theft, does not give to a neighbour what belongs to him.^[389] There is the lovelessness that desires to draw everything to one's self and does not help another.^[390] There is the love of money, which greedily seeks after riches and lands.^[391] There is the robbery of God and the poor in withholding the share that belongs to them.^[392]

What is the blessing of money? If the danger of sin is so great, would it not be better if there were no money? Is it not better to be without money? No, even for the spiritual life money may be a great blessing. It may be an exercise in industry and activity,^[393] in care and economy. It may be a sign of God's blessing upon our work.^[394] It may be an opportunity for showing that we can possess and lay it out for God, without withholding it or cleaving to it, and that by means of it we can manifest our generosity to the poor and our overflowing love for God's cause.^[395] It may be a means of glorifying God by our charity and of spreading among men the gold of heavenly blessing.^[396] It may be a thing that, according to the assurance of Jesus, we can exchange for a treasure in heaven.^[397]

And what is now the way to be freed from the danger and to be led into the righteous blessing of money?

Let God be Lord over your money. Receive all your money with thanksgiving, as coming from God in answer to the prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread"(Matthew 6:11).^[398]

Lay it all down before God as belonging to Him. Say with the woman, "I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the Lord" (Judges 17:3).^[399]

Let your dealing with your money be a part of your spiritual life. Receive and possess and give out your money as one who has been bought at a high price—redeemed, not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Jesus.^[400]

Make what the Word of God says of money—of earthly goods—a special study. The Word of the Father alone teaches how the child of God is to use blessing.

Greatly reflect on the fact that it is not given to you for yourself alone, but for you and your brethren together. The blessing of money is to do good to others and to make them rejoice.^[401]

Remember that it can be given up to the Father and the service of His Kingdom for the upbuilding of His spiritual temple—the extension of His influence. Every time a spiritual blessing is mentioned in Scripture, it is a time of cheerful giving for God's cause. Even the outpouring of the Holy Spirit made itself known in the giving of money for the Lord.^[402]

Christian, understand this, all the deepest deliberations of the heart and its most spiritual activities can manifest themselves in the way in which we deal with our money. Love to God, love to our neighbour, victory over the world by faith, the hope of everlasting treasure, faithfulness as a steward, joy in God's service, cheerful self-denial, holy discretion, and the glorious freedom of the children of God, can all be seen in the use of money. Money can be the means of the most glorious fellowship with God and the full enjoyment of the blessedness of being able to honour and serve Him.

Lord God, make me properly discern in what close connection my money

stands with my spiritual life. Let the Holy Spirit lead and sanctify me, so that all my earning and receiving, my keeping and dispensing of money, may always be pleasing to You and a blessing to my soul. Amen.

Notes

1. John Wesley always said that there were three rules about the use of money which he gave to men in business and by which he was sure that they would experience benefit.

Make as much money as you can. Be industrious and diligent.

Save as much money as you can. Be no spendthrift, live frugally and prudently.

Give away as much money as you can. That is the divine destination of money. That makes it an everlasting blessing for yourselves and others.

2. Acquaint yourself with the magnificent prayer of David in 1 Chronicles 29:10-20. Receive it into your soul because it teaches us the blessedness and the glorification of God that springs from cheerful giving.

Chapter 49_(TOC)

The Freedom of the Christian

"Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. Being made free from sin, Ye have your fruit unto holiness"—Romans 6:18, 22.

"But now we are delivered from the law"—Romans 7:6.

"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death"—Romans 8:2.

Freedom is counted in Scripture as one of the greatest privileges of the child of God. Throughout history, there is nothing for which nations have made great sacrifices except freedom. Slavery is the lowest condition into which man can sink, for in it he can no longer govern himself. Freedom is the deepest need of his nature.

To be free, then, is the condition in which anything can develop itself according to the law of its nature—according to its own disposition. Without freedom nothing can attain its destiny or become what it should be. This is true of the animal and man, of the worldly and the spiritual alike. It was for this reason that God chose the redemption of Israel out of the slavery of Egypt and into the glorious liberty of the promised land as the everlasting example of redemption out of the slavery of sin and into the liberty of the children of God.^[403] On this account, Jesus said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). And the Holy Scriptures teach us to stand firmly in the freedom with which Christ made us free. Complete insight into this freedom opens up to us one of the greatest glories

of the life that the grace of God has prepared for us.^[404]

There are three passages from the Epistle to the Romans which speak of our sanctification through a threefold freedom. There is freedom from sin in the sixth chapter, freedom from the law in the seventh, and freedom from the law of sin in the eighth.

There is freedom from sin (Romans 6:7, 18, 22). Sin is represented as a power that rules over man, and under which he is brought and taken captive: It urges him to be a slave to evil.^[405] By the death of Christ and in Christ, the believer—who is one with Him—is made entirely free from the dominion of sin. It has no more power over him. If, then, he still sins, it is because he permits sin still to rule over him, not knowing his freedom by faith. But if by faith he fully accepts what the Word of God thus confirms, then sin has no power over him. He overcomes it by the faith that he is made free from it.^[406]

Then there is freedom from the law. This leads us deeper into the life of grace than freedom from sin. According to Scripture, law and sin always go together. "The strength of sin is the law" (1 Corinthians 15:56). The law does nothing but make the offence greater.^[407] The law reveals our sinfulness. It cannot help us against sin; rather, with its demand for perfect obedience, it hopelessly gives us over to the power of sin. The Christian who does not realise that he is made free from the law will still always abide under sin.^[408] Christ and the law cannot rule over us together. In every endeavour to fulfil the law as believers, we are taken captive by sin.^[409] The Christian must know that he is entirely free from the law—from the **you must** that stands around us and over us. Then, for the first time, he will know what it is to be free from sin.

Then there is also freedom from the law of sin—actual liberation from the

power of sin in our members. What we have in Christ, freedom from sin and from the law, is inwardly appropriated for us by the Spirit of God. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The Holy Spirit in us takes the place of the law over us. "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (Galatians 5:18). Freedom from the law is not anything external. Instead, it takes place according to the amount of dominion and leading of the Spirit within us. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3:17). Accordingly, as the law of the Spirit rules in us, we are made free from the law, and from the law of sin. We are then free to do what we, as God's children, would gladly do—serve God.

Free expresses a condition in which nothing hinders me from being what I could and should be. In other words, **free** is to be able to do what I desire. The power of sin over us, the power of the law against us, and the power of the law of sin in us, hinder us. But he who stands in the freedom of the Holy Spirit—he who is then truly free—cannot be prevented or hindered from being what he could and should be. As it is the nature of a tree to grow upwards—free from all hindrances—so a child of God then grows to what he should and will be. As the Holy Spirit leads him into this freedom, the joyful consciousness of his strength for the life of faith springs up. He shouts joyfully, "I can do all things through Him which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). "Thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:14).

Son of God, anointed with the Spirit to announce freedom to the captives, make me also truly free. Let the Spirit of life in You, my Lord, make me free from the law of sin and of death. I am Your ransomed one. Let me live as Your freed one, who is hindered by nothing from serving You. Amen.

Notes

1. The freedom of the Christian extends over his whole life. He is free in relation to the institutions and teachings of men: "Ye are bought with a price: be ye not the servants of men" (1 Corinthians 7:23; Colossians 2:20). He is free in relation to the world and in the use of what God gives. He has power to possess it or to dispense with it, to enjoy it or to sacrifice it (1 Corinthians 9:1).
2. This freedom is no lawlessness. We are free from sin and the law to serve God in the Spirit. We are not under the law, but give ourselves, with free choice and in love, to Him who loves us (Romans 6:18; Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 2:16). Not under the law, also not without the law, but in the law—a new and higher law. "The law of the Spirit of life," "the law of liberty," (1 Corinthians 9:21; James 1:1-5; 2:12), the law written in our hearts, is our rule and measure. In this last passage the translation ought to be, "bound by a law to Christ."
3. This freedom has its subsistence from and in the Word. The more the Word abides in me and the truth lives in me, the freer I become (John 8:31, 32, 36).
4. Freedom manifests itself in love. I am free from the law and from man and from institutions to be able now, like Christ, to surrender myself for others (Romans 14:13, 21; Galatians 5:13; 6:1).
5. This glorious liberty to serve God and our neighbour in love is

a spiritual thing. We cannot by any means seize it and draw it to us. It becomes known only by a life in the Holy Spirit.

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3:17). "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (Galatians 5:18). It is the Holy Spirit who makes us free. Let us allow ourselves to be introduced by Him into the effectual, glorious liberty of the children of God. "The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2).

Chapter 50_(TOC)

Growth

"So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring forth and grow up, he knoweth not how. The earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, after that the ear, then the full corn in the ear"—Mark 4:26-28.

"The Head, from which all the body increaseth with the increase of God"—Colossians 2:19.

"That we may grow into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ, from whom the whole body maketh the increase"—Ephesians 4:15, 16.

Life is continual movement, progressiveness. Increase or growth is the law of all created life. Consequently, the new life in man is destined to increase—always by becoming stronger. As there are in the seed and in the earth a life and power of growth which impels the plant to achieve its full height and fruit, so is there in the seed of the eternal life an impelling force by which that life always increases and grows. This divine growth continues until we come to be a perfect man—measuring up to the stature of the fullness of Christ.^[410]

In this parable of the seed that springs up of itself, and becomes great and bears fruit, the Lord teaches us two of the most important lessons on the increase of the spiritual life. The one is that of its ***self-sufficiency***; the other is that of its ***gradual timing***.

The first lesson is for those who ask what they are to do in order to grow and advance more in grace. As the Lord said of the body, "Which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto his stature? Consider the lilies of the field

how they grow" (Matthew 6:27, 28). So He says to us here that we can do nothing, and need to do nothing, to make the spiritual life grow.^[411] Do you not see how, while man slept, the seed sprang up and became high? Do you not see that he did not know how the earth brought forth fruit by itself? Once man has sown, he must believe that God cares for the growth. Man does not have to care. He must trust and rest.

And must man then do nothing? You must understand that he can do nothing. The power of life must come from within—from the life and the Spirit implanted in him. He can contribute nothing to the growth itself. His growth will be given to him.^[412]

All he can do is to let the life grow. All that can hinder the life, he must take away and keep away. He can take away any thorns and thistles in the soil which occupy the place and power that the plant should have.^[413] The plant must have its place in the earth alone and undivided. The farmer can care for this. Then it is able to grow further *of itself*. Likewise, the Christian must take away what can hinder the growth of the new life. He must surrender his heart entirely and completely for the new life, allowing it alone to possess his heart, so that it may grow free and unhindered.^[414]

The farmer can also bring forth what the plant requires in the way of food or drink. He can manure or moisten the soil as it is needed. So must the believer see to it that for the new life nourishment is brought forth out of the Word, the living water of the Spirit, by prayer. It is in Christ that the new life is planted. From Him it increases with divine increase. Stay rooted in Him by the exercise of faith, and the life will grow of itself.^[415] Give it what it must have, take away what can hinder it, and the life will grow and increase of itself.

Then comes the second lesson of the parable—the gradual timing of the growth, "first the blade, after that the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Do not expect everything at once. Give God time. By faith and endurance we inherit the promises—faith that knows that it has everything in Christ, and endurance that expects everything in its time according to the rule and the order of the divine government. Give God time. Give the new life time. It is by continually remaining in the earth that the plant grows. It is by continually standing in grace, in Christ Himself—in whom God has planted us—that the new life grows.^[416]

Yes, give the new life sufficient time—time in prayer, time in communion with God, time in continuous exercise of faith, and time in persistent separation from the world. Give it time. The divine inner growth with which the life of God perfects man in Christ is slow but sure, hidden but real, and weak but endowed with heavenly power.

Lord God, graciously strengthen the faith of Your children, showing them that their growth and progress are in Your hands. Enable them to see what a precious, powerful life was implanted in them by You—a life that increases with a divine increase. Enable them, by faith and patience, to inherit the promises. And teach them in that faith to take away all that can hinder the new life, and to bring forward all that can further it, so that You may make Your work in them glorious. Amen.

Notes

1. For the plant, the principal thing is the soil in which it stands and out of which it draws its strength. For the Christian, this also is the principal thing. He is in Christ. Christ is all. He must grow up in Him, for out of Him the body obtains its

increase. The main thing is to abide in Christ by faith.

2. Remember that faith must set itself toward a silent restfulness so that growth is just like that of the lilies of God's hands, and so that He will see to it that we increase and grow strong.
3. By this firm and joyful faith we become "Strengthened with all might according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" (Colossians 1:11).
4. This faith that God cares for our growth takes away all anxiety and gives courage for doing the two things that we have to do—the taking away of what might be obstructive to the new life, and the bringing forward of what may be serviceable to it.
5. Observe well the distinction between planting and growing. Planting is the work of a moment. In a moment the earth receives the seed. After that comes the slow growth. Without delay—immediately—the sinner must receive the Word. There can be no delay before conversion. Then, with time, the growth of the seed follows.
6. The main thing is Christ. From Him and in Him is our growth. He is the soil that of itself brings forth fruit, yet we do not know how. Hold fellowship with Him daily. A month's worth of meditations on the blessed life of continued fellowship with Him are provided in my book, ***Abide in Christ***.

Chapter 51_(TOC)

Searching the Scriptures

*"O how I love Thy law! it is my meditation all the day"—Psalm 119:97.
"Search the Scriptures: and they are they which testify of Me"—John 5:39.
"The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them
that heard"—Hebrews 4:2.*

At the beginning of this book there is more than one passage on the use of God's Word in the life of grace. Before I take leave of my readers, I would like to come back to this all important point. I cannot too earnestly and urgently address this call to my young brothers and sisters—your spiritual life greatly depends on your use of God's Word.

Man lives by the Word that comes from the mouth of God. Therefore, seek with your whole heart to learn how to use God's Word correctly. With this in mind, reflect on the following hints:

Read the Word ***more with the heart than with the understanding***. With the understanding I know and comprehend—with the heart I desire and love and hold firmly. Let the understanding be the servant of the heart. Be very afraid of your understanding or carnal nature, which cannot receive spiritual things. ^[417] Deny your understanding, and wait in humility on the Spirit of God. On every occasion, keep silent during your reading of the Word. Say to yourselves, "This Word I now receive in my heart, to love and to let it live in me."^[418]

Always read the Word ***in fellowship with the living God***. The power of a word depends on my conviction regarding the man who wrote it. First, set yourself in loving fellowship with the living God under the impression of His nearness and love. Deal with the Word under the full conviction that He, the eternal God, is speaking with you. Let your heart be silent while you listen to God—to God Himself.^[419] Then the Word will certainly become a great blessing to you.

Read the Word ***as a living Word in which the Spirit of God dwells, and that certainly works in those who believe***. The Word is seed. Seed has life, and grows and yields fruit of itself. Likewise, the Word has life, and of itself grows and yields fruit.^[420] If you do not wholly understand it—if you do not feel its power—carry it in your heart. Ponder it and meditate on it, and it will of itself begin to yield a working and growth in you.^[421] The Spirit of God is with and in the Word.

Read it ***with the resolve to be, not only a hearer, but a doer of the Word***. Let the great question be—What would God now have of me with this Word? If the answer is—He would have me believe it and rely on Him to fulfil it—immediately do this from the heart. If the Word is a command of what you are to do, immediately yield yourself to do it.^[422] There is an unspeakable blessedness in the doing of God's Word, and in the surrender of myself to be and to act just as His Word dictates. Do not be only hearers, but doers of the Word.

Read the Word ***with time***. More and more, I see that one obtains nothing on earth without time. Give the Word time. Give the Word time to come into your heart, on every occasion on which you sit down to read it. Give it time, in the persistence with which you are faithful to it, from day to day and month to month.^[423] With perseverance, you become exercised and more

accustomed to the Word and the Word begins to work. Please, do not be discouraged when you do not understand the Word. Hold on, take courage, give the Word time. Later on the Word will explain itself. David had to meditate day and night to understand it.

Read the Word *with a searching of the Scriptures*. The best explanation of the Bible is the Bible itself. Take three or four texts on one point, and set them close to one another and compare them. See where they agree and where they differ. See where they say the same thing or again something else. Let the Word of God in one place be cleared up and confirmed by what He said in another place on the same subject. This is the safest and the best explanation. Even the holy writers used this method of instruction with the Scriptures, "*and again*" (John 19:37).^[424] Do not complain that this method takes too much time and energy. It is worth the trouble. Your pains will be rewarded. On earth you have nothing without effort.^[425] He who wants to go to heaven never goes without taking pains. Search the Scriptures, you will be richly rewarded.

Young Christian, let one of my last and most earnest words to you be this—your growth, your power, and your life depend on your faithfulness to the Word of God. Love God's Word. Esteem it sweeter than honey, better than thousands in silver or gold. In the Word, the Father can and will reveal His heart to you. In the Word, Jesus will communicate Himself and all His grace. In the Word, the Holy Spirit will come into you, to renew your heart and all your thoughts, according to the mind and will of God. Do not simply read enough of the Word to keep you from falling away. Make it one of your chief occupations on earth, to yield yourself so that God may fill you with His Word, and may fulfil His Word in you.

Lord God, what grace it is that You speak to us in Your Word, that we in

Your Word have access to Your heart, to Your will, and to Your love. Forgive us for our sins against Your precious Word. And, Lord, let the new life become so strong by the Spirit in us, that all its desire will be to abide in Your Word. Amen.

Notes

1. In the middle of the Bible stands Psalm 119, in which the praise and the love of God's Word are so strikingly expressed. It is not enough for us to read through the divisions of this psalm successively. We must take its principal points and seek what is said in different passages upon each of these points. Let us, for example, take the following points, observing the indications of the answers, and seek in this way to come under the full impression of what is taught us of the glory of God's Word:
 - a. The blessing that the Word gives—verses 1, 2, 6, 9, 11, 24, 45, 46, 47, etc.
 - b. How we have to handle the Word (observe, walk, keep, mark, etc.).
 - c. The names that are given to God's Word in this psalm.
 - d. Prayer for divine teaching—verses 5, 10, 12, 18, 19, 26.
 - e. Surrender to obedience to the Word—verses 93, 105, 106, 112, 128, 133.
 - f. God's Word, the basis of prayer—verses 41, 49, 58, 76, 107, 116, 170.

- g. Observance as the ground of confidence in prayer—verses 77, 159, 176.
- h. Observance as promised upon the hearing of prayer—verses 8, 17, 33, 34, 44.
- i. The power to observe the Word—verses 32, 36, 41, 42, 117, 135, 146.
- j. The praise of God's Word—verses 54, 72, 97, 129, 130, 144.
- k. The confident confession of obedience—verses 102, 110, 121, 168.
- l. Personal fellowship with God, seen in the psalmist's use of Thou and I, Thine and Mine.

I have merely mentioned a few points and a few verses. Seek out more and mark them until your mind is filled with the thoughts about the Word which the Spirit of God desires to give you. Read the words of that great man of faith, George Muller, with great thoughtfulness. He says, "The power of our spiritual life will be according to the measure of the room that the Word of God takes up in our life and in our thoughts. After an experience of 54 years, I can solemnly declare this. For three years after my conversion I used the Word little. Since that time, I have searched it with diligence, and the blessing was wonderful. From that time, I have read the Bible through a hundred times and at every time with increasing joy. Whenever I start fresh with it, it appears to me as a new book. I cannot express how great the blessing is of faithful, daily, regular searching of the Bible. The day is lost for me on which I have used no solid time for enjoying the Word of God.

"Friends sometimes say: 'I have so much to do that I can find

no time for regular Bible study.' I believe that there are few that have to work harder than I have. Yet it remains a rule with me never to begin my work until I have had real, sweet fellowship with God. After that I give myself heartily to the business of the day, that is, to God's work, with only intervals of some minutes for prayer."

Chapter 52_(TOC)

The Lord the Perfecter

"I will cry unto God most High; unto God that performeth all things for me"—Psalm 57:2.

"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me"—Psalm 138:8.

"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ"—Philippians 1:6.

"For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: To whom be glory for ever"—Romans 11:36.

We read that David once succumbed to unbelief, and said, "I shall now one day perish by the hand of Saul" (1 Samuel 27:1). So even the Christian may indeed fear that he will one day perish. This is because he looks at himself and what is in him, and does not set his trust wholly on God. It is because he does not yet know God as the Perfecter. He does not yet know what is meant by His name, "I am the Alpha and the Omega: the Beginning and the End: the First and the Last" (Revelation 21:6; 1:8). If I truly believe in God as the beginning out of whom all comes, then I must trust Him as the continuation and the end, to whom all goes.

God is the beginning. "He which hath begun a good work in you"; "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you" (John 15:16). We are to be thankful for God's free choice, made before the foundation of the world, that we became believers and have the new life. ^[426] Those who are still unconverted have nothing to do with this election—for them there is the offer of grace and the summons to surrender.

Outside, over the door of the Father, stands the inscription, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). This everyone can see and understand. No sooner are they inside the door than they see and understand the other inscription, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me" (John 6:37). ^[427] Then they can understand how all things are of God—first, obedience to the command of God, then, insight into the counsel of God.

But then it is of great importance to firmly hold onto this truth—He has begun the good work. Every thought of God will strengthen the confidence that He will also perfect it. His faithfulness, His love, His power, are all pledged so that He will perfect the good work which He began. Please read how God has taken more than one oath regarding His unchangeable faithfulness. Your soul will rest and find courage in this.

And how will He finish His work? What has its origin **from** Him is sustained **by** Him. It will one day be brought **to** Him and His glory. There is nothing in your life, worldly or spiritual, for which the Father will not care, because it has influence on you for eternity. ^[428] There is no moment of day or night in which the silent growth of your soul is not to go forward. The Father will take care of this, if you believe.

There is no part of your destiny as a child of God that the Father will not continue and complete His work in—even in things which you have not yet given thought to. ^[429] There is one condition—you must trust Him for this. You must in faith allow Him to work. You must trustfully say, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." You must trustfully pray, "I will cry unto God that performeth all things for me." Christian, let your soul become full of the thought—The whole care, for the continuation and the perfecting of God's work in me, is in His hands. ^[430]

And how glorious the perfecting will be. In our spiritual life, God is prepared to exhibit His power in making us participants of His holiness and the image of His Son. He will make us fit, and set us in a condition for all the blessed work in His Kingdom that He would have from us. He will make our body like to the glorious body of His Son. We may wait for the coming of the Son Himself from heaven to take His own to Him. He will unite us in one body with all His chosen, and will receive and make us dwell forever in His glory. How can we think that God will not perfect His work? He will surely do it. He will gloriously do it—for everyone who trusts Him for it.

Child of God, please say in deep assurance of faith, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." In every need say continually and with great boldness, "I will call on God, that performeth all things for me." And let the song of your life be the joyful doxology, "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: To Him be the glory for ever." Amen.

Lord God, who will perfect that which concerns me, teach me to know You and to trust You. And let every thought of the new life go hand in hand with the joyful assurance—He who began a good work in me will perfect it. Amen.

Notes

1. "He that endureth to the end, shall be saved" (Matthew 10:22). It brings but little profit to begin well. We must hold the beginning of our hope firm unto the end (Matthew 10:27; 24:13; Hebrews 3:14, 16; 11:12).
2. How do we explain the falling away of some believers? They were only temporary believers. They were partakers only of

the workings of the Spirit (Hebrews 6:4).

3. How do I know whether I am a partaker of the true new birth?
"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). The faith that God has received me is matured—is confirmed—by works and by a walk under the leading of the Spirit.
4. How can any one know for certain that he will persevere to the end? By faith in God the Perfecter. We may take the Almighty God as our Keeper. He who gives himself in sincerity to Him, and trusts wholly in Him to perfect His work, obtains a divine certainty that the Lord has him and will hold him firm unto the end.
5. Child of God, live in fellowship with your Father. Live the life of faith in your Jesus with an undivided heart, and all fear of falling away will be taken from you. The living seal of the Holy Spirit will be your assurance of perseverance to the end.

^[1] John 1:12, 13; 3:5, 7; 5:24; 1 John 3:14; 5:1

^[2] John 3:15, 16, 36; 6:40, 51; 11:25, 26; Romans 6:11, 23; 8:2; 1 John 5:12, 13

^[3] 1 John 1:3; 3:1; 5:11

^[4] John 10:10, 28; Hebrews 7:16, 28; 11:25, 26; 2 Corinthians 12:9; 13:4; Colossians 3:3, 4; Philippians 4:13

^[5] Joshua 3:4; Isaiah 4:5, 6; Matthew 16:23

^[6] Psalm 25:5, 8, 9; 143:8; Isaiah 42:16; 64:4; Matthew 11:25; 1 Corinthians 1:18, 19; 2:7, 10, 12; Hebrews 11:8

^[7] Psalm 18:2; 27:1; 36:8, 9; John 14:19; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:3, 4

^[8] Habakkuk 2:4; Matthew 6:27; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38

^[9] 1 Peter 1:23; 2:2, 10, 25

^[10] Romans 8:16; 1 Corinthians 3:1, 16; Galatians 4:6, 7; 1 John 3:2, 14, 24; 4:13; 5:10, 13.

^[11] Ephesians 5:8; Colossians 2:6; 1 Peter 1:14, 18, 19

^[12] 1 Corinthians 3:1, 13; Hebrews 5:13, 14

^[13] Matthew 5:3; Romans 12:3, 10; Ephesians 4:2; Philippians 2:3, 4; Colossians 3:12; 4:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:1; 2 Peter 3:18

^[14] Matthew 8:8, 15, 27, 28

^[15] Judges 5:31; Psalm 84:7; 92:13, 14; Proverbs 4:18; Isaiah 40:31; Ephesians 4:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:1; 2 Peter 3:18

^[16] Psalm 19:8, 11; 119:97, 100; Isaiah 55:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 12:11

^[17] John 6:63; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 4:12

^[18] John 10:4

^[19] Psalm 119:18; John 14:26; Ephesians 1:17, 18

^[20] Psalm 119:14, 47, 48, 111, 127

^[21] Deuteronomy 30:14; Psalm 1:2; 119:34, 36; Isaiah 51:7; John 5:38; 8:31; 15:7; Romans 10:8, 9; Colossians 3:16

^[22] Psalm 119:34; Matthew 13:19; Acts 8:30

^[23] Psalm 119:15, 16

^[24] John 5:38; Acts 8:37; Romans 10:10, 17

^[25] Exodus 25:16; Psalm 37:31; 40:8; Colossians 3:16

^[26] Genesis 21:1; Joshua 23:14

^[27] Deuteronomy 11:10; 28:1, 2; Psalm 1:2, 3; 119:14, 45, 98, 165; John 17:6, 8, 17

^[28] Psalm 119:69; John 15:3, 7; 17:6, 8, 17

^[29] John 14:21, 23; 1 John 2:14, 24; Revelation 3:8, 10

^[30] 2 Chronicles 20:20; Mark 9:23; Hebrews 11:33, 35; 1 John 5:4, 5

^[31] Genesis 21:1; 32:12; Numbers 14:17, 18, 20; Joshua 21:45; 23:14; 2 Samuel 7:25, 29; Psalm 119:49

^[32] Luke 1:38, 45; John 3:33; 4:50; 11:40; 20:29; Hebrews 11:11, 18

^[33] Romans 1:17; 4:5; 5:1; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 1:19; 3:17

^[34] John 3:16, 17, 36; 1 John 5:12, 13

^[35] Romans 8:38; Philippians 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; 1 Peter 1:4, 5

^[36] Galatians 2:20; 3:2, 5; 5:5, 6; Hebrews 10:35; 1 Peter 1:3

^[37] Luke 17:5, 6; Romans 10:6-8

^[38] 1 Thessalonians 2:13; James 1:21; 1 Peter 1:23

^[39] Deuteronomy 32:46, 47; Joshua 1:7, 9

^[40] Galatians 6:6; 1 Thessalonians 1:3; James 1:21

^[41] John 1:14, 16; 14:23; Romans 5:8; 8:32, 34; Ephesians 1:22; 3:17; Colossians 2:9, 10; Hebrews 7:24, 26; 1 John 4:9, 10

^[42] Matthew 11:27; John 17:23, 25; Romans 8:38, 39; Hebrews 2:11, 1 Timothy 1:12

^[43] Psalm 73:24; 142:6; John 20:28; Hebrews 3:14

^[44] John 1:12; 2 Corinthians 3:5; Colossians 2:6; 1 John 5:12

^[45] John 15:5; Romans 8:37; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:3, 2:10; Philippians 4:13

[46] John 1:12; 1 John 5:9, 13

[47] 1 John 4:4, 19

[48] 2 Corinthians 5:15; Philippians 3:8

[49] Galatians 1:4; 2:20; Ephesians 5:2, 25; 1 Timothy 2:6; Titus 2:14

[50] Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; Colossians 1:22; 1 Thessalonians 2:10; 3:13; 5:23, 24

[51] Exodus 19:4, 5; Deuteronomy 26:7, 18; Isaiah 41:9, 10; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 1 Peter 2:10

[52] John 6:29, 35; 7:38; 10:10, 38

[53] Matthew 8:10; 9:2, 22; Mark 11:24; Luke 7:50; 8:48; 17:19; 18:42; Romans 4:20, 21;

[54] 2 Corinthians 10:15; 1 Thes 1:8; 3:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:3

[55] Matthew 5:3; 1 Corinthians 3:10, 13, 16; Ephesians 4:14, 15; Colossians 2:6

[56] John 1:16; Colossians 2:9, 10; 3:3

[57] Matthew 5:9, 16, 44, 45; Romans 8:14; Ephesians 1:4, 5; 5:1, 2; Philippians 2:15; Hebrews 2:10; 1 Peter 1:14, 17; 1 John 3:1, 10; 5:1, 3

[58] Matthew 4:22; 10:24, 25, 37, 38; Luke 18:22; John 12:25, 26; 2 Corinthians 5:15

[59] Matthew 28:20

[60] John 21:17; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; 2 Timothy 2:13; 1 John 5:16

[61] Luke 18:28; Philippians 3:7, 8

[62] Matthew 7:21; John 3:20, 21; 2 Timothy 2:19, 21

[63] Romans 6:13, 22; 12:1; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Hebrews 13:15; 1 Peter 2:5

- [64] John 10:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; 2 Timothy 1:12
- [65] Deuteronomy 27:26; Isaiah 59:1, 2; Jeremiah 44:4; Romans 1:18
- [66] Galatians 2:4; Ephesians 5:25, 27; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 3:3, 8
- [67] Jeremiah 27:9; 1 Peter 1:2, 15, 16; 2:14; 1 John 3:8
- [68] Genesis 27:34; Isaiah 58:5, 6; John 6:26; James 4:3
- [69] Psalm 32:5; Luke 7:38; 19:7, 8, 10; John 8:11
- [70] Hebrews 9:26
- [71] Romans 7:4, 9; 8:2; 2 Corinthians 12:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:3
- [72] Deuteronomy 8:17, 18; Psalm 44:4; John 16:33; 1 John 5:4, 5
- [73] 1 Corinthians 15:10; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 4:13; Colossians 3:3-5
- [74] Exodus 29:43; John 15:4, 5; Romans 8:10; Ephesians 3:17, 18
- [75] Genesis 6:5, 6; Isaiah 43:24; Ezekiel 33:6; Revelation 6:16, 17
- [76] Judges 10:10, 15, 16; Ezra 9:6; Nehemiah 9:2, 33; Jeremiah 3:21, 25; Daniel 9:4, 5, 20
- [77] Leviticus 6:21; Numbers 5:7; 2 Samuel 12:13; Psalm 32:5; 38:18; 51:5, 19
- [78] Genesis 3:12; Exodus 32:22, 24; Isaiah 1:11, 5; Luke 13:26
- [79] Numbers 12:11; 21:7; 2 Samuel 24:10, 17; Isaiah 59:12, 13; Luke 23:41; Acts 19:18, 19; 22:19, 20; 1 Timothy 1:13, 15
- [80] Proverbs 28:13; Leviticus 26:40, 41; Jeremiah 31:18, 19
- [81] 2 Samuel 12:13; Psalm 32:5; Isaiah 55:7
- [82] 1 John 5:5
- [83] Psalm 103:12; Isaiah 38:17; 55:7; Micah 7:18, 19; Hebrews 10:16-18
- [84] Jeremiah 31:34; Hebrews 8:12; 10:17

^[85] Hosea 14:5; Luke 15:22; Acts 26:18; Romans 5:1, 5

^[86] Psalm 103:3; Isaiah 12:1, 3; Romans 5:10; 8:32; Ephesians 1:7; 3:5

^[87] John 13:14, 15; Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 6:20; Ephesians 5:25, 26; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:17, 18

^[88] Exodus 34:6, 7; Matthew 18:21; Luke 1:77, 78

^[89] Ephesians 2:13, 18; Philippians 3:9; Colossians 1:21, 22

^[90] Leviticus 13:13; 14:7, 8; Numbers 19:12; 31:23, 24; 2 Samuel 22:21, 25; Nehemiah 13:30; Malachi 3:3

^[91] Psalm 51:12; 73:1; Matthew 5:8; 1 Timothy 1:5; 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Peter 1:22

^[92] John 13:10, 11; Hebrews 9:14; 10:22; 1 John 1:7

^[93] John 15:3

^[94] Psalm 51:3; Ezekiel 30:25; John 13:2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Timothy 5:22; 2 Timothy 2:21; James 4:8; 1 John 3:8

^[95] Psalm 19:13; Matthew 5:6

^[96] Ephesians 5:26; Titus 2:14

^[97] Exodus 19:6; Leviticus 11:44; 19:2; 20:6, 7

^[98] Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 12:6; 41:14; 43:15; 49:7; Hosea 11:9

^[99] Isaiah 10:17; Hebrews 12:14

^[100] 1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 5:27

^[101] 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 5:26, 27; 2 Timothy 2:21

^[102] Exodus 29:43, 45; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16, 17; 6:19

^[103] Romans 1:4; 8:2, 13; 1 Peter 1:2

^[104] 2 Thessalonians 2:13

[105] 2 Corinthians 7:1

[106] John 1:14, 16; 1 Corinthians 2:9, 10

[107] Galatians 2:21; Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 2:13; 4:13

[108] Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8; 15:3, 4

[109] Psalm 14:3; 143:2; Romans 3:10, 20

[110] Romans 3:22, 24; 10:3, 10; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9

[111] Romans 5:17, 18; 6:13, 18, 19; 8:3; Titus 1:3; 2:12; 1 John 2:29; 3:9, 10

[112] Genesis 6:9; 7:1; Matthew 1:19; Luke 1:6; 2:25; 2 Peter 2:7

[113] Psalm 1:6; 5:12; 14:5; 34:16, 20; 37:17, 39; 92:13; 97:11; 146:8

[114] Psalm 32:11; 33:1; 58:11; 64:10; 68:4; 97:12

[115] Proverbs 10:3, 6, 7, 11, 16, 20, 21, 24, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32

[116] Ecclesiastes 3:17; Isaiah 3:10; Ezekiel 3:18, 20; 18:21, 23; 33:12; Malachi 3:18; Matthew 5:45; 12:49; 25:46

[117] Matthew 5:6, 20; 6:33

[118] Romans 3:31; 6:13, 22; 7:4, 6; 8:4; 2 Corinthians 9:9, 10; Philippians 1:11; 1 Timothy 6:11

[119] 1 John 2:4, 11, 29; 3:10; 5:2

[120] Psalm 119:166, 168; Luke 1:6, 75; 1 Thessalonians 2:10

[121] Matthew 5:6, 17, 20; 6:33

[122] Romans 5:5; Galatians 5:22; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 1 John 4:11; John 13:34

[123] Romans 5:5; 1 John 4:19

[124] Ephesians 4:2, 6; 5:1, 2; 1 John 3:1; 4:7, 20; 5:1

[125] Matthew 5:44, 45; Galatians 2:20; 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 13; 5:24; Philippians 4:13; 1 Peter 1:22

[126] Luke 22:26, 27; John 13:14, 15, 34; Colossians 2:13

[127] Matthew 12:50; 25:40; Romans 13:10; 1 Corinthians 7:19; Galatians 5:6; James 2:15, 16; 1 John 3:16, 17, 18

[128] Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 4:2, 32; Philippians 2:2, 3; Colossians 3:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:3

[129] Luke 6:32, 35; 1 Peter 1:22; 2 Peter 1:7

[130] 2 Chronicles 26:5, 16; 32:26, 31; Isaiah 65:5; Jeremiah 7:14; 2 Corinthians 12:7

[131] Isaiah 43:7, 21; John 12:28; 13:31, 32; 17:1, 4, 5; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:11, 12

[132] Romans 1:21, 23

[133] John 8:50; Philippians 2:7

[134] Romans 8:2; Philippians 2:5

[135] Psalm 31:23; Proverbs 16:5; Matthew 23:12; Luke 1:51; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5

[136] Psalm 34:19; Proverbs 11:2; Isaiah 57:15; Luke 9:48; 14:11; 18:14

[137] Romans 12:3, 16; 1 Corinthians 13:4; Galatians 5:22, 23, 26; Ephesians 4:2; Philippians 2:3

[138] Matthew 20:26, 28; Luke 22:27; John 13:14, 15; Philippians 2:7, 8

[139] 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:21

[140] Genesis 1:27; 1 Corinthians 11:7

[141] Job 42:6; Isaiah 6:5; Luke 5:8

[142] Romans 7:18; 1 Corinthians 15:9, 10; Galatians 2:20

- [143] Genesis 32:10; 2 Samuel 7:18; 1 Peter 5:6-10
- [144] Romans 7:14, 23; Galatians 6:1
- [145] 2 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:16, 17; 3:3
- [146] Matthew 26:41; Luke 12:35; 1 Peter 1:13; 5:8-10
- [147] Hebrews 3:6, 14; 10:35
- [148] Romans 6:1; Galatians 2:18; 3:3
- [149] Matthew 5:48; 2 Timothy 3:17; Hebrews 13:20, 21; James 1:4; 1 Peter 5:10
- [150] Matthew 14:31; 17:20
- [151] Psalm 38:18; 69:6; 1 John 1:9; 2:1
- [152] Proverbs 28:14; Philippians 2:12; 1 Peter 1:17, 18
- [153] 2 Chronicles 20:15; Psalm 18:30, 37; 44:5, 9; John 5:4, 5; Romans 11:20; 2 Corinthians 1:24; Philippians 2:13
- [154] Genesis 28:15; Deuteronomy 7:9; 32:10; Psalm 17:8; 89:33, 34; Romans 11:2, 29
- [155] Psalm 51:17; Jeremiah 31:33
- [156] Psalm 31:6; 141:3
- [157] Psalm 119:165; Jeremiah 26:3, 4; John 14:27; Philippians 4:6, 7; 2 Thessalonians 3:16
- [158] Isaiah 1:7; Jeremiah 1:9; Matthew 10:19, 20
- [159] Exodus 14:14; Deuteronomy 3:22; 20:4; 2 Chronicles 20:15
- [160] Matthew 9:28; 1 John 5:3, 4
- [161] Genesis 17:1; 18:14; Jeremiah 32:17, 27; Matthew 8:27; 28:18; Luke 1:37, 49; 18:27; Romans 4:21; Hebrews 11:19

- [162] Romans 4:21; 14:4; 2 Corinthians 9:8; 2 Timothy 1:13
- [163] John 13:1; 1 Corinthians 1:8, 9
- [164] John 10:14, 28; Galatians 2:20; 2 Timothy 4:18; 1 John 2:13, 14
- [165] Joshua 1:9; Psalm 23:4; Romans 8:35
- [166] Romans 4:4, 5; 11:6; 1 Corinthians 1:27, 28
- [167] 2 Chronicles 16:9; 20:12; John 5:19; 15:5; 2 Corinthians 1:9
- [168] John 15:5; 1 Corinthians 1:24; 15:10; Ephesians 6:18, 19; Colossians 1:11
- [169] 2 Corinthians 11:30; 12:9, 11; 13:4, 9
- [170] Psalm 89:13; 118:14
- [171] Psalm 18:1; 28:7, 8; 31:4; 43:2; 46:1; 59:17; 62:7; 87:2
- [172] Psalm 29:1, 11; 68:35
- [173] Psalm 71:16
- [174] Psalm 27:14; Isaiah 40:31; Ephesians 6:10
- [175] John 3:36; Romans 3:28; 4:5, 16; 5:1
- [176] 2 Chronicles 7:2; Psalm 27:13; Isaiah 7:9; Matthew 14:30, 31; Luke 5:5
- [177] John 12:25; Galatians 3:2, 14; Ephesians 1:13
- [178] Romans 4:20, 21; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 11:5, 6; James 5:15, 16
- [179] Romans 15:13; Galatians 2:20; 1 Peter 1:5, 7, 8
- [180] John 7:39; 14:16, 26; Acts 1:4, 5; 2:33; 1 Corinthians 3:16
- [181] John 15:26; 16:14, 15; 1 Corinthians 2:10, 12; 12:3
- [182] John 14:17, 26; Romans 8:2; Ephesians 3:17, 19
- [183] John 16:9, 14

[184] Isaiah 4:4; Zechariah 12:10, 11; Matthew 3:11, 12

[185] Psalm 139:7, 23; Isaiah 10:17; Matthew 7:5; Romans 14:4; 1 Corinthians 2:10; 14:24, 25

[186] Psalm 19:13; Micah 3:8; 1 Corinthians 3:17; 2 Corinthians 3:17; 6:16

[187] John 1:7, 9

[188] Ephesians 3:17-20; 1 Peter 1:5

[189] Romans 1:4; 8:2, 13; 1 Peter 1:2

[190] Romans 8:14, 16; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 1:22; 6:16; Ephesians 1:13

[191] Galatians 3:2, 5, 14; 5:5

[192] Hosea 14:6, 7; Matthew 6:28; Mark 4:26, 28; Luke 2:40; Romans 8:2

[193] John 6:63; 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:10, 14; 1 Thessalonians 2:13

[194] Zechariah 12:10; Romans 8:27; Jude 20

[195] 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24; 1 Peter 1:2, 15

[196] Matthew 10:20; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9, 13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13

[197] Acts 19:2; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 3:5, 14

[198] 1 Chronicles 19:12; Psalm 62:2, 6; 131:2; Hebrews 2:18; Zechariah 4:6

[199] John 14:15; Acts 5:32

[200] Childship—a word used by the author to express the relationship of a child. Childhood expresses the state of a child rather than the relationship.

[201] Isaiah 53:10; Acts 7:51; Hebrews 10:29

[202] Psalm 5:6; Proverbs 12:22; 21:28; John 8:44; Revelation 21:8, 27; 22:15

[203] Matthew 5:22; 1 Corinthians 1:10, 11; 3:3; 13:1, 3; Galatians 5:5, 15, 21,

26; Colossians 3:8, 12; 1 Thessalonians 5:15; James 3:14

[204] Matthew 11:29; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; Galatians 6:1; Ephesians 2:16, 17; Colossians 1:8; 2 Timothy 1:12

[205] Luke 6:31; Romans 13:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:6

[206] Proverbs 10:19, 20, 21, 31; 18:20; Ecclesiastes 5:1, 2; Matthew 12:36; Ephesians 5:4; James 3:9, 10

[207] Galatians 5:17, 24, 25; 6:8; Ephesians 4:22, 24; Colossians 3:9, 10; 1 Peter 4:2

[208] Romans 8:7; 1 Corinthians 3:3; Galatians 5:16, 25

[209] Romans 7:18; 1 Corinthians 3:3; Galatians 5:15, 26

[210] Romans 4:14, 15; 7:4, 6; 8:3, 8; Galatians 5:18; 6:12, 13; Hebrews 7:18

[211] Romans 8:14; 1 Corinthians 2:15; 3:1; Galatians 6:1

[212] Romans 7:6; 8:2, 13

[213] Romans 7:18; Galatians 3:3; 4:9; 5:4, 7

[214] Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38

[215] Romans 5:17, 21; 6:11; 8:2; Galatians 2:20; 1 John 5:11, 12

[216] Romans 7:18; 8:2, 13; Hebrews 11:33

[217] Romans 4:17; 2 Corinthians 1:9; Colossians 1:29; 2:3

[218] Romans 7:4, 6; 12:5, 6; Galatians 5:18; Philippians 3:3

[219] John 15:4, 5; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 12:9, 10

[220] Matthew 4:6; 2 Corinthians 4:4; 11:14

[221] Matthew 4:1, 10

[222] Matthew 12:28; Mark 4:15; Luke 13:16; Acts 10:38

[223] Matthew 16:23; Luke 22:31, 32

[224] Luke 10:18; 22:3, 53; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Romans 16:20; Colossians 2:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:8, 9; 1 John 3:8

[225] 1 Corinthians 7:5; 2 Corinthians 2:10, 11

[226] 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Timothy 1:20

[227] Matthew 4:9; 13:22; 1 Timothy 6:9, 10; 2 Timothy 4:10

[228] John 8:44; 1 John 3:10, 15; 4:20

[229] Galatians 3:3; 5:13

[230] Ephesians 6:10, 12, 16

[231] Genesis 19:22; John 10:9; 2 Corinthians 6:2; Hebrews 4:6, 7

[232] Acts 5:39; 1 Corinthians 10:22

[233] Ephesians 6:16; 1 John 5:4, 5

[234] Psalm 18:2, 3; 46:1, 2; 62:2, 3, 6-8; 144:2

[235] Joshua 5:14; John 16:33; Romans 8:37; 2 Corinthians 2:14

[236] Psalm 44:4-8; Isaiah 45:24

[237] Deuteronomy 20:3, 8; Joshua 6:20; Judges 7:3; Psalm 18:32-40; Hebrews 11:23

[238] Matthew 5:44, 45; 10:8; 18:33

[239] Isaiah 58:10, 11; 1 Corinthians 13:5; 1 John 4:11

[240] Psalm 112:5, 9; Proverbs 11:24, 25; Matthew 25:40; 1 Corinthians 15:58; 2 Corinthians 9:6; Hebrews 6:10

[241] Luke 24:49; John 7:38; 14:12

[242] Genesis 1:22, 28; 9:1; 22:17; 26:24

[243] 2 Corinthians 9:8, 11; Hebrews 6:14

[244] Luke 18:29, 30; John 12:24, 25; 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18

[245] Psalm 40:10, 11; 66:16; 71:8, 15, 24; Hebrews 13:15

[246] Luke 7:40; John 3:3; 4:7

[247] Exodus 18:8, 11; 2 Chronicles 5:13

[248] John 1:41, 42, 46; 4:28, 29, 39; Acts 11:19

[249] Hebrews 3:13; 10:24

[250] Exodus 4:11, 12; Joshua 1:9; Isaiah 50:4, 11; Jeremiah 1:6, 7; Matthew 10:19, 20

[251] 2 Chronicles 15:7; Psalm 126:6; Haggai 2:5; Galatians 6:9

[252] Acts 4:13; 2 Corinthians 3:5; 13:3

[253] Psalm 2:3; Matthew 24:14; 28:18, 19, 20; Mark 13:10; Luke 21:24; Romans 11:25

[254] Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 17:18; Acts 1:8

[255] 1 Corinthians 12:21

[256] Acts 1:8; 11:12, 23, 24; 13:2, 4; 22:21

[257] Acts 14:27; 15:4, 5; Romans 11:25, 33; 15:10; Ephesians 3:5, 8, 10

[258] Isaiah 49:6, 12, 18, 22; 54:1, 2

[259] Proverbs 11:24, 25; Isaiah 58:7, 8

[260] Isaiah 49:6, 18, 21, 22; 54:1, 3; 60:1, 3, 11, 16; 62:2

[261] Psalm 89:16, 17; Isaiah 29:19; John 16:22; 1 Peter 1:8

[262] Psalm 32:11; Isaiah 12:5, 6; 1 Thessalonians 5:16; Philippians 4:4

[263] Deuteronomy 28:47; Psalm 11:7; 119:11

[264] Nehemiah 8:11; Psalm 68:4; Proverbs 4:18

[265] Esther 8:16; Proverbs 13:9; 15:30; Isaiah 60:20

[266] Exodus 10:23; 2 Samuel 23:4; Psalm 36:10; Isaiah 60:1, 20; 1 John 1:5; 4:16

[267] Joshua 7:13; Isaiah 58:10; 59:1, 2, 9; Matthew 15:14, 16; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:8, 14; 1 Thessalonians 5:5; 1 John 2:10

[268] John 12:36; 11:40; Romans 15:13; 1 Peter 1:3

[269] Philippians 3:1; 4:4

[270] Isaiah 5:3; Hosea 7:14, 15; 2 Corinthians 7:10

[271] Isaiah 27:8, 9; 1 Corinthians 11:32; Hebrews 2:10; 12:11

[272] Psalm 119:49, 50, 92, 143; Isaiah 40:1; 43:2; Hebrews 12:10-13

[273] Isaiah 26:16; 61:1-2; Hebrews 2:10, 17, 18; 5:9

[274] 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4; Hebrews 13:5, 6

[275] Psalm 25:9; 39:2, 10; Isaiah 50:4, 5

[276] Genesis 18:22, 23; 22:5; 32:24; Exodus 33:11

[277] Matthew 6:7, 8; 7:11

[278] Matthew 6:7, 8; Mark 11:24; Luke 18:8; John 14:13, 14; 15:7, 16; 16:23, 24

[279] Psalm 3:4; 4:3; 6:9; 10:17; 17:6; 20:2, 7; 34:5, 7, 17, 18; 38:15; 40:1, 2; 65:2; 66:19

[280] Joshua 7:12; 1 Samuel 8:18; 14:37, 38; 28:6, 15; Proverbs 21:13; Isaiah 1:15; Micah 3:4; Haggai 1:9; James 1:6; 4:3; 5:16

[281] Psalm 145:9; Isaiah 30:19; Jeremiah 33:3; Malachi 3:10; Matthew 9:29; 15:28; 1 John 3:22; 5:14, 15

[282] Matthew 6:6; Luke 9:18, 28

[283] Acts 1:14

[284] 2 Chronicles 20:4, 17, 18; Nehemiah 9:2, 3; Joel 2:16, 17; Acts 12:5

[285] Psalm 133:1, 3; Jeremiah 50:4, 5; Matthew 5:23, 24; 18:19, 20; Mark 11:25

[286] Jeremiah 32:39; Acts 4:24

[287] John 14:13, 14; 15:7, 16; 16:23, 24

[288] James 5:16, 8; Acts 12:5; 2 Corinthians 1:11; James 4:3; 5:16, 17

[289] Genesis 15:1; Isaiah 8:13; Jeremiah 32:40; Romans 8:15; 1 Peter 3:14; 1 John 4:18

[290] Psalm 22:23, 25; 33:18; 112:1; 115:13; Proverbs 28:14

[291] Matthew 8:26; Revelation 21:8

[292] Psalm 33:18; 147:11; Luke 12:4, 7

[293] Psalm 56:4, 11; Proverbs 1:7; 9:10; 10:27; 19:23; Acts 9:31; 2 Corinthians 7:1

[294] Job 42:6; Psalm 5:7; Isaiah 6:3, 5; Habakkuk 2:20; Zephaniah 2:3

[295] Luke 18:2, 4; Romans 11:20; 1 Peter 3:2, 5

[296] Proverbs 2:5, 11; 8:12, 13; 13:13; 16:6; Luke 1:74

[297] Deuteronomy 6:2; Isaiah 12:2

[298] Exodus 19:4, 5; Leviticus 1:8, 9; Deuteronomy 7:6; Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17

[299] John 14:21; 15:14, 15; 21:17; Galatians 2:20

[300] Matthew 10:32, 33, 37, 38, 40; Luke 14:26, 27, 33; 18:22

[301] Exodus 33:16; Joshua 24:25; John 8:35

[302] Ruth 1:16; John 15:12; Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:20, 21; Ephesians 4:14, 16; 1 Peter 1:22

[303] 1 Corinthians 8:13; 9:25, 27; 10:23; 2 Corinthians 6:16, 17; 2 Timothy 2:4

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OBEDIENCE AND THE CROSS

ORIGINAL TITLES: MONEY; SCHOOL OF
OBEDIENCE; SECRET OF THE CROSS

BY

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Money^(TOC)

Preface

The four articles on money contained in this little book are a reprint from the South African Pioneer, the organ of the South Africa General Mission. They have been much appreciated by those who have read them, and are now sent forth with the earnest prayer that they may be mightily used of God, to the awakening of Christians all over the world to the privilege of giving.

14A Lingfield Road, Wimbledon.

Chapter 1^(TOC)

Christ's Estimate of Money

"Jesus watched how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And a certain poor widow came, and cast in a farthing. Jesus called His disciples, and said to them, 'This poor widow has cast more in than all the others: for all they cast in out of their abundance; but she in her lack cast in all that she had, even all her living.'"—Mark 12:41.

In all our religion and our Bible study, it is of the greatest consequence to find out what the mind of Christ is, to think as He thought, and to feel just as He felt. There is not a question that concerns us, not a single matter that ever comes before us, but we find in the words of Christ something for our guidance and help. We want today to get at the mind of Christ about money; to know exactly what he thought, and then to think and act just as He would do. This is not an easy thing. We are so under the influence of the world around us, that the fear of becoming utterly unpractical if we thought and acted just like Christ easily comes upon us. Let us not be afraid; if we really desire to find out what is His mind, He will guide us to what He wants us to think and do.

Only be honest in the thought: I want to have Christ teach me how to possess and how to use my money.

Look at Him for a moment sitting here over against the treasury, watching the people putting in their gifts. Thinking about money in the church, looking after the collection: we often connect that with Judas, or some hard-worked deacon, or the treasurer or collector of some society. But see here—Jesus sits and watches the collection. And as He does it, He weighs each gift in the balance of God, and puts its value on it. In heaven He does this still. Not a gift for any part of God's work, great or small, but He notices it, and puts its value on it for the blessing, if any, that it is to bring in time or eternity. And He is willing, even here on earth in the waiting heart, to let us know what He thinks of our giving. Giving money, is a part of our religious life, is watched over by Christ, and must be regulated by His word. Let us try and discover what the scriptures have to teach us.

1. Money giving a sure test of character

In the world money is the standard of value. It is difficult to express all that money means. It is the symbol of labor and enterprise and cleverness. It is often the token of God's blessing on diligent effort. It is the equivalent of all that it can procure of the service of mind or body, of property or comfort or luxury, of influence and power. No wonder that the world loves it, seeks it above everything, and often worships it. No wonder that it is the standard of value not only for material things, but for man himself, and that a man is too often valued according to his money.

It is, however, not only thus in the kingdom of this world, but in the kingdom of heaven too, that a man is judged by his money, and yet on a different principle. The world asks, what does a man own? Christ, how does he use it? The world thinks more about the money getting; Christ about the money giving. And when a man gives, the world still asks, what does he give? Christ asks, how does he give? The world looks at the money and its amount, Christ at the man and his motive. See this in the story of the poor widow. Many that were rich cast in much; but it was out of their abundance; there was no real sacrifice in it; their life was as full and comfortable as ever, it cost them nothing. There was no special love or devotion to God in it; part of an easy and traditional religion. The widow cast in a farthing. Out of her want she cast in all that she had, even all her living. She gave all to God without reserve, without holding back anything, she gave all.

How different our standard and Christ's. We ask how much a man gives. Christ asks, how much he keeps. We look at the gift. Christ asks whether the gift was a sacrifice.

The widow kept nothing over, she gave all; the gift won His heart and approval, for it was in the spirit of His own self-sacrifice, who, being rich, became poor for our own sakes. They—out of their abundance—cast in much: She, out of her want—all that she had.

But if our Lord wanted us to do as she did, why did He not leave a clear command about it? How gladly we then would do it. Ah! there you have it. You want a command to make you do it: that would just be the spirit of the world in the church looking at what we give, at our giving all. And that is just what Christ does not wish and will not have. He wants the generous love that does it unbidden. He wants every gift to be a gift warm and bright with love, a true free will offering. If you want the Master's approval as the poor widow had it, remember one thing: You must put all at his feet, hold all at his disposal.

And that, as the spontaneous expression of a love that, like Mary, cannot help giving, just because it loves.

All my money giving—what a test of character! Lord Jesus! Oh give me grace to love Thee intently, that I may know how to give.

2. Money giving a great means of grace

Christ called His disciples to come and listen while He talked to them about the giving He saw there. It was to guide their giving and ours. Our giving, if we listen to Christ with the real desire to learn, will have more influence on our growth in grace than we know.

The spirit of the world, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." Money is the great means the world has for gratifying its desires. Christ has said of His people, "they are not of the world, as I am not of the world." They are to show in their disposal of money that they act on unworldly principle, that the spirit of heaven teaches them how to use it. And what does that spirit suggest?

Use it for spiritual purposes, for what will last for eternity, for what is pleasing to God. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh and its lusts." One of the ways of manifesting and maintaining the crucifixion of the flesh is never to use money to gratify it. And the way to conquer every temptation to do so, is to have the heart filled with large thoughts of the spiritual power of money. Would you learn to keep the flesh crucified—refuse to spend a penny on its gratification. As much as money spent on self, may nourish and strengthen and comfort self, money sacrificed to God may help the soul in the victory that overcomes the world and the flesh.

Our whole life of faith may be strengthened by the way we deal with money. Many men have to be engaged continually in making money—by nature the heart is dragged down and bound to earth in dealing with what is the very life of the world. It is faith that can give a continual victory over this temptation.

Every thought of the danger of money, every effort to resist it, every loving gift to God, helps our life of faith.

We look at things in the very light of God. We judge of them as out of eternity, and the money passing through our hands and devoted to God may be a daily education in faith and heavenly-mindedness.

Very specially may our money-giving strengthen our life of love. Every grace needs to be exercised if it is to grow; most of all is this true of love. And—did we but know it—how our money might develop and strengthen our love, as it called us to the careful and sympathizing consideration of the needs of those around us. Every call for money, and every response we give, might be the stirring of a new love, and the aid to a fuller surrender to its blessed claims.

Do believe. Money giving may be one of your choicest means of grace, a continuous fellowship with God in the renewal of your surrender of your all to Him, and in proof of the earnestness of your heart to walk before Him in self-denial, and faith and love.

3. Money-giving a wonderful power for God

What a wonderful religion Christianity is. It takes money, the very embodiment of the power of sense of this world, with its self-interest, its covetousness, and its pride, and it changes it into an instrument for God's service and glory.

Think of the poor. What help and happiness is brought to tens of thousands of helpless ones by the timely gift of a little money from the hand of love. God has allowed the difference of rich and poor for this very purpose—that just as in the interchange of buying and selling mutual dependence upon each other is maintained among men—so in the giving and receiving of charity there should be abundant scope for the blessedness of doing and receiving good. He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." What a God-like privilege and blessedness to have the power of relieving the needy and making glad the heart of the poor by gold or silver. What a blessed religion that makes the money we give away a source of greater pleasure than that which we spend on ourselves. The latter is mostly spent on what is temporal and carnal—that spent in the work of love has eternal value, and brings double happiness, to ourselves and others too.

Think of the church and its work in this world; of Missions at home and abroad, and the thousand agencies for winning men from sin to God and Holiness. Is it indeed true that the coin of this world, by being cast into God's treasury in the right spirit, can receive the stamp of the mint of heaven, and be accepted in exchange for heavenly blessings? It is true. The gifts of faith and love go not only into the Church's treasury, but into God's own treasury, and are paid out again in heavenly goods. And that not according to the

earthly standard of value, where the question always is, How much? but according to the standard of heaven, where men's judgments of much and little, great and small, are all unknown. Christ has immortalized a poor widow's farthing. It shines through the ages brighter with His approval than the brightest gold. It has been a blessing to tens of thousands in the lesson it has taught. It tells you that your farthing, if it be your all, that your gift, if it be honestly given as all you ought to give to the Lord at the time, has His approval, His stamp, His eternal blessing.

If we did but take more time in quiet thoughtfulness for the Holy Spirit to show us our Lord Jesus in charge of the Heavenly Mint, stamping every true gift, and then using it for the Kingdom, surely our money would begin to shine with a new luster. And we should begin to say—the less I can spend on myself, and the more on my Lord, the richer I am. And we shall see how, as the widow was richer in her gift and her grace than the many rich, so he is richest who truly gives all he can.

4. Money giving a continual help on the ladder to heaven

You know how often our Lord Jesus spoke of this in His parables. In that of the unjust steward He said, "Make friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that they may receive you in the eternal habitations." In the parable of the talents He said, "You ought to have put my money." The man who had not used his talent, lost all. In the parable of the sheep and the goats, it is they who have cared for the needy and the wretched in His name, who shall hear the word—"Come, you blessed of my Father."

We cannot purchase heaven—as little with money as with works. But in your money giving, heavenly-mindedness and love to Christ, and love to men, and devotion to God's work, are cultivated and proved—the "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom," will take count of the money truly spent on Christ and his work. Our money giving must prepare us for heaven.

Oh! how many there are who if heaven and holiness could be bought for a thousand pounds would give it. No money can buy it. But if they only knew, money can wondrously help on the path of holiness and heaven. Money given in the spirit of self-sacrifice, and love, and faith in Him who has paid all, brings a rich and eternal reward. Day by day give as God blesses and as He asks—it will help to bring heaven nearer to you, it will help to bring you nearer to heaven.

The Christ who sat over against the treasury is my Christ. He watches my gifts. What is given in the spirit of wholehearted devotion and love He accepts. He teaches His disciples to judge as He judges. He will teach me

how to give, how much, how lovingly, how truthfully.

Money—this is what I want to learn from Him above all—money, the cause of so much temptation and sin, and sorrow and eternal loss; money, as it is received and administered and distributed at the feet of Jesus, the Lord of the Treasury, becomes one of God's choicest channels of grace to myself and to others. In this, too, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

Who gave a farthing, and gave her all. Lord! give Your Church, in her poverty, give us all the spirit of the poor widow.

Chapter 2^(TOC)

The Holy Spirit and Money

When the Holy Spirit came down at Pentecost to dwell in men, He assumed the charge and control of their whole life. They were to be or do nothing that was not under His inspiration and leading. In everything they were to move and live and have their being "in the Spirit," to be wholly spiritual men. Hence it followed as a necessity that their possessions and property, that their money and its appropriations were subjected to His rule too, and that their income and expenditure were animated by new, hitherto unknown, principles.

In the opening chapters of the Acts we find more than one proof of the all-embracing claim of the Holy Spirit to guide and judge in the disposal of money. If I want as a Christian to know how to give, let me learn here what the teaching of the Holy Spirit is as regards the place money is to have in my Christian life and in that of the Church.

First we have: The Holy Spirit taking possession of the money.

"All that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all according as every man had need." Acts 2:44, 45. And again, Acts 4:34 "As many as were possessors of land or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the Apostles' feet. And Barnabas having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the Apostles' feet." Without any command or instruction, in the joy of the Holy Spirit, the joy of the love which He had shed abroad in their heart, the joy of the heavenly treasures that

now made them rich, they spontaneously parted with their possessions and placed them at the disposal of the Lord and His servants.

It would have been strange had it been otherwise, and a terrible loss to the Church. Money is the great symbol of the power of happiness of this world; one of its chief idols, drawing men away from God; a never-ceasing temptation to worldliness, to which the Christian is daily exposed. It would not have been a full salvation that did not provide complete deliverance from the power of money. The story of Pentecost assures us that when the Holy Spirit comes in His fulness into the heart, then earthly possessions lose their place in it, and money is only valued as a means of proving our love and doing service to our Lord and our fellow men. The fire from heaven that finds a man upon the altar and consumes the sacrifice, finds his money too, and makes it all ALTAR GOLD, holy to the Lord.

We learn here the true secret of Christian giving, the secret, in fact, of all true Christian living—the joy of the Holy Ghost. How much of our giving then has there been in which this element has been too much lacking. Habit, example, human argument and motive, the thought of duty, or the feeling of the need around us, have had more to do with our charities than the power and love of the Spirit. It is not that what has just been mentioned is not needful. The Holy Spirit makes use of all these elements of our nature in stirring us to give. There is a great need for inculcating principles and fixed habits in regard to giving. But what we need to realize is that all this is but the human side, and cannot suffice if we are to give in such measure and spirit as to make every gift a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God and a blessing to our own souls.

The secret of true giving is the joy of the Holy Ghost.

The complaint in the Church as to the terrible need of more money for God's work, as to the terrible disproportion between what God's people spend on themselves and devote to their God, is universal. The pleading cry of many of God's servants who labor for the poor and the lost, is often heart-piercing. Let us take to heart the solemn lesson: it is simply a proof of the limited measure in which the power of the Holy Spirit is known among believers. Let us for ourselves pray most fervently the prayer that our whole life may be so in the joy of the Holy Spirit, a life so absolutely yielded to Him and His rule, that all our giving may be a spiritual sacrifice, through Jesus Christ.

Our second Pentecostal lesson on money we find in Chapter 3:6 "Then Peter said, silver and gold have I none, but what I have, that I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk!" Here it is: The Holy Spirit dispensing with money.

Our first lesson was: the Church of Pentecost needs money for its work; the Spirit of Pentecost provides money; money may be at once a sure proof of the Spirit's mighty working, and a blessed means of opening the way for His fuller action. But there is a danger ever near. Men begin to think that money is the great need; that abundance of money coming in is a proof of the Spirit's presence; that money must be strength and blessing. Our second lesson dissipates these illusions, and teaches us how the power of the Spirit can just be shown where there is no money. The Holy Spirit is the mighty power of God, now condescending to use the money of His saints, then again proving how divinely independent He is of it. The Church must yield herself to be guided into this double truth; the Holy Spirit claims all its money; the Holy Spirit's mightiest works may be wrought without it. The Church must never beg for money as if this were the secret of her strength.

See these Apostles, Peter and John, penniless in their earthly poverty, and yet

just in virtue of their poverty, mighty to dispense heavenly blessings. "Poor, yet making many rich." Where had they learned this? Peter says, "Silver and gold have I none; in the name of Jesus Christ, walk." It points us back to the poverty which Christ had enjoined upon them, and of which He had set them the wonderful example. By his holy poverty He would prove to men what a life is of perfect trust in the Father, how the possession of heavenly riches makes independent of earthly goods, how earthly poverty fits the better for holding and for dispensing eternal treasures. The inner circle of His disciples found in following the footsteps of His poverty the fellowship of His power. The Apostle Paul was taught by the Holy Spirit the same lesson. To be ever in external things, utterly loose even from earth's lawful things, is a wonderful, he almost appears to say an indispensable, help in witnessing to the absolute reality and sufficiency of the unseen heavenly riches.

We may be sure that as the Holy Spirit begins to work in power in His Church, there will again be seen His mighty operation in the possession of His people. Some will again by their giving make themselves poor, in the living faith of the incomprehensible worth of their heavenly heritage, and the fervent joy the Spirit gives them in it. And some who are poor and in great straits with their work for God will learn to cultivate more fully the joyful consciousness: "Silver and gold have I none: what I have I give: in the name of Jesus Christ, walk." And some who are not called to give all, will yet give with an unknown liberality, because they begin to see the privilege of giving all, and long to come as near as they can. And we shall have a Church, giving willingly and abundantly, and yet not for a moment trusting in its money, but honoring those most who have the grace and the strength to be followers of Jesus Christ in His poverty.

Our third lesson is: The Holy Spirit testing the money. All the money that is

given, even in a time when the Holy Spirit is moving mightily, is not given under His inspiration. But it is all given under his holy supervision, and He will from time to time, to each heart that honestly yields to Him, reveal what there may be wanting or wrong. Listen: "Barnabas having a field, sold it, and brought the money. But Ananias sold a possession and kept back part of the price, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the the Apostles' feet." Ananias brought his gift, and with his wife was smitten dead. What can have made the gift such a crime? He was a deceitful giver. He kept back part of the price.

He professed to give all, and did not. He gave with half a heart and unwillingly, and yet would have the the credit of having given all. In the Pentecostal Church the Holy Ghost was the author of the giving: his sin was against the Holy Ghost. No wonder that it is twice written: "great fear came upon the whole Church, and upon all who heard it." If it is so easy to sin even in giving, if the Holy Spirit watches and judges all our giving, we may well beware and fear.

And what was the sin? Simply this: he did not give all he professed. This sin, not in its greatest form, but in its spirit and more subtle manifestations, is far more common than we think. Are there not many who say they have given their all to God, and yet prove false to it in the use of their money? Are there not many who say all their money is their Lord's, and that they hold it as His stewards, to dispose of it as He directs, and yet who, in the amount they spend on God's work, as compared with that on themselves, and in accumulating for the future, prove that stewardship is but another name for ownership?

Without being exactly guilty of the sin of Judas, or Caiaphas, or Pilate, in crucifying our Lord, a believer may yet partake with them in the spirit in which he acts. Even so we may be grieving the Holy Ghost, even while we

condemn the sin of Ananias, by giving way to the spirit in which he acted, and withholding from God what we have professed to give Him. Nothing can save us from this danger, but the holy fear of ourselves, the very full and honest surrender of all our opinions, and arguments, about how much we may possess, and how much we may give, to the testing and searching of the Holy Spirit. Our giving must be in the light, if it is to be in the joy of the Holy Ghost.

And what was it that led Ananias to this sin? Most probably the example of Barnabas, the wish not to be outdone by another. Alas! how much there is of asking what men will expect from us. The thought of the judgment of men is present to us more than the judgment of God. And we forget that our gifts are accounted of God, Only by what the heart gives: it is the wholehearted giver that meets Him. How much has the Church done to foster the worldly spirit that values gifts by what they are in men's sight, in forgetfulness of what they are to Him that search the heart.

May the Holy Spirit teach us to make every gift part and parcel of a life of entire consecration to God. This cannot be until we be filled with the Spirit: this can be, for God will fill us with His Spirit.

4. There is still a lesson, less needful, no less solemn than that of Ananias (8:19). The Holy Ghost rejecting Money.

"Simon offered them money saying, 'Give me also this power.' But Peter said to him, 'Your money perish with you, because you have thought to obtain the gift of God with money.' "

The attempt to gain power or influence in the church of God by money brings perdition.

Here, more than with Ananias it was simple ignorance of the spiritual and unworldly character of the Kingdom of Christ. How little Simon understood the men he dealt with. They needed money, they could well use it for themselves and for others. But the Holy Spirit, with the powers and treasures of the unseen world had taken such possession of them, and so filled them, that money was as nothing. Let it perish rather than have anything to say in God's Church. Let it perish rather than for one moment encourage the thought that the rich man can acquire a place or a power which a poor man has not.

Has the Church been faithful to this truth in her solemn protest against the claims of wealth? Alas for the answer its history gives. There have been noble instances of true Apostolic succession in their maintenance of the superiority of the gift of God to every earthly consideration. But too often the rich have had an honor and an influence given them, apart from grace or godliness, which has surely grieved the Spirit and injured the church.

The personal application is here again the matter of chief importance. Our nature has been so brought under the power of the spirit of this world, our fleshly mind, with its dispositions and habits of thought and feeling, is so subtle in its influence that nothing can deliver us from the mighty spell that money exacts but a very full and abiding enjoyment of the Spirit's presence and working. To be entirely dead to all worldly ways of thinking, the Holy Spirit alone can give us. And He can only give it as He fills us with the very presence and power of the life of God.

Let us pray that we may have such a faith in the transcendent glory, in the absolute claim and sufficiency of the Holy Spirit as God's gift to the Church to be her strength and riches, that money may ever be kept under Christ's feet and under ours, with its only worth as the earthen vessel for His heavenly ministry.

Blessed Lord Jesus, teach and keep us that, like Barnabas, we may lay our money all at Your feet, and hold it all at Your disposal. Teach and keep us that like Peter, we may rejoice in the poverty that teaches us to prove our trust in the power of Your Spirit. Teach and keep us, lest, like Ananias, our profession of living entirely for You be belied, by our giving to You. Teach and keep us, lest, like Simon, we think that the gifts of God or power over men can be obtained by money.

Most blessed Spirit! fill us with Yourself; come and fill Your Church with Your living presence, and all our money will be Yours alone.

Chapter 3^(TOC)

The Grace of God and Money

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."—2 Corinthians 8:9.

In this and the following chapters we have Paul's teaching on the subject of Christian giving. In connection with a collection he wishes the Corinthian Christians from among the Gentiles to make for their Jewish brethren, he opens up the heavenly worth of our earthly gifts, and unfolds principles which ought to animate us as we offer our money in God's service. He does this especially as he cites the example of the Macedonian Christians and their abounding liberality, and makes them for all time the witnesses to what God's grace can do in making the ingathering of money the occasion of the deepest joy, of the revelation of the true Christlikeness, and of abounding thanksgiving and glory to God. Let us gather up some of the principal lessons; they may help us to find the way by which our money can increasingly become a means and a proof of the progress of the heavenly life within us.

1. The Grace of God always teaches us to give

"We make known to you the grace of God which has been given to the churches of Macedonia." 2 Corinthians 8:1. In the course of the two chapters the word grace occurs eight times. Once of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who for our sakes became poor." Once of "the grace which God is able to make abound to us." The other six times of the special grace of giving.

We all think we know what the word means. It is not only used of the gracious disposition in God's heart towards us, but much more of that gracious disposition which God bestows and works in us. Grace is the force, the power, the energy of the Christian life, as it is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit. We all know the command to stand fast in grace, to grow in grace, to seek for more grace. We rejoice in the words, exceeding grace, grace abounding exceedingly, grace exceedingly abundant. We pray continually that God would increase and magnify His grace in us.

We know the law of the Christian life: that no grace can be truly known or increased, except by acting it out. Let us learn here that the use of our money for others is one of the ways in which grace can be expressed and strengthened. The reason is clear. Grace in God is His compassion on the unworthy. His grace is wondrously free. It is always giving, without regard to merit. God finds his life and his delight in giving.

And when His grace enters the heart, it cannot change its nature: whether in God or man, grace loves and rejoices to give. And grace teaches a man to look upon this as the chief value of his money—the Godlike power of doing

good, even at the cost of enriching others by impoverishing ourselves.

Let us learn the lessons. If we have God's grace in us it will show itself in giving. If we want new grace, we must exercise what we have in giving. And in all we give we ought to do it in the consciousness of the grace of God that works it in us.

2. The Grace of God teaches to give liberally

"Their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality, for according to their power, yea, beyond their power, they gave of their own accord, beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace." 2 Corinthians 8:2. What a sight! And what a proof of the power of grace! These newly converted Gentiles in Macedonia hear of the need of their Jewish brethren in Jerusalem—men unknown and despised—and at once are ready to share with them what they have.

Of their own accord, they so give beyond their power, that Paul refuses to accept their gifts: with much entreaty they implore and persuade him to accept the gift. "Their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality."

It is remarkable how much more liberality there is among the poor than the rich. It is as if they do not hold so fast what they have: they more easily part with all; the deceitfulness of riches has not hardened them; they have learned to trust God for tomorrow. Their liberality is not indeed what men count such; their gifts are but small. Men say it does not cost them much to give all; they are so accustomed to have little. And yet the very fact of their giving it more easily is what makes it precious to God; it shows the childlike disposition that has not yet learnt to accumulate and to hold fast. God's way in His kingdom of grace on earth is ever from below, upwards. "Not many wise and not many noble are called. God has chosen the weak and the base things." And even so He has chosen the poor in this world, as they give out of their deep poverty, to teach the rich what liberality is.

"Far beyond their power gave they of their own accord, beseeching us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift." If this spirit were to pervade our churches and men of moderate means and of large possessions were to combine with the poor in their standard of giving, and the Macedonian example became the law of Christian liberality, what means would not flow in for the service of the kingdom.

3. The Grace of God teaches to give joyfully

"The abundance of their joy abounded unto the riches of their liberality."

(8:2) In the Christian life joy is the index of health and whole-heartedness. It is not an experience for times and seasons: it is the abiding proof of the presence and enjoyment of the Savior's love. No less than our spiritual exercises, it is meant to pervade our daily duties and our times of trial: "a joy that no man takes from you." And so it inspires our giving, making the offering of our money a sacrifice of joy and thanksgiving. And as we give joyfully, it becomes itself a new fountain of joy to us, as a participation in the joy of Him who said "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The blessedness of giving: would that men believed how sure this way to unceasing joy is, to be ever giving as God lives to give. Of the day when Israel brought its gifts for the temple, it is said "then the people rejoiced, because with a perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord; and David the King also rejoiced with great joy."

That is a joy we may carry with us through life and through each day, unceasingly dispensing our gifts of money, our lives or service all around. God has implanted the instinct of happiness deep in every creature; it cannot help being drawn to what gives happiness. Let us get our hearts filled with the faith of the joy of giving: that joy will make to rich and poor our calls to give among our most precious privileges; it will be true of us, "and the abundance of their joy abounded to the riches of their liberality."

4. The Grace of God makes our giving part of our surrender to our Lord

Paul says of their giving (8:5), they not only did this, "but first they gave their own selves to the Lord." In this sentence we have one of the most beautiful expressions for what is needed to salvation, and what it is in which full salvation consists. A man who has given himself to the Lord: that comprises all our Lord asks of us; all the rest He will do. The expression is nowhere else found in Scripture; we owe it to this dealing with the matter of the collection. It tells us that giving money will have no value, except we first give ourselves; that all our giving must just be the renewal and carrying out of the first great act of self-surrender; that each new gift of money may be a renewal of the blessedness of entire consecration.

It is only this thought that can lift our giving out of the ordinary level of Christian duty, and make it truly the manifestation and the strengthening of the grace of God in us. We are not under the law, but under grace. And yet so much of our giving, whether in the church plate, or on the subscription list, or on special occasions, is done as a matter of course, without aught of the direct relation to our Lord. A truly consecrated life is a life moment by moment in his love; it is this that will bring us to what appears so difficult, ever to give in the right spirit and as an act of worship. It is this will make "the abundance of our joy abound to the riches of our liberality."

5. The Grace of God makes our giving part of the Christlike life

"See that you abound in this grace also, for you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor."
(8:9) Every branch and leaf and blossom of the mightiest oak derives its life from the same strong root that bears the stem. The life in the tiniest bud is the same as in the strongest branch. We are branches in Christ the Living Vine; the very life that lived and worked in Him. Of what consequence that we should know well what His life is, that we may intelligently and willingly yield to it. Here we have one of its deepest roots laid open; "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he become poor, that you through His poverty might become rich." To enrich and bless us, He impoverished Himself. That was why the widow's mite pleased Him so; her gift was of the same measure as His: "She cast in all she had." This is the life and grace that seeks to work in us; there is no other mold in which the Christ-life can be cast. "See that you abound in this grace also; for you know the grace of our Lord Jesus, that he became poor." How little did the Macedonian Christians know that they were, in their deep poverty, and in the riches of their liberality, giving beyond their power, just acting out what the Spirit and grace of Jesus was working in them. How little we would have expected that the simple gift of these poor people would become the text of such high and holy and heart-searching teaching. How much we need to pray that the Holy Spirit may so master our purses and our possessions, that the grace of our giving will, in some truly recognizable degree, be the reflection of our Lord's. And how we need to bring our giving to the cross, and to seek Christ's death to the world and its possessions as the power for ours. So will we make others rich through our

poverty, and our life be somewhat like St. Paul's: "poor, yet making many rich."

6. The grace of God works in us not only the willing

But the doing. (8:10) "You were the first to make a beginning a year ago, not only to do, but also to will. But now complete the doing also; that as there was the readiness to will, so there may be the performance also." We all know what a gulf in the Christian life there often is between the willing and the doing. This prevails in the matter of giving, too. How many long for a time when they may be better off and able to give more. And meantime that wish, the fancied willingness to give more, deceives them, and is made to do duty for present liberality. How many who have the means, and intend doing something liberal, yet hesitate, and the large donation during life, or the legacy in the will, is never carried out. How many count themselves really liberal, because of what they will, while what they do, even up to their present means, is not what God would love to see. The message comes to all: "Now complete the doing also; that as the readiness to will, so the completion also, out of your ability."

"It is God who works in us to will and to do"; let us beware, in any sphere, of hindering Him by unbelief or disobedience, and resting in the 'to will', without going on to the 'to do'. The Christian life needs exercise; it is by practice that godliness grows. If in anything we find that our giving has not been up to this Scripture model, not as liberal and joyful, not in as perfect accord with the spirit of our entire surrender to our Lord, or of His making himself poor for us, let us at once, in addition to the readiness to will, complete the doing also.

7. The grace of God makes the gift

Acceptable according to what a man has. (8:12) "For if the readiness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have." The God who sees the heart, judges each gift by the ability to give. And His blessed Spirit gives the upright heart the blessed consciousness that the gift on earth has found approval and acceptance in heaven. God has been careful in His Word to teach us this in every possible way. All the world's judgments of the value of gifts are reversed in heaven; the love that gives liberally according to what it has is met by the Father's love from above. Let us seek to redeem our giving from all that is commonplace and little by taking hold of the blessed assurance: it is acceptable. Let us refuse to give what appears to satisfy us: let us pause, and rejoice in God's call to give, and in His Spirit that teaches how much and how to give, and the deepest joy of giving will come to us—the Spirit's seal that the Father is well pleased.

8. The grace of God through the giving works

Out the true unity and equality of all saints. (8:13) "I say not this, that others may be eased and you distressed; but by equality, your abundance being a supply at this present time for their want, that their abundance may also become a supply to your want. That there may be equality. As it is written: He that gathered much, had nothing over: and he that gathered little had no lack." Another ray of heavenly light on this appeal for a collection. Money will become the bond of union that binds the Christians of Jerusalem and of Corinth into one. They are one as much as Israel was one people. As in their ingathering of the manna the feeble and the strong were to bring all into one store, that all might share alike, so in the body of Christ. God allows of riches and poverty, God bestows His gifts with apparently unequal hand, that our love may have the high privilege of restoring the equality. The want of some calls us to the love and the help and the blessedness of giving to others. And at another time, or in different spheres, the very ones who needed help may, in their turn, out of their abundance bless their helpers. Everything has been so ordered that love will have room to work, and that there will be opportunity to cultivate and to prove the Christlike spirit.

What a call and what a field in the needs of the world for all God's people to prove that God's plan is theirs: "that there may be equality," and that the spirit of selfish contentment with my greater privilege has been banished by the Cross. In philanthropy and missions what a need for all saints doing their utmost "according to their power—yea, and beyond their power."

In sight of the heathen world, oh! what an appeal that there be equality and

that we shall share and share alike with them what God gives us. What new, unthought of, eternal value, money gets as one of the powers for giving to the perishing, of the abundance we have in Christ.

There is no room left to enlarge on the further lessons of 2 Corinthians 9. Let me just mention them:

(9:6) Let the giving be bountiful: it will bring a bountiful reward.

(9:7) Let the giving not be grudging or of necessity: the cheerful giver receives God's love.

(9:8) Let the giving be trustful: God will make all grace abound.

(9:11-13) Your giving brings glory to God by the thanksgiving of those you bless.

(9:15) Your giving reminds of God's giving, and calls to thanks for His unspeakable gift.

What a world of holy thought and heavenly light opened up by the gifts of the Macedonian and Corinthian converts! Will we not, under the power of that thought and light, review all our giving and see that it be brought into perfect accord with the Divine pattern in these chapters. Shall we not begin at once, and yield to Him, who became poor for us, everything that self-interest and self-indulgence has hitherto claimed and held. And shall we not beseech Him to show in us by His Spirit that the one worth and blessedness of money is to spend it for our Lord, to bless our fellowmen, to use it as an instrument and an exercise of grace, and so to turn even it into the treasure that lasts for eternity.

Chapter 4^(TOC)

The poverty of Christ

"You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich."—2 Corinthians 8:9.

"Through his poverty": what does that mean? That He dispossessed Himself of all heavenly and earthly possessions that the riches of earth and heaven might be ours? That He so took our place, as in our stead to walk in the path of earthly poverty, that we in comfort and ease might enjoy the heavenly riches he has won for us? Or has that "through his poverty" a deeper meaning, and does it imply that His poverty is the very path or passage that He opened up through which all must go who would fully enter into His riches? Does it mean that, just as He needed in poverty of spirit and body to die to the world that He might open for us the way to the heavenly treasures, so we need to walk in His footsteps, and can only through His poverty working in us, through fellowship with His poverty, come to the perfect enjoyment of the riches He came to bring? In other words, is the poverty of Jesus something for Him alone, or something in which his disciples are to share?

There is scarce a trait in the life and character of Christ in which we do not look to Him as an example—what are the lessons His Holy Poverty has to

teach? Is the right to possess and enjoy the riches of earth as it is now everywhere practiced in the Church part of what Christ has secured for us? Or, is it possible that the lack of faith in the beauty and blessedness of the poor life of Christ Jesus is part of the cause of our spiritual poverty; our lack of Christ's poverty the cause of our lack of His riches? Is there not a needs-be that we not only think of the one side, "for your sakes he became poor"; but as much of the other, "For His sake I suffer the loss of all things?"

In seeking an answer to these questions, we must first turn and gaze upon our blessed Lord, if maybe the Holy Spirit will unfold somewhat of the glory of this His blessed attribute. Unless our heart be fixed upon our Lord in patient and prayerful contemplation, and we wait for the Holy Spirit to give us His illumination, we may indeed have our thoughts about this Divine poverty, but we cannot really behold its glory, or have its power and blessing enter our life. May God give us understanding!

Why Christ had to become poor. We must first of all see what the reason—the needs-be—was of this earthly poverty of Christ. He might have lived on earth possessed of riches, and dispensing them with wise and liberal hand. He might have come in the enjoyment of a moderate competency, just enough to keep Him from the dependence and homelessness which was His lot. In either case He might have taught His people of all ages such precious and much-needed lessons as to the right use of the things of this world. What a sermon His life would have been on the far-reaching words: "They that buy as though they possessed not." But no, there was a Divine necessity that His life must be one of entire poverty. In seeking for the explanation, we shall find two classes of reasons. There are those which have reference to us and His work for us as our Savior. There are others which are more closely connected with His own personal life as man, and the work the Father

wrought in Him, as He perfected Him through suffering.

Of the reasons referring to His work, the principal ones are easily named. Christ's poverty is part of His entire and deep humiliation, a proof of His perfect humility—His willingness to descend to the very lowest depths of human misery, and to share to the full in all the consequences of sin. The poor have in all ages been despised, while the rich have been sought and honored: Christ came to be the despised and neglected of men in this, too.

Christ's poverty has ever been counted one of the proofs of His love

Love delights in giving, perfect love in giving all. The poverty of Christ is one of the expressions of that self-sacrificing love which held back nothing, and seeks to win us for itself by the most absolute self-abnegation on our behalf. Christ's poverty is His fitness for sympathizing and helping us in all the trials that come to us from our relation to this world and its goods. The majority of mankind has to struggle with poverty. The majority of God's saints have been a poor and afflicted people. The poverty of Christ has been to tens of thousands the assurance that He could feel for them; that, even as with Him, earthly need was to be the occasion for heavenly help, the school for a life of faith, and the experience of God's faithfulness the path to heavenly riches.

Christ's poverty is the weapon and the proof of His complete victory over the world. As our Redeemer, He proved by His poverty that His kingdom is not of this world, that as little as He feared its threats or its death could He be tempted to seek help from its wealth or strength.

But these reasons are more external and official; the deeper spiritual significance of Christ's poverty will be disclosed as we regard it as part of His training as the Son of Man, and His exhibition of what the true life of man is to be.

Christ's poverty was part of that suffering through which He learned obedience and was perfected by God as our High Priest. To human nature poverty must ever be a trial. We were made to be kings and possessors of all

things. To have nothing costs suffering.

Christ's human nature was not, as the Docetae taught, a mere appearance or show. There never was one so really, so intensely, a man as Christ Jesus: "true man of true man." Poverty implies dependence on others; it means contempt and shame; it often brings want and suffering; it always lacks the means and power of earth. Our blessed Lord felt all this as man. And it was part of that suffering through which the Father worked out His will in His Son, and the Son proved His submission to the Father, and His absolute trust in Him.

Christ's poverty was part of His school of faith, in which He Himself first learned, and then taught men, that life is more than meat, and that man lives "not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." In His own life He had to prove that God and the riches of heaven can more than satisfy a man who has nothing on earth; that trust in God for the earthly life is not vain; that one only needs as much as it pleases God to give. In His person we have witness to the power which comes with the preaching of the Kingdom of Heaven when the Preacher Himself is the evidence of its sufficiency.

Christ's poverty was one of the marks of His entire separation from the world, the proof that He was of another world and another spirit. As it was with the fruit good for food and pleasant to the eye, sin entered the world, so the great power of the world over men is in the cares and possessions and enjoyments of this life. Christ came to conquer the world and cast out its prince, to win the world back to God. He did so by refusing every temptation to accept its gifts or seek its aid. Of this protest against the worldly spirit, its self-pleasing and its trust in the visible, the poverty of Christ was one of the chief elements. He overcame the world first in the temptations by which its prince

sought to ensnare Himself, then and through that in its power over us. The poverty of Christ was thus no mere accident or external circumstance. It was an essential element of His holy, perfect life; one great secret of this power to conquer and to save; His path to the Glory of God.

The poverty of Christ's Disciples

We want to know what our share in this poverty of Christ is to be, whether and how far we are to follow His example. Let us study what Christ taught His disciples. When he said to them, "Follow Me," "Come after Me, I will make you fishers of men," He called them to share with Him in His poor and homeless life, in His state of entire dependence upon the care of God and the kindness of men. He more than once used strong expressions about forsaking all, renouncing all, losing all. And that they understood His call so is manifest from their forsaking nets and customs, and saying, through Peter, "We have forsaken all and followed You." The call of Christ to come after Him is often applied as if it was the call to repentance and salvation. This is by no means the case. The principles the call involves have their universal application; but, to expound and enforce them in truth, it is of great consequence first to understand the meaning of the call in its original intention. Christ separated for Himself a band of men who were to live with Him in closest fellowship, in entire conformity to His life, under his immediate training. These three conditions were indispensable for their receiving the Holy Spirit, for being true witnesses to Him and the life which He had lived and would impart to men. With them, as with Him, the surrender of all property and the acceptance of a state of poverty was manifestly a condition and a means without which the full possession of the heavenly riches in such power as to convince men of their worth could not come.

With Paul the case appears to have been very little different. Without any express command we know of, the Spirit of his Master so possessed him, and made the eternal world so real and glorious to him, that its expulsive power

made every thought of property or position disappear. He learnt to give utterance, as no one else ever could do, to what must have been our Blessed Lord's inmost life in the words he uses of himself: "as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things." And in his wonderful life, as in his writings, he proves what weight it gives to the testimony concerning eternal things when the witness can appeal to his own experience of the infinite satisfaction which the unseen riches can give. In Paul, as in Christ, poverty was the natural consequence of an all-consuming passion, and made him a channel through whom the Invisible Power could flow full and free.

The poverty of Christ in His Church

The history of the church tells us a sad story of the increase of wealth and worldly power, and the proportionate loss of the heavenly gift with which she had been entrusted, and which could alone bless the nations. The contrast to the Apostolic state is set in the clearest light by a story that is told of one of the Popes. When Thomas Aquinas first visited Rome, and expressed his amazement at all the wealth he saw, the Pope said, "We can no longer say, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "No, indeed;" was the answer, "nor can we say, 'What I have, that give I you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.'" The earthly poverty and the heavenly power had been closely allied, with the one the other had gone. Through successive ages the conviction ever came that it was only by a return to poverty that the bonds of earth beneath would be broken and the blessing from above brought back. And many a vain attempt was made to secure to poverty a place in the preaching and practice of the church such as it had been in Pentecostal days. At times, the earnest efforts of holy men met with temporary success, soon to give way again to the terrible power of the great enemy—the world.

There were various reasons for this failure. One was that men understood not that in Christianity it is not an external act or state that can profit, but only the spirit that animates. The words of Christ were forgotten: "The Kingdom of God is within you;" and men expected from poverty what only the Spirit of Christ, revealing itself in poverty, could accomplish. Men sought to make a law of it, to bind under its rules and gather into its brotherhoods, souls that had no inner calling or capacity for such imitation of Christ. The church sought to invest poverty with the mantle of a peculiar holiness, and by its

doctrine of Counsels of Perfection to offer a reward for this higher perfection. She taught that, while what was commanded in the Gospel was the duty of all, there were certain acts or modes of living which were left to the choice of the disciple. They were not of binding obligation; to follow these counsels was more than simple obedience, a work of supererogation which therefore had special merit. Out of this grew the doctrine of the power the church has to dispense this surplus merit of the saints to those who were lacking. And, in some cases, poverty became only a new source of self-righteousness, entering into covenant with wealth, and casting its dark and deadly shadow over those it promised to save.

At the time of the Reformation, poverty had become so desecrated as a part of the great system of evil it had to combat, that, in casting out those errors, it cast out a part of the truth with them. Since that time it is as if our Protestant theology has never ventured to enquire what the place and the meaning and the power is which Christ and the Apostle really gave poverty in their teaching and practice. And even in our days, when God is still raising up not a few witnesses to the blessedness of giving up all to trust in Him, and of possessing nothing that one may possess him the more fully, the church can hardly be said to have found the right expression for its faith in the spirit of Christ's poverty, as a power that is still to be counted as one of the gifts He bestows on some members of His church. It will be found that there is no small difficulty in trying to formulate the teaching of Scripture so as to meet the views of Evangelical believers.

The poverty of Christ in our days

I have spoken above of the errors connected with the teaching of the Counsels of Perfection. And yet there was a measure of truth in that teaching, too. The error was to say that the highest conformity to Christ was not a matter of duty, but of option. Scripture says, "To him that knows to do good and does it not, to him it is sin."

Wherever God's will is known, it must be obeyed. The mistake would have been avoided if attention had been paid to the difference of knowledge or spiritual insight by which our apprehensions of duty are affected. There is a diversity of gift and capacity, of spiritual receptivity and growth, of calling and grace, which makes a difference, not in the obligation of each to seek the most complete inner conformity to Christ, but in the possibility of externally manifesting that conformity in such ways as were seen in Christ.

During the three years of His public career, Christ gave Himself and His whole time to direct work for God. He did not labor for His livelihood. He chose for Himself disciples who would follow Him in this, forsaking all for direct work in the service of the Kingdom. For admission to this inner circle of Christ's chosen ones, Christ demanded what He did not from those who only came seeking salvation. They were to share with Him in the work and the glory of the new Kingdom; they must share with Him in the poverty that owns nothing for this world.

From what has been said above it is clear that no law can be laid down. It is not a question of law, but of liberty. But we must understand that word "liberty" aright. Too often Christian liberty is spoken of as our freedom from

too great restraint in sacrificing our own will, or the enjoyment of the world. Its real meaning is the very opposite. True love asks to be as free as possible from self and the world to bring its all to God. Instead of the question, "How far am I, as a Christian, free still to do this or the other?" The truly free spirit asks, "How far am I free to follow Christ to the uttermost! Does the freedom with which Christ has made me free really give us the liberty, in a love, which longs for the closest possible likeness and union with Him—still to forsake all and follow Him! Among the gifts and calling he still dispenses to His church will there not be some whom by His spirit He still draws in this particular, too, to bear and show forth His image? Do we not need as much as when He and His apostles were upon earth, men and women to give concrete and practical evidence that the man who literally gives up all of earthly possession because he sets his heart upon the treasure in heaven, can count upon God to provide for the things of earth?

Is not, amid the universal confession of worldliness in the church and the Christian life, just this the protest that is needed against the so subtle but mighty claim that the world makes upon us? In connection with every church and mission and work of philanthropy the question is asked, "How is it that in Christian countries hundreds of millions are spent on luxuries, with scarce single millions for God's work? Calculations are made as to what could be done if all Christians were only to be moderately liberal. I fear all such argument avails little.

Help must come from a different direction.

It was of the innermost circle that He had gathered around Himself that Christ asked a poverty as absolute as His own. It is in the innermost circle of God's children, among those who make the highest profession of insight into the riches of grace and their entire surrender to it, that we must find the witnesses

that His Spirit can still inspire and strengthen to bear His poverty. He has done it, and is doing it. In many a missionary and Salvation Army officer, in many a humble unknown worker, His Spirit is working out this trait of His blessed likeness. In the days we are looking for of deeper revival among God's children He will do it still more abundantly.

Blessed are all they who wait for him, to receive His teaching, to know His mind, and show forth His holy likeness. It is as the first, the inner, circle proves the power of His presence, that the second and the third will feel the influence. Men of moderate means, who may feel no calling to the poor life, will come under the constraining power of the example and feel compelled to sacrifice far more of comfort and enjoyment in Christ's service than they ever did before. And the rich will have their attention attracted to the danger signals God has set along their path. (Luke 18:25, Matthew 6:19, 21, 1 Timothy 6:9, 10, 16). And will, by these examples, if they may not themselves share in Christ's poverty, at least be helped to set their hearts more intensely upon the treasure in heaven—the being rich in faith, rich in good works, rich toward God—and themselves heirs of God, heirs of the riches of grace, and the riches of glory.

Christ's poverty and the riches it brings

"That you through His poverty might become rich." His POVERTY not only as an object of our faith, but as a matter of experience and fellowship is the passage through which the fullest entrance is gained into his riches. Let us present together some of the aspects we have already pointed out of the blessedness Christ's poverty and its voluntary fellowship brings.

What an aid to the spiritual life. It helps to throw the soul on God and the unseen; to realize the absoluteness of His presence and care in the least things of daily life; and is to make trust in God the actual moving spring of every temporal as well as spiritual interest. And because it is not possible to claim God's interposition for every day's food, if a man is not consciously walking in tender and full obedience, it links the soul to God's will and way by the closest of ties. The hourly needs of the body, which are so often our greatest hindrance, become wonderful helps in lifting our entire life into communion with God, and in bringing God down into everything. It elevates the spirit above the temporal, and teaches us in every state always to be content, always to rejoice and to praise.

What a protest against the spirit of this world. There is nothing the Christian life suffers more from than the subtle and indescribable worldliness that comes from the cares or the possessions of this life. Through it the God of this world exercises his hidden but terrible power. This is the Delilah in whose lap the God-separated Nazarite becomes impotent and sleeps. To awaken and shake out of this sleep more than preaching is needed, more than the ordinary Christian liberality, which quite comports with the full enjoyment of all that abundance can supply: there is needed the

demonstration of the Spirit and of power that God enables men, and makes it to them an indescribable blessedness, like their Lord, to give up everything of the earth that they may more fully possess, and prove, and proclaim the sufficiency of the heavenly riches and the satisfaction they give. The protest against the spirit of this world will become the mightiest proclamation of the kingdom of heaven, the self-evidencing revelation of how heaven can even now take possession.

What entrance it will give into the image and likeness of Jesus. We adore our Lord in the form of a servant, and worship Him in it as the most perfect possible manifestation of a Godlike Humility and Love. His poverty was an integral and essential part of that form of a servant in which He dwelt. In all ages the love of some has given them no rest in the desire to attain the closest possible conformity to the blessed Lord. In Him the outer and inner were in such living harmony that the connection was not accidental; the one was the only perfect and fit expression of the other. In the body of Christ there are great diversities of gifts; the whole body is not eye, or ear, or tongue. So there are some who have the calling and gift to manifest this trait of His image, and for the sake of their brethren and the world, keep alive the memory of this too much neglected part of the ever blessed Incarnation. Blessed they Whom his Holy Spirit makes the representatives of this His wondrous grace that, though He was rich, He became poor.

What a power then this poverty of Christ becomes to make others rich. It is through His poverty we become rich. His poverty in His people brings the same blessing. In the church, many who do not feel the calling, or who in God's providence are not allowed to follow their desire for it, will be stirred and strengthened by the sight. When some witness testifies to the blessedness of entire conformity, others who are not called to this path will feel urged, in

the midst of the property they possess and retain, to seek for as near an approach in spirit as is allowed them. Christian giving will not only be more liberal in amount, but more liberal in spirit, in the readiness and cheerfulness in the forethought and the actual self-sacrifice by which it will be animated.

Through their poverty, too, through Christ's poverty in them, many shall be made rich. Just as a specialist devotes himself to some limited branch of (say) medical science, and all profit by the exclusiveness of his researches, so through these, too, who love and live in and make manifest the poverty of our Lord, the church becomes all the richer. Through them the poverty of Christ gets a place in many hearts where it was not known, and it is seen how this was part of His overcoming the world, and how it may be a part of our victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Christ's poverty and our duty

I have said that all have not the same calling. How are we to know what our calling is? We may so easily allow ignorance or prejudice, self-indulgence or worldliness, human wisdom or unbelief to sway us, to keep us from the simplicity of the perfect heart, and to blind us to the full light of God's perfect will. Let us see where the position is in which perfect safety will be found, and where we may confidently count upon the Divine guidance and approval.

A fortnight ago I stood by the bedside of a dying servant of God, Rev. Geo. Ferguson, the principal of our Mission Institute. He told me how he had been meditating on a text that had come in the course of his preparation for his Mission class: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they will be as white as snow." As he thought, it was as if one said to him, "White as snow, do you know what that is?" His answer was, "No, Lord, You only know, I do not." And then the question came, "White as snow, can you attain that?—can you make yourself that?" "No, Lord, I cannot; but You can." And, again, he was asked, "Are you willing that I should do it?" "Yes, Lord, by Your grace I am willing. You should do all You can."

The three questions just suggest what our duty is. The heavenly poverty of Jesus Christ—do you know what it is? What it is in Him, in his disciples and in Paul, in His saints in later days? What it would be in you? Let the answer be, "No, Lord, You know." This is what we need first and most of all. If God were to open our eyes to see the spiritual glory of our Lord in His poverty, in His entire renunciation of everything of worldly comfort or self-pleasing; if we saw the Divine glory of which it is the expression; if we knew how infinitely beautiful it was to all the holy angels, how infinitely well-pleasing

to the Father, we should then only in some little degree be able to say whether it was something we ought to desire and imitate. If we saw the heavenliness and the measure of the likeness to our Lord it would bring into our life, we should say, "I have spoken of what I knew not—Oh, that God would show me His glory in this too: 'for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich!'" Before you judge of it, pray by the Holy Spirit to know it.

Then comes the second question. "Can you attain it? Can you, in the likeness of Jesus, give up everything in the world for God and your fellow men, and find your joy in the heavenly riches and the blessedness of dependence upon God alone?" "No, Lord, I cannot; but You can work." Come and gaze upon the Son of God and worship as you think. It was God that made Him what He was, and that God can, by His mighty power, work in me His Divine likeness. Ask God to reveal by His Spirit, what the poverty of Jesus is, and then to work in you as much of it as you can bear. Be sure of this, the deeper your entrance into His poverty, the richer you are.

And if the last question comes to search the heart—"Are you willing for it?"—then, surely, your answer will be ready: "By Your grace, I am!" You may see no way out of all the complications of your life. You may dread bringing upon yourself sacrifices and trials you could not bear. Be not afraid: you surely cannot fear giving yourself up to God's perfect love to work out His perfect will. For all He really means you to do He will most surely give light and strength. The Throne of Riches and Honor and Glory to which the Lamb has been exalted is surely proof enough that there is no surer way for us to riches and honor than through His poverty. The soul that in simplicity yields to the leading of her Lord will find that the fellowship of His suffering brings even here the fellowship of His glory:

"Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might be rich."

The School of Obedience^(TOC)

Preface

These addresses on Obedience are issued with the very fervent prayer that it may please our gracious Father to use them for the instruction and strengthening of the young men and women, on whose obedience and devotion so much depends for the Church and the world. To all of them who read this I send my loving greeting. The God of all grace bless them abundantly!

It often happens after a Conference, or even after writing a book, that it is as if one only then begins to see the meaning and importance of the truth with which one has been occupied. So I do indeed feel as if I had utterly failed in grasping or expounding the spiritual character, the altogether indispensable necessity, the divine and actual possibility, the inconceivable blessedness of a life of true and entire obedience to our Father in heaven. Let me, therefore, just in a few sentences gather up the main points which have come home to myself with special power, and ask every reader at starting to take note of them as **SOME OF THE CHIEF LESSONS** to be learnt in Christ's school of obedience.

The Father in heaven asks, and requires, and actually expects, that every child of His yield Him whole-hearted and entire obedience, day by day, and all the day.

To enable His child to do this, He has made a most abundant and altogether sufficient provision in the promise of the New Covenant, and in the gift of

His Son and Spirit.

This provision can alone, but can most certainly, be enjoyed, and these promises fulfilled, in the soul that gives itself up to a life in the abiding communion with the Three-One God, so that His presence and power work in it all the day.

The very entrance into this life demands the vow of absolute obedience, or the surrender of the whole being, to be, think, speak, do, every moment, nothing but what is according to the will of God, and well-pleasing to Him.

If these things be indeed true, it is not enough to assent to them: we need the Holy Spirit to give us such a vision of their glory and divine power, and the demand they make on our immediate and unconditional submission, that there may be no rest till we accept all that God is willing to do for us.

Let us all pray that God may, by the light of His Spirit, so show His loving and almighty will concerning us, that it may be impossible for us to be disobedient to the heavenly vision.

Andrew Murray.
Wellington, 9th August, 1898.

I. Obedience: Its place in Holy Scripture[\(TOC\)](#)

In undertaking the study of a Bible word, or of a truth of the Christian life, it is a great help to take a survey of the place it takes in Scripture. As we see where, and how often, and in what connections it is found, its relative importance may be apprehended as well as its bearing on the whole of revelation. Let me try in this first chapter to prepare the way for the study of what obedience is, by showing you where to go in God's Word to find the mind of God concerning it.

I. Take Scripture as a Whole

We begin with Paradise. In Genesis 2:16, we read: 'And ***the Lord God commanded the man***, saying.' And later (3:11), 'Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof ***I commanded thee*** that thou shouldest not eat?'

Note how obedience to the command is the one virtue of Paradise, the one condition of man's abiding there, the one thing his Creator asks of him. Nothing is said of faith, or humility, or love: obedience includes all. As supreme as is the claim and authority of God is the demand for obedience as the one thing that is to

DECIDE HIS DESTINY

In the life of man, to obey is the one thing needful.

Turn now from the beginning to the close of the Bible. In its last chapter you read (Revelation 22:14), 'Blessed are they that ***do His commandments***, that they may have a right to the tree of life.' Or, if we accept the Revised Version, which gives another reading, we have the same thought in chapters 12 and 14, where we read of the seed of the woman (12:17), 'which ***keep the commandments of God***, and hold the testimony of Jesus'; and of the patience of the saints (14:12), 'Here are they that ***keep the commandments of God***, and the faith of Jesus.'

From beginning to end, from Paradise lost to Paradise regained, the law is unchangeable—it is only obedience that gives access to the tree of life and the favor of God.

And if you ask how the change was effected out of the disobedience at the

beginning that closed the way to the tree of life, to the obedience at the end that again gained entrance to it, turn to

THAT WHICH STANDS MIDWAY

between the beginning and the end—the cross of Christ. Read a passage like Romans 5:19, '***Through the obedience of the One*** shall the many be made righteous'; or Philippians 2:8, 'He ***became obedient unto death, therefore*** God hath highly exalted Him'; or Hebrews 5:8, 9, 'He ***learned obedience and became*** the Author of salvation ***to them that obey Him,***' and you see how the whole redemption of Christ consists in restoring obedience to its place. The beauty of His salvation consists in this, that He brings us back to the life of obedience, through which alone the creature can give the Creator the glory due to Him, or receive the glory of which his Creator desires to make him partaker.

Paradise, Calvary, Heaven, all proclaim with one voice:

'Child of God! the first and the last thing thy God asks of thee is simple, universal, unchanging obedience.'

II. Let us turn to the Old Testament

Here let us specially notice how, with any new beginning in the history of God's kingdom, obedience always comes into special prominence.

1. Take Noah, the new father of the human race, and you will find four times written (Genesis 6:22; 7:5, 9, 16),

'According to all *that God commanded Noah*, so did he.'

It is the man who does what God commands, to whom God can entrust His work, whom God can use to be a savior of men.

2. Think of Abraham, the father of the chosen race. 'By faith Abraham *obeyed*' (Hebrews 11:7).

When he had been forty years in this school of faith-obedience, God came to perfect his faith, and to crown it with His fullest blessing. Nothing could fit him for this but a crowning act of obedience. When he had bound his son on the altar, God came and said (Genesis 22:12, 18),

'By Myself have I sworn, in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thee; and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed, *because thou hast obeyed My voice.*'

And to Isaac He spake (26:3, 5), 'I will perform the oath which I sware to Abraham, *because that Abraham obeyed my voice.*'

Oh, when shall we learn how unspeakably pleasing obedience is in God's sight, and how unspeakable is the reward He bestows upon it! The way to be a blessing to the world is to be men of obedience; known by God and the world by this

ONE MARK

A will utterly given up to God's will. Let all who profess to walk in Abraham's footsteps walk thus.

3. Go on to Moses. At Sinai, God gave him the message to the people (Exodus 19:4), '***If you will obey My voice indeed***, ye shall be a peculiar treasure to Me above all people.'

In the very nature of things it cannot be otherwise. God's holy will is His glory and perfection; it is only by an entrance into His will, by obedience, that it is possible to be His people.

4. Take the building of the sanctuary in which God was to dwell. In the last three chapters of Exodus you have the expression nineteen times, 'According to all the Lord commanded Moses, so did he,' And ***then***, 'The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.' Just so again in Leviticus 8 and 9, you have, with reference to the consecration of the priests and the tabernacle, the same expression twelve times. And ***then***, 'The glory of the Lord appeared before all the people, and fire came out from before the Lord, and consumed the burnt-offering.'

Words cannot make it plainer, that it is amid what the obedience of His people has wrought that God delights to dwell, that it is the obedient He crowns with His favor and

presence.

5. After the forty years wandering in the wilderness, and its terrible revelation of the fruit of disobedience, there was again a new beginning when the people were about to enter Canaan. Read Deuteronomy, with all Moses spoke in sight of the land, and you will find there is no book of the Bible which uses the word 'obey' so frequently, or speaks so much of the blessing obedience will assuredly bring. The whole is summed up in the words (11:27),

'I set before you a blessing if ye obey, a curse if ye will not obey.'

Yes, 'A BLESSING IF YE OBEY'! that is the key-note of the blessed life. Canaan, just like Paradise and Heaven, can be the place of blessing as it is the place of obedience. Would God we might take it in! Do beware only of praying only for a blessing. Let us care for the obedience, God will care for the blessing. Let my one thought as a Christian be, how I can obey and please my God perfectly.

6. The next new beginning we have is in the appointment of kings in Israel. In the story of Saul we have the most solemn warning as to the need of exact and entire obedience in a man whom God is to trust as ruler of His people. Samuel had commanded Saul (1 Samuel 10:8) to wait seven days for him to come and sacrifice, and to show him what to do. When Samuel delayed (13:8-14) Saul took it upon himself to sacrifice.

When Samuel came he said: 'Thou hast ***not kept the commandment*** of the Lord thy God, ***which He commanded thee***; thy kingdom shall not continue, because thou hast not kept that which ***the Lord commanded thee.***'

God will not honor the man who is not obedient.

Saul has a second opportunity given him of showing what is in his heart. He is sent to execute God's judgment against Amelek. He obeys. He gathers an army of two hundred thousand men, undertakes the journey into the wilderness, and destroys Amelek. But while God had commanded him 'utterly to destroy all; and not to spare,' he spared the best of the cattle and Agag.

God speaks to Samuel, 'It repenteth Me that I have set up Saul to be king, for ***he hath not performed My commandment.***'

When Samuel comes, Saul twice over says, '***I have performed the commandment of the Lord;***' '***I have obeyed the voice of the Lord.***'

And so he had, as many would think. But his obedience had not been entire. God claims exact, full obedience. God had said, '***Utterly destroy all! spare not!***' This he had not done. He had spared the best sheep for a sacrifice unto the Lord. And Samuel said.

'To obey is better than any sacrifice. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord hath rejected thee.'

Sad type of so much obedience, which in part performs God's

commandment, and yet is not the obedience God asks! God says of all sin and all disobedience: 'Utterly destroy all! spare not!' May God reveal to us whether we are indeed going all lengths with Him, seeking utterly to destroy all and spare nothing that is not in perfect harmony with His will. It is only a whole-hearted obedience, down to the minutest details, that can satisfy God. Let nothing less satisfy you; lest while we say, 'I have obeyed,' God says, 'Thou hast rejected the word of the Lord.'

7. Just one word more from the Old Testament. Next to Deuteronomy Jeremiah is the book most full of the word 'obey,' though alas! mostly in connection with the complaint that the people had not obeyed. God sums up all His dealings with the fathers in the one word,

'I spake not with them concerning sacrifices, but this thing I commanded them, OBEY MY VOICE AND I WILL BE YOUR GOD.'

Would God that we could learn that all that God speaks of sacrifices, even of the sacrifice of His beloved Son, is subordinate to the one thing—to have His creature restored to full obedience. Into all the inconceivable meaning of the word, 'I WILL BE YOUR GOD,' there is no gateway but this, 'OBEY MY VOICE.'

III. We Come to the New Testament

1. Here we think at once of our blessed Lord, and the prominence He gives to obedience as the one thing for which He was come into the world. He who entered it with His 'Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God,' ever confessed to men, 'I seek not My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.'

Of all He did and of all He suffered, even to the death, He said, 'This commandment have I received of My Father.'

If we turn to His teaching, we find everywhere, that the obedience He rendered is what He claims from everyone who would be His disciple.

During His whole ministry, from beginning to end, obedience is

THE VERY ESSENCE OF SALVATION

In the Sermon on the Mount He began with it: No one could enter the kingdom, 'but he that ***doeth the will*** of My Father which is in heaven.' And in the farewell discourse, how wonderfully He reveals the spiritual character of true obedience as it is born of love and inspired by it, and as it also opens the way into the love of God. Do take into your heart the wonderful words, (John 14:15, 16, 21, 23), 'If ye love Me, ye will keep my commandments. And the Father will send forth the Spirit. He hath My commandments and keepeth

them, he it is that loveth Me: and he shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him. If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.'

No words could express more simply or more powerfully the inconceivably glorious place Christ gives to obedience, with its twofold possibility, (1) as only possible to a loving heart, (2) as making possible all that God has to give of His Holy Spirit, of His wonderful love, of His indwelling in Christ Jesus. I know of no passage in Scripture that gives a higher revelation of the spiritual life, or the power of loving obedience as its one condition. Let us pray God very earnestly that by His Holy Spirit its light may transfigure our daily obedience with its heavenly glory.

See how all this is confirmed in the next chapter. How well we know the parable of the vine! How often and how earnestly we have asked how to be able to abide continually in Christ We have thought of more study of the Word, more faith, more prayer, more communion with God, and we have overlooked the simple truth that Jesus teaches so clearly, '**If ye keep My commandments**, ye shall abide in My love,' with its divine sanction, '**Even as I kept** My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.'

For Him as for us, the only way under heaven to abide in divine love is to **keep the commandments**. Do let me ask, have you known it, have you heard it preached, have you

believed it and proved it true in your experience: obedience on earth is the key to a place in God's love in heaven? Unless there be some correspondence between God's whole-hearted love in heaven, and our whole-hearted, loving obedience on earth, Christ cannot manifest Himself to us, God cannot abide in us, we cannot abide in His love.

2. If we go on from our Lord Jesus to His apostles, we find in the Acts two words of Peter's which show how our Lord's teaching had entered into him. In the one, 'God hath given His Holy Spirit *to them that obey Him*,'—he proves how he knew what had been the preparation for Pentecost, the surrender to Christ. In the other, '*We must obey God* rather than man'—we have the man-ward side: obedience is to be unto death; nothing on earth dare or can hinder it in the man who has given himself to God.
3. In Paul's Epistle to the Romans, we have, in the opening and closing verses the expression, '*the obedience of faith among all nations*' (1:5; 16:26), as that for which he was made an apostle. He speaks of what God had wrought 'to make the Gentiles obedient.' He teaches that, as the obedience of Christ makes us righteous, we become *the servants of obedience* unto righteousness. As disobedience in Adam and in us was the one thing that wrought death, so obedience, in Christ and in us, is the one thing that the gospel makes known as the way of restoration to God and His favor.
4. We all know how James warns us not to be hearers of the Word only but doers, and expounds how Abraham was

justified, and his faith perfected, by his works.

5. In Peter's First Epistle we have only to look at the first chapter, to see the place obedience has in his system. In verse 2 he speaks to the '***Elect, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and blood-sprinkling of Jesus Christ,***' and so points us to obedience as the eternal purpose of the Father, as the great object of the work of the Spirit, and a chief part of the salvation of Christ. In verse 13 he writes, 'As ***children of obedience,***' born of it, marked by it, subject to it, 'be ye holy in all manner of conversation.' Obedience is

THE VERY STARTING POINT OF TRUE HOLINESS

In verse 22 we read, 'Seeing ye have purified your souls ***in your obedience*** to the truth,'—the whole acceptance of the truth of God was not merely a matter of intellectual assent or strong emotion: it was a subjection of the life to the dominion of the truth of God: the Christian life was in the first place obedience.

6. Of John we know how strong his statements are. 'He that saith, I know Him, and ***keepeth not His Commandments,*** is a liar.' Obedience is

THE ONE CERTIFICATE OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

'Let us love ***in deed and truth;*** hereby we shall assure our hearts before Him. And whatsoever we ask we receive of Him, ***because we keep His commandments,*** and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.' Obedience is the secret of good conscience, and of the confidence that God heareth us.

'This is the love of God, that we **keep His Commandments.**' The obedience that keeps His commandments: this is the garment in which the hidden, invisible love reveals itself, and whereby it is known.

Such is the place obedience has in Holy Scripture, in the mind of God, in the hearts of His servants. We may well ask, Does it take that place in my heart and life? Have we indeed given obedience that supreme place of authority over us that God means it to have, as the inspiration of every action, and of every approach to Him? If we yield ourselves to the searching of God's Spirit, we may find that we never gave it its true proportion in our scheme of life, and that this lack is the cause of all our failure in prayer and in work. We may see that the deeper blessings of God's grace, and the full enjoyment of God's love and nearness, have been beyond our reach, simply because obedience was never made what God would have it be—the starting-point and the goal of our Christian life.

Let this, our first study, waken in us an earnest desire to know God's will fully concerning this truth. Let us unite in praying that the Holy Spirit may show us how defective the Christian's life is, where obedience does not rule all; how that life can be exchanged for one of full surrender to absolute obedience; and how sure it is that God in Christ will enable us to live it out.

II. The Obedience of Christ^(TOC)

'Through the obedience of the One shall all the many be made righteous.... Know ye not that ye are servants of obedience unto righteousness?'—Romans 5:19; 6:16.

'Through the obedience of the One shall the many be made righteous.' These words tell us what we owe to Christ. As in Adam we were made sinners, in Christ we are made righteous.

The words tell us, too, to what in Christ it is we owe our righteousness. As Adam's disobedience made us sinners, the obedience of Christ makes us righteous. To the obedience of Christ we owe everything.

Among the treasures of our inheritance in Christ this is one of the richest. How many have never studied it, so as to love it and delight in it, and get the full blessing of it! May God, by His Holy Spirit, reveal its glory, and make us partakers of its power.

You are familiar with the blessed truth of justification by faith. In the section of the Epistle to the Romans preceding our passage (3:21 - 5:11) Paul had taught what its ever-blessed foundation was—the atonement of the blood of Christ; what its way and condition—faith in the free grace of a God who justifies the ungodly; and what its blessed fruits—the bestowment of the righteousness of Christ, with an immediate access into the favor of God, and the hope of glory. In our passage he now proceeds to unfold the deeper truth of the union with Christ by faith, in which justification has its root, and which

makes it possible and right for God to accept us for His sake. Paul goes back to Adam and our union with him, with all the consequences that flowed from that union, to prove how reasonable, how perfectly natural (in the higher sense of the word) it is that those who receive Christ by faith, and are so united with Him, become partakers of His righteousness and His life. It is in this argument that he specially emphasizes the contrast between the disobedience of Adam, with the condemnation and death it wrought, and the obedience of Christ, with the righteousness and life it brings. As we study the place the obedience of Christ takes in His work for our salvation, and see in it the very root of our redemption, we shall know what place to give it in our heart and life.

'Through the one man's disobedience many were made sinners.' How was this?

There was a twofold connection between Adam and his descendants—*the judicial* and *the vital*.

JUDICIAL AND VITAL CONNECTION

Through the judicial, the whole race, though yet unborn, came at once under the sentence of death. 'Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them'—such as little children—'who had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression.'

This judicial relation was rooted in the vital connection. The sentence could not have come upon them, if they had not been in Adam. And the vital again became the manifestation of the judicial; each child of Adam enters life under the power of sin and death. 'Through the disobedience of the one, the many were constituted sinners,' both by position subject to the curse of sin and by nature subject to its power.

'Adam is the figure of Him who was to come,' and who is called the Second Adam, the Second Father of the race. Adam's disobedience in its effects is the exact similitude of what the obedience of Christ becomes to us. 'When a sinner believes in Christ, he is united to Him, and is at once, by a judicial sentence, pronounced and accepted as righteous in God's sight. The judicial relationship is rooted in the vital. He has Christ's righteousness only by having Christ Himself, and being in Him. Before he knows aught of what it is to be in Christ, he can know himself acquitted and accepted. But he is then led on to know the vital connection, and to understand that as real and complete as was his participation in Adam's disobedience with the death as well as the sinful nature that followed on it, is his participation in Christ's obedience, with both the righteousness and the obedient life and nature that come from it.

Let us see and understand this:

Through Adam's disobedience we are made sinners. The one thing God asked of Adam in Paradise was obedience. The one thing by which a creature can glorify God, or enjoy His favor and blessing, is obedience. The one cause of the power sin has got in the world, and the ruin it has wrought, is disobedience. The whole curse of sin on us is owing to disobedience imputed to us. The whole power of sin working in us, is nothing but this—that as we receive Adam's nature, we inherit his disobedience—we are born 'the children of disobedience.'

It is evident that

THE ONE WORK A CHRIST WAS NEEDED FOR

was to remove this disobedience—its curse, its dominion, its evil nature and workings. Disobedience was the root of all sin and misery. The first object of

His salvation was to cut away the evil root, and restore man to his original destiny—a life in obedience to his God.

How did Christ do this?

First of all, by coming as the Second Adam, to undo what the first had done. Sin had made us believe that it was a humiliation always to be seeking to know and do God's will. Christ came to show us the nobility, the blessedness, the heavenliness of obedience. When God gave us the robe of creaturehood to wear, we knew not that its beauty, its unspotted purity, was obedience to God. Christ came and put on that robe that He might show us how to wear it, and how with it we could enter into the presence and glory of God. Christ came to overcome, and so bear away our disobedience, and to replace it by His own obedience on us and in us. As universal, as mighty, as all pervading as was the disobedience of Adam, yea, far more so, was to be the power of the obedience of Christ.

The object of Christ's life of obedience was threefold: (1) As an Example, to show us what true obedience was. (2) As our Surety, by His obedience to fulfill all righteousness for us. (3) As our Head, to prepare a new and obedient nature to impart to us.

So He died, too, to show us that His obedience means a readiness to obey to the uttermost, to die for God; that it means the vicarious endurance and atonement of the guilt of our disobedience; that it means a death to sin as an entrance to the life of God for Him and for us.

The disobedience of Adam, in all its possible bearings, was to be put away and replaced by the obedience of Christ. Judicially, by that obedience we are made righteous. Just as we were made sinners by Adam's disobedience, we are at once and completely justified and delivered from the power of sin and

death: we stand before God as righteous men. Vitality—for the judicial and the vital are as inseparable as in the case of Adam—we are made one plant with Christ in His death and resurrection, so that we are as truly dead to sin and alive to God, as He is. And the life we receive in Him is no other than a life of obedience.

Let every one of us who would know what obedience is, consider well: It is the obedience of Christ that is the secret of the righteousness and salvation I find in Him. The obedience is the very essence of that righteousness: obedience is salvation. His obedience, first of all to be accepted, and trusted to, and rejoiced in, as covering and swallowing, up and making an end of my disobedience, is the one unchanging, never-to-be-forsaken ground of my acceptance. And then, His obedience—just as Adam's disobedience was the power that ruled my life, the power of death in me—becomes the life-power of the new nature in me. Then I understand why Paul in this passage so closely links the righteousness and the life. 'If by the trespass of one, death reigned through the one, much more shall they who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness **reign in life through One,**' even here on earth. 'The gift came unto all men unto justification **of life.**'

The more carefully we trace the parallel between the first and Second Adam, and see how in the former the death and disobedience reigned in his seed equally with himself, and how both were equally transmitted, through union with him, the more will the conviction be forced upon us that the obedience of Christ is equally to be ours, not only by imputation, but by personal possession. It is so inseparable from Him that to receive Him and His life is to receive His obedience. When we receive the righteousness which God offers us so freely, it at once points us to the obedience out of which it was born, with which it is inseparably one, in which alone it can live and flourish.

See how this connection comes out in the next chapter. After having spoken of our life—union to Christ, Paul, for the first time in the epistle (6:12), gives an injunction, 'Let not sin reign;... present yourselves unto God'; and then immediately proceeds to teach how this means nothing but obedience: 'Know ye not, that ye are servants of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?' Your relation to obedience is a practical one; you have been delivered from disobedience (Adam's and your own), and now are become servants of obedience—and that 'unto righteousness.' Christ's obedience was unto righteousness—the righteousness which is God's gift to you. Your subjection to obedience is the one way in which your relation to God and to righteousness can be maintained. Christ's obedience unto righteousness is the only beginning of life for you; your obedience unto righteousness, its only continuance. There is but one law for the head and the members. As surely as it was with Adam and his seed, disobedience and death, it is with Christ and his seed, obedience and life. The one bond of union, the one mark of likeness, between Adam and his seed was disobedience. The one bond of union between Christ and His seed, the one mark of resemblance, is obedience.

It was obedience made Christ the object of the Father's love (John 10:17, 18) and our Redeemer; it is OBEDIENCE ALONE can lead us in the way to dwell in that love (John 14:21, 23) and enjoy that redemption.

'Through the obedience of the One shall the many be made righteous.'
Everything depends upon our knowledge of and participation in the obedience, as the gateway and path to the full enjoyment of the righteousness. At conversion the righteousness is given to faith, once for all, completely and forever, with but little or no knowledge of the obedience. But as the righteousness is indeed believed in and submitted to, and its full dominion over us, as 'servants of righteousness,' sought after, it will open to

us its blessed nature, as born out of obedience, and therefore ever leading us back to its divine origin. The truer our hold of the righteousness of Christ, in the power of the Spirit, the more intense will be our desire to share in the obedience out of which it sprang. In this light let us

STUDY THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST

that like Him we may live as servants of obedience unto righteousness.

1. In Christ this obedience was a life principle.

Obedience with Him did not mean a single act of obedience now and then, not even a series of acts, but the spirit of His whole life. 'I came, not to do My own will.' 'Lo, I come, to do Thy will, O God.' He had come into the world for one purpose. He only lived to carry out God's will. The one supreme, all-controlling power of His life was obedience.

He is willing to make it so in us. This was what He promised when He said, 'Whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother and sister and mother.'

The link in a family is a common life shared by all and a family likeness. The bond between Christ and us is that He and we together do the will of God.

2. In Christ this obedience was a joy. 'I delight to do Thy will, O God.' 'My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me.'

Our food is refreshment and invigoration. The healthy man eats his bread with gladness. But food is more than enjoyment

—it is the one necessary of life. And so, doing the will of God was the food that Christ hungered after and without which He could not live, the one thing that satisfied His hunger, the one thing that refreshed and strengthened Him and made Him glad.

It was something of this David meant when he spoke of God's words being 'sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.' As this is understood and accepted, obedience will become more natural to us and necessary to us, and more refreshing than our daily food.

3. In Christ this obedience led to a waiting on God's will.

God did not reveal all His will to Christ at once, but day by day, according to the circumstances of the hour. In His life of obedience there was growth and progress; the most difficult lesson came the last. Each act of obedience fitted Him for the new discovery of the Father's further command. He spake, 'Mine ears hast Thou opened; I delight to do Thy will, O God.'

It is as obedience becomes the passion of our life that the ears will be opened by God's Spirit to wait for His teaching, and we be content with nothing less than a divine guidance into the divine will for us.

4. In Christ this obedience was unto death.

When He spake, 'I came not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me,' He was ready to go all lengths in denying His own will and doing the Father's. He meant it. 'In nothing

My will; at all costs God's will.'

This is the obedience to which He invites and for which He empowers us. This whole-hearted surrender to obedience in everything is the only true obedience, is the only power that will avail to carry us through. Would God that Christians could understand that nothing less than this is what brings the soul gladness and strength!

As long as there is a doubt about universal obedience, and with that a lurking sense of the possibility of failure, we lose the confidence that secures the victory. But when once we set God before us, as really asking full obedience, and engaging to work it, and see that we dare offer Him nothing less, we give up ourselves to the working of the divine power, which by the Holy Ghost can master our whole life.

5. In Christ this obedience sprang from the deepest humility. 'Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who emptied Himself—who took the form of a servant—who humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death.'

It is the man who is willing for entire, self-emptying, is willing to be and live as the servant, 'a servant of obedience,' is willing to be humbled very low before God and man, to whom the obedience of Jesus will unfold its heavenly beauty and its constraining power. There may be a strong will, that secretly trusts in self, that strives for the obedience, and fails. It is as we sink low before God in humility, meekness, patience, and entire resignation to His will, and are willing to

bow in an absolute helplessness and dependence on Him, as we turn away wholly from self, that it will be revealed to us how it is the one only duty and blessing of a creature to obey this glorious God!

6. In Christ this obedience was of faith—in entire dependence upon God's strength. 'I can do nothing of Myself.' 'The Father that dwelleth in Me doeth the works.'

The Son's unreserved surrender to the Father's will was met by the Father's unceasing and undeserved bestowment of His power working in Him.

Even so it will be with us. If we learn that our giving up our will to God is ever the measure of His giving His power in us, we shall see that a surrender to full obedience is nothing but a full faith that God will work all in us.

God's promises of the New Covenant all rest on this: 'The Lord Thy God will circumcise thine heart to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and thou shall obey the Lord thy God.' 'I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments.'

Let us, like the Son, believe that God works all in us, and we shall have the courage to yield ourselves to an unreserved obedience—an obedience unto death. That yielding ourselves up to God will become the entrance into the blessed experience of conformity to the Son of God in His doing the Father's will, because He counted on the Father's power. Let us give our all to God. He will work His all in us.

Know ye not that ye, made righteous by the obedience of One, are like Him and in Him servants of obedience unto righteousness? It is in the obedience

of the One the obedience of the many has its root, its life, its security. Let us turn and gaze upon, and study, and believe in Christ, as the obedient One, as never before. Let this be the Christ we receive and love, and seek to be made conformable to. As His righteousness is our one hope, let His obedience be our one desire. Let our faith in Him prove its sincerity and its confidence in God's supernatural power working in us by accepting Christ, the obedient One, as in very deed our life, as the Christ who dwells in us.

III. The Secret of True Obedience^(TOC)

'He learned obedience.'—Hebrews 5:8.

The secret of true obedience—let me say at once what I believe it to be—is the clear and close personal relationship to God. All our attempts after full obedience will be failures until we get access to His abiding fellowship. ***It is God's holy presence, consciously abiding with us, that keeps us from disobeying Him.***

Defective obedience is always the result of a defective life. To rouse and spur on that defective life by arguments and motives has its use, but their chief blessing must be that they make us feel the need of a different life, a life so entirely under the power of God that obedience will be its natural outcome. The defective life, the life of broken and irregular fellowship with God, must be healed, and make way for a full and healthy life; then full obedience will become possible. The secret of a true obedience is ***the return to close and continual fellowship with God.***

'He learned obedience' (Hebrews 5:8). And why was this needful? And what is the blessing He brings us? Listen, 'He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him.'

Suffering is unnatural to us, and therefore calls for the surrender of our will.

Christ needed suffering that in it He might learn to obey and give up His will

to the Father at any cost. He needed to learn obedience that as our great High Priest He might be made perfect. He learned obedience, He became obedient unto death, that He might become the author of our salvation. He became the author of salvation ***through obedience***, that He might save those '***who obey Him.***'

As obedience was with Him absolutely necessary to procure, it is with us absolutely necessary to inherit, salvation. The very essence of salvation is—obedience to God. Christ as the obedient One saves us as His obedient ones. Whether in His suffering on earth, or in His glory in heaven, whether in Himself or in us, obedience is what the heart of Christ is set upon.

On earth Christ was a learner in the school of obedience; in heaven He teaches it to His disciples here on earth. In a world where disobedience reigns unto death, the restoration of obedience is in Christ's hands. As in His own life, so in us, He has undertaken to maintain it. He teaches and works it in us.

Let us try and think what and how He teaches: it may be we shall see how little we have given ourselves to be pupils in this school, where alone obedience is to be learnt. When we think of an ordinary school, the principal things we ask often are—

(1) the teacher,

(2) the class-books,

(3) the pupils.

Let us see what each of these is in Christ's school of obedience.

I. The Teacher

'He learned obedience.' And now that He teaches it, He does so first and most by unfolding the secret of His own obedience to the Father.

I have said that the power of true obedience is to be found in the clear personal relationship to God. It was so with our Lord Jesus. Of all His teaching He said, 'I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father which sent Me gave Me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting; whatever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak.'

This does not mean that Christ received God's commandment in eternity as part of the Father's commission to Him on entering the world. No. Day by day, each moment as He taught and worked, He lived, as man, in continual communication with the Father, and received the Father's instructions just as He needed them. Does He not say, 'The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He *seeth* the Father do; for the Father *showeth* the Son all things that Himself *doeth*; and He *will show* Him greater things,' '*As I hear*, I judge,' 'I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me,' 'The words that I speak, I speak not of Myself, but the Father that dwelleth in Me'? It is everywhere a dependence upon a present fellowship and operation of God, a hearing and a seeing of what God speaks and does and shows.

Our Lord ever spoke of His relation to the Father as the type and the promise of our relation to Him, and to the Father through Him. With us as with Him, ***the life of continual obedience is impossible without continual fellowship and continual teaching.*** It is only when God comes into our lives, in a

degree and a power which many never consider possible, when His presence as the Eternal and Ever-present One is believed and received, even as the Son believed and received it, that there can be any hope of a life in which every thought is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

The imperative need of the continual receiving our orders and instructions from God Himself is what is implied in the words:

'OBEY MY VOICE, AND I WILL BE YOUR GOD.'

The expression 'obeying the commandments' is very seldom used in Scripture; it is almost always obeying **Me**, or obeying or hearkening to **My voice**. With the commander of an army, the teacher of a school, the father of a family, it is not the code of laws, however clear and good, with its rewards or threats, that secures true obedience; it is

THE PERSONAL LIVING INFLUENCE

wakening love and enthusiasm. It is the joy of ever hearing the Father's voice that will give the joy and the strength of true obedience. It is the voice gives power to obey the word; the word without the living voice does not avail.

How clearly this is illustrated by the contrast of what we see in Israel. The people had heard the voice of God on Sinai, and were afraid. They asked Moses that God might no more speak to them. Let Moses receive the word of God and bring it to them. They only thought of the commands; they knew not that **the only power to obey** is in the presence of God and His voice speaking to us. And so with only Moses to speak to them, and the tables of stone, their whole history is one of disobedience, because they were afraid of direct contact with God.

It is even so still. Many, many Christians find it so much easier to take their

teaching from godly men than to wait upon God to receive it from Himself. Their faith stands in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God.

Do let us learn the great lesson our Lord, 'who learned obedience' by every moment waiting to see and hear the Father, has to teach us. ***It is only when, like Him, with Him, in and through Him, we ever walk with God, and hear His voice,*** that we can possibly attempt to offer God the obedience He asks and promises to work.

Out of the depths of His own life and experience, Christ can give and teach us this. Pray earnestly that God may show you the folly of attempting to obey without the same strength Christ needed, may make you willing to give up everything for the Christlike joy of the Father's presence all the day.

II. The Text-Book

Christ's direct communication with the Father did not render Him independent of Holy Scripture.

In the divine school of obedience there is but one text-book, whether for the Elder Brother or the younger children. In His learning obedience He used the same text-book as we have. Not only when He had to teach or to convince others did He appeal to the Word—He needed it and He used it for His own spiritual life and guidance.

From the commencement of His public life to its close He lived by the Word of God. '***It is written***' was the sword of the Spirit with which He conquered Satan. 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me': this word of Scripture was the consciousness with which He opened His preaching of the gospel. 'That the Scripture might be fulfilled' was the light in which He accepted all suffering, and even gave Himself to the death. After the resurrection He expounded to the disciples 'in all the Scriptures the things ***concerning Himself.***'

In Scripture He had found God's plan and path for Him marked out. He gave Himself to fulfill it. It was in and with the use of God's Word that He received the Father's continual direct teaching.

In God's school of obedience the Bible is the only text-book. That shows us the disposition in which we are to come to the Bible—with the simple desire in it to find what is written concerning us as to God's will, and to do it.

Scripture was not written to increase our knowledge but to guide our conduct; 'that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished ***unto all good***

works. 'If any man will **do**, he shall know.' Learn from Christ to consider all there is in Scripture of the revelation of God, and His love, and His counsel, as simply auxiliary to God's great end: that the man of God may be fitted to do His will, as it is done in heaven; that man may be restored to that perfect obedience on which God's heart is set, and which alone is blessedness.

In God's school of obedience God's Word is the only text-book. To apply that Word in His own life and conduct, to know when each different portion was to be taken up and carried out, Christ needed and received a divine teaching. It is He who speaks in Isaiah, 'The Lord God wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the learned; the Lord God hath opened My ear.'

Even so does He who thus learned obedience teach it us, by giving us the Holy Spirit in our heart as the divine Interpreter of the Word. This is the great work of the indwelling Holy Spirit—to draw the Word we read and think upon **into our heart**, and make it quick and powerful there, so that God's living Word may work effectually in our will, our love, our whole being. It is because this is not understood that the Word has no power to work obedience.

Let me try and speak very plainly about this. We rejoice in increased attention given to Bible study, and in testimonies as to the interest awakened and benefit received. But let us not deceive ourselves. We may delight in studying the Bible; we may admire and be charmed with the views we get of God's truth; the thoughts suggested may make a deep impression and waken the most pleasing religious emotions; and yet the practical influence in making us holy or humble, loving, patient, ready either for service or suffering, be very small. The one reason for this is that we do not receive the Word, as it is in very deed, as the Word of a living God, who must Himself

speak to us, and into us, if it is to exert its divine power.

The letter of the Word, however we study and delight in it, has no saving or sanctifying power. Human wisdom and human will, however strenuous their effort, cannot give, cannot command that power. The Holy Spirit is the mighty power of God: ***it is only as the Holy Spirit teaches you***, only as the gospel is preached to you by man or by book, 'with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,' that it will really give you, with every command, the strength to obey, and work in you the very thing commanded.

With man, knowing and willing, knowing and doing, even willing and performing, are, for lack of power, often separate, and even at variance. ***Never in the Holy Spirit.*** He is at once the light and the might of God. All He is and does and gives has in it equally the truth and the power of God. When He shows you God's command, He always shows it you as a possible and a certain thing, a divine life and gift prepared for you, which He who shows is able to impart.

Beloved Bible students! do learn to believe that it is only when Christ, through the Holy Spirit, teaches you to understand and take the Word into your heart, that He can really teach you to obey as He did. Do believe, every time you open your Bible, that just as sure as you listen to the divine, Spirit-breathed Word, so surely will our Father, in answer to the prayer of faith and docile waiting, give the Holy Spirit's living operation in your heart. Let all your Bible study be a thing of faith. Do not only try and believe the truths or promises you read. This may be in your own power. Before that, ***believe in the Holy Spirit, in His being in you, in God's working in you through Him.*** Take the Word into your heart, in the quiet faith that He will enable you to love it, and yield to it, and keep it; and our blessed Lord Jesus will make the book to you what it was to Him when He spoke of 'the things which are

written concerning Me.' All Scripture will become the simple revelation of what God is going to do for you, and in you, and through you.

III. The Pupil

We have seen how our Lord teaches us obedience by unfolding the secret of His learning it, in unceasing dependence on *the Father*. We have seen how He teaches us to use the Sacred Book as He used it, as a divine revelation of what God has ordained for us, with the *Holy Spirit* to expound and enforce. If we now consider the place the believer takes in the school of obedience as a pupil, we shall better understand what Christ the Son requires to do His work in us effectually.

In a faithful student there are several things that go to make up his feelings towards a trusted teacher. He submits himself entirely to his leading. He reposes perfect trust in him. He gives him just as much time and attention as he asks.

When we see and consent that Jesus Christ has a right to all this, we may hope to experience how wonderfully He can teach us an obedience like His own.

1. *The true pupil*, say of some great musician or painter, *yields his master a whole-hearted and unhesitating submission.*

In practicing his scales or mixing the colors, in the slow and patient study of the elements of his art, he knows that it is wisdom simply and fully to obey.

It is this whole-hearted surrender to His guidance, this implicit submission to His authority, Christ asks. We come to Him asking Him to teach us the lost art of obeying God as He

did. He asks us if we are ready to pay the price. It is entirely and utterly to deny self! It is to give up our will and our life to the death! It is to be ready to do whatever He saith!

The only way of learning to do a thing is to do it. The only way of learning obedience from Christ is to give up your will to Him, and to make the doing of His will the one desire and delight of your heart.

Unless you take the vow of absolute obedience as you enter this class of Christ's school, it will be impossible for you to make any progress.

2. The true scholar of a great master finds it easy to render him this implicit obedience, simply because ***he trusts him.***

He gladly sacrifices his own wisdom and will to be guided by a higher.

We need this confidence in our Lord Jesus. He came from heaven to learn obedience, that He might be able to teach it well. His obedience is the treasury out of which, not only the debt of our past disobedience is paid, but out of which the grace for our present obedience is supplied. In His divine love and perfect human sympathy, in His divine power over our hearts and lives, He invites, He deserves, He wins our trust. It is by the power of a personal admiration and attachment to Himself, it is by the power of His divine love, in every deed shed into our heart by the Holy Spirit and wakening within us a responsive love, that He wakens our confidence, and communicates to us the true secret of success in His school.

As absolutely as we have trusted Him as a Savior to atone for our disobedience, so let us trust him as a Teacher to lead us out of it. Christ is our Prophet or Teacher. A heart that enthusiastically believes in His power and success as a Teacher, will, in the joy of that faith, find it possible and easy to obey. It is the presence of Christ with us all the day that will be the secret of true obedience.

3. A scholar gives his master just as much of ***his attendance and attention*** as he asks. The master fixes how much time must be devoted to personal intercourse and instruction.

Obedience to God is such a heavenly art, our nature is so utterly strange to it, the path in which the Son Himself learned it was so slow and long, that we must not wonder if it does not come at once. Nor must we wonder if it needs more time at the Masterfeet in meditation, and prayer, and waiting, in dependence and self-sacrifice, than the most are ready to give. But let us give it.

In Christ Jesus heavenly obedience has become human again, obedience has become our birth-right and our life-breath: let us cling to Him, let us believe and claim His abiding presence. With Jesus Christ who learned obedience as our Savior, with Jesus Christ who teaches obedience as our Master, we can live lives of obedience. His obedience—we cannot study the lesson too earnestly—His obedience is our salvation; in Him, the living Christ, we find it and partake of it moment by moment.

Let us beseech God to show us how Christ and His obedience are actually to be our life every moment: that will then make us pupils who give Him all our

heart and all our time. And He will teach us to keep His commandments and abide in His love, *even as He* kept His Father's commandments and abides in His love.

IV. The Morning Watch in the Life of Obedience^(TOC)

'If the first fruit is holy, so is the lump; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.'—Romans 11:16.

How wonderful and blessed is the divine appointment of the first day of the week as a holy day of rest. Not, (as some think), that we might have at least one day of rest and spiritual refreshment amid the weariness of life, but that that one holy day, at the opening of the week, might sanctify the whole, might help and fit us to carry God's holy presence into all the week and its work. With the first-fruit holy, the whole lump is holy; with the root holy, all the branches are holy too.

How gracious, too, the provision suggested by so many types and examples of the Old Testament, by which a morning hour at the opening of the day can enable us to secure a blessing for all its work, and give us the assurance of

POWER FOR VICTORY

over every temptation. How unspeakably gracious, that in the morning hour the bond that unites us with God can be so firmly tied that during hours when we have to move amid the rush of men or duties, and can scarce think of God, the soul can be kept safe and pure; that the soul can so give itself away, in the time of secret worship, into His keeping, that temptation shall only help us to unite it closer with Him. What cause for praise and joy, that the morning

watch can so each day renew and strengthen the surrender to Jesus and the faith in Him, that the life of obedience can not only be maintained in fresh vigor, but can indeed go on from strength to strength.

I would fain point out how intimate and vital the connection between obedience and the morning watch is. The desire for a life of entire obedience will give new meaning and value to the morning watch, even as this again can alone give the strength and courage needed for the former.

I. The Motive Principle

Think first of *the motive principle* that will make us love and faithfully keep the morning watch.

If we take it upon us simply as a duty, and a necessary part of our religious life, it will very soon become a burden. Or, if the chief thought be our own happiness and safety, that will not supply the power to make it truly attractive. There is only one thing will suffice—*the desire for fellowship with God.*

It is for that we were created in God's likeness. It is that in which we hope to spend eternity. It is that alone can fit us for a true and blessed life, either here, or hereafter. To have more of God, to know Him better, to receive from Him the communication of His love and strength, to have our life filled with His—it is for this He invites us to enter the inner chamber and shut the door.

It is in the closet, in the morning watch, that our spiritual life is both tested and strengthened. *There* is the battlefield where it is to be decided every day whether God is to have all, whether our life is to be absolute obedience. If we truly conquer there, getting rid of ourselves into the hands of our Almighty Lord, the victory during the day is sure. It is *there*, in the inner chamber, proof is to be given whether we really delight in God, and make it our aim to love Him with our whole heart.

Let this, then, be our first lesson: the presence of God is the chief thing, in our devotions. To meet God, to give ourselves into His holy will, to know that we are pleasing to Him, to have Him give us our orders, and lay His hand upon us, and bless us, and say to us, 'Go in this thy strength'—it is when the

soul learns that this is what is to be found in the morning watch, day by day,
that we shall learn to long for it and delight in it.

II. Reading the Bible

Let us next speak of *the reading of God's Word*, as part of what occupies us there. With regard to this I have more than one thing I wish to say.

1. One is that *unless we beware, the Word, which is meant to point us away to God, may actually intervene and hide Him from us.*

The mind may be occupied and interested and delighted at what it finds, and yet, because this is more head knowledge than anything else, it may bring little good to us. If it does not lead us to wait on God, to glorify Him, to receive His grace and power for sweetening and sanctifying our lives, it becomes a hindrance instead of a help.

2. Another lesson that cannot be repeated too often, or pressed too urgently, is that *it is only by the teaching of the Holy Ghost that we can get at the real meaning of what God means by His Word, and that the Word will really reach into our inner life, and work in us.*

The Father in heaven, who gave us His Word from heaven, with its divine mysteries and message, has given us His Holy Spirit in us, to explain and internally appropriate that Word. The Father wants us each time to ask that He teach us by His Spirit. He wants us to bow in a meek, teachable frame of mind, and believe that the Spirit will, in the hidden depth of our heart, make His Word live and work. He wants us to

remember that the Spirit is given us that we should be led by Him, should walk after Him, should have our whole life under His rule, and that therefore He cannot teach us in the morning unless we honestly give up ourselves to His leading. But if we do this and patiently wait on Him, not to get new thoughts but to get the power of the Word in our heart, we can count upon His teaching.

Let your closet be the classroom, let your morning watch be the study hour, in which your relation of entire dependence on, and submission to, the Holy Spirit's teaching is proved to God.

3. A third remark I want to make, in confirmation of what was said above, is this: ***ever study in God's Word in the spirit of an unreserved surrender to obey.***

You know how often Christ, and His apostles in their Epistles, speak of hearing and not doing. If you accustom yourself to study the Bible without an earnest and very definite purpose to obey, you are getting hardened in disobedience.

Never read God's will concerning you without honestly giving up yourself to do it at once, and asking grace to do so. God has given us His Word, to tell us what He wants us to do and what grace He has provided to enable us to do it: how sad to think it a pious thing just to read that Word without any earnest effort to obey it! May God keep us from this terrible sin!

Let us make it a sacred habit to say to God, '***Lord, whatever I***

know to be Thy will, I will at once obey.' Ever read with a heart yielded up in willing obedience.

4. One more remark. I have here spoken of such commands as we already know, and as are easily understood. But, remember, there are a great many commands to which your attention may never have been directed, or others of which the application is so wide and unceasing that you have not taken it in. Read God's Word with a deep desire to know all His will. If there are things which appear difficult, commands which look too high, or for which you need a divine guidance to tell you how to carry them out—and there are many such—let them drive you to seek a divine teaching. It is not the text that is easiest and most encouraging that brings most blessing, but the text, whether easy or difficult, which throws you most upon God. God would have you 'filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding'; it is in the closet this wonderful work is to be done. Do remember, it is only when you know that ***God is telling you to do a thing*** that you feel sure He gives the strength to do it. It is only as we are willing to know all God's will that, He will from time to time reveal more of it to us, and that we, will be able to do it all.

What a power the morning watch may be in the life of one who makes a determined resolve to meet God there; to renew the surrender to absolute obedience; humbly and patiently to wait on the Holy Spirit to be taught all God's will; and to receive the assurance that every promise given him in the Word will infallibly be made true! He that thus prays for himself, will

become a true intercessor for others.

III. Prayer

It is in the light of these thoughts I want now to say a few words on *what prayer is to be* in the morning watch.

1. First of all, *see that you secure the presence of God.*

Do not be content with anything less than seeing the face of God, having the assurance that He is looking on you in love, and listening and working in you.

If our daily life is to be full of God, how much more the morning hour, where the life of the day alone can have God's seal stamped upon it. In our religion we want nothing so much as MORE OF GOD—His love, His will, His holiness, His Spirit living in us, His power working in us for men. Under heaven there is no way of getting this but by close personal communion. And there is no time so good for securing and practicing it, as the morning watch.

The superficiality and feebleness of our religion and religious work all come from having so little real contact with God. If it be true that God alone is the fountain of all love and good and happiness, and that to have as much as possible of His presence and His fellowship, of His will and His service, is our truest and highest happiness, surely then to meet Himself alone in the morning watch ought to be

OUR FIRST CARE

To have had God appear to them, and speak to them, was with all the Old Testament saints the secret of their obedience and their strength. Do give God time in secret so to reveal Himself, that your soul may call the name of the place Peniel —'for I have seen Him face to face.'

2. My next thought is: ***let the renewal of your surrender to absolute obedience for that day be a chief part of your morning sacrifice.***

Let any confession of sin be very definite—a plucking out and cutting off of everything that has been grieving to God. Let any prayer for grace for a holy walk be as definite—an asking and accepting in faith of the very grace and strength you are specially in need of. Let your outlook on the day you are entering on be a very determined resolve that obedience to God shall be

ITS CONTROLLING PRINCIPLE

Do understand that there is no surer way, rather, that there is no other possible way, of getting into God's love and blessing in prayer, than by getting into His will. In prayer, give up yourself most absolutely to the blessed will of God: this will avail more than much asking. Beseech God to show you this great mercy, that He allows you, that He will enable you, to enter into His will, and abide there—that will make the knowing and doing His will in your life a blessed certainty. Let your prayer indeed be a 'morning sacrifice,' a placing yourself as a whole burnt-offering on the altar of the Lord.

The measure of surrender to full obedience will be the measure of confidence toward God.

3. Then remember that ***true prayer and fellowship with God cannot be all from one side.***

We need to be still, to wait and hear what response God gives. ***This is the office of the Holy Spirit, to be the voice of God to us.*** In the hidden depths of the heart, He can give a secret but most certain assurance that we are heard, that we are well-pleasing, that the Father engages to do for us what we have asked. What we need, to hear the Voice, to receive this assurance, is the quiet stillness that waits on God, the quiet faith that trusts in God, the quiet heart that bows in nothingness and humility before God, and allows Him to be all in all.

It is when God is waited on to take His part in our prayer that the confidence will come to us that we receive what we ask, that our surrender of ourselves in the sacrifice of obedience is accepted, and that therefore we can count upon the Holy Spirit to guide us into all the will of God, as He means us to know and do it.

What glory would come to us in the morning watch, and through it into our daily life, if it were thus made an hour spent with the Triune God, for the Father, through the Son and the Spirit, to take conscious possession of us for the day. How little need there then would be to urge and plead with God's children to watch the morning watch!

4. And now comes the last and the best of all. ***Let your prayer be intercessional, on behalf of others.***

In the obedience of our Lord Jesus, as in all His fellowship with the Father, the essential element was—it was all for others. This Spirit flows through every member of the body; the more we know it, and yield to it, the more will our life be what God would make it. The highest form of prayer is intercession. The chief object for which God chose Abraham and Israel and us was to make us a blessing to the world. We are a royal priesthood—a priestly people. As long as prayer is only a means of personal improvement and happiness, we cannot know its full power. Let intercession be a real longing for the souls of those around us, a real bearing of the burden of their sin and need, a real pleading for the extension of God's kingdom, real labor in prayer for definite purposes to be realized—let such intercession be what the morning watch is consecrated to, and see what new interest and attraction it will have.

Intercession! Oh to realize what it means! To take the name, and the righteousness, and the worthiness of Christ, to put them on, and in them to appear before God! 'In Christ's stead,' now that He is no longer in the world, to beseech God, by name, for the individual men and needs, where His grace can do its work! In the faith of our own acceptance, and of the anointing with the Spirit to fit us for the work, to know that our prayer can avail to 'save a soul from death,' can bring down and dispense the blessing of heaven upon earth! To think that in the hour of the morning watch this work can be renewed and carried on day by day, each inner chamber maintaining its own separate communication with heaven, and helping together in bringing down its share of the blessing.

It is in intercession, more than in the zeal that works in its own strength with

little prayer, that the highest type of piety, the true Christlikeness is cultivated. It is in intercession that a believer rises to his true nobility in the power of imparting life and blessing. It is to intercession we must look for any large increase of the power of God in the Church and its work for men.

One word in conclusion. Turn back and think now again about

THE INTIMATE AND VITAL CONNECTION

Between obedience and the morning watch.

Without obedience there cannot be the spiritual power to enter into the knowledge of God's Word and will. Without obedience there cannot be the confidence, the boldness, the liberty that knows that it is heard. Obedience is fellowship with God in His will; without it there is not the capacity for seeing and claiming and holding the blessings He has for us.

And so, on the other side, without very definite living communion with God in the morning watch, the life of obedience cannot possibly be maintained. It is there that the vow of obedience can every morning be renewed in power and confirmed from above. It is there that the presence and fellowship can be secured which make obedience possible. It is there that in the obedience of the One, and in the union with Himself, the strength is received for all that God can ask. It is there that the spiritual understanding of God's will is received, which leads to walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleasing.

God has called His children to live a wonderful, heavenly, altogether supernatural life. Let the morning watch each day be to you as

THE OPEN GATE OF HEAVEN

through which its light and power streams in on your waiting heart, and from

which you go out to walk with God all the day.^[1]

V. The Entrance to the Life of Full Obedience^(TOC)

'Obedient unto death.'—*Philippians 2:8.*

After all that has been said on the life of obedience, I purpose speaking in this address of the entrance on that life.

You might think it a mistake to take this text, in which you have obedience in its very highest perfection, as our subject in speaking of the entrance on the course. But it is no mistake. The secret of success in a race is to have the goal clearly defined, and aimed at from the very outset.

'He became obedient unto death.' There is no other Christ for any of us, no other obedience that pleases God, no other example for us to copy, no other Teacher from whom to learn to obey. Christians suffer inconceivably because they do not at once and heartily accept this as the only obedience they are to aim at. The youngest Christian will find it a strength in the school of Christ to make nothing less from the commencement his prayer and his vow: OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH. It is at once the beauty and the glory of Christ. A share in it is the highest blessing He has to give. The desire for and the surrender to it is possible to the youngest believer.

If you want to be reminded of what it means, think of the story in ancient history. A proud king, with a great army following him, demands the submission of the king of a small but brave nation. When the ambassadors

have delivered their message, he calls one of his soldiers to stab himself. At once he does it. A second is called; he too obeys at once. A third is summoned; he too is obedient to death.

'Go and tell your master that I have three thousand such men; let him come.'

The king dared count upon men who held their life not dear to them when the king's word called for it.

It is such obedience God wants. It is such obedience Christ gave. It is such obedience He teaches. Be it such obedience and nothing less we seek to learn. From the very outset of the Christian life let this be our aim, that we may avoid the fatal mistake of calling Christ Master and yet not doing what He says.

Let all who by these addresses have in any degree been convicted of the sin of disobedience, listen as we study from God's Word the way to escape from that and gain access to the life Christ can give—the entrance to the life of full obedience.

I. The Confession and Cleansing of the Disobedience

It is easy to see that this must be the first step. In Jeremiah, the prophet who more than any other speaks of the disobedience of God's people, God says,

'Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; for I am merciful. **Only acknowledge thine iniquity that you have not obeyed My voice**, saith the Lord God. Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord.'

As little as there can be pardon at conversion without confession can there be, after conversion, deliverance from the overcoming power of sin and the disobedience it brings, without a new and deeper conviction and confession.

The thought of our disobedience must not be a vague generality. The special things in which we actually disobey must be definitely found out, and in confession given up and placed in the hands of Christ, and by Him cleansed away. Then only can there be the hope of entering into the way of true obedience.

Let us search our life by the light of the teaching of our Lord.

1. Christ appealed to the law

He was not come to destroy the law, but to secure its fulfillment. To the young ruler, He said, 'Thou knowest the commandments.' Let the law be our first test.

Let us take a single sin—such as that of lying. I had a note from a young lady once saying that she wished to obey fully, and that she felt urged to confess an untruth she had told me. It was not a matter of importance, and yet she rightly judged that the confession would help her to cast it from her.

How much there is in ordinary society, how much in school life, too, that will not stand the test of strict truthfulness!

And so, there are other commandments, up to the very last, with its condemnation of all coveting and lusting after what is not ours, in which too frequently the Christian gives way to disobedience.

All this must come to a complete end. We must confess it, and in God's strength put it away forever, if there is to be any thought of our entering a life of full obedience.

2. Christ revealed the new law of love

To be merciful as the Father in heaven, to forgive just as He does, to love enemies and to do good to them that hate us, and to live lives of self-sacrifice and beneficence—this was the religion Jesus taught on earth.

Let us look upon an unforgiving spirit when we are provoked or ill-used, upon unloving thoughts and sharp or unkind words, upon the neglect of the call to show mercy and do good and bless, all as so much disobedience, which must be felt and mourned over and plucked out like a right eye, ere the power of a full obedience can be ours.

3. Christ spoke much of self-denial

Self is the root of all lack of love and obedience. Our Lord called His disciple to deny himself and to take up his cross; to forsake all, to hate and lose his own life, to humble himself and become the servant of all. He did so, because self, self-will, self-pleasing, self-seeking, is simply the source of all sin.

When we indulge the flesh in such a simple thing as eating and drinking; when we gratify self by seeking or accepting or rejoicing in what indulges our pride; when self-will is allowed to assert itself, and we make provision for the fulfillment of its desire, we are guilty of disobedience to His command. This gradually clouds the soul and makes the full enjoyment of His light and peace an impossibility,

4. Christ claimed for God the love of the heart

For Himself He equally claimed the sacrifice of all to come and follow Him. The Christian who has not definitely at heart made this his aim, who has not determined to seek for grace so to live, is guilty of disobedience. There may be much in his religion that appears good and earnest, but he cannot possibly have the joyful consciousness of knowing that he is doing the will of his Lord, and keeping His commandments.

When the call is heard to come and now begin anew a true life of obedience, there are many who feel the desire to do so, and try quietly to slip into it. They think that by more prayer and Bible study they will grow into it—it will gradually come. They are greatly mistaken. The word God uses in Jeremiah

might teach them their mistake:

'Turn, ye backsliding children, turn to Me.'

A soul that is in full earnest and has taken the vow of full obedience may grow out of a feeble obedience into a fuller one. But there is no growing out of disobedience into obedience. A turning back, a turning away, a decision, a crisis, is needed. And that only comes by the very definite insight into what has been wrong, and its confession with shame and penitence. Then alone will the soul seek for that divine and mighty cleansing from all its filthiness which prepares for the consciousness of the gift of the new heart, and God's Spirit in it causing us to walk in His statutes.

If you would hope to lead a different life, to become a man or a woman of a Christlike obedience unto death, do begin by beseeching God for the Holy Spirit of conviction, to show you all your disobedience and to lead you in humble confession to the cleansing God has provided. Rest not till you have received it.

II. Faith that Obedience is Possible

This is the second step. To take that step we must try and understand clearly what obedience is.

1. To this end we must attend carefully to the difference between *voluntary* and *involuntary* sin. It is with the former alone that obedience deals.

We know that the new heart which God gives His child is placed in the midst of the flesh with its sinfulness. Out of this there often arises, even in one who is walking in true obedience, evil suggestions of pride, unlovingness, impurity, over which he has no direct control. They are in their nature utterly sinful and vile; but they are not imputed to a man as acts of transgression. They are not acts of disobedience, which he can break off and cast out, as he can the disobedience of which we have spoken. The deliverance from them comes in another way, not through the will of the regenerate man, by which obedience always comes, but through the cleansing power of the blood and the indwelling Christ. As the sinful nature rises, all he can do is to abhor it and trust in the blood that at once cleanses him and keeps him clean.

IT IS OF GREAT CONSEQUENCE

to note the distinction. It keeps the Christian from thinking obedience impossible. It encourages him to seek and offer his

obedience in the sphere where it can avail. And it is just in proportion as in its own sphere the power of the will for obedience is maintained, that the power of the Spirit can be trusted and obtained to do the cleansing work in what is beyond the reach of the will.

2. When this difficulty has been removed, there is often a second one arises, to make us doubt whether obedience be indeed possible.

Men connect it with the idea of absolute perfection. They put together all the commands of the Bible; they think of all the graces these commands point to, in their highest possible measure; and they think of a man with all those graces, every moment in their full perfection, as an obedient man. How different is the demand of the Father in heaven! He takes account of the different powers and attainments of each child of His. He asks of him only the obedience of each day, or rather, each hour at a time. He sees whether I have indeed chosen and given myself up to the whole-hearted performance of every known command. He sees whether I am really longing and learning to know and do all His will. And when His child does this, in simple faith and love, the obedience is acceptable. The Spirit gives us the sweet assurance that we are well-pleasing to Him, and enables us to 'have confidence before God, because we know that we keep His commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.'

This obedience is indeed an attainable degree of grace. The faith that it is, is

indispensable to the obedient walk.

You ask for the ground of that faith in God's Word? You find it in God's New Covenant promise, 'I will write My law in their heart. I will put My fear in their heart, and they shall not depart from Me.'

The great defect of the Old Covenant was that it demanded, but did not provide, the power for obedience. This the New Covenant did. The heart means the love, the life. The law put into, written into the heart, means that it has taken possession of the inmost life and love of the renewed man. The new heart delights in the law of God, it is willing and able to obey it.

You doubt this; your experience does not confirm it. No wonder! A promise of God is a thing of faith; you do not believe it, and so cannot experience it.

You know what invisible writing fluid is. You, write with it on paper, and nothing can be seen by a man who is not in the secret. Tell him of it, and by faith he knows it. Hold it up to the sun, or put some chemical on it, and out comes the secret writing. So God's law is written in your heart. If you believe this firmly, and come and say to God that His law is there in your inmost part, and hold up that heart to the light and heat of the Holy Spirit, you will find it true. The law written in the heart will mean to you the fervent love of God's commands, with the power to obey them.^[2]

A story is told of one of Napoleon's soldiers. The doctor was seeking to extract a bullet that had lodged in the region of the heart, when the soldier cried,

'Cut deeper, you will find Napoleon graven there.'

Christian! do believe that the law lives in your inmost being! Speak in faith the words of David and of Christ,

'I delight to do Thy will O God! Yea, Thy law is written on my heart.'

The faith of this will assure you that obedience is possible. Such faith will help you into the life of true obedience.

III. The Step Out of Disobedience to Obedience is by Surrender to Christ

'Turn to Me, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding,' God said to Israel.

They were His people, but had turned from Him; the return must be immediate and entire. To turn our back upon the divided life of disobedience, and in the faith of God's grace to say 'I will obey,' may be the work of a moment.

The power for it, to take the vow and to maintain it, comes from the living Christ, 'We have said before, the power of obedience lies in the mighty influence of a living personal Presence. As long as we took our knowledge of God's will from a book or from men, we could not but fail. If we take Jesus, in His unchanging nearness, as at once our Lord and our Strength, we can obey. The voice that commands is the voice that inspires. The eye that guides is the eye that encourages. Christ becomes all in all to us; the Master who commands the Example who teaches, the Helper who strengthens. Turn from your life of disobedience to Christ; give up yourself to Him in surrender and faith.

In surrender. Let Him have all. Give up your life to be as full of Him, of His presence, His will, His service, as He can make it. Give up yourself to Him, not to be saved from disobedience, that now you may be happy and live your own life without sinning and trouble. No; but that He may have you wholly for Himself, as a vessel, as a channel, which He can fill with Himself, with His life and love for men, and me in His blessed service.

In faith too. In a new faith. When a soul sees this new thing in Christ, the power for continual obedience, it needs a new faith to take in the special blessing of His great redemption. The faith that only understood 'He became obedient unto death' of His atonement, as a motive to love and obedience, now learns to take the word as Scripture speaks it, 'Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death.' It believes that Christ has put His own mind and Spirit into us, and in the faith of that, prepares to live and act it out.

God sent Christ into the world to restore obedience to its place in our heart and life, to restore man to His place in the obedience to God. Christ came, and becoming obedient unto death proved what the only true obedience is. He wrought it out, and perfected it in Himself, as a life that He won through death, and now communicates to us. The Christ who loves us, who leads and teaches and strengthens us, who lives in us, is the Christ who was obedient unto death. 'Obedient unto death' is the very essence of the life He imparts. Shall we not accept it and trust Him to manifest it in us?

Would you enter into the blessed life of obedience? See here the open gate—Christ says, 'I am the door.' See here the new and living way—Christ says, 'I am the way.'

We begin to see it; all our disobedience was owing to our not knowing Christ aright. We see it; obedience is only possible in a life of unceasing fellowship with Himself. The inspiration of His voice, the light of His eyes, the grasp of His hand make it possible, make it certain.

Come and let us bow down, and yield ourselves to this Christ. Obedient unto death, in the faith that He makes us partakers with Himself of all He is and has.

VI. The Obedience Of Faith^(TOC)

'By faith Abraham obeyed.'—Hebrews 11:8.

'By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive as an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.' He believed that there was a land of Canaan, of which God had spoken. He believed in it as a 'land of promise,' secured to him as an inheritance. He believed that God would bring him there, would show it him, and give it him. In that faith he dared go out, not knowing whither he went. In the blessed ignorance of faith he trusted God, and obeyed, and received the inheritance.

The land of promise that has been set before us is ***the blessed life of obedience***. We have heard God's call to go out and dwell there—about that there can be no mistake. We have heard the promise of Christ to bring us there, and to give us possession of the land—that, too, is clear and sure. We have surrendered ourselves to our Lord, and asked of our Father to make all this true in us. Our desire now is that all our life and work in it may be lifted up to the level of a holy and joyful obedience: and that through us God may make obedience the key-note of the Christian life we aim at promoting in others. Our aim is high: we can only reach it by a new inflow of the power that comes from above. It is only by a faith that gets a new vision and hold of the powers of the heavenly world, secured to us in Christ, that we can obey and obtain the promise.

As we think of all this, of cultivating in ourselves and others the conviction that we only live to please Him to serve His purposes, some are ready to say:

'This is not a land of promise we are called to enter, but a life of burden and difficulty and certain failure.'

Do not say so, my brother! God calls you indeed to a land of promise. Come and prove what He can work in you. Come and experience what the nobility is of a Christlike obedience unto death. Come and see what blessing God will give to him who, with Christ, gives himself the uttermost unto the ever-blessed and most holy will of God. Only believe in the glory of this good land of whole-hearted obedience: in God, in who calls you to it; in Christ, who will bring you in; in the Holy Spirit, who dwells and works all there. He that believeth entereth in.

I wish, then, to speak of the obedience of faith, and of faith as the sufficient power for all obedience. I give you these five simple words as expressive of the disposition of a believing heart entering on that life in the good land—I see it, I desire it, I expect it, I accept it, I trust Christ for it.

I. Faith sees it

We have been trying to show you the map of the land, and to indicate the most important places in that land—the points at which God meets and blesses the soul. What we need now is in faith quietly and definitely to settle the question:

Is there really such a land of promise, in which continuous obedience is certainly, is divinely possible?

As long as there is any doubt on this point, it is out of the question to go up and possess the land.

Just think of Abraham's faith. It rested in God, in His omnipotence and His faithfulness. We have put before you the promises of God. Hear another of them: 'I will give you a new heart. and ***I will put My Spirit within you, and I will cause*** you to walk in my judgments, and ***ye shall keep*** them.' Here is God's covenant engagement. He adds, 'I the Lord have spoken, and ***I will do it.***' He undertakes to cause and enable you to obey. In Christ and the Holy Spirit He has made the most wonderful provision for fulfilling His engagement.

Just do what Abraham did—fix your heart upon God. 'He was strong in faith, giving glory to God, being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able to perform.' God's omnipotence was Abraham's stay. Let it be yours. Look out on all the promises God's Word gives of a clean heart, a heart established blameless in holiness, of a life in righteousness and holiness, of a walk in all the commandments of the Lord unblameable and well-pleasing to Him, of God's working in us to will and to do, of His working in us that

which is well-pleasing in His sight, in the simple faith: God says this; His power can do it. Let the assurance that a life of full obedience is possible, possess you. Faith can see the invisible and the impossible. Gaze on the vision until your heart says:

'It must be true. It is true. There is a life promised I have never yet known.'

II. Faith Desires it

When I read the gospel story and see how ready the sick and the blind and the needy were to believe Christ's word, I often ask myself what it was that made them so much more ready to believe than we are. The answer I get in the Word is this, that one great difference lies in the honesty and intensity of the desire. They did indeed desire deliverance with their whole heart. There was no need of pleading with them to make them willing to take His blessing.

Alas, that it should be so different with us! All indeed wish, in a sort of way, to be better than they are. But how few there are who really 'hunger and thirst after righteousness'; how few who intensely long and cry after a life of close obedience, and the continual consciousness of being pleasing to God.

There can be no strong faith without strong desire. Desire is the great motive-power in the universe. It was God's desire to save us moved HIM to send His Son. It is desire that moves one to study and work and suffer. It is alone the desire for salvation that brings a sinner to Christ. It is the desire for God, and the closest possible fellowship with Him, the desire to be just what He would have us be, and to have as much of His will as possible, that will make the promised land attractive to us. It is this will make us forsake everything to get our full share in the obedience of Christ.

And how can the desire be awakened?

Shame on us, that we need to ask the question; that the most desirable of all things, likeness to God in the union with His will and doing it, has so little attraction for us! Let us take it as a sign of our blindness and dullness, and beseech God to give us by His Spirit 'enlightened eyes of the heart,' that we

may see and know 'the riches of the glory of our inheritance' waiting upon the life of true obedience. Let us turn and gaze, in this light of God's Spirit, and gaze again on the life as possible, as certain, as divinely secured and divinely blessed, until our faith begins to burn with desire, and to say:

'I do long to have it. With my whole heart will I seek it.'

III. Faith Expects it

The difference between desire and expectation is great. There is often a strong desire after salvation in a soul who has little hope of really obtaining it. It is a great step in advance when desire passes into expectation, and the soul begins to savor spiritual blessing:

'I am sure it is for me, and, though I do not see how, I confidently expect to obtain it.'

The life of obedience is no longer an unattainable ideal held out by God, to make us strive at least to get a little nearer it, but is become a reality, meant for the life in flesh and blood here on earth. Expect it, as most certainly meant for you. Expect God to make it true.

There is much indeed to hinder this expectation. Your past failure; your unfavorable temperament or circumstances; your feeble faith; your difficulty as to what such a devotion, obedient unto death, may demand; your conscious lack of power for it—all this makes you say:

'It may be for others; it is not for me, I fear.'

I beseech you, speak not thus. You are leaving God out of account. Expect to get it. Look up to His power and His love, and do begin to say,

'It is for me.'

Take courage from the lives of God's saints who have gone before you. Santa Teresa writes that after her conversion she spent more than eighteen years of her life in that miserable attempt to reconcile God and her life of sin. But at

last she was able to write,

'I have made a vow never to offend God in the very least matter. I have vowed that I would rather die a thousand deaths than do anything of that kind, knowing I was doing it—this was obedience unto death. I am resolved never to leave anything whatever undone that I consider still to be more perfect, and more for the honor of my Lord.'^[3]

Gerhard Tersteegen had from his youth sought and served the Lord. After a time the sense of God's grace was withdrawn from him, and for five long years he was as one far away on the great sea, where neither sun nor stars appear. 'But my hope was in Jesus.' All at once a light broke on him that never went out, and he wrote, with blood drawn from his veins, that letter to the Lord Jesus in which he said:

'From this evening to all eternity, Thy will, not mine be done. Command and rule and reign in me. I yield up myself without reserve, and I promise, with Thy help and power, rather to give up the last drop of my blood than knowingly or willingly be untrue or disobedient to Thee.'

That was his obedience unto death.

Set your heart upon it, and expect it. The same God lives still. Set your hope on Him; He will do it.

IV. Faith accepts it

To accept is more than to expect. Many wait and hope and never possess because they do not accept.

To all who have not accepted, and feel as if they were not ready to accept, we say, Expect. If the expectation be from the heart, and be set indeed upon God Himself, it will lead the soul to accept.

To all who say they do expect, we urgently say, Accept. Faith has the wondrous God-given power of saying,

'I accept, I take, I have.'

It is for the lack of this definite faith, that claims and appropriates the spiritual blessing we desire, that so many prayers appear to be fruitless. For such an act of faith all are not ready. Where there is no true conviction of the sin of disobedience, and alas! no true sorrow for it; where there is no strong longing or purpose really in everything to obey God; where there is no deep interest in the message of Holy Scripture, that God wants to 'perfect us to do His will,' by Himself 'working in us that which is pleasing in His sight,' there is not the spiritual capacity to accept the blessing. The Christian is content to be a babe. He wants only to suck the milk of consolation. He is not able to bear the strong meat of which Jesus ate, 'doing, the will of His Father.'

And yet we come to all with the entreaty, Accept it, the grace for this wondrous new life of obedience; accept it now. Without this your act of consecration will come to little. Without this your purpose to try and be more obedient must fail. Has not God shown you that there is an entirely new

position for you to take—a possible position of simple childlike obedience, day by day, to every command His voice speaks to you through the Spirit: a possible position of simple childlike dependence on and experience of His all-sufficient grace, day by day, for every command He gives?

I pray you, even now, take that position, make that surrender, take that grace. Accept and enter on the true life of faith, and the unceasing obedience of faith. As unlimited and as sure as God's promise and power are, may your faith be. As unlimited as your faith is, will your simple childlike obedience be. Oh! ask God for His aid, and accept all He has offered you.

V. Faith Trusts Christ for all

'All the promises of God are in Christ Jesus, and in Him, Amen, unto the glory of God by us.' It is possible that as we have spoken of the life of obedience, there have been questions and difficulties rising to which you cannot at once give answer. You may feel as if you cannot take it all in at once, or reconcile it with all the old habits of thought and speech and action. You fear you will not be able at once to bring all into subjection to this supreme all-controlling principle,

'Do everything as the will of God: do all as obedience to Him.'

To all these questions there is one answer; one deliverance from all these fears; Jesus Christ, the living Savior, knows all, and asks you to trust yourself to Him for the wisdom and the power to walk ever in the obedience of faith.

We have seen more than once how His whole redemption, as He effected it, is nothing but obedience. As He communicates it, it is still the same. He gives us the spirit of obedience as the spirit of our life. This spirit comes to us each moment through Him. He Himself keeps charge of our obedience. There is none under heaven but what He has and gives and works. He offers Himself to us as surety for its maintenance, and asks us to trust Him for it. It is in Jesus Himself all our fears are removed, all our needs supplied, all our desires met. As He the righteous One is your righteousness, He the obedient One is your obedience.

Will you not trust Him for it? What faith sees and desires and expects and accepts, surely it dare trust Christ to give and to work.

Will you not to-day take the opportunity of giving glory to God and His Son, by trusting Jesus now to lead you into the promised land: Look up to your glorified Lord in heaven, and in His strength renew, with new meaning, your vow of allegiance, your vow never to do anything knowingly or willingly that would offend Him. Trust Him for the faith to make the vow, for the heart to keep it, for the strength to carry it out. Trust Him, the loving One, by His living presence, to secure both your faith and obedience. Trust Him, and venture to join in an act of consecration, in the assurance that He undertakes to be its Yea and Amen, to the glory of God by us.

VII. The School of Obedience[\(TOC\)](#)

A Basket of Fragments

'Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.'—John 6:12.

In this closing chapter I wish to gather up some points not yet touched upon, or not expressed with sufficient clearness, in the hope that they may help some one who has indeed enrolled himself in Christ's school of obedience.

I. On Learning Obedience

First, let me warn against a misunderstanding of the expression—'learning obedience.'

We are apt to think that absolute obedience as a principle—obedience unto death—is a thing that can only be gradually learned in Christ's school. This is a great and most hurtful mistake. What we have to learn, and do learn gradually, is the practice of obedience, in new and more difficult commands. But as to the principle, Christ wants us from the very entrance into His school to make the vow of entire obedience.

A little child of five can be implicitly obedient as a youth of eighteen. The difference between the two lies not in the principle, but in the nature of the work demanded..

Though externally Christ's obedience unto death came at the end of His life, the spirit of His obedience was the same from the beginning. Whole-hearted obedience is not the end, but the beginning of our school life. The end is fitness for God's service, when obedience has placed us fully at God's disposal. A heart yielded to God in unreserved obedience is the one condition of progress in Christ's school, and of growth in the spiritual knowledge of God's will.

Young Christian! do get this matter settled at once. Remember God's rule: all for all. Give Him all: He will give you all. Consecration avails nothing unless it means presenting yourself as a living sacrifice to do nothing but the will of God. The vow of entire obedience is the entrance fee for him who would be enrolled by no assistant teacher, but by Christ Himself, in the school of

obedience.

II. Of Learning to know God's Will

This unreserved surrender to obey, as it is the first condition of entering Christ's school, is the only fitness for receiving instruction as to the will of God for us.

There is a general will of God for all His children, which we can, in some measure, learn out of the Bible. But there is a special individual application of these commands—God's will concerning each of us personally, which only the Holy Spirit can teach. And He will not teach it, except to those who have taken the vow of obedience.

This is the reason why there are so many unanswered prayers for God to make known His will. Jesus said, 'If any man wills to do His Will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God.' If a man's will is really set on doing God's will, that is, if his heart is given up to do, and he as a consequence does it as far as he knows it, he shall know what God has further to teach him.

It is simply what is true of every scholar with the art he studies, of every apprentice with his trade, of every man in business doing is the one condition of truly knowing. And so obedience, the doing of God's will as far as we know, and the will and the vow to do it all as He reveals it, is the spiritual organ, the capacity for receiving the true knowledge of what is God's will for each of us.

In connection with this let me press upon you three things.

1. *Seek to have a deep sense of your very great ignorance of*

God's will, and of your impotence by any effort to know it aright.

The consciousness of ignorance lies at the root of true teachableness. 'The meek will He guide in the way'—those who humbly confess their need of teaching. Head-knowledge only gives human thoughts without power. God by His Spirit gives a living knowledge that enters the love of the heart, and works effectually.

2. Cultivate a strong faith that God will make you know wisdom in the hidden part, in the heart.

You may have known so little of this in your Christian life hitherto that the thought appears strange. Learn that God's working, the place where He gives His life and light, is in the heart, deeper than all our thoughts. Any uncertainty about God's will makes a joyful obedience impossible. Believe most confidently that the Father is willing to make known what He wants you to do. Count upon Him for this. Expect it certainly.

3. In view of the darkness and deceitfulness of the flesh and fleshly mind, ask God very earnestly for the searching and convincing light of the Holy Spirit.

There may be many things which you have been accustomed to think lawful or allowable, which your Father wants different. To consider it settled that they are the will of God because others and you think so, may effectually shut you out from knowing God's will in other things. Bring everything, without reserve, to the judgment of the Word, explained and

applied by the Holy Spirit. Wait on God to lead you to know that everything you are and do is pleasing in His sight.

III. On Obedience Unto Death

There is one of the deeper and more spiritual aspects of this truth to which I have not alluded. It is something that as a rule does not come up in the early stages of the Christian life, and yet it is needful that every believer know what the privileges are that await him. There is an experience into which whole-hearted obedience will bring the believer, in which he will know that, as surely as with his Lord, obedience leads to death.

Let us see what this means. During our Lord's life, His resistance to sin and the world was perfect and complete. And yet His final deliverance from their temptations and His victory over their power, His obedience, was not complete until He had died to the earthly life and to sin. In that death He gave up His life in perfect helplessness into the Father's hands, waiting for Him to raise Him up. It was through death that He received the fullness of His life and glory. Through death alone, the giving up of the life He had, could obedience lead Him into the glory of God.

The believer shares with Christ in this death to sin. In regeneration he is baptized by the Holy Spirit into it. Owing to ignorance and unbelief he may know little experimentally of this entire death to sin. When the Holy Spirit reveals to him what he possesses in Christ, and he appropriates it in faith, the Spirit works in him the very same disposition which animated Christ in His death. With Christ it was an entire ceasing from His own life, a helpless committal of His spirit into the Father's hands. This was the complete fulfillment of the Father's command: Lay down Thy life in My hands. Out of the perfect self-oblivion of the grave He entered the glory of the Father.

It is into the fellowship of this a believer is brought. He finds that in the most unreserved obedience for which God's Spirit fits him, there is still a secret element of self and self-will. He longs to be delivered from it. He is taught in God's Word that this can only be by death. The Spirit helps him to claim more fully that he is indeed dead to sin in Christ, and that the power of that death can work mightily in him. He is made willing to be obedient unto death, this entire death to self, which makes him truly nothing. In this he finds a full entrance into the life of Christ.

To see the need of this entire death to self, to be made willing for it, to be led into the entire self-emptying and humility of our Lord Jesus—this is the highest lesson that our obedience has to learn—this is, indeed, the Christlike obedience unto death.

There is no room here to enlarge on this. I thought it well to say this much on a lesson which God Himself will, in due time, teach those who are entirely faithful.

IV. Of the Voice of Conscience

In regard to the knowledge of God's will, we must see and give conscience its place, and submit to its authority.

There are a thousand little things in which the law of nature or education teaches us what is right and good, and in regard to which even earnest Christians do not hold themselves bound to obey. Now, remember, if you are unfaithful in that which is least, who will entrust you with the greater? Not God. If the voice of conscience tells you of some course of action that is the nobler or the better, and you choose another because it is easier or pleasing to self, you unfit yourself for the teaching of the Spirit, by disobeying the voice of God in nature. A strong will always to do the right, to do the very best, as conscience points it out, is a will to do God's will. Paul writes, 'I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.' The Holy Ghost speaks through conscience: if you disobey and hurt conscience, you make it impossible for God to speak to you.

Obedience to God's will shows itself in tender regard for the voice of conscience. This holds good with regard to eating and drinking, sleeping and resting, spending money and seeking pleasure—let everything be brought into subjection to the will of God.

This leads to another thing of great importance in this connection. If you would live the life of true obedience, see that you maintain a good conscience before God, and never knowingly indulge in anything which is contrary to His mind. George Muller attributed all his happiness during seventy years to this, along with his love of God's Word. He had maintained a good

conscience in all things, not going on in a course he knew to be contrary to the will of God. Conscience is the guardian or monitor God has given you, to give warning when anything goes wrong. Up to the light you have, give heed to conscience. Ask God, by the teaching of His will, to give it more light. Seek the witness of conscience that you are acting up to that light. Conscience will become your encouragement and your helper, and give you the confidence, both that your obedience is accepted, and that your prayer for ever-increasing, knowledge of the will is heard.

V. Of Legal and Evangelical Obedience

Even when the vow of unreserved obedience has been taken, there may still be two sorts of obedience—that of the law, and that of the gospel. Just as there are two Testaments, an Old and a New, so there are two styles of religion, two ways of serving God. This is what Paul speaks of in Romans, when he says, 'Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are **not under law** but under grace' (6:14), and further speaks of our being 'freed from the law,' so 'that we serve in newness of the spirit and **not in the oldness of the letter**' (7:6); and then again reminds us, 'Ye received **not again the spirit of bondage** unto fear, but ye received the Spirit of adoption' (8:15).

The threefold contrast points very evidently to a danger existing among those Christians of still acting as if they were under the law, serving in the boldness of the letter and in the spirit of bondage. One great cause of the feebleness of so much Christian living is because it is more under law than under grace. Let us see what the difference is.

What the law demands from us, grace promises and performs for us.

The law deals with what we ought to do, whether we can or not, and by the appeal to motives of fear and love stirs us to do our utmost. But it gives no real strength, and so only leads to failure and condemnation. Grace points to what we cannot do, and offers to do it for us and in us.

The law comes with commands on stone or in a book. Grace comes in a living, gracious Person, who gives His presence and His power.

The law promises life, if we obey. Grace gives life, even the Holy Spirit with

the assurance that we can obey.

Human nature is ever prone to slip back out of grace into the law, and secretly to trust to trying and doing its utmost. The promises of grace are so divine, the gift of the Holy Spirit ***to do all in us*** is so wonderful, that few believe it. This is the reason they never dare take the vow of obedience, or, having taken it, turn back again. I beseech you, study well what gospel obedience is. The gospel is good tidings. Its obedience is part of that good tidings—***that grace, by the Holy Spirit, will do all in you.*** Believe that, and let every undertaking to obey be in the joyous hopefulness that comes from faith in the exceeding abundance of grace, in the mighty indwelling of the Holy Spirit, in the blessed love of Jesus whose abiding presence makes obedience possible and certain.

VI. Of the Obedience of Love

This is one of the special and most beautiful aspects of gospel obedience. The grace which promises to work all through the Holy Spirit is the gift of eternal love. The Lord Jesus (who takes charge of our obedience, teaches it, and by His presence secures it to us) is He who loved us unto the death, who loves us with a love that passeth knowledge. Nothing can receive or know love but a loving heart. And it is this loving heart that enables us to obey. Obedience is the loving response to the divine love resting on us, and the only access to a fuller enjoyment of that love.

How our Lord insisted upon that in His farewell discourse! Thrice He repeats it in John 14—'***If ye love Me***, ye will keep My commandments.' 'He that keepeth My commandments, he it is that ***loveth Me.***' 'If a man ***love Me***, he will keep My word.' Is it not clear that love alone can give the obedience Jesus asks, and receive the blessing Jesus gives to obedience? The gift of the Spirit, the Father's love and His own, with the manifestation of Himself; the Father's love and His own making their abode with us: into these, loving obedience gives the assured access.

In the next chapter He puts it from the other side, and shows how obedience leads to the enjoyment of God's love—He kept His Father's commandments, and ***abides in His love.*** If we keep His commandments, we shall ***abide in His love.*** He proved His love by giving His life for us; ***we are His friends***, we shall enjoy His love, if we do what He commands us. Between His first love and our love in response to it, between our love and His fuller love in response to ours, ***obedience is the one indispensable link.*** True and full obedience is impossible, except as we live and love. 'This is the love of God,

that we keep His commandments.'

Do beware of a legal obedience, striving after a life of true obedience under a sense of duty. Ask God to show you the 'newness of life' which is needed for a new and full obedience. Claim the promise, 'I will circumcise thine heart, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; and thou shalt obey the Lord thy God.' Believe in the love of God and the grace of our Lord Jesus. Believe in the Spirit given in you, enabling you to love, and so causing you to walk in God's statutes. In the strength of this faith, in the assurance of sufficient grace, made perfect in weakness, enter into God's love, and the life of living obedience it works. For it is nothing but the continual presence of Jesus in His love can fit you for continual obedience.

VII. Is Obedience Possible?

I close with once again, and most urgently, pressing home this question. It lies at the very root of our life. The secret, half-unconscious thought that to live always well-pleasing to God is beyond our reach, eats away the very root of our strength. I beseech you to give a definite answer to the question.

If in the light of God's provision for obedience, of His promise of working all His good pleasure in you, of His giving you a new heart, with the indwelling of His Son and Spirit, you still fear obedience is not possible, do ask God to open your eyes truly to know His will.^[4] If your judgment be convinced, and you assent to the truth theoretically, and yet fear to give up yourself to such a life, I say to you too, Do ask God to open your eyes and bring you to know ***His will for yourself***. Do beware lest the secret fear of having to give up too much, of having to become too peculiar and entirely devoted to God, keep you back. Beware of seeking just religion enough to give ease to the conscience, and then not desiring to do and be and give God all He is worthy of. And beware, above all, of 'limiting' God, of making Him a liar, by refusing to believe what He has said He can and will do.

If our study in the school of obedience is to be of any profit, rest not till you have written it down—Daily obedience to all that God wills of me is possible, is possible to me. In His strength I yield myself to Him for it.

But, remember, only on one condition. Not in the strength of your resolve or effort, but ***that the unceasing presence of Christ, and the unceasing teaching of the Spirit of all grace and power be your portion***. Christ, the obedient One, living in you, will secure your obedience. Obedience will be to

you a life of love and joy in His fellowship.

VIII. Obedience to the Last Command^(TOC)

'Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations.'—Matthew 28:19.

'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.'—Mark
16:15.

'As Thou didst send Me into the world, even so send I them into the world'—
John 17:18; 20:21.

*'Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall
be My witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth.'*—Acts 1:8.

All these words breathe nothing less than the spirit of world conquest. 'All the nations,' 'all the world,' 'every creature,' 'the uttermost parts of the earth,'—each expression indicates that the heart of Christ was set on claiming His rightful dominion over the world He had redeemed and won for Himself. He counts on His disciples to undertake and carry out the work. As He stands at the foot of the throne, ready to ascend and reign, He tells them, 'All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth,' and points them at once to 'all the world,' to 'the uttermost parts of the earth,' as the object of His and their desire and efforts. As the King on the throne, He Himself will be their helper: 'I am with you always.' They are to be the advance guard of His conquering hosts even to the end of the world. He Himself will carry on the war. He seeks to inspire them with His own assurance of victory, with His own purpose to make this the only thing to be thought of as worth living or dying for—the winning back of the world to its God.

Christ does not teach or argue, ask or plead: He simply commands. He has trained His disciples to obedience. He has attached them to Himself in a love that can obey. He has already breathed His own resurrection Spirit into them. He can count upon them. He dare say to them: 'Go ye into all the world.' Formerly, during His life on earth, they had more than once expressed their doubt about the possibility of fulfilling His commands. But here, as quietly and simply as He speaks these divine words, they accept them. And no sooner has He ascended than they go to the appointed place, to wait for the equipment of a heavenly power from their Lord in heaven, for the heavenly work of making all the nations His disciples. They accepted the command and passed it on to those who through them believed on His name. And within a generation, simple men, whose names we do not even know, had preached the gospel in Antioch and Rome and the regions beyond. The command was passed on, and taken up into the heart and life, as meant for all ages, as

MEANT FOR EVERY DISCIPLE

The command is for us, too, for each one of us. There is in the Church of Christ no privileged clan to which alone belongs the honor, nor any servile clan on which alone rests the duty, of carrying the gospel to every creature. The life Christ imparts is His own life, the spirit He breathes is His very own Spirit, the one disposition He works is His own self-sacrificing love. It lies in the very nature of His salvation that every member of His body, in full and healthy access with Him feels himself urged to impart what he has received. The command is no arbitrary law from without. It is simply the revelation, for our intelligent and voluntary consent, of the wonderful truth that we are His body, that we now occupy His place on earth, and that His will and love now carry out through us the work He began, and that now in His stead we live to

seek the Father's glory, in

WINNING A LOST WORLD BACK TO HIM

How terribly the Church has failed in obeying the command! How many Christians there are who never knew that there is such a command! How many who hear of it, but do not in earnest set themselves to obey it! And how many who seek to obey it in such way and measure as seems to them fitting and convenient.

We have been studying what obedience is. We have professed to give ourselves up to a whole-hearted obedience. Surely we are prepared gladly to listen to anything that can help us to understand and carry out this our Lord's last and great command: ***the gospel to every creature.***

Let me give you what I have to say under the three simple headings:

Accept His command.

Place yourself entirely at His disposal.

Begin at once to live for His kingdom.

I. Accept his Command

There are various things that weaken the force of this command. There is the impression that a command given to all and general in its nature is not as binding as one that is entirely personal and specific; that if others do not their part, our share of the blame is comparatively small; that where the difficulties are very great, obedience cannot be an absolute demand; that if we are willing to do our best, this is all that can be asked of us.

Brethren! this is not obedience. This is not the spirit in which the first disciples accepted it. This is not the spirit in which we wish to live with our beloved Lord. We want to say, each one of us—If there be no one else, I, by His grace, will give myself and my life to live for His kingdom. Let me for a moment separate myself from all others, and think of my personal relation to Jesus.

I am a member of Christ's body. He expects every member to be at His disposal, to be animated by His Spirit, to live for what He is and does. It is so with my body. I carry every healthy member with me day by day, in the assurance that I can count upon it to do its part. Our Lord has taken me so truly up into His body that He can ask and expect nothing else from me. And I have so truly yielded myself to Him that there can be no idea of my wanting anything but just to know and do His will.

Or let me take the illustration of 'the Vine and the branches.' The branch has just as much only one object for its being as the vine—bearing fruit. If I really am a branch, I am just as much as He was in the world—only and wholly to bring forth fruit, to live and labor for the salvation of men.

Take still another illustration. Christ has bought me with His blood. No slave conquered by force or purchased by money was ever so entirely the property of his master, as my soul, redeemed and won by Christ's blood, given up and bound to Him by love, is His property, for Him alone to do with it what He pleases. He claims by divine right, working through the Holy Spirit in an infinite power, and I have given a full assent, that I live wholly for His kingdom and service. This is my joy and my glory.

There was a time when it was different. There are two ways in which a man can bestow his money or service on another. In olden time there was once a slave, who by his trade earned much money. All the money came to the master. The master was kind and treated the slave well. At length the slave, from earnings his master had allowed him, was able to purchase his liberty. In course of time the master became impoverished, and had to come to his former slave for help. He was not only able, but most willing to give it, and gave liberally, in gratitude for former kindness.

You see at once the difference between the bringing of his money and service when he was a slave, and his gifts when he was free. In the former case he gave all, because it and he belonged to the master. In the latter he only gave what he chose.

In which way ought we to give to Christ Jesus? I fear many, many give as if they were free to give what they chose, what they think they can afford. The believer to whom the right which the purchase price of the blood has acquired, has been revealed by the Holy Spirit, delights to know that he is the bond slave of redeeming love, and to lay everything he has at his Master's feet, because he belongs to Him.

Have you ever wondered that the disciples accepted the great command so

easily and so heartily? They came fresh from Calvary, where they had seen the blood. They had met the risen One, and He had breathed His Spirit into them. During the forty days, 'through the Holy Ghost He had given His commandments unto them.' Jesus was to them Savior, Master, Friend, and Lord. His word was with divine power; they could not but obey. Oh, let us bow at His feet, and yield to the Holy Spirit to reveal and assert His mighty claim, and let us unhesitatingly and with the whole heart accept the command as our one life-purpose: the gospel to every creature.

II. Place yourself at his Disposal

The last great command has been so prominently urged in connection with Foreign Missions that many are inclined exclusively to confine it to them. This is a great mistake. Our Lord's words, 'Make disciples of all nations; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you,' tell us what our aim is to be—nothing less than to make every man a true disciple, living in holy obedience to all Christ's will.

What a work there is to be done in our Christian churches and our so-called Christian communities ere it can be said that the command has been carried out! And what a need that the whole Church, with every believer in it, realize that to do this work is the sole object of its existence! The gospel brought fully, perseveringly, savingly to every creature: this is the mission, this ought to be the passion, of every redeemed soul. For this alone is the Spirit and likeness and life of Christ formed in you.

If there is one thing that the Church needs to preach, in the power of the Holy Ghost, it is the absolute and immediate duty of every child of God, not only to take some part in this work, as he may think fit or possible, but to give himself to Christ the Master, to be guided and used as He would have. And therefore I say to every reader who has taken the vow of full obedience—and dare we count ourselves true Christians if we have not done so?—place yourself at once and wholly at Christ's disposal. As binding, as is the first great command on all God's people, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart,' is this the last great command too—'The gospel to every creature.' Ere you know what your work may be, ere you feel any special desire or call or fitness for any work—if you are willing to accept the

command, place yourself at His disposal. It is His as Master to train and fit and guide and use you. Fear not; come at once and forever out of the selfish religion which puts your own will and comfort first, and gives Christ what you see fit. Let the Master know that He can have you wholly. Enroll yourself at once with Him as

A VOLUNTEER FOR HIS SERVICE

God has in these few past years filled our hearts with joy and thanksgiving at what He has done through the Student Volunteer Movement. The blessing it is bringing the Christian Church is as great as that coming to the heathen world. I sometimes feel as if there were only one thing still needed to perfect its work. Is there not a need of an enrollment of Volunteers for Home Service, helping its members to feel that as intense and undivided as is the consecration to which the Volunteer for foreign work is stirred and helped is the devotion Christ asks of every one, whom He has bought with His blood, for His service in saving the world? What blessings have not these simple words, 'It is my purpose, if God permit, to become a foreign missionary,' brought into thousands of lives! It helped them into the surrender of obedience to the great command, and became an era in their history. What blessings might not come to many who can never go abroad, or who think so, because they have not asked their Master's will, if they could take the simple resolve ***By the grace of God I devote my life wholly to the service of Christ's kingdom!*** The external forsaking of home and going abroad is often a great help to the foreign volunteer, through the struggle it costs him, and the breaking away from all that could hinder him. The home volunteer may have to abide in his calling, and not have the need of such an external separation—he needs all the more the help which a pledge, given in secret, or in union with others, can bring. The blessed Spirit can make it a crisis and a

consecration that leads to a life utterly devoted to God.

Students in the school of obedience study the last and great commandment well. Accept it with your whole heart. Place yourselves entirely at His disposal.

III. And Begin at once to act on your Obedience

In whatever circumstances you are, it is your privilege to have within reach souls that can be won for God. All around you there are numberless forms of Christian activity which invite your help and offer you theirs. Look upon yourself as redeemed by Christ for His service, as blessed with His Spirit to give you the very dispositions that were in Himself, and take up, humbly but boldly, your life calling, to take part in the great work of winning back the world to God. Whether you are led of God to join some of the many agencies already at work, or to walk in a more solitary path, remember not to regard the work as that of your church, or society, or as your own but as the Lord's. Cherish carefully the consciousness of 'doing it unto the Lord,' of being a servant who is under orders, and simply carrying them out; your work will then not, as so often, come between you and the fellowship with Christ, but link you inseparably to Him, His strength, and His approval.

It is so easy to get so engrossed in the human interest there is in our work, that its spiritual character, the supernatural power needed for it, the direct working of God in us and through us, all that can fill us with true heavenly joy and hope is lost out of sight. Keep your eye on your Master, on your King, on His throne. Ere He gave the command, and pointed His servants to the great field of the world. He first drew their eyes to Himself on the throne: ***'All power is given Me in heaven and on earth.'*** It is the vision, the faith, of Christ on the throne that reminds of the need, that assures us of the sufficiency of His divine power. Obey, not a command, but the living Almighty Lord of Glory; faith in Him will give you heavenly strength.

These words preceded the command, and then there followed, '**Lo, I am with you alway.**' It is not only Christ on the throne—glorious vision!—that we need, but Christ with us here below, in His abiding presence, Himself working for us and through us. Christ's power in heaven, Christ's presence on earth—between these two pillar promises lies the gate through which the Church enters to the conquest of the world. Let each of us follow our Leader, receive from Himself our orders as to our share in the work, and never falter in the vow of obedience that has given itself to live wholly for His will and His work alone.

Such a beginning will be a training time, preparing us fully to know and follow His leading. If His call for the millions of dying heathen come to us, we shall be ready to go. If His providence does not permit our going, our devotion at home will be as complete and intense as if we had gone. Whether it be at home or abroad, if only the ranks of the obedient, the servants of obedience, the obedient unto earth, are filled up, Christ shall have His heart's desire, and His glorious thought—the gospel to every creature—find its accomplishment!

Blessed Son of God! Here I am. By Thy grace, I give my life to the carrying out of Thy last great command. Let my heart be as Thy heart. Let my weakness be as Thy strength. In Thy name I take the vow of entire and everlasting obedience. Amen.

Note on the Morning Watch^(TOC)

'By, the observance of the morning watch is commonly meant the spending of *at least* the first half-hour of every day alone with God, in personal devotional Bible study and prayer.'

'There are Christians who say that they do not have time to devote a full half-hour to such a spiritual exercise. It is a striking fact that the busiest Christians constitute the class who plead this excuse the least, and most generally observe the morning watch. Any Christian who will honestly and persistently follow this plan for a month or two will become convinced that it is the best possible use of his time, that it does not interfere with his regular work, and that it promotes the wisest economy of time....

'In India, in China, in Japan, hundreds of students have agreed to keep the morning watch....

*'The practical question for each of us is, Why should not I keep the morning watch? Next to receiving Christ as Savior, and claiming the baptism of the Holy Ghost, **we know of no act attended with larger good to ourselves and to others than the formation of an undiscourageable resolution to keep the morning watch.**'*

These quotations are from an address by John R. Mott. At first sight the closing statement appears too strong. But think a moment, what such a revelation implies.

It means the deep conviction that the only way to maintain and carry out the surrender to Christ and the Holy Spirit, is by meeting God very definitely at

the commencement of each day, and receiving from Himself the grace needed for a walk in holy obedience.

It means an insight into the folly of attempting to live a heavenly life without rising up into close communion with God in heaven, and receiving from Himself the fresh bestowal of spiritual blessings.

It means the confession that it is alone in personal fellowship with God, and in delight in His nearness, that proof can be given that our love responds to His, and that we count His nearness our chief joy.

It means the faith that if time enough be given for God to lay His hands on us, and renew the inflowings of His Spirit, our soul may be so closely united to Him that no trials or duties can separate us from Him.

It means a purpose to live wholly and only for God, and by the sacrifice of time and ease to prove that we are willing to pay any price to secure the first of all blessings the presence of God for all the day.

Let us now look again at that sentence—'Next to receiving Christ as our Savior, and claiming the baptism of the Holy Spirit, ***we know of no act attended with larger good to ourselves or to others*** than the formation of an undiscourageable resolution to keep the morning watch.' If our acceptance of Christ as Lord and Master was whole-hearted, if our prayer for and claiming of the Holy Spirit to guide and control was sincere, surely there can be no thought of not giving God each day sufficient time, our very best time, for receiving and increasing in us what is indispensable to a life for Christ's glory and in His service.

You tell me there are many Christians who are content with ten minutes or a quarter of an hour. There are, but you will certainly not as a rule find them

strong Christians. And the Students' Movement is pleading with God, above everything, that He would meet to train a race of devoted, whole-hearted young men and women. Christ asked great sacrifices of His disciples; He has perhaps asked little of you as yet. But now He allows, He invites, He longs for you to make some. Sacrifices make strong men. Sacrifices help wonderfully to wrench us away from earth and self-pleasing, and lift us heavenward. Do not try to pare down the time limit of the morning watch to less than the half-hour. There can be no question about the possibility of finding the time. Ten minutes from sleep, ten from company or amusement, ten from lessons. How easy where the heart is right, hungering to know God and His will perfectly!

If you feel that you do not feel the need of so much time, and know not how to wait, we are content you should speak of your quiet time, or your hour of prayer. God may graciously, later on, draw you out to the morning watch. But do not undertake it unless you feel your heart stirred with the determination to make a sacrifice, and have full time for intimate intercourse with God. But if you are ready to do this, we urge you to join. The very fact of setting apart such a period helps to awaken the feeling: I have a great work to do, and I need time for it. It strengthens in your heart the conviction: If I am to be kept all this day without sin I must have time to get near to God. It will give your Bible study new point, as you find time, between the reading, to be still and bow in humility for the Holy Spirit's hidden working, and wait till you get some real apprehension of God's will for you, through the Word. And, by the grace of God, it may help you to begin that habit of specific and definite intercession of which the Church so surely stands in need.

Students! you know not whether in your future life your time may be more limited, your circumstances more unfavorable, your Christian earnestness

feebler. Now is the accepted time. Today, as the Holy Ghost saith. Listen to the invitation of your brethren in all lands, and fear not to form an undiscourageable resolution to spend at least half an hour each morning ***with God alone.***

The Secret of the Cross^(TOC)

Introduction

The question often arises how it is, with so much church-going, Bible-reading, and prayer, that the Christian fails to live the life of complete victory over sin and lacks the love and joy of the Lord. One of the most important answers, undoubtedly, is that he does not know what it is to die to himself and to the world. Yet without this, God's love and holiness cannot have their dwelling-place in his heart. He has repented of some sins, but knows not what it is to turn, not only from sin, but from his old nature and self-will.

Yet this is what the Lord Jesus taught. He said to the disciples that if any man would come after Him, he must hate and lose his own life. He taught them to take up the cross. That meant they were to consider their life as sinful and under sentence of death. They must give up themselves, their own will and power, and any goodness of their own. When their Lord had died on the cross, they would learn what it was to die to themselves and the world, and to live their life in the fullness of God.

Our Lord used the Apostle Paul to put this still more clearly. Paul did not know Christ after the flesh, but through the Holy Spirit Christ was revealed in his heart, and he could testify: "I am crucified with Christ; I live no longer; Christ liveth in me." In more than one of his Epistles the truth is made clear that we are dead to sin, with Christ, and receive and experience the power of the new life through the continual working of God's Spirit in us each day.

As the season of Lent approaches each year, our thoughts will be occupied

with the sufferings and death of our Lord. Emphasis will be laid, in the preaching, on Christ for us on the cross as the foundation of our salvation. Less is said about our death with Christ. The subject is a deep and difficult one, yet every Christian needs to consider it. It is my earnest desire to help those Christians who are considering this great truth, that death to self and to the world is necessary for a life in the love and joy of Christ.

I have sought to explain the chief words of our Lord and of His disciples on this subject. May I point out two things to my reader. First, take time to read over what you do not understand at once. Spiritual truth is not easy to grasp. But experience has taught me that God's words taken into the heart and meditated on with prayer help the soul by degrees to understand the truth. And secondly, be assured that only through the continual teaching of the Holy Spirit in your heart will you be able to appropriate spiritual truths. The great work of the Holy Spirit is to reveal Christ in our hearts and lives as the Crucified One who dwells within us. Let this be the chief aim of all your devotion: complete dependence on God, and an expectation of continually receiving all goodness and salvation from Him alone. Thus will you learn to die to yourself and to the world, and will receive Christ, the Crucified and Glorified One, into your heart, and be kept through the continual working of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray fervently for each other that God may teach us what it is to die with Christ—a death to ourselves and to the world; a life in Christ Jesus.

Your Servant in the Lord, Andrew Murray

Prayer^(TOC)

Heavenly Father, how shall I thank Thee for the unspeakable gift of Thy Son on the cross! How shall I thank Thee for our eternal salvation, wrought out by that death on the cross! He died for me that I might live eternally. Through His death on the cross I am dead to sin, and live in the power of His life.

Father in heaven, teach me, I humbly entreat Thee, what it means that I am dead with Christ and can live my life in Him. Teach me to realize that my sinful flesh is wholly corrupt and nailed to the cross to be destroyed, that the life of Christ may be manifest in me.

Teach me, above all, to believe that I cannot either understand or experience this except through the continual working of the Holy Spirit dwelling within me. Father, for Christ's sake I ask it. Amen.

"Jesus hath now many lovers of His heavenly kingdom, but few bearers of His cross. He hath many desirous of consolation, but few of tribulation. He findeth many companions of His table, but few of His abstinence. All desire to rejoice with Him, few are willing to endure anything for Him, or with Him. Many follow Jesus unto the breaking of bread, but few to the drinking of the cup of His passion. Many reverence His miracles, few follow the ignominy of His cross."—Thomas A Kempis

First Day^(TOC)

The Redemption of the Cross

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us."—Galatians 3:13.

Scripture teaches us that there are two points of view from which we may regard Christ's death upon the cross. The one is the REDEMPTION OF THE CROSS: Christ dying for us as our complete deliverance from the curse of sin. The other, THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CROSS: Christ taking us up to die with Him, and making us partakers of the fellowship of His death in our own experience.

In our text we have three great unsearchable thoughts. The law of God has pronounced a curse on all sin and on all that is sinful. Christ took our curse upon Him—yea, became a curse—and so destroyed its power, and in that cross we now have the everlasting redemption from sin and all its power. The cross reveals to us man's sin as under the curse, Christ becoming a curse and so overcoming it, and our full and everlasting deliverance from the curse.

In these thoughts the lost and most hopeless sinner finds a sure ground of confidence and of hope. God had indeed in Paradise pronounced a curse upon this earth and all that belongs to it. On Mount Ebal, in connection with giving the law, half of the people of Israel were twelve times over to pronounce a curse on all sin. And there was to be in their midst a continual reminder of it:

"Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Deuteronomy 21:23, 27:15-20). And yet who could ever have thought that the Son of God Himself would die upon the accursed tree, and become a curse for us? But such is in very deed the gospel of God's love, and the penitent sinner can now rejoice in the confident assurance that the curse is forever put away from all who believe in Christ Jesus.

The preaching of the redemption of the cross is the foundation and center of the salvation the gospel brings us. To those who believe its full truth it is a cause of unceasing thanksgiving. It gives us boldness to rejoice in God. There is nothing which will keep the heart more tender towards God, enabling us to live in His love and to make Him known to those who have never yet found Him. God be praised for the redemption of the cross!

Second Day^(TOC)

The Fellowship of the Cross

"Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus."—Philippians 2:5.

Paul here tells us what that mind was in Christ: He emptied Himself; He took the form of a servant; He humbled Himself, even to the death of the cross. It is this mind that was in Christ, the deep humility that gave up His life to the very death, that is to be the spirit that animates us. It is thus that we shall prove and enjoy the blessed fellowship of His cross.

Paul had said (verse 1): "If there is any comfort in Christ,"—the Comforter was come to reveal His real presence in them—"if any fellowship of the Spirit,"—it was in this power of the Spirit that they were to breathe the Spirit of the crucified Christ and manifest His disposition in the fellowship of the cross in their lives.

As they strove to do this, they would feel the need of a deeper insight into their real oneness with Christ. They would learn to appreciate the truth that they had been crucified with Christ, that their "old man" had been crucified, and that they had died to sin in Christ's death and were living to God in His life. They would learn to know what it meant that the crucified Christ lived in them, and that they had crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. It was because the crucified Jesus lived in them that they could live crucified to the

world.

And so they would gradually enter more deeply into the meaning and the power of their high calling to live as those who were dead to sin and the world and self. Each in his own measure would bear about in his life the marks of the cross, with its sentence of death on the flesh, with its hating of the self life and its entire denial of self, with its growing conformity to the crucified Redeemer in His deep humility and entire surrender of His will to the life of God.

It is no easy school and no hurried learning—this school of the cross. But it will lead to a deeper apprehension and a higher appreciation of the redemption of the cross, through the personal experience of the fellowship of the cross.

Third Day^(TOC)

Crucified with Christ

"I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me."—Galatians 2:20.

The thought of fellowship with Christ in His bearing the cross has often led to the vain attempt in our own power to follow Him and bear His image. But this is impossible to man until he first learns to know something of what it means to say, "I have been crucified with Christ."

Let us try to understand this. When Adam died, all his descendants died with him and in him. In his sin in Paradise, and in the spiritual death into which he fell, I had a share: I died in him. And the power of that sin and death, in which all his descendants share, works in every child of Adam every day.

Christ came as the second Adam. In His death on the cross all who believe in Him had a share. Each one may say in truth, "I have been crucified with Christ." As the representative of His people, He took them up with Him on the cross, and me too. The life that He gives is the crucified life, in which He entered heaven and was exalted to the throne, standing as a Lamb as it had been slain. The power of His death and life work in me, and as I hold fast the truth that I have been crucified with Him, and that now I myself live no more but Christ liveth in me, I receive power to conquer sin; the life that I have received from Him is a life that has been crucified and made free from the

power of sin.

We have here a deep and very precious truth. Most Christians have but little knowledge of it. That knowledge is not gained easily or speedily. It needs a great longing in very deed to be dead to all sin. It needs a strong faith, wrought by the Holy Spirit, that the union with Christ crucified—the fellowship of His cross—can day by day become our life. The life that He lives in heaven has its strength and its glory in the fact that it is a crucified life. And the life that He imparts to the believing disciple is even so a crucified life with its victory over sin and its power of access into God's presence.

It is in very deed true that I no longer live, but Christ liveth in me as a Crucified One. As faith realizes and holds fast the fact that the crucified Christ lives in me, life in the fellowship of the cross becomes a possibility and a blessed experience.

Fourth Day^(TOC)

Crucified to the World

"Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world."—Galatians 6:14.

What Paul had written in Galatians 2 is here in the end of the epistle confirmed, and expressed still more strongly. He speaks of his only glory being that in Christ he has in very deed been crucified to the world and entirely delivered from its power. When he said "I have been crucified with Christ," it was not only an inner spiritual truth, but an actual, practical experience in relation to the world and its temptations. Christ had spoken about the world hating Him, and His having overcome the world. Paul knows that the world, which nailed Christ to the cross, had in that deed done the same to him. He boasts that he lives as one crucified to the world, and that now the world as an impotent enemy was crucified to him. It was this that made him glory in the cross of Christ. It had wrought out a complete deliverance from the world.

How very different the relation of Christians to the world in our day! They agree that they may not commit the sins that the world allows. But except for that they are good friends with the world, and have liberty to enjoy as much of it as they can, if they only keep from open sin. They do not know that the

most dangerous source of sin is the love of the world with its lusts and pleasures.

O Christian, when the world crucified Christ, it crucified you with Him, When Christ overcame the world on the cross, He made you an overcomer too. He calls you now, at whatever cost of self-denial, to regard the world, in its hostility to God and His kingdom, as a crucified enemy over whom the cross can ever keep you conqueror.

What a different relationship to the pleasures and attractions of the world the Christian has who by the Holy Spirit has learned to say: "I have been crucified with Christ; the crucified Christ liveth in me"! Let us pray God fervently that the Holy Spirit, through whom Christ offered Himself on the cross, may reveal to us in power what it means to "glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world had been crucified unto me."

Fifth Day^(TOC)

The Flesh Crucified

"They that are in Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof."—Galatians 5:24.

Of the flesh Paul teaches us (Romans 7:18), "In me, that is, IN MY FLESH, DWELLETH NO GOOD THING." And again (Romans 8:7), "The mind of the flesh is ENMITY AGAINST GOD; for it is not subject to the law of God, NEITHER INDEED CAN IT BE." When Adam lost the spirit of God, he became flesh. Flesh is the expression for the evil, corrupt nature that we inherit from Adam. Of this flesh it is written, "Our old man was crucified with Him" (Romans 6:6). And Paul puts it here even more strongly, "They that are in Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh."

When the disciples heard and obeyed the call of Jesus to follow Him, they honestly meant to do so, but as He later on taught them what that would imply, they were far from being ready to yield immediate obedience. And even so those who are Christ's and have accepted Him as the Crucified One little understand what that includes. By that act of surrender they actually have crucified the flesh and consented to regard it as an accursed thing, nailed to the cross of Christ.

Alas, how many there are who have never for a moment thought of such a thing! It may be that the preaching of Christ crucified has been defective. It

may be that the truth of our being crucified with Christ has not been taught. They shrink back from the self-denial that it implies, and as a result, where the flesh is allowed in any measure to have its way, the Spirit of Christ cannot exert His power.

Paul taught the Galatians: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God." And only as the flesh is kept in the place of crucifixion can the Spirit guide us in living faith and fellowship with Christ Jesus.

Blessed Lord, how little I understood when I accepted Thee in faith that I crucified once for all the flesh with its passions and lusts! I beseech Thee humbly, teach me so to believe and so to live in Thee, the Crucified One, that with Paul I may ever glory in the cross on which the world and the flesh are crucified.

Sixth Day^(TOC)

Bearing the Cross

"He that doth not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."—Matthew 10:38-39.

We have had some of Paul's great words to the Galatians about the cross and our being crucified with Christ. Let us now turn to the Master Himself to hear what He has to teach us. We shall find that what Paul could teach openly and fully after the crucifixion, was given by the Master in words that could at first hardly be understood, and yet contained the seed of the full truth.

It was in the ordination charge, when Christ sent forth His disciples, that He first used the expression that the disciple must take up his cross and follow Him.

The only meaning the disciples could attach to these words was from what they had often seen, when an evil-doer who had been sentenced to death by the cross was led out bearing his cross to the place of execution. In bearing the cross, he acknowledged the sentence of death that was on him. And Christ would have His disciples understand that their nature was so evil and corrupt that it was only in losing their natural life that they could find the true life. Of Himself it was true that all His life He bore His cross—the sentence of death that He knew to rest upon Himself on account of our sins. And so He would have each disciple bear his cross—the sentence of death upon himself and his

evil, carnal nature.

The disciples could not at once understand all this. But Christ gave them seed words, which would germinate in their hearts and later on begin to reveal their full meaning. The disciple was not only to carry the sentence of death in himself, but to learn that in following the Master to His cross he would find the power to lose his life and to receive instead of it the life that would come through the cross of Christ.

Christ asks of His disciples that they should forsake all and take up their cross, give up their whole will and life, and follow Him. The call comes to us too to give up the self life with its self-pleasing and self-exaltation, and bear the cross in fellowship with Him—and so shall we be made partakers of His victory.

Seventh Day^(TOC)

Self-Denial

"Then said Jesus unto His disciples, 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.'"—Matthew 16:24.

Christ had for the first time definitely announced that He would have to suffer much and be killed and be raised again. "Peter rebuked Him, saying, 'Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall never be unto Thee.'" Christ's answer was, "Get thee behind Me, Satan." The spirit of Peter, seeking to turn Him away from the cross and its suffering, was nothing but Satan tempting Him to turn aside from the path which God had appointed as our way of salvation.

Christ then adds the words of our text, in which He uses for the second time the words "take up the cross." But with that He uses a most significant expression revealing what is implied in the cross: "If any man come after Me, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF, and take up his cross." When Adam sinned, he fell out of the life of heaven and of God into the life of the world and of self. Self-pleasing, self-sufficiency, self-exaltation, become the law of his life. When Jesus Christ came to restore man to his original place, "being in the form of God, HE EMPTIED HIMSELF, taking the form of a servant, and HUMBLING HIMSELF even to the death of the cross." What He has done Himself He asks of all who desire to follow Him: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself."

Instead of denying himself, Peter denied his Lord: "I know not the man." When a man learns to obey Christ's commands, he says of HIMSELF: "I know not the man." The secret of true discipleship is to bear the cross, to acknowledge the death sentence that has been passed on self, and to deny any right that self has to rule over us.

Death to self is to be the Christian's watchword. The surrender to Christ is to be so entire, the surrender for Christ's sake to live for those around us so complete, that self is never allowed to come down from the cross to which it has been crucified, but is ever kept in the place of death.

Let us listen to the voice of Jesus: "Deny self"; and ask that by the grace of the Holy Spirit, as the disciples of a Christ who denied Himself for us, we may ever live as those in whom self has been crucified with Christ, and in whom the crucified Christ now lives as Lord and Master.

Eighth Day^(TOC)

He cannot be my Disciple

"If any man cometh unto Me, and hateth not his own life, HE CANNOT BE MY DISCIPLER. Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after Me, CANNOT BE MY DISCIPLER. Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, HE CANNOT BE MY DISCIPLER." Luke 14:26-33.

For the third time Christ speaks about bearing the cross. He gives new meaning to it when He says that a man must hate his own life and renounce all that he has. Thrice over He solemnly repeats the words that without this a man cannot be His disciple.

"If a man hate not his own life." And why does Christ make such an exacting demand the condition of discipleship? Because the sinful nature we have inherited from Adam is indeed so vile and full of sin that, if our eyes were only opened to see it in its true nature, we would flee from it as loathsome and incurably evil. "The flesh is enmity against God"; the soul that seeks to love God cannot but hate the "old man" which is corrupt through its whole being. Nothing less than this, the hating of our own life, will make us willing to bear the cross and carry within us the sentence of death on our evil nature. It is not till we hate this life with a deadly hatred that we will be ready to give up the old nature to die the death that is its due.

Christ has one word more: "He that renounceth not all that he hath," whether

in property or character, "cannot be My disciple." Christ claims all. Christ undertakes to satisfy every need and to give a hundredfold more than we give up. It is when by faith we become conscious what it means to know Christ, and to love Him and to receive from Him what can in very deed enrich and satisfy our immortal spirits, that we shall count the surrender of what at first appeared so difficult, our highest privilege. As we learn what it means that Christ is our life, we shall count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. In the path of following Him, and ever learning to know and to love Him better, we shall willingly sacrifice all, self with its life, to make room for Him who is more than all.

Ninth Day^(TOC)

Follow Me

"Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him, and said: 'One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.'"—Mark 10:21.

When Christ spoke these words to the young ruler, he went away grieved. Jesus said: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" The disciples were astonished at His words. When Christ repeated once again what He had said, they were astonished out of measure, "Who then can be saved?" "Jesus looking upon them said, 'With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.'"

Christ had spoken about bearing the cross from the human side, as the one condition of discipleship. Here with the rich young ruler He reveals from the side of God what is needed to give men the will and the power thus to sacrifice all, if they are to enter the kingdom. He said to Peter, when he had confessed Him as Christ, the Son of God, that flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him, but His Father in heaven, to remind him and the other disciples that it was only by divine teaching that he could make the confession. So here with the ruler He unveils the great mystery that it is only by divine power that a man can take up his cross, can lose his life, can deny himself and hate the life to which he is by nature so attached.

What multitudes have sought to follow Christ and obey His injunction—and have found that they have utterly failed! What multitudes have felt that Christ's claims were beyond their reach and have sought to be Christians without any attempt at the whole-hearted devotion and the entire self-denial which Christ asks for!

Let us in our study of what the fellowship of the cross means take today's lesson to heart and believe that it is only by putting our trust in the living God, and in the mighty power with which He is willing to work in the heart, that we can attempt to be disciples who forsake all and follow Christ in the fellowship of His cross.

Tenth Day^(TOC)

A Grain of Wheat

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit. He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."—John 12:24-25.

All nature is a parable of how the losing of a life can be the way of securing a truer and higher life. Every grain of wheat, every seed throughout the world, teaches the lesson that through death lies the path to beautiful and fruitful life.

It was so with the Son of God. He had to pass through death in all its bitterness and suffering before He could rise to heaven and impart His life to His redeemed people. And here under the shadow of the approaching cross He calls His disciples: "If any man will serve Me, let him follow Me." He repeats the words: "He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."

One might have thought that Christ did not need to lose His holy life ere He could find it again. But so it was: God had laid upon Him the iniquity of us all, and He yielded to the inexorable law: Through death to life and to fruit.

How much more ought we, in the consciousness of that evil nature and that death which we inherited in Adam, be most grateful that there is a way open to us by which, in the fellowship of Christ and His cross, we can die to this

accursed self! With what willingness and gratitude ought we to listen to the call to bear our cross, to yield our "old man" as crucified with Christ daily to that death which he deserves! Surely the thought that the power of the eternal Life is working in us, ought to make us willing and glad to die the death that brings us into the fellowship and the power of life in a risen Christ.

Alas, how little this is understood! Let us believe that what is impossible to man is possible to God. Let us believe that the law of the Spirit of Christ Jesus, the risen Lord, can in very deed make His death and His life the daily experience of our souls.

Eleventh Day^(TOC)

Thy will be Done

"O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou will."—Matthew 26:39.

The death of Christ on the cross is the highest and the holiest that can be known of Him even in the glory of heaven. And the highest and the holiest that the Holy Spirit can work in us is to take us up and to keep us in the fellowship of the cross of Christ. We need to enter deeply into the truth that Christ the beloved Son of the Father could not return to the glory of heaven until He had first given Himself over unto death. As this great truth opens up to us it will help us to understand how in our life, and in our fellowship with Christ, it is impossible for us to share His life until we have first in very deed surrendered ourselves every day to die to sin and the world, and so to abide in the unbroken fellowship with our crucified Lord.

And it is from Christ alone that we can learn what it means to have fellowship with His sufferings, and to be made conformable unto His death. When in the agony of Gethsemane He looked forward to what a death on the cross would be, He got such a vision of what it meant to die the accursed death under the power of sin—with God's countenance so turned from Him that not a single ray of its light could penetrate the darkness—that He prayed the cup might pass from Him. But when no answer came, and He understood

that the Father could not allow the cup to pass by, He yielded up His whole will and life in the word: "Thy will be done." O Christian, in this word of your Lord in His agony, you can enter into fellowship with Him, and in His strength your heart will be made strong to believe most confidently that God in His omnipotence will enable you in very deed with Christ to yield up everything, because you have in very deed been crucified with Him.

"Thy will be done"—let this be the deepest and the highest word in your life. In the power of Christ with whom you have been crucified, and in the power of His Spirit, the definite daily surrender to the ever-blessed will of God will become the joy and the strength of your life.

Twelfth Day^(TOC)

The Love of the Cross

*"Then said Jesus: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'"—
Luke 23:34.*

The seven words on the cross reveal what the mind of Christ is, and show the dispositions that become His disciples. Take the three first words, all the expression of His wonderful love.

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He prays for His enemies. In the hour of their triumph over Him, and of the shame and suffering which they delight in showering on Him, He pours out His love in prayer for them. It is the call to everyone who believes in a crucified Christ to go and do likewise, even as He has said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which persecute you." The law of the Master is the law for the disciple; the love of the crucified Jesus, the only rule for those who believe in Him.

"Woman, behold thy son!" "Behold thy mother!" The love that cared for His enemies cared too for His friends. Jesus felt what the anguish must be in the heart of His widowed mother, and commits her to the care of the beloved disciple. He knew that for John there could be no higher privilege, and no more blessed service, than that of taking His place in the care of Mary. Even so, we who are the disciples of Christ must not only pray for His enemies, but

prove our love to Him and to all who belong to Him by seeing to it that every solitary one is comforted, and that every loving heart has some work to do in caring for those who belong to the blessed Master.

"Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." The penitent thief had appealed to Christ's mercy to remember him. With what readiness of joy and love Christ gives the immediate answer to his prayer! Whether it was the love that prays for His enemies, or the love that cares for His friends, or the love that rejoices over the penitent sinner who was being cast out by man—in all Christ proves that the cross is a cross of love, that the Crucified One is the embodiment of a love that passes knowledge.

With every thought of what we owe to that love, with every act of faith in which we rejoice in its redemption, let us prove that the mind of the crucified Christ is our mind, and that His love is not only what we trust in for ourselves, but what guides us in our loving intercourse with the world around us.

Thirteenth Day^(TOC)

The Sacrifice of the Cross

"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"—"I thirst."—"It is finished."—Matthew 27:46, John 19:28, 30.

The first three words on the cross reveal love in its outflow to men. The next three reveal love in the tremendous sacrifice that it brought, necessary to deliver us from our sins and give the victory over every foe. They still reveal the very mind that was in Christ, and that is to be in us as the disposition of our whole life.

"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" How deep must have been the darkness that overshadowed Him, for not one ray of light could pierce, and He could not say "My Father"! It was this awful desertion breaking in upon that life of childlike fellowship with the Father, in which He had always walked, that caused Him the agony and the bloody sweat in Gethsemane. "O My Father, let this cup pass from Me"—but it might not be, and He bowed His head in submission: "Thy will be done." It was His love to God and love to man—this yielding Himself to the very uttermost. It is as we learn to believe and to worship that love that we too shall learn to say: "Abba, Father, Thy will be done."

"I thirst." The body now gives expression to the terrible experience of what it passed through when the fire of God's wrath against sin came upon Christ in

the hour of His desertion. He had spoken of Dives crying "I am tormented in this flame." Christ utters His complaint of what He now suffered. Physicians tell us that in crucifixion the whole body is in agony with a terrible fever and pain. Our Lord endured it all and cried: "I thirst"; soul and body was the sacrifice He brought the Father.

And then comes the great word: "It is finished." All that there was to suffer and endure had been brought as a willing sacrifice; He had finished the work the Father gave Him to do. His love held nothing back. He gave Himself an offering and a sacrifice. Such was the mind of Christ, and such must be the disposition of everyone who owes himself and his life to that sacrifice. The mind that was in Christ must be in us, ready to say: "I am come to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work." And every day that our confidence grows fuller in Christ's finished work must see our heart more entirely yielding itself like Him, a whole burnt offering in the service of God and His love.

Fourteenth Day^(TOC)

The Death of the Cross

"Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit.' And having said this, He gave up the ghost."—Luke 23:46.

Like David (Psalm 31:5), Christ had often committed His spirit into the hands of His Father for His daily life and need. But here is something new and very special. He gives up His spirit into the power of death, gives up all control over it, to sink down into the darkness and death of the grave, where He can neither think, nor pray, nor will. He surrenders Himself to the utmost into the Father's hands, trusting Him to care for Him in the dark, and in due time to raise Him up again.

If we have indeed died in Christ, and are now in faith every day to carry about with us the death of our Lord Jesus, this word is the very one that we need. Just think once again what Christ meant when He said that we must hate and lose our life.

We died in Adam; the life we receive from him is death; there is nothing good or heavenly in us by nature. It is to this inward evil nature, to all the life that we have from this world, that we must die. There cannot be any thought of any real holiness without totally dying to this self or "old man." Many deceive themselves because they seek to be alive in God before they are dead to their own nature—a thing as impossible as it is for a grain of wheat to be

alive before it dies. This total dying to self lies at the root of all true piety. The spiritual life must grow out of death.

And if we ask how we can do this, we find the answer in the mind in which Christ died. Like Him we cast ourselves upon God, without knowing how the new life is to be attained; but as we in fellowship with Jesus say, "Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit," and depend simply and absolutely upon God to raise us up into the new life, there will be fulfilled in us the wonderful promise of God's Word concerning the exceeding greatness of His power in us who believe, according to the mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.

This indeed is the true test of faith—a faith that lives every day and every hour in absolute dependence upon the continual and immediate quickening of the divine life in us by God Himself through the Holy Spirit.

Fifteenth Day^(TOC)

It is Finished

"When Jesus had received the vinegar, He said: 'It is finished.'"—John 19:30.

The seven words of our Lord on the cross reveal to us His mind and disposition. At the beginning of His ministry He said (John 4:34): "My meat is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and TO FINISH HIS WORK." In all things, the small as well as the great, He should accomplish God's work. In the High Priestly Prayer at the end of the three years' ministry He could say (John 17:4): "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I HAVE FINISHED THE WORK which Thou gavest Me to do." He sacrificed all, and in dying on the cross could in truth say: "It is finished."

With that word to the Father He laid down His life. With that word He was strengthened, after the terrible agony on the cross, in the knowledge that all was now fulfilled. And with that word He uttered the truth of the gospel of our redemption, that all that was needed for man's salvation had been accomplished on the cross.

This disposition should characterize every follower of Christ. The mind that was in Him must be in us—it must be our meat, the strength of our life, TO DO THE WILL OF GOD IN ALL THINGS, AND TO FINISH HIS WORK. There may be small things about which we are not conscientious, and so we

bring harm to ourselves and to God's work. Or we draw back before some great thing which demands too much sacrifice. In every case we may find strength to perform our duty in Christ's word "It is finished." His finished work secured the victory over every foe. By faith we may appropriate that dying word of Christ on the cross, and find the power for daily living and dying in the fellowship of the crucified Christ.

Child of God, study the inexhaustible treasure contained in this word: "It is finished." Faith in what Christ accomplished on the cross will enable you to manifest in daily life the spirit of the cross.

Sixteenth Day^(TOC)

Dead to Sin

"We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?"—Romans 6:2.

After having, in the first section of the Epistle to the Romans (1:16 to 5:11), expounded the great doctrine of justification by faith, Paul proceeds, in the second section (5:12 to 8:39), to unfold the related doctrine of the new life by faith in Christ. Taking Adam as a figure of Christ, he teaches that just as we all really and actually died in Adam, so that his death reigns in our nature, even so, in Christ, those who believe in Him actually and effectually died to sin, were set free from it, and became partakers of the new holy life of Christ.

He asks the question: "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" In these words we have the deep spiritual truth that our death to sin in Christ delivers us from its power, so that we no longer may or need to live in it. The secret of true and full holiness is by faith, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, to live in the consciousness: I am dead to sin.

In expounding this truth he reminds them that they were baptized INTO THE DEATH OF CHRIST. We were buried with Him through baptism into death. We became UNITED WITH HIM by the likeness of His death. Our "old man" was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away—rendered void and powerless. Take time and quietly, asking for the teaching

of the Holy Spirit, ponder these words until the truth masters you: I am indeed dead to sin in Christ Jesus. As we grow in the consciousness of our union with the crucified Christ, we shall experience that the power of His life in us has made us free from the power of sin.

Romans 6 is one of the most blessed portions of the New Testament of our Lord Jesus, teaching us that our "old man," the old nature that is in us, was actually crucified with Him, so that now we need no longer be in bondage to sin. But remember it is only as the Holy Spirit makes Christ's death a reality within us that we shall know, not by force of argument or conviction, but in the reality of the power of a divine life, that we are in very deed dead to sin. It only needs a continual living in Christ Jesus.

Seventeenth Day^(TOC)

The Righteousness of God

"Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." "He believed God, who quickeneth the dead."—Romans 4:3, 7.

Let us now, after listening to the words of our Lord Jesus about our fellowship with Him in the cross, turn to St. Paul, and see how through the Holy Spirit he gives the deeper insight into what our death in Christ means.

You know how the first section of Romans is devoted to the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ. After speaking (1:18-32) of the awful sin of the heathen, and then (2:1-29) of the sin of the Jew, he points out how Jew and Gentile are "guilty before God," "All have sinned and come short." And then he sets forth that free grace which gave the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (3:21-31). In chapter 4 he points to Abraham as having, when he believed, understood that God justified him freely by His grace, and not for anything that he had done.

Abraham had not only believed this, but something more. "He believed in God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not as though they were." The two expressions are most significant, as indicating the two essential needs there are in the redemption of man in Christ Jesus. There is the need of justification by faith, to restore man to the favor of God. But there is more needed. He must also be quickened to a new life. Just as justification

is by faith alone, so is regeneration also. Christ died on account of our sins; He was raised again on account of our justification.

In the first section (down to chapter 5:11) Paul deals exclusively with the great thought of our justification. But in the second section (5:12 to 8:39) he expounds that wonderful union with Christ, through faith, by which we died with Him, by which we live in Him, and by which, through the Holy Spirit, we are made free, not only from the punishment, but also from the power of sin, and are enabled to live the life of righteousness, of obedience, and of sanctification.

Eighteenth Day^(TOC)

Dead with Christ

*"If we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him."—
Romans 6:8.*

The reason that God's children live so little in the power of the resurrection life of Christ is because they have so little understanding of or faith in their death with Christ. How clearly this appears from what Paul says: "If we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him"; it is the knowledge and experience that gives us the assurance of the power of His resurrection in us. "Christ died unto sin once; but the life that He liveth, He liveth unto God" (verse 10). It is only because and as we know that we are dead with Him, that we can live with Him.

On the strength of this, Paul now appeals to his readers. "Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (verse 11). The words "even so reckon yourselves" are a call to an act of bold and confident faith. Reckon yourselves to be indeed dead unto sin, as much as Christ is, and alive to God in Christ Jesus. The word gives us a divine assurance of what we actually are and have in Christ. And this not as a truth that our minds can master and appropriate, but a reality which the Holy Spirit will reveal within us. In His power we accept our death with Christ on the cross as the power of our daily life.

Then we are able to accept and obey the command: "Let not sin reign in your mortal body; but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead; for sin shall not have dominion over you" (verse 12, 13, 14). "Being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness; present your members as servants to righteousness unto sanctification. Being now made free from sin, ye have your fruit unto sanctification" (verse 18, 19, 22).

The whole chapter is a wonderful revelation of the deep meaning of its opening words: "How shall we, WHO DIED TO SIN, live any more therein?" Everything depends upon our acceptance of the divine assurance: If we died with Christ, as He died, and now lives to God, we too have the assurance that in Him we have the power to live unto God.

Nineteenth Day^(TOC)

Dead to the Law

*"Ye were made dead to the law, through the body of Christ." "Having died to that wherein we were holden, so that we serve in newness of the spirit."—
Romans 7:4, 6.*

The believer is not only dead to sin, but dead to the law. This is a deeper truth, giving us deliverance from the thought of a life of effort and failure, and opening the way to the life in the power of the Holy Spirit. "Thou shalt" is done away with; the power of the Spirit takes its place. In the remainder of this chapter (7:7-24) we have a description of the Christian as he still tries to obey the law, but utterly fails. He experiences that "in him, that in his flesh, dwelleth no good thing." He finds that the law of sin, notwithstanding his utmost efforts, continually brings him into captivity, and compels the cry: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" In the whole passage, it is everywhere "I," without any thought of the Spirit's help. It is only when he has given utterance to his cry of despair that he is brought to see that he is no longer under the law, but under the rule of the Holy Spirit (8:1, 2). "There is therefore now no condemnation," such as he had experienced in his attempt to obey the law, "to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." As chapter 7 gives us the experience that leads to being a captive under the power of sin, chapter 8 reveals the experience of the

life of a man in Christ Jesus, who has now been made free from the law of sin and death. In the former we have the life of the ordinary Christian doing his utmost to keep the commandments of the law, and to walk in His ways, but ever finding how much there is of failure and shortcoming. In the latter we have the man who knows that he is in Christ Jesus, dead to sin and alive to God, and by the Spirit has been made free and is kept free from the bondage of sin and of death.

Oh that men understood what the deep meaning is of Romans 7, where a man learns that in him, that is in his flesh, there is no good thing, and that there is no deliverance from this state but by yielding to the power of the Spirit making free from the power and bondage of the flesh, and so fulfilling the righteousness of the law in the power of the life of Christ!

Twentieth Day^(TOC)

The Flesh Condemned on the Cross

"What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."—Romans 8:3.

In Romans 8:7 Paul writes: "The mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be." Here Paul opens up the depth of sin that there is in the flesh. In chapter 7 he had said that in the flesh there is no good thing. Here he goes deeper, and tells us that it is enmity against God: it hates God and His law. It was on this account that God condemned sin in the flesh on the cross; all the curse that there is upon sin is upon the flesh in which sin dwells. It is as the believer understands this that he will cease from any attempt at seeking to perfect in the flesh what is begun in the Spirit. The two are at deadly, irreconcilable enmity.

See how this lies at the very root of the true Christian life (verses 3, 4): "God condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." All the requirements of God's law will be fulfilled, not in those who strive to keep and fulfill that law—a thing that is utterly impossible—but in those who walk by the Spirit, and in His power live out the life that Christ won for us on the cross and imparted to us in the resurrection.

Would God that His children might learn the double lesson. In me, that is in my flesh, in the old nature which I have from Adam, there dwells literally no good thing that can satisfy the eye of a holy God! And that flesh can never by any process of discipline, or struggling, or prayer, be made better than it is! But the Son of God in the likeness of sinful flesh—in the form of a man—condemned sin on the cross. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Twenty-First Day^(TOC)

Jesus Christ and him Crucified

"I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And my preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."—1 Corinthians 2:2, 4.

This text is very often understood of Paul's purpose in his preaching: to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. But it contains a far deeper thought. He speaks of his purpose, not only in the matter of his preaching, but in his whole spirit and life to prove how he in everything seeks to act in conformity to the crucified Christ. Thus he writes (2 Corinthians 13:4, 5): "Christ was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth through the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him through the power of God toward you." His whole ministry and manner of life bore the mark of Christ's likeness—crucified through weakness, yet living by the power of God.

Just before the words of our text Paul had written (1:17-24): "The word of the cross is to them that are perishing foolishness; but unto us who are being saved it is the power of God." It was not only in his preaching, but in his whole disposition and deportment that he sought to act in harmony with that weakness in which Christ was crucified. He had so identified himself with the weakness of the cross, and its shame, that in his whole life and conduct he

would prove that in everything he sought to show forth the likeness and the spirit of the crucified Jesus. Hence he says (2:3): "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."

It is on this account that he spoke so strongly: "Christ sent me to preach the gospel, not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void" (1:17); "My preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (2:4). Have we not here the great reason why the power of God is so little manifested in the preaching of the gospel? Christ the crucified may be the subject of the preaching and yet there may be such confidence in human learning and eloquence that there is nothing to be seen of that likeness of the crucified Jesus which alone gives preaching its supernatural, its divine power.

God help us to understand how the life of every minister and of every believer must bear the hallmark, the stamp of the sanctuary: Nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

Twenty-Second Day^(TOC)

Temperate in all Things

"Every man that striveth in the games is temperate in all things." "I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage."—1 Corinthians 9:25, 27.

Paul here reminds us of the well-known principle that anyone competing for a prize in the public games is "temperate in all things." Everything, however attractive, that might be a hindrance in the race is given up or set aside. And this in order to obtain an earthly prize. And shall we, who strive for an incorruptible crown, and that Christ may be Lord of all—shall we not be temperate in all things that could in the very least prevent our following the Lord Jesus with an undivided heart?

Paul says: "I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage." He would allow nothing to hinder him. He tells us: "This one thing I do: I press towards the mark for the prize." No self-pleasing in eating and drinking, no comfort or ease, should for a moment keep him from showing the spirit of the cross in his daily life, or from sacrificing all, like his Master. Read the following four passages which comprise his life-history: 1 Corinthians 4:11-13; 2 Corinthians 4:8-12, 6:4-10, 11:23-27. The cross was not only the theme of his preaching, but the rule of his life in all its details.

We need to pray God that this disposition may be found in all Christians and preachers of the gospel, through the power of the Holy Spirit. When the death

of Christ works with power in the preacher, then Christ's life will be known among the people. Let us pray that the fellowship of the cross may regain its old place, and that God's children may obey the injunction: "Let this mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus." He humbled Himself and became obedient unto the death of the cross. For, "if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection" (Romans 6:5).

Twenty-Third Day^(TOC)

The Dying of the Lord Jesus

"Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body." "So then death worketh in us, but life in you."—2 Corinthians 4:10, 12.

Paul here is very bold in speaking of the intimate union that there was between Christ living in him and the life he lived in the flesh, with all its suffering. He had spoken (Galatians 2:20) of his being crucified with Christ, and Christ living in him. Here he tells how he was always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus; it was through that that the life also of Jesus was manifested in his body. And he says that it was because of the death of Christ was thus working in and through him that Christ's life could work in them.

We often speak of our abiding in Christ. But we forget that that means the abiding in a crucified Christ. Many believers appear to think that when once they have claimed Christ's death in the fellowship of the cross, and have counted themselves as crucified with Him, that they may now consider it as past and done with. They do not understand that it is in the crucified Christ, and in the fellowship of His death, that they are to abide daily and unceasingly. The fellowship of the cross is to be the life of a daily experience, the self-emptying of our Lord, His taking the form of a servant, His humbling Himself and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of

the cross—this mind that was in Christ is to be the disposition that marks our daily life.

"Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus." This is what we are called to as much as Paul. If we are indeed to live for the welfare of men around us, if we are to sacrifice our ease and pleasure to win souls for our Lord, it must be true of us, as of Paul, that we are able to say: Death worketh in us, but life in those for whom we pray and labor. For it is in the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ that the crucified Lord can live out and work out His life in us and through us.

Let us learn the lesson that the abiding in Christ Jesus, for which we have so often prayed and striven, is nothing less than the abiding of the Crucified in us, and we in Him.

Twenty-Fourth Day^(TOC)

The Cross and the Spirit

*"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience?"—
Hebrews 9:14.*

The cross is Christ's highest glory. The glory which He received from the Father was entirely owing to His having humbled Himself to the death of the cross. "Wherefore also God highly exalted Him." The greatest work which the Holy Spirit could ever do in the Son of God was when He enabled Him to yield Himself a sacrifice and an offering for a sweet-smelling savour. And the Holy Spirit can now do nothing greater or more glorious for us than to lead us into the fellowship and likeness of that crucified life of our Lord.

Have we not here the reason that our prayers for the mighty working of the Holy Spirit are not more abundantly answered? We have prayed too little that the Holy Spirit might glorify Christ in us in the fellowship and the conformity to His sufferings. The Spirit, who led Christ to the cross, is longing and is able to maintain in us the life of abiding in the crucified Jesus.

The Spirit and the cross are inseparable. The Spirit led Christ to the cross; the cross brought Christ to the throne to receive the fullness of the Spirit to impart to His people. The Spirit taught Peter at once to preach Christ crucified; it was through that preaching that the three thousand received the

Spirit. In the preaching of the gospel, in the Christian life, as in Christ, so in us, the Spirit and the cross are inseparable. It is the sad lack of the mind and disposition of the crucified Christ, sacrificing self and the word to win life for the dying, that is one great cause of the feebleness of the Church. Let us beseech God fervently to teach us to say: We have been crucified with Christ; in Him we have died to sin; "always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus." So shall we be prepared for that fullness of the Spirit which the Father longs to bestow.

Twenty-Fifth Day (TOC)

The Veil of the Flesh

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh."—Hebrews 10:19, 20.

In the temple there was a veil between the Holy Place and the Most Holy. At the altar in the court the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled for forgiveness of sins. That gave the priest entrance into the Holy Place to offer God the incense as part of a holy worship. But into the Most Holy, behind the veil, the high priest alone might enter once a year. That veil was the type of sinful human nature; even though it had received the forgiveness of sin, full access and fellowship with God was impossible.

When Christ died, the veil was rent. Christ dedicated a new and living way to God through the rent veil of His flesh. This new way, by which we now can enter into the Holiest of all, ever passes through the rent veil of the flesh. Every believer "has crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof" (Galatians 5:24). Every step on the new and living way for entering into God's holy presence maintains the fellowship with the cross of Christ. The rent veil of the flesh has reference, not only to Christ and His sufferings, but to our experience in the likeness of His sufferings.

Have we not here the reason why many Christians can never attain to close

fellowship with God? They have never yielded the flesh as an accursed thing to the condemnation of the cross. They desire to enter into the Holiest of All, and yet allow the flesh with its desires and pleasures to rule over them. God grant that we may rightly understand, in the power of the Holy Spirit, that Christ has called us to hate our life, to lose our life, to be dead with Him to sin that we may live to God with Him. There is no way to a full abiding fellowship with God but through the rent veil of the flesh, through a life with the flesh crucified in Christ Jesus. God be praised that the Holy Spirit ever dwells in us to keep the flesh in its place of crucifixion and condemnation, and to give us the abiding victory over all temptations.

Twenty-Sixth Day^(TOC)

Looking unto Jesus

"Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame."—Hebrews 12:1, 2.

In running a race the eye and heart are ever set upon the goal and the prize. The Christian is here called to keep his eye fixed on Jesus enduring the cross, as the one object of imitation and desire. In our whole life we are ever to be animated by His Spirit as He bore the cross. This was the way that led to the throne and the glory of God. This is the new and living way which He opened for us through the veil of the flesh. It is as we study and realize that it was for His bearing the cross that God so highly exalted Him, that we shall walk in His footsteps bearing our cross after Him with the flesh condemned and crucified.

The impotence of the Church is greatly owing to the fact that this cross-bearing mind of Jesus is so little preached and practiced. Most Christians think that as long as they do not commit actual sin they are at liberty to possess and enjoy as much of the world as they please. There is so little insight into the deep truth that the world, and the flesh that loves the world, is enmity against God. Hence it comes that many Christians seek and pray for years for conformity to the image of Jesus, and yet fail so entirely. They do

not know, they do not seek with the whole heart to know, what it is to die to self and the world.

It was for the joy set before Him that Christ endured the cross—the joy of pleasing and glorifying the Father, the joy of loving and winning souls for Himself. We have indeed need of a new crusade with the proclamation: This is the will of God, that as Christ found His highest happiness THROUGH HIS ENDURANCE OF THE CROSS, and received thereby from the Father the fullness of the Spirit to pour down on His people, so it is only IN OUR FELLOWSHIP OF THE CROSS that we can really become conformed to the image of God's Son. As believers awake to this blessed truth, and run the race ever looking to the crucified Jesus, they will receive power to win for Christ the souls He has purchased on the cross.

Twenty-Seventh Day^(TOC)

Outside the Gate

"The bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the Holy Place, are burned outside the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach."—Hebrews 13:11-13.

The blood of the sin offering was brought into the Holy Place; the body of the sacrifice was burned outside the camp. Even so with Christ. His blood was presented to the Father; but His body was cast out as an accursed thing, outside the camp.

And so we read in Hebrews 10: "Let us enter into the Holy Place by the blood of Jesus." And in our text: "Let us go forth unto Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach." The deeper my insight is into the boldness which His blood gives me in God's presence, so much greater will be the joy with which I enter the Holy Place. And the deeper my insight is into the shame of the cross which He on my behalf bore outside the camp, the more willing shall I be, in the fellowship of His cross, to follow Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

There are many Christians who love to hear of the boldness with which we can enter into the Holy Place through His blood who yet have little desire for

the fellowship of His reproach, and are unwilling to separate themselves from the world with the same boldness with which they think to enter the Sanctuary. The Christian suffers inconceivable loss when he thinks of entering into the Holy Place in faith and prayer, and then feels himself free to enjoy the friendship of the world, so long as he does nothing actually sinful. But the Word of God has said: "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity against God?" "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." "Be not conformed to this world."

To be a follower of Christ implies a heart given up to testify for Christ in the midst of the world, if by any means some may be won. To be a follower of Christ means to be like Him in His love of the cross and His willingness to sacrifice self that the Father may be glorified, and that men may be saved.

Blessed Savior, teach me what it means that I am called to follow Thee outside the camp, bearing Thy reproach, and so to bear witness to Thy holy redeeming love, as it embraces the men who are in the world to win them back to the Father. Blessed Lord, let the spirit and the love that was in Thee be in me too, that I may at any cost seek to win the souls for whom Thou hast died.

Twenty-Eighth Day^(TOC)

Alive unto Righteousness

"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness."—1 Peter 2:24.

Here we have in the Epistle of Peter the same lessons that Paul has taught us. First, THE ATONEMENT OF THE CROSS: "Who His own self bare our sins in His body upon the tree." And then THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CROSS; "That we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness."

In this last expression we have the great thought that a Christian cannot live unto righteousness except as he knows that he has died unto sin. We need the Holy Spirit to make our death to sin in Christ such a reality that we know ourselves to be forever free from its power, and so yield our members to God as instruments of righteousness. The words give us a short summary of the blessed teaching of Romans 6.

Dear Christian, it cost Christ much to bear the cross, and then to yield Himself for it to bear Him. It cost Him much when He cried: "Now is My soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour."

Let us not imagine that the fellowship of the cross, of which Peter speaks here, "that we, having died to sins, might live unto righteousness," is easily

understood or experienced. It means that the Holy Spirit will teach us what it is to be identified with Christ in His cross. It means that we realize by faith how actually we shared with Christ in His death, and now, as He lives in us, abide in unceasing fellowship with Him, the Crucified One. This costs self-sacrifice; it costs earnest prayer; it costs a whole-hearted surrender to God and His will and the cross of Jesus; it costs abiding in Christ, and unceasing fellowship with Him.

Blessed Lord, make known to us day by day through the Holy Spirit the secret of our life in Thee: "We in Thee, and Thou in us." Let Thy Spirit reveal to us that as truly as we died in Thee, Thou now livest in us the life that was crucified and now is glorified in heaven. Let Thy Spirit burn the words deep into our hearts. Having died unto sin, and being forever set free from its dominion, let us know that sin can no more reign over us, or have dominion. Let us in the power of Thy redemption yield ourselves unto God as those who are alive from the dead, ready and prepared for all His will.

Twenty-Ninth Day^(TOC)

Followers of the Cross

"Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John 3:16.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." Here our Lord reveals to us the inconceivable love that moved Him to die for us. And now under the influence and in the power of that love dwelling in us, comes the message: "WE OUGHT TO LAY DOWN OUR LIVES FOR THE BRETHREN." Nothing less is expected of us than a Christ-like life and a Christ-like love, proving itself in all our dealings with our brethren.

The cross of Christ is the measure by which we know how much Christ loves us. That cross is the measure too of the love which we owe to the brethren around us. It is only as the love of Christ on the cross possesses our hearts, and daily animates our whole being, that we shall be able to love the brethren. Our fellowship in the cross of Christ is to manifest itself in our sacrifice of love, not only to Christ Himself, but to all who belong to Him.

The life to which John calls us here is something entirely supernatural and divine. It is only the faith of Christ Himself living in us that can enable us to accept this great command in the assurance that Christ Himself will work it out in us. It is He Himself who calls us: "If any man will come after Me, let

him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Nothing less than this, a dying to our own nature, a faith that our "old man," our flesh has been crucified with Christ, so that we no longer need to sin—nothing less than this can enable us to say: We love His commandments; this commandment too is not grievous.

But for such fellowship and conformity to the death of Christ, nothing will avail but the daily, unbroken abiding in Christ Jesus which He has promised us. By the Holy Spirit revealing and glorifying Christ in us, we may trust Christ Himself to live out His life in us. He who proved His love on the cross of Calvary, He Himself, He alone can enable us to say in truth: He laid down His life for us; we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. It is only as the great truth of the indwelling Christ obtains a place in the faith of the Church which it has not now, that the Christ-like love to the brethren will become the mark of true Christianity, by which all men shall know that we are Christ's disciples. This is what will bring the world to believe that God has loved us even as He loved Christ.

Thirtieth Day^(TOC)

Following the Lamb

*"These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth."—
Revelation 14:4.*

It may not be easy to say exactly what is implied in this following of the Lamb in the heavenly vision. But of this we may be sure, that it will be the counterpart in glory of what it is to follow in the footsteps of the Lamb here upon earth. As the Lamb on earth reveals what the Lamb in heaven would be, so His followers on earth can show forth something of the glory of what it is to follow Him in heaven.

And how may the footsteps of the Lamb be known? "He humbled Himself." "As a Lamb that is led to the slaughter, He opened not His mouth" (Isaiah 53:7). It is the meekness and gentleness and humility that marked Him which calls for His followers to walk in His footsteps.

Our Lord Himself said: "Learn of Me, that I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Paul writes: "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). And then he teaches us in what that mind consisted: Being in the form of God, He emptied Himself; He was made in the likeness of men; He took the form of a servant; He humbled Himself; He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. The Lamb is our Lord and Lawgiver. He opened the only path that leads to the

throne of God. It is as we learn from Him what it means to be meek and lowly, what it means to empty ourselves, to choose the place of the servant, to humble ourselves and become obedient, even unto death, the death of the cross, that we shall find the new and living way that leads us through the rent veil into the Holiest of All.

"Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name" (verse 9). It is because Christians so little bear the mark of this self-emptying and humiliation even unto death that the world refuses to believe in the possibility of a Christ-filled life.

Children of God, oh come and study the Lamb who is to be your model and your Savior. Let Paul's words be the keynote of your life: "I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me." Here you have the way to follow the Lamb even to the glory of the throne of God in heaven.

Thirty-First Day^(TOC)

To him be the Glory

"Unto Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."—Revelation 1:5, 6.

Some of my readers may feel that it is not easy to understand the lesson of the cross, or to carry it out in their lives. Do not think of it as a heavy burden or yoke that you have to bear. Christ says: "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." LOVE MAKES EVERYTHING EASY. Do not think of your love to Him, but of His great love to you, given through the Holy Spirit. Meditate on this day and night, until you have the assurance: He loves me unspeakably. It is through the love of Christ on the cross that souls are drawn to Him.

We have here the answer as to what will enable us to love the fellowship of the crucified Jesus. Nothing less than His love poured out through the continual breathing of the Holy Spirit into the heart of every child of God.

"UNTO HIM WHO LOVED US"—Be still, O my soul, and think what this everlasting love is that seeks to take possession of you and fill you with joy unspeakable.

"AND WASHED US FROM OUR SINS IN HIS OWN BLOOD"—Is that

not proof enough that He will never reject me; that I am precious in His sight, and through the power of His blood am well-pleasing to God?

"AND HATH MADE US KINGS AND PRIESTS UNTO GOD AND HIS FATHER"—and now preserves us by His power, and will strengthen us through His Spirit to reign as kings over sin and the world, and to appear as priests before God in intercession for others. O Christian, learn this wonderful song, and repeat it until your heart is filled with love and joy and courage, and turns to Him in glad surrender day by day: "To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Yes, to Him, who has loved me, and washed me from my sins in His blood, and made me a king and a priest—TO HIM BE THE GLORY IN ALL AGES. Amen.

The Blessing of the Cross^(TOC)

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."—Galatians 6:14.

One of the blessings of the cross consists in this, that it teaches us to know the worthlessness of our efforts and the utter corruption of our own nature. The cross does not offer to improve human nature, or to supply what man is unable to do. Many people, indeed, use it in this way, like patching a new cloth on an old garment. But this rends the garment, and such persons walk about in torn clothes, and go from one minister to another without finding what they seek. No, the old garment, our old man, must be laid aside, and given over to the death of the cross. And the cross causes all that is of the lost nature of man to die the accursed death, and the "I" takes the place of a malefactor; it breaks the staff over all that is of the old nature.

Whosoever has been brought to the cross through the Spirit has learned to pronounce the death sentence on his old nature, has broken the staff over himself, for whatever does not bear the mark of the cross lies under the curse. He who would save his life remains under the curse. If we have learned through the Spirit to understand the cross, then we have lost our life and will no longer expect any good from our old nature, and will not judge others, but ourselves only.

But as long as we have not been taught this lesson through the Spirit, we shall try to find good in ourselves, something of worth in God's sight, and upon which the sentence of death need not be passed. And if we find nothing at all,

we fall into a false grief which the Evil One eagerly uses to make us despair, by saying: "You may as well give up. God will not trouble about you. There is nothing for you but failure."

But this is not what God desires. What we possess by nature must be nailed to the cross and we must put on the new man. The cross brings man to utter bankruptcy of himself, and then God can come to our aid. The cross brought the disciples of Jesus once to such an end of themselves, which even the words of the Master had failed to do. It took from them the aureole of holiness which they thought they had won in the three years that they followed Jesus, and it taught them to know themselves. And so they were prepared to receive the Holy Spirit, who would impart a new nature and a new life. For we cannot separate the cross from the Spirit. We can have no Easter and no Pentecost until we have first had a Good Friday.

Through the cross alone are we prepared for life in the fullness of God; only he who is crucified with Christ can be a vessel unto honor.

Our "old man" must be crucified with Christ (Romans 6:6), and in the resurrection of Christ we find the roots of our new life (1 Peter 1:3).

Whosoever loses his life shall find it. We must learn the lesson of the cross as condemned and rejected ones, who have been crucified with Christ. Then the door will be open for a life of power and blessing. All that belongs to death must be given over to death, even as the body is laid away in the earth because it belongs to the earth.

The Holy Spirit, the Eternal Spirit, is unchangeable. He brought Christ our Head to the cross, and us His children with Him. For this work in us is twofold. On the one hand it leads us to death, and all that belongs to death; and on the other hand, to that life which God has placed within us, and which

leads from glory to glory. (—Translated from G. Steinberger.)

Prayer^(TOC)

How I praise Thee, O my God, for the gift of the Holy Spirit, who will reveal to me the secret of the cross of Christ! The Spirit strengthened Christ to offer Himself to God on the cross. The cross gave Christ the right to receive the fullness of the Spirit from the Father to pour out on all flesh. The cross gives us the right to receive the Spirit. And the Spirit teaches us to love the cross, and to partake of the life crucified with Christ.

O my Father, I thank Thee that Thou dost give the immediate, continual working of the Spirit in my heart, that the crucified Christ may be formed within me, and His life maintained within me.

Father, I beseech Thee humbly, teach me and Thy people so to know this work of the Spirit and to yield ourselves to Him to take full possession of us, that the crucified Lord Jesus may be glorified in us. Amen.

^[1] See note, p. xxx

^[2] In a volume being published about the same time, *The Two Covenants and the Second Blessing*, I have tried to show how plain, how certain, how all sufficient the provision is that has been made in the New Covenant, the Covenant of Grace, for securing our obedience.

^[3] She says further: 'We are so long and so slow in giving up our hearts to Thee. And then Thou wilt not permit our possession of Thee without our paying well for so precious a possession. There is nothing in all the world wherewith to buy the shedding abroad of Thy love in our hearts, but our heart's love. God never withholds Himself from them who pay this price and persevere in seeking Him. He will, little by little, and now and then, strengthen and restore that soul, until it is at last victorious.'

^[4] I once again refer to a new book, *The Two Covenants and the Second Blessing*, for further exposition of the sufficiency of the grace of the New Covenant to fit us for entire obedience.

WAITING AND WORKING FOR GOD

ORIGINAL TITLES: WAITING ON GOD; WORKING
FOR GOD; WHY DO YOU NOT BELIEVE?

BY

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Waiting on God^(TOC)

Day 1. The God of Our Salvation

"My soul waiteth only upon God [marg: is silent unto God]; from Him cometh my salvation."—Psalms 62:1

If salvation indeed comes from God, and is entirely His work, just as creation was, it follows, as a matter of course, that our first and highest duty is to wait on Him to do the work that pleases Him. Waiting becomes then the only way to the experience of a full salvation, the only way, truly, to know God as the God of our salvation. All the difficulties that are brought forward as keeping us back from full salvation, have their cause in this one thing: the defective knowledge and practice of waiting upon God. All that the Church and its members need for the manifestation of the mighty power of God in the world, is the return to our true place, the place that belongs to us, both in creation and redemption, the place of absolute and unceasing dependence upon God. Let us strive to see what the elements are that make up this most blessed and needful waiting upon God: it may help us to discover the reasons why this grace is so little cultivated, and to feel how infinitely desirable it is that the Church, that we ourselves, should at any price learn its blessed secret.

The deep need for this waiting on God lies equally in the nature of man and the nature of God. God, as Creator, formed man, to be a vessel in which He could show forth His power and goodness. Man was not to have in himself a fountain of life, or strength, or happiness: the ever-living and only living One was each moment to be the Communicator to him of all that he needed. Man's

glory and blessedness was not to be independent, or dependent upon himself, but dependent on a God of such infinite riches and love. Man was to have the joy of receiving every moment out of the fulness of God. This was his blessedness as an unfallen creature.

When he fell from God, he was still more absolutely dependent on Him. There was not the slightest hope of his recovery out of his state of death, but in God, His power and mercy. It is God alone who began the work of redemption; it is God alone who continues and carries it on each moment in each individual believer. Even in the regenerate man there is no power of goodness in himself: he has and can have nothing that he does not each moment receive; and waiting on God is just as indispensable, and must be just as continuous and unbroken, as the breathing that maintains his natural life.

It is, then, because Christians do not know their relation to God of absolute poverty and helplessness, that they have no sense of the need of absolute and unceasing dependence, or the unspeakable blessedness of continual waiting on God. But when once a believer begins to see it, and consent to it, that he by the Holy Spirit must each moment receive what God each moment works, waiting on God becomes his brightest hope and joy. As he apprehends how God, as God, as Infinite Love, delights to impart His own nature to His child as fully as He can, how God is not weary of each moment keeping charge of his life and strength, he wonders that he ever thought otherwise of God than as a God to be waited on all the day. God unceasingly giving and working; His child unceasingly waiting and receiving: this is the blessed life.

"Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from Him cometh my salvation." First we wait on God for salvation. Then we learn that salvation is only to bring us to God, and teach us to wait on Him. Then we find what is better still, that

waiting on God is itself the highest salvation. It is the ascribing to Him the glory of being All; it is the experiencing that He is All to us.

May God teach us the blessedness of waiting on Him.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 2. The Keynote of Life^(TOC)

"I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord!"—Genesis 49:18

It is not easy to say exactly in what sense Jacob used these words, in the midst of his prophecies in regard to the future of his sons. But they do certainly dictate that both for himself and for them his expectation was from God alone. It was God's salvation he waited for; a salvation which God had promised and which God Himself alone could work out. He knew himself and his sons to be under God's charge. Jehovah the Everlasting God would show in them what His saving power is and does. The words point forward to that wonderful history of redemption which is not yet finished, and to the glorious future in eternity whither it is leading. They suggest to us how there is no salvation but God's salvation, and how waiting on God for that, whether for our personal experience, or in wider circles, is our first duty, our true blessedness.

Let us think of ourselves, and the inconceivably glorious salvation God has wrought for us in Christ, and is now purposing to work out and to perfect in us by His Spirit. Let us meditate until we somewhat realize that every participation of this great salvation, from moment to moment, must be the work of God Himself. God cannot part with His grace, or goodness, or strength, as an external thing that He gives us, as He gives the raindrops from heaven. No; He can only give it, and we can only enjoy it, as He works it Himself directly and unceasingly. And the only reason that He does not work it more effectually and continuously is, that we do not let Him. We hinder Him either by our indifference or by our self-effort, so that He cannot do

what He would.

What He asks of us, in the way of surrender, and obedience, and desire, and trust, is all comprised in this one word: waiting on Him, waiting for His salvation. It combines the deep sense of our entire helplessness of ourselves to work what is divinely good, and our perfect confidence that our God will work it all in His divine power.

Again, I say, let us meditate on the divine glory of the salvation God purposes working out in us, until we know the truths it implies. Our heart is the scene of a divine operation more wonderful than Creation. We can do as little towards the work as towards creating the world, except as God works in us to will and to do. God only asks of us to yield, to consent, to wait upon Him, and He will do it all. Let us meditate and be still, until we see how meet and right and blessed it is that God alone do all, and our soul will of itself sink down in deep humility to say: "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord." And the deep blessed background of all our praying and working will be: "Truly my soul waiteth upon God."

The application of the truth to wider circles, to those we labor among or intercede for, to the Church of Christ around us, or throughout the world, is not difficult. There can be no good but what God works; to wait upon God, and have the heart filled with faith in His working, and in that faith to pray for His mighty power to come down, is our only wisdom. Oh for the eyes of our heart to be opened to see God working in ourselves and in others, and to see how blessed it is to worship and just to wait for His salvation!

Our private and public prayer are our chief expression of our relation to God: it is in them chiefly that our waiting upon God must be exercised. If our waiting begin by quieting the activities of nature, and being still before God;

if it bows and seeks to see God in His universal and almighty operation, alone able and always ready to work all good; if it yields itself to Him in the assurance that He is working and will work in us; if it maintains the place of humility and stillness, and surrenders until God's Spirit has quickened the faith that He will perfect His work: it will indeed become the strength and the joy of the soul. Life will become one deep blessed cry: "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord."

"My soul, wait thou only upon God"

Day 3. The True Place of the Creature^(TOC)

"These wait all upon Thee; That Thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That Thou givest unto them, they gather: Thou openest Thine hand, they are satisfied with good."—Psalms 104:27-28

This Psalm, in praise of the Creator, has been speaking of the birds and the beasts of the forest; of the young lions, and man going forth to his work; of the great sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. And it sums up the whole relation of all creation to its Creator, and its continuous and universal dependence upon Him in the one word: "These all wait upon Thee." Just as much as it was God's work to create, it is His work to maintain. As little as the creature could create itself, it is it left to provide for itself. The whole creation is ruled by the one unalterable law of—waiting upon God!

The word is the simple expression of that for the sake of which alone the creature was brought into existence, the very groundwork of its constitution. The one object for which God gave life to creatures was that in them He might prove and show forth His wisdom, power, and goodness, in His being each moment their life and happiness, and pouring forth unto them, according to their capacity, the riches of His goodness and power. And just as this is the very place and nature of God, to be unceasingly the supplier of every want in the creature, so the very place and nature of the creature is nothing hut this—to wait upon God and receive from Him what He alone can give, what He delights to give.

If we are in this little book at all to apprehend what waiting on God is to be to the believer, to practice it and to experience its blessedness, it is of consequence that we begin at the very beginning, and see the deep reasonableness of the call that comes to us. We shall understand how the duty is no arbitrary command. We shall see how it is not only rendered necessary by our sin and helplessness. It is simply and truly our restoration to our original destiny and our highest nobility, to our true place and glory as creatures blessedly dependent on the All—Glorious God.

If once our eyes are opened to this precious truth, all Nature will become a preacher, reminding us of the, relationship which, founded in creation, is now taken in grace. As we read this Psalm, and learn to look upon all life in Nature as continually maintained by God Himself, waiting on God will be seen to be the very necessity of our being. As we think of the young lions and the ravens crying to Him, of the birds and the fishes and every insect waiting on Him, till He give them their meat in due season, we shall see that it is the very nature and glory of God that He is a God who is to be waited on. Every thought of what Nature is, and what God is, will give new force to the call: "Wait thou only upon God."

"These all wait upon Thee, that thou mayest give." It is God who giveth all: let this faith enter deeply into our hearts. Ere yet we fully understand all that is implied in our waiting upon God, and ere we have even been able to cultivate the habit, let the truth enter our souls: waiting on God, unceasing and entire dependence upon Him, is, in heaven and earth, the one only true religion, the one unalterable and all—comprehensive expression for the true relationship to the ever-blessed one in whom we live.

Let us resolve at once that it shall be the one characteristic of our life and worship, a continual, humble, truthful waiting upon God. We may rest

assured that He who made us for Himself, that He might give Himself to us and in us, that He will never disappoint us. In waiting on Him we shall find rest and joy and strength, and the supply of every need.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God."

Day 4. For Supplies^(TOC)

"The Lord upholdeth all that fall, And raiseth up all those that be bowed down. The eyes of all wait upon Thee; And Thou givest them their meat in due season."—Psalms 145:14-15

PSALM 104 is a Psalm of Creation, and the words, "These all wait upon Thee," were used with reference to the animal creation. Here we have a Psalm of the Kingdom, and "The eyes of all wait upon Thee" appears specially to point to the needs of God's saints, of all that fall and them that be bowed down. What the universe and the animal creation do unconsciously, God's people are to do intelligently and voluntarily. Man is to be the interpreter of Nature. He is to prove that there is nothing more noble or more blessed in the exercise of our free will than to use it in waiting upon God.

If an army has been sent out to march into an enemy's country, and tidings are received that it is not advancing, the question is at once asked, what may be the cause of delay. The answer will very often be: "Waiting for supplies." All the stores of provisions or clothing or ammunition have not arrived; without these it dare not proceed. It is no otherwise in the Christian life: day by day, at every step, we need our supplies from above. And there is nothing so needful as to cultivate that spirit of dependence on God and of confidence in Him, which refuses to go on without the needed supply of grace and strength.

If the question be asked, whether this be anything different from what we do when we pray, the answer is, that there may be much praying with but very little waiting on God. In praying we are often occupied with ourselves, with

our own needs, and our own efforts in the presentation of them. In waiting upon God, the first thought is of the God upon whom we wait. We enter His presence, and feel we need just to be quiet, so that He, as God, can overshadow us with Himself. God longs to reveal Himself, to fill us with Himself. Waiting on God gives Him time in His own way and divine power to come to us.

It is specially at the time of prayer that we ought to set ourselves to cultivate this spirit.

Before you pray, bow quietly before God, just to remember and realize who He is, how near He is, how certainly He can and will help. Just be still before Him, and allow His Holy Spirit to waken and stir up in your soul the child-like disposition of absolute dependence and confident expectation. Wait upon God as a Living Being, as the Living God, who notices you, and is just longing to fill you with His salvation. Wait on God till you know you have met Him; prayer will then be come so different.

And when you are praying, let there be intervals of silence, reverent stillness of soul, in which you yield yourself to God, in case He may have aught He wishes to teach you or to work in you. Waiting on Him will become the most blessed part of prayer, and the blessing thus obtained will be doubly precious as the fruit or such fellowship with the Holy One, God has so ordained it, in harmony with His holy nature, and with ours, that waiting on Him should be the honor we give Him. Let us bring Him the service gladly and truthfully; He will reward it abundantly.

"The eyes of all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season." Dear soul, God provides in Nature for the creatures He has made: how much more will He provide in Grace for those He has redeemed. Learn

to say of every want, and every failure, and every lack of needful grace: I have waited too little upon God, or He would have given me in due season all I needed. And say then too—

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 5. For Instruction^(TOC)

"Shew me thy ways, O Lord; Teach me Thy paths. Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me; For Thou art the God of my salvation; On Thee do I wait all the day."—Psalms 25:4-5

I spoke of an army on the point of entering an enemy's territories. Answering the question as to the cause of delay: "Waiting for supplies." The answer might also have been: "Waiting for instructions," or "Waiting for orders." If the last despatch had not been received, with the final orders of the commander-in-chief, the army dared not move. Even so in the Christian life: as deep as the need of waiting for supplies, is that of waiting for instructions.

See how beautiful this comes out in Psalms 25. The writer knew and loved God's law exceedingly, and meditated in that law day and night. But he knew that this was not enough. He knew that for the right spiritual apprehension of the truth, and for the right personal application of it to his own peculiar circumstances, he needed a direct divine teaching.

The psalm has at all times been a very peculiar one, because of its reiterated expression of the felt need of the Divine teaching, and of the childlike confidence that that teaching would be given. Study the psalm until your heart is filled with the two thoughts—the absolute need, the absolute certainty of divine guidance. And with these how entirely it is in this connection that he speaks, "On Thee do I wait all the day." Waiting for guidance, waiting for instruction, all the day, is a very blessed part of waiting upon God.

The Father in heaven is so interested in His child, and so longs to have his

life at every step in His will and His love, that He is willing to keep his guidance entirely in His own hand. He knows so well that we are unable to do what is really holy and heavenly, except as He works it in us, that He means His very demands to become promises of what He will do, in watching over and leading us all the day. Not only in special difficulties and times of perplexity, but in the common course of everyday life, we may count upon Him to teach us His way, and show us His path.

And what is needed in us to receive this guidance? One thing: waiting for instructions, waiting on God. "On Thee do I wait all the day." We want in our times of prayer to give clear expression to our sense of need, and our faith in His help. We want definitely to become conscious of our ignorance as to what God's way may be, and the need of the Divine light shining within us, if our way is to be as of the sun, shining more and more unto the perfect day. And we want to wait quietly before God in prayer, until the deep, restful assurance fills us: It will be given—"the meek will He guide in the way."

"On Thee do I wait all the day." The special surrender to the Divine guidance in our seasons of prayer must cultivate, and be followed up by, the habitual looking upwards "all the day." As simple as it is, to one who has eyes, to walk all the day in the light of the sun, so simple and delightful can it become to a soul practiced in waiting on God, to walk all the day in the enjoyment of God's light and leading. What is needed to help us to such a life is just one thing: the real knowledge and faith of God as the one only source of wisdom and goodness, as ever ready, and longing much to be to us all that we can possibly require—yes! this is the one thing we need. If we but saw our God in His love, if we but believed that He waits to be gracious, that He waits to be our life and to work all in us—how this waiting on God would become our highest joy, the natural and spontaneous response of our hearts to His great

love and glory!

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 6. For All Saints [\(TOC\)](#)

"Let none that wait on Thee be ashamed."—Psalms 25:3

Let us now, in our meditation of today, each one forget himself, to think of the great company of God, saints throughout the world, who are all with us waiting on Him. And let us all join in the fervent prayer for each other, "Let none that wait on Thee be ashamed."

Just think for a moment of the multitude of waiting ones who need that prayer; how many there are, sick and weary and solitary, to whom it is as if their prayers are not answered, and who sometimes begin to fear that their hope will be put to shame. And then, how many servants of God, ministers or missionaries, teachers or workers, of various name, whose hopes in their work have been disappointed, and whose longing for power and blessing remains unsatisfied. And then, too, how many, who have heard of a life of rest and perfect peace, of abiding light and fellowship, of strength and victory, and who cannot find the path. With all these, it is nothing but that they have not yet learned the secret of full waiting upon God. They just need, what we all need, the living assurance that waiting on God can never be in vain. Let us remember all who are in danger of fainting or being weary, and all unite in the cry, "Let none that wait on Thee be ashamed!"

If this intercession for all who wait on God becomes part of our waiting on Him for ourselves, we shall help to bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

There will be introduced into our waiting on God that element of

unselfishness and love, which is the path to the highest blessing, and the fullest communion with God. Love to the brethren and love to God are inseparably linked. In God, the love to His Son and to us are one: "That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me, may be in them." In Christ, the love of the Father to Him, and His love to us, are one: "As the Father loved me, so have I loved you." In us, He asks that His love to us shall be ours to the brethren: "As I have loved you, that ye love one another." All the love of God, and of Christ, are inseparably linked with love to the brethren. And how can we, day by day, prove and cultivate this love otherwise than by daily praying for each other? Christ did not seek to enjoy the Father's love for Himself; He passed it all on to us. All true seeking of God and His love for ourselves, will be inseparably linked with the thought and the love of our brethren in prayer for them.

"Let none that wait on Thee be ashamed." Twice in the psalm David speaks of his waiting on God for himself; here he thinks of all who wait on Him. Let this page take the message to all God's tried and weary ones, that there are more praying for them than they know. Let it stir them and us in our waiting to make a point of at times forgetting ourselves, and to enlarge our hearts, and say to the Father, "These all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season." Let it inspire us all with new courage-for who is there who is not at times ready to faint and be weary? "Let none that wait on Thee be ashamed" is a promise in a prayer, "They that wait on Thee shall not be ashamed!" From many and many a witness the cry comes to every one who needs the help, brother, sister, tried one, "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord. Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that wait on the Lord."

Blessed Father! We humbly beseech Thee, Let none that wait on Thee be ashamed; no, not one. Some are weary, and the time of waiting appears long. And some are feeble, and scarcely know how to wait. And some are so entangled in the effort of their prayers and their work, they think that they can find no time to wait continually. Father, teach us all how to wait. Teach us to think of each other, and pray for each other. Teach us to think of Thee, the God of all waiting ones. Father! Let none that wait on Thee be ashamed. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 7. A Plea in Prayer^(TOC)

*"Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on Thee."—Psalms
25:21*

For the third time in this psalm we have the word wait. As before in verse 5, "On Thee do I wait all the day," so here, too, the believing supplicant appeals to God to remember that he is waiting on Him, looking for an answer. It is a great thing for a soul not only to wait upon God, but to be filled with such a consciousness that its whole spirit and position is that of a waiting one, that it can, in childlike confidence, say, Lord! Thou knowest, I wait on Thee. It will prove a mighty plea in prayer, giving ever-increasing boldness of expectation to claim the promise, "They that wait on Me shall not be ashamed!"

The prayer in connection with which the plea is put forth here is one of great importance in the spiritual life. If we draw nigh to God, it must be with a true heart. There must be perfect integrity, whole-heartedness, in our dealing with God. As we read in the next Psalm (26:1, 11). "Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity," "As for me, I walk in my integrity," there must be perfect uprightness or single-heartedness before God, as it is written, "His righteousness is for the upright in heart." The soul must know that it allows nothing sinful, nothing doubtful; if it is indeed to meet the Holy One, and receive His full blessing, it must be with a heart wholly and singly given up to His will. The whole spirit that animates us in the waiting must be, "Let integrity and uprightness"—Thou seest that I desire to come so to Thee, Thou knowest I am looking to Thee to work them perfectly in me;—let them "preserve me, for I wait on Thee."

And if at our first attempt truly to live the life of fully and always waiting on God, we begin to discover how much that perfect integrity is wanting, this will just be one of the blessings which the waiting was meant to work. A soul cannot seek close fellowship with God, or attain the abiding consciousness of waiting on Him all the day, without a very honest and entire surrender to all His will.

"For I wait on Thee": it is not only in connection with the prayer of our text but with every prayer that this plea may be used. To use it often will be a great blessing to ourselves. Let us therefore study the words well until we know all their bearings. It must be clear to us what we are waiting for. There may be very different things. It may be waiting for God in our times of prayer to take his place as God, and to work in us the sense of HIS holy presence and nearness. It may be a special petition, to which we are expecting an answer. It may be our whole inner life, in which we are on the lookout for God's putting forth of His power. It may be the whole state of His Church and saints, or some part of His work, for which our eyes are ever toward Him. It is good that we sometimes count up to ourselves exactly what the things are we are waiting for, and as we say definitely of each of them, "On Thee do I wait," we shall be emboldened to claim the answer, "For on Thee do I wait."

It must also be clear to us, on Whom we are waiting. Not an idol, a God of whom we have made an image by our conceptions of what He is. No, but the living God, such as He really is in His great glory, His infinite holiness, His power, wisdom, and goodness, in His love and nearness. It is the presence of a beloved or a dreaded master that wakens up the whole attention of the servant who waits on him. It is the presence of God, as He can in Christ by His Holy Spirit make Himself known, and keep the soul under its covering and shadow, that will waken and strengthen the true waiting spirit. Let us be

still and wait and worship till we know how near He is, and then say, "On Thee do I wait."

And then, let it be very clear, too, that we are waiting. Let that become so much our consciousness that the utterance comes spontaneously, "On Thee I do wait all the day; I wait on Thee." This will indeed imply sacrifice and separation, a soul entirely given up to God as its all, its only joy. This waiting on God has hardly yet been acknowledged as the only true Christianity. And yet, if it be true that God alone is goodness and joy and love; if it be true that our highest blessedness is in having as much of God as we can; if it be true that Christ has redeemed us wholly for God, and made a life of continual abiding in His presence possible, nothing less ought to satisfy than to be ever breathing this blessed atmosphere, "I wait on Thee."

"My soul, wait thou only on God!"

Day 8. Strong and of Good Courage^(TOC)

"Wait on the Lord: be strong, And let your heart take courage Yea, wait thou on the Lord."—Psalms 27:14

The psalmist had just said, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." If it had not been for his faith in God, his heart had fainted. But in the confident assurance in God which faith gives, he urges himself and us to remember one thing above all—to wait upon God. "Wait on the Lord: be strong, and let your heart take courage: yea, wait thou on the Lord." One of the chief needs in our waiting upon God, one of the deepest secrets of its blessedness and blessing, is a quiet, confident persuasion that it is not in vain; courage to believe that God will hear and help; we are waiting on a God who never could disappoint His people.

"Be strong and of good courage." These words are frequently found in connection with some great and difficult enterprise, in prospect of the combat with the power of strong enemies, and the utter insufficiency of all human strength. Is waiting on God a work so difficult, that, for that too, such words are needed, "Be strong, and let your heart take courage"? Yes, indeed. The deliverance for which we often have to wait is from enemies, in presence of whom we are impotent. The blessings for which we plead are spiritual and all unseen; things impossible with men; heavenly, supernatural, divine realities. Our heart may well faint and fail.

Our souls are so little accustomed to hold fellowship with God; the God on whom we wait so of ten appears to hide Himself. We who have to wait are often tempted to fear that we do not wait aright, that our faith is too feeble,

that our desire is not as upright or as earnest as it should be, that our surrender is not complete. Amid all these causes of fear or doubt, how blessed to hear the voice of God, "Wait on the Lord! Be strong, and let thine heart take courage! YEA, WAIT THOU ON THE LORD!" Let nothing in heaven or earth or hell—let nothing keep thee from waiting on thy God in full assurance that it cannot be in vain.

The one lesson our text teaches us is this, that when we set ourselves to wait on God we ought beforehand to resolve that it shall be with the most confident expectation of God's meeting and blessing us. We ought to make up our minds to this, that nothing was ever so sure, as that waiting on God will bring us untold and unexpected blessing. We are so accustomed to judge of God and His work in us by what we feel, that the great probability is that when we begin more to cultivate the waiting on Him, we shall be discouraged, because we do not find any special blessing from it. The message comes to us, "Above everything, when you wait on God, do so in the spirit of abounding hopefulness. It is God in His glory, in His power, in His love longing to bless you that you are waiting on."

If you say that you are afraid of deceiving yourself with vain hope, because you do not see or feel any warrant in your present state for such special expectations, my answer is, it is God, who is the warrant for your expecting great things. Oh, do learn the lesson. You are not going to wait on yourself to see what you feel and what changes come to you. You are going to WAIT ON GOD, to know first, WHAT HE IS, and then, after that, what He will do. The whole duty and blessedness of waiting on God has its root in this, that He is such a blessed Being, full, to overflowing, of goodness and power and life and joy, that we, however wretched, cannot for any time come into contact with Him, without that life and power secretly, silently beginning to

enter into him and blessing him. God is Love! That is the one only and all-sufficient warrant of your expectation. Love seeketh out its own: God's love is just His delight to impart Himself and His blessedness to His children.

Come, and however feeble you feel, just wait in His presence. As a feeble, sickly invalid is brought out into the sunshine to let its warmth go through him, come with all that is dark and cold in you into the sunshine of God's holy, omnipotent love, and sit and wait there, with the one thought: Here I am, in the sunshine of His love. As the sun does its work in the weak one who seeks its rays, God will do His work in you. Oh, do trust Him fully.

"Wait on the Lord! Be strong, and let your heart take courage! Yea, wait thou on the Lord!"

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 9. With the Heart^(TOC)

*"Be strong, and let your heart take courage, All ye that wait for the Lord."—
Psalms 31:24*

The words are nearly the same as in our last meditation. But I gladly avail myself of them again to press home a much-needed lesson for all who desire to learn truly and fully what waiting on God is. The lesson is this: It is with the heart we must wait upon God. "Let your heart take courage"

All our waiting depends upon the state of the heart. As a man's heart is, so is he before God. We can advance no further or deeper into the holy place of God's presence to wait on Him there, than our heart is prepared for it by the Holy Spirit. The message is, "Let your heart take courage, all ye that wait on the Lord."

The truth appears so simple, that some may ask, Do not all admit this? Where is the need of insisting on it so specially? Because very many Christians have no sense of the great difference between the religion of the mind and the religion of the heart, and the former is far more diligently cultivated than the latter. They know not how infinitely greater the heart is than the mind. It is in this that one of the chief causes must be sought of the feebleness of our Christian life, and it is only as this is understood that waiting on God will bring its full blessing.

A text in Proverbs (3:5) may help to make my meaning plain. Speaking of a life in the fear and favor of God, it says, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not upon thine own understanding." In all religion we have to

use these two powers. The mind as to gather knowledge from God's word, and prepare the food by which the heart with the inner life is to be nourished. But here comes in a terrible danger, of our leaning to our own understanding, and trusting in our apprehension of divine things.

People imagine that if they are occupied with the truth, the spiritual life will as a matter of course be strengthened. And this is by no means the case. The understanding deals with conceptions and images of divine things, but it cannot reach the real life of the soul. Hence the command, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not upon thine own understanding." It is with the heart man believeth, and comes into touch with God. It is in the heart God has given His Spirit, to be there to us the presence and the power of God working in us. In all our religion it is the heart that must trust and love and worship and obey. My mind is utterly impotent in creating or maintaining the spiritual life within me: the heart must wait on God for Him to work it in me.

It is in this even as in the physical life. My reason may tell me what to eat and drink, and how the food nourishes me. But in the eating and feeding my reason I can do nothing: the body has its organs for that special purpose. Just so, reason may tell me what God's word says, but it can do nothing to the feeding of the soul on the bread of life—this the heart alone can do by its faith and trust in God. A man may be studying the nature and effects of food or sleep; when he wants to eat or sleep he sets aside his thoughts and study, and uses the power of eating or sleeping. And so the Christian needs ever, when he has studied or heard God's word, to cease from his thoughts, to put no trust in them, and to waken up his heart to open itself before God, and seek the living fellowship with Him.

This is now the blessedness of waiting upon God, that I confess the impotence of all my thoughts and efforts, and set myself still to bow my heart

before Him in holy silence, and to trust Him to renew and strengthen His own work in me. And this is just the lesson of our text, "Let your heart take courage, all ye that wait on the Lord." Remember the difference between knowing with the mind and believing with the heart. Beware of the temptation of leaning upon your understanding, with its clear strong thoughts. They only help you to know what the heart must get from God: in themselves they are only images and shadows.

"Let your heart take courage, all ye that wait on the Lord." Present it before Him as that wonderful part of your spiritual nature in which God reveals Himself, and by which you can know Him. Cultivate the greatest confidence that, though you cannot see into your heart, God is working there by His Holy Spirit. Let the heart wait at times in perfect silence and quiet; in its hidden depths God will work. Be sure of this, and just wait on Him. Give your whole heart, with its secret workings, into God's hands continually. He wants the heart, and takes it, and as God dwells in it. "Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all ye that wait on the Lord."

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 10. In Humble Fear and Hope^(TOC)

"Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy; To deliver their soul from death, And to keep them alive in famine. Our soul hath waited for the Lord; He is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in Him, Because we have trusted in His holy name. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, According as we wait for thee."—Psalms 33:18-22

God's eye is upon His people: their eye is upon Him. In waiting upon God, our eye, looking up to Him, meets His looking down upon us. This is the blessedness of waiting upon God, that it takes our eyes and thoughts away from ourselves, even our needs and desires, and occupies us with our God. We worship Him in His glory and love, with His all-seeing eye watching over us, that He may supply our every need. Let us consider this wonderful meeting between God and His people, and mark well what we are taught here of them on whom God's eye rests, and of Him on whom our eye rests.

"The eye of the Lord is on them that fear Him, on them that hope in His mercy." Fear and hope are generally thought to be in conflict with each other, in the presence and worship of God they are found side by side in perfect and beautiful harmony. And this because in God Himself all apparent contradictions are reconciled. Righteousness and peace, judgment and mercy, holiness and love, infinite power and infinite gentleness, a majesty that is exalted above all heaven, and a condescension that bows very low, meet and kiss each other.

There is indeed a fear that hath torment, that is cast out entirely by perfect love. But there is a fear that is found in the very heavens. In the song of

Moses and the Lamb they sing, "Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name?" And out of the very throne the voice came, "Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him." Let us in our waiting ever seek "to fear the glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD." The deeper we w bow before His holiness in holy fear and adoring awe, in deep reverence and humble self-abasement, even as the angels veil their faces before the throne, the more will His holiness rest upon us, and the soul be filled to have God reveal Himself; the deeper we enter into the truth "that no flesh glory in His presence," will it be given us to see His glory. "The eye of the Lord is on them that fear Him."

"On them that hope in His mercy." So far will the true fear of God be from keeping us back from hope, it will stimulate and strengthen it. The lower we bow, the deeper we feel we have nothing to hope in but His mercy. The lower we bow, the nearer God will come, and make our hearts bold to trust Him. Let every exercise of waiting, let our whole habit of waiting on God, be pervaded by abounding hope—a hope as bright and boundless as God's mercy. The fatherly kindness of God is such that, in whatever state we come to Him, we may confidently hope in His mercy.

Such are God's waiting ones. And now, think of the God on whom we wait. "The eye of the Lord is on them that fear Him, on them that hope in His mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine." Not to prevent the danger of death and famine—this is often needed to stir the waiting on Him—but to deliver and to keep alive. For the dangers are often very real and dark; the situation, whether in the temporal or spiritual life, may appear to be utterly hopeless. There is always one hope: God's eye is on them.

That eye sees the danger, and sees in tender love His trembling waiting child,

and sees the moment when the heart is ripe for the blessing, and sees the way in which it is to come. This living, mighty God, oh, let us fear Him and hope in His mercy. And let us humbly but boldly say, "Our soul waiteth for the Lord; He is our help and our shield. Let Thy mercy be upon us, O Lord, according as we wait for Thee."

Oh, the blessedness of waiting on such a God! a very present help in every time of trouble; a shield and defense against every danger. Children of God! will you not learn to sink down in entire helplessness and impotence and in stillness to wait and see the salvation of God?

In the utmost spiritual famine, and when death appears to prevail, oh, wait on God. He does deliver, He does keep alive. Say it not only in solitude, but say it to each other—the psalm speaks not of one but of God's people—"Our soul waiteth on the Lord: He is our help and our shield." Strengthen and encourage each other in the holy exercise of waiting, that each may not only say of it himself, but of his brethren, "We have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 11. Patiently^(TOC)

"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him, Those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the land."—Psalms 37:7, 9

"In patience possess your souls." "Ye have need of patience." "Let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire." Such words of the Holy Spirit show us what an important element in the Christian life and character patience is. And nowhere is there a better place for cultivating or displaying it than in waiting on God. There we discover how impatient we are, and what our impatience means. We confess at times that we are impatient with men, and circumstances that hinder us, or with ourselves and our slow progress in the Christian life. If we truly set ourselves to wait upon God, we shall find that it is with Him we are impatient, because He does not at once, or as soon as we could wish, do our bidding. It is in waiting upon God that our eyes are opened to believe in His wise and sovereign will, and to see that the sooner and the more completely we yield absolutely to it, the more surely His blessing can come to us.

"It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Romans 9:16. We have as little power to increase or strengthen our spiritual life, as we had to originate it. We "were born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of the will of God." Even so, our willing and running, our desire and effort, avail nought; all is "of God that sheweth mercy."

All the exercises of the spiritual life, our reading and praying, our willing and doing, have their very great value. But they can go no farther than this, that

they point the way and prepare us in humility to look to and to depend alone upon God Himself, and in patience to wait His good time and mercy. The waiting is to teach us our absolute dependence upon God's mighty working, and to make us in perfect patience place ourselves at His disposal. They that wait on the Lord shall inherit the land; the promised land and its blessing. The heirs must wait; they can afford to wait.

"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." The margin gives for "Rest in the Lord," "Be silent to the Lord," or R. V., "Be still before the Lord." It is resting in the Lord, in His will, His promise, His faithfulness, and His love, that makes patience easy. And the resting in Him is nothing but being silent unto Him, still before Him. Having our thoughts and wishes, our fears and hopes, hushed into calm and quiet in that great peace of God which passeth all understanding. That peace keeps the heart and mind when we are anxious for anything, because we have made our request known to Him. The rest, the silence, the stillness, and the patient waiting, all find their strength and joy in God Himself.

The need for patience, and the reasonableness, and the blessedness of patience will be opened up to the waiting soul. Our patience will be seen to be the counterpart of God's patience. He longs far more to bless us fully than we can desire it. But, as the husbandman has long patience till the fruit be ripe, so God bows Himself to our slowness and bears long with us. Let us remember this, and wait patiently: of each promise and every answer to prayer the word is true: "I the Lord will hasten it in its time." Isaiah 60:22.

"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." Yes, for HIM. Seek not only the help, the gift, thou needest seek: HIMSELF; wait for HIM. Give God His glory by resting in Him, by trusting him fully, by waiting patiently for Him. This patience honors Him greatly; it leaves Him, as God on the throne, to do

His work; it yields self wholly into His hands. It lets God be God. If thy waiting be for some special request, wait patiently. If thy waiting be more the exercise of the spiritual life seeking to know and have more of God, wait patiently. Whether it be in the shorter specific periods of waiting, or as the continuous habit of the souls. Rest in the Lord, be still before the Lord, and wait patiently. "They that wait on the Lord shall inherit the land."

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 12. Keeping His Ways^(TOC)

"Wait on the Lord, and keep His way, And He shalt exalt thee to inherit the land."—Psalms 37:34

If we desire to find a man whom we long to meet, we inquire where the places and the ways are where he is to be found. When waiting on God, we need to be very careful that we keep His ways; out of these we never can expect to find Him. "Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness; those that remember Thee in Thy ways." Isaiah 64:5. We may be sure that God is never and nowhere to be found but in His ways. And that there, by the soul who seeks and patiently waits, He is always most surely to be found. "Wait on the Lord, and keep His ways, and He shall exalt thee."

How close the connection between the two parts of the injunction, "Wait on the Lord,"—that has to do with worship and disposition; "and keep His ways,"—that deals with walk and work. The outer life must be in harmony with the inner; the inner must be the inspiration and the strength for the outer. It is our God who has made known His ways in His Word for our conduct, and invites our confidence for His grace and help in our heart. If we do not keep His ways, our waiting on Him can bring no blessing. The surrender to full obedience to all His will is the secret of full access to all the blessings of His fellowship.

Notice how strongly this comes out in the psalm. It speaks of the evildoer who prospereth in his way, and calls on the believer not to fret himself. When we see men around us prosperous and happy while they forsake God's ways, and ourselves left in difficulty or suffering, we are in danger of first fretting

at what appears so strange, and then gradually yielding to seek our prosperity in their path. The psalm says, "Fret not thyself; trust in the Lord, and do good. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; cease from anger, and forsake wrath. Depart from evil, and do good; the Lord forsaketh not His saints. The righteous shall inherit the land. The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide." "And then follows—the word occurs for the third time in the psalm—"Wait on the Lord, and keep His way." Do what God asks you to do; God will do more than you can ask Him to do.

And let no one give way to the fear: I cannot keep His way; it is this robs one of every confidence. It is true you have not the strength yet to keep all His ways. But keep carefully those for which you have received strength already. Surrender yourself willingly and trustingly to keep all God's ways, in the strength which will come in waiting on Him. Give up your whole being to God without reserve and without doubt; He will prove Himself God to you, and work in you that which is pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ.

Keep His ways, as you know them in the Word. Keep His ways, as nature teaches them, in always doing what appears right. Keep His ways, as Providence points them out. Keep His ways, as the Holy Spirit suggests. Do not think of waiting on God while you say you are not willing to work in His path. However weak you feel, only be willing, and He who has worked to will, will work to do by His power.

"Wait on the Lord, and keep His way." It may be that the consciousness of shortcoming and sin makes our text look more like a hindrance than a help in waiting on God. Let it not be so.

Have we not said more than once, the very starting-point and ground-work of this waiting is utter and absolute impotence? Why then not come with

everything evil you feel in yourself, every memory of unwillingness, unwatchfulness, unfaithfulness, and all that causes such unceasing self-condemnation? Put your power in God's omni-potence, and find in waiting on God your deliverance.

Your failure has been owing to only one thing: you sought to conquer and obey in your own strength. Come and bow before God until you learn that He is the God who alone is good, and alone can work any good thing. Believe that in you, and all that nature can do, there is no true power. Be content to receive from God each moment the inworking of His mighty grace and life, and waiting on God will become the renewal of your strength to run in His ways and not be weary, to walk in His paths and never faint. "Wait on the Lord, and keep His way" will be command and promise in one.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 13. For more than we Know^(TOC)

"And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in Thee. Deliver me from all my transgressions."—Psalms 39:7, 8.

There may be times when we feel as if we knew not what we are waiting for. There may be other times we think we do know, and when it would just be so good for us to realize that we do not know what to ask as we ought. God is able to do for us exceeding abundantly above what we ask or think, and we are in danger of limiting Him, when we confine our desires and prayers to our own thoughts of them. It is a great thing at times to say, as our psalm says: "And now, Lord, what wait I for?" I scarce know or can tell; this only I can say—"My hope is in Thee."

How we see this limiting of God in the case of Israel! When Moses promised them meat in the wilderness, they doubted, saying, "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? He smote the rock that the water gushed out; can He give bread also? Can He provide flesh for His people?" If they had been asked whether God could provide streams in the desert, they would have answered, Yes. God had done it: He could do it again. But when the thought came of God doing something new, they limited Him; their expectation could not rise beyond their past experience, or their own thoughts of what was possible.

Even so we may be limiting God by our conceptions of what He has promised or is able to do. Do let us beware of limiting the Holy one of Israel in our very prayer. Let us believe that the very promises of God we plead have a divine meaning, infinitely beyond our thoughts of them. Let us believe that His fulfilment of them can be, in a power and an abundance of grace,

beyond our largest grasp of thought. And let us therefore cultivate the habit of waiting on God, not only for what we think we need, but for all His grace and power are ready to do for us.

In every true prayer there are two hearts in exercise. The one is your heart, with its little, dark, human thoughts of what you need and God can do. The other is God's great heart, with its infinite, its divine purposes of blessing. What think you? To which of these two ought the larger place to be given in your approach to Him? Undoubtedly, to the heart of God: every thing depends upon knowing and being occupied with that. But how little this is done. This is what waiting on God is meant to teach you. Just think of God's wonderful love and redemption, in the meaning these words must have to Him. Confess how little you understand what God is willing to do for you, and say each time as you pray: "And now, what wait I for?" My heart cannot say, God's heart knows and waits to give. "My hope is in Thee." Wait on God to do for you more than you can ask or think.

Apply this to the prayer that follows: "Deliver me from all my transgressions." You have prayed to be delivered from temper, or pride, or self-will. It is as if it is in vain. May it not be that you have had your own thoughts about the way or the extent of God's doing it, and have never waited on the God of glory, according to the riches of His glory, to do for you what hath not entered the heart of man to conceive? Learn to worship God as the God who doeth wonders, who wishes to prove in you that He can do something supernatural and divine. Bow before Him, wait upon Him, until your soul realizes that you are in the hands of a divine and almighty worker. Consent but to know what and how He will work; expect it to be something altogether godlike, something to be waited for in deep humility, and received only by His divine power. Let, the, "And now, Lord, what wait I for? My

hope is in Thee" become the spirit of every longing and every prayer. He will in His time do His work.

Dear soul, in waiting on God you may often be ready to be weary, because you hardly know what you have to expect. I pray you, be of good courage—this ignorance is often one of the best signs. He is teaching you to leave all in His hands, and to wait on Him alone. "Wait on the Lord! Be strong, and let your heart take courage. Yea, wait thou on the Lord"

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 14. The Way to the New Song^(TOC)

*"I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry... and He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."—
Psalms 40:1-3*

Come and listen to the testimony of one who can speak from experience of the sure and blessed outcome of patient, waiting upon God. True patience is so foreign to our self-confident nature, it is so indispensable in our waiting upon God, it is such an essential element of true faith, that we may well once again meditate on what the word has to teach us.

The word patience is derived from the Latin word for suffering. It suggests the thought of being under the constraint of some power from which we fain would be free. At first we submit against our will; experience teaches us that when it is vain to resist, patient endurance is our wisest course. In waiting on God it is of infinite consequence that we not only submit, because we are compelled to, but because we lovingly and joyfully consent to be in the hands of our blessed Father. Patience then becomes our highest blessedness and our highest grace. It honors God, and gives Him time to have His way with us. It is the highest expression of our faith in His goodness and faithfulness. It brings the soul perfect rest in the assurance that God is carrying on His work. It is the token of our full consent that God should deal with us in such a way and time as He thinks best. True patience is the losing of our self-will in His perfect will.

Such patience is needed for the true and full waiting on God. Such patience is the growth and fruit of our first lessons in the school of waiting. To many a

one it will appear strange how difficult it is truly to wait upon God. The great stillness of soul before God that sinks into its own helplessness and waits for Him to reveal Himself; the deep humility that is afraid to let own will or own strength work aught except as God works to will and to do; the meekness that is content to be and to know nothing except as God gives His light; the entire resignation of the will that only wants to be a vessel in which His holy will can move and mold: all these elements of perfect patience are not found at once. But they will come in measure as the soul maintains its position, and ever again says: "Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from HIM cometh my salvation: He only is my rock and my salvation."

Have you ever noticed what proof we have that patience is a grace for which very special grace is given, in these words of Paul: "Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all"—what? "patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." Yes, we need to be strengthened with all God's might, and that according to the measure of His glorious power, if we are to wait on God in all patience. It is God revealing Himself in us as our life and strength, that will enable us with perfect patience to leave all in His hands. If any are inclined to despond, because they have not such patience, let them be of good courage; it is in the course of our feeble and very imperfect waiting that God Himself by His hidden power strengthens us and works out in us the patience of the saints, the patience of Christ Himself.

Listen to the voice of one who was deeply tried: "I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry." Hear what he passed through: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Patient waiting upon God brings a rich reward; the deliverance is sure; God Himself will put a new

song into your mouth. O soul! be not impatient, whether it be in the exercise of prayer and worship that you find it difficult to wait, or in the delay in respect of definite requests, or in the fulfilling of your heart's desire for the revelation of God Himself in a deeper spiritual life—fear not, but rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.

And if you sometimes feel as if patience is not your gift, then remember it is God's gift, and take that prayer (2 Thessalonians 3:5): "The Lord direct your hearts into the patience of Christ." Into the patience with which you are to wait on God, He Himself will guide you.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 15. For His Counsel^(TOC)

"They soon forgot His works: they waited not for His counsel."—Psalms 106:13

This is said of the sin of God's people in the wilderness. He had wonderfully redeemed them, and was prepared as wonderfully to supply their every need. But, when the time of need came, "they waited not for His counsel." They thought not that the Almighty God was their Leader and Provider; they asked not what His plans might be. They simply thought the thoughts of their own heart, and tempted and provoked God by their unbelief. "They waited not for His counsel."

How this has been the sin of God's people in all ages! In the land of Canaan, in the days of Joshua, the only three failures of which we read were owing to this one sin. In going up against Ai, in making a covenant with the Gibeonites, in settling down without going up to possess the whole land, they waited not for His counsel. And so even the advanced believer is in danger from this most subtle of temptations—taking God's word and thinking his own thoughts of them, and not waiting for His counsel. Let us take the warning and see what Israel teaches us. And let us very specially regard it not only as a danger to which the individual is exposed, but as one against which God's people, in their collective capacity, need to be on their guard.

Our whole relation to God is ruled in this, that His will is to be done in us and by us as it is in heaven. He has promised to make known His will to us by His Spirit, the Guide into all truth. And our position is to be that of waiting for His counsel as the only guide of our thoughts and actions. In our church

worship, in our prayer-meetings, in our conventions, in all our gatherings as managers, or directors, or committees, or helpers in any part of the work for God, our first object ought ever to be to ascertain the mind of God. God always works according to the counsel of His will; the more that counsel of His will is sought and found and honored, the more surely and mightily will God do His work for us and through us.

The great danger in all such assemblies is that in our consciousness of having our Bible, and our past experience of God's leading, and our sound creed, and our honest wish to do God's will, we trust in these, and do not realize that with every step we need and may have a heavenly guidance. There may be elements of God's will, application of God's word, experience of the close presence and leading of God, manifestations of the power of His Spirit, of which we know nothing as yet. God may be willing, nay, God is willing to open up these to the souls who are intently set upon allowing Him to have his way entirely, and who are willing in patience to wait for His making it known.

When we come together praising God for all He has done and taught and given, we may at the same time be limiting Him by not expecting greater things. It was when God had given the water out of the rock that they did not trust Him for bread. It was when God had given Jericho into his hands that Joshua thought the victory over Ai was sure, and waited not for counsel from God. And so, while we think that we know and trust the power of God for what we may expect, we may be hindering Him by not giving time, and not definitely cultivating the habit of waiting for His counsel.

A minister has no more solemn duty than teaching people to wait upon God. Why was it that in the house of Cornelius, when "Peter spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell upon all that heard him"? They had said, "We are here

before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." We may come together to give and to listen to the most earnest exposition of God's truth with little spiritual profit if there be not the waiting for God's counsel.

And so in all our gatherings we need to believe in the Holy Spirit as the Guide and Teacher of God's saints when they wait to be led by Him into the things which God hath prepared, and which the heart cannot conceive. More stillness of soul to realize God's presence; more consciousness of ignorance of what God's great plans may be; more faith in the certainty that God has greater things to show us; that He Himself will be revealed in new glory: these must be the marks of the assemblies of God's saints if they would avoid the reproach, "They waited not for His counsel."

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 16. And His Light in the Heart^(TOC)

"I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, And in His word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord. More than they that watch for the morning: More than they that watch for the morning."—Psalms 130:5-6

With what intense longing the morning light is often waited for. By the mariners in a shipwrecked vessel; by a benighted traveler in a dangerous country; by an army that finds itself surrounded by an enemy. The morning light will show what hope of escape there may be. The morning may bring life and liberty. And so the saints of God in darkness have longed for the light of His countenance, more than watchmen for the morning. They have said, "More than watchmen for the morning, my soul waiteth for the Lord." Can we say that too? Our waiting on God can have no higher object than simply having His light shine on us, and in us, and through us, all the day.

God is Light. God is a Sun. Paul says: "God hath shined in our hearts to give the light," What light? "The light of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." Just as the sun shines its beautiful, life-giving light on and into our earth, so God shines into our hearts the light of His glory, of His love, in Christ His Son. Our heart is meant to have that light filling and gladdening it all the day. It can have it, because God is our sun, and it is written, "Thy sun shall no more go down for ever." God's love shines on us without ceasing.

But can we indeed enjoy it all the day? We can. And how can we? Let nature give us the answer. Those beautiful trees and flowers, with all this green grass, what do they do to keep the sun shining on them? They do nothing; they simply bask in the sunshine, when it comes. The sun is millions of miles

away, but over all that distance it comes, its own light and joy; and the tiniest flower that lifts its little head up-wards is met by the same exuberance of light and blessing as flood the widest landscape. We have not to care for the light we need for our day's work; the sun cares, and provides and shines the light around us all the day. We simply count upon it, and receive it, and enjoy it.

The only difference between nature and grace is this, that what the trees and the flowers do unconsciously, as they drink in the blessing of the light, is to be with us a voluntary and a loving acceptance. Faith, simple faith in God's word and love, is to be the opening of the eyes, the opening of the heart, to receive and enjoy the unspeakable glory of His grace. And just as the trees, day by day, and month by month, stand and grow into beauty and fruitfulness, just welcoming whatever sunshine the sun may give, so it is the very highest exercise of our Christian life just to abide in the light of God, and let it, and let Him, fill us with the life and the brightness it brings.

And if you ask, But can it really be, that just as naturally and heartily as I recognize and rejoice in the beauty of a bright sunny morning, I can rejoice in God's light all the day? It can, indeed. From my breakfast-table I look out on a beautiful valley, with trees and vineyards and mountains. In our spring and autumn months the light in the morning is exquisite, and almost involuntarily we say, How beautiful! And the question comes, Is it only the light of the sun that is to bring such continual beauty and joy? And is there no provision for the light of God being just as much an unceasing source of joy and gladness? There is, indeed, if the soul will but be still and wait on Him, **ONLY LET GOD SHINE.**

Dear soul! learn to wait on the Lord, more than watchers for the morning. All within you may be very dark; is that not the very best reason for waiting for the light of God? The first beginnings of light may be just enough to discover

the darkness, and painfully to humble you on account of sin. Can you not trust the light to expel the darkness? Do believe it will. Just bow, even now, in stillness before God, and wait on Him to shine into you. Say, in humble faith, God is light, infinitely brighter and more beautiful than that of the sun. God is light: the Father. The eternal, inaccessible, and incomprehensible light: the Son. The light concentrated, and embodied, and manifested: the Spirit, the light entering and dwelling and shining in our hearts. God is light, and is here shining on my heart. I have been so occupied with the rushlights of my thoughts and efforts. I have never opened the shutters to let His light in. Unbelief has kept it out.

I bow in faith: God, light, is shining into my heart; the God of whom Paul wrote, "God hath shined into our heart," is my God. What would I think of a sun that could not shine? What shall I think of a God that does not shine? No, God shines! God is light! I will take time, and just be still, and rest in the light of God. My eyes are feeble, and the windows are not clean, but I will wait on the Lord. The light does shine, the light will shine in me, and make me full of light. And I shall learn to walk all the day in the light and joy of God. My soul waits on the light of the Lord, more than the watcher for the morning.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 17. In Times of Darkness^(TOC)

"I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth His face from the house of Jacob; and I will look for Him."—Isaiah 8:17

Here we have a servant of God, waiting upon Him, not on behalf of himself, but of his people, from whom God was hiding His face. It suggests to us how our waiting upon God, though it commences with our personal needs, with the desire for the revelation of Himself, or for the answer to personal petitions, need not, may not, stop there. We may be walking in the full light of God's countenance, and God yet be hiding His face from His people around us; far from being content to think that this is nothing but the just punishment of their sin, or the consequence of their indifference, we are called with tender hearts to think of their sad estate, and to wait on God on their behalf. The privilege of waiting upon God is one that brings great responsibility. Even as Christ, when He entered God's presence, at once used His place of privilege and honor as intercessor, so we, no less, if we know what it is really to enter in and wait upon God, must use our access for our less favored brethren. "I will wait upon the Lord, who hideth His face from the house of Jacob."

You worship with a certain congregation. Possibly there is not the spiritual life or joy either in the preaching or in the fellowship that you could desire. You belong to a Church, with its many congregations. There is so much of error or worldliness, of seeking after human wisdom and culture, or trust in ordinances and observances, that you do not wonder that God hides His face, in many cases, and that there is but little power for conversion or true

edification.

Then there are branches of Christian work with which you are connected—a Sunday school, a gospel hall, a young men's association, a mission work abroad—in which the feebleness of the Spirit's working appears to indicate that God is hiding His face. You think, too, you know the reason, There is too much trust in men and money; there is too much formality and self-indulgence; there is too little faith and prayer; too little love and humility; too little of the spirit of the crucified Jesus. At times you feel as if things were hopeless; nothing will help.

Do believe that God can help and will help. Let the spirit of the prophet come into you, as you value his words, and set yourself to wait on God, on behalf of His erring children. Instead of the tone of judgment or condemnation, of despondency or despair, realize your calling to wait upon God. If others fail in doing it, give yourself doubly to it. The deeper the darkness, the greater the need of appealing to the one only Deliverer. The greater the self-confidence around you, that knows not that it is poor and wretched and blind, the more urgent the call on you who profess to see the evil and to have access to Him who alone can help, to be at your post waiting upon God. Say on each new occasion, when you are tempted to speak or to sigh: "I will wait on the Lord, who hideth His face from the house of Jacob."

There is a still larger circle—the Christian Church throughout the world. Think of Greek, Roman Catholic, and Protestant churches, and the state of the millions that belong to them. Or think only of the Protestant churches with their open Bible and orthodox creeds. How much nominal profession and formality, how much of the rule of the flesh and of man in the very temple of God! And what abundant proof that God does hide his face!

What are those who see and mourn this to do? The first thing to be done is this: "I will wait on the Lord, who hideth His face from the house of Jacob." Let us wait on God, in the humble confession of the sins of His people. Let us take time and wait on Him in this exercise. Let us wait on God in tender, loving intercession for all saints, our beloved brethren, however wrong their lives or their teaching may appear. Let us wait on God in faith and expectation, until He shows us that He will hear. Let us wait on God, with the simple offering of ourselves to Himself, and the earnest prayer that He would send us to our brethren. Let us wait on God, and give Him no rest till He makes Zion a joy in the earth.

Yes, let us rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him who now hides His face from so many of His children. And let us say of the lifting up of the light of His countenance we long for all His people, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and my hope is in His word. My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than the watchers for the morning, the watchers for the morning."

"My soul, wait thou only upon God!"

Day 18. To Reveal Himself^(TOC)

And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation—Isaiah 25:9

In this passage, we have two precious thoughts. The one, that it is the language of God's people who have been unitedly waiting on Him. The other, that the fruit of their waiting has been that God has so revealed Himself, that they could joyfully say, "Lo, this is our God... this is the LORD." The power and the blessing of united waiting is what we need to learn.

Note that this phrase is repeated twice, "We have waited for him." In some time of trouble, the hearts of the people had been drawn together, and they had, ceasing from all human hope or help, with one heart set themselves to wait for their God. Is this not just what we need in our churches and conventions and prayer meetings? Is not the need of the church and the world great enough to demand it? Are there not in the church of Christ evils to which no human wisdom is equal? Have we not ritualism and rationalism, formalism and worldliness, robbing the church of its power? Have we not culture and money and pleasure threatening its spiritual life? Are not the powers of the church utterly inadequate to cope with the powers of infidelity and iniquity and wretchedness in Christian countries and in heathendom? And, is there not, in the promise of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit, a provision made that can meet the need and give the church the restful assurance that she is doing all her God expects of her? And would not united waiting upon God for the supply of His Spirit most certainly seem the needed blessing? We cannot doubt it.

The object of a more definite waiting upon God in our gatherings would be very much the same as in personal worship. It would mean a deeper conviction that God must and will do all. It would require a more humble and abiding entrance into our deep helplessness, and the need of entire and unceasing dependence upon Him. We need a more living consciousness that the essential thing is to give God His place of honor and of power. We must have a confident expectation that to those who wait on Him, God will, by His Spirit, give the secret of His acceptance and presence, and then, in due time, the revelation of His saving power. The great aim would be to bring everyone in a praying and worshiping company under a deep sense of God's presence, so that when they part there will be the consciousness of having met God Himself, of having left every request with Him, and of now waiting in stillness while He works out His salvation.

It is this experience that is indicated in our text. The fulfillment of the words may, at times, be in such striking interpositions of God's power that all can join in the cry, "Lo, this is our God... this is the LORD." They may equally become true in spiritual experience, when God's people, in their waiting times, become so conscious of His presence that, in holy awe, souls feel, "Lo, this is our God... this is the LORD." It is this, alas, that is too much missed in our meetings for worship. The godly minister has no more difficult, no more solemn, no more blessed task, than to lead his people out to meet God. And, before he preaches, he must bring each one into contact with Him. "We are now here in the presence of God"—these words of Cornelius show the way in which Peter's audience was prepared for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Waiting before God, waiting for God, and waiting on God are the conditions of God showing His presence.

A company of believers gathered with the one purpose, helping each other by

little intervals of silence, to wait on God alone, opening the heart for whatever God may have of new discoveries of evil, of His will, of new openings in work or methods of work, would soon have reason to say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Day 19. As a God of Judgment^(TOC)

Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee... For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness—Isaiah 26:8-9

*The LORD is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait upon him—
Isaiah 30:18*

God is a God of mercy and a God of judgment. Mercy and judgment are forever together in His dealings. In the Flood, in the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, in the overthrow of the Canaanites, we ever see mercy in the midst of judgment. In these, the inner circle of His own people, we see it, too. The judgment punishes the sin, while mercy saves the sinner. Or, rather, mercy saves the sinner, not in spite of, but by means of, the very judgment that came upon his sin. In waiting on God, we must beware of forgetting this—as we wait we must expect Him as a God of judgment.

"In the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee." That will prove true in our inner experience. If we are honest in our longing for holiness—in our prayers to be wholly the Lord's—His holy presence will stir up and discover hidden sin. It, will bring us very low in the bitter conviction of the evil of our nature, its opposition to God's law, and its inability to fulfill that law. The words will come true: "Who may abide the day of his coming?... For he is like a refiner's fire" (Malachi 3:2). "Oh that thou wouldest... come down... As when the melting fire burneth" (Isaiah 64:1). In great mercy, God executes, within the soul, His judgments upon sin, as He makes it feel its wickedness and guilt. Many try to flee from these judgments. The soul that longs for God, and for deliverance from sin, bows under them

in humility and in hope. In silence of soul, it says, "Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered" (Numbers 10:35). "In the way of thy judgments... have we waited for thee."

Let no one who seeks to learn the blessed art of waiting on God, wonder if at first the attempt to wait on Him only reveals more of sin and darkness. Let no one despair because unconquered sins, evil thoughts, or great darkness appear to hide God's face. Was not, in His own beloved Son, the gift and bearer of His mercy on Calvary, the mercy as hidden and lost in the judgment? Oh, submit and sink down deep under the judgment of your every sin. Judgment prepares the way and breaks out in wonderful mercy. It is written, "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment" (Isaiah 1:27). Wait on God, in the faith that His tender mercy is working out His redemption in the midst of judgment. Wait for Him; He will be gracious to you.

There is another application still, one of unspeakable solemnity. We are expecting God, in the way of His judgments, to visit his earth; we are waiting for Him. What a thought! We know of these coming judgments. We know that there are tens of thousands of professing Christians who live on in carelessness, and who, if no change comes, must perish under God's hand. Oh, will we not do our utmost to warn them, to plead with and for them, if God may have mercy on them! If we feel our lack of boldness, zeal, and cower, will we not begin to wait on God more definitely and persistently as a God of judgment? Will we not ask Him to so reveal Himself in the judgments that are coming on our very friends, that we may be inspired with a new fear of Him and them, and constrained to speak and pray as never yet before? Verily, waiting on God is not meant to be a spiritual self-indulgence. Its object is to let God and His holiness, Christ and the love that died on Calvary, the Spirit and fire that burns in heaven and came to earth, get possession of us to

warn and arouse men with the message that we are waiting for God in the way of His judgments. Oh, Christian, prove that you really believe in the God of judgment!

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Day 20. Who Waits on us^(TOC)

And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will He be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him—Isaiah 30:18

We must not only think of our waiting upon God, but also of what is more wonderful still, of God's waiting upon us. The vision of Him waiting on us will give new impulse and inspiration to our waiting upon Him. It will give us an unspeakable confidence that our waiting cannot be in vain. If He waits for us, then we may be sure that we are more than welcome—that He rejoices to find those He has been seeking for. Let us seek even now, at this moment, in the spirit of lowly waiting on God, to find out, something of what it means. "Therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you." We will accept and echo back the message, "Blessed are all they that wait for him."

Look up and see the great God upon His throne. He is love an unceasing and inexpressible desire to communicate His own goodness and blessedness to all His creatures. He longs and delights to bless. He has inconceivably glorious purposes concerning every one of His children, by the power of His Holy Spirit, to reveal in them His love and power. He waits with all the longings of a father's heart. He waits that He may be gracious unto you. And, each time you come to wait upon Him, or seek to maintain in daily life the holy habit of waiting, you may look up and see Him ready to meet you. He will be waiting so that He may be gracious unto you. Yes, connect every exercise, every breath of the life of waiting, with faith's vision of your God waiting for you.

And if you ask: How is it, if He waits to be gracious, that even after I come

and wait upon Him, He does not give the help I seek, but waits on longer and longer? There is a double answer. The one is this. God is a wise husbandman, who "waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it (James 5:7). He cannot gather the fruit until it is ripe. He knows when we are spiritually ready to receive the blessing to our profit and His glory. Waiting in the sunshine of His love is what will ripen the soul for His blessing. Waiting under the cloud of trial, that breaks in showers of blessing, is as necessary. Be assured that if God waits longer than you could wish, it is only to make the blessing doubly precious. God waited four thousand years, until the fullness of time, before He sent His Son. Our times are in His hands. He will avenge His elect speedily. He will make haste for our help and not delay one hour too long.

The other answer points to what has been said before. The giver is more than the gift; God is more than the blessing. And our being kept waiting on Him is the only way for our learning to find our life and joy in Himself. Oh, if God's children only knew what a glorious God they have, and what a privilege it is to be linked in fellowship with Him, then they would rejoice in Him! Even when He keeps them waiting, they will learn to understand better than ever. "Therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you." His waiting will be the highest proof of His graciousness.

"Blessed are all they that wait for him." A queen has her ladies-in-waiting. The position is one of subordination and service, and yet it is considered one of the highest dignity and privilege, because a wise and gracious sovereign makes them companions and friends. What a dignity and blessedness to be attendants-in-waiting on the everlasting God, ever on the watch for every indication of His will or favor, ever conscious of His nearness, His goodness, and His grace! "The LORD is good unto them that wait for him"

(Lamentations 3:25). "Blessed are all they that wait for him." Yes, it is blessed when a waiting soul and a waiting God meet each other. God cannot do His work without His and our waiting His time. Let waiting be our work, as it is His. And, if His waiting is nothing but goodness and graciousness, let ours be nothing but a rejoicing in that goodness, and a confident expectancy of that grace. And, let every thought of waiting become to us the simple expression of unmingled and unutterable blessedness, because it brings us to a God who waits that He may make Himself known to us perfectly as the gracious One.

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Day 21. The Almighty One^(TOC)

They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint—Isaiah 40:31

Our waiting on God will depend greatly on our faith of what He is. In our text, we have the close of a passage in which God reveals Himself as the everlasting and almighty One. It is as that revelation enters into our soul that the waiting will become the spontaneous expression of what we know Him to be—a God altogether most worthy to be waited upon.

Listen to the words, "Why sayest thou, O Jacob... My way is hid from the LORD...? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?" (Isaiah 40:27-28). So far from it: "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint... and the young men shall utterly fall" (verse 29-30). And consider that "the glory of young men is their strength" (Proverbs 20:29). All that is deemed strong with man shall come to nothing. "But they that wait upon the LORD," on the Everlasting One, who does not faint, and is not weary, they "shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and"—listen now, they will be strong with the strength of God, and, even as He, they will "not be weary; and they shall walk, and" even as He, they will "not faint."

Yes, "they shall mount up with wings as eagles." You know what eagles' wings mean. The eagle is the king of birds; it soars the highest into the

heavens. Believers are to live a heavenly life, in the very presence and love and joy of God. They are to live where God lives; they need God's strength to rise there. It will be given to them that wait on Him.

You know how the eagles' wings are obtained. Only in one way—by the eagle birth. You are born of God. You have the eagles' wings. You may not have known it; you may not have used them; but God can and will teach you how to use them.

You know how the eagles are taught the use of their wings. See yonder cliff rising a thousand feet out of the sea. See high up a ledge on the rock, where there is an eagle's nest with its treasure of two young eaglets. See the mother bird come and stir up her nest, and with her beak push the timid birds over the precipice. See how they flutter and fall and sink toward the depth. See now how she "fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings" (Deuteronomy 32:11), and so, as they ride upon her wings, brings them to a place of safety. And so, she does this once and again, each time casting them out over the precipice, and then again taking and carrying them. "So the LORD alone did lead him" (verse 12). Yes, the instinct of that eagle mother was God's gift, a single ray of that love in which the Almighty trains His people to mount as on eagles' wings.

He stirs up your nest. He disappoints your hopes. He brings down your confidence. He makes you fear and tremble, as all your strength fails, and you feel utterly weary and helpless. And all the while He is spreading His strong wings for you to rest your weakness on and offering His everlasting Creator strength to work in you. And all He asks is that you sink down in your weariness and wait on Him. Allow Him in His Jehovah strength to carry you as you ride upon the wings of His omnipotence.

Dear child of God, I pray you, lift up your eyes, and behold your God! Listen to Him who says that He "fainteth not, neither is weary" (Isaiah 40:28), who promises that you too will not faint or be weary, who asks nothing but this one thing, that you should wait on Him. And, let your answer be, With such a God, so mighty, so faithful, so tender,

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Day 22. Its Certainty of Blessing^(TOC)

Thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me—Isaiah 49:23

Blessed are all they that wait for him—Isaiah 30:18

What promises! How God seeks to draw us to waiting on Him by the most positive assurance that it never can be in vain; "they shall not be ashamed that wait for me." How strange that, though we should so often have experienced it, we are yet so slow to learn that this blessed waiting must and can be the very breath of our life—a continuous resting in God's presence and His love, an unceasing yielding of ourselves for Him to perfect His work in us. Let us once again listen and meditate, until our heart says with new conviction, "Blessed are all they that wait for him."

We found in the prayer of Psalm 25: "Let none that wait on thee be ashamed" (verse 3). The very prayer shows how we fear that it might be true. Let us listen to God's answer, until every fear is banished, and we send back to heaven the words God speaks, Yes, Lord, we believe what You say: "All they who wait for Me will not be ashamed." "Blessed are all they that wait for him."

The context of each of these two passages points us to times when God's church was in great straits, and to human eyes there were no possibilities of deliverance. But, God interposes with His word of promise, and pledges His almighty power for the deliverance of His people. And it is as the God who has Himself undertaken the work of their redemption that He invites them to wait on Him, and assures them that disappointment is impossible.

We, too, are living in days in which there is much in the state of the church, with its profession and its formalism, that is indescribably sad. Amid all we praise God for, there is, alas, much to mourn over! Were it not for God's promises, we might well despair. But, in His promises the living God has given and bound Himself to us. He calls us to wait on Him. He assures us we will not be put to shame. Oh, that our hearts might learn to wait before Him, until He Himself reveals to us what His promises mean. In the promises, He reveals Himself in His hidden glory! We will be irresistibly drawn to wait on Him alone. May God increase the company of those who say: "Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield" (Psalms 33:20).

This waiting upon God on behalf of His church and people will depend greatly upon the place that waiting on Him has taken in our personal life. The mind may often have beautiful visions of what God has promised to do, and the lips may speak of them in stirring words, but these are not really the measure of our faith or power. No, it is what we really know of God in our personal experience, conquering the enemies within, reigning and ruling, revealing Himself in His holiness and power in our innermost being. It is this that will be the real measure of the spiritual blessing we expect from Him, and bring to our fellow men.

It is as we know how blessed the waiting on God has become to our own souls, that we will confidently hope in the blessing to come on the church around us. The keyword of all our expectations will be, He has said: "All they who wait on Me will not be ashamed." From what He has done in us, we will trust Him to do mighty things around us. "Blessed are all they that wait for him." Yes, blessed even now in the waiting. The promised blessings for ourselves, or for others, may tarry. The unutterable blessedness of knowing and having Him who has promised—the divine Blessor, the living Fountain

of the coming blessings—is even now ours. Do let this truth acquire full possession of your souls, that waiting on God is itself the highest privilege of man, the highest blessedness of His redeemed child.

Even as the sunshine enters with its light and warmth, with its beauty and blessing, into every little blade of grass that rises upward out of the cold earth, so the everlasting God meets, in the greatness and the tenderness of His love, each waiting child, to shine in his heart "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6). Read these words again, until your heart learns to know what God waits to do to you. Who can measure the difference between the great sun and that little blade of grass? And yet, the grass has all of the sun it can need or hold.

Do believe that in waiting on God, His greatness and your littleness suit and meet each other most wonderfully. Just bow in emptiness and poverty and utter weakness, in humility and meekness, and surrender to His will before His great glory, and be still. As you wait on Him, God draws near. He will reveal Himself as the God who will mightily fulfill His every promise. And, let your heart continually take up the song: "Blessed are all they that wait for him."

My soul, wait thou only upon God

Day 23. For Unlooked-For Things^(TOC)

For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him—Isaiah 64:4

The American Standard Version has the thought: "Neither hath the eye seen a God besides thee, who worketh for him that waiteth for him." In the King James Version, the thought is that no eye has seen the thing that God has prepared. In the American Standard Version, no eye has seen a God, besides our God, who works for him who waits for Him. To both, the two thoughts are common: that our place is to wait upon God, and that what the human heart cannot conceive will be revealed to us. The difference is the following: in the American Standard Version, it is the God who works; in the King James Version, the thing He is to work. In 1 Corinthians 2:9, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," the reference is in regard to the things that the Holy Spirit is to reveal, as in the King James Version, and in this chapter we will keep to that.

The previous verses in Isaiah, especially Isaiah 63:15, refer to the low state of God's people. The prayer has been poured out, "Look down from heaven" (verse 15). "Why hast thou... hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake" (verse 17). And 64:1-2, still more urgent, "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down... as when the melting fire burneth... to make thy name known to thine adversaries!" Then follows the plea from the past, "When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy

presence" (verse 3). "For"—this is now the faith that has been awakened by the thought of things we looked not for, He is still the same God—"neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him."

God alone knows what He can do for His waiting people. As Paul expounds and applies it: "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:11). "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit" (verse 10).

The need of God's people, and the call for God's intervention, is as urgent in our days as it was in the time of Isaiah. There is now, as there was then, as there has been at all times, a few who seek after God with their whole hearts. But, if we look at Christendom as a whole, at the state of the church of Christ, there is infinite cause for beseeching God to rend the heavens and come down. Nothing but a special interposition of almighty power will avail. I fear we do not have a proper conception of what the so-called Christian world is in the sight of God. Unless God comes down "as when the melting fire burneth... to make [His] name known to [His] adversaries" (Isaiah 64:2), our labors are comparatively fruitless.

Look at the ministry: how much it is in the wisdom of man and of literary culture; how little in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Think of the unity of the body: how little there is of the manifestation of the power of a heavenly love binding God's children into one. Think of holiness—the holiness of Christlike humility and crucifixion to the world. How little the world sees that they have men among them who live in Christ in heaven, in whom Christ and heaven live.

What is to be done? There is only one thing. We must wait upon God. And

what for? We must cry, with a cry that never rests, "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens... [and] come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence" (Isaiah 64:1). We must desire and believe, we must ask and expect, that God will do unlooked-for things. We must set our faith on a God of whom men do not know what He has prepared for them who wait for Him. The wonder-doing God, who can surpass all our expectations, must be the God of our confidence.

Yes, let God's people enlarge their hearts to wait on a God able to do exceeding abundantly above what we can ask or think (Ephesians 3:20). Let us band ourselves together as His elect who cry day and night to Him for things men have not seen. He is able to arise and to make His people a name and a praise in the earth. "The LORD will wait, that he may be gracious unto you... blessed are all they that wait for him" (Isaiah 30:18).

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Day 24. To Know His Goodness^(TOC)

The LORD is good unto them that wait for him—Lamentations 3:25

There is none good but God (Matthew 19:17). His goodness is in the heavens. "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee" (Psalms 31:19). "O taste and see that the LORD is good" (Psalms 34:8). And here is now the true way of entering into and rejoicing in this goodness of God—waiting upon Him. The Lord is good—even His children often do not know it, for they do not wait in quietness for Him to reveal it. But, to those who persevere in waiting, whose souls do wait, it will come true. One might think that it is just those who have to wait who might doubt it. But, this is only when they do not wait, but grow impatient. The truly waiting ones will all say, "The LORD is good unto them that wait for him." If you want to fully know the goodness of God, give yourself more than ever to a life of waiting on Him.

At our first entrance into the school of waiting upon God, the heart is mainly set on the blessings which we wait for. God graciously uses our needs and desires for help to educate us for something higher than we were thinking of. We were seeking gifts; He, the Giver, longs to give Himself and to satisfy the soul with His goodness. It is just for this reason that He often withholds the gifts, and that the time of waiting is made so long. He is constantly seeking to win the heart of His child for Himself. He wishes that we would not only say, when He bestows the gift, "How good is God!" but that long before it comes, and even if it never comes, we should all the time be experiencing: it is good that a man should quietly wait. "The LORD is good unto them that wait for

him."

What a blessed life the life of waiting then becomes, the continual worship of faith, adoring, and trusting His goodness. As the soul learns its secret, every act or exercise of waiting becomes just a quiet entering into the goodness of God, to let it do its blessed work and satisfy our every need. And, every experience of God's goodness gives new attractiveness to the work of waiting. Instead of only taking refuge in time of need, there comes a great longing to wait continually and all day. And, however duties and engagements occupy the time and the mind, the soul gets more familiar with the secret art of always waiting. Waiting becomes the habit and disposition, the very second nature and breath of the soul.

Dear Christian, begin to see that waiting is not one among a number of Christian virtues, to be thought of from time to time. But, it expresses that disposition that lies at the very root of the Christian life. It gives a higher value and a new power to our prayers and worship, to our faith and surrender, because it links us, in unalterable dependence, to God Himself. And, it gives us the unbroken enjoyment of the goodness of God: "The LORD is good unto them that wait for him."

Let me stress once again that you must take time and trouble to cultivate this much needed element of the Christian life. We get too much secondhand religion from the teaching of men. That teaching has great value, even as the preaching of John the Baptist sent his disciples away from himself to the living Christ, if it leads us to God Himself. What our faith needs is—more of God.

Many of us are too occupied with our work. As with Martha, the very service we want to render the Master separates us from Him. It is neither pleasing to

Him nor profitable to ourselves. The more work, the more need of waiting upon God. The doing of God's will would then be, instead of exhausting, our meat and drink, our nourishment and refreshment and strength. "The LORD is good unto them that wait for him." How good is known only by those who prove it in waiting on Him. How good none can fully tell but those who have proved Him to the utmost.

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Day 25. Quietly^(TOC)

It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD—Lamentations 3:26

Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted" (Isaiah 7:4). "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength" (Isaiah 30:15). Such words reveal to us the close connection between quietness and faith. They show us what a deep need there is of quietness, as an element of true waiting upon God. If we are to have our whole heart turned toward God, we must have it turned away from man, from all that occupies and interests, whether of joy or sorrow.

God is a being of such infinite greatness and glory, and our nature has become so estranged from Him, that it requires our whole heart and desires set upon Him, even in some little measure, to know and receive Him. Everything that is not God, that excites our fears or stirs our efforts or awakens our hopes or makes us glad, hinders us in our perfect waiting on Him. The message is one of deep meaning: "Take heed, and be quiet"; "In quietness...shall be your strength"; "It is good that a man should... quietly wait."

Scripture abundantly testifies how the very thought of God in His majesty and holiness should silence us: "The LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (Habakkuk 2:20); "Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD" (Zephaniah 1:7); "Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation" (Zechariah 2:13).

As long as the waiting on God is chiefly regarded as an end toward more effectual prayer, and the obtaining of our petitions, this spirit of perfect quietness will not be obtained. But, when it is seen that waiting on God is itself an unspeakable blessedness—one of the highest forms of fellowship with the Holy One—the adoration of Him in His glory will of necessity humble the soul into a holy stillness, making way for God to speak and reveal Himself. Then, it comes to the fulfillment of the precious promise, that all of self and self-effort will be humbled: "The haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day" (Isaiah 2:11).

Let everyone who wants to learn the art of waiting on God remember the lesson, "Take heed, and be quiet" (Isaiah 7:4). "It is good that a man... quietly wait." Take time to be separate from all friends and all duties, all cares and all joys; time to be still and quiet before God. Take time not only to secure stillness from man and the world, but from self and its energy. Let the Word and prayer be very precious. But remember, even these may hinder the quiet waiting. The activity of the mind in studying the Word or giving expression to its thoughts in prayer, the activities of the heart, with its desires and hopes and fears, may so engage us that we do not come to the still waiting on the All-glorious One; our whole being is prostrate in silence before Him.

Though at first it may appear difficult to know how thus quietly to wait, with the activities of mind and heart for a time subdued, every effort after it will be rewarded. We will discover that it grows upon us, and the little season of silent worship will bring a peace and a rest that give a blessing not only in prayer, but all day.

"It is good that a man should... quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD." Yes, it is good. The quietness is the confession of our meekness. It will not be

done with all our willing and running (Romans 9:16), with all our thinking and praying. We must receive it from God. It is the confession of our trust that our God will, in His time, come to our help—the quiet resting in Him alone. It is the confession of our desire to sink into our nothingness and to let Him work and reveal Himself. Do let us wait quietly. In daily life, let there be, in the soul that is waiting for the great God to do His wondrous work, a quiet reverence, an abiding watching against too deep engrossment with the world. Then, the whole character will come to bear the beautiful stamp—quietly waiting for the salvation of God.

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Day 26. In Holy Expectancy^(TOC)

*Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation:
my God will hear me—Micah 7:7*

Have you ever heard of a little book, "Expectation Corners"? It tells of a king who prepared a city for some of his poor subjects. Not far from them were large storehouses, where everything they could need was supplied if they sent in their requests. But, on one condition—that they should be on the lookout for the answer, so that when the king's messengers came with the answer to their petitions, they should always be found waiting and ready to receive them. The sad story is told of one desponding person who never expected to get what he asked, because he was too unworthy. One day, he was taken to the king's storehouses, and there, to his amazement, he saw, with his address on them, all the packages that had been made up for him and sent. There was the garment of praise and the oil of joy and the eye salve and so much more. They had been to his door but found it closed; he was not on the lookout. From that time on, he learned the lesson Micah would teach us today. "I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me."

We have said more than once: waiting for the answer to prayer is not the whole of waiting, but only a part. Today, I want to take in the blessed truth that it is a part, and a very important one. When we have special petitions, in connection with which we are waiting on God, our waiting must be very definitely in the confident assurance, "My God will hear me."

A holy, joyful expectancy is of the very essence of true waiting. And, this is

not only true in reference to the many varied requests every believer has to make, but most especially to the one great petition which ought to be the chief thing every heart seeks for itself—that the life of God in the soul may have full sway, that Christ may be fully formed within, and that we may be filled to all the fullness of God. This is what God has promised. This is what God's people too little seek, very often because they do not believe it possible. This is what we ought to seek and dare to expect, because God is able and waiting to work it in us.

But, God Himself must work it. And for this end our working must cease. We must see how entirely it is to be the faith of the operation of God, who raised Jesus from the dead. Just as much as the resurrection, the perfecting of God's life in our souls is to be directly His work. And, waiting has to become, more than ever, a tarrying before God in stillness of soul, counting upon Him who raises the dead and calls the things that are not as though they were (Romans 4:17).

Just notice how the threefold use of the name of God in our text points us to Himself as the one from whom alone is our expectation. "I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me."

Everything that is salvation, everything that is good and holy, must be the direct, mighty work of God Himself within us. In every moment of a life in the will of God, there must be the immediate operation of God. And, the one thing I have to do is this: to look to the Lord, to wait for the God of my salvation, to hold fast the confident assurance, "my God will hear me."

God says, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalms 46:10).

There is no stillness like that of the grave. In the grave of Jesus, in the fellowship of His death, in death to self with its own will and wisdom, its

own strength and energy—there is rest. As we cease from self and our soul becomes still to God, God will arise and show Himself. "Be still, and know"; then you will know "that I am God." There is no stillness like the stillness Jesus gives when He speaks. "Peace, be still" (Mark 4:39). In Christ, in His death, in His life, in His perfected redemption, the soul may be still, and God will come in, take possession, and do His perfect work.

My soul, be thou still only unto God!

Day 27. For Redemption^(TOC)

"Simeon... was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him... Anna, a prophetess... spoke of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem"—Luke 2:25, 36, 38.

Here we have the mark of a waiting believer. "Just," righteous in all his conduct; "devout," devoted to God, ever walking as in His presence; "waiting for the consolation of Israel," looking for the fulfillment of God's promises: "and the Holy Ghost was upon him." In the devout waiting, he had been prepared for the blessing. And Simeon was not the only one. Anna spoke to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. This was the one mark, amid surrounding formalism and worldliness, of a godly band of men and women in Jerusalem. They were waiting on God, looking for His promised redemption.

And now that the consolation of Israel has come, and the redemption has been accomplished, do we still need to wait? We do indeed. But, will not our waiting, who look back to it as come, differ greatly from those who looked forward to it as coming? It will, especially in two aspects. We now wait on God in the full power of the redemption, and we wait for its full revelation.

Our waiting is now in the full power of the redemption. Christ said, "In that day you will know that you are in Me. Abide in Me." The Epistles teach us to present ourselves to God as "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ" (Romans 6:11), "blessed... with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). Our waiting on God may now be in the wonderful consciousness maintained by the Holy Spirit within us,

that we are accepted in the Beloved, that the love that rests on Him rests on us, that we are living in that love, in the very nearness and presence and sight of God.

The old saints took their stand on the Word of God, and waiting, hoping on that Word, we rest on the Word, too—but, oh, under what exceedingly greater privileges, as one with Christ Jesus! In our waiting on God, let this be our confidence: in Christ we have access to the Father. How sure, therefore, we may be that our waiting cannot be in vain.

Our waiting differs, too, in this, that while they waited for a redemption to come, we see it accomplished and now wait for its revelation in us. Christ not only said, "Abide in me" (John 15:4), but also "I in you" (verse 4). The Epistles not only speak of us in Christ, but of Christ in us, as the highest mystery of redeeming love. As we maintain our place in Christ day by day, God waits to reveal Christ in us in such a way that He is formed in us, that His mind and disposition and likeness acquire form and substance in us, so that by each it can in truth be said, "Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20).

My life in Christ up there in heaven and Christ's life in me down here on earth—these two are the complement of each other. And, the more my waiting on God is marked by the living faith, I in Christ, the more the heart thirsts for and claims the Christ in me. The waiting on God, which began with special needs and prayer, will increasingly be concentrated, as far as our personal life is concerned, on this one thing: Lord, reveal Your redemption fully in me; let Christ live in me.

Our waiting differs from that of the old saints in the place we take, and the expectations we entertain. But, at root it is the same: waiting on God, from whom alone is our expectation.

Learn one lesson from Simeon and Anna. How utterly impossible it was for them to do anything toward the great redemption—toward the birth of Christ or His death. It was God's work. They could do nothing but wait. Are we as absolutely helpless in regard to the revelation of Christ in us? We are indeed. God did not work out the great redemption in Christ as a whole and leave its application in detail to us.

The secret thought that it is so is the root of all our feebleness. The revelation of Christ in every individual believer, and in each one the daily revelation, step by step and moment by moment, is as much the work of God's omnipotence as the birth or resurrection of Christ. Until this truth enters and fills us, and we feel that we are just as dependent upon God for each moment of our life in the enjoyment of redemption as they were in their waiting for it, our waiting upon God will not bring its full blessing. The sense of utter and absolute helplessness, the confidence that God can and will do all, are the marks of our waiting as of theirs. As gloriously as God proved Himself to them the faithful and wonder-working God, He will to us, too.

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Day 28. For the Coming of His Son^(TOC)

*"[Be] ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord."—Luke 12:36.
"Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in its own times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords."—1 Timothy 6:14-15 (ASV).
"Turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven."—1 Thessalonians 1:9-10*

Waiting on God in heaven, and waiting for His Son from heaven—these two God has joined together, and no man may put them asunder. The waiting on God for His presence and power in daily life will be the only true preparation for waiting for Christ in humility and true holiness. The waiting for Christ coming from heaven to take us to heaven will give the waiting on God its true tone of hopefulness and joy. The Father, who, in His own time, will reveal His Son from heaven, is the God who, as we wait on Him, prepares us for the revelation of His Son. The present life and the coming glory are inseparably connected in God and in us.

There is sometimes a danger of separating them. It is always easier to be engaged with the Christianity of the past or the future than to be faithful in the Christianity of today. As we look to what God has done in the past, or will do in time to come, the personal claim of present duty and present submission to His working may be avoided. Waiting on God must always lead to waiting for Christ as the glorious consummation of His work. And, waiting for Christ must always remind us of the duty of waiting upon God as our only proof that the waiting for Christ is in spirit and in truth.

There is such a danger of our being more occupied with the things that are

coming than with Him who is to come. There is such scope in the study of coming events for imagination and reason and human ingenuity, that nothing but deeply humble waiting on God can save us from mistaking the interest and pleasure of intellectual study for the true love of Him and His appearing. All you who say you wait for Christ's coming, be sure that you wait on God now. All you who seek to wait on God now to reveal His Son in you, see to it that you do so as men waiting for the revelation of His Son from heaven. The hope of that glorious appearing will strengthen you in waiting upon God for what He is to do in you now. The same omnipotent love that is to reveal that glory is working in you even now to prepare you for it.

"The blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13 ASV), is one of the great bonds of union given to God's church throughout the ages. "He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at in all them that believed" (2 Thess. 1:10 ASV). Then, we will all meet, and the unity of the body of Christ will be seen in its divine glory. It will be the meeting place and the triumph of divine love. Jesus receiving His own and presenting them to the Father. His own meeting Him and worshiping, in speechless love, that blessed face. His own meeting each other in the ecstasy of God's own love. Let us wait, long for, and love the appearing of our Lord and heavenly Bridegroom. Tender love to Him and tender love to each other is the true and only bridal spirit.

I am very afraid that this is sometimes forgotten. A beloved brother in Holland was speaking about the expectancy of faith being the true sign of the bride. I ventured to express a doubt. An unworthy bride, about to be married to a prince, might only be thinking of the position and the riches that she was to receive. The expectancy of faith might be strong and true love utterly lacking. It is not when we are most occupied with prophetic subjects, but

when in humility and love we are clinging close to our Lord and His followers, that we are in the bride's place. Jesus refuses to accept our love except as it is love to His disciples. Waiting for His coming means waiting for the glorious coming manifestation of the unity of the body, while we seek here to maintain that unity in humility and love. Those who love most are the most ready for His coming. Love to each other is the life and beauty of His bride, the church.

And how is this to be brought about? Beloved child of God, if you want to learn how to properly wait for His Son from heaven, live even now waiting on God in heaven. Remember how Jesus lived ever waiting on God. He could do nothing of Himself. It was God who perfected His Son through suffering and then exalted Him. It is God alone who can give you the deep spiritual life of one who is really waiting for His Son: wait on God for it. Waiting for Christ Himself is so different from waiting for things that may come to pass! The latter any Christian can do; the former, God must work in you every day by His Holy Spirit. Therefore, all you who wait on God, look to Him for grace to wait for His Son from heaven in the Spirit which is from heaven. And, you who want to wait for His Son, wait on God continually to reveal Christ in you.

The revelation of Christ in us, as it is given to them who wait upon God, is the true preparation for the full revelation of Christ in glory.

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Day 29. For The Promise of the Father^(TOC)

"He charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father."—Acts 1:4 ASV

In speaking of the saints in Jerusalem at Christ's birth—with Simeon and Anna—we saw how the call to waiting is no less urgent now, though the redemption they waited for has come, than it was then. We wait for the full revelation in us of what came to them, but what they could scarcely comprehend. In the same way, it is with waiting for the promise of the Father. In one sense, the fulfillment can never come again as it came at Pentecost. In another sense, and that in as deep a reality as with the first disciples, we need to wait daily for the Father to fulfill His promise in us.

The Holy Spirit is not a person distinct from the Father in the way two persons on earth are distinct. The Father and the Spirit are never without or separate from each other. The Father is always in the Spirit; the Spirit works nothing but as the Father works in Him. Each moment, the same Spirit that is in us is in God, too. And, he who is most full of the Spirit will be the first to wait on God most earnestly to further fulfill His promise and to still strengthen him mightily by His Spirit in the inner man. The Spirit in us is not a power at our disposal. Nor is the Spirit an independent power, acting apart from the Father and the Son. The Spirit is the real, living presence and the power of the Father working in us. Therefore, it is he who knows that the Spirit is in him who waits on the Father for the full revelation and experience of the Spirit's indwelling. It is he who waits for His increase and abounding

more and more.

See this in the apostles. They were filled with the Spirit at Pentecost. When they, not long after, on returning from the council where they had been forbidden to preach, prayed afresh for boldness to speak in His name, a fresh coming down of the Holy Spirit was the Father's fresh fulfillment of His promise.

At Samaria, by the Word and the Spirit, many had been converted, and the whole city was filled with joy. At the apostles' prayer, the Father once again fulfilled the promise. (See Acts 8:14-17) Even so to the waiting company—"We are all here before God"(see Acts 10:33)—in Cornelius' house. And so, too, in Acts 13. It was when men, filled with the Spirit, prayed and fasted, that the promise of the Father was afresh fulfilled, and the leading of the Spirit was given from heaven: "Separate me Barnabas and Saul" (Acts 13:2).

So also we find Paul, in Ephesians, praying for those who have been sealed with the Spirit, that God would grant them the spirit of illumination. And later on, that He would grant them, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man.

The Spirit given at Pentecost was not something that God failed with in heaven, and sent out of heaven to earth. God does not, cannot, give away anything in that manner. When He gives grace or strength or life, He gives it by giving Himself to work it—it is all inseparable from Himself. Much more so is the Holy Spirit. He is God, present and working in us. The true position in which we can count upon that working with an unceasing power is as we, praising for what we have, still unceasingly wait for the Father's promise to be still more mightily fulfilled.

What new meaning and promise does this give to our lives of waiting! It

teaches us to continually keep the place where the disciples tarried at the footstool of the throne. It reminds us that, as helpless as they were to meet their enemies, or to preach to Christ's enemies until they were endued with power, we, too, can only be strong in the life of faith, or the work of love, as we are in direct communication with God and Christ. They must maintain the life of the Spirit in us. This assures us that the omnipotent God will, through the glorified Christ, work in us a power that can bring unexpected things to pass, impossible things. Oh, what the church will be able to do when her individual members learn to live their lives waiting on God—when together, with all of self and the world sacrificed in the fire of love, they unite in waiting with one accord for the promise of the Father, once so gloriously fulfilled, but still unexhausted!

Come and let each of us be still in the presence of the inconceivable grandeur of this prospect: the Father waiting to fill the church with the Holy Spirit. And willing to fill me, let each one say.

With this faith, let a hush and a holy fear come over the soul, as it waits in stillness to take it all in. And, let life increasingly become a deep joy in the hope of the ever fuller fulfillment of the Father's promise.

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Day 30. Continually (TOC)

"Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually."—Hosea 12:6

Continuity is one of the essential elements of life. Interrupt it for a single hour in a man, and it is lost; he is dead. Continuity, unbroken and ceaseless, is essential to a healthy Christian life. God wants me to be, and God waits to make me; I want to be, and I wait on Him to make me, every moment, what He expects of me—what is well pleasing in His sight. If waiting on God is the essence of true faith, the maintenance of the spirit of entire dependence must be continuous. The call of God, "wait on thy God continually," must be accepted and obeyed. Although there may be times of special waiting, the disposition and habit of soul must be there unchangeably and uninterrupted.

This continual waiting is indeed a necessity. To those who are content with a feeble Christian life, it appears to be a luxury beyond what is essential to be a good Christian. But, all who are praying the prayer, "Lord, make me as holy as a pardoned sinner can be made! Keep me as near to You as it is possible for me to be! Fill me as full of Your love as You are willing to do!" feel at once that it is something that must be had. They feel that there can be no unbroken fellowship with God, no full abiding in Christ, no maintaining of victory over sin and readiness for service, without waiting continually on the Lord.

The continual waiting is a possibility. Many think that with the duties of life it is out of the question. They cannot always be thinking of it. Even when they wish to, they forget.

They do not understand that it is a matter of the heart and that what the heart is full of, occupies it, even when the thoughts are otherwise engaged. A father's heart may be continuously filled with intense love and longing for a sick wife or child at a distance, even though pressing business requires all his thoughts. When the heart has learned how entirely powerless it is for one moment to keep itself or bring forth any good, when it has learned how surely and truly God will keep it, when it has, in despair of itself, accepted God's promise to do for it the impossible, it learns to rest in God. In the midst of occupations and temptations, it can wait continually.

This waiting is a promise. God's commands are enablings. Gospel precepts are all promises, a revelation of what our God will do for us. When you first begin waiting on God, it is with frequent intermission and failure. But, do believe God is watching over you in love and secretly strengthening you in it. There are times when waiting appears like just losing time, but it is not so. Waiting, even in darkness, is unconscious advance, because it is God you have to do with, and He is working in you. God, who calls you to wait on Him, sees your feeble efforts and works it in you. Your spiritual life is in no respect your own work; as little as you begin it, can you continue it. It is God's Spirit who has begun the work in you of waiting upon God. He will enable you to wait continually.

Waiting continually will be met and rewarded by God Himself working continually. We are coming to the end of our lessons. I hope that you and I might learn one thing: God must, God will work continually. He ever does work continually, but the experience of it is hindered by unbelief. But, He, who by His Spirit teaches you to wait continually, will bring you also to experience how, as the Everlasting One, His work is never ceasing. In the love and the life and the work of God, there can be no break, no interruption.

Do not limit God in this by your thoughts of what may be expected. Do fix your eyes upon this one truth: in His very nature, God, as the only Giver of life, cannot do anything other than work in His child every moment. Do not look only at the one side: "If I wait continually, God will work continually." No, look at the other side. Place God first and say, "God works continually; every moment I may wait on Him continually." Take time until the vision of your God working continually, without one moment's intermission, fills your being. Your waiting continually will then come of itself. Full of trust and joy, the holy habit of the soul will be: "on thee do I wait all the day" (Psalms 25:5). The Holy Spirit will keep you ever waiting.

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Day 31. Only^(TOC)

"My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation."—Psalm 62:5-6

It is possible to be waiting continually on God, but not only upon Him. There may be other secret confidences intervening and preventing the blessing that was expected. And so the word only must come to throw its light on the path to the fullness and certainty of blessing. "My soul, wait thou only upon God... He only is my rock."

Yes, "my soul, wait thou only upon God." There is but one God, but one source of life and happiness for the heart; "He only is my rock"; "My soul, wait thou only upon God." You desire to be good; "There is none good but... God" (Matthew 19:17), and there is no possible goodness but what is received directly from Him. You have sought to be holy; "There is none holy as the LORD" (1 Samuel 2:2), and there is no holiness but what He by His Spirit of holiness every moment breathes in you. You would gladly live and work for God and His kingdom, for men and their salvation. Hear how He says: "The everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary... He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength... They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength. (Isaiah 40:28-39, 31). He only is God; He only is your Rock: "my soul, wait thou only upon God."

"My soul, wait thou only upon God." You will not find many who can help you in this. There will be enough of your brothers to draw you to put trust in churches and doctrines, in schemes and plans and human appliances, in

means of grace and divine appointments. But, "my soul, wait thou only upon God" Himself. His most sacred appointments become a snare when trusted in. The brazen serpent becomes Nehushtan (see 2 Kings 18:4); the ark and the temple a vain confidence. Let the living God alone, none and nothing but He, be your hope.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God." Eyes and hands and feet, mind and thought, may have to be intently engaged in the duties of this life. "My soul, wait thou only upon God." You are an immortal spirit, created not for this world but for eternity and for God. Oh, my soul, realize your destiny. Know your privilege, and "wait thou only upon God." Let not the interest of spiritual thoughts and exercises deceive you; they very often take the place of waiting upon God. "My soul, wait thou," your very self, your innermost being, with all its power, "wait thou only upon God." God is for you; you are for God. Wait only upon Him.

Yes, "my soul, wait thou only upon God." Beware of two great enemies: the world and self. Beware of allowing any earthly satisfaction or enjoyment, however innocent it appears, keep you back from saying, "I [will] go... unto God my exceeding joy" (Psalms 43:4). Remember and study what Jesus said about denying self: "Let [a man] deny himself" (Matthew 16:24). Tersteegen says: "The saints deny themselves in everything." Pleasing self in little things may be strengthening it to assert itself in greater things.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God." Let Him be all your salvation and all your desire. Say continually and with an undivided heart, "From him cometh my [expectation]. He only is my rock... I shall not be greatly moved" (Psalms 62:1-2). Whatever your spiritual or temporal needs are, whatever the desire or prayer of your heart, whatever your interest in connection with God's work in the church or the world—in solitude or in the rush of the

world, in public worship or other gatherings of the saints, "my soul, wait thou only upon God." Let your expectations be from Him alone. "He only is my rock."

"My soul, wait thou only upon God." Never forget the two foundation truths on which this blessed waiting rests. If you are ever inclined to think this waiting only is too hard or too high, they will recall you at once. They are your absolute helplessness and the absolute sufficiency of your God. Oh, enter deeply into the entire sinfulness of all that is of self, and do not think of letting self have anything to say one single moment. Enter deeply into your utter and unceasing inability to ever change what is evil in you, or to bring forth anything that is spiritually good. Enter deeply into your relationship of dependence on God, to receive from Him every moment what He gives. Enter deeper still into His covenant of redemption, with His promise to restore more gloriously than ever what you have lost. And, by His Son and Spirit, He will unceasingly give you His actual divine presence and power. And thus, wait upon your God continually and only.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God." No words can tell, no heart can conceive, the riches of the glory of this mystery of the Father and of Christ. Our God, in the infinite tenderness and omnipotence of His love, waits to be our life and joy. Oh, my soul, let it no longer be necessary that I repeat the words, "Wait upon God." But, let all that is in me rise and sing, "Truly my soul waiteth upon God" (Psalms 62:1). "On thee do I wait all the day" (Psalms 25:5).

My soul, wait thou only upon God!

Working for God^(TOC)

Introduction

The object of this little book is first of all to remind all Christian workers of the greatness and the glory of the work in which God gives a share. It is nothing less than that work of bringing men back to their God, at which God finds His highest glory and blessedness. As we see that it is God's own work we have to work out, that He works it through us, that in our doing it His glory rests on us and we glorify Him, we shall count it our joy to give ourselves to live only and wholly for it.

The aim of the book at the same time is to help those who complain, and perhaps do not even know to complain, that they are apparently laboring in vain, to find out what may be the cause of so much failure. God's work must be done in God's way, and in God's power. It is spiritual work, to be done by spiritual men, in the power of the Spirit. The clearer our insight into, and the more complete our submission to, God's laws of work, the surer and the richer will be our joy and our reward in it.

Along with this I have had in view the great number of Christians who practically take no real part in the service of their Lord. They have never understood that the chief characteristic of the Divine life in God and Christ is love and its work of blessing men. The Divine life in us can show itself in no other way. I have tried to show that it is God's will that every believer without exception, whatever be his position in life, gives himself wholly to live and work for God.

I have also written in the hope that some, who have the training of others in Christian life and work, may find thoughts that will be of use to them in teaching the imperative duty, the urgent need, the Divine blessedness of a life given to God's service, and to waken within the consciousness of the power that works in them, even the Spirit and power of Christ Himself.

To the great host of workers in Church and Chapel, in Mission-Hall and Open-Air, in Day and Sunday Schools, in Endeavor Societies, in Y. M. and Y. W. and Students' Associations, and all the various forms of the ministry of love throughout the world, I lovingly offer these meditations, with the fervent prayer that God, the Great Worker, may make us true Fellow-Workers with Himself.

ANDREW MURRAY.

Wellington, February, 1901.

I: Waiting and Working^(TOC)

*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. Neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, which worketh for him that waiteth for Him—
Isaiah 40:31, 64:4*

Here we have two texts in which the connection between waiting and working is made clear. In the first we see that waiting brings the needed strength for working—that it fits for joyful and unwearied work. They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up on eagles' wings; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.' Waiting on God has its value in this: it makes us strong in work for God. The second reveals the secret of this strength. God worketh for Him that waiteth for Him.' The waiting on God secures the working of God for us and in us, out of which our work must spring. The two passages teach the great lesson, that as waiting on God lies at the root of all true working for God, so working for God must be the fruit of all true waiting on Him. Our great need is to hold the two sides of the truth in perfect conjunction and harmony.

There are some who say they wait upon God, but who do not work for Him. For this there may be various reasons. Here is one who confounds true waiting on God (in living direct intercourse with Him as the Living One), and the devotion to Him of the energy of the whole being, with the slothful, helpless waiting that excuses itself from all work until God, by some special impulse, has made work easy. Here is another who waits on God more truly, regarding it as one of the highest exercises of the Christian life, and yet has never understood that at the root of all true waiting there must lie the surrender and the readiness to be wholly fitted for God's use in the service of

men. And here is still another who is ready to work as well as wait, but is looking for some great inflow of the Spirit's power to enable him to do mighty works, while he forgets that as a believer he already has the Spirit of Christ dwelling in Him; that more grace is only given to those who are faithful in the little; and that it is only in working that we can be taught by the Spirit how to do the greater works. All such, and all Christians, need to learn that waiting has working for its object, that it is only in working that waiting can attain its full perfection and blessedness. It is as we elevate working for God to its true place, as the highest exercise of spiritual privilege and power, that the absolute need and the divine blessing of waiting on God can be fully known.

On the other hand, there are some, there are many, who work for God, but know little of what it is to wait on Him. They have been led to take up Christian work, under the impulse of natural or religious feeling, at the bidding of a pastor or a society, with but very little sense of what a holy thing it is to work for God. They do not know that God's work can only be done in God's strength, by God Himself working in us. They have never learnt that, just as the Son of God could do nothing of Himself, but that the Father in Him did the work, as He lived in continual dependence before Him, so, and much more, the believer can do nothing but as God works in him. They do not understand that it is only as in utter weakness we depend upon Him, His power can rest on us. And so they have no conception of a continual waiting on God as being one of the first and essential conditions of successful work. And Christ's Church and the world are sufferers to-day, oh, so terribly! not only because so many of its members are not working for God, but because so much working for God is done without waiting on God.

Among the members of the body of Christ there is a great diversity of gifts

and operations. Some, who are confined to their homes by reason of sickness or other duties, may have more time for waiting on God than opportunity of direct working for Him. Others, who are over pressed by work, find it very difficult to find time and quiet for waiting on Him. These may mutually supply each other's lack. Let those who have time for waiting on God definitely link themselves to some who are working. Let those who are working as definitely claim the aid of those to whom the special ministry of waiting on God has been entrusted. So will the unity and the health of the body be maintained. So will those who wait know that the outcome will be power for work, and those who work, that their only strength is the grace obtained by waiting. So will God work for His Church that waits on Him.

Let us pray that as we proceed in these meditations on working for God, the Holy Spirit may show us how sacred and how urgent our calling is to work, how absolute our dependence is upon God's strength to work in us, how sure it is that those who wait on Him shall renew their strength, and how we shall find waiting on God and working for God to be indeed inseparably one.

1. It is only as God works for me, and in me, that I can work for Him.
2. All His work for me is through His life in me.
3. He will most surely work, if I wait on Him.
4. All His working for me, and my waiting on Him, has but one aim, to fit me for His work of saving men.

II: Good Works the Light of the World^(TOC)

Ye are the light of the world. Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven—Matthew 5:14, 16.

A light is always meant for the use of those who are in darkness, that by it they may see. The sun lights up the darkness of this world. A lamp is hung in a room to give it light. The Church of Christ is the light of men. The God of this world hath blinded their eyes; Christ's disciples are to shine into their darkness and give them light. As the rays of light stream forth from the sun and scatter that light all about, so the good works of believers are the light that streams out from them to conquer the surrounding darkness, with its ignorance of God and estrangement from Him.

What a high and holy place is thus given to our good works. What power is attributed to them. How much depends upon them. They are not only the light and health and joy of our own life, but in every deed the means of bringing lost souls out of darkness into God's marvelous light. They are even more. They not only bless men, but they glorify God, in leading men to know Him as the Author of the grace seen in His children. We propose studying the teaching of Scripture in regard to good works, and specially all work done directly for God and His kingdom. Let us listen to what these words of the Master have to teach us.

The aim of good works—It is, that God may be glorified. You remember how our Lord said to the Father: I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished

the work which Thou gavest Me to do.' We read more than once of His miracles, that the people glorified God. It was because what He had wrought was manifestly by a Divine power. It is when our good works thus too are something more than the ordinary virtues of refined men, and bear the impress of God upon them, that men will glorify God. They must be the good works of which the Sermon on the Mount is the embodiment—a life of God's children, doing more than others, seeking to be perfect as their Father in heaven is perfect. This glorifying of God by men may not mean conversion, but it is a preparation for it when an impression favorable to God has been made. The works prepare the way for the words, and are an evidence to the reality of the Divine truth that is taught, while without them the world is powerless.

The whole world was made for the glory of God. Christ came to redeem us from sin and bring us back to serve and glorify Him. Believers are placed in the world with this one object, that they may let their light shine in good works, so as to win men to God. As truly as the light of the sun is meant to lighten the world, the good works of God's children are meant to be the light of those who know and love not God. What need that we form a right conception of what good works are, as bearing the mark of something heavenly and divine, and having a power to compel the admission that God is in them.

The power of good works—Of Christ it is written: In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.' The Divine life gave out a Divine light. Of His disciples Christ said: If any man follow Me, he shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.' Christ is our life and light. When it is said to us, Let your light shine, the deepest meaning is, let Christ, who dwells in you, shine. As in the power of His life you do your good works, your light shines out to

all who see you. And because Christ in you is your light, your works, however humble and feeble they be, can carry with them a power of Divine conviction. The measure of the Divine power which works them in you will be the measure of the power working in those who see them. Give way, O child of God, to the Life and Light of Christ dwelling in you, and men will see in your good works that for which they will glorify your Father which is in heaven.

The urgent need of good works in believers—As needful as that the sun shines every day, yea, more so, is it that every believer lets his light shine before men. For this we have been created anew in Christ, to hold forth the Word of Life, as lights in the world. Christ needs you urgently, my brother, to let His light shine through you. Perishing men around you need your light, if they are to find their way to God. God needs you, to let His glory be seen through you. As wholly as a lamp is given up to lighting a room, every believer ought to give himself up to be the light of a dark world.

Let us undertake the study of what working for God is, and what good works are as part of this, with the desire to follow Christ fully, and so to have the light of life shining into our hearts and lives, and from us on all around.

1. Ye are the light of the world! The words express the calling of the Church as a whole. The fulfillment of her duty will depend upon the faithfulness with which each individual member loves and lives for those around him.
2. In all our efforts to waken the Church to evangelize the world, our first aim must be to raise the standard of life for the individual believer of the teaching: As truly as a candle only exists with the object of giving light in the darkness, the one

object of your existence is to be a light to men.

3. Pray God by His Holy Spirit to reveal it to you that you have nothing to live for but to let the light and love of the life of God shine upon souls.

III: Son, go Work^(TOC)

Son, go work to-day in my vineyard—Matthew 21:28

The father had two sons. To each he gave the command to go and work in his vineyard. The one went, the other went not. God has given the command and the power to every child of His to work in His vineyard, with the world as the field. The majority of God's children are not working for Him and the world is perishing.

Of all the mysteries that surround us in the world, is not one of the strangest and most incomprehensible this—that after 1800 years the very name of the Son of God should be unknown to the larger half of the human race.

Just consider what this means. To restore the ruin sin had wrought, God, the Almighty Creator, actually sent His own Son to the world to tell men of His love, and to bring them His life and salvation. When Christ made His disciples partakers of that salvation, and the unspeakable joy it brings, it was with the express understanding that they should make it known to others, and so be the lights of the world. He spoke of all who through them should believe, having the same calling. He left the world with the distinct instruction to carry the Gospel to every creature, and teach all nations to observe all that He had commanded. He at the same time gave the definite assurance that all power for this work was in Him, that He would always be with His people, and that by the power of His Holy Spirit they would be able to witness to Him to the ends of the earth. And what do we see now? After 1800 years two thirds of the human race have scarce heard the name of Jesus. And of the other third, the larger half is still as ignorant as if they had never

heard.

Consider again what this means. All these dying millions, whether in Christendom or heathendom, have an interest in Christ and His salvation. They have a right to Him. Their salvation depends on their knowing Him. He could change their lives from sin and wretchedness to holy obedience and heavenly joy. Christ has a right to them. It would make His heart glad to have them come and be blessed in Him. But they and He are dependent on the service of His people to be the connecting link to bring them and Him together. And yet what His people do is as nothing to what needs to be done, to what could be done, to what ought to be done.

Just consider yet once again what this means. What a revelation of the state of the Church. The great majority of those who are counted believers are doing nothing towards making Christ known to their fellow-men. Of the remainder, the majority are doing so little, and that little so ineffectually, by reason of the lack of wholehearted devotion, that they can hardly be said to be giving themselves to their Lord's service. And of the remaining portion, who have given themselves and all they have to Christ's service, so many are occupied with the hospital work of teaching the sick and the weakly in the Church, that the strength left free for aggressive work, and going forth to conquer the world, is terribly reduced. And so, with a finished salvation, and a loving Redeemer, and a Church set apart to carry life and blessing to men, the millions are still perishing.

There can be no question to the Church of more intense and pressing importance than this: What can be done to waken believers to a sense of their holy calling, and to make them see that to work for God, that to offer themselves as instruments through whom God can do His work, ought to be the one aim of their life? The vain complaints that are continually heard of a

lack of enthusiasm for God's kingdom on the part of the great majority of Christians, the vain attempts to waken anything like an interest in missions proportionate to their claim, or Christ's claim, make us feel that nothing less is needed than a revival that shall be a revolution, and shall raise even the average Christian to an entirely new type of devotion. No true change can come until the truth is preached and accepted, that the law of the kingdom is: Every believer to live only and wholly for God's service and work.

The father who called his sons to go and work in his vineyard did not leave it to their choice to do as much or as little as they chose. They lived in his home, they were his children, he counted on what they would give him, their time and strength. This God expects of His children. Until it is understood that each child of God is to give His whole heart to his Father's interest and work, until it is understood that every child of God is to be a worker for God, the evangelization of the world cannot be accomplished. Let every reader listen, and the Father will say to him personally: Son, go work in My vineyard.

1. Why is it that stirring appeals on behalf of missions often have so little permanent result? Because the command with its motives is brought to men who have not learned that absolute devotion and immediate obedience to their Lord is of the essence of true salvation.
2. If it is once seen, and confessed, that the lack of interest in missions is the token of a low and sickly Christian life, all who plead for missions will make it their first aim to proclaim the calling of every believer to live wholly for God. Every missionary meeting will be a consecration meeting to seek and surrender to the Holy Spirit's power.

3. The average standard of holiness and devotion cannot be higher abroad than at home, or in the Church at large than in individual believers.
4. Every one cannot go abroad, or give his whole time to direct work; but everyone, whatever his calling or circumstances, can give his whole heart to live for souls and the spread of the kingdom.

IV: To Each one his Work^(TOC)

As a man sojourning in another country, having given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded the porter also to watch—Mark 13:34

What I have said in a previous chapter of the failure of the Church to do her Master's work, or even clearly to insist upon the duty of its being done by every member has often led me to ask the question, What must be done to arouse the Church to a right sense of her calling? This little book is an attempt to give the answer. Working for God must take a very different and much more definite place in our teaching and training of Christ's disciples than it has done.

In studying the question I have been very much helped by the life and writings of a great educationalist. The opening sentence of the preface to his biography tells us: Edward Thring was unquestionably the most original and striking figure in the schoolmaster world of his time in England.' He himself attributes his own power and success to the prominence he gave to a few simple principles, and the faithfulness with which he carried them out at any sacrifice. I have found them as suggestive in regard to the work of preaching as of teaching, and to state them will help to make plain some of the chief lessons this book is meant to teach.

The root-principle that distinguished his teaching from what was current at the time was this: Every boy in school, the dullest, must have the same attention as the cleverest. At Eton, where he had been educated, and had come out First, he had seen the evil of the opposite system. The school kept

up its name by training a number of men for the highest prizes, while the majority were neglected. He maintained that this was dishonest: there could be no truth in a school which did not care for all alike. Every boy had some gift; every boy needed special attention; every boy could, with care and patience, be fitted to know and fulfill his mission in life.

Apply this to the Church. Every believer, the feeblest as much as the strongest, has the calling to live and work for the kingdom of his Lord. Every believer has equally a claim on the grace and power of the Holy Spirit, according to his gifts, to fit him for his work. And every believer has a right to be taught and helped by the Church for the service our Lord expects of him. It is when this truth, every believer the feeblest, to be trained as a worker for God, gets its true place, that there can be any thought of the Church fulfilling its mission. Not one can be missed, because the Master gave to every one his work.

Another of Thring's principles was this: It is a law of nature that work is pleasure. See to make it voluntary and not compulsory. Do not lead the boys blindfold. Show them why they have to work, what its value will be, what interest can be awakened in it, what pleasure may be found in it. A little time stolen, as he says, for that purpose, from the ordinary teaching, will be more than compensated for by the spirit which will be thrown into the work.

What a field is opened out here for the preacher of the gospel in the charge he has of Christ's disciples. To unfold before them the greatness, the glory, the Divine blessedness of the work to be done. To show its value in the carrying out of God's will, and gaining His approval; in our becoming the benefactors and saviors of the perishing; in developing that spiritual vigor, that nobility of character, that spirit of self-sacrifice which leads to the true bearing of Christ's image.

A third truth Thring insisted on specially was the need of inspiring the belief in the possibility, yea, the assurance of success in gaining the object of pursuit. That object is not much knowledge; not every boy can attain to this. The drawing out and cultivation of the power there is in himself—this is for every boy—and this alone is true education. As a learner's powers of observation grow under true guidance and teaching and he finds within himself a source of power and pleasure he never knew before, he feels a new self beginning to live, and the world around him gets a new meaning. He becomes conscious of an infinity of unsuspected glory in the midst of which we go about our daily tasks, becomes lord of an endless kingdom full of light and pleasure and power.'

If this be the law and blessing of a true education, what light is shed on the calling of all teachers and leaders in Christ's Church! The know ye nots of Scripture—that ye are the temple of God—that Christ is in you—that the Holy Spirit dwelleth in you—acquire a new meaning. It tells us that the one thing that needs to be wakened in the hearts of Christians is the faith in the power that worketh in us. As one comes to see the worth and the glory of the work to be done, as one believes in the possibility of his, too, being able to do that work well; as one learns to trust a Divine energy, the very power and spirit of God working in him; he will, in the fullest sense become conscious of a new life, with an infinity of unsuspected glory in the midst of which we go about our daily task, and become lord of an endless kingdom full of light and pleasure and power.' This is the royal life to which God has called all His people. The true Christian is one who knows God's power working in himself, and finds it his true joy to have the very life of God flow into him, and through him, and out from him to those around.

1. We must learn to believe in the power of littles—of the value

of every individual believer. As men are saved one by one, they must be trained one by one for work.

2. We must believe that work for Christ can become as natural, as much an attraction and a pleasure in the spiritual as in the natural world.
3. We must believe and teach that every believer can become an effective worker in his sphere. Are you seeking to be filled with love to souls?

V: To Each according to his Ability^(TOC)

The kingdom of heaven is as when a man, going into another country, called his own servants, and delivered them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his several ability—Matthew 25:14

In the parable of the talents we have a most instructive summary of our Lord's teaching in regard to the work He has given to His servants to do. He tells us of His going to heaven and leaving His work on earth to the care of His Church; of His giving every one something to do, however different the gifts might be; of His expecting to get back His money with interest; of the failure of him who had received least; and of what it was that led to that terrible neglect.

He called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods, and went on his journey.' is literally what our Lord did. He went to heaven, leaving His work with all His goods to the care of His Church. His goods were, the riches of His grace, the spiritual blessings in heavenly places, His word and Spirit, with all the power of His life on the throne of God—all these He gave in trust to His servants, to be used by them in carrying out His work on earth. The work He had begun they were to prosecute. As some rich merchant leaves Cape Town to reside in London, while his business is carried on by trustworthy servants, our Lord took His people into partnership with Himself, and entrusted His work on earth entirely to their care. Through their neglect it would suffer; their diligence would be His enrichment. Here we have the true root-principle of Christian service; Christ has made Himself dependent for the extension of His kingdom on the faithfulness of His people.

Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his several ability. Though there was a difference in the measure, every one received a portion of the master's goods. It is in connection with the service we are to render to each other that we read of the grace given to each of us according to the measure of the gift of Christ.' This truth, that every believer without exception has been set apart to take an active part in the work of winning the world for Christ, has almost been lost sight of. Christ was first a son, then a servant. Every believer is first a child of God, then a servant. It is the highest honor of a son to be a servant, to have the father's work entrusted to him. Neither the home nor the foreign missionary work of the Church will ever be done right until every believer feels that the one object of his being in the world is to work for the kingdom. The first duty of the servants in the parable was to spend their life in caring for their master's interests.

After a long time the lord of those servants cometh and maketh a reckoning with them. Christ keeps watch over the work He has left to be done on earth; His kingdom and glory depend upon it. He will not only hold reckoning when He comes again to judge, but comes unceasingly to inquire of His servants as to their welfare and work. He comes to approve and encourage, to correct and warn. By His word and Spirit He asks us to say whether we are using our talents diligently, and, as His devoted servants, living only and entirely for His work. Some He finds laboring diligently, and to them He frequently says: Enter into the joy of thy Lord.' Others He sees discouraged, and them He inspires with new hope. Some He finds working in their own strength; these He reproveth. Still others He finds sleeping or hiding their talent; to such His voice speaks in solemn warning: from him that hath shall be taken away even that he hath. Christ's heart is in His work; every day He watches over it with the intensest interest; let us not disappoint Him nor deceive ourselves.

'Lord, I was afraid and hid thy talent in the earth.' That the man of the one talent should have been the one to fail, and to be so severely punished is a lesson of deep solemnity. It calls the Church to beware lest, by neglecting to teach the feebler ones, the one talent men, that their service, too, is needed, she allow them to let their gifts lie unused. In teaching the great truth that every branch is to bear fruit, special stress must be laid on the danger of thinking that this can only be expected of the strong and advanced Christian. When Truth reigns in a school, the most backward pupil has the same attention as the more clever. Care must be taken that the feeblest Christians receive special training, so that they, too, may joyfully have their share in the service of their Lord and all the blessedness it brings. If Christ's work is to be done, not one can be missed.

'Lord, I knew that thou art a hard man, and I was afraid.' Wrong thoughts of God, looking upon His service as that of a hard master, are one chief cause of failure in service. If the Church is indeed to care for the feeble ones, for the one talent servants, who are apt to be discouraged by reason of their conscious weakness, we must teach them what God says of the sufficiency of grace and the certainty of success. They must learn to believe that the power of the Holy Spirit within them fits them for the work to which God has called them. They must learn to understand that God Himself will strengthen them with might by His Spirit in the inner man. They must be taught that work is joy and health and strength. Unbelief lies at the root of sloth. Faith opens the eyes to see the blessedness of God's service, the sufficiency of the strength provided, and the rich reward. Let the Church awake to her calling to train the feeblest of her members to know that Christ counts upon every redeemed one to live wholly for His work. This alone is true Christianity, is full salvation.

VI: Life and Work^(TOC)

'My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to accomplish His work. I must work the works of Him that sent Me. I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me with Thyself.'—John 5:34, 9:4, 17:4

'Work is the highest form of existence.' The highest manifestation of the Divine Being is in His work. Read carefully again the words of our Blessed Lord at the head of the chapter, and see what Divine glory there is in His work. In His work Christ showed forth His own glory and that of the Father. It was because of the work He had done, and because in it He had glorified the Father, that He claimed to share the glory of the Father in heaven. The greater works He was to do in answer to the prayer of the disciples was, that the Father might be glorified in the Son. Work is indeed the highest form of existence, the highest manifestation of the Divine glory in the Father and in His Son.

What is true of God is true of His creature. Life is movement, is action, and reveals itself in what it accomplishes. The bodily life, the intellectual, the moral, the spiritual life—individual, social, national life—each of these is judged of by its work. The character and quality of the work depends on the life: as the life, so the work. And, on the other hand the life depends on the work; without this there can be no full development and manifestation and perfecting of the life: as the work, so the life.

This is specially true of the spiritual life—the life of the Spirit in us. There may be a great deal of religious work with its external activities, the outcome

of human will and effort, with but little true worth and power, because the Divine life is feeble. When the believer does not know that Christ is living in him, does not know the Spirit and power of God working in him, there may be much earnestness and diligence, with little that lasts for eternity. There may, on the contrary, be much external weakness and apparent failure, and yet results that prove that the life is indeed of God.

The work depends upon the life. And the life depends on the work for its growth and perfection. All life has a destiny; it cannot accomplish its purpose without work; life is perfected by work. The highest manifestation of its hidden nature and power comes out in its work. And so work is the great factor by which the hidden beauty and the Divine possibilities of the Christian life are brought out. Not only for the sake of what it accomplishes through the believer as God's instrument, but what it effects on himself, work must in the child of God take the same place it has in God Himself. As in the Father and the Son, so with the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, work is the highest manifestation of life.

Work must be restored to its right place in God's scheme of the Christian life as in very deed the highest form of existence. To be the intelligent willing channel of the power of God, to be capable of working the very work of God, to be animated by the Divine Spirit of love, and in that to be allowed to work life and blessing to men; it is this gives nobility to life, because it is for this we are created in the image of God. As God never for a moment ceases to work His work of love and blessing in us and through us, so our working out what He works in us is our highest proof of being created anew in His likeness.

If God's purpose with the perfection of the individual believer, with the appointment of His Church as the body of Christ to carry on His work of

winning back a rebellious world to His allegiance and love is to be carried out, working for God must have much greater prominence given to it as the true glory of our Christian calling. Every believer must be taught that, as work is the only perfect manifestation, and therefore the perfection of life in God and throughout the world, so our work is to be our highest glory. Shall it be so in our lives?

If this is to come, we must remember two things. The one is that it can only come by beginning to work. Those who have not had their attention specially directed to it cannot realize how great the temptation is to make work a matter of thought and prayer and purpose, without its really being done. It is easier to bear than to think, easier to think than to speak, easier to speak than to act. We may listen and accept and admire God's will, and in our prayer profess our willingness to do—and yet not actually do. Let us, with such measure of grace as we have, and much prayer for more, take up our calling as God's working men, and do good hard work for Him. Doing is the best teacher. If you want to know how to do a thing, begin and do it.

Then you will feel the need of the second thing I wish to mention, and be made capable of understanding it—that there is sufficient grace in Christ for all the work you have to do. You will see with ever-increasing gladness how He the Head works all in you the member, and how work for God may become your closest and fullest fellowship with Christ, your highest participation in the power of His risen and glorified life.

1. Life and work: beware of separating them, The more work you have, the more your work appears a failure. The more unfit you feel for work, take all the more time and care to have your inner life renewed in close fellowship with God.

2. Christ liveth in me—is the secret of joy and hope, and also of power for work. Care for the life, the life will care for the work. 'Be filled with the Spirit.'

VII: The Father abiding in Me doeth the Work^(TOC)

*'Jesus answered them, My Father worketh even until now, and I work.'—John
5:17-20*

*'Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words
that I speak I speak not of Myself: but the Father abiding in Me doeth the
work.'—John 14:10*

Jesus Christ became man that He might show us what a true man is, how God meant to live and work in man, and how man may find his life and do his work in God. In words like those above, our Lord opens up the inner mystery of His life, and discovers to us the nature and the deepest secret of His working. He did not come to the world to work instead of the Father; the Father was ever working—'worketh even until now.' Christ's work was the fruit, the earthly reflection of the Heavenly Father working. And it was not as if Christ merely saw and copied what the Father willed or did: 'the Father abiding in Me doeth the work.' Christ did all His work in the power of the Father dwelling and working in Him. So complete and real was His dependence on the Father, that, in expounding it to the Jews, He used the strong expressions (verse 19, 30) John 5:19, 30: 'The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing'; 'I can do nothing of Myself.' As literally as what He said is true of us, 'Apart from Me ye can do nothing,' is it true of Him too. 'The Father abiding in Me doeth the work.'

Jesus Christ became man that He might show us what true man is, what the true relation between man and God, what the true way of serving God and doing His work. When we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus, the life we

receive is the very life that was and is in Christ, and it is only by studying His life on earth that we know how we are to live. 'As I live because of the Father, so he that eateth Me shall live because of Me.' His dependence on the Father is the law of our dependence on Him and on the Father through Him.

Christ counted it no humiliation to be able to do nothing of Himself, to be always and absolutely dependent on the Father. He counted it His highest glory, because so all His works were the works of the all glorious God in Him. When shall we understand that to wait on God, to bow before Him in perfect helplessness, and let Him work all in us, is our true nobility, and the secret of the highest activity? This alone is the true Son-life, the true life of every child of God. As this life is known and maintained, the power for work will grow, because the soul is in the attitude in which God can work in us, as the God who 'worketh for him that waiteth on Him.' It is the ignorance or neglect of the great truths, that there can be no true work for God but as God works it in us, and that God cannot work in us fully but as we live in absolute dependence on Him, that is the explanation of the universal complaint of so much Christian activity with so little real result. The revival which many are longing and praying for must begin with this: the return of Christian ministers and workers to their true place before God—in Christ and like Christ, one of complete dependence and continual waiting on God to work in them.

Let me invite all workers, young and old, successful or disappointed, full of hope or full of fear, to come and learn from our Lord Jesus the secret of true work for God. 'My Father worketh, and I work;' 'The Father abiding in Me doeth the works.' Divine Fatherhood means that God is all, and gives all, and works all. Divine Sonship means continual dependence on the Father, and the reception, moment by moment, of all the strength needed for His Work. Try to grasp the great truth that because 'it is God who worketh all in all,' your

one need is, in deep humility and weakness, to wait for and to trust in His working. Learn from this that God can only work in us as He dwells in us. 'The Father abiding in Me doeth the works.' Cultivate the holy sense of God's continual nearness and presence, of your being His temple, and of His dwelling in you. Offer yourself for Him to work in you all His good pleasure. You will find that work, instead of being a hindrance, can become your greatest incentive to a life of fellowship and childlike dependence.

At first it may appear as if the waiting for God to work will keep you back from your work. It may indeed—but only to bring the greater blessing, when you have learned the lesson of faith, that counts on His working even when you do not feel it. You may have to do your work in weakness and fear and much trembling. You will know that it is all, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. As you know yourself better and God better, you will be content that it should ever be—His strength made perfect in our weakness.

1. 'The Father abiding in Me doeth the work.' There is the same law for the Head and the member, for Christ and the believer. 'It is the same God that worketh all in all.'
2. The Father not only worked in the Son when He was on earth, but now, too, that He is in heaven. It is as we believe in Christ in the Father's working in Him, that we shall do the greater works. See John 14:10-12.
3. It is as the indwelling God, the Father abiding in us, that God works in us. Let the life of God in the soul be clear, the work will be sure.
4. Pray much for grace to say, in the name of Jesus, 'The Father

abiding in me doeth the work.'

VIII: Greater Works^(TOC)

*Verily, verily, I say unto You, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also and greater works shall he do; because I go unto the Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, that will I do.'—
John 14:12-14*

In the words (verse 10) 'The Father abiding in Me doeth the works,' Christ had revealed the secret of His and of all Divine service—man yielding himself for God to dwell and to work in him. When Christ now promises, 'He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also,' the law of the Divine inworking remains unchanged. In us, as much as in Him, one might even say a thousand times more than with Him, it must still ever be: The Father in me doeth the works. With Christ and with us, it is 'the same God who worketh all in all.'

How this is to be, is taught us in the words, 'He that believeth on Me.' That does not only mean, for salvation, as a Savior from sin. But much more. Christ had just said (verses 10, 11), 'Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: the Father abiding in Me doeth the works.' We need to believe in Christ as Him in and through whom the Father unceasingly works. To believe in Christ is to receive Him into the heart. When we see the Father's working inseparably connected with Christ, we know that to believe in Christ, and receive Him into the heart, is to receive the Father dwelling in Him and working through Him. The works His disciples are to do cannot possibly be done in any other way than His own are done.

This becomes still more clear from what our Lord adds: 'And greater works

shall he do; because I go unto the Father.' What the greater works are, is evident. The disciples at Pentecost with three thousand baptized, and multitudes added to the Lord; Philip at Samaria, with the whole city filled with joy; the men of Cyprus and Cyrene, and, later on, Barnabas at Antioch, with much people added to the Lord; Paul in his travels, and a countless host of Christ's servants down to our day, have in the ingathering of souls, done what the Master condescendingly calls greater works than He did in the days of His humiliation and weakness.

The reason why it should be so our Lord makes plain, 'Because I go to the Father.' When He entered the glory of the Father, all power in heaven and on earth was given to Him as our Redeemer. In a way more glorious than ever the Father was to work through Him; and He then to work through His disciples. Even as His own work on earth 'in the days of the weakness of the flesh, had been in a power received from the Father in heaven, so His people, in their weakness, would do works like His, and greater works in the same way, through a power received from heaven. The law of the Divine working is unchangeable: God's work can only be done by God Himself. It is as we see this in Christ, and receive Him in this capacity, as the One in and through whom God works all, and so yield ourselves wholly to the Father working in Him and in us,' that we shall do greater works than He did.

The words that follow bring out still more strongly the great truths we have been learning, that it is our Lord Himself who will work all in us, even as the Father did in Him, and that our posture is to be exactly what His was, one of entire receptivity and dependence. 'Greater works shall he do, because I go to the Father, and whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do.' Christ connects the greater works the believer is to do, with the promise that He will do whatever the believer asks. Prayer in the name of Jesus will be the

expression of that dependence that waits on Him for His working, to which He gives the promise: Whatsoever ye ask, I will do, in you and through you. And when He adds, 'that the Father may be glorified in the Son,' He reminds us how He had glorified the Father, by yielding to Him as Father, to work all His work in Himself as Son. In heaven Christ would still glorify the Father, by receiving from the Father the power, and working in His disciples what the Father would. The creature, as the Son Himself can give the Father no higher glory than yielding to Him to work all. The believer can glorify the Father in no other way than the Son, by an absolute and unceasing dependence on the Son, in whom the Father works, to communicate and work in us all the Father's work. 'If ye shall ask anything in My name, that will I do,' and so ye shall do greater works.

Let every believer strive to learn the one blessed lesson. I am to do the works I have seen Christ doing; I may even do greater works as I yield myself to Christ exalted on the throne, in a power He had not on earth; I may count on Him working in me according to that power. My one need is the spirit of dependence and waiting, and prayer and faith, that Christ abiding in me will do the works, even whatsoever I ask.

1. How was Christ able to work the works of God? By God abiding in Him! How can I do the works of Christ? By Christ abiding in me!
2. How can I do greater works than Christ? By believing, not only in Christ, the Incarnate and Crucified, but Christ triumphant on the throne.
3. In work everything depends, O believer, on the life, the inner life, the Divine life. Pray to realize that work is vain except as

it is in 'the power of the Holy Spirit' dwelling in thee.

IX: Created in Christ Jesus for Good Works^(TOC)

'By grace have ye been saved through faith; not of works, lest any man should glory. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.'—Ephesians 2:8-10

We have been saved, not of works, but for good works. How vast the difference. How essential the apprehension of that difference to the health of the Christian life. Not of works which we have done, as the source whence salvation comes, have we been saved. And yet for good works, as the fruit and outcome of salvation, as part of God's work in us, the one thing for which we have been created anew. As worthless as are our works in procuring salvation, so infinite is their worth as that for which God has created and prepared us. Let us seek to hold these two truths in their fulness of spiritual meaning. The deeper our conviction that we have been saved, not of works, but of grace, the stronger the proof we should give that we have indeed been saved for good works.

'Not of works, for ye are God's workmanship.' If works could have saved us, there was no need for our redemption. Because our works were all sinful and vain, God undertook to make us anew—we are now His workmanship, and all the good works we do are His workmanship too. 'His workmanship, created us anew in Christ Jesus.' So complete had been the ruin of sin, that God had to do the work of creation over again in Christ Jesus. In Him, and specially in His resurrection from the dead, He created us anew, after His

own image, into the likeness of the life which Christ had lived. In the power of that life and resurrection, we are able, we are perfectly fitted, for doing good works. As the eye, because it was created for the light, is most perfectly adapted for its work, as the vine-branch, because it was created to bear grapes, does its work so naturally, we who have been created in Christ Jesus for good work, may rest assured that a Divine capacity for good works is the very law of our being. If we but know and believe in this our destiny, if we but live our life in Christ Jesus, as we were new created in Him, we can, we will, be fruitful unto every good work.

'Created for good works, which God hath afore prepared that we should walk in them.' We have been prepared for the works, and the works prepared for us. To understand this, think of how God foreordained His servants of old, Moses and Joshua, Samuel and David, Peter and Paul, for the work He had for them, and foreordained equally the works for them. The feeblest member of the body is equally cared for by the Head as the most honored. The Father has prepared for the humblest of His children their works as much as for those who are counted chief. For every child God has a life plan, with work apportioned just according to the power, and grace provided just according to the work. And so just as strong and clear as the teaching, salvation not of works, is its blessed counterpart, salvation for good works, because God created us for them, and even prepared them for us.

And so the Scripture confirms the double lesson this little book desires to bring you. The one, that good works are God's object in the new life He has given you, and ought therefore to be as distinctly your object. As every human being was created for work, and endowed with the needful powers, and can only live out a true and healthy life by working, so every believer exists to do good works, that in them his life may be perfected, his fellowmen

may be blessed, his Father in heaven be glorified. We educate all our children with the thought that they must have their work in the world: when shall the Church learn that its great work is to train every believer to take his share in God's great work, and to abound in the good works for which he was created? Let each of us seek to take in the deep spiritual truth of the message, 'Created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God hath afore prepared' for each one, and which are waiting for him to take up and fulfill.

The other lesson—that waiting on God is the one great thing needed on our part if we would do the good works God has prepared for us. Let us take up into our hearts these words in their Divine meaning: We are God's workmanship. 'Not by one act in the past, but in a continuous operation. We are created for good works, as the great means for glorifying God. The good works are prepared for each of us, that we might walk in them. Surrender to and dependence upon God's working is our one need. Let us consider how our new creation for good works is all in Christ Jesus, and abiding in Him, believing on Him, and looking for His strength alone will become the habit of our soul. Created for good works! will reveal to us at once the Divine command and the sufficient power to live a life in good works.

Let us pray for the Holy Spirit to work the word into the very depths of our consciousness: Created in Christ Jesus for good works! In its light we shall learn what a glorious destiny, what an infinite obligation, what a perfect capacity is ours.

1. Our creation in Adam was for good works. It resulted in entire failure. Our new creation in Christ is for good works again. But with this difference: perfect provision has been made for securing them.

2. Created by God for good works; created by God in Christ Jesus; the good works prepared by God for us—let us pray for the Holy Spirit to show us and impart to us all this means.
3. Let the life in fellowship with God be true; the power for the work will be sure. As the life, so the work.

X: Work, for God works in You[\(TOC\)](#)

'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work, for His good pleasure.'—Philippians 2:12, 13

In our last chapter we saw what salvation is. It is our being God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works. It concludes, as one of its chief and essential elements, all that treasury of good works which God afore prepared that we should walk in them. In the light of this thought we get the true and full meaning of to-day's text. Work out your own salvation, such as God has meant it to be, a walk in all the good works which God has prepared for you. Study to know exactly what the salvation is God has prepared for you, all that He has meant and made it possible for you to be, and work it out with fear and trembling. Let the greatness of this Divine and most holy life, hidden in Christ, your own absolute impotence, and the terrible dangers and temptations besetting you, make you work in fear and trembling.

And yet, that fear need never become unbelief, nor that trembling discouragement, for—it is God which worketh in you. Here is the secret of a power that is absolutely sufficient for everything we have to do, of a perfect assurance that we can do all that God really means us to do. God works in us both to will and to work. First, to will; He gives the insight into what is to be done, the desire that makes the work pleasure, the firm purpose of the will that masters the whole being, and makes it ready and eager for action. And then to work. He does not work to will, and then leave its unaided to work it out ourselves. The will may have seen and accepted the work, and yet the

power be lacking to perform. The renewed will of Romans 7 delighted in God's law, and yet the man was impotent to do, until in Romans 8:2-4, by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, he was set free from the law of sin and death; then first could the righteousness of the law be fulfilled in him, as one who walked not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

One great cause of the failure of believers in their work is that, when they think that God has given them to will, they undertake to work in the strength of that will. They have never learnt the lesson, that because God has created us in Christ Jesus for good works, and has afore prepared the good works in which we are to walk, He must needs, and will most certainly, Himself work them all in us. They have never listened long to the voice speaking 'It is God which worketh in you.'

We have here to do with one of the deepest, most spiritual, and most precious truths of Scripture—the unceasing operation of Almighty God in our heart and life. In virtue of the very nature of God, as a Spiritual Being not confined to any place, but everywhere present, there can be no spiritual life but as it is upheld by His personal indwelling.

Not without the deepest reason does Scripture say, He worketh all in all. Not only of Him are all things as their first beginning, and to Him as their end, but also through Him, who alone maintains them.

In the man Christ Jesus the working of the Father in Him was the source of all He did. In the new man, created in Christ Jesus, the unceasing dependence on the Father is our highest privilege, our true nobility. This is indeed fellowship with God: God Himself working in us to will and to do.

Let us seek to learn the true secret of working for God. It is not, as many think, that we do our best, and then leave God to do the rest. By no means.

But it is this, that we know that God's working His salvation in us is the secret of our working it out. That salvation includes every work we have to do. The faith of God's working in us is the measure of our fitness to work effectively. The promises, 'According to your faith be it unto you,' 'All things are possible to him that believeth,' have their full application here. The deeper our faith in God's working in us, the more freely will the power of God work in us, the more true and fruitful will our work be.

Perhaps some Sunday school worker reads this. Let me ask, Have you really believed that your only power to do God's work is as one who has been created in Christ Jesus for good works, as one in whom God Himself works to will and to work? Have you yielded yourself to wait for that working? Do you work because you know God works in you? Say not that these thoughts are too high. The work of leading young souls to Christ is too high for us indeed, but if we live as little children, in believing that God will work all in us, we shall do His work in His strength. Pray much to learn and practice the lesson in all you do: Work, for God worketh in you.

1. I think we begin to feel that the spiritual apprehension of this great truth, 'God worketh in you,' is what all workers greatly need.
2. The Holy Spirit is the mighty power of God, dwelling in believers for life and for work. Beseech God to show it you, that in all our service our first care must be the daily renewing of the Holy Spirit.
3. Obey the command to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Believe in His indwelling. Wait for His teaching. Yield to His leading. Pray for His mighty working. Live in the Spirit.

4. What the mighty power of God works in us we are surely able to do. Only give way to the power working in you.

XI: Faith working by Love[\(TOC\)](#)

'In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love. Through love be servants one to another; for the whole law is fulfilled in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'—
Galatians 5:6, 13.

In Christ Jesus no external privilege avails. The Jew might boast of his circumcision, the token of God's covenant. The Gentile might boast of his uncircumcision, with an entrance into the Kingdom free from the Jewish law. Neither availed aught in the Kingdom of heaven—nothing but, as we have it in 6:15, a new creature, in which old things are passed away and all things become new. Or, as we have it in our text—as a description of the life of the new creature—nothing but faith working by love, that makes us in love serve one another.

What a perfect description of the new life. First you have faith, as the root, planted and rooted in Christ Jesus. Then as its aim you have works, as the fruit. And then between the two, as the tree, growing downwards into the root and bearing the fruit upward, you have love, with the life-sap flowing through it by which the root brings forth the fruit, Of faith we need not speak here. We have seen how believing on Jesus does the greater works; how the faith in the new creation, and in God working in us, is the secret of all work. Nor need we speak here of works—our whole book aims at securing for them the place in every heart and life that they have in God's heart and in His Word.

We have here to study specially the great truth that all work is to be love, that

faith cannot do its work but through love, that no works can have any worth but as they come of love, and that love alone is the sufficient strength for all the work we have to do.

The power for work is love—It was love that moved God to all His work in creation and redemption. It was love that enabled Christ as man to work and to suffer as He did. It is love that can inspire us with the power of a self-sacrifice that seeks not its own, but is ready to live and die for others. It is love that gives us the patience that refuses to give up the unthankful or the hardened. It is love that reaches and overcomes the most hopeless. Both in ourselves and those for whom we labor love is the power for work. Let us love as Christ loved us.

The power for love is faith—Faith roots its life in the life of Christ Jesus, which is all love. Faith knows, even when we cannot realize fully, the wonderful gift that has been given into our heart in the Holy Spirit shedding abroad God's love there. A spring in the earth may often be hidden or stopped up. Until it is opened the fountain cannot flow out. Faith knows that there is a fountain of love within that can spring up into eternal life, that can flow out as rivers of living waters. It assures us that we can love, that we have a Divine power to love within us, as an unalienable endowment of our new nature.

The power to exercise and show love is work—There is no such thing as power in the abstract; it only acts as it is exercised. Power in repose cannot be found or felt. This is specially true of the Christian graces, hidden as they are amid the weakness of our human nature. It is only by doing that you know that you have; a grace must be acted ere we can rejoice in its possession. This is the unspeakable blessedness of work, and makes it so essential to a healthy Christian life that it wakens up and strengthens love, and makes us partakers

of its joy.

Faith working by love—In Christ Jesus nothing avails but this. Workers for God! believe this. Practice it. Thank God much for the fountain of eternal love opened within you. Pray fervently and frequently that God may strengthen you with might by the power of His Spirit in your inner man, so that, with Christ dwelling in you, you may be rooted and grounded in love. And live then, your daily life, in your own home, in all your intercourse with men, in all your work, as a life of Divine love. The ways of love are so gentle and heavenly, you may not learn them all at once. But be of good courage, only believe in the power that worketh in you, and yield yourself to the work of love: it will surely gain the victory.

Faith working by love—In Christ Jesus nothing avails but this. Let me press home this message, too, on those who have never yet or only just begun to think of working for God. Come and listen.

You owe everything to God's love. The salvation you have received is all love. God's one desire is to fill you with His love. For His own satisfaction, for your own happiness, for the saving of men. Now, I ask you—Will you not accept God's wonderful offer to be filled with His love? Oh! come and give up heart and life to the joy and the service of His love. Believe that the fountain of love is within you; it will begin to flow as you make a channel for it by deeds of love. Whatever work for God you try to do, seek to put love into it. Pray for the spirit of love. Give yourself to live a life of love; to think how you can love those around you, by praying for them, by serving them, by laboring for their welfare, temporal and spiritual. Faith working by love in Christ Jesus, this alone availeth much.

1. 'Faith, Hope, Love: the greatest of these is Love.' There is no

faith or hope in God. But God is love. The most Godlike thing is love.

2. Love is the nature of God. When it is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit love becomes our new nature. Believe this, give yourself over to it, and act it out.
3. Love is God's power to do His work. Love was Christ's power. To work for God pray earnestly to be filled with love to souls!

XII: Bearing Fruit in every Good Work^(TOC)

'To walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all patience.'—Colossians 1:10

There is a difference between fruit and work. Fruit is that which comes spontaneously, without thought or will, the natural and necessary outcome of a healthy life. Work, on the contrary, is the product of effort guided by intelligent thought and will. In the Christian life we have the two elements in combination. All true work must be fruit, the growth and product of our inner life, the operation of God's Spirit within us. And yet all fruit must be work, the effect of our deliberate purpose and exertion. In the words, 'bearing fruit in every good work,' we have the practical summing up of the truth taught in some previous chapters. Because God works by His life in us, the work we do is fruit. Because, in the faith of His working, we have to will and to work, the fruit we bear is work. In the harmony between the perfect spontaneity that comes from God's life and Spirit animating us, and our co-operation with Him as His intelligent fellow-labourers, lies the secret of all true work.

In the words that precede our text, 'filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,' we have the human side, our need of knowledge and wisdom; in the words that follow, 'strengthened with all power, according to the might of His glory,' we have the Divine side. God teaching and strengthening, man learning to understand and patiently do His will; such is the double life that will be fruitful in every good work.

It has been said of the Christian life that the natural man must first become spiritual, and then again the spiritual man must become natural. As the whole natural life becomes truly spiritual, all our work will partake of the nature of fruit, the outgrowth of the life of God within us. And as the spiritual again becomes perfectly natural to us, a second nature in which we are wholly at home, all the fruit will bear the mark of true work, calling into full exercise every faculty of our being.

'Bearing fruit unto every good work.' The words, suggest again the great thought, that as an apple tree or a vine is planted solely for its fruit, so the great purpose of our redemption is that God may have us for His work and service. It has been well said: 'The end of man is an Action and not a Thought, though it were of the noblest.' It is in his work that the nobility of man's nature as ruler of the world is proved. It is for good works that we have been new created in Christ Jesus: It is when men see our good works that our Father in Heaven will be glorified and have the honor which is His due for His workmanship. In the parable of the vine our Lord insisted on this: 'He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit.' 'Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.' Nothing is more to the honor of a husbandman than to succeed in raising an abundant crop—much fruit is glory to God.

What need that every believer, even the feeblest branch of the Heavenly Vine, the man who has only one talent, be encouraged and helped, and even trained, to aim at the much fruit. A little strawberry plant may, in its measure, be bearing a more abundant crop than a large apple tree. The call to be fruitful in every good work is for every Christian without exception. The grace that fits for it, of which the prayer, in which our words are found, speaks, is for every one. Every branch fruitful in every good work—this is an

essential part of God's Gospel.

'Bearing fruit in every good work.' Let us study to get a full impression of the two sides of this Divine truth. God's first creation of life was in the vegetable kingdom. There it was a life without anything of will or self-effort, all growth and fruit was simply His own direct work, the spontaneous outcome of His hidden working. In the creation of the animal kingdom there was an advance. A new element was introduced—thought and will and work. In man these two elements were united in perfect harmony. The absolute dependence of the grass and the lily on the God who clothes them with their beauty were to be the groundwork of our relationship—nature has nothing but what it receives from God. Our works are to be fruit, the product of a God-given power. But to this was added the true mark of our God likeness the power of will and independent action: all fruit is to be our own work. As we grasp this we shall see how the most absolute acknowledgment of our having nothing in ourselves is consistent with the deepest sense of obligation and the strongest will to exert our powers to the very utmost. We shall learn to study the prayer of our text as those who must seek all their wisdom and strength from God alone. And we shall boldly give ourselves, as those who are responsible for the use of that wisdom and strength, to the diligence and the sacrifice and the effort needed for a life bearing fruit in every good work.

1. Much depends, for quality and quantity, on the healthy life of the tree. The life of God, of Christ Jesus, of His Spirit, the Divine life in you, is strong and sure.
2. That life is love. Believe in it. Act it out. Have it replenished day by day out of the fulness there is in Christ.
3. Let all your work be fruit; let all your willing and working be

inspired by the life of God. So will you walk worthily of the Lord with all pleasing.

XIII: Always abounding in the Work of the Lord^(TOC)

'Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast,, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.'—1 Corinthians 15:58

We all know the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, in its Divine revelation of the meaning of Christ's resurrection, with all the blessings of which it is the source.

It gives us a living Savior, who revealed Himself to His disciples on earth, and to Paul from heaven. It secures to us the complete deliverance from all sin. It is the pledge of His final victory over every enemy, when He gives up the kingdom to the Father, and God is all in all. It assures us of the resurrection of the body, and our entrance on the heavenly life. Paul had closed his argument with his triumphant appeal to Death and Sin and the Law: 'O Death, where is thy victory? The sting of Death is Sin, and the power of Sin is the Law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' And then follows, after fifty-seven verses of exultant teaching concerning the mystery and the glory of the resurrection life in our Lord and His people, just one verse of practical application: 'Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.' The faith in a risen, living Christ, and in all that His resurrection is to us in time and eternity, is to fit us for, is to prove itself in—abounding work for our Lord!

It cannot be otherwise. Christ's resurrection was His final victory over sin,

and death, and Satan, and His entrance upon His work of giving the Spirit from heaven and extending His kingdom throughout the earth. Those who shared the resurrection joy at once received the commission to make known the joyful news. It was so with Mary and the women. It was so with the disciples the evening of the resurrection day. 'As the Father sent Me, I send you.' It was so with all to whom the charge was given: 'Go into all the world, preach the Gospel to every creature.' The resurrection is the beginning and the pledge of Christ's victory over all the earth. That victory is to be carried out to its complete manifestation through His people. The faith and joy of the resurrection life are the inspiration and the power for the work of doing it. And so the call comes to all believers without exception: 'Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye always abounding in the work of the Lord!'

'In the work of the Lord.' The connection tells us at once what that work is. Nothing else, nothing less than, telling others of the risen Lord, and proving to them what new life Christ has brought to us. As we indeed know and acknowledge Him as Lord over all we are, and live in the joy of His service, we shall see that the work of the Lord is but one work—that of winning men to know and bow to Him. Amid all the forms of lowly, living, patient service, this will be the one aim, in the power of the life of the risen Lord, to make Him Lord of all.

This work of the Lord is no easy one. It cost Christ His life to conquer sin and Satan and gain the risen life. It will cost us our life, too—the sacrifice of the life of nature. It needs the surrender of all on earth to live in the full power of resurrection newness of life. The power of sin, and the world, in those around us is strong, and Satan does not yield his servants an easy prey to our efforts. It needs a heart in close touch with the risen Lord, truly living the resurrection life, to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the

work of the Lord. But that is a life that can be lived—because Jesus lives.

Paul adds: 'Forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord.' I have spoken more than once of the mighty influence that the certainty of reward for work, in the shape of wages or riches, exerts on the millions of earth's workers. And shall not Christ's workers believe that, with such a Lord, their reward is sure and great? The work is often difficult and slow, and apparently fruitless. We are apt to lose heart, because we are working in our strength and judging by our expectations. Let us listen to the message: 'O ye children of the resurrection life, be ye always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labor is not in vain in the Lord.' 'Let not your hands be weak; your work shall be rewarded.' 'You know that your labor is not vain in the Lord.'

'In the Lord.' The expression is a significant one. Study it in Romans 16 where it occurs ten times, where Paul uses the expressions: 'Receive here in the Lord;' 'my fellow-worker in Christ Jesus;' 'who are in Christ, in the Lord;' 'beloved in the Lord;' 'approved in Christ;' 'who labor in the Lord;' 'chosen in the Lord.' The whole life and fellowship and service of these saints had the one mark—they were, their labors were, in the Lord. Here is the secret of effectual service. Your labor is not 'in vain in the Lord.' As a sense of His presence and the power of His life is maintained, as all works are wrought in Him, His strength works in our weakness; our labor cannot be in vain in the Lord. Christ said: 'He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.' Oh! let not the children of this world, with their confidence that the masters whose work they are doing will certainly give them their due reward, put the children of light to shame. Let us rejoice and labor in the confident faith of the word: 'Your labor is not in vain in the Lord. Wherefore, beloved brethren, be ye always abounding in the work of the Lord.'

XIV: Abounding Grace for Abounding Work^(TOC)

'And God is able to make all grace abound unto you, that ye may abound unto every good work.'—2 Corinthians 9:8

In our previous meditation we had the great motive to abounding work—the spirit of triumphant joy which Christ's resurrection inspires as it covers the past and the future. Our text to-day assures us that for this abounding work we have the ability provided: God is able to make all grace abound, that we may abound to all good works. Every thought of abounding grace is to be connected with the abounding in good works for which it is given. And every thought of abounding work is to be connected with the abounding grace that fits for it.

Abounding grace has abounding work for its aim. It is often thought that grace and good works are at variance with each other. This is not so. What Scripture calls the works of the law, our own works, the works of righteousness which we have done, dead works—works by which we seek to merit or to be made fit for God's favor, these are indeed the very opposite of grace. But they are also the very opposite of the good works which spring from grace, and for which alone grace is bestowed. As irreconcilable as are the works of the law with the freedom of grace, so essential and indispensable are the works of faith, good works, to the true Christian life. God makes grace to abound, that good works may abound. The measure of true grace is tested and proved by the measure of good works. God's grace abounds in us that we may abound in good works. We need to have the truth

deeply rooted in us: Abounding grace has abounding work for its aim.

And abounding work needs abounding grace as its source and strength. There often is abounding work without abounding grace. Just as any man may be very diligent in an earthly pursuit, or a heathen in his religious service of an idol, so men may be very diligent in doing religious work in their own strength, with but little thought of that grace which alone can do true, spiritual effective work. For all work that is to be really acceptable to God, and truly fruitful, not only for some visible result here on earth, but for eternity, the grace of God is indispensable. Paul continually speaks of his own work as owing everything to the grace of God working in him: 'I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me' (1 Corinthians 15:10). 'According to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of His power' (Ephesians 3:7). And he as frequently calls upon Christians to exercise their gifts 'according to the grace that was given us' (Romans 12:6). 'The grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ' (Ephesians 4:7). It is only by the grace of God working in us that we can do what are truly good works. It is only as we seek and receive abounding grace that we can abound in every good work.

'God is able to make all grace abound unto you, that ye may abound in all good works.' With what thanksgiving every Christian ought to praise God for the abounding grace that is thus provided for him. And with what humiliation to confess that the experience of, and the surrender to, that abounding grace has been so defective. And with what confidence to believe that a life abounding in good works is indeed possible, because the abounding grace for it is so sure and so Divinely sufficient. And then, with what simple childlike dependence to wait upon God day by day to receive the more grace which He gives to the humble.

Child of God! do take time to study and truly apprehend God's purpose with you, that you abound in every good work! He means it! He has provided for it! Make the measure of your consecration to Him nothing less than His purpose for you. And claim, then, nothing less than the abounding grace He is able to bestow. Make His omnipotence and His faithfulness your confidence. And live ever in the practice of continual prayer and dependence upon His power working in you. This will make you abound in every good work. According to your faith be it unto you.

Christian worker, learn here the secret of all failure and all success. Work in our own strength, with little prayer and waiting on God for His spirit, is the cause of failure. The cultivation of the spirit of absolute impotence and unceasing dependence will open the heart for the workings of the abounding grace. We shall learn to ascribe all we do to God's grace. We shall learn to measure all we have to do by God's grace. And our life will increasingly be in the joy of God's making His grace to abound in us, and our abounding in every good work.

1. 'That ye may abound to every good work.' Pray over this now till you feel that this is what God has prepared for you.
2. If your ignorance and feebleness appear to make it impossible, present yourself to God, and say you are willing, if He will enable you to abound in good works, to be a branch that brings forth much fruit.
3. Take into your heart, as a living seed, the precious truth: God is able to make all grace abound in you. Trust His power and His faithfulness (Romans 4:20, 21; 1 Thessalonians 5:24).
4. Begin at once by doing lowly deeds of love. As the little child

in the kindergarten. Learn by doing.

XV: In the Work of Ministering^(TOC)

*'And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ.'—
Ephesians 4:11, 12*

The object with which Christ when He ascended to heaven bestowed on His servants the various gifts that are mentioned is threefold. Their first aim is—for the perfecting of the saints. Believers as saints are to be led on in the pursuit of holiness until they 'stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.' It was for this Epaphras labored in prayer. It is of this Paul writes: 'Whom we preach, teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ' (Colossians 4:12; 1:28).

This perfecting of the saints is, however, only a means to a higher end: unto the work of ministering, to fit all the saints to take their part in the service to which every believer is called. It is the same word as is used in texts as these: 'They ministered to Him of their substance; Ye ministered to the saints and do minister' (Luke 4:30, 8:3; 1 Corinthians 16:15; Hebrews 6:10; 1 Peter 4:11).

And this, again, is also a means to a still higher end: unto the building up of the body of Christ. As every member of our body takes its part in working for the health and growth and maintenance of the whole, so every member of the body of Christ is to consider it his first great duty to take part in all that can help to build up the body of Christ. And this, whether by the helping and strengthening of those who are already members, or the ingathering of those who are to belong to it. And the great work of the Church is, through its

pastors and teachers, so to labor for the perfecting of the saints in holiness and love and fitness for service, that every one may take his part in the work of ministering, that so, the body of Christ may be built up and perfected.

Of the three great objects with which Christ has given His Church apostles and teachers, the work of ministering stands thus in the middle. On the one hand, it is preceded by that on which it absolutely depends—the perfecting of the saints. On the other, it is followed by that which it is meant to accomplish—the building up of the body of Christ. Every believer without exception, every member of Christ's body, is called to take part in the work of ministering. Let every reader try and realize the sacredness of his holy calling.

Let us learn what the qualification is for our work. 'The perfecting of the saints' prepares them for the 'work of ministering.' It is the lack of true sainthood, of true holiness, that causes such lack and feebleness of service. As Christ's saints are taught and truly learn what conformity to Christ means, a life like his, given up in self-sacrifice for the service and salvation of men, as His humility and love, His separation from the world and devotion to the fallen, are seen to be the very essence and blessedness of the life He gives, the work of ministering, the ministry of love, will become the one thing we live for. Humility and Love—these are the two great virtues of the saint—they are the two great powers for the work of ministering. Humility makes us willing to serve; love makes us wise to know how to do it. Love is inventive; it seeks patiently, and suffers long, until it find a way to reach its object. Humility and love are equally turned away from self and its claims. Let us pray, let the Church labor for 'the perfecting of the saints' in humility and love, and the Holy Spirit will teach us how to minister.

Let us look at what the great work is the members of Christ have to do. It is

to minister to each other. Place yourself at Christ's disposal for service to your fellow Christians. Count yourself their servant. Study their interest. Set yourself actively to promote the welfare of the Christians round you.

Selfishness may hesitate, the feeling of feebleness may discourage, sloth and ease may raise difficulties—ask your Lord to reveal to you His will, and give yourself up to it. Round about you there are Christians who are cold and worldly and wandering from their Lord. Begin to think what you can do for them. Accept as the will of the Head that you as a member should care for them. Pray for the Spirit of love. Begin somewhere—only begin, and do not continue hearing and thinking while you do nothing. Begin 'the work of ministering' according to the measure of the grace you have. He will give more grace.

Let us believe in the power that worketh in us as sufficient for all we have to do. As I think of the thumb and finger holding the pen with which I write this, I ask, How is it that during all these seventy years of my life they have always known just to do my will? It was because the life of the head passed into and worked itself out in them. 'He that believeth on Me,' as his Head working in him, 'the works that I do shall he do also.' Faith in Christ, whose strength is made perfect in our weakness' will give the power for all we are called to do.

Let us cry to God that all believers may waken up to the power of this great truth: Every member of the body is to live wholly for the building up of the body.

1. To be a true worker the first thing is close, humble fellowship with Christ the Head, to be guided and empowered by Him.
2. The next is humble, loving fellowship with Christ's members

serving one another in love.

3. This prepares and fits for service in the world.

XVI: According to the Working of each several Part[\(TOC\)](#)

'That we may grow up in all things into Him, which is the Head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint together supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.'—Ephesians 4:15, 16.

The Apostle is here speaking of the growth, the increase, the building up of the body. This growth and increase has, as we have seen, a double reference. It includes both the spiritual uniting and strengthening of those who are already members, so as to secure the health of the whole body; and also the increase of the body by the addition of all who are as yet outside of it, and are to be gathered in. Of the former we spoke in the previous chapter—the mutual interdependence of all believers, and the calling to care for each other's welfare. In this chapter we look at the growth from the other side—the calling of every member of Christ's body to labor for its increase by the labor of love that seeks to bring in them who are not yet of it. This increase of the body and building up of itself in love can only be by the working in due measure of each several part.

Think of the body of a child; how does it reach the stature of a full-grown man? In no other way but by the working in due measure of every part. As each member takes its part, by the work it does in seeking and taking and assimilating food, the increase is made by its building up itself. Not from without, but from within, comes the work that assures the growth. In no other way can Christ's body attain to the stature of the fulness of Christ. As it is

unto Christ the Head we grow up, and from Christ the Head that the body maketh increase of itself, so it is all through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part. Let us see what this implies.

The body of Christ is to consist of all who believe in Him throughout the world. There is no possible way in which these members of the body can be gathered in, but by the body building itself tip in love. Our Lord has made Himself, as Head, absolutely dependent on His members to do this work. What nature teaches us of our own bodies, Scripture teaches us of Christ's body. The head of a child may have thought and plans of growth—they will all be vain, except as the members all do their part in securing that growth. Christ Jesus has committed to His Church the growth and increase of His body. He asks and expects that as wholly as He the Head lives for the growth and welfare of the body, every member of His body, the very feeblest, shall do the same, to the building up of the body in love. Every believer is to count it his one duty and blessedness to live and labor for the increase of the body, the ingathering of all who, are to be its members.

What is it that is needed to bring the Church to accept this calling, and to train and help the members of the body to know and fulfill it? One thing. We must see that the new birth and faith, that all insight into truth, with all resolve and surrender and effort to live according to it, is only a preparation for our true work. What is needed is that in every believer Jesus Christ be so formed, so dwell in the heart, that His life in us shall be the impulse and inspiration of our love to the whole body, and our life for it. It is because self occupies the heart that it is so easy and natural and pleasing to care for ourselves. When Jesus Christ lives in us, it will be as easy and natural and pleasing to live wholly for the body of Christ. As readily and naturally as the

thumb and fingers respond to the will and movement of the head will the members of Christ's body respond to the Head, as the body grows up into Him, and from Him maketh increase of itself.

Let us sum up. For the great work the Head is doing in gathering in from throughout the world and building up His body, He is entirely dependent on the service of the members. Not only our Lord, but a perishing world is waiting and calling for the Church to awake and give herself wholly to this work—the perfecting of the number of Christ's members. Every believer, the very feeblest, must learn to know his calling—to live with this as the main object of this existence. This great truth will be revealed to us in power, and obtain the mastery, as we give ourselves to the work of ministering according to the grace we already have. We may confidently wait for the full revelation of Christ in its as the power to do all He asks of its.

XVII: Women adorned with Good Work_(TOC)

'Let women adorn themselves; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment; but through good works. Let none be enrolled as a widow under threescore years old, well reported of for good works;... if she hath diligently followed every good work—1 Timothy 2:10, 5:9, 10.

In the three Pastoral Epistles, written to two young pastors to instruct them in regard to their duties, 'good works' are more frequently mentioned than in Paul's other Epistles. In writing to the Churches, as in a chapter like Romans 12 he mentions the individual good work by name. In writing to the pastors he had to use this expression as a summary of what, both in their own life and their teaching of others, they had to aim at. A minister was to be prepared to every good work, furnished completely to every good work, an ensample of good works. And they were to teach Christians—the women to adorn themselves with good works, diligently to follow every good work, to be well reported of for good works; the men to be rich in good works, zealous of good works, ready to every good work, to be careful and to learn to maintain good works. No portion of God's work presses home more definitely the absolute necessity of good works as an essential, vital element in the Christian life.

Our two texts speak of the good works of Christian women. In the first they are taught that their adorning is to be not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment, but, as becomes women preferring godliness, with good works. We know what adornment is. A leafless tree in winter has life; when

spring comes it puts on its beautiful garments, and rejoices in the adornment of foliage and blossom. The adorning of Christian women is not to be in hair or pearls or raiment, but in good works. Whether it be the good works that have reference to personal duty and conduct, or those works of beneficence that aim at the pleasing and helping of our neighbor or those that more definitely seek the salvation of souls—the adorning that pleases God, that gives true heavenly beauty, that will truly attract others to come and serve God, too, is what Christian women ought to seek after. John saw the holy city descend from heaven, 'made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.' 'The fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints' (Revelation 21:2, 24:8). Oh! that every Christian woman might seek so to adorn herself as to please the Lord that loved her.

In the second passage we read of widows who were placed upon a roll of honor in the early Church, and to whom a certain charge was given over the younger women. No one was to be enrolled who was not 'well reported of for good works.' Some of these are mentioned: if she has been known for the careful bringing up of her children, for her hospitality to strangers, for her washing the saints' feet, for her relieving the afflicted; and then there is added, 'if she hath diligently followed every good work.' If in her home and out of it, in caring for her own children, for strangers, for saints, for the afflicted, her life has been devoted to good works, she may indeed be counted fit to be an example and guide to others. The standard is a high one. It shows us the place good works took in the early Church. It shows how woman's blessed ministry of love was counted on and encouraged. It shows how, in the development of the Christian life, nothing so fits for rule and influence as a life given to good works.

Good works are part and parcel of the Christian life, equally indispensable to

the health and growth of the individual, and to the welfare and extension of the Church. And yet what multitudes of Christian women there are whose active share in the good work of blessing their fellow-creatures is little more than playing at good works. They are waiting for the preaching of a full gospel, which shall encourage and help and compel them to give their lives so to work for their Lord, that they, too, may be well reported of as diligently following every good work. The time and money, the thought and heart given to jewels or costly raiment will be redeemed to its true object. Religion will no longer be a selfish desire for personal safety, but the joy of being like Christ, the helper and savior of the needy. Work for Christ will take its true place as indeed the highest form of existence, the true adornment of the Christian life. And as diligence in the pursuits of earth is honored as one of the true elements of character and worth, diligently to follow good works in Christ's service will be found to give access to the highest reward and the fullest joy of the Lord.

1. We are beginning to awaken to the wonderful place woman can take in church and school and mission. This truth needs to be brought home to every one of the King's daughters, that the adorning in which they are to attract the world, to please their Lord, and enter His presence is—good works.
2. Woman, as the image of 'the weakness of God,' 'the meekness and gentleness of Christ,' is to teach man the beauty and the power of the long-suffering, self-sacrificing ministry of love.
3. The training for the service of love begins in the home life; is strengthened in the inner chamber; reaches out to the needy around, and finds its full scope in the world for which Christ died.

XVIII: Rich in Good Works[\(TOC\)](#)

'Charge them that are rich in the present world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed.'—1 Timothy 6:18.

If women are to regard good work as their adornment, men are to count them their riches. As good works satisfy woman's eye and taste for beauty, they meet man's craving for possession and power. In the present world riches have a wonderful significance. They are often God's reward on diligence, industry, and enterprise. They represent and embody the life-power that has been spent in procuring them. As such they exercise power in the honor or service they secure from others. Their danger consists in their being of this world, in their drawing off the heart from the living God and the heavenly treasures. They may become a man's deadliest enemy: How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of heaven!

The gospel never takes away anything from us without giving us something better in its stead. It meets the desire for riches by the command to be rich in good works. Good works are the coin that is current in God's kingdom: according to these will be the reward in the world to come. By abounding in good works we lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven. Even here on earth they constitute a treasure, in the testimony of a good conscience, in the consciousness of being well pleasing to God (1 John 3) in the power of blessing others.

There is more. Wealth of gold is not only a symbol of the heavenly riches; it

is actually, though so opposite in its nature, a means to it. 'Charge the rich that they do good, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up for themselves a good foundation.' 'Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles.' Even as the widow's mite, the gifts of the rich, when given in the same spirit, may be an offering with which God is well pleased (Hebrews 13:16). The man who is rich in money may become rich in good works, if he follows out the instructions Scripture lays down. The money must not be given to be seen of men 'but as unto the Lord. Nor as from an owner, but a steward who administers the Lord's money, with prayer for His guidance. Nor with any confidence in its power or influence, but in deep dependence on Him who alone can make it a blessing. Nor as a substitute for, or bringing out from that personal work and witness, which each believer is to give. As all Christian work, so our money giving has its value alone from the spirit in which it is done, even the spirit of Christ Jesus.

What a field there is in the world for accumulating these riches, these heavenly treasures. In relieving the poor, in educating the neglected, in helping the lost, in bringing the gospel to Christians and heathen in darkness, what investment might be made if Christians sought to be rich in good works, rich toward God. We may well ask the question, 'What can be done to waken among believers a desire for these true riches? Men have made a science of the wealth of nations, and carefully studied all the laws by which its increase and universal distribution can be promoted. How can the charge to be rich in good works find a response in the hearts that its pursuit shall be as much a pleasure and a passion as the desire for the riches of the present world?

All depends upon the nature, the spirit, there is in man. To the earthly nature, earthly riches have a natural affinity and irresistible attraction. To foster the

desire for the acquisition of what constitutes wealth in the heavenly kingdom, we must appeal to the spiritual nature. That spiritual nature needs to be taught and educated and trained into all the business habits that go to make a man rich. There must be the ambition to rise above the level of a bare existence, the deadly contentment with just being saved. There must be some insight into the beauty and worth of good works as the expression of the Divine life—God's working in us and our working in Him; as the means of bringing glory to God; as the source of life and blessing to men; as the laying up of a treasure in heaven for eternity. There must be a faith that these riches are actually within our reach, because the grace and Spirit of God are working in us. And then the outlook for every opportunity of doing the work of God to those around us, in the footsteps of Him who said, 'It is more blessed to give than receive.' Study and apply these principles—they will open the sure road to your becoming a rich man. A man who wants to be rich often begins on a small scale, but never loses an opportunity. Begin at once with some work of love, and ask Christ, who became poor, that you might be rich, to help you.

1. What is the cause that the appeal for money for missions meets with such insufficient response? It is because of the low spiritual state of the Church. Christians have no due conception of their calling to live wholly for God and His kingdom.
2. How can the evil be remedied? Only when believers see and accept their Divine calling to make God's kingdom their first care, and with humble confession of their sins yield themselves to God, will they truly seek the heavenly riches to be found in working for God.
3. Let us never cease to plead and labor for a true spiritual

awakening throughout the Church.

XIX: Prepared unto every Good Work^(TOC)

'If a man therefore cleanse himself from them, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work.'—2 Timothy 2:21.

Paul had spoken of the foundation of God standing sure (2:19), of the Church as the great house built upon that foundation, of vessels, not only of gold, silver, costly and lasting, vessels to honor, but also of wood and of earth, common and perishable, vessels to dishonor. He distinguishes between them of whom he had spoken, who gave themselves to striving about words and to vain babblings, and such as truly sought to depart from all iniquity. In our text he gives us the four steps in the path in which a man can become a vessel unto honor in the great household of God. These are, the cleansing from sin; the being sanctified; the meetness for the Master to use as He will; and last, the spirit of preparedness for every good work. It is not enough that we desire or attempt to do good works. As we need training and care to prepare us for every work we are to do on earth, we need it no less, or rather we need it much more, to be—what constitutes the chief mark of the vessels unto honour—to be prepared unto every good work.

'If a man cleanse himself from them'—from that which characterizes the vessels of dishonour—the empty profession leading to ungodliness, against which he had warned. In every dish and cup we use, how we insist upon it that it shall be clean. In God's house the vessels must much more be clean. And every one who would be truly prepared unto every good work must see

to this first of all, that he cleanse himself from all that is sin. Christ Himself could not enter upon His saving work in heaven until He had accomplished the cleansing of our sins. How can we become partners in His work, unless there be with us the same cleansing first. Ere Isaiah could say, 'Here am I, send me,' the fire of heaven had touched his lips, and he heard the voice, 'Thy sin is purged.' An intense desire to be cleansed from every sin lies at the root of fitness for true service.

'He shall be a vessel of honor, sanctified.' Cleansing is the negative side, the emptying out and removal of all that is impure. Sanctified, the positive side, the refilling and being possessed of the spirit of holiness, through whom the soul becomes God possessed, and so partakes of His holiness. 'Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit'—this first, then, and so 'perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.' In the temple the vessels were not only to be clean, but holy, devoted to God's service alone. He that would truly work for God must follow after holiness; 'a heart established in holiness' (1 Thessalonians 4:14), a holy habit of mind and disposition, yielded up to God and marked by a sense of His presence, fit for God's work. The cleansing from sin secures the filling with the Spirit.

'Meet for the Master's use.' We are vessels for our Lord to use. In every work we do, it is to be Christ using us and working through us. The sense of being a servant, dependent on the Master's guidance, working under the Master's eye, instruments used by Him and His mighty power, lies at the root of effectual service. It maintains that unbroken dependence, that quiet faith, through which the Lord can do His work. It keeps up that blessed consciousness of the work being all His, which leads the worker to become the humbler the more he is used. His one desire is—meet for the Master's use.

'Prepared unto every good work.' Prepared. The word not only means

equipment, fitness, but also the disposition, the alacrity which keeps a man on the outlook, and makes him earnestly desire and joyfully avail himself of every opportunity of doing his Master's work. As he lives in touch with his Lord Jesus, and holds himself as a cleansed and sanctified vessel, ready for Him to use, and he sees how good works are what he was redeemed for, and what his fellowship with his Lord is to be proved in, they become the one thing he is to live for. He is prepared unto every good work.

1. 'Meet for the Master's use,' that is the central thought. A personal relation to Christ, an entire surrender to His disposal, a dependent waiting to be used by Him, a joyful confidence that He will use us—such is the secret of true work.
2. Let the beginning of your work be a giving yourself into the hands of the Master, as your living, loving Lord.

XX: Furnished completely unto every Good Work^(TOC)

'Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth.'—2 Timothy 2:15

'Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.'—2 Timothy 3:16, 17

A workman that needeth not to be ashamed is one who is not afraid to have the master come and inspect his work. In hearty devotion to it, in thoroughness and skill, he presents himself approved to him who employs him. God's workers are to give diligence to present themselves approved to Him; to have their work worthy of Him unto all well pleasing. They are to be as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. A workman is one who knows his work, who gives himself wholly to it, who is known as a working man, who takes delight in doing his work well. Such every Christian minister, every Christian worker, is to be—a workman that makes a study of it to invite and expect the Master's approval.

'Handling aright the word of truth.' The word is a seed, a fire, a hammer, a sword, is bread, is light. Workmen in any of these spheres can be our example. In work for God everything depends upon handling the word aright. Therefore it is that, in the second text quoted above, the personal subjection to the word, and the experience of its power, is spoken of as the one means of our being completely furnished to every good work. God's workers must

know that the Scripture is inspired of God, and has the life and life-giving power of God in it. Inspired is Spirit-breathed—the life in a seed, God's Holy Spirit is in the word. The Spirit in the word and the Spirit in our heart is One. As by the power of the Spirit within us we take the Spirit-filled word we become spiritual men. This word is given for teaching, the revelation of the thoughts of God; for reproof, the discovery of our sins and mistakes; for correction, the removal of what is defective to be replaced by what is right and good; for instruction which is in righteousness, the communication of all the knowledge needed to walk before God in His ways. As one yields himself wholly and heartily to all this, and the true Spirit-filled word gets mastery of his whole being, he becomes a man of God, complete and furnished completely to every good work. He becomes a workman approved of God, who needs not to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of God. And so the man of God has the double mark—his own life wholly molded by the Spirit breathed word—and his whole work directed by his rightly handling that word.

'That the man of God may be complete, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.' In our previous meditation we learnt how in the cleansing and sanctification of the personal life the worker becomes a vessel meet for the Masters use, prepared unto every good work. Here we learn the same lesson—it is the man of God who allows God's word to do its work of reproof and correcting and instructing in his own life who will be complete, completely furnished unto every good work. Complete equipment and readiness for every good work—that is what every worker for God must aim at.

If any worker, conscious of how defective his preparation is, ask how this complete furnishing for every good work is to be attained, the analogy of an

earthly workman, who needs not be ashamed, suggests the answer. He would tell us that he owes his success, first of all, to devotion to his work. He gave it his close attention. He left other things to concentrate his efforts on mastering one thing. He made it a life study to do his work perfectly. They who would do Christ's work as a second thing, not as the first, and who are not willing to sacrifice all for it, will never be complete or completely furnished to every good work.

The second thing he will speak of will be patient training and exercise. Proficiency only comes through painstaking effort. You may feel as if you know not how or what to work aright. Fear not—all learning begins with ignorance and mistakes. Be of good courage. He who has endowed human nature with the wonderful power that has filled the world with such skilled and cunning workmen, will He not much more give His children the grace they need to be His fellow workers? Let the necessity that is laid upon you—the necessity that you should glorify God, that you should bless the world, that you should through work ennoble and perfect your life and blessedness, urge you to give immediate and continual diligence to be a workman completely furnished unto every good work.

It is only in doing we learn to do aright. Begin working under Christ's training; He will perfect His work in you, and so fit you for your work for him.

1. The work God is doing, and seeking to have done in the world, is to win it back to Himself.
2. In this work every believer is expected to take part.
3. God wants us to be skilled workmen, who give our whole heart to His work, and delight in it.

4. God does His work by working in us, inspiring and strengthening us to do His work.
5. What God asks is a heart and life devoted to Him in surrender and faith.
6. As God's work is all love, love is the power that works in us, inspiring our efforts and conquering its object.

XXI: Zealous of Good Works^(TOC)

'He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us for Himself, a people of His own, zealous of good works.'—Titus 2:14

In these words we have two truths—what Christ has done to make us His own, and what He expects of us. In the former we have a rich and beautiful summary of Christ's work for us: He gave Himself for us, He redeemed us from all iniquity, He cleansed us for Himself, He took us for a people, for His own possession. And all with the one object, that we should be a people zealous of good works. The doctrinal half of this wonderful passage has had much attention bestowed on it; let us devote our attention to its practical part—we are to be a people zealous of good works. Christ expects of us that we shall be zealots for good works—ardently, enthusiastically devoted to their performance.

This cannot be said to be the feeling with which most Christians regard good works. What can be done to cultivate this disposition? One of the first things that wakens zeal in work is a great and urgent sense of need. A great need wakens strong desire, stirs the heart and the will, rouses all the energies of our being. It was this sense of need that roused many to be zealous of the law; they hoped their works would save them. The Gospel has robbed this motive of its power. Has it taken away entirely the need of good works? No, indeed, it has given that urgent need a higher place than before. Christ needs, needs urgently, our good works. We are His servants, the members of His body, without whom He cannot possibly carry on His work on earth. The work is so great—with the hundreds of millions of the unsaved—the work is so great,

that not one worker can be spared. There are thousands of Christians to-day who feel that their own business is urgent, and must be attended to, and have no conception of the urgency of Christ's work committed to them. The Church must waken up to teach each believer this.

As urgently as Christ needs our good works the world needs them. There are around you men and women and children who need saving. To see men swept down past us in a river, stirs our every power to try and save them. Christ has placed His people in a perishing world, with the expectation that they will give themselves, heart and soul, to carry on His work of love. Oh! let us sound forth the blessed Gospel message: He gave Himself for us that He might redeem us for Himself, a people of His own, to serve Him and carry on His work—zealous of good works.

A second great element of zeal in work is delight in it. An apprentice or a student mostly begins his work under a sense of duty. As he learns to understand and enjoy it, he does it with pleasure, and becomes zealous in its performance. The Church must train Christians to believe that when once we give our hearts to it, and seek for the training that makes us in some degree skilled workmen, there is no greater joy than that of sharing in Christ's work of mercy and beneficence. As physical and mental activity give pleasure, and call for the devotion and zeal of thousands, the spiritual service of Christ can waken our highest enthusiasm.

Then comes the highest motive, the personal one of attachment to Christ our Redeemer: 'The love of Christ constraineth us.' The love of Christ to us is the source and measure of our love to Him. Our love to Him becomes the power and the measure of our love to souls. This love, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, this love as a Divine communication, renewed in us by the renewing of the Holy Ghost day by day, becomes a zeal for Christ that shows

itself as a zeal for good works. It becomes the link that unites the two parts of our text, the doctrinal and the practical, into one. Christ's love, that gave Himself for us, that redeemed us from all iniquity, that cleansed us for Himself, that made us a people of His own in the bonds of an everlasting loving kindness, that love believed in, known, received into the heart, makes the redeemed soul of necessity zealous in good works.

'Zealous of good works!' Let no believer, the youngest, the feeblest, look upon this grace as too high. It is Divine, provided for and assured in the love of our Lord. Let us accept it as our calling. Let us be sure it is the very nature of the new life within us. Let us, in opposition to all that nature or feeling may say, in faith claim it as an integral part of our redemption—Christ Himself will make it true in us.

XXII: Ready to every Good Work^(TOC)

'Put them in mind to be ready to every good work.'—Titus 3:1

'Put them in mind.' The words suggest the need of believers to have the truths of their calling to good works ever again set before them. A healthy tree spontaneously bears its fruit. Even where the life of the believer is in perfect health, Scripture teaches us how its growth and fruitfulness only come through teaching, and the influence that exerts on mind and will and heart. For all who have charge of others the need is great of Divine wisdom and faithfulness to teach and train all Christians, specially young and feeble Christians, to be ready to every good work. Let us consider some of the chief points of such training.

Teach them clearly what good works are. Lay the foundation in the will of God, as revealed in the law, and show them how integrity and righteousness and obedience are the groundwork of Christian character. Teach them how in all the duties and relationships of daily life true religion is to be carried out. Lead them on to the virtues which Jesus specially came to exhibit and teach—humility, meekness and gentleness and love. Open out to them the meaning of a life of love, self-sacrifice, and beneficence entirely given to think of and care for others. And then carry them on to what is the highest, the true life of good works—the winning of men to know and love God.

Teach them what an essential part of the Christian life good works are. They are not, as many think, a secondary element in the salvation which God gives. They are not merely to be done in token of our gratitude, or as a proof of the sincerity of our faith, or as a preparation for heaven. They are all this, but

they are a great deal more. They are the very object for which we have been redeemed: we have been created anew unto good works. They alone are the evidence that man has been restored to his original destiny of working as God Works, and with God, and because God works through him. God has no higher glory than His works, and specially His work of saving love. In becoming imitators of God, and walking and working in love, even as Christ loved us and gave Himself for us, we have the very image and likeness of God restored in us. The works of a man not only reveal his life, they develop and exercise, they strengthen and perfect it. Good works are of the very essence of the Divine life in us.

Teach them, too, what a rich reward they bring. All labor has its market value. From the poor man who scarce can earn a shilling a day, to the man who has made his millions, the thought of the reward there is for labor has been one of the great incentives to undertake it. Christ appeals to this feeling when He says, 'Great shall be your reward.' Let Christians understand that there is no service where the reward is so rich as that of God. Work is bracing, work is strength, and cultivates the sense of mastery and conquest. Work wakens enthusiasm and calls out a man's noblest qualities. In a life of good works the Christian becomes conscious of his Divine ministry of dispensing the life and grace of God to others. They bring us into closer union with God. There is no higher fellowship with God than fellowship in His saving work of love. It brings us into sympathy with Him and His purposes; it fills us with His love; it secures His approval. And great is the reward, too, on those around us. When others are won to Christ, when the weary and the erring and the desponding are helped and made partakers of the grace and life there are in Christ Jesus for them, God's servants share in the very joy in which our blessed Lord found His recompense.

And now the chief thing. Teach them to believe that it is possible for each of us to abound in good works. Nothing is so fatal to successful effort as discouragement or despondency. Nothing is more a frequent cause of neglect of good works than the fear that we have not the power to perform them. Put them in mind of the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. Show them that God's promise and provision of strength is always equal to what He demands; that there is always grace sufficient for all the good works to which we are called. Strive to waken in them a faith in 'the power that worketh in us,' and in the fulness of that life which can flow out as rivers of living water. Train them to begin at once their service of love. Lead them to see how it is all God working in them, and to offer themselves as empty vessels to be filled with His love and grace. And teach them that as they are faithful in a little, even amid mistakes and shortcomings, the acting out of the life will strengthen the life itself, and work for God will become in full truth a second nature.

God grant that the teachers of the Church may be faithful to its commission in regard to all her members—'Put them in mind to be ready for every good work.' Not only teach them, but train them. Show them the work there is to be done by them; see that they do it; encourage and help them to do it hopefully. There is no part of the office of a pastor more important or more sacred than this, or fraught with richer blessing. Let the aim be nothing less than to lead every believer to live entirely devoted to the work of God in winning men to Him. What a change it would make in the Church and the world!

1. Get a firm hold of the great root-principle. Every believer, every member of Christ's body, has his place in the body solely for the welfare of the whole body.
2. Pastors have been given for the perfecting of the saints with

the work of ministering, of serving in love.

3. In ministers and members of the churches, Christ will work mightily if they will wait upon Him.

XXIII: Careful to maintain Good Works^(TOC)

'I will that thou affirm these things confidently, to the end that they which have believed God may be careful to maintain good works. Let our people also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.'—Titus 3:8, 14

In the former of these passages Paul charges Titus confidently to affirm the truths of the blessed Gospel to the end, with the express object that all who had believed should be careful, should make a study of it, to maintain good works. Faith and good works were to be inseparable; the diligence of every believer in good works was to be a main aim of a pastor's work. In the second passage he reiterates the instruction, with the expression, let them learn, suggesting the thought that, as all work on earth has to be learned, so in the good works of the Christian life there is an equal need of thought and application and teachableness, to learn how to do them aright and abundantly.

There may be more than one reader of this little book who has felt how little he has lived in accordance with all the teaching of God's word, prepared, thoroughly furnished, ready unto, zealous of good works. It appears so difficult to get rid of old habits, to break through the conventionalities of society, to know how to begin and really enter upon a life that can be full of good works, to the glory of God. Let me try and give some suggestions that may be helpful. They may also aid those who have the training of Christian workers, in showing in what way the teaching and learning of good works may best succeed. Come, young workers all, and listen.

1. A learner must begin by beginning to work at once. There is no way of learning an art like swimming or music, a new language or a trade, but by practice. Let neither the fear that you cannot do it, nor the hope that something will happen that will make it easier for you, keep you back. Learn to do good works, the works of love, by beginning to do them. However insignificant they appear, do them. A kind word, a little help to some one in trouble, an act of loving attention to a stranger or a poor man, the sacrifice of a seat or a place to some one who longs for it—practise these things. All plants we cultivate are small at first. Cherish the consciousness that, for Jesus' sake, you are seeking to do what would please Him. It is only in doing you can learn to do.
2. The learner must give his heart to the work, must take interest and pleasure in it. Delight in work ensures success. Let the tens of thousands around you in the world who throw their whole soul into their daily business, teach you how to serve your blessed Master. Think sometimes of the honor and privilege of doing good works, of serving others in love. It is God's own work, to love and save and bless men. He works it in you and through you. It makes you share the spirit and likeness of Christ. It strengthens your Christian character. Without actions, intentions lower and condemn a man instead of raising him. Only as much as you act out, do you really live. Think of the Godlike blessedness of doing good, of communicating life, of making happy. Think of the exquisite joy of growing up into a life of beneficence, and being the blessing of all you meet. Set your heart upon being a vessel

meet for the Master's use, ready to every good work.

3. Be of good courage, and fear not. The learner who says I cannot, will surely fail. There is a Divine power working in you. Study and believe what God's word says about it. Let the holy self-reliance of St. Paul, grounded on his reliance on Christ, be your example: I can do all things—in Christ which strengtheneth me. Study and take home to yourself the wonderful promises about the power of the Holy Spirit, the abundance of grace, Christ's strength made perfect in weakness, and see how all this can only be made true to you in working. Cultivate the noble consciousness that as you have been created to good works by God, He Himself will fit you for them. And believe then that just as natural as it is to any workman to delight and succeed in his profession, it can be to the new nature in you to abound in every good work. Having this confidence, you need never faint.
4. Above all, cling to your Lord Jesus as your Teacher and Master. He said: 'Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls.' Work as one who is a learner in His school, who is sure that none teaches like Him, and is therefore confident of success. Cling to Him, and let a sense of His presence and His power working in you make you meek and lowly, and yet bold and strong. He who came to do the Father's work on earth, and found it the path to the Father's glory, will teach you what it is to work for God.

To sum up again, for the sake of any who want to learn how to work, or how to work better:

1. Yield yourself to Christ. Lay yourself on the altar, and say you wish to give yourself wholly to live for God's work.
2. Believe quietly that Christ accepts and takes charge of you for His work, and will fit you for it.
3. Pray much that God would open to you the great truth of His own working in you. Nothing else can give true strength.
4. Seek to cultivate a spirit of humble, patient, trustful dependence upon God. Live in loving fellowship with Christ, and obedience to Him. You can count upon His strength being made perfect in your weakness.

XXIV: As His Fellow-Workers(TOC)

*'We are God's fellow workers: ye are God's building.'—1 Corinthians 3:9
'And working together with Him we intreat that ye receive not the grace of
God in vain.'—2 Corinthians 6:1*

We have listened to Paul's teaching on good works ([Chapters IX-XXII](#)); let us turn now to his personal experience, and see if we can learn from him some of the secrets of effective service.

He speaks here of the Church as God's building, which, as the Great Architect, He is building up into a holy temple and dwelling for Himself. Of his own work, Paul speaks as of that of a master builder, to whom a part of the great building has been given in charge. He had laid a foundation in Corinth; to all who were working there he said: 'Let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon.' 'We are God's fellow workers.' The word is applicable not only to Paul, but to all God's servants who take part in His work; and because every believer has been called to give his life to God's service and to win others to His knowledge, every, even the feeblest, Christian needs to have the word brought to him and taken home: 'We are God's fellow workers.' How much it suggests in regard to our working for God!

As to the work we have to do—The eternal God is building for Himself a temple; Christ Jesus, God's Son, is the foundation; believers are the living stones. The Holy Spirit is the mighty power of God through which believers are gathered out of the world made fit for their place in the temple, and built up into it. As living stones, believers are at the same time the living workmen, whom God uses to carry out His work. They are equally God's

workmanship and God's fellow workers. The work God is doing He does through them. The work they have to do is the very work God is doing. God's own work, in which He delights, on which His heart is set, is saving men and building them into His temple. This is the one work on which the heart of every one who would be a fellow worker with God must be set. It is only as we know how great, how wonderful, this work of God is—giving life to dead souls, imparting His own life to them, and living in them—that we shall enter somewhat into the glory of our work, receiving the very life of God from Him, and passing it on to men.

As to the strength for the work—Paul says of his work as a mere master builder, that it was 'according to the grace of God which was given me.' For Divine work nothing but Divine power suffices. The power by which God works must work in us. That power is His Holy, Spirit. Study the second chapter of this Epistle, and the third of the Second, and see how absolute was Paul's acknowledgment of his own impotence, and his dependence on the teaching and power of the Holy Spirit. As this great truth begins to live in the hearts of God's workers, that God's work can only be done by God's power in us, we shall feel that our first need every day is to have the presence of God's Spirit renewed within us. The power of the Holy Spirit is the power of love. God is love. All He works for the salvation of men is love; it is love alone that truly conquers and wins the heart. In all God's fellow workers love is the power that reaches the hearts of men. Christ conquered and conquers still by the love of the cross. Let that mind be in you, O worker, which was in Christ Jesus, the spirit of a love that sacrifices itself to the death, of a humble, patient, gentle love, and you will be made meet to be God's fellow worker.

As to the relation we are to hold to God—In executing the plans of some great building the master builder has but one care—to carry out to the

minutest detail the thoughts of the architect who designed it. He acts in constant consultation with him, and is guided in all by his will; and his instructions to those under him have all reference to the one thing—the embodiment, in visible shape, of what the master mind has conceived. The one great characteristic of fellow workers with God ought to be that of absolute surrender to His will, unceasing dependence on His teaching, exact obedience to His wishes. God has revealed His plan in His Word. He has told us that His Spirit alone can enable us to enter into His plans, and fully master His purpose with the way he desires to have it carried out. The clearer our insight into the Divine glory of God's work of saving souls, into the utter insufficiency of our natural powers to do the work, into the provision, that has been made by which the Divine love can animate us, and the Divine Spirit guide and strengthen us for its due performance, the more we shall feel that a childlike teachableness, a continual looking upward and waiting on God, is ever to be the chief mark of one who is His fellow-labourer. Out of the sense of humility, helplessness, and nothingness there will grow a holy confidence and courage that knows that our weakness need not hinder us, that Christ's strength is made perfect in weakness, that God Himself is working out His purpose through us. And of all the blessings of the Christian life, the most wonderful will be that we are allowed to be—God's fellow workers!

1. God's fellow worker! How easy to use the word, and even to apprehend some of the great truths it contains! How little we live in the power and the glory of what it actually involves!
2. Fellow-workers with God! Everything depends upon knowing, in His holiness and love, the God with whom we are associated as partners.
3. He who has chosen us, that in and through us He might do His

great work, will fit us for His use.

4. Let our posture be adoring worship, deep dependence, great waiting, full obedience.

XXV: According to the Working of His Power^(TOC)

'Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily.'—Colossians 1:29
'The mystery of Christ, whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of His power.'—Ephesians 3:7

In the words of Paul to the Philippians, which we have already considered ([Chapter IX.](#)), in which he called upon them and encouraged them to work, because it was God who worked in them, we found one of the most pregnant and comprehensive statements of the great truth that it is only by God's working in us that we can do true work. In our texts for this chapter we have Paul's testimony as to his own experience. His whole ministry was to be according to the grace which was given him according to the working of God's power. And of his labor he says that it was a striving according to the power of Him who worked mightily in him.

We find here the same principle we found in our Lord—the Father doing the works in Him. Let every worker who reads this pause, and say—If the ever blessed Son, if the Apostle Paul, could only do their work according to the working of His power who worked in them mightily, how much more do I need this working of God in me, to fit me for doing His work aright. This is one of the deepest spiritual truths of God's word; let us look to the Holy Spirit within us to give it such a hold of our inmost life, that it may become the deepest inspiration of all our work. I can only do true work as I yield myself

to God to work in me.

We know the ground on which this truth rests, 'There is none good but God'; 'There is none holy but the Lord'; 'Power belongeth unto God.' All goodness and holiness and power are only to be found in God, and where He gives them. And He can only give them in the creature, not as something He parts with, but by His own actual presence and dwelling and working. And so God can only work in His people in as far as He is allowed to have complete possession of the heart and life. As our will and life and love are yielded up in dependence and faith, and God is waited on to keep possession and to abide, even as Christ waited on Him, God can work in us.

This is true of all our spiritual life, but specially of our work for God. The work of saving souls is God's own work: none but He can do it. The gift of His Son is the proof of how great and precious He counts the work, and how His heart is set upon it. His love never for one moment ceases working for the salvation of men. And when He calls His children to be partners in His work, He shares with them the joy and the glory of the work of saving and blessing men. He promises to work His work through them, inspiring and energizing them by His power working in them. To him who can say with Paul: 'I labor, striving according to His power who worketh in me mightily,' his whole relation to God becomes the counterpart and the continuation of Christ's, a blessed, unceasing, momentary, and most absolute dependence on the Father for every word He spoke and every work He did.

Christ is our pattern. Christ's life is our law and works in us. Christ lived in Paul his life of dependence on God. Why should any of us hesitate to believe that the grace given to Paul of laboring and striving 'according to the working of the power' will be given to us too. Let every worker learn to say—As the power that worked in Christ worked in Paul too, that power works no less in

me. There is no possible way of working God's work aright, but by God working it in us.

How I wish that I could take every worker who reads this by the hand, and say—Come, my brother! let us quiet our minds, and hush every thought in God's presence, as I whisper in your ears the wonderful secret: God is working in you. All the work you have to do for Him, God will work in you. Take time and think it over. It is a deep spiritual truth which the mind cannot grasp nor the heart realize. Accept it as a Divine truth from heaven; believe that this word is a seed out of which can grow the very spiritual blessing of which it speaks. And in the faith of the Holy Spirit's making it live within you, say ever again: God worketh in me. All the work I have to work for Him, God will work in me.

The faith of this truth, and the desire to have it made true in you, will constrain you to live very humbly and closely with God. You will see how work for God must be the most spiritual thing in a spiritual life. And you will ever anew bow in holy stillness: God is working; God will work in me; I will work for Him according to the power which worketh in me mightily.

1. The gift of the grace of God (Ephesians 2:7, 3:7), the power that worketh in us (Ephesians 3:20), the strengthening with might by the Spirit (Ephesians 3:16)—the three expressions all contain the same thought of God's working all in us.
2. The Holy Spirit is the power of God. Seek to be filled with the Spirit, to have your whole life led by Him, and you will become fit for God's working mightily in you.
3. 'Ye shall receive the power of the Holy Spirit coming on you.'
Through the Spirit dwelling in us God can work in us mightily.

4. What holy fear, what humble watchfulness and dependence, what entire surrender and obedience become us if we believe in God's working in us.

XXVI: Laboring more Abundantly^(TOC)

'By the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed on me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.'—1 Corinthians 15:10

'And He hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My power is made perfect in weakness.... In nothing was I behind the chiefest of the apostles, though I am nothing.'—2 Corinthians 12:9, 11

In both of these passages Paul speaks of how he had abounded in the work of the Lord. 'In nothing was I behind the chiefest of the Apostles.' 'I labored more abundantly, than they all.' In both he tells how entirely it was all of God, who worked in Him, and not of himself. In the first he says: 'Not I, but the grace of God which was with me.' And then in the second, showing how this grace is Christ's strength working in us, while we are nothing, he tells us: 'He said unto me: My grace is sufficient for thee: My power is made perfect in weakness.' May God give us 'the Spirit of revelation, enlightened eyes of the heart,' to see this wonderful vision, a man who knows himself to be nothing, glorying in his weakness, that the power of Christ may rest on him, and work through him, and who so labors more abundantly than all. What does this teach us as workers for God[?]

God's work can only be done in God's strength—It is only by God's power, that is, by God Himself working in us, that we can do effective work.

Throughout this little book this truth has been frequently repeated. It is easy to accept of it; it is far from easy to see its full meaning, to give it the mastery over our whole being, to live it out. This will need stillness of soul, and meditation, strong faith and fervent prayer. As it is God alone who can work

in us, it is equally God who alone can reveal Himself as the God who works in us. Wait on Him, and the truth that ever appears to be beyond thy reach will be opened up to thee, through the knowledge of who and what God is. When God reveals Himself as 'God who worketh all in all,' thou wilt learn to believe and work 'according to the power of Him who worketh in thee mightily.'

God's strength can only work in weakness—It is only when we truly say, Not I! that we can fully say, but the grace of God with me. The man who said, In nothing behind the chiefest of the Apostles! had first learnt to say, though I am nothing. He could say: 'I take pleasure in weaknesses, for when I am weak then am I strong.' This is the true relation between the Creator and the creature, between the Divine Father and His child, between God and His servant. Christian worker! learn the lesson of thine own weakness, as the indispensable condition of God's Power working in thee. Do believe that to take time and in God's presence to realize thy weakness and nothingness is the sure way to be clothed with God's strength. Accept every experience by which God teaches thee thy weakness as His grace preparing thee to receive His strength. Take pleasure in weaknesses!

God's strength comes in our fellowship with Christ and His service—Paul says: I will glory in my weakness, that the strength of Christ may rest upon me.' 'I take pleasure in weaknesses for Christ's sake.' And he tells how it was when he had besought the Lord that the messenger of Satan might depart from him, that He answered: 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' 'Christ is the wisdom and the power of God.' We do not receive the wisdom to know, or the power to do God's will as something that we can possess and use at discretion. It is in the personal attachment to Christ, in a life of continual communication with Him, that His power rests on us. It is in taking pleasure

in weaknesses for Christ's sake that Christ's strength is known.

God's strength is given to faith, and the work that is done in faith—It needs a living faith to take pleasure in weaknesses, and in weakness to do our work, knowing that God is working in us. Without seeing or feeling anything, to go on in the confidence of a hidden power working in us—this is the highest exercise of a life of faith. To do God's own work in saving souls, in persevering severing prayer and labor; amid outwardly unfavorable circumstances and appearances still to labor more abundantly—this faith alone can do. Let us be strong in faith, giving glory to God. God will show Himself strong towards him whose heart is perfect with Him.

My brother! be willing to yield yourself to the very utmost to God, that His power may rest upon you, may work in you. Do let God work through you. Offer yourself to Him for His work as the one object of your life. Count upon His working all in you, to fit you for His service, to strengthen and bless you in it. Let the faith and love of your Lord Jesus, whose strength is going to be made perfect in your weakness, lead you to live even as He did, to do the Father's will and finish His work.

1. Let every minister seek the full personal experience of Christ's strength made perfect in His weakness: this alone will fit him to teach believers the secret of their strength.
2. Our Lord says: 'My grace, My strength.' It is as, in close personal fellowship and love, we abide in Christ, and have Christ abiding in us, that His grace and strength can work.
3. It is a heart wholly given up to God, to His will and love, that will know his power working in our weakness.

XXVII: A Doer that worketh shall be blessed in Doing[\(TOC\)](#)

'Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves. He that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth, but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in doing.'—James 1:22, 25

'God created us not to contemplate but to act. He created us in His own image, and in Him there is no Thought without simultaneous Action.' True action is born of contemplation. True contemplation, as a means to an end, always begets action. If sin had not entered there had never been a separation between knowing and doing. In nothing is the power of sin more clearly seen than this, that even in the believer there is such a gap between intellect and conduct. It is possible to delight in hearing, to be diligent in increasing our knowledge of God's word, to admire and approve the truth, even to be willing to do it, and yet to fail entirely in the actual performance. Hence the warning of James, not to delude ourselves with being hearers and not doers. Hence his pronouncing the doer who worketh blessed in his doing.

Blessed in doing—The words are a summary of the teaching of our Lord Jesus at the close of the Sermon on the Mount: 'He that doeth the will of My Father shall enter the kingdom of heaven.' 'Every one that heareth My words, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man.' To the woman who spoke of the blessedness of her who was his mother: 'Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.' To the disciples in the last night: 'If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.' It is one of the greatest

dangers in religion that we rest content with the pleasure and approval which a beautiful representation of a truth calls forth, without the immediate performance of what it demands. It is only when conviction has been translated into conduct that we have proof that the truth is mastering us.

A doer that worketh shall be blessed in doing—The doer is blessed. The doing is the victory that overcomes every obstacle it brings out and confirms the very image of God, the Great Worker; it removes every barrier to the enjoyment of all the blessing God has prepared. We are ever inclined to seek our blessedness in what God gives, in privilege and enjoyment. Christ placed it in what we do, because it is only in doing that we really prove and know and possess the life God has bestowed. When one said, 'Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God,' our Lord answered with the parable of the supper, 'Blessed is he that forsakes all to come to the supper.' The doer is blessed. As surely as it is only in doing that the painter or musician, the man of science or commerce, the discoverer or the conqueror find their blessedness, so, and much more, is it only in keeping the commandments and in doing the will of God that the believer enters fully into the truth and blessedness of deliverance from sin and fellowship with God. Doing is the very essence of blessedness, the highest manifestation, and therefore the fullest enjoyment of the life of God.

A doer that worketh shall be blessed in doing—This was the blessedness of Abraham, of whom we read (James 2:22): 'Thou seest that faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect.' He had no works without faith; there was faith working with them and in them all. And he had no faith without works: through them his faith was exercised and strengthened and perfected. As his faith, so his blessedness was perfected in doing. It is in doing that the doer that worketh is blessed. The true insight into this, as a

Divine revelation of the true nature of good works, in perfect harmony with all our experience in the world, will make us take every command, and every truth, and every opportunity to abound in good works as an integral part of the blessedness of the salvation Christ has brought us. Joy and work, work and joy, will become synonymous: we shall no longer be hearers but doers.

Let us put this truth into immediate practice. Let us live for others, to love and serve them. Let not the fact of our being unused to labors of love, or the sense of ignorance and unfitness, keep us back. Only begin. If you think you are not able to labor for souls, begin with the bodies. Only begin, and go on, and abound. Believe the word, It is more blessed to give than to receive. Pray for and depend on the promised grace. Give yourself to a ministry of love; in the very nature of things, in the example of Christ, in the promise of God you have the assurance: If you know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. Blessed is the doer!

XXVIII: The Work of Soul Saving^(TOC)

'My brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.'—James 5:19-20

We sometimes hesitate to speak of men being converted and saved by men. Scripture here twice uses the expression of one man converting another, and once of his saving him. Let us not hesitate to accept it as part of our work, of our high prerogative as the sons of God, to convert and to save men. 'For it is God who worketh in us.'

'Shall save a soul from death.' Every workman studies the material in which he works: the carpenter the wood, the goldsmith the gold. 'Our works are wrought in God.' In our good works we deal with souls. Even when we can at first do no more than reach and help their bodies, our aim is the soul. For these Christ came to die. For these God has appointed us to watch and labor. Let us study these. What care a huntsman or a fisherman takes to know the habits of the spoil he seeks. Let us remember that it needs Divine wisdom and training and skill to become winners of souls. The only way to get that training and skill is to begin to work: Christ Himself will teach each one who waits on Him

In that training the Church with its ministers has a part to take. The daily experience of ordinary life and teaching prove how often there exist in a man unsuspected powers, which must be called out by training before they are known to be there. When a man thus becomes conscious and master of the power there is in himself he is, as it were, a new creature; the power and

enjoyment of life is doubled. Every believer has bidden within himself the power of saving souls. The Kingdom of Heaven is within us as a seed, and every one of the gifts and graces of the spirit are each also a hidden seed. The highest aim of the ministry is to waken the consciousness of this hidden seed of power to save souls. A depressing sense of ignorance or impotence keeps many back. James writes: 'Let him who converts another know that he has saved a soul from death.' Every believer needs to be taught to know and use the wondrous blessed power with which he has been endowed. When God said to Abraham: 'I will bless thee, then shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,' He called him to a faith not only in the blessing that would come to him from above, but in the power of blessing he would be in the world. It is a wonderful moment in the life of a child of God when he sees that the second blessing is as sure as the first.

'He shall save a soul.' Our Lord bears the name of Jesus, Savior. He is the embodiment of God's saving love. Saving souls is His own great work, is His work alone. As our faith in Him grows to know and receive all there is in Him, as He lives in us, and dwells in our heart and disposition, saving souls will become the great work to which our life will be given. We shall be the willing and intelligent instruments through whom He will do His mighty work.

'If any err, and one convert him he which converteth a sinner shall save a soul.' The words suggest personal work. We chiefly think of large gatherings to whom the Gospel is preached; the thought here is of one who has erred and is sought after. We increasingly do our work through associations and organizations. 'If one convert him, he saveth a soul;' it is the love and labor of some individual believer that has won the erring one back. It is this we need in the Church of Christ—every believer who truly follows Jesus Christ

looking out for those who are erring from the way, loving them, and laboring to help them back. Not one of us may say, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' We are in the world only and solely that as the members of Christ's body we may continue and carry out His saving work. As saving souls was and is His work, His joy, His glory, let it be ours, let it be mine, too. Let me give myself personally to watch over individuals, and seek to save them one by one.

'Know that he which converteth a sinner shall save a soul.' 'If ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them.' Let me translate these Scripture truths into action; let me give these thoughts shape and substance in daily life; let me prove their power over me, and my faith in them, by work. Is there not more than one Christian around me wandering from the way, needing loving help and not unwilling to receive it? Are there not some whom I could take by the hand, and encourage to begin again? Are there not many who have never been in the right way, for some of whom Christ Jesus would use me, if I were truly at His disposal?

If I feel afraid—oh! let me believe that the love of God as a seed dwells within me, not only calling but enabling me actually to do the work. Let me yield myself to the Holy Spirit to fill my heart with that love, and fit me for its service. Jesus the Savior lives to save; He dwells in me; He will do His saving work through me. 'Know that he which converteth a sinner shall save a soul from death, and cover a multitude of sins.'

1. More love to souls, born out of fervent love to the Lord Jesus—is not this our great need?
2. Let us pray for love, and begin to love, in the faith that as we exercise the little we have more will be given.
3. Lord! open our eyes to see Thee doing Thy great work of

saving men, and waiting to give Thy love and strength into the heart of every willing one. Make each one of Thy redeemed a soul winner.

XXIX: Praying and Working^(TOC)

'If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death.'—1 John 5:16

'Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works' these words in Hebrews express what lies at the very root of a life of good works—the thoughtful loving care we have for each other, that not one may fall away. As it is in Galatians: 'Even if a man be overtaken in a trespass, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness.' Or as Jude writes, apparently of Christians who were in danger of falling away, 'Some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear.' As Christ's doing good to men's bodies ever aimed at winning their souls, all our ministry of love must be subordinated to that which is God's great purpose and longing—the salvation unto life eternal.

In this labor of love praying and working must ever go together. At times prayer may reach those whom the words cannot reach. At times prayer may chiefly be needed for ourselves, to obtain the wisdom and courage for the words. At times it may be specially called forth for the soul by the very lack of fruit from our words. As a rule, praying and working must be inseparable—the praying to obtain from God what we need for the soul; the working to bring to it what God has given us. The words of John here are most suggestive as to the power of prayer in our labor of love. It leads us to think of prayer as a personal work; with a very definite object; and a certainty of answer.

Let prayer be a personal effort. If any man see his brother he shall ask. We

are so accustomed to act through societies and associations that we are in danger of losing sight of the duty resting upon each of us to watch over those around him. Every member of my body is ready to serve any other member. Every believer is to care for the fellow believers who are within his reach, in his church, his house, or social circle. The sin of each is a loss and a hurt to the body of Christ. Let your eyes be open to the sins of your brethren around you; not to speak evil or judge or helplessly complain, but to love and help and care and pray. Ask God to see your brother's sin, in its sinfulness, its danger to himself, its grief to Christ, its loss to the body; but also as within reach of God's compassion and deliverance. Shutting our eyes to the sin of our brethren around us is not true love. See it, and take it to God, and make it part of your work for God to pray for your brother and seek new life for him.

Let prayer be definite. If any man see his brother sinning let him ask. We need prayer from a person for a person. Scripture and God's spirit teach us to pray for all society, for the Church with which we are associated, for nations, and for special spheres of work. Most needful and blessed. But somehow more is needed—to take of those with whom we come into contact, one by one, and make them the subjects of our intercession. The larger supplications must have their place, but it is difficult with regard to them to know when our prayers are answered. But there is nothing will bring God so near, will test and strengthen our faith, and make us know we are fellow workers with God, as when we receive an answer to our prayers for individuals. It will quicken in us the new and blessed consciousness that we indeed have power with God. Let every worker seek to exercise this grace of taking up and praying for individual souls.^[1]

Count upon an answer. He shall ask, and God will give him (the one who prays) life for them that sin. The words follow on those in which John had

spoken about the confidence we have of being heard, if we ask anything according to His will. There is often complaint made of not knowing God's will. But here there is no difficulty. 'He willeth that all men should be saved.' If we rest our faith on this will of God, we shall grow strong and grasp the promise. 'He shall ask, and God will give him life for them that sin.' The Holy Spirit will lead us, if we yield ourselves to be led by Him, to the souls God would have us take as our special care, and for which the grace of faith and persevering prayer will be given us. Let the wonderful promise: God will give to him who asks life for them who sin, stir us and encourage us to our priestly ministry of personal and definite intercession, as one of the most blessed among the good works in which we can serve God and man.

Praying and working are inseparable. Let all who work learn to pray well. Let all who pray learn to work well.

1. To pray Thee confidently, and, if need be, perseveringly, for an individual, needs a close walk with God, and the faith that we can prevail with Him.
2. In all our work for God, prayer must take a much larger place. If God is to work all; if our posture is to be that of entire dependence, waiting for Him to work in us; if it takes time to persevere and to receive in ourselves what God gives us for others; there needs to be a work and a laboring in prayer.
3. Oh that God would open our eyes to the glory of this work of saving souls, as the one thing God lives for, as the one thing He wants to work in us.
4. Let us pray for the love and power of God to come on us, for the blessed work of soul winning.

XXX: I Know thy Works[\(TOC\)](#)

'To the angel of the church in Ephesus—in Thyatira—in Sardis—in Philadelphia—in Laodicea write: I know thy works.'^[2]—Revelation 2-3

'I know thy works.' These are the words of Him who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and whose eyes are like a flame of fire. As He looks upon the churches, the first thing He sees and judges of is—the works. The works are the revelation of the life and character. If we are willing to bring our works into His holy presence, His words can teach us what our work ought to be.

To Ephesus He says: 'I know thy works, and thy toil and patience, and that thou canst not bear evil men, and thou hast patience and didst bear for My name's sake, and hast not grown weary. But I have this against thee, that thou hast left thy first love. Repent, and do the first works.' There was here much to praise—toil, and patience, and zeal that had never grown weary. But there was one thing lacking—the tenderness of the first love.

In His work for us Christ gave us before and above everything His love, the personal tender affection of His heart. In our work for Him He asks us nothing less. There is such a danger of work being carried on, and our even bearing much for Christ's sake, while the freshness of our love has passed away. And that is what Christ seeks. And that is what gives power. And that is what nothing can compensate for. Christ looks for the warm loving heart, the personal affection which ever keeps Him the center of our love and joy.

Christian workers, see that all your work be the work of love, of tender

personal devotion to Christ Jesus.

To Thyatira: 'I know thy works, and thy love and faith and ministry and patience, and that the last works are more than the first. But I have this against thee, that thou sufferest the woman Jezebel, and she teacheth and seduceth My servants.' Here again the works are enumerated and praised: the last had even been more than the first. But then there is one failure: a false toleration of what led to impurity and idolatry. And then He adds of His judgments: 'the churches shall know that I am He which searches the reins and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your works.'

Along with much of good works there may be some one form of error or evil tolerated which endangers the whole church. In Ephesus there was zeal for orthodoxy, but a lack of love; here love and faith, but a lack of faithfulness against error. If good works are to please our Lord, if our whole life must be in harmony with them, in entire separation from the world and its allurements, we must seek to be what He promised to make us, stablished in every good word and work. Our work will decide our estimate in His judgment.

To Sardis: 'I know thy works, that thou hast a name to live, and thou art dead. Be watchful and stablish the things that are ready to die: for I have found no works of thine fulfilled before My God.'

There may be all the forms of godliness without the power; all the activities of religious organization without the life. There may be many works, and yet He may say: I have found no work of thine fulfilled before My God, none that can stand the test and be really acceptable to God as a spiritual sacrifice. In Ephesus it was works lacking in love, in Thyatira works lacking in purity, in Sardis works lacking in life.

To Philadelphia: 'I know thy works, that thou hast a little power, and didst keep My word and didst not deny My name. Because thou didst keep My word, I also will keep thee.'

On earth Jesus had said: He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me. If a man love Me, he will keep My word. and My Father will love him. Philadelphia, the church for which there is no reproof, had this mark: its chief work, and the law of all its work, was, it kept Christ's word, not in an orthodox creed only, but in practical obedience. Let nothing less, let this truly, be the mark and spirit of all our work: a keeping of the word of Christ. Full, loving conformity to His will will be rewarded.

To Laodicea: 'I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. Thou sayest, I am rich and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing.' There is not a church without its works, its religious activities. And yet the two great marks of Laodicean religion, lukewarmness, and its natural accompaniment, self complacence, may rob them of their worth. It not only, like Ephesus, teaches us the need of a fresh and fervent love, but also the need of that poverty of spirit, that conscious weakness out of which the absolute dependence on Christ's strength for all our work will grow, and which will no longer leave Christ standing at the door, but enthrone Him in the Heart.

'I know thy works.' He who tested the works of the seven churches still lives and watches over us. He is ready in His love to discover what is lacking, to give timely warning and help, and to teach us the path in which our works can be fulfilled before His God. Let us learn from Ephesus the lesson of fervent love to Christ, from Thyatira that of purity and separation from all evil, from Sardis that of the need of true life to give worth to work, from Philadelphia that of keeping His word, and from Laodicea that of the poverty of spirit which possesses the kingdom of heaven, and gives Christ the throne

of all! Workers! Let us live and work in Christ's presence. He will teach and correct and help us, and one day give the full reward of all our works because they were His own works in us.

XXXI: That God may be Glorified^(TOC)

'If any man serveth, let him serve as of the strength which God supplieth: that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, whose is the glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.'—1 Peter 4:11

Work is not done for its own sake. Its value consists in the object it attains. The purpose of him who commands or performs the work gives it its real worth. And the clearer a man's insight into the purpose, the better fitted will he be to take charge of the higher parts of the work. In the erection of some splendid building, the purpose of the day-labourer may simply be as a hireling to earn his wages. The trained stone-cutter has a higher object: he thinks of the beauty and perfection of the work he does. The master mason has a wider range of thought: his aim is that all the masonry shall be true and good. The contractor for the whole building has a higher aim—that the whole building shall perfectly correspond to the plan he has to carry out. The architect has had a still higher purpose—that the great principles of art and beauty might find their full expression in material shape. With the owner we find the final end—the use to which the grand structure is to be put when he, say, presents the building as a gift for the benefit of his townsmen. All who have worked upon the building honestly have done so with some true purpose. The deeper the insight and the keener the interest in the ultimate design, the more important the share in the work, and the greater the joy in carrying it out.

Peter tells us what our aim ought to be in all Christian service—'that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.' In the work of God, a work not to be done for wages but for love, the humblest laborer is admitted

to a share in God's plans, and to an insight into the great purpose which God is working out. That purpose is nothing less than this: that God may be glorified. This is the one purpose of God, the great worker in heaven, the source and master of all work, that the glory of His love and power and blessing may be shown. This is the one purpose of Christ, the great worker on earth in human nature, the example and leader of all our work. This is the great purpose of the Holy Spirit, the power that worketh in us, or, as Peter says here, 'the strength that God supplieth.' As this becomes our deliberate, intelligent purpose, our work will rise to its true level, and lift us into living fellowship with God.

'That in all things God may be glorified.' What does this mean? The glory of God is this, that He alone is the Living One, who has life in Himself. Yet not for Himself alone, but, because His life is love, for the creatures as much as for Himself. This is the glory of God, that He is the alone and ever flowing fountain of all life and goodness and happiness, and that His creatures can have all this only as He gives it and works it in them. His working all in all, this is His glory. And the only glory His creature, His child, can give Him is this—receiving all He is willing to give, yielding to Him to let Him work, and then acknowledging that He has done it. Thus God Himself shows forth His glory in us; in our willing surrender to Him, and our joyful acknowledgment that He does all, we glorify Him. And so our life and work is glorified, as it has one purpose with all God's own work, 'that in all things God may be glorified, whose is the glory for ever and ever.'

See here now the spirit that ennobles and consecrates Christian service according to Peter: 'He that serveth (in ministering to the saints or the needy), let him serve as of the strength which God supplieth.' Let me cultivate a deep conviction that God's work, down into the details of daily life, can only be

done in God's strength, 'by the power of the Spirit working in us.' Let me believe firmly and unceasingly that the Holy Spirit does dwell in me, as the power from on high, for all work to be done for on high. Let me in my Christian work fear nothing so much, as working in my own human will and strength, and so losing the one thing needful in my work, God working in me. Let me rejoice in the weakness that renders me so absolutely dependent upon such a God, and wait in prayer for His power to take full possession.

'Let him serve as of the strength which God supplieth, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.' The more you depend on God alone for your strength, the more will He be glorified. The more you seek to make God's purpose your purpose, the more will you be led to give way to His working and His strength and love. Oh! that every, the feeblest, worker might see what a nobility it gives to work, what a new glory to life, what a new urgency and joy in laboring for souls, when the one purpose has mastered us: that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

1. The glory of God as Creator was seen in His making man in His own image. The glory of God as Redeemer is seen in the work He carries on for saving men, and bringing them to Himself.
2. This glory is the glory of His holy love, casting sin out of the heart, and dwelling there.
3. The only glory we can bring to God is to yield ourselves to His redeeming love to take possession of us, to fill us with love to others, and so through us to show forth His glory.
4. Let this be the one end of our lives—to glorify God; in living to work for Him, 'as of the strength which God supplieth'; and

winning souls to know and live for His glory.

5. Lord! teach us to serve in the strength which God supplieth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, whose is the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Why Do You Not Believe?^(TOC)

Introduction

Beloved friends, who are seeking the Lord, but have not yet found Him, it is for you that this little book has been written. When I recently spoke with you, in the course of my pastoral visitation, my soul was filled with deep sorrow over your condition. I still met with many who with manifest earnestness and spiritual desire were seeking salvation, some indeed for many years past, and who, notwithstanding, had not yet arrived at faith.

This ought not to remain so. It tends to the dishonor of our Lord. True religion is thereby brought into contempt, for the world is then right in concluding: the service of Jesus gives neither joy nor salvation. On young converts your influence is by no means helpful, for your example gives them absolutely no encouragement. In this way also, the congregation suffers loss, for instead of helping as joyfully active members to build it up, you are on the contrary serving to divide its energies, and you hinder its spiritual prosperity. To your minister you are often the cause of care and anxiety; you make him dispirited with the thought that the Word of God has so little influence with you. You spend your life in sorrow and gloom, and you place your souls in peril for eternity.

Beloved, your condition goes to my heart, and many a time I ask myself, What is really the cause of this unbelief? I know that there are some who cannot believe, because their heart is not right before God. The man who loves the world, and does not, with confession of his guilt, betake himself to

Jesus with the prayer that he may be delivered from the love of the world, cannot, may not, believe. The man who still cleaves to this and that bosom sin, and, for instance, will not have done with deception, love of strife, pride, avarice, and such like iniquities, ought not to be surprised that he cannot believe. Jesus would ask him, "How can ye believe?" (John 5:44). It is an impossibility. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you. I write to you as those of whom I hope that it is in truth their earnest desire to find the Savior, and of whom I really trust that they have truly declared before the Lord: "LORD, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." And with my eye fixed on your condition, I ask myself, What can be the cause of it, and is there no means of delivering you out of it? "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?"

The cause cannot be that God has closed His dealings with you, and that it is no longer possible for you to believe. No: God commands you to believe. He desires this, and in His word has laid down before your faith promises for it to take up. And yet I fear that there are some among you who imagine that there is an appointment of God, against which you can do nothing, until God makes some alteration. With all earnestness, I entreat you to put these thoughts far from you. It is your own guilt that you do not believe, and indeed a heavy guilt, which you ought to confess with humility, and of which you should be ashamed. If you do not fully acknowledge this, I see no remedy for bringing you to faith, for this secret thought will make all your endeavors of no avail.

The cause of this unbelief of yours can just as little be that God has not given you power for faith. I know that this misunderstanding is prevailing with some of you. Because there are some Christians that have been brought to faith very suddenly and effectually, it is imagined that such a mode of

conversion, if not the only one, is certainly at least the best. Secretly, therefore, some are waiting for a powerful impulse whereby they shall be as if driven to faith and brought to it at once. This thought also is a very dangerous hindrance in the way of faith. There are always two ways, along which one can attain to the enjoyment of abundance. To make the first plain by an example: one may become rich at once by an inheritance that one receives, or by this or that successful undertaking; but one can also attain to wealth by the more gradual and quiet method of faithful industry and economy, or by making a wise use of every opportunity of increasing one's resources. So, to use another illustration, one can have a large space filled with water by a plentiful shower of rain as well as by a watercourse from a clear fountain; by which latter method the thing is done more slowly. The first is the easier way, but it is also that which stands exposed to the most dangers. The second is the longer and more troublesome way, but in some respects also the safer. The souls that find the heavenly treasure of the assurance of faith at once are to be accounted happy that the way for them has been so short; if others have to tread a more difficult path, they can nevertheless at least reach the goal. If they only move along the pathway of means with real desire, and with the positive conviction that they also can believe, they shall be brought to this point.

In connection with the two erroneous ideas just mentioned, stands what I have also just referred to, namely, the means of healing for your complaint, and therefore on this point, too, I shall say a few words.

You must acknowledge that it is the will of God that you should believe. "If I speak the truth, why do you not believe me?" (John 8:46). This question of the Lord Jesus to the Jews, which He also puts to us, shows that unbelief must have a cause apart from Him. He spoke the truth with the aim and desire

of awakening faith. You must further take into consideration that there is nothing for which you have to wait, before you begin to believe. You have to set yourselves forthwith in the way of the means, and with them you must be diligent; then you may hope for the blessing of the Spirit. On the Spirit you have not to wait, as if He had still first to come and were to make you by one token or another know that He was now ready, and that you could thus believe. No; He is promised to you. He has already often desired to work in your souls; and instead of your having to wait for Him, before you begin to believe, you have just to make haste to believe, for the Spirit waits for you. You have already kept Him waiting too long. Begin, therefore, immediately without further delay. And if, trusting in the promises of God, that the Spirit is given to those who ask for Him, you are diligent in learning to believe, you may also certainly expect that He, the Spirit of grace, will make you capable of faith. Wait not then, and delay not under the impression that all is not yet ready, or that it is not yet your duty actually to believe. In this sense there is nothing for which you have still to wait. No: ask for the Spirit, expect His influence, be diligent, and, although you do not then as yet actually observe His workings, you may, nevertheless, reckon upon it that, even while you may suppose yourselves to have been passed by, the Spirit is already cooperating with your first feeble endeavors.

You must pay special attention to what the means for coming to faith is, and to what way it has to be used. The means is the word: but the main stress falls on the manner in which the word is employed. When one searches it merely in a general way, and reads it to get knowledge and religious instruction, it operates so strongly in the line of reflection and repentance that the anxious soul is often embarrassed by the influx of thought, and thus fails to attain his object in reading. It is my counsel, therefore, that you should read the Bible with a definite aim, namely, to find out what promises there are that you have

to believe. It is my counsel that you should seek and come to know what promises there are that are available for you, in order that you may be occupied with them, and so take advantage of every expedient for receiving them in faith. Meditate upon them, learn them by heart, remain continuously absorbed with them, bow your knees before the Lord, and say to Him that you are resolved to believe them. Grudge not the time that this exercise costs you. Do not fancy that this business can be finished in ten minutes or so. The vast eternity is surely worth the striving of some hours. Take time thus to search the word with set purpose, with that one definite aim of arriving at faith. Ponder the word and pray for enlightening influences from above: such earnestness cannot remain unblessed.

There is still another remark to be made respecting the manner in which this means is to be used, namely, that the duty is to be done with faithfulness and perseverance. We all know how great the power of habit is. By continuous and intentional repetition a thing that was at the outset strange and opposed to our taste, becomes a second nature and thereby easy and acceptable. In religion the laws of human nature are not set aside; the Spirit is indeed above them, but He still makes use of them. So is it also with faith. The heart that is habituated to distrust and doubt does not arrive at the new, holy habit of faith without the continual, often repeated exercise of the act of faith. The promise that found a slight entrance today loses its influence in turn tomorrow, just because the soul does not persevere, and has taken no pains to keep and confirm the blessing received. Thus I have often observed that, after a sermon or a conversation, a soul had a little light but speedily again lost it. And why? Because he did not recognize the importance and the necessity of his still keeping the promises anew before him, to the end that the old habit of unbelief might not again obtain the upper hand. Therefore, beloved be faithful continue FROM DAY TO DAY, YES, AS MUCH AS YOU CAN,

occupied with the promises of God. The question must be continually repeated, "What does God require me to believe?" and in like manner, in the face of whatever weakness, must the answer be expressed at His feet: "Lord, I believe; I will believe."

To hold out a helpful hand to this perseverance, I have written for you this little book. It is offered to you with this urgent entreaty that for a month, day by day, you specially concentrate your attention on that faith to which God calls you. It was in the midst of prayer that these words were addressed to you: do you read them also with a praying heart. May it please the Lord to deliver you soon from the chains with which you to this day are still fettered. God grant it. Amen.

Chapter 1^(TOC)

The Absolute Necessity of Faith

"He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that does not believe shall be condemned."—Mark 16:16

Hear this word of the Lord, all you who have decided to seek your salvation. He that believes will be saved; simple faith is enough: more God does not require. With less, however, He will not be content. Faith is the only way: there is no other way that leads to salvation. He that does not believe will be condemned. Thus, alike on the right and the left hands, on the one side by the attractions and charms of His grace, on the other by the menace of His wrath, does God seek to impel us to faith in Christ as the one indispensable condition of salvation.

However much man may be opposed to this method of God, the time comes when the lost in hell no less than the saved in heaven will justify God in this ordination of His. The whole universe will acknowledge the equity of this sentence: he that does not believe will be condemned. The gracious Lord had always met the sinner with the wonderful offer of having remitted all the offences he had committed, or what the law had still to demand—of having bestowed on him all that was necessary for an everlasting salvation. He required no worthiness or merit, but simply this, that man should accept what was offered to him, and believe what was said to him. And, in order to remove every impediment to faith out of the way, and win the heart, God ordained to be sent the glad tidings of salvation through His own Jesus

Christ, who manifested Himself in the most loving and attractive form, and sealed His love with His own precious blood. He, then, that still does not believe—the whole creation must approve of the sentence—he will be condemned. He has anew set the seal upon all his former sins, for he will not suffer himself to be redeemed from them. To his former sins, he has yet added this, the greatest of all, that he has affronted the authority of God, despised the love of God, lightly esteemed the Son of God, defied God's vengeance, and thrust away from him God's salvation. By unbelief he has shown his enmity against God and his rejection of God; it cannot, it may not, be otherwise: he that does not believe will be condemned.

Not less is the absolute necessity of faith confirmed by the contemplation of the other side: he that believes will be saved. Man has nothing, absolutely nothing, whereby on his part he can be in a position to contribute something to the attainment of salvation. And yet the Lord will do nothing but reign over a willing people. Man is no stone; on his own side, he must play his own part. It is faith that solves the difficult enigma that man who can do nothing should yet do something: faith which is manifested in the acknowledgment of poverty and misery, in the confession of inability and helplessness, in consent, submission, and surrender to that grace of God which is to be everything in us. More God could not require; less He may not require, for He will not inflict wrong on His own honor and the freedom of man. He requires faith: faith alone. What grace it is that thus bends to our weakness: he that believes will be saved.

Reader, behold, then, these two ways: make your choice. Pray, reason not any longer, nor ask the question if there be no other way; but, come, submit yourself to God and to the word of His grace: he that believes will be saved. No longer yield to the secret thought, that something else may after all still be

necessary. I am well aware that everlasting salvation appears to you to be too great a boon over against this meager and paltry faith. It appears to you too hazardous for your sinfulness to venture so far merely upon faith; yet, see, it is God that has spoken: only by faith. He that possesses this faith, has all; for by it he has Christ. He that does not possess faith has nothing, although he should possess all besides. Faith is indispensable.

Anxious ones, hear it yet once again: "he that believes will be saved; he that does not believe will be condemned."

Chapter 2^(TOC)

The Object of Faith

"For she said, If I but touch His garments I will be made whole."—Mark 5:28

What a glorious representation of the Lord Jesus does this woman in her simplicity give to us. She regarded Him as so filled with the divine power of life, as He in truth is, that it flowed out on everyone that only touched Him in faith, and streamed over him. She felt assured that even the slightest fellowship with Him would be blessed, and that she would experience the healing power of the life that was in Him. Not for a moment did she have any doubt of His power and still less of His willingness. Had He not come for the sick? Why should she still ask, as if she had no claim? No: she knew the one truth just as certainly as she knew the other—that in Him there was healing. This healing is also for her. She should doubt her right to make use of the light of the sun, sooner than her right to Jesus. She should fear whether it were indeed open to her to take a draught of water from a rushing river sooner than cherish the thought that there was no health for her to be found with Jesus.

O that you, doubting soul, would think of the Lord Jesus just as this woman thought of Him. It is always the good pleasure of the Father that in Him all fulness should dwell. All the fulness of His love and His life has the Father of set purpose made to dwell in Jesus, the Son of Man, in order that it may be truly visible and accessible to us. In Him dwells the power of a new and holy life from the dead, which he obtained by making atonement for our sins. This

life is mighty to impart health to souls sick unto death, and this is for us sinful, dead, condemned sinners. Pray, do understand what the woman calls out to you; the blessing and the approval of Jesus are always the seal of the truth of her words. In Jesus is life, life even for the most wretched.

What a glorious representation is there here also of true faith, as the means of our participating in the fulness of Jesus. The woman knows that she has no work to do; that she has no great motion of strength to put forth; that she has not to consider, as is the case in dealing with other professors of the healing art, whether she is really in a position to pay the fees that will be demanded. No: she has merely to touch Him, that is, she has merely to appropriate what is prepared for her; the healing is there as soon as she stretches out her hand to receive it. Anxious soul, who has already been so long seeking to prepare and make yourself fit for the great work of believing, let this poor woman cure you of your error. In Jesus everything is ready; you have merely to stretch out your hand. O, do understand it. Here He stands ready for your deliverance; He is also given to you by the Father; only touch Him with the firm conviction of the faith: Jesus is for me; with the simple thought, I have a right to Him; in Him there is deliverance for me also. Touch Him, and, as truly as His name is Jesus, you will be delivered. This may not be immediately felt by you; in that case just wait, hold on, say from day to day: "If I touch Him, I will be made whole." The healing will be consciously yours.

And what a glorious representation is there besides of the blessing which Jesus will give to faith. That the woman was healed was much to begin with; but it speaks of yet richer blessing that Jesus observed her, the poor trembling believer who would fain have hid herself for shame, even while others were seeking her in the crowd. He gives her the assurance of His good pleasure

and His favor; He constrains her to confess Him openly. He praises her faith, and thus makes her an example and a blessing for thousands. O, all you who are looking out and yearning for the salvation of the soul, pray learn to understand what is awaiting you with Jesus, what you may hope for from Him. It is not only forgiveness of sins and rescue from destruction that He will make you partakers of: the friendship and love of the Savior will also be your portion, and by these He will make you become a blessing to others.

Beloved, what more have you need of to make you say humbly and with faltering lips, after this woman, "If I but touch His garments, I will be made whole."

Chapter 3^(TOC)

The Seed of Faith

"The seed is the word of God."—Luke 8:11

Very simply as well as strikingly is the word of God set forth to us in this parable. There lies the cold, dead earth, which of itself brings forth either nothing, or thorns and thistles. It has not the power to give man nutritive corn. When the husbandman, however, desires to have that corn, he takes good seed and commits it to the ground that had hitherto brought forth nothing but weeds. The soil receives it, and keeps it in the silent and dark secrecy of its bosom. Encouraged by the sunshine and moistened by the dew of heaven, it shoots there and grows up; and the cold dead earth by and by becomes the mother of a beautiful crop. The life was not in the earth, but in the seed; and yet the earth was just as indispensable as the living seed, before that these fair fruits could be reaped. Although the seed did not receive life from the earth, yet without the earth's having its share in the work, the seed could not yield its fruit. It must offer the seed the soil, in which the root can shoot; in its bosom must the seed still be kept until it be ready to make an appearance above ground.

A glorious and instructive picture is this of the new life of grace. Like the seed, the word has a divine power of life. Like the earth, the heart is in itself lifeless, unfruitful of itself in what is good. Like the seed in the earth, the word is strewn in the heart and committed to it, simply to be received and kept there. The living power that God has lodged in the seed is the security

that the ground, although in and of itself wholly incapable of bringing forth anything but weeds, will be changed into a fruitful field. Thus, however helpless you may feel yourselves to be, will the living seed of God's word send forth its roots in your heart, and sprouting upwards bring forth fruit. Sinner, yearning for salvation, you have only to acknowledge that a living power is presented to you in every word of God. With that confidence must you keep it in your heart, and the certainty of fruit depends not on any ability of yours, but on the faithfulness of God. Only endeavor by prayerful consideration and faithful keeping of God's word, to prepare a place for it in your heart.

Mourn no longer, then, that your heart is so hard and so full of weeds, but rather understand what you see every day, that by the keeping of the seed the dead earth is transformed into a fruitful field. Faith is not a thing that is present in you before you receive the word, or with which you must meet the word. No! there is life in the word, and it is by the word that faith is first awakened.

Meanwhile, forget not that there are many kinds of seed, and that every kind bears fruit according to its nature. A child of God, for example, longs for comfort in adversity; he chooses one of the promises of God to His people, sows it in his heart, and keeps it; the desired fruit is the comfort of God. As those who are troubled about your sins, you have need of the promises of God's grace in relation to the ungodly. Seek for seed according to your need. "The Lord is gracious and full of compassion"; "He will abundantly pardon"; "He that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out"; "Christ died for the ungodly." That is the kind of seed you must use. Every one of these words is a heavenly grain of seed containing power for eternal life. One of them is sufficient to bring forth, when it shoots up, the fruits of faith and peace and

life. Let one of them be faithfully kept in the heart, and it cannot but be that faith will be born of it. In the seed is life: the seed of God's word has a divine power of life. O, take, then, the heavenly seed, lay it up in your heart, and keep it there. Although you do not actually feel that you believe, resolve at least to hold fast by the thought: "It is the living word of God. God will give the increase in His own time." The seed needs time for development. It must be kept a long time quietly beneath the ground: one day it certainly comes up. Day by day continue absorbed in heart with the word of promise and of grace. The true God and His living word are the guarantees that your experience also will be: "Faith comes by the word of God."

Chapter 4^(TOC)

The Language of Faith

"With You is forgiveness."—Psalm 130:4

Here is one of those heavenly grains of seed that have only to be received and kept in the heart to become living, and to bring forth faith, peace, and blessing. Let me have the privilege of commending it to you this morning, anxious soul.

It is such a simple word: every one can understand it. Every one knows what is meant when an earthly father forgives his child. He answers him that he will no longer remember his sins, will not impute the evil experienced, and will not punish him. He will deal with the child as if he had done no harm. In like manner the guilty and consciously-condemned soul looks to God on high, and says: "Lord, with You there is forgiveness. My guilt is heavy, I have deserved Your severest punishment; but with You is forgiveness. Of free grace You have promised to acquit the guilty of everything, and not to impute his sins to him." This is the simple, and at the same time the only way along which one exposed to the curse, who can do or bring nothing, can be saved. Altogether freely and for nothing, without the least worthiness or merit on his part, he receives the divine acquittal from all his guilt.

Is it not also a glorious word? Should not every one desire this boon? For a soul that, with David in this psalm, has to cry "out of the depths": "If You, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who will stand?" it is glorious to be

able to look up to God with the assurance: All these sins will God blot out and bring to nought. Yes: very blessed it is to be able to look up to God out of the distress and anxiety with which the soul has felt its heavy guilt and deep misery, and to say: "With You is forgiveness; the Lord looks upon me in grace, His anger is turned away from me, and He comforts me." What a blessed peace, what a heavenly joy then falls on the heart. O, it is glorious, in the face of all conviction of sin and experience of misery, in the face of every thought of death and judgment, to be able to say: "With You is forgiveness." Who would not desire it?

It is also such a sure word. Everyone may believe it. The whole Bible announces it. Jesus came from heaven to obtain and to seal it for us. His blood is the pledge of it. Thousands of the greatest sinners can support the truth of the cry: "With God there is forgiveness." All heaven confirms it. Eternity will re-echo: "With God is forgiveness." It is sure. The certitude of it depends not on your faith. Whether you believe it or not, whether you despise it or not, "With God is forgiveness." As truly as He is God, is He a God of forgiveness, a God who abundantly pardons. As certain as you are that He is God, may you be certain that there is forgiveness with Him. Before you believe it, it is truth, and you may rest your soul and safely commit yourself to God upon it. You will experience it: with God is sure forgiveness.

Further, it is such a powerful word. Every one can receive blessing from it. Although you have as yet no faith, take this word as a living seed into your heart, and it will awaken faith. Although you dare not as yet call God your Father, lay up this word in your heart, give it a place there, think over it, and say in spoken words before your God: "Lord, with You there is forgiveness." This word is living and powerful; it will cause hope to rise in your soul. It will inspire you with new thoughts about God, it will instil into you

confidence and boldness before Him. Insensibly you will get up to saying: "With You there is forgiveness also for me." It will thus awaken the fear and love of God in your soul. It will bind you to Jesus, it will impel you to dedicate yourself wholly to Him. O soul, mourn no longer over your weakness. Receive this word; it is "living and powerful." Go with it trustfully to your knees, and, although it should be the thousandth time, use it as the language of your heart to God: "Lord, with You there is forgiveness." This word will work mightily, and faith and peace and love will be its fruits.

Beloved, I offer to you this word of God. God gives you freedom to use this word with Him; God commands you to think thus of Him. True, your heart says, "I do not know whether there is forgiveness with God"; but come, let these perverse thoughts of yours go and give room for God's thoughts in your soul. Let it stand fast with you: "With God is forgiveness," and you will speedily be able to add: also for me. And so you will soon learn to sing: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgives all your iniquities."

Chapter 5^(TOC)

The Beginning of Faith

*"Yea, Lord, I have believed that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God."—John
11:27*

The Lord had said to Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live"; and after that He had put to her the question, "Believest thou this?" What answer was she to give? The thought that her brother was to be raised again was still too high and wonderful for her. And yet she was conscious that she believed in Jesus, and did not doubt Him or His word. What reply was she to make? With childlike simplicity and sincerity she says: "I have believed that Thou art the Christ: I do not indeed know aright what I believe concerning the resurrection of my brother. It is to me, as if I cannot understand, cannot conceive it; but this I know, I have believed and still believe in Thee, as the Son of the living God. Thee, Thy birth, Thy power, Thy love, I doubt not."

How instructive is this picture of Martha's faith. How frequently it happens that when the word of the Lord comes to a soul with the promise of forgiveness and reception into child-ship with God, and the question is put, "Believest thou this?" that the discouraged soul falls a-sighing and answers, "Ah! no: this I cannot yet believe"; and thereafter he proceeds to condemn himself—a thing that profits nothing, instead of acting as Martha did. She did not yet believe everything, but what she believed that she spoke out before the Lord. She believed in Him as the Son of the living God: this was the

principal thing, and would prove the source of greater faith. In connection with what she did believe, she was diligent in prayer; by this means her faith would be strengthened and become capable of receiving yet more and more.

Follow that example, O thou of little faith. When you are asked: Do you believe that your sins are forgiven, that you are a child of God, that everlasting salvation is yours? you are perhaps afraid to answer, " Yes." You see others who can say so. You read in God's word that the Lord will give His grace, that you may be enabled to say so. But you cannot say so, and you do not know how you shall ever come to the point of daring to say so. Soul, learn the way from Martha. Do not continue sitting down there, mourning over your unbelief, but go to Jesus with that which you know that you do believe. This at least you know that, although you cannot yet say, He is my Savior, your whole soul believes that He was sent by God to be a Savior, and that He has proved Himself to be a Savior for others. Well, then, go with this confession to Jesus, utter it before Him in prayer, look to Him and adore Him as the Savior of the world. Speak out what you do believe, and by this means will faith in your heart be confirmed and increased. Say: "Lord Jesus, how unbelieving I am; this, however, I do believe that Thou art the Savior, full of love and grace, and mighty to redeem." Forget yourselves and worship Jesus, although you dare not as yet say, that He is yours. In the midst of those exercises your faith will increase, and by and by you will insensibly come to the confidence that He is also yours. Only persevere: so long as you cannot yet say, "He is mine and I am His," let your soul be found, this and every day, in the ceaseless adoring confession: "Yea, Lord: this I believe, that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." He will speedily confirm to you that word of truth: "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." (Matthew 25:21). You will speedily learn to believe, and then, like Martha, you shall also see the glory

of God.

Chapter 6^(TOC)

The Spirit of Faith

"But having the same Spirit of faith... we also believe."—2 Corinthians 4:13

For the hundred times that in the word of God we are exhorted to faith, or that faith is spoken of as an act of man, it is but in some few instances that it is expressly said that faith is the work of the Spirit. And thus, when we insist on faith as a work in which man must be active and in which he must trustfully and perseveringly use means, it may sometimes appear as if we forget who the Author of faith is. This, however, is by no means the case. We believe that those who feel most deeply the truth about the complete dependence of man on the Spirit, as the Spirit of faith, will also be the most eager to fall in with the exhortation addressed to man. He who knows that there is a Spirit to actuate to faith knows also that man may, with spirit and hope, strive to exercise faith.

The right understanding of this truth is, for anxious souls, of great importance. They must especially know that when they wait for the influence of the Spirit to carry them on to faith, they must not expect that this influence shall be unveiled to them in a conscious and sensible manner. The beginnings of life are hid in darkness: the first workings of the Spirit are not known or observed. The soul must work on, although it be not conscious that the Spirit is in it: it must as readily in the dark as in the day, and that too in its own strength, obey and strive to believe; it must hold fast the word in confidence that the Spirit will, through the word, work in it, expecting that sooner or later

the Spirit will be recognised as the power that has put it in a position to believe. That faith will then be to it the first sure token that it has the Spirit. He is always the Spirit of faith. Faith is his internal manifestation, the form in which He reveals Himself, and by which He becomes known. It cannot be, "If I once have the Spirit then I believe," but, "when I believe, then I know that the Spirit has wrought this result in me."

In this way the right desire of the soul to know that it has the Spirit of faith may be fully gratified. It will learn that there is something more in it than its mere faith, that faith is not its own work: it will learn that the divine Creator of the new life is in it, According as the trustful soul is in itself unreservedly surrendered to live through faith, shall the Spirit witness with its spirit which was active in faith, according to the word of God, that after we believe we are sealed with the Spirit: "Ye know Him, for He abideth with you and shall be in you." (John 14:17). By His divine, indwelling power, he always stirs up the soul more and more to faith, carrying it into all the riches of the promises of God, and giving it confidence to appropriate every blessing to itself. And thus the one influence always operates upon the other; the more fully the soul believes, the more clear becomes the revelation of the Spirit; the more fully the Spirit works in it, the more does the soul grow in the life of faith and confidence. And thus at length, but not by the way which most of us had pictured for ourselves, we come to the experience of the blessedness of which we are speaking, namely, of having the Spirit of faith.

Seeker of salvation, why do you not believe? The Spirit of God is a Spirit of faith. It is the Spirit of God that has broken your slumber and made you anxious to believe. It is the Spirit who will help you in the conflict for faith, in which you think that you are abandoned by Him. He is given in answer to prayer. Let the thought encourage you, that where there is a soul desirous of

salvation the Spirit will certainly work faith in it. At the outset you are not yet in a position to recognise His working. You are not yet accustomed to His ways; His tokens are still unknown to you. Hidden, but really existing, He is at hand to help you, if you but pray for Him and do your work, relying upon His operation. In this exercise and conflict of prayer, and in the desire to believe, it is He that all unconsciously draws on and strengthens the soul. Believe, for the Spirit will give faith within you. Work, "for it is God that worketh in you."

And, when you have believed and have become known to Him as the Spirit of faith—O, be thou only faithful to Him. Yield yourself wholly to Him; set your heart entirely open for Him; through Him, let there be a progress "from faith to faith," until, with full certitude, you are able to witness: "We have the same Spirit of faith, therefore we also believe."

Chapter 7^(TOC)

The Repentance of Faith

"Repent ye, and believe in the gospel."—Mark 1:15

This beginning of the preaching of the Lord Jesus contains the summary of the will of God for our salvation. Repent ye and believe. What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. Without repentance no real faith, without faith no true repentance.

Without repentance no real faith. The entire design of God in the mission of Christ, the great aim for which the salvation of faith has been given to us, is to win the heart back from sin, and to make it free from sin. A real desire for this salvation can thus never arise in the heart that is not also prepared to be loosed from sin, and to abandon it. Faith is a surrender of the soul to God: this is an impossibility where it still continues to give itself to sin. Faith is an appropriation and a reception into the heart of the grace of God: it is an absurdity to suppose that this should take place without a contemporaneous repentance, an abandonment and casting out of sin.

Without faith also no true repentance. Repentance is not only a turning away from sin, which of itself would tend to self-righteousness, but a turning back to God, and this can take place only through faith. Repentance is not a work of one's own power, but a consenting, a cooperation with God's plan, in God's strength, a trustful surrender to the redeeming grace of God. And this can be done only through faith. Repentance is not an actual victory over sin, but the

soul has to bring every sin to the feet of the Lord Jesus, the great victor over sin, that He may take it away; and this cannot find place, except by the faith which has acknowledged that He is faithful to forgive sin, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness.

Thus the power of repentance is faith: for the more we trust that Jesus makes us free from sin, the stronger are we to turn away from it. And the power of faith, on the other hand, is also repentance: for the more eager to become freed from sin it causes us to be, the more are we shut up to faith. "Repent ye and believe": he that observes and holds fast both shall be saved.

Nor is it only at the beginning of the way, but on to the very end that these two must accompany one another. No sooner is faith cultivated in a one-sided fashion, without a growing conscientiousness in the casting off of little sins, and the sanctification of the whole heart and walk, than it becomes a work merely of the understanding or the feeling. And as soon as continued repentance occupies itself with the furtherance of sanctification, without daily holding fast and increasing a living faith by the promise of God's grace, such a repentance will also lose its worth.

"Repent ye and believe." See here what Jesus calls us to. Every wish and endeavor after repentance, every remembrance of the sin which is in you, and of which you would be free, must be a summons to faith in that Jesus who is exalted to bestow repentance. Combat every sin, and make renunciation of it at His feet with faith fixed on Him. And let every thought of faith on the other hand be an encouragement to fight more bravely against sin, until at length your whole soul shall be filled with the faith of which it is written: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." So shall repentance and faith in due time become entirely one, and the out-going of the soul to Jesus shall be a departure from sin: the enjoyment by faith of the

light of His love, shall of itself drive away the darkness. Then shall believing and working no longer be considered as antagonistic, but the soul shall know that a continually renewed faith is the fruit of sanctification, for it carries it on in the strength of Jesus, and continued repentance then gives to faith courage to persevere, experience which it can plead, and the certitude of a full assurance.

Soul, why do you not believe? O, pray let it not be because you will not repent. It should not be that you are not willing to make a renunciation of sin. And let it not be that you would first repent and then later on believe. No: let both go together from this moment onwards: "Repent ye and believe."

Chapter 8^(TOC)

The Humility of Faith

"Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof: but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed."—Matthew 8:8

The faith of which these words are the utterance was so great that the Lord wondered at it, and exclaimed: "I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel." It may be of service to those who desire to come to faith, or who long for a stronger faith than they have hitherto had, to examine carefully the faith of the centurion, and to observe the soil in which that great faith struck its roots. The soil is—deep humility. This man who, although he belonged to the Gentiles, was praised by the Jewish elders as worthy of the Lord's favor, and whose faith surpassed all that the Lord had found in Israel—this eminent man is the only one of whom we read, during Jesus' sojourn on earth, that he did not consider himself worthy that Jesus should enter his house. Wonderful humility in such a hero of faith. We learn from this the most momentous lesson—that deep humility and strong faith are knit to one another by the closest bonds.

Out of humility springs faith. Then first, when the soul fully acknowledges that it has nothing, and is also content to receive favor as one that possesses nothing, does it cast itself on the free grace of God, and receive it as one that believeth. In the acknowledgment of its nothingness, it does not dare to contradict God with its thoughts of unworthiness, with its desire still further to bring this or that to perfection. It feels that, since it has pleased such a great

God to say that He is prepared to show compassion to the poorest and most wretched, then nothing becomes it better than to be silent and suffer Him to manifest His love. It knows, moreover, that it is so deeply corrupt that it can never of itself become better, and on this account its faith is just the best proof of its humility: it is from the recognition of its utter helplessness, from its knowledge of the fact that it can never become better, that it casts itself on the will of God. This is an entirely different state of mind from that of all such as imagine that humility comes out in not believing; as if there could be humility in waiting till something has been found in us that could make us more acceptable to the Lord than we really are; as if there could be humility in giving no obedience to the command of God actually to believe. Nay, verily. And just as perverse is the idea that faith will at any later period lead to pride. No: faith, as it springs from humility, will in turn only increase humility. It was because the centurion by faith recognised Jesus as wielding over nature a power which could not by any circumstance be prevented from healing the sick by His mere word, that he felt himself to be unworthy of having him in his house. And thus will it always be. The more glorious the revelation and experience of the Lord's greatness and goodness which faith enjoys, the more deeply does it sink in self-abasement and in lowly acknowledgment of the condescension by which such a God unveils Himself to such a sinner. And thus it always continues to be: the deeper humility the more faith, and again, the stronger faith the deeper humility. May the Lord teach us these truths—that there is no stronger proof of humility, and also no better means of increasing it, than just faith; and that, whether we feel ourselves deeply humbled, or still desire to come to a deeper humility the one as well as the other should only shut us up to faith.

And now, soul, why do you not believe! Are you still too unworthy? You dare not say so. The deeper your humility, the stronger your reason and right

for believing. Are you still too proud? Ah, let it not be longer so. Only bring yourself to the acknowledgment of your entire weakness, and confess that you are wholly lost: in the depths of your wretchedness, you will see that there is no other remedy than to let the Lord help you, and to commit yourself trustfully to the word of His grace.

Chapter 9^(TOC)

The Finding of Faith

"Seek, and ye shall find."—Luke 11:9

This word is a promise of Jesus, and on this account sure and certain. His truth and faithfulness are like His love to sinners, the pledge that every one who truly seeks shall certainly find. And yet there are so many that apparently seek sincerely and earnestly, and yet complain that they do not find. Whence arises this failure? Amongst other reasons, a principal one is that they do not know what finding is. They have a wrong idea of this finding; so that they have probably found, and yet continue seeking. And this arises chiefly from the fact of their not understanding that not only seeking and praying, but also finding must take place by faith.

To use an illustration: I have a heavy debt, and must go to prison, because I cannot pay it. I seek for a surety, but can nowhere find one. Then I receive a letter from a friend who has heard of my misfortune, telling me that he will become my surety: he will come at the first opportunity to release me. Shall I then not say that I have found a surety? And that not otherwise than by faith. I have not yet spoken to the man, I have not yet received the money, and yet out of trust in his letter, and because I place reliance on his word, I still say: I have found a surety. It might possibly happen that experience here would be in conflict with faith. Perchance I might be taken to prison on account of my debt, and my actual experience at that time, when I looked round on the gloomy abode, might possibly say, "I have no surety"; but faith would still

say, "I have found a surety; I know my friend will certainly come. I have only to wait a little, when he will appear for my release." The real experience then comes later—after the finding.

Not otherwise is it with the finding of the Lord Jesus. The awakened sinner seeks all round for a surety to meet his debt, to deliver his soul, but nowhere finds one. Then comes to him the word of God, with the message: "Christ is a propitiation for the sin of the whole world." The soul has only to receive that word, and then by faith it has found a Redeemer. And according as it occupies itself with that word, so as to be persuaded that the message is also for it, the more does it become strengthened in the conviction: "The Redeemer: is also for me—God has said it"; until at last it learns to say with gladness: "I have found the Savior." Mark it well, all this takes place simply and only by faith in the word. It may be that the soul's experience is still in conflict with this confession. It often feels itself very sinful, corrupt, perverted from God, as if it were in a gloomy dungeon, and it asks: "If it be true that I have found the Savior, why is it thus with me?" But it remembers that the finding of the Redeemer precedes the real experience of redemption. It comforts itself with the thought that the Lord is honored by the faith which holds fast His word as truth, and that it is by trial that faith becomes prepared alike to contemplate and to enjoy. First finding, receiving in faith; then later, actual experience.

Seeking soul, Jesus is to be found. He is not far from you, so that you must still for a long time seek Him, but very near. For He seeks you. Only believe this, hem yourself round with this: "Jesus seeks me, and is bent on having me." Let the word of God's grace fill your heart, and out of the word you will speedily say in faith: "I have found Him whom my soul desires, Jesus, the Savior of sinners."

Chapter 10^(TOC)

The Simplicity of Faith

"The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart."—Romans 10:8

The righteousness which is of faith saith thus: "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down:) or, Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach." Thus does Paul describe the simplicity of faith and of the salvation which is obtained by it. Not in the height above, not in the depth below, not far off and to be sought for with great trouble: for the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart. That is to say, if you simply confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart, you shall be saved.

O that souls would give heed to such words of God, and understand that it is the truth, what God says: "Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness: it shall not be far off." (Isaiah 46:12-13). We are far from God, and yet we have no long road to traverse in seeking God. For such a task we are too weak and too blind. In sheer compassion He brings his salvation right up to us, yea, very nigh. Not in the height and not in the depth, but in our own inmost spirit He manifests His salvation. In our mouth and in our heart does He give it, for in the preaching of the word of faith Christ abides and He comes to us. And yet so many will always go about seeking it, as if it were afar off. How is it that they

sigh over the thought of the majesty and the holiness of God and the impossibility of climbing up to Him to bring thence a Savior for themselves? Or how is it that they speak of the Lord Christ, as if He were still dead (although He did indeed die for our sins), and did not now live to save them? Ah, no: that was the righteousness which was of the law, and which prescribed that man must do something before he can live. But the message of the Gospel is: "Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21). Helpless and wretched, man has only to be silent and to receive: God brings the blessing nigh.

The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart. You mourn that it is still not in your heart. You are afraid to take it simply in your mouth; but, soul, observe how gracious God is. He will make the confession of the mouth for you the way and the means to the faith of the heart. How often in the things of this world do we teach our little children to utter words which they do not yet fully understand, in the sure confidence that the thoughts and feelings expressed in them will be gradually imprinted on their hearts. How constantly do we see that idle and sinful words, which at the outset are uttered carelessly, become forthwith rooted in the heart of the speaker, and bear their own fruits. And what do we not observe in prayer that the soul which is ever and anon uttering, for example, the words, "Thy will be done," although the heart does not as yet fully assent to them, shall at last, by means of the very use of the expression, submit to the casting out of the unwilling and antagonistic disposition. Would that we dealt not otherwise with the salvation which is by faith. Take the word in your mouth, humbly and earnestly. Say the words of grace after the Lord God, as if you heard Him addressing them to you. Yield not to the unbelief of the heart: combat and overcome it by attaching yourself to the Lord with the mouth: the consent of the heart will surely be won. Yea, do this now, by continually thinking over and speaking

what the Lord God has said to you: "The word is nigh." Confess with the mouth, with longing and with prayer, in order that it may at length come to the faith of the heart, that Jesus is your choice and your Lord: the Spirit of God will work with the word, and you shall be able to believe with your heart. The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and then also in your heart.

Chapter 11^(TOC)

The Sincerity of Faith

"I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."—Mark 9:24

The word of God attaches great value to sincerity. It is on this account that the desire of many to be sincere in their faith is justifiable. And for the fear and disquietude which arise from this desire they have also well-founded reasons, in the consistent testimony of the word of God as well as in experience. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is desperately sick: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).

Frequently, however, there are great mistakes made, alike with respect to what true sincerity is and the means by which it is obtained and increased. As to the first of these points—what true sincerity is—many think that sincerity consists in a distinct feeling that they have surrendered themselves to the Lord with a strong faith and a fervent love. This is by no means what the word of God intends by sincerity. Sincerity is that attitude of the soul, in virtue of which we present ourselves to the Lord just as we are, neither better nor worse. A man is insincere who makes himself out to be other than he really is or feels. It is on this account that the words of the father of the possessed child, quoted above, are such a glorious example of sincerity. He wished to believe, but felt unbelief still too strong within him. What, then, shall be done? He presents himself to the Lord just as he is. He knows that his desire is to trust in Jesus; but he does not know whether there be more unbelief than faith in his heart. What shall he do? Shall he mourn over the

unbelief that is still in him? Or shall he just wait on until he feels that he has believed well and fully? No: not one of these things; for they will afford him no help. Just as he is, he goes to Jesus, and with childlike sincerity and simplicity he pours out his heart before Him: "Lord, I believe: but, alas, there is still too much unbelief—come, to the help of my distrustfulness."

And this teaches us further what is the only means of being delivered from insincerity. The father felt that there was still in him an element that was waiting to believe, but he goes with it to Jesus. He makes it known to Him in the expectation that, in spite of his distrust, He will have mercy upon him and rescue him from it. How utterly different is this conduct from that of so many seeking souls. How often they continue year after year mourning over insincerity, longing for sincerity, and yet they make no progress. Ask them if it be not true that they make no advance but rather go on in their misery. And they know not, and they hearken not, when it is said to them that this is genuine sincerity—to present ourselves just as we are, with all our unbelief. They ought to know that this is the only way to healing; to give ourselves to the Savior, with the little beginnings of good—although they are but a desire to believe—and that, too, in spite of a great preponderance of double-heartedness and worldly-mindedness and unbelief. Yes: to mourn our unbelief, in dealing actually with Jesus—that is true sincerity.

Poor soul, who hast so long remained apart from the Lord from dread of being insincere, and hast thereby grieved both the Lord and thyself, even although thou shouldest feel that of the hundred elements in you there are ninety and nine of unbelief, and only one of feeble desire to believe, go with it to Jesus: that is sincerity. Continue every day also to pour out your heart before the Lord: fight the good fight against remaining insincerity and distrust at Jesus' feet. That is the only place where you can overcome. "Lord,

I believe; I will believe as well as I can; I do so. I believe at last, that Thou art Jesus, the Helper of the wretched; come to the help of my distrustfulness." As you thus pray and strive every day, you will soon obtain the victory and the blessing. As for him who does not thus pray, he may be sure at least of this, that, so long as he remains apart from Jesus, no more sincerity shall come. No: sincerity is the outpouring of the heart before the Lord, and is nowhere obtained but in intercourse with Him and through His friendly grace.

Chapter 12^(TOC)

The Penitence of Faith

"Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."—Luke 5:8

The Savior had unveiled His glory to Peter. He had wonderfully blessed His work of faith, "At Thy word I will let down the net," and at the same time made Himself known as the mighty Ruler over nature, the beneficent Friend of His disciples. Of all this grace, the fruit and the result was that Peter cast Himself before the Lord with the prayer: "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man." The glory of the Lord appeared to him so clearly in that light of faith, and his own sinfulness became to him so manifest, that out of dread and self-abasement he uttered this cry: a clear proof that true faith has as its fruit a deeper humiliation for sin and knowledge of it, sincere and inward penitence.

And this lesson is of great importance for many who are in the way of faith. They think that they cannot be believing, because they are not yet deeply enough convinced of sin. And they do not observe that this word has not yet defined how deeply one must feel sin before one may come to Jesus: it has fixed no measure. The first sense of need must bring us to Him. They do not understand that this remaining apart from Jesus is just the way to make their sense of sin less, and, what is especially of importance, that, on the other hand, an incipient faith may become the means of increasing this sense of sin. Always the closer to the light, the more visible the impurity; the nearer to the Holy One, the stronger the sense of unworthiness; the more blessed with grace, the deeper the conviction of sin.

As with Peter, so with all believers. The hour of the revelation, of Jesus' grace and love are the times of the deepest abasement. And these times are for the most part not at the beginning, but in the later progress of the life of faith. Consider the case of Peter: he has to attain his true knowledge of sin at his denial of the Lord, well-nigh three years after he had already said: "We have believed and known that Thou art the Christ." Think also of Jacob: how the Lord made with him at Bethel the covenant of His grace, and yet first brought him to the recognition of his sinfulness twenty years later, in the crisis of the wrestling by night, in which the Lord came to meet him as an antagonist, to break down the old nature and the power of the flesh. Think also of David and the glorious experiences of God's help and friendship which he as a youth tasted when he was a shepherd and fought against Goliath: it was much later in life that he had to enter into the path of suffering, ere he could see sin unveiled. And so there are still ever so many, in whose case it is manifest that the Lord first leads their souls to faith, and then later on, through faith, to the full knowledge of sin, to genuine penitence.

Accordingly, let the soul who desires to become more humble and to turn back to God as one that is guilty understand that doubt and unbelief will not help him in this but rather hinder him; but that on the contrary faith can bring on the way to obtain all this fruit. Let the soul who doubts if he indeed has faith, and may have it, consider that, while his feeling of unworthiness and guilt causes so much darkness and anxiety in the depths of his spirit, it is only in this poverty of the soul that faith can flourish, and that it is by this means that he will be driven to his Lord. And let the soul who believes never forget that this must be one of the indispensable fruits and proofs of the sincerity of his faith, namely, a constantly growing self-abhorrence and a becoming less in his own eyes, according to the word of the Lord to His people: "I will establish my covenant with you, that ye may be ashamed, when I shall make

atonement for you, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord." (Ezekiel 16:61-63).^[3]

Reader, why do you not believe? Surely it is not that you will still wait for more penitence and contrition of heart. Ah, no: this last grace, too, is always a fruit of faith. Believe today in the grace of Him who conies to you. All that is lacking in you must stir you up to this. With Him you receive everything that you are going to seek elsewhere in vain.

Chapter 13^(TOC)

The Fear of Faith

"By faith, Noah moved with godly fear prepared an ark."—Hebrews 11:7

There are many who suppose that, when the word of God says, "Blessed is the man that feareth always," it is commending a disposition that is at variance with the rest and assurance that are given by faith. And they thus regard this unbelief as a sort of virtue: they fear this great and holy God, and they fear their own weakness and unfaithfulness, and they dare not believe. This view is altogether out of harmony with the word of God; for the word teaches us that fear and confidence must go hand in hand with each other.

"Many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." (Psalms 40:3). "Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord." (Psalms 115:11). "Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy." (Psalms 33:18). Fear and confidence go in union: the one increases the other.

Very clearly is this truth set before us in the history of Noah. "By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark." The fear was partly the fruit of his faith, and partly a motive to make his faith active in the building of the ark. He believed the announcement of the avenging flood, and feared; feared in view of the destruction that was to overtake his fellow-men, and in view of the holy God from whom the judgment was to proceed. He feared, and therefore he cleaved in strong faith to the promise of the ark, and worked at it as the only means of preservation. Fear and trust were with him inseparable, the one indispensable

to the other.

Anxious soul, you fear the Lord, you fear His holiness and His judgments, and you say that it is out of veneration for Him that you do not dare to believe. You say that you are too unworthy in the presence of such a holy and dreadful God to appropriate the right of being called His child, and of speaking to Him with confidence. O that you knew how grievously you are mistaken. There is nothing that so much tends to arouse in the Lord the sense of dishonor and anger as unbelief—not believing His word, that He has compassion on all the unworthy. There is nothing on which God so much sets His honor as His free grace and His pity for the ungodly. You wound Him in the most tender point when you doubt if His grace is indeed for you, and so drag its greatness and trustworthiness into doubt. O souls, when you fear the Lord, pray, fear to dishonor Him by unbelief.

But, no; you say that it is not the Lord, but yourselves that you doubt. You fear on account of your unfaithfulness, your insincerity. And do you not then understand that it is just this fear of yourselves that is the strongest argument for your casting yourselves upon the Lord and entrusting yourselves to Him. O soul, pray, seek no longer something in yourselves; for, if you wait until you no longer fear for yourselves, you will never come to Christ at all. God never asks you for an engagement to be faithful on which He can rely. No: He gives you a promise of faithfulness on which you can rely. And just because you fear your own unfaithfulness, you must place your confidence on God's faithfulness. Herein just lies the glory of free grace, that the sinner, who cannot trust himself, who feels that in everything—in faith, in humility, in earnestness, in sincerity—he comes far short, may yet surrender himself to the Lord as one who is utterly wretched, with confidence in the word that He certainly receives, and will keep such an one. Yea: it is he who fears on his

own account that must trust in the Lord. This is the only remedy. He has nothing on which he can hope but the promise of God's compassion. Every thought of fear must be a new motive to confidence. So shall he learn to fear no more, according to the word of the psalmist: "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: his heart is established, he shall not be afraid." (Psalms 112:1, 8). He shall also learn to experience that the fear of the Lord then becomes through confidence the source, not of anxiety but of peace and growing power, according to that other word: "The Church, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, was multiplied." (Acts 9:31).

Chapter 14^(TOC)

The Certainty of Faith

*"Looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief, being fully assured that what He had promised He was able also to perform."—
Romans 4:20, 21*

Abraham did not doubt. Glorious testimony to provoke us to jealousy, and thus to the imitation of his example. Therefore the word also gives us to know what the power was in virtue of which he obtained faith and brought all doubt to silence. The secret lay simply in the conviction: What God has promised, He is able also to perform. On this account he was assured, and whenever reflections and doubtings would arise, he always held before his eyes the incontrovertible argument: That which has been promised, God is able to perform. Hence it is that there stands written: "Without being weakened in faith, he considered his own body now as good as dead before Him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead and calleth the things that are not as though they were." (Rom. 4: 19, 17, RV.) To every question, "How can these things be?" there was his simple answer: "What God has promised He is able also to perform. For the Lord there is nothing too wonderful. It is not my business to be anxious, and to say how God's word can be fulfilled. The Lord will see to it."

My reader, you mourn over the power of your doubts, and say that you cannot overcome them: come, learn of Abraham how you can do this. The first thing that is necessary is that you understand and reflect what promise

the Lord has given you. If the Lord has given no promises for you, then it cannot be your duty to believe. But, as surely as the word says "Believe," is there also a promise which you must believe. To take only one out of the thousands which are in the Scriptures, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." God gives you the gracious promise, and commands you to believe it with all your heart. It is His will that you should receive it as the truth that His Son has come for all that are lost, hence also for you. He desires that you should believe that His Son seeks you and longs for you, and that His Son will save you.

God wills that you should ponder this thought and cherish it in your heart, until your whole soul takes its stand on this truth: Jesus seeks me, lost as I am; there is grace for me. As soon as you believe that, the Savior begins to come in to you.

If now you have reached this first point, if you know that there is a promise also for you, then the second duty is not to look into yourselves to know if there is hope that what you expect will take place. As Abraham did not regard his own body, which was already dead, so must you not regard your own dead soul. Although you feel yourself to be dead, powerless, insincere, very sinful, although you are lacking in penitence, earnestness, and in all else that you know you ought to have, still act like Abraham: believe on God, who maketh the dead alive, and calleth the things that are not as though they were. Act like Abraham, and cast down every doubt with the thought: "What God has promised He is able also to perform." Keep your mind occupied with this certain truth: He is come to save that which was lost, and there is no lost one so far lost that Jesus cannot find him and cannot save him.

Once again, it comes simply to these two points: know if there is a promise for you, lost sinner; if so, then cleave simply to this fact: What has been

promised He is able also to perform. "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. I will no longer dishonor Thee by doubtings: Thy power, Thy love, Thy faithfulness, I will adore and trust. I will venture to surrender my soul to Thee. Although I feel it not, I will believe it. Thou seekest and savest that which is lost. Lord, help: I do believe."

Chapter 15^(TOC)

The Glorifying of God by Faith

*"He wavered not through unbelief; but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God. Wherefore also it was reckoned unto him for righteousness."—
Romans 4:20, 22*

The question is frequently asked by those who have not yet come to faith, and who on this account do not yet fully understand it, What, pray, may be the reason why faith is so highly esteemed by the Lord and is capable of such great things? The answer is simple: It gives glory to God. It humbles the sinner in the dust as one who deserves nothing and is capable of nothing, and must on this account present himself to God as dependent on the promises of a free compassion. It glorifies God in the acknowledgment of His power and love which will bestow redemption; of His word and faithfulness also, since these are held to be so strong and glorious that the sinner, although he has nothing else, can commit himself to them. Faith sets God and man in the right relation to one another—God on the throne of His sovereign grace, from whom all must and shall come; man in his misery and nothingness, as one who has nothing in himself but guilt and its curse.

In the other virtues of the Christian life, such as humility and love, there is always something that is wrought in man, that he can feel, and of which he might be able to boast. True faith on the other hand is the confession of utter poverty and helplessness. It says: "I have nothing left, I can also do nothing. I must now simply remain silent to hear what God speaks, to see what He will

do, to receive what He will give." It is truly the attitude of a beggar, by which man is laid in the dust. And yet no angel in heaven can give God so much honor as faith, when out of the surrounding darkness and sin and poverty it still relies on God and expects from Him the certain fulfilment of that which He has promised.

Alas! how great is the foolishness of the heart of man. How many are there still, who really imagine that they give glory to God by their unbelief. They fancy that, when they mourn heavily over themselves and their misery, telling how unworthy they are to appropriate such grace because they have so deep a sense of the greatness and holiness of God, this is to the honor of God. On the contrary, it is really to His dishonor: as if He were not sufficiently gracious towards the unworthy, not sufficiently powerful to rescue the utterly wretched, not faithful to perform His word. No: faith alone gives glory to God, for it sets no limits to the Holy One of Israel, It has but one question, What has God said? When it has once known this, then it asks nothing further about possibility or truth or anything else. The word of God is enough for the soul. Like Abraham, it gives glory to God by being strong in faith.

Beloved reader, it is a terrible sin to rob God of His honor. By being unbelieving you make yourself guilty of this offence. As God has revealed Himself in the gospel more gloriously than in the law, so is the sin of unbelief in relation to the promises much more dreadful than that of disobedience to the commandments. For this reason, I entreat you, believe what God says. Ask not what you are or what you have, but if there is anything with respect to which God will have it that you shall now believe, or if there is any promise with which He comes to meet the ungodly. Here is one: "Christ died for the ungodly." Receive that word, keep it in your heart, ponder and believe it, and rest not until it abides as essential truth with you, even as it is with

God: "Christ is for the ungodly." Yes: this very day, O souls, give glory to the Lord, by going to Him as the gracious, almighty, and faithful Redeemer; commit yourselves to His word, be strong in faith and thereby give glory to God, as you go to Him.

Anxious ones, in God's name, why do you not believe? This is the only thing that you are to do, the only thing that God will have—only believe.

Chapter 16^(TOC)

The Power of Faith

"By faith even Sarah herself received power since she counted Him faithful who had promised."—Hebrews 11:11

See here again one of the examples, so simple and intelligible of what faith is: "She counted Him faithful who had promised." There was a time when Sarah doubted, for she looked to nature, and it said to her that she should no longer bear. Through the repeated promises of the Lord she was nevertheless led to look to Him who had given the promises, and keeping in mind His divine faithfulness she found there was no alternative for her but to believe; and the only account which she could give of the supernatural expectation of faith was this: "He is faithful that promised." (Hebrews 10:23).

The same way must still be followed by those Christians who desire to be liberated from their doubts and to reach the blessed experiences of the life of faith. We must learn to have done with the reasonings of the understanding; with the questions which nature would have first answered, such as, "How can these things be?", "Whereby shall I know it?", with calculations as to whether our own wisdom and power are perchance sufficient to bring us where we must know; and we must hold ourselves content with the view expressed in this sentence: "He is faithful that promised." The only thing which one has to ask is this, "Is there a promise also for me?" If the word of God gives us the answer: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners of whom I

am the chief," then that is sufficient to bring us down before the Lord and to make us expect that He will perform the promise to us: "He is faithful that promised."

O, if souls would only keep themselves occupied with the consideration of God's faithfulness, how would unbelief be ashamed. Whenever anxious feelings multiply in you, and you fear for yourself and your work, go, O soul, bow down in silent meditation and adoration before your God as the faithful One, until your whole spirit becomes filled with the thoughts and the peace that spring from this attribute. Go over all the assurances in the Scriptures, so glorious and clear, that the unchangeable One Himself shall fulfil His counsel, and that He simply desires of souls the stillness which observes and expects the performance. Take counsel with the believers of the old and new covenants, reflect on their ways and their leadings, and they will tell you with one accord that their strength and their peace have been—the faithfulness of God. O, pray, accustom yourself, every day, with every promise of God that you read, with every prayer that you make for the attainment of what God has spoken to you of, with every fear that arises in you as to whether you shall be indeed partaker of the offered salvation—pray, accustom yourself to fasten your eye undividedly on that word, to let your whole heart be filled with it: "He is faithful that promised." And, above all, even when you are not yet able to appropriate everything to yourselves, forget not to praise and to thank God for His faithfulness; praise and adore Him as the Faithful One: adoration will confirm you in faith in Him. Nor must you set your hope on the divine faithfulness only when you are taking the first steps on the way of conversion, seeking for forgiveness and acceptance, but, especially in the midst of the struggle, to be confirmed unto the end and to be unreprouvable in the day of our Lord Jesus. It is with his eye fixed on this hope that Paul says "God is faithful, through whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son

Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 1:8, 9); just as in that glorious work about sanctification that finds so little belief, "The God of peace sanctify you wholly," he also immediately adds: "Faithful is He that calleth you, who will also do it." (1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24).

It was by this faith, this loyal esteem of the faithfulness of her God and reliance upon it, that Sarah received power to bear. So far is this faith also from leading to sluggishness and indifference that it will increase activity. It teaches the soul to wait upon God spiritually and earnestly, that He may point out to it what it must do, and that it may learn by experience to understand the deep significance of that word: "Work, for God worketh in you." Believing in His faithfulness also to work in it, it has courage to work after Him. "By faith she received power, since she counted Him faithful who had promised."

Chapter 17^(TOC)

The Childship of Faith

"As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name."—John 1:12

The receiving of the Lord Jesus is here said to be the same as believing on His name. One receives Him as soon as one believes, yea through believing on His name. His name is always Jesus, Savior. As soon as the soul believes this, and on this account looks on Him as the man who certainly saves the sinner, it not merely thinks: "He can do this, yet I know not if it will take place with me," but it regards Him as a Savior given by God also for himself, and thus believes on His name that it essentially expresses what Jesus is—as soon as, I say, the sinner does this, he receives Him. He acknowledges Him in His grace as Jesus, appropriates Him in the faith which says, "He is also for me"; he receives Him as a gift bestowed by God, set before Him to be appropriated, receives Him as that which His name signifies—Savior, the only and perfect Savior. He acknowledges that in himself there is nothing good nor ever shall be; he foresees manifold unfaithfulness and backsliding; he feels himself to be wholly powerless: but he receives Jesus as a Savior, as one who undertakes the whole work, who from day to day will continue that work and accomplish it in the leading, the keeping, and the sanctification of the soul. And according as he believes further in that name, in the absolute truth, the far-reaching signification, the inexhaustible power of that name, in this same measure does he receive Jesus more perfectly in the riches of His

manifold blessings, and experience how true it is: Jesus saves. He gives power to men to become the children of God, enables them also to say, through the Spirit, "Abba, Father," and with all the dispositions of children—confidence, fear, love, obedience—to rejoice in God's fatherly love.

Reader, are you seeking salvation? O, then, receive Jesus. He is offered to you by God as a Savior. Receive Him as a gift of the Divine love; acknowledge Him as really also for you; believe that, with His name, it is the full truth that the work of saving a sinner may well be entrusted to Him; receive Him in that faith, coupled with the simple surrender of yourselves, dead and wretched as you are, into His hands, and be assured that you shall not come out deceived. Away with all doubtings. In the name of God I ask you, as upright dealing is for you indispensable to being saved: Do you believe in the name of Jesus, or do you not believe in it? Do you believe in the name JESUS, given by the true God to His Son, in order that you may build your hope upon it? O sinner, pray, believe that the name, Jesus, is divine truth. Come, say today, "Yes: He is the Savior of that which was lost "; no longer shut Him out, but receive Him in the heart, with simple faith in His word, I am Jesus. Begin with this, continue with this, go forward with this, believe evermore in the name JESUS; receive Him with this, and He shall give you power to become a child of God. Here once more what God says to you today, "As many as received Him"—thousands on earth and in heaven can corroborate the statement that it is really so—"to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name."

Chapter 18^(TOC)

The Surrender of Faith

"First they gave their own selves to the Lord."—2 Corinthians 8:5

In the word of His promise, through the gracious working of His Spirit, the Lord gives Himself to us; through faith we receive Him, and we know that He is ours. This faith, as the outgoing of the soul to Jesus to meet Him, is at the same time a surrender to Him. We can never receive the Savior and His grace without at the same time surrendering ourselves to Him, to be sealed and filled with salvation. And as faith knows that the Lord is ours, because His word tells us that He gives Himself to us, so it also knows that He receives us as His own, because His word assures us of that.

Faith has thus two sides: the believing reception of the Lord Jesus with all that He gives, and the believing surrender of the soul with all that it has to the Lord. The one cannot be without the other. I take Jesus as my King to rule over me, as a Savior to free me from sin; He cannot perform His work in me, if I do not surrender myself to Him. Confidence in Jesus is thus at the same time a committal of one's self to Him.

Anxious soul, see here again the simplicity of faith. If you wish to know what you have to do, the answer is, Give yourself to the Lord Jesus.

Give yourself to the Lord Jesus, just as you are. You have to give yourself to Him, not as an offering that is worthy of Him, as one who is already His friend and on whom He can look down with complacency. No: you have to

surrender yourself to Him as one that is dead, whom He has to make alive, as an enemy whom He must reconcile and forgive, as a sinner whom He must save. The multitude of your sins, the corruption which you feel struggling within you, the very insincerity of your coming to Him, are thus no reason why you should not venture to give yourself to Him. No: just the reverse: these are the proofs that you stand in need of a Savior; they are at the same time the tokens given by the word of God of those in whose behalf Jesus came. O sinner, just as you are, surrender yourself to Jesus.

Surrender yourself also to Him wholly and undividedly. Keep nothing back of what is yours. Think not that He is to do one part of the work and you the rest. No: submit entirely to His estimate of you. Although you do not yet feel the power to make a separation from all sins, although you still feel that the heart is attached to one thing and another, and will cleave to them, make confession of all this before Him; for it is also through the confession of sins that we surrender ourselves to Him. Understand that the more you surrender yourself entirely to Him, the more completely is He able to accomplish His work for you. Think of His complete surrender for you and to you; think of the claim of His love upon you and the complete salvation with which He will fill you, and let your surrender to Him be complete and undivided.

And, above all, surrender yourself to Him in faith. You have perchance given yourself to Him ere this, but it brought you no peace, for you did not know if the surrender was accepted by Him. You would have a token from heaven, a divine inspiration in your heart to tell you that He had accepted you. And this was wrong. He has said: "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." God has said: "Return ye, and I will receive you." When you surrender yourself to Jesus, you must believe that; in that word you must have sufficient. You are to take your stand upon it, because God speaks the truth.

However wretched you are, however imperfect your surrender is, it must be a surrender of faith, of faith that He receives you, because He has said it. Although you find it difficult to believe that so firmly, although it seems to you very hazardous for so great a sinner, it is, nevertheless, your duty to believe that, when you surrender yourself to the Lord, He receives you. Do not set yourself above God. Do not say, I have done my part but I know not if God will do His. No: think of the word; say to the Lord that it is on His promise that you surrender yourself; day after day be occupied with the faithfulness of God's promise and you shall gradually come to the blessed certainty: He receives me. Yes: you, shall even be able to say, He has received me.

Chapter 19^(TOC)

The School of Faith

*"O woman, great is thy faith; be it done unto thee even as thou wilt."—
Matthew 15:28*

A great faith: all should know that there is nothing on earth so desirable. Many may wish to have it and may pray for it, and yet there are but few that come to it. And why? A principal reason is this: they will not walk in the way that leads to it; they are afraid of the school where that faith is taught. Or, they have very wrong ideas concerning the way to attain that great faith, as if, for instance, it were a gift which is bestowed at once. So perverse are their thoughts, that when the Lord is going to hear their prayers and is to lead them in another way than they had expected, they suppose that He is no longer caring for them. Come, all ye that long for more faith, learn from the Canaanite woman, how the Lord will bring you to it.

First of all, He will try you. The Canaanite woman had a daughter possessed by a devil, and what a trial was not that to her? And so the Lord still sends His children trials of very different kinds. With one, it is trial in the physical life; with another, trial in the family; with another again it is inward vexation of soul; with still more it is hidden conflict with sin. But trial there must be; for so long as the flesh has everything agreeable and according to its inclination, the soul will never wholly and with power cleave to the Lord. It is by necessity that it is driven out to seek all its salvation in the Lord and to commit itself to Him. Blessed trial, the message of God to teach more faith,

how many regard thee as the messenger of His wrath and aversion, instead of humbly suffering themselves to be led by thy hand to the Lord.

Further: when the Lord is to lead a soul to great faith, He leaves its prayers unheard. So it was with the Canaanite woman. He answered her not one word, and when He did at length reply to her, the answer was still more unfavorable than His silence. This is always the way. If the answer came immediately, how would the soul get acquainted with the Lord Himself. His gifts would occupy its attention so much that it would overlook the Lord Himself. It must first be put to the proof, whether it can take its stand upon its Lord and what He has provided, without any answer; whether He and His word are to suffice for it; yea, whether it will, even when His word appears to be opposed to it, still not doubt His love, but rather commit itself to it. A faith so great that it still cleaves to the Lord in spite of apparent rejection: this precious lesson, which is above all else acceptable to the Lord, is learned and practiced only in the conflict of unheard but persevering prayer.

Once more: the soul that is to come to great faith must be humbled. What a hard word for the poor heathen woman: "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." But she suffers it to be well-pleasing to her, and uses it as her strongest argument. She overcomes the Lord with His own weapons and turns His rejection into her plea: "Even the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall under their master's table." Do you also likewise: whenever, in following the Lord, your sins are laid bare to you, and your unworthiness held up before you, and the word makes you feel that you are an ungodly and accursed sinner, always answer with the woman, "Yea, Lord, I am very wretched; all that my heart testifies of sin is true: 'yet, yet even the dogs eat'; and with such a Lord as Thou art, there is overflowing grace even for the most wretched." The deeper the root, the stronger the tree; the deeper the

descent of humility, the stronger the faith; for then it leans, not half on itself, but wholly on the Lord.

See here, thou, my soul, Jesus' school for faith. Let it not grieve you, if the lessons are sometimes heavy; He has told you of this beforehand. But hold fast this conviction: when my soul is brought into trial, when my sin and unworthiness become more distinct, and press me the deeper down, I shall look upon all this as the way along which the all-loving Jesus is to lead me to that life of faith, in which He takes such delight; and when I am dispirited, I shall read again the story of the Canaanite, and I shall be strengthened by the glorious victory and reward of her conflict of faith. The more difficult the school, the more glorious the prize; "Be it done unto thee, even as thou wilt."

Chapter 20^(TOC)

The Word of Faith

"So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."—Romans 10:17

Here is the simple answer to the question, How does faith arise in the soul? The Spirit, the author of faith, uses for this purpose a means, and that means is the word. It cannot be otherwise. The Spirit does not work apart from the faculties of man, but by means of them. His supernatural power makes use of the natural gifts which remain to man after his sin, renews and sanctifies them. By awakening desire, He bends the will; by presenting the loveliness of Jesus, He works upon the affections; and thus also, when He works faith, He does so by presenting the truth, in order thereby to awaken confidence.

I take it for granted that my reader is one who has been awakened; who, desiring to be saved, is looking out for rescue; who longs to be freed from his sin, and asks, How, pray, do I come to faith in Jesus? The answer is, By the word. But what am I to do with the word? Do with it what you should do with any ordinary message which you cannot at once believe. Suppose that tidings is brought to you of a great inheritance which comes to you. You had not been expecting it, and cannot believe that so great happiness and wealth have fallen to your lot. What are you to do? You will inquire if the messenger is trustworthy. If you are sure of this point, in order to obtain all certainty, you will ask him once and again and again to say that you are the person intended; or if he has brought a letter of conveyance or a will, you will read it

repeatedly. And thus, by explanation and confirmation of his message, you will become convinced and will believe. This is just: faith is by the word.

Not otherwise is it in divine things.

When the message comes to you, Jesus is a Savior for sinners, also for you, do you ask if you are to believe Him who speaks? The answer is, Yes: for He is the true God. Do you ask if there is no misunderstanding, or if you are really the person intended? Yes: for the message is to every sinner. Then does it become your duty to listen earnestly to the message; to ask repeatedly, yea unceasingly—for the matter is of moment—Shall I or shall I not believe? And the more you simply take the word, read and read again the message of God, contemplate one after another the promises with which God has made it sure that the Savior is for every sinner, the sooner shall you feel constrained to say, It is true; God says it; I must believe it.

O, poor sinner, pray cease to ask what your own heart feels, as one who would be saved. Cease to seek the ground of faith in yourselves. Attend now to the word: Jesus is the Savior of sinners. Listen to it again and yet again. Let your soul become occupied the whole day with the thought: God says it; it must be. And continue with this, the more wretched and dark the condition of your heart may be. Ask simply from day to day, What says the word? Take and carry that word in your heart, and you shall speedily experience that "faith is by the word" And so far from making you think that faith is thus a work of your own power will such activity be, that you shall acknowledge that it is by the word the Spirit works. Your use of the word gives you reason, gives you right, to hope for His help. You shall experience how little faith is merely a reasoning of the intellect, but at the same time how faithful God is to bestow His grace on the use of means, and to crown with His blessing the soul that honors His word.

Chapter 21^(TOC)

The Thanksgiving of Faith

*"So walk in Him, established in your faith, abounding in thanksgiving."—
Colossians 2:17*

The idea which is here expressed by the apostle is, that where faith is active and growing it will always go coupled with thanksgiving; as it stands written: "Then believed they His words; they sang His praise." As faith stirs up to thanksgiving, so it exercises a reactive influence; it in turn strengthens faith. Faith and thanksgiving belong to one another and keep one another. The more I believe, the more I shall thank; the more I thank, the more I shall believe. The lack of faith is the reason that men give thanks so little; the neglect of thanksgiving hinders and weakens faith. This is a fault to which too little attention has been paid and from which many a one suffers great loss. Let us consider it for a moment.

The reason why thanksgiving has the effect of increasing faith is manifest. Faith has its greatest power in the fact that in believing the soul wholly forgets itself, and with undivided energy looks to God and hears Him—goes out wholly to Him. This is in like manner precisely the nature of thanksgiving, that in it the soul must be entirely occupied with God, with the contemplation of His goodness, the adoration of His Godhead, the consideration of His ways, the expression of His wonders. Accordingly, the more the mind is exercised in this work, and is taken up with the thought of all this, the more shall there be fixed and rooted in it the conviction that the

Lord is truly a God on whom it is its duty to rely. If thanksgiving, the express mention of His omnipotence, His love, His faithfulness, His perfection shall fill the soul, the result cannot but be that the soul shall suffer it to be concentrated on God. He that has but a single word of such a God to build upon has enough. In such thanksgiving the soul will have its desires roused, its courage strengthened, its inward devotion to Him deepened. The shamefulfulness of its unbelief will be very manifest as an offence against such a God. The remembrance of unbelief, of my unworthiness, my lack of love, my insincerity, my weakness and my uncertainty as to whether I shall remain faithful—all this shall be utterly blotted out by what the thankful soul has expressed, namely, that God in His compassionate and omnipotent love is greater than all the force of sin and Satan. It cannot be otherwise, if thanksgiving increases faith. Hence that word: "Abounding in faith with thanksgiving."

And now I wish to ask you who here say that you are seeking the increase of faith this question, Are you really doing this by thanking God? If you are still unconverted, go and thank Him that you are still not in hell. O, what a wonder it is that in His longsuffering He has still borne with you and spared you. Thank Him for this. Thank Him that He gave His Son Jesus for sinners. Yes: although you are not yet able to say that He is yours, fall upon your knees and thank God for His unspeakable gift to this sinful world and also to you. Thank Him for His gracious promise which has also come to you. O sinner, though you have as yet received little or nothing for yourself, pray be not silent, but adore and speak of His wonderful compassion. Let this be a daily work with you. Keep yourself intensely occupied with it: let your soul abide in contemplating what God is, what He has done, what He has promised He will do; how gracious, how faithful He is and how mighty to deliver and endeavor, however imperfectly, to express this on your knees

before Him. In every acknowledgment of your bitter misery, thank Him that He is God; confess before Him that He is great and good. This thanksgiving will teach your soul that you may calmly confide in God. And, throughout the whole conflict of faith, you will often have to say that, when everything looked utterly dark and your wretchedness was very deep, if you but rendered thanks for what God was, hope then once more revived in your soul.

Whatever else fails you, this always remains—a God to praise. Never was your case so wretched, that you had nothing more left to be thankful for.

Only put this remedy to the proof: in the midst of all that is dark, grievous, and incomprehensible for the soul, only begin to praise, and your praising shall speedily merge in believing. Praising and believing are one.^[4]

Chapter 22^(TOC)

The Offence of Faith

"And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times."—2 Kings 5:10

The story of Naaman's healing has at all times served as a striking illustration of the way of faith, with all the humbling, yea offensive, features that it has for the natural heart, of which Naaman himself is to us so clear an example.

The answer of Naaman when he received the message of the prophet—how entirely is it in accordance with the expectation of nature, which is so fain to see something, so fain to receive something in the shape of external ceremonies: "Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and recover the leper." How completely emerges here the inclination of the seeker for healing, who would have a sensible, visible, impressive revelation of the Lord's power; and who, when a servant is sent with the simple message of faith, turns away disappointed, as if this were no answer to his prayer.

And then the contents of the message—to wash in Jordan. If water could do it, were not the rivers of Damascus larger than the Jordan, were not their waters better than all the waters of Israel? He did not know that it was not the water, but the power of God through His word with the water. And in like manner the seeker for salvation cannot understand that it must just be faith by which he is to be cleansed. Are there not the waters of a deep and inward penitence, the streams of sincere humility, the loyalty of an inner love? Why

is it, pray, that faith is to be named above these? How many there are that go and set their disposition before and above mere simple faith; as if God called not that which is weak and despised, and indeed nothing; as if He had not chosen faith as the way in which man, as capable of no achievement, was to receive everything out of free compassion.

But, more than all else, the washing seven times was sure to prove a stumbling-block, unless he had previously been taught to submit to the obedience of faith. If the waters were good, why was not one washing sufficient? If the healing did not take place at the fifth or sixth time, why should it occur just at the seventh time? Reason was thoroughly entitled to inquire in this fashion. But faith cannot insist on an answer to these questions, and at the same time obeys "according to the word of the man of God." This submission should become to us a very significant instance of the longsuffering of faith. It should remind us how faith is to hold out, although it sees not the least token of alteration or healing. It should teach us the lesson which is learned with so much difficulty that there must be a continual repetition of the act of faith, cleaving fast to the word of God, until He bestows the blessing.

O soul, seeking for salvation, learn here your way. It is with submission to that which does not appear to you the best means, which seems to you too small and trifling for such a great result, it is by the continuous repetition of what at the outset seems fruitless, that you are called on to persevere in faith. Pray, understand it, faith is God's way. It was He that devised it, and not man. On this account it is a stumbling-block to every Naaman, until he learns, as one that is helpless, to bow beneath the word of God. Submit yourself to God and receive what He says, that "he that believeth shall be saved." Go every day to the word and its streams of living water. Although it seems to you

somewhat trifling to wash there, to plunge and bathe in it, to receive from it this or that promise, and to do the very same thing every day anew, without experiencing any healing, yet hold on. Persevere, and the blessed result shall be like that of Naaman. "His flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child," he was as one born a second time, "and he was clean." You also shall be born again by the living word, and be cleansed from your sin. It does not lie in you, nor even in the word regarded in itself, but in the faithfulness of God, who has said: "He that believeth shall not be ashamed."

Chapter 23^(TOC)

The Stability of Faith

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for."—Hebrews 11^[5]

Many people think that faith is something which at its best is but very uncertain: not so certain, for example, as sight or hearing. They appear to think that faith is a sort of imagination by which we must take pains to be assured in our own hearts that we shall be saved. The result of this erroneous conception is that they often attempt to exercise it, but find no rest in it, or perhaps even come to regard all assurance of faith as conjecture, self-deception, or presumption. They do not understand what faith is.

The Epistle to the Hebrews might have taught them. There faith is represented as the highest certainty, as a sure foundation on which one can build and safely trust oneself. In faith there is nothing that moves or can be moved: faith is a strong basis, and that indeed for the simple reason that faith depends upon what stands more firmly than rocks or mountains, namely, the word of God. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of God endures to eternity. And on this account it is that to come to rest, peace, and stability, the soul has simply to ask, "What has God said?" Is there anything that God has commanded me to believe? Has He spoken anything that is directed to every sinner, and that every sinner is bound to believe? If so, then it is my duty to search out this and to receive it as being the word of the true God, and therefore sure and certain.

And what is it, then, that every sinner is to believe I Simply this—that Christ has been given by God also to him as a Savior. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ is come into the world to save sinners,"—all sinners without distinction, even the chief. Let the sinner that longs to be saved only hold fast that truth, and be occupied with it. Let him go out of himself, so as to be hemmed in with this thought, until his heart be filled with it: Jesus is come to save sinners, even me; Jesus is given by God also to save me: Christ is certainly for me. Not because I have believed all this or have been converted; no, but because I am an ungodly one. And, whether I believe it or not, it remains truth that Christ is offered by God also to me. Before I believe it, it is the truth: the truth of it thus does not depend on anything in me that is yet to take place. The truth of it is grounded on the fact that God has said it. I have, therefore, nothing to do but to hear according to the word of God, and to receive it in my soul, until it becomes with me a settled conviction: it must be true, Christ is a Savior also for me, for God has said it. Every questioning in the form of, Are you already converted? or, Are you worthy of it? or, Are you indeed sincere? I bring to silence with the simple answer: Whoever or whatever I may be, Christ is for the sinner, is also for me. And according as I day by day accustom myself simply to ask, Am I sure that God has said it? shall I experience that faith is a firm foundation. Standing on this basis, I cannot waver, but I come to an ever clearer insight into the truth that faith is nothing but a receiving and committing of oneself to the word of the true God. Hence it cannot be otherwise than that "faith is a firm foundation."

And now, anxious one, why do you not believe? O, faith is no imagination that you too are a chosen one, but a laying of yourself down on the immovable rock of the word of the Lord. "God loved the world," "Christ died for the ungodly"; and now He comes to ask you—see to it, I entreat you, that

you give Him an answer: "If I speak the truth to you, why do you not believe?"

Chapter 24^(TOC)

The Justification of Faith

"We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law."—Romans 3:28

The Lord has revealed to us two ways, which should be able to lead us to Him and salvation. Along the one the law leads us, along the other grace. Both ways are good and come from God: yet there is after all only one of the two for us to use, by reason of our weakness. The law is good for those who have the power to obey and to follow it. Grace is the way for those who are powerless and can accomplish nothing. The law demands and must be fulfilled: grace gives and needs simply to be received. The law says, "Do this and thou shalt live"; grace says, "Believe and thou shalt be saved." The law demands works, yet gives no strength to produce them: grace asks for faith, which it also of its own power awakens by its promises—faith, which is nothing but the acknowledgment of weakness and a consent to be willing to receive everything for nothing. The law directs me to the height, to a mountain too steep to climb: grace to the valley, where I have only to sink down to be preserved.

Of the utmost importance is it that I should know well the distinction betwixt these two ways, choose the right one, and walk in it. For in our present sinful condition there is only one of these ways that is still really of service to us, although man on the contrary would just very fain walk in the other. Well is it for us that God has left us in no doubt as to which one is wished for and

approved of by Him.

It was especially the Apostle Paul whom God chose to point out to us clearly the way of salvation—as he has done most fully in his Epistle to the Romans. The conclusion of his argumentation we have in the text quoted at the head of this chapter. He had shown how all mankind, Jews as well as heathen, had missed the glory of God. They could not fulfil, they did not wish to fulfil, the law of God. The law must be perfectly obeyed, otherwise it works only wrath. The law knows nothing of grace, only of right. God has searched the world, and there was none righteous, not even one. By the law every mouth was stopped, and the whole world made guilty before God. It was a declaration of the law itself, "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Romans 3:20). "But the righteous shall live by faith." That, the Lord Jesus had proclaimed. By His death God had reconciled the world. He had allowed the punishment and the demands of the law to be fulfilled. He has permitted an everlasting and infinite righteousness to be brought in. For nothing had God suffered it to be offered: without price and without money is this righteousness ours, through the free gift of God. In the case of the corrupt, curse-deserving, and powerless sinner, there can be no talk of service or works: only of faith, "Submission to the righteousness of God." Where that faith in Jesus and the word of His grace is found, there is the sinner made partaker of the righteousness of God, faith being simply the eye to see it as it was offered, the hand to receive it, and the activity for appropriating it for himself. He that believeth is justified.

What folly, then, is it still to look to one's own works or merit. Sinner, are you resolved to work? Then must you keep the whole law, and that perfectly; and thus you shall certainly be condemned. Do you desire to be justified? Only believe in Christ and His righteousness, in God and the promises of His

grace, as intended also for you. By that faith man is justified without the works of the law.

Chapter 25^(TOC)

The Works of Faith

"Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith."—James 2:24

It has often been supposed that there was opposition betwixt this utterance of James and the doctrine of Paul. It is to be nevertheless acknowledged at once that this is not the case, when one reflects that the works of which Paul speaks are entirely different from those which James intends. Paul always speaks of the works of the law: James has his eye upon the works of faith. The works of the law are those which are done out of the personal power of man. In the direction of fulfilling the law of God in order to merit the favor of God and make himself worthy of it. Of these the word of God says, that man is justified without the works of the law. He can do nothing that is good or meritorious: all that comes from him is impure and deserving of wrath. On the contrary, the works of faith of which James speaks are those which must be done for the confirmation and the perfecting of faith, and thus out of the power which God gives and not to merit anything. They serve to manifest that which faith has received from free grace. They follow upon conversion, while the works of the law can only precede this change. The works of the law will be able to glorify man: the works of faith give God all the honor; for they are done in the acknowledgment of personal unworthiness. Works and faith go together, as being both fruits of grace and tokens of the renewing of the mind; faith as the root of the works, the works as the perfecting of faith.

In this way it can now be clearly understood what the word of God means,

when in one passage it says: "To him that worketh not but believeth, his faith is reckoned for righteousness," and then again insists on works. The works which are done apart from faith, as an endeavor to make ourselves worthy of God's favor and thus keep us back from faith, the reception of God's free grace, are not to be done: they are abominable in the eyes of God: "He that worketh not is justified." The works which are done with and in faith, while the soul in the sense of its unworthiness commits itself to the gracious promises of God, just because it hopes or knows that the Lord receives it apart from its merits, and seeks to praise Him for them, are acceptable to God, and must be done, the more the better. And it is of these that it is said that "man is justified by works": they are the manifestation of faith and actual fruit-bearing, and not merely of a faith that continues inactive, and is thus dead.

Let the soul which seeks to come to Jesus in faith thus understand what it is to think of works. As soon as it begins to look upon its works as the ground of merit, as soon as it begins to say in fear, "My works are too small, too trifling, too sinful for me to be received," it must at once remember that "man is justified without works." No sin or ungodliness of which you have been guilty ought to keep you back from the hope of grace. Yet, on the other side, in order that the soul may not perhaps sit down in idle inactivity, in order that it may not go on in sin while it relies upon grace, let it be remembered that as soon as the first beginnings of the desire for grace awake within us—this, if it is sincere, will necessarily show itself active in the doing of God's will. We shall be able to pray with confidence and in truth, "forgive us our debts," only when at the same time we just as heartily endeavor to say, "as we forgive our debtors"; just as John writes, "Let us not love in word, neither with the tongue but in deed and truth. Hereby shall we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before Him"; and, "If our heart condemn us not, we have

boldness toward God." (Compare further 1 John 4:22, as also Psalm 18:22-27.) Thus we learn to understand rightly the word, "work for God worketh in you," that is, by faith; and our works become the lovely evidences of His heavenly grace, the foretokens of His everlasting favor.

Chapter 26^(TOC)

The Obedience of Faith

"By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out."—Hebrews 11:8

Beloved soul, you still say that you would fain believe, that it is your earnest and sincere desire to belong to the people of the Lord. You are nevertheless kept back, for what reason you yourself do not really know. Perhaps it is because it is not yet quite clear to you what you have to do when you believe. You do not yet understand the simplicity of faith, nor see that it is something which you can and must do without any even the least delay. Let us try to understand this by the example of the father of the faithful.

The Lord had said to Abraham: "Go thou out of thine own land to the country which I shall show thee." In this calling of Abraham, we find a divine command and a divine promise. The command is, "Go thou out of thine land": the promise is, "to a country which I shall show to cleave to the word: "The Lord will bring you thither."

"But I have not received the promises," you cry. My reply is, You have indeed received the promises. God is not so unrighteous as to say to anyone that he must go to heaven without the promise that He will bring him thither. He has given you Jesus to show you the country, and to lead you on the way thither. He does not say, "Repent ye," without pointing to Jesus whom He ordained to give repentance. He does not say, "Abandon sin, and be saved," without at the same time saying, "Jesus frees and saves from sin." And it is

only in the strength of this faith that you shall enter heaven. Therefore, soul, observe the calling of God: pray, understand that Jesus will do all for you: receive Him this day as the guide on the way given by God. However wretched you are, just simply believe that it is truth that God has given His Son Jesus also to you to save you. Be willing and acknowledge Him as your Savior. Rejoice in the thought: God has given Him to the sinner and thus also to me. And although you still feel nothing in yourself, grasp firmly this thought the whole day: carry it round with you in the midst of all your work and over it: It is certainly true, God has given Jesus also to me, to save me. This simple thought is faith. Hold fast by it, thank God for it: it will speedily send forth roots in you, and you shall rejoice in the assurance: Jesus is leading me to heaven. By this faith, you also, having been called, shall be obedient.

Chapter 27^(TOC)

The Nutriment of Faith

"A day's portion every day."—Exodus 16:4

"I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may prove them whether they will walk in my law or no." In these words we have announced to us what the rule is for the maintenance of the spiritual life, the law for the growth and increase of the life of faith. This law is in no respect different from that which we observe in the natural life every day. Every man knows how the little child is fed so as to grow up a strong man, how the strong man is supplied with nourishment so as to maintain his strength. The daily regular use of a little food gives man strength of body. Thus also is it with everything in nature: the little tree becomes large, the poor man becomes rich, the grandest building rises from its foundation, the longest journey can be performed, not with great and violent strides, but by the silent, persevering faithfulness, which does not despise the little, invisible progress of every day, but uses it to reach the appointed goal.

"A day's portion every day," the general rule of the natural life prevails also in the spiritual; and yet there are so many Christians who, by not acknowledging this, suffer dreadful loss. They imagine that great exertion of strength at particular times, that fervent prayers when we feel ourselves stirred up, are the means of securing the increase and the flourishing of the soul's life. But the golden rule, "a day's portion every day," the day by day,

regular continuance in the use of food, whereby the soul obtains its growth, they do not understand. They have not yet apprehended the lesson that faith and the life of faith must have nourishment, daily bread; and that with the promise, "I will rain bread from heaven," there stands the command "The people shall gather a day's portion every day that I may" (this clause is added just for this very end) "prove them whether they will walk in my law or no."

Beloved reader, have you not often mourned over the unstable and changeable character of your spiritual life; have you not often wondered how it comes about that your days of hope are so shortlived, and asked on all sides what you had first to do that it might be otherwise with you, that your faith might abide and increase? Would it surprise you that you should be weak, if your body remained without food for a couple of days, and that every time afresh? And is it then to surprise you that your faith should not be living, firm, and strong, if you do not faithfully partake of the word of God? That is the nutriment of faith: from it and from it alone does faith draw its strength. "Man shall live by every word that cometh from the mouth of God." Confess that you too often yield to this and that worldly circumstance, to idleness and apathy, and neglect the hidden use of God's word, or use it so hastily and superficially that your soul is not nourished. No wonder that you have to mourn over a leanness in your soul. Begin today and henceforth let no day pass by without eating of the heavenly manna, the word of God and the living Christ in the word. Receive the word in faith. God gave manna every day in the waste wilderness up until the homecoming in Canaan: if we go out and gather there will be in the word, for every new day, instruction, strengthening, purification, and salvation. And he who with faithful perseverance continues day by day in the use of the word, even when he does not at once observe the blessing that flows from it, shall experience that the increase of faith, although it be unobserved and slow, is yet certain and sure.

Chapter 28^(TOC)

The Tenderness of Faith

"And they gathered it morning by morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed us hot, it melted."—Exodus 16:21

In the silence and coolness and secrecy of the night God gave the manna: in the freshness and quickening of the morning hour the people had to go out to gather it. It was thus the first work of every day to receive bread from God's hand; for, when the sun waxed hot, it melted, and was no longer to be found. Not in the glow of the midday sun, nor in the press and bustle of the day, did they receive this hidden manna, but in the charming coolness of the morning, ere the mind was ensnared by the seductions of the world.

Lovely and instructive image of the way in which God still ministers to faith its nutriment. And I remain convinced that there are many that seem to be sincerely longing for confirmation of faith, while they have not become partakers of it, because they do not go in search of it betimes. How many are there, pray, by whom the reading of the Bible is continued only in the evening? After the freshness of the morning hour and the strength of the day have been devoted to the world, they come in the evening, in weariness of mind and body, to serve the Lord with the remnant of their energies. No wonder that there is no blessing enjoyed: the heart is weary, the tenderness of the spirit and its receptiveness for the word is dulled. On the other hand, are there not many who are often content in the morning with the general reading of the word in the household, apart from private searching of the Scriptures,

or reflection or meditation with prayer? This still yields little blessing. The reading of a chapter once a day is, as a rule, not sufficient. No: let all that truly desire to increase in faith, see to it that they endeavor in the morning hour to gather for the day manna on which they can ruminate throughout its course. He that goes out in the morning without partaking of a portion of this nutriment comes home weary in the evening, with but little desire to eat. And he who does not in the morning first lay up the word in his heart is not to be surprised if the world assumes the first and chief place in his heart, for he has neglected the only means of being in advance of the world. No: as the Lord gives us the night in order to throw off again the weariness of the day, and in the morning hour to make a new beginning with fresh spirit and energy, so must the believer take and devote to the Lord his first fresh and undiminished forces, and gather his manna while the blessing of the night's rest is upon him, and before the corruption of the world has again banished its lovely dew; for when the sun waxes hot, it melts. When the heat of the day has come, and temptation has first passed over the soul, all the gladness and trustfulness of the morning hour have also passed away. The life of grace will not endure the heat of the sun unless it be first strengthened by food.

"Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning." "O Lord, in the morning shalt Thou hear my voice; in the morning will I order my prayer unto Thee, and keep watch." (Psalms 143:8; 5:3.) Such words point out to us what will be the attitude of the soul in him who is in earnest first and chiefly and with the whole heart to serve the Lord. With every morning hour he will taste the delightful experience of the word: "His going forth is prepared as the daybreak." (Hosea 6:3.)

Reader, why do you not believe? Pray be faithful towards yourself and towards God. There is no piety in mourning over unbelief, unless you also lay

aside everything that stands in the way of faith. If the irregular, superficial use of the word, if the giving of the first, the fresh, the best hours of the day and energies of the soul to the world and its service is the cause, then come, make a change in these points: morning by morning go and seek your God: He will not keep Himself hidden from you.

Chapter 29^(TOC)

The Hand of Faith

"Jesus said to the man that had his hand withered... stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored."—Luke 6:10

One of the most common mistakes by which souls are kept back from faith is that they do not feel the strength for faith. They desire first to feel faith living in themselves, and then they would believe. But that the command to believe should come to them while they do not yet feel themselves prepared for it or in a position to believe—this they do not comprehend. They do not understand, because they have not observed, what we experience or may see every day, that readiness and ability for any work is not given before the work but only through the work, and thus after we begin to work. The child that learns to run begins before he can really do it, and learns in the midst of the effort. The man that wishes to learn swimming goes into the water while he cannot yet swim, because he knows that, when he begins, he will in time learn to do it. And this law of nature has a still more glorious application in grace. God gives us commands for which we have previously no power, and yet requires obedience to them with full right; because He has said to us that when we submit, and set ourselves towards obedience, strength will be given along with this incipient activity. And this is the spirit in which we are to believe. Under the conviction of its unbelief, the soul must set itself to believe. In the assurance that power will be bestowed, it is yet to make a beginning: "Lord, I believe." In this action it is also to persevere and go

forward.

Very strikingly are both aspects of this truth pictured to us in the case of the man with the withered hand. He feels his hand powerless, and yet Jesus says to him: "Stretch forth thy hand." He sees in the Savior enough to convince him that He will not mock him, that He who gives this command will certainly never issue it without, at the same time, giving power to carry it out. He obeys and his hand is healed. O soul, the Lord Jesus who calls to you, "Believe in Me, as your Savior," knows your helplessness. But it is just on this account that He speaks to you to rescue you from it. With a voice of power He commands you, "Believe in Me, that I am given by God to be your Savior: stretch out your hand to lay hold of Me and to appropriate Me for yourself." Listen to Him, be willing to obey Him; remember that with the command He also gives the strength; begin, although you do not yet feel the power, and, although you can still do nothing, say, like Martha: "I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." Show that it is your desire to believe, and that you are in dead earnest about it; set your soul to attend to the fact that He really speaks to you, and to hear how charmingly attractive and kindly encouraging His voice is: "O thou unbelieving one, believe in Me." As the man with the withered hand obtained power to stretch it out at the command of Jesus, so shall it be with you. The command, "Believe," will no longer oppress you with the thought, "I cannot do it," but encourage you to entertain the confidence: "Jesus commands it, thus it is to be, thus it may be." And if, with every inclination again to be discouraged, you look to Jesus and hear how cheeringly He calls to you, "You may, you must, you can believe in Me," your soul will be strengthened with an ever-growing steadfastness to entrust yourself to Him. In the endeavor to believe, strength for it is given and exercised: the hand of faith will soon be entirely healed.

Soul, Jesus asks you, "If I speak the truth to you, why do you not believe?" He tells you the divine truth that He has come for you. He tells you the truth that your faith may be awakened thereby. I beseech you, understand this. See Him who here speaks: it is Jesus, the faithful and almighty Lover: hear His voice and be no longer unbelieving.

Chapter 30^(TOC)

The Hindering of Faith

"Then cometh the devil and taketh away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved."—Luke 8:12

By this word the Lord teaches us that whenever the devil is bent on keeping back anyone from salvation, he has merely to see to it that he keeps him back also from faith: he cannot then be prepared for salvation. And, on the other hand, in order to keep anyone back from faith, he has simply to take away the word from the heart: he does not then believe. And how dreadful is the thought that there are so many who, although they say that they desire to believe, yet work into the hand of the devil, so far as the word is concerned. To the devil it is a matter of small interest in what particular way this takes place, so long as he can take away the word out of the heart. In how many ways is this done.

In one case, by all manner of sin and unrighteousness. The love of sin cannot dwell together with the word. The heart cannot at the same time move towards God and away from God, cannot equally desire the word and sin. One or other of these must be cast out. Alas! how many thousand times does a sinner who said that he was seeking Jesus, and was desirous of believing, let slip the word which he has laid up in his heart in the morning, because he was not willing to say farewell to his sin, his anger, or lying, or deception, or envy, or impurity.

In another, the word is stifled by worldly cares and inclinations. It may be

either the heavy sorrow and disquietude of one who has a difficult lot in the world, or it may be the temptation and preoccupation with the world that often springs from prosperity. How constantly it happens that the word is stifled, and thus taken away by love to the world.

Again, there are others from whom the devil takes away the word, through the soul's being occupied with itself and its sins. Instead of the heart being kept bent on the word of promise, the eye is fixed on its own inmost parts: the soul is so much taken up with its own feeling, its own wretchedness and weakness, with the effort to be converted in its own strength, that the word is loosely held, and so easily carried away.

And when one remembers how superficially the word is read, what little pains is taken to understand the word, to take into the heart and keep there every day that which should be fitted to strengthen faith, one feels how lightly and easily the word is taken away: it costs the devil little trouble.

Reader, if you are seeking Jesus, if you would come to faith, be admonished by this earnest word: "The devil comes and takes away the word, that they may not believe." Whatever temptation there may be, either from the world without or in your own heart, take heed that you always keep and hold fast the word. Let not the devil take it away from you. Let the precepts and promises of the word be your meditation day and night. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." (Colossians 3:16). "Thy word have I laid up in mine heart... It is my meditation all the day." (Psalms 119:11, 97). This language of David must be yours; then, when you have found life, you will later on be able also to say with him: "This I have had, because I kept Thy precepts." (Psalms 119:56). O soul, even the devil knows this: where the word dwells in the heart, there faith comes. Do you also learn this, and be assured that the humble, silent holding fast the living word of God will

certainly be blessed to awaken faith in you also. God Himself has said that is the word, "which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21). And as the word is received and kept in this hope, He is faithful to bestow by the Spirit the blessing of the word.

Before that word, the evil one retreats, as before the "It is written" out of Jesus' mouth: wof the seeker for healing, who would have a sensible, visible, impressive revelation of the Lord's power; and who, when a servant is sent with the simple message of faith, turns away disappointed, as if this were no answer to his prayer.

Chapter 31^(TOC)

The Gift of Faith

*"To you it hath been granted in the behalf of Christ to believe in Him."—
Philippians 1:29*

Faith a gift of God: this truth has been to many a one the cause of fear and dread. And yet this ought not to be. It rather yields reasons for gladness and hope. It is always an entirely perverse amplification of this statement to say: "It is a gift, and thus I do not know whether I shall ever receive it; if it were to be found by personal effort, and if I had to call it into existence by my own power, I should then indeed take heed that I did not remain without faith." Thus many a one reasons. No: the reverse is the truth. If you could believe of yourselves, by personal effort and work, you would never do it, you should certainly be lost. But since faith is given to us, since there is a Lord in heaven who will implant and cherish and care for that faith in us, then there is hope that we may obtain and preserve that faith. It is a word of joyful hope.

And what makes the encouragement of this word still greater—this faith is given by grace. There is no question of worthiness or merit, of wisdom or piety, of strength or dignity; but it is given to the unworthy and the ungodly. To those that do not seek Him, the sovereign God comes with His drawing grace; through the Spirit He works the conviction of sin and of the need of His love; by His word He sets Jesus before the soul as His gift to the sinner, desirable and suitable, freely offered and acceptable, until the soul, under the hidden and indeed effectual working of the Spirit, takes confidence to

appropriate the Savior entirely to itself. Yea, from beginning to end, along the whole way, in the midst of continual sinfulness and unfaithfulness on your part, it is of grace given to you to believe in Him.

And that faith comes under the use of means does not make it any the less a gift. Of well-nigh every gift of God one can be partaker only by work. We get bread in the sweat of our brow, and yet we pray: "Give us this day our daily bread." We enjoy health through the use of food and other means, and yet we always thank the Lord for preserving us from sickness and death. No: the appointment of means only shows us how loving the gift is, how the Lord will move and open the spirit of man by its own activity to appropriate entirely for himself what his God will bestow upon him. This thought of our text does not deter from means, but gives the right desire and the right spirit to use them. The soul learns to understand that the Lord who gives it the word will also give the faith to receive it; that He who has given the promise will also bestow the fulfilment, although you feel that you cannot do it. Set yourself to believe, in the joyful confidence: it is given.

Reader, it is given by grace to believe in Jesus. Ask this grace humbly from the Lord, wait for it at His hands in a childlike spirit. Let every experience of failure, of unbelieving, of insensibility convince you, how unfortunate it would be if you had to believe of yourself, and how blessed it is that you may look to God for it. Keep yourself occupied with the word of promise, look to Jesus as appointed for you by God, in order that you may believe in Him; and in every endeavor to appropriate Him, and the promises of grace, work in silent gladness, inspired by the word: "It is granted unto you to believe in Jesus." The God who has had Jesus offered to me, who has awakened in me the first desire for Him, will also give grace to believe. In that blessed confidence I shall go forward, until secretly and gradually faith becomes

living and visible. Yes, thank God, "it is granted to believe in Him."

^[1] This thought is very strikingly put in a penny tract, One by One, to be obtained from the author, Mr. Thomas Hogben, Welcome Mission, Portsmouth.

^[2] In the A. V. we find the words in all the seven epistles; according to R. V. they occur only five times.

^[3] Dutch version.

^[4] The Dutch here admits of a play upon words, "Loven en gelooven zijn een."

^[5] The Dutch version has, "Now faith is a firm foundation of the things which we hope for," etc.

THE SUPERNATURAL WORK OF GOD

ORIGINAL TITLES: BE PERFECT; DIVINE HEALING;
HELPS TO INTERCESSION

THE TRUE VINE: MEDITATIONS FOR A MONTH ON
JOHN 15:1-16

BY

ANDREW MURRAY

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Thirteenth Day: For the Spirit of Burning

Fourteenth Day: For the Church of the Future

Fifteenth Day: For Schools and Colleges

Sixteenth Day: For the Power of the Holy Spirit

Seventeenth Day: For Kings and Rulers

Eighteenth Day: For Peace

Nineteenth Day: For the Holy Spirit on Christendom

Twentieth Day: For God's Spirit on the Heathen

Twenty-First Day: For God's Spirit on the Jews

Twenty-Second Day: For all who are in suffering

Twenty-Third Day: For the Holy Spirit in Your Own Work

Twenty-Fourth Day: For the Spirit on Your Own
Congregation

Twenty-Fifth Day: For More Conversions

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The True Vine: Meditations for a Month on John 15:1-16

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Be Perfect^(TOC)

Preface and Prayer

If any one takes up this little volume with the idea of finding a theory of Perfection expounded or vindicated, he will be disappointed. My object has been a very different one. What I have wished to do is to go with my reader through the Word of God, noting the principal passages in which the word "Perfect" occurs, and seeking in each case from the context to find what the impression is the word was meant to convey. It is only when we have yielded ourselves simply and prayerfully to allow the words of Scripture to have their full force, that we are on the right track for combining the different aspects of truth into one harmonious whole.

Among the thoughts which have specially been brought home to me in these meditations, and in which I trust I may secure the assent of my reader, the following are the chief:

1. There is a Perfection of which Scripture speaks as possible and attainable. There may be, there is, great diversity of opinion as to how the term is to be defined. But there can be only one opinion as to the fact that God asks and expects His children to be perfect with Him; that He promises it as His own work; and that Scripture speaks of some as having been perfect before Him, and having served Him with a perfect heart. Scripture speaks of a Perfection that is at once our duty and our hope.

2. To know what this Perfection is we must begin by accepting the command, and obeying it with our whole heart. Our natural tendency is the very opposite. We want to discuss and define what Perfection is, to understand how the command can be reconciled with our assured conviction that no man is perfect, to provide for all the dangers we are sure are to be found in the path of Perfection.

This is not God's way. Jesus said, "If any man will do, he will know." The same principle holds good in all human attainment. It is only he who has accepted the command, "Be perfect," in adoring submission and obedience, who can hope to know what the Perfection is that God asks and gives. Until the Church is seen prostrate before God, seeking this blessing as her highest good, it will be no wonder if the very word "Perfection," instead of being an attraction and a joy, is a cause of apprehension and anxiety, of division and offence. May God increase the number of those who, in childlike humility, take the word from His own lips, as a living seed, in the assurance that it will bring forth much fruit.

3. Perfection is no arbitrary demand; in the very nature of things God can ask nothing less. And this is true whether we think of Him or of ourselves.

If we think of Him, who as God has created the universe for Himself and for His glory, who seeks and alone is able to fill it with His happiness and love, we see how impossible it is for God to allow anything else to share man's heart with Himself. God must be all and have all. As Lawgiver and Judge; He dare

not be content with anything less than absolute legal perfection. As Redeemer and Father it equally becomes Him to claim nothing less than a real childlike perfection. God must have it all.

If we think of ourselves, the call to perfection is no less imperative. God is such an Infinite, Spiritual Good, and the soul is so incapable of receiving or knowing or enjoying Him except as it gives itself wholly to Him, that for our own sakes God's love can demand of us nothing less than a perfect heart.

4. Perfection, as the highest aim of what God in His great power would do for us, is something so Divine, Spiritual, and Heavenly, that it is only the soul that yields itself very tenderly to the leading of the Holy Spirit that can hope to know its blessedness.

God has worked into every human heart a deep desire for perfection. That desire is manifested in the admiration which all men have for excellence in the different objects or pursuits to which they attach value. In the believer who yields himself wholly to God, this desire fastens itself upon God's wonderful promises, and inspires a prayer like that of M'Cheyne: "Lord, make me as holy as a pardoned sinner can be made."

The more we learn to desire this full conformity to God's will, for the consciousness that we are always pleasing to Him, we will see that all this must come as a gift direct from heaven. This gift is the full outbirth in us of the life of God, the inbreathing of the Holy Spirit of Jesus in those who are wholly

yielded to His indwelling and rule. Trusting ever less to men's thoughts and teachings, we will retire often into the secret of God's presence, in the assurance that the more we see God's face, and hear the secret voice that comes direct from Him, "BE PERFECT," the more will the Holy Spirit dwelling within us unfold the heavenly fulness and power of the words, and make them, as God's words, bring and give and create the very thing He speaks.

In the hope that these simple meditations may help some of God's children to go on to Perfection, I commit them and myself to the Blessed Father's teaching and keeping.

ANDREW MURRAY.

Dedication

Ever BLESSED FATHER! You have sent me a message by Your Beloved Son that I am to be perfect as You are perfect. Coming from You, O You incomprehensible and most glorious God, it means more than man can grasp. Coming to You, I ask that You will Yourself teach me what it means, create in me what it claims, give me what it promises.

My Father! I accept the word in the obedience of faith. I will yield my life to its rule. I will hide it in my heart as a living seed, in the assurance that there, deeper than thought or feeling, Your Holy Spirit can make it strike root and grow up.

And as I go through Your Word, to meditate on what it says of the path of the perfect, teach me, O my Father, to bring every thought of mine captive to the obedience of Christ, and to wait for that teaching of Your Holy Spirit which is so sure to the upright in heart. In Him, with whom You have sent me the message, give me the answer to this prayer also. Amen.

Day 1

A Perfect heart makes a Perfect Man

"Noah was a righteous man, and perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God."—Genesis 6:9.

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that fears God and shuns evil?"—Job 1:8.

"The heart of David was perfect with the Lord his God."—1 Kings 11:4, 15:3.

"Asa's heart was perfect with the Lord all his days."—1 Kings 15:14.

We have grouped together four men, of all of whom Holy Scripture testifies that they were perfect men, or that their heart was perfect with God. Of each of them Scripture testifies, too, that they were not perfect in the sense of absolute sinlessness. We know how Noah fell. We know how Job had to humble himself before God. We know how sadly David sinned. And of Asa we read that there came a time when he did foolishly, and relied on the Syrians and not on the Lord his God; when in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians. And yet the heart of these men was perfect with the Lord their God.

To understand this, there is one thing we must remember. The meaning of the word "perfect" must in each case be decided by that particular stage in God's education of His people in which it is used. What a father or a teacher counts perfection in a child of ten, is very different from what he would call so in one of twenty. As to the disposition or spirit, the perfection would be the

same; in its contents, as the proofs by which it was to be judged of, there would be a wide difference. We shall see later on how in the Old Testament nothing was really made perfect; how Christ has come to reveal, and work out, and impart the true perfection; how the perfection, as revealed in the New Testament, is something infinitely higher, more spiritual and efficacious, than under the old economy. And yet at root they are one. God looks at the heart. A heart that is perfect with Him is an object of complacency and approval. A wholehearted consecration to His will and fellowship, a life that takes as its motto, WHOLLY FOR GOD, has in all ages, even where the Spirit had not yet been given to dwell in the heart, been accepted by Him as the mark of the perfect man.

The lesson which these Scripture testimonies suggest to us is a very simple, but a very searching one. In God's record of the lives of His servants there are some of whom it is written: his heart was perfect with the Lord his God. Is this, let each reader ask, what God sees and says of me? Does my life, in the sight of God, bear the mark of intense, wholehearted consecration to God's will and service? of a burning desire to be as perfect as it is possible for grace to make me? Let us yield ourselves to the searching light of this question. Let us believe that with this word PERFECT, God means something very real and true. Let us not evade its force, or hide ourselves from its condemning power, by the vain subterfuge that we do not fully know what it means. We must first accept it, and give up our lives to it, before we can understand it. It cannot be insisted upon too strongly that, whether in the Church at large and its teaching, or in the life of the individual believer, there can be no hope of comprehending what perfection is except as we count all things loss to be apprehended of it, to live for it, to accept of it, to possess it.

But so much we can understand. What I do with a perfect heart I do with love

and delight, with a willing mind and all my strength. It implies a fixity of purpose, and a concentration of effort, that makes everything subordinate to the one object of my choice. This is what God asks, what His saints have given, what we must give.

Again I say to every one who wishes to join me in following through the Word of God its revelation of His will concerning perfection, yield yourself to the searching question: Can God say of me as of Noah and Job, of David and Asa, that my heart is perfect with the Lord my God? Have I given myself up to say that there must be nothing, nothing whatever, to share my heart with God and His will? Is a heart perfect with the Lord my God the object of my desire, my prayer, my faith, my hope? Whether it has been so or not, let it be so today. Make the promise of God's word your own: "The God of peace Himself perfect you." The God, who is of power to do above all we ask or think, will open up to you the blessed prospect of a life of which He shall say: "His heart was perfect with the Lord his God."

Day 2

Walk before me, and Be Perfect

"And when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, I am Almighty God: walk before Me, and be perfect. And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him."—Genesis 17:1-3.

*"You shall be perfect with the Lord your God."—Deuteronomy 18:13.
"Let your heart be perfect with the Lord your God to walk in His statutes."—
1 Kings 8:61.*

It was now twenty-four years since God had called Abram to go out from his father's home, and that he had obeyed. All that time he had been a learner in the school of faith. The time was approaching for him to inherit the promise, and God comes to establish His covenant with him. In view of this, God meets him with this threefold word: I am Almighty God: walk before Me: be perfect.

Be perfect. The connection in which we find the word will help us to understand its meaning. God reveals Himself as God Almighty. Abram's faith had long been tried: it was about to achieve one of its greatest triumphs: faith was to be changed to vision in the birth of Isaac. God invites Abram more than ever to remember, and to rest upon, His omnipotence. He is Almighty God: all things are possible to Him: He holds rule over all. All His power is working for those who trust Him. And all He asks of His servant is that he be

perfect with Him: give Him his whole heart, his perfect confidence. God Almighty with all His power is wholly for you; be wholly for God. The knowledge and faith of what God is lies at the root of what we are to be: "I am Almighty God: be perfect." As I know Him whose power fills heaven and earth, I see that this is the one thing needed: to be perfect with Him, wholly and entirely given up to Him. WHOLLY FOR GOD is the keynote of perfection.

Walk before Me, and be perfect. It is in the life fellowship with God, in His realized presence and favor, that it becomes possible to be perfect with Him. Walk before Me Abraham had been doing this; God's word calls him to a clearer and more conscious apprehension of this as his life calling. It is easy for us to study what Scripture says of perfection, to form our ideas of it, and argue for them. But let us remember that it is only as we are walking closely with God, seeking and in some measure attaining, uninterrupted communion with Him, that the Divine command will come to us in its Divine Power, and unfold to us its Divine meaning. Walk before Me, and be perfect. God's realized presence is the school, is the secret, of perfection. It is only he who studies what perfection is in the full light of God's presence to whom its hidden glory will be opened up.

That realized presence is the great blessing of the redemption in Jesus Christ. The veil has been rent, the way into the true sanctuary, the Presence of God, has been opened; we have access with boldness into the Holiest of all. God, who has proved Himself God Almighty in raising Jesus from the dead and setting Him, and us in Him, at His right hand, speaks now to us: I am God Almighty: walk before Me, and be perfect.

That command came not only to Abraham. Moses gave it to the whole people of Israel; "You shall be perfect with the Lord your God." It is for all

Abraham's children; for all the Israel of God; for every believer. Oh! think not that ere you can obey you must first understand and define what perfection means. No, God's way is the very opposite of this. Abraham went out, not knowing where he went. You are called to go on to perfection: go out, not knowing where you are going. It is a land God will show you. Let your heart be filled with His glory: I am God Almighty. Let your life be spent in His presence: walk before Me. As His Power and His Presence rest upon you and fill you, your heart will, before you know, be drawn up, and strengthened to accept and rejoice in and fulfil the command: be perfect. As surely as the opening bud has but to abide in the light of the sun to attain perfection, will the soul that walks in the light of God be perfect too. As the God, who is ALL, shines upon it, it cannot but rejoice to give Him ALL.

Day 3

Perfect with the lord your God

"You shall be perfect with the Lord your God."—Deuteronomy 18:13

To be perfect before God is not only the calling and the privilege of a man like Abraham, it is equally the duty of all his children. The command is given to all Israel, for each man of God's people to receive and obey: "You shall be perfect with the Lord your God." It comes to each child of God; no one professing to be a Christian may turn aside from it, or refuse it obedience, without endangering his salvation. It is not a command like, "You shall not kill," or, "You shall not steal," having reference to a limited sphere in our life, but is a principle that lies at the very root of all true religion. If our service of God is to be acceptable, it must not be with a divided, but a whole, a perfect heart.

The chief hindrance in the way of obedience to this command lies in our misapprehension of what religion is. Man was created simply to live for God, to show forth His glory, by allowing God to show how completely He could reveal His likeness and blessedness in man. God lives for man; longing in the greatness of His love to communicate His goodness and His love. It was to this life, lost by sin, Christ came to redeem us back. The selfishness of the human heart looks upon salvation as simply the escape from hell, with so much of holiness as is needed to make our happiness secure. Christ meant us to be restored to the state from which we had fallen—the whole heart, the

whole will, the whole life given up to the glory and service of God. To be wholly given up to God, to be perfect with the Lord our God, lies at the very root, is the very essence of true religion. The enthusiastic devotion of the whole heart to God is what is asked of us.

When once this misconception has been removed, and the truth begins to dawn upon the soul, a second hindrance is generally met with in the question of unbelief, How can these things be? Instead of first accepting God's command, and then waiting in the path of obedience for the teaching of the Spirit, men are at once ready with their own interpretation of the word, and confidently affirm, "it cannot be." They forget that the whole object of the gospel and the glory of Christ's redemption is, that it makes possible what is beyond man's thoughts or powers; and that it reveals God, not as a Lawgiver and Judge, exacting the last penny, but as a Father, who in grace deals with each one according to his capacity, and accepts the devotion and the intention of the heart.

We understand this of an earthly father. A child of ten is doing some little service for the father, or helping him in his work. The work of the child is very defective, and yet the cause of joy and hope to the father, because he sees in it the proof of the child's attachment and obedience, as well as the pledge of what that spirit will do for the child when his intelligence and his strength have been increased. The child has served the father with a perfect heart, though the perfect heart does not at once imply perfect work. Even so the Father in heaven accepts as a perfect heart the simple childlike purpose that makes His fear and service its one object. The Christian may be deeply humbled at the involuntary uprisings of the evil nature; but God's Spirit teaches him to say, "It is no more I, but sin that dwells in me." He may be sorely grieved by the consciousness of shortcoming and failure, but he hears

the voice of Jesus, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Even as Christ counted the love and obedience of His faithless disciples as such, and accepted it as the condition on which He had promised them the Spirit, the Christian can receive the witness of the Spirit that the Father sees and accepts in him the perfect heart, even where there is not yet the perfect performance.

"You shall be perfect with the Lord your God." Oh! let us beware of making the Word of God of no effect by our traditions. Let us believe the message, "You are not under the law, but under grace." Let us realize what grace is in its pitying tenderness: "As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him." And what, in its mighty power working in us both to will and to do: "The God of all grace shall Himself perfect you." If we hold fast our integrity, our confidence, and the rejoicing of hope steadfast unto the end, being perfect in heart will lead us on to be perfect in the way, and we will realize that Christ fulfils this too in us, "You shall be perfect with the Lord your God."

Day 4

I have walked before you with a Perfect Heart

"Then Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord, saying, 'I beg You, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before You in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Your sight.' And the word of the Lord came to Isaiah, saying, 'Tell Hezekiah, this is what the Lord says, I have heard your prayer, and seen your tears; I will heal you.'"—2 Kings 20:2-5

What a childlike simplicity of communication with God. When the Son was about to die, He spoke, "I have glorified You on earth, I have finished the work which You gave Me to do. And now, O Father, You glorify Me." He pleaded His life and work as the ground for expecting an answer to His prayer. And so Hezekiah, the servant of God, also pleaded, not as a matter of merit, but in the confidence that "God is not unrighteous to forget our work of faith and labor of love," that God should remember how he had walked before Him with a perfect heart.

The words first of all suggest to us this thought, that the man who walks before God with a perfect heart can know it—it may be a matter of consciousness. Let us look at the testimony Scripture gives of him (2 Kings 18:3-6), "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did." Then follow the different elements of this life that was right in God's sight. "He trusted in the Lord God of Israel. He held to the

Lord. He departed not from following Him. He kept His commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses. And the Lord was with Him." His life was one of trust and love, of steadfastness and obedience. And the Lord was with him. He was one of the saints of whom we read, "By faith they obtained a good report." They had the witness that they were righteous, that they were pleasing to God.

Let us seek to have this blessed consciousness. Paul had it when he wrote, "Our glorying is, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom, but in the grace of God, we behaved ourselves" (2 Corinthians 1:12). John had it when he said, "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, we have boldness toward God; and whatever we ask we receive, because we keep His commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in His sight" (1 John 3:21, 22). If we are to have perfect peace and confidence, if we are to walk in the holy boldness and the blessed glorying of which Scripture speaks, we must know that our heart is perfect with God.

Hezekiah's prayer suggests a second lesson—that the consciousness of a perfect heart gives wonderful power in prayer. Read over again the words of his prayer, and notice how distinctly this walk with a perfect heart is his plea. Read over again the words just quoted from John, and see how clearly he says that "because we keep His commandments we receive what we ask." It is a heart that does not condemn us, that knows that it is perfect toward God, that gives us boldness.

There is most probably not a single reader of these lines who cannot testify how painfully at some time or other the consciousness of the heart not being perfect with God has hindered confidence and prayer. And mistaken views as to what the perfect heart means, and as to the danger of self-righteousness in praying Hezekiah's prayer, have in very many cases banished all idea of its

ever being possible to attain to that boldness and confident assurance of an answer to prayer which John connects with a heart that does not condemn us. Oh! that we would give up all our prejudices, and learn to take God's Word as it stands as the only rule of our faith, the only measure of our expectations. Our daily prayers would be a new reminder that God asks the perfect heart; a new occasion of childlike confession as to our walking or not walking with a perfect heart before God; a new motive to make nothing less the standard of our intercourse with our Father in heaven. How our boldness in God's presence would be ever clearer; how our consciousness of His acceptance would be brighter; how the humbling thought of our nothingness would be quickened, and our assurance of His strength in our weakness, and His answer to our prayer, become the joy of our life.

Oh! the comfort, amid all consciousness of imperfection of attainment, of being able to say, in childlike simplicity, "Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before You with a perfect heart."

Day 5

Lord, give A Perfect Heart

"Give to Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep Your commandments, Your testimonies, and Your statutes."—1 Chronicles 29:19.

"Let my heart be perfect in Your testimonies."—Psalm 119:80.

In his parting commission to Solomon, David had laid it upon him to serve God with a perfect heart, because He is God who searches the hearts. It is nothing less than the heart, the whole heart, a perfect heart, that God wants. Very shortly afterwards, in his dedication prayer after the giving of all the material for the temple, he turns again to this as the one thing needful, and asks it for his son as a gift from God. "Give my son Solomon a perfect heart." The perfect heart is a gift from God, given and received under the laws which rule all His giving, as a hidden seed to be accepted and acted on in faith. The command, "Be perfect," comes and claims immediate and full submission. Where this submission is yielded, the need of a Divine power to make the heart fit for perfection becomes the motive for urgent and earnest prayer. The word of command, received and hid in a good and honest heart, becomes itself the seed of a Divine power. God works His grace in us by stirring us to work. So the desire to listen to God's command, and to serve Him with a perfect heart, is a beginning that God looks to, and that He will Himself strengthen and perfect. The gift of a perfect heart is thus obtained in the way of the obedience of faith. Begin at once to serve God with a perfect heart, and the perfect heart will be given to you.

The perfect heart is a gift from God, to be asked for, to be obtained by prayer. No one will pray for it earnestly, perseveringly, believingly, until he accepts God's word fully that it is a positive command and an immediate duty to be perfect. Where this has been done, the consciousness will soon grow strong of the utter impossibility of attempting obedience in human strength. And the faith will grow that the word of command was simply meant to draw the soul to Him who gives what He asks.

The perfect heart is a gift to be obtained in prayer. David asked the Lord to give it to his son Solomon, even as he had prayed for himself long before, "Let my heart be perfect in Your testimonies." Let all of us who desire for this blessing follow his example: let us make it a matter of definite, earnest prayer. Let each son and daughter of God say to the Father: "Give Your child a perfect heart." Let us in the course of our meditations in this little book turn each word of command, or teaching, or promise into prayer—pointed, personal prayer that asks and claims, that accepts and proves the gift of a perfect heart. And when the seed begins to strike root, and the spirit gives the consciousness that the first beginnings of the perfect heart have been bestowed in the wholehearted purpose to live for God alone, let us hold on in prayer for the perfect heart in all its completeness. A heart perfect in its purpose towards God—this is only the initial stage. Then there comes the putting on of one grace after another—the going, from strength to strength, on to perfection—the putting on, in ever-growing distinctness of likeness, the Lord Jesus, with every trait of His holy image. All this is to be sought and found in prayer too. It is just he who knows most of what it is to be perfect in purpose who will pray most to be perfect in practice too.

In the words of Hezekiah, we see that there are two elements in the perfect heart: the relation to God, and to His commandments. "I have walked before

You with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Your sight." David speaks of the second of these in his prayer, "a perfect heart to keep Your commandments." The two always go together: walking before God, in the awareness of His presence, will ensure walking in His commandments.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes from the Father of lights," the gift of a perfect heart too. "But let us ask in faith, nothing wavering." Let us be sure that in the believing, adoring worship of God there will be given to the soul that is set upon having it, nothing less than what God Himself means with a perfect heart. Let us pray the prayer boldly, "Lord, give Your child a perfect heart. Let my heart be perfect in Your testimonies."

Day 6

God's strength for the Perfect in Heart

"Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host? Yet, because you relied on the Lord, He delivered them into your hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him."—2 Chronicles 16:8, 9.

We have here the same three thoughts we had in God's words to Abraham. There, it was the command to be perfect in connection with the faith in God's power and a walk in His Presence. Here, we have the perfect heart spoken of as the condition of the experience of God's power, and as that which His eyes seek and approve in those who walk in His presence. The words teach us the great lesson of the value of the perfect heart in His sight. It is the one thing He desires. "His eyes run to and fro through the whole earth" to find such. The Father seeks such to worship Him. And when He finds them, then He shows Himself strong in their behalf. It is the one thing that marks the soul as having the capacity of receiving, and showing God's glory, His strength.

The context proves that the chief mark of the perfect heart is trust in God. "Because you relied on the Lord, He delivered them into your hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro to show Himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." The essence of faith is this, that it gives God His place and glory as God; it allows Him free scope to work, relying on Him alone; it lets God be God. In such faith or reliance the heart proves itself perfect toward God; with no other object of confidence or desire, it depends

upon none but Him. As the eyes of God go to and fro throughout the world, wherever He discovers such a man, He delights to prove Himself strong to him, to work for him or in him, as the case may be, according to the riches of the glory of His power.

What precious lessons these words teach us for the Christian's life. To have God reveal His strength in us, to have Him make us strong for life or work, for doing or for suffering, our heart must be perfect with Him. Let us not shrink from accepting the truth. Let no preconceived opinion as to the impossibility of perfection keep us from allowing the Word of God to have its full effect upon us. He shows Himself strong to those whose heart is perfect towards Him. Before we attempt to define exactly, let us first receive the truth that there is such a thing as what God calls a perfect heart, and say it shall be ours. Let us rest contented with nothing short of knowing that the eyes of the Lord have seen that we are wholehearted with Him. Let us not be afraid to say, "With my whole heart, I have sought Thee."

We saw how the chief mark of this perfect heart is reliance upon God. God looks for men who trust Him fully; in them He will show His power. God is a Being of Infinite and Incomprehensible Glory and Power. Our mind can form no right conception of what He can do for us. Even when we have His word and promises, our human thoughts of what He means are always defective. By nothing do we dishonor God more than by limiting Him. By nothing do we limit Him more than by allowing our human ideas of what He purposes to be the measure of our expectations. The reliance of a heart perfect towards Him is simply this: it yields to Him as God, it rests upon Him, it allows Him, as God, to do in His own way what He has promised. The heart is perfect towards Him in meeting Him with a perfect faith for all that He is and does as God. Faith expects from God what is beyond all expectation.

The Father seeks such. Oh! with what joy He finds them. How He delights in them as His eyes, running to and fro throughout the world, rests upon them to show Himself their strong and mighty Helper! Let us walk before this God with a perfect heart, relying upon Him yet to work in us above all that we can ask or think. The one great need of the spiritual life is to know how entirely it is dependent upon God working in us, and what the exceeding greatness of His power is in us who believe. As the soul knows this, and with a perfect heart yields to this Almighty God to let Him do His work within, oh! how strong He will show Himself in its behalf.

Day 7

With the Perfect God shows himself Perfect

"I was also perfect with Him, and I kept myself from my iniquity."

"To the perfect man, You will show Yourself perfect."

"As for God, His way is perfect."

"He is a shield to them that trust Him."

*"It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect."—Psalm
18:23, 25, 30, 32.*

"As for God, His way is perfect." In all He does, and all He is God is the perfection of goodness and beauty. In nature and grace, in heaven and on earth, in the greatest and the least, everything that is in God and of God, down to the very hem of His garment, is infinite perfection. If men who study and admire the perfection of His works, if saints who love and seek the perfection of His service and fellowship, but understood it, they would see that here alone perfection can be truly known and found—in God Himself. As for God—this is the highest we can say of Him, though we can comprehend but little of it—As for God, His way is perfect.

"He makes my way perfect." Of God's perfection this is the chief excellence—that He does not keep it for Himself: heaven and earth are full of His glory. God is Love; who lives, not for Himself, but in the energy of an infinite life, makes His creatures, as far as they can possibly receive it, partakers of His

perfection. It is His delight to perfect all around Him. And especially the soul of man that rises up to Him. Between His servant and Himself, God would have perfect harmony. The Father wants the child to be like Himself. The more I learn in adoring worship to say, "As for God, His way is perfect," the sooner I will have faith and grace with the Psalmist to say, "He makes my way perfect."

As we believe this, that is, receive the heavenly truth in these words into our inmost being and assimilate it, we shall not wonder that the same man also said, "I was also perfect with Him, and kept myself from my iniquity." "The God that arms me with strength, and makes my way perfect," His alone is the power and the honor and the glory of what He has created. This makes the confession, "I was also perfect with Him," so far from being presumption or self-righteousness, nothing but an ascription of praise to Him to whom it is due.

And then follow the words in which the perfection of God and that of man are seen in their wonderful relationship and harmony: "With the perfect man, You will show Yourself perfect." As little as there can be a ray of the light of day, however dull and clouded it be, but what speaks of the sun, so little can there be any perfection but what is of God. In its feeblest beginnings in a soul, in its darkest and almost hopeless strugglings, it is all God's perfection wrestling with man to break through and get possession. As long as man refuses to consent, God cannot make His perfection known, for God must be to us what we are to Him: "With the warped, You show Yourself twisted." But where man's will consents, and his heart chooses this perfection and this perfect God as its portion, God meets the soul with ever larger manifestation of how perfect He is towards His own. "With the perfect man You will show Yourself perfect."

Christian! walk before God with a perfect heart, and you will experience how perfect the heart, and the love, and the will of God to bless, is towards you. Of a heart perfectly yielded to Him, God will take perfect possession. Walk before God in a perfect way—it is God who makes my way perfect—and your eyes and heart will be opened to see, in adoring wonder, how perfect God's way is with you and for you. Do take mightily hold of this word as the law of God's revelation of Himself: "With the perfect man, You will show Yourself perfect." To a soul perfectly devoted to Him, God will wonderfully reveal Himself. Turn with your whole heart and life, your whole trust and obedience, towards God—walk before Him with a perfect heart—and He will show Himself perfect to you, the God whose way is perfect and makes your way perfect, the God who perfects you in every good thing. Meet God with your, "With my whole heart I have sought You"; He will answer you with His, "Yes, I will rejoice over you to do you good, with my whole heart and with my whole soul." Oh! say it in faith, and hope, and joy, "With the perfect man You will show Yourself perfect."

Day 8

Perfect in Heart leads to Perfect in the Way

"Blessed are they that are perfect in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, that seek Him with the whole heart."—Psalm 119:1, 2.

"Let my heart be perfect in Thy testimonies."—Psalm 119:80.

"I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. Oh! when will You come to me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart."—Psalm 101:2.

We have seen what Scripture says of the perfect heart: here it speaks of the perfect walk. "Blessed are the perfect in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." These are the opening words of the beautiful psalm, in which there is given to us the picture, from the witness of personal experience, of the wonderful blessedness of a life in the law and the will of God. As he looks back upon the past, the Psalmist does not hesitate to claim that he has kept that law: "I have kept Your testimonies;" "I have conformed to Your law;" "I did not desert Your standards;" "I have not strayed from Your judgments;" "I have done judgment and justice;" "I have not swerved from Your testimonies;" "I have done Your commandments;" "My soul has conformed to Your declarations." Of a truth may the man who can look up to God and, in simplicity of soul, speak thus, say, "How blessed are the perfect in the way!"

What is meant by this being "perfect in the way" becomes plain as we study the psalm. Perfection includes two elements. The one is the perfection of heart, the earnestness of purpose, with which a man gives himself up to seek God and His will. The other, the perfection of obedience, in which a man seeks, not only to do some, but all the commandments of his God, and rests content with nothing less than the New Testament privilege of "standing perfect in all the will of God." Of both, the Psalmist speaks with great confidence. Hear how he testifies of the former in words such as these: "Blessed are they that seek Him with the whole heart;" "With my whole heart I have sought You;" "With my whole heart, I will conform to Your law;" "I will keep Your standards with my whole heart;" "Your standards are my delight;" "O, how I love Your standards!" "Consider how I love Your standards;" "I love them exceedingly." This is indeed the perfect heart of which we have already heard. The whole psalm is a prayer, and an appeal to God Himself to consider and see how His servant in wholehearted simplicity has chosen God and His standard as his only portion.

We have more than once said that in this wholeheartedness, in the perfect heart, we have the root of all perfection.

But it is only the root and beginning: there is another element that may not be lacking. God is to be found in His will; he who would truly find and fully enjoy God, must meet Him in all His will. This is not always understood. A man may have his heart intent on serving God perfectly, and yet may be unconscious how very imperfect his knowledge of God's will is. The very earnestness of his purpose, and his consciousness of integrity towards God, may deceive him. As far as he knows, he does God's will. But he forgets how much there is of that blessed will that he does not yet know. He can learn a very blessed lesson from the writer of our psalm.

Hear how he speaks: "I have refrained my feet from every evil way;" "I hate every false way;" "I esteem all Your standards concerning all things to be right." It is this surrender to a life of entire and perfect obedience that explains at once the need he felt of Divine teaching, and the confidence with which he pleaded for it and expected it: "Let my heart be perfect in Your testimonies." The soul that longs for nothing less than to be perfect in the way, and in deep consciousness of its need of a Divine teaching pleads for it, will not be disappointed.

In our next meditation we pass on to the New Testament. In the Old we have the time of preparation, the awakening of the spirit of holy expectancy, waiting God's fulfilment of His promises. In the Old the perfect heart was the receptacle, emptied and cleansed for God's filling. In the New we will find Christ perfected forevermore, perfecting us, and fitting us to walk perfect in Him. In the New the word that looks at the human side, perfect in heart, disappears, to give place to that which reveals the Divine filling that awaits the prepared vessel: Perfect Love; God's love perfected in us.

"Blessed are the perfect in the way!" We have heard the testimony of an Old Testament saint, and is it not written of New Testament times, "He that is feeble shall be as David"? Surely now, in the fulness of time, when Jesus our High Priest in the power of an endless life saves completely, and the Holy Spirit has come out of God's heaven to dwell within us and be our life, surely now there need not be one word of the psalm that is not meant to be literal truth in the mouth of every believer. Let us read it once more. Speaking it word for word before God, as its writer did, we too shall begin to sing, "Blessed are the perfect in the way, that seek Him with their whole heart."

"I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. Oh! when will You come to me! I will walk within my house with a perfect heart."

Day 9

Perfect as the Father

*"For this reason you will be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."—
Matthew 5:48*

Perfect before God, perfect with God, perfect towards God: these are the expressions we find in the Old Testament. They all indicate a relationship: the choice or purpose of the heart set upon God, the wholehearted desire to trust and obey Him. The first word of the New Testament at once lifts us to a very different level, and opens to us what Christ has brought for us. Not only perfect towards God, but perfect as God; this is the wonderful prospect it holds out to us. It reveals the infinite fulness of meaning the word perfect has in God's mind. It gives us at once the only standard we are to aim at and to judge by. It casts down all hopes of perfection as a human attainment; but awakens hope in Him who, as God, has the power, as Father has the will, to make us like Himself.

A young child may be the perfect image of his father. There may be a great difference in age, in stature, in power, and yet the resemblance may be so striking that every one notices it. And so a child of God, though infinitely less, may yet bear the image of the Father so markedly, may have such a striking likeness to his Father, that in his creaturely life he will be perfect, as the Father is in His Divine life. This is possible. It is what Jesus here commands. It is what each one should aim at. "Perfect as your Father in

heaven is perfect," must become one of the first articles of our creed, one of the guiding lights of our Christian life.

Wherein this perfection of the Father consists is evident from the context: "Love your enemies, that you may be sons of your Father which is in heaven; for He makes His sun to shine on the evil and the good: Be therefore perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." Or as it is in Luke 6:36: "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful." The perfection of God is His love; His will to communicate His own blessedness to all around Him. His compassion and mercy are the glory of His being. He created us in His image and after His likeness, to find our glory in a life of love and mercy and beneficence. It is in love we are to be perfect, even as our Father is perfect.

The thought that comes up at once, and that ever returns again, is this: But is it possible? And if so, how? Certainly not as a fruit of man's efforts. But the words themselves contain the answer: "perfect as your Father is perfect." It is because the little child has received his life from his father, and because the father watches over his training and development, that there can be such a striking and ever-increasing resemblance between him in his feebleness and his father in his strength. It is because the sons of God are partakers of the Divine nature, have God's life, and spirit, and love within them, that the command is reasonable, and its obedience in ever-increasing measure possible: Be perfect, as your Father is. The perfection is our Father's: we have its seed in us; He delights to give the increase. The words that first appear to cast us down in utter helplessness now become our hope and strength. Be perfect, as your Father is perfect. Claim your child's heritage; give up yourself to be wholly a son of God; yield yourself to the Father to do in you all He is able.

And then, remember too, who it is gives this message from the Father. It is

the Son, who Himself was, by the Father, perfected through suffering; who learned obedience and was made perfect; and who has perfected us forever. The message, "Be perfect," comes to us from Him, our elder Brother, as a promise of infinite hope. What Jesus asks of us, the Father gives. What Jesus speaks, He does. To "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus," is the one aim of Christ and His gospel. Let us accept the command from Him; in yielding ourselves to obey it, let us yield ourselves to Him: let our expectation be from Him in whom we have been perfected. Through faith in Him we receive the Holy Ghost, by whom the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. Through faith in Him, that love becomes in us a fountain of love springing up without ceasing. In union with Him, the love of God is perfected in us, and we are perfected in love. Let us not fear to accept and obey the command, "Be perfect, as your Father is perfect."

Day 10

Perfected as the Master

*"Be therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful... The disciple is not above his master: but every one who is perfected will be as his master."—
Luke 6:36, 40*

In his report of part of the Sermon on the Mount, Luke records that Jesus says, not: "Be perfect," but, "Be merciful," as your Father is. He then introduces the word perfect immediately after; not, however, in connection with the Father, but the Son, as the Master of His disciples. The change is most instructive; it leads us to look to Jesus, as He dwelt in the flesh, as our model. It might be said that our circumstances and powers are so different from those of God that it is impossible to apply the standard of His infinite perfection in our little world. But here comes the Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, tempted in all things like as we are, and offers Himself as our Master and Leader. He lives with us that we may live with Him; He lives like us that we may live like Him.

The Divine standard is embodied and made visible, is brought within our reach, in the human model. Growing into His likeness, who is the image of the Father, we shall bear the likeness of the Father too: becoming like Him, the firstborn among many brethren, we shall become perfect as the Father is. "The disciple is not above his Master: but every one who is perfected shall be as his Master."

"The disciple is not above his Master." The thought of the disciple being as the Master sometimes has reference to outward humiliation: like the Master he will be despised and persecuted (Matthew 10:24, 25; John 15:20). And sometimes to inward humility, the willingness to be a servant (Luke 22:27; John 13:16). Both in his external life and his inner disposition the perfected disciple knows nothing higher than to be as his Master.

To take Jesus as Master, with the distinct desire and aim to be and live and act like Him—this is true Christianity. This is something far more than accepting Him as a Savior and Helper. Far more even than acknowledging Him as Lord and Master.

A servant may obey the commands of his master most faithfully, while he has little thought of through them rising up into the master's likeness and spirit. This alone is full discipleship, to long in everything to be as like the Master as possible, to count His life as the true expression of all that is perfect, and to aim at nothing less than the perfection of being perfect as He was.

"Everyone who is perfected shall be as his Master."

The words suggest to us very distinctly that in discipleship there is more than one stage. Just as in the Old Testament it is said only of some that they served the Lord with a perfect heart, while of others we read that their heart was not perfect with the Lord (1 Kings 11:4, 15:3; 2 Chronicles 25:2), so even now there are great differences between disciples. Some there are to whom the thought of aiming at the perfect likeness of the Master has never come: they only look to Christ as a Savior. And some there are whose heart indeed longs for full conformity to their Lord, "to be as the Master," but who have never understood, though they have read the words, that there is such a thing as "a perfect heart" and a life "perfected in love."

But there are those, too, to whom it has been given to accept these words in their Divine meaning and truth, and who do know in blessed experience what it is to say with Hezekiah, "I have walked before Thee with a perfect heart," and with John, "as He is, even so are we in this world."

As we go on in our study of what Scripture says of perfection, let us hold fast the principle we have learnt here. Likeness to Jesus in His humiliation and humility: the choice, like Him, of the form of a servant, the spirit that does not exercise lordship and would not be ministered unto, but girds itself to minister and to give its life for others, this is the secret of true perfection. "The disciple is not above his Master, but every one who is perfected shall be as his Master." With the perfect love of God as our standard, with that love revealed in Christ's humanity and humility as our model and guide, with the Holy Spirit to strengthen us with might, that this Christ may live in us, we shall learn to know what it is that every one who is perfected shall be as his Master.

Day 11

The Perfect Selling all to follow Christ

*"Jesus said unto him, 'If you desire to be perfect, go sell everything, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.'"—
Matthew 19:21.*

To the rich young ruler poverty was to be the path to perfection. "The disciple is not above his Master, but every one who is perfected shall be as his Master." Poverty was part of the Master's perfection, part of that mysterious discipline of self-denial and suffering through which it became God to perfect Him: while He was on earth, poverty was to be the mark of all those who would be always with, and wholly as, the Master.

What does this mean? Jesus was Lord of all. He might have lived here on earth in circumstances of comfort and with moderate possessions. He might have taught us how to own, and to use, and to sanctify property. He might in this have become like us, walking in the path in which most men have to walk. But He chose poverty. Its life of self-sacrifice and direct dependence on God, its humiliation, its trials and temptations, were to be elements of that highest perfection He was to exhibit.

In the disciples whom He chose to be with Him, poverty was to be the mark of their fellowship with Him, the training school for perfect conformity to His image, the secret of power for victory over the world, for the full possession of the heavenly treasure, and the full exhibition of the heavenly spirit. And

even in him, who, when the humiliation was past, had his calling from the throne, in Paul, poverty was still the chosen and much-prized vehicle of perfect fellowship with his Lord.

What does this mean? The command, "Be perfect," comes to the rich as well as the poor. Scripture has nowhere spoken of the possession of property as a sin. While it warns against the danger riches bring, and denounces their abuse, it has nowhere promulgated a law forbidding riches. And yet it speaks of poverty as having a very high place in the life of perfection.

To understand this we must remember that perfection is a relative term. We are not under a law, with its external commands as to duty and conduct, that takes no account of diversity of character or circumstance. In the perfect law of liberty in which we are called to live, there is room for infinite variety in the manifestation of our devotion to God and Christ. According to the diversity of gifts, and circumstances, and calling, the same spirit may be seen in apparently conflicting paths of life. There is a perfection which is sought in the right possession and use of earthly goods as the Master's steward; there is also a perfection which seeks even in external things to be as the Master Himself was, and in poverty to bear its witness to the reality and sufficiency of heavenly things.

In the early ages of the Church this truth, that poverty is for some the path of perfection, exercised a mighty and a blessed influence. Men felt that poverty, as one of the traits of the holy life of Jesus and His apostles, was sacred and blessed. As the inner life of the Church grew feeble, the spiritual truth was lost in external observances, and the fellowship of the poverty of Jesus was scarce to be seen. In its protest against the self-righteousness and the superficiality of the Romish system, the Protestant Church has not yet been able to give to poverty the place it ought to have either in the portraiture of

the Master's image or the disciple's study of perfect conformity to Him.

And yet it is a truth many are seeking after. If our Lord found poverty the best school for His own strengthening in the art of perfection, and the surest way to rise above the world and win men's hearts for the Unseen, it surely need not surprise us if those who feel drawn to seek the closest possible conformity to their Lord even in external things, and who long for the highest possible power in witnessing for the Invisible, should be irresistibly drawn to count this word as spoken to them too: "If you desire to be perfect, sell everything, and follow Me."

When this call is not felt, there is a larger lesson of universal application: No perfection without the sacrifice of all. To be perfected here on earth Christ gave up all: to become like Him, to be perfected as the Master, means giving up all. The world and self must be renounced. "If you desire to be perfect, sell all, and give to the poor; and come, follow Me."

Day 12

The Perfect Man a Spiritual Man

*"Howbeit we speak wisdom among the perfect."—1 Corinthians 2:6
"And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. For whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are you not yet carnal?"—1 Corinthians 3:1, 3.*

Among the Corinthians there were mighty and abundant operations of the Holy Spirit. Paul could say to them (1:5), "In everything you were enriched in Christ, so that you come behind in no gift." And yet in the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit there was much that was wanting. He had to say, "There are contentions among you; I beseech you that there be no divisions among you, but that you may be perfected together in the same mind." The spirit of humility, and gentleness, and unity was wanting; without these they could not be perfected, either individually or as a body. They needed the injunction, "Above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness."

The Corinthians were as yet carnal; the gifts of the Spirit were among them in power; but His grace, renewing, sweetening, sanctifying every temper into the likeness of Jesus, in this they were lacking much. The wisdom Paul preached was a heavenly, spiritual wisdom, God's wisdom in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which needed a spiritual, heavenly mind to apprehend it. "We speak wisdom among the perfect;" he could not speak to them "as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal." Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned; the wisdom among the perfect could only be received by those who were not

carnal, but spiritual. The perfect of whom Paul speaks are the spiritual.

And who are the spiritual? Those in whom not only the gifts, but the graces of the Spirit have obtained supremacy and are made manifest. God's love is His perfection (Matthew 5:40-46); Christ's humility is His perfection. The self-sacrificing love of Christ, His humility, and meekness, and gentleness, manifested in daily life, are the most perfect fruit of the Spirit, the true proof that a man is spiritual. A man may have great zeal in God's service, he may be used to influence many for good, and yet, when weighed in the balance of love, be found sadly wanting. In the heat of controversy, or under unjust criticism, haste of temper, slowness to forgive and forget, quick words and sharp judgments, often reveal an easily wounded sensitiveness, which proves how little the Spirit of Christ has full possession or real mastery. The spiritual man is the man who is clothed with the spirit of the suffering, crucified Jesus.

And it is only the spiritual man who can understand "the wisdom among the perfect," "even the mystery which now has been manifested to the holy ones, to whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you." A Christian teacher may be a man of wonderful sagacity and insight, may have the power of opening the truth, of mightily stimulating and helping others, and may yet have so much of the carnal that the deeper mystery of Christ in us remains hidden. It is only as we yield ourselves wholly to the power of God's Holy Spirit, as the question of being made free from all that is carnal, of attaining the utmost possible likeness to Jesus in His humiliation, of being filled with the Spirit, rules heart and life, that the Christian, be he scholar or teacher, can fully enter into the wisdom among the perfect.

To know the mind of God we must have the mind of Christ. And the mind of Christ is this, that He emptied and humbled Himself, and became obedient to

death. This His humility was His capacity, His fitness for rising to the throne of God. This mind must be in us if the hidden wisdom of God is to be revealed to us in its power. It is this that is the mark of the spiritual, the perfect man.

May God increase the number of the perfect. And to that end the number of those who know to speak wisdom among the perfect, even God's wisdom in a mystery. As the distinction between the carnal and the spiritual, the babes and the perfect, comes to recognition in the Church, the connection between a spiritual life and spiritual insight will become clearer, and the call to perfection will gain new force and meaning. And it will once again be counted just cause of reproof and of shame not to be among the perfect.

Day 13

Perfecting Holiness

"Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."—2 Corinthians 7:1.

These words give us an insight into one of the chief aspects of perfection, and an answer to the question: Wherein is it we are to be perfect? We must be perfect in holiness. We must be perfectly holy. Such is the exposition of the Father's message, Be perfect.

We know what holiness is. God alone is holy, and holiness is that which God communicates of Himself. Separation and cleansing and consecration are not holiness, but only the preliminary steps on the way to it. The temple was holy because God dwelt in it. Not that which is given to God is holy, but that which God accepts and appropriates, that which He takes possession of, takes up into His own fellowship and use—that is holy. "I am the Lord who makes you holy," was God's promise to His people of old, on which the command was based, "Be holy." God's taking them for His own made them a holy people; their entering into this holiness of God, yielding themselves to His will, and fellowship, and service, was what the command, "Be holy," called them to.

Even so it is with us Christians. We are made holy in Christ; we are saints or holy ones. The call comes to us to follow after holiness, to perfect holiness, to

yield ourselves to the God who is ready to sanctify us wholly. It is the knowledge of what God has done in making us His holy ones, and has promised to do in sanctifying us wholly, that will give us courage to perfect holiness.

"Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us perfect holiness." Which promises? They had just been mentioned: "I will dwell in them; I will be their God; I will receive you; I will be to you a Father." It was God's accepting the temple, and dwelling there Himself, that made it holy. It is God's dwelling in us that makes us holy; that gives us not only the motive, but the courage and the power to perfect holiness, to yield ourselves for Him to possess perfectly and entirely. It is God's being a Father to us, begetting His own life, His own Son within us, forming Christ in us, until the Son and the Father make their abode in us, that will give us confidence to believe that it is possible to perfect holiness, and will reveal to us the secret of its attainment. "Having therefore these promises, beloved," that is, knowing them, living on them, claiming and obtaining them, let us "perfect holiness."

This faith is the secret power of the growth of the inner life of perfect holiness. But there are hindrances that check and prevent this growth. These must be watched against and removed. "Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." Every defilement, outward or inward, in conduct or inclination, in the physical or the spiritual life, must be cleansed and cast away. Cleansing in the blood, cleansing by the word, cleansing by the pruning knife or the fire—in any way or by any means—but we must be cleansed. In the fear of the Lord every sin must be cut off and cast out; everything doubtful or defiling must be put away; soul and body and spirit must be preserved entire and blameless. Thus cleansing ourselves from all

defilement we will perfect holiness: the spirit of holiness will fill God's temple with His holy presence and power.

Beloved, having these promises, let us perfect holiness. Perfectly holy! perfect in holiness let us yield ourselves to these thoughts, to these wishes, to these promises, of our God. Beginning with the perfect childlike heart, pressing on in the perfect way, clinging to a perfect Savior, living in fellowship with a God whose way and work is perfect, let us not be afraid to come to God with His own command as our prayer: Perfect holiness, O my Lord! He knows what He means by it, and we will know if we follow on to know. Lord, I am called to perfect holiness: I come to You for it; make me as perfectly holy as a redeemed sinner can be on earth.

Let this be the spirit of our daily prayer. I would walk before God with a perfect heart: perfect in Christ Jesus; in the path of perfect holiness. I would this day come as near perfection as grace can make it possible for me. "Perfecting holiness" shall, in the power of His Spirit, be my aim.

Day 14

We Pray for Your Perfecting: Be Perfected

"This we also pray for, even your perfecting.... Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfected, be comforted, be of the same mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you."—2 Corinthians 13:9, 11.

The word here translated "perfect" means to bring a thing into its right condition, so that it is as it should be. It is used of mending nets, restoring them to their right state, or of equipping a ship: fitting it out with all it should have. It implies thus two things: the removal of all that is still wrong; the supply of all that is still lacking.

Within two verses Paul uses the word twice. First, as the expression of the one thing which he asks of God for them, the summary of all grace and blessing: "This we pray for, even your perfecting." That you be perfectly free from all that is wrong and carnal, and that you should perfectly possess and exhibit all that God would have you be: we pray for your perfecting. Next as the summing up in a farewell word of what He would have them aim at. "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfected." And then follow three other verbs, which show how this one, which takes the lead, has reference to the Christian's daily life, and is meant to point to what is to be his daily aim and experience. "Be perfected, be comforted, be of the same mind, live in peace." Just as the comfort of the Spirit, and the unity of love, and the life of peace

are, if the God of love and peace is to be with us, our duty and our privilege every hour, so, too, the being perfected. The close of the two Epistles gathers up all its teaching in this one injunction—Farewell—Be Perfected.

The two texts together show us what the prayer and the preaching of every minister of the gospel ought to be; what his heart, above everything, ought to be set on. We justly look upon Paul as a model whom every minister ought to copy—let every Gospel minister copy him in this, so that his people may know as he goes in and out among them that his heart breathes heavenward for them this one wish: Your perfecting! and may feel that all his teaching has this one aim: Be perfected!

If ministers are to seek this above everything in their charge of the Church of God, they need themselves to feel deeply and to expose faithfully the low standard that prevails in the Church. Some have said that they have seen Perfectionism slay its thousands. All must admit that Imperfectionism has slain its tens of thousands. Multitudes are soothing themselves in a life of worldliness and sin with the thought that as no one is perfect, imperfection cannot be so dangerous. Numbers of true Christians are making no progress because they have never known that we can serve God with a perfect heart, that the perfect heart is the secret of a perfect way, of a work going on unto perfection. God's call to us to be perfect, to perfect holiness in His fear, to live perfect in Christ Jesus, to stand perfect in all the will of God, must be preached, until the faith begins to live again in the Church that all teaching is to be summed up in the words, and each day of our life to be spent under their inspiration: Be Perfected!

When once ministers know themselves and are known as the messengers of this God-willed perfection, they will feel the need of nothing less than the teaching of the Holy Spirit to guide men in this path. They will see and

preach that religion must indeed be a surrender of all to God. Becoming as conformed to His will, living as entirely to His glory, being as perfectly devoted to His service, as grace can enable us to be, and no less, will be the only rule of duty and measure of expectation. The message, Be Perfected! will demand the whole heart, the whole life, the whole strength. As the soul learns each day to say, "Father! I desire to be perfect in heart with You today, I desire to walk before You and be perfect," the need and the meaning of abiding in Christ will be better understood, Christ Himself with His power and love will have new preciousness, and God will prove what He can do for souls, for a Church wholly given up to Him.

O you ministers of Christ, you messengers of His salvation, say to the Churches over which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers: This also we pray for—even your perfecting! Finally, brethren, Be perfected!

Day 15

Not Perfected, Yet Perfect

"Not that I have already obtained, or am already perfected; but I press on.... One thing I do, I press on towards the goal. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."—Philippians 3:12-15.

In perfection there are degrees. We have perfect, more perfect, most perfect. We have perfect, waiting to be perfected. Song of Solomon it was with our Lord Jesus. In Hebrews we read thrice of Him that He was perfected or made perfect. Of sinful imperfection there was not the faintest shadow in Him. At each moment of His life He was perfect—just what He should be. And yet He needed, and it became God to perfect Him through suffering and the obedience He learned in it. As He conquered temptation, and maintained His allegiance to God, and amid strong crying and tears gave up His will to God's will, His human nature was perfected, and He became High Priest, "the Son perfected forevermore." Jesus during His life on earth was perfect, but not yet perfected.

The perfected disciple shall be as his Master. What is true of Him is true, in our measure, of us too. Paul wrote to the Corinthians of speaking wisdom among the perfect, a wisdom carnal Christians could not understand. Here in our text he classes himself with the perfect, and expects and enjoins them to be of the same mind with himself. He sees no difficulty either in speaking of himself and others as perfect, or in regarding the perfect as needing to be yet

further and fully perfected.

And what is now this perfection which has yet to be perfected? And who are these perfect ones? The man who has made the highest perfection his choice, and who has given his whole heart and life to attain to it, is counted by God a perfect man. "The kingdom of heaven is like a seed." Where God sees in the heart the single purpose to be all that God wills, He sees the divine seed of all perfection. And as He counts faith for righteousness, so He counts this wholehearted purpose to be perfect as incipient perfection. The man with a perfect heart is accepted by God, amid all imperfection of attainment, as a perfect man. Paul could look upon the Church and unhesitatingly say, "As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded."

We know how among the Corinthians he describes two classes. The one, the large majority, carnal and content to live in strife; the other, the spiritual, the perfect. In the Church of our day it is to be feared that the great majority of believers have no conception of their calling to be perfect. They have not the slightest idea that it is their duty not only to be religious, but to be as eminently religious, as full of grace and holiness, as it is possible for God to make them. Even where there is some measure of earnest purpose in the pursuit of holiness, there is such a want of faith in the earnestness of God's purpose when He speaks: "Be perfect," and in the sufficiency of His grace to meet the demand, that the appeal meets with no response. In no real sense do they understand or accept Paul's invitation: "Let us, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."

But, thank God! it is not so with all. There is an ever-increasing number who cannot forget that God means what He says when He speaks: "Be perfect," and who regard themselves as under the most solemn obligation to obey the command. The words of Christ: "Be perfect," are to them a revelation of what

Christ is come to give and to work, a promise of the blessing to which His teaching and leading will bring them. They have joined the band of like-minded ones whom Paul would associate with himself; they seek God with their whole heart; they serve Him with a perfect heart; their one aim in life is to be made perfect, even as the Master.

My reader! as in the presence of God, who has said to you: "Be perfect!" and of Christ Jesus, who gave Himself that you might obey this command of your God, I charge you that you do not refuse the call of God's servant, but enrol yourself among those who accept it: "Let us, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Fear not to take your place before God with Paul among the perfect in heart. So far will it be from causing self-complacency, that you will learn from him how the perfect has yet to be perfected, and how the one mark of the perfect is that he counts all things loss as he presses on unto the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ.

Day 16

Perfect, and yet to be Perfected

*"Not that I have already obtained, or am already perfected, but I press on...
One thing I do, I press on toward the goal. Let us therefore, as many as be
perfect, be thus minded. Brethren, be ye imitators together of me."—
Philippians 3:12-17.*

The mark of the perfect, as set before us in Paul and all who are thus minded, is the passionate desire to be yet made perfect. This looks like a paradox. And yet what we see in our Master proves the truth of what we say: the consciousness of being perfect is in entire harmony with the readiness to sacrifice life itself for the sake of being yet made perfect. It was thus with Christ. It was thus with Paul. It will be thus with us, as we open our hearts fully and give God's words room and time to do their work. Many think that the more imperfect one is the more he will feel his need of perfection. All experience, in every department of life, teaches us the very opposite. It is those who are nearest perfection who most know their need of being yet perfected, and are most ready to make any sacrifice to attain to it. To count everything loss for perfection in practice, is the surest proof that perfection in principle has possession of the heart. The more honestly and earnestly the believer claims that he seeks God with a perfect heart, the more ready will he be with Paul to say: "Not that I have already obtained, or am already perfected."

And wherein was it now that Paul longed to be made perfect? Read the

wonderful passage with care, and without prejudice or preconceived ideas, and I think you will see that he gives here no indication of its being sin or sinful imperfection from which he was seeking to be perfectly free. Whatever his writings teach elsewhere, the thought is not in his mind here. The perfected disciple is as his Master. Paul is speaking here of his life and lifework, and feels that it is not perfected until he has reached the goal and obtained the prize. To this he is pressing on. He that runs in a race may, as far as he has gone, have done everything perfectly; all may pronounce his course perfect as far as it has gone. Still it has to be perfected. The contrast is not with failure or shortcoming, but with what is as yet unfinished, and waiting for its full end. And so Paul uses expressions which all tell us how what he already had of Christ was but a part. He did know Christ, he had gained Christ, he was found in Him, he had apprehended in wonderful measure that for which Christ had apprehended him. And yet of all these things—of knowing Christ, of gaining Him, of being found in Him, of apprehending that for which he was apprehended—he speaks as of what he was striving after with all his might: "If by any means I may attain to the resurrection of the dead;" "I press on to the goal, unto the prize." It is of all this he says: "Not that I am already made perfect. Let as many as are perfect be thus minded."

Paul had known Christ for many years, but he knew there were in Him riches and treasures greater than he had known yet, and nothing could satisfy him but the full and final and eternal possession of what the resurrection would bring him. For this he counted all things but loss; for this he forgot the things that were behind; for this he pressed on to the goal, unto the prize. He teaches us the spirit of true perfection. A man who knows he is perfect with God; a man who knows he must yet be perfected; a man who knows that he has counted all things loss to attain this final perfection; such is the perfect man.

Christian, learn here the price of perfection, as well as the mark of the perfect ones. The Master gave His life to be made perfect forever. Paul did the same. It is a solemn thing to profess the pursuit of perfection. The price of the "pearl of great price" is high: all things must be counted loss. I have urged you to put down your names in the class-list of the perfect; to ask the Master to put it down and give you the blessed witness of the Spirit to a perfect heart. I urge you now, if, like Paul, you claim to be perfect, single and wholehearted in your surrender to God, to live the life of the perfect, with all things loss for Jesus as its watchword and its strength, and its one desire to possess Him wholly, to be possessed of Him, and to be made perfect even as He was.

O our Father! be pleased to open the eyes of Your children, that they may see what the perfection of heart is that You now ask of them, and what the perfection in Christ is that You desire for them to seek at any cost.

Day 17

Perfect in Christ

"Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we proclaim, admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ: whereunto I labor also, striving according to His working which works in me mightily."—Colossians 1:27-29.

Perfect in Christ: in our inquiry into the teaching of the Word as to perfection, we have here a new word opening up to us the hope, giving us the assurance, of what we have seen to be our duty. It links all that we have seen of God's call and claim, with all that we know of Christ in His grace and power. Perfect in Christ: here is the open gateway into the perfect life. He to whom it is given to see fully what it means, finds through it an abundant entrance into the life of Christian perfectness.

There are three aspects in which we need to look at the truth of our being perfect in Christ. There is, first, our perfectness in Christ, as it is prepared for us in Him, our Head. As the second Adam, Christ came and wrought out a new nature for all the members of His body. This nature is His own life, perfected through suffering and obedience. In thus being perfected Himself, He perfected forever them that are sanctified. His perfection, His perfect life, is ours. And that not only judicially, or by imputation, but as an actual spiritual reality, in virtue of our real and living union with Him. Paul says in the same Epistle, "You are complete, made full in Him"; all that you are to be is already fulfilled, and so you are fulfilled in Him: circumcised in Him,

buried with Him, raised with Him, quickened together with Him. All Christ's members are in Him, fulfilled in Him.

Then there is our perfection in Christ, as imparted to us by the Holy Spirit in uniting us to Him. The life which is implanted in us at the new birth, planted into the midst of a mass of sin and flesh, is a perfect life. As the seed contains in itself the whole life of the tree, so the seed of God within us is the perfect life of Christ, with its power to grow, and fill our life, and bring forth fruit to perfection.

And then there is also our perfection in Christ, as wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, appropriated by us in the obedience of faith, and made manifest in our life and conduct. As our faith grasps and feeds upon the truth in the two former aspects, and yields itself to God to have that perfect life master and pervade the whole of our daily life in its ordinary actions; perfect in Christ will become each moment a present practical reality and experience. All that the Word has taught of the perfect heart, and the perfect way, of being perfect as the Father, and perfect as the Master, shines with new meaning and with the light of a new life. Christ, the living Christ, is our Perfection; He, Himself, lives each day and hour to impart it. The measureless love of Jesus, and the power of the endless life in which His life works, become the measure of our expectation. In the life in which we now live in the flesh, with its daily duties in relationship with men and money, with care and temptation, we are to give the proof that Perfect in Christ is no mere ideal, but in the power of Almighty God, simple and literal truth.

It is in the last of these three aspects that Paul has used the expression in our text. He speaks of admonishing every man, and teaching every man, in all wisdom, that he may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. It is to the perfectness in daily life and walk that the admonishing and teaching have

reference. In principle, Christians were perfect in Christ: in practice they were to become perfect. The aim of the Gospel Ministry among believers was to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, to teach men how they might put on the Lord Jesus, have His life cover them and have His life in them.

What a task! What a hopeless task to the minister, as he looks upon the state of the Church! What a task of infinite hopefulness, if he does his work as Paul did, "Whereunto," nothing less than presenting every man perfect in Christ: "Whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily." The aim is high, but the power is Divine. Let the minister, in full purpose of heart, make Paul's aim his own: to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. He may count upon Paul's strength: "His working which works in me mightily."

Day 18

Perfect in all the will of God

"Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Jesus Christ, salutes you, always striving for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God."—Colossians 4:12.

In this, as in some of the other Epistles, there is set before us the life of the believer as he lives it in heaven in Christ, and then as he lives it here on earth with men. The teaching of Scripture is intensely spiritual and supernatural, but, at the same time, intensely human and practical. This comes out very beautifully in the two expressions of our Epistle. Paul had told the Colossians what he labored for; he now tells them what another minister, Epaphras, prayed on their behalf. Paul's striving was in his labor that they might be perfect in Christ Jesus. The striving of Epaphras was in the prayer that they might be perfect in all the will of God.

First we have "Perfect in Christ Jesus." The thought is so unearthly and Divine, that its full meaning eludes our grasp. It lifts up to life in Christ and heaven. Then we have "Perfect in all the will of God." This word brings us down to earth and daily life, placing all under the rule of God's will, and calling us in every action and disposition to live in the will of God.

"That you may stand perfect in all the will of God." "The perfection of the creature consists in nothing but willing the will of the Creator." The will of God is the expression of the Divine perfection. Nature has its beauty and

glory in being the expression of the Divine will. The angels have their place and bliss in heaven in doing God's will. The Son of God was perfected in learning obedience, in giving Himself up unto the will of God. His redemption has but one object, to bring man into that only place of rest and blessedness—the will of God. The prayer of Epaphras shows how truly he had entered into the spirit of his Master. He prays for his people, that they may stand in the will of God; and that in all the will of God—nothing in their life excepted, in which they were not in God's will. And that again, perfect in all the will of God; at each moment, with a perfect heart walking in a perfect way. Perfect in all the will of God, is ever his one thought of what ought to be asked and could be found in prayer.

Paul prayed for the Colossians, "that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." These two servants of God were of one mind, that young converts must be reminded that their knowledge of God's will is very defective, that they need to pray for a Divine teaching to know that Will, and that their one aim should be to stand perfect in all that will.

Let all seekers after perfection, let all who would be like-minded with Paul, note well the lesson. In the joy of a consecration sealed by the Holy Spirit, in the consciousness of a wholehearted purpose, and of serving God with a perfect heart, the believer is often tempted to forget how much there may be in which he does not yet see God's will. There may be grave defects in his character, serious shortcomings from the law of perfect love in his conduct, which others can observe. The consciousness of acting up to the full light of what we know to be right is a most blessed thing, one of the marks of the perfect heart. But it must ever be accompanied with the remembrance of how much there may be that has not yet been revealed to us. This sense of

ignorance as to much of God's will, this conviction that there is still much in us that needs to be changed, and sanctified, and perfected, will make us very humble and tender, very watchful and hopeful in prayer. So far from interfering with our consciousness that we serve God with a perfect heart, it will give it new strength, while it cultivates that humility which is the greatest beauty of perfection. Without it, the appeal to the consciousness of our uprightness becomes superficial and dangerous, and the doctrine of perfection a stumbling-block and a snare.

Perfect in all the will of God. Let this be our unceasing aim and prayer. Striking its roots deep in the humility which comes from the conviction of how much there is yet to be revealed to us; strengthened by the consciousness that we have given ourselves to serve Him with a perfect heart; full of the glad purpose to be content with nothing less than standing perfect in all the will of God; rejoicing in the confidence of what God will do for those who are before Him perfect in Christ Jesus: let our faith claim the full blessing. God will reveal to us how perfect in Christ Jesus, and perfect in all the will of God, are one in His thought, and may be so in our experience.

Paul prayed for the Colossians "without ceasing," that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will. Epaphras was "always striving in his prayers" for them, that they might stand perfect in all the will of God. It is by prayer, by unceasing striving in prayer, that this grace must be sought for the Church. It is before the throne, it is in the presence of God, that the life of perfection must be found and lived. It is by the operation of the mighty quickening power of God Himself, waited for and received in prayer, that believers can indeed stand perfect in all the will of God. God give us grace so to seek and so to find it.

Day 19

Christ made perfect through Suffering

"It became Him to make the Leader of their salvation perfect through sufferings."—Hebrews 2:10.

"Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered; and having been perfected, He became, for all them that obey Him, the Author of eternal salvation."—Hebrews 5:8, 9.

"But the word of the oath appointeth a Son, perfected forevermore."—Hebrews 7:28.

We have here three passages in which we are taught that Jesus Christ Himself, though He was the Son of God, had to be perfected. The first tells us that it was as the Leader of our salvation that He was perfected; that it was God's work to perfect Him; that there was a need-be for it; "it became God" to do it; and that it was through suffering the work was accomplished. The second, what the power of suffering to perfect was, that in it He learned obedience to God's will; and that, being thus perfected, He became the Author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him. The third, that it is as the Son perfected for evermore that He is appointed High Priest in the heavens.

The words open to us the inmost secret of Christian perfection. The Christian has no other perfection than the perfection of Christ. The deeper his insight into the character of his Lord, as having been made perfect by being brought into perfect union with God's will through suffering and obedience, the more clearly will he apprehend wherein that redemption which Christ came to

bring really consists, and what the path is to its full enjoyment.

In Christ there was nothing of sinful defect or shortcoming. He was from His birth the perfect One. And yet He needed to be perfected. There was something in His human nature which needed to grow, to be strengthened and developed, and which could only thus be perfected. He had to follow on, as, step by step, the will of God opened up to Him, and in the midst of temptation and suffering to learn and prove what it was at any cost to do that will alone. It is this Christ who is our Leader and Forerunner, our High Priest and Redeemer.

And it is as this perfection of His, this being made perfect through obedience to God's will, is revealed to us, that we will know fully what the redemption is that He brings.

We learn to take Him as our example. Like Him we say, "I am come, not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me." We accept the will of God as the one thing we have to live for and to live in. In every circumstance and trial we see and bow to the will of God. We meet every providential appointment, in every ordinary duty of daily life, as God's will. We pray to be filled with the knowledge of His will, that we may enter into it in its fulness, that we may stand complete in all the will of God. Whether we suffer or obey God's will, we seek to be perfected as the Master was.

We not only take Christ as our example and law in the path of perfection, but as the promise and pledge of what we are to be. All that Christ was and did as Substitute, Representative, Head and Savior, is for us. All He does is in the power of the endless life. This perfection of His is the perfection of His life, His way of living; this life of His, perfected in obedience, is now ours. He gives us His own Spirit to breathe, to work it in us. He is the Vine; we are the

branches; the very mind and disposition that was in Him on earth is communicated to us.

Yes, more; it is not only Christ in heaven who imparts to us somewhat of His Spirit; Christ Himself comes to dwell in our heart: the Christ who was made perfect through learning obedience. It is in this character that He reigns in heaven: "He became obedient unto death; therefore God highly exalted Him." It is in this character that He dwells and rules in the heart. The real character, the essential attribute of the life Christ lived on earth, and which He maintains in us, is this: a will perfect with God, and ready at any cost to be perfected in all His will. It is this character He imparts to His own: the perfection with which He was perfected in learning obedience. As those who are perfect in Christ, who are perfect of heart towards God, and are pressing on to be made perfect, let us live in the will of God, our one desire to be even as He was, to do God's will, to stand perfect in all the will of God.

Day 20

Let us press on to Perfection

*"But solid food is for the perfect, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. For this reason, let us cease to speak of the first principles of Christ, and press on unto perfection."—
Hebrews 5:14; 6:1.*

The writer had criticized the Hebrews for being dull of hearing; for having made no progress in the Christian life; for still being as little children who needed milk. They could not bear solid food, the deeper and more spiritual teaching in regard to the heavenly state of life into which Christ had entered, and into which He gives admission to those who are ready for it. Such our writer calls the perfect, mature or full-grown men of the house of God. We must not connect the idea of mature or full-grown with time. In the Christian life it is not as in nature: a believer of three years old may be counted among the mature or perfect, while one of twenty years' standing may be but a babe, unskilled in the word of righteousness. Nor must we connect it with power of intellect or maturity of judgment. These may be found without that insight into spiritual truth, and that longing after the highest attainable perfection in character and fellowship with God, of which the writer is speaking.

We are told what the distinguishing characteristic of the perfect is: "even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil" It is the desire after holiness, the tender conscience that longs above everything to discern good and evil, the heart that seeks only, and always,

and fully to know and do the will of God, that marks the perfect. The man who has set his heart upon being holy, and in the pursuit after the highest moral and spiritual perfection exercises his senses in everything to discern good and evil, is counted the perfect man.

The Epistle has spoken of the two stages of the Christian life. It now calls upon the Hebrews to be no longer babes, no longer to remain content with the first principles, the mere elements of the doctrine of Christ. With the exhortation, "Let us press on to perfection"; it invites them to come and learn how Jesus is a Priest in the power of an endless life, who can save completely; how He is the Mediator of a better covenant, lifting us into a better life by writing the law in our heart; how the Holiest of all has been set open for us to enter in, and there to serve the living God. "Let us go on to perfection" is the landmark pointing all to that heavenly life in God's presence which can be lived even here on earth, to which the full knowledge of Jesus as our heavenly High Priest leads us.

"Let us press on to Perfection." It is not the first time we have the word in the Epistle. We read of God's perfecting Christ through suffering. Perfection is that perfect union with God's will, that blessed meekness and surrender to God's will, which the Father wrought in Christ through His suffering. We read of Christ's learning obedience, and so being made perfect. This is the true maturity or perfection, the true wisdom among the perfect, the knowing and doing God's will. We read of strong food for the perfect, who by reason of practice, have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. Here again perfection is, even as with Christ, the disposition, the character that is formed when a man makes conformity to God's will, fellowship with God in His holiness, the one aim of His life, to which everything else, even life itself, is to be sacrificed.

It is to this that Jesus, our High Priest, and the further teaching of the Epistle, would lead us on. The knowledge of the mysteries of God, of the highest spiritual truth, cannot profit us, because we have no inward capacity for receiving them, unless our inmost life is given up to receive as ours the perfection with which Jesus was perfected. When this disposition is found, the Holy Spirit will reveal to us how Christ has perfected forever, in the power of an endless life, those who are sanctified. He has prepared a life, a disposition, with which He clothes them. And we will understand that, "Let us go on to perfection," just means this, "Let us go on to know Christ perfectly, to live entirely by His heavenly life now that He is perfected, to follow wholly His earthly life, and the path in which He reached perfection." Union with Christ in heaven will mean likeness to Christ on earth in that lamb-like meekness and humility in which He suffered, in that Son-like obedience through which He entered into glory.

Brethren, leaving the first principles, let us go on to Perfection.

Day 21

No Perfection by the Law

"Now, if there was perfection through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people had received the law), what further need that another priest should arise after the order of Melchisedek?... who has been made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life....

For there is a disannulling of a former commandment, because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect."—Hebrews 7:11-19.

Gifts and sacrifices are offered, which cannot, as touching the conscience, make the worshiper perfect."—Hebrews 9:9.

"For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, can never make perfect them that draw nigh."—Hebrews 10:1.

"That apart from us they should not be made perfect."—Hebrews 11:40.

Of the Epistles of the New Testament there is none in which the word "Perfect" is used so often as that to the Hebrews. There is none that will help us more to see what Christian perfection is, and the way to its attainment. The word is used thrice of our Lord Jesus, and His being made perfect Himself. Twice of our subjective perfection. Five times of the perfection of which the law was the shadow, but which could not be until Jesus came. Thrice of Christ's work in perfecting us. And once of the work of God in perfecting us. These five thoughts will each give us a subject of meditation. Of the first two we have spoken already.

A careful perusal of the verses placed above, will show that the writer

thought it of great importance to make it clear that the law could perfect no person or thing. It was all the more of consequence to press this, both because of the close connection in which the law stood to the true perfection, as its promise and preparation, and of the natural tendency of the human heart to seek perfection by the law. It was not only the Hebrews who greatly needed this teaching: among Christians in our days the greatest hindrance in accepting the perfection the gospel asks and offers, is that they make the law its standard, and then our impotence to fulfil the law, the excuse for not attaining, for not even seeking it. They have never understood that the law is but a preparation for something better; and that when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part is done away.

The Law demands; the Law calls to effort; the Law means self. It puts self upon doing its utmost. But it makes nothing perfect, neither the conscience nor the worshiper. This is what Christ came to bring. The very perfection which the law could not give He does give. The Epistle tells us that He was made a Priest, not as Aaron, after the law and in connection with the service of a carnal commandment, which had to be disannulled because of its weakness and unprofitableness, but after the power of an endless life. What Christ, as Priest, has wrought and now works, is all in the power of an inward birth, of a new life, of the eternal life. What is born into me, what is as a spirit and life within me, has its own power of growth and action. Christ's being made perfect Himself through suffering and obedience; His having perfected us by that sacrifice by which He was perfected Himself; and His communication of that perfection to us, is all in the power of an endless life. It works in us as a life power; in no other way could we become partakers of it.

Perfection is not through the law; let us listen to the blessed lesson. Let us

take the warning. The law is so closely connected with perfection, was so long its only representative and forerunner, that we can hardly realize: the law makes nothing perfect. Let us take the encouragement: What the law could not do, God, sending His Son, has done. The Son, perfected for evermore, has perfected us for ever. It is in Jesus we have our perfection. It is in living union with Him, it is when He is within us, not only as a seed or a little child, but formed within us, dwelling within us, that we shall know how far He can make us perfect. It is faith that leads us in the path of perfection. It is the faith that sees, that receives, that lives in Jesus the Perfect One, that will bear us on to the perfection God would have.

Day 22

Christ has Perfected Us

"But Christ, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, through His own blood, entered once for all into the holy place."—Hebrews 9:11, 12.

*"By one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified."—
Hebrews 10:14.*

In Christ's work, as set before us in the Epistle to the Hebrews, there are two parts. In contrast with the worldly sanctuary, He is the minister of the true tabernacle. The Holiest of all is now open to us: Christ has opened the way through a more perfect tabernacle into the presence of God. He has prepared and opened up for us a place of perfect fellowship with God, of access, in a life of faith, which means a life in full union with Christ, into God's immediate presence.

There must be harmony between the place of worship and the worshiper. As He has prepared the perfect sanctuary, the Holiest of all, for us, He has prepared us for it too. "By one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified." For the sanctuary the sanctified ones; for the Holiest of all a holy priesthood; for the perfect tabernacle the perfected worshiper.

"By one sacrifice He has perfected forever them that are sanctified." The word perfected cannot mean here anything different from what it meant in the three passages where it has been previously used of Him (Hebrews 2:11, 5:9, 7:28). They all point to that which constituted the real value, the innermost

nature, of His sacrifice. He was Himself perfected for our sakes, so that He might perfect us with the same perfection with which God had perfected Him. What is this perfection with which God perfected Him through suffering, in which He was perfected through obedience, in which as the Son, perfected forevermore, He was made our High Priest?

The answer is to be found in what the object was of Christ's redeeming work. The perfection of man as created consisted in this, that he had a will with power to will as God willed, and so to enter into inner union with the Divine life and holiness and glory. His fall was a turning from the will of God to do the will of self. And so this self and self-will became the source and the curse of sin. The work of Christ was to bring man back to that will of God in which alone is life and blessedness. Therefore it became God, it was proper and needful if He was to be the Leader of our salvation, that God should make Him perfect through suffering. In His own person He was to conquer sin, to develop and bring to perfection a real human life, sacrificing everything that men hold dear, willing to give up even life itself, in surrender to God's will; proving that it is the meat, the very life of man's spirit, to do God's will. This was the perfection with which Christ was perfected as our High Priest, who brings us back to God. This was the meaning and the value of His sacrifice, that "one sacrifice" by which "He has perfected forever them that are sanctified." In the same sacrifice in which He was perfected, He perfected us. As the second Adam, He made us partakers of His own perfection. Just as Adam in his death corrupted us and our nature forevermore, so Christ, in His death, in which He, Himself, was perfected, perfected us and our nature for evermore. He has created for us a new perfect nature, a new life. With Him we died to sin; in Him we live for God.

And how do we become partakers of this perfection with which Christ has

perfected us? First of all the conscience is perfected so that we have no more conscience of sin, and enter boldly into the Holiest, the Presence of God. The consciousness of a perfect redemption possesses and fills the soul. And then, as we abide in this, God Himself perfects us in every good thing, to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ. Through Christ, the High Priest in the power of the endless life, there comes to us in a constant stream from on high, the power of the heavenly life. So that day by day we may present ourselves perfect in Christ Jesus.

A soul that seeks to dwell in the Divine perfection of which the Epistle speaks; that holds fellowship with Him who in such intense human reality was perfected through suffering and obedience; that in faith turns to Him who has perfected us, and now holds our perfection in Himself to be communicated as a life in us day by day, for us to practice and put it into exercise in walking in His footsteps; may count most surely that He Himself will lead it into the promised inheritance.

Day 23

God Perfect you in every good thing

"Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the Great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus, make you perfect in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen."—Hebrews 13:20, 21.

These two verses contain a summary of the whole Epistle in the form of a prayer. In the former of the two we have the substance of what was taught in the first or doctrinal half—what God has done for us in the redemption in Christ Jesus. In the second of the two verses we have a revelation and a promise of what this God of redemption will do for us; we see how God's one aim and desire is to make us perfect. We have said before, the word "perfect" here implies the removal of all that is wrong, and the supply of all that is lacking. This is what God waits to do in us. "God make you perfect in every good thing."

We need a large faith to claim this promise. So that our faith may be full and strong, we are reminded of what God has done for us; this is the assurance of what He will yet do in us. Let us look to Him as the God of peace, who has made peace in the entire putting away of sin; who now proclaims peace; who gives perfect peace. Let us look to Jesus Christ, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, our High Priest and King, who loves to care for and keep us. Let us remember the blood of the eternal covenant, in the power of which God

raised Him and He entered heaven; that blood is God's pledge that the covenant with its promises will be fulfilled in our hearts. Let us think of God's bringing Him again from the dead, that our faith and hope might be in God; the power that raised Jesus is the power that works in us. Yes, let us look, and worship, and adore this God of peace, who has done it all, who raised Christ through the blood of the covenant, that we might know and trust Him.

And let us believe the message that tells us: This God of peace, He will perfect you in every good thing. The God who perfected Christ will perfect you too. The God who has worked out such a perfect salvation for us, will perfect it in us. The more we gaze upon Him who has done such wondrous things for us, will we trust Him for this wondrous thing He promises to do in us, to perfect us in every good thing. What God did in Christ is the measure of what He will do in us to make us perfect. The same Omnipotence that worked in Christ to perfect Him, waits for our faith to trust its working in us day by day to perfect us in the doing of God's will. And on our part, the surrender to be made perfect will be the measure of our capacity to experience what God has done in Christ.

And now hear what this perfection is which this God promises to work in us. It is truly Divine, as Divine as the work of redemption: the God of peace, who brought again Christ from the dead, perfect you. It is intensely practical: in every good thing, to do His will. It is universal, with nothing excluded from its operation: in every good thing. It is truly human and personal: God perfects us, so that we do His will. It is inward: God working in us that which is pleasing in His sight. And it is most blessed, giving us the consciousness that our life pleases Him, because it is His own work: He works in us that which is pleasing in His sight.

"God perfect you to do His will:" this is the conclusion of the whole Epistle. "To do His will:" this is the blessedness of the angels in heaven. For this the Son became man: by this He was perfected: in this—"in the which will," as done by Him, "we are sanctified." It is "TO DO His WILL" that God perfects us; that God works in us that which is pleasing in His sight.

Believer, let God's aim be your aim also. Say to God that you do desire this above everything. Give yourself, at once, entirely, absolutely, to this, and say with the Son, "I come to do Your will, O my God." This will give you an insight into the meaning, and the need, and the preciousness of the promise, "God perfect you to do His will." This will fix your heart upon God in the wondrous light of the truth: He who perfected Christ is perfecting me too. This will give you confidence, in the fulness of faith, to claim this God as your God, the God who perfects in every good thing.

The perfecting of the believer by God, restoring him to his right condition to fit him for doing His will, may be instantaneous. A valuable piece of machinery may be out of order. The owner has spent time and trouble in vain to put it right. The maker comes: it costs him but a moment to see and remove the hindrance. And so the soul that has for years wearied itself in the effort to do God's will, may often in one moment be delivered from some misapprehension as to what God demands or promises, and find itself restored, perfected for every good thing. And what was done in a moment becomes the secret of the continuous life, as faith each day claims the God that perfects, to do that which is well pleasing in His sight.

Yes, the soul that dares say to God that it yields itself in everything to do His will, and through all the humiliation which comes from the sense of emptiness and impotence, abides by its vow in simple trust, will be made strong to rise and to appropriate and experience in full measure what God has

offered in this precious word: "The God of peace perfect you, in every good thing, to do His will, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ."

And it will sing with new meaning, and in fulness of joy, the song of adoring love: "To Him be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Day 24

Perfect Patience makes a Perfect Man

"And let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing."—James 1:4.

Perfection is a seed. The life, given in regeneration, is a perfect life. Through ignorance and unbelief the soul may never get beyond knowing that it has life, and remain unconscious of what a wonderful, perfect life it has.

Perfection is a seed. It is a blessed hour when the soul awakens up to know this, and with a perfect heart yields itself to appropriate all that God has given. The perfection of the perfect heart, a heart wholly yielded to seek God with all its strength, is again a seed, with infinite power of growth and increase.

Perfection is a growth. As the Christian awakens to the consciousness of what God asks and gives, and maintains the vow of a wholehearted surrender, he grows in his sense of need and his trust in the promise of a Divine life and strength, until all the promises of grace come to a focus in the one assurance, "The God of all grace will Himself perfect you"; that faith which was the fruit of previous growth, becomes the new seed of further growth. Perfection now develops into something riper and mellow. The overshadowing Presence of Him who perfects, rests continually on the spirit, and the whole character bears the impression of heavenliness and fellowship with the Unseen. The soul makes way for God, and gives Him time to do His work; the God of

Peace, perfecting in every good thing, gets entire possession. The soul rests in the rest of God.

This is not the work of a day. Perfection is a growth. "You have need of patience, that having done the will of God, you may inherit the promise." "Be imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Man is the creature of time, and is under the law of development. In the kingdom of heaven it is as in nature, from the seed first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. There is nothing at times that appears more mysterious to the believer than the slowness of God. It is as if our prayers are not heard, as if His promises are not fulfilled, as if our faith is vain. And all the time God is hastening on His work with all speed. He will avenge His own elect speedily, though He bear long with them.

"Let patience have its perfect work." We are so often impatient with ourselves, not content to trust God to do His work, and so hindering just when we want to hurry on His work. We are impatient with God; instead of the adoring trust of Him, the God of peace, who is perfecting us, we fret ourselves because we do not see what we had thought out for ourselves. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him," is the law of faith, not only in times of well-being, but especially in the path of perfection. Faith is the law of the Christian life to an extent that very few realize. The assurance that rests in the unseen power that is working out its Holy Purpose will never be disappointed. As it has been said of an elderly saint, "She was sure that, however long any soul might have to continue in the path of humiliation, with self-emptying, the end, with all who were faithful, would one day be a filling to overflowing of all their inward being with the presence of the Holy One."

"Let patience have its perfect work." This is the command. To those who

obey it, the potential offered is certain, "that you may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing." How words are heaped up to make us appreciate what the aim and expectation of the believer ought to be! Perfect, something finished, that satisfies its purpose; entire, that in which every part is in its place; and lacking in nothing, just all that the Father expects: such is the Christian character as God's Spirit sets it before us. There is a perfection which the Christian is to regard as his duty and his life. Where patience has its perfect work it will bring forth what the husbandman longs for, fruit unto perfection. "God's work in man is the man. If God's teaching by patience have a perfect work in you, you are perfect."

But where there is to be this perfect fruit, there must first be the perfect seed. And that seed is the perfect heart. Without this, whence could patience have its perfect work? With this, every trial, every difficulty, every failure even, is accepted as God's training school, and God is trusted as the Faithful One, who is perfecting His own work. Let there be first the perfect heart—that will lead to perfect patience, and that again to the fully perfected man.

Jesus Christ was Himself not perfected in one day: it took time; in Him patience had its perfect work. True faith recognizes the need of time, and rests in God. And time to us means days and years. Let us learn each day to renew the vow: "This day I intend to live for God as perfectly as His grace will enable me. This day I intend, in the patience of hope, to trust the God of all grace, who Himself is perfecting me. This day I intend to be perfect and entire, lacking nothing." With such a vow renewed day by day, with faith in Christ who has perfected us, and God who is perfecting us, patience will do its perfect work. And we will be perfect and entire, lacking nothing.

Day 25

The Perfect tongue marks the Perfect Man

"In many things we all stumble. If anyone does not stumble in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also."—James 3:2.

There can be no perfection in art or science without attention to little things. One of the truest marks of genius is the power, in presence of the highest ideal, to attend to even the least details. No chain is stronger than its feeblest link. The weakest point in the character of a Christian is the measure of his nearness to perfection. It is in the little things of daily life that perfection is attained and proved.

The tongue is a little member. A word of the tongue is, oh! such a little thing in the eyes of many. And yet we are told by none less than our blessed Lord: "By your words you will be justified." When the Son of man comes in the glory of His Father to repay to every man according to his deeds, every word will be taken into account. In the light of the great day of God, if any man stumble not in word, the same is a perfect man. This is the full-grown man, who has attained maturity, who has reached unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

But is it possible for any man to be thus perfect, and not to stumble in a single word? Has not James just said, "In many things we all stumble?" Just

think of all the foolish words one hears among Christians, the sharp words, the hasty, thoughtless, unloving words, the words that are only half honest and not spoken from the heart. Think of all the sins of the tongue against the law of perfect love and perfect truth, and we must admit the terrible force of James' statement: "In many things we all stumble." When he adds, "If any stumble not in word, the same is a perfect man," can he really mean that God expects that we should live so, and that we must seek and expect it too?

Let us think. With what objective does he use these words? In the beginning of his Epistle he had spoken of patience having its perfect work, that we may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing. There, entire perfection, with nothing lacking, is set before us as a definite promise to those who let patience have its perfect work. His Epistle is written, as all the Epistles are, under the painful impression of how far ordinary Christian experience is from such perfection, but in the faith that it is not a hopeless task to teach God's people that they ought to be, that they can be, perfect and entire, lacking in nothing. Where he begins to speak of the tongue, the two sides of the truth again rise up before him. The ordinary experience he expresses in the general statement: "In many things we all stumble." The will of God and the power of grace he sets forth in the blessed and not impossible ideal of all who seek to be perfect and entire: "If any man stumble not in word, the same is a perfect man." James speaks of it in all simplicity as a condition as actual as the other condition of everyone stumbling.

The question is again asked: But is it really a possible ideal? Does God expect it of us? Is grace promised for it? Let us call in Peter as a witness, and listen to what God's Spirit says through him, as to that terrible necessity of always stumbling which some hold fast, as to the blessed possibility of being kept from stumbling. "Give the more diligence," he writes, "to make your

calling and election sure; for if you do these things, you will never stumble." "Never"—that includes, not even in word. Let us hear what Jude says, "Now unto Him, who is able to guard you from stumbling through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and power, before all time, and now, and forevermore. Amen." It is the soul that knows and without ceasing trusts God as a God who guards from stumbling, as a God who watches and keeps us every moment through Jesus Christ, that will without ceasing sing this song of praise.

The three texts on "stumbling" are the only ones in the New Testament in which the word occurs in reference to the Christian life. The text in James is heard quoted a hundred times for every time the texts in Peter and Jude are cited. And Christ has said, "According to your faith be it unto you." If our faith feeds only and always on, "In many things we all stumble," no wonder that we do stumble. If with that "stumble" we take the "stumble not" that follows, "If any man stumble not in word, the same is a perfect man," and the "not stumble" of Peter and Jude, the faith that embraces the promise will obtain it: God's power will translate it into our experience, and our life will be a living Epistle into which God's words have been transcribed. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks: out of a heart that is perfect towards God, in which the love of God is shed abroad, in which Christ dwells, the tongue will bring forth words of truth and uprightness, of love and gentleness, full of beauty and of blessing. God wills it: God works it: let us claim it.

Day 26

God will himself Perfect You

"The God of all grace, who called you unto His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered awhile, will Himself perfect, establish, and strengthen you. To Him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen."—1 Peter 5:10, 11.

Through suffering to glory: this is the keynote of the First Epistle of Peter. The word "suffer" occurs sixteen times, the word "glory" fourteen times. In its closing words the readers are reminded of all its teaching, as he writes to them: "The God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory, after you have suffered a little while." In no Epistle of the New Testament are the two aspects of Christ's death: that He suffered for us, and that we are to suffer with Him and like Him, so clearly and closely linked together. Fellowship with Christ, likeness to Christ, manifested in suffering, is the point of view from which Peter would have us look on life as the path to glory. To be a partaker of the sufferings and the glory of Christ is the Christian's privilege. He was perfected through suffering by God: the same God perfects us for suffering and glorifying Him in it.

"God will Himself perfect you!" In God alone is perfection. In Him is all perfection. And all perfection comes from Him. When we consider the wondrous perfection there is in the sun, in the laws it obeys, and in the blessings it dispenses, and remember that it owes all to the will of the Creator, we acknowledge that its perfection is from God. And so, through the

whole of nature, to the tiniest insect that floats in the sunbeam, and the humblest little flower that basks in its light, everything owes its beauty to God alone. All His works praise Him. His work is perfect.

And have we not here in nature the open secret of Christian perfection? It is God who must perfect us! "God will Himself perfect you." What is revealed in nature, is the pledge of what is secured to us in grace. "It suited Him, for whom are all things, and of whom are all things, in leading many sons unto glory, to make the Leader of their salvation perfect through suffering." It was befitting that God should show that He is the God who works out perfection amid the weakness and suffering of a human life. This is what constitutes the very essence of salvation, to be perfected by God; to yield oneself to the God, for whom, and of whom are all things, Himself to perfect us.

God has planted deep in the heart of man the desire for perfection. Is it not this that stirs the spirit of the artist and the poet, of the discoverer and the artificer? Is it not the nearest possible approach to this that wakens admiration and enthusiasm? And is it only in grace that all thought and all joy of present perfection is to be banished? Certainly not, if God's word be true. The promise is sure and bright for this our earthly life: "God will Himself perfect you." Joined with the words, "establish, and strengthen you," the "Himself perfect you," can refer to nothing but the present daily life. God shall Himself put you into the right position, and in that position then establish and strengthen you, so as to fit you perfectly for the life you have to live, and the work you have to do.

We find it so hard to believe this, because we do not know what it means. "You are not under the law, but under grace." The law demands what we cannot give or do. Grace never asks what it does not give; and so the Father never asks what we cannot do. He Himself, who raised Jesus from the dead,

is always ready, in that same resurrection power, to perfect us to do His will. Let us believe, and be still, until our soul is filled with the blessed truth, and we know that it will be done to us.

O my soul, learn to know this God, and claim Him, in this His character, as yours: "God will Himself perfect you!" Worship and adore Him here, until your faith is filled with the assurance: My God Himself is perfecting me. Regard yourself as the clay in the hands of the Great Artist, spending all His thought and time and love to make you perfect. Yield yourself in voluntary, loving obedience to His will and His Spirit. Yield yourself in full confidence into His very hands, and let the word ring through your whole being: **GOD SHALL HIMSELF PERFECT YOU**; perfectly fit you for all He intends you to be or do. Let every perfect bud or flower you see whisper its message: Only let God work; only wait upon God; **GOD SHALL HIMSELF PERFECT YOU**.

Believer! have you desired this? O claim it, claim it now. Or rather, claim now in very deed this God as your God. Just as the writer to the Hebrews, and Peter in this Epistle, gather up all their varied teaching into this one central promise, "God shall Himself perfect you," so there may come in the life of the believer a moment when he gathers up all his desires and efforts, all his knowledge of God's truth, and all his faith in God's promises, concentrates them in one simple act of surrender and trust, and, yielding himself wholly to do His will, dares to claim God as the God that perfects him. And his life becomes one doxology of adoring love: To Him be the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Day 27

Perfect Love is Keeping Christ's Word

"Whosoever keeps His words, in him truly has the love of God been perfected."—John 2:5.

Tauler says of the Apostle John:

"In three ways, dear children, did the beloved Lord attract to Himself the heart of John. First, did the Lord Jesus call him out of the world to make him an apostle. Next, did He grant to him to rest upon His loving breast. Thirdly, and this was the greatest and most perfect nearness, when on the holy day of Pentecost He gave to him the Holy Ghost, and opened to him the door through which he should pass into the heavenly places. Thus, children, does the Lord first call you from the world and make you to be the messengers of God. And next, He draws you close to Himself, that you may learn to know His holy gentleness and lowliness, and His deep and burning love, and His perfect unshrinking obedience. And yet this is not all. Many have been drawn thus far, and are satisfied to go no further. And yet they are far from the perfect nearness which the heart of Jesus desires. St. John lay at one moment on the breast of the Lord Jesus, and then he forsook Him and fled. If you have been brought so far as to rest on the breast of

Christ, it is well. But yet there was to John a nearness still to come, one moment of which would be worth a hundred years of all that had gone before. The Holy Ghost was given to him—the door was opened. There is a nearness in which we lose ourselves, and God is all in all. This may come to us in one swift moment, or we may wait for it with longing hearts, and learn to know it at last. It was of this that St. Paul spoke when he said that the thing which the heart has not conceived, God has now revealed to us by His Holy Spirit. The soul is drawn within the inner chamber, and there are the wonders and the riches revealed." (Three Friends of God, by Mrs. Bevan.)

To understand a writer it is often needful to know his character and history. When John wrote the Epistle he had for fifty years been living in that inmost nearness of which Tauler speaks, in the inner chamber within the veil. While on earth Jesus had found in him a congenial spirit, receptive of His highest spiritual teaching, one to whom He felt drawn in special love. Fifty years of communing with the Son in the glory of the Father, and experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit to make the eternal life, the heavenly life of Jesus in fellowship with the Father, an everyday reality—no wonder that when John testifies of it as a life of perfect love, the Church that is not living on this level can only speak of it as an ideal, in this life unattainable. To one who thinks of what John was and knew of his Lord, and what a Church under his teaching would be, the words are simply descriptive of characters he saw around him; men to whom he could write: "Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, we have boldness

toward God... because we keep His commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in His sight." "Whosoever keeps His word, in him truly has the love of God been perfected."

John is the disciple whom Jesus loved! The words Jesus spoke about the love of God had a special attraction for him; the love with which Jesus loved him exercised its mighty influence; the Holy Spirit that came from the heart of the glorified Jesus intensified and spiritualized it all; and John became the Apostle of Love, who, gazing into the very depths of the Divine Glory and Being, found there that GOD IS LOVE. With this word, "Love," as the sum of his theology, he links to the word he found in the Old Testament and in the writings of his brother apostles, the word "Perfect," and tells us that this is perfection, this the highest type of Christian character, the highest attainment of the Christian life—for a man to have God's love perfected in him.

The condition and the mark of this being perfected in love Jesus had taught him: "If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him; and we will come to him, and make our abode with him." Keeping His word: this is the link between the love of the disciple and the love of the Father, leading to that wondrous union in which the Father's love draws Him to come and dwell in the loving heart. "If you keep my commandments," Jesus said, "you shall abide in my love: even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love." And John confirms from his own experience what the Master spoke: "Whosoever keeps His word, in him has the love of God been perfected."

Thank God! this is a life to be found on earth: God's love can be perfected in us. Let not what we see in the Church around us make us doubt God's word. When John spoke of Perfect Love, and Paul of the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, they testified from personal experience of

what they had received in direct communication from the throne of glory. The words were to them the expression of a life of which we have little conception; to us they convey no more truth than our low experience can put into them. Oh! that our hearts might be roused to believe in their heavenly, supernatural, fulness of meaning, and not to rest until we know that the love that passes knowledge, the love that God is, the love of Christ, dwells within us as a fountain springing up unto everlasting life: "THE LOVE OF GOD PERFECTED IN US"—the prospect is sure to everyone who will allow the love of God in Christ to have the mastery, and to prove what God can do for them that love Him.

Day 28

Perfect Love is Loving the Brethren

"Beloved! if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man has beheld God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us."—1 John 4:11, 12.

The first mark of a soul in whom the love of God is to be perfected is: keeping His word. The path of obedience, the loving obedience of the perfect heart, the obedience of a life wholly given up to God's will, is the path the Son opened up into the presence and the love of the Father. It is the only path that leads into perfect love.

The commandments of Christ are all included in the one word "Love," because "Love is the fulfilling of the law." "A new commandment I have given you, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you." This is Christ's word: he that keeps this word, keeps all the commandments. Love to the brethren is the second mark of a soul seeking to enter the life of perfect love.

In the very nature of things it cannot be otherwise. "Love seeks not her own:" love loses itself in going out to live in others. Love is the death of self: where self still lives there can be no thought of perfect love. Love is the very being and glory of God; it is His nature and property as God to give of His own life to all His creatures, to communicate His own goodness and blessedness. The gift of His Son is the gift of Himself to be the life and joy of man. When that

love of God enters the heart it imparts its own nature—the desire to give itself to the very death for others. When the heart wholly yields itself to be transformed into this nature and likeness, then Love takes possession; there the love of God is perfected.

The question is often asked whether it be the love of God to us, or our love to God, that is meant by perfect love. The word includes both, because it implies a great deal more. The love of God is One, as God is One: His Life, His very Being. Where that Love descends and enters, it retains its nature; it is ever the Divine Life and Love within us. God's love to us, and our love to God and Christ, our love to the brethren and to all men—all these are but aspects of one and the same love. Just as there is one Holy Spirit in God and in us, so it is one Divine Love, the Love of the Spirit, that dwells in God and in us.

To know this, is a wonderful help to faith. It teaches us that to love God, or the brethren, or our enemies, is not a thing our efforts can attain. We can only do it, because the Divine Love is dwelling in us; only as far as we yield ourselves to the Divine Love as a Living Power within, as a life that has been born into us, and that the Holy Spirit strengthens into action. Our part is first of all to rest, to cease from effort, to know that He is in us, and to give way to the love that dwells and works in us in a power that is from above.

How well John remembered the night when Jesus spoke so wonderfully of love in His parting words! How impossible it appeared to the disciples indeed to love as He had loved! How much there had been among them of pride, and envy, and selfishness; anything but love like His! How it had broken out among them that very night at the supper table! They never could love like the Master—it was impossible.

But what a change was wrought when the Risen One breathed on them, and said, "Receive the Holy Ghost!" And how that change was consummated when the Holy Spirit came down from heaven, and out of that wonderful Love which there flowed in holy interchange between the Father and the Son, when they met again in the glory, shed abroad in their hearts THE LOVE OF GOD! In the love of the day of Pentecost, the Perfect Love celebrated its first great triumph in the hearts of men.

The Love of God still reigns. The Spirit of God still waits to take possession of hearts where He has hitherto had too scanty room. He had been in the disciples all the time, but they had not known of what manner of spirit they were. He had come upon them on that evening when the Risen One breathed upon them. But it was on Pentecost He filled them so that Love Divine prevailed and overflowed, and they were perfected in Love. Let every effort we make to love, and every experience of how feeble our love is, lead us and draw us on to Jesus on the Throne. In Him the Love of God is revealed and glorified, and rendered accessible to us. Let us believe that the Love of God can come down as a fire that will consume and destroy self, and make love to one another, fervent perfect love, the one mark of discipleship. Let us believe that this Love of God, Perfect Love, can be shed abroad in our hearts, in measure to us hitherto unknown, by the Holy Ghost given to us. Our tongues and lives, our homes and Churches, will then prove to sinful, perishing fellow-men that there still are children of God in whom the Love of God is perfected.

Even as the whole Christian life, so love too has its two stages. There is love seeking, struggling, and doing its best to obey, and ever failing. And there is love finding, resting, rejoicing, and ever triumphing. This takes place when self and its efforts have been given into the grave of Jesus, and His Life and

love have taken their place. When the birth of heavenly love in the soul has come; in the power of the heavenly life, loving is natural and easy; Christ dwells in the heart, now we are rooted and grounded in love, and know the love that transcends knowledge.

Day 29

Perfect Love: God Abiding in Us

"No man has seen God at any time: if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit."—1 John 4:12, 13.

"No man has seen God at any time:" the vision of God we may not yet have. The all-consuming, all-absorbing fire of its glory, bringing death to all that is of nature, is not consistent with this our earthly state. But there is given to us in its stead an equivalent, that can prepare and train us for the beatific vision, and also satisfy the soul with all that it can contain of God. We cannot behold God, but we can have GOD ABIDING IN US, and HIS LOVE PERFECTED IN US. Though the brightness of God's glory is not now to be seen, the presence of what is the very essence of that glory—His Love—may now be known. God's love perfected in us, God Himself abiding in us: this is the heaven we can have on earth.

And the way to this blessedness? "God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us, if we love one another." We may not see God; but we see our brother, and, lo! in him we have an object that will repay us for the loss of the vision of God. An object that will awaken and call forth the Divine love within us; will exercise and strengthen and develop it; will open the way for the Divine love to do its beloved work through us, and so to perfect us in Love; will awaken the Divine complacency and draw it down to come and take up its

abode within us. In my brother I have an object on which God bids me prove all my love to him. In loving him, however unlovely he may be, love proves that self no longer lives; that it is a flame of that fire which consumed the Lamb of God; that it is God's love being perfected in us; that it is God Himself living and loving within us.

"If we love one another, God abides in us. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit." The wondrous knowledge that God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us, is no result of reflection, a deduction from what we see in ourselves. No, Divine things, Divine Love, the Divine indwelling, are only seen in a Divine light. "By this we know them, because He has given us of His Spirit." John remembers how little the disciples understood or experienced of the words of Jesus until that never-to-be forgotten day when, in the light of the fire that came from heaven, all became luminous and real. It is the Holy Spirit alone, not in His ordinary gracious workings, such as the disciples also had before that day, but in His special bestowment, direct from the throne of the exalted Jesus, to make Him personally and permanently present to the soul that will rest content with nothing less—it is the Holy Spirit alone, by whom we know that God dwells in us, and we in Him, and that His love is perfected in us.

It is in the Christian life now still, even as it was then. It is the special work of the Holy Spirit to reveal the indwelling God and to perfect us in love. By slow steps we have to master now one side of truth and then another; to practise now one grace and then the very opposite. For a time our whole heart goes out in the aim to know and do His will. Then, again, it is as if there is but one thing to do—to love—and we feel as if in our own home, in all our dealings with men, in our outlook in the Church and the world, we needed but to practise love. After a time we feel how we fail, and we turn to the word

that calls us to faith, to cease from self and to trust in Him who works both to will and to do. Here once more we come short, and we feel that this alone can meet our need—a share in the Pentecostal gift—the Spirit given in power as not before. Let none faint nor be discouraged. Let us seek to obey, and to love, and to trust with a perfect heart. In that whereunto we have attained let us be faithful. But so let us press on to perfection: let us confidently expect that this portion also of the word will be made all our own: "If we love one another, God abides in us, and the love of God is perfected in us. By this we know it, because He has given us of His Spirit."

It is only in the path of love—love in practical exercise seeking to be perfect love—that this wondrous blessing can be found: God abiding in us, and we in Him. And it is only by the Holy Ghost that we can know that we have it. God abiding in us, and His love perfected in us: God is Love; how sure it is that He longs to abide with us! God is Love, who sends forth the Spirit of His Son to fill the hearts that are open to Him: how sure it is that we can be perfected in love. A perfect heart can count upon being filled with a perfect love: let nothing less than perfect love be our aim, that we may have God abiding in us, and His love perfected in us; we shall know it by the Spirit which He has given us.

Day 30

Perfect Love: As he is, Even so are we

"Herein is love made perfect in us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, even so are we in this world."—1 John 4:17.

Let us look back on the steps in the life of perfected love that have been set before us thus far. The Divine love entering the heart, manifests itself first in loving obedience to Christ. Of that obedience, love to the brethren in active exercise becomes the chief mark and manifestation. In this obedient love and loving obedience, the principle of fellowship with God, God abiding in us, is developed and strengthened. Of this fellowship the Holy Spirit gives the evidence and abiding consciousness. Such is the path in which love is perfected. Obedience to Christ: love to the brethren; the indwelling of God in us, and us in Him; the communication and revelation of all this by the Holy Spirit: all these are correlated ideas—they imply and condition each other. Together they make up the blessed life of perfect love.

The perfect heart began by seeking God wholly and alone. It found Him in the perfect way, of obedient love to the Lord, ministering and loving to the brethren. Song of Solomon it came in Christ to the Father, and fellowship with Him. Song of Solomon it was prepared and opened for that special illumination of the Spirit which revealed God's indwelling: the Father came to take up His abode. What was at first but a little seed—the perfect heart—has grown up and borne fruit; the perfect heart is now a heart in which the

love of God is perfected. Love has taken full possession, and reigns throughout the whole being.

Has the apostle now anything more that he can say of perfect love? Yes; two things. He tells what is its highest blessing: "Herein is love made perfect in us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment." And what is its deepest ground or reason? "Because as He is, even so are we in the world." The former of these two thoughts we find again in the next verse. Let us here consider the latter.

"Because as He is, even so are we in the world." It is in Christ we are perfect. It is with the same perfection with which Christ was perfected Himself that He made us perfect, that God now perfects us. Our place in Christ implies perfect unity of life and spirit, of disposition and character. John gathers up all the elements of the perfect love he has mentioned, and in view of the day of judgment, and the boldness perfect love will give us, combines them into this one, "Because as He is, even so are we in the world."

"As He is, so are we." In chapter 2 he had said, "He that says he abides in Him, ought himself also to walk even as He walked." Likeness to Christ in His walk of obedience on earth is the mark of perfect love.

In chapter 3 we read, "Everyone that has this hope set on Him (the hope of being like Him, when we will see Him as He is), perfects himself, even as He is pure." Likeness to Christ in His heavenly purity is the mark of perfect love.

In chapter 3 we read further, "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Likeness to Christ in His love to us is the mark of perfect love.

In the last night Jesus prayed, "That they may be one, even as we are one; I in

them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one." Likeness to Christ in His fellowship with the Father, God in us and we in Him, is the mark of perfect love. God gave Christ to save us, by becoming our life, by taking us up into union with Himself. God could have no higher aim, could bestow no higher blessing than that He should see Christ in us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment. Herein is love made perfect, "because as He is, even so are we in the world."

"That we may have boldness in the day of judgment," God has committed judgment unto the Son, as the perfected Son of man. His judgment will be a spiritual one: Himself will be its standard; likeness to Him the fitness to pass in and reign with Him. Perfect love is perfect union and perfect likeness; we have boldness even in the day of judgment: because as He is, even so are we in this world. O ye seekers after perfection! it is in Christ it is to be found. In Him is God's love revealed; in Him and His life you enter into it, and it enters into you; in Him love takes possession, and transforms you into His likeness; in Him God comes to make His abode in you; in Him love is perfected. The prayer is fulfilled, "That the love wherewith You love Me may be in them, and I in them." The love of God is perfected in us; we are perfected in love; we have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, even so are we.

The Love of God, as a fire from the altar before the Throne, as the Presence of the God of love Himself living in us, makes itself felt in its Heavenly power, so that the world may know that God has loved us, as He loved His Son. The Love that flows from God to Christ rests on us also, and makes us one with Him. As He, the Son, is, in heaven, even so are we, in the world, living in the Father and in His love.

Day 31

Perfect Love: Casting out fear

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear has punishment. And he that fears is not made perfect in love."—1 John 4:18.

Bengel says that in the religious life there are four steps: serving God without fear or love; with fear without love; with fear and love; with love without fear. And Augustine: Fear prepares the way for love: where there is no fear, there is no opening for love to enter. Fear is the medicine, love the healing. Fear leads to love; when love is perfected fear is done. Perfect love casts out fear. Herein is love perfected, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, even so are we in this world.

The day of judgment! What a day that will be! Many have no fear of that day, because they trust that they have been justified. They imagine that the same grace which justified the ungodly will give the passage into heaven. This is not what Scripture teaches. The reality of our having obtained forgiveness will be tested in that day by our having bestowed forgiveness on others. Our fitness for entering the kingdom, by the way in which we have served Jesus in the ministry of love to the sick and the hungry. In our justification all this had no part: in the judgment it will be the all-important element. If we are to see Him as He is, and to be like Him, we must have purified ourselves as He is pure. It is perfect love, it is to be in this world even as He is, that casts out fear, and gives us boldness in the day of judgment. He that fears is not made

perfect in love.

The day of judgment! What a day! What a blessed thing to have boldness in that day! To meet the burning, fiery furnace of God's holiness, to be ready to be judged by our conformity to Christ's likeness and image, and to have no fear, what blessedness! It is this that makes what Scripture reveals of perfection and of love perfected in us of such immediate and vital interest to each one of us.

We have come to the close of our meditations on what Scripture teaches of the perfection attainable in this life. We began with the perfect heart, the heart wholly set upon God, as the mark of the man whom God counts a perfect man. We saw the perfect man walking in a perfect way, "walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." We found with the New Testament the standard at once infinitely raised. Perfect as the Father, the child's standard; perfected as the Master, the disciple's model; perfect in all the will of God, the Christian's aim and hope. And then to meet this high demand, the word came to us: perfect in Christ, perfected by Christ, God Himself perfecting us in every good thing. And now John, the beloved disciple, has summed up all the teaching of the word with his perfect love. Keeping Christ's word, loving the brethren, abiding in God, filled with the Spirit, being even as Christ is, we can live perfected in love. With a heart that does not condemn us, we have boldness before God, because we keep His commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. With God's love perfected in us we have boldness in the day of judgment.

Beloved fellow-Christian! To have the love of God perfected in us; to be perfected in love; perfect love: these all are a Divine possibility, a Divine reality, the ripened fruit of the perfect life. We know now the tree on which this fruit grows. Its root is a heart perfect with God, walking before Him and

being perfect. Let us be perfect in our surrender to Him in obedience and trust. Let deep dependence on Him, let faith in Him, let a patient waiting, having our expectation from Him alone, be the spirit of our daily life. It is God, Himself, who must give it. Let us count upon Him for nothing less than to be perfected in love and to have God abiding in us. This is what He longs to do for us.

The tree that grows on this root is a life in union with Christ, aiming at perfect conformity to Him. Perfect in Christ, perfected by Christ, perfected by God like Christ and through Christ: when these words, pregnant with the will and love of God and the mystery of redemption, become the daily life of the soul, the perfect heart rules the life, and the believer learns to stand perfect in all the will of God. The tree brings forth fruit abundantly.

Even unto perfection. Obedience and brotherly love, fellowship with God and likeness to Christ, and the unhindered flow and rule of the Holy Spirit, lead the soul into a life of perfect love. The God of love gets His heart's desire; the love of God celebrates its triumph; the days of heaven are begun on earth; the soul is perfected in love.

"Finally, brethren, farewell! Be perfected." Be perfect with God. Let nothing less be your aim. God will show Himself perfect with you, will perfectly reveal Himself, will perfectly possess you. Believe this. God will Himself perfect you day by day, with each new morning you may claim it. Live in surrender to this His work, and accept it. And fear not, nor be discouraged. God Himself will grant it to you to know what it is: God dwells in us, and His love is perfected in us.

Closing Prayer

O my Father! I desire to walk in your presence this day, and be perfect. You have commanded it; and You give the enabling grace. I desire to be perfect with the Lord my God. I desire to serve You with a perfect heart. I desire to be perfect, as the Father is perfect.

These are Your own words, O my God! I resolve to accept and obey them in childlike simplicity and trust.

I thank You for the unspeakable gift, Your beloved Son, who was Himself perfected through suffering and obedience in His sacrifice on the cross, and by that sacrifice has perfected us also. I thank You that through Him You now perfect me in every good thing, Yourself working in me that which is pleasing in Your sight. You will show Yourself strong to them that are of a perfect heart.

I thank You, O my Father, for the blessed expectation Your word holds out of being perfected in love here on earth; for the blessed witness of the beloved disciple to its truth in him and around him; for the power and light of the Holy Spirit that sheds abroad Your love in our hearts, and makes it all a reality and a consciousness. The Lord will perfect that which concerns me: to Him be the glory. Amen.

Divine Healing^(TOC)

Preface

"The publication of this work may be regarded as a testimony of my faith in divine healing. After being stopped for more than two years in the exercise of my ministry, I was healed by the mercy of God in answer to the prayer of those who see in Him 'the Lord that healeth thee' (Exodus 15:26).

"This healing, granted to faith, has been the source of rich spiritual blessing to me. I have clearly seen that the Church possesses in Jesus, our Divine Healer, an inestimable treasure, which she does not yet know how to appreciate. I have been convinced anew of that which the Word of God teaches us in this matter, and of what the Lord expects of us; and I am sure that if Christians learned to realize practically the presence of the Lord that healeth, their spiritual life would thereby be developed and sanctified. I can therefore no longer keep silence, and I publish here a series of meditations, with the view of showing, according to the Word of God, that 'the prayer of faith' (James 5:15) is the means appointed by God for the cure of the sick, that this truth is in perfect accord with Holy Scripture, and that the study of this truth is essential for everyone who would see the Lord manifest His power and His glory in the midst of His children."—ANDREW MURRAY

Chapter 1

Pardon and Healing

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then saith he to the sick of the palsy), Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thine house"—(Matthew 9:6).

In man two natures are combined. He is at the same time spirit and matter, heaven and earth, soul and body. For this reason, on one side he is the son of God, and on the other he is doomed to destruction because of the Fall; sin in his soul and sickness in his body bear witness to the right which death has over him. It is the twofold nature which has been redeemed by divine grace. When the Psalmist calls upon all that is within him to bless the Lord for His benefits, he cries, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, who... forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm 103:3). When Isaiah foretells the deliverance of his people, he adds, "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity" (Isaiah 33:24).

This prediction was accomplished beyond all anticipation when Jesus the Redeemer came down to this earth. How numerous were the healings wrought by Him who was come to establish upon earth the kingdom of heaven! Whether by His own acts or whether afterwards by the commands which He left for His disciples, does He not show us clearly that the preaching of the Gospel and the healing of the sick went together in the

salvation which He came to bring? Both are given as evident proof of His mission as the Messiah: "The blind receive their sight and the lame walk., and the poor have the Gospel preached to them" (Matthew 11:5). Jesus, who took upon Him the soul and body of man, delivers both in equal measure from the consequences of sin.

This truth is nowhere more evident or better demonstrated than in the history of the paralytic. The Lord Jesus begins by saying to him, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," after which He adds, "Arise and walk." The pardon of sin and the healing of sickness complete one the other, for in the eyes of God, who sees our entire nature, sin and sickness are as closely united as the body and the soul. In accordance with the Scriptures, our Lord Jesus has regarded sin and sickness in another light than we have. With us sin belongs to the spiritual domain; we recognize that it is under God's just displeasure, justly condemned by Him, while sickness, on the contrary, seems only a part of the present condition of our nature, and to have nothing to do with God's condemnation and His righteousness. Some go so far as to say that sickness is a proof of the love and grace of God.

But neither the Scripture nor yet Jesus Christ Himself ever spoke of sickness in this light, nor do they ever present sickness as a blessing, as a proof of God's love which should be borne with patience. The Lord spoke to the disciples of divers sufferings which they should have to bear, but when He speaks of sickness, it is always as of an evil caused by sin and Satan, and from which we should be delivered. Very solemnly He declared that every disciple of His would have to bear his cross (Matthew 16:24), but He never taught one sick person to resign himself to be sick. Everywhere Jesus healed the sick, everywhere He dealt with healing as one of the graces belonging to the kingdom of heaven. Sin in the soul and sickness in the body both bear

witness to the power of Satan, and "the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8).

Jesus came to deliver men from sin and sickness that He might make known the love of the Father. In His actions, in His teaching of the disciples, in the work of the apostles, pardon and healing are always to be found together. Either the one or the other may doubtless appear more in relief, according to the development or the faith of those to whom they spoke. Sometimes it was healing which prepared the way for the acceptance of forgiveness, sometimes it was forgiveness which preceded the healing, which, coming afterwards, became a seal to it. In the early part of His ministry, Jesus cured many of the sick, finding them ready to believe in the possibility of their healing. In this way He sought to influence hearts to receive Himself as He who is able to pardon sin. When He saw that the paralytic could receive pardon at once, He began by that which was of the greatest importance; after which came the healing which put a seal on the pardon which had been accorded to him.

We see, by the accounts given in the Gospels, that it was more difficult for the Jews at that time to believe in the pardon of their sins than in divine healing. Now it is just the contrary. The Christian Church has heard so much of the preaching of the forgiveness of sins that the thirsty soul easily receives this message of grace; but it is not the same with divine healing; that is rarely spoken of; the believers who have experienced it are not many. It is true that healing is not given in this day as in those times, to the multitudes whom Christ healed without any previous conversion. In order to receive it, it is necessary to begin by confession of sin and the purpose to live a holy life. This is without doubt the reason why people find more difficulty to believe in healing than in forgiveness; and this is also why those who receive healing receive at the same time new spiritual blessing, feel more closely united to

the Lord Jesus, and learn to love and serve Him better. Unbelief may attempt to separate these two gifts, but they are always united in Christ. He is always the same Savior both of the soul and of the body, equally ready to grant pardon and healing. The redeemed may always cry: "Bless the Lord, O my soul., who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm 103:3).

Chapter 2

Because of Your Unbelief

"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?"

"And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you" (Matthew 17:19, 20).

When the Lord Jesus sent His disciples into different parts of Palestine, He endowed them with a double power, that of casting out unclean spirits and that of healing all sickness and all infirmity (Matthew 10:1). He did the same for the seventy who came back to Him with joy, saying, "Lord, even the spirits are subject unto us through thy name" (Luke 10:17). On the day of the Transfiguration, while the Lord was still upon the mountain, a father brought his son who was possessed with a demon, to His disciples, beseeching them to cast out the evil spirit, but they could not. When, after Jesus had cured the child, the disciples asked Him why they had been unable to do it themselves as in other cases, He answered them, "because of your unbelief." It was, then, their unbelief, and not the will of God which had been the cause of their defeat.

In our days divine healing is very little believed in, because it has almost entirely disappeared from the Christian Church. One may ask the reason, and here are the two answers which have been given. The greater number think

that miracles, the gift of healing included, should be limited to the time of the primitive Church, that their object was to establish the first foundation of Christianity, but that from that time circumstances have altered. Other believers say unhesitatingly that if the Church has lost these gifts, it is by her own fault; it is because she has become worldly that the Spirit acts but feebly in her; it is because she has not remained in direct and habitual relation with the full power of the unseen world; but that if she were to see anew springing up within her men and women who live the life of faith and of the Holy Spirit, entirely consecrated to their God, she would see again the manifestation of the same gifts as in former times. Which of these two opinions coincides the most with the Word of God? Is it by the will of God that the "gifts of healing" have been suppressed, or is it rather man who is responsible for it? Is it the will of God that miracles should not take place? Will He in consequence of this no longer give the faith which produces them? Or again, is it the Church which has been guilty of lacking faith?

What Saith the Scripture?

The Bible does not authorize us, either by the words of the Lord or His apostles, to believe that the gifts of healing were granted only to the early times of the Church; on the contrary, the promises which Jesus made to the apostles when He gave them instructions concerning their mission, shortly before His ascension, appear to us applicable to all times (Mark 16:15-18). Paul places the gift of healing among the operations of the Holy Spirit. James gives a precise command on this matter without any restriction of time. The entire Scriptures declare that these graces will be granted according to the measure of the Spirit and of faith.

It is also alleged that at the outset of each new dispensation God works miracles, that it is His ordinary course of action; but it is nothing of the kind.

Think of the people of God in the former dispensation, in the time of Abraham, all through the life of Moses, in the exodus from Egypt, under Joshua, in the time of the Judges and of Samuel, under the reign of David and other godly kings up to Daniel's time; during more than a thousand years miracles took place.

But, it is said, miracles were much more necessary in the early days of Christianity than later. But what about the power of heathenism even in this day, wherever the Gospel seeks to combat it? It is impossible to admit that miracles should have been more needful for the heathen in Ephesus (Acts 19:11, 12) than for the heathen of Africa in the present day. And if we think of the ignorance and unbelief which reign even in the midst of the Christian nations, are we not driven to conclude that there is a need for manifest acts of the power of God to sustain the testimony of believers and to prove that God is with them? Besides, among believers themselves, how much of doubt, how much of weakness there is! How their faith needs to be awakened and stimulated by some evident proof of the presence of the Lord in their midst. One part of our being consists of flesh and blood; it is therefore in flesh and blood that God wills to manifest His presence.

In order to prove that it is the Church's unbelief which has lost the gift of healing, let us see what the Bible says about it. Does it not often put us on our guard against unbelief, against all which can estrange and turn us from our God? Does not the history of the Church show us the necessity of these warnings? Does it not furnish us with numerous examples of backward steps, of world pleasing, in which faith grew weak in the exact measure in which the spirit of the world took the upper hand? For such faith is only possible to him who lives in the world invisible. Until the third century the healings by faith in Christ were numerous, but in the centuries following they became

more infrequent. Do we not know from the Bible that it is always unbelief which hinders the mighty working of God?

Oh, that we could learn to believe in the promises of God! God has not gone back from His promises; Jesus is still He who heals both soul and body; salvation offers us even now healing and holiness, and the Holy Spirit is always ready to give us some manifestations of His power. Even when we ask why this divine power is not more often seen, He answers us: 'Because of your unbelief' The more we give ourselves to experience personally sanctification by faith, the more we shall also experience healing by faith. These two doctrines walk abreast. The more the Spirit of God lives and acts in the soul of believers, the more will the miracles multiply by which He works in the body. Thereby the world can recognize what redemption means.

Chapter 3

Jesus and the Doctors

Mark 5:25-34

We may be thankful to God for having given us doctors. Their vocation is one of the most noble, for a large number of them seek truly to do, with love and compassion, all they are able to alleviate the evils and sufferings which burden humanity as a result of sin. There are even some who are zealous servants of Jesus Christ, and who seek also the good of their patients' souls. Nevertheless it is Jesus Himself who is always the first, the best, the greatest Physician.

Jesus heals diseases in which earthly physicians can do nothing, for the Father gave Him this power when He charged Him with the work of our redemption. Jesus, in taking upon Him our human body, delivered it from the dominion of sin and Satan; He has made our bodies temples of the Holy Ghost and members of His own body (1 Corinthians 6:15, 19), and even in our day how many have been given up by the doctors as incurable, how many cases of tuberculosis, of gangrene, of paralysis, of dropsy, of blindness and of deafness, have been healed by Him! Isaiah it not then astonishing that so small a number of the sick apply to Him?

The method of Jesus is quite another than that of earthly physicians. They seek to serve God in making use of remedies which are found in the natural world, and God makes use of these remedies according to natural law,

according to the natural properties of each, while the healing which proceeds from Jesus is of a totally different order; it is by divine power, the power of the Holy Ghost, that Jesus heals. Thus the difference between these two modes of healing is very marked. That we may understand it better, let us take an example; here is a physician who is an unbeliever, but extremely clever in his profession; many sick people owe their healing to him. God gives this result by means of the prescribed remedies, and the physician's knowledge of them. Here is another physician who is a believer, and who prays God's blessing on the remedies which he employs. In this case also a large number are healed, but neither in the one case nor the other does the healing bring with it any spiritual blessing. They will be preoccupied, even the believing among them, with the remedies which they use, much more than with what the Lord may be doing with them, and in such a case their healing will be more hurtful than beneficial. On the contrary, when it is Jesus only to whom the sick person applies for healing, he learns to reckon no longer upon remedies, but to put himself into direct relation with His love and His almightiness. In order to obtain such healing, he must commence by confessing and renouncing his sins, and exercising a living faith. Then healing will come directly from the Lord, who takes possession of the sick body, and it thus becomes a blessing for the soul as well as for the body.

"But is it not God who has given remedies to man?" it is asked. "Does not their power come from Him?" Without doubt; but on the other hand, is it not God who has given us His Son with all power to heal? Shall we follow the way of natural law with all those who do not yet know Christ, and also with those of His children whose faith is still too weak to abandon themselves to His almightiness; or rather do we choose the way of faith, receiving healing from the Lord and from the Holy Spirit, seeing therein the result and the proof of our redemption?

The healing which is wrought by our Lord Jesus brings with it and leaves behind it more real blessing than the healing which is obtained through physicians. Healing has been a misfortune to more persons than one. On a bed of sickness serious thoughts had taken possession, but from the time of his healing how often has a sick man been found anew far from the Lord! It is not thus when it is Jesus who heals. Healing is granted after confession of sin; therefore it brings the sufferer nearer to Jesus, and establishes a new link between him and the Lord, it causes him to experience His love and power, it begins within him a new life of faith and holiness. When the woman who had touched the hem of Christ's garment felt that she was healed, she learned something of what divine love means. She went away with the words: "Daughter, thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace."

O you who are suffering from some sickness, know that Jesus the sovereign Healer is yet in our midst. He is close to us, and He is giving anew to His Church manifest proofs of His presence. Are you ready to break with the world, to abandon yourself to Him with faith and confidence? Then fear not, remember that divine healing is a part of the life of faith. If nobody around you can help you in prayer, if no "elder" is at hand to pray the prayer of faith, fear not to go yourself to the Lord in the silence of solitude, like the woman who touched the hem of His garment. Commit to Him the care of your body. Get quiet before Him and like the poor woman say, "I will be healed." Perhaps it may take some time to break the chains of your unbelief, but assuredly none that wait on Him shall be ashamed (Psalm 25:3)

Chapter 4

Health and Salvation by the Name of Jesus

Acts 3:16; 4:10, 12

When after Pentecost, the paralytic was healed through Peter and John at the gate of the temple, it was "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth" that they said to him, "Rise up and walk," and as soon as the people in their amazement ran together to them, Peter declared that it was the name of Jesus which had so completely healed the man.

As the result of this miracle and of Peter's discourse, many people who had heard the Word believed (Acts 4:4). On the morrow Peter repeated these words before the Sanhedrin, "By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth... doth this man stand here before you whole"; and then he added, "There is none other name under heaven.., whereby we must be saved." This statement of Peter's declares to us that the name of Jesus both heals and saves. We have here a teaching of the highest import for divine healing.

We see that healing and health form part of Christ's salvation. Does not Peter clearly state this in his discourse to the Sanhedrin where, having spoken of healing, he immediately goes on to speak of salvation by Christ? (Acts 4:10, 12). In heaven even our bodies will have their part in salvation; salvation will not be complete for us until our bodies shall enjoy the full redemption of

Christ. Why then should we not believe in this work of redemption here below? Even already here on earth, the health of our bodies is a fruit of the salvation which Jesus has acquired for us.

We see also that health as well as salvation is to be obtained by faith. The tendency of man by nature is to bring about his salvation by his works, and it is only with difficulty that he comes to receive it by faith; but when it is a question of the healing of the body, he has still more difficulty in seizing it. As to salvation, he ends it by accepting it because by no other means can he open the door of heaven; while for the body, he makes use of well-known remedies. Why then should he seek for divine healing? Happy is he who comes to understand that it is the will of God; that God wills to manifest the power of Jesus, and also to reveal to us His Fatherly love; to exercise and to confirm our faith, and to make us prove the power of redemption in the body as well as in the soul. The body is part of our being; even the body has been saved by Christ; therefore it is in our body that our Father wills to manifest the power of redemption, and to let men see that Jesus lives. Oh, let us believe in the name of Jesus! Was it not in the name of Jesus that perfect health was given to the impotent man? And were not these words: "Thy faith hath saved thee," pronounced when the body was healed? Let us seek then to obtain divine healing.

Wherever the Spirit acts with power, there He works divine healings. Would it not seem that if ever miracles were superfluous, it was at Pentecost, for then the word of the apostles worked mightily, and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit was abundant? Well, it is precisely because the Spirit acted powerfully that His working must needs be visible in the body. If divine healing is seen but rarely in our day, we can attribute it to no other cause than that the Spirit does not act with power. The unbelief of worldlings and the

want of zeal among believers stop His working. The healings which God is giving here and there are the precursory signs of all the spiritual graces which are promised to us, and it is only the Holy Spirit who reveals the almightiness of the name of Jesus to operate such healings. Let us pray earnestly for the Holy Spirit, let us place ourselves unreservedly under His direction, and let us seek to be firm in our faith in the name of Jesus, whether for preaching salvation or for the work of healing.

God grants healing to glorify the name of Jesus. Let us seek to be healed by Jesus that His name may be glorified. It is sad to see how little the power of His name is recognized, how little it is the end of preaching and of prayer. Treasures of divine grace, of which Christians deprive themselves by their lack of faith and zeal, are hidden in the name of Jesus. It is the will of God to glorify His Son in the Church; and He will do it wherever He finds faith. Whether among believers, or whether among the heathen, He is ready with virtue from on high to awaken consciences, and to bring hearts to obedience. God is ready to manifest the all-power of His Son, and to do it in a striking way in body as well as in soul. Let us believe it for ourselves, let us believe it for others, for the circle of believers around us, and also for the Church in the whole world. Let us give ourselves to believe with firm faith in the power of the name of Jesus, let us ask great things in His name, counting on His promise, and we shall see God still do wonders by the name of His holy Son.

Chapter 5

Not by Our Own Power

"And when Peter saw it he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?"—(Acts 3:12).

As soon as the impotent man had been healed at the gate of the temple through Peter and John, the people ran together unto them. Peter, seeing this miracle was attributed to their power and holiness, loses no time in setting them right by telling them that all the glory of this miracle belongs to Jesus, and that it is He in whom we must believe.

Peter and John were undoubtedly full of faith and of holiness; perhaps even they may have been the most holy and zealous servants of God in their time, otherwise God might not have chosen them as instruments in this case of healing. But they knew that their holiness of life was not of themselves, that it was of God through the Holy Spirit. They think so little of themselves that they ignore their own holiness and know only one thing—that all power belongs to their Master. They hasten, then, to declare that in this thing they count for nothing, that it is the work of the Lord alone. This is the object of divine healing: to be a proof of the power of Jesus, a witness in the eyes of men of what He is, proclaiming His divine intervention, and attracting hearts to Him. "Not by our own power or holiness." Thus it becomes those to speak whom the Lord is pleased to use in helping others by their faith.

It is necessary to insist on this because of the tendency of believers to think the contrary. Those who have recovered their health in answer to "the prayer of faith," "the supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working" (James 5:16, R.V.), are in danger of being too much occupied with the human instrument which God is pleased to employ, and to think that the power lies in man's piety.

Doubtless the prayer of faith is the result of real godliness, but those who possess it will be the first to acknowledge that it does not come from themselves, nor from any effort of their own. They fear to rob the Lord of the least particle of the glory which belongs to Him, and they know that if they do so, they will compel Him to withdraw His grace from them. It is their great desire to see the souls which God has blessed through them enter into a direct and increasingly intimate communion with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, since that is the result which their healing should produce. Thus they insist that it is not caused by their own power or holiness.

Such testimony on their part is necessary to reply to the erroneous accusations of unbelievers. The Church of Christ needs to hear clearly announced that it is on account of her worldliness and unbelief that she has lost these spiritual gifts of healing (1 Corinthians 12:9) and that the Lord restores to those who, with faith and obedience, have consecrated their lives to Him. This grace cannot reappear without being preceded by a renewal of faith and of holiness. But then, says the world, and with it a large number of Christians, "You are laying claim to the possession of a higher order of faith and holiness, you consider yourselves holier than others." To such accusations this word of Peter is the only reply before God and man, confirmed by a life of deep and real humility: "Not by our own power or holiness." "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory,

for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake" (Psalm 115:1). Such a testimony is also necessary in view of our own heart and of the wiles of Satan. As long as, through the Church's unfaithfulness, the gifts of healing are but rarely given, those children of God who have received these gifts are in danger of priding themselves upon them, and of imagining that they have in themselves something exceptionally meritorious. The enemy does not forget to persecute them by such insinuations, and woe unto them if they listen to him. They are not ignorant of his Y devices; therefore they need to pray continually to the Lord to keep them in humility, the true means of obtaining continually more grace. If they persevere in humility, they will recognize that the more God makes use of them, the more also will they be penetrated with the conviction that it is God alone who works by them, and that all the glory belongs to Him. "Not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10). Such is their watchword. Finally, this testimony is useful for the feeble ones who long for salvation, and who desire to receive Christ as their Healer. They hear of full consecration and entire obedience, but they form a false idea of it. They think they must in themselves attain to a high degree of knowledge and of perfection, and they fall a prey to discouragement. No, no; it is not by our own power or holiness that we obtain these graces, but by a faith quite simple, a childlike faith, which knows that it has no power nor holiness of its own, and which commits itself completely to Him who is faithful, and whose almightiness can fulfill His promise. Oh, let us not seek to do or to be anything of ourselves! It is only as we feel our own powerlessness, and expect all from God and His Word that we realize the glorious way in which the Lord heals sickness "by faith in his name."

Chapter 6

According to the Measure of Faith

*"And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour"—
(Matthew 8:13).*

This passage of Scripture brings before us one of the principal laws of the kingdom of heaven. In order to understand God's ways with His people, and our relations with the Lord, it is needful to understand this law thoroughly and not to deviate from it. Not only does God give or withhold His gifts according to the faith or unbelief of each, but they are granted in greater or lesser measure, only in proportion to the faith which receives them. God respects the right to decide which He has conferred on man. Therefore He can only bless us in the measure in which each yields himself up to His divine working, and opens all his heart to Him. Faith in God is nothing else than the full opening of the heart to receive everything from God; therefore man can only receive divine grace according to his faith; and this applies as much to divine healing as to any other grace of God.

This truth is confirmed by the spiritual blessings which may result from sickness. Two questions are often asked: (1) Is it not God's will that His children should sometimes remain in a prolonged state of sickness? (2) Since it is a recognized thing that divine healing brings with it greater spiritual blessing than the sickness itself, why does God allow certain of His children

to continue sick through many years, and while in this condition give them blessing in sanctification, and in communion with Himself? The answer to these two questions is that God gives to His children according to their faith. We have already had occasion to remark that in the same degree in which the Church has become worldly, her faith in divine healing has diminished until at last it has disappeared. Believers do not seem to be aware that they may ask God for the healing of their sick-ness, and that thereby they may be sanctified and fitted for His service. They have come to seek only submission to His will and to regard sickness as a means to be separate from the world. In such conditions the Lord gives them what they ask. He would have been ready to give them yet more, to grant them healing in answer to the prayer of faith, but they lacked the faith to receive it. God always meets His children where they are, howsoever weak they may be. The sick ones, therefore, who have desired to receive Him with their whole heart, will have received from Him the fruit of the sickness in their desire that their will should be conformed to the will of God. They might have been able to receive healing, in addition, as a proof that God accepted their submission; if this has not been so, it is because faith has failed them to ask for it.

"As thou hast believed so be it done unto thee." These words give the reply to yet another question: How can you say that divine healing brings with it so much of spiritual blessing, when one sees that the greater number of those who were healed by the Lord Jesus received nothing more than a deliverance from their present sufferings, without giving any proof that they were also spiritually blessed? Here again, as they believed, so was it done unto them.

A good number of sick people, having witnessed the healing of others, gained confidence in Jesus just far enough to be healed, and Jesus granted them their request, without adding other blessings for their souls. Before His ascension

the Lord had not as free an entrance as He now has into the heart of man, because "the Holy Ghost was not yet given" (John 7:39). The healing of the sick was then hardly more than a blessing for the body. It was only later, in the dispensation of the Spirit, that the conviction and confession of sin have become for the believer the first grace to be received, the essential condition for obtaining healing, as St. Paul tells us in his Epistle to the Corinthians, and James in his to the twelve tribes scattered abroad (1 Corinthians 11:31, 32; James 5:16). Thus the degree of spiritual grace which it is possible for us to receive depends upon the measure of our faith, whether it be for its external manifestation, or especially whether for its influence upon our inner life.

We recommend for every suffering one who is looking for healing, and who seeks to know Jesus as his divine Healer, not to let himself be hindered by his unbelief, not to doubt the promises of God, and thus to be "strong in faith giving glory to God" as is His due. "As thou hast believed so be it done unto thee." If with all your heart you trust in the living God you will be abundantly blessed; do not doubt it.

The part of faith is always to lay hold on just that which appears impossible or strange to human eyes. Let us be willing to be considered fools for Christ's sake (1 Corinthians 4:10). Let us not fear to pass for weak-minded in the eyes of the world and of such Christians as are ignorant of these things, because, on the authority of the Word of God, we believe that which others cannot yet admit. Do not, then, let yourself be discouraged in your expectation even though God should delay to answer you, or if your sickness be aggravated. Once having placed your foot firmly on the immovable rock of God's own Word, and having prayed the Lord to manifest His almightiness in your body because you are one of the members of His Body, and the temple of the Holy Ghost, persevere in believing in Him with the firm assurance that He has

undertaken for you, that He has made Himself responsible for your body, and that His healing virtue will come to glorify Him in you.

Chapter 7

The Way of Faith

"And straightway the father of the child cried out and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief"—(Mark 9:24).

These words have been a help and strength to thousands of souls in their pursuit of salvation and the gifts of God. Notice that it is in relation to an afflicted child that they were pronounced, in the fight of faith when seeking healing from the Lord Jesus. In them we see that in one and the same soul there can arise a struggle between faith and unbelief, and that it is not without a struggle that we come to believe in Jesus and in His all-power to heal the sick. In this we find the needful encouragement for realizing the Savior's power.

I speak here especially to sufferers who do not doubt the power or the will of the Lord Jesus to heal in this day without the use of earthly remedies, but who lack the boldness to accept healing for themselves. They believe in the divine power of Christ, they believe in a general manner His good will to heal; they have acquired, either by the Scriptures, or by facts of healings by the Lord alone which have taken place in our days, the intellectual persuasion that the Lord can help even them, but they shrink back from accepting healing, and from saying with faith, "The Lord has heard me, I know that He is healing me."

Take notice first that without faith no one can be healed. When the father of

the afflicted child said to Jesus, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us," Jesus replied: "If **thou** canst believe." Jesus had the power to heal and He was ready to do it, but He casts responsibility on the man. "If thou canst! All things are possible to him that believeth" (R.V.). In order to obtain your healing from Jesus, it is not enough to pray. Prayer without faith is powerless. It is "the prayer of faith" which saves the sick (James 5:15). If you have already asked for healing from the Lord, or if others have asked it for you, you must, before you are conscious of any change, be able to say with faith, "On the authority of God's Word I have the assurance that He hears me and that I shall be healed." To have faith means in your case to surrender your body absolutely into the Lord's hands, and to leave yourself entirely to Him. Faith receives healing as a spiritual grace which proceeds from the Lord even while there is no conscious change in the body. Faith can glorify God and say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul.... which healeth all my diseases" (Psalm 103:1-3). The Lord requires this faith that He may heal.

But how is such faith to be obtained? Tell your God the unbelief which you find in your heart,. and count on Him for deliverance from it. Faith is not money by which your healing can be purchased from the Lord. It is He who desires to awaken and develop in you the necessary faith. "Help my unbelief," cried the father of the child. It was his ardent desire that his faith should not come short. Confess to the Lord all the difficulty you have to believe Him on the ground of His Word; tell Him you want to be rid of this unbelief, that you bring it to Him with a will to hearken only to His Word. Do not lose time in deploring your unbelief, but look to Jesus. The light of His countenance will enable you to find the power to believe in Him (Psalm 44:3). He calls on you to trust in Him; listen to Him, and by His grace faith will triumph in you. Say to Him, "Lord, I am still aware of the unbelief which

is in me. I find it difficult to believe that I am sure of my healing because I possess Him who works it. And, nevertheless, I want to conquer this unbelief. Thou, Lord, wilt give me the victory. I desire to believe, I will believe, by Thy grace I dare to say I can believe. Yes, Lord, I believe, for Thou comest to the help of my unbelief." It is when we are in intimate communion with the Lord, and when our heart responds to His, that unbelief is overcome and conquered.

It is needful also to testify to the faith one has. Be resolved to believe that which the Lord says to you, to believe, above all, that which He is. Lean wholly upon His promises. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." "I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26). Look to Jesus, who "bare our sickness" (Matthew 8:17), and who healed all who came to Him; count on the Holy Spirit to manifest in your heart the presence of Jesus who is also now in heaven, and to work also in your body the power of His grace. Praise the Lord without waiting to feel better, or to have more faith. Praise Him, and say with David, "O Lord, my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me" (Psalm 30:2). Divine healing is a spiritual grace which can only be received spiritually and by faith, before feeling its effect on the body. Accept it, then, and give glory to God. When the Lord Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the child, he rent him sore, so that he was as one dead, inasmuch as many said, "He is dead." If, therefore, your sickness does not yield at once, if Satan and your own unbelief attempt to get the upper hand, do not heed them, cling closely to Jesus your Healer, and He will surely heal you.

Chapter 8

Your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost

1 Corinthians 6:15, 19, 20

The Bible teaches us that the Body of Christ is the company of the faithful. These words are taken generally in their spiritual sense, while the Bible asks us positively whether we know not that our bodies are the members of Christ. In the same way, when the Bible speaks of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit or of Christ, we limit Their presence to the spiritual part of our being-our soul, or our heart. Nevertheless the Bible says expressly, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?" When the Church understands that the body also has part in the redemption which is by Christ, by which it ought to be brought back to its original destiny, to be the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, to serve as His instrument, to be sanctified by His presence, she will also recognize all the place which divine healing has in the Bible and in the counsels of God.

The account of the creation tells us that man is composed of three parts. God first formed the body from the dust of the earth, after which He breathed into it "the breath of life." He caused His own life, His Spirit, to enter into it. By this union of Spirit with matter, the man became a "living soul." The soul, which is essentially the man, finds its place between the body and the spirit; it

is the link which binds them together. By the body the soul finds itself in relation to the external world; by the spirit, with the world invisible and with God. By means of the soul, the spirit can subject the body to the action of the heavenly powers and thus spiritualize it; by means of the soul, the body also can act upon the spirit and attract it earthwards. The soul, subject to the solicitations of both spirit and body, is in a position to choose between the voice of God, speaking by the Spirit, or the voice of the world, speaking through the senses.

This union of spirit and body forms a combination which is unique in the creation—it makes man to be the jewel of God's work. Other creatures had existed already; some, like angels, were all spirit, without any material body, and others, like the animals, were only flesh, possessing a body animated with a living soul, but devoid of spirit. Man was destined to show that the material body, governed by the spirit, was capable of being transformed by the power of the Spirit of God, and of being thus led to participate of heavenly glory.

We know what sin and Satan have done with this possibility of gradual transformation. By means of the body, the spirit was tempted, seduced, and became a slave of sense. We know also what God has done to destroy the work of Satan and to accomplish the purpose of creation. "The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). God prepared a body for His Son (Hebrews 10:5). "The word was made flesh" (John 1:14). "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24). And now Jesus, raised up from the dead with a body as free from sin as His spirit and His soul, communicates to our body the virtue of His glorified body. The Lord's Supper is "the communion of the body of

Christ"; and our bodies are "the members of Christ" (10:16; 6:15; 12:27).

Faith puts us in possession of all that the death of Christ and His resurrection have procured for us, and it is not only in our spirit and our soul that the life of the risen Jesus manifests its presence here below; it is in the body also that it would act according to the measure of our faith.

"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?" Many believers represent to themselves that the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in our body as we dwell in a house. Nothing of the kind. I can dwell in a house without its becoming part of my being. I may leave it without suffering; no vital union exists between my house and me. It is not thus with the presence of our soul and spirit in our body. The life of a plant lives in and pervades every part of it; and our soul is not limited to dwell in such or such part of the body, the heart or the head, for instance, but penetrates throughout, even to the end of the lowest members. The life of the soul pervades the whole body; the life throughout proves the presence of the soul. It is in like manner that the Holy Ghost comes to dwell in our body. He penetrates its entirety. He animates and possesses us infinitely more than we can imagine.

In the same way in which the Holy Spirit brings to our soul and spirit the life of Jesus, His holiness, His joy, His strength, He comes also to impart to the sick body all the vigorous vitality of Christ as soon as the hand of faith is stretched out to receive it.

When the body is fully subject to Christ, crucified with Him, renouncing all self-will and independence, desiring nothing but to be the Lord's temple, it is then that the Holy Spirit manifests the power of the risen Savior in the body. Then only can we glorify God in our body, leaving Him full freedom to manifest therein His power, to show that He knows how to set His temple

free from the domination of sickness, sin, and Satan.

Chapter 9

The Body for the Lord

1 Corinthians 6:13

One of the most learned of theologians has said that corporeity is the end of the ways of God. As we have already seen, this is indeed what God has accomplished in creating man. It is this which makes the inhabitants of heaven wonder and admire when they contemplate the glory of the Son. Clothed with a human body, Jesus has taken His place forever upon the throne of God, to partake of His glory. It is this which God has willed. It shall be recognized in that day when regenerated humanity, forming the body of Christ, shall be truly and visibly the temple of the living God (1 Corinthians 6:16), and when all creation in the new heavens and new earth shall share the glory of the children of God. The material body shall then be wholly sanctified, glorified by the Spirit; and this body, thus spiritualized, shall be the highest glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and of His redeemed.

It is in anticipation of this new condition of things that the Lord attaches a great importance to the indwelling and sanctification of our bodies, down here, by His Spirit. Song of Solomon little is this truth understood by believers that less still do they seek for the power of the Holy Spirit in their bodies. Many of them also, believing that this body belongs to them, use it as it pleases them. Not understanding how much the sanctification of the soul and spirit depends upon the body, they do not grasp all the meaning of the

words, "The body is for the Lord," in such a way as to receive them in obedience.

"The body is for the Lord." What does this mean? The apostle has just said, "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them." Eating and drinking afford the Christian an opportunity of carrying out this truth, "The body is for the Lord." He must indeed learn to eat and drink to the glory of God. By eating, sin and the Fall came about. It was also through eating that the devil sought to tempt our Lord. Thus Jesus Himself sanctified His body in eating only according to the will of His Father (Matthew 4:4). Many believers fail to watch over their bodies-fail to observe a holy sobriety so as to avoid rendering their bodies unfit for the service of God. Eating and drinking should never impede communion with God; their purpose is, rather, to facilitate communion by maintaining the body in its normal condition.

The apostle speaks also of fornication, this sin which defiles the body, and which is in direct opposition to the words, "The body is for the Lord." It is not simply incontinence outside the married state, but in that state also, which is meant here; all voluptuousness, all want of sobriety of whatsoever kind is condemned in these words: "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost" (1 Corinthians 6:19). In the same way, all of what goes to maintain the body-to clothe it, strengthen it, rest it in sleep, or afford it enjoyment-should be placed under the control of the Holy Spirit. As under the Old Covenant, the temple was constructed solely for God, and for His service, even so our body has been created for the Lord and for Him alone.

One of the chief benefits then of divine healing will be to teach us that our body ought to be set free from the yoke of our own will to become the Lord's property. God does not grant healing to our prayers until He has attained the

end for which He has permitted the sickness. He wills that this discipline should bring us into a more intimate communion with Him; He would make us understand that we have regarded our body as our own property, while it belonged to the Lord; and that the Holy Spirit seeks to sanctify all its actions. He leads us to understand that if we yield our body unreservedly to the influence of the Holy Spirit, we shall experience His power in us, and He will heal us by bringing into our body the very life of Jesus; He leads us, in short, to say with full conviction, "The body is for the Lord."

There are believers who seek after holiness, but only for the soul and spirit. In their ignorance they forget that the body and all its systems of nerves—that the hand, the ear, the eyes, the mouth—are called to testify directly to the presence and the grace of God in them. They have not sufficiently taken in these words: "Your bodies are the members of Christ." "If by the Spirit ye make to die the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (1 Corinthians 6:15; Romans 8:13, R.V., margin). "The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23, R.V.). Oh, what a renewing takes place in us when, by His own touch, the Lord heals our bodies, when He takes possession of them, and when by His Spirit He becomes life and health to them! It is with an indescribable consciousness of holiness, of fear and of joy that the believer can then offer his body a living sacrifice to receive healing, and to have for his motto these words: "The body is for the Lord."

Chapter 10

The Lord for the Body

1 Corinthians 6:13

There is reciprocity in God's relations with man. That which God has been for me, I ought in my turn to be for Him. And that which I am for Him, He desires again to be for me. If, in His love, He gives Himself fully to me, it is in order that I may lovingly give myself fully to Him. In the measure in which I more or less really surrender to Him all my being, in that measure also He gives Himself more really to me. God thus leads the believer to understand that this abandonment of Himself involves the body, and the more our life bears witness that the body is for the Lord, the more also we experience that the Lord is for the body. In saying, "The body is for the Lord," we express the desire to regard our body as wholly consecrated, offered in sacrifice to the Lord, and sanctified by Him. In saying, "The Lord is for the body," we express the precious certainty that our offering has been accepted, and that, by His Spirit, the Lord will impart to our body His own strength and holiness, and that henceforth He will strengthen and keep us.

This is a matter of faith. Our body is material, weak, feeble, sinful, mortal. Therefore it is difficult to grasp all at once the full extent of the words, "The Lord is for the body." It is the Word of God which explains to us the way to assimilate. The body was created by the Lord and for the Lord. Jesus took upon Him an earthly body. In His body He bore our sins on the cross, and

thereby set our body free from the power of sin. In Christ the body has been raised again, and seated on the throne of God. The body is the habitation of the Holy Spirit; it is called to eternal partnership in the glory of heaven. Therefore, with certainty, and in a wide and universal sense, we can say, "Yes, the Lord Jesus, our Savior, is for the body." This truth has many applications. In the first place, it is a great help in practical holiness. More than one sin derives its strength from some physical tendency. The converted drunkard has a horror for intoxicating drinks, but, notwithstanding, his appetites are sometimes a snare to him, gaining victory over his new convictions. If, however, in the conflict he gives over his body with confidence to the Lord, all physical appetite, all desire to drink will be overcome. Our temper also often results from our physical constitution. A nervous, irritable system produces words which are sharp, harsh, and wanting in love. But let the body with this physical tendency be taken to the Lord, and it will soon be experienced that the Holy Spirit can mortify the risings of impatience, and sanctify the body, rendering it blameless.

These words, "The Lord is for the body," are applicable also to the physical strength which the Lord's service demands of us. When David cries, "It is God that girdeth me with strength," he means physical strength, for he adds: "He maketh my feet like hinds' feet... mine arms do bend a bow of brass" (Psalm 18:33, 34, R.V.). Again in these words:

"The Lord is the strength of my life" (Psalm 27:1), it does not mean only the spiritual man but the entire man. Many believers have experienced that the promise, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Isaiah 40:31), touches the body, and that the Holy Spirit increases the physical strength.

But it is especially in divine healing that we see the truth of these words:

"The Lord is for the body." Yes, Jesus, the sovereign and merciful Healer, is always ready to save and cure. There was in Switzerland, some years ago, a young girl with tuberculosis and near death. The doctor had advised a milder climate, but she was too weak to take the journey. She learned that Jesus is the Healer of the sick. She believed the good news, and one night when she was thinking of this subject it seemed to her that the body of the Lord drew near to her, and that she ought to take these words literally, "His body for our body." From this moment she began to improve. Some time after she began to hold Bible readings, and later on she became a zealous and much-blessed worker for the Lord among women. She had learned to understand that the Lord is for the body.

Dear sick one, the Lord has shown thee by sickness what power sin has over the body. By thy healing He would also show thee the power of redemption of the body. He calls thee to show that which thou hast not understood hitherto, that "the body is for the Lord." Therefore give Him thy body. Give it Him with thy sickness and with the sin, which is the original source of sickness. Believe always that the Lord has taken charge of this body, and He will manifest with power that He really is the Lord, who is for the body. The Lord, who has Himself taken upon Him a body here on earth and regenerated it, from the highest heaven, where He now is, clothed with His glorified body, sends us His divine strength, willing thus to manifest His power in our body.

Chapter 11

Do not consider your Body

Romans 4:19-21

When God promised to give Abraham a son, the patriarch would never have been able to believe in this promise if he had considered his own body, already aged and worn out. However, he would see nothing but God and His promise, the power and faithfulness of God who guaranteed him the fulfillment of His promise.

This enables us to lay hold of all the difference there is between the healing which is expected from earthly remedies and the healing which is looked for from God only. When we have recourse to remedies for healing, all the attention of the sick one is upon the body, considering the body, while divine healing calls us to turn away our attention from the body, and to abandon ourselves, soul and body, to the Lord's care, occupying ourselves with Him alone.

This truth equally enables us to see the difference between the sickness retained for blessing and the healing received from the Lord. Some are afraid to take the promise in James 5 in its literal sense, because they say sickness is more profitable to the soul than health. It is true that in the case of healing obtained by earthly remedies, many people would be more blessed in remaining ill than in recovering health, but it is quite otherwise when healing comes directly from the hand of God. In order to receive divine healing, sin

must be so truly confessed and renounced, one must be so completely surrendered to the Lord, self must be so really yielded up to be wholly in His hands, and the will of Jesus to take charge of the body must be so firmly counted on that the healing becomes the commencement of a new life of intimate communion with the Lord.

Thus we learn to give up to Him entirely the care of the health, and the smallest indication of the return of the evil is regarded as a warning not to consider our body, but to be occupied with the Lord only.

What a contrast this is from the greater number of sick people who look for healing from remedies. If some few of them have been sanctified by the sickness, having learned to lose sight of themselves, how many more are there who are drawn by the sickness itself to be constantly occupied with themselves and with the condition of their body. What infinite care they exercise in observing the least symptom, favorable or unfavorable! What a constant preoccupation to them is their eating and drinking, the anxiety to avoid this or that! How much they are taken up with what they consider due to them from others, whether they are sufficiently thought of, whether well enough nursed, whether visited often enough! How much time is thus devoted to considering the body and what it exacts, rather than the Lord and the relations which He seeks to establish with their souls! Oh, how many are they who, through sickness, are occupied almost exclusively with themselves!

All this is totally different when healing is looked for in faith from the loving God. Then the first thing to learn is: Cease to be anxious about the state of your body, you have trusted it to the Lord and He has taken the responsibility. If you do not see a rapid improvement immediately, but on the contrary the symptoms appear to be more serious, remember that you have

entered on a path of faith, and therefore you ought not to consider the body, but cling only to the living God. The commandment of Christ, "Be not anxious... for your body" (Matthew 6:25, R.V.), appears here in a new light. When God called Abraham not to consider his own body, it was that He might call him to the greatest exercise of faith which could be, that he might learn to see only God and His promise. Sustained by his faith, he gave glory to God, convinced that God would do what He had promised. Divine healing is a marvelous tie to bind us to the Lord. At first one may fear to believe that the Lord will stretch forth His mighty hand and touch the body; but in studying the Word of God the soul takes courage and confidence. At last one decides, saying, I yield up my body into the hands of God; and I leave the care of it to Him. Then the body and its sensations are lost sight of, and only the Lord and His promise are in view.

Dear reader, wilt thou also enter upon this way of faith, very superior to that which it is the habit to call natural? Walk in the steps of Abraham. Learn from him not to consider thine own body, and not to doubt through unbelief. To consider the body gives birth to doubts, while clinging to the promise of God and being occupied with Him alone gives entrance into the way of faith, the way of divine healing, which glorifies God.

Chapter 12

Discipline and Sanctification

"God chasteneth us for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness"—(Hebrews 12:10). "If a man... purge himself.., he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work"—(2 Timothy 2:21).

To sanctify anything is to set apart, to consecrate, to God and to His service. The temple at Jerusalem was holy, that is to say, it was consecrated, dedicated to God that it might serve Him as a dwelling place. The vessels of the temple were holy, because they were devoted to the service of the temple; the priests were holy, chosen to serve God and ready to work for Him. In the same way the Christian ought also to be sanctified, at the Lord's disposal, "ready to do every good work."

When the people of Israel went out of Egypt, the Lord reclaimed them for His service as a holy people. "Let my people go that they may serve me" (Exodus 7:16), He said to Pharaoh. Set free from their hard bondage, the children of Israel were debtors to enter at once upon the service of God, and to become His happy servants. Their deliverance was the road which led to their sanctification.

Again in this day, God is forming for Himself a holy people, and it is that we may torn part of them that Jesus sets us free. He "gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his

own possession, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14, R.V.). It is the Lord who breaks the chains by which Satan would hold us in bondage. He would have us free, wholly free to serve Him. He wills to save us, to deliver both the soul and the body, that each of the members of the body may be consecrated to Him and placed unreservedly at His disposal.

A large number of Christians do not yet understand all this, they do not know how to take in that the purpose of their deliverance is that they may be sanctified, prepared to serve their God. They make use of their life and their members to procure their own satisfaction; consequently they do not feel at liberty to ask for healing with faith. It is therefore to chasten them-that they may be brought to desire sanctification-that the Lord permits Satan to inflict sickness upon them and by it keep them chained and prisoners (Luke 13:11, 16). God chastens us "for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness," and that we may be sanctified, "meet for the Master's use" (Hebrews 12:10, R.V.; 2 Timothy 2:21).

The discipline which inflicts the sickness brings great blessings with it. It is a call to the sick one to reflect; it leads him to see that God is occupied with him, and seeks to show him what there is which still separates him from Himself. God speaks to him, He calls him to examine his ways, to acknowledge that he has lacked holiness, and that the purpose of the chastisement is to make him partaker of His holiness. He awakens within him the desire to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit down into the inmost recesses of his heart, that he may be enabled to get a clear idea of what his life has been up to the present time, a life of self-will, very unlike the holy life which God requires of him. He leads him to confess his sins, to entrust them to the Lord Jesus, to believe that the Savior can deliver him from them. He urges him to yield to Him, to consecrate his life to Him, to die to himself that he

may be able to live unto God.

Sanctification is not something which you can accomplish yourself; it cannot even be produced by God in you as something which you can possess and contemplate in yourself. No, it is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of holiness alone who can communicate His holiness to you and renew it continually.

Therefore it is by faith you can become "partakers of his holiness." Having understood that Jesus has been made unto you of God sanctification (1 Corinthians 1:30), and that it is the Holy Spirit's work to impart to you His holiness which was manifested in His life on earth, surrender yourself to Him by faith that He may enable you to live that life from hour to hour. Believe that the Lord will by His Spirit lead you into, and keep you in this life of holiness and of consecration to God's service. Live thus in the obedience of faith, always attentive to His voice, and the guidance of His Spirit.

From the time that this Fatherly discipline has led the sick one to a life of holiness, God has attained His purpose, and He will heal him who asks it in faith. Our earthly parents "for a few days chastened us.... All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous, but grievous: yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness" (Hebrews 12:10, 11, R.V.). Yes, it is when the believer realizes this peaceable fruit of righteousness that he is in a condition to be delivered from the chastisement.

Oh, it is because believers still understand so little that sanctification means an entire consecration to God that they cannot really believe that healing will quickly follow the sanctification of the sick one. Good health is too often for them only a matter of personal comfort and enjoyment which they may dispose of at their will, but God cannot thus minister to their selfishness. If they understood better that God requires of His children that they should be

"sanctified and meet for the Master's use," they would not be surprised to see Him giving healing and renewed strength to those who have learned to place all their members at His disposal, willing to be sanctified and employed in His service by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of healing is also the Spirit of sanctification.

Chapter 13

Sickness and Death

Psalm 91:3, 6, 16; Psalm 92:14

This objection is often made to the words of the apostle James, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick": If we have the promise of being always healed in answer to prayer, how can it be possible to die? And some add: How can a sick person know whether God, who fixes the time of our life, has not decided that we shall die by such a sickness? In such a case, would not prayer be useless, and would it not be a sin to ask for healing?

Before replying, we would remark that this objection touches not such as believe in Jesus as the Healer of the sick, but the Word of God itself, and the promise so clearly declared in the epistle of James and elsewhere. We are not at liberty to change or to limit the promises of God whenever they present some difficulty to us; neither can we insist that they shall be clearly explained to us before we can bring ourselves to believe what they state. It is for us to begin by receiving them without resistance; then only can the Spirit of God find us in the state of mind in which we can be taught and enlightened.

Furthermore, we would remark that in considering a divine truth which has been for a long time neglected in the Church, it can hardly be understood at the outset. It is only little by little that its importance and bearing are discerned. In measure as it revives, after it has been accepted by faith, the Holy Spirit will accompany it with new light. Let us remember that it is by

the unbelief of the Church that divine healing has left her. It is not on the answers of such or such a one that faith in Bible truths should be made to depend. "There arises light in the darkness" (Psalm 112:4) for the "upright" who are ready to submit themselves to the Word of God.

To the first objection it is easy to reply. Scripture fixes seventy or eighty years as the ordinary measure of human life. The believer who receives Jesus as the Healer of the sick will rest satisfied then with the declaration of the Word of God. He will feel at liberty to expect a life of seventy years, but not longer. Besides, the man of faith places himself under the direction of the Spirit, which will enable him to discern the will of God if something should prevent his attaining the age of seventy. Every rule has its exceptions, in the things of heaven as in the things of earth. Of this, therefore, we are sure according to the Word of God, whether by the words of Jesus or by those of James, that our heavenly Father wills, as a rule, to see His children in good health that they may labor in His service.

For the same reason He wills to set them free from sickness as soon as they have made confession of sin and prayed with faith for their healing. For the believer who has walked with his Savior, strong with the strength which proceeds from divine healing, and whose body is consequently under the influence of the Holy Spirit, it is not necessary that when his time comes to die, he should die of sickness. To "fall asleep in Jesus Christ," such is the death of the believer when the end of his life is come. For him death is only sleep after fatigue, the entering into rest. The promise, "That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6:3), is addressed to us who live under the New Covenant. The more the believer has learned to see in the Savior Him who "took our infirmities" the more he has the liberty to claim the literal fulfillment of the promises: "With long life will

I satisfy him"; "They shall bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing."

The same text applies to the second objection. The sick one sees in God's Word that it is His will to heal His children after the confession of their sins, and in answer to the prayer of faith. It does not follow that they shall be exempt from other trials; but as for sickness, they are healed of it because it attacks the body, which is become the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. The sick one should then desire healing that the power of God may be made manifest in him, and that he may serve Him in accomplishing His will. In this he clings to the revealed will of God, and for that which is not revealed he knows that God will make known His mind to His servants who walk with Him. We would insist here that faith is not a logical reasoning which ought in some way to oblige God to act according to His promises. It is rather the confiding attitude of the child who honors his Father, who counts upon His love to see Him fulfilling His promises, and who knows that He is faithful to communicate to the body as well as to the soul the new strength which flows from the redemption, until the moment of departure is come.

Chapter 14

The Holy Spirit the Spirit of Healing

1 Corinthians 12:4, 9, 11

What is it that distinguishes the children of God? What is their glory? It is that God dwells in the midst of them and reveals Himself to them in power (Exodus 33:16; 34:9, 10). Under the New Covenant this dwelling of God in the believer is still more manifest than in former times. God sends the Holy Spirit to His Church, which is the Body of Christ, to act in her with power, and her life and her prosperity depend on Him. The Spirit must find in her unreserved, full liberty, that she may be recognized as the Church of Christ, the Lord's Body. In every age the Church may look for manifestations of the Spirit, for they form our indissoluble unity; "one body and one Spirit" (Ephesians 4:4).

The Spirit operates variously in such or such a member of the Church. It is possible to be filled with the Spirit for one special work and not for another. There are also times in the history of the Church when certain gifts of the Spirit are given with power, while at the same time ignorance or unbelief may hinder other gifts. Wherever the life more abundant of the Spirit is to be found, we may expect Him to manifest all His gifts.

The gift of healing is one of the most beautiful manifestations of the Spirit. It is recorded of Jesus, "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth... who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil" (Acts 10:38).

The Holy Spirit in Him was a healing Spirit, and He was the same in the disciples after Pentecost. Thus the words of our text express what was the continuous experience of the early Church (compare attentively Acts 3:7; 4:30; 5:12, 15, 16; 6:8; 8:7; 9:41; 14:9, 10; 16:18, 19; 19:12; 28:8, 9). The abundant pouring out of the Spirit produced abundant healings. What a lesson for the Church in our days!

Divine healing is the work of the Holy Spirit. Christ's redemption extends it—powerful working to the body, and the Holy Spirit is responsible both to transmit it to and maintain it in us. Our body shares in the benefit of the redemption, and even now it can receive the pledge of it by divine healing. It is Jesus who heals, Jesus who anoints and baptizes with the Holy Spirit. Jesus, who baptized His disciples with the same Spirit, is He who sends us the Holy Spirit here on earth—either to keep sickness away from us, or to restore us to health when sickness has taken hold upon us.

Divine healing accompanies the sanctification by the Spirit. It is to make us holy that the Holy Spirit makes us partakers of Christ's redemption. Hence His name "Holy." Therefore the healing which He works is an intrinsic part of His divine mission, and He bestows it either to lead the sick one to be converted and to believe (Acts 4:29, 30; 5:12, 14; 6:7, 8; 8:6-8) or to confirm his faith if he is already converted, He constrains him thus to renounce sin, and to consecrate himself entirely to God and to His service (1 Corinthians 10:31; James 5:15, 16; Hebrews 12:10).

Divine healing tends to glorify Jesus. It is God's will that His Son should be glorified, and the Holy Spirit does this when He comes to show us what the redemption of Christ does for us. The redemption of the mortal body appears almost more marvelous than that of the immortal soul. In these two ways God wills to dwell in us through Christ, and thus to triumph over the flesh. As

soon as our body becomes the temple of God through the Spirit, Jesus is glorified.

Divine healing takes place wherever the Spirit of God works in power. Proofs of this are to be found in the lives of the Reformers, and in those of certain Moravians in their best times. But there are yet other promises touching the pouring out of the Holy Spirit which have not been fulfilled up to this time. Let us live in a holy expectation, praying the Lord to accomplish them in us.

Chapter 15

Persevering Prayer

Luke 18:1-8

The necessity of praying with perseverance is the secret of all spiritual life. What a blessing to be able to ask the Lord for such and such a grace until He gives it, knowing with certainty that it is His will to answer prayer, but what a mystery for us in the call to persevere in prayer, to knock in faith at His door, to remind Him of His promises, and to do so without wearying until He arises and grants us our petition! Is not the assurance that our prayer can obtain from the Lord that which He would not otherwise give the evident proof that man has been created in the image of God, that he is His friend, that he is His fellow worker, and that the believers who together form the Body of Christ participate in this manner in His intercessory work? It is to Christ's intercession that the Father responds, and to which He grants His divine favors.

More than once the Bible explains to us the need for persevering prayer. There are many grounds, the chief of which is the justice of God. God has declared that sin must bear its consequences; sin therefore has rights over a world which welcomes and remains enslaved by it. When the child of God seeks to quit this order of things, it is necessary that the justice of God should consent to this; time therefore is needed that the privileges which Christ has procured for the believers should weigh before God's tribunal. Besides this,

the opposition of Satan, who always seeks to prevent the answer to prayer, is a reason for it (Daniel 10:12, 13). The only means by which this unseen enemy can be conquered is faith. Standing firmly on the promises of God, faith refuses to yield, and continues to pray and wait for the answer, even when it is delayed, knowing that the victory is sure (Ephesians 6:12-18).

Finally, perseverance in prayer is needful for ourselves. Delay in the answer is intended to prove and strengthen our faith; it ought to develop in us the steadfast will which will no longer let go the promises of God, but which renounces its own side of things to trust in God alone. It is then that God, seeing our faith, finds us ready to receive His favor and grants it to us. He will avenge speedily, even though He tarry. Yes, notwithstanding all the needful delays, He will not make us wait a moment too long. If we cry unto Him day and night, He will avenge us speedily.

This perseverance in prayer will become easy to us as soon as we fully understand what faith is. Jesus teaches us in these words, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22). When the Word of God authorizes us to ask anything, we ought at once to believe that we receive it. God gives it to us; this we know by faith, and we can say between God and us that we have received it, although it might be only later that we are permitted to realize the effects here on earth. It is before having seen or experienced anything whatsoever that faith rejoices in having received, perseveres in praying, and waits until the answer is manifest. But even after having believed that we are heard, it is good to persevere until it has become an accomplished fact.

This is of great importance in obtaining divine healing. Sometimes, it is true, the healing is immediate and complete; but it may happen that we have to wait, even when a sick person has been able to ask for it in faith. Sometimes

also the first symptoms of healing are immediately manifest; but afterwards the progress is slow, and interrupted by times when it is arrested or when the evil returns. In such cases it is important for both the sick person and those who pray with him to believe in the efficacy of persevering prayer, even though they may not understand the mystery of it. That which God appears at first to refuse, He grants later to the prayer of the Canaanitish woman, to the prayer of the "widow," to that of the friend who knocks at midnight (Matthew 15:22; Luke 18:3; 11:5). Without regarding either change or answer, the faith which is grounded on the Word of God, and which continues to pray with importunity, ends by gaining the victory. "Shall not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you he will avenge them speedily." God knows how to delay all the time which is necessary, and nevertheless to act speedily without waiting more than is needful. The same two things should belong to our faith. Let us lay hold with a holy promptitude of the grace which is promised us, as if we had already received it; let us await with untiring patience the answer which is slow to come. Such faith belongs to living in Him. It is in order to produce in us this faith that sickness is sent to us, and that the healing is granted to us, for such faith above all glorifies God.

Chapter 16

Let him that is healed Glorify God

It is a prevalent idea that piety is easier in sickness than in health; that silence and suffering incline the soul to seek the Lord and enter into communion with Him better than the distractions of active life; that, in fact, sickness throws us more upon God. For these reasons sick people hesitate to ask for healing from the Lord; for they say to themselves, "How can we know whether sickness may not be better for us than health?" To think thus is to ignore that the healing and its fruits are divine. Let us try to understand that though a healing through ordinary means may at times run the risk of making God relax His hand, divine healing, on the contrary, binds us more closely to Him. Thus it comes to pass that in our day, as in the time of the early ministry of Jesus Christ, the believer who has been healed by Him can glorify Him far better than the one who remains sick. Sickness can only glorify God in the measure in which it gives occasion to manifest His power (John 9:3; 11:4).

The sufferer who is led by his sufferings to give glory to God, does it, so to speak, by constraint. If he had health and liberty to choose, it is quite possible that his heart would turn back to the world. In such a case the Lord must keep him on one side; his piety depends on his sickly condition. This is why the world supposes that religion is hardly efficacious anywhere but in sick chambers or death beds, and for such as have no need to enter into the noise and stir of ordinary life. In order that the world may be convinced of the power of religion against temptation, it must see the believer who is in good health walking in calmness and holiness even in the midst of work and of

active life. Doubtless very many sick people have glorified God by their patience in suffering, but He can be still more glorified by a health which He has sanctified.

"Why then," we are asked, "should those who have been healed in answer to the prayer of faith glorify the Lord more than such as have been healed through earthly remedies?" Here is the reason. Healing by means of remedies shows us the power of God in nature; but it does not bring us into living and direct contact with Him; while divine healing is an act proceeding from God, without anything but the Holy Spirit.

In this latter, contact with God is the thing which is essential, and it is for this reason that examination of the conscience and the confession of sins should be the preparation for it (1 Corinthians 11:30-32;. James 5:15, 16). One who is so healed is called to consecrate himself quite anew and entirely to the Lord (1 Corinthians 6:13, 19). All this depends upon the act of faith which lays hold of the Lord's promise, which yields to Him, and which does not doubt that the Lord at once takes possession of what is consecrated to Him. This is why the continuance of health received depends on the holiness of the life, and the obedience in seeking always the good pleasure of the divine Healer (Exodus 15:26).

Health obtained under such conditions ensures spiritual blessings. The mere restoration to health by ordinary means does not. When the Lord heals the body it is that He may take possession of it and make it a temple that He may dwell in. The joy which then fills the soul is indescribable. It is not only the joy of being healed; it is joy mingled with humility, and a holy enthusiasm which recognizes the touch of the Lord and receives a new life from Him. In the exuberance of his joy the healed one exalts the Lord, he glorifies Him by word and deed, and all his life is consecrated to his God.

It is evident that these fruits of healing are not the same for all, and that sometimes there are steps made backwards. The life of the healed one has a solidarity with the life of believers around him. Their doubts and their inconsistencies may in time tend to make his steps totter, although this generally results in a new beginning. Each day he discovers and recognizes afresh that his life is the Lord's life; he enters into a more intimate and more joyous communion with Him; he learns to live in habitual dependence upon Jesus, and receives from Him that strength which results from a more complete consecration.

Oh, what may not the Church become when she lives in this faith, when every sick person shall recognize in sickness a call to be holy, and to expect from the Lord a manifestation of His presence, when healings shall be multiplied, producing in each a witness of the power of God, all ready to cry with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul.... Who healeth all thy diseases."

Chapter 17

The Need for a Manifestation of God's Power

Acts 4:29-31

Isaiah it permissible to pray in this way now, to ask he Lord, "Grant unto thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness while thou stretchest forth thy hand to heal" (R.V.)? Let us look into this question.

Does not the Word of God meet with as many difficulties in our days as then, and are not the needs now equally pressing? Let us picture to ourselves the apostles in the midst of Jerusalem and her unbelief; on the one hand the rulers of the people and their threatenings; on the other, the blinded multitude refusing to believe in the Crucified. Now the world is no longer so openly hostile to the Church because it has lost its fear of her, but its flattering words are more to be dreaded than its hatred. Dissimulation is sometimes worse than violence. And is not a Christianity of mere form, in the sleep of indifference, just as inaccessible as an openly resisting Judaism? God's servants need even in the present day, in order that the Word may be preached with all boldness, that the power of God should be evidently manifested among them.

Is not the help of God as necessary now as then? The apostles knew well that it was not the eloquence of their preaching which caused the truth to triumph,

but they knew the necessity for the Holy Spirit to manifest His presence by miracles. It was needful that the living God should stretch forth His hand, that there might be healings, miracles, and signs in the name of His holy Son Jesus. It was only thus that His servants rejoiced, and, strengthened by His presence, could speak His Word with boldness and teach the world to fear His name.

Do not the divine promises concern us also? The apostles counted on these words of the Lord before He ascended, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature., and these signs shall follow them which believe., they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover" (Mark 16:15, 17, 18). This charge indicates the divine vocation of the Church; the promise which follows it shows us what is her armor, and proves to us that the Lord acts in concert with her. It was because the apostles counted on this promise that they prayed the Lord to grant them this proof of His presence. They had been filled with the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost, but they still needed the supernatural signs which His power works. The same promise is as much for us, for the command to preach the Gospel cannot be severed from the promise of divine healing with which it is accompanied. It is nowhere to be found in the Bible that this promise was not for future times. In all ages God's people greatly need to know that the Lord is with them, and to possess the irrefutable proof of it. Therefore this promise is for us; let us pray for its fulfillment.

Ought we to reckon on the same grace? We read in the Acts when the apostles had prayed, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people... and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 4:31;

5:12-15). Oh, what joy and what new strength would God's people receive today if anew the Lord should thus stretch forth His hand! How many wearied and discouraged laborers grieve that they do not see more results, more blessings on their labors! What life would come into their faith if signs of this kind should arise to prove to them that God is with them! Many who are indifferent would be led to reflect, more than one doubter would regain confidence, and all unbelievers would be reduced to silence. And the poor heathen! How he would awake if he saw by facts that which words had not enabled him to lay hold of, if he were forced to acknowledge that the Christian's God is the living God who doeth wonders, the God of love who blesses!

Awake, awake, put on thy strength, Church of Christ! Although thou hast lost by thy unfaithfulness the joy of seeing allied to the preaching of the Word the hand of the Lord stretched out to heal, the Lord is ready to grant thee this grace anew. Acknowledge that it is thine own unbelief which has so long deprived thee of it, and pray for pardon. Clothe thyself with the strength of prayer.

"Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord. Awake as in the ancient days" (Isaiah 51:9).

Chapter 18

Sin and Sickness

"The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed"—(James 5:15, 16).

Here, as in other Scriptures, the pardon of sins and the healing of sickness are closely united. James declares that pardon of sins will be granted with the healing; and for this reason he desires to see confession of sin accompany the prayer which claims healing. We know that confession of sin is indispensable to obtain from God the pardon of sin: it is not less so to obtain healing. Unconfessed sin presents an obstacle to the prayer of faith; in any case, the sickness may soon reappear, and for this reason.

The first care of a physician, when he is called to treat a patient, is to diagnose the cause of the disease. If he succeeds he stands a better chance to combat it. Our God also goes back to the primary cause of all sickness—that is, sin. It is our part to confess and God's to grant the pardon which removes this first cause, so that healing can take place. In seeking for healing by means of earthly remedies, the first thing to do is to find a clever physician, and then to follow his prescriptions exactly; but in having recourse to the prayer of faith, it is needful to fix our eyes, above all, upon the Lord, and to ascertain how we stand with Him. James therefore points out to us a condition which is essential to the recovery of our health; namely, that we confess and forsake

sin.

Sickness is a consequence of sin. It is because of sin that God permits it; it is in order to show us our faults, to chasten us, and purify us from them.

Sickness is therefore a visible sign of God's judgment upon sin. It is not that the one who is sick is necessarily a greater sinner than another who is in health. On the contrary, it is often the most holy among the children of God whom He chastens, as we see from the example of Job. Neither is it always to check some fault which we can easily determine: it is especially to draw the attention of the sick one to that which remains in him of the egotism of the "old man" and of all which hinders him from a life entirely consecrated to his God. The first step which the sick one has to take in the path of divine healing will be therefore to let the Holy Spirit of God probe his heart and convince him of sin. After which will come, also, humiliation, decision to break with sin, and confession. To confess our sins is to lay them down before God as in Achan's case (Joshua 7:23), to subject them to His judgment, with the fixed purpose to fall into them no more. A sincere confession will be followed by a new assurance of pardon.

"If he has committed sins they shall be forgiven him." When we have confessed our sins, we must receive also the promised pardon, believing that God gives it in very deed. Faith in God's pardon is often vague in the child of God. Either he is uncertain, or he returns to old impressions, to the time when he first received pardon; but the pardon which he now receives with confidence, in answer to the prayer of faith, will bring him new life and strength. The soul then rests under the efficacy of the blood of Christ, receives from the Holy Spirit the certainty of the pardon of sin, and that therefore nothing remains to hinder the Savior from filling him with His love and with His grace. God's pardon brings with it a divine life which acts

powerfully upon him who receives it.

When the soul has consented to make a sincere confession and has obtained pardon, it is ready to lay hold of the promise of God; it is no longer difficult to believe that the Lord will raise up His sick one. It is when we keep far from God that it is difficult to believe; confession and pardon bring us quite near to Him. As soon as the cause of the sickness has been removed, the sickness itself can be arrested. Now it is easy for the sick one to believe that if the Lord necessarily subjected the body to the chastisement of the sins committed, He also wills that, the sin being pardoned, this same body should receive the grace which manifests His love. His presence is revealed, a ray of life, of His divine life, comes to quicken the body, and the sick one proves that as soon as he is no longer separated from the Lord, the prayer of faith does save the sick.

Chapter 19

Jesus bore our Sickness

*"Surely he hath borne our sicknesses and carried our sorrows... My righteous servant shall justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities... He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because... he bare the sin of many"—
(Isaiah 53:4, 11, 12, R.V.).*

Do you know this beautiful chapter, the fifty-third of Isaiah, which has been called the fifth Gospel? In the light of the Spirit of God, Isaiah describes beforehand the sufferings of the Lamb of God, as well as the divine graces which would result from them.

The expression "to bear" could not but appear in this prophecy. It is, in fact, the word which must accompany the mention of sin, whether as committed directly by the sinner, or whether as transmitted to a substitute. The transgressor, the priest, and the expiatory victim must all bear the sin. In the same way, it is because the Lamb of God has borne our sins that God smote Him for the iniquity of us all. Sin was not found in Him, but it was put upon Him; He took it voluntarily upon Him. And it is because He bore it-and that, in bearing it, He put an end to it-that He has the power to save us. "My righteous servant shall justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities... he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because... he bare the sin of many" (Isaiah 53:11, 12). It is, therefore, because our sins have been borne by Jesus Christ that we are delivered from them as soon as we believe this truth; consequently we need no longer bear them ourselves.

In this same chapter (Isaiah 53) the expression "to bear" occurs twice, but in relation to two different things. It is said not only that the Lord's righteous Servant has borne our sins (verse 12), but also that He has borne our sicknesses (verse 4, R.V., margin). Thus His bearing our sicknesses forms an integral part of the Redeemer's work as well as bearing our sins. Although Himself without sin He has borne our sins, and He has done as much for our sicknesses. The human nature of Jesus could not be touched by sickness because it remained holy. We never find in the account of His life any mention of sickness. Participating in all the weaknesses of our human nature, hunger, thirst, fatigue and sleep, because all these things are not the consequence of sin, He still had no trace of sickness. As He was without sin, sickness had no hold on Him, and He could die only a violent death and that by His voluntary consent. Thus it is not in Him but on Him that we see sickness as well as sin; He took them upon Him and bore them of His own free will. In bearing them and taking them upon Him, He has by this very fact triumphed over them, and has acquired the right of delivering His children from them.

Sin had attacked and ruined equally the soul and the body. Jesus came to save both. Having taken upon Him sickness as well as sin, He is in a position to set us free from the one as well as the other, and that He may accomplish this double deliverance He expects from us only one thing: our faith.

As soon as a sick believer understands the purport of the words, "Jesus has borne my sins," he does not fear to say also: "I need no longer bear my sins, they are upon me no longer." In the same way as soon as he has fully taken in and believed for himself that Jesus has borne our sicknesses, he does not fear to say: "I need no longer bear my sickness; Jesus in bearing sin bore also sickness which is its consequence; for both He has made propitiation, and He

delivers me from both."

I have myself witnessed the blessed influence which this truth exercised one day upon a sick woman. For seven years she had been almost continually bedfast. A sufferer from tuberculosis, epilepsy, and other sicknesses, she had been assured that no hope of cure remained for her. She was carried into the room where the late Mr. W. E. Boardman was holding a Sunday evening service for the sick, and was laid in a half-fainting condition on the sofa. She was too little conscious to remember anything of what took place until she heard the words, "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:17), and then she seemed to hear the words, "If He has borne your sicknesses, why then bear them yourself? Get up." But she thought-if I attempt to get up, and fall upon the ground, what will they think of me? But the inward voice began again:

"If He has borne my sins, why should I have to bear them?" To the astonishment of all who were present, she arose, and, although still feeble, sat down in a chair by the table. From that moment her healing made rapid progress. At the end of a few weeks she had no longer the appearance of an invalid, and later on her strength was such that she could spend many hours a day in visiting the poor. With what joy and love she could then speak of Him who was "the strength of her life" (Psalm 27:1). She had believed that Jesus had borne her sicknesses as well as her sins, and her faith was not put to confusion. It is thus that Jesus reveals Himself as a perfect Savior to all those who will trust themselves unreservedly to Him.

Chapter 20

Is Sickness a Chastisement?

"For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep. For if we discerned ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world"—(1 Corinthians 11:30-32, R.V.).

In writing to the Corinthians the Apostle Paul must needs reprove them for the manner in which they observed the Lord's Supper, drawing upon themselves the chastisements of God. Here, therefore, we see sickness as a judgment of God, a chastisement for sin. Paul sees it to be a real chastisement since he afterwards says: "chastened by the Lord," and he adds that it is in order to hinder them from falling yet deeper into sin, to prevent them from being "condemned with the world," that they are thus afflicted. He warns them that if they would be neither judged nor chastened by the Lord, that if by such examination they discovered the cause of the sickness and condemned their sins, the Lord would no longer need to exercise severity. Isaiah it not evident that here sickness is a judgment of God, a chastisement of sin, and that we may avoid it in examining and condemning ourselves?

Yes, sickness is, more often than we believe it, a judgment, a chastisement for sin. God "doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men" (Lamentations 3:33). It is not without a cause that He deprives us of health. Perhaps it may be to render us attentive to some sin which we can recognize: "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (John 5:14); perhaps

because God's child has become entangled in pride and worldliness; or it may be that self-confidence or caprice have been mixed with his service for God. It is again quite possible that the chastisement may not be directed against any particular sin, but that it may be the result of the preponderance of sin which weighs upon the entire human race. When (John 9:3), in the case of the man born blind, the disciples asked the Lord, "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" and He answered, "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents," He does not by any means say that there is no relation between sin and sickness, but He teaches us not to accuse every sick person of sin.

In any case, sickness is always a discipline which ought to awaken our attention to sin, and turn us from it. Therefore a sick person should begin by condemning, or discerning himself (1 Corinthians 11:31), by placing himself before his heavenly Father with a sincere desire to see anything which could have grieved Him, or could have rendered the chastisement necessary. So doing he may count assuredly on the Holy Spirit's light, who will clearly show him his failure. Let him be ready at once to renounce what he may discern, and to place himself at the Lord's disposal to serve Him with perfect obedience, but let him not imagine that he can conquer sin by his own efforts. No, that is impossible to him. But let him, with all his power of will, be on God's side in renouncing what is sin in His sight, and let him believe that he is accepted of Him. So doing he will be yielding himself, consecrating himself anew to God, willing to do only His holy will in all things.

Scripture assures us that if we thus examine ourselves the Lord will not judge us. Our Father only chastens His child as far as needful. God seeks to deliver us from sin and self; as soon as we understand Him and break with these, sickness may cease; it has done its work. We must come to see what the

sickness means, and recognize in it the discipline of God. One may recognize vaguely that he commits sins while scarcely attempting to define what they are; or if he does, he may not believe it is possible to give them up; and if he decides to renounce them, he may fail to count on God that He will put an end to the chastisement. And yet, how glorious is the assurance which Paul's words here give us!

Dear sick one, dost thou understand that thy heavenly Father has something to reprove in thee? He would have thy sickness help thee to discover it, and the Holy Spirit will guide thee in the search. Then renounce at once what He may point out to thee. Thou wouldst not have the smallest shade remain between thy Father and thee. It is His will to pardon thy sin and to heal thy sickness. In Jesus we have both pardon and healing; they are two sides of His redemptive work. He calls thee to live a life of dependence upon Him in a greater degree than hitherto. Abandon thyself then to Him in a complete obedience, and walk henceforth as a little child in following His steps. It is with joy that thy heavenly Father will deliver thee from chastisement, that He will reveal Himself to thee as thy Healer, that He will bring thee nearer to Him by this new tie of His love, that He will make thee obedient and faithful in serving Him. If, as a wise and faithful Father, He has been obliged to chasten thee, it is also as a Father that He wills thy healing, and that He desires to bless and keep thee henceforth.

Chapter 21

God's Prescription for the Sick

"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him"—(James 5:14, 15).

This text, above all others, is that which most clearly declares to the sick what they have to do in order to be healed. Sickness and its consequences abound in the world. What joy, then, for the believer to learn from the Word of God the way of healing for the sick! The Bible teaches us that it is the will of God to see His children in good health. The Apostle James has no hesitation in saying that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." May the Lord teach us to hearken and to receive with simplicity what His Word tells us!

Notice, first, that James here makes a distinction between affliction (or suffering) and sickness. He says (verse 13): "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray" (R.V.). He does not specify what shall be requested in such a case; still less does he say that deliverance from suffering shall be asked. No; suffering which may arise from various exterior causes is the portion of every Christian. Let us therefore understand that the object of James is to lead the tried believer to ask for deliverance only with a spirit of submission to the will of God, and, above all, to ask the patience which he considers to be the privilege of the believer (James 1:2-4, 12; 5:7, 8).

But in dealing with the words, "Is any sick among you?" James replies in quite another manner. Now he says with assurance that the sick one may ask for healing with confidence that he shall obtain it, and the Lord will hear him. There is therefore a great difference between suffering and sickness. The Lord Jesus spoke of suffering as being necessary, as being willed and blessed of God; while He says of sickness that it ought to be cured. All other suffering comes to us from without, and will only cease when Jesus shall triumph over the sin and evil which are in the world; while sickness is an evil in the body itself, in this body saved by Christ that it may become the temple of the Holy Spirit, and which, consequently, ought to be healed as soon as the sick believer receives by faith the working of the Holy Spirit, the very life of Jesus in him.

What is the direction here given to the sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let the elders pray for him. In the time of James there were physicians, but it is not to them the sick believer must turn. The elders then were the pastors and leaders of the churches, called to the ministry not because they had passed through schools of theology, but because they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and well known for their piety and for their faith. Why should their presence be needed by the sick one? Could not his friends have prayed? Yes; but it is not so easy for everybody to exercise the faith which obtains healing, and, doubtless, that is one reason why James desired that men should be called whose faith was firm and sure. Besides this, they were representatives to the sick one of the Church, the collective body of Christ, for it is the communion of believers which invites the Spirit to act with power. In short, they should, after the pattern of the great Shepherd of the sheep, care for the flock as He does, identify themselves with the sick one, understand his trouble, receive from God the necessary discernment to

instruct him and encourage him to persevere in faith. It is, then, to the elders of the Church that the healing of the sick is committed, and it is they, the servants of the God who pardons iniquities and heals diseases (Psalm 103), who are called to transmit to others the Lord's graces for soul and body.

Finally, there is a promise still more direct—that of healing; the apostle speaks of it as the certain consequence of the prayer of faith. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." This promise ought to stimulate in every believer the desire and expectation of healing. Receiving these words with simplicity and as they are written, ought we not to see in them an unlimited promise, offering healing to whomsoever shall pray in faith? The Lord teach us to study His Word with the faith of a truly believing heart!

Chapter 22

The Lord that healeth thee

"I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that healeth thee"—(Exodus 15:26).

How often have we read these words, without daring to take them for ourselves, and without expectation that the Lord would fulfill them to us! We have seen in them that the people of God ought to be exempt from the diseases inflicted upon the Egyptians, and we have believed that this promise applied only to the Old Testament, and that we who live under the economy of the New Testament cannot expect to be kept from or healed of sickness by the direct intervention of the Lord! As, however, we were obliged to recognize the superiority of the New Covenant, we have come, in our ignorance, to allege that sickness often brings great blessings, and that consequently God had done well to withdraw what He had formerly promised, and to be no longer for us what He was for Israel, "The Lord that healeth thee."

But in our day we see the Church awakening and acknowledging her mistake. She sees that it is under the New Covenant that the Lord Jesus passed on His power of healing to His disciples. She is beginning to see that in charging His Church to preach the Gospel to every creature, He has promised to be with her "always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20), and as the proof of His presence, His disciples should have the power to lay hands on

the sick, and they should be healed (Mark 16:15-18). She sees, moreover, that in the days following Pentecost, the miraculous pouring out of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by miraculous healings, which were evident proof of the blessings brought about by the power from on high (Acts 3:16; 5:12; 9:40). There is nothing in the Bible to make her believe that the promise made to Israel has been since retracted, and she hears from the mouth of the Apostle James this new promise:

"The prayer of faith shall save [or heal] the sick" (James 5:15). She knows that at all times it has been unbelief which has limited (or set bounds to) the Holy One of Israel (Psalm 78:41), and she asks herself if it is not unbelief which hinders in these days this manifestation of the power of God. Who can doubt it? It is not God or His Word which are to blame here; it is our unbelief which prevents the miraculous power of the Lord, and which holds Him back from healing as in past times. Let our faith awake, let it recognize and adore in Christ the all-power of Him who says, "I am the Lord which healeth thee." It is by the works of God that we can best understand what His Word tells us; the healings which again are responding to the prayer of faith confirm, by gloriously illustrating, the truth of His promise.

Let us learn to see in the risen Jesus the divine Healer, and let us receive Him as such. In order that I may recognize in Jesus my justification, my strength, and my wisdom, I must grasp by faith that He is really all this to me; and equally when the Bible tells me that Jesus is the sovereign Healer, I must myself appropriate this truth, and say, "Yes, Lord, it is Thou who art my Healer." And why may I hold Him as such? It is because He gives Himself to me, that I am "one plant with him" (Romans 6:5, French ver.), and that, inseparably united to Him, I thus possess His healing power; it is because His love is pleased to load His beloved with His favors, to communicate Himself

with all His heart to all who desire to receive Him. Let us believe that He is ready to extend the treasure of blessing, contained in the name, "The Lord that healeth thee," to all who know and who can trust in this divine name. This is the treatment for the sick indicated by the law of His kingdom. When I bring my sickness to the Lord, I do not depend on what I see, on what I feel or what I think, but on what He says. Even when everything appears contrary to the expected healing, even if it should not take place at the time or in the way that I had thought I should receive it, even when the symptoms seem only to be aggravated, my faith, strengthened by the very waiting, should cling immovably to this word which has gone out of the mouth of God, "I am the Lord that healeth thee." God is ever seeking to make us true believers. Healing and health are of little value if they do not glorify God, and serve to unite us more closely with Him; thus in the matter of healing our faith must always be put to the proof. He who counts on the name of his God, who can hear Jesus saying to him, "Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldest believe thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (John 11:40), will have the joy of receiving from God Himself the healing of the body, and of seeing it take place in a manner worthy of God, and conformably to His promises. When we read these words, "I am the Lord that healeth thee," let us not fear to answer eagerly, "Yes, Lord, Thou art the Lord that healeth me."

Chapter 23

Jesus Heals the Sick

"He healed all that were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying: Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses"—(Matthew 8:16, 17).

In a preceding chapter we have studied the words of the prophet Isaiah. If the reader has still any doubt as to the interpretation of it which has been given, we remind him of that which the Holy Spirit caused the evangelist St. Matthew to write about it. It is expressly said regarding all the sick ones whom Jesus healed, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet." It was because Jesus had taken on Him our sicknesses that He could, that He ought to heal them. If He had not done so, one part of His work of redemption would have remained powerless and fruitless.

This text of the Word of God is not generally understood in this way. It is the generally accepted view that the miraculous healings done by the Lord Jesus are to be looked upon only as the proof of His mercy, or as being the symbol of spiritual graces. They are not seen to be a necessary consequence of redemption, although that is what the Bible declares. The body and the soul have been created to serve together as a habitation of God; the sickly condition of the body is, as well as that of the soul, a consequence of sin, and that is what Jesus came to bear, to expiate and to conquer.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, it was not in the character of the Son of

God that He cured the sick, but as the Mediator who had taken upon Him and borne sickness, and this enables us to understand why Jesus gave so much time to His healing work, and why also the evangelists speak of it in a manner so detailed. Read for example what Matthew says about it: "Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the good tidings of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those that were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them" (Matthew 4:23, 24). "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people" (Matthew 9:35). "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease" (10:1). When the disciples of John the Baptist came to ask Jesus if He were the Messiah, that He might prove it to them, He replied: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them" (11:5). After the cure of the withered hand, and the opposition of the Pharisees who sought to destroy Him, we read that "great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all" (12:15). When later, the multitude had followed Him into a desert place, it is said, "And Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick" (14:14). Farther on: "They sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased; and besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole" (14:35, 36). It is said also of the sick which were

among the multitudes that they "cast them down at Jesus' feet and he healed them," and Matthew adds: "Insomuch that the multitudes wondered when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see; and they glorified the God of Israel" (15:30, 31). And finally when He came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan, "Great multitudes followed him, and he healed them there" (19:2).

Let us add to these many texts those which give us in detail the account of healings wrought by Jesus, and let us ask ourselves if these healings afford us only the proof of His power during His life here on earth, or if they are not much rather the undoubted and continual result of His work of mercy and of love, the manifestation of His power of redemption which delivers the soul and body from the dominion of sin? Yes; that was in very deed the purpose of God. If, then, Jesus bore our sicknesses as an integral part of the redemption, if He has healed the sick "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias," and if His Savior-heart is always full of mercy and of love, we can believe with certainty that to this very day it is the will of Jesus to heal the sick in answer to the prayer of faith.

Chapter 24

Fervent and Effectual Prayer

"Pray for one another that ye may be healed. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elijah was a man of like passions (or nature] with us and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and it rained, not on the earth for three years and six months. And he prayed again; and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit"—(James 5:16-18).

James knew that a faith which obtains healing is not the fruit of human nature; therefore he adds that the prayer must be "fervent." Only such can be efficacious. In this he stands upon the example of Elijah, a man of the same nature ("subject to like passions") as we are, drawing therefore the inference that our prayer can be and ought to be of the same nature as his. How then did Elijah pray? This will throw some light upon what the prayer of faith should be.

Elijah had received from God the promise that rain was about to fall upon the earth (1 Kings 18:1), and he had declared this to Ahab. Strong in the promise of his God, he mounts Carmel to pray (1 Kings 18:42; James 5:18). He knows, he believes that God's will is to send rain, and nevertheless he must pray, or the rain will not come. His prayer is no empty form; it is a real power, the efficacy of which is about to make itself felt in heaven. God wills that it shall rain, but the rain will only come at Elijah's request, a request repeated with faith and perseverance until the appearance of the first cloud in the sky. In order that the will of God shall be accomplished, this will must on

one side be expressed by a promise, and on the other it must be received and laid hold of by the believer who prays. He therefore must persevere in prayer that he may show his God that his faith expects an answer, and will not grow weary until it is obtained.

This is how prayer must be made for the sick. The promise of God, "The Lord will raise him up," must be rested on, and His will to heal recognized. Jesus Himself teaches us to pray with faith which counts on the answer of God; He says to us: "All things whatsoever ye pray for, and ask for, believe that ye have received them and ye shall have them"—(Mark 11:24, R.V.). After the prayer of faith which receives beforehand that which God has promised, comes the prayer of perseverance, which does not lose sight of that which has been asked until God has fulfilled His promise (1 Kings 18:43). There may be some obstacle which hinders the fulfillment of the promise; whether on the side of God and His righteousness (Deuteronomy 9:18), or on the side of Satan, and his constant opposition to the plans of God, something which may still impede the answer to the prayer (Daniel 10:12, 13). It may be also that our faith needs to be purified (Matthew 15:22-28). Whatever it may be, our faith is called to persevere until the answer comes. He who prays six times fervently and stops there, when he ought to have prayed seven times (2 Kings 13:18, 19), deprives himself of the answer to his prayer.

Perseverance in prayer, a perseverance which strengthens the faith of the believer against all which may seem opposed to the answer, is a real miracle; it is one of the impenetrable mysteries of the life of faith. Does it not say to us that the Savior's redeemed one is in very deed His friend, a member of His body, and that the government of the world and the gifts of divine grace depend in some sense upon his prayers? Prayer, therefore, is no vain form. It is the work of the Holy Spirit, who intercedes here on earth in us and by us,

and as such, it is as efficacious, as indispensable as the work of the Son interceding for us before the throne of God. It might seem strange that after having prayed with the certainty of being heard, and having seen therein the will of God, we should still need to continue in prayer. Nevertheless it is so. In Gethsemane, Jesus prayed three times in succession. On Carmel Elijah prayed seven times; and we, if we believe the promise of God without doubting, shall pray until we receive the answer. Both the importunate friend at midnight and the widow who besieged the unjust judge are examples of perseverance in seeking the end in view.

Let us learn from Elijah's prayer to humble ourselves, to recognize why the power of God cannot be more manifested in the Church, whether in the healing of the sick, or in conversion, or sanctification. "Ye have not because ye ask not" (James 4:2). Let it also teach us patience. In the cases where healing is delayed, let us remember that obstacles may exist over which only perseverance in prayer can triumph. Faith which ceases to pray, or which is allowed to relax in its fervor, cannot appropriate that which God has nevertheless given. Let not our faith in the promises of Scripture be shaken by those things which are as yet beyond our reach. God's promise remains the same: "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." May the prayer of Elijah strengthen our faith. Let us remember that we have to imitate them who through faith and patience inherit the promises (Hebrews 6:12). If we learn to persevere in prayer, its fruit will be always more abundant, always more evident, and we shall obtain, as Jesus obtained when He was on earth, healing of the sick, often immediate healing, which shall bring glory to God.

Chapter 25

Intercessory Prayer

"Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working"—(James 5:16, R.V.). James begins by speaking to us of the prayers of the elders of the church; but here he addresses all believers in saying: "Pray one for another that ye may be healed." Having already spoken of confession and pardon, he still adds: "Pray one for another."

This shows us that the prayer of faith which asks for healing is not the prayer of one isolated believer, but that it ought to unite the members of the body of Christ in the communion of the Spirit. God certainly hears the prayer of each one of His children as soon as it is presented to Him with living faith, but the sick one does not always possess such faith as this. Therefore, that the Holy Spirit may come to act with power, there must generally be the union of several members of the body of Christ unitedly claiming His presence.

This dependence on our brethren should be exercised in two ways. First of all we must confess our faults to any whom we may have wronged, and receive pardon from them. But besides this, if one who is sick has been brought to see in such or such a sin which he has committed the cause of his sickness, and to recognize in it a chastening of God, he ought in such a case to acknowledge his sin before the elders or brethren in Christ who pray for him, and who are thus enabled to do so with more light and more faith. Such confession will be also a touchstone which tests the sincerity of his

repentance, for it is easier to confess our sins to God than to man. Before he will do it, his humiliation must needs be real and his repentance sincere. The result will be a closer communion between the sick one and those who intercede for him, and their faith will be quickened anew.

"Pray one for another that ye may be healed." Does not this clearly answer that which one so often hears said: What is the use in going to M. Zeller in Switzerland, Dr. Cullis in America, or to Bethshan in London? Does not the Lord hear prayer in whatsoever place it is offered? Yes; without any doubt wherever a prayer in living faith rises up to God, it finds Him ready to grant healing; but the Church has so neglected to believe in this truth that it is a rare thing in the present day to find Christians capable of praying in this manner. Thus we cannot be too grateful to the Lord that He has inspired certain believers with the desire to consecrate their lives, in part, to witness to the truth of divine healing. Their words and their faith awaken faith in the heart of many sick ones who, without their help, would never arrive at it. It is precisely these very people who always say to everybody:

"The Lord is everywhere to be found." Let Christians learn not to neglect the least part of the marvelous power of their God, and He will be able to manifest to all that He is always the "Lord which healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26). Let us take heed to obey the Word of God, to confess one to another, and to pray one for another that we may be healed.

James notes here still another essential condition to successful prayer: it must be the prayer of the righteous. "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working." The Scripture tells us that "he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he [Jesus] is righteous" (1 John 3:7). James himself was surnamed "The Just," on account of his piety and the tenderness of his conscience. Whether an "elder" or a simple believer, it is only after one is

wholly surrendered to God and living in obedience to His will that one can pray effectually for the brethren. John says as much: "Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do the things which are pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:22). It is therefore the prayer of one who lives in intimate communion with God which "availeth much." It is to such prayer that God will grant the answer, which He would not be able to give to such other of His children.

We often hear these words quoted: "The prayer of a righteous man availeth much," but very rarely is it taken in connection with its context, or remembered that it is most especially divine healing which is in question here. Oh, may the Lord raise up in His Church many of these righteous men, animated with living faith, whom He can use to glorify Jesus as the divine Healer of the sick!

Chapter 26

The will of God

"Thy will be done"—(Matthew 6:10). "If the Lord will"—(James 4:15).

In days of sickness, when doctors and medicines fail, recourse is generally had to the words we have here quoted, and they may easily become a stumbling-block in the way of divine healing. "How may I know," it is asked, "whether it is not God's will that I should remain ill? And as long as this is an open question, how can I believe for healing, how can I pray for it with faith?" Here truth and error seem to touch. It is indeed impossible to pray with faith when we are not sure that we are asking according to the will of God. "I can," one may say, "pray fervently in asking God to do the best for me, believing that He will cure me if it is possible." As long as one prays thus, one is indeed praying with submission, but this is not the prayer of faith. That is only possible when we are certain that we are asking according to the will of God. The question then resolves itself into making sure of what is the will of God. It is a great mistake to think that the child of God cannot know what is His will about healing.

In order to know His divine will, we must be guided by the Word of God. It is His Word which promises us healing. The promise of James 5 is so absolute that it is impossible to deny it. This promise only confirms other passages, equally strong, which tell us that Jesus Christ has obtained for us the healing of our diseases, because He has borne our sicknesses. According

to this promise, we have right to healing, because it is a part of the salvation which we have in Christ, and therefore we may expect it with certainty.

Scripture tells us that sickness is, in God's hands, the means of chastening His children for their sins, but that this discipline ceases to be exercised as soon as His suffering child acknowledges and turns from the sin. Isaiah it not as much as to say clearly that God desires only to make use of sickness to bring back His children when they are straying?

Sick Christian, open thy Bible, study it and see in its pages that sickness is a warning to renounce sin, but that whoever acknowledges and forsakes his sins finds in Jesus pardon and healing. Such is God's promise in His Word. If the Lord had in view some other dispensation for such of His children whom He was about to call home to Him, He would make known to them His will, giving them by the Holy Spirit a desire to depart; in other special cases, He would awaken some special conviction; but as a general rule, the Word of God promises us healing in answer to the prayer of faith.

"Nevertheless," some might say, "is it not better in all things to leave it to the will of God?" And they quote the instance of such and such Christians who would have, so to speak, forced the hand of God by their praying without adding, "Thy will be done," and who would not have experienced blessing in the answer to their prayers. And these would say, "How do we know whether sickness would not be better for us than health?" Notice here that this is no case of forcing the hand of God, since it is His Word which tells us that it is His will to heal us. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." God wills that the health of the soul should have a blessed reflex influence on the health of the body, that the presence of Jesus in the soul should have its confirmation in the good condition of the body. And when you know that such is His will you cannot, when speaking in such a way, say truthfully that you are in all

things leaving it to Him. It is not leaving it to Him when you make use of all possible remedies to get healing, instead of laying hold of His promise. Your submission is nothing else than spiritual sloth in view of that which God commands you to do.

As to knowing whether sickness is not better than health, we do not hesitate to reply that the return to health which is the fruit of giving up sin, of consecration to God, and of an ultimate communion with God, is infinitely better than sickness. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thessalonians 4:3), and it is by healing that God confirms the reality of this. When Jesus comes to take possession of our body, and cures it miraculously, when it follows that the health received must be maintained from day to day by an uninterrupted communion with Him, the experience which we thus gain of the Savior's power and of His love is a result very superior to any which sickness has to offer. Doubtless sickness may teach us submission, but healing received direct from God makes us better acquainted with our Lord, and teaches us to confide in Him better. Besides which it prepares the believer to accomplish better the service of God.

Christian, who art sick, if thou wilt really seek to know what is the will of God in this thing, do not let thyself be influenced by the opinions of others, nor by thy own former prejudices, but listen to and study what the Word of God has to say. Examine whether it does not tell thee that divine healing is a part of the redemption of Jesus, and that God wills that every believer should have the right to claim it; see whether it does not promise that the prayer of every child of God for this thing shall be heard, and whether health restored by the power of the Holy Spirit does not manifest the glory of God in the eyes of the Church and of the world. Inquire of it; it will answer thee, that, according to the will of God, sickness is a discipline occasioned by sin (or

shortcoming), and that healing, granted to the prayer of faith, bears witness to His grace which pardons, which sanctifies, and which takes away sin.

Chapter 27

Obedience and Health

"There made he for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them, and said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee"—(Exodus 15:25, 26).

It was at Marah that the Lord gave to His people this ordinance. Israel was just released from the yoke of Egypt when their faith was put to the proof in the desert by the waters of Marah. It was after He had sweetened the bitter waters that the Lord promised He would not put upon the children of Israel any of the diseases which He had brought upon the Egyptians so long as they would obey Him. They would be exposed to other trials, they might sometimes suffer the need of bread and of water, and encounter great dangers; all these things might come upon them in spite of their obedience, but sickness might not touch them. In a world still under the power of Satan, they might be a butt for attacks coming from without, but their bodies would not be oppressed with sickness, for God had delivered them from it. Had He not said, "**If** thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God... I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that healeth thee"? Again elsewhere, "Ye shall serve the Lord your God, ... and I will take sickness away from the midst of

thee" (Exodus 23:25; read also Leviticus 26:14, 16; Deuteronomy 7:15, 23; 28:15-61).

This calls our attention to a truth of the greatest importance: the intimate relations which exist between obedience and health, between sanctification which is the health of the soul, and the divine healing which ensures the health of the body-both are comprised in the salvation that comes from God. It is noteworthy that in several languages these three words, salvation, healing, and sanctification, are derived from the same root and present the same fundamental thought. (For instance, the German **Heil**, salvation; **Heilung**, healing; **Heilichung**, sanctification.) Salvation is the redemption which the Savior has obtained for us, health is the salvation of the body which also comes to us from the Divine Healer, and lastly, sanctification reminds us that true salvation and true health consist in being holy as God is holy. Thus it is in giving health to the body and sanctification to the soul that Jesus is really the Savior of His people. Our text clearly declares the relation which exists between holiness of life and the healing of the body. The expressions which bear this out seem to be purposely multiplied: "If thou wilt diligently hearken.., if thou wilt do that which is right.., if thou wilt give ear... if thou wilt keep all his statutes, I will not send any sickness upon thee."

Here we have the key to all true obedience and holiness. We often think we know well the will of God revealed in His Word; but why does not this knowledge bring forth obedience? It is because in order to obey we must begin by hearkening. "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God.., and give ear...." As long as the will of God reaches me through the voice of man, or through the reading of a book, it may have but little power with me, while if I enter into direct communion with God, and listen to His

voice, His commandment is quickened with living power to facilitate its accomplishment. Christ is the living Word and the Holy Spirit is His voice. Listening to His voice means to renounce all our own will and wisdom, to close the ear to every other voice so as to expect no other direction but that of the Holy Spirit. One who is redeemed is like a servant or child, who needs to be directed; he knows that he belongs entirely to God, and that all his being, spirit, soul and body, ought to glorify God.

But he is equally conscious that this is above his strength, and that he needs to receive, hour by hour, the direction which he needs. He knows also that the divine commandment, as long as it is a dead letter to him, cannot impart to him strength and wisdom, and that it is only as he attentively gives ear that he will obtain the desired strength; therefore, he listens and learns thus to observe the laws of God. This life of attention and action, of renouncement and of crucifixion, constitutes a holy life. The Lord brings us to it in the first place by sickness, and makes us understand that which we are lacking, and then also by the healing which calls the soul to this life of continual attention to the voice of God.

Most Christians see nothing more in divine healing than a temporal blessing for the body, while in the promise of our holy God its end is to make us holy. The call to holiness sounds daily stronger and more clearly in the Church. More and more believers are coming to understand that God wants them to be like Christ; and the Lord is beginning again to make use of His healing virtue, seeking thereby to show us that still in our own days the Holy One of Israel is "the Lord that healeth thee," and that it is His will to keep His people both in health of body and in obedience.

Let him who looks for healing from the Lord receive it with joy. It is not a legal obedience which is required of him, an obedience depending upon his

own strength. No; God asks of him, on the contrary, the abandonment of a little child, the attention which hearkens and consents to be led. This is what God expects of him; and the healing of the body will be the result of this childlike faith, for the Lord will reveal Himself to him as the mighty Savior who heals the body and sanctifies the soul.

Chapter 28

Job's Sickness and Healing

"So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown"—(Job 2:7).

The veil which hides from us the unseen world is lifted for a moment in the mysterious history of Job; it reveals to us heaven and hell busily occupied with God's servants upon earth. We see in it the temptations peculiar to sickness, and how Satan makes use of them to dispute with God, and to seek the perdition of the soul of man, while God, on the contrary, seeks to sanctify it by the very same trial. In the case of Job, we see in God's light the source from which sickness proceeds, what is the result which it should have, and how it is possible to be delivered from it.

Whence comes sickness; from God or from Satan? Opinions on this point vastly differ. Some hold that it is sent of God, others see in it the work of the wicked one. Both are in error as long as they hold their view to the exclusion of that held by the other party, while both are in the right if they admit that there are two sides to this question. Let us say then that sickness comes from Satan, but that it cannot exist without the permission of God. On the one hand the power of Satan is that of an oppressor who has not himself any right to pounce upon man and attack him, and on the other hand the claims of Satan on man are legitimate in that the righteousness of God decrees that he who yields himself to Satan places himself under his domination.

Satan is the prince of the kingdom of darkness and of sin; sickness is the consequence of sin. Herein is constituted the right of Satan over the body of sinful man. He is the prince of this world, so recognized by God, until such time as he shall be legally conquered and dethroned. Consequently he has a certain power over all those who remain down here under his jurisdiction. He then it is who torments men with sickness, and seeks thereby to turn them from God, and to work their ruin.

But, we would hasten to say, the power of Satan is far from being almighty; he can do nothing without God's authorization. God permits him to do all he does in tempting men, even believers, but it is in order that the trial may bring forth in them the fruit of holiness. It is also said that Satan has the power of death (Hebrews 2:14), that he is everywhere at work where death reigns, and nevertheless he has no power to decide as to the death of God's servants without the express will of God. It is even so with sickness. Because of sin, sickness is the work of Satan, but as the supreme direction of this world belongs to God, it can also be regarded as the work of God. All who are acquainted with the Book of Job know how very clearly this is brought out there.

What ought to be the result of sickness? The result will be good or evil according as God or Satan shall have the victory in us. Under Satan's influence, a sick person sinks always deeper in sin. He does not recognize sin to be the cause of the chastisement, and he occupies himself exclusively with himself and with his sufferings. He desires nothing but to be healed, without dreaming of a desire for deliverance from sin. On the contrary wherever God gains the victory, sickness leads the sufferer to renounce himself, and to abandon himself to God. The history of Job illustrates this. His friends accused him, unjustly, of having committed sins of exceptional gravity, and

by them to have drawn upon himself his terrible sufferings. It was, however, no such thing, since God Himself had borne him witness that he was "perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil" (Job 2:3). But in defending himself Job went too far. Instead of humbling himself in abasement before the Lord, and recognizing his hidden sins, he sought in all self-righteousness to justify himself. It was not until the Lord appeared to him that he came to say, "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:6). To him sickness became a signal blessing in bringing him to know God in quite a new way, and to humble himself more than ever before Him. This is the blessing which God desires that we also may receive whenever He permits Satan to strike us with sickness, and this end is attained by all sufferers who abandon themselves unreservedly to Him.

How are we to be delivered from sickness? A father never prolongs the chastisement of his child beyond the time necessary. God, also, who has His purpose in permitting sickness, will not prolong the chastisement longer than is needful to attain His end. As soon as Job had understood Him, from the time that he condemned himself and repented in dust and ashes, through hearkening to what God had revealed to him of Himself, the chastisement was at an end. God Himself delivered him from Satan's hand and healed him of his sickness.

Would that the sick in our day understood that God has a distinct purpose in permitting the chastisement, and that as soon as it is attained, as soon as the Holy Spirit shall have led them to confess and forsake their sins and to consecrate themselves entirely to the service of the Lord, the chastisement will no longer be needed-that the Lord could and would deliver them! God makes use of Satan as a wise government makes use of a jailer. He only leaves His children in his power for the given time; after which His good will

is to associate us in the redemption of Him who has conquered Satan, who has withdrawn us from his domination in bearing in our stead our sins and our sicknesses.

Chapter 29

The Prayer of Faith

*"The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up"—
(James 5:15).*

The prayer of faith! Only once does this expression occur in the Bible, and it relates to the healing of the sick. The Church has adopted this expression, but she hardly ever has recourse to the prayer of faith except for the sake of obtaining other graces; while according to Scripture it is especially intended for the healing of the sick.

Does the Apostle expect healing through the prayer of faith alone, or should it be accompanied by the use of remedies? This is generally the question which is raised. It is easily decided, if we take into consideration the power of the Church's spiritual life in the early ages: the gifts of healing bestowed on the Apostles by the Lord, augmented by the subsequent pouring out of the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:30; 5:15, 16), what Paul says of these gifts of healing by the same Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:9), what James here insists upon when, in order to strengthen the reader in the expectation of faith, he recalls Elijah's prayer and God's wonderful answer (James 5:14-17). Does not all this clearly show that the believer is to look for healing in response to the prayer of faith alone, and without the addition of remedies?

Another question will arise: Does the use of remedies exclude the prayer of faith? To this we believe our reply should be: No, for the experience of a

large number of believers testifies that in answer to their prayers God has often blessed the use of remedies, and made them a means of healing.

We come here to a third question: Which is then the line to follow, that we may prove with the greatest certainty, and according to the will of God, the efficacy of the prayer of faith? Isaiah it, according to James, in setting aside all remedies or in using remedies as believers do for the most part? In a word, is it with or without remedies that the prayer of faith best obtains the grace of God? Which of these two methods will be most directly to the glory of God and for blessing to the sick one? Isaiah it not perfectly simple to reply that if the prescription and the promise in James apply to believers of our time, they will find blessing in receiving them just as they were given to believers then, conforming to them on all points, expecting healing only from the Lord Himself, without having any recourse to remedies besides? It is, in fact, in this sense that Scripture always speaks of effectual faith and of the prayer of faith.

Both the laws of nature and the witness of Scripture show us that God often makes use of intermediary agencies to manifest His glory, but whether by experience or by Scripture, we know also that under the power of the fall, and the empire of our senses, our tendency is to attach more importance to the remedies than to the direct action of God. It often happens that remedies so occupy us as to intercept the presence of our God and turn us away from Him. Thus the laws and the properties of nature, which were destined to bring us back to God, have the contrary effect. This is why the Lord in calling Abraham to be the father of His chosen people had not recourse to the laws of nature (Romans 4:17-21). God would form for Himself a people of faith, living more in the unseen than in the things visible; and in order to lead them into this life it was necessary to take away their confidence in ordinary

means. We see therefore that it was not by the ordinary ways which He has traced in nature that God led Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, the Judges, David and many other kings of Israel. His object was to teach them by this to confide only in Him, to know Him as He is: "Thou art the God that doest wonders" (Psalm 77:14).

God wills to act in a similar way with us. It is when we seek to walk according to His prescription in James 5, abandoning the things which are seen (1 Corinthians 4:18) to lay hold of the promise of God, and so receive directly from Him the desired healing, that we discover how much importance we have attached to earthly remedies. Doubtless there are Christians who can make use of remedies without damage to their spiritual life, but the larger number of them are apt to count much more on the remedies than on the power of God. Now the purpose of God is to lead His children into a more intimate communion with Christ, and this is just what does happen when by faith we commit ourselves to Him as our sovereign Healer, counting solely on His invisible presence. Renouncing remedies strengthens faith in an extraordinary manner. Healing becomes, then, far more than sickness, a source of numberless spiritual blessings. It makes real to us what faith can accomplish, it establishes a new tie between God and the believer, and commences in him a life of confidence and dependence. The body equally with the soul is placed under the power of the Holy Spirit, and the prayer of faith, which saves the sick, thus leads us to a life of faith, strengthened by the assurance that God manifests His presence in our earthly life.

Chapter 30

Anointing in the Name of the Lord

"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church: and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord"—(James 5:14).

Anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." These words have given rise to controversy. Some have sought to infer from them that, very far from prescribing recourse to the prayer of faith alone, without the use of remedies, St. James had, on the contrary, mentioned anointing with oil as a remedy to be employed, and that to anoint in the name of the Lord had no other signification than to rub the patient with oil. But as this prescription applies to all kinds of sickness, this would be to attribute to oil a miraculous virtue against all sickness. Let us see what the Scripture tells us about anointing with oil, and what sense it attaches to these two words.

It was the custom of the people in the East to anoint themselves with oil when they came out of the bath; it was most refreshing in a hot climate. We see also that all those who were called to the special service of God were to be anointed with oil, as a token of their consecration to God, and of the grace they should receive from Him to fulfill their vocation. Thus the oil which was used to anoint the priests and the tabernacle was looked upon as "most holy" (Exodus 30:22-32), and wherever the Bible speaks of anointing with oil, it is an emblem of holiness and consecration. Nowhere in the Bible do we find

any proof that oil was used as a remedy.

Once indeed the anointing with oil is mentioned in connection with sickness, but its place there was evidently as a religious ceremony and not as a remedy. In Mark 6:13 we read that the twelve "cast out many devils and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." Here the healing of the sick runs parallel with the casting out of devils: both the result of miraculous power. Such was the kind of mission which Jesus commanded His disciples when He sent them two and two: "He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease" (Matthew 10:1). Thus it was the same power which permitted them either to cast out devils or to heal the sick.

But let us seek to discover what was symbolized by the anointing administered by the twelve. In the Old Testament, oil was the symbol of the gift of the Holy Spirit: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me," etc. (Isaiah 61:1). It is said of the Lord Jesus in the New Testament: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power" (Acts 10:38), and it is said of believers: "Ye have an unction [anointing, R.V.] from the Holy One" (1 John 2:20). Sometimes man feels the need of a visible sign, appealing to his senses, which may come to his aid to sustain his faith, and enable him to grasp the spiritual meaning. The anointing therefore should symbolize to the sick one the action of the Holy Spirit who gives the healing.

Do we then need the anointing as well as the prayer of faith? It is the Word of God which prescribes it, and it is in order to follow out its teachings that most of those who pray for healing receive the anointing; not that they regard it as indispensable, but to show that they are ready to submit to the Word of God in all things. In the last promise made by the Lord Jesus, He ordains the

laying on of hands, not the anointing, to accompany the communication of healing virtue (Mark 16:18). When Paul circumcised Timothy, and when he took upon himself a special vow, it was to prove that he had no objection to observing the institutions of the Old Covenant so long as the liberty of the Gospel did not thereby suffer loss. In the same way, James, the head of the Church of Jerusalem, faithful in preserving as far as possible the institutions of his fathers, continued the system of the Holy Spirit. And we also should regard it, not as a remedy, but as a pledge of the mighty virtue of the Holy Spirit, as a means of strengthening faith, a point of contact and of communion between the sick one and the members of the Church who are called to anoint him with oil.

"I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26).

Chapter 31

Full Salvation Our High Privilege

Luke 15:31

Please turn with me to the 15th chapter of Luke, and read the thirty-first verse: the Father said, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine."

Some time ago, when at Northfield, I was told by Mr. Moody that the best thing that he had heard at Keswick two years ago was this verse-given by some parting minister as a closing or parting text and Mr. Moody said to himself, "Why did I not see that before?"

We may talk a great deal, and write a great deal, about the father's love to the prodigal, but when we think of the way he treated the elder brother, it brings to our hearts a truer sense of the wonderful love of the father; therefore I want to speak on this verse.

I suppose there are not a few Christians here who have got "full salvation"; but perhaps more than half those present have not got it, and, if I were to ask you, "Have you got it?" you would probably say, "I don't understand what you mean by it, what is it?" Well, the great object of our Convention is to bring you to see that full salvation is waiting for you now, that God wants you to experience it, and, if you feel you have not got it, we wish to show you how wrong it is to be without it, and then to show you how to come out of the

wrong life into the right one here and now. Oh, may all who have not got the experience pray very humbly, "Oh, my Father, bring me into the full enjoyment of Thy full salvation."

First, the high privilege of God's children.

Second, the low experience of many of them.

Third, the cause of this great discrepancy.

Fourth, the way of restoration, or how to get full salvation.

First, then, the elder son, being ever with his father, had, if he liked, the privilege of two things: unceasing fellowship and unlimited partnership. But he was worse than the prodigal, for, although always at home, yet he had never known, nor enjoyed, nor understood the privileges that were his. All this fullness of fellowship had been waiting for and offered to him, but not received. While the prodigal was away from home in the far country, his elder brother was far from the enjoyment of home, while he was at home.

Unceasing Fellowship. An earthly father loves his child, and delights to make his child happy. "God is love," and He delights to pour out His own nature to His people. So many people talk about God hiding His face; but there are only two things that ever caused God to do so—sin or unbelief. Nothing else can. It is the very nature of the sun to shine, and it can't help shining on and on. "God is love," and, speaking with all reverence, He can't help loving. We see His goodness toward the ungodly, and His compassion on the erring, but His fatherly love is manifested toward all His children. "Ever with me"; but, you say, "Is it possible to be always happy and dwelling with God?" Yes, certainly, and there are many Scripture promises as to this. Look at the Epistle to the Hebrews, where we read of "boldness to enter within the veil";

how often, too, does David speak of hiding "in the secret of his tabernacle," and "dwelling under the shadow of the Almighty."

My message is that the Lord your God desires to have you living continually in the light of His countenance. Your business, your temper, your circumstances, of which you complain as hindering, are they stronger than God? If you come and ask God to shine in and upon you, you will see and prove that He can do it, and that you as a believer may walk all the day and every day in the light of His love. That is "full salvation." "'Ever with Thee'; I never knew it, Lord, and so I did not enjoy it, but I do now."

Unlimited Partnership-"All I have is thine." The elder son complained of the father's gracious reception of the prodigal, of all the feasting and rejoicing over his return, while to him had never been given a kid that he might make merry with his friends. The father, in the tenderness of his love, answers him, "Son, you were always in my house; you had only to ask and you would have got all you desired and required." And that is what our Father says to all His children. But you are saying, "I am so weak, I cannot conquer my sins, I can't manage to keep right, I can't do this and the other thing." No, but God can; and all the time He is saying to you: "All I have is thine; for in Christ I have given it to you. All the Spirit's power and wisdom, all the riches of Christ, all the love of the Father; there is nothing that I have but is thine; I as God am God, that I may love, keep, and bless thee." Thus God speaks, but it seems all a dream to some. Why are you so poor? God's Word is sure, and does He not promise all this? See in John, chapters 14 to 16, how He tells us that we may have wonderful answers to prayer if we come in Jesus' name and abide in Him. Do we really believe that it is possible for a Christian to live such a life?

Now, we have looked at this high privilege which is for all, so we pass on to consider our second point: The Low Experience of many of God's dear

children. What is it? Just living in poverty and starvation. The elder son, the child of a rich man, living in utter poverty!-"never had a kid," while all that was his father's was his-just exactly the state of many a child of God. The way He wants us to live is in the fullest fellowship of all His blessings, yet what a contrast!

Ask some if their lives are full of joy; why, they don't even believe it is possible to be always happy and holy. "How could we get on thus in business?" they say; and they imagine that the life of fullest blessing possible to them must be one of sighing and sadness and sorrow.

I asked a dear woman at the Cape-a devoted Christian woman-how she was getting on. She answered that in her experience it was sometimes light and sometimes darkness, and argued that, as this was so in nature, the same thing held good in the kingdom of grace. So she just gave herself up to a wretched experience. But I don't read in the Bible that there is to be any night or darkness in the believer's experience; on the contrary, I read, "thy sun shall no more go down"; yet there are many who actually believe that there is nothing so good for them. As I said already, nothing can hide God from us but sin and unbelief. If you are in spiritual poverty, and there is no joy, no experience of victory over sin, temper, wandering, why is it so? "Oh," you say, "I'm too weak, I must fall." But does not the Scripture say that He is "able to keep you from falling [stumbling]"? A minister once told me That, although God is able, the verse does not say He is willing to do it. God does not mock us, beloved; if He says He is "able," then it is a proof of His willingness to do it. Do let us believe God's Word and examine our own experience in the light of it.

Again, are you working and bearing much fruit for God, and do people by your life see and say, "God is with that man, keeping him humble, pure, and

heavenly minded"? Or are they forced to confess that you are just a very ordinary Christian, easily provoked, worldly, and not heavenly minded? That is not the life God wants us to live, brethren. We have a rich Father, and as no true earthly father would like to see his child in rags, or without shoes and proper clothing, etc., neither does our God; but He wishes to fill up our life with richest and choicest blessings. How many Sunday school teachers there are who teach, and teach, and hope for the conversion of their scholars, but yet they can't say God uses them to the conversion of any of them. They enjoy no close fellowship with God, no victory over sin, no power to convince the world. To which class do you belong? The low-level, or the fully possessed? Confess it today. These two sons represent two classes of Christians: the prodigal-away backslidden; the elder son-out of full fellowship with God. They were alike poor, and the elder son needed as great a change as did the prodigal; he needed to repent and confess and claim his full privileges; and so ought all low-level Christians to repent, confess, and claim full salvation. Oh, both of you, come today and say, "Father, I have sinned."

Now, we ask, What is the cause of this terrible discrepancy? Why the great difference in the experience, I wonder? Ask yourself, "What is the reason I am not enjoying this full blessing? God's Word speaks of it, others speak of it, and I see some who are living in it." Oh, do ask the reason; come to God and say: "Why is it I never live the life You want me to live?"

You will find the answer in our story. The elder son had an un-childlike spirit, and entertained wrong thoughts about his father; and, if you had known the real character of your Father, your life would have been all right. You have, as it were, said, "I never got a kid to make merry; my Father is rich, but He never gives. I have prayed quite enough, but God does not answer me. I

hear other people say that God fills and satisfies them, but He never does that for me."

A dear minister told me once that such a life was not for everybody, that it was of God's sovereignty to give this to whomsoever He pleased. Friends, there is no doubt as to God's sovereignty. He dispenses His gifts as He will; we are not all Pauls or Peters; places at the right and left hand of God are prepared for whomsoever He will. But this is not a matter of divine sovereignty; it is a question of child's heritage. The Father's love offers to give to every child in actual experience His full salvation. Now look at an earthly father. His children are of various ages, but all have equal right to the joy of their father's countenance. True, he gives to his son of twenty years more money than to the son of five, and he has more to speak of to the boy of fifteen than to the child of three; but, as regards his love toward them, it is all the same, and in their privileges as children they are all alike. And God's love to His dear children is all the same. Oh, do not try to throw the blame on God, but say, "I have had hard thoughts of Thee, O God, and I have sinned. As a father I have done for my children what I did not believe God was able and willing to do for me, and I have been lacking in childlike faith." Oh, do believe in the love, the willingness and power of God to give you full salvation, and a change must surely come.

Now let us consider the Way of Restoration: how to get out of this poor experience. The prodigal repented and so must those children of God who have been living within sight of, but not enjoying, His promises. Conversion is generally sudden and a long repentance is usually a long impenitence. Many in the Church of Christ think it must take a long time to get into full salvation. Yes, it will take a long time if you are to do it yourself-indeed, you never will. No, no, friend, if you come and trust God it can be done in a

moment. By God's grace give yourself up to Him. Don't say, "What's the use? It will do no good"; but put yourself, as you are in sin and weakness, into the bosom of your Father. God will deliver you, and you will find that it is only one step out of the darkness into the light. Say, "Father, what a wretch I have been, in being with Thee and yet not believing Thy love to me!"

Yes, I come today with a call to "repent"; addressed, not to the unsaved, but to those who know what it is to be pardoned. For have you not sinned in the hard thoughts you have had of God, and is there not a longing, a thirsting and hungering after something better? Come, then, repent, and just believe that God does blot out the sin of your unbelief. Do you believe it? Oh, do not dishonor God by unbelief, but come today and confidently claim full salvation. Then trust in Him to keep you. This seems difficult to some; but there is no difficulty about it. God will shine His light upon you always, saying, "Son, thou art ever with me"; and all you have to do is to dwell in and walk in that light.

I began by saying there are two classes of Christians: those who enjoy full salvation, and those who do not understand about it. Well, if it is not clear to you, ask God to make it clear. But if you do understand about it, remember it is a definite act. Just let yourself go into the arms of God; hear Him say, "All is thine"; then you say, "Praise God, I believe, I accept, I give up myself to Him, and I believe God gives Himself now to me!"

Chapter 32

Ye Are the Branches

"Ye are the branches"—(John 15:5).

What a simple thing it is to be a branch—the branch of a tree, or the branch of a vine! The branch grows out of the vine, or out of the tree, and there it lives and in due time bears fruit. It has no responsibility except just to receive from the root and stem sap and nourishment. And if we only by the Holy Spirit knew our relationship to Jesus Christ, our work would be changed into the brightest and most heavenly thing upon earth. Instead of there ever being soul-weariness or exhaustion, our work would be like a new experience, linking us to Jesus as nothing else can. For, alas! is it not often true that our work comes between us and Jesus? What folly! The very work He has to do in me, and I for Him, I take up in such a way that it separates me from Christ. Many a laborer in the vineyard has complained that he has too much work, and no time for close communion with Jesus, and that his usual work weakens his inclination for prayer, and that his too much intercourse with men darkens the spiritual life. Sad thought, that the bearing of fruit should separate the branch from the vine! That must be because we have looked upon our work as something else than the branch bearing fruit. May God deliver us from every false thought about the Christian life!

Now, just a few thoughts about this blessed branch-life.

In the first place it is a life of absolute dependence. The branch has nothing: it

just depends upon the vine for everything. That word, absolute dependence, is one of the most solemn and large and precious of words. A great German theologian wrote two large volumes some years ago, to show that the whole of Calvin's theology is summed up in that one principle of absolute dependence upon God; and he was right. If you can learn every moment of the day to depend upon God, everything will come right. You will get the higher life if you depend absolutely upon God.

Must I understand that when I have got to work, when I have to preach a sermon, or address a Bible class, or go out and visit the poor neglected ones, that all the responsibility of the work is on Christ?

That is exactly what Christ wants you to understand. Christ desires that in all your work the very foundation should be the simple, blessed consciousness: Christ must care for all.

And how does He fulfill the trust of that dependence? He does it by sending down the Holy Spirit-not now and then only as a special gift, for remember the relation between the vine and the branches is such that hourly, daily, unceasingly, there is the living connection maintained. The sap does not flow for a time, and then stop, and then flow again, but from moment to moment the sap flows from the vine to the branches. And just so, my Lord Jesus wants me to take that blessed position as a worker, and, morning by morning and day by day and hour by hour and step by step, in every work I have to go out to, just to abide before Him in the simple, utter helplessness of one who knows nothing, and is nothing, and can do nothing.

Absolute dependence upon God is the secret of all power in work. The branch has nothing but what it gets from the vine, and you and I can have nothing but what we get from Jesus.

But secondly, the life of the branch is not only a life of entire dependence, but of deep restfulness. Oh, that little branch, if it could think, and if it could feel, and if it could speak-and if we could have a little branch today to talk to us, and if we would say: "Come, branch of the vine, tell me, I want to learn from thee how I can be a true branch of the living Vine," what would it answer? The little branch would whisper: "Man, I hear that you are wise, and I know that you can do a great many wonderful things. I know you have much strength and wisdom given to you, but I have one lesson for you. With all your hurry and effort in Christ's work you never prosper. The first thing you need is to come and rest in your Lord Jesus. That is what I do. Since I grew out of that vine I have spent years and years, and all I have done is just to rest in the vine. When the time of spring came I had no anxious thought nor care. The vine began to pour its' sap into me, and to give the bud and leaf. And when the time of summer came I had no care, and in the great heat I trusted the vine to bring moisture to keep me fresh. And in the time of harvest, when the owner came to pluck the grapes, I had no care. If there was anything in the grapes not good, the owner never blamed the branch; the blame was always on the vine. And if you would be a true branch of Christ, the living Vine, just rest on Him. Let Christ bear the responsibility."

You say: "Won't that make me slothful?" I tell you it will not. No one who learns to rest upon the living Christ can become slothful, for the closer your contact with Christ the more of the Spirit of His zeal and love will be borne in upon you. But, oh! begin to work in the midst of your entire dependence by adding to it deep restfulness. A man sometimes tries and tries to be dependent upon Christ, but he worries himself about this absolute dependence: he tries and he cannot get it. But let him sink down into entire restfulness every day.

Rest in Christ, who can give wisdom and strength, and you do not know how that restfulness will often prove to be the very best part of your message. You plead with people and you argue, and they get the idea: There is a man arguing and striving with me. They only feel: Here are two men dealing with each other. But if you will let the deep rest of God come over you, the rest in Christ Jesus, the peace and rest and holiness of heaven, that restfulness will bring a blessing to the heart, even more than the words you speak.

But a third thought. The branch teaches a lesson of much fruitfulness. You know the Lord Jesus repeated that word "fruit" often in that parable; He spoke first of fruit, and then of more fruit, and then of much fruit. Yes, you are ordained not only to bear fruit, but to bear much fruit. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." In the first place, Christ said: "I am the Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman who has charge of Me and you." He who will watch over the connection between Christ and the branches is God; and it is in the power of God, through Christ, that we are to bear fruit.

O Christians! you know this world is perishing for the lack of workers. And it needs not only more workers. The workers are saying, some more earnestly than others, "We need not only more workers, but we need that our workers should have a new power, a different life-that the workers should be able to bring more blessing."

What is wanting? There is wanting the close connection between the worker and the heavenly Vine. Christ, the heavenly Vine, has blessings that He could pour on tens of thousands who are perishing. Christ, the heavenly Vine, has power to provide the heavenly grapes. But "ye are the branches," and you cannot bear heavenly fruit unless you are in close connection with Jesus Christ.

Do not confound work and fruit. There may be a good deal of work for Christ that is not the fruit of the heavenly Vine. Do not seek for work only. Oh! study this question of fruit-bearing. It means the very life and the very power and the very Spirit and the very love within the heart of the Son of God-it means the heavenly Vine Himself coming into your heart and mine.

Stand in close connection with the heavenly Vine and say: "Lord Jesus, nothing less than the sap that flows through Thyself, nothing less than the Spirit of Thy divine life is what we ask. Lord Jesus, I pray Thee let Thy Spirit flow through me in all my work for Thee." I tell you again that the sap of the heavenly Vine is nothing but the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is nothing but the life of the heavenly Vine, and what you must get from Christ is nothing less than a strong inflow of the Holy Spirit. You need it exceedingly, and you want nothing more than that. Remember that. Do not expect Christ to give a bit of strength here, and a bit of blessing yonder, and a bit of help over there. As the vine does its work in giving its own peculiar sap to the branch, so expect Christ to give His own Holy Spirit into your heart, and then you will bear much fruit. And if you have only begun to bear fruit, and are listening to the word of Christ in the parable, "more fruit," "much fruit," remember that in order that you should bear more fruit you just require more of Jesus in your life and heart.

A fourth thought. The life of the branch is a life of close communion. Let us again ask: What has the branch to do? You know that precious, inexhaustible word that Christ used: Abide. Your life is to be an abiding life. And how is the abiding to be? It is to be just like the branch in the vine, abiding every minute of the day. There are the branches, in close communion, in unbroken communion, with the vine, from January to December. And cannot I live every day-it is to me an almost terrible thing that we should ask the question

—cannot I live in abiding communion with the heavenly Vine? You say, "But I am so much occupied with other things." You may have ten hours' hard work daily, during which your brain has to be occupied with temporal things; God orders it so. But the abiding work is the work of the heart, not of the brain, the work of the heart clinging to and resting in Jesus, a work in which the Holy Spirit links us to Christ Jesus. Oh, do believe that deeper down than the brain, deep down in the inner life, you can abide in Christ, so that every moment you are free the consciousness will come: Blessed Jesus, I am still in Thee. If you will learn for a time to put aside other work and to get into this abiding contact with the heavenly Vine, you will find that fruit will come.

What is the application to our life with regard to this abiding communion? What does it mean? It means close fellowship with Christ in secret prayer. I am sure there are Christians who do long for the higher life, and who sometimes have got a great blessing, and have at times found a great inflow of heavenly joy and a great outflow of heavenly gladness; and yet after a time it has passed away. They have not understood that close, personal, actual communion with Christ is an absolute necessity for daily life. Take time to be alone with Christ. Nothing in heaven or earth can free you from the necessity for that, if you are to be happy and holy Christians.

Oh, how many Christians look upon it as a burden, and a tax, and a duty, and a difficulty to get much alone with God! That is the great hindrance to our Christian life everywhere. We need more quiet fellowship with God, and I tell you in the name of the heavenly Vine that you cannot be healthy branches, branches into which the heavenly sap can flow, unless you take plenty of time for communion with God. If you are not willing to sacrifice time to get alone with Him, and give Him time every day to work in you, and to keep up the link of connection between you and Himself, He cannot give

you that blessing of His unbroken fellowship. Jesus Christ asks you to live in close communion with Him. Let every heart say: "O Christ, it is this I long for, it is this I choose." And He will gladly give it to you.

And then my last thought. The life of the branch is a life of entire surrender. This word, entire surrender, is a great and solemn word, and I believe we do not understand its meaning. But yet the little branch preaches it. "Have you anything to do, little branch, beside bearing grapes?" "No, nothing." "Are you fit for nothing?" "Fit for nothing! The Bible says that a bit of vine cannot even be used as a pen; it is fit for nothing but to be burned." "And now, what do you understand, little branch, about your relation to the vine?" "My relation is just this: I am utterly given up to the vine, and the vine can give me as much or as little sap as it chooses. Here I am at its disposal, and the vine can do with me what it likes!"

Oh, we need this entire surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is one of the most difficult points to make clear, and one of the most important and needful points to explain-what this entire surrender is. It is an easy thing for a man or a number of men to offer themselves up to God for entire consecration, and to say, "Lord, it is my desire to give up myself entirely to Thee." That is of great value and often brings very rich blessing. But the one question I ought to study quietly is: What is meant by entire surrender? It means that just as literally as Christ was given up entirely to God, I am given up entirely to Christ. Is that too strong? Some of you think so. Some think that never can be; that just as entirely and absolutely as Christ gave up His life to do nothing but seek the Father's pleasure, and depend on the Father absolutely and entirely, I am to do nothing but to seek the pleasure of Christ. But that is actually true. Christ Jesus came to breathe His own Spirit into us, to make us find our very highest happiness in living entirely for God, just as

He did. O beloved brethren, if that is the case, then I ought to say: "Yes, as true as it is of that little branch of the vine, so true, by God's grace, I would have it be of me. I would live day by day that Christ may be able to do with me what He will."

Ah! here comes the terrible mistake that lies at the bottom of so much of our own religion. A man thinks: "I have my business and family duties, and my relations as a citizen, and all this I cannot change. And now alongside of all this I am to take in religion and the service of God as something that will keep me from sin. God help me to perform my duties properly!" That is not right. When Christ came, He came and bought the sinner with His blood. If there was a slave market here and I were to buy a slave, I should take that slave away to my own house from his old surroundings, and he would live at my house as my personal property, and I could order him about all the day. And if he were a faithful slave he would live as having no will and no interests of his own, his one care being to promote the well-being and honor of his master. And in like manner I, who have been bought with the blood of Christ, have been bought to live every day with the one thought-How can I please my Master?

Oh, we find the Christian life so difficult because we seek for God's blessing while we live in our own will. We would be glad to live the Christian life according to our own liking. We make our own plans and choose our own work, and then we ask the Lord Jesus to come in and take care that sin shall not conquer us too much, and that we shall not go too far wrong; we ask Him to come in and give us so much of His blessing. But our relation to Jesus ought to be such that we are entirely at His disposal, and every day come to Him humbly and straightforwardly, and say: "Lord, is there anything in me that is not according to Thy will, that has not been ordered by Thee, or that is

not entirely given up to Thee?" Oh, if we would wait and wait patiently, there would spring up a relationship between us and Christ so close and so tender that we should afterwards be amazed how far distant our intercourse with Him had previously been.

I know there are a great many difficulties about this question of holiness; I know that all do not think exactly the same with regard to it. But that would be to me a matter of comparative indifference if I could see that all are honestly longing to be free from every sin. But I am afraid that unconsciously there are in hearts often compromises with the idea: "We cannot be without sin; we must sin a little every day—we cannot help it." Oh, that people would actually cry to God: "Lord, do keep me from sin!" Give yourself utterly to Jesus, and ask Him to do His very utmost for you in keeping you from sin.

In conclusion, let me gather up all in one word. Christ Jesus said: "I am the vine, ye are the branches." In other words: "I, the living One who have so completely given Myself to you, am the Vine. You cannot trust Me too much. I am the Almighty Worker, full of a divine life and power." Christians, you are the branches of the Lord Jesus Christ. If there is in your heart the consciousness: "I am not a strong, healthy, fruit-bearing branch, I am not closely linked with Jesus, I am not living in Him as I should be"—then listen to Him saying: "I am the Vine, I will receive you, I will draw you to Myself, I will bless you, I will strengthen you, I will fill you with My Spirit. I, the Vine, have taken you to be My branches; I have given Myself utterly to you; children, give yourselves utterly to Me. I have surrendered Myself as God absolutely to you; I became Man and died for you that I might be entirely yours. Come and surrender yourselves entirely to be Mine."

What shall our answer be? Oh, let it be a prayer from the depths of our heart, that the living Christ may take each one of us and link us close to Himself.

Let our prayer be that He, the living Vine, shall so link each of us to Himself that we shall go on our way with our hearts singing: "He is my Vine, and I am His branch; I want nothing more—now I have the everlasting Vine." Then when you get alone with Him, worship and adore Him, praise and trust Him, love Him and wait for His love. "Thou art my Vine, and I am Thy branch. It is enough, my soul is satisfied." Glory to His blessed name!

Helps to Intercession^(TOC)

Preface

Pray Without Ceasing

Pray Without Ceasing—Who can do this? How can one do it who is surrounded by the cares of daily life? How can a mother love her child without ceasing? How can the eyelid without ceasing hold itself ready to protect the eye? How can I breathe and feel and hear without ceasing? Because all these are the functions of a healthy, natural life. And so, if the spiritual life be healthy, under the full power of the Holy Spirit, praying without ceasing will be natural. ***Pray Without Ceasing***—Does it refer to continual acts of prayer, in which we are to persevere till we obtain, or to the spirit of prayerfulness that should animate us all the day? It includes both. The example of our Lord Jesus shows us this. We have to enter our closet for special seasons of prayer; we are at times to persevere there in importunate prayer. We are also all the day to walk in God's presence, with the whole heart set upon heavenly things. Without set times of prayer, the spirit of prayer will be dull and feeble. Without the continual prayerfulness, the set times will not avail.

Pray Without Ceasing—Does that refer to prayer for ourselves or others? To both. It is because many confine it to themselves that they fail so in practicing it. It is only when the branch gives itself to bear fruit, more fruit, much fruit, that it can live a healthy life, and expect a rich inflow of sap. The death of Christ brought Him to the place of everlasting intercession. Your death with

Him to sin and self sets you free from the care of self, and elevates you to the dignity of intercessor—one who can get life and blessing from God for others. Know your calling; begin this your work. Give yourself wholly to it, and before you know it you will be finding something of this "Praying always" within you.

Pray Without Ceasing—How can I learn it? The best way of learning to do a thing—in fact the only way—is to do it. Begin by setting apart some time every day, say ten or fifteen minutes, in which you say to God and to yourself, that you come to Him now as an intercessor for others. Let it be after your morning or evening prayer, or any other time. If you cannot secure the same time every day, do not be troubled. Only see that you do your work. Christ chose you and appointed you to pray for others. If at first you do not feel any special urgency or faith or power in your prayers, do not let that hinder you. Quietly tell your Lord Jesus of your feebleness; believe that the Holy Spirit is in you to teach you to pray, and be assured that if you begin, God will help you. God cannot help you unless you begin and keep on.

Pray Without Ceasing—How do I know what to pray for? If once you begin, and think of all the needs around you, you will soon find enough. But to help you, this little book is issued with subjects and hints for prayer for a month. It is meant that we should use it month by month, until we know more fully how to follow the Spirit's leading, and have learned, if need be, to make our own list of subjects, and then can dispense with it. In regard to the use of these helps, a few words may be needed.

- 1. How to Pray***—You notice for every day two headings—the one ***What to Pray***; the other, ***How to Pray***. If the subjects only were given, one might fall into the routine of mentioning names and things before God, and the work would become a

burden. The hints under the heading ***How to Pray***, are meant to remind you of the spiritual nature of the work, of the need of Divine help, and to encourage faith in the certainty that God, through the Spirit, will give us grace to pray aright and will also hear our prayer. One does not at once learn to take his place boldly, and to dare to believe that he will be heard. Therefore take a few moments each day to listen to God's voice reminding you of how certainly even you will be heard, and calling on you to pray in that faith in your Father, to claim and take the blessing you plead for. And let these words about ***How to Pray***, enter your hearts and occupy your thoughts at other times, too. The work of intercession is Christ's great work on earth, entrusted to Him because He gave Himself a sacrifice to God for men. The work of intercession is the greatest work a Christian can do. Give yourself as a sacrifice to God for men, and the work will become your glory and your joy, too.

2. *What to Pray*—Scripture calls us to pray for many things: for all saints; for all men, for kings and all rulers; for all who are in adversity; for the sending forth of laborers; for those who labor in the gospel; for all converts; for believers who have fallen into sin; for one another in our own immediate circles. The Church is now so much larger than when the New Testament was written; the number of forms of work and workers is so much greater; the needs of the Church and the world are so much better known, that we need to take time and thought to see where prayer is needed, and to what our hearts are most drawn out. The Scriptural calls to prayer demand a

large heart, taking in all saints, and all men, and all needs. An attempt has been made in these helps to indicate what the chief subjects are that need prayer, and that ought to interest every Christian.

It will be felt difficult by many to pray for such large spheres as are sometimes mentioned. Let it be understood that in each case we may make special intercession for our own circle of interest coming under that heading. And it is hardly needful to say, further, that where one subject appears of more special interest or urgency than another we are free for a time, day after day, to take up that subject. If only time be really given to intercession, and the spirit of believing intercession be cultivated, the object is attained. While, on the one hand, the heart must be enlarged at times to take in all, the more pointed and definite our prayer can be, the better. With this view paper is left blank on which we can write down special petitions we desire to urge before God.

3. *Answers to Prayer*—More than one little book has been published in which Christians may keep a register of their petitions, and note when they are answered. Room has been left on every page for this, so that more definite petitions with regard to individual souls or special spheres of work may be recorded, and the answer expected. When we pray for all saints, or for missions in general, it is difficult to know when or how our prayer is answered, or whether our prayer has had any part in bringing the answer. It is of extreme importance that we should prove that God hears us, and to this end take

note of what answers to look for, and when they come. On the day of praying for all saints, take the saints of your congregation, or in your prayer meeting, and ask for a revival among them. Take, in connection with missions, some special station or missionary you are interested in, or more than one, and plead for blessing. And expect and look for its coming, that you may praise God.

4. *Prayer Circles*—In publishing this invitation to intercession, there is no desire to add another to the many existing prayer unions or praying bands. The first object is to stir the many Christians who practically, through ignorance of their calling or unbelief as to their prayer availing much, take but very little part in the work of intercession; and then to help those who do pray to some fuller apprehension of the greatness of the work, and the need of giving their whole strength to it. There is a circle of prayer which asks for prayer on the first day of every month for the fuller manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit throughout the Church. I have given the words of that invitation as subject for the first day, and taken the same thought as keynote throughout. The more one thinks of the need and the promise, and the greatness of the obstacles to be overcome in prayer, the more one feels it must become our life work day by day, that to which every other interest is subordinated.

But while not forming a large prayer union, it is suggested that it may be found helpful to have small prayer circles to unite in prayer, either for one month, with some special object

introduced daily along with the others, or through a year or longer, with the view of strengthening each other in the grace of intercession. If a minister were to invite some of his neighboring brethren to join for some special requests along with the printed subjects for supplication, or a number of the more earnest members of his congregation to unite in prayer for revival, some might be trained to take their place in the great work of intercession, who now stand idle because no man hath hired them.

5. *Who is Sufficient for These Things?*—The more we study and try to practice this grace of intercession, the more we become overwhelmed by its greatness and our feebleness. Let every such impression lead us to listen: My grace is sufficient for thee, and to answer truthfully: Our sufficiency is of God. Take courage; it is in the intercession of Christ you are called to take part. The burden and the agony, the triumph and the victory are all His. Learn from Him, yield to His Spirit in you, to know how to pray. He gave Himself a sacrifice to God for men, that He might have the right and power of intercession. "He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Let your faith rest boldly on His finished work. Let your heart wholly identify itself with Him in His death and His life. Like Him, give yourself to God a sacrifice for men; it is your highest nobility; it is your true and full union with Him; it will be to you, as to Him, your power of intercession. Beloved Christian! come and give your whole heart and life to intercession, and you will know its blessedness and its power. God asks nothing less; the world needs nothing less; Christ

asks nothing less; let us offer to God nothing less.

First Day

What to Pray—For the Power of the Holy Spirit.

I bow my Knees unto the Father, that He would grant you that ye may be strengthened with power through His Spirit—Ephesians 3:14-16.

Wait for the promise of the Father—Acts 1:4.

"The fuller manifestation of the grace and energy of the blessed Spirit of God, in the removal of all that is contrary to God's revealed will, so that we grieve not the Holy Spirit, but that He may work in mightier power in the Church, for the exaltation of Christ and the blessing of souls." God has one promise to and through His exalted Son; our Lord has one gift to His Church; the Church has one need; all prayer unites in the one petition—the power of the Holy Spirit. Make it your one prayer.

How to Pray—As a Child Asks a Father

If a son ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone! How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?—Luke 11:11, 13.

Ask as simply and trustfully as a child asks bread. You can do this because "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father. "This Spirit is in you to give you childlike confidence. In the faith of His praying in you, ask for the power of that Holy Spirit everywhere. Mention places or circles where you specially ask it to be seen.

Special Petitions

Second Day

What to Pray—For the Spirit of Supplication

The Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us—Romans 8:26.

I will pour out the Spirit of Supplication—Zechariah 12:10.

"The evangelization of the world depends first of all upon a revival of prayer. Deeper than the need of men—aye, deep down at the bottom of our spiritless life—is the need for the forgotten secret of prevailing, world-wide prayer."

Every child of God has the Holy Spirit in him to pray. God waits to give the Spirit in full measure. Ask for yourself, and all who join, the outpouring of the Spirit of Supplication. Ask it for your own prayer circle.

How to Pray—In the Spirit

"With all prayer and supplication, praying at all seasons in the Spirit"—Ephesians 6:18.

Praying in the Holy Spirit—Jude 20.

Our Lord gave His disciples on His resurrection day the Holy Spirit to enable them to wait for the full outpouring on the day of Pentecost. It is only in the power of the Spirit already in us, acknowledged and yielded to, that we can pray for His fuller manifestation. Say to the Father, it is the Spirit of His Son in you urging you to plead His promise.

Special Petitions

Third Day

What to Pray—For All Saints

With all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all saints—Ephesians 6:18.

Every member of a body is interested in the welfare of the whole, and exists to help and complete the others. Believers are one body, and ought to pray, not so much for the welfare of their own church or society, but, first of all, for all saints. This large, unselfish love is the proof that Christ's Spirit and Love are teaching them to pray. Pray first for all and then for the believers around you.

How to Pray—In the Love of the Spirit

By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another—John 13:35.

I pray that they all may be one, that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me—John 17:21.

I beseech you, brethren, by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me—Romans 15:30.

Above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves—1 Peter 4:8.

If we are to pray we must love. Let us say to God we do love all His saints; let us say we love specially every child of His we know. Let us pray with fervent love, in the love of the Spirit.

Special Petitions

Fourth Day

What to Pray—For the Spirit of Holiness

God is the Holy One. His people is a holy people. He speaks: ***I am holy: I am the Lord which make you holy.*** Christ prayed: ***Sanctify them. Make them holy through Truth.*** Paul prayed: ***God establish your hearts unblameable in holiness. God sanctify you wholly!***

Pray for all saints—God's holy ones—throughout the Church, that the Spirit of holiness may rule them. Specially for new converts. For the saints in your own neighborhood or congregation. For any you are specially interested in. Think of their special need, weakness, or sin, and pray that God may make them holy.

How to Pray—Trusting in God 's Omnipotence

The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. When we think of the great things we ask for, of how little likelihood there is of their coming, of our own insignificance, prayer is not only wishing, or asking, but believing and accepting. Be still before God and ask Him to let you know Him as the Almighty One, and leave your petitions with Him Who doeth wonders.

Special Petitions

Fifth Day

What to Pray—That God's People May Be Kept from the World

Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest Keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world—John 17:11, 15, 16.

In the last night Christ asked three things of His disciples: that they might be kept as those who are not of the world; that they might be sanctified; that they might be one in love. You cannot do better than pray as Jesus prayed. Ask for God's people that they may be kept separate from the world and its spirit; that they, by the Spirit, may live as those who are not of the world.

How to Pray—Having Confidence before God

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight—1 John 3:21, 22.

Learn these words by heart. Get them into your heart. Join the ranks of those who, with John, draw near to God with an assured heart, that does not condemn them, having confidence toward God. In this spirit pray for your brother who sins (1 John 5:16). In the quiet confidence of an obedient child, plead for those of your brethren who may be giving way to sin. Pray for all to be kept from the evil. And say often, "What we ask, we receive, because we keep and do."

Special Petitions

Sixth Day

What to Pray—For the Spirit of Love in the Church

I pray that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and Thou in Me; that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.. that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them—John 17:22, 23, 26.

The fruit of the Spirit is love—Galatians 5:22.

Believers are one in Christ, as He is one with the Father. The love of God rests on them, and can dwell in them. Pray that the power of the Holy Ghost may so work this love in believers, that the world may see and know God's love in them. Pray much for this.

How to Pray—As One of God 's Remembrancers

I have set watchmen on thy walls, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence, and give Him no rest—Isaiah 62:6.

Study these words until your whole soul be filled with the consciousness, I am appointed intercessor. Enter God's presence in that faith. Study the world's need with that thought—it is my work to intercede; the Holy Spirit will teach me for what and how. Let it be an abiding consciousness: My great at lifework, like Christ's, is intercession—to pray for believers and those who do not yet know God.

Special Petitions

Seventh Day

What to Pray—For the Power of the Holy Spirit on Ministers

I beseech you that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me—
Romans 15:30.

"He will deliver us; ye also helping together on our behalf by your supplication."—2 Corinthians 1:10, 11.

What a great host of ministers there is in Christ's Church. What need they have of prayer. What a power they might be, if they were all clothed with the power of the Holy Ghost. Pray definitely for this; long for it. Think of your minister, and ask it very specially for him. Connect every thought of the ministry, in your town or neighborhood or the world, with the prayer that all may be filled with the Spirit. Plead for them the promise, "Tarry until ye be clothed with power from on high."—Luke 24:49. "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you."—Acts 1:8.

How to Pray—In Secret

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret—Matthew 6:6.

He withdrew again into the mountain to pray, Himself alone—Matthew 14:23; John 6:15.

Take time and realize, when you are alone with God: Here am I now, face to face with God, to intercede for His servants. Do not think you have no influence, or that your prayer will not be missed. Your prayer and faith will

make a difference. Cry in secret to God for His ministers.

Special Petitions

Eighth Day

What to Pray—For the Spirit on All Christian Workers

Ye also helping together on our behalf that for the gift bestowed upon us by means of many, thanks may be given by many on our behalf—2 Corinthians 1:11.

What multitudes of workers in connection with our churches and missions, our railways and postmen, our soldiers and sailors, our young men and young women, our fallen men and women, our poor and sick! God be praised for this! What could they not accomplish if each were living in the fullness of the Holy Spirit? Pray for them; it makes you a partner in their work, and you will praise God each time you hear of blessing anywhere.

How to Pray—With Definite Petitions

What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?—Luke 18:41.

The Lord knew what the man wanted, and yet He asked him. The utterance of our wish gives point to the transaction in which we are engaged with God, and so awakens faith and expectation. Be very definite in your petitions, so as to know what answer you may look for. Just think of the great host of workers, and ask and expect God definitely to bless them in answer to the prayer of His people. Then ask still more definitely for workers around you. Intercession is not the breathing out of pious wishes; its aim is—in believing, persevering prayer—to receive and bring down blessing.

Special Petitions

Ninth Day

What to Pray—For God's Spirit on Our Mission Work

The evangelization of the world depends first of all upon a revival of prayer. Deeper than the need for men—aye, deep down at the bottom of our spiritless life, is the need for the forgotten secret of prevailing, world-wide prayer.

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul. Then when they had fasted and prayed, they sent them away. So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed—Acts 13:3, 4.

Pray that our mission work may all be done in this spirit—waiting on God, hearing the voice of the Spirit, sending forth men with fasting and prayer. Pray that in our churches our mission interest and mission work may be in the power of the Holy Spirit and of prayer. It is a Spirit-filled, praying Church that will send out Spirit-filled missionaries, mightily in prayer.

How to Pray—Take Time

I give myself unto prayer—Psalm 109:4.

We will give ourselves continually to prayer—Acts 6:4.

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God—Ecclesiastes 5:2.

And He continued all night in prayer to God—Luke 6:12.

Time is one of the chief standards of value. The time we give is a proof of the interest we feel. We need time with God—to realize His presence; to wait for

Him to make Himself known; to consider and feel the needs we plead for; to take our place in Christ; to pray till we can believe that we have received. Take time in prayer, and pray down blessing on the mission work of the Church.

Special Petitions

Tenth Day

What to Pray—For God's Spirit on Our Missionaries

What the world needs today is not only more missionaries, but the outpouring of God 's Spirit on everyone whom He has sent out to work for Him in the foreign field. Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be My witnesses unto the uttermost part of the earth—Acts 1:8.

God always gives His servants power equal to the work He asks of them. Think of the greatness and difficulty of this work—casting Satan out of his strongholds—and pray that everyone who takes part in it may receive and do all his work in the power of the Holy Ghost. Think of the difficulties of your missionaries, and pray for them.

How to Pray—Trusting God 's Faithfulness

He is faithful that promised. She counted Him faithful who promised—Hebrews 10:23; 11:11.

Just think of God's promises to His Son, concerning His kingdom; to the Church, concerning the heathen; to His servants, concerning their work; to yourself, concerning your prayer; and pray in the assurance that He is faithful, and only waits for prayer and faith to fulfil them. "Faithful is He that calleth you" (to pray), "who also will do it" (what He has promised). 1 Thessalonians 5:24. Take up individual missionaries, make yourself one with them, and pray till you know that you are heard. Oh, begin to live for Christ's kingdom as the one thing worth living for!

Special Petitions

Eleventh Day

What to Pray—For More Laborers

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth labourers into His harvest—Matthew 9:38.

What a remarkable call of the Lord Jesus for help from His disciples in getting the need supplied. What an honor put upon prayer. What a proof that God wants prayer and will hear it. Pray for laborers, for all students in theological seminaries, training homes, Bible institutes, that they may not go, unless He fits them and sends them forth; that our churches may train their students to seek for the sending forth of the Holy Spirit; that all believers may hold themselves ready to be sent forth, or to pray for those who can go.

How to Pray—In Faith, Nothing Doubting

Jesus saith unto them, Have faith in God. Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith shall come to pass, he shall have it—Mark 11:22, 23 the world in respect of sin.

Have faith in God! Ask Him to make Himself known to you as the faithful mighty God, who worketh all in all; and you will be encouraged to believe that He can give suitable and sufficient laborers, however impossible this appears. But, remember, in answer to prayer and faith. Apply this to every opening where a good worker is needed. The work is God's. He can give the right workman. But He must be asked and waited on.

Special Petitions

Twelfth Day

What to Pray—For the Spirit to Convince the World of Sin

I will send the Comforter to you. And He, when He is come, will convict the world in respect of sin—John 1:7, 8.

God's one desire, the one object of Christ's being manifested, is to take away sin. The first work of the Spirit on the world is conviction of sin. Without that, no deep or abiding revival, no powerful conversion. Pray for it, that the gospel may be preached in such power of the Spirit, that men may see that they have rejected and, crucified Christ, and cry out, What shall we do? Pray most earnestly for a mighty power of conviction of sin wherever the gospel is preached.

How to Pray—Stir Up Yourself to Take Hold of God 's Strength

Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me—Isaiah 27:5.

There is none that calleth upon Thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee—Isaiah 64:7.

Stir up the gift of God which is in thee—2 Timothy 1:6.

First, take hold of God's strength. God is a Spirit. I cannot take hold of Him, and hold Him fast, but by the Spirit. Take hold of God's strength, and hold on till it has done for you what He has promised. Pray for the power of the Spirit to convict of sin.

Second, stir up yourself—the power is in you by the Holy Spirit—to take

hold. Give your whole heart and will to it, and say, I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me.

Special Petitions

Thirteenth Day

What to Pray—For the Spirit of Burning

And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion shall be called holy: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, by the Spirit of Judgment and the Spirit of Burning—Isaiah 4:3.

A washing by fire! a cleansing by judgment! He that has passed through this shall be called holy. The power of blessing for the world, the power of work and intercession that will avail, depends upon the spiritual state of the Church; and that can only rise higher as sin is discovered and put away. Judgment must begin at the house of God. There must be conviction of sin for sanctification. Beseech God to give His Spirit as a Spirit of Judgment and a Spirit of Burning—to discover and burn out sin in His people.

How to Pray—In the Name of Christ

Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do. If ye shall ask Me anything in My name, that will I do—John 4:13, 14.

Ask in the name of your Redeemer God, who sits upon the throne. Ask what He has promised, what He gave His blood for, that sin may be put away from among His people, Ask—the prayer is after His own heart—for the spirit of deep conviction of sin to come among His people. Ask for the spirit of burning. Ask in the faith of His name—the faith of what He wills, of what He can do—and look for the answer. Pray that the Church may be blessed, to be made a blessing in the world.

Special Petitions

Fourteenth Day

What to Pray—For the Church of the Future

That the children might not be as their fathers, a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God—Psalm 78:8.

I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thy offspring—Isaiah 44:3.

Pray for the rising generation, who are to come after us. Think of the young men and women and children of this age, and pray for all the agencies at work among them; that in associations and societies and unions, in homes and schools, Christ may be honored, and the Holy Spirit get possession of them. Pray for the young of your neighborhood.

How to Pray—With the Whole Heart

The Lord grant thee according to thine own heart—Psalm 20:4.

Thou hast given him his heart's desire—Psalm 21:2.

I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord—Psalm 119:145.

God lives, and listens to every petition with His whole heart. Each time we pray the whole Infinite God is there to hear. He asks that in each prayer the whole man shall be there too; that we shall cry with our whole heart. Christ gave Himself to God for men; and so He takes up every need into His intercession. If once we seek God with our whole heart, the whole heart will be in every prayer with which we come to this God. Pray with your whole heart for the young.

Special Petitions

Fifteenth Day

What to Pray—For Schools and Colleges

As for Me, this is My Covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee and My Words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever—Isaiah 59:21.

The future of the Church and the world depends, to an extent we little conceive, on the education of the day. The Church may be seeking to evangelize the heathen, and be giving up her own children to secular and materialistic influences. Pray for schools and colleges, and that the Church may realize and fulfill its momentous duty of caring for its children. Pray for godly teachers.

How to Pray—Not Limiting God

They limited the Holy One of Israel—Psalm 78:41.

He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief—Matthew 13:5.

Is anything too hard for the Lord!—Genesis 18:14.

Ah, Lord God! Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power; there is nothing too hard for Thee. Behold, I am the Lord: is there anything too hard for Me!—Jeremiah 32:17, 27.

Beware, in your prayer, above everything, of limiting God, not only by unbelief, but by fancying that you know what He can do. Expect unexpected

things, above all that we ask or think. Each time you intercede, be quiet first and worship God in His glory. Think of what He can do, of how He delights to hear Christ, of your place in Christ, and expect great things.

Special Petitions

Sixteenth Day

What to Pray—For the Power of the Holy Spirit in Our Sunday Schools

Thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and will save thy children—Isaiah 49:25.

Every part of the work of God's Church is His work. He must do it. Prayer is the confession that He will—the surrender of ourselves into His hands to let Him—work in us and through us. Pray for the hundreds of thousands of Sunday School teachers, that those who know God may be filled with His Spirit. Pray for your own Sunday School. Pray for the salvation of the children.

How to Pray—Boldly

We have a great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace—Hebrews 4:14, 16.

These hints to help us in our work of intercession—what are they doing for us? Making us conscious of our feebleness in prayer? Thank God for this. It is the very first lesson we need on the way to pray the effectual prayer that availeth much. Let us persevere, taking each subject boldly to the throne of grace. As we pray we shall learn to pray and to believe and to expect with increasing boldness. Hold fast your assurance: it is at God's command you come as an intercessor. Christ will give you grace to pray aright.

Special Petitions

Seventeenth Day

What to Pray—For Kings and Rulers

I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgiving, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high places; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity—1 Timothy 2:1, 2.

What a faith in the power of prayer! A few feeble and despised Christians are to influence the mighty Roman emperors, and help in securing peace and quietness. Let us believe that prayer is a power that is taken up by God in His rule of the world. Let us pray for our country and its rulers; for all the rulers of the world; for rulers in cities or districts in which we are interested. When God's people unite in this, they may count upon their prayers effecting in the unseen world more than they know. Let faith hold this fast.

How to Pray—The Prayer before God as Incense

And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should add it unto the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel taketh the censer; and he filled it with the fire upon the altar, and cast it upon the earth: and there followed thunder, and voices, and lightning, and an earthquake—Revelation 8:3-5.

The same censer brings the prayer of the saints before God and casts fire upon the earth. The prayers that go up to heaven have their share in the

history of this earth. Be sure that thy prayers enter God's presence.

Special Petitions

Eighteenth Day

What to Pray—For Peace

I exhort therefore first of all, that supplications be made for Kings and all that are in high places; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour—1 Timothy 2:1-3.

He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth—Psalm 46:9

What a terrible sight!—the military armaments in which the nations find their pride. What a terrible thought!—the evil passions that may at any moment bring on war. And what a prospect for suffering and desolation that must come. God can, in answer to the prayer of His people, give peace. Let us pray for it, and for the rule of righteousness on which alone it can be established.

How to Pray—With the Understanding

What is it then will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding—1 Corinthians 14:15.

We need to pray with the spirit, as the vehicle of the intercession of God's Spirit, if we are to take hold of God in faith and power. We need to pray with the understanding, if we are really to enter deeply into the needs we bring before Him. Take time to apprehend intelligently, in each subject, the nature, the extent, the urgency of the request, the ground and way and certainty of God's promise as revealed in His Word. Let the mind affect the heart. Pray with the understanding and with the spirit.

Special Petitions

Nineteenth Day

What to Pray—For the Holy Spirit on Christendom

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof—2 Timothy 3:5.

Thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead—Revelation 3:1.

There are five hundred million nominal Christians. The state of the majority is unspeakably awful. Formality, worldliness, ungodliness, rejection of Christ's service, ignorance, and indifference—to what an extent does all this prevail. We pray for the heathen—oh! do let us pray for those bearing Christ's name—many in worse than heathen darkness. Does not one feel as if one ought to begin to give up his life, and to cry day and night to God for souls? In answer to prayer God gives the power of the Holy Ghost.

How to Pray—In Deep Stillness of Soul

My soul is silent unto God: from Him cometh my salvation—Psalm 62:1.

Prayer has its power in God alone. The nearer a man comes to God Himself, the deeper he enters into God's will; the more he takes hold of God, the more power in prayer. God must reveal Himself. If it please Him to make Himself known, He can make the heart conscious of His presence. Our posture must be that of holy reverence, of quiet waiting and adoration. As your month of intercession passes on, and you feel the greatness of your work, be still before God. Thus you will get power to pray.

Special Petitions

Twentieth Day

What to Pray—For God's Spirit on the Heathen

Behold, these shall come from far; and these from the land of Sinim—Isaiah 49:12.

Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall haste to stretch out her hands to God—Psalm 68:31.

I the Lord will hasten it in his time—Isaiah 60:22.

Pray for the heathen, who are yet without the Word. Think of China, with her three hundred millions—a million a month dying without Christ. Think of Dark Africa, with its two hundred millions. Think of thirty millions a year going down into the thick darkness. If Christ gave His life for them, will you not do so? You can give yourself up to intercede for them. Just begin, if you have never yet begun, with this simple monthly school of intercession. The ten minutes you give will make you feel this is not enough. God's Spirit will draw you on. Persevere, however feeble you are. Ask God to give you some country or tribe to pray for. Can anything be nobler than to do as Christ did? Give your life for the heathen.

How to Pray—With Confident Expectation of an Answer

Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and will shew thee great things and difficult, which thou knowest not—Jeremiah 33:3.

Thus saith the Lord God: I will yet be inquired of, that I do it—Ezekiel 36:37.

Both texts refer to promises definitely made, but their fulfillment would

depend upon prayer: God would be inquired of to do it. Pray for God's fulfillment of His promises to His Son and His Church, and expect the answer. Plead for the heathen: plead God's promises.

Special Petitions

Twenty-First Day

What to Pray—For God's Spirit on the Jews

I will pour out upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplications; and they shall look unto Me whom they pierced—Zechariah 12:10.

Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved—Romans 10:1.

Pray for the Jews. Their return to the God of their fathers stands connected, in a way we cannot tell, with wonderful blessing to the Church, and with the coming of our Lord Jesus. Let us not think that God has foreordained all this, and that we cannot hasten it. In a divine and mysterious way God has connected his fulfillment of His promise with our prayer. His Spirit's intercession in us is God's forerunner of blessing. Pray for Israel and the work done among them. And pray too: Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus!

How to Pray—With the Intercession of the Holy Spirit

We know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered—Romans 8:26.

In your ignorance and feebleness believe in the secret indwelling and intercession of the Holy Spirit within you. Yield yourself to His life and leading habitually. He will help your infirmities in prayer. Plead the promises of God even where you do not see how they are to be fulfilled. God knows the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Pray with the simplicity of a little child; pray

with the holy awe and reverence of one in whom God's Spirit dwells and prays.

Special Petitions

Twenty-Second Day

What to Pray—For All Who Are in Suffering

Remembering them that are in bonds, as bound with them; them that are evil entreated, as being yourselves in the body—Hebrews 13:3.

What a world of suffering we live in! How Jesus sacrificed all and identified Himself with it! Let us in our measure do so too. The persecuted, the Jews, the famine-stricken millions of India, the hidden slavery of Africa, the poverty and wretchedness of our great cities—and so much more: what suffering among those who know God and who know Him not. And then in smaller circles, in ten thousand homes and hearts, what sorrow. In our own neighborhood, how many needing help or comfort. Let us have a heart for, let us think of the suffering. It will stir us to pray, to work, to hope, to love more. And in a way and time we know not God will hear our prayer.

How to Pray—Praying always and not fainting

He spake unto them a parable to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint—Luke 18:1.

Do you not begin to feel prayer is really the help for this sinful world? What a need there is of unceasing prayer! The very greatness of the task makes us despair! What can our ten minutes intercession avail? It is right we feel this: this is the way in which God is calling and preparing us to give our life to prayer. Give yourself wholly to God for men, and amid all your work, your heart will be drawn out to men in love, and drawn up to God in dependence and expectation. To a heart thus led by the Holy Spirit, it is possible to pray

always and not to faint.

Special Petitions

Twenty-Third Day

What to Pray—For the Holy Spirit in Your Own Work

I labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily—
Colossians 1:29.

You have your own special work; make it a work of intercession. Paul labored, striving according to the working of God in him. Remember, God is not only the Creator, but the Great Workman, who worketh all in all. You can only do your work in His strength, by His working in you through the Spirit. Intercede much for those among whom you work, till God gives you life for them. Let us all intercede too for each other, for every worker throughout God's Church, however solitary or unknown.

How to Pray—In God's Very Presence

Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. James 4:8.

The nearness of God gives rest and power in prayer. The nearness of God is given to him who makes it his first object. "Draw nigh to God" seek the nearness to Him, and He will give it; "He will draw nigh to you." Then it becomes easy to pray in faith. Remember that when first God takes you into the school of intercession it is almost more for your own sake than that of others. You have to be trained to love, and wait, and pray, and believe. Only persevere. Learn to set yourself in His presence, to wait quietly for the assurance that He draws nigh. Enter His holy presence, tarry there, and spread your work before Him. Intercede for the souls you are working among. Get a blessing from God, His Spirit into your own heart, for them.

Special Petitions

Twenty-Fourth Day

What to Pray—For the Spirit on Your Own Congregation

Beginning at Jerusalem—Luke 24:47.

Each one of us is connected with some congregation or circle of believers, who are to us the part of Christ's body with which we come into most direct contact. They have a special claim on our intercession. Let it be a settled matter between God and you that you are to labor in prayer on its behalf. Pray for the minister and all leaders or workers in it. Pray for the believers according to their needs. Pray for conversions. Pray for the power of the Spirit to manifest itself. Band yourself with others to join in secret in definite petitions. Let intercession be a definite work, carried on as systematically as preaching or Sunday School. And pray, expecting an answer.

How to Pray—Continually

Watchmen, that shall never hold their peace day or night—Isaiah 62:6.

His own elect, that cry to Him day and night—Luke 18:7

Night and day praying exceedingly that we may perfect that which is lacking in your faith—1 Thessalonians 3:10.

A widow indeed, hath her hope set in God, and continueth in supplications night and day—1 Timothy 5:5.

When the glory of God, and the love of Christ, and the need of souls are revealed to us, the fire of this unceasing intercession will begin to burn in us for those who are near and those who are far off.

Special Petitions

Twenty-Fifth Day

What to Pray—For More Conversions

He is able to save completely, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession—Hebrews 7:25.

We will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word... And the Word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied exceedingly—Acts 6:4, 7.

Christ's power to save, and save completely, depends on His unceasing intercession. The apostles' withdrawing themselves from other work to give themselves continually to prayer was followed by the number of the disciples multiplying exceedingly. As we, in our day, give ourselves to intercession, we shall have more and mightier conversions. Let us plead for this. Christ is exalted to give repentance. The Church exists with the Divine purpose and promise of having conversions. Let us not be ashamed to confess our sins and feebleness, and cry to God for more conversions in Christian and heathen lands, of those too whom you know and love. Plead for the salvation of sinners.

How to Pray—In Deep Humility

Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs... O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt—Matthew 15:27, 28.

You feel unworthy and unable to pray aright. To accept this heartily, and to be content still to come and be blest in your unworthiness, is true humility. It proves its integrity by not seeking for anything, but simply trusting His grace.

And so it is the very strength of a great faith, and gets a full answer. "Yet the dogs"—let that be your plea as you persevere for someone possibly possessed of the devil. Let not your littleness hinder you for a moment.

Special Petitions

Twenty-Sixth Day

What to Pray—For the Holy Spirit on Young Converts

Peter and John prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost; for as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus—Acts 8:15, 16.

Now He which establisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; who also gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts—2 Corinthians 1:21, 22.

How many new converts who remain feeble; how many who fall into sin; how many who backslide entirely. If we pray for the Church, its growth in holiness and devotion to God's service, pray especially for the young converts. How many stand alone, surrounded by temptation; how many have no teaching on the Spirit in them, and the power of God to establish them; how many in heathen lands, surrounded by Satan's power. If you pray for the power of the Spirit in the Church, pray especially that every young convert may know that he may claim and receive the fullness of the Spirit.

How to Pray—Without Ceasing

As for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you—1 Samuel 12:23.

It is sin against the Lord to escape praying for others. When once we begin to see how absolutely indispensable intercession is, just as much a duty as loving God or believing in Christ, and how we are called and bound to it as believers, we shall feel that to cease intercession is grievous sin. Let us ask

for grace to take up our place as priests with joy, and give our lives to bring down the blessing of Heaven.

Special Petitions

Twenty-Seventh Day

What to Pray—That God's People May Realize Their Calling

I will bless thee; and be thou a blessing: In Thee shall All The Families Of The Earth be blessed—Genesis 12:2, 3.

God be merciful Unto Us, and bless Us, and cause His face to shine Upon Us. That Thy way may be known Upon Earth, Thy saving health Among All Nations—Psalm 67:1, 2.

Abraham was only blessed that he might be a blessing to all the earth. Israel prays for blessing, that God may be known among all nations. Every believer, just as much as Abraham, is only blessed that he may carry God's blessing to the world.

Cry to God that His people may know this, that every believer is only to live for the interests of God and His kingdom. If this truth were preached and believed and practiced, what a revolution it would bring in our mission work. What a host of willing intercessors we should have. Plead with God to work it by the Holy Spirit.

How to Pray—As One Who Has Accepted for Himself What He Asks for Others

Peter said What I have, I give unto thee ... The Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning ... God gave them the like gift, as He gave unto us—Acts 3:6; 9:15, 17.

As you pray for this great blessing on God's people, the Holy Spirit taking

entire possession of them for God's service, yield yourself to God, and claim the gift anew in faith. Let each thought of feebleness or shortcoming only make you the more urgent in prayer for others; as the blessing comes to them, you too will be helped. With every prayer for conversions or mission work, pray that God's people may know wholly they belong to Him.

Special Petitions

Twenty-Eighth Day

What to Pray—That all God's People May Know the Holy Spirit

The Spirit of Truth, Whom the world knoweth not; but ye know Him; for He abideth with you, and shall be in you—John 14:17.

Know ye not that Your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost?—1 Corinthians 6:19.

The Holy Spirit is the power of God for the salvation of men. He only works as He dwells in the Church. He is given to enable believers to live wholly as God would have them live, in the full experience and witness of Him who saves completely. Pray God that everyone of His people may know the Holy Spirit! That He, in all His fullness, is given to them! That they cannot expect to live as their Father would have, without having Him in His fullness, without being filled with Him! Pray that all God's people, even away in churches gathered out of heathendom, may learn to say: I believe in the Holy Ghost.

How to Pray—Laboring Fervently in Prayer

Who is one of you, saluteth you, always reverently you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God—Colossians 4:12.

To a healthy man labor is a delight; in what interests him he labors fervently. The believer who is in full health, whose heart is filled with God's Spirit, labors fervently in prayer. For what? That his brethren may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God; that they may know what God wills for them how He calls them to live, and be led and walk by the Holy Ghost. Labor

ferently in prayer that all God's children may know this, as possible, as divinely sure.

Special Petitions

Twenty-Ninth Day

What to Pray—For the Spirit of Intercession

I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it to you—John 15:16.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name, In that day ye shall ask in My name—John 6:24, 26.

Has not our school of intercession taught us how little we have prayed in the name of Jesus? He promised His disciples: In that day, when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, ye shall ask in My name. Are there not tens of thousands with us mourning the lack of the power of intercession? Let our intercession today be for them and all God's children, that Christ may teach us that the Holy Spirit is in us; and what it is to live in His fullness, and to yield ourselves to His intercessional work within us. The Church and the world need nothing so much as a mighty Spirit of Intercession to bring down the power of God on earth. Pray for the descent from heaven of the Spirit of Intercession for a great prayer revival.

How to Pray—Abiding in Christ

If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done to you—John 15:7.

Our acceptance with God, our access to Him, is all in Christ. As we consciously abide in Him we have the liberty, not a liberty to our old nature or self-will, but the Divine liberty from all self-will, to ask what we will, in

the power of the new nature, and it shall be done. Let us keep this place, and believe even now that our intercession is heard, and that the Spirit of Supplication will be given all around us.

Special Petitions

Thirtieth Day

What to Pray—For the Holy Spirit with the Word of God

Our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance—1 Thessalonians 1:5.

Those who preached unto you the Gospel with the Holy Ghost sent forth from Heaven—1 Peter 1:12.

What numbers of Bibles are being circulated. What numbers of sermons on the Bible are being preached. What numbers of Bibles are being read in home and school. How little blessing when it comes "in word" only; what Divine blessing and power when it comes "in the Holy Ghost," when it is preached "with the Holy Ghost sent forth from Heaven." Pray for Bible circulation, and preaching and teaching and reading, that it may all be in the Holy Ghost, with much prayer. Pray for the power of the Spirit with the Word in your own neighborhood, wherever it is being read or heard. Let every mention of "The Word of God" waken intercession.

How to Pray—Watching and Praying

Continue steadfastly in prayer watching therein with thanksgiving; withal praying for us also, that God may open unto us a door for the Word—Colossians 4:2, 3.

Do you not see how all depends upon God and prayer? As long as He lives and loves, and hears and works, as long as there are souls with hearts closed to the Word, as long as there is work to be done in carrying the Word—Pray without ceasing. Continue steadfastly in prayer, watching therein with

thanksgiving. These words are for every Christian.

Special Petitions

Thirty-First Day

What to Pray—For the Spirit of Christ in His people

I am the Vine, ye are the branches—John 15:5.

That ye should do as I have done to you—John 13:15.

As branches we are to be so like the Vine, so entirely identified with it, that all may see that we have the same nature, and life, and Spirit. When we pray for the Spirit, let us not only think of a Spirit of power, but the very disposition and temper of Christ Jesus. Ask and expect nothing less: for yourself, and all God's children, cry for it.

How to Pray—Striving in Prayer

That ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me—Romans 15:30.

I would ye knew what great conflict I have for you—Colossians 2:1.

All the powers of evil seek to hinder us in prayer. Prayer is a conflict with opposing forces. It needs the whole heart and all our strength. May God give us grace to strive in prayer till we prevail.

Special Petitions

The True Vine[\(TOC\)](#)

Meditations for a Month on John 15:1- 16

"The mystery which hath been hid from ages, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."—Colossians 1:26, 27

Only A Branch

"I am the vine, ye are the branches."—John 15:5

"Tis only a little Branch,
A thing so fragile and weak,
But that little Branch hath a message true
To give, could it only speak.
"I'm only a little Branch,
I live by a life not mine,
For the sap that flows through my tendrils small
Is the life-blood of the Vine.
"No power indeed have I
The fruit of myself to bear,
But since I'm part of the living Vine,
Its fruitfulness I share.
"Dost thou ask how I abide?
How this life I can maintain?—
I am bound to the Vine by life's strong band,
And I only need remain.
"Where first my life was given,

In the spot where I am set,
Upborne and upheld as the days go by,
By the stem which bears me yet.
"I fear not the days to come,
I dwell not upon the past,
As moment by moment I draw a life,
Which for evermore shall last.
"I bask in the sun's bright beams,
Which with sweetness fills my fruit,
Yet I own not the clusters hanging there,
For they all come from the root."
A life which is not my own,
But another's life in me:
This, this is the message the Branch would speak,
A message to thee and me.
Oh, struggle not to "abide,"
Nor labor to "bring forth fruit,"
But let Jesus unite thee to Himself,
As the Vine Branch to the root.
So simple, so deep, so strong
That union with Him shall be:
His life shall forever replace thine own,

And His love shall flow through thee.
For His Spirit's fruit is love,
And love shall thy life become,
And for evermore on His heart of love
Thy spirit shall have her home.

—*Freda Hanbury*

Preface

I have felt drawn to try to write what young Christians might easily apprehend, as a help to them to take up that position in which the Christian life must be a success. It is as if there is not one of the principal temptations and failures of the Christian life that is not met here. The nearness, the all-sufficiency, the faithfulness of the Lord Jesus, the naturalness, the fruitfulness of a life of faith, are so revealed, that it is as if one could with confidence say, Let the parable enter into the heart, and all will be right.

May the blessed Lord give the blessing. May He teach us to study the mystery of the Vine in the spirit of worship, waiting for God's own teaching.

The Vine

"I am the True Vine."—John 15:1

All earthly things are the shadows of heavenly realities—the expression, in created, visible forms, of the invisible glory of God. The Life and the Truth are in Heaven; on earth we have figures and shadows of the heavenly truths. When Jesus says: "I am the true Vine," He tells us that all the vines of earth are pictures and emblems of Himself. He is the divine reality, of which they are the created expression. They all point to Him, and preach Him, and reveal Him. If you would know Jesus, study the vine.

How many eyes have gazed on and admired a great vine with its beautiful fruit. Come and gaze on the heavenly Vine till your eye turns from all else to admire Him. How many, in a sunny clime, sit and rest under the shadow of a vine. Come and be still under the shadow of the true Vine, and rest under it from the heat of the day. What countless numbers rejoice in the fruit of the vine! Come, and take, and eat of the heavenly fruit of the true Vine, and let your soul say: "I sat under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste."

I am the true Vine—This is a heavenly mystery. The earthly vine can teach you much about this Vine of Heaven. Many interesting and beautiful points of comparison suggest themselves, and help us to get conceptions of what Christ meant. But such thoughts do not teach us to know what the heavenly Vine really is, in its cooling shade, and its life-giving fruit. The experience of this is part of the hidden mystery, which none but Jesus Himself, by His Holy Spirit, can unfold and impart.

I am the true Vine—The vine is the living Lord, who Himself speaks, and gives, and works all that He has for us. If you would know the meaning and power of that word, do not think to find it by thought or study; these may help to show you what you must get from Him to awaken desire and hope and prayer, but they cannot show you the Vine. Jesus alone can reveal Himself. He gives His Holy Spirit to open the eyes to gaze upon Himself, to open the heart to receive Himself. He must Himself speak the word to you and me.

I am the true Vine—And what am I to do, if I want the mystery, in all its heavenly beauty and blessing, opened up to me? With what you already know of the parable, bow down and be still, worship and wait, until the divine Word enters your heart, and you feel His holy presence with you, and in you. The overshadowing of His holy love will give you the perfect calm and rest of knowing that the Vine will do all.

I am the true Vine—He who speaks is God, in His infinite power able to enter into us. He is man, one with us. He is the crucified One, who won a perfect righteousness and a divine life for us through His death. He is the glorified One, who from the throne gives His Spirit to make His presence real and true. He speaks—oh, listen, not to His words only, but to Himself, as He whispers secretly day by day: "I am the true Vine! All that the Vine can ever be to its branch, ***"I will be to you."***"

Holy Lord Jesus, the heavenly Vine of God's own planting, I beseech Thee, reveal Thyself to my soul. Let the Holy Spirit, not only in thought, but in experience, give me to know all that Thou, the Son of God, art to me as the true Vine.

The Husbandman

"And My Father is the Husbandman."—John 15:1

A vine must have a husbandman to plant and watch over it, to receive and rejoice in its fruit. Jesus says: "My Father is the husbandman." He was "the vine of God's planting." All He was and did, He owed to the Father; in all He only sought the Father's will and glory. He had become man to show us what a creature ought to be to its Creator. He took our place, and the spirit of His life before the Father was ever what He seeks to make ours: "Of him, and through him, and to him are all things." He became the true Vine, that we might be true branches. Both in regard to Christ and ourselves the words teach us the two lessons of absolute dependence and perfect confidence.

My Father is the Husbandman—Christ ever lived in the spirit of what He once said: "The Son can do nothing of himself." As dependent as a vine is on a husbandman for the place where it is to grow, for its fencing in and watering and pruning. Christ felt Himself entirely dependent on the Father every day for the wisdom and the strength to do the Father's will. As He said in the previous chapter (14:10): "The words that I say unto you, I speak not from Myself; but the Father abiding in Me doeth his works." This absolute dependence had as its blessed counterpart the most blessed confidence that He had nothing to fear: the Father could not disappoint Him. With such a Husbandman as His Father, He could enter death and the grave. He could trust God to raise Him up. All that Christ is and has, He has, not in Himself, but from the Father.

My Father is the Husbandman—That is as blessedly true for us as for

Christ. Christ is about to teach His disciples about their being branches. Before He ever uses the word, or speaks at all of abiding in Him or bearing fruit, He turns their eyes heavenward to the Father watching over them, and working all in them. At the very root of all Christian life lies the thought that God is to do all, that our work is to give and leave ourselves in His hands, in the confession of utter helplessness and dependence, in the assured confidence that He gives all we need. The great lack of the Christian life is that, even where we trust Christ, we leave God out of the count. Christ came to bring us to God. Christ lived the life of a man exactly as we have to live it. Christ the Vine points to God the Husbandman. As He trusted God, let us trust God, that everything we ought to be and have, as those who belong to the Vine, will be given us from above.

Isaiah said: "A vineyard of red wine; I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." Ere we begin to think of fruit or branches, let us have our heart filled with the faith: as glorious as the Vine, is the Husbandman. As high and holy as is our calling, so mighty and loving is the God who will work it all. As surely as the Husbandman made the Vine what it was to be, will He make each branch what it is to be. Our Father is our Husbandman, the Surety for our growth and fruit.

Blessed Father, we are Thy husbandry. Oh, that Thou mayest have honor of the work of Thy hands! O my Father, I desire to open my heart to the joy of this wondrous truth: My Father is the Husbandman. Teach me to know and trust Thee, and to see that the same deep interest with which Thou caredst for and delightedst in the Vine, extends to every branch, to me too.

The Branch

"Every Branch in me that Beareth Not Fruit, He taketh It away."—John 15:2

Here we have one of the chief words of the parable—**branch**. A vine needs branches: without branches it can do nothing, can bear no fruit. As important as it is to know about the Vine, and the Husbandman, it is to realize what the branch is. Before we listen to what Christ has to say about it, let us first of all take in what a branch is, and what it teaches us of our life in Christ. A branch is simply a bit of wood, brought forth by the vine for the one purpose of serving it in bearing its fruit. It is of the very same nature as the vine, and has one life and one spirit with it. Just think a moment of the lessons this suggests.

There is the lesson of **entire consecration**. The branch has but one object for which it exists, one purpose to which it is entirely given up. That is, to bear the fruit the vine wishes to bring forth. And so the believer has but one reason for his being a branch—**but one reason for his existence on earth**—that the heavenly Vine may through him bring forth His fruit. Happy the soul that knows this, that has consented to it, and that says, I have been redeemed and I live for one thing—as exclusively as the natural branch exists only to bring forth fruit, I too; as exclusively as the heavenly Vine exists to bring forth fruit, I too. As I have been planted by God into Christ, I have wholly given myself to bear the fruit the Vine desires to bring forth.

There is the lesson of **perfect conformity**. The branch is exactly like the vine in every aspect—the same nature, the same life, the same place, the same work. In all this they are inseparably one. And so the believer needs to know

that he is partaker of the divine nature, and has the very nature and spirit of Christ in him, and that his one calling is to yield himself to a perfect conformity to Christ. The branch is a perfect likeness of the vine; the only difference is, the one is great and strong, and the source of strength, the other little and feeble, ever needing and receiving strength. Even so the believer is, and is to be, the perfect likeness of Christ.

There is the lesson of ***absolute dependence***. The vine has its stores of life and sap and strength, not for itself, but for the branches. The branches are and have nothing but what the vine provides and imparts. The believer is called to, and it is his highest blessedness to enter upon, a life of entire and unceasing dependence upon Christ. Day and night, every moment, Christ is to work in him all he needs.

And then the lesson of ***undoubting confidence***. The branch has no cure; the vine provides all; it has but to yield itself and receive. It is the sight of this truth that leads to the blessed rest of faith, the true secret of growth and strength: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

What a life would come to us if we only consented to be branches! Dear child of God, learn the lesson. You have but one thing to do: Only be a branch—nothing more, nothing less! Just be a branch; Christ will be the Vine that gives all. And the Husbandman, the mighty God, who made the Vine what it is, ***will as surely make the branch what it ought to be.***

Lord Jesus, I pray Thee, reveal to me the heavenly mystery of the branch, in its living union with the Vine, in its claim on all its fullness. And let Thy all-sufficiency, holding and filling Thy branches, lead me to the rest of faith that knows that Thou workest all.

The Fruit

*"Every Branch in me That Beareth Not Fruit, He Taketh It Away."—John
15:2*

Fruit—This is the next great word we have: the Vine, the Husbandman, the branch, the fruit. What has our Lord to say to us of fruit? Simply this—that fruit is the one thing the branch is for, and that if it bear not fruit, the husbandman takes it away. The vine is the glory of the husbandman; the branch is the glory of the vine; the fruit is the glory of the branch; if the branch bring not forth fruit, there is no glory or worth in it; it is an offense and a hindrance; the husbandman takes it away. The one reason for the existence of a branch, the one mark of being a true branch of the heavenly Vine, the one condition of being allowed by the divine Husbandman to share the life the Vine is—bearing fruit.

And what is fruit? Something that the branch bears, not for itself, but for its owner; something that is to be gathered, and taken away. The branch does indeed receive it from the vine sap for its own life, by which it grows thicker and stronger. But this supply for its own maintenance is entirely subordinate to its fulfillment of the purpose of its existence—bearing fruit. It is because Christians do not understand or accept of this truth, that they so fail in their efforts and prayers to live the branch life. They often desire it very earnestly; they read and meditate and pray, and yet they fail, they wonder why? The reason is very simple: they do not know that ***fruit-bearing is the one thing they have been saved for.*** Just as entirely as Christ became the true Vine with the one object, you have been made a branch too, with the one object of

bearing fruit for the salvation of men. The Vine and the branch are equally under the unchangeable law of fruit-bearing as the one reason of their being. Christ and the believer, the heavenly Vine and the branch, have equally their place in the world exclusively for one purpose, to carry God's saving love to men. Hence the solemn word: Every branch that beareth not fruit, He taketh it away.

Let us specially beware of one great mistake. Many Christians think their own salvation is the first thing; their temporal life and prosperity, with the care of their family, the second; and what of time and interest is left may be devoted to fruit-bearing, to the saving of men. No wonder that in most cases very little time or interest can be found. No, Christian, the one object with which you have been made a member of Christ's Body is that the Head may have you to carry out His saving work. The one object God had in making you a branch is that Christ may through you bring life to men. Your personal salvation, your business and care for your family, ***are entirely subordinate to this***. Your first aim in life, your first aim every day, should be to know how Christ desires to carry out His purpose in you.

Let us begin to think as God thinks. Let us accept Christ's teaching and respond to it. The one object of my being a branch, the one mark of my being a true branch, the one condition of my abiding and growing strong, is that I bear the fruit of the heavenly Vine for dying men to eat and live. And the one thing of which I can have the most perfect assurance is that, with Christ as my Vine, and the Father as my Husbandman, I can indeed be a fruitful branch.

Our Father, Thou comest seeking fruit. Teach us, we pray Thee, to realize how truly this is the one object of our existence, and of our union to Christ. Make it the one desire of our hearts to be branches, so filled with the Spirit of

the Vine, as to bring forth fruit abundantly.

More Fruit

"And Every Branch That Beareth Fruit, He Cleanseth, That it May Bear More Fruit."—John 15:2

The thought of fruit is so prominent in the eye of Him who sees things as they are, fruit is so truly the one thing God has set His heart upon, that our Lord, after having said that the branch that bears no fruit is taken away, at once adds: and where there is fruit, the one desire of the Husbandman is more fruit. As the gift of His grace, as the token of spiritual vigor, as the showing forth of the glory of God and of Christ, as the only way for satisfying the need of the world, God longs and fits for, more fruit.

More Fruit—This is a very searching word. As churches and individuals we are in danger of nothing so much as self-contentment. The secret spirit of Laodicea—we are rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing—may prevail where it is not suspected. The divine warning—poor and wretched and miserable—finds little response just where it is most needed.

Let us not rest content with the thought that we are taking an equal share with others in the work that is being done, or that men are satisfied with our efforts in Christ's service, or even point to us as examples. Let our only desire be to know whether we are bearing all the fruit Christ is willing to give through us as living branches, in close and living union with Himself, whether we are satisfying the loving heart of the great Husbandman, our Father in Heaven, in His desire for more fruit.

More Fruit—The word comes with divine authority to search and test our

life: the true disciple will heartily surrender himself to its holy light, and will earnestly ask that God Himself may show what there may be lacking in the measure or the character of the fruit he bears. Do let us believe that the Word is meant to lead us on to a fuller experience of the Father's purpose of love, of Christ's fullness, and of the wonderful privilege of bearing much fruit in the salvation of men.

More Fruit—The word is a most encouraging one. Let us listen to it. It is just to the branch that is bearing fruit that the message comes: more fruit. God does not demand this as Pharaoh the task-master, or as Moses the lawgiver, without providing the means. He comes as a Father, who gives what He asks, and works what He commands. He comes to us as the living branches of the living Vine, and offers to work the more fruit in us, if we but yield ourselves into His hands. Shall we not admit the claim, accept the offer, and look to Him to work it in us?

"That it may bear more fruit": do let us believe that as the owner of a vine does everything to make the fruitage as rich and large as possible, the divine Husbandman will do all that is needed to make us bear more fruit. All He asks is, that we set our heart's desire on it, entrust ourselves to His working and care, and joyfully look to Him to do His perfect work in us. God has set His heart on more fruit; Christ waits to work it in us; let us joyfully look up to our divine Husbandman and our heavenly Vine, to ensure our bearing more fruit.

Our Father which art in Heaven, Thou art the heavenly Husbandman. And Christ is the heavenly Vine. And I am a heavenly branch, partaker of His heavenly life, to bear His heavenly fruit. Father, let the power of His life so fill me, that I may ever bear more fruit, to the glory of Thy name.

The Cleansing

"Every Branch That Beareth Fruit, He Cleanseth It, That It May Bear More Fruit."—John 15:2

There are two remarkable things about the vine. There is not a plant of which the fruit has so much spirit in it, of which spirit can be so abundantly distilled as the vine. And there is not a plant which so soon runs into wild wood, that hinders its fruit, and therefore needs the most merciless pruning. I look out of my window here on large vineyards: the chief care of the vinedresser is the pruning. You may have a trellis vine rooting so deep in good soil that it needs neither digging, nor manuring, nor watering: pruning it cannot dispense with, if it is to bear good fruit. Some tree needs occasional pruning; others bear perfect fruit without any: the vine must have it. And so our Lord tells us, here at the very outset of the parable, that the one work the Father does to the branch that bears fruit is: He cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit.

Consider a moment what this pruning or cleansing is. It is not the removal of weeds or thorns, or anything from without that may hinder the growth. No; it is the cutting off of the long shoots of the previous year, the removal of something that comes from within, that has been produced by the life of the vine itself. It is the removal of something that is a proof of the vigor of its life; the more vigorous the growth has been, the greater the need for the pruning. It is the honest, healthy wood of the vine that has to be cut away. And why? Because it would consume too much of the sap to fill all the long shoots of last year's growth: the sap must be saved up and used for fruit alone. The branches, sometimes eight and ten feet long, are cut down close to

the stem, and nothing is left but just one or two inches of wood, enough to bear the grapes. It is when everything that is not needful for fruit-bearing has been relentlessly cut down, and just as little of the branches as possible has been left, that full, rich fruit may be expected.

What a solemn, precious lesson! It is not to sin only that the cleansing of the Husbandman here refers. It is to our own religious activity, as it is developed in the very act of bearing fruit. It is this that must be cut down and cleansed away. We have, in working for God, to use our natural gifts of wisdom, or eloquence, or influence, or zeal. And yet they are ever in danger of being unduly developed, and then trusted in. And so, after each season of work, God has to bring us to the end of ourselves, to the consciousness of the helplessness and the danger of all that is of man, to feel that we are nothing. All that is to be left of us is just enough to receive the power of the life-giving sap of the Holy Spirit. What is of man must be reduced to its very lowest measure. All that is inconsistent with the most entire devotion to Christ's service must be removed. The more perfect the cleansing and cutting away of all that is of self, the less of surface over which the Holy Spirit is to be spread, so much the more intense can be the concentration of our whole being, to be entirely at the disposal of the Spirit. This is the true circumcision of the heart, the circumcision of Christ. This is the true crucifixion with Christ, bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus in the body.

Blessed cleansing, God's own cleansing! How we may rejoice in the assurance that we shall bring forth more fruit.

O our holy Husbandman, cleanse and cut away all that there is in us that would make a fair show, or could become a source of self-confidence and glorying. Lord, keep us very low, that no flesh may glory in Thy presence. We do trust Thee to do Thy work.

The Pruning Knife

*"Already Ye Are Clean Because of the Word I Have Spoken Unto You."—
John 15:3*

What is the pruning knife of this heavenly Husbandman? It is often said to be affliction. By no means in the first place. How would it then fare with many who have long seasons free from adversity; or with some on whom God appears to shower down kindness all their life long? No; it is the Word of God that is the knife, shaper than any two-edged sword, that pierces even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and is quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is only when affliction leads to this discipline of the Word that it becomes a blessing; the lack of this heart-cleansing through the Word is the reason why affliction is so often unsanctified. Not even Paul's thorn in the flesh could become a blessing until Christ's Word—"My strength is made perfect in weakness"—had made him see the danger of self-exaltation, and made him willing to rejoice in infirmities.

The Word of God's pruning knife. Jesus says: "Ye are already clean, because of the word I have spoken unto you." How searchingly that word had been spoken by Him, out of whose mouth there went a sharp two-edged sword, as he had taught them! "Except a man deny himself, lose his life, forsake all, hate father and mother, he cannot be My disciple, he is not worthy of Me"; or as He humbled their pride, or reproved their lack of love, or foretold their all forsaking Him. From the opening of His ministry in the Sermon on the Mount to His words of warning in the last night, His Word had tried and

cleansed them. He had discovered and condemned all there was of self; they were now emptied and cleansed, ready for the incoming of the Holy Spirit.

It is as the soul gives up its own thoughts, and men's thoughts of what is religion, and yields itself heartily, humbly, patiently, to the teaching of the Word by the Spirit, that the Father will do His blessed work of pruning and cleansing away all of nature and self that mixes with our work and hinders His Spirit. Let those who would know all the Husbandman can do for them, all the Vine can bring forth through them, seek earnestly to yield themselves heartily to the blessed cleansing through the Word. Let them, in their study of the Word, receive it as a hammer that breaks and opens up, as a fire that melts and refines, as a sword that lays bare and slays all that is of the flesh. The word of conviction will prepare for the word of comfort and of hope, and the Father will cleanse them through the Word.

All ye who are branches of the true Vine, each time you read or hear the Word, wait first of all on Him to use it for His cleansing of the branch. Set your heart upon His desire for more fruit. Trust Him as Husbandman to work it. Yield yourselves in simple childlike surrender to the cleansing work of His Word and Spirit, and you may count upon it that His purpose will be fulfilled in you.

Father, I pray Thee, cleanse me through Thy Word. Let it search out and bring to light all that is of self and the flesh in my religion. Let it cut away every root of self-confidence, that the Vine may find me wholly free to receive His life and Spirit. O my holy Husbandman, I trust Thee to care for the branch as much as for the Vine. Thou only art my hope.

Abide

"Abide in Me, and I in You."—John 15:4

When a new graft is placed in a vine and it abides there, there is a twofold process that takes place. The first is in the wood. The graft shoots its little roots and fibers down into the stem, and the stem grows up into the graft, and what has been called the structural union is effected. The graft abides and becomes one with the vine, and even though the vine were to die, would still be one wood with it. Then there is the second process, in which the sap of the vine enters the new structure, and uses it as a passage through which sap can flow up to show itself in young shoots and leaves and fruit. Here is the vital union. Into the graft which abides in the stock, the stock enters with sap to abide in it.

When our Lord says: "Abide in me, and I in you," He points to something analogous to this. "Abide in me": that refers more to that which we have to do. We have to trust and obey, to detach ourselves from all else, to reach out after Him and cling to Him, to sink ourselves into Him. As we do this, through the grace He gives, a character is formed, and a heart prepared for the fuller experience: "I in you," God strengthens us with might by the Spirit in the inner man, and Christ dwells in the heart by faith.

Many believers pray and long very earnestly for the filling of the Spirit and the indwelling of Christ, and wonder that they do not make more progress. The reason is often this, the "I in you" cannot come because the "abide in me" is not maintained. "There is one body and one spirit"; before the Spirit can fill, there must be a body prepared. The graft must have grown into the stem,

and be abiding in it before the sap can flow through to bring forth fruit. It is as in lowly obedience we follow Christ, even in external things, denying ourselves, forsaking the world, and even in the body seeking to be conformable to Him, as we thus seek to abide in Him, that we shall be able to receive and enjoy the "I in you." The work enjoined on us: "**Abide in me,**" will prepare us for the work undertaken by Him: "I in you."

In—The two parts of the injunction have their unity in that central deep-meaning word "in." There is no deeper word in Scripture. God is in all. God dwells in Christ. Christ lives in God. We are in Christ. Christ is in us: our life taken up into His; His life received into ours; in a divine reality that words cannot express, we are in Him and He in us. And the words, "Abide in me and I in you," just tell us to believe it, this divine mystery, and to count upon our God the Husbandman, and Christ the Vine, to make it divinely true. No thinking or teaching or praying can grasp it; it is a divine mystery of love. As little as we can effect the union can we understand it. Let us just look upon this infinite, divine, omnipotent Vine loving us, holding us, working in us. Let us in the faith of His working abide and rest in Him, ever turning heart and hope to Him alone. And let us count upon Him to fulfill in us the mystery: "Ye in me, and I in you."

Blessed Lord, Thou dost bid me abide in Thee. How can I, Lord, except Thou show Thyself to me, waiting to receive and welcome and keep me? I pray Thee show me how Thou as Vine undertaketh to do all. To be occupied with Thee is to abide in Thee. Here I am, Lord, a branch, cleansed and abiding—resting in Thee, and awaiting the inflow of Thy life and grace.

Except Ye Abide

"As the Branch Cannot Bear Fruit of Itself, Except It Abide In the Vine; No More Can Ye, Except Ye Abide in Me."—John 15:4

We know the meaning of the word **except**. It expresses some indispensable condition, some inevitable law. "The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, **except** it abide in the vine. No more can ye, except ye abide in me." There is but one way for the branch to bear fruit, there is no other possibility, it must abide in unbroken communion with the vine. Not of itself, but only of the vine, does the fruit come. Christ had already said: "Abide in me"; in nature the branch teaches us the lesson so clearly; it is such a wonderful privilege to be called and allowed to abide in the heavenly Vine; one might have thought it needless to add these words of warning. But no—Christ knows so well what a renunciation of self is implied in this: "Abide in me"; how strong and universal the tendency would be to seek to bear fruit by our own efforts; how difficult it would be to get us to believe that actual, continuous abiding in Him is an absolute necessity! He insists upon the truth: **Not of itself** can the branch bear fruit; **except it abide**, it cannot bear fruit. "No more can ye, **except ye abide in me.**"

But must this be taken literally? Must I, as exclusively, and manifestly, and unceasingly, and absolutely, as the branch abides in the vine, be equally given up to find my whole life in Christ alone? I must indeed. The **except ye abide** is as universal as the **except it abide**. The **no more can ye** admits of no exception or modification. If I am to be a true branch, if I am to bear fruit, if I am to be what Christ as Vine wants me to be, my whole existence must be as

exclusively devoted to abiding in Him, as that of the natural branch is to abiding in its vine.

Let me learn the lesson. Abiding is to be an act of the will and the whole heart. Just as there are degrees in seeking and serving God, "not with a perfect heart," or "with the whole heart," so there may be degrees in abiding. In regeneration the divine life enters us, but does not all at once master and fill our whole being. This comes as matter of command and obedience. There is unspeakable danger of our not giving ourselves with our whole heart to abide. There is unspeakable danger of our giving ourselves to work for God, and to bear fruit, with but little of the true abiding, the wholehearted losing of ourselves in Christ and His life. There is unspeakable danger of much work with but little fruit, for lack of this one thing needful. We must allow the words, "not of itself," "except it abide," to do their work of searching and exposing, of pruning and cleansing, all that there is of self-will and self-confidence in our life; this will deliver us from this great evil, and so prepare us for His teaching, giving the full meaning of the word in us: "Abide in me, and I in you."

Our blessed Lord desires to call us away from ourselves and our own strength, to Himself and His strength. Let us accept the warning, and turn with great fear and self-distrust to Him to do His work. "Our life is hid with Christ in God!" That life is a heavenly mystery, hid from the wise even among Christians, and revealed unto babes. The childlike spirit learns that life is given from Heaven every day and every moment to the soul that accepts the teaching: "not of itself," "except it abide," and seeks its all in the Vine. Abiding in the Vine then comes to be nothing more nor less than the restful surrender of the soul to let Christ have all and work all, as completely as in nature the branch knows and seeks nothing but the vine.

Abide in Me. I have heard, my Lord, that with every command, Thou also givest the power to obey. With Thy "rise and walk," the lame man leaped, I accept Thy word, "Abide in me," as a word of power, that gives power, and even now I say, Yea, Lord, I will, I do abide in Thee.

The Vine

"I am The Vine, Ye Are The Branches."—John 15:5

In the previous verse Christ had just said: "Abide in me." He had then announced the great unalterable law of all branch-life, on earth or in Heaven: "not of itself"; "except it abide." In the opening words of the parable He had already spoken: "I am the vine." He now repeats the words. He would have us understand—note well the lesson, simple as it appears, it is the key of the abiding life—that the only way to obey the command, "Abide in me," is to have eye and heart fixed upon Himself. "Abide in me...I am the true vine." Yea, study this holy mystery until you see Christ as the true Vine, bearing, strengthening, supplying, inspiring all His branches, ***being and doing in each branch all it needs***, and the abiding will come of itself. Yes, gaze upon Him as the true Vine, until you feel what a heavenly Mystery it is, and are compelled to ask the Father to reveal it to you by His Holy Spirit. He to whom God reveals the glory of the true Vine, he who sees what Jesus is and waits to do every moment, he cannot but abide. The vision of Christ is an irresistible attraction; it draws and holds us like a magnet. Listen ever to the living Christ still speaking to you, and waiting to show you the meaning and power of His Word: ***"I am the vine."***

How much weary labor there has been in striving to understand what abiding is, how much fruitless effort in trying to attain it! Why was this? Because the attention was turned to the abiding as a work we have to do, instead of the living Christ, in whom we were to be kept abiding, who Himself was to hold and keep us. we thought of abiding as a continual strain and effort—we

forget that it means rest from effort to one who has found the place of his abode. Do notice how Christ said, "Abide in Me; I am the Vine that brings forth, and holds, and strengthens, and makes fruitful the branches. Abide in Me, rest in Me, and let Me do My work. I am the true Vine, all I am, and speak, and do is divine truth, giving the actual reality of what is said. I am the Vine, only consent and yield thy all to Me, I will do all in thee."

And so it sometimes comes that souls who have never been specially occupied with the thought of abiding, are abiding all the time, because they are occupied with Christ. Not that the word *abide* is not needful; Christ used it so often, because it is the very key to the Christian life. But He would have us understand it in its true sense—"Come out of every other place, and every other trust and occupation, come out of self with its reasonings and efforts, come and rest in what I shall do. Live out of thyself; abide in Me. Know that thou art in Me; thou needest no more; remain there in Me."

"I am the Vine." Christ did not keep this mystery hidden from His disciples. He revealed it, first in words here, then in power when the Holy Spirit came down. He will reveal it to us too, first in the thoughts and confessions and desires these words awaken, then in power by the Spirit. Do let us wait on Him to show us all the heavenly meaning of the mystery. Let each day, in our quiet time, in the inner chamber with Him and His Word, our chief thought and aim be to get the heart fixed on Him, in the assurance: all that a vine ever can do for its branches, my Lord Jesus will do, is doing, for me. Give Him time, give Him your ear, that He may whisper and explain the divine secret: "I am the vine."

Above all, remember, Christ is the Vine of God's planting, and you are a branch of God's grafting. Ever stand before God, in Christ; ever wait for all grace from God, in Christ; ever yield yourself to bear the more fruit the

Husbandman asks, in Christ. And pray much for the revelation of the mystery that all the love and power of God that rested on Christ is working in you too. "I am God's Vine," Jesus says; "all I am I have from Him; all I am is for you; God will work it in you."

I am the Vine. Blessed Lord, speak Thou that word into my soul. Then shall I know that all Thy fullness is for me. And that I can count upon Thee to stream it into me, and that my abiding is so easy and so sure when I forget and lose myself in the adoring faith that the Vine holds the branch and supplies its every need.

Ye The Branches

"I Am The Vine, Ye Are the Branches."—John 15:5

Christ had already said much of the branch; here He comes to the personal application: "Ye are the branches of whom I have been speaking. As I am the Vine, engaged to be and do all the branches need, so I now ask you, in the new dispensation of the Holy Spirit whom I have been promising you, to accept the place I give you, and to be My branches on earth." The relationship He seeks to establish is an intensely personal one: it all hinges on the two little words I and You. And it is for us as intensely personal as for the first disciples. Let us present ourselves before our Lord, until He speak to each of us in power, and our whole soul feels it: "I am the Vine; you are the branch."

Dear disciple of Jesus, however young or feeble, hear the voice. "You are the branch." You must be ***nothing less***. Let no false humility, no carnal fear of sacrifice, no unbelieving doubts as to what you feel able for, keep you back from saying: "I will be a branch, with all that may mean—a branch, very feeble, but yet as like the Vine as can be, for I am of the same nature, and receive of the same spirit. A branch, utterly helpless, and yet just as manifestly set apart before God and men, as wholly given up to the work of bearing fruit, as the Vine itself. A branch, nothing in myself, and yet resting and rejoicing in the faith that knows that He will provide for all. Yes, by His grace, I will be nothing less than a branch, and all He means it to be, that through me, He may bring forth His fruit."

You are the branch—You need be ***nothing more***. You need not for one

single moment of the day take upon you the responsibility of the Vine. You need not leave the place of entire dependence and unbounded confidence. You need, least of all, to be anxious as to how you are to understand the mystery, or fulfill its conditions, or work out its blessed aim. The Vine will give all and work all. The Father, the Husbandman, watches over your union with and growth in the Vine. You need be nothing more than a branch. Only a branch! Let that be your watchword; it will lead in the path of continual surrender to Christ's working, of true obedience to His every command, of joyful expectancy of all His grace.

Is there anyone who now asks: "How can I learn to say this aright, 'Only be a branch!' and to live it out?" Dear soul, the character of a branch, its strength, and the fruit it bears, depend entirely upon the Vine. And your life as branch depends entirely upon your apprehension of what our Lord Jesus is.

Therefore never separate the two words: "I the Vine—you the branch." Your life and strength and fruit depend upon what your Lord Jesus is! Therefore worship and trust Him; let Him be your one desire and the one occupation of your heart. And when you feel that you do not and cannot know Him aright, then just remember it is part of His responsibility as Vine to make Himself known to you. He does this not in thoughts and conceptions—no—but in a hidden growth within the life that is humbly and restfully and entirely given up to wait on Him. The Vine reveals itself within the branch; thence comes the growth and fruit, Christ dwells and works within His branch; only be a branch, waiting on Him to do all; He will be to thee the true Vine. The Father Himself, the divine Husbandman, is able to make thee a branch worthy of the heavenly Vine. Thou shalt not be disappointed.

Ye are the branches. This word, too Lord! O speak it in power unto my soul. Let not the branch of the earthly vine put me to shame, but as it only lives to

bear the fruit of the vine, may my life on earth have no wish or aim, but to let
Thee bring forth fruit through me.

Much Fruit

"He That Abideth in Me, and I in Him, the Same Bringeth Forth Much Fruit."—John 15:5

Our Lord had spoken of fruit, more fruit. He now adds the thought: much fruit. There is in the Vine such fullness, the care of the divine Husbandman is so sure of success, that the much fruit is not a demand, but the simple promise of what must come to the branch that lives in the double abiding—he in Christ, and Christ in him. "The same bringeth forth much fruit." It is certain.

Have you ever noticed the difference in the Christian life between work and fruit? A machine can do work: only life can bear fruit. A law can compel work: only love can spontaneously bring forth fruit. Work implies effort and labor: the essential idea of fruit is that it is the silent natural restful produce of our inner life. The gardener may labor to give his apple tree the digging and manuring, the watering and the pruning it needs; he can do nothing to produce the apple: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy." The healthy life bears much fruit. The connection between work and fruit is perhaps best seen in the expression, "fruitful in every good work." (Colossians 1:10). It is only when good works come as the fruit of the indwelling Spirit that they are acceptable to God. Under the compulsion of law and conscience, or the influence of inclination and zeal, men may be most diligent in good works, and yet find that they have but little spiritual result. There can be no reason but this—their works are man's effort, instead of being the fruit of the Spirit, the restful, natural outcome of the Spirit's operation within us.

Let all workers come and listen to our holy Vine as He reveals the law of sure and abundant fruitfulness: "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." The gardener cares for one thing—the strength and healthy life of his tree: the fruit follows of itself. If you would bear fruit, see that the inner life is perfectly right, that your relation to Christ Jesus is clear and close. Begin each day with Him in the morning, to know in truth that you are abiding in Him and He in you. Christ tells that nothing less will do. It is not your willing and running, it is not by your might or strength, but —"by my Spirit, saith the Lord." Meet each new engagement, undertake every new work, with an ear and heart open to the Master's voice: "He that abideth in me, beareth much fruit." See you to the abiding; He will see to the fruit, for He will give it in you and through you.

O my brother, it is Christ must do all! The Vine provides the sap, and the life, and the strength: the branch waits, and rests, and receives, and bears the fruit. Oh, the blessedness of being only branches, through whom the Spirit flows and brings God's life to men!

I pray you, take time and ask the Holy Spirit to give you to realize the unspeakably solemn place you occupy in the mind of God. He has planted you into His Son with the calling and the power to bear ***much fruit***. Accept that place. Look much to God, and to Christ, and expect joyfully to be what God has planned to make you, a fruitful branch.

Much fruit! So be it, blessed Lord Jesus. It can be, for Thou art the Vine. It shall be, for I am abiding in Thee. It must be, for Thy Father is the Husbandman that cleanses the branch. Yea, much fruit, out of the abundance of Thy grace.

You Can Do Nothing

"Apart From Me Ye Can Do Nothing."—John 15:5

In everything the life of the branch is to be the exact counterpart of that of the Vine. Of Himself Jesus had said: "The Son can do nothing of himself." As the outcome of that entire dependence, He could add: "All that the Father doeth, doeth the Son also likewise." As Son He did not receive His life from the Father once for all, but moment by moment. His life was a continual waiting on the Father for all He was to do. And so Christ says of His disciples: "Ye can do nothing apart from me." He means it literally. To everyone who wants to live the true disciple life, to bring forth fruit and glorify God, the message comes: You can do nothing. What had been said: "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit," is here enforced by the simplest and strongest of arguments: "Abiding in Me is indispensable, for, you know it, of yourselves you can do nothing to maintain or act out the heavenly life."

A deep conviction of the truth of this word lies at the very root of a strong spiritual life. As little as I created myself, as little as I could raise a man from the dead, can I give myself the divine life. As little as I can give it myself, can I maintain or increase it: every motion is the work of God through Christ and His Spirit. It is as a man believes this, that he will take up that position of entire and continual dependence which is the very essence of the life of faith. With the spiritual eye he sees Christ every moment supplying grace for every breathing and every deepening of the spiritual life. His whole heart says Amen to the word: You can do nothing. And just because he does so, he can also say: "I can do all things in Christ who strengtheneth me." The sense of

helplessness, and the abiding to which it compels, leads to true fruitfulness and diligence in good works.

Apart from me ye can do nothing—What a plea and what a call every moment to abide in Christ! We have only to go back to the vine to see how true it is. Look again at that little branch, utterly helpless and fruitless except as it receives sap from the vine, and learn that the full conviction of not being able to do anything apart from Christ is just what you need to teach you to abide in your heavenly Vine. It is this that is the great meaning of the pruning Christ spoke of—all that is self must be brought low, that our confidence may be in Christ alone. "Abide in me"—much fruit! "Apart from me"—nothing! Ought there to be any doubt as to what we shall choose?

The one lesson of the parable is—as surely, as naturally as the branch abides in the vine, ***You can abide in Christ***. For this He is the true Vine; for this God is the Husbandman; for this you are a branch. Shall we not cry to God to deliver us forever from the "apart from me," and to make the "abide in me" an unceasing reality? Let your heart go out to what Christ is, and can do, to His divine power and His tender love to each of His branches, and you will say evermore confidently: "Lord! I am abiding; I will bear much fruit. My impotence is my strength. So be it. Apart from Thee, nothing. In Thee, much fruit."

Apart from Me—you nothing. Lord, I gladly accept the arrangement: I nothing—Thou all. My nothingness is my highest blessing, because Thou art the Vine, that givest and workest all. So be it, Lord! I, nothing, ever waiting on Thy fullness. Lord, reveal to me the glory of this blessed life.

Withered Branches

"If a Man Abide Not in Me, He is Cast Forth as a Branch, and is Withered; and They Gather Them, and Cast Them into the Fire, and They are Burned."—John 15:6

The lessons these words teach are very simple and very solemn. A man can come to such a connection with Christ, that he counts himself to be in Him, and yet he can be cast forth. There is such a thing as not abiding in Christ, which leads to withering up and burning. There is such a thing as a withered branch, one in whom the initial union with Christ appears to have taken place, and in whom yet it is seen that his faith was but for a time. What a solemn call to look around and see if there be not withered branches in our churches, to look within and see whether we are indeed abiding and bearing fruit!

And what may be the cause of this "not abiding." With some it is that they never understood how the Christian calling leads to holy obedience and to loving service. They were content with the thought that they had believed, and were safe from Hell; there was neither motive nor power to abide in Christ—they knew not the need of it. With others it was that the cares of the world, or its prosperity, choked the Word: they had never forsaken all to follow Christ. With still others it was that their religion and their faith was in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God. They trusted in the means of grace, or in their own sincerity, or in the soundness of their faith in justifying grace; they had never come even to seek an entire abiding in Christ as their only safety. No wonder that, when the hot winds of temptation or persecution blew, they withered away: they were not truly rooted in Christ.

Let us open our eyes and see if there be not withered branches all around us in the churches. Young men, whose confessions were once bright, but who are growing cold. Or old men, who have retained their profession, but out of whom the measure of life there once appeared to be has died out. Let ministers and believers take Christ's words to heart, and see, and ask the Lord whether there is nothing to be done for branches that are beginning to wither. And let the word **Abide** ring through the Church until every believer has caught it—no safety but in a true abiding in Christ.

Let each of us turn within. Is our life fresh, and green, and vigorous, bringing forth its fruit in its season? (See Psalm 1:3; 92:13, 14; Jeremiah 17:7, 8.) Let us accept every warning with a willing mind, and let Christ's "if a man abide not" give new urgency to His "abide in me." To the upright soul the secret of abiding will become ever simpler, just the consciousness of the place in which He has put me; just the childlike resting in my union with Him, and the trustful assurance that He will keep me. Oh, do let us believe there is a life that knows of no withering, that is ever green; and that brings forth fruit abundantly!

Withered! O my Father, watch over me, and keep me, and let nothing ever for a moment hinder the freshness that comes from a full abiding in the Vine. Let the very thought of a withered branch fill me with holy fear and watchfulness.

Whatsoever Ye Will

"If Ye Abide in Me, and My Words Abide in You, Ask Whatsoever Ye Will, and it Shall be Done Unto You."—John 15:7

The Whole place of the branch in the vine is one of unceasing prayer. Without intermission it is ever calling: "O my vine, send the sap I need to bear Thy fruit." And its prayers are never unanswered: it asks what it needs, what it will, and it is done.

The healthy life of the believer in Christ is equally one of unceasing prayer. Consciously or unconsciously, he lives in continual dependence. The Word of his Lord, "You can do nothing," has taught him that not more unbroken than the continuance of the branch in the vine, must be his asking and receiving. The promise of our text gives us infinite boldness: "Ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

The promise is given in direct connection with fruit-bearing. Limit it to yourself and your own needs, and you rob it of its power; you rob yourself of the power of appropriating it. Christ was sending these disciples out, and they were ready to give their life for the world; to them He gave the disposal of the treasures of Heaven. Their prayers would bring the Spirit and the power they needed for their work.

The promise is given in direct connection with the coming of the Spirit. The Spirit is not mentioned in the parable, just as little as the sap of the vine is mentioned. But both are meant all through. In the chapter preceding the parable, our Lord had spoken of the Holy Spirit, in connection with their

inner life, being in them, and revealing Himself within them (14:15-23). In the next chapter He speaks of the Holy Spirit in connection with their work, coming to them, convincing the world, and glorifying Him (16:7-14). To avail ourselves of the unlimited prayer promises, we must be men who are filled with the Spirit, and wholly given up to the work and glory of Jesus. The Spirit will lead us into the truth of its meaning and the certainty of its fulfillment.

Let us realize that we can only fulfill our calling to bear much fruit, by praying much. In Christ are hid all the treasures men around us need; in Him all God's children are blessed with all spiritual blessings; He is full of grace and truth. But it needs prayer, much prayer, strong believing prayer, to bring these blessings down. And let us equally remember that we cannot appropriate the promise without a life given up for men. Many try to take the promise, and then look round for what they can ask. This is not the way; but the very opposite. Get the heart burdened with the need of souls, and the command to save them, and the power will come to claim the promise.

Let us claim it as one of the revelations of our wonderful life in the Vine: He tells us that if we ask in His name, in virtue of our union with Him, whatsoever it be, it will be done to us. Souls are perishing because there is too little prayer. God's children are feeble because there is too little prayer. We bear so little fruit because there is so little prayer. The faith of this promise would make us strong to pray; let us not rest till it has entered into our very heart, and drawn us in the power of Christ to continue and labor and strive in prayer until the blessing comes in power. To be a branch means not only bearing fruit on earth, but power in prayer to bring down blessing from Heaven. Abiding fully means praying much.

Ask what ye will. O my Lord, why is it that our hearts are so little able to

accept these words in their divine simplicity? Oh, give me to see that we need nothing less than this promise to overcome the powers of the world and Satan! Teach us to pray in the faith of this Thy promise.

If Ye Abide

"If Ye Abide in Me, and My Words, Abide in You, Ask Whatsoever Ye Will, and it Shall be Done Unto You."—John 15:7

The reason the Vine and its branches are such a true parable of the Christian life is that all nature has one source and breathes one spirit. The plant world was created to be to man an object lesson teaching him his entire dependence upon God, and his security in that dependence. He that clothes the lilies will much more cloth us. He that gives the trees and the vines their beauty and their fruits, making each what He meant it to be, will much more certainly make us what He would have us to be. The only difference is what God works in the trees is by a power of which they are not conscious. He wants to work in us with our consent. This is the nobility of man, that he has a will that can cooperate with God in understanding and approving and accepting what He offers to do.

If ye abide—Here is the difference between the branch of the natural and the branch of the spiritual Vine. The former abides by force of nature: the latter abides, not by force of will, but by a divine power given to the consent of the will. Such is the wonderful provision God has made that, what the power of nature does in the one case, the power of grace will do in the other. The branch can abide in the Vine.

If ye abide in me...ask whatsoever ye will—If we are to live a true prayer life, with the love and the power and the experience of prayer marking it, there must be no question about the abiding. And if we abide, there need be no question about the liberty of asking what we will, and the certainty of its

being done. There is the one condition: "If ye abide in me." There must be no hesitation about the possibility or the certainty of it. We must gaze on that little branch and its wonderful power of bearing such beautiful fruit until we truly learn to abide.

And what is its secret? Be wholly occupied with Jesus. Sink the roots of your being in faith and love and obedience deep down into Him. Come away out of every other place to abide here. Give up everything for the inconceivable privilege of being a branch on earth of the glorified Son of God in Heaven. Let Christ be first. Let Christ be all. Do not be occupied with the abiding—be occupied with Christ! He will hold you, He will keep you abiding in Him. He will abide in you.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you—This He gives as the equivalent of the other expression: "I in you. If my words abide in you"—that is, not only in meditation, in memory, in love, in faith—all these words enter into your will, your being, and constitute your life—if they transform your character into their own likeness, and you become and are what they speak and mean—ask what ye will; it shall be done unto you. Your words to God in prayer will be the fruit of Christ and His words living in you.

Ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you—Believe in the truth of this promise. Set yourself to be an intercessor for men; a fruit-bearing intercessor, ever calling down more blessing. Such faith and prayer will help you wonderfully to abide wholly and unceasingly.

If ye abide. Yes, Lord, the power to pray and the power to prevail must depend on this abiding in Thee. As Thou art the Vine, Thou art the divine Intercessor, who breathest Thy spirit in us. Oh, for grace to abide simply and wholly in Thee, and ask great things!

The Father Glorified

"Herein is My Father Glorified, that Ye Bear Much Fruit."—John 15:8

How can we glorify God? Not by adding to His glory or bringing Him any new glory that He has not. But simply by allowing His glory to shine out through us, by yielding ourselves to Him, that His glory may manifest itself in us and through us to the world. In a vineyard or a vine bearing much fruit, the owner is glorified, as it tells of his skill and care. In the disciple who bears much fruit, the Father is glorified. Before men and angels, proof is given of the glory of God's grace and power; God's glory shines out through him.

This is what Peter means when he writes: "He that ministers, let him minister as of the ability that God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ." As a man works and serves in a power which comes from God alone, God gets all the glory. When we confess that the ability came from God alone, he that does the work, and they who see it, equally glorify God. It was God who did it. Men judge by the fruit of a garden of what the gardener is. Men judge of God by the fruit that the branches of the Vine of His planting bears. Little fruit brings little glory to God. It brings no honor to either the Vine or the Husbandman. "That ye bear much fruit, herein is my Father glorified."

We have sometimes mourned our lack of fruit, as a loss to ourselves and our fellow men, with complaints of our feebleness as the cause. Let us rather think of the sin and shame of little fruit as robbing God of the glory He ought to get from us. Let us learn the secret of bringing glory to God, serving of the

ability which God giveth. The full acceptance of Christ's Word, "You can do nothing"; the simple faith in God, who worketh all in all; the abiding in Christ through whom the divine Husbandman does His work and gets much fruit—this is the life that will bring glory to God.

Much fruit—God asks it; see that you give it. God can be content with nothing less; be you content with nothing less. Let these words of Christ—fruit, more fruit, much fruit—abide in you, until you think as He does, and you be prepared to take from Him, the heavenly Vine, what He has for you. Much fruit: herein is my Father glorified. Let the very height of the demand be your encouragement. It is so entirely beyond your power, that it throws you more entirely upon Christ, your true Vine. He can, He will, make it true in you.

Much fruit—God asks because he needs. He does not ask fruit from the branches of His Vine for show, to prove what He can do. No; He needs it for the salvation of men: it is in that He is to be glorified. Throw yourself in much prayer on your Vine and your Husbandman. Cry to God and your Father to give you fruit to bring to men. Take the burden of the hungry and the perishing on you, as Jesus did when He was moved with compassion, and your power in prayer, and your abiding, and your bearing much fruit to the glory of the Father will have a reality and a certainty you never knew before.

The Father glorified. Blessed prospect—God glorifying Himself in me, showing forth the glory of His goodness and power in what He works in me, and through me. What a motive to bear much fruit, just as much as He works in me! Father, glorify Thyself in me.

True Disciples

"Herein is My Father Glorified, that Ye Bear Much Fruit: So Shall Ye Be My Disciples."—John 15:8

And are those who do not bear much fruit not disciples? They may be, but in a backward and immature stage. Of those who bear much fruit, Christ says: "These are My disciples, such as I would have them be—these are true disciples." Just as we say of someone in whom the idea of manliness is realized: That is a man! So our Lord tells who are disciples after His heart, worthy of the name: Those who bear much fruit. We find this double sense of the word **disciple** in the Gospel. Sometimes it is applied to all who accepted Christ's teaching. At other times it includes only the inner circle of those who followed Christ wholly, and gave themselves to His training for service. The difference has existed throughout all ages. There have always been a smaller number of God's people who have sought to serve Him with their whole heart, while the majority have been content with a very small measure of the knowledge of His grace and will.

And what is the difference between this smaller inner circle and the many who do not seek admission to it? We find it in the words: **much fruit**. With many Christians the thought of personal safety, which at their first awakening was a legitimate one, remains to the end the one aim of their religion. The idea of service and fruit is always a secondary and very subordinate one. The honest longing for much fruit does not trouble them. Souls that have heard the call to live wholly for their Lord, to give their life for Him as He gave His for them, can never be satisfied with this. Their cry is to bear as much fruit as

they possibly can, as much as their Lord ever can desire or give in them.

Bear much fruit: so shall ye be My disciples—Let me beg every reader to consider these words most seriously. Be not content with the thought of gradually doing a little more or better work. In this way it may never come. Take the words, ***much fruit***, as the revelation of your heavenly Vine of what you must be, of what you can be. Accept fully the impossibility, the utter folly of attempting it in your strength. Let the words call you to look anew upon the Vine, an undertaking to live out its heavenly fullness in you. Let them waken in you once again the faith and the confession: "I am a branch of the true Vine; I can bear much fruit to His glory, and the glory of the Father."

We need not judge others. But we see in God's Word everywhere two classes of disciples. Let there be no hesitation as to where we take our place. Let us ask Him to reveal to us how He ask and claims a life wholly given up to Him, to be as full of His Spirit as He can make us. Let our desire be nothing less than perfect cleansing, unbroken abiding, closest communion, abundant fruitfulness—true branches of the true Vine.

The world is perishing, the church is failing, Christ's cause is suffering, Christ is grieving on account of the lack of wholehearted Christians, bearing much fruit. Though you scarce see what it implies or how it is to come, say to Him that you are His branch to bear much fruit; that you are ready to be His disciple in His own meaning of the word.

My disciples. Blessed Lord, much fruit is the proof that Thou the true Vine hast in me a true branch, a disciple wholly at Thy disposal. Give me, I pray Thee, the childlike consciousness that my fruit is pleasing to Thee, what Thou countest much fruit.

The Wonderful Love

"Even as the Father Hath Loved Me, I Also Have Loved you."—John 15:9

Here Christ leaves the language of parable, and speaks plainly out of the Father. Much as the parable could teach, it could not teach the lesson of love. All that the vine does for the branch, it does under the compulsion of a law of nature: there is no personal living love to the branch. We are in danger of looking to Christ as a Saviour and a supplier of every need, appointed by God, accepted and trusted by us, without any sense of the intensity of personal affection in which Christ embraces us, and our life alone can find its true happiness. Christ seeks to point us to this.

And how does He do so? He leads us once again to Himself, to show us how identical His own life is with ours. Even as the Father loved Him, He loves us. His life as vine dependent on the Father was a life in the Father's love; that love was His strength and His joy; in the power of that divine love resting on Him He lived and died. If we are to live like Him, as branches to be truly like our Vine, we must share in this too. ***Our life must have its breath and being in a heavenly love as much as His.*** What the Father's love was to Him, His love will be to us. If that love made Him the true Vine, His love can make us true branches. "Even as the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you."

Even as the Father hath loved Me—And how did the Father love Him? The infinite desire and delight of God to communicate to the Son all He had Himself, to take the Son into the most complete equality with Himself, to live in the Son and have the Son live in Him—this was the love of God to Christ.

It is a mystery of glory of which we can form no conception, we can only bow and worship as we try to think of it. And with such a love, with this very same love, Christ longs in an infinite desire and delight to communicate to us all He is and has, to make us partakers of His own nature and blessedness, to live in us and have us live in Himself.

And now, if Christ loves us with such an intense, such an infinite divine love, what is it that hinders it triumphing over every obstacle and getting full possession of us? The answer is simple. Even as the love of the Father to Christ, so His love to us is a divine mystery, too high for us to comprehend or attain to by any effort of our own. It is only the Holy Spirit who can shed abroad and reveal in its all-conquering power without intermission this wonderful love of God in Christ. It is the vine itself that must give the branch its growth and fruit by sending up its sap. It is Christ Himself must by His Holy Spirit dwell in the heart; then shall we know and have in us the love that passeth knowledge.

As the Father loved Me, so have I loved you—Shall we not draw near to the personal living Christ, and trust Him, and yield all to Him, that He may love this love into us? Just as he knew and rejoiced every hour—the Father loveth Me—we too may live in the unceasing consciousness—as the Father loved Him, so He loves me.

As the Father loved Me, so have I loved you. Dear Lord, I am only beginning to apprehend how exactly the life of the Vine is to be that of the branch too. Thou art the Vine, because the Father loved Thee, and poured His love through Thee. And so Thou lovest me, and my life as branch is to be like Thine, a receiving and a giving out of heavenly love.

Abide in my Love

"Even as the Father Hath Loved Me, I Also Have Loved You: Abide Ye in My Love."—John 15:9

Abide in My love—We speak of a man's home as his abode. Our abode, the home of our soul, is to be the love of Christ. We are to live our life there, to be at home there all the day: this is what Christ means our life to be, and really can make it. Our continuous abiding in the Vine is to be an abiding in His love.

You have probably heard or read of what is called the higher, or the deeper life, of the richer or the fuller life, of the life abundant. And you possibly know that some have told of a wonderful change, by which their life of continual failure and stumbling had been changed into a very blessed experience of being kept and strengthened and made exceeding glad. If you asked them how it was this great blessing came to them, many would tell you it was simply this, that they were led to believe that this abiding in Christ's love was meant to be a reality, and that they were made willing to give up everything for it, and then enabled to trust Christ to make it true to them.

The love of the Father to the Son is not a sentiment—it is a divine life, an infinite energy, an irresistible power. It carried Christ through life and death and the grave. The Father loved Him and dwelt in Him, and did all for Him. So the love of Christ to us too is an infinite living power that will work in us all He delights to give us. The feebleness of our Christian life is that we do not take time to believe that this divine love does really delight in us, and will possess and work all in us. We do not take time to look at the Vine bearing

the branch so entirely, working all in it so completely. We strive to do for ourselves what Christ alone can, what Christ, oh, so lovingly, longs to do for us.

And this now is the secret of the change we spoke of, and the beginning of a new life, when the soul sees this infinite love willing to do all, and gives itself up to it. "Abide ye in my love." To believe that, it is possible so to live moment by moment; to believe that everything that makes it difficult or impossible will be overcome by Christ Himself; to believe that Love really means an infinite longing to give itself wholly to us and never leave us; and in this faith to cast ourselves on Christ to work it in us; this is the secret of the true Christian life.

And how to come to this faith? Turn away from the visible if you would see and possess the invisible. Take more time with Jesus, gazing on Him as the heavenly Vine, living in the love of the Father, wanting you to live in His love. Turn away from yourself and your efforts and your faith, if you would have the heart filled with Him and the certainty of His love. Abiding means going out from everything else, to occupy one place and stay there. Come away from all else, and set your heart on Jesus, and His love, that love will waken your faith and strengthen it. Occupy yourself with that love, worship it, wait for it. You may be sure it will reach out to you, and by its power take you up into itself as your abode and your home.

Abide in My love. Lord Jesus, I see it, it was Thy abiding in Thy Father's love that made Thee the true Vine, with Thy divine fullness of love and blessing for us. Oh, that I may even so, as a branch, abide in Thy love, for its fullness to fill me and overflow on all around.

Obey and Abide

"If Ye Keep My Commandments, Ye Shall Abide In My Love."—John 15:10

In our former meditation reference was made to the entrance into a life of rest and strength which has often come through a true insight into the personal love of Christ, and the assurance that that love indeed meant that He would keep the soul. In connection with that transition, and the faith that sees and accepts it, the word **surrender** or **consecration** is frequently used. The soul sees that it cannot claim the keeping of this wonderful love unless it yields itself to a life of entire obedience. It sees too that the faith that can trust Christ for keeping from sinning must prove its sincerity by venturing at once to trust Him for strength to obey. In that faith it dares to give up and cut off everything that has hitherto hindered it, and to promise and expect to live a life that is well pleasing to God.

This is the thought we have here now in our Saviour's teaching. After having in the words, "Abide in my love," spoken of a life in His love as a necessity, because it is at once a possibility and an obligation, He states what its one condition is: "**If ye keep my commandments**, ye shall abide in my love." This is surely not meant to close the door to the abode of His love which he had just opened up. Not in the most distant way does it suggest the thought which some are too ready to entertain, that as we cannot keep His commandments, we cannot abide in His love. No; the precept is a promise: "Abide in my love," could not be a precept if it were not a promise. And so the instruction as to the way through this open door points to no unattainable ideal; the love that invites to her blessed abode reaches out the hand, and enables us to keep

the commandments. Let us not fear, in the strength of our ascended Lord, to take the vow of obedience, and give ourselves to the keeping of His commandments. Through His will, loved and done, lies the path to His love.

Only let us understand well what it means. It refers to our performance of all that we know to be God's will. There may be things doubtful, of which we are not sure. A sin of ignorance has still the nature of sin in it. There may be involuntary sins, which rise up in the flesh, which we cannot control or overcome. With regard to these God will deal in due time in the way of searching and humbling, and if we be simple and faithful, give us larger deliverance than we dare expect. But all this may be found in a truly obedient soul. Obedience has reference to the positive keeping of the commandments of our Lord, and the performance of His will in everything in which we know it. This is a possible degree of grace, and it is the acceptance in Christ's strength of such obedience as the purpose of our heart, of which our Saviour speaks here. Faith in Christ as our Vine, in His enabling and sanctifying power, fits us for this obedience of faith, and secures a life of abiding in His love.

If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love—It is the heavenly Vine unfolding the mystery of the life He gives. It is to those abiding in Him to whom He opens up the secret of the full abiding in His love. ***It is the wholehearted surrender in everything to do His will, that gives access to a life in the abiding enjoyment of His love.***

Obey and abide. Gracious Lord, teach me this lesson, that it is only through knowing Thy will one can know Thy heart, and only through doing that ***will*** one can abide in Thy love. Lord, teach me that as worthless as is the doing in my own strength, so essential and absolutely indispensable is the doing of faith in Thy strength, if I would abide in Thy love.

Ye, Even As I

"If Ye Keep My Commandments, Ye Shall Abide in My Love, Even as I have Kept My Father's Commandments, and Abide in His Love."—John 15:10

We have had occasion more than once to speak of the perfect similarity of the vine and the branch in nature, and therefore in aim. Here Christ speaks no longer in a parable, but tells us plainly out of how His own life is the exact model of ours. He had said that it is alone by obedience we can abide in His love. He now tells that this was the way in which He abode in the Father's love. As the Vine, so the branch. His life and strength and joy had been in the love of the Father: it was only by obedience He abode in it. We may find our life and strength and joy in His love all the day, but it is only by an obedience like His we can abide in it. Perfect conformity to the Vine is one of the most precious of the lessons of the branch. It was by obedience Christ as Vine honored the Father as Husbandman; it is by obedience the believer as branch honors Christ as Vine.

Obey and abide—That was the law of Christ's life as much as it is to be that of ours. He was made like us in all things, that we might be like Him in all things. He opened up a path in which we may walk even as He walked. He took our human nature to teach us how to wear it, and show us how obedience, as it is the first duty of the creature, is the only way to abide in the favor of God and enter into His glory. And now He comes to instruct and encourage us, and asks us to keep His commandments, even as He kept His Father's commandments and abides in His love.

The divine fitness of this connection between obeying and abiding, between

God's commandments and His love, is easily seen. God's will is the very center of His divine perfection. As revealed in His commandments, it opens up the way for the creature to grow into the likeness of the Creator. In accepting and doing His will, I rise into fellowship with Him. Therefore it was that the Son, when coming into the world, spoke: "I come to do thy will, O God"! This was the place and this would be the blessedness of the creature. This was what he had lost in the Fall. This was what Christ came to restore. This is what, as the heavenly Vine, He asks of us and imparts to us, that even as He by keeping His Father's commandments abode in His love, we should keep His commandments and abide in His love.

Ye, even as I—The branch cannot bear fruit except as it has exactly the same life as the Vine. Our life is to be the exact counterpart of Christ's life. It can be, just in such measure as we believe in Him as the Vine, imparting Himself and His life to His branches. "Ye, even as I," the Vine says: one law, one nature, one fruit. Do let us take from our Lord the lesson of obedience as the secret of abiding. Let us confess that simple, implicit, universal obedience has taken too little the place it should have. Christ died for us as enemies, when we were disobedient. He took us up into His love; now that we are in Him, His Word is: "Obey and abide; ye, even as I." Let us give ourselves to a willing and loving obedience. He will keep us abiding in His love.

Ye, even as I. O my blessed Vine, who makest the branch in everything partake of Thy life and likeness, in this too I am to be like Thee: as Thy life in the Father's love through obedience, so mine in Thy love! Saviour, help me, that obedience may indeed be the link between Thee and me.

Joy

"These Things Have I Spoken Unto You, That My Joy May Be in You, and That Your Joy May Be Fulfilled."—John 15:11

If any one asks the question, "How can I be a happy Christian?" our Lord's answer is very simple: "These things," about the Vine and the branches, "I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be fulfilled." "You cannot have My joy without My life. Abide in Me, and let Me abide in you, and My joy will be in you." All healthy life is a thing of joy and beauty; live undividedly the branch life; you will have His joy in full measure.

To many Christians the thought of a life wholly abiding in Christ is one of strain and painful effort. They cannot see that the strain and effort only come, as long as we do not yield ourselves unreservedly to the life of Christ in us. The very first words of the parable are not yet opened up to them: "I am the true Vine; I undertake all and provide for all; I ask nothing of the branch but that it yields wholly to Me, and allows Me to do all. ***I engage to make and keep the branch all that it ought to be.***" Ought it not to be an infinite and unceasing joy to have the Vine thus work all, and to know that it is none less than the blessed Son of God in His love who is each moment bearing us and maintaining our life?

That My joy may be in you—We are to have Christ's own joy in us. And what is Christ's own joy? There is no joy like love. There is no joy but love. Christ had just spoken of the Father's love and His own abiding in it, and of His having loved us with that same love. His joy is nothing but the joy of

love, of being loved and of loving. It was the joy of receiving His Father's love and abiding in it, and then the joy of passing on that love and pouring it out on sinners. It is this joy He wants us to share: the joy of being loved of the Father and of Him; the joy of in our turn loving and living for those around us. This is just the joy of being truly branches: abiding in His love, and then giving up ourselves in love to bear fruit for others. Let us accept His life, as He gives it in us as the Vine, His joy will be ours: the joy of abiding in His love, the joy of loving like Him, of loving with His love.

And that your joy may be fulfilled—That it may be complete, that you may be filled with it. How sad that we should so need to be reminded that as God alone is the fountain of all joy, "God our exceeding joy," the only way to be perfectly happy is to have as much of God, as much of His will and fellowship, as possible! Religion is meant to be in everyday life a thing of unspeakable joy. And why do so many complain that it is not so? Because they do not believe that there is no joy like the joy of abiding in Christ and in His love, and being branches through whom He can pour out His love on a dying world.

Oh, that Christ's voice might reach the heart of every young Christian, and persuade him to believe that His joy is the only true joy, that His joy can become ours and truly fill us, and that the sure and simple way of living in it is—only this—to abide as branches in Him our heavenly Vine. Let the truth enter deep into us—as long as our joy is not full, it is a sign that we do not yet know our heavenly Vine aright; every desire for a fuller joy must only urge us to abide more simply and more fully in His love.

My joy—your joy. In this too it is: as the Vine, so the branch; all the Vine in the branch. Thy joy is our joy—Thy joy in us, and our joy fulfilled. Blessed Lord, fill me with Thy joy—the joy of being loved and blessed with a divine

love; the joy of loving and blessing others.

Love One Another

"This is My Commandment, That Ye Love One Another."—John 15:12

God is love. His whole nature and perfection is love, living not for Himself, but to dispense life and blessing. In His love He begat the Son, that He might give all to Him. In His love He brought forth creatures that He might make them partakers of His blessedness.

Christ is the Son of God's love, the bearer, the revealer, the communicator of that love. His life and death were all love. Love is His life, and the life He gives. He only lives to love, to live out His life of love in us, to give Himself in all who will receive Him. The very first thought of the true Vine is love—living only to impart His life to the branches.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of love. He cannot impart Christ's life without imparting His love. Salvation is nothing but love conquering and entering into us; we have just as much of salvation as we have of love. Full salvation is perfect love.

No wonder that Christ said: "A new commandment I give unto you"; "This is my commandment"—the one all-inclusive commandment—"that ye love one another." The branch is not only one with the vine, but with all its other branches; they drink one spirit, they form one body, they bear one fruit. Nothing can be more unnatural than that Christians should not love one another, even as Christ loved them. The life they received from their heavenly Vine is nothing but love. This is the one thing He asks above all others. "Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples...love one

another." As the special sort of vine is known by the fruit it bears, the nature of the heavenly Vine is to be judged of by the love His disciples have to one another.

See that you obey this commandment. Let your "obey and abide" be seen in this. Love your brethren as the way to abide in the love of your Lord. Let your vow of obedience begin here. Love one another. Let your intercourse with the Christians in your own family be holy, tender, Christlike love. Let your thoughts of the Christians round you be, before everything, in the spirit of Christ's love. Let your life and conduct be the sacrifice of love—give yourself up to think of their sins or their needs, to intercede for them, to help and to serve them. Be in your church or circle the embodiment of Christ's love. The life Christ lives in you is love; let the life in which you live it out be all love.

But, man, you write as if all this was so natural and simple and easy. Isaiah it at all possible thus to live and thus to love? My answer is: Christ commands it: you must obey. Christ means it: you must obey, or you cannot abide in His love.

But I have tried and failed. I see no prospect of living like Christ. Ah! that is because you have failed to take in the first word of the parable—"I am the true Vine: I give all you need as a branch, I give all I myself have." I pray you, let the sense of past failure and present feebleness drive you to the Vine. He is all love. He loves to give. He gives love. He will teach you to love, even as He loved.

Love one another. Dear Lord Jesus, Thou art all love; the life Thou gavest us is love; Thy new commandment, and Thy badge of discipleship is, "Love one another." I accept the charge: with the love with which Thou lovest me, and I

love Thee, I will love my brethren.

Even as I have Loved You

"This is My Commandment, That Ye Love One Another, Even as I Have Loved You."—John 15:12

This is the second time our Lord uses the expression—***Even as I***. The first time it was of His relation to the Father, keeping His commandments, and abiding in His love. Even so we are to keep Christ's commandments, and abide in His love. The second time He speaks of His relation to us as the rule of our love to our brethren: "Love one another, as I have loved you." In each case His disposition and conduct is to be the law for ours. It is again the truth we have more than once insisted on—perfect likeness between the Vine and the branch.

Even as I—But is it not a vain thing to imagine that we can keep His commandments, and love the brethren, even as He kept His Father's, and as He loved us? And must not the attempt end in failure and discouragement? Undoubtedly, if we seek to carry out the injunction in our strength, or without a full apprehension of the truth of the Vine and its branches. But if we understand that the "even as I" is just the one great lesson of the parable, the one continual language of the Vine to the branch, we shall see that it is not the question of what we feel able to accomplish, but of what Christ is able to work in us. These high and holy commands—"Obey, even as I! Love, even as I"—are just meant to bring us to the consciousness of our impotence, and through that to waken us to the need and the beauty and the sufficiency of what is provided for us in the Vine. We shall begin to hear the Vine speaking every moment to the branch: "Even as I. Even as I: My life is your life; and

have a share in all My fullness; the Spirit in you, and the fruit that comes from you, is all just the same as in Me. Be not afraid, but let your faith grasp each "Even as I" as the divine assurance that because I live in you, you may and can live like Me."

But why, if this really be the meaning of the parable, if this really be the life a branch may live, who do so few realize it? Because they do not know the heavenly mystery of the Vine. They know much of the parable and its beautiful lessons. But the hidden spiritual mystery of the Vine in His divine omnipotence and nearness, bearing and supplying them all the day—this they do not know, because they have not waited on God's Spirit to reveal it to them.

Love one another, even as I have loved you—"Ye, even as I." How are we to begin if we are really to learn the mystery? With the confession that we need to be brought to an entirely new mode of life, because we have never yet known Christ as the Vine in the completeness of His quickening and transforming power. With the surrender to be cleansed from all that is of self, and detached from all that is in the world, to live only and wholly as Christ lived for the glory of the Father. And then with the faith that this "even as I" is in very deed what Christ is ready to make true, the very life the Vine will maintain in the branch wholly dependent upon Him.

Even as I. Ever again it is, my blessed Lord, as the Vine, so the branch—one life, one spirit, one obedience, one joy, one love.

Lord Jesus, ***in the faith that Thou art my Vine, and that I am Thy branch***, I accept Thy command as a promise, and take Thy "even as I" as the simple revelation of what Thou dost work in me. Yea, Lord, as Thou hast loved, I will love.

Friendship: Its Origin

"Greater Love Hath No Man Than This, That a Man Lay Down His Life for His Friends."—John 15:13

In the three following verses our Lord speaks of His relation to His disciples under a new aspect—that of friendship. He point us to the love in which it on His side has its origin (verse 13): to the obedience on our part by which it is maintained (verse 14); and then to the holy intimacy to which it leads (verse 15).

Our relation to Christ is one of love. In speaking of this previously, He showed us what His love was in its heavenly glory; the same love with which the Father had loved Him. Here we have it in its earthly manifestation—lay down His life for us. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Christ does indeed long to have us know that the secret root and strength of all He is and does for us as the Vine is love. As we learn to believe this, we shall feel that here is something which we not only need to think and know about, but a living power, a divine life which we need to receive within us. Christ and His love are inseparable; they are identical. God is love, and Christ is love. God and Christ and the divine love can only be known by having them, by their life and power working within us. "This is eternal life, that they know thee"; there is no knowing God but by having the life; the life working in us alone gives the knowledge. And even so the love; if we would know it, we must drink of its living stream, we must have it shed forth by the Holy Spirit in us.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man give his life for his friends."

The life is the most precious thing a man has; the life is all he is; the life is himself. This is the highest measure of love: when a man gives his life, he hold nothing back, he gives all he has and is. It is this our Lord Jesus wants to make clear to us concerning His mystery of the Vine; with all He has He has placed Himself at our disposal. He wants us to count Him our very own; He wants to be wholly our possession, that we may be wholly His possession. He gave His life for us in death not merely as a passing act, that when accomplished was done with; no, but as a making Himself ours for eternity. Life for life; He gave His life for us to possess that we might give our life for Him to possess. This is what is taught by the parable of the Vine and the branch, in their wonderful identification, in their perfect union.

It is as we know something of this, not by reason or imagination, but deep down in the heart and life, that we shall begin to see what ought to be our life as branches of the heavenly Vine. He gave Himself to death; He lost Himself, that we might find life in Him. This is the true Vine, who only lives to live in us. This is the beginning and the root of that holy friendship to which Christ invites us.

Great is the mystery of godliness! Let us confess our ignorance and unbelief. Let us cease from our own understanding and our own efforts to master it. Let us wait for the Holy Spirit who dwells within us to reveal it. Let us trust His infinite love, which gave its life for us, to take possession and rejoice in making us wholly its own.

His life for His friends. How wonderful the lessons of the Vine, giving its very life to its branches! And Jesus gave His life for His friends. And that love gives itself to them and in them. My heavenly Vine, oh, teach me how wholly Thou longest to live in me!

Christ's Friendship: Its Evidence

"Ye Are My Friends, if Ye Do the Things Which I Command You."—John 15:14

Our Lord has said what He gave as proof of His friendship: He gave His life for us. He now tells us what our part is to be—to do the things which He commands. He gave His life to secure a place for His love in our hearts to rule us; the response His love calls us to, and empowers us for, is that we do what He commands us. As we know the dying love, we shall joyfully obey its commands. As we obey the commands, we shall know the love more fully. Christ had already said: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." He counts it needful to repeat the truth again: the one proof of our faith in His love, the one way to abide in it, the one mark of being true branches is—to do the things which He commands us. He began with absolute surrender of His life for us. He can ask nothing less from us. This alone is a life in His friendship.

This truth, of the imperative necessity of obedience, doing all that Christ commands us, has not the place in our Christian teaching and living that Christ meant it to have. We have given a far higher place to privilege than to duty. We have not considered implicit obedience as a condition of true discipleship. The secret thought that it is impossible to do the things He commands us, and that therefore it cannot be expected of us, and a subtle and unconscious feeling that sinning is a necessity have frequently robbed both precepts and promises of their power. The whole relation to Christ has become clouded and lowered, the waiting on His teaching, the power to hear

and obey His voice, and through obedience to enjoy His love and friendship, have been enfeebled by the terrible mistake. Do let us try to return to the true position, take Christ's words as most literally true, and make nothing less the law of our life: "Ye are my friends, if ye do the things that I command you." Surely our Lord asks nothing less than that we heartily and truthfully say: "Yea, Lord, what Thou dost command, that will I do."

These commands are to be done as a proof of friendship. The power to do them rests entirely in the personal relationship to Jesus. For a friend I could do what I would not for another. The friendship of Jesus is so heavenly and wonderful, it comes to us so as the power of a divine love entering in and taking possession, the unbroken fellowship with Himself is so essential to it, that it implies and imparts a joy and a love which make the obedience a delight. The liberty to claim the friendship of Jesus, the power to enjoy it, the grace to prove it in all its blessedness—all come as we do the things He commands us.

Is not the one thing needful for us that we ask our Lord to reveal Himself to us in the dying love in which He proved Himself our friend, and then listen as He says to us: "Ye are My friends." As we see what our Friend has done for us, and what an unspeakable blessedness it is to have Him call us friends, the doing His commands will become the natural fruit of our life in His love. We shall not fear to say: "Yea, Lord, we are Thy friends, and do what Thou dost command us."

If ye do. Yes, it is in doing that we are blessed, that we abide in His love, that we enjoy His friendship. "If ye do what I command you!" O my Lord, let Thy holy friendship lead me into the love of all Thy commands, and let the doing of Thy commands lead me ever deeper into Thy friendship.

Christ's Friendship: Its Intimacy

"No Longer Do I Call You Servants; for the Servant Knoweth Not What His Lord Doeth: But I Have Called You Friends; for All Things That I Heard From My Father, I Have Made Known Unto You."—John 15:15

The highest proof of true friendship, and one great source of its blessedness, is the intimacy that holds nothing back, and admits the friend to share our inmost secrets. It is a blessed thing to be Christ's servant; His redeemed ones delight to call themselves His slaves. Christ had often spoken of the disciples as His servants. In His great love our Lord now says: "No longer do I call you servants"; with the coming of the Holy Spirit a new era was to be inaugurated. "The servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth"—he has to obey without being consulted or admitted into the secret of all his master's plans. "But, I have called you friends, for all things I heard from my Father I have made known unto you." Christ's friends share with Him in all the secrets the Father has entrusted to Him.

Let us think what this means. When Christ spoke of keeping His Father's commandments, He did not mean merely what was written in Holy Scripture, but those special commandments which were communicated to Him day by day, and from hour to hour. It was of these He said: "The Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that he doeth, and he will show him greater things." All that Christ did was God's working. God showed it to Christ, so that He carried out the Father's will and purpose, not, as man often does, blindly and unintelligently, but with full understanding and approval. As one who stood in God's counsel, He knew God's plan.

And this now is the blessedness of being Christ's friends, that we do not, as servants, do His will without much spiritual insight into its meaning and aim, but are admitted, as an inner circle, into some knowledge of God's more secret thoughts. From the Day of Pentecost on, by the Holy Spirit, Christ was to lead His disciples into the spiritual apprehension of the mysteries of the kingdom, of which He had hitherto spoken only by parables.

Friendship delights in fellowship. Friends hold council. Friends dare trust to each other what they would not for anything have others know. What is it that gives a Christian access to this holy intimacy with Jesus? That gives him the spiritual capacity for receiving the communications Christ has to make of what the Father has shown Him? "Ye are my friends if ye do what I command you." It is loving obedience that purifies the soul. That refers not only to the commandments of the Word, but to that blessed application of the Word to our daily life, which none but our Lord Himself can give. But as these are waited for in dependence and humility, and faithfully obeyed, the soul becomes fitted for ever closer fellowship, and the daily life may become a continual experience: "I have called you friends; for all things I have heard from my Father, I have made known unto you."

I have called you friends. What an unspeakable honor! What a heavenly privilege! O Saviour, speak the word with power into my soul: "I have called you My friend, whom I love, whom I trust, to whom I make known all that passes between my Father and Me."

Election

"Ye Did Not Choose Me, But I Chose You, and Appointed You That Ye Should Go and Bear Fruit."—John 15:16

The branch does not choose the vine, or decide on which vine it will grow. The vine brings forth the branch, as and where it will. Even so Christ says: "Ye did not choose me, but I chose you." But some will say is not just this the difference between the branch in the natural and in the spiritual world, that man has a will and a power of choosing, and that it is in virtue of his having decided to accept Christ, his having chosen Him as Lord, that he is now a branch? This is undoubtedly true. And yet it is only half a truth. The lesson of the Vine, and the teaching of our Lord, points to the other half, the deeper, the divine side of our being in Christ. If He had not chosen us, we had never chosen Him. Our choosing Him was the result of His choosing us, and taking hold of us. In the very nature of things, it is His prerogative as Vine to choose and create His own branch. We owe all we are to "the election of grace." If we want to know Christ as the true Vine, the sole origin and strength of the branch life, and ourselves as branches in our absolute, most blessed, and most secure dependence upon Him, let us drink deep of this blessed truth: "Ye did not choose me, but I chose you."

And with what view does Christ say this? That they may know what the object is for which He chose them, and find, in their faith in His election, the certainty of fulfilling their destiny. Throughout Scripture this is the great object of the teaching of election. "Predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son." (to be branches in the image and likeness of the Vine).

"Chosen that we should be holy." "Chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit." "Elect in sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience." Some have abused the doctrine of election, and others, for fear of its abuse, have rejected it, because they have overlooked this teaching. They have occupied themselves with its hidden origin in eternity, with the inscrutable mysteries of the counsels of God instead of accepting the revelation of its purpose in time, and the blessings it brings into our Christian life.

Just think what these blessings are. In our verse Christ reveals His twofold purpose in choosing us to be His branches: that we may bear fruit on earth, and have power in prayer in Heaven. What confidence the thought that He has chosen us for this gives, that He will not fail to fit us for carrying out His purpose! What assurance that we can bear fruit that will abide, and can pray so as to obtain! What a continual call to the deepest humility and praise, to the most entire dependence and expectancy! He would not choose us for what we are not fit for, or what He could not fit us for. He has chosen us; this is the pledge, He will do all in us.

Let us listen in silence of soul to our holy Vine speaking to each of us: "You did not choose Me!" And let us say, "Yea, Lord, but I chose You! Amen, Lord!" Ask Him to show what this means. In Him, the true Vine, your life as branch has its divine origin, its eternal security, and the power to fulfill His purpose. From Him to whose will of love you owe all, you may expect all. In Him, His purpose, and His power, and His faithfulness, in His love let me abide.

I chose you. Lord, teach me what this means—that Thou hast set Thy heart on me, and chosen me to bear fruit that will abide, and to pray prayer that will prevail. In this Thine eternal purpose my soul would rest itself and say: "What He chose me for I will be, I can be, I shall be."

Abiding Fruit

"I Chose You, and Appointed You, That Ye Should Go and Bear Fruit, and That Your Fruit Should Abide."—John 15:16

There are some fruits that will not keep. One sort of pears or apples must be used at once; another sort can be kept over till next year. So there is in Christian work some fruit that does not last. There may be much that pleases and edified, and yet there is no permanent impression made on the power of the world or the state of the Church. On the other hand, there is work that leaves its mark for generations or for eternity. In it the power of God makes itself lastingly felt. It is the fruit of which Paul speaks when he describes the two styles of ministry: "My preaching was not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstrations of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The more of man with his wisdom and power, the less of stability; the more of God's Spirit, the more of a faith standing in God's power.

Fruit reveals the nature of the tree from which it comes. What is the secret of bearing fruit that abides? The answer is simple. It is as our life abides in Christ, as we abide in Him, that the fruit we bear will abide. The more we allow all that is of human will and effort to be cut down short and cleansed away by the divine Husbandman, the more intensely our being withdraws itself from the outward that God may work in us by His Spirit; that is, the more wholly we abide in Christ, the more will our fruit abide.

What a blessed thought! He chose you, and appointed you to bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide. He never meant one of His branches to bring

forth fruit that should not abide. The deeper I enter into the purpose of this His electing grace, the surer my confidence will become that I can bring forth fruit to eternal life, for myself and others. The deeper I enter into this purpose of His electing love, the more I will realize what the link is between the purpose from eternity, and the fruit to eternity: the abiding in Him. The purpose is His, He will carry it out; the fruit is His, He will bring it forth; the abiding is His, He will maintain it.

Let everyone who professes to be a Christian worker, pause. Ask whether you are leaving your mark for eternity on those around you. It is not your preaching or teaching, your strength of will or power to influence, that will secure this. ***All depends on having your life full of God and His power.*** And that again depends upon your living the truly branchlike life of abiding—very close and unbroken fellowship with Christ. It is the branch, that abides in Him, that brings forth much fruit, fruit that will abide.

Blessed Lord, reveal to my soul, I pray Thee, that Thou hast chosen me to bear much fruit. Let this be my confidence, that Thy purpose can be realized—Thou didst choose me. Let this be my power to forsake everything and give myself to Thee. Thou wilt Thyself perfect what Thou hast begun. Draw me so to dwell in the love and the certainty of that eternal purpose, that the power of eternity may possess me, and the fruit I bear may abide.

That ye may bear fruit. O my heavenly Vine, it is beginning to dawn upon my soul that fruit, more fruit—much fruit—abiding fruit is the one thing Thou hast to give me, and the one thing as branch I have to give Thee! Here I am. Blessed Lord, work out Thy purpose in me; let me bear much fruit, abiding fruit, to thy glory.

Prevailing Prayer

"I Appointed You That Ye Should Go and Bear Fruit, and That Your Fruit Should Abide: That Whatsoever Ye Shall Ask of the Father in My Name, He May Give It You."—John 15:16

In the first verse of our parable, Christ revealed Himself as the true Vine, and the Father as the Husbandman, and asked for Himself and the Father a place in the heart. Here, in the closing verse, He sums up all His teaching concerning Himself and the Father in the twofold purpose for which He had chosen them. With reference to Himself, the Vine, the purpose was, that they should bear fruit. With reference to the Father, it was, that whatsoever they should ask in His name, should be done of the Father in Heaven. As fruit is the great proof of the true relation to Christ, so prayer is of our relation to the Father. A fruitful abiding in the Son, and prevailing prayer to the Father, are the two great factors in the true Christian life.

That whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you—These are the closing words of the parable of the Vine. The whole mystery of the Vine and its branches leads up to the other mystery—that ***whatsoever we ask in His name the Father gives!*** See here the reason of the lack of prayer, and of the lack of power in prayer. It is because we so little live the true branch life, because we so little lose ourselves in the Vine, abiding in Him entirely, that we feel so little constrained to much prayer, so little confident that we shall be heard, and so do not know how to use His name as the key to God's storehouse. The Vine planted on earth has reached up into Heaven; it is only the soul wholly and intensely abiding in it, can reach into Heaven with power to prevail much. Our faith in the teaching and the truth of

the parable, in the truth and the life of the Vine, must prove itself by power in prayer. The life of abiding and obedience, of love and joy, of cleansing and fruit-bearing, will surely lead to the power of prevailing prayer.

Whatsoever ye shall ask—The promise was given to disciples who were ready to give themselves, in the likeness of the true Vine, for their fellow men. This promise was all their provision for their work; they took it literally, they believed it, they used it, and they found it true. Let us give ourselves, as branches of the true Vine, and in His likeness, to the work of saving men, of bringing forth fruit to the glory of God, and we shall find a new urgency and power to pray and to claim the "whatsoever ye ask." We shall waken to our wonderful responsibility of having in such a promise the keys to the King's storehouses given us, and we shall not rest till we have received bread and blessing for the perishing.

"I chose you, that ye may bring forth fruit, and that your fruit may abide; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it to you." Beloved disciple, seek above everything to be a man of prayer. Here is the highest exercise of your privilege as a branch of the Vine; here is the full proof of your being renewed in the image of God and His Son; here is your power to show how you, like Christ, live not for yourself, but for others; here you enter Heaven to receive gifts for men; here your abiding in Christ has led to His abiding in you, to use you as the channel and instrument of His grace. The power to bear fruit for men has been crowned by power to prevail with God.

"I am the vine, my Father is the Husbandman." Christ's work in you is to bring you so to the Father that His Word may be fulfilled in you: "At that day ye shall ask in my name; and I say not that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you." ***The power of direct access to the Father for***

men, the liberty of intercession claiming and receiving blessing for them in faith, is the highest exercise of our union with Christ. Let all who would truly and fully be branches give themselves to the work of intercession. It is the one great work of Christ the Vine in Heaven, the source of power for all His work. Make it your one great work as branch: it will be the power of all your work.

In My name. Yes, Lord, in Thy name, the new name Thou hast given Thyself here, the true Vine. As a branch, abiding in Thee in entire devotion, in full dependence, in perfect conformity, in abiding fruitfulness, I come to the Father, in Thee, and He will give what I ask. Oh, let my life be one of unceasing and prevailing intercession! Amen!

THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF THE LOVE OF GOD

THE PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW
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BY

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A few words may be devoted to the first epistle of John

The love of God^(TOC)

The love of God occupies a more prominent place than any other divine attribute in present-day Christian consciousness. Obviously the causes of this prominence must not be sought in the sphere of doctrinal thinking, but in certain practical tendencies of our modern religious life. Not for the sake of its theological significance as a constituent factor in the divine character, but for the sake of its bearing upon human conduct and destiny has the love of God been exalted to this position of supremacy among its sister attributes. It were idle to pretend that the scientific theology of today is more successful than the theology of previous ages in deducing from the one principle of love everything that Scripture and experience teach concerning God's method of dealing with His creatures. On the contrary, to the thinking mind the impossibility of doing this has perhaps never stood out more clearly than it stands out at present, in the light of what biblical research has shown to be the truth of revelation, and of what modern science has shown to be the reality of life. And yet, in the very face of this impossibility, there has developed a widespread demand that God's love, and nothing but His love, shall be made the keynote of every message Christianity has to bring to the world.

The shifting of the emphasis in religion from the intellect to the will_(TOC)

The shifting of the emphasis in religion from the intellect to the will and the emotions has undoubtedly had something to do with producing this result. So long as the intellect retained its legitimate place among the functions of the religious subject, so long as to know God was felt to be an essential part of glorifying God, the natural tendency was to make this knowledge as comprehensive and as many-sided as possible—to have it mirror the full content of the divine nature, and not merely a single one of its perfections. Whatever may be charged against the intellectualism of the period when orthodoxy reigned supreme, it can claim credit at least for having been broad minded and well balanced in its appreciation of the infinite complexity and richness of the life of God. The music of that theology may not always please modern ears, because it seems lacking in sweetness; but it ranged over a wider scale and made better harmonies than the popular strains of today. On the other hand, it is plain that where the religious interest is exclusively concentrated upon the will and entirely exhausts itself in attempts at solving the concrete, practical problems of life, no strong incentive will exist for reflecting upon any other aspect of the nature of God than His love, because all that is required of God is that He shall serve as the norm and warrant for Christian philanthropic effort. It is a well-known fact that all heresy begins with a partial truth. So it is in the present case. No one will deny that in the Scriptural disclosure of truth the divine love is set forth as a most fundamental principle, nor that the embodiment of this principle in our

human will and action forms a prime ingredient of that subjective religion which the Word of God requires of us. But it is quite possible to overemphasize this one side of truth and duty as to bring into neglect other exceedingly important principles and demands of Christianity. The result will be that, while no positive error is taught, yet the equilibrium both in consciousness and life is disturbed and a condition created in which the power of resistance to the inroads of spiritual disease is greatly reduced. There can be little doubt that in this manner the one-sidedness and exclusiveness with which the love of God has been preached to the present generation is largely responsible for that universal weakening of the sense of sin, and the consequent decline of interest in the doctrines of atonement and justification, which even in orthodox and evangelical circles we all see and deplore.

But this by no means reveals the full extent of the danger to which the tendency we are speaking of has exposed us. It is impossible for any practical displacement of the balance of truth to continue for a long time without endeavoring to perpetuate and justify itself by means of a corresponding reconstruction of the entire doctrinal system. Thus what may have been at first no more than a matter of relative emphasis inevitably tends to become a question of positive theoretical error, such as makes the return to normal conditions in practical religious life more difficult than before. In the Ritschlian theology we have before us the systematic expression of all the various currents and tendencies which have now for a considerable time been carrying the Christian spirit of our age in the direction just pointed out. Here the primacy of the love of God and the restriction of religion to the sphere of the will have ceased to be abnormalities of an unevenly distributed development. They have become the supreme maxims, clearly realized and systematically upheld, to whose sway the religious consciousness in its whole

extent is made absolutely subject. Ritschlianism is the application of the principle of empiricism to the sphere of theological knowledge, and that in its extreme positivistic form. Not what God has objectively and supernaturally revealed to us concerning Himself, but only that which can enter into our subjective religious experience, forms the proper content of theology. Under the reproach of being metaphysical, all that the church has hitherto believed concerning the triune existence of God, concerning His transcendental attributes, concerning the preexistence and incarnation of Christ, and many other vital facts, is ruled out of her creed. Well nigh the whole of what used to be considered the solid substance of our knowledge of God is thus declared, not simply of secondary importance, but, so far as our apprehension is concerned, impossible and nonexistent. By such radical reduction of the claims of the intellect to nothing, the way is made clear for the enthronement of the will as the sovereign organ through which the knowledge of God is obtained. For, if for knowing God we are shut up to our subjective experience, how else can His revelation enter into our consciousness except in the form of loving will? This is the only mode of the divine existence that we can actually reproduce, and consequently apprehend, without falling back upon the discredited method of metaphysical speculation. From the standpoint of this theology the proposition, God is love, assumes the literal meaning that everything we know of Him is but one of the many formulas in which His love may be expressed, according to the several relations it sustains to us. As Schleiermacher transformed all the divine attributes into so many forms of causality, in accordance with his principle that religion is a feeling of absolute dependence, so in the Ritschlian system the old names for the attributes are, to be sure, retained, but the reality designated by these names is in each case reduced to terms of love. No road leads out of this moral circle to which our cognition of God is confined. Omnipotence is

defined as the love of God, which is able to assist Him against every enemy. Omnipresence signifies that His love can help everywhere and under all circumstances. Eternity expresses the assurance that not for a single moment does God cease to cherish love for us. Righteousness means the consistency wherewith God's love pursues the goal of our salvation. In the same manner the entire rich complex of the world of redemption, which the Scriptures call the kingdom of God, is forced within the limits of such moral relationships as the divine love prescribes for us. The kingdom of God is identical with the moral order of the world. What Christ came to reveal is the fatherhood of God, not in any trinitarian sense, but exclusively as a moral and religious fact; and, corresponding to this, the sonship of Christ can have no other content than that the experience of the love of God attained in Him its ideal perfection.

Paradoxical though this absorption of all other attributes into the one trait of love may be, it is but the consistent carrying out of the principle which underlies every practical tendency to ignore the scriptural law of proportion in dealing with the divine character. There is, however, still another serious defect to be noticed in this modern exploitation of the love of God, touching not the distinction of love from the other attributes, but the internal distinction between the various kinds and degrees of affection, which in the case of a relationship so infinitely varied as that of God to the world are subsumed under the comprehensive term of love. The old theology was exceedingly careful in marking off these kinds and degrees from one another, and in assigning to each the group of objects upon which it operates. The primordial love which is exchanged between the three persons of the adorable Trinity was distinguished from the ectypical love which goes out toward the creature. Within the latter, the general benevolence extending toward all sentient beings was separated from the specific affection God cherishes for

intelligent beings made in his image. Terms like [filoktisia](#) and [filanqrwpia](#) were employed in order to facilitate the proper recognition of these lines of distinction. And again, within the limits of the divine affection for angels and men, notice was taken of the difference necessarily created by the physical, moral, and spiritual conditions under which the love of God finds and contemplates its objects. Above all, the supreme soteriological manifestation of this love, rising in its absoluteness and sovereignty above every possibility of being either originated or checked or extinguished by aught in the creature, and particularly belonging to the sphere of the elect, was upheld in its uniqueness over against all other manifestations of a conditioned and more common character. It needs but a glance at the average presentation of the same subject today, whether in popular or more scientific form, to observe that these distinctions are entirely neglected. A dull uniformity has taken the place of the wealth of form and color that used to delight the eye, not merely of the theologian, but of the simple Christian also, because both recognized in it a reflection of the infinite fullness of life in God. Thus the watchword, God is love, has not only silenced all other voices from the realm of truth, it has likewise rendered many incapable of appreciating broad distinctions in a matter where even the most delicate shadings are of importance. And, as valuation depends largely upon a well-developed sense for the specific difference of one's possessions and privileges, it is to be feared that, in consequence of this leveling process, the consciousness of the saving love of God no longer possesses for the Christian today quite the same preciousness it used to possess for believers of past generations. Not only this, but objectively also in the same degree as the extent of its sphere of application has been enlarged, the content of the divine love has been impoverished and depleted. The message has become one which bears the same meaning for all, but it seems less worth carrying than it

did before.

In view of what has been stated, and in view of the concrete significance which these general issues have assumed for us in the present confessional crisis, it may not seem amiss to devote the time at our disposal to a brief review of the scriptural doctrine of the love of God. Following the historical method, we glance separately at the Old and New Testament developments of revelation on this subject. At first sight it would seem as if the Old Testament Scriptures could yield but a scanty harvest for our purpose. Looked at from one point of view the old covenant stands contrasted as the economy of law and righteousness, with the new as the economy of gospel and grace. We must remember, however, that the contrast so defined is relative and not an absolute contrast. As will appear presently, the characteristic difference between the old and the new covenant concerns much more emphasis thrown on Israel's love for God than on God's love for Israel. It is on the side of the subjective religious frame of mind with which the Old Testament worshiper approaches Jehovah, that the limitations under which he lives most sharply reveal themselves. As regards the other side, the love of Jehovah for His people, so far from being reticent or reserved on this subject, the Scriptures of the old covenant depict it with a richness of coloring and a degree of anthropomorphic realism perhaps unrivaled, certainly unsurpassed, in those of the new. It should be remembered, however, that the Old Testament, in accordance with its Semitic genius, seldom views the divine attributes in the abstract as quiescent dispositions in God, but mostly as assuming concrete shape in their single historical manifestations. To translate these attributes from the sphere of action into the sphere of being, and thus to eternalize them, has been the task of the New Testament. From the fact that this applies also to the attribute of love, we must not allow ourselves to draw the mistaken inference that the love so described is lacking in continuity or does

not form an essential element in the Old Testament conception of the character of God.

Jehovah are not very numerous[\(TOC\)](#)

The passages in which love is directly predicated of Jehovah are not very numerous. They belong to Deuteronomy, the Psalter, and the prophetic writings of Hosea, Isaiah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, and Malachi. It must be remembered, however, that the direct use of this one word by no means accurately measures the frequency and importance of the conception itself. In order to gain a correct estimate of these, such cognate terms as "grace," "mercy," "lovingkindness" (Chesed) must be taken into account. Also the verbs used to describe the elective act in which the divine love expresses itself, such as "to know" and "to choose," come under consideration. Still further, the conception of Jehovah's fatherhood over Israel and the covenant conception claim a share of our attention, since both obviously imply the existence of a relation of love, even where this is not explicitly affirmed or reflected upon.

Attitude of Jehovah toward His own^(TOC)

In the patriarchal period of revelation no explicit use is made of the term love to designate the attitude of Jehovah toward His own. Even in the Mosaic period the word does not occur until Deuteronomy. Nevertheless, equivalent forms of statement show that the conception itself is not wanting. Man is said to have been made in the image of God, and obviously the underlying idea is that in his very constitution he is adapted and designed for communion with God. The entire mode of God's seeking our first parents immediately after the fall reveals the most tender care and solicitude. In the promise that enmity will be put between the serpent and the woman and their respective seeds, the pledge of friendship with Him who puts this enmity is implicitly contained. Enoch and Noah walked with God, and Jehovah declares Himself the God of Shem in the pregnant covenant sense of this phrase. Abraham throughout his history appears as the ideal friend of God, though only later revelation explicitly calls him so (2 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8). On the second occasion that Jehovah makes the covenant with Abraham, the import of the covenant is summed up in the formula that He will be a God unto the patriarch and unto his seed after him. In connection with Abraham also, the significant term "to know" is found for the first time, as descriptive of the loving condescension wherewith Jehovah chose him for a relation of special intimacy with Himself. Afterward this term reappears, where it is said of the children of Israel in Egypt that God heard their groaning, remembered His covenant with the patriarchs, looked upon them and knew them (Exodus 2:24, 25). To Pharaoh God speaks of Israel as His firstborn, i. e., His dearly

beloved son (Exodus 4:22). Immediately before the making of the Sinaitic covenant and the promulgation of the Decalogue, all Jehovah's gracious dealings with His people connected with the Exodus are summed up in the beautiful words: "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:4-6). In the four classical statements, where the Torah rises to the height of a description of the character of God, His benevolent attributes, such as lovingkindness (Chesed), mercy, grace, longsuffering, faithfulness, are strongly emphasized (Exodus 20:5, 6; 34:6, 7; Numbers 14:8; Deuteronomy 7:9, 10).

All this sufficiently shows that there is no essential difference between the several parts of the Pentateuch in the recognition of this side of the divine nature. Still it is not accidental that in Deuteronomy the conception of Jehovah's love attains to a relatively greater prominence and clearness of expression. Deuteronomy stands on the dividing line between the legal and the prophetic types of revelation. While embodying a real law code, it at the same time approaches the character of prophecy in that it goes back from the single concrete commandments of Jehovah to certain general, spiritual principles, and varies the categorical imperative of the other codes with the winning note of persuasion and exhortation. In this light we must also interpret its emphatic assertion of the divine love. The lawgiver appeals to this, because it affords the supreme motive for that obedience from the heart which he endeavors to urge upon the people. Precisely because the conception is thus used as a motive for obedience, it attaches itself to the figure of the love of a father for his son, which we already met at an earlier place in the Pentateuch (Deuteronomy 32:5, 6, 19; Exodus 4:22, 23). It

should be noticed, however, that in thus bringing forward the thought of Jehovah's love for Israel, Deuteronomy throws special emphasis upon the elective character of this love. It is not so much the general fact that Jehovah now loves the people, but rather the special consideration that in the past at a definite moment He set His love upon them, to the exclusion of all other nations, upon which the book dwells. The emphasis thrown on this feature is closely connected with the practical purpose which the whole idea is made to serve. In nearly all the passages where Israel is exhorted to love Jehovah this has the specific meaning of a warning against the service of other gods. The sincerity of their affection for Jehovah must show itself in this, that it excludes all similar relationships to false deities; and it is corresponding to this that the elective discriminating element in the origin of God's love for Israel is emphasized. He also did not choose many nations, but gave His love to Israel alone (Deuteronomy 4:19, 20, 34, 35; 10:14-16; 32:8, 12). Upon the truth that this particular love for the covenant people is intended to become ultimately subservient to the salvation of all nations Deuteronomy does not reflect. Its point of view is indicated by the words of the Song of Moses: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel" (32:8).^[1] That the Pentateuch, as a whole, knows this wider outlook, its sublime structure exhibiting Israel's history, as the central movement of the history of the race, sufficiently shows. Nevertheless, even here it would be an error to find in the service to the cause of universalism appointed for Israel the only and adequate explanation of the election of this one people to privileges from which all others are excluded. No unprejudiced reader will be able to escape from the conclusion that the manner in which the particularism of the divine love is developed proves it to be a principle of intrinsic and permanent significance. It is urged as

something without which Jehovah's love for His people would not be what it actually is, nor possess the full spiritual value which in reality belongs to it. On the basis of the Old Testament statements alone, altogether apart from their New Testament interpretation, we are led to infer that the national election of Israel, besides serving a historical purpose in a larger international economy of redemption, springs also from some other mysterious reason not deducible from the facts of this world, but strictly pertaining to the hidden counsel of God, and typifying by its operation on a national scale with reference to Israel the elective, particularistic character of supernatural grace with reference to individuals everywhere.

Whether the Torah conceives of Jehovah's love for Israel as absolute_(TOC)

Somewhat more difficult it is to answer two other questions, viz., whether the Torah conceives of Jehovah's love for Israel as absolute or conditioned by causes outside of Himself, and in how far the other attributes, such as wrath and justice, which are plainly conditioned in their nature, affect its operation. As regards the first origin of this love, it is easy to show that this is absolute, in that it springs from God independently of any excellent qualities, ethical or otherwise, which might be naturally inherent in Israel. It is explicitly denied that Jehovah set His love upon them because they were more in number than any other people (Deuteronomy 7:7). The influence of ethical considerations in attracting God's choice to Israel is plainly excluded by the repeated statement that He knew them for a stiff-necked and rebellious people, and that, while the Canaanites were driven out from the land because of their unrighteousness, it is by no means followed from this that Israel took their place because of its righteousness (Deuteronomy 9:4, 6, 24). Thus the motives determining Jehovah's love for Israel are sought in Himself alone. The only apparent exception to this is that the ancient love for the fathers is said to lie at the basis of God's favor for the people of the Mosaic period. But in reality this only carries the sovereign initiative of the relationship on the part of God one step further back. If He loved the posterity because He was faithful to His love for the patriarchs, His love for the patriarchs originated from Himself alone. On the other hand, it must be confessed that the permanent enjoyment of the special favor of God is made throughout

dependent on faithful performance of the covenant obligations by Israel, and in so far, therefore, appears ethically conditioned. It is true, according to the evolutionary hypothesis at present in vogue, the bestowal or withdrawal of Jehovah's favor was, in the pre-prophetic period, conceived of as a matter of pure incalculable caprice, because the stage of evolution had not yet been reached in which the ethical element in the divine character began to be regarded as central and supreme. But this, of course, rests on the opinion that those parts of the Pentateuch in which the statements under review occur belong to a much later than the Mosaic period, and reflect the ascendancy of the prophetic ideas. Hence we may safely discard it for our present purpose. It is universally acknowledged that the law as a whole, to whatever age its several documents may belong, represents the attitude of Jehovah toward Israel as governed by strictly ethical considerations. He visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children of them that hate Him, and shows mercy unto them that love Him and keep His commandments. He proclaims Himself in the ears of Moses Jehovah God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. But not only is the divine attitude represented as varying according to the varying conduct of individuals or families among Israel, with reference to the entire nation also the possibility of the favor of Jehovah being succeeded by His displeasure, owing to apostasy on a national scale, is contemplated. Both the prophetic chapter appended to the book of Leviticus and the discourses in Deuteronomy are explicit on this point. Nevertheless a difference is to be observed between the manner in which the judgment to be brought upon the nation in its organic capacity is spoken of and the expressions used with reference to the

punishment of individuals. While the issue of the latter is final destruction, and consequently the process leading to this purely retributive (Deuteronomy 29:21), the national judgment has for its goal the ultimate conversion of Israel, and is characterized as bearing the nature of chastisement rather than that of retribution. It must be conceded that this distinction is not everywhere drawn with equal clearness, and sometimes even the divine procedure against the nation is referred to in terms of retribution as well as of discipline.^[2] The law in this respect speaks the language of ordinary human life: its method is that of a father who, while fully intending to inflict punishment for the good of his child, yet naturally, in referring to it for the sake of warning, speaks of it as a just recompense for evil. It belongs also to the anthropomorphic mode of expression when the anger of Jehovah is said to replace or extinguish His love, and conversely the return of His favor is described as a repentance, or explained from the sudden remembrance of His covenant that comes to Him after the tempest of wrath has spent its force. The Semitic habit, above alluded to, of regarding the divine attributes as modes of action rather than as psychological dispositions facilitated this manner of speech. In the midst of all, however, the important fact remains, that a real continuity is ascribed to Jehovah's covenant love for Israel. Whatever His outward attitude may be, the affection in His heart survives. The renewal of the covenant after the captivity, which is looked forward to in the prophetic discourses of the law, is on every occasion derived from the sovereign love of Jehovah alone. That such a renewal remains possible, notwithstanding the rigor with which the plan of the covenant makes its perpetuity dependent on obedience, is plainly due to the sovereign origin of the covenant in the beginning. God reserves for Himself the right to do in the future what He did in the past, viz., to love Israel freely and thus to introduce into His dealings with them a principle which cannot be explained from the ethical structure of the covenant itself.

To be sure, even here the interests of God's moral government are carefully safeguarded, lest they should suffer detriment from the operation of this sovereign principle. The renewal of the covenant does not take place except after previous repentance. Such repentance, however, besides being the gift of God (Deuteronomy 30:6), is but the prerequisite, by no means the meritorious cause, of Israel's restoration to favor. The law always gives as the true ground of the latter God's sovereign love (Leviticus 26:44, 45; Deuteronomy 4:31).

What sense the law assigns to love the central^(TOC)

Or supreme place among the divine attributes

From what has been said we are able to determine in what sense the law assigns to love the central or supreme place among the divine attributes. It is evident that this cannot be affirmed after the modern fashion, as if there was nothing in God but love, and every mode of His self-revelation were a form of love. There is that in the character of Jehovah which cannot be reduced to terms of love for the creature, though undoubtedly it must be subsumable, like all that is in Him, under the categories of holiness and righteousness. It is a striking fact that the Torah, as little as the other parts of the Old Testament, contains the proposition, God is love; whereas it does contain the statement that He is a consuming fire (Deuteronomy 4:24). The vocation of the law to perform a ministry of condemnation may explain this. But even though such a proposition did occur, the fact that the other occurs side by side with it should restrain us from putting upon it an interpretation which would bring the law into conflict with itself. And yet even this opening volume of Scripture recognizes with sufficient clearness that in one sense the love of Jehovah for His people transcends all His other perfections. He would not be Himself if He did not punish sin: His righteousness and wrath are necessary elements in His nature. But it would certainly not be in the spirit of the Pentateuch to say that God takes the same intense personal delight in punishing as He does in the exercise of His love. He releases His anger, if we

may speak after the manner of men, because conscientiously He cannot do otherwise. He loves because the entire weight of His infinite Being inclines Him to do so. Just as in our human life, what we do from inclination issues from the center of our personality, while what we do from conscientious motives proceeds from the periphery, so in the life of God, though all is equally perfect and necessary, yet Scripture teaches us to recognize degrees in the satisfaction wherewith He contemplates the working of His various attributes in relation to the world. It is a more blessed thing for the Almighty to love than to punish. In an isolated case the strong anthropomorphic pathos of the discourse may lead to a manner of speech which would seem to ignore this principle, as when Deuteronomy says that Jehovah will *rejoice* in destroying Israel (Deuteronomy 28:63), but, on the whole, the statement just made must be held to reflect faithfully the teaching of the law and of the entire Old Testament on the subject. The elaborate system of sacrifices provided for the expiation of sin bears witness to this. We need not investigate here whether this expiation is conceived of as preventing or as neutralizing the burning of the divine wrath; in either case it is Jehovah Himself who, in His love, by anticipation, protects the sinner from the destructive effects of His own resentment of sin, and thus makes love triumph over wrath. Nay, the law gives formal and emphatic expression to the principle in question when it makes the mercy of Jehovah extend to a thousand generations, whilst His anger is said to reach only to the third and to the fourth of them that hate Him (Exodus 20:5, 6, 7; 34:6, 7 . Cf. Deuteronomy 7:9).

We find the conception[\(TOC\)](#)

Of the divine love used with the same implications

Turning from the legal to the prophetic literature, we find the conception of the divine love used with the same implications. When the modern hypothesis endeavors to press the entire content of the prophetic preaching within the rigid scheme of the vindication of justice pure and simple, it ignores one of the most characteristic elements of this preaching, and is able to do so only by the violent excision of all promissory oracles. Faith in the sovereign love of God, which, in spite of the judgment, will not suffer Israel to perish, rather than a strongly developed conviction of the persistence of righteousness, is what inspires the prophets with hope for the future. The very abruptness with which threatening turns into promise, sometimes without reflection upon the intervening stage of repentance, shows that ethical considerations play at best a subordinate part in producing this sublime assurance. No wonder that the element under review forms the great stumbling block in the way of the modern Pelagianizing interpretation of prophecy. It is unnecessary to point out in detail how the various features already considered in connection with the law reappear in the prophets. The exclusive reference of Jehovah's love to Israel is affirmed on every hand, most explicitly where God speaks in Amos: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth"; or in Malachi: "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? Yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau" (Amos 3:2; Malachi 1:2, 3). In the prophets, for the first time, the figure of the marriage relation becomes the form in

which the conception clothes itself and by means of which it is further developed in several directions (Hosea 1-3; Isaiah 50:1; 54:5; 66:8, 9; Jeremiah 2:1; 3:14, 20; 11:15; 12:7; 31:3; Ezekiel 23), though side by side with this the other analogy of the love of a father for his son continues to be used (Hosea 1:10; 11:1, 3; Isaiah 45:9-11; 46:3; 63:16; 64:8; Jeremiah 3:4, 19; 31:9). It is thoroughly characteristic of the religious consciousness of Isaiah, with its fundamental note of reverence for the divine majesty, that in the second part of his book, where the free love of Jehovah finds voice in the most tender accents, yet the capacity in which Israel is addressed as the object of this love remains that of Jehovah's servant, with the exception of a few passages of matchless beauty, in which the impetus of the divine affection sweeps even this last reserve away (Isaiah 50:1; 54:5; 63:8, 9, 16; 64:8). This marriage bond between God and His people bears the absolute character of a monogamic relation. Israel possesses a unique value for Jehovah, so that He sacrifices men for her and gives people for her life (Isaiah 43:4). The subserviency of Israel's election to the carrying out of God's universalistic purpose is much more clearly revealed than in the law, but it is nowhere suggested that this privilege of service is the only gift by which the object of God's choice is distinguished from other nations. The sovereign gracious origin of the divine love manifested in the people's past history, in the face of their unworthiness, lies at the basis of the confidence of the prophets in the future re-adoption of Israel (Jeremiah 31:3; 33:23-26; Ezekiel 16:1-14, 60-63; 20:35-37). Writers of the modern critical school, it is true, find in the prophetic literature a different account of Israel's moral and spiritual condition in the Mosaic period than that given by the Pentateuch.

The days of the desert journey, it is claimed are here idealized as the days of the kindness of Israel's youth, of the love of her espousals, when she went after Jehovah in the wilderness in a land not sown (Jeremiah 2:2). But,

leaving entirely unanswered for the present the question of whether this ideal light is the only one in which the people of Moses' time appeared to the prophets, or whether perhaps even in the writings of the eighth and seventh centuries, acquaintance with a less favorable side of this early period shows itself, at any rate, we are not told that the knowledge of this youthful affection and obedience determined Jehovah to set His love upon Israel. On the contrary, Jeremiah, with whom the ideal judgment above quoted is found, is also the one who contrasts the new covenant of the future with the old Mosaic covenant in this respect, that in the latter the law was not written upon the heart; in his opinion, therefore, the internal disposition to obey was lacking both before and after the making of the covenant (Jeremiah 31:33). Elsewhere also the same prophet declares that the Mosaic generation was disobedient from the beginning (Jeremiah 11:7, 8). Isaiah says Israel was called a transgressor from the womb (Isaiah 48:8). Nor do Amos and Hosea judge differently (Amos 5:25, 26; Hosea 9:10; 11:1, 2). All these prophets know of no other explanation for the favor once shown to Israel, and to be shown to her again, than the sovereign love of God. The future manifestation of this love will include the gift of repentance (Jeremiah 32:7, 8; Ezekiel 11:19, 20; 36:25-27). Ezekiel alone prefers to name another motive for the promised restoration, viz., the desire of Jehovah to sanctify His name and vindicate His glory among the Gentiles (Ezekiel 36:22, 23), a feature which finds its sufficient explanation in the general tone and temper of his prophecy, from which the emotional element is relatively absent.

Character of the prophetic preaching^(TOC)

In view of the pronounced ethical character of the prophetic preaching, we may expect *a priori* that, on the other hand, this principle of sovereign love will not only be kept in balance by the coordinated principle of righteousness, but even will be made to enter into the closest union with the latter, so as to render it every possible service. This is actually the case. The love of God is never allowed to swallow up the attribute of His justice, as if justice were a mere instrument in the hands of love for the pursuit of its own ends. Even in Hosea and Jeremiah, who both view the approaching judgment as a discipline of love designed for the people's conversion, this mode of viewing it is by no means the only one employed. The judgment has at one and the same time a double meaning: it is referred to love and justice as coexistent divine modes of dealing. In fact, the perception begins to dawn that in reality there are wrapped up in the one national organism two Israels—that of the reprobate mass, for which destruction is determined, and that of the elect remnant, to which the love and the promises belong (Isaiah 4:3, 4; 6:13; 10:20-22; 28:5; Micah 2:12, 13; 4:7; 5:8; 7:18; Jeremiah 24:29; Ezekiel 14:22, 23). Though in Amos and Isaiah the representation of the judgment as retribution stands in the foreground, while in Hosea and Jeremiah it is more definitely viewed as chastisement, this is on the whole but a difference of emphasis, not a diversity of teaching. All agree that as little as the execution of righteousness can destroy the sovereign love of Jehovah, so little can His sovereign love supersede His justice. Still, no less than in the law, it is here recognized that the inner delight of the divine heart is in the exercise of love rather than in

that of judgment (Hosea 11:8, 9; Jeremiah 31:20). Most characteristic of prophecy is the manner in which it makes the conception of God's love for Israel do service as a positive factor in the great struggle for righteousness. Jehovah's love from the outset posited for Israel the ideal of righteousness as the only destiny worthy to be the end of such a relationship. When God says in Amos, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: *therefore* will I visit upon you all your iniquities" (3:2), the presupposition clearly is that His loving knowledge of Israel had for its express purpose the training of Israel to moral excellence. But in a more specifically religious direction also the same principle is made to operate. Hosea uses the figure of the marriage union, based on mutual love, in order to contrast most vividly the physical nature of the Baal cult and the spiritual nature of the relation between Jehovah and Israel. The former constitutes a necessary bond to which the deity and its worshipers both find themselves subject by the very law of their existence. The latter, on the contrary, springs from free choice of love, and therefore dates from a definite point in history, previous to which both Jehovah and Israel existed without such mutual relationship. It is obvious that for bringing out this important idea the analogue of conjugal love was better adapted than that of paternal love. The relation between father and son is in its origin a necessary one, whereas that between husband and wife rests on the free consent of both, and in so far more faithfully reflects the historical and spiritual character of the covenant. Here, then, the idea of love has become determinative of the specific difference of the revealed religion of Israel as distinct from the nature religions of the surrounding peoples. And it ought to be noticed that what Hosea, in virtue of this principle, demands of Israel is not confined to the sphere of ethics, but covers likewise the religious attitude toward Jehovah. What God desires of His people is that they shall answer to the love which He bears them with a like affection. The prophetic

polemic against the ritualism of the popular cult proceeds from a twofold motive. On the one hand, its watchword is, not sacrifices but righteousness; on the other, not the external service of the altar, but the internal devotion of the heart. In a religion determined by the supreme principle of free spiritual love, every species of ritualism presented an insufferable anomaly. Thus it must be understood when the prophet puts into the mouth of Jehovah, expostulating with Israel, the words, "I have desired lovingkindness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hosea 6:6). The knowledge of God here is that affectionate regard for Jehovah which shall be the reflex of His elective knowledge of Israel. The exact correspondence of the two conceptions may be seen from another passage, where the demand, "Thou shalt know no god but me," is immediately followed by the reminder, "I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought" (Hosea 13:4, 5). In Amos and Isaiah the protest against the externalism of the day springs more largely from ethical motives, though in the latter at least the application of the principle in question to the specifically religious sphere is not entirely wanting-witness the divine complaint: "This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but they have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men" (Isaiah 29:13).

The Psalter adds no original viewpoints to those already discovered in the law and the prophets. If anything, we expect to find here the subjective religious response to the revelation of the divine love made in the history of Israel. Undoubtedly utterances like that in the seventy-third Psalm, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon the earth that I desire beside thee," or that in the forty-second, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God," mark not only the highest point to which the aspiration of the pious

heart has attained under the Old Testament, but, we may safely affirm the highest point to which it can ever attain in the form of pure, disinterested spiritual love. These are voices coming, as it were, from the world of ideal religion, in which the soul is lifted for a moment above the consciousness even of her own soteriological need and tastes the enjoyment of God as such. But passages of this character are rare: explicit reference to the love of the saints for Jehovah is made no more than six times in the entire Psalter (Psalm 18:1; 31:23; 91:14; 97:10; 116:1; 145:20). More easily the psalmists rise to the consciousness of an indirect relation, such as is expressed by the phrases to love "the name," "the commandments," "the salvation," "the house of Jehovah" (Psalm 5:4; 40:16; 69:36; 70:4; 119:132, 165). This is all the more significant in view of the fact that the Psalter is full of the recognition of the divine love both for Israel and for individuals. But it should be observed that Chesed, the term chosen for this, designates specifically the dutiful affection of a superior toward an inferior, therefore a form of love which cannot be reciprocated by man in kind. There seems to be only one well-established instance of the use of this word to describe the love of man toward God, viz., in the passage of Jeremiah where Jehovah declares that He remembers the Chesed of Israel's youth, the love of her espousals. And even here the true nature of the conception still clearly reveals itself. By an exquisitely conceived turn of speech God represents Himself as having sued for the love of Israel, and as having regarded her first answering affection in the light of a favor she condescended to bestow upon Him. In the mind of a psalmist no such thought could have originated.^[3] Even more marked is the absence of the subjective human response to the divine love from the entire wisdom literature. As might be expected from the reflective, practical scope of this class of writings, the fear rather than the love of Jehovah is here the controlling idea. The direct, personal relation to God, of which the Psalter is

so full, remains throughout in the background. Only once in Proverbs is mention made of those that love Jehovah (Proverbs 8:17). In two other places of the same book the divine love is spoken of as extending to certain classes of men (Proverbs 3:12; 15:9). Even on the divine objective side the conception assumes a more or less impersonal character. To love becomes equivalent to taking delight in, approving of, just as elsewhere the impersonal object of certain qualities, such as righteousness and judgment, is directly substituted for the personal one (Psalm 11:7; 33:5; 37:28; 99:4).

Before taking leave of the Old Testament doctrine, whose bare outlines have just been sketched, we must note one fact which stands out quite prominently, viz., that wherever the specific term or the specific conception of the love of Jehovah appears, the reference is always to the sphere of the covenant. It would be an inadequate explanation to say that the Old Testament, on the whole, concerns itself with the relation of God to Israel exclusively, and that consequently its silence on His love for other nations is a mere negative datum, from which no doctrinal inference to the particularistic character of the divine love as such can be drawn. In point of fact, the Old Testament has a great deal to teach on the benevolent side of God's self-revelation to the world at large. The strongest of terms are used on occasion to emphasize this truth. Even the covenant conception is not deemed too sacred to be employed for the purpose of describing the solemn manner in which God pledged to the whole of creation, in the day of Noah, His abundant, ever-flowing kindness in the sphere of natural life, His longsuffering in the view of universal sin, His common grace working for the restraint of sin. It is attributed to His righteousness, universally revealed, that He keeps this covenant and preserves man and beast. As Jonah took pity on his gourd, so He pities and spares the Ninevites and their cattle. His mercy is wider and deeper than the ocean of human misery. But when the Old

Testament seeks for a general category under which these several manifestations of universal benevolence are to be subsumed, it does not choose the term love. Whatever may be true of later revelation, it is certainly not in harmony with the Old Testament *usus loquendi* to classify all the benevolent attributes as so many forms of love. Love in the Old Testament is not a genus but a species, be it the highest species in which the genus unfolds itself. On the other hand, the generic name for the several forms belonging to this aspect of the divine character is that of "goodness." "The earth is full of the goodness of Jehovah" (Psalm 33:5); "His goodness endureth continually" (Psalm 52:1); "O that men would praise Jehovah for his goodness" (Psalm 107:15, 21). It is interesting to observe how delicate is the feeling of some of the sacred writers for this distinction. Not seldom where the universal benevolence of God has been dwelt upon and the circle of vision contracts to Israel, immediately the lovingkindness of Jehovah is substituted for the terms used before (Psalm 36:6, 7, 8; 107:15, 21, 43; 147:19, 20; 148:13, 14). Obviously the reason for this phenomenon lies in the absolute character the Old Testament ascribes to the divine love. In His general goodness God bestows various gifts upon the creature; in His love He gives Himself and holds nothing back. Consequently it was felt that wherever such absolute, unreserved covenant self-communication was lacking, the term love could not properly apply. The scriptural terminology on this point was not the product of any abstract theological speculation, but the faithful transcript of the simple facts of experience as interpreted by the Holy Spirit to the mind of the sacred writers.

Passing over from the Old to the New Testament, it needs but a rapid glance to perceive that in the teaching of our Lord, both in its Synoptical and Johannine form, the conception of the love of God occupies a central and controlling place. Not, to be sure, as if the other attributes of the divine

character were resolved into the primary element of love. This is no more the case here than anywhere else in Scripture. While Jesus invites us to love the heavenly Father, He, on the other hand, also exhorts us to fear the God who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. So long as the doctrine of eternal punishment is recognized as an integral part of our Lord's message, it will also have to be admitted that He knows of a relation of God to man determined not by the principle of love but by that of justice. Nevertheless by the prominence given to the truth of the divine fatherhood objectively and to the call for faith subjectively, the conception of the gracious love of God is not only drawn into the center, but also made the principal theme of Jesus' preaching. In order rightly to appreciate the significance of this fact, we must take into account the historical circumstances under which the gospel was first proclaimed. Our Lord was confronted with the abnormal spectacle of a religious system which claimed to be the product of special soteriological revelation, and in which, nevertheless, God has been so far removed from man as to be no longer the object of trust and love. In Judaism everything had been put on the basis of commercial intercourse with the Almighty. Over against this it was necessary before all else to awaken the religious consciousness to the recognition of the fact that God is personally interested in man; that instead of merely exploiting man in His service, He lovingly gives Himself to man, and desires to be met in the spirit of trust and affection. But it were utterly wrong to infer that Jesus, by what He taught in this direction, wished simply to brush aside all that previous revelation had inculcated with regard to other aspects of the divine character. The indirect polemic of this teaching is aimed not at the Old Testament, but at its perversion in Judaism. By taking our Lord's gospel out of its historic environment and by refusing to construe it in harmony with the larger movement of revelation as a whole, we may be easily led to impute to Him

principles which He would have repudiated. From the fact that to a generation which knew God only as a righteous Judge, and in an atmosphere surcharged with the sense of retribution, He made the sum and substance of His preaching the love of God, it does not follow that, if He were in person to preach to our present age so strangely oblivious of everything but love, His message would be entirely the same. It is quite possible to conceive that in such a case the emphasis would be somewhat differently distributed.

Old covenant the nation collectively was^(TOC)

The object of the love of Jehovah

A real advance beyond the Old Testament must be noted in two other respects. Under the old covenant the nation collectively was the object of the love of Jehovah. In our Lord's teaching the possession of this privilege is individualized. God is the Father of every disciple in the kingdom.

There had been approaches to this in prophetic revelation, but how partial they were may be gathered from the fact that the messianic King is the only individual whom the Old Testament represents as calling God His Father in prayer. In all other instances of this kind, the theocratic congregation is the praying subject. In the second place, what is even more important, the conception of the divine love is universalized. First of all, this means that it is denationalized. It was not our Lord's calling to engage during His earthly life in missionary activity among the Gentiles. As a preacher He was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel only. And as a preacher He conscientiously kept within the limits prescribed by the Old Testament, to the extent even of reserving the title of children for the members of the covenant nation, as His discourse with the Syro-Phoenician woman shows. At the same time He distinctly foretold that in virtue of the completion of His own work the gospel would soon be preached to all the nations. And in an indirect way this tendency toward denationalization may be seen at work even in His treatment of Israelites. In the Israelite it is the man as such, the universal man, sin as a universal human phenomenon, salvation as a universal human need, that the

Savior deals with.

Our Lord also taught the universality of the love of God[\(TOC\)](#)

But the question may further be put, whether, besides in this national and qualitative sense, our Lord also taught the universality of the love of God in the numerical sense of appropriating it to every individual man. The answer to this requires careful discrimination. It must be admitted that what the Old Testament used to call the goodness of Jehovah, in the sphere of natural life, is drawn by our Lord within the circle of God's love. In commanding the disciples to love their enemies He lays at the basis of this duty the example of the heavenly Father, who makes His sun to rise upon the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust. Although this benevolent attitude toward mankind universally is not explicitly called love, the reasoning implies that it may be correctly so designated. The more abstract form of New Testament truth opened the way for employing the terms in a wider sense than had been possible with the Old Testament conception, from which the thought of marriage or fatherhood was practically inseparable.

Undoubtedly, by thus emphasizing the universality of common grace and making it flow from the love of God, our Lord sought a point of contact for the approaching universalism of the gospel. That God loves the world in its natural existence, even outside the sphere of the covenant, contains a pledge of the bestowal upon the same world of an infinitely higher redemptive love.

For it should be observed, in the second place, that the work of redemption itself bears in our Lord's representation a broad cosmical character. This is true already of the Synoptical teaching. Especially the doctrine of the kingdom in its eschatological aspect clearly reveals that the divine love sets

for its goal not the saving of isolated individuals out of the world, but the salvation of the world as an organic whole. The coming of the kingdom in glory will bring a [palingenesis](#) of the universe. But it is especially in the Johannine discourses, with their characteristic method of unfolding truth in its large fundamental aspects, that the principle in question is brought out with great distinctness. It is here that the statements occur, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son," and "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Christ is called the light of the world, and the Savior of the world. He gives His flesh and His blood for the life of the world. From the nature of the case, however, this cosmical love, though in certain of its effects pertaining to every man, does not permit in its absolute sense of being individualized. It involves a purpose to save the world organically, not a purpose to save every person in the world individually. I am well aware that such a qualification of the sense of these passages has come to be regarded in many quarters as a subterfuge inspired by dogmatic prejudice.^[4] In one point of fact, however, the reasons which compel this interpretation are purely biblico-theological, and consist of a number of Johannine utterances giving the saving love of God a special reference to the elect. This will appear presently. How little ground there is for the charge of dogmatic bias against those who adopt the proposed exegesis may be seen, meanwhile, from the fact that men like Holtzmann and Pfleiderer are among its advocates—obviously not from any dogmatic motive, but because they see no other way of making the Johannine teaching consistent with itself.^[5] .

Jesus leads us to ascribe universality to the divine love^(TOC)

There is, however, still a third sense, in which Jesus leads us to ascribe universality to the divine love. This is done not so much in explicit form as by the implications of His attitude toward sinful men in general. We must never forget that our Lord was the divine love incarnate, and that consequently what He did, no less than what He taught, is a true revelation adapted to shed light on our problem. If the Son of God was filled with tender compassion for every lost human soul, and grieved even over those whose confirmed unbelief precluded all further hope of salvation, it is plain that there must be in God something corresponding to this. In the parable of the prodigal son the father is represented as continuing to cherish a true affection for his child during the period of the latter's estrangement. It would be hardly in accord with our Lord's intention to press the point that the prodigal was destined to come to repentance, and that, therefore, the father's attitude toward him portrays the attitude of God toward the elect only, and not toward every sinner as such. We certainly have a right to say that the love which God originally bears toward man as created in His image survives in the form of compassion under the reign of sin. This being so, when the sinner comes in contact with the gospel of grace, it is natural for God to desire that he should accept its offer and be saved. We must even assume that over against the sin of rejection of the gospel this love continues to assert itself, in that it evokes from the divine heart sincere sorrow over man's unbelief. But this universal love should be always so conceived as to leave room for the fact that God, for sovereign reasons, has not chosen to bestow upon its objects that higher love

which not merely desires, but purposes and works out the salvation of some. It may be difficult to realize from any analogy in our own consciousness how the former can exist without giving rise to the latter; yet we are clearly led to believe that such is the case in God. A logical impossibility certainly is not involved, and our utter ignorance regarding the motives which determine the election of grace should restrain us from forming the rash judgment that, psychologically speaking, the existence of such a love in God for the sinner and the decree of preterition with reference to that same sinner are mutually exclusive. For, let it be remembered, we are confronted with the undeniable fact that this universal love of God, however defined, does not induce Him to send the gospel of salvation to all who are its objects. If the withholding of the gospel is consistent with its truthfulness, then *a fortiori* the withholding of efficacious grace must be. That there are good reasons for the former is true: but undoubtedly God has also His wise and holy reasons for the latter. The Scriptures do not assert that election and preterition are arbitrary decrees to the mind of God. All they insist upon is that the motives underlying them are inscrutable to us, and have nothing whatever to do with the worthiness or unworthiness of man.

Neither this indiscriminate goodness in the sphere of nature, however, nor the collective love which embraces the world as an organism, nor the love of compassion which God retains for every lost sinner, should be confounded with that fourth and highest form of the divine affection which the Savior everywhere appropriates to the disciples. This is represented under the figure of fatherhood. Notwithstanding all that has been asserted to the contrary by a host of modern writers, an impartial examination of the facts discloses the principle that the fatherhood of God in its specific sense is realized in the kingdom, so that His fatherhood and kingship appear coextensive. Where both are soteriological conceptions, that is, in by far the majority of cases,

they cover the disciples only. That the religious sonship begins with discipleship, and is realized in proportion to the progress made in the latter, Jesus more than once affirms in so many words. The extreme form of the modern theory, according to which all men as such, indiscriminately, are the children of God, certainly cannot claim our Lord's authority in its favor. But even the less extreme form of this theory, according to which God is absolutely and equally the Father of all mankind, whilst men may become partially and relatively His children by spiritual transformation after His image, is not in harmony with the facts. Not merely the sonship, also the fatherhood is given an exclusive reference to the disciples. Jesus always speaks of *your* Father, *their* Father, never of *the* Father absolutely, except where the altogether unique trinitarian relation between Himself and God is meant. This is at least the Synoptical usage. In the Johannine discourses it is different. Here *the* Father is quite frequent as applying to the disciples. But precisely here it is also easy to show that this form of expression rests on an entirely different basis from that of a universal fatherhood of God. It is because the disciples are co-adopted into the relation of love which exists between the Father and the Son that God in a derivative sense becomes to them also *the* Father, as He is to Christ in a primordial sense. This, therefore, is a widening application of the term, such as would be inconceivable if the idea of a universal fatherhood were the starting point. Besides this, in the fourth Gospel the divine fatherhood is more than once associated with the begetting of believers and consequently a definite, historical beginning assigned to it. The most convincing proof of the correctness of our position lies in this, that our Lord derives certain specific privileges, which He appropriates to the disciples, from the source of God's fatherhood in reference to them. He reminds them that it is natural for the Gentiles, who do not stand in this close relationship to God, to be anxious about meat and drink and

clothing; "but **your** heavenly Father," He adds, "knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Matthew 6:32).

The love of this gracious fatherhood is infinitely richer^(TOC)

The love of this gracious fatherhood is infinitely richer than that pertaining to the three other spheres previously mentioned. It would be wrong, of course, to keep them mechanically separated. For those who are to be received into the inner sanctuary the privileges of the court serve as a preparation. But whatever there is of organic adjustment between the sphere of nature and of the kingdom, between that of common and of special grace, between the love of compassion and the love of adoption, cannot justify us in identifying the one with the other. In our Lord's teaching this is never done. ^[6] So far as the actual manifestation of the love of God in human consciousness is concerned, a fundamental difference lies in this, that the enjoyment of the common love of God outside of the kingdom does not exempt man from being subject at the same time to the divine wrath on account of sin. Love and wrath here are not mutually exclusive. Within the circle of redemption, on the other hand, the enjoyment of the paternal love of God means absolute forgiveness and deliverance from all wrath. Even this, however, is not sufficient clearly to mark the distinction between these two kinds of love, the wider and the narrower. For, previously to the moment of believing, those who are appointed for salvation, no less than the others, are subject in their consciousness to the experience of the wrath of God. It would seem, therefore, that in his pre-Christian state the one who will later become a child of God is not differentiated from the one who never will, inasmuch as both are in an equal sense the objects of the general benevolence of God and of His wrath in their experience. Thus a representation would result as if the line

of God's general love ran singly up to the point of conversion, there to pass over into the line of His special love. The general love of God, as a common possession of all men, would then be the only factor to be reckoned with outside of the sphere of the kingdom; and a special love of God could be spoken of only with reference to those who have actually become His children. And on this standpoint the temptation would always be strong to view the special love as conditioned by the spiritual character of man, since it does not apply to any except the regenerate. In order to clear the subject thoroughly, therefore, we must note the further fact that, according to our Lord's teaching, even before the divine wrath is lifted off the sinner at the moment of his believing, there exists alongside of the general benevolence which embraces all mankind a special affection in the heart of God for certain individuals, who are destined to become subsequently His children, and who are in their subjective consciousness as yet the objects of His wrath. Already during the pre-Christian state of the elect there are two lines, that of general and special love, running parallel in God's disposition toward them. It is not the special love itself which originates at the moment of conversion, but only the subjective realization and enjoyment of it on the part of the sinner. The fourth Gospel, in which so many at present profess to find an indiscriminate universalism of the redemptive love of God, is the most emphatic on this point of all the New Testament writings, Paul alone excepted. Not merely is sovereign election taught here in unequivocal terms: it is also brought into organic connection with the love of God. Those who are appointed unto life are children and sheep of the fold antecedently to their acceptance of the gospel. They belong to the Father in a special sense, and in virtue of this ownership are given by Him to the Son. Because this special relation between the Father and them exists, the Son, who is in His whole appearance and activity the exact reproduction of the Father, chooses them out of the world,

and makes them the objects of that High-priestly intercession from which the world is on principle excluded. Believers know that they love God, because He loved them first. And, what is strongest of all, in a context where the Savior dwells upon the Father's love, which was His before the foundation of the world, He identifies the disciples with Himself even in this unique possession: "In order that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (17:23).

Briefly glance at the teaching of St. Paul_(TOC)

Next we must briefly glance at the teaching of St. Paul so far as it bears on our subject. It is universally acknowledged that in his doctrine of the believer's gracious relation to God the apostle makes the principle of the divine love absolutely supreme. But it is contended by many modern writers that Paul does not consistently adhere to this, because he continues to construe the pre-Christian natural and Jewish legal religious status of man on a meritorious basis, determined by the principle not of love but of righteousness; and in his theory of atonement and justification even permits this discarded principle to reassert itself in the specifically Christian sphere. So far as this professes to be a dogmatic or philosophical criticism of the apostle's position, we have nothing to do with it here. From a biblico-theological point of view, however, the question may be raised whether Paul failed to think out the ultimate consequences of his system in this respect, or whether perhaps he had in his own mind and to his own satisfaction so adjusted the attributes of love and righteousness to one another that they did not appear to him mutually exclusive.

We believe that the latter view is the correct one. In the act of atonement at least Paul finds the harmonious embodiment and revelation of both love and righteousness as coexistent and equally fundamental attributes of God. And, this being so, there is no reason to deny that the apostle so conceived of the scheme under which eternal life might hypothetically be secured, by fulfillment of the law, as to allow a place in it also for the manifestation of the divine love. We must not overlook that Paul hardly ever speaks of this

scheme in the abstract, as it would operate under ideal conditions, but nearly always *in concreto*, as it operates under the actual conditions of the reign of sin. Where he does approach it from the former point of view, there is nothing to indicate that, after the extreme Jewish fashion he eliminates from it the principle of love as well as of grace. Paul nowhere condemns the law method of securing life as unworthy of God and irreligious in itself; on the contrary, the fact that he transfers it bodily to the relation to God which Christ assumed in our place proves that it appeared to him ideal from a religious point of view. On Christ as the substitute of sinners the love and righteousness of God terminated in perfect harmony, both so far as God and the Savior's own religious appreciation were concerned.

In the Pauline epistles, if anywhere, we might expect a deduction of the catholicity of the gospel from the principle of the universal love of God, if such a deduction could be logically made. For it goes without saying that to Paul as the great universalizer of the gospel, a principle of this import would have possessed immense practical value, not to speak of the theoretical interest his mind would naturally bring to its elucidation. The roots of Paul's universalism may be traced along the whole line of his doctrinal thinking. Here, however, we have not only to inquire in how far this universalism can be said organically to proceed from the apostle's theology in the narrower sense, from his doctrine of the nature and attributes of God. Confining ourselves to this, we find the principle of monotheism used as an argument in the plea for extension of the gospel to the Gentiles: "is he the God of the Jews only? Not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith" (Romans 3:29, 30). At another time it is the apostle's conception of the spirituality and righteousness of the divine character which leads him to the conclusion that if the uncircumcised Gentile were to keep the law, while the

circumcised Jew transgressed the law, the former would be justified and the latter condemned. But this, of course, is spoken from the purely hypothetical standpoint of what we would call the covenant of works, and does not necessarily involve the application of the same principle to an order of grace. Nevertheless, in another passage Paul actually argues from the universal lordship of God over the world to the catholicity of the gospel: "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Romans 10:12). Still, it will be observed that the richness of grace stands here not in the premise, but in the conclusion. The fact remains, and it ought to teach us caution, that Paul has nowhere based even the denationalization of the gospel on some such syllogism as this: God is essentially love, therefore He must embrace in His saving purpose both Jews and Gentiles. On the contrary, so deeply was the apostle impressed with the sovereign character of the universalism of grace, even in this national sense, that he celebrates the reception of the Gentiles into the covenant as the great **musthrion** of Christ which for ages had been hid in God, because it sprang from an eternal purpose which He purposed in the Redeemer.

As a positive fact, on the other hand, Paul distinctly recognizes the universal character which the manifestation of the divine love in its various aspects has assumed. The benevolence pertaining to the sphere of common grace has received its classical description in the words that God has not left Himself without witness, in that He does good and gives from heaven rain and fruitful seasons, filling the hearts of all men with food and gladness (Acts 14:17). There is a general goodness of God adapted to lead men to repentance. Great prominence is given to the cosmical scope of the plan of redemption. Christ has been made by God not the Savior of separated individuals, but the head of a new humanity, the second Adam. The whole organism of creation, including its irrational part, will be raised to the liberty of the glory of the

children of God. Some of the passages falling under this head have such a wide sweep that they are easily misunderstood, as if the apostle meant to affirm in them a reference of God's saving purpose to every individual, and not merely to the world collectively. A careful examination, however, shows that this is nowhere intended. Thus in the well-known passage of Romans (5:12-21), where a parallel is drawn between the first and second Adam and the spread of sin and righteousness in the world through the transgression of the one and the obedience of the other, Paul speaks of the operation not merely of the former principle, but also of the latter as extending to all. But if this were to be interpreted in a distributive sense, as applying to every man individually, then plainly not the loving desire of God to save all, but the actual salvation of all would be affirmed, for the apostle expressly declares that by the righteousness of the one the free gift has come upon all men unto justification of life. We are thus forced to assume that the "all" covers the totality of those who belong to the new human race which springs from the second Adam. To find in the word "many" alternating with "all" in the context a reminder of the particularism of grace would be surely unwarranted, for this "many" is also used where the consequences of Adam's sin are spoken of; but it would be equally unwarranted to conclude, as others have done, from the use of "all" that Paul advocated a doctrine of absolute universalism. Another instructive example of the manner in which the apostle's wide outlook upon the cosmical reach of the grace of God influences his mode of expression is found in Romans 11:32, where, speaking of Jews and Gentiles in their mutual relation to the gospel, he declares: "God has concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." On the same principle we must also interpret the statement in the first epistle to the Corinthians (15:22) that "as all die in Adam, so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Room for difference of opinion exists in regard to such passages as bring the principle of universalism in connection with the atonement. The apostle declares that in the death of Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19); and by the side of this Pauline utterance may be placed that of John the Baptist concerning the Lamb of God taking away the sins of the world (John 1:29), and that of John the Evangelist affirming Christ to be a propitiation not merely for our sins, but also for the whole world (1 John 2:2); as well as the passage in Hebrews (2:9) in which Christ is said to have tasted death for everyone. Two possibilities here suggest themselves. We may have to take the term "world," or the other universalistic expressions used, in the collective organic sense, as in the instances already discussed. Or, we may have to interpret them as teaching a certain reference of the atoning work of Christ to all men individually. Some of the passages quoted clearly require the former exegesis. In the mouth of the Baptist the word "cosmos" seems intended to cover the two divisions of the human race, Jews and Gentiles, because the saying alludes by way of contrast to the representation of the servant of Jehovah in Isaiah bearing the sins of Israel alone. To 1 John 2:2 the old distinction between the sufficiency and the intended efficacy of the expiatory sacrifice of Christ properly applies: the writer's purpose is not to enlighten his readers about the extent to which the atonement is actually operative, but to assure them of its inexhaustible richness so far as their own sins are concerned. For Hebrews 2:9 the context, which speaks of "many sons" and of "the brethren" of the Savior, requires a reference of [pantoj](#) to the partakers of that new humanity of which Jesus had been just set forth as the ideal representative. As regards more particularly the Pauline passage, the absence of the article before [kosmoj](#) should be carefully noted: God was in Christ reconciling a [kosmoj](#) to Himself. God's grace embraces a whole

cosmos in its organic capacity, including the Gentiles; not one branch, but the whole tree of the human race is the object of His reconciling act. The exegesis which would find here a reference to benefits which flow from the atonement to every man as such, is open to two objections. On the one hand, not some lesser benefit, but actual justification is specified as the main effect of the atonement: God was in Christ reconciling a cosmos unto Himself, ***not imputing unto them their trespasses*** . On the other hand, in the immediate context the words "one died for all" have their correlate in "all are dead," which latter statement refers, if not exclusively, at least in part, to the believer's ethical death to sin. It appears, therefore, that Paul's thought was dwelling here upon the efficacy of the Savior's death which extends to believers only. But believers are, according to Paul, involved in the sin and guilt of the race, and consequently the reconciliation which disposes of their sin and guilt must from the nature of the case bear also a racial, cosmical aspect.

It must be granted, however, that, altogether apart from the exegesis of these passages, some sort of reference of the atonement to every man may be affirmed; and inasmuch as this reference is a beneficial one, we are led to posit back of it a form of love equally comprehensive and effective, which will have to be coordinated with the three other forms of universal love previously distinguished. The Bible gives us no right to say that Christ in His atoning work acted as the legal substitute of every individual human being. But certainly neither does it require us to assert that for the non-elect the atonement is void of all benefit or significance. Every man is indebted for great privileges to the cross of Christ. The continued existence of the race in spite of sin, but for it, would have been impossible. The atonement by its universal sufficiency renders the gospel a message which can be preached to every human being, and the offer of the gospel illumines the entire earthly

existence of every one to whom it comes by the hope that he may find himself through faith one of the actual heirs of redemption. It makes an immense difference whether our present life be spent in the consciousness of this hope or without it. This may be best realized by making clear to ourselves what a tremendous change the withdrawal of the offer of the gospel would produce in the entire outlook upon life, even for those who do not accept its terms. On the other hand, the love from which these universal benefits of the atonement flow should never be so defined as to obscure the fact that it falls short of the intention to bestow efficacious grace. We must also remember that as it embodies itself in the offer of the gospel it can be called universal in a qualified sense only, since its field is circumscribed by the actual spread of the gospel at any given time.

So far, then, there is in Paul nothing to lead us beyond the general statement that the redemptive love of God transcends all national bounds, that it aims at the reconstruction of a new humanity out of the chaos into which sin has plunged the present human race. All the great epistles are at one on this point, the only difference being that in Ephesians and Colossians the circle of reconciling love is drawn with a still wider radius so as to encompass things both in heaven and on earth, a representation admirably adapted to throw light on the collective cosmical trend of Paul's thought, and to teach us caution in the matter of individualizing such utterances. In the Pastoral Epistles, however, a more pronounced form of universalism seems to find expression. Here we read not only that Christ gave Himself a ransom for all (1 Timothy 2:6), but also that God quickens all things (or keeps alive all things, 1 Timothy 6:13), that God will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4), that the living God is the Savior of all men especially of those that believe (1 Timothy 4:10), that in Christ the kindness (*chrstothj*) and *filanqrwpia* of God our Savior toward

men appeared (Titus 3:4). In the case of these passages the context clearly indicates that a reference of God's saving grace or Christ's saving work to all classes of men rather than to all men numerically considered, is meant to be affirmed. When the apostle first exhorts that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for **all men**, then specializes this as including kings and all that are in authority, and finally assigns as the ground for this duty the fact that God will have **all men** to be saved, it is not only allowed but demanded by the principles of sound exegesis to interpret the second "all men" in the same sense as the first. This also applies to the passage in Titus 2:11, 12, where in succession the classes of old men, old women, young women, young men, and servants are named and the manner of life appropriate to each described, whereupon the apostle adduces as the most forcible and comprehensive motive for obedience to this exhortation the fact that the grace of God which brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Similarly in another passage of the same epistle (3:4) the appeal to the [xrhstothj](#) and [filanqrwpia](#) of God follows immediately upon the instruction to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to speak evil of no man, to show all meekness unto all men.

In these cases, therefore, the context supplies an adequate reason, such as would be always and everywhere in force, for urging the principle in question. Nevertheless, the emphasis and frequency with which this principle is brought forward render it probable that something more specific in the historical situation to which the epistles address themselves was in the apostle's mind and determined the mode of statement even in the passages already quoted. Of a polemic against Judaizing particularistic tendencies in

the ordinary sense, we cannot think in this connection, for there is no further trace of such in the Pastoral Epistles. In so far only as the pronounced nationalism of certain Jewish Christians may have betrayed them into taking the ground that it was unlawful to pray for the Gentile magistrates, can the exhortation to include in the common petitions of the church kings and all that are in authority be explained as a protest against error of a Judaizing type. There is absolutely no reason to ascribe to the writer any intention to weaken or neutralize by these universalistic passages Paul's doctrine of predestination. Besides involving denial of the Pauline origin of the epistles, this would leave unexplained why, in other passages, the principle of predestination is enunciated with all desirable distinctness. The only possibility that remains, therefore, is to find in the passages under review a warning against the dualistic trend of that incipient Gnosticism, to whose early presence in the apostolic period also the epistles of the first captivity bear witness. In a twofold sense it might become of importance to vindicate over against this heresy the universalism of saving grace. On the one hand, in so far as Gnosticism on principle excluded from salvation those who lacked the pneumatic character which predisposes for the reception of the truth; and, on the other hand, in so far as those belonging to the pneumatic part of the human race might be considered to carry the power of salvation by nature in themselves, and consequently to stand in no absolute need of the objective saving grace of God revealed in Christ. In other words, it might become necessary to emphasize that God saves all men, in so far as no man is by his subjective condition either sunk beneath the possibility or raised above the necessity of redemption. Reading again with this theory in mind the passages already quoted, we cannot but be struck with the light it throws upon their general meaning and even upon the concrete forms of expression. God will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of that truth which the

Gnostics reserve for the pneumatici. The living God is the Savior not of one class of men, but of all men, especially of those that believe, for believers do not stand in less need of His grace than others: on the contrary, they are those in whom it most fully manifests itself. It is God's kindness and love toward men as such—His [filanqrwpia](#)—which the gospel reveals, not His preference for any aristocracy of the Spirit. God quickens all things and does not exclude the sphere of matter from the influence of the regenerating power. If this should be really the key to a correct understanding of the statements in question, it needs no lengthy argument to show that they were never intended either to affirm or deny the absolute universalism of redemptive love with reference to individuals. All they can be fairly construed to teach is that no subjective spiritual characteristics divide the human race for God into two generations. God extends His grace to man as man; whether to all men without exception in the same manner, or to all in one sense, to some in a special sense, there are questions the answer to which would lie entirely outside the scope of the writer's intention.

But, whether this interpretation be adopted or not, in either case it will have to be acknowledged that the Pastoral Epistles do not identify this general love with the specific affection whose sole objects are the elect. In the midst of an apostasy which had carried away prominent members of the church, and might well make others doubt their own power of perseverance, Paul appeals for the encouragement of believers to the sovereign principle: "The Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Timothy 2:19). And what is true of the Pastoral Epistles is true of the Pauline epistles in general. Nowhere in the New Testament does it appear more clearly than in Paul that the love associated with fatherhood and sonship is the Christian's exclusive privilege. Religious sonship begins with justification, for justification is in its very conception an adoptive act. And the objective side of the relation, the divine fatherhood,

also is realized only in the sphere of Christianity. In the salutations of nearly all the epistles grace and peace are invoked upon believers from God *our Father* . The phrase, "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," serves as a constant reminder that only to those who are in Christ is God a Father-God. The saints are addressed as the beloved of God. The love of God is shed abroad in their hearts through the Holy Spirit given unto them. It is put on a line with the peace which not merely subjectively, but objectively also, is an exclusively Christian possession. Nor does the apostle represent this unique love which rests upon believers as something first originated at the moment of their introduction into the Christian state. On the contrary, with the greatest possible distinctness, and in entire harmony with our Lord's Johannine teaching, he prolongs it backward to a point where it enters the region of the absolute eternal life of God. With the several forms of His general benevolence it may be intertwined as strands into a cord, but it never becomes identical with any of these. It is a principle not merely rendering the salvation of all the elect certain, but also rendering their salvation the supreme concern around which God's all-comprehensive decree makes the history of the world revolve. The apostle ascribes to it such a character that it would cease to be what it is were it to leave one single step in the *ordo salutis* subject to uncertainty. Most clearly this finds expression in Paul's doctrine of foreknowledge, predestination, election. By whichever of these terms the ethical choice of God may be designated, it is to the mind of the apostle, in its origin, essence, and purpose, in its entire compass, a choice of love. For this reason it is impossible to maintain that the decree of predestination has no bearing whatever on the question of the love of God, as if from the totality of mankind He selected certain persons to be saved with a choice resting on ground unknown, but into which a loving preference of these persons did not enter as a motive. The word foreknowledge is employed where the deepest

source of the act of election comes under consideration, that beyond which nothing has been revealed to us or can be understood by us. But at this very earliest moment, when the mysterious decree of God passes within the ken of mortal eye, it bears already the signature of love, for this word "foreknowledge" expresses nothing else than that God by an act of condescension draws a person into the circle of His special notice and interest. And that this love has an absoluteness which will not let it be satisfied with less than the totality of what it can do for its object is taught by the other conception, that of predestination, and by the manner in which Paul connects it with that of foreknowledge. When saying, in the well-known passage of Romans (8:29), that those whom God foreknew He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, the apostle means to ascribe by this to the foreknowledge an intensity of love, such as in predetermining the destiny of believers made God seize upon the highest conceivable ideal of power and glory and blessedness, the image of God's Son—i. e., the mediatorial glory of the exalted Christ. Finally, the idea of election involves the same truth, since it designates an act whereby God chooses for Himself, or unto holiness, with the definite purpose that those chosen shall stand in a relationship of the closest appurtenance and most intimate love to Himself. How fundamental a principle this precedence of love over every other element in shaping God's eternal purpose was to Paul, may be seen from the fact that He places it back even of that mercy which to our human conception would naturally seem the first sentiment to be stirred up in the heart of God by the sight of fallen man. To the Ephesians (2:4) he writes that God was rich in mercy, owing to the great love wherewith He loved us. The implication is that the sense of mercy, while naturally present in God toward such as are in misery, assumes toward the elect a richer and more tender character, and this on account of the love which antecedently He

cherishes for them. Accordingly, the divine redemptive love bears with Paul throughout a pronounced personal character, more so than would be the case if it were identical with that general feeling of compassion which takes little account of individuality, but responds, as it were, to suffering human nature in the abstract. The words "who loved *me* and gave Himself for *me* " (Galatians 2:20) undoubtedly express what is true for every single believer. Nor must we regard this carrying back of the most individualized form of love into the very origin of the purpose of redemption a subordinate or accidental feature of the Pauline system. It is the natural expression of that absolutism which characterizes the apostle's view of the bond between the believer and God. Religion, which by its very nature seeks to eternalize its possession of God, feels the need of doing so not merely with reference to the future, but also with reference to the past. In his consciousness of election the believer carries within himself the sublime assurance that in the eternal life of God Himself there has never been a moment in which even the idea of his personality was indifferent to God.

A New words may be devoted to the first epistle of John[\(TOC\)](#)

A few words may be devoted to the first epistle of John, because in it the idea of the divine love attains to greater prominence than in any other New Testament writing. The cause for this is probably the same as that which explained to us the universalistic tenor of the Pastoral Epistles, a polemic against Gnostic tendencies. Still the point of attack is here a different one, viz., the one-sided intellectualism of the Gnostic method of salvation, and the one-sidedly metaphysical conception of God underlying it. Over against this the absolute importance of appreciating the ethical aspect of the divine character and the indispensableness of applying to the profession of Christianity the practical ethical test found in love toward the brethren are emphasized. Hence such statements as, "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love" (1 John 4:8), "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him" (4:16), "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him" (2:4). If these sublime utterances are taken out of the historical environment for which the writer intended them and pressed into the service of other trains of thought, great abuse may result. Especially the saying, "God is love," has in this manner been misapplied in several directions. Even so well-balanced an interpreter as Holtzmann lets himself be carried away to the extreme of declaring that in this word the conception of God has been entirely cut loose from the category of substance and removed from the sphere of nature religion—a thoroughly modern positivistic idea, to which John, who calls God eternal light and eternal life as well as love, would certainly not have

assented. ^[7] The epistle itself administers the corrective for such extravaganzas of interpretation. It clearly teaches that the love of God, which it makes the center of His revealed character, belongs in its highest sense to believers only: "Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not" (3:1). If God were nothing but love, to the exclusion of all other modes of being, no difference would be possible between His attitude toward the world and His attitude toward His own.

The remaining New Testament types of revelation add little of importance to what has been gathered from the teaching of our Lord, of St. Paul, and of St. John. We may, therefore, proceed to close this discussion with a brief suggestion touching the bearing of what we have found on the present desire to introduce into the confession of the church a statement which shall authoritatively formulate the biblical doctrine on the universal redemptive love of God. That there is something which on sound biblico-theological grounds may be so designated, our inquiry has shown. But even more clearly than this it has, we believe, brought out two other facts. In the first place, that that form of love which the Bible everywhere emphasizes and magnifies, so as to be truly called one great revelation of love, is not God's general benevolence, but His special affection for His people. This distribution of emphasis ought to be preserved in every credal statement which professes to reflect biblical proportions of truth. And in the second place, we have had occasion to observe that the Scriptures do not leave room for the opinion that at any point, either in the eternal decree or in its historical unfolding, God's love for those intended to become His people has been undifferentiated from His love for wider groups of humanity. Every formula which would efface or even tend to obscure this fundamental distinction ought to be at the outset rejected as unbiblical. The divine love for the elect is different not only in

degree but specifically from all the other forms of love, because it involves a purpose to save, of which all the other forms fall short. It was the great fault of the Amyraldian system that, on the one hand, it ascribed to the universal redemptive love which it assumed, the character of a purpose to save; and that, on the other hand, by doing so it made the special relation of God to the elect emerge at a secondary stage in the degree of redemption. This is not only destructive of the principle that the purpose of God cannot under any circumstances be frustrated; it also strikes at the root of the specifically religious significance of the doctrine of election. The love of God for His own thus becomes an afterthought and loses the better part of its value. The fact that the one historic attempt to reduce the principle we have been considering to a theological formula has been a signal failure, ought to fill the church of today with great humility and make her proceed with extreme caution in the task which, wisely or unwisely, she has set herself; the more so since, as we have seen, the air is rife with extravagant un-Calvinistic, unscriptural notions on the subject. Nor is there need of any undue precipitancy. The great practical issues of today are in no wise staked on the solution of the delicate theological questions involved in our problem. There can be no difference of opinion as to what is the revealed will of God concerning our duty to bring the gospel to every creature. After all, it is from obedience to this plain commandment that our zeal and faithfulness in preaching the gospel must spring. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children, that we may do all the words of His law. May God grant that, whatever the outcome of the present crisis, we may firmly hold to this, and that the year's work upon which we are entering may help us all to become more efficient and abounding in the execution of this solemn charge of our Lord.

[1] Cf., however, the Greek text: "according to the number of the Sons of

God," in which "the Sons of God" is supposed to designate the gods of the heathen nations conceived as angels.

[2] Cf. Leviticus 26:18, 23, 24, 25, 28, 36, 38, 39, 40; Deuteronomy 8:5, 8:19, 20; 28:20, 22, 24, 51, 63 .

[3] It might seem as if the above statement did not sufficiently take account of the fact that the adjective Chasid occurs some twenty times in the Psalter to designate the pious from the point of view of their faithful attachment to the cause of Jehovah. The passive interpretation of the word has been generally abandoned: it is intransitive: a Chasid is he who exercises, not who receives Chesed; this the fact that Jehovah is called Chasid toward man clearly proves. But the question arises whether this specifically religious quality designated by Chasid has back of it the same conception of a personal Chesed exercised toward God directly, as when Jehovah is said to show Chesed toward man. It is possible that the religious sense was developed out of the ethical sense, that the Chasid was first the one who showed Chesed in his inter-religious designation. This would explain why the noun Chesed is practically never used in the sense of love shown from man to God, whereas in the two other senses of love from God to man and love from man to man it is quite common. At any rate, even the specifically religious usage of Chasid reflects rather an indirect attachment to the law and worship of Jehovah than a direct affection for Jehovah Himself. In regard to the noun Chesed, Hosea 6:4, 6 is a disputed passage. Cf. on this and the whole subject Winter, in *Z. A. W.*, 9:215ff.; Smend, *Altt. Relig.* (2nd ed.), p. 213; Cheyne, *Bampton Lectures*, p. 378. Winter, in the article just cited, goes too far in eliminating the conception of man's love for God entirely from the pre-Deuteronomiac sources (i. e., according to his view of the date of Deuteronomy, from everything older than the close of the seventh century B. C.). This involves the violent removal of it from Judges 5:31 (Song of Deborah) and Psalm 18:2 (one of the oldest Psalms).

[4] In the Meyer-Weiss Commentary, e. g., it is so characterized.

[5] Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch d. N. T. Theol.*, 2:479, note 1.}

[6] From the parable of the prodigal son the identity of the general love of God preceding conversion with the special love following conversion might be

inferred. But this would be an undue straining of a point obviously given with the parabolic setting of the representation as such. The parable itself does not fail to indicate that the sinner through conversion attains to the enjoyment of an altogether new and higher kind of love from the side of God than was his before. The prodigal is formally readopted and reinvested with the insignia of sonship. Cf. the excellent discussion of this subject by the late Dr. King, in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* for 1899, pp. 590-599.

^[7] Holtzmann, *Lehrb. d. N. T. Theol.*, 2:395. It might be asserted with equal justification that the categories of personality or even of existence were here eliminated. As is well known, the necessity of asserting the former (i. e., that we cannot affirm God to be a person) from its positivistic standpoint has actually been charged against the Ritschlian theology by some of its critics.

ABRAHAM

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OF FAITH

BY

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Preface^(TOC)

In sending out from the Press these Studies in the Life of Abraham, I am very sensible of the inadequacy of my attempt to conceive, or portray, one of the greatest characters of History. And yet there is one thought pervading the entire narrative, which brings it near to the poorest limner of its noble outlines. Abraham was great through his faith. And that faith was at first but a silver thread, a tiny streak, an insignificant sinew—not stronger than that which trembles in the humblest and weakest reader of these lines.

But wherever faith is, it is the link with Omnipotence; the channel for the Divine communications; the wire along which the Fire of Heaven may travel. And as it is used according to the promptings of the Divine Spirit, and in obedience to his commands, it will grow. It grew in Abraham. It will grow in us.

To trace the laws of that growth, and its gradual increase, for the encouragement of those who by faith are the children of Abraham, and who long with intense desire to emulate their great progenitor, until they can remove mountains of difficulty and achieve apparent impossibilities, has been the great principle on which these pages have been prepared.

F. B. Meyer

Chapter One^(TOC)

The Hole of the Pit

"The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran; and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee."—Acts 7:2-3.

"Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father."—Isaiah 51:1-2.

In the gray dawn of history the first great character that arrests our attention at any length is that of Abraham; who would command our notice for this, if for nothing else, that he is spoken of as the "Friend of God." Surely it must be well worthy of our devout consideration to study the inner life, and outward carriage, of such a man: that we too, in our smaller measure, may become—not servants only, but—"friends"; the favored confidantes of God—from whom He will not hide His secrets, to whom He will make known His will.

Many rays of interest focus in the story of Abraham. His portrait is drawn with such detail, that it lives before us, with the same hopes and fears, golden hours and hours of depression, that are familiar factors in our own lives. Then, also, his life is so constantly referred to in the Old Testament, and in the New, that it would seem as if the right understanding of it is necessary to give us the clue to many a difficult passage, and many a sacred doctrine in the succeeding pages of the Bible. Nor can it fail to interest us to discover the reason why the wild Bedouin of the desert and the modern Englishman—the conservative East, and the progressive and swift moving West; the Muslim

and the Christian—can find in the tent of the first Hebrew a common meeting ground, and in himself a common origin.

Our story takes us back two thousand years before the birth of Christ, and to the ancient city of Ur. And it may be well, by the aid of modern discovery, to consider the earliest conditions amid which this life was cradled. We like to stand in that lone spot among the hills, where, amid the bracken and the gorse, or from some moss grown basin of rock, there springs forth the river which drains a continent, and flows, laden with navies to the sea. We ask the biographer to tell us something of the scenes amid which a great life was nurtured; because we think that we can better understand its color, current, and drift. So would we thank modern discovery for having cast its lantern on the ruins of that old world city, which was the busy home of life when flocks browsed on the seven hills of Rome; and red deer, light of foot, roamed over the site of St. Paul's, or came down to drink the undefiled and pellucid waters of the Thames.

We must look for Ur, not in Upper Mesopotamia, where a mistaken tradition has fixed it, but in the ruins of Mugheir, in the near vicinity of the Persian Gulf. Forty centuries, slowly silting up the shore, have driven the sea back about a hundred miles. But at the time of which we speak it is probable^[1] that Abraham's natal city stood upon the coast near the spot where the Euphrates poured the volume of its waters into the ocean waves.

"The present remains of the town consist of a series of low mounds disposed in an oval shape, measuring about two miles in extent, and commanded by a larger mound of seventy feet in height, on which are the remains of what must have been once a vast temple, dedicated to the Moon." [Professor Rawlinson.] In olden days it was a large and flourishing city, standing on the sea, and possessed of fleets of vessels, which coasted along the shores of the

Indian Ocean, freighted with the products of the rich and fertile soil.

It would be foreign to our purpose to attempt a description of the luxuriance of that Chaldean land, watered by its two mighty streams [The Euphrates and the Tigris], and in which the grain crop was of marvelous abundance, and the date-palm attained to an extraordinary growth, repaying richly the scanty labors of the people; and where pomegranates and apples, grapes and tamarisks grow wild. Suffice it to say, that it was a long green strip of garden land, sufficient to attract and maintain vast populations of men, and specially suitable for the settlement of those shepherd tribes which required extensive pasture lands for their herds and flocks.

These sons of Ham were grossly IDOLATROUS. In that clear transparent atmosphere, the heavenly bodies blazed with extraordinary effulgence, beguiling the early Chaldeans into a system of Nature worship, which speedily became identified with rites of gross indulgence and impurity, such as those into which humanity always falls, when it refuses to retain God in its knowledge, and gives itself up to the dictates of its own carnal lusts. The race seemed verging again on the brink of those horrible and unnatural crimes which had already necessitated its almost total destruction; and it was evident that some expedient must be speedily adopted to arrest the progress of moral defilement, and to save mankind. This enterprise was undertaken by Him, whose delights have ever been with the sons of men, and who, in after days, could say, with majestic emphasis, "Before Abraham was, I AM." And He accomplished His purpose then, as so often since, by SEPARATING to Himself one man, that through him and his descendants, when they had been thoroughly purified and prepared, He might operate upon the fallen race of man, recalling it to Himself and elevating it by a moral lever, working on a pivot outside itself.

Four centuries had passed away since the Flood; and they must have been centuries abounding in emigrations. Population multiplied more rapidly than now, and all the world was open where to choose. Leaving the first seats of life, swarm after swarm must have hived off in every direction. Surging waves of men, pressed on by hunger, love of conquest, or stronger hordes behind, spread outwards over the world. The sons of Japeth pushed northwards, to colonize Europe and Asia, and to lay the foundations of the great Indo-European family. The sons of Ham pushed southwards, over the fertile plains of Chaldea, where, under the lead of the mighty Nimrod, they built towns of baked clay; reared temples, of which the ruins remain to this day; and cultivated the arts of civilized life to an extent unknown elsewhere. They are said to have been proficient in mathematics and astronomy; in weaving, metalworking, and gem engraving; and to have preserved their thoughts by writing on clay tablets.

Now, it so happened, that into the midst of this Hamite colonization there had come a family of the sons of Shem. This clan, under the lead of Terah, had settled down on the rich pasture lands outside Ur. The walled cities, and civilized arts, and merchant traffic, had little attraction for them; as they were rather a race of shepherds, living in tents, or in villages of slightly constructed huts. And if Noah's prediction were verified (Genesis 9:26), we may believe that their religious life was sweeter and purer than that of the people amongst whom we find them.

But, alas! the moral virus soon began its work. The close association of this Shemite family with the idolatrous and abominable practices of the children of Ham, tainted the purity and simplicity of its early faith; and it is certain that a levelling-down process was subtly at work, lowering its standard to that of its neighbors. Joshua (Joshua 24:15) says distinctly that the fathers of the

children of Israel, who dwelt beyond the flood of the Euphrates, served other gods. And there are traces of the evil in the home of Laban, from which Rachel stole the images (TERAPHIM), the loss of which so kindled her father's wrath (Genesis 31:19-35). It is a heavy responsibility for godly people to live amid scenes of notorious godlessness and sin. If they escape the snare, their children may be caught in it. What right have we heedlessly to expose young lives to foul miasma, which may taint and defile them for ever more! And if through the claims of duty we are compelled to live in any such baleful and noxious atmosphere, let us ask that the fire of Divine purity may extend like a cordon of defense around our home; and that our dear ones may dwell in the secret place of the Most High.

Amid such scenes ABRAHAM was born, and grew from youth to manhood. But, from the first, if we may credit the traditions which have lingered in the common talk of the unchanging East, he must have possessed no ordinary character. According to those stories, which, if not literally true, are no doubt based on a substratum of fact, as a young man Abraham offered an uncompromising opposition to the evil practices which were rife, not only in the land, but in his father's house. He employed the weapon of sarcasm, used so effectively afterwards by the prophets to his own descendants. He broke the helpless images to pieces. He refused to bow before the subtle element of fire at the bidding of the monarch, and under the penalty of martyrdom. Thus early was he being detached from the quarry of heathendom, dug from "the hole of the pit," preparatory to being shaped as a pillar in the house of the Lord.

There is nothing of all this in Scripture, but there is nothing inconsistent with it. On the contrary, as the peculiar movements of a planet suggest the presence of some celestial body of a definite size, which is yet hidden from

view in the depths of space: so the mature character, the faith, and the ready obedience of this man, when he first comes under our notice, convince us that there must have been a long previous period of severe trial and testing. The mushroom is the child of a single night; but the oak, which is a match for the tempest, is the result of long years of sun and air, of breeze and storm.

At last, THE GOD OF GLORY APPEARED UNTO HIM. The light had been growing on his vision; and finally the sun broke out from the obscuring clouds. In what form of glory Jehovah revealed Himself we cannot guess; but we must believe that there was some outward manifestation which dated an epoch in Abraham's life, and gave him unmistakable basis of belief for all his future. Probably the Son, who from all eternity has been the Word of God, arrayed Himself, as afterwards on the plains of Mamre, in an angel form; or spoke to him, as afterwards to Isaiah, from the midst of the burning seraphim (Isaiah 6). In any case, the celestial vision was accompanied by a call, like that which in all ages of the world has come to loyal hearts, summoning them to awake to their true destiny, and take their place in the regeneration of the world: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee" (Genesis 12:1). If we live up to our light, we shall have more light. If we are faithful in a very little, we may have the opportunity of being faithful in much. If we are steadfast in Chaldea, we may be called out to play a great part in the history of the world. God's choice is never arbitrary; but is based on some previous traits in those whom He summons from amongst their fellows to His aid. "Whom He foreknew, He also did predestinate."

It is impossible to tell into whose hands these words may fall. Young men amid the godless tea-planters of India, or in the wild bush life of Australia. Sailors on shipboard, and soldiers in camp. Lonely confessors of Christ in

worldly and vicious societies; where there is everything to weaken, and nothing to reinforce the resistance of the brave but faltering spirit. Let all such take heart! They are treading a well worn path, on which the noblest of mankind have preceded them; and which was much more difficult in days when few were found in it, and specially in that day, when a solitary man, the "father of many nations," trod it.

One symptom of being on that path is LONELINESS. "I called him alone" (Isaiah 51:2). It was a loneliness that pressed hard on the heart of Jesus. But it is a loneliness which is assured of the Divine companionship (see John 8:16, 29; 16:32). And though no eye seems to notice the struggles, and protests, and endeavors of the solitary spirit, they are watched with the sympathy of all heaven; and presently there will be heard a call, like that which started Abraham as a pilgrim, and opened before him the way into marvelous blessedness.

Despair not for the future of the world. Out of its heart will yet come those who shall lift it up to a new level. Sauls are being trained in the bosom of the Sanhedrin; Luthers in the cloisters of the Papal Church; Abrahams under the shadows of great heather temples. God knows where to find them. And, when the times are darkest, they shall lead forth a host of pilgrim spirits, numberless as the sand on the seashore; or as the stardust, lying thick through the illimitable expanse of space.

Chapter Two^(TOC)

The Divine Summons

"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing."—Genesis 12:1-2.

Whilst Abraham was living quietly in Ur, protesting against the idolatry of his times, with all its attendant evils, and according to tradition, suffering bitter persecution for conscience sake, "The God of glory appeared unto him, and said, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee."—(Acts 7:2-3).

This was the first of those marvelous appearances which anticipated the Incarnation; and marked the successive stages of God's manifestation of Himself to men.

When this Divine appearance came we do not know; it may have been in the still and solemn night, or in the evening hour of meditation; or amid the duties of his position: but suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about him, and a visible form appeared in the heart of the glory, and a voice spoke the message of heaven in his ear. Not thus does God now appear to us; and yet it is certain that He still speaks in the silence of the waiting spirit, impressing His will, and saying, "Get thee out." Listen for that voice in the inner shrine of thine heart.

This same voice has often spoken since. It called Elijah from Thisbe, and Amos from Tekoa; Peter from his fishing nets, and Matthew from his

tollbooth; Cromwell from his farm in Huntington, and Luther from his cloister at Erfurt. It ever sounds the perpetual summons of God, "Come out from her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues"; "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing." Has it not come to you? Strange, if it has not. Yet, if it has, let nothing hinder your obedience; strike your tents, and follow where the God of glory beckons; and in that word COME, understand that He is moving on in front, and that if you would have His companionship, you must follow.

(1) This Call Involved Hardship

He was a childless man. He had sufficient for the supply of his needs. He was deeply attached to those who were united to him by the close ties of a common nature. It was no small matter for him to break up his camp, to tear himself from his nearest and dearest, and to start for a land which, as yet, he did not know.

And so must it always be. The summons of God will ever involve a wrench from much that nature holds dear. We must be prepared to take up our cross daily if we would follow where He points the way. Each step of real advance in the Divine life will involve an altar on which some dear fragment of the self life has been offered; or a cairn beneath which some cherished idol has been buried.

It is true that the blessedness which awaits us will more than compensate us for the sacrifices which we may have to make. And the prospect of the future may well allure us forward; but still, when it comes to the point, there is certain anguish as the last link is broken, the last farewell said, and the last look taken of the receding home of past happy years. And this is God's winnowing fan, which clearly separates chaff and wheat. Many cannot endure a test so severe and searching in its demands. Like Pliable, they get out of the slough by the side nearest to their home. Like the young man, they go away sorrowful from the One to whom they had come with haste. Shall this be the case with you? Will you hear the call of God and shrink back from its cost? Count the cost clearly indeed; but, having done so, go forward in the name and by the strength of Him in whom all things are possible and easy and safe. And in doing so you will approve yourself worthy to stand with

Christ in the regeneration.

Nothing is more clear than that, in these critical days, God is summoning the whole Church to a great advance, not only in knowledge, and in spiritual experience, but also in the evangelization of the world. Blessed are they who are privileged to have a share in this sublime campaign!

(2) But this Call was Eminently Wise

It was wise for ABRAHAM HIMSELF. Nothing strengthens us so much as isolation and transplantation. Let a young man emigrate, or be put into a responsible position; let him be thrown on his own resources—and he will develop powers of which there would have been no trace, if he had always lived at home, dependent on others, and surrounded by luxury. Under the wholesome demand his soul will put forth all her native vigor.

But what is true of the natural qualities of the soul is preeminently true of faith. So long as we are quietly at rest amid favorable and undisturbed surroundings, faith sleeps as an undeveloped sinew within us; a thread, a germ, an idea. But when we are pushed out from all these surroundings, with nothing but God to look to, then faith grows suddenly into a cable, a monarch oak, a master principle of the life.

As long as the bird lingers by the nest, it will not know the luxury of flight. As long as the trembling boy holds to the bank, or toes the bottom, he will not learn the ecstasy of battling with the ocean wave. As long as men cling to the material, they cannot appreciate the reality of the promises of God. Abram could never have become Abraham, the father of the faithful, the mighty exemplar of faith, if he had always lived in Ur. No; he must quit his happy home, and journey forth into the untried and unknown, that faith may rise up to all its glorious proportions in his soul.

It may not be necessary for us to withdraw from home and friends; but we shall have to withdraw our heart's deepest dependence from all earthly props and supports, if ever we are to learn what it is to trust simply and absolutely

on the eternal God. It may be that He is breaking away just now the shores on which we have been leaning, that the ship may glide down upon the ocean wave.

It was wise FOR THE WORLD'S SAKE. On this one man rested the hope for the future of the world. Had he remained in Ur, it is impossible to say whether he would have continued true; or whether he might not have been seriously infected by the idolatry around. Or, even if he had been enabled to resist the adverse influences, his family, and, above all, his children, might have failed beneath the terrible ordeal. Was it not, therefore, wise for the world's sake, and for the sake of the Divine purposes, that he should be taken right away from his home and early associations, to find a fresh religious starting point for the human race, on new soil, and under new conditions?

Was it not thus that, in days of abounding vice and superstition, God led the Pilgrim Fathers to cross the seas, and found a new world, on the inhospitable shores of New England? And has it not been the plan of the Divine government in all ages? It is impossible to move our times, so long as we live beneath their spell; but when once we have risen up, and gone, at the call of God, outside their pale, we are able to react on them with an irresistible power. Archimedes vaunted that he could lift the world, if only he could obtain, outside of it, a pivot on which to rest his lever. Do not be surprised then, if God calls you out to be a people to Himself, that by you He may react with blessed power on the great world of men.

Sometimes, indeed, He bids us stay where we are, to glorify Him there. But oftenest He bids us leave unhallowed companionships, irreligious associations, evil fellowships and partnerships, and at great cost to get ourselves away into the isolation of a land which He promises to reveal.

(3) This Call was Accompanied by Promise

God's commands are not always accompanied by reasons, but always by promises, expressed or understood. To give reasons would excite discussion; but to give a promise shows that the reason, though hidden, is all sufficient. We can understand the promise, though the reason might baffle and confuse us. The reason is intellectual, metaphysical, spiritual; but a promise is practical, positive, literal. As a shell encloses a kernel, so do the Divine commands hide promises in their heart. If this is the command: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ"; this is the promise: "And thou shalt be saved." If this is the command: "Sell that thou hast and give to the poor"; this is the promise: "Thou shalt have treasure in heaven." If this is the command: "Leave father and mother, houses and lands"; this is the promise: "Thou shalt have a hundred fold here, and everlasting life beyond." If this is the command: "Be ye separate"; this is the promise: "I will receive you and be a Father to you." So in this case: Though thou art childless, I will make of thee a great nation: though thou art the youngest son, I will bless thee, and make thy name great: though thou art to be torn from thine own family, in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And each of those promises has been literally fulfilled.

It may seem that the hardships involved in the summons to exile are too great to be borne; yet study well the promise which is attached. And as the "City which hath foundations" looms on the view, it will dwarf the proportions of the Ur in which you have been content to spend your days; and you will rise to be gone. Sometimes, therefore, it seems easier not to dwell on the sacrifice

involved, but on the contents of the Divine and gracious promise. Bid people take; and they will give up of themselves. Let men find in Jesus the living water, and, like the woman of Samaria, they will leave their water pots. Fire the hearts of the young with all the beauty and blessedness of the service of Jesus; and they will not find it so hard to leave nets, and fishing boats, and friends, to forsake all and follow Him. "When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me... immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."

St. Francis de Sales used to say, "When the house is on fire, men are ready to throw everything out of the window; and when the heart is full of God's true love, men are sure to count all else but worthless."

(4) This Call Teaches us the Meaning of Election

Everywhere we find beings and things more loftily endowed than others of the same kind. This is markedly evident in the religious sphere. And there is at first a jarring wonder at the apparent inequality of the Divine arrangements; until we understand that the superior endowment of the few is intended to enable them the better to help and bless the rest. "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing."

A great thinker feels that his end is approaching; he has made grand discoveries, but he has not as yet given them to the world. He selects one of his most promising pupils, and carefully indoctrinates him with his system; he is very severe on any inaccuracies and mistakes; he is very careful to give line on line. Why does he take all this care? For the sake of the young man? Not exclusively for the pupil's benefit; but that he may be able to give to the world those thoughts which his dying master has confided to his care. The young disciple is blessed that he may pass the blessings on to others.

Is not this a glimpse into the intention of God, in selecting Abraham, and in him the whole family of Israel? It was not so much with a view to their personal salvation, though that was included; but that they might pass on the holy teachings and oracles with which they were entrusted. It would have been worse than useless to have given such jewels directly to mankind. As well put a gorgeous banquet before a hungry babe. To say the least, there was no language ready in which to enshrine the sacred thoughts of God. The genius of truth required that the minds of men should be prepared to

apprehend its sacred lessons. It was needful that definitions and methods of expression should be first well learnt by the people, who, when they had learnt them, might become the teachers of mankind.

The deep question is, whether election has not much more to do with our ministry than with our personal salvation. It brings less of rest, and peace, and joy, than it does of anguish, bitterness, and sorrow of heart. There is no need to envy God's elect ones. They are the exiles, the cross bearers, the martyrs amongst men; but careless of themselves, they are all the while learning God's deepest lessons, away from the ordinary haunts of men; and they return to them presently with discoveries that pass all human thought, and are invaluable for human life.

(5) This Call Gives the Key to Abraham's Life

It rang a clarion note at the very outset, which continued to vibrate through all his after history. The key to Abraham's life is the word "Separation." He was from the first to last a SEPARATED MAN. Separated from his fatherland and kinsfolk; separated from Lot; separated, as a pilgrim and stranger, from the people of the land; separated from his own methods of securing a fulfillment of the promises of God; separated from the rest of mankind by special sorrows, which brought him into closer fellowship with God than has ever been reached by man; separated to high and lofty fellowship in thoughts and plans, which God could not hide from him.

But it was the Separation of Faith

There is a form of separation known amongst men, in which the lonely soul goes apart, to secure uninterrupted leisure for devotion; spending the slow passing hours in vigil, fasting, and prayer; hoping to win salvation as the guerdon of its austerities. This is not the separation to which God called Abraham, or to which we are summoned.

Abraham's separation is not like that of those who wish to be saved; but rather that of those who are saved. Not towards the Cross, but from it. Not to merit anything, but, because the heart has seen the Vision of God, and cannot now content itself with the things that once fascinated and entranced it; so that leaving them behind, it reaches out its hands in eager longing for eternal realities, and thus is led gradually and insensibly out and away from the seen to the unseen, and from temporal to the eternal.

May such separation be ours! May we catch the Divine Call, irradiated by the Divine Promise! And as we hear of that fair land, of that glorious city, of those Divine delights which await us, may we leave and relinquish those lesser and injurious things which have held us too long, spoiling our peace, and sapping our power; and, striking our tents, obey our God's behest, though it may lead us whither we know not!

Chapter Three^(TOC)

He Obeyed

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed."—Hebrews 11:8.

Ah, how much there is in those two words! Blessedness in heart, and home, and life; fulfilled promises; mighty opportunities of good—lie along the narrow, thorn-set path of obedience to the word and will of God. If Abraham had permanently refused obedience to the voice that summoned him to sally forth on his long and lonely pilgrimage, he would have sunk back into the obscurity of an unknown grave in the land of Ur, like many an Eastern sheikh before and since. So does the phosphorescent wave flash for a moment in the wake of the vessel ploughing her way by night through the southern seas; and then it is lost to sight for ever. But, thank God, Abraham obeyed, and in that act laid the foundation-stone of the noble structure of his life.

It may be that some will read these words whose lives have been a disappointment, and a sad surprise; like some young fruit tree, laden in spring with blossom, but which, in the golden autumn stands barren and alone amid the abundant fruitage of the orchard. You have not done what you expected to do. You have not fulfilled the prognostications of your friends. You have failed to realize the early promise of your life. And may not the reason lie in this, that away back in your life, there rang out a command which summoned you to an act of self-sacrifice from which you shrank? And THAT has been your one fatal mistake. The worm at the root of the gourd. The little rot within the timber. The false step, which deflected the life-course from the

King's highway into a blind alley.

Would it not be well to ascertain if this be not so, and to hasten back to fulfil even now the long-delayed obedience, supposing it to be possible? Oh, do not think that it is now too late to repair the error of the past; or that the Almighty God will now refuse, on account of your delay, that to which He once summoned you in the young, glad years, which have taken their flight for ever. "He is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in goodness and truth." Do not use your long delay as an argument for longer delay, but as a reason for immediate action. "Why tarriest thou?"

Abraham, as the story shows, at first met the call of God with a mingled and partial obedience; and then for long years neglected it entirely. But the door stood still open for him to enter, and that gracious Hand still beckoned him; until he struck his tents, and started to cross the mighty desert with all that owned his sway. It was a partial failure, which is pregnant with invaluable lessons for ourselves.

(1) At First, Then, Abraham's Obedience was only Partial

HE TOOK TERAH WITH HIM; indeed, it is said that "Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, and Sarai his daughter-in-law; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees" (Genesis 11:31). How Terah was induced to leave the land of his choice, and the graves of his dead, where his son Haran slept, we cannot tell. Was Abraham his favorite son, from whom he could not part? Was he dissatisfied with his camping grounds? Or, had he been brought to desire an opportunity of renouncing his idols, and beginning a better life amid healthier surroundings? We do not know. This, at least, is clear, that he was not whole-hearted; nor were his motives unmixed; and his presence in the march had the disastrous effect of slackening Abraham's pace, and of interposing a parenthesis of years in an obedience which, at first, promised so well. Days which break in sunlight are not always bright throughout; mists, born of earth, ascend and veil the sky: but eventually the sun breaks out again, and, for the remaining hours of daylight, shines in a sky unflecked with cloud. It was so with Abraham.

The clan marched leisurely along the valley of the Euphrates, finding abundance of pasture in its broad alluvial plains, until at last Haran was reached; the point from which caravans for Canaan leave the Euphrates to strike off across the desert. There they halted, and there they stayed till Terah died. Was it that the old man was too weary for further journeyings? Did he like Haran too well to leave it? Did heart and flesh fail, as he looked out on that far expanse of level sand, behind which the sun set in lurid glory every night? In any case, he would go no farther on the pilgrimage, and probably

for as many as fifteen years, Abraham's obedience was stayed; and for that period there were no further commands, no additional promises, no hallowed communings between God and His child.

It becomes us to be very careful as to whom we take with us in our pilgrimage. We may make a fair start from our Ur; but if we take Terah with us, we shall not go far. Take care, young pilgrim to eternity, to whom you mate yourself in the marriage-bond. Beware, man of business, lest you find your Terah in the man with whom you are entering into partnership. Let us all beware of that fatal spirit of compromise, which tempts us to tarry where beloved ones bid us to stay. "Do not go to extremes," they cry; "we are willing to accompany you on your pilgrimage, if you will only go as far as Haran! Why think of going farther on a fool's errand—and whither you do not know?" Ah! this is hard to bear, harder far than outward opposition. Weakness and infirmity appeal to our feelings against our better judgment. The plains of Capua do for warriors what the arms of Rome failed to accomplish. And, tempted by the bewitching allurements, which hold out to us their syren attractions, we imitate the sailors of Ulysses, and vow we will go no farther in quest of our distant goal.

"When his father was dead, He removed him into this land" (Acts 7:4). Death had to interpose, to set him free from the deadly incubus which held him fast. Terah must die ere Abraham will resume the forsaken path. Here we may get a solution for mysteries in God's dealings with us, which have long puzzled us; and understand why our hopes have withered, our schemes have miscarried, our income has dwindled, our children have turned against us. All these things were hindering our true development; and, out of mercy to our best interests, God has been compelled to take the knife in hand, and set us at liberty. He loves us so much that He dares to bear the pain of inflicting pain.

And thus Death opens the door to Life, and through the grave we pass into the glad world of Hope and Promise which lies upon its farther side.

"Glory to God, 'to God,' he saith. Knowledge by suffering entereth, And life is perfected through death."

(2) Abraham's Obedience was Rendered Possible by his Faith

"So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him. And he took Sarai his wife, and Lot, his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran, and they went forth" (Genesis 12:5). No easy matter that! It was bitter to leave the kinsfolk that had gathered around him; for Nahor seems to have followed his old father and brother up the valley to their new settlement at Haran, and we find his family living there afterwards. [Compare Genesis 11:29; 22:20-27; 24:10; 27:43] There was no overcrowding in those ample pastures. And to crown the whole, the pilgrim actually did not know his destination, as he proposed to turn his back on the Euphrates, and his face towards the great desert. Do you not suppose that Nahor would make this the one subject of his attack?

"What do you want more, by brother, which you cannot have here?"

"I want nothing but to do the will of God, wherever it may lead me."

"Look at the dangers: you cannot cross the desert, or go into a new country without arousing the jealousy of some, and the cupidity of others. You would be no match for a troop of robbers, or an army of freebooters."

"But He who bids me go must take all the responsibility of that upon Himself. He will care for us."

"Tell me, only, whither you are going, and where you propose to settle."

"That is a question I cannot answer; for, indeed, you know as much about it

as I do myself. But I am sure that if I take one day's march at a time, that will be made clear—and the next—and the next—until at last I am able to settle in the country which God has selected for me somewhere."

This surely was the spirit of many a conversation that must have taken place on the eve of that memorable departure. And the equivalents to our words, "Enthusiast," "Fanatic," "Fool." would be freely passed from mouth to mouth. But Abraham would quietly answer: "God has spoken; God has promised; God will do better for me than ever He has said." At night, as he walked to and fro beneath the stars, he may have sometimes been inclined to give up in despair; but then that sure promise came back again on his memory, and he braced himself to obey. "BY FAITH Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place, which he should after receive for an inheritance, OBEYED" (Hebrews 11:8). Whither he went, he knew not; it was enough for him to know that he went with God. He leant not so much upon the promise as upon the Promiser: he looked not on the difficulties of his lot—but on the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God; who had deigned to appoint his course, and would certainly vindicate Himself.

And so the caravan started forth. The camels, heavily laden, attended by their drivers. The vast flocks mingling their bleatings with their drovers' cries. The demonstrative sorrow of Eastern women mingling with the grave farewells of the men. The forebodings in many hearts of imminent danger and prospective disaster. Sarah may even have been broken down with bitter regrets. But Abraham faltered not. He staggered not through unbelief. He "knew whom he had believed, and was persuaded that He was able to keep that which he had committed to Him against that day." "He was fully persuaded that what God had promised, He was able also to perform."

Moreover, the sacred writer tells us that already some glimpses of the "city

which hath foundations," and of the "better country, the heavenly," had loomed upon his vision; and that fair vision had loosened his hold upon much which otherwise would have fascinated and fastened him.

Ah, glorious faith! this is thy work, these are thy possibilities!—contentment to sail with sealed orders, because of unwavering confidence in the love and wisdom of the Lord High Admiral: willinghood to arise up, leave all, and follow Christ, because of the glad assurance that earth's best cannot bear comparison with heaven's least.

(3) Abraham's Obedience was Finally Very Complete

"They went forth to go into the land of Canaan, AND INTO THE LAND OF CANAAN THEY CAME" (Genesis 12:5). For many days after leaving Haran, the eye would sweep a vast monotonous waste, broken by the scantiest vegetation; the camels treading the soft sand beneath their spreading, spongy feet; and the flecks finding but scanty nutriment on the coarse, sparse grass.

At one point only would the travellers arrest their course. In the oasis, where Damascus stands today, it stood then, furnishing a welcome resting-place to weary travellers over the waste. A village near Damascus is still called by the patriarch's name. And Josephus tells us that in his time a suburb of Damascus was called "the habitation of Abraham". And there is surely a trace of his slight sojourn there in the name of his favorite and most trusted servant, Eliezer of Damascus, of whom we shall read anon.

But Abraham would not stay here. The luxuriance and beauty of the place were very attractive; but he could not feel that it was God's choice for him. And, therefore, ere long he was again on the southern track, to reach Canaan as soon as he could. Our one aim in life must ever be to follow the will of God, and to walk in those ways in the which He has pre-ordained for us to walk. Many a Damascus oasis, where ice-cold waters descending from mountain ranges spread through the fevered air a delicious coolness, and temper the scorching heat by abundant verdure, tempts us to tarry. Many a Peter, well-meaning but mistaken, lays his hand on us, saying "This shall not

be unto thee: spare thyself." Many a conspirator within the heart counsels a general mutiny against the lonely, desolate will. And it is well when the pilgrim of eternity refuses to stay short, in any particular, of perfect consecration and obedience to the extreme demands of God. When you go forth to go into the land of Canaan, do not rest until into the land of Canaan you come. Anything short of complete obedience nullifies all that has been done. The Lord Jesus must have all or none; and His demands must be fulfilled up to the hilt. But they are not grievous.

What a glorious testimony was that which our Master uttered when He said, "The Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him." Would that it might be true of each of us! Let us henceforth give to Christ our prompt and unlimited obedience; sure that, even if He bids us ride into the valley of death, it is through no blunder or mistake, but out of some sheer necessity, which forbids Him to treat us otherwise, and which He will ere long satisfactorily explain.

"Ours not to make reply, Ours not to reason why, Ours but to do and die."

Chapter Four^(TOC)

The First of the Pilgrim Fathers

Genesis 12:4-9

"Abram departed" (Verse 4).

"Abram passed through" (Verse 6).

"Abram went forth" (Verse 5).

"Abram removed" (Verse 8).

"Abram journeyed" (Verse 9).

"He went out, not knowing whither he went."—Hebrews 11:8.

All through the history of mankind there has been a little band of men, in a sacred and unbroken succession, who have confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers upon earth. Not more certainly does the scallop-shell on the monument of the cathedral aisle indicate that he whose dust lies beneath once went on pilgrimage beyond the seas, than do certain indications, not difficult to note, betray the pilgrims of the Unseen and Eternal. Sometimes they are found afar from the haunts of men, wandering in deserts and in mountains, dwelling in the dens and caves of the earth—to which they have been driven by those who had no sympathy with their other-worldliness, and hated to have so strong a light thrown on their own absorption in the concerns of the earth, and time, and sense. But very often they are to be found in the market-places and homes of men, distinguished only by their simpler dress; their girded loins; their restrained and abstemious appetite; their loose hold on gold; their independence of the maxims and opinions and applause of the world around; and the far-away look which now and again gleams in their eyes, the certain evidence of affections centered, not on the transitory things

of time and earth, but on those eternal realities which, lying beneath the veil of the visible, are only revealed to faith.

These are the pilgrims. For them the annoyances and trials of life are not so crushing or so difficult to bear; because such things as these cannot touch their true treasure, or affect their real interest. For them the royalties and glories; the honors and rewards; the delights and indulgences of men—have no attraction. They are children of a sublimer realm, members of a greater commonwealth, burgesses of a nobler city than any upon which the sun has ever looked. Foreigners may mulct an Englishman of all his spending money; but he can well afford to lose it, if all his capital is safely invested at home, in the Bank of England. How can a dukedom in some petty principality present attractions to the scion of an empire, who is passing hastily through the tiny territory, as fast as steam and wealth can carry him, to assume the supreme authority of a mighty monarchy? The pilgrim has no other desire than to pass quickly over the appointed route to his home—a track well trodden through all ages—fulfilling the duties, meeting the claims, and discharging faithfully the responsibilities devolving upon him, but ever remembering that here he has no continuing city, and seeks one which is to come.

The immortal dreamer, who has told the story of the pilgrims in words which the world will never let die, gives three marks of their appearance:

First: *"They were clothed with such kind of raiment as was diverse from the raiment of any that traded in that fair. The people, therefore, of the fair made a great gazing upon them; some said they were fools, some they were Bedlams; and some they were outlandish men."*

Secondly: *"Few could understand what they said, they naturally spoke the language of Canaan: but they that kept the fair were the men of this world; so that from one end of the*

fair to the other they seemed barbarians to each other."

Thirdly: *"But that which did not a little amuse the merchandisers was, that these pilgrims set very light by all their wares; they cared not so much as to look upon them, and if they called on them to buy, they would put their fingers in their ears, and cry, TURN AWAY MINE EYES FROM BEHOLDING VANITY, and look upwards, signifying that their trade and traffic was in heaven."*

Evidently this type of man was well known when the great dreamer dreamt—and long before. For the Apostle Peter wrote to scattered strangers (1 Peter 1:1), and reminded them AS STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS, to abstain from fleshly lusts. And long before that day, in the sunniest period of Jewish prosperity, David, in the name of his people, confessed that they were STRANGERS AND SOJOURNERS AS WERE ALL THEIR FATHERS; and that their days on earth were as a shadow on the hills, now covering long leagues of landscape, and then hastening away, chased by glints of brilliant sun.

We left the patriarch moving leisurely southward; and thus he continued to journey forward through the land of promise, making no permanent halt, till he reached the place of Sichem, or Shechem, in the very heart of the land, where our Lord in after-years sat weary by the well. There was no city or settlement there then. The country was sparsely populated. The only thing that marked the site was a venerable oak, whose spreading arms in later ages were to shadow the excesses of a shameful idolatry [see Judges 9:27-46; 1 Kings 12:25]. Beneath this oak on the plain of Sichem, the camp was pitched; and there, at last, the long silence was broken, which had lasted since the first summons was spoken in Chaldea, "And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him" (Genesis 12:7).

He did not, however, stay there permanently, but moved a little to the south, to a place between Bethel and Ai; where, according to Dr. Robinson, there is now a high and beautiful plain, presenting one of the finest tracts of pasturage in the whole country.

Three things then engage our thought: the Tent, the Altar, and the Promise.

(1) The Tent

When Abraham left Haran his age was seventy-five. When he died he was one hundred and seventy-five years old. And he spent that intervening century moving to and fro, dwelling in a frail and flimsy tent, probably of dark camel's hair, like that of the Bedouin of the present day. And that tent was only a befitting symbol of the spirit of his life.

He held himself aloof from the people of the land. He was among them, but not of them. He did not attend their tribal gatherings. He carefully guarded against inter-marriage with their children, sending to his own country to obtain a bride for his son. He would not take from the Canaanites a thread or a sandal-thong. He insisted on paying full market value for all he received. He did not stay in any permanent location, but was ever on the move. The tent which had no foundations; which could be erected and struck in half-an-hour—this was the apt symbol of his life.

Frequently may the temptation have been presented to his mind of returning to Haran, where he could settle in the town, identified with his family. Nor were opportunities to return wanting (Hebrews 11:15). But he deliberately preferred the wandering life of Canaan to the settled home of Charran; and to the end he still dwelt in a tent. It was from a tent that he was carried to lie beside Sarah in Machpelah's rocky cave. And why? The question is fully answered in that majestic chapter which recounts the triumphs of faith. "Abraham dwelt in tents, because he looked for the City which hath the foundations" (Hebrews 11:9 RV). Precisely so: and the tent-life is the natural one for those who feel that their fatherland lies beyond the stars.

It is of the *utmost importance that the children of God should live this detached life as a testimony to the world*. How will people believe us, when we talk about our hope, if it does not wean us from excessive devotion to the things around us? If we are quite as eager, or careworn; quite as covetous or grasping; quite as dependent on the pleasures and fascinations of this passing world—as themselves: may they not begin to question whether our profession be true on the one hand; or whether after all there be a real city yonder on the other.

We must not go on as we are. *Professing Christians are too much taken up in business cares, in pleasure-seeking, in luxury, and self-indulgence*.

There is a slight difference between the children of the kingdom and the children of this generation. The shrewdest observer could hardly detect any in their homes, in the education of their children, in their dress, or in their methods of doing business. They eat, they drink; they buy, they sell; they plant, they build; they marry, they give in marriage—though the flood is already breaking through the crumbling barriers to sweep them all away.

Yet how is it to be altered? Shall we denounce the present practice? Shall we inveigh against the reckless worldliness of the times? This will not effect a permanent cure. Let us rather paint with glowing colors that City which John saw. Let us unfold the glories of that world to which we are bound. Let us teach that even here, the self-denying, resolute, and believing spirit may daily tread the golden pavement, and hear even the symphonies of angel harps; and surely there will come into many a life a separateness of heart and walk which shall impress men with the reality of the unseen, as no sermon could do, however learned or eloquent.

(2) The Altar

Wherever Abraham pitched his tent, he built an altar. Thus the Pilgrim Fathers, on the shores of the New World, set up their altars of worship even before they reared their homes. And long after the tent was shifted, the altar stood to show where the man of God had been.

Ah, it would be a *blessed token of our religious fervor if we could set up altars in every house where we pass the night*, and in every locality where it might be our hap to live, setting the example of private and family prayer, which would live long after we had passed away. If we would only dare to do it, the very Canaanites would come to revere the spot where we had knelt, and would hand on the sacred tradition, stirring coming generations to kneel there also, and call upon the name of the Lord.

Let us also remember that the altar means sacrifice, whole burnt-offering, self-denial, and self-surrender. In this sense the altar and the tent must ever go together. We cannot live the detached tent-life without some amount of pain and suffering, such as the altar bespeaks. But it is out of such a life that there spring the most intense devotion, the deepest fellowship, the happiest communion.

If your private prayer has been lately hindered, it may be that you have not been living enough in the tent. The tent-life of separation is sure to produce the altar of self-denial and of heavenly fellowship. *Confess that you are a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth*; and you will find it pleasant and natural to call on the name of the Lord. We do not read of Abraham building an altar, so long as he dwelt in Charran; he could not have fellowship with God whilst

living in open disobedience to Him; or as long as he was ensconced comfortably in a settled life. But out of the heart of the real pilgrim life there sprang longings, desires, and aspirations, which could only be satisfied by the altars which marked his progress from place to place.

But Abraham's altar was not for himself alone. At certain periods the whole clan gathered there for common worship. A motley group that, in which slaves bought in Egypt or Ur mingled with those born in the camp; in which children and parents, young and old, stood in silent awe around the altar, where the patriarch stood to offer their common sacrifice and worship. "I know Abraham," said God, "that he will command his children and his household after him" (Genesis 18:19). ***He, in whom all families of the earth were to be blessed, practised family religion;*** and in this he sets a striking example to many Christians whose homes are altar-less. Would that Christians might be stirred by the example of the patriarch to erect the family altar, and to gather around it the daily circle of their children and dependents, for the sweetening and ennobling of their family life! Many an evil thing, like the gargoyles on the cathedral towers, would be driven forth before the hallowing influence of praise and prayer.

(3) The Promise

"Unto thy seed will I give this land" (Genesis 12:7). As soon as Abraham had fully obeyed, this new promise broke upon his ear. And it is ever thus. Disobey—and you tread a path unlit by a single star. Obey, live up to the claims of God—and successive promises beam out from heaven to light your steps, each one richer and fuller than the one before. Hitherto God had pledged Himself only to show the land: now He bound Himself to give it. The separated pilgrim-life always obtains promises.

There was no natural probability of that promise being fulfilled. "The Canaanite was then in the land." Powerful chieftains like Mamre and Eschol; flourishing towns like Sodom, Salem, and Hebron; the elements of civilization—all were there. The Canaanites were not wandering tribes. They had settled and taken root. They built towns, and tilled the land. They knew the use of money and writing; and administered justice in the gate. Every day built up their power, and made it more unlikely that they could ever be dispossessed by the descendants of a childless shepherd.

But God had said it; and so it came to pass. "The counsel of the Lord standeth fast for ever; the thoughts of His heart to all generations" (Psalm 33:11). I know not what promise may be over-arching your life, my reader, with its bow of hope; but this is certain, that if you fulfil its conditions, and live up to its demands, it will be literally and gloriously fulfilled. ***Look not at the difficulties and improbabilities that block the path, but at the might and faithfulness of the Promiser.*** "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall not pass away." Not one jot or tittle shall fail (Mark 13:31; Matthew 5:18; Luke 16:17). And promise after promise shall light your life,

like safety lighthouses at night along a rocky coast, which pass the vessel onward, till at the last the rays of the rising sun shine full on the haven where the mariner would be.

Chapter Five^(TOC)

Gone Down Into Egypt

"Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land [of Canaan]."—Genesis 12:10.

The path of the separated man can never be an easy one. He must be **willing to stand alone; to go outside the camp; and to forego the aid of many** of those supplies on which other men freely draw. It is a life, therefore, which is only possible to Faith. When Faith is strong, we dare cut ourselves adrift from the moorings which coupled us to the shore; and launch out into the deep, depending only on the character and word of Him at whose command we go. But when Faith is weak, we dare not do it; and, leaving the upland path, we herd with the men of the world, who have their portion in this life, and who are content with that alone. Ah, how can we say enough of His tender mercy, who, at such times, bends over us, with infinite compassion, waiting to lift us back into the old heroic life!

"And there was a famine in the land."—A famine? A famine in the Land of Promise? Yes, as afterwards, so then; the rains that usually fall in the latter part of the year had failed; the crops had become burnt up with the sun's heat before the harvest; and the herbage, which should have carpeted the uplands with pasture for the flocks, was scanty, or altogether absent. If a similar calamity were to befall us now, we could still draw sufficient supplies for our support from abroad. But Abraham had no such resource. A stranger in a strange land; surrounded by suspicion and hostile peoples; weighted with the responsibility of vast flocks and herds—it was no trivial matter to stand face

to face with the sudden devastation of famine.

Did it prove that he had made a mistake in coming to Canaan? Happily the promise which had lately come to him forbade his entertaining the thought. And this may have been one principal reason why it was given. It came, not only as a reward for the past, but as a preparation for the future; so that the man of God might not be tempted beyond what he was able to bear. Our Savior has His eye on our future, and sees from afar the enemy which is gathering its forces to attack us, or is laying its plans to beguile and entrap our feet. His heart is not more careless of us than, under similar circumstances, it was of Peter, in the darkening hour of his trial, when He prayed for him that his faith might not fail, and washed his feet with an inexpressible solemnity. And thus it often happens that ***a time of special trial is ushered in by the shining forth of the Divine presence,*** and the declaration of some unprecedented promise. Happy are they who gird themselves with these Divine preparations, and so pass unhurt through circumstances which otherwise would crush them with their inevitable pressure.

How often do professing Christians adopt a hurt and injured tone in speaking of God's dealings with them! They look back upon a sunny past, and complain that it was better with them before they entered the wicket gate and commenced to tread the narrow way. Since that moment they have met with nothing but disaster. They had no famines in Ur or Charran; but now, in the Land of Promise, they are put to sore straits and are driven to their wits' end. The trader has met with bad debts, which sorely embarrass him; the capitalist has been disappointed in several of his most promising investments; the farmer has been disheartened by a succession of bad seasons. And they complain that the service of God has brought them misfortune rather than a

blessing.

But is not this the point to be borne in mind on the other side? These misfortunes would probably have come in any case; and how much less tolerable would they have been had there not been the new sweet consciousness that God had now become the refuge of the soul! Besides this, God our Father does not undertake to repay His children in the base coin of this lower world. Spiritual grace will ever be its own reward. Purity, truth, gentleness, devotion, have no equivalent in the ore drawn from the mines of Peru, nor in the pearls of the sea; but in the happy consciousness of the heart at peace with God, and rejoicing in His smile. Had God pledged Himself to give His servants an unbroken run of prosperity, how many more counterfeit Christians would there be! Well is it that He has made no such promise; though it is certainly true that "godliness has the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Do not be surprised if a famine meets you. It is no proof of your Father's anger, but is permitted to come to test you—or to root you deeper, as the whirlwind makes the tree grapple its roots deeper into the soil.

"And Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there."—What a marvelous history is that of Egypt, linking successive centuries. Full of mystery, wonder, and deep thinking on the destiny of man. The land of Pyramid and Sphinx, and mighty dynasties, and of the glorious Nile. We need not wonder that Egypt has ever been one of the granaries of the world, when we recall the periodic inundation of that marvelous river, which preserves the long narrow strip of green between far-reaching wastes of sand. Thither in all ages all countries have come, as Joseph's brethren did, to buy grain. The ship in which the Apostle Paul was conveyed to Rome was a grain ship of Alexandria, bearing a freight of wheat for the consumption of Rome.

In the *figurative language of Scripture, Egypt stands for alliance with the world*, and dependence on an arm of flesh. "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses; and trust in chariots because they are many; and in horsemen because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!" (Isaiah 31:1)

There were occasions in Jewish story when God Himself bade His servants seek a temporary asylum in Egypt. Whilst Jacob was halting in indecision on the confines of Canaan, longing to go to Joseph, and yet reluctant to repeat the mistakes of the past, Jehovah said, "I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt" (Genesis 46:3-4). And, in later days, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt" (Matthew 2:13). There *may be times in all our lives when God may clearly indicate that it is His will for us to go out into the world*, with a view of accomplishing some Divine purpose with respect to it. "Go, shine as lights," He seems to say. "Arrest corruption, even as salt does. Witness for Me where My name is daily blasphemed." And when God sends us, by the undoubted call of His providence, He will be as sure to keep and deliver us as He did Jacob and his seed, or the Holy Child.

But it does not appear that Abraham received any such Divine direction. He acted simply on his own judgment. He looked at his difficulties. He became paralyzed with fear. He grasped at the first means of deliverance which suggested itself, much as a drowning man will catch at a straw. And thus, *without taking counsel of his heavenly Protector, he went down into Egypt.*

Ah, fatal mistake! But how many make it still. They may be true children of God; and yet, in a moment of panic, they will adopt methods of delivering themselves which, to say the least, are questionable; and sow the seeds of

sorrow and disaster in life after, to save themselves from some minor embarrassment. Christian women plunge into the marriage bond with those who are the enemies of God, in order that they may be carried through some financial difficulty. Christian merchants take ungodly partners into business for the sake of the capital they introduce. To enable them to stave off the pressure of difficulties, and to maintain their respectability, Christian people of all grades will court the help of the world. What is all this—but going down to Egypt for help?

How much better would it have been for Abraham to have thrown the responsibility back on God, and to have said, "Thou hast brought me here; and Thou must now bear the whole weight of providing for me and mine: here will I stay till I clearly know what Thou wilt have me to do." If any should read these lines who have come into positions of extreme difficulty, through following the simple path of obedience, let them not look at God through difficulties, as we see the sun shorn of splendor through a fog; but let them look at difficulties through God. Let them put God between themselves and the disasters which threaten them. Let them cast the whole responsibility upon Him. Has He not thus brought you into difficulties, that He may have an opportunity of strengthening your faith, by giving some unexampled proof of His power? Wait only on the Lord, trust also in Him: His name is Jehovah-jireh; He will provide.

See How One Sin Leads to Another

When Abraham lost his faith, and went down into Egypt, he also lost his courage, and persuaded his wife to call herself his sister. He had heard of the licentiousness of the Egyptians, and feared that they might take his life, to get possession of Sarah; who, even at the age which she had reached, must have been possessed of very considerable charms.

There was an element of truth in the statement that Sarah was his half-sister; but it was meant as a lie; and it certainly misled the Egyptians, "for she was taken into Pharaoh's house." It was a mean and cowardly act on Abraham's part, which was utterly indefensible. It was a cruel wrong to one who had faithfully followed his fortunes for so long. And it endangered the promised seed. Yet so it happens; ***when we lose our faith, and are filled with panic for ourselves, we become regardless of all*** and every tie, and are prepared to sacrifice our nearest and dearest, if only we may escape.

The world may entreat us well (12:16), but that will be a poor compensation for our losses. There is no altar in Egypt, no fellowship with God, no new promises; but a desolated home, and a wretched sense of wrong. When the ***prodigal leaves his Father's house, though he may win a brief spell of forbidden pleasure; yet he loses all that makes life worth living, and brings himself down to the level of the swine.*** In such a case there is no resource, save to retrace the way that we have come, to "do the first works," and like Abraham to go up out of Egypt to the place of the altar where we were "at the first" (13:4). Abraham's failure in Egypt gives us an insight into the original nature of the patriarch, which was by no means heroic; and betrays a vein of duplicity and deceit, similar to that which has so often re-appeared in his

posterity.

How thankful should we be that the Bible does not shrink from recording the story of the sins of its noblest saints! What a proof of its veracity is here, and what encouragement there is for us!—for if God was able to make His friend out of such material as this, may we not aspire to a like privilege, though we, too, have grievously violated the high calling of faith? The one thing that God requires of His saints is implicit obedience—entire surrender. Where these are present, He can still make Abrahams out of us, though, by nature, the soil of our being is prone to barrenness and weeds.

Chapter Six^(TOC)

Separated from Lot

"Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or, if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."—Genesis 13:9.

In our last, we saw something of the original stuff of which God makes His saints. By nature Abraham was not superior to the general run of Orientals, who do not hesitate to lie, in order to gain a point or to avert a disaster. Compared with an average Englishman, Abraham would have come off a bad second. The faith which one day was to do business in the ocean waves could not swim across a tiny creek. It is hard to imagine such a man would ever arrive at a stature of moral greatness so commanding as to overtop all his contemporaries, and look across the ages to see the day of Christ. Yet so it was. And from that thought we may take courage.

Our ***God does not need noble characters, as the ground-work of His masterpieces. He can raise up stones as children.*** He can turn thorns into fir trees, briars into myrtle trees. He can take fishermen from their nets, and publicans from their toll-booths, making them into evangelists, apostles, and martyrs. We are not much by nature—wild, bad blood may be flowing in our veins; but God will be the more magnified, if from such stones He can raise up children unto Abraham. The miracle of His grace and power will bring more conspicuous glory to His holy Name, in proportion to the unpromising character of the materials on which He works.

"Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south."

Very marvelous this! Judging as men, we might have thought that he would never recover from that sad mistake, that disastrous failure and sin. Surely he will reap as he has sown! He will never see his faithful wife again, but must bear for ever on his conscience the brand of coward treachery! Or if, indeed, she be given again to him, he will never extricate himself from the meshes into which he has thrown himself! Irritated and deceived, Pharaoh will surely find some method of avenging the wrong with which the foreigner has repaid his generous hospitality!

But no. Contrary to all human anticipation, Jehovah appears on the behalf of his most unworthy servant. In after-years the Psalmist gives us the very words, which He uttered in the heart of the king: "Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm" (Psalm 55:15). What a marvel of tenderness! ***God does not cast us away for one sin. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.*** For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him" (Psalm 53:10-11). And thus, notwithstanding repeated falls and shortcomings, He lovingly pursues His Divine purpose with the soul in which the "root of the matter" is found, until He sets it free from its clinging evils, and lifts it into the life of faith, and power, and familiar friendship with Himself. "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, then the Lord shall be a light unto me" (Micah 7:8).

Warned by this Divine voice, and restrained by a power which suffered him not to do God's servant harm, Pharaoh had commanded his men concerning him: and they had "sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had." This is how it comes to pass that we find them again traversing the uplands of

Southern Palestine on their way back to Bethel, unto the place where they had halted on their first entrance into Palestine. So complete was the delivering power of God, that the Egyptian monarch did not even take back the gifts which he had bestowed as a dowry for Sarah. The "sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maidservants, and she-asses, and camels," still remained in Abraham's possession. And we are, therefore, prepared to learn, that "Abram was very rich, in cattle, in silver, and in gold." That visit to Egypt beyond doubt laid the foundation of the immense wealth of the family in after-time; and it was out of this that the next trouble sprang. A trouble it seemed at first; but God marvelously overruled it for drawing His child yet closer to Himself, and severing the metal to a further extent from the alloy which had clung to it too long. Hitherto, we have been told repeatedly, "and Lot went with him." This record will not be made again.

(1) Who was Lot?

The son of Abraham's dead brother, Haran. He had probably succeeded to his father's inheritance. He may have come with his uncle across the desert in the secret hope of bettering his condition; but we will hope that he was prompted by worthier motives. He seems to have been one of those men who take right steps, not because they are prompted by obedience to God, but because their friends are taking them. Around him was the inspiration of an heroic faith, the fascination of the untried and unknown; the stir of a great religious movement: and Lot was swept into the current, and resolved to go too. He was the Pliable of the earliest Pilgrim's Progress. He may have thought that he was as much in earnest as Abraham; may have thought that he was as much in earnest as Abraham; but it was a great mistake. He was simply an echo; a dim afterglow; a chip on the bosom of a mighty current.

In every great religious movement there always have been, and always will be a number of individuals who cast in their lot with it, without knowing the power which inspires it. Beware of them. They cannot stand the stress of the life of separation to God. The *mere excitement will soon die away from them; and, having no principle to take its place, they will become hindrances and disturbers of the peace.* As certainly as they are harbored in the camp, or their principles are allowed within the heart, they will lower the spiritual tone; allure to worldly policy; suggest methods which would not otherwise occur to us; and draw us towards the Egypt-world.

Nothing but supreme principle can carry any one through the real, separated, and surrendered life of the child of God. If you are prompted by anything less, such as excitement, enthusiasm, fashion, contagious example—you will

first be a hindrance, and end by being a failure. Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith. Prove your own selves. And, if you are consciously acting from a low and selfish motive, ask God to breathe into you His own pure love. Better act from an inferior motive, if only it be in the right direction; but covet earnestly the best.

(2) The Necessity of Separation

That recent failure in connection with Egypt may have been due, to a larger extent than we know, to the baneful influence of Lot. Had Abraham been left to himself, he might never have thought of going down to Egypt: and, in that case, there would have been another paragraph or passage in the Bible describing the exploits of a faith which dared to stand to God's promise, though threatened by disaster, and hemmed in by famine; waiting until God should bid it move, or make it possible to stay. There is something about that visit to Egypt which savors of the spirit of Lot's after-life. In any case, the time had come, in the providence of God, when this lower and more worldly spirit must go its way; leaving Abraham to stand alone, without prop, or adviser, or ally; thrown back on the counsel and help of God alone.

The outward separation of the body from the world of the ungodly is incomplete, unless accompanied and supplemented by the inner separation of the spirit. ***It is not enough to leave Ur, Haran, and Egypt. We must be rid of Lot also.*** Though we lived in a monastery, shut away from the homes and haunts of men, with no sound to break upon the ear but the summoning bell of worship, and the solemn chant; yet so long as there was an alien principle in our breast, a Lot in our heart-life, there could not be that separation to God which is the condition of the growth of faith, and of all those higher forms of the true life which make earth most like heaven. Lot must go. "Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself" (Psalms 4:3). No other foot then must intrude within the enclosure of the Divine proprietorship.

O souls that sigh for saintliness as harts pant for water-brooks, have ye counted the cost? Can ye bear the fiery ordeal? The manufacture of saints is

no child's play. The block has to be entirely separated from the mountain bed, ere the Divine chisel can begin to fashion it. The gold must be plunged into the cleansing fire, ere it can be molded or hammered into an ornament of beauty for the King.

As Abraham was separated from one after another of nature's resources, so must it be with all aspirants for the inner chambers of the palace of God. We must be prepared to die to the world with its censure or praise; to the flesh, with its ambitions and schemes; to the delights of a friendship which is insidiously lowering the temperature of the spirit; to the self-life, in all its myriad subtle and overt manifestations; and even, if it be God's will, to the joys and consolations of religion.

All this is impossible to us of ourselves. But if we will surrender ourselves to God, willing that He should work in and for us that which we cannot do for ourselves, we shall find that He will gradually and effectually, and as tenderly as possible, begin to disentwine the clinging tendrils of the poisoning weed, and bring us into heart-union with Himself.

It may be that Abraham had already felt for himself the ill effect of association with Lot, and may have longed to be free from him, without knowing how the emancipation could be effected. In any case, somewhat akin to this may be the condition of some who shall read these words.

Entangled in an alliance which you seem powerless to break off, your only hope is to bear it quietly till God sets you at liberty. Meanwhile guard your will, by God's grace, from swinging round, as a boat with the tide. Declare to God continually your eager desire to be emancipated. By prayer and faith get honey out of the lion's carcass. Wait patiently till God's hour strikes, and His hand opens the fast-locked door, and bids you be free. That time will come at length; for God has a destiny in store for you, so great that neither He nor you

can allow it to be forfeited for any light or trivial obstacle.

(3) How the Separation was Brought about

The valleys around Bethel, which had been quite adequate for their needs when first they came to Canaan, were now altogether insufficient. The herdsmen were always wrangling for the first use of the wells, and the first crop of the pastures. The cattle were continually getting mixed. "The land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together."

Quarrels between servants have a habit of travelling upwards, and embroiling their masters. And so Abraham and Lot would be told by their headmen of what was happening; and each would be tempted to feel irritated with the other.

Abraham saw at once that such a state of things must not be allowed to go on: especially as "the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land." For ***if those warlike neighbors heard of the dissensions in the camp, they would take an early opportunity of falling upon it.*** United they stood; divided, they must fall. Besides, there was the scandal of the thing, which might work prejudicially on the name and worship of that God to whom Abraham was known to bow the knee. Would that the near presence of the world might have the same wholesome effect of checking dissension and dispute among the children of the same Father!

And so Abraham called Lot to him, and said, "Let there be no strife between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen: for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou

depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left" (13:8-9).

The proposal was very WISE. He saw that there was a cause for the disturbance, which would lead to similar troubles continually. If he spoke sharply to Lot, Lot would answer in the same spirit, and a breach would be made at once. So he went to the root of the matter, and proposed their separation.

His line of action was very MAGNANIMOUS. As the elder and the leader of the expedition, ***he had the undoubted right to the first choice. But he waived his right*** in the interests of reconciliation.

But, above all, it was BASED ON FAITH. His faith was beginning to realize its true position; and, like a fledgling, to spread its wings for further and still further flights. Had not God pledged Himself to take care of him, and to give him an inheritance? There was no fear, therefore, that Lot could ever rob him of that which was guaranteed to him by the faithfulness of God. And he preferred, a thousand times over, that God should choose for him, than that he should choose for himself.

The man who is sure of God can afford to hold very lightly the things of this world. God Himself is his inalienable heritage; and, in having God, he has all. And, as we shall see, the man who "hedges" for himself does not do so well in the long run as the man who, having the right of choice, hands it back to God, saying: "Let others choose for themselves, if they please; but as for myself, Thou shalt choose mine inheritance for me."

"Not mine—not mine the choice In things or great or small; Be Thou my Guide, my Guard, my Strength, My Wisdom and my 'All'."

Chapter Seven^(TOC)

The Two Paths

*"Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me."—
Genesis 13:9.*

Abraham and Lot stood together on the heights of Bethel. The Land of Promise spread out before them as a map. On three sides at least there was not much to attract a shepherd's gaze. The eye wandered over the outlines of the hills which hid from view the fertile valleys nestling within their embrace. There was, however, an exception in this monotony of hill, towards the south-east, where the waters of the Jordan spread out in a broad valley, before they entered the Sea of the Plain.

Even from the distance the two men could discern the rich luxuriance, which may have recalled to them traditions of the garden once planted by the Lord God in Eden, and have reminded them of scenes which they had lately visited together in the valley of the Nile. This specially struck the eye of Lot; eager to do the best for himself, and determined to make the fullest use of the opportunity which the unexpected magnanimity of his uncle had thrown in his way. Did he count his relative a fool for surrendering the right of choice? Did he vow that he must allow no false feelings of delicacy to interfere with his doing what he could for himself? Did he feel strong in the keenness of his sight, and the quickness of his judgment? Perhaps so. For he had little sympathy with the pilgrim spirit.

But the time would come when he would bitterly rue his choice, and owe

everything to the man of whom he was now prepared to take advantage.

"Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well-watered everywhere... as the garden of the Lord. ... Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan" (13:10-11). He did not ask what God had chosen for him. He did not consider the prejudicial effect which the morals of the place might exert upon his children and himself. His choice was entirely determined by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. For the men of Sodom were "sinners before the Lord exceedingly."

How many have stood upon those Bethel heights, intent on the same errand as took Lot thither! Age after age has poured forth its crowds of young hearts, to stand upon an exceeding high mountain, whilst before them have been spread all the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them; the tempter whispering, that for one act of obeisance all shall be theirs. In assurance and self-confidence; eager to do the very best for themselves; prepared to consider the moralities only in so far as these did not interfere with what they held to be the main chance of life—thus have succeeding generations looked towards the plains of Sodom from afar. And, alas! like Lot, they have tried to make stones into bread; they have cast themselves down from the mountain side, for angels to catch; they have knelt before the tempter, to find his promise broken, the vision of power an illusion, and the soul beggared for ever—whilst the tempter, with hollow laugh, has disappeared, leaving his dupe standing alone in the midst of a desolate wilderness.

Let us not condemn Lot too much because he chose without reference to the moral and religious conditions of the case; lest, in judging him, we pronounce sentence on ourselves. ***Lot did nothing more than is done by scores of professing Christians every day.***

A Christian man asks you to go over and see the place which he is about to take in the country. It is certainly a charming place: the house is spacious and well-situated; the air balmy; the garden and paddock large; the views enchanting. When you have gone over it, you ask how he will fare on Sunday. You put the question not from feelings of curiosity, but because you know that he needs strong religious influences to counteract the effect of absorbing business cares, from Monday morning till Saturday night; and because you know that his children are beginning to evince a deepening interest in the things of God. "Well," says he, "I really have never thought of it." Or perhaps he answers, "I believe there is nothing here like we have been accustomed to; but one cannot have everything: and they say that the society here is extremely good." Is not this the spirit of Lot, who bartered the altar of Abraham's camp for the plains of Sodom, because the grass looks green and plentiful?

Have mothers, professing Christians, never gone into society where evangelical religion is held in contempt, for no other reason than to make a good match for their daughters, so far, at least, as the world is concerned? Ah, the world is full of breaking hearts and wrecked happiness, because so many persist in lifting up their eyes to choose for themselves, and with sole reference to the most sordid considerations.

If Abraham had remonstrated with Lot, suggesting the mistake he was making, do you not suppose that he would have answered petulantly: "Do you not think that we are as eager as you are to serve the Lord? ***Sodom needs just that witness which we shall be able to give. Is it not befitting that the light should shine in the darkness;*** and that the salt should be scattered where there is putrefaction?" Abraham might not be able to contest these assertions, and yet he would have an inner conviction that these were not the

considerations which were determining his nephew's choice. Of course, if God sends a man to Sodom, He will keep him there; as Daniel was kept in Babylon: and nothing shall by any means hurt him. He shall be kept as the eye is kept: guarded in its bony socket from violence, and by its delicate veil of eyelid sheltered from the dust. But if God does not clearly send you to Sodom, it is a blunder, a crime, a peril to go.

Mark how Lot was swiftly swept into the vortex; first he saw; then he chose; then he separated himself from Abraham; then he journeyed east; then he pitched his tent toward Sodom; then he dwelt there; then he became an alderman of the place, and sat in the gate. His daughters married two of the men of Sodom; and they probably ranked among the most genteel and influential families of the neighborhood. But his power of witness-bearing was gone. Or if he lifted up his voice in protest against deeds of shameless vice, he was laughed at for his pains, or threatened with violence. His righteous soul might vex itself; but it met with no sympathy. He was carried captive by Chedorlaomer. His property was destroyed in the overthrow of the cities. His wife was turned into a pillar of salt. And the blight of Sodom left but too evident a brand upon his daughters. Wretched, indeed, must have been the last days of that hapless man, cowering in a cave, stripped of everything, face to face with the results of his own shameful sin.

It is, indeed, a terrible picture; and yet some such retribution is in store for every one whose choice of home, and friends, and surroundings, is dictated by the lust of worldly gain, or fashion, or pleasure, rather than by the will of God. If such are saved at all, they will be saved as Lot was—so as by fire. Now, let us turn to a more inviting theme, and further consider the dealings of the Almighty God with Abraham, the one man who was being educated to hold fellowship with Jehovah as a friend.

(1) God Always Comes Near to his Separated Ones

"And the Lord said unto Abram, AFTER THAT LOT WAS SEPARATED FROM HIM." It may be that Abraham was feeling very lonely. Lot and he had been constant and close companions: and when the last of the camp-followers had moved off, and Lot had disappeared into the long distance, a cold chill may have enveloped him, as a November fog does the man who has arisen before the dawn to see his friend away by the early mail. Then it was that God spake to him.

We all dread to be separated from companions and friends. It is hard to see them stand aloof, and drop away one by one; and to be compelled to take a course by oneself. The young girl finds it hard to refuse the evening at the theatre, and to stay alone at home when her gay companions have gone off in high spirits. The young city clerk finds it hard to refuse to join in the "sweepstake," which is being got up on the occasion of some annual race. The merchant finds it hard to withdraw from the club or society with which he has long been identified, because there are practices creeping in which his conscience refuses to sanction. The Christian teacher finds it hard to adopt a course which isolates him from brethren with whom he has had sweet fellowship, but against whose views he is obliged to protest.

And yet, if we really wish to be only for God, it is inevitable that there should be many a link snapped; many a companionship forsaken; many a habit and conventionalism dropped: just as a savage must gradually and necessarily abjure most of his past, ere he can be admitted into the society and friendship

of his European teacher.

But let us not stand looking on this aspect of it—the dark side of the cloud. Let us rather catch a glimpse of the other side, illuminated by the rainbow promise of God. And let this be understood, that, when once the spirit has ***dared to take up that life of consecration to the will of God to which we are called, there break upon it visions, voices, comfortable words, of which the heart could have formed no previous idea.*** For brass He brings gold, and for iron silver, and for wood brass, and for stone iron. Violence is no more heard, nor wasting, nor destruction. The sun is no more needed for the day, nor the moon for the night. Because the Lord has become the everlasting light of the surrendered and separate heart, and the days of its mourning have passed away for ever.

"Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you; and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit" (2 Corinthians 6, 7).

(2) God Will Do Better for those Who Trust him

Than they Could do for Themselves

Twice here in the context we meet the phrase—"lifting up the eyes." But how great the contrast! Lot lifted up his eyes, at the dictate of worldly prudence, to spy out his own advantage. Abraham lifted up his eyes, not to discern what would best make for his material interests, but to behold what God had prepared for him. How much better it is to keep the eye steadfastly fastened on God till He says to us!—"Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art—northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever" (13:14-15).

God honors them that honor Him. He withholds "no good thing from them that walk uprightly." He "meets him that rejoices and works righteousness." If only we will go on doing what is right, giving up the best to our neighbor to avoid dispute, considering God's interests first, and our own last, expending ourselves for the coming and glory of the kingdom of heaven, we shall find that God will charge Himself with our interests. And He will do infinitely better for us than we could. Lot had to ask the men of Sodom if he might sojourn among them, and he had no hold on the land; but it was all given unasked to Abraham, including that verdant circle on which Lot had set his heart. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

It is difficult to read these glowing words, NORTHWARD, AND

SOUTHWARD, AND EASTWARD, AND WESTWARD, without being reminded of "the length, and breadth, and depth, and height, of the love of Christ, that passeth knowledge." Much of the land of Canaan was hidden behind the ramparts of the hills; but enough was seen to ravish that faithful spirit. Similarly, we may not be able to comprehend the love of God in Christ, but the higher we climb the more we behold. The upper cliffs of the separated life command the fullest view of that measureless expanse.

In some parts of the Western Highlands, the traveller's eye is delighted by the clear and sunlit waters of a loch—an arm of the sea, running far up into the hills. But as he climbs over the heathery slopes, and catches sight of the waters of the Atlantic, bathed in the light of the setting sun, he almost forgets the fair vision which had just arrested him. Thus do growing elevation and separation of character unfold ever richer conceptions of Christ's infinite love and character.

God's promises are ever on the ascending scale. One leads up to another, fuller and more blessed than itself. In Mesopotamia, God said, "I will show thee the land." At Bethel, "This is the land," Here, "I will give thee all the land, and children innumerable as the grains of sand." And we shall find even these eclipsed. It is thus that God allures us to saintliness. Not giving anything till we have dared to act—that He may test us. Not giving everything at first—that He may not overwhelm us. And always keeping in hand an infinite reserve of blessing. Oh, the unexplored remainders of God! Who ever saw His last star?

(3) God Bids us Appropriate his Gifts

"Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it." This surely means that God wished Abraham to feel as free in the land as if the title-deeds were actually in his hands. He was to enjoy it; to travel through it; to look upon it as his. By faith he was to act towards it as if he were already in absolute possession.

There is a deep lesson here, as to the appropriation of faith. "Be strong and very courageous" was addressed six several times to Joshua. "Be strong" refers to the strength of the wrists to grasp. "Be very courageous" refers to the tenacity of the ankle-joints to hold their ground. May our faith be strong in each of these particulars. Strong to lay hold, and strong to keep.

The difference between Christians consists in this. For us all there are equal stores of spiritual blessing laid up in our Lord; but some of us have learnt more constantly and fully to appropriate them. We walk through the land in its lengths and breadths. We avail ourselves of the fullness of Jesus. Not content with what He is for us in the counsel of God, our constant appeal is to Him in every moment of need.

We need not be surprised to learn that Abraham removed to Hebron (which signifies fellowship), and built there an altar to the Lord. New Mercies call us to deeper fellowship with our Almighty Friend, who never leaves or forsakes His own. And, as the result of his dealings with us, let us build fresh altars, and make a new dedication of ourselves and all we have to His blessed service.

Chapter Eight^(TOC)

Refreshment between the Battles

"Four kings with five."—Genesis 14:9.

The strife recorded in Genesis 14 was no mere border foray. It was an expedition for chastisement and conquest. Chedorlaomer was the Attila, the Napoleon of his age. His capital city, Susa, lay across the desert, beyond the Tigris, in Elam. Years before Abraham had entered Canaan as a peaceful emigrant, this dreaded conqueror had swept southwards, subduing the towns which lay in the Jordan Valley, and thus possessing himself of the master-key to the road between Damascus and Memphis. When Lot took up his residence towards Sodom, the cities of the plain were paying tribute to this mighty monarch.

At last the men of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Admah and Zeboiim, became weary of the Elamite yoke and rebelled, and Chedorlaomer was compelled to undertake a second expedition to chastise their revolt and regain his power. Combining his own forces with those of three vassal and friendly rulers in the Euphrates Valley, which lay in his way, he swept across the desert, and fell upon the wild tribes that harbored in the mountains of Bashan and Moab. His plan was evidently to ravage the whole country contiguous to those Jordan towns before actually investing them.

At last the allied forces concentrated in the neighborhood of Sodom, where they encountered fierce resistance. Encouraged by the pitchy nature of the soil, in which horsemen and chariots would move with difficulty, the

townsfolk risked an engagement in the open. In spite, however, of the bitumen pits, the day went against the effeminate and dissolute men of the plain, in whose case, as in many others, social corruption proved itself the harbinger of political overthrow. The defeat of the troops was followed by the capture and sack of those wealthy towns; and all who could not escape were manacled as slaves, and carried off in the train of the victorious army.

Sated at length with their success, their attention engrossed by their rich booty and their vast host of captives, the foreign host began slowly to return along the Jordan Valley on its homeward march. "And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed." Then one of the survivors of that fatal day climbed the hills, and made for Abraham's encampment, which he may have known in earlier days, when, as one of Lot's many servants, he lived there. "And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants... and divided himself against them" (14:14-15).

(1) Here is the Unselfish and Successful Interposition of a Separated Man on the behalf of Others

Hidden in the configuration of the country, and confederate with his friends, Abraham had watched the movements of the devastators from afar. "But they had not come nigh him; only with his eyes had he beheld and seen the reward of the wicked" (Psalm 41:8). Common prudence would have urged him not to embroil himself. "Be thankful that you have escaped, and do not meddle further in the business; lest you make these mighty kings your foes."

But true separation never argues thus. Granted that the separated one is set apart for God, yet he is set apart that he may react more efficiently on the great world over which God yearns, and towards which He has entertained great purposes of mercy, in the election of the few. Genuine separation—an unattachedness to the things of time and sense, because of an ardent devotion to the unseen and eternal—is the result of faith, which always works by love; and this love tenderly yearns for those who are entangled in the meshes of worldliness and sin. ***Faith makes us independent, but not indifferent. It is enough for it to hear that its brother is taken captive; and it will arm instantly to go in pursuit.***

Ah, brothers and sisters, have there never come to you the tidings that your brothers are taken captive? How, then, is it that you have not started off long ago for their deliverance? Is this separation genuine, which stands unconcernedly by while there is such need for immediate and unselfish

action?

But Abraham's interposition was as SUCCESSFUL as it was unselfish and prompt. The force with which he set out was a very slender one; but his raw recruits moved quickly, and thus in four or five days they overtook the self-reliant and encumbered host amid the hills where the Jordan takes its rise. Adopting the tactics of a night attack, he fell suddenly on the unsuspecting host, and chased them in headlong panic, as far as the ancient city of Damascus. "And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people" (14:16).

Chapter Nine^(TOC)

Melchizedec

"This Melchizedec, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God."—Hebrews 7:1.

Christ is here! The passage is fragrant with the ointment of His name. Our hands drop with myrrh, and our fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh, as we lay them upon the handles of this lock (Song of Solomon 6:5). Let us get aside from the busy rush of life, and think long, deep thoughts of Him who is the Alpha and Omega of Scripture, and of saintly hearts. And let us draw from the unsearchable depths of His nature, by the bucket of this mysterious record touching Melchizedec, the King of Salem.

There is a sense in which Christ was made AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEC; but there is a deeper sense in which Melchizedec was made AFTER THE ORDER OF THE SON OF GOD. The writer to the Hebrews tells us that Melchizedec was "made like unto the Son of God" (Hebrews 7:3). Christ is the Archetype of all; and from all eternity has had those qualities which have made Him so much to us. It would seem as if they could not stay to be manifested in the fullness of the ages; they chafed for expression. From of old His delights were with the sons of men. And so this mysterious royal priest was constituted—reigning in his peaceful city, amid the storm and wreckage of his times—that there might be given amongst men some premonition, some anticipation, of that glorious life which was already being lived in Heaven on man's behalf, and which, in due course, would be manifested on our world, and at that very spot where Melchizedec lived his

Christ-like life. Oh that we, too, might be priests after the order of Melchizedec in this respect, if in no other, that we are made as like as possible to the Son of God!

Melchizedec was a Priest

The spiral column of smoke climbing up into the clear air, in the fragrant morn, and at the dewy eve, told that there was one heart at least which was true in its allegiance to the Most High God: and which bore up before Him the sins and sorrows of the clans that clustered near. He seems to have had that quick sympathy with the needs of his times which is the true mark of the priestly heart (Hebrews 4:15). And he had acquired thereby so great an influence over his neighbors that they spontaneously acknowledged the claims of his special and unique position. ***Man must have a priest. His nature shrinks from contact with the All Holy.*** What is there in common between vileness and purity, darkness and light, ignorance and the knowledge which needs no telling? And in all ages, men have selected from among their fellows one who should represent them to God, and God to them. It is a natural instinct. And it has been met in our glorious Lord, who, while He stands for us in the presence of God, face to face with uncreated Light, ever making intercessions, at the same time is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, succors us in our temptations, and has compassion on our ignorance. Why need we travel farther afield? Why imitate Micah in setting up for ourselves a priest whom human hands have made? (See Judges 17:10). Why permit any other to bear this sacred name, or to intrude on this holy office? None but Christ will satisfy or meet the requirements of God, or "become us" with unutterable needs (Hebrews 7:26).

This Priesthood Came of God, and was Ratified by an Oath

The priests of the house of Levi exercised their office after "the law of a carnal commandment" (Hebrews 7:16). They assumed it, not because of any inherent fitness, or because specially summoned to the work by the voice of heaven, but because they had sprung from the special sacerdotal tribe. The Priesthood of Christ, on the other hand, is God's best gift to men—to thee, my reader, and to me; more necessary than spring flowers, or light, or air. Without it our souls would wander ever in a Sahara desert. "Christ glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest" (Hebrews 5:5), but He was called of God to be a High Priest after the order of Melchizedec (verse 10). And such was the solemnity of His appointment, that it was ratified by "the word of the oath." "The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec" (Hebrews 7:21-28). Here is "strong consolation" indeed. No unfaithfulness or ingratitude can change this priesthood. The eternal God will never run back from that word and oath. "Eternity" is written upon the High Priest's brow: "for evermore" rings out, as He moves, from the chime of His golden bells: "an unchangeable Priesthood" is the law of His glorious being. Hallelujah! The heart may well sing, when, amid the fluctuation of earth's change, it touches at length the primeval rock of God's eternal purpose. He is "consecrated" Priest "for evermore."

This Priesthood was also Catholic

Abraham was not yet circumcised. He was not a Jew, but a Gentile still. It was as the father of many nations that he stood and worshipped and received the benediction from Melchizedec's saintly hands. Not thus was it with the priesthood of Aaron's line. To share its benefit a man must needs become a Jew, submitting to the initial rite of Judaism. None but Jewish names shone in that breastplate. Only Jewish wants or sins were borne upon those consecrated lips. BUT CHRIST IS THE PRIEST OF MAN. He draws ALL MEN unto Himself. The one sufficient claim upon Him is that thou bear the nature which He has taken into irreversible union with His own—that thou art a sinner and a penitent pressed by conscious need. Then hast thou a right to Him, which cannot be disallowed. He is thy Priest—thine own; as if none other had claim on Him than thou. Tell Him all thy story, hiding nothing, extenuating, excusing nothing. All kindreds, and peoples, and nations, and tongues, converge in Him, and are welcome; and all their myriad needs are satisfactorily met.

This Priesthood was Superior to all Human Orders of Priests

If ever there were a priesthood which held undisputed supremacy among the priesthods of the world, it was that of Aaron's line. It might not be as ancient as that which ministered at the shrines of Nineveh, or so learned as that which was exercised in the silent cloisters of Memphis and Thebes; but it had about it this unapproachable dignity—in that it had emanated, as a whole, from the Word of God. Yet even the Aaronic must yield obeisance to the Melchizedec Priesthood. And it did. For Levi was yet in the loins of Abraham when Melchizedec met him; and he paid tithes in Abraham, and knelt in token of submission, in the person of the patriarch, beneath the blessing of this greater than himself (Hebrews 7:4-10). Why then need we concern ourselves with the stars, when the sun has arisen upon us? What have we to do with any other than with this mighty Mediator, this Daysman, who towers aloft above all rivals; Himself sacrifice and Priest, who has offered a solitary sacrifice, and fulfils a unique ministry!

This Priesthood Partook of the Mystery of Eternity

We need not suppose that this mystic being had literally no father, or mother, beginning of days, or end of life. The fact on which the inspired writer fixes is—that no information is afforded us on any of these points. There is an intention in the golden silence, as well as in the golden speech of Scripture. And these details were doubtless shrouded in obscurity, that there might be a still clearer approximation of the type to the glory of the Antitype, who abides continually. He is the Ancient of Days; the King of the Ages; the I AM. The Sun of His Being, like His Priesthood, knows nought of dawn, or decline from meridian zenith, or descent in the western sky. "He is made after the power of an endless life." "He ever liveth to make intercession." If, in the vision of Patmos, the hair of His head was white as snow, it was not the white of decay, but of incandescent fire. "He continueth ever, and hath an unchangeable priesthood." "He is the same yesterday, today, and for ever." He does for us now what He did for the world's grey fathers, and what He will do for the last sinner who shall claim His aid.

This Priesthood was Royal

"Melchizedec, King of Salem, priest." Here again there is no analogy in the Levitical priesthood.

The royal and priestly offices were carefully kept apart. Uzziah was struck with the which brand of leprosy when he tried to unite them. But how marvelously they blended in the earthly life of Jesus! As Priest, He pitied, and helped, and fed men: as King, He ruled the waves. As Priest, He uttered His sublime intercessory prayer: as King, He spoke the "I will" of royal prerogative. As Priest, He touched the ear of Malchus: as the disowned King, to whom even Caesar was preferred, He was hounded to the death. As Priest, He pleaded for His murderers, and spake of Paradise to the dying thief: whilst His Kingship was attested by the proclamation affixed to His cross. As Priest, He breathed peace on His disciples: as King, He ascended to sit down upon His throne.

He was FIRST "King of Righteousness," and after that also King of Salem, which is King of Peace (Hebrews 7:2). Mark the order. Not first Peace at any price, or at the cost of Righteousness, but Righteousness first—the righteousness of His personal character; the righteous meeting, on our behalf, of the just demands of a Divine and holy law. And then founded on, and arising from, this solid and indestructible basis, there sprang the Temple of Peace, in which the souls of men may shelter from the shocks of time. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. And My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet restingplaces" (Isaiah 32:17-18).

Ah, souls, what is your attitude towards Him? There be plenty who are willing enough to have Him as Priest, who refuse to accept Him as King. But it will not do. He must be King, or He will not be Priest. And He must be King in this order, first making thee right, then giving thee His peace that passeth all understanding. Waste not precious time in paltering, or arguing with Him; accept the situation as it is, and let thy heart be the Salem, the city of Peace, where He, the Priest-King, shall reign for ever. And none is so fit to rule as He who stooped to die. "In the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as it had been slain" (Revelation 5:6). Exactly! The throne is the befitting place for the Man who loved us to the death.

This Priesthood Receives Tithes of all

"The patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils" (Hebrews 7:4 RV). This ancient custom shames us Christians. ***The patriarch gave more to the representative of Christ than many of us give to Christ Himself.*** Come, if you have never done so before, resolve to give your Lord a tithe of your time, your income, your all. "Bring all the tithes into His storehouse." Nay, thou glorious One, we will not rest content with this; take all, for all is Thine. "Thine is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as King above all. Now, therefore, we thank Thee and praise Thy glorious name."

Chapter Ten^(TOC)

The Firmness of Abraham's Faith

"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God."—Romans 4:20.

In this chapter (Genesis 15), for the first time in Scripture, four striking phrases occur; but each of them is destined to be frequently repeated with many charming variations. We may speak then of this precious paragraph as of some upland vale where streamlets take their rise which are to flow seawards, making glad the lowland pasture lands on their way. Now, first, we meet the phrase, "the word of the Lord came." Here, first, we are told that "the Lord God is a shield." For the first time rings out the silver chime of that Divine assurance, "Fear not!" And now we first meet in human history that great, that mighty word, "believed." What higher glory is there for man than that he should reckon on the faithfulness of God? For this is the meaning of all true belief.

The "word of the Lord" came to Abraham about two distinct matters.

(1) God Spoke to Abraham about his Fear

Abraham had just returned from the rout of Chedorlaomer and the confederate kings in the far north of Canaan; and there was a natural reaction from the long and unwonted strain as he settled down again into the placid and uneventful course of a shepherd's life. In this state of mind he was most susceptible to fear; as the enfeebled constitution is most susceptible to disease.

And there was good reason for fear. He had defeated Chedorlaomer, it is true; but in doing so he had made him his bitter foe. The arm of the warrior-king had been long enough to reach to Sodom; why should it not be long enough and strong enough to avenge his defeat upon that one lonely man? It could not be believed that the mighty monarch would settle down content until the memory of his disastrous defeat was wiped out with blood. There was every reason, therefore, to expect him back again to inflict condign punishment. And, besides all this, as a night wind in a desert land, there swept now and again over the heart of Abraham a feeling of lonely desolation, of disappointment, of hope deferred. More than ten years had passed since he had entered Canaan. Three successive promises had kindled his hopes, but they seemed as far from realization as ever. Not one inch of territory! Not a sign of a child! Nothing of all that God had foretold!

It was under such circumstances that the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great Reward." Ah, *our God does not always wait for us to come to Him; He often comes to*

us; He draws near to us in the low dungeon; He sends His angel to prepare for us the cruse of water and the baked cakes, and on our souls break His tender assurances of comfort, more penetrating than the roar of the surge, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."

But God does not content Himself with vague assurances. He gives us solid ground for comfort in some fresh revelation of Himself. And oftentimes the very circumstances of our need are chosen as a foil to set forth some special side of the Divine character which is peculiarly appropriate. What could have been more re-assuring at this moment to the defenseless pilgrim, with no stockade or walled city in which to shelter, but whose flocks were scattered far and wide, than to hear that God Himself was around him and his, as a vast, impenetrable, though invisible shield. "I am thy Shield."

Mankind, when once that thought was given, eagerly caught at it; and it has never been allowed to die. Again and again it rings out in prophecy and psalms, in temple anthem and from retired musings. "The Lord God is a sun and shield." "Thou art my hiding-place and my shield." "Behold, O God, our shield; and look upon the face of thine Anointed." "His truth shall be thy shield and buckler." It is a very helpful thought for some of us! We go every day into the midst of danger; men and devils strike at us; now it is the overt attack, and now the stab of the assassin; unkind insinuations, evil suggestions, taunts, gibes, threats; all these things are against us. But if we are doing God's will and trusting in God's care, ours is a charmed life, like that of the man who wears chain armor beneath his clothes. The Divine environment pours around us, rendering us impervious to attack, as the stream of electricity may surround a jewel-case with an atmosphere before which the stoutest attack of the most resolute felon is foiled. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper" (Isaiah 54:17). "Thou shalt not be afraid

for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." Happy are they who have learnt the art of abiding within the inviolable protection of the eternal God, on which all arrows are blunted, all swords turned aside, all sparks of malice extinguished with the hissing sound of a torch in the briny waters of the sea.

Nor does God only defend us from without, He is the REWARD and the satisfaction of the lonely heart. It was as if He asked Abraham to consider how much he had in having Himself. "Come now, my child, and think; even if thou wert never to have one foot of soil, and thy tent were to stand silent, amid the merry laughter of childish voices all around—yet thou wouldest not have left thy land in vain, for thou hast Me. Am not I enough? I fill heaven and earth; cannot I fill one lonely soul? Am not I 'thy exceeding great reward'; able to compensate thee by My friendship, to which thou art called, for any sacrifice that thou mayest have made?"

Our God, who is love, and love in its purest, divinest essence, has given us much, and promised us more; but still His best and greatest gift is His own dear self; our reward, our great reward, our exceeding great reward. Hast thou naught? Is thy life bare? Have lover and friend forsaken thee? Art thou lonely and forsaken of all the companions of earlier, younger days? Well, answer this one question more, Hast thou God? For if thou hast, thou hast all love and life, all sweetness and tenderness, all that can satisfy the heart, and delight the mind. All lovely things sleep in Him, as all colors hide in the sunbeam's ray, waiting to be unravelled. To have God is to have all, though bereft of everything. To be destitute of God is to be bereft of everything, though having all.

(2) God Spoke to Abraham about his Childlessness

It was night, or perhaps the night was turning towards the morning, but as yet myriads of stars—the watchfires of the angels; the choristers of the spheres; the flocks on the wide pasture lands of space—were sparking in the heavens. The patriarch was sleeping in his tent, when God came near him in a vision; and it was under the shadow of that vision that Abraham was able to tell God all that was in his heart. We can often say things in the dark which we dare not utter beneath the eye of day. And in that quiet watch of the night, Abraham poured out into the ear of God the bitter, bitter agony of his heart's life. He had probably long wanted to say something like this; but the opportunity had not come. But now there was no longer need for restraint; and so it all came right out into the ear of his Almighty Friend, "Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir." It was as if he said, "I promised for myself something more than this; I have conned Thy promises, and felt that they surely prognosticated a child of my own flesh and blood; but the slowly moving years have brought me no fulfillment of my hopes; and I suppose that I mistook Thee. Thou never intendest more than that my steward should inherit my name and goods. Ah, me! it is a bitter disappointment; but Thou hast done it, and it is well."

So we often mistake God, and interpret His delays as denials. What a chapter might be written of God's delays! Was not the life of Jesus full of them, from the moment when He tarried behind in the Temple, to the moment when He abode two days still in the same place where He was, instead of hurrying across the Jordan in response to the sad and agonized entreaty of the sisters

whom He loved. So He delays still. It is the mystery of the art of educating human spirits to the finest temper of which they are capable. What searchings of heart; what analyzing of motives; what testings of the Word of God; what upliftings of soul—searching what, or what manner of time. the Spirit of God signifies! All these are associated with those weary days of waiting, which are, nevertheless, big with spiritual destiny. But such delays are not God's final answer to the soul that trusts Him. They are but the winter before the burst of spring. "And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but thine own son shall be thine heir. Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. So shall thy seed be" (Genesis 15:4-5). And from that moment the stars shone with new meaning for him, as the sacraments of Divine promise.

And he believed in the Lord

What wonder that those words are so often quoted by inspired men in after ages; or that they lie as the foundation stone of some of the greatest arguments that have ever engaged the mind of man! (See Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6; James 2:23)

He believed before he Underwent the Jewish Rite of Circumcision

The Apostle Paul lays special emphasis on this, as showing that they who were not Jews might equally have faith, and be numbered amongst the spiritual children of the great father of the faithful (Romans 4:9-21; Galatians 3:7-29) The promise that he should be the heir of the world was made to him, when as yet he was only the far-travelled pilgrim; and so it is sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

He believed in face of Strong Natural Improbabilities

Appearances were dead against such a thing as the birth of a child to that aged pair. The experience of many years said, "It cannot be." The nature and reason of the case said, "It cannot be." Any council of human friends and advisers would have instantly said, "It cannot be!" And Abraham quietly considered and weighed them all "without being weakened in faith" (Romans

4:19 RV). Then he as carefully looked unto the promise of God. And, rising from his consideration of the comparative weight of the one and the other, he elected to venture everything on the word of the Eternal. Nay, that was not all; as shock followed shock, and wave succeeded wave, booming with crash of thunder on his soul, he staggered not; he did not budge an inch; he did not even tremble, as sometimes the wave-beat rock shivers to its base. He reckoned on the faithfulness of God. He gave glory to God. He relied implicitly on the utter trustworthiness of the Divine veracity. He was "fully assured that what He had promised He was able also to perform." Ah, child of God, for every look at the unlikelihood of the promise, take ten looks at the promise: this is the way in which faith waxes strong. "Looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong" (Romans 4:20 RV).

His Faith was Destined to be Severely Tried

If you take to the lapidary the stones which you have collected in your summer ramble, he will probably send the bulk of them home to you in a few days, with scanty marks of having passed through his hands. But some one or two of the number may be kept back, and when you inquire for them, he will reply: "Those stones which I returned are not worth much: there was nothing in them to warrant the expenditure of my time and skill; but with the others, the case is far otherwise: they are capable of taking a polish and of bearing a discipline which it may take months and even years to give; but their beauty, when the process is complete, will be all the compensation that can be wished."

Some men pass through life without much trial, because their natures are

light and trivial, and incapable of bearing much, or of profiting by the severe discipline which, in the case of others, is all needed, and will yield a rich recompense, after it has had its perfect work. God will not let any one of us be tried beyond what we are able to bear. But when He has in hand a nature like Abraham's, which is capable of the loftiest results, we must not be surprised if the trial is long continued, almost to the last limit of endurance. The patriarch had to wait fifteen years more, making five-and-twenty years in all, between the first promise and its fulfillment in the birth of Isaac.

His Faith was Counted to him for Righteousness

Faith is the seed-germ of righteousness; and, when God sees us possessed of the seed, He counts us as also being in possession of the harvest which lies hidden in its heart. Faith is the tiny seed which contains all the rare perfumes and gorgeous hues of the Christian life, awaiting only the nurture and benediction of God. When a man believes, it is only a matter of education and time to develop that which is already in embryo within him; and God, to whom the future is already present, accounts the man of faith as dowered with the fruits of righteousness, which are to the glory and praise of God. But there is a deeper meaning still than this—in the possession through faith of a judicial righteousness in the sight of God.

The righteousness of Abraham resulted not from his works, but from his faith. "He believed God; and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness." "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was reckoned unto him; but for our sake also, unto whom it shall be reckoned, who believe on Him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Galatians 3:6; Romans 4:23-24 RV). Oh, miracle of grace! if we trust ever so simply in Jesus Christ our Lord, we

shall be reckoned as righteous in the eye of the eternal God. We cannot realize all that is included in those marvelous words. This only is evident, that faith unites us so absolutely to the Son of God that we are ONE with Him for evermore; and all the glory of His character—not only what He was when He became obedient unto death, but what He is in the majesty of His risen nature—is reckoned unto us.

Some teach imputed righteousness as if it were something apart from Christ, flung over the rags of the sinner. But it is truer and better to consider it as a matter of blessed identification with Him through faith; so that as He was one with us in being made sin, we are one with Him in being made the Righteousness of God. In the counsels of Eternity that which is true of the glorious Lord is accounted also true of us who, by a living faith, have become members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. Jesus Christ is made unto us Righteousness, and we are accepted in the Beloved. There is nothing in faith, considered in itself, which can account for this marvelous fact of imputation. Faith is only the link of union; but inasmuch as it unites us to the Son of God, it brings us into the enjoyment of all that He is as the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.

Chapter Eleven^(TOC)

Watching with God

(Genesis 15:7)

"The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come; it will not tarry."—Habakkuk 2:3.

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."—Lamentations 3:26.

"If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience with patience wait for it."—Romans 8:25.

It is not easy to watch with God, or to wait for Him. The orbit of His providence is so vast. The stages of His progress are so wide apart. He holds on His way through the ages; we tire in a few short hours. And when His dealings with us are perplexing and mysterious, the heart that had boasted its unwavering loyalty begins to grow faint with misgivings, and to question—When shall we be able to trust absolutely, and not be afraid?

In human relationships, when once the heart has found its rest in another, it can bear the test of distance and delay. Years may pass without a word or sigh to break the sad monotony. Strange contradictions may baffle the understanding and confuse the mind. Officious friends may delight in putting unkind and false constructions on conduct confessedly hard to explain. But the trust never varies or abates. It knows that all is well. It is content to exist without a token, and to be quiet without attempting to explain or defend. Ah, when shall we treat God so? When shall we thus rest in Him, trusting where we cannot understand? Can any education be too hard which shall secure this

as its final and crowning result? Surely that were heaven, when the heart of man could afford to wait for a millennium, unstaggered by delay, untinged by doubt.

At this stage, at least, of his education, Abraham had not learnt this lesson. But in that grey dawn, as the stars which symbolized his posterity were beginning to fade in the sky, he answered the Divine assurance that he should inherit the land of which he as yet did not own a foot, by the sad complaint: "Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?"

How human this is! It was not that he was absolutely incredulous: but he yearned for some tangible evident token that it was to be as God had said; something he could see; something which should be an ever-present sacrament of the coming heritage, as the stars were of the future seed. Do not wonder at him; but rather adore the love which bears with these human frailties, and stoops to give them stepping-stones by which to cross the sands to the firm rock of an assured faith.

(1) Watching by the Sacrifice

In those early days, when a written agreement was very rare, if not quite unknown, men sought to bind one another to their word with the most solemn religious sanctions. The contracting party was required to bring certain animals, which were slaughtered and divided into pieces. These were laid on the ground in such a manner as to leave a narrow lane between; up and down which the covenanting party passed to ratify and confirm his solemn pledge.

It was to this ancient and solemn rite that Jehovah referred, when he said, "Take Me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another" (Genesis 15:8, 10).

It was still the early morning. The day was young. And Abraham sat down to watch. Then there came a long pause. Hour after hour passed by; but God did not give a sign or utter a single word. Judging by appearances, there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

Higher and ever higher the sun drove his chariot up the sky, and shone with torrid heat on those pieces of flesh lying there exposed upon the sand; but still no voice or vision came. The unclean vultures, attracted by the scent of carrion, drew together as to a feast, and demanded incessant attention if they were to be kept away. Did Abraham ever permit himself to imagine that he was sitting there on a fool's mission? Did not the thought instil itself into his mind, that perhaps after all he had been led to arrange those pieces by a freak of his own fancy, and that God would not come at all? Did he shrink from the

curious gaze of his servants, and of Sarah his wife, because half-conscious of having taken up a position he could not justify?

We cannot tell what passed through that much-trying heart during those long hours. But this, at least, we recognize; that this is in a line with the discipline through which we all have to pass. Hours of waiting for God! Days of watching! Nights of sleepless vigil! Looking for the outposts of the relief that tarries! Wondering why the Master comes not! Climbing the hill again and again, to return without the expected vision! Watching for some long-expected letter, till the path to the Post Office is trodden down with constant passing to and fro, and wet with many tears! But all in vain! Nay, but it is not in vain. For these long waiting hours are building up the fabric of the spirit-life, with gold, and silver, and precious stones, so as to become a thing of beauty, and a joy for evermore.

Only let us see to it that we never relax our attitude of patience, but wait to the end for the grace to be brought unto us. And let us give the unclean birds no quarter. We cannot help them sailing slowly through the air, or uttering dismal screams, or circling around us as if to pounce. But we CAN help them settling down. And this we must do, in the name and by the help of God. "If the vision tarry, wait for it."

(2) The Horror of a Great Darkness

The sun at last went down, and the swift Eastern night cast its heavy veil over the scene. Worn out with the mental conflict, the watchings, and the exertions of the day, Abraham fell into a deep sleep. And in that sleep his soul was oppressed with a dense and dreadful darkness; such as almost stifled him, and lay like a nightmare upon his heart. "Lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him."

Do my readers understand something of the horror of that darkness? When one who has been brought up in a traditional belief, which fails to satisfy the instincts of maturer life, supposes that in letting go the creed, there must also be the renunciation of all faith and hope, not seeing that the form may go, whilst the essential substance may remain: when one, mistaking the nature of sin and the mercy of God, fears that there has been committed an unpardonable sin, or that the bounds of repentance have been overstepped for ever: when some terrible sorrow which seems so hard to reconcile with perfect love, crushes down upon the soul, wringing from it all its peaceful rest in the pitifulness of God, and launching it on a sea unlit by a ray of hope: when unkindness, and cruelty, and monstrous injustice browbeat, and mock, and maltreat the trusting heart, till it begins to doubt whether there be a God overhead who can see and still permit—these know something of the horror of great darkness; and what weird and frightful visions will in that darkness pass one after another before the spirit, like the phantoms of a drunkard's delirium or the apparitions of an unhealthy brain.

It was a long and dark prospect which unfolded itself before Abraham. He beheld the history of his people through coming centuries, strangers in a

foreign land, enslaved and afflicted. Did he not see the anguish of their soul, and their cruel bondage beneath the task-master's whips? Did he not hear their groans, and see mothers weeping over their babes, doomed to the insatiable Nile? Did he not witness the building of Pyramid and Treasure-city, cemented by blood and suffering? It was, indeed, enough to fill him with darkness that could be felt.

And yet the sombre woof was crossed by the warp of silver threads. The enslaved were to come out, and to come out with great substance, their oppressors being overwhelmed with crushing judgment. They were to come into that land again. Whilst, as for himself, he should go to his fathers in peace, and be buried in a good old age.

It is thus that human life is made up: brightness and gloom; shadow and sun; long tracks of cloud, succeeded by brilliant glints of light. And amid all, Divine justice is working out its own schemes, affecting others equally with the individual soul which seems the subject of especial discipline. The children of Abraham must not inherit the Land of Promise till the fourth generation has passed away, because the iniquity of the Amorites had not yet filled up the measure of their doom. Only then—when the reformation of that race was impossible; when their condition had become irremediable, and their existence was a menace to the peace and purity of mankind—was the order given for their extermination, and for the transference of their power to those who might hold it more worthily.

Oh, ye who are filled with the horror of great darkness because of God's dealings with mankind, learn to trust that infallible wisdom which is co-assessor with immutable justice, and know that He who passed through the horror of the darkness of Calvary, with the cry of forsakenness, is ready to bear you company through the valley of the shadow of death, till you see the

sun shining upon its further side. "Who is among you that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."

(3) The Ratification of the Covenant

When Abraham awoke, the sun was down. Darkness reigned supreme. "It was dark." A solemn stillness brooded over the world. Then came the awful act of ratification. For the first time since man left the gates of Eden there appeared the symbol of the glory of God; that awful light which was afterwards to shine in the pillar of cloud, and the Shekinah gleam.

In the thick darkness, that mysterious light—a lamp of fire—passed slowly and majestically between the divided pieces; and, as it did so, a voice said: "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15:18).

Remember that promise: made with the most solemn sanctions, never repealed since, and never perfectly fulfilled. For a few years during the reign of Solomon the dominions of Israel almost touched these limits, but only for a very brief period. The perfect fulfillment is yet in the future. Somehow the descendants of Abraham shall yet inherit their own land, secured to them by the covenant of God. Those rivers shall yet form their boundary lines: for "the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

A foreign power forbids their entrance yet; and Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles. But we may be entering on a series of events, which shall shatter the decrepit empire of the unspeakable Turk, and release Egypt and Palestine from his blighting sway, so that the land which awaits the people, and the people which awaits the land, may be reunited beneath the blessing of Him who, by word and oath, gave strong consolation to His much-tried servant Abraham.

As we turn from this scene—in which God bound Himself by such solemn sanctions, to strengthen the ground of His servant's faith—we may carry with us exalted conceptions of His great goodness, which will humble itself so low in order to secure the trust of one poor heart. By two immutable things, His word and oath, God has given strong assurance to us who are menaced by the storm, drawing us on to a rock-bound shore. Let us, by our Forerunner, send forward our anchor, Hope, within the veil that parts us from the unseen: where it will grapple in ground that will not yield, but hold until the day dawn, and we follow it into the haven guaranteed to us by God's immutable counsel (Hebrews 6:19-20).

Chapter Twelve^(TOC)

Hagar, the Slave Girl

"Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar."—Genesis 16:1.

We none of us know all that is involved when we tear ourselves from the familiar scenes of our Harans to follow God into the lands of separation which lie beyond the river. The separated life cannot be an easy one. We may dimly guess this as we step out into the untried and unknown; but God graciously veils from our eyes that which would needlessly startle and daunt us; unfolding to us His requirements, only as we are able to bear them.

The difficulties of the separated life arise, not from any arbitrary appointments of Divine Providence, but from the persistent manifestation of the self-life in its many Protean forms. It is absurd to say that it dies once for all in some early stage of the Christian life; and it is perilous to lead men to think so. When men think or boast that it is dead, it peeps out in their very assertions, and laughs at the success of its efforts to blind them to its presence. This is the masterpiece of its art: to cajole its dupes into thinking that it is dead. Bands of thieves always like to secure the insertion of a paragraph in the newspapers, announcing that they have left the neighborhood, because in the false security which is induced by the announcement, they are more able to carry out their plans of pillage.

We say, in the first moments of consecration, that we are eager, not only to be reckoned dead in the sight of God, so far as our self-life is concerned, but

to be dead. And if we really mean what we say, God undertakes the work, first of revealing the insidious presence of the self-life where we had least expected it, and then of nailing it in bitter suffering to the cross of a painful death. O ye who know something of the analysis of your inner life, do not your hearts bear witness that, as the light of heaven breaks with glowing glory on your souls, it reveals unexpected glimpses into the insidious workings of self—so much so that you are driven to claim, with no bated breath: first, Divine forgiveness for harboring such a traitor; and then, the interposition of Divine grace to mete out that death which is the only condition of growth and blessedness.

There is here a very startling manifestation of the tenacity with which Abraham's self-life still survived. We might have expected that by this time it had been extinguished: the long waiting of ten slow-moving years: the repeated promises of God: the habit of contact with God Himself—all this had surely been enough to eradicate and burn out all confidence in the flesh; all trust in the activities of the self-life; all desire to help himself to the realization of the promises of God. Surely, now, this much-tried man will wait until, in His own time and way, God shall do as He has said. Abraham would not take a shoe-latchet, or a thread, from the King of Sodom, because he was so sure that God would GIVE him all the land. Nor was he disappointed: when God said, "I am thy exceeding great reward." And similarly we might have expected that he would have strenuously resisted every endeavor to induce him to realize for himself God's promise about his seed. Surely he will wait meekly and quietly for God to fulfil His own word, by means best known to Himself.

Instead of this he listened to THE REASONING OF EXPEDIENCY, which happened to chime in with his own thoughts, and sought to gratify the

promptings of his spirit by doing something to secure the result of which God had spoken. Simple-hearted faith waits for God to unfold His purpose, sure that He will not fail. But mistrust, reacting on the self-life, leads us to take matters into our own hands—even as Saul did, when he took upon himself to offer sacrifice, without awaiting the arrival of Samuel.

(1) The Quarter Whence these Reasonings Came

"Sarai said unto Abram." Poor Sarah! She had not had her husband's advantages. When he had been standing in fellowship with God, she had been quietly pursuing the routine of household duty, pondering many things.

It was clear that Abraham should have a son; but it was not definitely said by God that the child would be hers. Abraham was a strict monogamist; but the laxer notions of those days warranted the filling of the harem with others, who occupied an inferior rank to that of the principal wife, and whose children, according to common practice, were reckoned as if they were her own. Why should not her husband fall in with those laxer notions of the marriage vow? Why should he not marry the slave-girl, whom they had either purchased in an Egyptian slave market, or acquired amongst the other gifts with which Pharaoh had sent them away?

It was an heroic sacrifice for her to make. She was willing to forego a woman's dearest prerogative; to put another in her own place; and to surrender a position to which she had a perfect right to cling, even though it seemed to clash with the direct promise of God. But her love to Abraham; her despair of having a child of her own; and her inability to conceive of God fulfilling His word by other than natural means—all these things combined to make the proposal from which, in another aspect, her wifely nature must have shrunk. Love in Sarah did violence to love.

No one else could have approached Abraham with such a proposition, with the slightest hope of success. But when Sarah made it, the case was altered.

The suggestion might have flitted across his own mind, in his weaker moments, only to be instantly rejected and put aside, as doing a grievous wrong to his faithful wife. But now, as it emanated from her, there seemed less fear of it. It was supported by the susceptibilities of natural instinct. It was consistent with the whisperings of doubt. It seemed to be a likely expedient for realizing God's promise. And without demur, or reference to God, he fell in with the proposal. "Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai."

It is always hard to resist temptation when it appeals to natural instinct or to distrustful fear. At such an hour, if the Savior be not our Keeper, there is small hope of our being able to resist the double assault. But the temptation is still more perilous when it is presented, not by some repellent fiend, but by some object of our love; who, like Sarah, has been the partner of our pilgrimage, and who is willing to sacrifice all in order to obtain a blessing which God has promised, but has not yet bestowed.

We should be exceedingly careful before acting on the suggestions of any who are not as advanced as we are in the Divine life. What may seem right to them may be terribly wrong for us. And we should be especially careful to criticize and weigh any proposals which harmonize completely with the tendencies of our self-life. "If the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly... thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare" (Deuteronomy 13:6-8). But does not the response of the soul to such suggestions indicate how far the self-life is from being dead.

(2) The Sorrows to which they Led

As soon as the end was obtained, the results, like a crop of nettles, began to appear in that home, which had been the abode of purity and bliss; but which was not destined to be the scene of discord. Raised into a position of rivalry with Sarah, and expectant of giving the long-desired son to Abraham, and a young master to the camp, Hagar despised her childless mistress, and took no pains to conceal her contempt.

This was more than Sarah could endure. It was easier to make one heroic act of self-sacrifice, than to bear each day the insolent carriage of the maid whom she had herself exalted to this position. Nor was she reasonable in her irritation; instead of assuming the responsibility of having brought about the untoward event, so fraught with misery to herself, she passionately upbraided her husband, saying: "My wrong be upon thee: the Lord judge between me and thee" (Genesis 16:5).

How true this is to human nature! We take one false step, unsanctioned by God; and when we begin to discover our mistake, we give way to outbursts of wounded pride. But instead of chiding ourselves, we turn upon others, whom we may have instigated to take the wrong course, and we bitterly reproach them for wrongs of which they at most were only instruments, whilst we were the final cause.

Out of this fleshly expedient sprang many sorrows. Sorrow to Sarah, who on this occasion, as afterwards, must have drunk to the dregs the cup of bitter gall; of jealousy and wounded pride; of hate and malice, which always destroy peace and joy in the nature, from which they stream as the fiery lava

torrents from a volcanic crater. Sorrow to Hagar, driven forth as an exile from the home of which she had dreamt to become the mistress, and to which she had thought herself essential. Ah, bitter disappointment! Sorrow to Abraham, loth to part with one who, to all human appearance, would now become the mother of the child who should bless his life: stung, moreover, as he was, by the unwonted bitterness of his wife's reproaches.

If any should read these words who are tempted to use any expedients of human devising for the attainment of ends, which in themselves may be quite legitimate, let them stand still, and take to heart the teachings of this narrative. For, as surely as God reigns, shall every selfish expedient involve us in unutterable and heartrending sorrow. "From this time shalt thou have wars."

(3) The Victim Whose Life-Course was so Largely Involved

We cannot be surprised at the insolent bearing of the untutored slave-girl. It was only what might have been expected. But we mourn to see in her only one of myriads who have been sacrificed to the whim or passion, to the expediency or selfishness, of men. Innocent and light-hearted, she might have been the devoted wife of some man in her own station and the mother of a happy family. But, taken as she was from her true station, and put into a position in which she was a mother without being a lawful wife, what could her lot be but misery in the home in which she had no proper status, and at last in the exiled and homeless wanderings to which Sarah's bitter jealousy twice drove her: once for a time—afterwards for ever?

Abraham, for the sake of the peace of his home, dared not interpose between his wife and her slave. "Behold," said he, "thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee." Not slow to act upon this implied consent, the irate mistress dealt so bitterly with the girl that she fled from her face, and took the road, trodden by the caravans, towards her native land.

"The angel of the Lord" (and here, for the first time, that significant expression is used, which is held by many to express some evident manifestation of the Son of God in angel-guise) "found her by a well of water" which was familiarly known in the days of Moses. There, worn, and weary, and lonely, she sat down to rest. How often does the Angel of the Lord still find us in our extremity!—when we are running away from the post which was assigned to us; when we are evading the cross. And what

questions could be more pertinent, whether to Hagar or to us: "Whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go?" Reader, answer those two questions, ere thou readest further. What is thine origin? and what thy destiny?

Then there followed the distinct command, which applies to us evermore, "Return, and submit." The day would come when God Himself would open the door, and send Hagar out of that house (Genesis 21:12-14). But until that moment should come, after thirteen years had rolled away, she must return to the place which she had left, bearing her burden and fulfilling her duty as best she might. "Return, and submit."

We are all prone to act as Hagar did. If our lot is hard, and our cross is heavy, we start off in a fit of impatience and wounded pride. We shirk the discipline; we evade the yoke; we make our own way out of the difficulty. Ah! we shall never get right thus. Never! We must retrace our steps; we must meekly bend our necks under the yoke. We must accept the lot which God has ordained for us, even though it be the result of the cruelty and sin of others. We shall conquer by yielding. We shall escape by returning. We shall become free by offering ourselves to be bound. "Return, and submit." By and by, when the lesson is perfectly learnt, the prison-door will open of its own accord.

Meanwhile the heart of the prodigal is cheered by promise (16:10). The Angel of the Lord unfolds all the blessed results of obedience. And as the spirit considers these, it finds the homeward way no longer lined by flints, but soft with flowers.

Nor is this all: but in addition to promise, there breaks on the soul the conception of One who lives and sees; who lives to avenge the wronged, and to defend the helpless; and who sees each tear and pang of the afflicted soul.

"Thou are a God that seeth." Not like those blind Egyptian idols that stare

with stony gaze across the desert: having eyes, though they see not. It was a new thought to the untutored slave-girl; it is familiar enough to us. And yet we might find new depths of meaning in life and duty, if every moment were spent in that habitual realization of these words. Let us look after Him that seeth us. Let us often stay the whirr of life's shuttles to say softly to ourselves, "God is here; God is near; God sees—He will provide; He will defend; He will avenge." "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him" (2 Chronicles 16:9, Zechariah 4:10).

Chapter Thirteen^(TOC)

Be Thou Perfect!

"I am the Almighty God: walk before Me, and be thou perfect."—Genesis 17:1.

Thirteen long years passed slowly on after the return of Hagar to Abraham's camp. The child Ishmael was born, and grew up in the patriarch's house—the acknowledged heir of the camp, and yet showing symptoms of the wild-ass nature of which the angel had spoken (16:12 RV). Not a little perplexed must Abraham have been with those strange manifestations; and yet the heart of the old man warmed to the lad, and clung to him, often asking that Ishmael might live before God.

And throughout that long period there was no fresh appearance, no new announcement. Never since God had spoken to him in Charran had there been so long a pause. And it must have been a terrible ordeal, driving him back on the promise which had been given, and searching his heart to ascertain if the cause lay within himself. Such silences have always exercised the hearts of God's saints, leading them to say with the Psalmist: "***Be not silent to me; lest, if Thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit***" (Psalm 28:1). And yet they are to the heart what the long silence of winter is to the world of nature, in preparing it for the outburst of spring.

Some people are ever on the outlook for Divine appearances, for special manifestations, for celestial voices. If these are withheld, they are almost ready to break their hearts. And their life tends to an incessant straining after

some startling evidence of the nearness and the love of God. This feverishness is unwholesome and mistaken. Such manifestations are, indeed, delightful; but they are meant as the bright surprises, and not as the rule of Christian life: they are flung into our lives as a holiday into the school routine of a child, awakening thrilling and unexpected emotions of Joy. It is true that they are liable to be withheld when we are walking at a distance from God, or indulging in coldheartedness and sin. But it is not always so. And when the child of God has lost these bright visitations for long and sad intervals—if, so far as can be ascertained, there is no sense of condemnation on the heart for known unfaithfulness—then it must be believed that they are withheld, not in consequence of palpable sin, but to test the inner life, and to teach the necessity of basing it on faith, rather than on feelings however gladsome, or experiences however divine.

At last, "when Abram was ninety years old and nine," the Lord appeared unto him again, and gave him a new revelation of Himself; unfolded the terms of His covenant; and addressed to him that memorable charge, which rings its summons in the ear and heart of every believer still: "Walk before Me, and be thou perfect."

(1) The Divine Summons

"Walk before Me, and be thou perfect." Men have sadly stumbled over that word. They have not erred, when they have taught that there is an experience, denoted by the phrase, which is possible to men. But they have sadly erred in pressing their own significance into the word, and in then asserting that men are expected to fulfil it, or that they have themselves attained it.

"Perfection" is often supposed to denote sinlessness of moral character, which at the best is only a negative conception, and fails to bring out the positive force of this mighty word. Surely perfection means more than—sinlessness. And if this be admitted, and the further admission be made, that it contains the thought of moral completeness, then it becomes yet more absurd for any mortal to assert it of himself. The very assertion shows the lack of any such thing, and reveals but slender knowledge of the inner life and of the nature of sin. ABSOLUTE SINLESSNESS is surely impossible for us so long as we have not perfect knowledge; for as our light is growing constantly, so are we constantly discovering evil in things which once we allowed without compunction: and if those who assert their sinlessness live but a few years longer, and continue to grow, they will be compelled to admit, if they are true to themselves, that there was evil in things which they now deem to be harmless. But whether they admit it or not, their shortcomings are not less sinful in the sight of the holy God, although undetected by their own fallible judgment. And as to MORAL COMPLETENESS, it is enough to compare the best man whom we ever knew with the perfect beauty of God incarnate, to feel how monstrous such an assumption is. Surely the language of the Apostle Paul better becomes our

lips, as he cries, "Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect; but I follow after." Perhaps in the dateless noon of eternity such words will still best become our lips.

Besides all this, the word "perfect" bears very different renderings from those often given to it. For instance, when we are told that the man of God must be PERFECT (2 Timothy 3:17), the underlying thought, as any scholar would affirm, is that of a workman being "thoroughly equipped for his work," as when a carpenter comes to the house, bearing in his hand the bag in which all necessary tools are readily available. Again, when we join in the prayer that the God of Peace would make us PERFECT in every good work to do His will, we are, in fact, asking that we may be "put in joint" with the blessed Lord; so that the glorious Head may freely secure through us the doing of His will (Hebrews 13:20-21). Again, when our Lord bids us be PERFECT as our Father in heaven is perfect, He simply incites us to that "impartiality of mercy" which knows no distinctions of evil and good, of unjust and just, but distributes its favors with bountiful and equal hand (Matthew 5:48).

What, then, is the true force and significance of this word in that stirring command which lies before us here, "Walk before Me, and be thou perfect"? A comparison of the various passages where it occurs establishes its meaning beyond a doubt, and compels us to think into it the conception of "whole-heartedness." It denotes the entire surrender of the being; and may be fairly expressed in the well-known words of the sweet and gifted songstress of modern days:

"True-hearted, whole-hearted, faithful and loyal, King of our lives, by Thy grace will we be."

This quality of whole-hearted devotion has ever been dear to God. It was this that He considered in Job, and loved in David. It is in favor of this that His

eyes run to and fro to show Himself strong (2 Chronicles 16:9). It is for this that He pleads with Abraham; and it was because He met with it to so large an extent in his character and obedience that He entered into eternal covenant bond with him and his.

Here let each reader turn from the printed page, to the record of the inner life lying open to God alone, and ask, "Is my heart perfect with God? Am I whole-hearted towards Him? Is He first in my schemes, pleasures, friendships, thoughts, and actions? Is His will my law, His love my light, His business my aim, His 'well-done!' my exceeding great reward? Do others share me with Him?"

There is no life to be compared with that of which the undivided heart is the center and spring. Why not seek it now—and, turning to God in holy reverie, ask Him to bring the whole inner realm under His government, and to hold it as His for evermore. "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (Matthew 6:22).

And such an attitude can only be MAINTAINED BY A VERY CAREFUL WALK. "Walk before Me, and be thou perfect." We must seek to realize constantly the presence of God, becoming instantly aware when the fleeci-est cloud draws its veil for a moment over His face, and asking whether the cause may not lie in some scarcely-noticed sin. We must cultivate the habit of feeling Him near, as the Friend from whom we would never be separated, in work, in prayer, in recreation, in repose. We must guard against the restlessness and impetuosity, the excessive eagerness and impatience, which drown the accents of His still, small voice. We must abjure all expedients He does not inspire, all actions He does not promote. We must often turn from the friend, the poem, the landscape, or the task, to look up into His face with a smile of loving recognition. We must constantly have the watches which we

carry next our hearts synchronized by His eternal movements. All this must be. And yet we shall not live forced or unnatural lives. None so blithe or light-hearted as we. All the circles of our daily life will move on unbroken order and beauty; just as each shining moon circles around its planet, because the planet obeys the law of gravitation to the sun. Would you walk before God? Then let there be nothing in heart or life which you would not open to the inspection of His holy and pitiful eye.

(2) The Revelation on which this Summons was Based

"I am the Almighty God" ("El-Shaddai"). What a name is this! And what awful emotions it must have excited in the rapt heart of the listener! God had been known to him by other names, but not by this. And this was the first of a series of revelations of those depths of meaning which lay in the fathomless abyss of the Divine name, each disclosure marking an epoch in the history of the race.

In God's dealings with men you will invariably find that some transcendent revelation precedes the Divine summons to new and difficult duty; promise opens the door to precept: ***He gives what He commands, ere He commands what He wills. And on this principle God acted here.*** It was no child's play to which He called His servant. To walk always before Him—when heart was weak, and strength was frail, and the temptation strong to swerve to right or left. To be perfect in devotion and obedience, when so many crosslights distracted, and perplexed, and fascinated the soul. To forego all methods of self-help, however tempting. To be separated from all alliances that others permitted or followed. This was much. And it was only possible through the might of the Almighty. Abraham could only do all these things on the condition, on which the Apostle insisted in after-days, that God should strengthen him. And, therefore, it was that there broke on him the assurance: "I am the Almighty God." It is as if He had said: "All power is Mine in Heaven, and upon earth. Of old I laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of My hands. I sit upon the circle of the earth; and its inhabitants are as grasshoppers. I bring out the starry hosts by number,

calling them all by names, by the greatness of My might, for that I am strong in power: not one faileth. Hast thou not known—hast thou not heard—that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary?"

All this is as true today as ever. And if any will dare venture forth on the path of separation, cutting themselves aloof from all creature aid, and from all self-originated effort; ***content to walk alone with God, with no help from any but Him—such will find that all the resources of the Divine Almighty will be placed at their disposal, and that the resources of Omnipotence must be exhausted ere their cause can fail for want of help.*** O children of God, why do we run to and fro for the help of man, when the power of God is within reach of the perfect heart? But this condition must be fulfilled ere that mighty power can be put in operation on our behalf. "To him that overcometh I will give a white stone, and in the stone a new name written." In Abraham's case, that name, graved on the glistening jewel, was "I am the Almighty God"; for Moses it was "Jehovah"; for us it is "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ".

(3) The Covenant which was Divinely Proposed

"I will make My covenant between Me and thee." A covenant is a promise made under the most solemn sanctions, and binding the consenting parties in the most definite and impressive way. What mortal would not consent when the Almighty God proposed to enter into an everlasting covenant with His creature, ordered in all things and sure, and more stable than the everlasting hills!

It Referred to the Seed

And there was a marked advance. In Haran it ran thus, "I will make of thee a great nation." At Bethel, thus, "Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth." At Mamre, thus, "Count the stars; so shall thy seed be." But now, three times over, the patriarch is told that he should be the father of many nations, a phrase explained by the Apostle as including all, of every land, who share Abraham's faith, though not sprung from him in the line of natural descent (Galatians 3:7-29). In memory of that promise his name was slightly altered, so that it signified the "father of a great multitude". Nations of thee, and kings of thee" (Genesis 17:6). WE are included in the golden circle of those words, if we believe; and we may claim the spiritual part, at least, of this covenant, which was made with Abraham before he was circumcised.

It Referred to the Land

"I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a

stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession." This promise waits for fulfillment. The word "everlasting" must mean something more than those few centuries of broken, fitful rule. The recent immigration of Jews to Palestine may be an initial stage to its realization. But there is a time, no doubt, at hand when our covenant-keeping God will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, and will repair the ruins thereof; and the land, which now sighs under the cruel despotism of the infidel, shall be again inhabited by the seed of Abraham His friend.

It Referred to the Coming Child

Till then Abraham had no other thought than that Ishmael should be his heir. But this could not be: (1) because he was slave-born; and the slave abideth not in the house for ever: (2) because he was a child of the flesh, and not the direct gift of God. Abraham had been left to wait till the hope of children had become as remote from him as it had been for years from his wife; so that the heir should be evidently the creation of the Almighty God, whose name was disclosed, ere this astounding announcement was made. This is why we are kept waiting till all human and natural hope has died from our hearts, so that God may be All in all. "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac" (verse 19).

For us there is yet a crowning sweetness in the words, "I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed"; words repeated, in Hebrews 8:10, so as certainly to include us all, if we believe. Who can unfold all the wealth of meaning of these words? All light, and no darkness at all. All love, and no shadow of change. All strength, and no sign of weakness. Beauty, sweetness, glory, majesty, all are in God, and all these will be thine and mine, if God saith to us, "I will be a God unto thee."

Nor shall this heritage be ours only: it shall belong to our children also, if we exercise Abraham's faith. God pledges Himself to be the God of our seed. But it is for us to claim the fulfillment of His pledge. Not in heart-rending cries, but in quiet, determined faith, let us ask Him to do as He has said.

Chapter Fourteen^(TOC)

The Sign of the Covenant

"I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly."—Genesis 17:2.

Three times over in Scripture Abraham is called "the friend of God." In that moment of agony, when tidings came to King Jehoshaphat of the great heathen alliance which had been formed against him, he stood in the Temple, and said, "Art not Thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land... and gavest it to the seed of Abraham, thy friend, for ever?" (2 Chronicles 20:7).

And the Apostle James, at the close of his argument about faith and works, tells us that when Abraham believed God, "it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God" (James 2:23).

But, better than all, Jehovah Himself uses the title of friendship, and acknowledges the sacred tie between this much tried spirit and Himself: "Thou Israel art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham My friend" (Isaiah 41:8).

And it would almost appear as if these two chapters, Genesis 17 and 18, had been written for this, among other things: to show the familiarity and intimacy which existed between the Eternal God and the man who was honored to be called His "friend". However, in reading them, we must not suppose that there was something altogether exceptional and unique in this marvelous story. Without doubt it is a true record of what happened more

than three thousand years ago: but it is surely also intended as a specimen of the way in which the Eternal God is willing to deal with true-hearted saints in all ages. To hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of His saints, God has been all that He was to Abraham; and He is willing to be all that to us still.

Let us peruse these ancient lines beneath the flood of light shed on them by our Savior, when He said: "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends" (John 15:15).

The friendship of God is freely offered to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. We cannot merit or deserve it. We cannot establish a prior claim to it. We are simply His bankrupt debtors forever, wondering at the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths, of the unsearchable riches of His grace. May we not say that one ultimate cause of this friendship is in the yearning of the heart of the Eternal for fellowship? But it must remain for ever a mystery why He should seek it amongst ourselves; the fallen children of Adam; the tenants of bodies of dust; the aphidae on the tiny leaf, called earth, amidst the forest foliage of the universe.

Surely, if He had so desired it, He might have found—or if He could not have found, He might have created—a race more noble, more obedient, more sympathetic than ourselves. Or, at least, He might have secured one which should not cost Him so dearly, demanding of Him the anguish of Gethsemane, and the blood of the cross. So, perhaps, we are sometimes prone to think. And yet it could not be. That which is, and has been, must on the whole be the best that could be, since infinite love and wisdom have so ordered it. And perhaps none could be so perfectly the companions and fellows of the Son of God through all the ages as those who know the light, because they have dwelt in the darkness; who know the truth, because they have been ensnared in the meshes of the false; and who can appreciate love,

because they have been in the far country, wasting their substance in riotous living, but have been redeemed by His blood.

But what a wondrous destiny there is within our reach! One to which the first-born sons of light might aspire in vain! At the best they can only be ministers, flames of fire, hearts of love, excelling in strength, hearkening to His word. But we may be the FRIENDS of God; sons and daughters of the great King; members of the body of Christ; constituent parts of His Bride, in her peerless beauty and meetness for her Spouse. As one writes such words as these, the brain almost reels beneath the conception that flashes before it of the blessedness which awaits us, both in this world, and in those ages which rear their heads in the far distance, as lines on lines of snowy breakers rolling in from a sunlit sea.

Oh, FRIENDS OF GOD! why do you not make more of your transcendent privileges? Why do you not talk to Him about all that wearies and worries you, as freely as Abraham did, telling Him about your Ishmaels, your Lots, and His dealings? Why do you not fall on your faces while God talks with you (17:3)? Life should be one long talk between God and us. No day at least should close without our talking over its history with our patient and loving Lord; entering into His confessional; relieving our hearts of half their sorrow, and all their bitterness, in the act of telling Him all. And if only we get low enough, and be still enough, we shall hear His accents sweet and thrilling, soft and low, opening depths which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; but which He has prepared for those who love and wait for Him.

There are, however, three conditions to be fulfilled by us if we would enjoy this blessed friendship: SEPARATION, PURITY, and OBEDIENCE, each of which was set forth in the rite of circumcision, which was given to Abraham for himself and his descendants at this time.

Circumcision seems to have been in vogue among the Egyptians and other nations, even before it was taken up and adopted as the seal of the sacred covenant between God and Abraham. It existed previously; but it had never borne the interpretation with which it was now invested; just as the immersion of new disciples had been long practised both by the Baptist and the Jews, before our Lord appropriated it and gave it a significance which opened up in it entirely fresh depths of meaning and beauty.

We are all of us more or less dependent on outward symbols and signs; and Abraham and his children were no exception to this rule; and it therefore seemed good to God to carve in the flesh of His people an unmistakable reminder and sacrament of that holy relationship into which they had entered. A similar function, in the Christian Church, is met by the ordinances of Believers' Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The rite of circumcision was rigorously maintained amongst the children of Abraham. Moses was not permitted to undertake his life-work whilst his son was left uncircumcised. Nor were the people allowed to enter Canaan until they had rolled away the reproach of Egypt, and had submitted to this rite on the threshold of the Land of Promise. The sanctity of the Sabbath might at any time be invaded, rather than permit the eighth day of a child's life to pass without the act of circumcision being performed. It is said of the child Jesus that "eight days were fulfilled for circumcising Him" (Luke 2:21 RV). Paul noted the fact that in his own life, according to Jewish usage, he was "circumcised the eighth day" (Philippians 3:5). And no one could receive benefit through sin-offering or sacrifice who had not passed through this initiatory rite. So strict was the line of demarcation, that the Jew counted the uncircumcised as unclean, and would not eat with them or go into their houses. It was a formidable charge against the Apostle Peter, on his return to

Jerusalem from visiting in the house of Cornelius, "Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them" (Acts 11:3).

It was concerning this matter that controversy waxed so warm in the early Church. The Pharisee party were quite willing for Gentiles to meet with them in Church fellowship, if they were circumcised as Jews; but not otherwise. They went so far as to affirm, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1, 24). And, not content with affirming this in Antioch and Jerusalem, they sent their emissaries far and wide, especially visiting the churches which had been recently founded by the Apostle Paul's assiduous care, and insisting upon the circumcision of the new converts so soon as he had turned his back.

There was no compromise possible in this matter; and both the Council at Jerusalem and the Apostle Paul, guided by the Spirit of God, made it abundantly clear, both by circular letter and epistle, that circumcision was part of the temporary ritual of Judaism, which was destined to pass away. "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." "In the new man there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision." "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Galatians 5:2; Colossians 3:11; Galatians 5:6, 6:15). And thus this danger was averted from the Church, which had been in peril of becoming a Jewish institution, a kind of inner circle of the Judaistic commonwealth, but which henceforth became the common meeting-ground for all who loved, trusted, and obeyed the Lord Jesus in sincerity.

At the same time, as in so many other Jewish rites, there was an inner spirit, which passed on into the Christian Church, and is our heritage today. St. Paul, the deadly foe of the outward rite, speaks of the spiritual circumcision, and says it is made without human hands, by the direct interposition of the

Holy Spirit; and that it consists in "the putting-off of the body of the sins of the flesh" (Colossians 2:11). Oh, blessed High Priest, this is what we need: take the knife in hand; and, though it cost us blood, make haste to set us free from the dominion of evil, and to constitute us the true circumcision: "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Philippians 3:3).

It is only in proportion as we know the spiritual meaning of circumcision that we can enter into the joyous appropriation of the friendship of God. But if we are willing, our Lord and Savior is both able and willing to effect in us this blessed spiritual result.

(1) Separation

Abraham and his seed were marked out by this rite as a separated people. And it is only as such that any of us can be admitted into the friendship of God. Blood-shedding and death—the cross and the grave—must lie between us and our own past life; yea, between us and all complicity with evil. The only trysting place for Christ and His followers is outside the camp, where the ground is still freshly trodden by the feet of the exiled King.

There are times when we may be expressly bidden to abide where we were originally called of God; but this will be for special purposes of ministry, and because the darkness needs light, and the carcase requires salt. For the most part the clarion note rings out to all who are wishful to know the sweets of Divine fellowship: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you" 2 Corinthians 6:17-18).

This was the key to Abraham's life; and is the inner meaning of the rite of circumcision.

(2) Purity

"Putting off of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ (Colossians 2:11 RV). There is hardly a single grace dearer to God than this—to keep lily-white amid the defiling atmosphere: to walk with unspotted garments even in Sardis: to be as sensitive to the taint of impurity as the most delicate nostril to an evil odor. Ah, this is a condition of great price in the sight of God, and one to which He unveils Himself. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

Purity can only be attained by the special Grace of the Holy Spirit; and by doing two things: first, by our turning instantly from paragraphs in papers, or pictures on the walls, and all things else, which excite impure imaginations; secondly, by our seeking immediate forgiveness, when we are conscious of having yielded, even for a moment, to the deadly and insidious fascinations of the flesh.

There are some who sigh after the white rose of chastity, with a kind of despair that it should ever become their own. They forget that it is only possible to us by the grace of Christ, and through the Holy Spirit; whose temples we profess ourselves to be. Let us trust Him to keep His own property in the perfect loveliness of that purity and chastity which are so dear to God; this is the circumcision of Christ.

(3) Obedience

For Abraham this rite might have seemed less necessary than for some in his camp. But no sooner was it commanded than it was undergone. "In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son." Does it not remind us of Him who said, "Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you"? Instant obedience to known duty is an indispensable condition of all intimacy with God: and if the duty be irksome and difficult, then remember to claim all the more of the Divine grace; for there is no duty, to which we are called, for the discharge of which there is not strength enough within reach, if only we will put forth our hands to take it.

We do not obey in order to become friends; but having become friends we hasten to obey. Love is more inexorable than law. And for the love of Him who calls us by so dear a title, we are glad to undertake and accomplish what Sinai with all its thunders would fail to nerve us to attempt.

Of the secrets which shall be revealed; of the delights which shall be experienced; of the blessings which shall accrue to ever widening circles, through the friendship of one man with God—we have not space to speak. This, however, is true, that the soul laughs to itself (verse 17), not with incredulity, but with the uncontrollable gladness of conscious acceptance and love.

Chapter Fifteen^(TOC)

The Divine Guest

"The LORD appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre."—Genesis 18:1.

When, in the course of some royal progress, a Sovereign deigns to sojourn in the homestead of one of the subjects of his realm, the event becomes at once the theme of chroniclers, and the family selected for so high an honor is held in deepened respect. But what shall we say in the presence of such an episode as this—in which the God of Heaven became the guest of His servant Abraham!

There is no doubt as to the august character of one of the three who, on that memorable afternoon, when every living thing was seeking shelter during the heat of the day, visited the tent of the patriarch. In the first verse we are expressly told that Jehovah appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day. And in the tenth verse there is the accent of Deity, who alone can create life, and to whom nothing is too hard, in the words of promise which tell how certainly Sarah should have a son. And, besides, we are told that two angels came to Sodom at even. Evidently they were two of the three who had sat as Abraham's guests beneath the tree which sheltered his tent in the blazing noon. But as for the other, who throughout the wondrous hours had been the only spokesman, His dignity is disclosed in the amazing colloquy which took place on the heights of Mamre, when Abraham stood yet before the Lord, and pleaded with Him as the Judge of all the earth.

It was thus that the *Son of God anticipated His incarnation; and was found in fashion as a man before He became flesh.* He loved to come INCOGNITO into the homes of those He cherished as His friends, even before He came across the slopes of Olivet to make His home in the favored cottage, where His spirit rested from the din of the great city, and girded itself for the cross and the tomb. "He rejoiced in the habitable part of the earth, and His delights were with the sons of men" (Proverbs 8:31).

It is very marvelous! We may well ask with deepest reverence and awe the question of Solomon, when he felt the utter inadequacy of his splendid Temple as the abode of the eternal God: "Will God in very deed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded!" (1 Kings 8:27 RV). But this question has been forever settled by God Himself, in the majestic words: "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isaiah 42:15). And the life of our blessed Master is a delightful commentary on these mighty affirmations. He said to a publican, "Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for today I must abide at thy house." He went to the home of Peter, and was ministered to by one of the household, whom He had raised from the gates of death. And after His resurrection, He entered the humble lodging of the two disciples in whose company He had walked from Jerusalem, seeking to dry their tears as they went.

Nor is this all. There is no heart so lowly but that He will enter. There is no home so humble, but that He will make Himself a welcome inmate. There is no table so poorly provided, but that He will sit thereat, turning water into wine, multiplying the loaves and fishes, and converting the simple meal into

a sacrament. When seated at meat with those He loves, He still takes bread, and blesses it and breaks, and gives to them (Luke 24:30). To each and all He says, as He stands laden with raiment, eyesalve, gold, and viands for the evening meal: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him; and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20).

Abraham evidently, at the outset, did not realize the full meaning of the episode in which he was taking part. Even so do we often fail to value aright characters with whom we come in contact. It is only as they pass away from us for ever, and we look back upon them, that we realize that we have been entertaining angels unawares. Let us so act always and everywhere, that as we review the past we may have nothing to regret; and may not have to reproach ourselves with having omitted to do something or other, which we would have inserted in our programme had we only realized our opportunities.

Abraham treated his visitors with true eastern hospitality. ... he ran to meet them, and bowed himself toward the ground. He proposed water for their feet, and rest for their tired frames, beneath the spreading shadow. He started his wife to the immediate kneading of the meal for baking on the scorching stones. He ran to choose his tenderest calf, refusing to delegate the work to another's hand. He served his visitors himself, and stood as a servant by their side, under the tree, while they did eat. Christians have not much to boast of—and a good deal to learn—as they consider the action of this old-time saint, and his dealings with the three strangers who came to his tent. The faith which he had towards God had a very winsome aspect towards men. There was nothing in him which was austere or forbidding; but much that was exceedingly lovely, and brimming with the milk of human kindness.

May it not be that Christ Comes to us Often in the Guise of a Stranger?

But we are too busy, or too tired, or too much afraid of making a mistake; and, therefore, we either refuse Him altogether, or we treat Him so badly that He passes unobserved away, to carry to some one else the blessing which He would have left with us had we only shown ourselves worthy.

Does He not test us thus? Of course if He were to come in His manifested splendor as the Son of the Highest, every one would receive Him, and provide Him with sumptuous hospitality. But this would not reveal our true character. And so He comes to us as a wayfaring man, hungry and athirst; or as a stranger, naked and sick. Those that are akin to Him will show Him mercy, in whatsoever disguise He comes, though they recognize Him not, and will be surprised to learn that they ever ministered to Him. Those, on the other hand, who are not really His, will fail to discern Him; will let Him go unhelped away; and will wake up to find that "inasmuch as they did it not to one of the least of these, they did it not to Him" (Matthew 25:45).

There was much truth in the simplicity of the little German lad, who left the door open for the Lord to enter and sit with his mother and himself at their frugal supper-table; and who, as a beggar stood within the portal, asking for alms, remarked: "Perhaps the Lord could not come Himself, and had therefore sent this poor man as His representative."

But God Never Leaves us in his Debt

He takes care to pay for His entertainment, royally and divinely. He uses Peter's fishing smack, and gives it back, nearly submerged by the weight of the fish which He had driven into the nets. He sits down with His friends to a country marriage-feast, and pays for their simple fare by jars brimming with water turned to wine. He uses the five barley loaves and two small fishes; but He fills the lad with an ample meal. He sends His prophet to lodge with a widow, and provides meal and oil for him and her for many days. And Abraham was no loser by his ready hospitality; for, as they sat at meat, the Lord foretold the birth of Sarah's child: "I will certainly return unto thee; and Sarah thy wife shall have a son."

Sarah was sitting inside the flimsy curtain of camel's hair, secluded after the Eastern fashion for those of high rank; and as she heard the words, she laughed within herself the laugh of incredulity. That laugh was at once noticed by Him from whom nothing can be hid, and whose eyes are as a flame of fire. "And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Genesis 28:13-14).

With strange simplicity she answered through the curtain, denying that she had laughed: for she was afraid. But her reply was met by the stern and uncompromising asseveration, which was altogether final, "Nay, but thou didst laugh." These were the only audible words which we know to have passed between God and Abraham's wife; and they reveal the superficiality and unbelief of her nature. But we must not judge her too harshly, for she had not had the opportunities of her husband. However, she seems to have been

led by these words into a true faith; for it is said, "By faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised" (Hebrews 11:11).

This is the True Law of Faith

Do not look at your faith or at your feelings; but look away to the word of promise, and, above all, to the Promiser. Study the punctuality of His orderings in the starry firmament. Are planets ever overdue? or do the seasons forget to revolve? Consider how accurately He has kept His word with the nations of the past, whose ruined cities attest His judgments! Has He ever failed to keep His word? Is there any conceivable reason why He should not keep it? His power is omnipotent; and would He ever have pledged Himself to do what He could not effect? "He is faithful that promised." Look from faith to the promise, and from the promise to the Promiser. And as we become conscious of possessing the power of vision whilst we look on any object to which we may direct our gaze, so we shall become conscious of the presence and growth of faith as we look away to our faithful God.

Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?

That is one of God's unanswered questions. It has lain there for three thousand years, perused by myriads, answered by none; unless, indeed, those words of Jeremiah are the only answer which mortal men can give: "Ah, Lord God" behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched-out arm; and there is nothing too hard for Thee" (Jeremiah 32:17).

It may seem to you hard to the verge of impossibility, that ever God should keep his word, in the conversion of that friend for whom you have a warrant to pray, according to 1 John 5:16. Hard to vindicate your character from the aspersions with which it is being befouled. Hard to keep your evil nature in the place of death; and to cast down your evil imaginings, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Hard to make you sweet and gentle, forgiving and loving. Hard to produce from you the fruits of a lovely and holy nature. It may be hard; but it is not too hard for the Lord. "With God all things are possible." And, as Sarah found it, all things are possible to those who believe.

The one thing that hinders God is our unbelief. Sarah must believe, and Abraham also, ere the child of promise could be born. And so must it be with us. As soon as we believe, then, according to our faith it is done to us; yea, exceeding abundantly beyond all we had asked or thought.

It may seem hard that the sins of a life should be forgiven; but God will do it for any penitent and believing soul. "All that believe in Christ are justified from all things" (Acts 13:39). It may seem hard that our naked souls should

be attired in vestments fit for the royal palace; but it shall be so, if we have faith; for the righteousness of Christ is imputed and reckoned to all who believe (Romans 3:22). It may seem hard that rebels should become children; yet this, too, shall be; for to them that receive Him He gives the right to become children of God (John 1:12).

You ask how to obtain this faith. Remember that faith is the receptive attitude of the soul, begotten and maintained by the grace of God. Christ is the Author and Finisher of faith; not only in the abstract, but in the personal experience of the soul. Faith is the gift of God. If, then, you would receive it, put your will on the side of Christ; not a passing wish, but the whole will of your being: will to believe patiently, persistently, yearningly; let your eyes be ever toward the Lord; study the promises of God; consider the nature of God; be prepared to be rid of everything that grieves His Holy Spirit; and it is as certain as the truth of Christ, that you will have begotten and maintained in you the faith that can move mountains, and laugh at impossibilities.

And to such faith God will come, not as a passing wayfarer, but to abide; to feast with the soul in holy strengthening fellowship; to fill it with the true laughter; and to leave behind promises soon to become accomplished facts. "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them; and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Revelation 21:3).

Chapter Sixteen^(TOC)

Pleading for Sodom

*"And Abraham stood yet before the Lord; and Abraham drew near."—
Genesis 18:22-23.*

As the day wore on, Abraham's mysterious guests went off across the hills towards Sodom; and Abraham went with them to bring them on their way. But all three did not reach the guilty city, over which the thunder clouds had already commenced to gather. That evening two angels entered it alone. And where was their companion? Ah! He had stayed behind to talk yet further with His friend. Tradition still points out the spot on the hills at the head of a long steep ravine leading down to the sullen waters of the Dead Sea where the Lord tarried behind to tell Abraham all that was in His heart.

Why did not the Lord accompany His angels down to Sodom? Was it because vengeance is His strange work, in which He can take no pleasure? It surely befits the dignity of the sovereign Judge to delegate to other hands the execution of His decrees. "The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity" (Matthew 13:41).

But there was a deeper reason still. Abraham was the "friend of God"; and friendship constitutes a claim to be entrusted with secrets hidden from all beside. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." "Henceforth," said the Master to His disciples, "I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things

that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:15). If we live near God, we shall have many things revealed to us which are hidden from the wise and prudent. The *Septuagint version has well brought out the spirit of the Divine reverie, when it puts the question thus: "Shall I hide from Abraham, MY SERVANT, the thing which I do"?* The Lord does nothing which He does not first reveal to His holy servants and prophets.

But the words which follow point to a yet further reason for the full disclosures that were made: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment" (Genesis 18:19). Was there a fear lest Abraham and his children might doubt the justice of the judgment of God if the righteous were summarily cut off with the wicked; and if the cities of the plain were destroyed without a revelation of their sin on the one hand, and the display of the Divine mercy on the other? Certainly it has placed the Divine character in an altogether different light, in that we have been permitted, in such a case as this, to understand some of the motives which have actuated God in His goodness or severity. And though His judgments must ever be a great deep, yet such a wondrous colloquy as this shines above them; as the rainbow trembles in its matchless beauty over the steamy depths of Niagara's plunge.

(1) The Burden of the Divine Announcement

"The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great." What marvelous expression is this! There, far down the valley, bathed in the radiance of the westering sun, lay the guilty cities, still and peaceful. No sound travelled to the patriarch's ear, not even the roar which aeronauts detect in the dizzy heights of air, through which they travel on their adventurous way, passing mighty cities far beneath, which betray their existence by their voice. Quiet though Sodom seemed in the far distance, and in the hush of the closing day; yet to God there was a cry. The cry of the earth compelled to carry such a scar. The cry of inanimate creation, groaning and travailing in pain. The cry of the oppressed, the down trodden—the victims of human violence and lust. The cry of the maiden, the wife, and the child. These were the cries which had entered into the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth. And ***each sin has a cry.*** "***The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me***" And it will go on crying; unless it is silenced by the yet greater voice of the blood of Christ, "which speaketh better things." And, if each sin has a cry, what must not be the volume of sound for a life, and for a city! Must not God still have to say of our great cities, one by one—"Its cry is great; and its sin is very grievous."

"I will go down now, and see." God always narrowly investigates the true condition of the case, before He awards or executes His sentences. He comes seeking fruit for three years, before He gives the order for the cutting down of the tree that cumbered the vineyard soil. He walks our streets day and night. He patrols our thoroughfares, marking everything, missing nothing. He glides unmasked into our most sacred privacy; for all things are naked and open unto

the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. He is prepared, nay, eager to give us the benefit of any excuse. But flagrant sin, like that which broke out in Sodom that very night, is enough to settle for ever the fate of a Godless community when standing at the bar of Him who is Judge and Witness both.

And if not, I will know." There was something very ominous in all these words, which Abraham clearly understood to indicate the approaching destruction of the place; for in his prayer he again and again alludes to the imminence of its doom: "Wilt Thou, also, destroy the righteous with the wicked?" But what is there that God does not know? "The darkness and the light are both alike to Him." Yet He says, "I will know." Yes, ungodly man who mayest read this page: remember that from God no secrets can be hid. He will search out the most hidden ramifications of thy sin; bringing them out before the gaze of the universe; and justifying His righteous judgments which He will not spare.

(2) The Impression which this Announcement

Made on Abraham's Mind

So soon as the angels had gone on, leaving Abraham alone with the Lord, he was thoroughly aroused by the revelation which had broken upon him; and his mind was filled with a tumult of emotion. He hardly dared expostulate with God: what was he, but "dust and ashes"? And yet he was impelled to make some attempt to avert the doom that threatened the cities of the plain.

The motives that prompted him were twofold:

[1] There was a Natural Anxiety about his Kinsman, Lot

Twenty years had passed since Lot had left him; but he had never ceased to follow him with the most tender affection. He could not forget that Lot was the son of his dead brother Haran: or that he had been his ward; or that he had braved the hardships of the desert in his company. All this had been present to his mind, when, a few years before, he had made a heroic effort to extricate him from the hands of Chedorlaomer. And now the strong impulse of natural affection stirred him to make one strenuous effort to save Sodom, lest his nephew might be overwhelmed in its overthrow. Real religion tends not to destroy, but to fulfill all the impulses of true natural love.

[2] There was also a Fear Lest the Total Destruction

Of the Cities of the Plain Might

Prejudice the Character of God in the Minds of the Neighboring Peoples

Abraham did not deny that the fate which was about to overtake them was deserved by many of the people of that enervating and luxuriant valley: but he could not bring his mind to suppose that the whole of the population was equally debased; and he feared that if all were summarily swept away, the surrounding nations would have a handle of reproach against the justice of his God, and would accuse Him of unrighteousness, inasmuch as He destroyed the righteous with the wicked.

The character of God has ever been dear to his true-hearted servants of every age. Moses was prepared to forego the honor of being the ancestor of the chosen people, rather than that the nations which had heard of the Divine fame should be able to say that God was not able to bring them into the Land of Promise. [See Exodus 32:10, Numbers 14:12] And when the men of Israel fled before Ai, Joshua and the elders appear to have thought less of the danger of the immediate rising to cut them off than of what God would do for His great name. Oh for more of this chivalrous devotion to the interests and glory of our God! Would that we were so absorbed in all that touches the honor of the Divine name amongst men, that this might be the supreme element in our anxiety, as we view the drift of human opinion concerning the

enactments of Divine providence!

This passion for the glory of God burnt with a clear strong flame in Abraham's heart; and it was out of this that there arose his wondrous intercession. And when we become as closely identified with the interests of God as he was, we shall come to feel as he did; and shall be eager that the Divine character should be vindicated amongst the children of men; content, if need be, to lie dying in the ditch, so long as we can hear the shouts of triumph amid which our King rides over us to victory.

(3) The Elements in Abraham's Intercession

It was Lonely Prayer

He waited till on all that wide plateau, and beneath those arching skies, there was no living man to overhear this marvelous outpouring of a soul overcharged, as are the pools, when, after the rains of spring, they overflow their banks. "He stood before the Lord." It is fatal to all the intensest, strongest devotion to pray always in the presence of another, even the dearest. Every saint must have a closet, of which he can shut the door, and in which he can pray to the Father which is in secret. This "closet" may be the mountains, or the woods, or the sounding shore; but it must be somewhere. Pitiably is the one who cannot—miserable the one who dare not—meet God face to face, and talk with Him of His ways, and plead for his fellows.

"For what are men better than sheep or goats, That nourish a blind life within the brain, If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer Both for themselves and those who call them friend."

It was Prolonged Prayer

"Abraham stood yet before the Lord." The story takes but a few moments to read; but the scene may have lasted for the space of hours. We cannot climb the more elevated pinnacles of prayer in a hasty rush. They demand patience, toil, prolonged endeavor, ere the lower slopes can be left, and the brooding cloud-line passed, and the aspiring soul can reach that cleft in the mountain

side, where Moses stood beneath the shadow of God's hand. Of course, our God is ever on the alert to hear and answer those prayers which, like minute-guns, we fire through the live-long day; but we cannot maintain this posture of ejaculatory prayer unless we cultivate the prolonged occasions. How much we miss because we do not wait before God! We do not give the sun a chance to thaw us. We do not linger long enough upon the quay to see the vessels return freighted with the answers we had been praying for. If only we had remained longer at the palace door, we might have seen the King come out with a benediction in His face and a largess in His hands.

It was Very Humble Prayer

"Behold, now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes." "Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak." "Behold, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord." "Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once." The *nearer we get to God, the more conscious are we of our unworthiness; just as the higher a bird flies in mid-heaven, the deeper will be the reflection of its snowy pinions in the placid mere beneath.* Let the glow-worm vie with the meridian sun; let the dewdrop boast itself against the fullness of the ocean bed; let the babe vaunt its knowledge with the intelligence of a seraph—before the man who lives in touch with God shall think of taking any other position than that of lowliest humiliation and prostration in His presence. Before Him angels veil their faces, and the heavens are not clean in His sight. And is it not remarkable that our sense of weakness is one of our strongest claims and arguments with God? "He forgetteth not the cry of the humble." "To that man will I look who trembleth."

This Prayer Was Based On A Belief That God Possessed The Same Moral

Intuitions As Himself—"Wilt Thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? That be far from Thee that the righteous should be as the wicked!" "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" There is an infinite interest in this. It is as if the patriarch looked up from the clear depths of his own integrity into the azure heights of the Divine Being, and saw there enthroned a moral nature, at least as upright, fair, and true as his own; and to that he made his appeal, sure of a favorable response.

It was as if he had said: "Almighty God, I could not think it right to destroy the righteous with the wicked; and ***I am sure that any number of righteous men would shrink from doing so. And if this is binding on man, of course it must be much more binding on Thee, because Thou art the Judge of all the earth.***" And God was not angry; indeed He assented to Abraham's plea. And may we not go further, and say—that though God may act in ways above our reason, yet He will not contradict those instincts of the moral sense which He has placed within our hearts. And if at times He seem to do so, it is because we have falsely conceived of His dealings, and put an erroneous interpretation upon them.

It was a cherished motto of bygone days that "the king could do no wrong." "Alas! it was a vain dream. But what was untrue of the Stuarts is literally true of the Eternal God. He cannot outrage the moral nature in man, which is made in the likeness of His own. Let us possess our souls in patience, sure that any appearances to the contrary are mists generated by our own evil natures or limited intelligence, and will be swept away from obscuring that everlasting righteousness which is steadfast and changeless as the great mountains.

This Prayer was Persevering

SIX TIMES Abraham returned to the charge, and as each petition was granted, his faith and courage grew; and, finding he had struck a right vein, he worked it again, and yet again. It looks at first sight as if he forced God back from point to point, and wrung his petitions from an unwilling hand. But this is a mistake. ***In point of fact, GOD WAS DRAWING HIM ON; and if he had dared to ask at first what he asked at the last, he would have got more than all that he asked or thought at the very commencement of his intercession.*** This was the time of his education. He did not learn the vast extent of God's righteousness and mercy all at once; he climbed the dizzy heights step by step; and, as he gained each step, he was inspired to dare another. What a pity that he stopped at ten! There is no knowing what he might have reached, had he gone on. As it was, the Almighty was obliged, by the demands of His own nature, to exceed the limits placed by Abraham, in bringing out of Sodom the only persons that could, by any possibility, be accounted "righteous."

It is so that God educates us still. In ever-widening circles, He tempts his new-fledged eaglets to try the sustaining elasticity of the air. He forces us to ask one thing; and then another, and yet another. And when we have asked our utmost, there are always unexplored remainders behind; and He does exceeding abundantly above all. There were not ten righteous men in Sodom; but Lot and his wife, and his two daughters, were saved, though three of them were deeply infected with the moral contagion of the place. And God's righteousness was clearly established and vindicated in the eyes of the surrounding peoples.

In closing, we remark ONE OF THE GREAT PRINCIPLES IN THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD—A whole city had been spared, if ten righteous men had been found within its walls. Ungodly men

little realize how much they owe to the presence of the children of God in their midst. Long ere now had the floods of deserved wrath swept them all away; but judgment has been restrained, because God could not do anything while the righteous were found amongst them. The impatient servants have often asked if they should not gather out the tares. But the answer of the righteous Lord has ever been: "Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat also with them." Ah, how little the world realizes the debt it owes to its saints, the salt to stay its corruption, the light to arrest the re-institution of the reign of chaos and night! We cannot but yearn over the world, as it rolls on its way towards its sad dark doom. Let us plead for it from the heights above Mamre. And may we and our beloved ones be led out from it into safety, ere the last plagues break full upon it in inevitable destruction!

Chapter Seventeen^(TOC)

Angel Work in a Bad Town (Genesis 19)

The waters of the Dead Sea ripple over a part of the site where once stood the cities of the plain, with their busy stir of life, and thought, and trade. But all the sounds of human joy, sorrow, or industry. the tread of the soldier, the call of the herdsman, the murmur of the market, the voices of little children playing in the open spaces—ALL are hushed in that awful solitude, the aspect of which is a striking testimony to the truth of the inspired Word.

Embosomed in gaunt mountains, the Dead Sea lies thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. So weird and desolate is the scene, that it was long believed that no birds would fly across the sullen waters; no shells line the strand; no trace of living verdure is found along the shores: but, strewn along the desolate margin lie trunks and branches of trees, torn from the thickets of the river jungle by the violence of the Jordan, borne rapidly into the Sea of Sodom, and cast up again from its depths, encrusted with the salt which makes those waters utterly unfit to drink. And as the traveller wanders around the spot, he is irresistibly reminded of the time, when "the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground."

The Reasons which Justified this Supreme Act of Destruction

(1) It was a Merciful Warning to the Rest of Mankind

The lesson of the Flood had well-nigh faded from the memory of man; and, heedless of all restraint, the human family had made terrible advances in the course of open shameless vice—so much so that there seemed an imminent danger of men repeating the abominable crimes that had opened the sluices of the Deluge. It was surely, therefore, wise and merciful to set up a warning, which told its own terrible story, and reminded transgressors that there were limits beyond which the Judge of all the earth would not permit them to go.

It is true that the visitation, if it temporarily alarmed the nations of the immediate neighborhood, did not prevent them from reaching a similar excess of immorality some centuries later, or from incurring at the edge of Joshua's sword the doom which heaven's fire had executed on their neighbors in the Jordan plain. Still, God's warnings have a merciful intention, even where they are unheeded; and this Sodom catastrophe has been well said to belong to that class of terrors in which a wise man will trace "the loving-kindness of the Lord."

(2) Moreover, in this Terrible Act the Almighty Simply Hastened

The Result of Their Own Actions

Nations are not destroyed until they are rotten at the core; as the north-east wind which snaps the forest trees only hastens the result for which the borer-worm had already prepared. It would have been clear to any thoughtful observer who had ventured out after dark in Sodom that it must inevitably fall. Unnatural crime had already eaten out the national heart, and, in the ordinary course of events, utter collapse could not be long delayed.

Go into the tents of Abraham, and you find simplicity; hospitality; the graces of a truly noble character, which guarantee the perpetuity of his name, and the glorious future of his children. Now go to Sodom; and in that sultry climate you find a population enervated with luxury; debased by cowardly submission to a foreign tyrant; cankered to the core with vice; not ten righteous men among them all; whilst the purity and sanctity of home are idle words. All these symptoms prognosticate, with prophetic voice, that their "sentence lingereth not, and their destruction slumbereth not."

This suggests a solemn lesson for ourselves. The tide of empire has ever set westwards. India, Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, have successively wielded supreme power, and sunk into oblivion. Shall it depart from Britain, as it has departed from the rest? It need not do so. Yet, as we remark the increase of extravagance and luxury; the reckless expenditure on pleasure; the shameless vice that flaunts itself in our streets; the adulation of wealth, the devotion to gambling laxness of the marriage tie—we may well entertain the darkest fears about the future of our fatherland. The only hope for us is based on the important part which we are called to play in facilitating the evangelization of the world. Should we once fail in this—or should we send out more opium chests than Bibles, more spirit-sellers than missionaries—

nothing can avert our fall.

(3) Besides, this Overthrow Only Happened after Careful Investigation

"I will go down now and see." Beneath these simple words we catch a glimpse of one of the most sacred principles of Divine action. God does not act hastily, nor upon hearsay evidence; He must see for Himself if there may not be some mitigating or extenuating circumstances. It was only after He had come to the fig-tree for many years, seeking fruit in vain, that He said, "Cut it down: why cumbereth it the ground?" And this deliberation is characteristic of God. He is unwilling that any should perish. He is slow to anger. Judgment is His strange work. He tells us that some day, when we come to look into His doings, we shall be comforted, concerning many of the evils which He has brought on the world, because we shall know that He has not done WITHOUT CAUSE all that He has done (Ezekiel 14:23).

(4) There is this Consideration also— That, During the Delay

Many a Warning was Sent

First, there was the conquest by Chedorlaomer, some twenty years before the time of which we write. Then there was the presence of Lot, which, indeed, was enfeebled by his inconsistencies, but was yet a protest on the behalf of righteousness (2 Peter 2:7-8). Finally, there was the deliverance and

restoration by the energetic interposition of Abraham. Again and again had God warned the men of these cities of their inevitable doom, if they did not repent. To use His own expressive words, He "rose up early" to send His messengers; but the people would not hear.

Nor is His usage different in the case of individuals. The course of every sin is against a succession of menacing red lights and exploding fog signals, warning of danger if that course be pursued. Just as the quivering of the nerves tells when the system is overstrained, and demands immediate rest at the risk of certain paralysis, if that warning be disregarded; so has God arranged that no downward step can be taken, without setting going vast numbers of shrill bells that tell of danger ahead. Transgressor! the signals are all against thee.

To regard these alarm-tokens is to be saved. To disregard them, persevering in spite of all, is to deaden the soul and harden the heart, and run the risk of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. For that unpardonable sin is not an act, but a state—the condition of the soul that does not, and cannot, feel; that is utterly insensible and careless of its state; that drifts heedless to its doom; and is not forgiven, simply because it does not admit or feel its need of forgiveness, and, therefore, does not ask for it.

(5) It is Worthy of Notice that God Saved all Whom he Could

Lot was a sorry wreck of a noble beginning. When he started forth, as Abraham's companion from Ur, he gave promise of a life of quite unusual power and fruit. But he was one of those characters which cannot stand success. There is no temptation more insidious or perilous than that. The

Enchanted Ground is more to be dreaded than the open assaults of Apollyon. More are ruined by the deceitfulness of riches than by the cares of life.

When first Lot went down to Sodom, attracted by the sole consideration of its pastures, it was no doubt his intention to keep aloof from its people, and to live outside its walls. But the moth cannot with impunity flutter about the flame. By and by he abandoned the tent life altogether, and took a house inside the city. At last he betrothed his daughters to native Sodomites, and sat in its gateway as one of its aldermen. He was given to hospitality; but in the proposals by which he endeavored to vindicate its exercise, he proved how the air of Sodom had taken the bloom off his purity. He was with difficulty dragged out of Sodom, as a brand plucked from the burning; and over the closing scenes of his life it is decent to draw a veil. And yet such a wreck was saved!

Nor was he saved alone; but his wife also, who did not take many steps outside the city, before, by looking back, with a mixture of disobedience and regret, she showed herself utterly hopeless; and her two daughters, whose names are branded with eternal infamy. If God was so careful to secure their safety, how bad must those have been whom He left to their fate! Is it not clear that He saved all who at all came within the range of mercy's possibilities? There will not be one soul amongst the lost who had the faintest claim to be among the saved; and there will be a great many among the saved whose presence there will be a very great surprise to us. "They shall come from the east and west... but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out."

The Motives of the Angels' Visit

These were three:

(1) The Proximate, or Nearest Cause was their own Love to Man

The angels love us. Though they know that we are destined to a dignity before which that of the loftiest seraphs must pale, no envy eats out the pure benevolence which throbs within their holy spirits. It is enough that God has willed it so, and that we are dear to their sweet Master, Christ. It is then no hardship for them to leave "their golden bowers," or "cleave the flitting skies," that they may come and hasten lingerers to repentance. If there were any hardship, it would be in their mission to destroy.

(2) The Efficient Cause was Abraham's Prayer

"And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow" (Genesis 19:29). Pray on, beloved reader, pray on for that dear one far away in the midst of a very Sodom of iniquity. It may seem impossible for you to go down into it for his rescue, or to help him in any other way; but, in answer to your prayer, God will send His angels to that ship laboring in mid-ocean; into that log-house in the Canadian clearing, or that shanty by an African diamond mine; or away to that abode dedicated to vice or drink. God's angels

go everywhere. A Sodom cannot hold its victims back from their touch, any more than their bright presences can be soiled by the polluting atmosphere through which they pass. Whilst you are praying, God's angels are on their way to perform your desire, albeit that their progress may be hindered by causes hidden from our ken (see Daniel 10:12).

(3) But the Ultimate Cause was God's Mercy

"The Lord being merciful to him." Mercy: that is the last link in the chain. Is it not the staple in the wall? There is nothing beyond it. The Apostle himself cannot allege a more comprehensive or satisfactory reason for his position in the sunlit circle of salvation than this: "I obtained mercy." "By the grace of God, I am what I am." And this shall be our theme also through that eternity whose day-star has already arisen in our hearts.

It seems marvelous that God should employ sons of men to win men to Himself. Surely angels could do it better! Nay, did they not save Lot with a pertinacity, and a holy ingenuity, which are full of teaching and stimulus to ourselves, as workers for the Lord? The world is full of Sodoms still; and Lots, whom we have known and loved or who have a claim on us, are sitting at their gates. Oh, why are we behind the angels in eagerness to pluck them as brands from the burning? Bright spirits, ye shall read us some holy lessons as to methods of Christian work; and we will try and emulate you—lest the time should come when we shall be dismissed from our posts; and heaven's doors flung wide open each dawn to let out your rejoicing crowds, to take our place in class, or pulpit, or squalid court!

The Angels went to where Lot was

"There came two angels to Sodom at even." What! did angels go to Sodom? Yes, to Sodom—and yet angels. And as a ray of light may pass through the fetid atmosphere of some squalid court, and emerge without a stain on its pure texture, so may angels spend a night in Sodom, surrounded by crowds of sinners, and yet be untainted angel still. If you go to Sodom for your gains, as Lot did, you will soon show signs of moral pollution. But if you go to save men, as these angels did, you may go into a very hell of evil, where the air is laden with impurity and blasphemy, but you will not be befouled. No grain of mud shall stick. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn" (Isaiah 54:17).

This is the spirit of Christ's Gospel. "He goeth after that which is lost till He find it." "He put forth His hand and touched him" (Luke 15:4; Matthew 8:3). We must not wait for sinners to come to us; we must go to them—to the banks of the stream, where the fish hide in the dark, cool depths; to the highways of the town, where men congregate; to public-houses, music-halls, stews of crime, and homes of poverty; yea, and to the most distant parts of the world—wherever men are found we must go to them, to preach the Gospel. The most unlikely places will yield Lots, who would have died in their sins, if they had not been sought out.

They were Content to Work for Very Few

Special value attaches to hand-picked fruit. Too often we, in our ignorance,

prefer to go into the orchard and shake down from the trees the abundant crop, until the ground far and near is littered with fruit. But we forget how much waste there is in the process; and how much of the crop becomes bruised: whilst some is torn prematurely from the parent bough.

So far as we can gather, all our Lord's choicest followers were the result of His personal ministry. To one and another He said, "Follow Me!" His life was full of personal interviews. He sought out individual souls (Matthew 4:19, 21; 9:9; Luke 19:5). He would spend much time and thought to win one solitary woman, her character none too good (John 4). He believed in going after one sheep that was lost. And the steadfastness of their characters vindicated His methods. And it is most beautiful to trace the same characteristic in the Apostle Paul, who says that he "warned every man, and taught every man, that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28).

It is a question whether more men are not saved by individual appeal than by all our preaching. It is not the sermon which wins them; but the quiet talk with a worker at an after-meeting, or the letter of a parent, or the words of a friend. When Christ said, "Preach the Gospel to every creature," did He not suggest that we were to set ourselves to the work of leaving the proclamation of heaven's love at every door, and to every child of Adam, throughout the world?

We never know what we do when we win one soul for God. Is not the following instance, culled from the biography of James Brainerd Taylor—called home to God too early, and yet not before he had won hundreds of souls by his personal appeals—a fair specimen of myriads more?

On one occasion he reined up his horse to drink at a roadside well. Another

horseman at the same moment did the same. The servant of God, as the horses were eagerly quenching their thirst, turned to the stranger, and spoke some burning words concerning the duty and honor of Christian discipleship. In a moment more they had parted, and were riding in different directions. But the word of God remained as incorruptible seed, and led to the conversion of that wayside hearer. He became a Christian and a missionary. Often he wondered who had been the instrument of his conversion, and sought for him in vain. But he did not succeed in identifying him till years after, when, in a packet of books, sent him from his native land, he opened the story of that devoted life, and in the frontispiece beheld the face which had haunted him, in sleeping and waking hours, ever since that slight but memorable interview.

It has been said that the true method of soul-winning is to set the heart on some one soul; and to pursue it, until it has either definitely accepted, or finally rejected, the Gospel of the grace of God. We should not hear so many cries for larger spheres, if Christians only realized the possibilities of the humblest life. Christ found work enough in a village to keep Him there for thirty years. Philip was torn from the great revival in Samaria to go into the desert to win one seeker after God.

Have you ever spoken to your servant, your shoeblick, your postman, your companion, your neighbor? Ah, it would not take long to evangelize the world, if every man would teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying "Know the Lord!"

They Told Lot Plainly of his Danger

"Hast thou here any besides? ...bring them out of this place: for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them in waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it" (Genesis 19:12-13). We are rather squeamish nowadays of talking to men thus. We have lined our lips with velvet. We aim to be gentler than Christ. He did not hesitate to speak of an undying worm and a quenchless flame. The gnashing of teeth; the wail of despair; the knock to which no door would open—were arguments which came more than once from His lips. (See Matthew 8:12, 13:42, 50, 22:13, 24:51, 25:10-12, 30; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 13:25-28). He evidently taught as if men might make a mistake which they could not possibly repair. If certain elements are wanting in food, the children will grow up boneless and unhealthy; and if we do not take care, the deficiency of our modern teaching will have disastrous results. Whether we talk about it or not, it is yet as true as the nature of God, that those who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:9). And "if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Hebrews 10:26-27).

It may be that the day of grace is nearer to its close than we think. The clock of destiny may have struck; the avalanche may have commenced to roll forward its overwhelming mass; whilst the storm-clouds may brood heavily over a godless age, for which, in the Day of Judgment, it shall be worse than for Sodom and Gomorrah. There may be nothing to portend this momentous fact. "The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar." Nature keeps God's secrets well. No portent in heaven, no driving up of the cloud-wrack in the clouds, no tremor on earth; but the axe suddenly driven home to

the heart of the doomed tree. Escape, my reader, for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou anywhere short of the cleft side of Jesus, where only we may hide from the just judgment of sin. Rest not till thou hast put the Lord Jesus between thyself and the footsteps of pursuing justice.

They Hastened Him

"When the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot" (19:15). They had been reluctant to stay in his house, unlike the alacrity with which they accepted Abraham's hospitality; and they spent the short sultry night in urging on Lot the certainty and terror of the approaching destruction. So much so that they actually got him to go to arouse his sons-in-law. But an inconsistent life cannot arrest the wanderer, or startle the sleeper into wide-awakeness about his soul. People say that we must conform a little to the manners of our time, if we would exert a saving influence over men. It is a fatal mistake. If we live in Sodom, we shall have no power to save the people of Sodom. You must stand outside of them, if you would save them from the gurgling rapids. Yes, dwellers in Sodom, you cannot level Sodom up; but it will certainly level you down, and laugh at you, when you try to speak. "He seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law."

But when he came back from his ineffectual mission, Lot seemed infected by the scepticism which had ridiculed his warnings. "He lingered." How could he leave his children, and household goods, and property, on what seemed to be a fool's errand? Surely all things would continue as they had been from the beginning of the world. "And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand."

It was hand-help. It was the urgency of a love that would take no denial. The two angels had but four hands, but each hand was full, and each clasped the hand of a procrastinating sinner. Would that we knew more fully this divine enthusiasm, which pulls men out of the fire! (Jude 23).

Nor were they satisfied, till their proteges were safe outside the city; and were speeding towards the rampart of the distant hills. So Lot was saved from the overthrow. But though he was sent out of Sodom, he took Sodom with him; and over the remainder of his history we must draw a veil. Still, it is a marvelous testimony to the power of intercessory prayer, to learn that a man so low in the moral scale, together with his daughters, was saved for Abraham's sake; and if he had finally settled at the little city of Zoar, that too would have been spared for his sake.

Let us hasten sinners. Let us say to each one: "Escape for thy life; better lose all than lose your soul. Look not behind to past attainments or failures. Linger nowhere outside the City of Refuge, which is Jesus Christ Himself. Haste ye! habits of indecision strengthen; opportunities are closing in; the arrow of destruction has already left the bow of justice: "behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation."

Chapter Eighteen^(TOC)

A Bit of the Old Nature

"Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, and thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin?"—Genesis 20:9.

For long years an evil may lurk in our hearts, permitted and unjudged, breeding failure and sorrow in our lives, as some unnoticed and forgotten sewer may secretly undermine the health of an entire household. In the twilight we overlook many a thing which we should not allow for a single moment if we saw it in its true character; and which, amid the all-revealing light of the perfect day, we should be the first to fling away in horror. But that which escapes our ken is patent in all its naked deformity to the eye of God. "The darkness and the light are both alike to Him." And He will so direct the discipline of our lives as to set in clear prominence the deadly evil which He hates; so that, when He has laid bare the cancerous growth, He may bring us to long for and invite the knife which shall set us free from it for ever.

These words have been suggested by the thirteenth verse of this chapter, which indicates an evil compact, into which Abraham had entered with Sarah some thirty years before the time of which we write. Addressing the king of the Philistines, the patriarch let fall a hint which sheds a startling light upon his failure, when first he entered the Land of Promise, and, under stress of famine, went down into Egypt; and upon that repetition of his failure which we must now consider. Here is what he said: "And it came to pass, when God

caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto my wife, This is thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother."

In a certain sense, no doubt, Sarah was his sister. She was the daughter of his father, though not the daughter of his mother. But she was much more his wife than his sister; and to withhold that fact was to withhold the one fact that was essential to the maintenance of his honor, and the protection of her virtue. We are not bound to tell the whole truth to gratify an idle curiosity; but we are bound not to withhold the one item, which another should know before completing a bargain, if the knowledge of it would materially alter the result. A lie consists in the motive quite as much as in the actual words. We may unwittingly say that which is actually false, meaning above all things to speak the truth, and, though a lie in form, there is no lie in fact. On the other hand, like Abraham, we may utter true words, meaning them to convey a deliberate and shameful falsehood.

This secret compact between Abraham and his wife, in the earliest days of his exodus, was due to his slender faith in God's power to take care of them, which again sprang from his limited experience of his Almighty Friend. In this we may find its sole excuse. But it ought long before this to have been canceled by mutual consent. The faithless treaty should have been torn into shreds, and scattered to the winds of heaven. It was not enough that they did not act on it for many years; for it was evidently still in existence, tacitly admitted by each of them, and only waiting for an emergency to arise from the dusty obscurity into which it had receded, and to come again into light and use.

But the existence of this hidden understanding, though perhaps Abraham did not realize it, was inconsistent with the relation into which he had now

entered with God. It was altogether a source of weakness and failure. And, above all, it was a secret flaw in his faith, which would inevitably affect its tone, and destroy its effectiveness in the dark trials which were approaching. God could afford to pass it over in those early days, when faith itself was yet in germ; but it could not be permitted, when that faith was reaching to a maturity in which any flaw would be instantly detected; and it would be an unsuitable example in one who was to become the model of faith to the world.

The judgment and eradication of this lurking evil were therefore necessary, and were brought about in this wise.

The day before Sodom's fall, the Almighty told Abraham that, at a set time in the following year, he should have a son and heir. And we should have expected that he would have spent the slow-moving months beneath the oak of Mamre, already hallowed by so many associations. But such was not the case. It has been suggested that he was too horrified at the overthrow of the cities of the plain, to be able to remain any longer in the vicinity. All further association with the spot was distasteful to him. Or it may have been that another famine was threatening. But in any case "he journeyed from hence towards the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar" (Genesis 20:1).

Gerar was the capital of a race of men who had dispossessed the original inhabitants of the land, and were gradually passing from the condition of wandering shepherd life into that of a settled and warlike nation; afterwards to be known to the Hebrews by the dreaded name, Philistines: a title which, in fact, gave to the whole land its name of Palestine. Their chieftain bore the official title of Abimelech, "My Father the King."

Here, the almost forgotten agreement between Sarah and himself offered itself as a ready expedient, behind which Abraham's unbelief took shelter. He knew the ungoverned license of his time, unbridled by the fear of God (verse 11). He dreaded, lest the heathen monarch, enamored with Sarah's beauty, or ambitious to get her into his power for purposes of State policy, might slay him for his wife's sake. And so he again resorted to the paltry policy of calling her his sister. As if God could not have defended him and her, screening them from all evil; as He had done so often in days gone by.

His Conduct was very Cowardly

He risked Sarah's virtue, and the purity of the promised seed. And, even if we accept the justification of his conduct proposed by some, who argue that he was so sure of the seed promised him by God that he could dare to risk what otherwise he would have more carefully guarded, his faith leading him into the license of presumption, yet, it was surely very mean on his part to permit Sarah to pass through any ordeal of the sort. If he had such superabundant faith, he might have risked his own safety at the hand of Abimelech rather than Sarah's virtue.

It was also Very Dishonoring to God

Amongst those untutored tribes Abraham was well known as the servant of Jehovah. And they could not but judge of the character of Him whom they could not see, by the traits they discerned in His servant, whom they knew in familiar intercourse. Alas that Abraham's standard was lower than their own! so much so that Abimelech was able to rebuke him, saying: "Thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin: thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done." Such an opinion, elicited in such a way, must have been an unpropitious preparation for any attempt to proselytize Abimelech to the Hebrew faith. "Not so," we can imagine him saying: "I have had some experience of one of its foremost representatives, and I prefer to remain as I am."

It is heartbreaking, when the heathen rebukes a professor of superior godliness for speaking lies. Yet it is lamentable to confess that such men often enough have higher standards of morality than those who profess godliness. Even if they do not fulfill their own conceptions, yet the beauty of their ideal is undeniable, and is a remarkable vindication of the universal vitality of conscience. The temperate Hindu is scandalized by the drunkenness of the Englishman whose religion he is invited to embrace. The Chinaman cannot understand why he should exchange the hoary religion of Confucius for that of a people which by superior armaments forces upon his country a drug which is sapping its vitals. The employee abhors a creed which is professed by his master for one day of the week, but is disowned on the other six. Let us walk circumspectly towards them that are outside; adorning in all things the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and giving no occasion to

the enemy to blaspheme, save as it concerns the law of our God.

It Also Stood Out in Poor Relief against

The Behavior of Abimelech

As to his original character, Abimelech commends himself to us as the nobler of the two. He rises early in the morning, prompt to set the great wrong right. He warns his people. He restores Sarah with munificent presents. His reproach and rebuke are spoken in the gentlest, kindest tones. He simply tells Sarah that her position as the wife of a prophet would, not in Philistia only, but wherever they might come, be a sufficient security and veil (verse 16). There is the air of high-minded nobility in his behavior throughout this crisis which is exceedingly winsome.

It would almost appear as if the Spirit of God took delight in showing that the original texture of God's saints was not higher than that of other men, nor indeed so high. What they became, they became in spite of their natural selves. So marvelous is the wonder-working power of the grace of God that He can graft His rarest fruits on the wildest stocks. He seems to delight to secure His choicest results in natures which men of the world might reject as hopelessly bad. He demands no assistance from us, so sure is He that when once faith is admitted as the root-principle of character, all other things will be added to it.

Oh, critics of God's handiwork, we do not deny the inconsistencies of a David, a Peter, or an Abraham; but we insist that those inconsistencies were not the result of God's work, but in spite of it. They indicate the hopelessness

of the original nature—the moorland waste to which He has set His cultivating hand. And shall we blame the Gardener's skill, when, in the paradise which it has created, we encounter a bit of original soil, which, by force of contrast, indicates the marvel of His genius; and which, before long, if only we exercise patience, will yield to the selfsame spell, and blossom as the rest?

And you, on the other hand, who aspire for the crown of saintliness, to which ye are truly called, take heart! There is nothing which God has done for any soul that He will not do for you. And there is no soil so unpromising that He will not compel it to yield His fairest results. "What is impossible to man is possible to God." The same power in all its matchless energy, which raised the body of our Lord from its sleep in the grave of Joseph, to sit at the Father's side in the heights of glory, in spite of opposing battalions of evil spirits—is ready to do as much for each of us, if only we will daily, hourly, yield to it without reserve. Only cease from your own works, and keep always on God's "lift," refusing each solicitation to step off its ascending energy, or to do for yourself what He will do for you so much better than you can ask or think.

Let us ponder, as we close, these practical lessons:

(1) WE ARE NEVER SAFE SO LONG AS WE ARE IN THIS
WORLD

Abraham was an old man. Thirty years had passed since that sin had shown itself last. During that time he had been growing and learning much. But, alas! the snake was scotched, not killed. The weeds were cut down, not eradicated. The dry-rot had been checked; but the rotten timbers had not been cut

away. Never boast yourself against once-cherished sins: only by God's grace are they kept in check; and if you cease to abide in Christ, they will revive and revisit you, as the seven sleepers of Ephesus reappeared to the panic-stricken town.

(2) WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO THROW OURSELVES INTO THE WAY OF THE TEMPTATION WHICH HAS OFTEN MASTERED US

Those who daily cry, "Lead us not into temptation," should see to it that they do not court the temptation against which they pray. We must not expect angels to catch us every time we choose to cast ourselves from the mountain brow. A godly fear will avoid the perilous pass marked by crosses to indicate the failures of the past, and will choose a safer route. Abraham had been wiser had he never gone into the Philistines' territory at all.

(3) WE MAY BE ENCOURAGED BY GOD'S TREATMENT OF ABRAHAM'S SIN

Although God had a secret controversy with His child, He did not put him away. And when his wife and he were in extreme danger, as the result of his sin, their Almighty Friend stepped in to deliver them from the peril which menaced them. Again "He reproved kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not My anointed, and do My prophets no harm." He told Abimelech that he was a dead man; put an arrest upon him by the ministry of an ominous disease; and bade him apply to the intercession of the very man by whom he had been so grievously misled,

and who, in spite of all his failures, was a prophet still, having power with God.

Have you sinned, bringing disrepute on the name of God? Do not despair. Go alone, as Abraham must have done, and confess your sin with tears and childlike trust. Do not abandon prayer. Your prayers are still sweet to Him; and He waits to answer them. It is only through them that His purposes can be fulfilled toward men. Trust then in the patience and forgiveness of God, and let His love, as consuming fire, rid you of concealed and hidden sin.

Chapter Nineteen^(TOC)

Hagar and Ishmael Cast Out

"Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir... with Isaac."—Genesis 21:10.

Even though we were hearing this story for the first time, and did not know of the grave crisis to which we were approaching in the next chapter, we might be sure that something of the sort was imminent; and we should rest our conclusion on the fact of the stern discipline through which the great patriarch was called to pass. Faith is the expression of our inner moral life; and it cannot be exercised in its loftiest form so long as there is any obliquity of the heart, any hidden or unholy affection. These things must be cut away, or passed through the fiery discipline of sorrow; that, being freed from them, the heart may exercise that supreme faith in God which is the fairest crown of human existence.

The Almighty Lover of souls knew the trial which awaited His child in the near future; and set Himself to prepare him for it, by ridding him of certain clinging inconsistencies, which would have paralyzed the action of his faith in the hour of trial. We have already seen how one of these—the secret compact between himself and Sarah—was exposed to the light and judged. We have now to see how another matter, the patriarch's connection with Hagar and her child, was also dealt with by Him, who acts on us either as fuller's soap, or if that be not strong enough, as a refiner's fire.

In what way the presence of Hagar and Ishmael hindered the development of

Abraham's noblest life of faith, we cannot entirely understand. Did his heart still cling to the girl who had given him his firstborn son? Was there any secret satisfaction in the arrangement, which had at least achieved one cherished purpose, though it had been unblessed by God? Was there any fear that if he were summoned to surrender Isaac, he would find it easier to do so, because, at any moment, he could fall back on Ishmael, as both son and heir? We cannot read all that was in Abraham's mind; but surely some such thoughts are suggested by the expressions which to this hour record the history of the anguish of this torn and lonely heart, as one darling idol after another was rent away, that he himself might be cast naked and helpless on the omnipotence of the Eternal God. "The thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight" (verse 11).

It may be that not a few who read these lines sigh to possess a faith like that which Abraham had: a faith which staggers not through unbelief; a faith to which God cannot give a denial; a faith which can open and shut heaven, and to which all things are possible. But are you willing to pay the cost—the cost of suffering; the cost of rending from your heart all that would frustrate the cherished idol after another cast out; the cost of being stripped even to nakedness of all the dear delights in which the flesh may have found pleasure. "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto Him, We are able" (Matthew 20:22; Mark 10:38-39). You hardly realize all that is meant when you say so much; but it shall be revealed to you step by step; and nothing shall be too difficult, all being measured out according to your strength by Him who knows our frame and remembers that we are dust. Let us not dread the pruning-knife; for it is wielded by the hand of One who loves us infinitely, and who is seeking results that are to fill our hearts with eternal gratitude, and heaven with praise.

The final separation from Abraham of ingredients which would have been prejudicial to the exercise of a supreme faith was brought about by the birth of the long-promised child, which is alluded to at the commencement of this chapter (Genesis 21), and which led up to the crisis with which we are now dealing.

"The Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as He had spoken" (Genesis 21:1). It is impossible to trust God too absolutely. God's least word is a spar of imperishable wood driven into the Rock of Ages, which will never give, and on which you may hang your entire weight for evermore. "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; the thoughts of His heart to all generations" (Psalm 33:11).

But we must be Prepared to Wait God's Time

"Sarah bare Abraham a son in his old age, AT THE SET TIME of which God had spoken unto him." God has His set times. It is not for us to know them; indeed, we cannot know them; we must wait for them. If God had told Abraham in Haran that he must wait for thirty years until he pressed the promised child to his bosom, his heart would have failed him. So, in gracious love, the length of the weary years was hidden, and only as they were nearly spent, and there were only a few more months to wait, God told him that "according to the time of life, Sarah shall have a son" (18:14). The set time came at last; and then the laughter that filled the patriarch's home made the aged pair forget the long and weary vigil. "And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare unto him, ISAAC" (that is LAUGHTER). Take heart, waiting one, thou waitest for One who cannot disappoint thee; and who will not be five minutes behind the appointed moment: ere long "your sorrow shall be turned into joy."

"A woman, when she is in travail, hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world" (John 16:21). That joy may give the clue to the unwonted outburst of song on the part of the happy and aged mother. The laughter of incredulity, with which she received the first intimation of her approaching motherhood (18:12), was now exchanged for the laughter of fulfilled hope. And she gave utterance to words that approached the elevation of a rhythmic chant, and which served as the model of that other song with which the virgin mother announced the advent of her

Lord. So Sarah said,

"God hath made me to laugh: Every one that heareth will laugh with me."

And long after, one of her daughters said,

"My soul doth magnify the Lord; And my spirit hath rejoiced In God my Savior. For He that is mighty Hath done to me great things; And holy is His name." Luke 1:46-49.

Ah, happy soul, when God makes thee laugh! Then sorrow and crying shall flee away for ever, as darkness before the dawn.

The peace of Abraham's house remained at first unbroken, though there may have been some slight symptoms of the rupture which was at hand. The dislike which Sarah had manifested to Hagar, long years before, had never been extinguished: it had only smouldered in her bosom, waiting for some slight incident to stir it again into a blaze. Nor had the warm passionate nature of Hagar ever forgotten those hard dealings which had driven her forth, to fare as best she might in the inhospitable desert. Abraham must have been often sorely put to it to keep the peace between them. At last the women's quarters could conceal the quarrel no longer, and the scandal broke out into the open day.

The Immediate occasion of this open rupture

was the weaning of the young Isaac. "The child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the day that Isaac was weaned." But amid all the bright joy of that happy occasion, one shadow suddenly stole over the scene,

and brooded on the mother's soul. Sarah's jealous eye saw Ishmael mocking. It was hardly to be wondered at. The lad had recently suffered a severe disappointment. He had grown up as the undisputed heir of all that camp, accustomed to receive its undivided loyalty; and it must have been very difficult to view with equanimity the preparations made in honor of the child who was destined to supersede him; and so, under the appearance of sportive jesting, he jeered at Isaac in a way which betrayed the bitterness of his soul; and which indeed he was at no pains to conceal. This awoke all Sarah's slumbering jealousy; which may have often been severely tested during the last few years by Ishmael's assumption and independent bearing. She would stand it no longer. Why should she, the chieftain's wife, and mother of his heir, brook the insolence of a slave? And so she said unto Abraham with a sneer and the sting of the old jealousy, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac."

We Cannot but Recall the use

Which the Great Apostle makes of this Incident

In his days the Jews, priding themselves on being the lineal descendants of Abraham, refused to consider it possible that any but themselves could be children of God, and the heirs of promise. They arrogated to themselves exclusive privileges and position. And when large numbers of Gentiles were born into the Christian Church under the first preaching of the Gospel, and claimed to be the spiritual seed, with all the rights pertaining thereunto; they who, like Ishmael, were simply born after the flesh, persecuted them which, like Isaac, were born after the Spirit. Everywhere the Jews set themselves to resist the preaching of the Gospel, which denied to them their exclusive privileges; and to harry those who would not enter the Church through the rites of Judaism. And ere long the Jewish nation was rejected; put aside; cast out. Succeeding ages have seen the building-up of the Church from among the once-persecuted ones, whilst the children of Abraham have wandered in the wilderness fainting for the true water of life (Galatians 4:29).

But there is a Still Deeper Reference

Hagar, the slave, who may even have been born in the Sinaitic Desert, with which she seems to have been so familiar, is a fit representative of the spirit of legalism and bondage, seeking to win life by the observance of the law, which was given from those hoary cliffs. Hagar is the covenant of Mount Sinai in Arabia, "which gendereth to bondage," and "is in bondage with her children" (Galatians 4:24-25). Sarah, the free woman, on the other hand, represents the covenant of free grace. Her children are love, and faith, and hope; they are not bound by the spirit of "must," but by the promptings of spontaneous gratitude; their home is not in the frowning clefts of Sinai, but in Jerusalem above, which is free, and is the mother of us all. Now, argues the Apostle, there was no room for Hagar and Sarah, with their respective children, in Abraham's tent. If Ishmael was there, it was because Isaac was not born. But as soon as Isaac came in, Ishmael must go out. So the two principles—of legalism, which insists on the performance of the outward rite of circumcision; and of faith, which accepts the finished work of the Savior—cannot coexist in one heart. It is a moral impossibility. As well could darkness coexist with light, and slavery with freedom. So, addressing the Galatian converts, who were being tempted by Judaizing teachers to mingle legalism and faith, the Apostle bade them follow the example of Abraham, and cast out the spirit of bandage which keeps the soul in one perpetual agony of unrest.

You, my readers, are trusting Christ; but, perhaps, you are living in perpetual bondage to your scruples; or, perhaps you are always endeavoring to add some acts of obedience, by way of completing and assuring your salvation.

Ah! it is a great mistake. Cease to worry about these legal matters. Beware of morbid scrupulosity of conscience, one of the most terrible diseases by which the human spirit can be plagued. Do not always imagine that God's love to you depends on the performance of many minute acts, concerning which there are no definite instructions given. Trust Christ. Realize His wonderful and complete salvation. Work not towards sonship, but from it. "Cast out the bondwoman and her son." Live the free, happy life of Isaac, whose position is assured; and not that of Ishmael, whose position is dependent on his good behavior. "The servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the son abideth ever."

The Remaining History is Briefly Told

With many a pang—as the vine which bleeds copiously when the pruning knife is doing its work—Abraham sent Hagar and her child forth from his home, bidding them a last sad farewell. In the dim twilight they fared forth, before the camp was astir. The strong man must have suffered keenly as he put the bread into her hand, and with his own fingers bound the bottle of water on her shoulder, and kissed Ishmael once more. And yet he must not let Sarah guess how much he felt it. How many passages in our lives are only known to God!

Yet it was better so. And God provided for them both. When the mother's hopes were on the point of expiring, and the lad lay dying of thirst in the scorching noon, under the slender shade of a desert shrub, the Angel of God stayed her sobs, pointed out the well of water to which her tears had made her blind, and promised that her child should become a great nation. Ishmael would never have developed to his full stature if he had perpetually lived in the enervating luxury of Abraham's camp. There was not room enough there for him to grow. For him, as for us all, there was need of the free air of the desert, in which he should match himself with his peers, becoming strong by privation and want. That which seems like to break our hearts at the moment, turns out in after-years to have been of God. "And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice" (21:12).

One more weight was laid aside, and one more step taken in the preparation of God's "friend" for the supreme victory of his faith; for which his whole life had been a preparation, and which was now at hand.

Some flowers are the result of a century of growth, and the Divine Husbandman will consider Himself repaid for years of loving, patient care, if the life He has tended will bloom out into but one act, like that which we are soon to record. Such acts scatter the seeds of noble and heroic deeds for all future time.

Chapter Twenty [\(TOC\)](#)

A Quiet Resting Place

"And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God: and Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days."—Genesis 21:33-34.

When a river is approaching its plunge down some mighty chasm, its waters flow with placid stillness; every ripple is smoothed out of the peaceful surface, and the great volume of water is hushed and quieted. There could hardly be a greater contrast than that which exists between the restfulness of the river before it is torn by the ragged rocks in its downward rush, and its excitement and foam at the foot of the falls. In the one case you can discern, through the translucent waters, the stones and rocks that line its bed; in the other you are blinded by the spray and deafened by the noise.

Is not this an Emblem of our Lives?

Our Father often inserts in them a parenthesis of rest and peace, to prepare us for some coming trial. It is not invariably so. We need not always temper our enjoyment of some precious gift with a foreboding dread of its AFTERWARDS. But this, at least, is largely true: that if every season of clear-shining is not followed by a time of cloud, yet seasons of sorrow and trial are almost always preceded by hours or days or years of sunny experience, which lie in the retrospect of life, as a bright and comforting memory, where the soul was able to gather the strength it was to expend, and to prepare itself for its supreme effort.

Thus it Happened to Abraham

We have already seen how wisely and tenderly his Almighty Friend had been preparing him for his approaching trial; first, in searching out his hidden compact with Sarah; and then in ridding him of the presence of Hagar and her son. And now some further preparation was to be wrought in his spirit, through this period of peaceful rest beside the well of the oath. Leaving Gerar, the patriarch travelled with his slow-moving flocks along the fertile valley, which extends from the sea into the country. The whole district was admirably suited for the maintenance of a vast pastoral clan. In the winter the valley contains a running stream, and at any time water may be obtained by digging at a greater or less depth. Having reached a suitable camping-ground, Abraham digged a well, which is probably one of those which remain to this day; and of which the water, lying some forty feet below the surface, is pure and sweet. Drinking troughs for the use of cattle are scattered around in close proximity to the mouth, the curbstones of which are deeply worn by the friction of the ropes used in drawing up the water by hand. It is not improbably that these very stones were originally hewn under the patriarch's direction, even though their position may have been somewhat altered by the Arab workmen of a later date.

Shortly after Abraham had settled there, Abimelech, the king, accompanied by Phichol, the chief captain of his host, came to his encampment, intent on entering into a treaty which should be binding, not only on themselves, but on their children: "Swear unto me here by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son" (verse 23). Before formally binding himself under these solemn sanctions, Abraham brought up a matter

which is still a fruitful subject of dispute in Eastern lands. The herdsman of Abimelech had violently taken away the well of water which the servants of Abraham had dug. But the king immediately repudiated all knowledge of their action. It had been done without his cognizance and sanction. And in the treaty into which the two chieftains entered, there was, so to speak, a special clause inserted with reference to this well, destined in after years to be so famous. Writing materials were not then in use; but the seven ewe lambs, which Abraham gave Abimelech, were the visible and lasting memorial that the well was his recognized property. Thus it happened that as the solemnly-sworn covenant was made beside the well, so its name became for ever associated with it, and it was called "Beersheba", the well of the oath, or "the well of the seven", with reference to the seven gifts, or victims, on which the oath was taken.

In further commemoration of this treaty, Abraham planted a tamarisk tree, which, as a hardy evergreen, would long perpetuate the memory of the transaction in those lands, where the mind of man eagerly catches at anything that will break the monotony of the landscape. There also he erected an altar, or shrine, and called on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God. "And Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days." Ah! those long, happy days! Their course was only marked by the growing years of Isaac, who passed on through the natural stages of human growth—from boyhood to youth, and from youth to opening manhood—the object of Abraham's tender, clinging love. No words can tell the joy of Abraham over this beloved child of his old age. "Thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest." It seemed as if perpetual laughter had come to take up its abode in that home, to brighten the declining years of that aged pair. Who could have foretold that the greatest trial of all his life had yet to come, and that from a clear sky a thunderbolt was about to fall, threatening to destroy all his happiness at a

single stroke?

We None of us Know What Awaits Us

This at least is clear, that our life is being portioned out by the tender love of God; who spared not His own Son, and has pledged Himself, with Him, also freely to give us all things. Here is one of the unanswerable questions of Scripture: What will not God do for them that love Him? No love, no care, no wisdom, which they need, shall be spared. And yet, with all this, there may be keen suffering to bear. We sometimes seem to forget that what God takes He takes in fire: that nothing less than the discipline of pain can ever disintegrate the clinging dross of our natures; and that the only way to the resurrection life and the ascension mount is the way of the garden, the cross, and the grave. Nothing will dare to inflict so much pain—as the love which desires the richest and sweetest life of the object of its affection. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth; and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Let us prepare then for coming hours of trial by doing as Abraham did.

(1) Let Us Live by the well

There is a great tendency among Christians today to magnify special places and scenes which have been associated with times of blessing; and to obtain from them a supply which they store up for their maintenance in after-days. But so many of these, and of others, are in danger of forgetting that instead of making an annual pilgrimage to the well, they might take up their abode beside it, and live there.

The water of that well speaks of the life of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord, and is stored up for us in the fathomless depths of the Word of God. The well is deep; yet can faith's bucket reach its precious contents, and bring

them to the thirsty lip and yearning heart.

One of the greatest blessings that can come to the soul is to acquire the habit of sinking wells into the depth that lieth under, and to draw water for itself. We are too much in the habit of drinking water which others have drawn; and too little initiated into the sacred science of drawing for ourselves.

It is my growing conviction that if Christians would not attempt to read so many chapters of the Bible daily, but would study what they do read more carefully, turning to the marginal references, reading the context, comparing Scripture with Scripture, endeavoring to get one or more complete thoughts of the mind of God, there would be a greater richness in their experience; more freshness in their interest in Scripture; more independence of men and means; and more real enjoyment of the Word of the living God. Oh for a practical realization of what Jesus meant when He said!—"The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

Oh, my readers, open your hearts to the teaching of the Holy Ghost. Rest content with nothing short of a deep and loving knowledge of the Bible. Ask that within you there may be a repetition of the old miracle, "when Israel sang this song: Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it" (Numbers 21:17). Then "in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert: and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water" (Isaiah 35:6-7).

(2) Let Us Shelter Beneath the Covenant

Abraham was quiet from the fear of evil, because of Abimelech's oath. How

much more sure and restful should be the believing soul, which shelters beneath that everlasting covenant which is "ordered in all things and sure." There are some Christians doubtful of their eternal salvation, and fearful lest they should ultimately fall away from grace and be lost, to whom this advice is peculiarly appropriate: "Live by the well of the oath."

In the eternity of the past, the Eternal Father entered into covenant with His Son, the terms of which covenant seem to have been on this wise. On the one hand our Lord pledged his complete obedience and His atoning death on behalf of all who should believe. And, on the other hand, the Father promised that all who should believe in Him should be delivered from the penalty of a broken law; should be forgiven, adopted into His family, and saved with an eternal salvation. This is but a crude and inadequate statement of mysteries so fathomless that the loftiest seraphs peer into them in vain. And yet it sets forth, in the babbling of human language, a truth of the utmost importance, behind which the weakest believer may securely shelter.

The one question is, Do you believe in Jesus Christ? Or, to put it still more simply, Are you willing that the Holy Ghost should create in you a living faith in the Savior of men? WOULD YOU BELIEVE IF YOU COULD? Is your will on God's side in this matter of faith? Are you prepared to surrender anything and everything that would hinder your simple-hearted faith in Jesus? If so, you may appropriate to yourself the blessings of the Covenant confirmed by the counsel and oath of God. Your faith may be weak; but it is faith in the embryo and germ. And as the Ark saved the squirrel as well as the elephant, so does the Covenant shelter the weakest and feeblest believer equally with the giant in faith.

This, then, becomes true of us, if we believe. We are forgiven; our name is inscribed on the roll of the saved; we are adopted into the family of God; we

have within us the beginning of a life which is eternal as the life of God. "The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee" (Isaiah 54:10). And shall not this comfort us amid many a heartbreaking sorrow? Nothing can break the bonds by which our souls are knit with the eternal God. "Although my house be not so with God; yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although He make it not to grow" (2 Samuel 23:5).

Rejoice in all the good things which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Plant thy trees; be comforted by their shade, and fed by their fruit. Listen to the ringing laughter of thine Isaac. Dread not the future; but trust the great love of God. Live by the well, and shelter beneath the covenant. So, if trial is approaching, thou shalt be the better able to meet it with a calm and strong heart.

Chapter Twenty-One^(TOC)

The Greatest Trial of All

"Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest; and offer him for a burnt offering."—Genesis 22:2.

So long as men live in the world, they will turn to this story with unwaning interest. There is only one scene in history by which it is surpassed; that where the Great Father gave His Isaac to a death from which there was no deliverance. God and Abraham were friends in a common sorrow up to a certain point; though the infinite love of God stepped in to stay the hand of Abraham at the critical moment, sparing His friend what He would not spare Himself.

God Did Tempt Abraham

A better rendering might be, "God did put Abraham to the test." Satan tempts us that he may bring out the evil that is in our hearts; God tries or tests us that He may bring out all the good. In the fiery trial through which the believer is called to pass, ingredients of evil which had counteracted his true development drop away, shriveled and consumed; whilst latent qualities—produced by grace, but not yet brought into exercise—are called to the front; receive due recognition; and acquire a fixity of position and influence which nothing else could possibly have given them. In the agony of sorrow we say words and assume positions, which otherwise we should never have dreamt of, but from which we never again recede. Looking back, we wonder how we dared to do as we did: and yet we are not sorry—because the memory of what we were in that supreme hour is a precious legacy; and a platform from which we take a wider view, and climb to the further heights which beckon us.

The common incidents of daily life, as well as the rare and exceptional crises, are so contrived as to give us incessant opportunities of exercising, and so strengthening, the graces of Christian living. Happy are they who are ever on the alert to manifest each grace, according to the successive demands of the varied experiences of daily life. If we were always on the outlook for opportunities of manifesting the special qualities of Christ's character, which are called for by the trials, and worries, and vexations of common experience, we should find that they were the twenty thousand chariots of God, waiting to carry us up to heights which could never otherwise be trodden by our feet.

But God Sends us no Trial, Whether Great or Small

Without First Preparing us

He "will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13). Trials are, therefore, God's vote of confidence in us. Many a trifling event is sent to test us, ere a greater trial is permitted to break on our heads. We are set to climb the lower peaks before urged to the loftiest summits with their virgin snows; are made to run with footmen before contending with horses; are taught to wade in the shallows, before venturing into the swell of the ocean waves. So it is written: "It came to pass AFTER THESE THINGS, that God did tempt Abraham."

Moreover,

God Often Prepares us for Coming Trial

By Giving us some New and Blissful Revelation of Himself

I notice that, at the close of the preceding chapter, we are told that "Abraham called on the name of the everlasting God." Now, we do not learn that he had ever looked on God in this light before. He had known Him as God, the Almighty (17:1), but not as God, the Everlasting. The unchangeableness, the eternity, the independence of change, and time, and tens, which mark the Being of Jehovah—all these broke suddenly on his soul about that time in a fresh and more vivid manner. Who that can remember seeing the sea for the first time can ever forget the first impression of its grandeur and far-spread mirror-like expanse? And the soul of the patriarch was thrilled with the lofty train of high and holy thought, as he used that name in prayer beside the well, and beneath the spreading shade of the tree he had planted. And with him, as so often with us, the new name was to enable him the better to withstand the shock of coming sorrow.

The Trial Came Very Suddenly

As we have seen, life was flowing smoothly with the patriarch—courted by Abimelech; secure of his wells; gladdened with the presence of Isaac; the everlasting God his friend. "Ah, happy man," we might well have exclaimed, "thou hast entered upon thy land of Beulah; thy sun shall no more go down, nor thy moon withdraw itself; before thee lie the sunlit years, in an unbroken chain of blessing." But this was not to be. And just at that moment, like a bolt out of a clear sky, there burst upon him the severest trial of his life. It is not often that the express trains of heaven are announced by warning bell, or falling signal; they dash suddenly into the station of the soul. It becomes us to be ever on the alert; for at such an hour and in such a guise as we think not, the Son of Man comes.

The Trial Touched Abraham in His Tenderest Point

It concerned his Isaac. Nothing else in the circumference of his life could have been such a test as anything connected with the heir of promise, the child of his old age, the laughter of his life. HIS LOVE WAS TESTED. For love of God, he had done much. But at whatever cost, he had ever put God first, glad to sacrifice all, for very love of Him. For this he had torn himself from Charran. For this he had been willing to become a homeless wanderer; content if at the last he became an inmate of God's home. For this he had renounced the hopes he had built on Ishmael; driving him, as a scapegoat, into the wilderness to return no more. But, perhaps, if he had been asked if he felt that he loved God most of all, he would not have dared to say that he did. We can never gauge our love by feeling. The only true test of love is in how much we are prepared to do for the one to whom we profess it. "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me." But God knew how true and strong His child's love was, and that he loved Him best. So He put him to a supreme test, that all men might henceforth know that a mortal man could love God so much as to put Him first, though his dearest lay in the opposite scale of the balance of the heart. Would not you like to love God like this? Then tell Him you are willing to pay the cost, if only He will create that love within you. And, remember: though at first He may ask you to give up your Isaac to Him, it is only that you may take up your true position, and evince to the world your choice; for He will give your beloved back again from the altar on which you have laid him. "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him for a burnt-offering."

(Genesis 22:2).

It was also a Great Test of his Faith

Isaac was the child of promise. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." With reiterated emphasis this lad had been indicated as the one essential link between the aged pair and the vast posterity which was promised them. And now the father was asked to sacrifice his life. It was a tremendous test to his faith. How could God keep His word, and let Isaac die? It was utterly inexplicable to human thought. If Isaac had been old enough to have a son who could perpetuate the seed to future generations, the difficulty would have been removed. But how could the childless Isaac die; and still the promise stand of a posterity through him, innumerable as stars and sand? One thought, however, as the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us, filled the old man's mind, "GOD IS ABLE." He "accounted that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead" (Hebrews 11:19). He felt sure that somehow God would keep His word. It was not for him to reason how, but simply to obey. He had already seen Divine power giving life where all was as good as dead; why should it not do it again? In any case he must go straight on, doing as he was told, and calculating on the unexhausted stores in the secret hand of God. Oh for faith like this!—simply to believe what God says; assured that God will do just what He has promised; looking without alarm, from circumstances that threaten to make the fulfillment impossible, to the bare word of God's unswerving truthfulness. Surely this habit is not so impossible of attainment. Why then should we not begin to practice it, stepping from stone to stone, until we are far out from the shore of human expediency leaning on the unseen but felt arm of Omnipotence?

It was a Test of Abraham's Obedience

It was in the visions of the night that the word of the Lord must have come to him: and early the next morning the patriarch was on his way. The night before, as he lay down, he had not the least idea of the mission on which he would be started when the early beams of dawn had broken up the short Eastern night. But he acted immediately. We might have excused him if he had dallied with his duty; postponing it, procrastinating, lingering as long as possible. That, however, was not the habit of this heroic soul, which had well acquired the habit of instantaneity, one of the most priceless acquisitions for any soul ambitious of saintliness. "And Abraham rose up early in the morning" (verse 3). No other hand was permitted to saddle the ass, or cleave the wood, or interfere with the promptness of his action. He "saddled his ass, and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him." This promptness was his safeguard. While the herdsmen were beginning to stir, and the long lines of cattle were being driven forth to their several grazing grounds, the old man was on his way. I do not think he confided his secret to a single soul, not even to Sarah. Why should he? The lad and he would enter that camp again, when the short but awful journey was over. "I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you."

This Test did not Outrage any of the Natural

Instincts of his Soul

First of all, he was too familiar with God's voice to mistake it. Too often had he listened to it to make a mistake in this solemn crisis. And he was sure that God had some way of deliverance; which, though he might not be able to forecast it, would secure the sparing of Isaac's life. Besides, he lived at a time when such sacrifices as that to which he was called were very common; and he had never been taught decisively that they were abhorrent to the mind of his Almighty Friend. We must, in reading Scripture, remember that at first all God's servants were more or less affected by the religious notions that were current in their age; and we must not imagine that in all respects they were divested of the misconceptions that resulted from the twilight revelation in which they lived, but have since become dissipated before the meridian light of the Gospel, One of the first principles of that old Canaanitish religion demanded that men should give their firstborn for their transgression, the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul. On the altars of Moab, and Phoenicia, and Carthage; nay, even in the history of Israel itself—this almost irrepressible expression of human horror at sin, and desire to propitiate God, found terrible expression. Not that fathers were less tender than now, but because they had a keener sense of the terror of unforgiven sin; they cowered before gods whom they knew not, and to whom they imputed a thirst for blood and suffering; they counted no cost too great to appease the awful demands which ignorance, and superstition, and a consciousness of sin, made

upon them.

Perhaps Abraham had lately witnessed these rites; and as he did so, he had thought of Isaac, and wondered if he could do the same with him; and marveled why such a sacrifice had never been demanded at his hands. And it did not, therefore, startle him when God said, "Take now thy son, and offer him up." He was to learn that whilst God demanded as much love as ever the heathen gave their cruel and imaginary deities, yet Heaven would not permit of human sacrifices or of offered sons. A Greater Sacrifice was to be made to put away sin. Abraham's obedience was, therefore, allowed to go up to a certain point, and then peremptorily stayed—that in all future time men might know that God would not demand, or permit, or accept human blood at their hands, much less the blood of a bright and noble lad; and that in such things He could have no delight.

Here let us ask ourselves whether we are of this same mind; holding our treasures with a loose hand; loving God most of all; prepared to obey Him at all costs; slaying our brightest hopes if God bid it—because so sure that He will not fail or deceive us. If so, may God give us this mind, and keep us in it, for His glory, and for the maturing of our own faith.

What those three days of quiet traveling must have been to Abraham, we can never know. It is always so much easier to act immediately and precipitately, than to wait through long days, and even years; but it is in this process of waiting upon God that souls are drawn out to a strength of purpose and nobility of daring, which become their sacred inheritance for all after-time. And yet, despite the patriarch's preoccupation with his own special sorrow, the necessity was laid upon him to hide it under an appearance of resignation, and even gladness; so that neither his son nor his servants might guess the agony which was gnawing at his heart.

At last, on the third day, he saw from afar the goal of his journey, God had informed him that He would tell him which of the mountains was the appointed spot of the sacrifice: and now probably some sudden conviction seized upon his soul, that an especial summit, which reared itself in the blue distance, was to be the scene of that supreme act in which he should prove that to his soul God was chiefest and best. Tradition, which seems well authenticated, has always associated that "mountain in the land of Moriah" with the place on which, in after days, stood the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, and the site of Solomon's Temple; and there is a wonderful appropriateness in the fact that this great act of obedience took place on the very spot where hecatombs of victims and rivers of blood were to point to that supreme Sacrifice which this prefigured.

As soon as the mountain had loomed into view, Abraham said unto his young men: "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." What a significant expression, in this connection, is that word WORSHIP! It reflects the mood of the patriarch's mind. He was preoccupied with that Being, at whose command he had gone forth on this sorrowful errand. He looked upon his God, at the moment when He was asking so great a gift, as only deserving adoration and worship. The loftiest sentiment that can fill the heart of man swayed his whole nature; and it seemed to him as if his costliest and dearest treasure was not too great to give to that great and glorious God who was the one object of his life.

It is of the utmost importance that we should emphasize the words of ASSURED CONFIDENCE, which Abraham addressed to his young men before he left them. "I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." This was something more than unconscious prophecy: it was the assurance of an unwavering faith, that somehow or other God would

interpose to spare his son; or at least, if necessary, to raise him from the dead. In any case Abraham was sure that Isaac and he would before long come again. It is this which so largely removes the difficulties that might otherwise obscure this act; and it remains to all time a most striking proof of the tenacity with which faith can cling to the promises of God. When once you have received a promise, cling to it as a sailor to a spar in the midst of the boiling waters. God is bound to be as good as His word. And even though He ask you to do the one thing that might seem to make deliverance impossible; yet if you dare to do it, you will find not only that you shall obtain the promise, but that you shall also receive some crowning and unexpected mark of His love.

The Influence of Abraham's Behavior was Felt by his Son

He caught his father's spirit. We do not know how old he was; he was at least old enough to sustain the toil of a long march on foot, and strong enough to carry up hill the faggots, laid upon his shoulders by his father. But he gladly bent his youthful strength under the weight of the wood, just as through the Via Dolorosa a greater than he carried His cross. Probably this was not the first time that Abraham and Isaac had gone on such an errand; but it is beautiful to see the evident interest the lad took in the proceedings as they went, "both of them together."

At all previous sacrifices, Abraham had taken with him a lamb; but on this occasion Isaac's wondering attention was drawn to the omission of that constant appendage to their acts of sacrifice; and with a simplicity which must have touched Abraham to the quick, he said, "My father, behold the fire and the wood! but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" What a stab was this to that sorely-tried heart, which dared not even reveal the secret beneath which it bowed; and which eagerly caught at a subterfuge to enable it to postpone the answer. Thus with a gleam of prophetic insight, mingled with unwavering faith in Him for whose sake he was suffering, the father answered, "My son, God will Himself provide a lamb for a burnt-offering." So they went Both of them together.

Can we Wonder that Abraham Shrank from Disclosing all the Facts?

We all have our treasures whom we fondly love. We shudder at the remotest thought of losing them. With breaking hearts we watch the color fade from the cheek of a darling child, or mark the slow progress of disease in some twin soul; but Abraham must submit to a keener test than these. Our dear ones depart in spite of all we do to keep them; but in Abraham's case there was this added anguish, that he was to inflict the blow. The last thought that Isaac would have of him would be, holding the uplifted knife; and even though the lad might be restored to him—yet would it not be a revelation to the young heart to discover that it was possible for his father to do to him an act of violence like that?

But at Last the Discovery Could no Longer be Withheld

"They came to the place which God had told him of, and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order." Can you not see the old man slowly gathering the stones; bringing them from the furthest distance possible; placing them with a reverent and judicious precision; and binding the wood with as much deliberation as possible? But at last everything is complete; and he turns to break the fatal secret to the young lad who had stood wonderingly by. Inspiration draws a veil over that last tender scene—the father's announcement of his mission; the broken sobs; the kisses, wet with tears; the instant submission of the son, who was old enough and strong enough to rebel if he had had the mind. Then the binding of that tender frame; which, indeed, needed no compulsion, because the young heart had learned the secret of obedience and resignation. Finally, the lifting him to lie upon the altar, on the wood. Here was a spectacle which must have arrested the attention of heaven. Here was a proof of how much mortal man will do for the love of God. Here was an evidence of Childlike faith which must have thrilled the heart of the Eternal God, and moved Him in the very depths of His being. Do you and I love God like this? Is He more to us than our nearest and dearest? Suppose they stood on this side, and He on that side: would we go with Him, though it cost us the loss of all? You think you would. Aye, it is a great thing to say. The air upon this height is too rare to breathe with comfort. The one explanation of it is to be found in the words of our Lord; "He that loveth father or mother, son or daughter, more than Me, is not worthy of Me" (Matthew 10:37).

The blade was raised high, flashing in the rays of the morning sun; but it was not permitted to fall. With the temptation God also made a way of escape. "And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, 'Abraham!'" With what avidity would that much-tried soul seize at anything that offered the chance of respite or of pause! and he said, his uplifted hand returning gladly to his side, "Here am I!" Would that we could more constantly live in the spirit of that response, so that God might constantly live in the spirit of that response, so that God might always know where to find us; and so that we might be always ready to fulfill His will. Then followed words that spoke release and deliverance: "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me" (verse 12).

When we have given our best and costliest to God, passing our gifts through the fire, surrendering them to His will, He will give them back to us as gold refined—multiplied, as Job's belongings were. But it is also quite likely that He will not do so until we have almost lost all heart and hope. "Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh," "The Lord will provide." And so it passed into a proverb, and men said one to another, "In the mount of the Lord deliverance shall be seen." It is a true word. Deliverance is not seen till we come to the mount of sacrifice. God does not provide deliverance until we have reached the point of our extremest need. It is when our Isaac is on the altar, and the knife is about to descend upon him, that God's angel interposes to deliver.

Near by the altar there was a thicket; and, as Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked around, he beheld a ram caught there by its horns. Nothing could be more opportune. He had wanted to show his gratitude, and the fullness of his heart's devotion; and he gladly went and took the ram, and offered him up for

a burnt-offering instead of his son. Here, surely, is the great doctrine of substitution; and we are taught how life can only be preserved at the cost of life given. According to one of the early Church writers, there is a yet deeper mystery latent here; viz., that whilst Isaac represents the Deity of Christ, the ram represents His human nature, which became a sacrifice for the sins of the world. I am not user that I would altogether accept this interpretation; because it is the Deity of Christ working through His humanity which gives value to His sacrifice; but all through this marvelous story there is an evident setting forth of the mysteries of Calvary.

Abraham's act enables us better to understand the sacrifice which God made to save us. The gentle submission of Isaac, laid upon the altar with throat bare to the knife, gives us a better insight into Christ's obedience to death. Isaac's restoration to life, as from the dead, and after having been three days dead in his father's purpose, suggests the resurrection from Joseph's tomb. Yet the reality surpasses the shadow. Isaac suffers with a clear apprehension of his father's presence. Christ, bereft of the consciousness of His Father's love, complains of His forsakenness. All was done that love could do to alleviate Isaac's anguish; but Christ suffered the rudeness of coarse soldiery, and the upbraidings of Pharisee and Scribe. Isaac was spared death; but Christ drank the bitter cup to its dregs.

Before they left the mountain brow, the angel of Jehovah once more addressed the patriarch. God had often promised: now for the first time He sware; and since He could swear by no greater He sware by Himself, and said: "By Myself have I sworn, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee; and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his

enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice" (verse 16-17). Think not, O soul of man, that this is a unique and solitary experience. It is simply a specimen and pattern of God's dealings with all souls who are prepared to obey Him at whatever cost. After thou hast patiently endured, thou shalt receive the promise. The moment of supreme sacrifice shall be the moment of supreme and rapturous blessing. God's river, which is full of water, shall burst its banks, and pour upon thee a tide of wealth and grace. There is nothing, indeed, which God will not do for a man who dares to step out upon what seems to be the mist; though as he puts down his foot he finds it rock beneath him.

All Who Believe are the Children of Faithful Abraham

We then, Gentiles though we are, divided from him by the lapse of centuries, may inherit the blessing that he won; and the more so as we follow closely in his steps. That blessing is for us if we will claim it. That multiplication of seed may be realized in our fruitfulness of service. That victory over all enemies may give us victory in all time of our temptation, and that blessing for all the nations of the earth may be verified again as we go forth into all the world telling the story of a Savior's death.

From that eminence Abraham looked across the vale of centuries, and saw the day of Christ. He "saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56). With a new light in his heart, with a new composure on his face, talking much with Isaac of the vision which had broken upon his noble soul, Abraham returned to his young men. "And they rose up and went together to Beersheba, and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba;" but the halo of the vision lit up the common places of his life, as it shall do for us, when from the mounts of sacrifice we turn back to the lowlands of daily duty.

Chapter Twenty-Two^(TOC)

Machpelah, and its First Tenant

"Give me a possession of a burying-place with you; that I may bury my dead out of my sight."—Genesis 23:4.

"And Abraham buried Sarah, his wife, in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre."—Genesis 23:19.

When Abraham came down the slopes of Mount Moriah, hand in hand with Isaac, fifty years of his long life still lay before him. Of those fifty years, twenty-five passed away before the event recorded in this chapter. What happened in those serene and untroubled years which lie between these two chapters, as a valley between two ridges of hills, we do not know. In all likelihood one year was as much as possible like another. Few events broke their monotony. The river of Abraham's life had passed the rapids and narrows of its earlier course, and now broadened into reaches of still water, over which its current glided with an almost imperceptible movement.

The changes that mark the progress of our year are unknown beneath those glorious skies which rain perpetual summer on the earth; and the equitableness of the climate is symbolical of the equitableness of the simple patriarch life. The tending of vast flocks and herds; the perpetual recurrence of birth, marriage, and death, among the vast household of slaves; the occasional interchange of hospitality with neighboring clans; special days for sacrifice and worship—these would be the most exciting episodes of that serene and calm existence, which is separated as far as possible from our feverish, broken lives. And yet, is there so very much that we can vaunt

ourselves in, when we compare our days with those? True, there was not the railway; the telegraph wire; the journal; the constant interchange of news. But perhaps life may more fully attain its ideal, and fulfill its purpose, when its moments and hours are not dissipated by the constant intrusion of petty details, like those which for most of us make up the fabric of existence.

Perhaps we can never realize how much the members of such a household as Abraham's would be to one another. Through long, unbroken periods they lived together, finding all their society in one another. The course of pastoral life left ample leisure for close personal intercourse; and it was inevitable that human lives spent under such circumstances should grow together; even as trees in a dense wood, wherein they sometimes became so entangled and entwined that no human ingenuity can disentangle one from another. Thus it must have happened that the loss through death of one loved and familiar face would leave a blank never to be filled, and scarcely ever to be forgotten. We need not wonder, therefore, that so much stress is laid upon the death of Sarah, the chief event of those fifty years of Abraham's life; nor need we regret that such ample details are given of her death and burial; since they enable us to get a glimpse of the patriarch, and see if he has altered at all during the quarter of a century which has passed over him.

(1) We are First Arrested by Abraham's Tears

"And Sarah died in Kirjath-Arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan." Abraham seems to have been away from home, perhaps at Beersheba, when she breathed her last; but he came at once "to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her." This is the first time we read of Abraham weeping. We do not read that he wept when he crossed the Euphrates, and left for ever home and kindred. There is no record of his tears when tidings came to him that his nephew Lot was carried into captivity. He does not seem to have bedewed his pathway to Mount Moriah with the tears of his heart. But now that Sarah is lying dead before him, the fountains of his grief are broken up.

What made the Difference?

Ah! there is all the difference between DOING God's will and SUFFERING it. So long as we have something to do for God—whether it be a toilsome march; or a battle; or a sacrifice—we can keep back our tears, and bear up our attention from our griefs. But when all is over; when there is nothing more to do; when we are left with the silent dead, requiring nothing more at our hands; when the last office is performed, the last flower arranged, the last touch given—then the tears come.

It is not Wonderful that Abraham Wept

Sarah had been the partner of his life for seventy or eighty years. She was the

only link to the home of his childhood. She alone could sympathize with him when he talked of Terah and Nahor, or of Haran and Ur of the Chaldees. She alone was left of all who thirty years before had shared the hardships of his pilgrimage. As he knelt by her side, what a tide of memories must have rushed over him of their common plans, and hopes, and fears, and joys! He remembered her as the bright young wife; as the fellow-pilgrim; as the childless persecutor of Hagar; as the prisoner of Pharaoh and Abimelech; as the loving mother of Isaac; and every memory would bring a fresh rush of tears.

There are some who chide tears as unmanly, unsubmitive, unchristian. They would comfort us with chill and pious stoicism, bidding us meet the most agitating passages of our history with rigid and tearless countenance. With such the spirit of the Gospel, and of the Bible, has little sympathy. We have no sympathy with a morbid sentimentality; but we may well question whether the man who cannot weep can really love; for sorrow is love, widowed and bereaved—and where that is present, its most natural expression is in tears. Religion does not come to make us unnatural and inhuman; but to purify and ennoble all those natural emotions with which our manifold nature is endowed. Jesus wept. Peter wept. The Ephesian converts wept on the neck of the Apostle whose face they thought they were never to see again. Christ stands by each mourner, saying, "Weep, my child; weep, for I have wept."

Tears relieve the burning brain, as a shower the electric clouds. Tears discharge the insupportable agony of the heart, as an overflow lessens the pressure of the flood against the dam. Tears are the material out of which heaven weaves its brightest rainbows. Tears are transmuted into the jewels of better life, as the wounds in the oyster turn to pearls. Happy, however, is that man who, when he weeps for his departed, has not to reproach himself with

unkindnesses and bitter words. We cannot always understand what makes people weep, when we stand with them on the loose earth beside the open grave. In many cases their sorrow is due to pure affection; in some cases, however, there is an additional saltiness in their tears, because of unspoken regret. "I wish that I had not acted so: that I could recall those words: that I had had another opportunity of expressing the love I really felt, but hid: that I had taken more pains to curb myself; to be gentle, loving, endearing, and endeared. Oh for one hour of explanation and confession and forgiveness!" Let us see to it that we may never have to drink such bitter ingredients in the cup of our bereavement; and that we may not, let us not fail to give expression to those nobler feelings which often strive within our breasts, but which we too often repress.

And if some should read these words whose tears are the more bitter because they themselves are unsubmissive, let such remember that where they cannot feel resigned, they must will to be resigned, putting their will on God's side in this matter; asking Him to take it and fashion it according to His own; and remembering that our only province is with the will. This is all God asks; and if this is right with Him, He will subdue every other thought, and bring the whole being into a state of glad acquiescence. "I delight to do Thy will, O my God." "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him!"

(2) Notice Abraham's Confession

"Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying, I am a stranger and a sojourner with you; give me a possession of a burying-place with you" (23:3-4). See how sorrow reveals the heart. When all is going well, we wrap up our secrets; but when sorrow rends the veil, the ARCANA of the inner temple are laid bare! To look at Abraham as the great and wealthy patriarch, the emir, the chieftain of a mighty clan, we cannot guess his secret thoughts. He has been in the land for sixty-two years; and surely by this time he must have lost his first feelings of loneliness. He is probably as settled and naturalized as any of the princes round. So you might think, until he is widowed of his beloved Sarah! Then, amidst his grief, you hear the real man speaking his most secret thought: "I am a stranger and a sojourner with you."

These are very remarkable words; and they were never forgotten by his children. Speaking of the land of promise, God said, through Moses, to the people, "The land shall not be sold for ever; for ye are strangers and sojourners with Me." When David and his people made splendid preparations to build the Temple, as their spokesman he said, "Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly? for all things come of Thee; for we are strangers before Thee and sojourners, as were all our fathers. Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." And, further, in one of his matchless Psalms, he pleads, "Hear my prayer, O Lord! Hold not Thy peace at my tears; for I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were." (Psalm 39:12) So deeply had those words of Abraham sunk in the national mind, that the Apostle inscribes them over

the cemetery where the great and the good of the Jewish nation lie entombed: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them; and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Hebrews 11:13).

We may ask what it was that maintained this spirit in Abraham for so many years. There is but one answer: "They that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country" (Hebrews 11:14). That country is never looked upon by the sun, or watered by the rivers of the earth, or refreshed by the generous dews. It is the better country, even the heavenly; the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; the land that needs neither sun nor moon, because the Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof. Uprooted from the land of his birth, the patriarch could never take root again in any earthly country; and his spirit was always on the alert, eagerly reaching out towards the city of God, the home where only such royal souls as his can meet their peers, and find their rest. He refused to be contented with anything short of this; and, therefore, God was not ashamed to be called his God, because He had prepared for him a city. How this elevation of soul shames some of us! In our better moments we say that we are "the burgesses of the skies"; but our conversation is not in heaven, in our practical ordinary daily life. We profess to look for a city; but we take good care to make for ourselves an assured position among the citizens of this world. We affect to count all things dross; but the eagerness with which, muck-rake in hand, we strive to heap together the treasures of earth is a startling commentary upon our words.

(3) Notice Abraham's Faith

Men are wont to bury their dead beside their ancestors. The graves of past generations are the heritage of their posterity. By them rather than by the habitations of the living do tribes and races of men find their resting-place. The American loves to visit the quiet English churchyard where his fathers lie. The Jew elects in old age to journey to Palestine, that dying he may be buried in soil consecrated by the remains of his race. And it may be that Abraham first thought of that far distant grave in Charran, where Terah and Haran lay buried. Should he take Sarah thither? "No," thought he, "that country has no claim upon me now. The only land, indeed, on which I have a claim is this wherein I have been a stranger. Here in after-days shall my children live. Here the generations that bear my name shall spread themselves out as the sands on the sea shore, and as the stars in the midnight sky. It is meet, therefore, that I should place our grave, in which Sarah their mother, and I their father, shall lie, in the heart of the land—to be a nucleus around which our descendants shall gather in all coming time. What though, as God has told me, four hundred years of suffering and furnace fire must pass, yet my children shall ultimately come hither again: and I will hold the land in pledge against their coming, sure that it shall be as God has said!"

It is very beautiful to remark the action of Abraham's faith in this matter; and to see its outcome in his utter refusal to receive the land as a gift from any hand but that of God. When the chieftains to whom he made his appeal heard it, they instantly offered him the choice of their sepulchre affirming that none of them would withhold his sepulchre from so mighty a prince. And afterwards, when he sought their intercession with Ephron the son of Zohar,

for the obtaining of the cave of Machpelah, which was at the end of his field, and Ephron proposed to give it to him in the presence of the sons of his people, Abraham steadfastly refused. It was all his as the gift of God; it would be all his some day in fact; and in the meanwhile he would purchase the temporary use of that which he could never accept as a gift from any but his Almighty Friend.

And so after many courteous speeches, in the dignified manner which still prevails amongst Orientals, "the field and the cave, and all the trees, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city" (Genesis 23:17-18). Their witness had the same binding effect in those rude days as legal documents have in our own.

There Abraham buried Sarah; there Isaac and Ishmael buried Abraham; there they buried Isaac, and Rebecca his wife; there Jacob buried Leah; and there Joseph buried Jacob his father; and there in all likelihood, guarded by the jealous Moslem, untouched by the changes and storms that have swept around their quiet resting-place, those remains are sleeping still, holding that land in fee, and anticipating the time when on a larger and more prominent scale the promise of God to Abraham shall be accomplished.

Not yet has the Divine promise been fully realized. The children of Abraham have possessed the Land of Promise for "but a little while" (Isaiah 63:18). For long ages their adversaries have held sway there. But the days are hastening on when once more God will set His hand to gather His chosen people from all lands; and the infidel shall no longer desecrate those sacred spots; but once again shall the hills, and valleys, and pasture lands of Palestine come into the possession of the seed of Abraham, the friend of God.

Chapter Twenty-Three^(TOC)

The Soul's Answer to the Divine Summons

"I will go!"—Genesis 24:58.

Carry back your mind for thirty-seven centuries. The loft light of an Oriental sunset falls gently on the fertile grazing grounds watered by the broad Euphrates; and as its gloom lights up all the landscapes dotted by flocks, and huts, and villages, it irradiates with an especial wealth of color the little town of Haran, founded one hundred years before by Terah, who, travelling northwards from Ur, resolved to go no further. The old man was smarting keenly at the recent loss of his youngest son, and after him the infant settlement was named. And so in time houses were built, and girdled by a wall in Oriental style. There Terah died, and thence the caravan had started at the command of God across the terrible desert, for the unknown Land of Promise. One branch of the family, however—that of Nahor—lived there still. His son, Bethuel, was the head; and in that family, at the time of which I speak, there was at least a mother; a brother named Laban; and a daughter in the first flush of girlish beauty, Rebecca.

It is Rebecca who occupies the central place in the pastoral scene before us. All her young life had been spent in that old town. Daughter of the Sheikh though she was, yet she was not kept in that listless indolence which is the curse of so many well-born girls today. She could make savory meat, and tend the flocks, as her niece Rachel did in after-years on that same spot, and

carry her pitcher gracefully poised upon her shoulder. She knew by name all the people who dwelt in that little town; and she had heard of those of her kindred who before her birth had gone beyond the great desert, and of whom hardly a word had travelled back for so many years. She little guessed the greatness of the world, and of her place in it; and in her wildest dreams she never thought of doing more than living and dying within the narrow limits of her native place. Elastic in step, modest in manner, pure in heart, amiable and generous, with a very fair face, as the sacred story tells us—how little did she imagine that the wheel of God's providence was soon to catch her out of her quiet home, and whirl her into the mighty outer world that lay beyond the horizon of desert sand.

On a special evening a stranger halted at the well, outside the little town. He had with him a stately caravan of ten camels, each richly laden, and all bearing traces of long travel. There the little band waited, as if not knowing what next to do. Its leader was probably the good Eliezer, the steward of Abraham's house, who had come there on a solemn commission from his master. Abraham was now advanced in years. Isaac his son was forty years of age, and the old man longed to see him suitably married; and though his faith never doubted that God would fulfil His promise of the seed, yet he was desirous of clasping in his aged arms the second link between him and his posterity. He had therefore bound his trusty servant by a double oath: first, that he would not take a wife for Isaac from the daughters of the Canaanites around them, but from his own kith and kin at Haran; and secondly, that he would never be an accomplice to Isaac's return to the land which he had left. This solemn oath was lit up by the assurance of the old man, that the Lord God of heaven, who took him from his father's house and the land of his kindred, would send His angel before him, and would crown his mission with success.

Having arrived at the city-well towards nightfall—"even, the time that women go out to draw water"—the devout leader asked that God would send him "good speed," addressing the Almighty as the Lord God of his master Abraham, and pleading that in prospering his way He would show kindness to his master. The simplicity and trustfulness of his prayer are very beautiful; and are surely the reflection of the piety which reigned in that vast encampment gathered around the wells of Beersheba, and which was the result of Abraham's own close walk with God. There would be less fault to find with servants in the present day, if they were treated as servants were once treated—as souls rather than hands; and if they were encouraged to imitate, because they had learned to admire, the character of those with whom they live in such close contact. Alas that servants in Christian homes often find so little to attract them to the godliness which is professed, but scantily practiced!

It is Our Privilege to talk with God About Everything in Life

The minutest things are not too small for Him who numbers the hairs of our heads. No day can we afford to spend, without asking that He should send us good speed. Well would it be for us, as we stand by the well at morning, or at eventide, to commit our way unto the Lord, trusting that He should bring it to pass. And if this be true of ordinary days, how much more of those days which decide destiny, which are the watershed of life, and in which plans are concluded which may affect all after-years! Nor is it wrong for us to ask a sign from God, if by this we mean that He would permit the circumstances of our daily lot to indicate His will: to confirm by inner inspiration from Himself, and to embody, in fact, that which has already been impressed upon our own conscience. We have no right to ask for signs for the gratification of a morbid curiosity; but we are justified in asking for the concurrence of outward providence indicating the will of God. It was a holy and a happy inspiration that led the godly servant to ask that the damsel, who responded with courteous alacrity to his request for water, should be she whom God had appointed as a bride for his master's son; and it happened to him as it will always happen to those who have learned to trust like little children, that "before he had done speaking," his answer was waiting by his side.

We need not tell in detail all that followed: the gifts of heavy jewelry; the reverent recognition of God's goodness in answering prayer, as the man bowed down his head and worshipped the Lord; the swift run home; the admiration of mother and brother at the splendid gifts; the breathless telling of the unexpected meeting; the proffered hospitality of Laban, whose notions

of hospitality were quickened by his keen eye for gain, and who spoke the words of welcome with extra heat because he saw the rich lading of the camels; the provision of straw and provender for the camels, of water for the feet of the weary drivers, and of food for their leader, and the refusal to eat until his errand was unravelled and its purpose accomplished; the story, told in glowing words, of Abraham's greatness; the narrative of the wonderful way in which the speaker had been led, and Rebecca indicated; the final request that her relatives would deal kindly and truly in the matter; and their unhesitating and swift consent in words that drew the old servant prostrate to the ground in holy ecstasy as he worshipped the Lord. "Behold," they said, "Rebecca is before thee; take her and go: and let her be thy master's wife, as the Lord hath spoken."

Then from his treasures he brought forth jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment with which to deck Rebecca's fair form; her mother and Laban also received precious things to their hearts' desire. "Then they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night." In the early dawn, refusing all invitation to further waiting, Abraham's steward started back again, carrying with him Rebecca and her nurse; and through the fragrant morning air the blessings of that little cluster of friendly hearts were wafted to her ear, as seated on her camel, and wrapped in a dream of girlish hope and wonder, she caught the last voice from her home. "They addressed Rebecca and said unto her, Thou art our sister: be thou the mother of thousands of millions; and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them,"

We must thus pass over the details of this story, which carries on its forefront the stamp of inspiration and of truth; suffice it to say that it has no superior in this book for its rich, soft, placid style. It is full of those touches of nature

which make all men kin, and which move them everywhere alike. Let us not elicit two or three further lessons to illustrate by it the Divine summons, and the answer of the soul.

(1) A Lesson to those who Carry the Summons of god

Let us Saturate Our work with Prayer

Like his master, the servant would not take a single step without prayer. Not that he always spoke aloud. No one would have known that the old man prayed as he stood there by the well. Nor did he arbitrarily dictate to God; but he threw the whole responsibility of the matter upon Him who had ever shown Himself so true a Friend to his beloved master. He had a most difficult thing to do, in which strong chances were running against him. Was it likely that a young girl would care to leave her home to cross the vast expanse of sand in company with himself, a complete stranger, and to become the wife of one whom she had never seen? "Peradventure the woman will not follow me!" and if she were willing, her relatives might not be; but he prayed, and prayed again, and God's good speed crowned his errand with complete success.

We too are sometimes sent on very unlikely errands: Humanly speaking, our mission seems likely to prove a failure; but those who trust in God have not the word "failure" in their vocabulary. Their hearts are centers from which the fragrance of silent prayer is ever exhaling into the presence of God. They succeed where they seem menaced with certain disappointment. Christian

worker! never start on any mission for God, whether to an individual soul or to a congregation, without the prayer, "Send me good speed this day."

We must also Wait upon God for Direction

Abraham's steward asked that the chosen bride should be willing to draw water for his camels. A trifle this must seem to some; and yet it was a true test for a girl's nature. It showed a ready kindness of heart, which was prepared to outrun the requirements of conventional politeness. It indicated a nature in which haughty pride had no place. Is it not a fact that in such trivial, unstudied acts there is a sure index of character? Very often God's servants make great mistakes; because they force themselves on souls, not living in the will of God, not seeking the indication of His bidding, not waiting until He should open the door of circumstance into some new life. We do not always realize the solemn mystery that surrounds each human soul; or the depths into which all spiritual consciousness may have receded; or the thick cake of worldliness and carelessness which may have crusted over the sensibilities of the being. God only understands all this; and we should do very wisely to wait expectantly and trustfully for Him to open up the way of access into the citadel of the heart. We may be sure that in this God will not fail us, but that whilst we are speaking He will hear and answer.

Let us say much in Praise of our Master

It is beautiful to notice how eloquent the old man is about his master. He does not say one word about himself, or extol himself in any way, so absorbed was

he in the story of his absent, distant lord. Was not this also characteristic of the Apostles, who preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and whose narratives are like colorless glass, only letting His glory through? Alas! that we so obtrude ourselves, that men go away talking of us. Let us lose ourselves in our theme. And whilst we show the jewels of Christian character in our own deportment, let the theme of our message be: "The Lord Jehovah hath greatly blessed our Master, Christ, and has given Him a name which is above every name; and has raised Him to His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and every name that is named: and He is worthy to receive power, and riches, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." And when success attends your words, be sure to give all the glory to Him from whom it has come.

(2) The Summons Itself was a call to a simple

Penniless girl to ally herself in marriage to one of the wealthiest and noblest of earth's aristocracy. It was not sent because of her worth, or wealth, or beauty; but because it was so willed in the heart and counsel of Abraham. Such a call is sent to every soul that hears the Gospel. In yonder azure depths lives the great Father God. He has one Son, His only-begotten and well-beloved. He has resolved to choose from amongst men those who as one Church shall constitute His bride for ever. He sends this call to you, not because you are worthy, or wealthy, or beautiful; but because He has so willed it in the counsels of His own heart; and He longs that you shall be willing to detach yourself from all that you hold dear. This is His message: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear! forget also thine own people and thy father's house: so shall the King greatly desire thy

beauty: for He is thy Lord; and worship thou Him" (Psalm 95:10-11)

And if that call is obeyed, thou shalt lose thine own name, sinner, in His name; thou shalt be arrayed in His fair jewels; thou shalt share His wealth; thou shalt sit down with Him on His throne; all things shall be thine. Wilt thou go with this Man? Wilt thou leave all to be Christ's? Wilt thou give thine unseen Lover thine heart, to be His for ever? Come and put yourself under the convoy of the blessed Holy Spirit, who pleads the cause of Jesus, as did Abraham's servant that of Isaac; and let Him conduct you where Jesus is.

(3) How to Deal with this summons

We must find Room for it

"Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared a house and room." The Master saith, "Where is the guest-chamber?" There was no room for Christ in the inn: but we must make room for Him in the heart: or, at least, we must be willing that He should make room for Himself.

We must Bear Witness

"The damsel ran, and told her mother's house." As soon as you have heard the call, and received the jewels of promise, which are the earnest of your inheritance, you must go home to your friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for you.

We must not Procrastinate, or Confer with Flesh and Blood

Men, and circumstances, would fain defer our starting on pilgrimage. This is Satan's method of breaking off the union for ever. There must be no dallying or delay: but when the enquiry is put to us, "Wilt thou go with this man?" we must promptly and swiftly answer, "I will go."

The journey was long and toilsome; but all the way the heart of the young girl was sustained by the tidings told her by the faithful servant, who beguiled the weary miles with stories of the home to which she was journeying, and the man with whom her life was to be united—"Whom having not seen, she loved; and in whom, though she saw him not, she rejoiced." She already loved him, and ardently longed to see him.

One evening the meeting came. Isaac had gone forth to meditate at eventide, sadly lamenting the loss of his mother, eagerly anticipating the coming of his bride, and interweaving all with holy thought. And when he lifted up his eyes across the pastures, lo, the camels were coming, and the two young souls leapt to each other.

Happy meeting! which made Rebecca oblivious to all the trials and hardships of her journey, and the loss of her friends. Was it not also an emblem of the moment when the work of the Holy Spirit, our gracious Conductor, will conclude in the presence of our Lord, the true Bridegroom of saintly hearts, and we shall see his face, to be for ever with Him, going no more out for ever?

And after a while in that silent home, there was again the prattle of childish

voices; and for several years the patriarch rejoiced in the presence of his grandchildren, to whom he would tell the history of the past, on which his aged soul loved to dwell. And of one narrative those lads would never tire; that which told how their father had once climbed the summit of Moriah, to be, as it were, raised from the dead.

Chapter Twenty-Four^(TOC)

Gathered to his People

"These are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived; an hundred, threescore, and fifteen years. Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people."—Genesis 25:8.

No human name can vie with Abraham's for the wide-spread reverence which it has evoked amongst all races and throughout all time. The pious Jew looked forward to reposing, after death, in the bosom of Father Abraham. The fact of descent from him was counted by thousands sufficient to secure them a passport into heaven. Apostles so opposite as Paul and James united in commending his example to the imitation of primitive Christians, in an age which had seen the Lord Jesus Himself. The medieval Church canonized Abraham alone among Old Testament worthies, by no decree, but by popular consent. Devout Moslems reverence his name as second only to that of their prophet. What was the secret of this widespread renown? It is not because he headed one of the greatest movements of the human family; nor yet because he evinced manly and intellectual vigor; nor because he possessed vast wealth. It was rather the remarkable nobility and grandeur of his religious life that has made him the object of veneration to all generations of mankind.

At the Basis of his Character was a Mighty Faith

"Abraham believed God." In that faith he left his native land, and travelled to one which was promised, but not clearly indicated. In that faith he felt able to let Lot choose the best he could for himself; because he was sure that none could do better for himself than God was prepared to do for the one who trusted Him. In that faith he waited through long years, sure that God would give him the promised child. In that faith he lived a nomad life, dwelling in tents, and making no attempt to return to the settled country from which he had come out. Indeed, his soul was consumed with the passionate expectancy of the city of God. In that faith he was prepared to offer Isaac, and buried Sarah.

Do not suppose that his faith dwelt alone. On the contrary, it bore much fruit; for if we test him by those catalogues of the fruits of faith which are provided in the New Testament, we shall find that he manifested them each and all. Take, for instance, that chain of linked graces enumerated in the Second Epistle by the Apostle Peter; a kind of golden ladder, stretched across the chasm between heaven and earth, and uniting them.

To Faith he Added Virtue, or Manly Courage

What could have been more manly than the speed with which he armed his trained servants; or than the heroism with which he, with a train of undisciplined shepherds, broke on the disciplined bands of Assyria, driving them before him as the chaff before the whirlwind, and returning victorious down the long valley of the Jordan?

And to Manly Courage he Added Knowledge

All his life he was a student in God's college of divinity. Year by year fresh revelations of the character and attributes of God broke upon his soul. He grew in the knowledge of God and the Divine nature, which at the first had been to him a TERRA INCOGNITA. An unknown country grew beneath his gaze: as he climbed through the years into closer fellowship with God, and from the summit looked down upon its lengths and breadths, its depths and heights, its oceans, mountain-ranges, and plains.

And to Knowledge he Added Temperance, or Self-Control

That he was master of himself is evident from the way in which he repelled the offer of the King of Sodom; and curbed his spirit amid the irritations caused by Lot's herdsmen. The strongest spirits are those which have the strongest hand upon themselves, and are able, therefore, to do things which weaker men would fail in. There is no type of character more splendid than that of the man who is master of himself, because he is the servant of God; and who can rule others rightly because he can rule himself well.

And to Temperance, Patience

Speaking of him, the voice of New Testament inspiration affirms that he "patiently endured" (Hebrews 6:16). No ordinary patience was that which waited through the long years, not murmuring or complaining, but prepared to abide God's time; weaned from the breasts of earthly consolation and help, and quieted after the manner of the Psalmist, who said, "I have quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child. Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever." (Psalms 131:2-3).

And to his Patience he Added Godliness

One of his chief characteristics was his piety—a constant sense of the presence of God in his life, and a love and devotion to Him. Wherever he pitched his tent, there his first care was to rear an altar. Shechem, Hebron, Beersheba—alike saw these tokens of his reverence and love. In every time of trouble he turned as naturally to God as a child to its father; and there was such holy intercourse between his spirit and that of God, that the name by which he is now best known throughout the East is "THE FRIEND"—a name which he holds PAR EXCELLENCE, and which has almost overshadowed the use of that name by which we know him best.

And to Godliness he Added Brotherly Kindness

Some men who are devoted towards God are lacking in the tenderer qualities towards those most closely knit with them in family bonds. Not so was it with Abraham. He was full of affection. Beneath the calm exterior and the erect bearing of the mighty chieftain there beat a warm and affectionate heart. Listen to that passionate cry, "Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!" Remember God's own testimony to the affection he bore towards Isaac —"Thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest." Abraham's nature therefore may be compared to those ranges of mighty hills, whose summits rear themselves above the region of storms, and hold converse with the skies; whilst their lower slopes are clothed with woods and meadows, where homesteads nestle and bright children string their necklaces of flowers with merry laughter.

And to Brotherly Kindness he Added Charity, or Love

In his dealings with men he could afford to be generous, open-hearted, open-handed; willing to pay down the large price demanded for Machpelah's cave without haggling or complaint; destitute of petty pride; affable, courteous, able to break out into sunny laughter; right with God, and therefore able to shed upon men the rays of a genial, restful noble heart.

ALL THESE THINGS WERE IN HIM AND ABOUNDED, and they made him neither barren nor unfruitful; they made his calling and election sure; they prepared for him an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of God our Savior. The thought that underlies the expression in the Greek (PLOUSIWS HE EISODOS) is richly significant. The words denote the welcome given by choral songs and joyous greetings to the conqueror who, laden with spoils, returned to his native city; and they indicate that for some favored souls, at least, there is waiting on the threshold of the other world a welcome so exuberant, so boisterous in its unutterable joy, so royally demonstrative, as to resemble that given in all times to those who have conferred great benefits, or who have learnt the art of stirring the loyal devotion of their fellows. If such an entrance could be accorded to any one, certainly it would be to Abraham, when, stooping beneath the weight of one hundred threescore and fifteen years, "he gave up the ghost, and died at a good old age, an old man, full of years, and was gathered to his people."

Abraham Gave up the Ghost

There was no reluctance in his death; he did not cling to life—he was glad to be gone; and when the angel-messenger summoned him, without a struggle, nay, with the readiness of glad consent, his spirit returned to God who gave it.

He was Gathered to his People

This cannot refer to his body; for that did not sleep beside his ancestors, but side by side with Sarah's. Surely then it must refer to his spirit. The world's grey fathers knew little of the future; but they felt that there was somewhere a mustering place of their clan, whither devout and holy souls were being gathered, one by one, so that each spirit, as it passed from this world, went to rejoin its people; the people from which it had sprung: the people whose name it bore; the people to which by its tastes and sympathies it was akin.

What a lovely synonym for death! To DIE is to rejoin our people; to pass into a world where the great clan is gathering, welcoming with shouts each new-comer through the shadows. Where are your people? I trust they are God's people; and if so, those that bear your name, standing on the other shore, are more numerous than the handful gathered around you here; many whom you have never known, but who know you; many whom you have loved and lost awhile; many who without you cannot be made perfect in their happiness. There they are, rank on rank, company on company, regiment on regiment, watching for your coming. Be sure you do not disappoint them! But remember, if your people are God's people, you cannot be gathered to them unless first in faith and love you are gathered to Him.

Little doubt had this noble man of the recognition of saintly spirits in the other world; and indeed, it is an untrue conception which has filled the future with strange spirits, unknowing and unknown. Heaven is not a prison with tier on tier of cells; but a HOME. And what is home without the recognition and love of fond hearts? So long as we read of David going to his child; of Paul anticipating the pleasure of meeting again his converts; of the women

and disciples being able to recognize the appearance and the love of the Savior amid the glory of the resurrection body—we may be prepared to believe, with the patriarch, that dying is re-union with those to whom in the deepest sense we are related. Spiritual affinities are for all time and for eternity, and will discover themselves through all worlds.

An his Sons, Isaac and Ishmael

Buried him in the Cave of Machpelah

There were great differences between these two. Ishmael, the child of his slave: Isaac, of the wedded wife. Ishmael, the offspring of expediency: Isaac, of promise. Ishmael, wild and masterful, "the wild ass"; strongly marked in his individuality; proud, independent, swift to take an insult, swift to avenge it: Isaac, quiet and retiring, submissive and meek, willing to carry wood, to be kept in the dark, to be bound, to yield up his wells, and to let his wife govern his house. And yet all differences were wiped out in that moment of supreme sorrow; and coming from his desert fastnesses, surrounded by his wild and ruffian freebooters, Ishmael united with the other son of their common father, who had displaced him in his inheritance, and who was so great a contrast to himself; but all differences were smoothed out in that hour.

Many ancient chieftains may have been gathered by that ancient cave, to join in one last act of respect to the mighty prince who had dwelt amongst them for so long. Amid the wail of the women, and the dirge which even to this day tells of sorrow for departed worth in Eastern lands—borne by a band of his trusted retainers, whilst a vast concourse of the camp stood wrapped in reverent silence around—the remains of the man who had dared to trust God at all costs, and who with pilgrim steps had traversed so many weary miles, were solemnly laid beside the dust of Sarah, his faithful wife. There, in all probability, they rest even to this day, and thence they will be raised at the coming of the King.

Out of materials which were by no means extraordinary, God built up a

character with which He could hold fellowship as friend with friend; and a life which has exerted a profound influence on all after-time. It would seem as if He can raise any crop He chooses, when the soil of the heart and life are entirely surrendered to Him. Why should not we henceforth yield ourselves utterly to His divine husbandry, asking Him to fulfil in us the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power? Only let us trust Him fully, and obey Him instantly and utterly; and as the years pass by, they shall witness results which shall bring glory to God in the highest, whilst they fill us with ceaseless praise.

^[1] The site of Ur is still a matter of discussion, into which I have no desire to enter. I have adopted the more recent suggestion because the distance from Charran seems to comport better with the narrative. The old site assigned to Ur was only a day or two's march from Charran, and surely Terah would not have broken up his home for so short a journey.

ELIJAH

ORIGINAL TITLE: ELIJAH AND THE SECRET OF HIS
POWER

BY

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Chapter 1^(TOC)

The Source of Elijah's Strength

This chapter begins with the conjunction "And." It is, therefore, an addition to what has gone before; and it is God's addition. When we have read to the end of the previous chapter—which tells the melancholy story of the rapid spread and universal prevalence of idolatry in the favored land of the ten tribes of Israel—we might suppose that that was the end of all; and that the worship of Jehovah would never again acquire its lost prestige and power. And, no doubt, the principal actors in the story thought so too. Ahab thought so, Jezebel thought so, the false prophets thought so, the scattered remnant of hidden disciples thought so.

But they had made an unfortunate omission in their calculations—they had left out Jehovah Himself. He must have something to say at such a crisis. He must add a few chapters before the history is closed. When men have done their worst and finished, it is the time for God to begin. And when God begins, He is likely, with one blow, to reverse all that has been done without Him; and to write some pages of human history which will be a lesson and an inspiration to all coming time. That "And" is ominous enough to His foes; but it is full of hope and promise to His friends.

Things were dark enough. After the death of Solomon, his kingdom split into two parts. The southern was under Rehoboam, his son; the northern under Jeroboam, who had superintended the vast public works. Jeroboam was

desperately eager to keep his hold on his people; but he feared to lose it if they continued to go, two or three times a year, to the annual feasts at Jerusalem. He thought that old associations might overpower their newborn loyalty to himself. He resolved, therefore, to set up the worship of Jehovah in his own territories, and erected two temples, one at Dan, in the extreme north, the other at Bethel, in the extreme south. And in each of these places he placed a golden calf, that the God of Israel might be worshipped "under the form of a calf that eateth hay." This sin broke the second commandment—which forbade the children of Israel to make any graven image or to bow down before the likeness of anything in heaven above, or in the earth beneath. So weak and sinful a bid for popularity is never forgotten in Holy Scripture. Like a funeral knell, the words ring out again and again: "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin."

After many revolutions and much bloodshed, the kingdom passed into the hands of a military adventurer, Omri. The son of this man was Ahab, who "did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him" (1 Kings 16:33). This came to pass, not so much because his character was more depraved, but because he was a weak man, the tool of a crafty, unscrupulous, and cruel woman. Some of the worst crimes that have ever been committed have been wrought by weak men at the instigation of worse—but stronger—spirits than themselves.

When the young and beautiful Jezebel left the ceiled palaces of Tyre to become the consort of the newly-crowned king of Israel, it was no doubt regarded as a splendid match. At that time Tyre sat as queen upon the seas in the zenith of her glory. Her colonies dotted the shores of the Mediterranean as far as Spain. Her ships whitened every sea with their sails, and ventured to the coasts of our own Cornwall for tin. Her daughter, Carthage, nursed the

lion cub Hannibal, and was strong enough to make Rome tremble. But, like many a splendid match, it was fraught with misery and disaster. No one can disobey God's plain words against intermarriage with the ungodly without suffering for it at last.

As she left her palace home, Jezebel would be vehemently urged by the priests—beneath whose influence she had been trained, and who, therefore, exercised an irresistible spell over her—to do her utmost to introduce into Israel the hideous and cruel rites of her hereditary religion. Nor was she slow to obey. First, she seems to have erected a temple to Astarte in the neighborhood of Jezreel, the Windsor of the land, and to have supported its four hundred and fifty priests from the revenues of her private purse. Then Ahab and she built a temple for Baal in Samaria, the capital of the kingdom, large enough to contain immense crowds of worshipers (1 Kings 16:32). Shrines and temples then began to rise in all parts of the land in honor of these false deities; while the altars of Jehovah, like that at Carmel, were ruthlessly broken down. The land swarmed with the priests of Baal and of the groves—proud of court favor; glorying in their sudden rise to power; insolent, greedy, licentious, and debased. The fires of persecution were lit and began to burn with fury. The schools of the prophets were shut up, and grass grew in their courts. The prophets themselves were hunted down and slain by the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented. The pious Obadiah had great difficulty in saving a few of them by hiding them in the limestone caves of Carmel and feeding them at the risk of his own life.

The whole land seemed apostate. Of all the thousands of Israel, only seven thousand remained who had not bowed the knee or kissed the hand to Baal. But they were paralyzed with fear and kept so still that their very existence

was unknown by Elijah in the hour of his greatest loneliness. Such times have often come, fraught with woe: false religions have gained the upper hand, iniquity has abounded, and the love of many has waxed cold. So was it when the Turk swept over the Christian communities of Asia Minor and replaced the cross by the crescent. So was it when Roman Catholicism spread over Europe as a pall of darkness that grew denser as the dawn of the Reformation was on the point of breaking. So it was in the last century, when moderatism reigned in Scotland, and apathy in England.

But God is never at a loss. The land may be overrun with sin, the lamps of witness may seem all extinguished, the whole force of the popular current may run counter to His truth, and the plot may threaten to be within a hair's breadth of entire success, but all the time He will be preparing a weak man in some obscure highland village, and in the moment of greatest need will send him forth, as His all-sufficient answer to the worst plottings of His foes. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isaiah 59:19b). So it has been, and so it shall be again.

Elijah was an inhabitant of Gilead. Gilead lay east of the Jordan. It was wild and rugged, its hills were covered with shaggy forests, its awful solitudes were only broken by the dash of mountain streams, and its valleys were the haunt of fierce wild beasts. What the highlands of Argyleshire and Inverness were a century ago to the lowland towns of Scotland, that must Gilead have been to the more refined and civilized people of Jerusalem and Samaria. The inhabitants of Gilead partook of the character of their country—wild, lawless, and unkempt. They lived in rude stone villages and subsisted by keeping flocks of sheep.

Elijah grew up like the other lads of his age. In his early years he probably

did the work of a shepherd on those wild hills. As he grew to manhood, his erect figure, his shaggy locks, his cloak of camel's hair, his muscular, sinewy strength—which could out strip the fiery coursers of the royal chariot and endure excessive physical fatigue—distinguished him from the dwellers in lowland valleys. But in none of these would he be specially different from the men who grew up with him in the obscure mountain hamlet of Thisbe, whence he derived the name of Tishbite. There were many among them as lithe, and swift, and strong, and capable of fatigue, as he. We must not look to these things for the secret of his strength.

As he grew in years, he became characterized by an intense religious earnestness. He was "very jealous for the Lord God of hosts." Deeply taught in Scripture, especially in those passages which told how much Jehovah had done for His people, Elijah yearned, with passionate desire, that they should give Him His meed of honor. And he learned that this was lacking by the dread tidings that came in broken snatches. Messengers after messenger told how Jezebel had thrown down God's altars and slain His prophets and replaced them by the impious rites of her Tyrian deities—his blood ran liquid fire, his indignation burst all bounds, he was "very jealous for the Lord God of hosts." O noble heart! I wish that we could be as righteously indignant amid the evils of our time! Oh for a coal from that pure flame that burnt on thine inner hearth!

But the question was, How should he act? What could he do—a wild, untutored child of the desert? There was only one thing he could do—the resource of all much-tried souls—he could pray, and he did: "He prayed earnestly" (James 5:17). And in his prayer he seems to have been led back to a denunciation made years before by Moses to the people—that if they turned aside and served other gods, and worshiped them, the Lord's wrath would be

kindled against them; and He would shut up the heaven so there should be no rain (Deuteronomy 11:16-17). Flowing into this mold, his thoughts must have shaped themselves somewhat thus: "If my God does not fulfill this threat the people will think that it is an idle tale, or that He is a myth of the past—a dead tradition. This must not be. Better far that the land should suffer the terrors of famine, and the people experience the bitterest agonies of thirst, and that I should be torn limb from limb. It were better that we should suffer the direst physical woes that can blast our national prosperity, than that we should come to think that the Jehovah of our fathers is as dead as the idols of the heathen." And so he set himself to pray that the terrible threat might be literally fulfilled. "He prayed earnestly that it might not rain."

A terrible prayer indeed! And yet, was it not more terrible for the people to forget and ignore the God of their fathers, and to give themselves up to the licentious orgies of Baal and Astarte? Remember, too, what a wrong construction might be put upon the utter silence of God Himself. Could anything be more disastrous than that the statute book should be filled with laws which the Lawgiver could not or would not enforce? Nothing could be more detrimental to the true conception of God. "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee and set them in order before thine eyes" (Psalm 50:21).

Physical suffering is a smaller calamity than moral delinquency. And the love of God does not shrink from inflicting such suffering, if, as a result, the plague of sin may be cut out as a cancer and stayed. It may be that this is why there is so much sorrow in life. One may be suffering a terrible drought, before which all the springs of his prosperity are drying up. No dews of grace or rains of blessing have fallen on one's lot for many days. This is not a

chance; it is the work of One who loves His own too well to permit him to forsake Himself without making one effort to arrest and change a life. The cornfield is fired only because He wants to bring him to Himself (2 Samuel 14:30). The drought is sent only to enforce the rebuilding of the altar on Carmel's height and the immolation of the false priests in the vale beneath.

And as Elijah prayed, the conviction was wrought into his mind that it should be even as he prayed; and that he should go to acquaint Ahab with the fact. Whatever might be the hazard to himself, both king and people must be made to connect their calamities with the true cause. And this they evidently did, as we shall see (1 Kings 18:10). That the drought was due to his prayer is also to be inferred from the express words with which Elijah announced the fact to the king: "There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" (1 Kings 17:1).

What a meeting was that! We know not where it took place, whether in the summer palace when Jezebel was at her consort's side, or when Ahab was surrounded by his high officers of state in Samaria. But wherever it took place, it was a subject worthy of the highest art and genius. The old religion against the new; the child of nature against the flaccid child of courts; camel's hair against soft clothing; moral strength against moral weakness.

This interview needed no ordinary moral strength. It was no child's play for the untutored man of the desert to go on such an errand to that splendid court! What chance was there of his escaping with his life? Surely he would not fare better than the prophets who had not dared so much as he! Yet he came and went unhurt, in the panoply of a might which seemed invulnerable.

What was the secret of that strength? If it can be shown that it was due to something inherent in Elijah and peculiar to himself; some force of nature,

some special quality of soul to which ordinary men can lay no claim; then we may as well close our inquiries and turn away from the inaccessible heights that mock us. But if it can be shown, as I think it can, that this splendid life was lived not by its inherent qualities, but by sources of strength which are within the reach of the humblest child of God who reads these lines, then every line of it is an inspiration, beckoning us to its own glorious level. Courage, brothers! There is nothing in this man's life which may not have its counterpart in ours, if only it can be established that his strength was obtained from sources which are accessible to ourselves.

Elijah's strength did not lie in himself or his surroundings. He was of humble extraction. He had no special training. He is expressly said to have been "a man of like passions" with ourselves. When, through failure of faith, he was cut off from the source of his strength, he showed more craven-hearted cowardice than most men would have done. He lay down upon the desert sands, asking to die. When the natural soil of his nature shows itself, it is not richer than that of the majority of men. If anything it is the reverse.

Elijah gives us three indications of the source of his strength.

1. "AS JEHOVAH LIVETH." To all beside, Jehovah might seem dead; but to him He was the one supreme reality of life. And if we would be strong, we too must be able to say, "I know that my redeemer liveth" (Job 19:25), "He ever liveth to make intercession for us" (Hebrews 7:25), and "because he lives, we shall live also" (John 14:19). The death of the cross was bitter, but He lives. The spear made fearful havoc, but He lives. The grave was fast closed, but He lives. Men and devils did their worst, but He lives. The man who has heard Jesus say, "I am he that liveth" (Revelation 1:18), will also hear Him say, "Fear

not! be strong, yea, be strong."

2. "BEFORE WHOM I STAND." He was standing in the presence of Ahab; but he was conscious of the presence of a greater than any earthly monarch, the presence of Jehovah, before whom angels bow in lowly worship, harkening to the voice of His word. Gabriel himself could not employ a loftier designation (Luke 1:19). Let us cultivate this habitual recognition of the presence of God, it will lift us above all other fear. Let us build our cottage so that every window may look out on the mighty Alps of God's presence; and that we may live, and move, and have our being beneath the constant impression that God is here. Besides this, a conviction had been borne in upon his mind that he was chosen by God to be His called and recognized servant and messenger; and in this capacity he stood before Him.
3. "JEHOVAH IS MY STRENGTH." The word ELIJAH may be rendered "Jehovah is my God," but there is another possible translation, "Jehovah is my strength." This gives the key to Elijah's life. God was the strength of his life; of whom should he be afraid? When the wicked, even his enemies and foes, came on him to eat up his flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against him, his heart should not fear. What a revelation is given us in this name! Oh that it were true of each of us! Yet, why should it not be? Let us from henceforth cease from our own strength, which at the best is weakness; and let us appropriate God's by daily, hourly faith. Then this shall be the motto of our future lives: "In the LORD

have I righteousness and strength" (Isaiah 45:24), "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13), "the LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation" (Psalm 118:14).

Chapter 2_(TOC)

Beside the Drying Brook

We are studying the life of a man of like passions with ourselves, one who was weak where we are weak, failing where we would fail. But he stood, single-handed, against his people and stemmed the tide of idolatry and sin and turned a nation back to God. And he did it by the use of resources which are within reach of us all. This is the fascination of the story. If it can be proven that he acted under a spell of some secret which is hidden from us ordinary persons or that he was cast in an heroic mold to which we can lay no claim, then disappointment will overcast our interest and we must lay aside the story. Elijah would be a model we could not copy, an ideal we could not realize, a vision that mocks us as it fades into the azure of the past.

But this is not the case. This man, by whom God threshed the mountains, was only a worm at the best. This pillar in God's temple was, by nature, a reed shaken by the breath of the slightest zephyr. This prophet of fire who shone like a torch, was originally but a piece of smoking flax. Faith made him all he became, and faith will do as much for us if only we can exercise it to appropriate the might of the eternal God as he did. All power is in God, and it has pleased Him to store it all in the risen Savior, as in some vast reservoir. These stores are brought into human hearts by the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost is given according to the measure of our receptivity and faith. Oh, for Elijah's receptiveness, that we might be as full of Divine power as he was, and as able, therefore, to do exploits for God and truth!

But, before this can happen, we must pass through the same education as he. You must go to Cherith and Zarephath before you can stand on Carmel. Even the faith you have must be pruned, educated, and matured so that it may become strong enough to subdue kingdoms, work righteousness, and turn armies of aliens to flight.

Notice, then, the successive steps in God's education of His servants.

1. God's Servants must Learn to take one Step at a Time

This is an elementary lesson, but it is hard to learn. No doubt Elijah found it so. Before he left Thisbe for Samaria, to deliver the message that burdened his soul, he would naturally inquire what he should do when he had delivered it. How would he be received? What would be the outcome? Where should he go to escape the vengeance of Jezebel, who had not shrunk from slaying the prophets less dauntless than himself? If he had asked those questions of God and waited for a reply before he left his highland home, he would never have gone at all. Our Father never treats His children so. He only shows us one step at a time, and He bids us take it in faith. If we look up into His face and say: "But if I take this step which is certain to involve me in difficulty, what shall I do next?" the heavens will be mute save with the one repeated message, "Take it and trust Me."

But directly God's servant took the step to which he was led, and delivered the message, then "the word of the Lord came to him, saying: Get thee hence, ...hide thyself by the brook Cherith" (1 Kings 17:3). So it was afterwards; it was only when the brook had dried up, and the stream had dwindled to pools, and the pools to drops, and the drops had died away in the sand—only then

did the word of the Lord come to him, saying, "Arise, get thee to Zarephath" (1 Kings 17:9).

I like that phrase, "the word of the Lord came to him." He did not need to go to search for it; it came to him. And so it will come to you. It may come through the Word of God, or through a distinct impression made on your heart by the Holy Ghost, or through circumstances; but it will find you out, and tell you what you are to do. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:6).

It may be that for long you have had upon your mind some strong impression of duty; but you have held back, because you could not see what the next step would be. Hesitate no longer. Step out upon what seems to be the impalpable mist, and you will find a slab of adamant beneath your feet. Every time you put your foot forward, you will find that God has prepared a stepping-stone, and another, and another; each appearing as you come to it. The bread is by the day. The manna is every morning. The strength is according to the moment's need. God does not give all the directions at once, lest we should get confused. He tells us just as much as we can remember and do. Then we must look to Him for more. So we learn, by easy stages, the sublime habits of obedience and trust.

2. God's Servants must be Taught the Value of the Hidden Life

"Get thee hence and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith" (1 Kings 17:3). The man who is to take a high place before his fellows must take a low place before his God, and there is no better manner

of bringing a man down than by suddenly dropping him out of a sphere to which he was beginning to think himself essential, teaching him that he is not at all necessary to God's plan, and compelling him to consider in the sequestered vale of some Cherith how mixed are his motives, and how insignificant his strength.

So the Master dealt with His apostles. When, on one occasion, they returned to Him, full of themselves and flushed with success, He quietly said, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place." We are too strong, too full of self, for God to use us. We vainly imagine that we are something, and that God cannot dispense with us. How urgently we need that God should bury our self-centeredness in the darkness of a Cherith or a tomb, so as to hide it, and keep it in the place of death. We must not be surprised, then, if sometimes our Father says: "There, child, you have had enough of this hurry, and publicity, and excitement; go and hide yourself by the brook—hide yourself in the Cherith of the sick chamber, or in the Cherith of bereavement, or in some solitude from which the crowds have ebbed away." Happy is he who can reply, "This Your will is also mine; I flee to You to hide me. Hide me in the secret of Your tabernacle, and beneath the cover of Your wings!"

Every saintly soul that would wield great power with men must win it in some hidden Cherith. A Carmel triumph always presupposes a Cherith; and a Cherith always leads to a Carmel. We cannot give out unless we have previously taken in. We cannot exorcise the devils unless we have first entered into our closets and shut our doors and spent hours of rapt intercourse with God. The acquisition of spiritual power is impossible, unless we hide ourselves from men and from ourselves in some deep gorge where we may absorb the power of the eternal God; as vegetation through long ages absorbed these qualities of sunshine which it gives back through burning

coal.

Bishop Andrewes had his Cherith in which he spent five hours every day in prayer and devotion. John Welsh, who thought the day ill-spent which did not witness eight or ten hours of closet communion, had it. David Brainard had it in the woods of North America, which were the favorite scene of his devotions. Christmas Evans had it in his long and lonely journeys amid the hills of Wales. Fletcher of Madeley, who would often leave his classroom for his private chamber and spend hours upon his knees with his students, pleading for the fullness of the Spirit till they could kneel no longer, had his Cherith. Or, passing back to the blessed age from which we date the centuries, Patmos, the seclusion of the Roman prisons, the Arabian desert, and the hills and vales of Palestine, are forever memorable as the Cheriths of those who have made our modern world. Our Lord found His Cherith at Nazareth, in the wilderness of Judea, amid the olives of Bethany, and in the solitudes of Gadara. Not one of us can dispense with some Cherith where the sounds of earthly toil and human voices are exchanged for the murmur of the waters of quietness which are fed from the throne and where we may taste the sweets and imbibe the power of a life hidden in Christ by the power of the Holy Ghost. Sometimes a human spirit, intent on its quest, may even find its Cherith in a crowd. For such an one, God is an all-sufficient abode, and the secret place of the Most High is its most holy place.

3. God's Servants must Learn to Trust God Absolutely

At first we yield a timid obedience to a command which seems to involve manifest impossibilities; but when we find that God is even better than His word, our faith grows exceedingly, and we advance to further feats of faith

and service. This is how God trains His young eaglets to fly. At last nothing is impossible. This is the key to Elijah's experience.

How strange to be sent to a brook, which would of course be as subject to the drought as any other! How contrary to nature to suppose that ravens, which feed on carrion, would find such food as man could eat; or, having found it, would bring it regularly morning and evening! How unlikely, too, that he could remain secreted from the search of the bloodhounds of Jezebel anywhere within the limits of Israel! But God's command was clear and unmistakable. It left him no alternative but to obey. "So he went and did according to the word of the Lord" (1 Kings 17:5).

One evening, as we may imagine, Elijah reached the narrow gorge, down which the brook bounded with musical babble toward the Jordan. On either side the giant cliffs towered up, inclosing a little patch of blue sky. The interlacing boughs of the trees made a natural canopy in the hottest noon. All along the streamlet's course the moss would make a carpet of richer hue and softer texture than could be found in the palaces of kings. And, yonder, came the ravens—"the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning... [and] in the evening" (1 Kings 17:6). What a lesson was this of God's power to provide for his child! In after days, Elijah would often recur to it as dating a new epoch in his life. "I can never doubt God again. I am thankful that He shut me off from all other supplies, and threw me back on Himself. I am sure that He will never fail me, whatsoever the circumstances of strait or trial through which He may call me to pass."

There is a strong emphasis on the word THERE—"I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there" (1 Kings 17:4). Elijah might have preferred many hiding places to Cherith; but that was the only place to which the ravens would bring his supplies; and, as long as he was there, God was pledged to

provide for him. Our supreme thought should be: "Am I where God wants me to be?" If so, God will work a direct miracle rather than suffer us to perish for lack. If the younger son chooses to go to the far country of his own accord, he may be in danger of dying of starvation among his swine; but if the Father sends him there, he shall have enough and to spare. God sends no soldier to the warfare on his own charges. He does not expect us to attend to the duties of the field and the commissariat. The manna always accompanies the pillar of cloud. If we do His will on earth as in heaven, He will give us daily bread. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

We will not stay to argue the probability of this story being true. It is enough that it is written here. And the presence of the supernatural presents no difficulties to those who can say "Our Father," and who believe in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus. But if corroboration were needed, it could be multiplied an hundred-fold from the experience of living people, who have had their needs supplied in ways quite as marvelous as the coming of ravens to the lonely prophet.

A little boy, having read this incident with his widowed mother one wintry night, as they sat in a fireless room beside a bare table, asked her if he might set the door open for God's ravens to come in; he was so sure that they must be on their way. The burgomaster of that German town, passing by, was attracted by the sight of the open door, and entered, inquiring the cause. When he learned the reason, he said, "I will be God's raven," and relieved their need then and afterward. Ah, reader, God has an infinite fertility of resource; and if thou art doing His work where He would have thee, He will supply thy need, though the heavens fall. Only trust Him!

4. God's Servants are Often Called to Sit by Drying Brooks

"It came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up" (1 Kings 17:7). Our wildest fancy can but inadequately realize the condition to which the Land of Promise was reduced by the first few months of drought. The mountain pastures were seared as by the passage of fire. The woodlands and copses were scorched and silent. The rivers and brooks shrank attenuated in their beds, receding continually, and becoming daily more shallow and still. There was no rain to revive vegetation or replenish the supplies of water. The sun rose and set for months in the sky, the blue of which was unflecked by a single cloud. There was no dew to sprinkle the parched, cracked earth with refreshing tears. And so Cherith began to sing less cheerily. Each day marked a visible diminution of its stream. Its voice grew fainter and fainter till its bed became a course of stones, baking in the scorching heat. It dried up.

What did Elijah think? Did he think that God had forgotten him? Did he begin to make plans for himself? This would have been human; but we will hope that he waited quietly for God, quieting himself as a weaned child, as he sang, "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him" (Psalm 62:5).

Many of us have had to sit by drying brooks. Perhaps some are sitting by them now—the drying brook of popularity which is ebbing away as from John the Baptist; the drying brook of health, sinking under a creeping paralysis, or a slow consumption; the drying brook of money, slowly dwindling before the demands of sickness, bad debts, or other people's extravagance; the drying brook of friendship, which for long has been diminishing and threatens soon to cease. Ah, it is hard to sit beside a drying

brook, much harder than to face the prophets of Baal on Carmel.

Why does God let them dry? He wants to teach us not to trust in His gifts, but in Himself. He wants to drain us of self, as He drained the apostles by ten days of waiting before Pentecost. He wants to loosen our roots before He removes us to some other sphere of service and education. He wants to put in stronger contrast the river of throne-water that never dries. Let us learn these lessons, and turn from our failing Cheriths to our unfailing Savior. All sufficiency resides in Him—unexhausted by the flight of the ages, undiminished by the thirst of myriads of saints. The river of God is full of water. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:13-14). "Drink abundantly, O beloved!" (Song of Solomon 5:1).

Chapter 3_(TOC)

Ordered to Zarephath

A friend of mine, spending a few days in the neighborhood of our English lakes, came upon the most beautiful shrubs he had ever seen. Arrested by their extraordinary luxuriance, he inquired the cause and learned that it was due to a judicious system of transplanting, constantly pursued. Whatever may be the effect of such a process in nature, it is certainly true that our heavenly Father employs similar methods to secure the highest results in us. He is constantly transplanting us. And though these changes threaten at times to hinder all steady progress in the spiritual life, if they are rightly borne they result in the most exquisite manifestations of Christian character and experience.

Another illustration of the same truth is given by the prophet Jeremiah, when he says, "Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed" (Jeremiah 48:11). Grape juice, when first expressed from its ruddy chalice, is impure and thick. It is left in vessels until fermentation has done its work, and a thick sediment, called lees, has been precipitated to the bottom. When this is done, the liquid is carefully drawn off into another vessel, so that all the precipitated sediment is left behind. This emptying process is repeated again and again, till the offensive odor that came from the lees has passed away, and the liquid has become clear and beautiful. In the case of

Moab there had been none of this unsettling process, and consequently the people had made no moral or spiritual progress; his taste remained in him, and his scent [was] not changed" (Jeremiah 48:11). The quiet life is by no means the greatest life. Some characters can only reach the highest standard of spirituality by the disturbings or displacings in the order of God's providence.

Will not this cast light upon God's dealings with Elijah? Once he stood in the vessel "home;" then emptied into the vessel "Jezreel;" then into the vessel "Cherith;" and now into the fourth vessel, "Zarephath." All this that he might not settle upon his lees, but be urged toward a goal of moral greatness which he otherwise would never have reached. This qualified him to take his stand on the Transfiguration Mount as the associate of Moses and the companion of Christ. Take heart, you who are compelled to be constantly on the move—pitching the tent tonight, only to be summoned by the moving cloud and the trumpet call to strike it tomorrow. All this is under the direction of a wise and faithful love which is educating you for a glorious destiny. Believe only that your circumstances are those most suited to develop your character. They have been selected out of all possible combinations of events and conditions in order to effect in you the highest finish of usefulness and beauty. They would have been the ones selected by you if all the wide range of omniscient knowledge had been within your reach.

And yet, when a human spirit is entirely taken up with God as Elijah was, these changes become comparatively harmless and trifling—as a gnat sting to a soldier in the heat of battle. To one who lives in the presence of the unchanging God and who can say, "Thus saith Jehovah, before whom I stand," the ever-varying conditions of our lot touch only the outer rim of life. Whatever they take away, they cannot take THAT away. Whatever they

bring, they cannot give more than THAT. The consciousness of that Presence is the one all-mastering thought—the inspiration, the solace, the comfort, of every waking hour. And as we have seen a far-spread summer landscape through the haze of intense heat, so do all people and things and events show themselves through the all-enwrapping, all-encompassing presence of God. To fulfill His plans, to obey the least intimation of His will, to wait on His hand, to dwell in the absorbing vision of Himself, to be satisfied with the fullness of joy which fills His presence-chamber with sweetest perfume and with celestial music—this is the one passion of the happy spirit, to whom, as to Elijah, this grace is given. But such grace is for you, through the Holy Ghost, if only you will open to it all the capacities of your heart and life. Why not seek it?

There are several lessons here.

Faith Awaits God's Plans

"It came to pass, after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land." Week after week, with unfaltering and steadfast spirit, Elijah watched that dwindling brook; often tempted to stagger through unbelief, but refusing to allow his circumstances to come between himself and God. Unbelief sees God through circumstances, as we sometimes see the sun shorn of its rays through the smoky air; but faith puts God between itself and circumstances, and looks at them through Him. And so the dwindling brook became a silver thread, and the silver thread stood presently in pools at the foot of the largest boulders, and then the pools shrank. The birds fled, the wild creatures of field and forest came no more to drink, the brook was dry. Only then, to his patient and unwavering spirit, "the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath" (1 Kings 7:8-9).

Most of us would have become anxious and worn with planning long before that. We should have ceased our songs as soon as the streamlet caroled less musically over its rocky bed. With harps swinging on the willows we should have paced to and fro upon the withering grass, lost in pensive thought. And probably, long before the brook was dry, we should have devised some plan, and asking God's blessing on it, would have started off elsewhere. Alas! we are all too full of our own schemes, and plans, and contrivings. And if Samuel does not come just when we expect, we force ourselves and offer the burnt-offering (1 Samuel 13:12). This is the source of the untold misery. We sketch out our program and rush into it. Only when we are met by insuperable obstacles do we begin to reflect whether it was God's will or to appeal to Him. He does often extricate us because His mercy endureth forever, but if we had only waited first to see the unfolding of His plans, we should never have found ourselves landed in such an inextricable labyrinth. We should never have been compelled to retrace our steps with so many tears of shame.

One of the formative words for all human lives, and especially for God's servants, was given by God to Moses, when He said, "See... that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount" (Hebrews 8:5). Moses was eager to do God's work, and the best skill among the people was at his command; but he must not make a single bell, pomegranate, tassel, fringe, curtain, or vessel, except on God's pattern and after God's ideal. And so he was taken up into the mount, and God opened the door into His own mind where the tabernacle stood complete as an ideal; and Moses was permitted to see the thing as it lived in the thought and heart of God. Forty days of reverent study passed by. When Moses returned to the foot of the mountain, he had only to transfer into the region of actual fact that which had been already shown to him, in pattern, on the mount.

Surely some such thought as this must have been in the mind of our blessed Lord, when He said, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do" (John 5:19). So utterly had He emptied Himself that He had abandoned even His own schemes and plans. He lived a planless life, accepting each moment the plan which His Father unfolded before Him. He was confident that that plan would lead Him on to greater and ever greater works, until the world should marvel at the splendor of the results—rising from Gethsemane and Calvary through the broken grave, to the Ascension Mount and the glory of His second Advent. Oh, mystery of humiliation, that He who planned all things should will to live a life of such absolute dependence! And, yet, if He lived such a life, how much more will it become us; how much anxiety it will save us; and to what lengths of usefulness and heights of glory will it bring us! Would that we were content to wait for God to unveil His plan, so that our life might be simply the working out of His thought, the exemplification of His ideal! Let this be the cry of our hearts, "Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths! (Psalm 21:4); "teach me to do thy will" (Psalm 143:10); "unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul" (Psalm 25:1).

God's Plans Demand Implicit Obedience

"So he arose and went to Zarephath," as before he had gone to Cherith, and as presently he would go to show himself to Ahab. A Christian lady, who had attended our services and who had learned the blessedness of a surrendered life, was soon after obliged to find another home across the ocean. She came back recently, over thousands of miles of land and sea, to visit the scene of the lesson in the hope that she would regain her former joy. But to her

disappointment, though she worshiped on the same sacred spot and listened to the sounds of the well-known voice, she could not recover her joy.

At last the cause appeared. She had been living in conscious disobedience to the will of Christ, expressed through her conscience and His Word. The motives that prompted the disobedience had a touch of nobility about them but it was still disobedience, and it wrought its own penalty.

This is the true cause of failure in so many Christian lives. We catch sight of God's ideal, and become enamored with it, and we vow to be only His. We use the most emphatic words. We dedicate ourselves upon the altar. For a while we seem to tread another world, bathed in heavenly light. Then there comes a command clear and unmistakable. We must leave some beloved Cherith and go to some unwelcome Zarephath. We must speak some word, take some step, cut off some habit; and we shrink from it—the cost is too great. But as we refuse to be obedient, the light dies off the landscape of our lives and dark clouds fling their shadows far and near.

We do not win salvation by our obedience. Salvation is the gift of God which is received by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ our Lord. But, in being saved, we must obey. Our Savior adjures us, by the love we bear to Himself, to keep His commandments. And He does so because He wants us to taste His rarest gifts, and because He knows that in the keeping of His commandments there is great reward.

Search the Bible from board to board and see if strict, implicit, and instant obedience has not been the secret of the noblest lives that ever lit up the dull monotony of the world. The proudest title of our King was the Servant of Jehovah. And none of us can seek to realize a nobler aim than that which was the inspiration of His heart: "I come... to do thy will, O God" (Hebrews

10:7). Mary, the simple-hearted mother, uttered a word which is pertinent to every age, when, at the marriage feast, she turned to the servants and said, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (John 2:5).

Implicit Obedience Sometimes Brings us Into a Smelting Furnace

"Zarephath" means a smelting furnace. It lay outside the Land of Canaan, occupying the site of the modern Surafend which stands on a long ridge, backed by the snow-clad steeps of Hermon and overlooking the blue waters of the Mediterranean. Many things might have made it distasteful to the prophet. It belonged to the land from which Jezebel had brought her impious tribe. It was as much cursed by the terrible drought as Canaan. It was impossible to reach it save by a weary journey of one hundred miles through the heart of the land where his name was execrated, his person proscribed. And then to be sustained by a widow woman belonging to a heathen people! He would not have so much minded to have sustained her, but it was not pleasant to feel that he must be dependent on her slender earnings or meager store. Surely it was a smelting furnace for cleansing out any alloy of pride or self-reliance or independence which might be lurking in the recesses of his heart.

And there was much of the refining fire in the character of his reception. When he reached the straggling town it was probably toward nightfall. At the city gate a widow woman was gathering a few sticks to prepare the evening meal. To some it might have seemed a coincidence, but there is no such word in faith's vocabulary. That which to human judgment is a coincidence, to faith

is a Providence. This was evidently the widow of whom God had spoken. Faint with thirst and weary with long travel, but never doubting that his needs would be amply met, he asked her to fetch a little water in a vessel, that he might drink. The widow may have had some premonition of his coming. There would seem to be some suggestion of this having been so, in the words, "I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee" (1 Kings 17:9). Her Character will come out in due course; but there must have been something in her which could not be found in the many widows of the land of Israel (Luke 4:25-26). It was for no arbitrary reason that God passed them over, and went so far afield. She must have possessed qualities of Character, germs of better things, sparks of heroism and faith which distinguished her from all her sorrowing sisterhood and made her the befitting hostess of the prophet; the glad sharer with him in his Father's bounty. To her the impression was probably given of the coming of the prophet—just as the visions to Saul and to Ananias, to Cornelius and to Peter, flashed upon them in duplicates.

She was not, therefore, surprised at the prophet's request, and silently went to fetch a small jar of water. Encouraged by her willingness, Elijah asked her to bring a morsel of bread. It was a modest request, but it unlocked the silent agony of her soul. She had no cake, but just a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse. She was about to make one last repast for herself and her son, who was probably too weak through long privation to be with her. Having eaten it, they had no alternative but to lie down together and die. It was very depressing for the man of God, after his long and weary march.

It is thus that God leads His people still. "And that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water" (Numbers 31:23). He will not suffer us to be tempted beyond that which we are able to bear. He will not thresh vetches

with a sharp threshing instrument nor turn a cartwheel about on cummin. But it is written, "Every thing that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean" (Numbers 31:23). If then, there is something in you that can bear the ordeal, be sure you will be put into the furnace. But the fire shall not destroy, it shall only cleanse you. You will be put into it by the hand of love and kept in it only until patience has done her perfect work. The flames shall only consume the bonds that bind you and, as you walk loose in the fire, bystanders shall descry at your side the form of one like unto the Son of God.

When God Puts His People into the Furnace

He will Supply all their Needs

Circumstances were certainly very depressing, but what are they to a man whose inner self is occupied with the presence and power of God? God had said that he should be fed, and by that widow. So it should be, though the earth and heaven should pass away. Difficulties are to faith what gymnastic apparatus are to bays; means of strengthening the muscular fiber. Like the fabled salamander, faith feeds on fire. And so with heroic faith, Elijah said, "Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: ...for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth" (1 Kings 17:13-14).

Our only need is to inquire if we are at that point in God's pattern where He would have us be. If we are, though it seem impossible for us to be maintained, the thing impossible shall be done. We shall be sustained by a miracle if no ordinary means will suffice. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God,

and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). We reserve for future thought that unfailing meal and oil, but, before we close, we remark with what different meaning different people may use the same holy words. The widow said, as Elijah had done, "The LORD God liveth" (1 Kings 17:12). But to her those words brought no comfort, because they were repeated from hearsay and not from a living experience of their truth. God forbid that they should be a parrot-speech upon our lips. But, rather, may they be burned into our inmost being—so that we may go through life fearless of all save sin, and cheering timid hearts with the assurance of an unfaltering courage. "Fear not!" (verse 13).

Chapter 4^(TOC)

The Spirit and Power of Elijah

How can those who have traveled in Switzerland forget the early mornings when they have been summoned from sleep to await the dawn? A weird and mysterious hush possesses nature as a crowd is hushed in expectancy of a king's approach. Then a strange light spreads outward from the eastern sky. At last one of the loftiest Alps is smitten with the roseate flush of dawn; then another, and another, and yet another, until all the peaks, mantled with untrodden snow, are lit up and transfigured with burning splendor. But during all this time the valleys below are swathed in mist and veiled in darkness. It is only after hours have passed away and the monarch of the day has climbed slowly toward his throne that the blessed sunlight penetrates to the tiny hamlets and scattered chalets, or sparkles in the brooks, or casts shadows from the stones and flowers.

This illustration will show the difference between the dispensation which closed with the first advent of our Lord and that in which it is our happiness to live, and which is to close with His glorious Epiphany. Each has been blessed with the ministry of the Holy Ghost; but it is in this age alone, dating from the day of Pentecost, that He has been poured forth on sons and daughters, and on servants and handmaidens (Acts 2:17-18). Now every believer, even the humblest and the weakest, may be bathed in His divine and sacred influence; but in Elijah's time, only the elite of the household of faith knew what His eternal fullness meant. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). "The prophets... searched... what

the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify" (1 Peter 1:11). The Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39).

Elijah was one of these men who were filled with the Holy Ghost. This was the Universal testimony of those who knew him best. Elisha's one desire was that he should be heir to the Spirit which was so manifestly upon his master (2 Kings 2:9). "The spirit of Elijah" was a familiar phrase on the lips of the sons of the prophets (2 Kings 2:15). And years after, when the angel of God spake to Zacharias in the Temple, he could find no better illustration of the presence of the Holy Ghost in his promised child, than by saying, "He shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias" (Luke 1:15-17).

The glorious ministry of Elijah was due not to any inherent qualities in himself but to the extraordinary indwelling of the Holy Ghost who was given to him as to other holy men of God in the old time—through faith. If, then, we could but have that same Spirit in an equal measure, we should be able to repeat his marvelous deeds. It is said that it would be possible to gather up the mighty force of Niagara and, transforming it into electricity, carry it along a wire to drive machinery one hundred miles away. If this should ever be done, it would be a matter of almost perfect indifference whether the wire were slender or thick. The mighty force could as well travel along the slender thread, and as well perform its marvels, as through an electric cable. So the question for us all is whether the Holy Ghost is working with and through us in power. If He is, then, though our nature be paltry and weak, He shall effect through us the same mighty deeds as through men vastly our superiors in mental and moral force. Nay, we may even glory in our infirmities, that this divine power may rest upon us more conspicuously, and that the glory may be more evidently God's.

Now the question arises. May we, ordinary Christian people living in our modern society, hope to receive the Holy Spirit in that extraordinary and special measure in which He rested upon Elijah? Of course we have all received the Holy Spirit to a certain extent, or we could never have come to Jesus. All the graces of the Christian character, all our comfort, all our overcomings, are due to His presence.

*Every virtue we possess,
And every victory won,
And every thought of holiness,
Are His alone.
Author Unknown*

And yet it is clear that over and beyond this ordinary grace, which all believers must have, there is a blessed anointing of the Holy Ghost which gives special equipment and fitness for service. Elijah had it. Our blessed Lord, as the perfect servant, had it. Being full of the Holy Ghost, He returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and traced His marvelous power to the fact that the Holy Spirit was upon Him (Luke 4:1, 14, 18). The apostles had it from the day of Pentecost when they received the fullness of the Spirit for witness-bearing, although they must have possessed Him before for personal character (compare Acts 1:8 and 2:4 with John 20:22). The Samaritan believers had it, but only after Peter and John had prayed for them "that they might receive the Holy Ghost"—although it is evident that their previous conversion and joy had been due to His blessed work (Acts 8:15-16). The disciples at Ephesus had it, but only after Paul had laid his hands upon them.

This is surely what we want. And this is what we may have. This special anointing for service is not only for men like Elijah or Paul or Peter who soar far beyond us into the azure skies, but for us all as long as there stands upon

the page of revelation these priceless words, "The promise [referring obviously to Acts 1:4] is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). We are among the far-off ones, and therefore we may claim the promise for ourselves and receive the fullness of the Holy Ghost to equip us for our life and ministry.

But there are three conditions with which we must comply if we would receive and keep this blessed gift.

We must be Emptied

God cannot fill us if we are already filled. It took ten days to drain the apostles, even though they had spent three years under the immediate tuition of Christ. But the emptying process was an indispensable preliminary to the day of Pentecost. For Elijah, this process went on beside the drying brook and during the long and dreary march to Zarephath and throughout his sojourn there. It apparently took three years and six months. It was a long and weary waiting time, but it was well spent. As he became emptied of self, self-sufficiency, and self-dependence he became more and more filled with the Spirit of power so that Carmel itself, with all its heroic deeds, was gloriously possible to him.

Are we willing to pay this price? Are we prepared for God to empty us of all that is in the anywise contrary to his will? Are we content to be empty and broken vessels, that the river, in whose bed we lie, may easily flow through us? If not, let us ask Him to work in us to will His own good pleasure—plunging the cold, stubborn iron into the glowing furnace of His grace until it can be bent into perfect conformity to His own glorious will. But if we are willing, let us present our emptied nature to the Son of God, that He may fill

us with the fullness of the Spirit. Let us also believe that He does fill us, as soon as we yield ourselves to Him. You do not want more of Him more urgently than He wants more of you, and the one is the condition of the other (James 4:5 RV). Grace, like nature, abhors a vacuum. Just as the cold, fresh air will rush in to fill an exhausted receiver as soon as it has a chance to enter, so does the grace of the Holy Spirit enter the heart that can boast of nothing but an aching void. There may be no ecstasy, no rushing wind, no fiery baptism; but nevertheless, "the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his Temple" (Malachi 3:1) in floods of silent and golden light. "Thus saith the LORD, Make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water" (2 Kings 3:16-17).

Many Christians, seeking this blessed fullness, make the same mistake as is constantly made by those who seek after forgiveness and acceptance with God. They look within for evidences of the indwelling of the Spirit and refuse to believe in His presence unless they detect certain signs which they consider befitting. This is entirely wrong. The reckoning is not of feeling but of faith.

If we have complied with God's directions we must believe, whether we feel any difference or not, that God has done His part and has kept His promise, given to us through Jesus Christ our Lord; and that He has not been slower to give us the Holy Spirit than earthly fathers are to give bread to their hungry children (Luke 11:13). When we leave the chamber where we have solemnly dedicated ourselves to God and sought to be filled with the Spirit, we must not examine our feelings to discover whether there is such a difference in us as we might expect; but we must cry in the assurance of faith, "I praise Thee, Blessed One, that Thou hast not failed to perform Thy chosen work. Thou

hast entered my longing heart, and hast taken up Thine abode in me. Henceforth Thou shalt have Thy way with me, to will and do Thine own good pleasure."

We should not seek to know the presence of the Holy Ghost by any signs pointing to Himself. He reveals not Himself, but Christ. The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ (John 16:14). And the surest symptoms that He is within are sensitivity to sin, tenderness of conscience, and the growing love for Jesus, the fragrance of His name, sympathy with His purposes. Have you these in growing measure? Then you know somewhat of His gracious filling.

A little child was once asked her age; and she replied, "I don't feel like seven. I feel like six; but Mother says I'm seven." Here was the reckoning of faith, putting her mother's word before her own feeling. And thus we must refuse to consider ourselves, to diagnose our symptoms, or feel our pulse; but must launch out upon the deep of God's truthfulness and let down our nets for a draught of power and blessing.

We must be Obedient

We have already insisted on this, but it is so indispensable that repeated emphasis must be laid upon it. Christ reiterated His appeals for the keeping of His commands in almost every sentence of His closing discourses with His disciples (John 14:15, 21, 23-24). He gives the secret of His own abiding in His Father's love in these striking words: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (John 15:10). Instant and implicit obedience to the teaching of the Word and the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit is an absolute condition of keeping, or increasing, the store of sacred influence. On the contrary, one little item of disobedience persisted in is quite sufficient to

check all further bestowments, and even to deprive us of what we have. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword" (Isaiah 1:19-20). Nor is such obedience hard, for all God's commands are enablings, and His grace is sufficient. Look out for it. If only every believer who reads these lines would resolve from this hour to imitate Elijah, who went and did according to the word of the Lord (1 Kings 17:5, 8-10)—not with the thought of merit, but beneath the inspiration of love; not in the weightier matters only, but in the crossings of the T's and in the dottings of the I's—they would find at once that there would open before them a life of almost inconceivable glory. It is from the heights of unwavering obedience that we catch sight of the wide and open sea of blessedness. The exact obedience of Elias is the inviolable condition of receiving and keeping the spirit and power of Elijah.

We must Live on the Word of God

Elijah, the widow, and her son lived on their daily replenished stores; but the prophet had other meat to eat which they knew not of: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). It was on that word that Elijah fed during those long and slow-moving days. Sometimes he would climb up the heights behind the little town, in deep meditation upon that Word which is like the great mountains. Sometimes he would pace the seashore, musing on those judgments which are a great deep. He could say, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart! (Jeremiah 15:16). And sitting with the widow and her son, he would make that Word the topic of his constant talk; so that she was compelled to refer to it in these significant terms: "I know... that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth" (1 Kings 17:24).

This is the further absolute condition of becoming and remaining filled with the Holy Ghost. The Spirit works with and through the Word. What the metal is to the locomotive, what the wire is to the electric spark, what the grammar is to the teacher—the Word of God is to the Spirit of God. If we neglect the reverent study of Scripture we cut ourselves off from the very vehicle through which God's Spirit teaches human spirits. And this is the great fault of our times. Christian people will attend conventions, plunge into all kinds of Christian work, read many good books about the Bible and Christian living; but they give the Bible itself the most cursory and superficial heed. And it is for this reason that the Bible does not speak to them.

If you would know all the wondrous beauty of a forest glade, you must not be satisfied with passing through it with hasty foot and in company with a troop of merry children whose ringing laughter carries panic into the hearts of thousands of shy living things that, with trembling hearts, keep still in hole and brake and nest. No, you must go alone and sit quietly down on the log of some felled tree and wait. Then the mystery of beauty will begin to unfold itself: the fairy bowers, the mossy glens, the interlacing boughs. Presently a note will sound from yonder bough, as the signal for the outburst of many sweet-voiced choristers, and the woodland will ring with the music of the birds while the squirrel runs up some neighboring tree, and the rabbits come out to feed, and the young foxes play about their holes. All this is hidden from those who cannot wait. So there are mysteries of glory and beauty in Scripture hidden from the wise and prudent but revealed to babes. There is no book that will so repay time spent over its pages as the Word of God.

A neglected Bible means a starved and strengthless spirit, a comfortless heart, a barren life, and a grieved Holy Ghost. If the people who are now perpetually running about to meetings for crumbs of help and comfort, would

only stay at home and search their Bibles, there would be more happiness in the Church and more blessing on the world. It is very prosaic counsel, but it is true.

We reserve our next chapter for an account of the life of this Spirit-filled man and the household in which he dwelt. Suffice it now to say that the Holy Ghost, which dwelt in so largely, revealed Himself in those very traits which must always be His fruits: gentleness under provocation, steadfastness in trial, power in prayer, life victorious over death. But we may note, in closing, the remarkable admission of the widow: "I know that thou art a man of God" (1 Kings 17:24).

We talk of the man of letters, the man of honor, the man of mark; but how infinitely better to be known as a man of God—one of God's men, a man after God's own heart! And how splendid the tribute when we are so addressed by those with whom we live! "Familiarity breeds contempt" is a cliché, but when a man is filled with the Holy Ghost; the more he is known, the more clearly he is proved to be a man of God.

And in Elijah's case, the power of the indwelling Spirit evinced itself in the marvelous effect produced on that widow and her child. The widow was convinced of sin and led to the truth of God. The son was brought back from death into life. And such result shall accrue in our experiences, if we will only seek to be filled with the fullness of God. "He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12). "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

Chapter 5^(TOC)

The Test of the Homelife

Many a man might bear himself as a hero and saint in the solitudes of Cherith, or on the heights of Carmel, and yet wretchedly fail in the homelife of Zarephath. It is one thing to commune with God in the solitudes of nature and perform splendid acts of devotion and zeal for Him in the presence of thousands, but it is quite another to walk with Him day by day in the midst of a home with its many calls for the constant forgetfulness of self. Blessed, indeed, is the homelife on whose threshold we cast aside our reserve, our attitude of self-defense, our suspicions and our fears, and resign ourselves to the unquestioning trust of those whose love puts the tenderest construction on much that the world exaggerates and distorts!

And yet it would be idle to deny that there is much to try and test us just where the flowers bloom and the voices of hate and passion die away in distant murmurs. There is a constant need for the exercise of gentleness, patience, self-sacrifice, and self-restraint. And beneath the test of homelife with its incessant duties and demands, many men break down—even men whose characters seem far above the average.

This ought not to be, nor need it be. If our religion is what it should be, it will resemble the law of gravitation, which not only controls the planets in their spheres but guides the course of each dust grain through the autumn breeze and determines the fall of a rose petal fluttering to the path. Everything will

come beneath its sway—each look, each word, each trivial act. Indeed, we shall show the reality and thoroughness of our religion when it is no longer a garment to be put off and on at will, but when it pervades us as life does the organism in which it is contained. The truly religious man will be as sweet in irritating gnat stings as in crushing calamities, as self-denying for a child as for a crowd, as patient over a spoiled or late meal as over an operation which summons all his manhood to the front. "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Corinthians 12:6) is the one answer of Jesus Christ to all inquiries, the one reply to all excuses and complaints about trying circumstances.

Your homelife was chosen for you by the unerring skill of One who knows you better than you know yourself and who cannot make a mistake. It has been selected as the best school of grace for you. Its burdens were poised on the hand of infinite love, before they were placed on your shoulders. Its pressure has been carefully measured by scales more delicate than those which chemists use. And now, looking down upon you, the Master says: "There is nothing in your life that may not be lived in Me, for Me, through Me, and I am willing to enable you to be sweet, and noble, and saint-like in it all."

In the last chapter we saw something of the power and Spirit with which Elijah was filled. It was nothing less than the Holy Ghost Himself, and we learned that that same glorious gift is for each of us. Indeed, it is our bounden duty never to rest until we are filled with that same fullness and clothed in that same robe. But we are now to follow him into a home and see how he bears the test of home life, and we shall learn to admire and love him the more. He lived a truly human life. He was not too great or good for human nature's daily food.

He was the same man in the widow's house as on Carmel's heights. He is like

one of those mountains to which we have referred, piercing the heavens with unscalable heights but clothed about the lower parts with woodlands, verdant fields, and smiling bowers where bees gather honey, and children play. He shows that when a man is full of the Holy Ghost, it will be evidenced by the entire tenor of his daily walk and conversation. In this he reminds us of Luther, the Elijah of modern times, who stood alone against the apostasy of the Romish church; but whose family life was a model of beauty—an oasis in the desert. Let those who only know Luther as the Reformer read his letters to his little daughter, and they will be captivated by the winsomeness and tenderness of that great and gentle soul.

Elijah Teaches us Contentment

The fare in the widow's home was frugal enough and there was only enough of it for their daily needs. Human nature, which was as strong in the prophet as in the rest of us, would have preferred to be able to count sacks of meal and barrels of oil. It would have been pleasant to go into some spacious storeroom and, looking around on the abundant provision, say, "I have goods enough to carry me through the years of famine. I will eat, drink, and be merry." But this is not God's way nor is it the healthiest discipline for our better life.

God's rule is, Day by day. God provides for each day as it comes. The manna fell on the desert sands each day, enough for that day. But it fell every day without fail. God will provide us with enough strength each day to meet that day's demands: "as thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deuteronomy 33:25). And they who live like this are constantly reminded of their blessed dependence on their Father's love. They are led back again to the life of the little child. They know nothing of those temptations to self-sufficiency which

work ruin in the rich as the myriads of minute insects of the southern seas silently eat away the bottoms of mighty vessels which are able to defy the storms.

If God were to give us the choice between seeing our provision and keeping it ourselves or not seeing it and leaving Him to deal it out, day by day; most of us would be almost sure to choose the former alternative. It gratifies our sense of importance to count up our stores, our barrels, and our sacks. It invests us with so much superiority to our neighbors. It gives such a sense of security. But we should be far wiser to say, "I am content to trust Thee, Father, the living God who gives us all things richly to enjoy. Keep Thou the stores under Thine own hand; they will give me less anxiety, they will not lead me into temptation, they will not expose me to be jealous of others less favored than myself."

And those who live thus are not worse off than others; nay, in the truest sense, they are better off because the responsibility of maintaining them rests wholly upon God. They are delivered from the fret of anxiety, the strain of daily care, and the temptations which make it almost impossible for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. If God guarantees, as He does, our support, does it much matter whether we can SEE the sources from which He will obtain it? It might gratify our curiosity, but it would not make them more sure. They are in existence and beneath His eye; and they will come safely to our hand. The main thing is to understand the precious promise, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). Then let us go on doing our duty, filling our time, working out the plan of our life. We may be as free from care as the birds that have neither storehouse nor barn. We may laugh as merrily as the child who comes in from school to eat and goes out again to play and is utterly

thoughtless about his next meal. We may be entirely destitute, our pantry bare, our money exhausted, and our means of livelihood gone. But our Father has ample resources. His are the cattle on a thousand hills, and His the waving corn-fields, and the myriad fish of the ocean depths. His hired servants have bread enough and to spare, He has prepared a supply for our need, and He will deliver it in time. We only need to trust Him.

It is impossible to tell whose eyes may read these words, but if they should be read by those whose aim it is to be independent, let them consider what they mean. Do they mean to be independent of God or of men? They will live to see that they can be independent of neither. And the serious question presents itself, Is this a worthy aim for those who are bought slaves of Christ? Surely we are meant to be stewards; not storing up our Lord's money for ourselves, but administering for Him all that we do not need for the maintenance of ourselves and our dear ones in the position of life in which God has placed us. And our only worldly aim should be to lay out our Lord's money to the very best advantage so that we may render Him an account with joy when He comes to reckon with us.

If, on the other hand, these words are read by those who are dependent on daily supplies—with little hope of ever owning more than the daily handful of meal and the little oil at the bottom of the cruse—let them be comforted by the example of Elijah. "Be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5). The bottom of the barrel may have been scraped today; but tomorrow there will be just enough in it for tomorrow's needs. The last drop of oil may have been drained today, but there will be enough for tomorrow. Anxiety will not do you good; but the prayer of faith will. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." He who lit life's flame knows how much fuel is required to keep it

burning. Throw all responsibility on God. He who gave His own Son will with Him freely give all things. Do not listen to the arch-liar, who bids you distrust and despair. He has never yet been justified by the event. His prophecies have always proved false. His insinuations are simply beds of rank and poisonous stinging nettles. Do not lie down in them, but trample them beneath your feet. Oh that we might learn, though it be in the school of privation to be content in whatever state we are and to be able to cry with one of Elijah's compeers, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). "For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth" (1 Kings 17:14).

Elijah also Teaches us Gentleness Under Provocation

We do not know how long the mother hung over her dying child. He may have been struck down like the little fellow who cried, "My head! my head!" and faded in one summer's afternoon, or he may have lingered beneath the spell of a wearying illness which not only wore out his life but overtaxed his mother's nerves so that she spoke unadvisedly and cruelly to the man who had brought deliverance to her home. "Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?" (1 Kings 17:18).

A remark so uncalled for and unjust might well have stung the prophet to the quick or prompted a bitter reply. And it would doubtless have done so, had his goodness been anything less than inspired by the Holy Ghost. But one of the fruits of His indwelling is gentleness. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness" (Galatians 5:22). The nature breathed into the spirit by the blessed Spirit of God is identical with His own which is love:

and... "Charity [love] suffereth long, and is kind; ... is not easily provoked; ... beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things; endureth all things" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). Thus it happened that Elijah simply said, "Give me thy son" (1 Kings 17:19). If there were a momentary uprising of indignation it was immediately quelled by the Dove which had come to brood in the nest of his heart.

We need more of this practical godliness. Many deceive themselves. They go to fervid meetings and profess that they have placed all upon the altar. They speak as if they were indeed filled with the Holy Ghost. But when they return to their homes, the least friction, or interference with their plans, or mistake on the part of others, or angry outburst arouses a sudden and violent manifestation of temper. Such people have not yet experienced His special grace. There is much more for them to learn. He who first led them to Jesus is able to make them meek with His meekness, and gentle with His gentleness. He can give them victory over their natural infirmities as well as over all conscious sin. He can work so great a transformation within them that "instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" (Isaiah 55:13).

If the Holy Spirit is really filling the heart, there will come over the rudest, the least refined, the most selfish person a marvelous change. There will be a gentleness in speech, a softness of the voice, a tender thoughtfulness in the smallest actions, an expression of abiding peace on the face. These shall be the evident seal of the Holy Ghost, the mint-mark of heaven. Are they evident in ourselves?

*Gentle Spirit, dwell with me,
I myself would gentle be;*

*And with words that help and heal,
Would Thy life in mine reveal.
Author Unknown*

Elijah Teaches also the Power of a Holy Life

Somewhere in the background of this woman's life there was a dark deed which dwarfed all other memories of wrongdoing and stood out before her mind as her sin (1 Kings 17:18). What it was we do not know. It may have been connected with the birth of that very son. It had probably been committed long years before and had then filled her with a keen agony of mind, for conscience is not inoperative even in the hearts of the children of idolatry and heathendom (Romans 2:14-15). But in later years, the keen sense of remorse had become dulled; conscience long outraged had grown benumbed. Sometimes she even lost all recollection of her sin for weeks and months together. We all have a wonderful faculty of dismissing from us an unwelcome thought, just as men try to hide from themselves the obvious symptoms of a disease which is sapping the forces of life.

Memory fixes all impressions and retains them. It never permits them to be destroyed, though it may not always be able to produce them instantly to a given call. Some memories are like well-classified libraries in which you can readily discover even the smallest pamphlet, while others are so confused that they are useless for practical purposes. Yet, even in these nothing that ever came within their range has ever been lost, and whenever the right clue is presented there is an immediate resurrection and recovery of sounds and sights and trains of thought long buried.

How terrible will it be when the lost soul is met on the threshold of the dark world to which it goes, by the solemn words, "Son, Remember!" And what more fearful punishment could we imagine than being compelled to meet again and confront the hideous past, summoned by an inevitable remembrancer while conscience, no longer stupefied and drugged, is sensitive enough to convince of the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

It is remarkable how different is the mental stimulus which is required by different castes of mind to awaken dormant memories. In the case of some, the handwriting on an old letter, a picture, a scent borne on the breeze, or a song will be enough. Their own sorrow reminded Joseph's brethren of their disgraceful behavior to their brother thirty years before. But in the case of the woman of Zarephath it was Elijah's holy life, combined with her own terrible sorrow. Beneath the spell of these two voices her memory gave up its dead, and her conscience was quickened into vigorous life. "Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance?" (1 Kings 17:18).

Oh, to live in the power of the Holy Ghost! Our looks would sometimes then convict the stoutest sinners of sin, as it is recorded of Finney whose grieved face brought conviction to a young woman and through her to a whole factory of operatives. Our holy walk would be a standing rebuke, a mirror in which the sin-pocked might see the ravages wrought by sin. Our words would then be sharp two-edged swords, piercing to the dividing of the joints and marrow, of soul and spirit.

And if any shall be conscious of some hidden but unforgiven sin, let that one know that all efforts to forget will some day be unavailing. Sickness, or bereavement, or bitter loss may come. Then that sin will spring up as if only committed yesterday, in all its horror and agony. It is said that the spirit of the victim haunts the murderer until he makes reparation by confession and

surrender. There is some truth in it, for sin is only blotted out of remembrance, both of God and the soul, when it has been confessed and put beneath the blood of Jesus. Confess your sin and claim that cleansing now, and you will hear the voice of God saying, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 10:17).

Elijah Teaches the Secret of Giving Life

It is a characteristic of those who are filled with the Holy Ghost, that they carry with them everywhere the spirit of life, even resurrection life. We shall not only convince men of sin, but we shall become channels through which the divine life may enter them. Thus was it with the prophet. But mark the conditions under which alone we shall be able to fulfill this glorious function.

1. LONELY WRESTLINGS. "He took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried unto the LORD" (1 Kings 17:19-20). We are not specific enough in prayer, and we do not spend enough time in intercession, dwelling with holy ardor on each beloved name and on each heartrending case. What wonder that we achieve so little!
2. HUMILITY. "He stretched himself upon the child three times" (1 Kings 17:21). How wonderful that so great a man should spend so much time and thought on that slender frame and be content to bring himself into direct contact with that which might be thought to defile! It is a touching spectacle, but we must imitate it in some measure. We must seek the conversion

of children, winning them before Satan or the world attach them. But to do so, we must stoop to them; becoming as little children to win little children for Jesus.

3. PERSEVERANCE. "He stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD" (1 Kings 17:21). He was not soon daunted. It is thus that God tests the genuineness of our desire. These deferred answers lead us to lengths of holy boldness and pertinacity of which we should not otherwise have dreamed, but from which we shall never go back. "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint! (Luke 18:1).

And his supplication met with the favor of God. "The LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived" (1 Kings 17:22). And as the prophet presented him to the grateful and rejoicing mother, he must have been beyond all things gratified with her simple testimony to the reality and power of the life which the Holy Ghost had begotten within him: "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth" (1 Kings 17:24). And what was the result of all?

Her work was small, her conceptions obscure, her home Gentile and heathen. Yet, because her motives were noble and her spirit in sympathy with Elijah's, it was announced by Him, at whose throne we must all stand for our reward, that she had done what she could, and her crown should shine as brightly as that placed on the brow of the prophet of God. We are rewarded, not according to our sphere or the results of our work, but according to the sincerity and beauty of our motives. These may be as lofty in an obscure widow as in Elijah himself.

Chapter 6^(TOC)

Obadiah—A Contrast

After many days the word of the Lord again summoned Elijah to be on the move. Months, and even years had passed in the retirement of Zarephath. The widow and her son had become bound to him by the most sacred ties. The humble home, with its loft and barrel of meal and cruse of oil, was hallowed with the delightful memories of the unfailing carefulness of God.

It must have been a great trial for him to go, and how great was the contrast that awaited him! He had probably heard of Ahab's search for him through all the neighboring countries. There was not a nation or kingdom where the incensed monarch had not sent to seek him, demanding an oath from the rulers that he was not in hiding there. It was not likely, therefore, that he would be received with much courtesy. Nay, the probability was that he would be instantly arrested and perhaps put to torture to extort a revocation of the words which had placed the realm under the terrible interdict of drought. And as he contrasted the tumultuous roar of the waves foaming outside the harbor with the calm peace that reigned in the haven of rest which had sheltered him so long, he might well have shrunk back in dismay. But he had no alternative but to go. He who had said, "Go hide thyself," now said, "Go show thyself" (1 Kings 18:1). What was he but a servant, bound to obey? And so, with the implicit obedience which has arrested our attention more than once, "Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab" (1 Kings 18:2).

In this new departure the prophet evidently encouraged himself by the words on which he had leaned when first he entered the monarch's presence, "The LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand" (1 Kings 18:15). And there may have rung through his spirit a refrain, throbbing with heroic faith, uttered centuries before by a kindred soul: "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident" (Psalm 27:1-3).

But, though Elijah's spirit was thus fortified against fear, it must have been very bitter to him to see the devastation which had been wrought in the land. The music of the brooklets was still. No green pastures carpeted the hills or vales. There was neither blossom on the fig tree nor fruit in the vines; and the labor of the olive failed. The ground was chapped and barren. The hinds calved in the field and deserted their young because there was no grass. The wild asses, with distended nostrils, climbed the hills to snuff up the least breath of air that might allay the fever of their thirst. And, probably, the roads in the neighborhood of the villages and towns were dotted by the stiffened corpses of the abject poor who had succumbed to the severity of their privations. We have no idea, in these temperate regions, of the horrors of an Eastern drought. All this had been brought about instrumentally by the prophet's prayer, and it would have been intolerable, had he not eagerly hoped that his people would learn the exceeding sinfulness and evil of sin. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore, and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God" (Jeremiah 2:19).

Though the famine was sore everywhere, it seems to have been most severe in Samaria. "There was a sore famine in Samaria." And it was this famine that brought out the true character of Ahab. We might have supposed that he would set himself to alleviate the miseries of his people; and, above all, that he would have turned back to God; but no—his one thought was about the horses and mules of his stud; and his only care was to save some of them alive. And so he starts on a mission—such as is still undertaken by the petty chieftains of Eastern tribes—to find grass. What selfishness is here! Mules and asses before his people! Seeking for grass instead of seeking for God!

And yet such selfishness is as rife today as ever. Selfishness like this prompts the great ones of the earth to dash myriads of men against each other in the shock of battle, for the gratification of a mere personal pique, and regardless of the untold misery inflicted on thousands of hearts and homes. Selfishness like this makes men of wealth and fashion loll on beds of down, roll in luxurious carriages, and feast sumptuously every day—indifferent to the hopeless wretchedness of those who earn their wealth and are paid a starvation wage. Selfishness like this still spends on an equipage, a horse, a dog, the keeping of a shooting-box, the round of amusements, more than it can afford for the maintenance of God's work or for the relief of the poor. Are professing Christians clear in this matter? Are there not many who spend as much on a single dinner party as they do on the needs of a dying world? And what is this but a repetition of the sin of Ahab, who went out to find grass for his beasts, while his people were left to take their chance! Oh, that this spirit of selfishness were exorcised by the Spirit of Christ! Then missionary societies would not be hampered in their operations for want of funds; then the coffers of charitable institutions would be filled; then many a hard working toiler would be able to give effect to schemes now blighted and arrested by the east wind of want. I do not blame Christian men for

maintaining themselves in that position of life in which they were called. It is their apparent duty to retain that position as a sacred talent (1 Corinthians 7:20, 24). But I cannot understand a man daring to call himself a Christian and spending more upon the accessories and luxuries of his life than he does upon that service of man which is so dear to our Lord. This is surely the selfishness of Ahab.

It is startling to find such a man as Obadiah occupying so influential position at Ahab's court. "Obadiah was the governor (or steward) of his house" (1 Kings 18:3). Now, according to his own testimony, Obadiah had feared the Lord from his youth (1 Kings 18:12). This is also the testimony of the sacred historian concerning him: "Obadiah feared the LORD greatly" (verse 3). And he had given conspicuous proof of his piety. When Jezebel had swept the land with the besom of persecution, hunting down the prophets of the Lord and consigning them to indiscriminate slaughter, he had rescued a hundred of the proscribed men, hiding them by fifty in a cave and feeding them with bread and water. But though a good man, there was evidently a great lack of moral strength in his character. Otherwise he could never have held the position he did in the court of Ahab and Jezebel.

There is no possible harm in a Christian man holding a position of influence in a court or society where he can do so at no cost of principle. On the contrary, it may enable him to render priceless service to the cause of God. Where would Luther and the Reformation have been, humanly speaking, had it not been for the Elector of Saxony? And what would have been the fate of our Wycliffe, if John o'Gaunt had not constituted him his ward? But very few can occupy such a position without putting kid on their hands and velvet on their lips, without dropping something of their uncompromising speech, or dipping their colors to the flag of expediency. And there is every indication

that this was the weak point with Obadiah.

Obadiah did not believe in carrying matters too far. Of course he could not fall in with this new order of things, but then there was no need for him to force his religious notions on everyone. He was often shocked at what he saw at court and found it hard to keep still, but then it was no business of his, and it would not do to throw up his situation, for he would be sure to lose it if he spoke out. He was often sad at heart to witness the sufferings of the prophets of the Lord and almost inclined to take up their cause, but then a single man could not do much. Perhaps he could help them better in a quiet way by keeping where he was, though it might sometimes be a little strain on his principles. The poor man must often have been in a great strait to reconcile his duty to Jehovah with his duty to his other master, Ahab. And Elijah shrewdly hinted at it, when he said, "Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here!" Imagine a courtier of Oliver Cromwell trying to be true to the Commonwealth and to the cause of the exiled Stuarts! The life of policy and expediency is like ropewalking—it needs considerable practice in the art of balancing.

There are scores of Obadiahs everywhere in the professing church. They know the right, and are secretly trying to do it; but they say as little about religion as they can. They never rebuke sin. They never confess their true colors. They find pretexts and excuses to satisfy the remonstrances of an uneasy conscience. They are as nervous of being identified by declared Christians as Obadiah was of being identified as a follower of Jehovah when Elijah sent him to Ahab. They are sorry for those who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, but it never occurs to them to stand in the pillory by their side. They content themselves with administering some little relief to them, as Obadiah did to the harried prophets, but as they conceal that relief from the

world, they put it in as a claim to the people of God for recognition and protection, as Obadiah did. "Was it not told my lord what I did?" (1 Kings 18:13). They sometimes are on the point of throwing up all to take up an uncompromising attitude, but they find it hard to go forth to suffer affliction with the people of God as long as they are well provided for within the palace walls.

What a contrast between Obadiah and Elijah! And it is with the purpose of accentuating that contrast and of bringing out into fuller relief the noble character of the prophet, that we have sought to elaborate this sketch of Ahab's steward.

There is a Contrast between the Inside

And the Outside of the Camp for Witnessing

There is much said on both sides of the case. Many amongst us advise that the children of God should stay in the camp of the world—joining in its festivities, going to its places of amusements, taking the lead in its fashion and its course. In this way they hope to temper and steady it, to level it up, to make it Christian. It is a fair dream, exceedingly congenial to our natural tastes. If it were only true, it would save a world of trouble. The poor prophets of the Lord might come back from their caves, Elijah might become Ahab's vizier, and Obadiah's conscience might settle to rest. Indeed, Elijah's policy would be a supreme mistake, and we had better all become Obadiahs at once.

But there are two insurmountable difficulties in the way of our accepting this theory of leveling up from within.

1. IT IS IN DIRECT OPPOSITION TO THE TEACHING OF SCRIPTURE. Come out from her, my people, is the one summons than rings like a clarion note from board to board. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord; and touch not the unclean thing" (2 Corinthians 6:17). There is not a single hero or saint whose name sparkles on the inspired page who moved his times from within. All, without exception, have raised the cry, "Let us go forth without the camp;" and have joined the constant stream of martyrs, confessors, prophets, and saints, of whom the world is not worthy, but who can trace their kinship to Him of whom it is written, "He suffered without the gate." The only Scriptural course for God's witnesses is to go out to Him without the camp; in the world, but not of it; wearing the pilgrim garb, manifesting the pilgrim spirit, uttering the pilgrim confession.
2. THIS THEORY WILL NOT WORK. The Man who goes into the world to level it up will soon find himself leveled down. Was not this the case with Obadiah? Instead of getting Ahab to think with himself, Ahab sent him to all fountains of water and to all brooks to find grass for his horses and mules. Surely this was a miserable errand for one who feared the Lord greatly! But this is only a sample of the kind of things which must be borne and done by such as try to serve two masters. Compare the influence exerted on the behalf of Sodom by Abraham on the heights of Mamre, with that of Lot, who, not content with

pitching his tent toward the city gate, went to live inside and even became one of the judges in the city (Genesis 19:1). Remember that Lot was carried captive in the sack of Sodom; but Abraham rescued him. But why need we multiply instances? This matter is undergoing daily proof. The Christian woman who marries an ungodly man is in imminent danger of being soon dragged down to his level. The servant of God who enters into partnership with a man of the world cannot keep the business from drifting. The church which admits the world into its circle will find that it will get worldly quicker than the world will become Christian.

The safest and strongest position is outside the camp. Archimedes said that he could move the world, if only he had a point of rest given him outside it. Thus, too, can a handful of God's servants influence their times, if only they resemble Elijah, whose life was spent altogether outside the pale of the court and the world of his time.

There is a Contrast between Preventive And Aggressive Goodness

Obadiah sought simply to prevent a great harm being done. He shielded the prophets from the sword of Jezebel and the touch of famine. And this was well. Preventive goodness like this serves a very useful purpose. It rears homes and refuges and bulwarks of defense behind which persecuted and threatened lives may thrive. But after all, the world needs something more. It is not enough to deal with the poisoned streams, a hand is needed to cast the

healing salt into the fountainhead. There is an urgent demand for men like Elijah and John the Baptist who dare oppose the perpetrators of evil deeds and arraign them before the bar of God and compel them to bow before the offended majesty of a broken law.

For this there is needed a positive enduement of power which cannot be had by the half-hearted but is the glad prerogative of those who, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, are servants of God. Obadiah had no power of this kind. How could he have? On the other hand, Elijah was full of it. Because he was so, he succeeded in arresting the tides of sin when they were in full flood.

It is not enough to shelter the prophets, we must go and show ourselves to Ahab. We may be as sugar, but we must also be like salt that stays the progress of consumption. The preventive and ameliorative, the healing agency, is good; but the aggressive is better still, because it deals with the hidden causes of things. May God send to His Church a handful of lion-like men, like Elijah, of whom this is the majestic record: "Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab" (1 Kings 18:2) to confront the royal culprit, to lay the king under arrest.

There is a Contrast between the Caution of Expediency And the Fearlessness of Faith

When Elijah told Obadiah to tell his master that Elijah was waiting for Ahab, the astonished courtier was incredulous. He knew how irritated and incensed Ahab had been, and that his anger was at white heat still. It seemed madness

for the prophet to expose himself to its flames. Indeed, he thought either that the prophet did not know the way in which the king had sought for him or that the Spirit of the Lord would carry him off before they could meet. It never occurred to him that Elijah dare meet the king if he really know how matters stood. And even supposing that Obadiah himself were foolhardy enough to confront the king, surely God would prevent him from stepping into the lion's lair. In any case, Obadiah wished to have nothing to do with it. He was more anxious for himself than for the work of God or the wishes of Elijah. Twice over he repeated the words, "He shall slay me" (1 Kings 18:9, 12). And it was only when Elijah appealed to God as the witness of his solemn oath and assured Obadiah that he would surely show himself to Ahab before the sun went down that he reluctantly went to meet Ahab and told him. How unable he was to form a true conception of the fearlessness of Elijah!

And what was the source of that fearlessness? Surely it is unfolded to us in the words of Elijah's sublime asseveration: "As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand" (2 Kings 3:14). God was more real to Elijah than Ahab. He was a courtier in the throneroom of the King of kings. How could he be afraid of a man that should die, and of the son of man that should become as the grass of the mower's scythe withered by the noontide heat? The fear of God had made him impervious to all other fear. Faith sees the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire. Faith can hear the tread of twelve legions of angels marshaling for its defense. Faith can detect the outlines of those Almighty hands which hide the children of God in their hollow. And so, with unblanched face and undismayed heart, God's Elijahs go on to do His commands, though their way is blocked by as many devils as there are tiles upon the housetops. The Obadiahs assert that they will never dare to carry their proposals through, but they live to see their predictions falsified and their mean suggestions shamed.

There is a Contrast between the Reception Given

To These Two Types of Character by the Ungodly

Ahab could tolerate Obadiah, because he never rebuked him. When salt has lost its savor it does not sting, though it be rubbed into an open wound. But as soon as Ahab saw Elijah, he accosted him as the great troubler of the time. "It came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel?" (1 Kings 18:17 RV). Years after, speaking of another devoted servant of God, whose advice was demanded by Jehoshaphat, this same Ahab said, "I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil" (1 Kings 22:8).

There is no higher testimony to the consistency of our life than the hearty hatred of the Ahabs around us. One of the most scathing condemnations that could be pronounced on men is contained in those terrible words of our Lord: "The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil" (John 7:7). Who would not undergo all the hate that the Ahabs can heap on us rather than incur that sentence from the lips of Christ! "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad (Matthew 5:11-12). If all men speak well of you, you may begin to question whether you are not becoming mere Obadiahs. But if Ahab accuses you of troubling him, rejoice; and tell him to his face that his trouble is due to a broken commandment, and to the idols before which he bows. If

there should read these lines those who are in trouble, enduring affliction, their life smitten with drought, let them ask whether the cause is not to be found in broken vows, in desecrated temples, in forfeited oaths. If so, return at once, with tears of penitence and words of confession, unto the Lord. "He hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up" (Hosea 6:1).

There, face to face, we leave Ahab and Elijah. We need not ask which is the more royal of the two, nor need we spend our time in looking for Obadiah. We cannot but admire the noble bearing of the prophet of God. But let us remember it was due, not to his inherent character, but to his faith. By faith he quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness was made strong, stopped the mouth of this lion. And if we will acquire a similar faith, we may anticipate similar results on the meaner platform of our own lives.

Chapter 7_(TOC)

The Plan of Campaign

When Elijah left Zarephath, his mind was utterly destitute of any fixed plan of action. He knew that he must show himself to Ahab and that rain was not far away, for these were his definite marching orders: "Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth" (1 Kings 18:1). But more than that he knew not. There may have flitted before his spirit dim previsions of that sublime conflict on Carmel's heights, but he knew nothing certainly. His one endeavor was to quiet his eager nature like a weaned child, hushing it with the lullaby of an old refrain: "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him" (Psalm 62:5).

The plan of this great campaign for God's truth against Baal's falsehood may have been revealed to Elijah on his journey from Zarephath to find Ahab. It may have been a sudden glance as when a lightning-flash reveals to a benighted traveler the winding pathway he must follow through the vale beneath. But it is quite as likely that it was revealed in pieces, like those of a children's puzzle—handed out one by one from the parent to the child, who might be confused with more than one at a time. This is so often God's way, and they who trust Him utterly are quite pleased to have it so. There is even a novelty and beauty in life when every step is unforeseen and unexpected and opens up new vistas of loveliness in God's management and in Himself.

If we seek to think ourselves into Elijah's attitude of heart and mind as he left

the shelter of Zarephath and began to pass through the incidents that culminated in Carmel, it seems to have been threefold. And surely it is of surpassing interest to learn how such a man felt as he approached the sublime crisis of his life.

He was Filled with a Consuming Passion for the Glory of God

"Let it be known that Thou are God in Israel." This prayer is the key to his heart. He neither knew nor cared to know what would become of himself; but his soul was on fire with a holy jealousy for the glory of God. He could not bear to think of those wrecked altars or martyred prophets. He could not bear to think how the Land of Promise was groaning beneath the obscene and deadly rites of Phoenician idolatry. He could not bear to think that his people were beginning to imagine that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel had abdicated in favor of these false deities which were newly brought in. And when he was compelled to face these things, his spirit was stirred to its depths with indignation and sorrow.

Well would it be if each one of us was similarly inspired! We are very eager for the success of our work, our church, our sect. If these thrive, we are satisfied. If these languish, we are depressed. We are wholly occupied with the interests of our own tiny pools, oblivious of the great sea of divine glory lying nearby in perpetual sunshine. Is it wonderful that we have so small a measure of success? God will not give His glory to another, nor His praise to the graven images of our own conceit. But in this, also, God is willing to lift our daily experience to the level of our loftiest ideals. Only trust Him to do it. Ask and expect Him to fill you with the fire of that zeal which burned in the heart of Elijah, consuming all that was base, corrupt, and selfish; making the

whole man a fit agent for God. This was no indigenous growth. It was not more natural to him than it is to any one of us. It was simply one of the fruits of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, who is equally promised to the most ignoble nature.

He was Profoundly Convinced that he was Only a Servant

"Let it be known that thou art God in Israel; and that I am thy servant." It was not for the slave in olden times to plan, but to be pliant to the least expression of the master's will—to be a tool in his hand, a chess-piece on the board for him to move just where he willed. And this was the attitude of Elijah's spirit—surrendered, yielded, emptied; pliant to the hands that reach down out of heaven to mold men.

This attitude is the true one for us all. Are we not too fond of doing things for God, instead of letting God do what He chooses through us? We say, "We will go yonder, we will do this and that, we will work for God thus." We do not consider that we should first inquire if this is God's will for us. We do not recognize His absolute ownership. We often miss doing what He sorely wants us to do, because we insist on carrying out some little whim of our own. This is the blight on much of the activity of Christian people at the present time. They are not satisfied to be as the apostle Paul was, "the servant of Jesus Christ" (Romans 1:1).

Elijah was Eagerly Desirous to Know and Work Out God's Plan

"Let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel; and that I am thy

servant; and that I have done all these things at thy word" (1 Kings 18:36). When one feels that he is working out God's plan, and that God is working out His plan through him, he is invincible. Men, circumstances, opposition, are of no more account than the chaff of the autumn threshings. God's plan is His purpose. And God's purpose shall be accomplished; though earth and heaven pass away. And this was doubtless one element in Elijah's splendid strength.

The question of our relation to God's plan is most important, because the power and blessing of God are only to be enjoyed in all their fullness by those who are where He would have them be. God had the plan of the desert wanderings in His thought long before Israel left Egypt, and He worked out that plan by the movements of the cloud over the desert sands. The manna fell on any given morning only where the cloud was brooding, shielding the host by its fleecy fold. To get the manna and the shade, the blood-redeemed must be just where God's plan required them to be. This is a parable of our lives. Would we have divine supplies? We must keep step with the divine plan. The fire burns only when we erect the altar according to God's word. We must not be disobedient to a heavenly vision. We must not spend our years in daydreams, nor in seeking comfort; but must be incessant in uttering the cry, "What wilt Thou have me to do?"

There are many ways of learning God's plan. Sometimes it is revealed in circumstances—not always pleasant, but ever acceptable, because they reveal our Father's will. No circumstance happens outside His permission; each is a King's messenger bearing His message, though we are sometimes puzzled to decipher it. Sometimes God's plan is revealed by strong impressions of duty, which increase in proportion as they are prayed over and tested by the Word of God.

There are many voices by which God can speak His will to the truly surrendered spirit. If there is any confusion as to what it is, it is due to one of these two causes: either the human will is not fully yielded to do God's will so soon as it is known, but there is some film between the two, preventing the entire permeation of the human by the Divine; or the time of perfect knowledge has not arrived, and we must be content to wait quietly. It is a true rule for us all, to do nothing so long as we are in any uncertainty; but to examine ourselves and be ready to act as soon as we know. We may have the experience of the apostle Peter repeated in our own: "While Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men... sent from Cornelius... stood before the gate" (Acts 10:17). The knocking of three men at a gate may sometimes indicate God's plan, or a dream from across the sea, or the glimpse of a weary face, just a little more weary than others around (Acts 16:9-10; John 5:6-7).

The plan, as Elijah unfolded it to Ahab, was eminently adapted to the circumstances of the case. All Israel was to be gathered by royal summons to Carmel, which reared itself above the plain of Esdraelon, a noble site for a national meeting ground. Special care was to be taken to secure the presence of the representatives of the systems that had dared to rival the worship of Jehovah: "The prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table" (1 Kings 18:19). A test was then to be imposed on these rival systems, which the adherents of Baal could not possibly refuse, for he was the sun-god, and this was a trial by fire.

Elijah knew that the altar of Baal would remain smokeless. He knew that Jehovah would answer his faith by fire, as He had done again and again in the glorious past. He felt convinced also that the people, unable to escape the evidence of their senses, would forever disavow the accursed systems of

Phoenicia and return once more to the worship of the God of their fathers.

It is probably that, in the case of Ahab, only so much of this plan was disclosed as was necessary to secure the gathering of the people. To tell him too much would be to invite criticism and perhaps to arouse opposition. It is not likely that he would have been so pliant unless allured by the bait of rain. "So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel" (1 Kings 18:20).

We do not know how this was done, but doubtless the royal word would be passed through the country by a system of messengers, like those which once gave warning of the peril of Jabesh-Gilead or, in later times, carried the fiery cross through the highlands. But in any case this summoning of the people must have taken a few days. And it is by that interval of waiting that we are for a moment arrested. It was like the sultry hush which precedes the breaking of a tropical thunderstorm, or the momentary pause before long lines of armed men are launched at each other in the shock of battle.

Where and how did Elijah spend that interval? We are told that "he came unto all the people," when they were finally assembled on the appointed day. We may not press the word, but does it not suggest that he came from the contrary direction to that from which the people gathered? And if the people came from the whole circumference of the land, may he not have come from some ancient cave of Carmel's heights, just where the long range of hills drops suddenly down in sheer precipices on the sea?

In my opinion, Elijah spent those memorable days of waiting on Carmel itself; sheltering himself and the lad in some wild cave at night, and by day going carefully over the scene of the approaching conflict. How mournfully would he bend over the stones of the altar, which was broken down! It was

broken down not by the wild weather, or the devastating hand of time, but by the wicked behest of Jezebel (1 Kings 18:32). How eagerly would he search out the original twelve stones, strewn recklessly afar and covered by wild undergrowth. He would need them soon! How constantly would he stay himself upon his God and pour out litanies of supplication for the people and gird himself for the coming conflict by effectual, fervent prayer. Would he not learn the way down to Kishon's brook beneath, and visit the perennial spring from which he would fill the barrels again and yet again with water?

We sometimes seem to think that that answer of fire was probably so much the result of God's determination as to have been largely independent of any special exercise of the prophet's faith. We suppose that more faith and prayer were needed to bring the rain than to bring the leaping, consuming flame. We consider that the one needed the intense sevenfold prayer, while the other needed only the few sentences spoken in the audience of the amazed people, at the moment of sacrifice. But this is a very superficial reading of the story. It is not in harmony with the general dealings of God. As much fervent, believing prayer was needed for the fire as for the rain, and the answer by fire would never have come that day if the previous days had not been spent in the presence-chamber of God. The prayer during ten days of waiting, in the upper room, must precede the descent of the Holy Ghost, as a baptism of fire, on the day of Pentecost.

It is a sublime spectacle—this yielded, surrendered man, waiting on Carmel in steadfast faith; the gathering of the people; and the unfolding of the purpose of God. He had no fear about the issue, and as the days rolled by, his soul rose in higher and ever higher joy. He expected soon to see a nation at the feet of God.

And he was all this, not because he was of a different make to ourselves; but

because he had got into the blessed habit of dealing with God at first hand, as a living reality, in whose presence it was his privilege and glory always to stand.

Chapter 8^(TOC)

The Conflict on the Heights of Carmel

It is early morning upon Mount Carmel. We are standing on the highest point, looking northward to where Hermon, on the extreme borders of the land, rears its snowcapped head to heaven. Around us on the left lies the Mediterranean Sea, its deep blue waters flocked here and there by the sails of the Tyrian mariners. Immediately at Carmel's base winds Kishon's ancient brook, once choked by the slaughter of Sisera's host. Beyond it stretches the plain of Esdraelon, the garden of Palestine, now sere and barren with three years' drought. Away there in the distance is the city of Jezreel, with the royal palace and the idol temple distinctly visible.

From all sides the crowds are making their way toward this spot, which, from the remotest times, has been associated with worship. No work is being done anywhere. The fires are dying out in the smithy and the forge. The instruments of labor hang useless on the walls. The whole thought of young and old is concentrated on that mighty convocation to which Ahab has summoned them. See how the many thousands of Israel are slowly gathering and taking up every spot of vantage ground from which a view can be obtained of the proceedings; and prepared for any extreme—from the impure rites of Baal and Astarte, to the reestablishment of their fathers' religion on the dead bodies of the false priests!

The people are nearly gathered, and there is the regular tread of marshaled men—four hundred prophets of Baal, conspicuous with the sun symbols flashing on their brows. But the prophets of Astarte are absent. The queen, at whose table they ate, has overruled the summons of the king. And now, through the crowd, the litter of the king, borne by stalwart carriers, threads its way, surrounded by the great officers of state.

But our thought turns from the natural panorama, and the sea of upturned faces, and the flashing splendor of the priests, sure of court favor, and insolently defiant. We fix our thought with intense interest on that one man, of sinewy build and flowing hair, who, with flashing eye and compressed lip, awaits the quiet hush which will presently fall upon that mighty concourse. One man against a nation! See with what malignant glances his every movement is watched by the priests. No tiger ever watched its victim more fiercely! If they had their way, he would never touch yonder plain again.

The king alternates between fear and hate, but restrains himself. He feels that, somehow, the coming of the rain depends on this one man. And through the crowd, if there be sympathizers, they are hushed and still. Even Obadiah discreetly keeps out of the way. But do not fear for Elijah—he needs no sympathy! He is consciously standing in the presence of One to whom the nations of men are as grasshoppers. All heaven is at his back. Legions of angels fill the mountain with horses and chariots of fire. He is only a man of like passions with ourselves, but he is full of faith and spiritual power. He has learned the secret of moving God Himself. He can avail of the very resources of Deity, as a slender rod may draw lightning from the cloud. This very day—not by any inherent power, but by faith—you shall see him subdue a kingdom, work righteousness, escape the edge of the sword, wax valiant in the fight, and turn armies of aliens to flight. Nothing shall be impossible to

him. Is it not written that "All things are possible to him that believeth"? (Mark 9:23). He spoke seven times during the course of that memorable day, and his times during the course of that memorable day, and his words are the true index of what was passing in his heart.

Elijah Uttered a Remonstrance

"Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him" (1 Kings 18:21). To his clear faith, which was almost sight, there was no IF. He did not doubt for a moment that the LORD was God. But he wanted to show the people the absurdity of their position. Religions so diametrically opposed could not both be right. One of them must be wrong. As soon as the true one was discovered, the one shown to be false must be cast to the winds.

At present their position was illogical and absurd. Their course was like the limp of a man whose legs are uneven, or like the device of a servant employed to serve two masters—doing his best for both and failing to please either. His sincere and simple soul had no patience with such egregious folly. No doubt they had drifted into it, as men often do drift into absurd and wrong positions. We are all liable to that drift of the stream. But the time had come for the nation to be arrested in its attempt to mingle the worship of Jehovah and Baal and compelled to choose between the two issues that presented themselves. Undoubtedly, the prophet felt that once his people were compelled to choose between the two and to say whether the Jehovah of their fathers, or Baal should be God, there should be no doubt as to their verdict.

The people seemed to have been stunned and ashamed that such alternatives should be presented to their choice, for "the people answered him not a word" (1 Kings 18:21). Oh, for the clear-sightedness of that faith which shall show

men the unreasonableness of their position—sweeping away the cobwebs of sophistry with a single movement of the hand and arraigning them at the bar of their own consciences, silent and condemned. It is needed in our day as much as ever. Everywhere men are trying to win the smile of the world and the "well done" of Christ. They crowd alike the temples of mammon and of God. They try to be popular in the court of Saul, and to stand well with the exiled David.

Elijah Threw Down a Challenge

"The God that answereth by fire, let him be God." It was a fair proposal, because Baal was the lord of the sun and the god of those productive natural forces of which heat is the element and sign. The votaries of Baal could not therefore refuse.

And every Israelite could recall many an occasion in the glorious past when Jehovah had answered by fire. It burned in the acacia bush which was its own fuel. It shone like a beacon light in the van of the desert march. It gleamed on the brow of Sinai. It smote the murmuring crowds. It fell upon the sacrifices which awaited it on the brazen altar. It was the emblem of Jehovah, and the sign of His acceptance of His people's service.

When Elijah proposed that each side should offer a bullock and await an answer by fire, he secured the immediate acquiescence of the people. "All the people answered and said, It is well spoken" (1 Kings 18:24).

That proposal was made in the perfect assurance that God would not fail him. Had he not spend days in prayer? Had not the divine plan been revealed to him? Was it to be supposed for a moment that God would push His servant into the front of the battle, and then leave him? Granted that a miracle must

be wrought before the sun set: there was no difficulty about that to a man who lived in the secret place of the Most High. Miracles are only the results of the higher laws of His chamber.

God will never fail the man who trusts Him utterly. He may keep him waiting until the fourth watch of the morning, but the gray dawn will reveal Him stepping across the billows' crests to His servant's help. Be sure that you are on God's plan, then forward in God's name! The very elements shall obey you, and fire shall leap from heaven at your command.

Elijah Dealt out Withering Sarcasm

For the first time in their existence, the false priests were unable to insert the secret spark of fire among the fagots that lay upon their altar. They were compelled, therefore, to rely on a direct appeal to their patron deity. And this they did with might and main. Round and round the altar they went in the mystic choric dance, breaking their rank sometimes by an excited leap up and down at the altar which was made; and all the while repeating the monotonous chant, "O Baal, hear us!" (1 Kings 18:26). But there was no voice, nor any that answered. "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: they have ears, but they hear not:... they that make them are like unto them, so is everyone that trusteth in them" (Psalm 115:4-6, 8).

Three hours passed. Their deity slowly drove his golden chariot up the steep of heaven and ascended his throne in the zenith. It was surely the time of his greatest power, and he must help them then if ever. But all he did was to bronze the eager, upturned faces of his priests to a deeper tint.

Elijah could ill conceal his delight in their defeat. He knew it would be so. He

was so sure that nothing could avert their utter discomfiture that he could afford to mock them by suggesting a cause for the indifference of their god: "Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked" (1 Kings 18:27). Sarcasm is an invaluable weapon when it is used to expose the ridiculous pretensions of error and convince men of the folly and unreasonableness of their ways.

"And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them" (1 Kings 18:28). Surely their extremity was enough to touch the compassion of any deity, however hard to move! And, since the heavens still continued dumb, did it not prove to the people that their religion was a delusion and a sham?

Three more hours passed by, until the hour had come when, in the temple of Jerusalem, the priests of God were accustomed to offer the evening lamb. But "There was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded (1 Kings 18:29). The altar stood cold and smokeless, the bullock unconsumed.

Elijah Issued an Invitation

His time had come at last, and his first act was to invite the people nearer. He knew what his faith and prayer had won from God, but he wanted the answer of fire to be beyond dispute. He therefore invited the close scrutiny of the people as he reared the broken altar of the Lord. As he sought, with reverent care, those scattered stones and built them together so that the twelve stood as one—a meet symbol of the unity of the ideal Israel in the sight of God—the keen glances of the people in his close proximity could see that there was no inserted torch or secret spark.

Do we not want a few more, who, amid the scatterings of the present day, can still discern the true unity of the Church, the Body of Christ? We may never see that unity visibly manifested until we see the Bride, the Lamb's wife, descend out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. But nevertheless we can enter into God's ideal of it as a spiritual unity, existing unbroken in His thought and unaffected by the divisions of our times. Is it not clear that, during this age, the Church of Christ was never meant to be a visible corporate body, but a great spiritual reality, consisting of all faithful and loyal spirits, in all communions, who, holding the Head, are necessarily one with each other?

Elijah Gave a Command

His faith was exuberant. He was so sure of God, that he dared to heap difficulties in His way, knowing that there is no real difficulty for infinite power. The more unlikely the answer was, the more glory would there be to God. Oh, matchless faith! which can laugh at impossibilities and heap them one upon another, to have the pleasure of seeing God vanquish them—as a steam hammer cracks a nutshell placed under it by the wondering child.

The altar was reared, the wood laid in order, the bullock cut in pieces; but to prevent any possibility of fraud and make the coming miracle still more wonderful, Elijah said, "Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the sacrifice and on the wood (1 Kings 18:33). This they did three times until the wood was drenched, and the water filled the trench, making it impossible for a spark to travel across.

Alas, few of us have faith like this! We are not so sure of God that we dare to pile difficulties in His way. We all try our best to make it easy for Him to help us. Yet what this man had, we too may have, by prayer and fasting.

Elijah Offered a Prayer

Such a prayer! It was quiet and assured, confident of an answer. Its chief burden was that God should vindicate Himself that day, showing Himself to be God indeed and turning the people's heart back to Himself.

Whenever we can so lose ourselves in prayer as to forget personal interests and to plead for the glory of God, we have reached a vantage ground from which we can win anything from Him. Our blessed Lord, in His earthly life, had but one passion—that His Father might be glorified; and now He cannot resist fulfilling the prayer which advances this as its plea: "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13).

Is it wonderful that "the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench" (1 Kings 18:38)? It could not have been otherwise! And let us not think that this is an old-world tale, never to be repeated. The fire still waits for the Promethean faith that can bring it down. If there were the same need, and if any one of us exercised the same faith, we might again see fire descending. Did not the Holy Ghost inaugurate this very age with flames of fire? Our God is a consuming fire and when the unity of His people is once recognized, and His presence is sought, He will descend, overcoming all obstacles and converting a drenched and dripping sacrifice into food on which He Himself can feed.

Elijah Issued an Order for Execution

It was a very terrible act, and yet what could he do? The saints of those times knew nothing of our false notions of liberality. Tell Elijah that those men might be sincere; he would find it difficult to believe it. He would assert that they were none the less dangerous to the best interests of his people. To let them escape would be to license them as the agents of apostasy. They must die. And so the order went forth from those stern lips: "Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape" (1 Kings 18:40). The people were in the mood to obey. Only a moment before they had rent the air with the shout, "The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God (1 Kings 18:39). They had seen how hideously they had been deceived. And now they close round the cowed and vanquished priests, who see that resistance is in vain, and their hour has come.

"And they took them" (1 Kings 18:40). Some took one, and some another. Each priest was hurried down the mountainside by the frenzied and determined men who were beginning to see them as the cause of the long drought.

"Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there" (1 Kings 18:40). One after another they fell beneath his sword while the king stood by, a helpless spectator of their doom, and Baal did naught to save them.

And when the last was dead, the prophet knew that rain was not far off. He could almost hear the clouds hurrying toward the land. He knew what we all need to know; that God can only bless the land or heart which no longer shelters within its borders rivals to Himself. May God clear us of His rivals and impart to us Elijah's faith, that we may also be strong and do exploits!

Chapter 9^(TOC)

Rain at Last!

We can, to a very inadequate degree, realize the horrors of an Eastern drought. And it would have been difficult in the parched land on which Elijah gazed from Carmel, to have recognized that garden of the Lord of which Moses said: "The LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it" (Deuteronomy 8:7, 9).

But beside this exquisite delineation, Moses had been given a description of the certain calamities that would ensue if Israel went aside from any of the words which God commanded, to the right hand or to the left. And among other items of misery, it was expressly stated that the heaven overhead should be brass, and the earth underfoot iron, and the very rain should be transformed to powder and dust (Deuteronomy 28:23-24). This terrible prediction had now been literally fulfilled. And the anguish of the land was directly attributable to the apostasy of its people. All this was the result of sin. The iniquities of Israel had separated between them and their God. Elijah knew this, and it prompted him to act the part of executioner to the priests of Baal. They had been the ringleaders in the national revolt from God, but their bodies now lay in ghastly death on the banks of the Kishon, or were being hurried out to sea.

Ahab must have stood by Elijah in the Kishon gorge, an unwilling spectator of that fearful deed of vengeance, not daring to resist the outburst of popular indignation or attempt to shield the men whom he had himself encouraged and introduced. When the last priest had bitten the dust, Elijah turned to the king and said, "Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain" (1 Kings 18:41). It was as if he said, "Get thee up to where thy tents are pitched on yon broad upland sweep; the feast is spread in thy gilded pavilion; thy lackeys await thee; feast thee on thy dainties; but be quick! for now that the land is rid of these traitor priests, and God is once more enthroned in His rightful place, the showers of rain cannot be longer delayed. Can you not hear the sough of the western breeze, which shall soon become a hurricane? Be quick! or the rain may interrupt thy carouse."

What a contrast between these two men! "Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees" (1 Kings 18:42). It is no more than we might have expected of the king. When his people were suffering the extremities of drought, he cared only to find grass enough to save his stud. Now, though his faithful priests had died by hundreds, he thought only of the banquet that awaited him in his pavilion. Cruel, cowardly, mean, and sensual are the least epithets we can apply to this worthless man, clad though he was with the royal robes of Israel. I think I can see Ahab and Elijah ascending those heights together: no sympathy, no common joy, no reciprocated thanksgiving. The king turns straight off to his tents while the servant of God climbs to the highest part of the mountain and finds an oratory at the base of a yet higher spur from which a marvelous view could be obtained of the broad expanse of the Mediterranean, which slept under the growing stillness of the coming night.

Such contrasts still reveal themselves. Crises reveal the secrets of men's hearts and show of what stuff they are made. The children of this world will spend their days in feasting, and their nights in revelry, though a world is rushing down to ruin. If only they can eat and drink, they are regardless of the needs of the perishing and the judgments of God. Such feasted with Belshazzar when the foe was at the gates of Babylon. Such filled with the frivolities the royal apartments of Whitehall when William of Orange was landing at Tor Bay. And woe to the land when such men rule! The sequence between the sensual luxury of the rulers and the decadence of the nation was well pointed out by Isaiah when he said: "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that tarry late into the night, till wine inflame them! And the harp and the lute, the tabret and the pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither have they considered the operation of his hands. Therefore my people are gone into captivity" (Isaiah 5:11-13 RV). May our beloved country be preserved from having such leaders as these! And may our youth be found, not garlanded and scented for the Ahab feasts, but with Elijah on the bleak uplands; where there may be no dainty viands, but where the air is fresh, and life is free, and the spirit is braced to noble deeds.

There are certain characteristics in Elijah's prayer, which we must notice as we pass, because they should form part of all true prayer.

It was Based on the Promise of God

When Elijah was summoned from Zarephath to resume his public work, his marching orders were capped by the specific promise of rain: "Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth" (1 Kings 18:1). To natural reason this might have seemed to render prayer unnecessary. Would

not God fulfill His promise, and send the rain, altogether irrespective of further prayer? But Elijah's spiritual instincts argued otherwise, and more truly. Though he had never heard the words, yet he anticipated the thought of a later prophet who, after enunciating all that God was prepared to do for His people, uttered these significant words: "Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them."

God's promises are given, not to restrain, but to incite to prayer. They show the direction in which we may ask, and the extent to which we may expect an answer. They are the mold into which we may pour our fervid spirits without fear. They are the signed check, made payable to order, which we must endorse and present for payment. Though the Bible is crowded with golden promises from board to board, yet will they be inoperative until we turn them into prayer. It is not our province to argue the reasonableness of this; it is enough to argue and enforce it. Why should it not be sufficient to silence all questions by saying that we have here reached one of the primal laws of the spiritual world, as simple, as certain, as universal, as any that obtain in the world of nature? Promises of abundant harvest smile to the husbandman from earth and sky, but he knows that they will not be realized unless he puts into operation the laws and processes of agriculture. As he does so, it is not necessary for his success that he should understand the why and wherefore; it is enough for him to do his little part, and he finds that every promise is fulfilled in the produce shed at his feet from Nature's golden horn.

When, therefore, we are asked why men should pray, and how prayer avails, we are not careful to answer more than this: "Prayer is the instinct of the religious life; it is one of the first principles of the spiritual world." It is clearly taught in the Word of God to be prevalent with the Almighty. It has been practiced by the noblest and saintliest of men, who have testified to its

certain efficacy. Our Lord Jesus not only practiced it, but proclaimed its value in words which have been plunged a myriad times into the crucible of experience and are as true today as ever: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:9). We are content, therefore, to pray, though we are as ignorant of the philosophy of the modus operandi of prayer as we are of any natural law. We find it no dreamy reverie or sweet sentimentality, but a practical, living force. Whenever we stand by the altar of incense, we become aware of the angel of the Lord standing hard by, and saying, "Fear not, O man greatly beloved! thy prayer is heard."

When your child was a toddling, lisping babe, he asked many things wholly incompatible with your nature and its own welfare; but as the years have passed, increasing experience has molded your child's requests into shapes suggested by yourself. So, as we know more of God through His promises, we are staid from asking what He cannot give and led to set our hearts on things which lie on His open palm waiting to be taken by the hand of an appropriating faith. This is why all prayer, like Elijah's, should be based on promise. We stand on a foundation of adamant and have an irresistible purchase with God when we can put our finger on His own promise and say, "Do as Thou hast said."

It was Definite

This is where so many prayers fail. They are shot like arrows into the air. They are like letters which require no answer because they ask for nothing. They are like the firing of artillery in a mimic fight when only gunpowder is employed. This is why they are so wanting in power and interest. We do not pray with an expectation of attaining definite and practical results. We

wander out like Isaac to meditate in the fields at eventide, but we fail to ascend Carmel with the compressed lip and the resolute step of Elijah, as determined, if we may, to win by prayer the fulfillment of some blessed promise, as he was to bring the longed-for rain. Let us amend in this matter. Let us keep a list of petitions which we shall plead before God. Let us direct our prayer, as David did (Psalm 5:3), and look up for the answer; and we shall find ourselves obtaining new and unwonted blessings. Be definite!

It was Earnest

"Elias... prayed earnestly" (James 5:17). This is the testimony of the Holy Spirit, through the apostle James. It was the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man, which availeth much. The prayers of Scripture all glow with the white heat of intensity. Remember how Jacob wrestled, and David panted and poured out his soul; the importunity of the blind beggar, and the persistency of the distracted mother; the strong crying and tears of our Lord. In each case the whole being seemed gathered up, as a stone into a catapult, and hurled forth in vehement entreaty. Prayer is only answered for the glory of Christ, but it is not answered unless it be accompanied with such earnestness as will prove that the blessing sought is really needed.

Ah, what earnestness pants and throbs on every side! No listless attention! No flagging interest! No drowsy eye! Oh, for such violence, guided by holiness, to take the kingdom of heaven by force! Such earnestness is, of course, to be dreaded when we seek some lower boon for ourselves. But when, like Elijah, we seek the fulfillment of the divine promise—not for ourselves, but for the glory of God—then it is impossible to be too much in earnest or too full of the energy of prayer.

Elijah's Prayer was Humble

"He cast himself down on the ground, and put his face between his knees." We scarcely recognize him, he seems to have so lost his identity. A few hours before, he stood erect as an oak of Bashan; now, he is bowed as a bulrush. Then as God's ambassador he pleaded with man; now as man's intercessor he pleads with God. Is it not always so—that the men who stand straightest in the presence of sin bow lowest in the presence of God? And is it not also true, that those who live nearest God are the most reverent? True, you are a child; but you are also a subject. True, you are a redeemed man; but you can never forget your original name, sinner. True, you may come with boldness; but remember the majesty, might, and power of God, and take your shoes off. The angels of His presence fly with veiled faces to do His bidding, as they cry, "Holy, Holy, Holy!" The most tender love, which casts out the tormenting fear, begets a fear that is as sensitive as that of John who, though he lay his head on Jesus' breast, scrupled too hastily to intrude upon the grave where He had slept. Our only plea with God is the merit and blood of our great High Priest. It becomes us to be humble.

It was Full of Expectant Faith

"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). Faith is the indispensable condition of all true prayer. It is the gift of the Holy Ghost. It thrives by exercise. It grows strong by feeding on the promises: the Word of God is its natural food. It beat strongly in Elijah's heart. He knew that God would keep His word, and so he sent the lad—possibly the widows' son—up to the highest point of Carmel and bade him look toward the sea. He was sure that before long his prayer would be answered, and God's promise would be kept. We have often prayed

and failed to look out for the blessings we have sought. The stately ships of heaven have come up to the quays, laden with the very blessings we asked; but as we have not been there to welcome and unload them, they have put out again to sea. The messenger pigeons have come back again to their cotes with the tiny messages concealed beneath their wings, but we have not been there to search for them and take them.

Sometimes we have to exercise faith on the simple warrant of God's Word. At other times, God seems to give us special faith for things which are not directly promised. The presence or absence of faith is a great test in prayer. Where it is present, we are so sure of the answer as to turn petition into thanksgiving. But where it is persistently absent, and where continued prayer fails to light up the spirit with the conviction of coming answer, then it would seem as if the Urim and Thummim stone is darkening with one of God's loving refusals and He says, "Ask me no more concerning this matter."

There is a faith which God cannot refuse; to which all things are possible; which laughs at impossibility; which can move mountains and plant them in the sea. May such faith be ours! It can be ours only by careful and eager nurture. Such faith was Elijah's.

It was Very Persevering

He said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." And he went up, and looked, and said, "There is nothing."—How often have we sent the lad of eager desire to scan the horizon! and how often has he returned with the answer, There is nothing!—There is no tear of penitence in those hard eyes. There is no symptom of amendment in that wild life. There is no sign of deliverance in these sore perplexities. There is nothing. And because there is nothing when we have just begun to pray, we leave off praying. We leave the

mountain brow. We do not know that God's answer is even then upon the way.

Not so with Elijah. "And he said, Go again seven times" (1 Kings 18:43). There is a truer rendering of this: "Then said he seven times, Go again." It is not that the lad was told to run to and fro seven times, without interrupting the prophet in prayer; but it would appear that again and again the lad came back to his master with the same message. "There is nothing;" and, after an interval, he was bidden to go again.

He came back the first time, saying, "There is nothing" (1 Kings 18:43). Elijah said, "Go again." And that was repeated seven times. It was no small test of the prophet's endurance; but he was not tried more than he could endure, and with the ordeal there came sufficient grace, so that he was able to bear it.

Not unfrequently our Father grants our prayer, and labels the answer for us; but He keeps it back, that we may be led on to a point of intensity, which shall bless our spirits forever, and from which we shall never recede. The psalmist says, "Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed" (Psalm 25:3). Then when we have outdone ourselves, He lovingly turns to us, and says, "Great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt!" (Matthew 15:28). He waits, that He may be gracious unto us.

And the Prayer was Abundantly Answered

For weeks and months before, the sun had been gathering drops of mist from lake and river, from sea and ocean, drawing them as clouds in coronets of glory and around himself. Now the gale was bearing them rapidly toward the

thirsty land of Israel. "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24). The answer to your prayers may be nearer than you think. It may already have started by the down-line. On the wings of every moment it is hastening toward you. God shall answer you, and that right early.

Presently the lad, from his tower of observation, beheld on the horizon a tiny cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, scudding across the sky. No more was needed to convince an Oriental that rain was near. It was, and is, the certain precursor of a sudden hurricane of wind and rain. The lad was sent with an urgent message to Ahab, to descend from Carmel to his chariot in the plain beneath, lest Kishon, swollen by the rains, should stop him in his homeward career. The lad had barely time to reach the royal pavilion before the heavens were black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain.

The monarch started amid the pelting storm, but fleetlier than his swift steeds were the feet of the prophet, energized by the hand of God. He snatched up his streaming mantel and twisted it around his loins. Amid the fury of the elements with which the night closed in, he outstripped the chariot and ran like a common courier before it to the entrance of Jezreel, some eighteen miles distant. He did this to convince the king that in his zeal against idolatry he was actuated by no personal disrespect to himself and prompted only by jealousy for God.

Thus by his faith and prayer this solitary man brought back the rain to Israel. More things are wrought by prayer than this world knows of. Why should not we learn and practice his secret? It is certainly within the reach of us all. Then we too might bring spiritual blessings from heaven, which should make the parched places of the church and the world rejoice and blossom as the rose.

Chapter 10_(TOC)

How the Mighty Fell

Amid the drenching storm with which the memorable day of the convocation closed in, the king and the prophet reached Jezreel. Probably they were the first to bring tidings of what had occurred. Elijah went to some humble lodging for shelter and food, while Ahab repaired to the palace, where Jezebel awaited him. All day long the queen had been wondering how matters were going on Mount Carmel. She cherished the feverish hope that her priests had won the day; and when she saw the rain-clouds steal over the sky, she attributed the welcome change so some great interposition of Baal in answer to their pleadings. May not some such colloquy as this have taken place between the royal pair, when they met in the palace interior?

"How have things gone today? No doubt, well; the rain has anticipated your favorable reply."

"I have nothing to tell you that will give you pleasure."

"Why! Has anything happened?"

"The worst has happened."

"What do you mean? Where are my priests?"

"You will never see them again."

"Never see them again! What do you mean? Tell me quickly!"

"They are all dead. By this time their bodies are floating out to sea."

"Who has dared to do this thing? Did they not defend themselves? Did you not raise your hand? How did they die? Where is Elijah? Have the people broken into revolt?"

Then "Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword" (1 Kings 19:1).

Jezebel's indignation knew no bounds. She was like a tigress robbed of her young. Ahab's temperament was sensual and materialistic. If he had enough to eat and drink, and the horses and mules were cared for, he was content. He could not understand people becoming so enthusiastic about religious matters. In his judgment there was not much to choose between God and Baal. His was the motto of the Epicurean, "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." Not so Jezebel. She was as resolute as he was indifferent. Crafty, unscrupulous, and intriguing, she molded Ahab to her mind; and, in doing so, anticipated the symbol of the Apocalypse in which the scarlet-clad woman rides upon the beast.

To Jezebel the crisis was one of gravest moment. Policy, as well as indignation, prompted her to act at once. If this national reformation were permitted to spread, it would sweep away before it all that she had been laboring at for years. She must strike, and strike at once; and where would her blow tell so well as when aimed at the master-spirit of the day's proceedings? So that very night, amid the violence of the storm, she sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them, by tomorrow about this time" (1 Kings 19:2). That message betrays the woman. She did not dare to kill him, though he was easily within her power. So she mastered her wrath, and

contented herself with threats. Her mind was set on driving him from the country, so she might be left free to repair the havoc he had caused. In this, alas! she was only too successful.

Elijah's presence had never been so necessary as now. The work of destruction had commenced, and the people were in a mood to carry it through to the bitter end. The tide had turned and was setting in toward God. Elijah was needed to direct its flow, to keep the people true to the choice which they had made, and to complete the work of reformation by a work of construction. From what we have seen of him, we should have expected that he would receive the message with unruffled composure, laying it before God in quiet confidence, assured that He would hide him in the secret of His Pavilion from the wrath of man and shield him from the strife of tongues. Surely he will preserve a dignified silence or return an answer like that which Chrysostom sent on a similar occasion to the Empress Eudoxia, "Go tell her I fear nothing but sin." But, instead of this, we are told (and surely the sacred historian must have heaved a deep sigh as he wrote the words), "When he saw that, he arose, and went for his life" (1 Kings 19:3).

He went for his life! Accompanied by his servant, and under covert of the night, he hurried through the driving storm, across the hills of Samaria, and directed his course, with true Bedouin instinct, toward the extreme south of Judea, where the pasture lands of Palestine fade into the drear expanse of the Arabian desert. Nor did he slacken his speed until he had left far behind him the country over which Jezebel's scepter swayed and had reached Beersheba, the town that clustered round the well of the oath—where, centuries before, Abraham had planted a grove and called upon the name of the Lord. He was safe there, but even there he could not stay. His spirit seems to have become utterly demoralized and panic-stricken. He would not even brook the

company of his servant. So, leaving him in Beersheba, he plunged alone into that wild desert waste that stretches southward to Sinai.

Through the weary hours he plodded on beneath the burning sun, his feet blistered by the scorching sands. No ravens, no Cherith, no Zarephath were there. No human sympathy lent him its kindly aid. The very presence of God seemed to have withdrawn itself from his side. At last the fatigue and anguish overpowered even his sinewy strength, and he cast himself beneath the slight shadow of a small shrub of juniper, and asked to die. "It is enough now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers" (1 Kings 19:4).

What might have been! If only Elijah had held his ground—dwelling in the secret place of the Most High and hiding under the shadow of the Almighty—he might have saved his country. There would have been no necessity for the captivity and dispersion of his people. The seven thousand secret disciples might have come forth from their hiding places to avow themselves and would have constituted a nucleus of loyal hearts. And his own character would have escaped a stain which has resisted the obliterating erasure of the ages and still remains, fraught with shame and sorrow. Elijah's influence in Israel never recovered from that one false step. He missed a chance which never came again. And though God, in His mercy, treated him lovingly and royally as a child, He never again reinstated him as a servant in just the position which he so thoughtlessly flung away. It is a solemn thought for us all! If for one moment we are left to ourselves, we may take a step which may shatter our influence, and forever after put us into a very different position from that which might have been ours if only we had remained true. As children, we may be forgiven; as servants we are never reinstated or trusted quite as we were once.

It is noteworthy that the Bible saints often fail just where we would have expected them to stand. Abraham was the father of those who believe; but his faith failed him when he went down to Egypt and lied to Pharaoh about his wife. Moses was the meekest of men; but he missed Canaan because he spoke unadvisedly with his lips. John was the apostle of love, yet in a moment of intolerance he wished to call down fire out of heaven. So Elijah, who might have been supposed to be superior to all human weakness, shows himself to be indeed "a man subject to like passions as are we" (James 5:17).

The old castle, which from its hill, watches over the town of Edinburgh clustering beneath, was captured only once in the whole history of Scotland, and its capture happened thus: its defenders thought that on one side the steepness of the rock made it inaccessible and impregnable; and they put no sentries there. And so, in the gray mist of the early morning, a little party crept up the precipitous slopes and surprised the garrison into surrender.

Is there not a warning here for us all? It may be that some have been saying boastfully of certain forms of vice, "I shall never yield to this or that. I have no inclination to such forms of sin. This is one of the points in which I am strong to resist." Beware! It may be that the great enemy of souls has a special design in producing in you a sense of false security, that he may assail and vanquish you in the very point in which you deem yourself impregnable, and so forbear to watch.

What a proof is here of the veracity of the Bible! Had it been merely a human composition, its authors would have shrunk from delineating the failure of one of its chief heroes. No artist would think of snapping a column just as it was tapering to its coronal. Men sometimes complain against the Bible for its uncompromising portraiture. Yet, is not this its glory? It holds the mirror up to human nature, that we may learn what is in man that we may none of us

despair, and that we may infer that, if God were able to fashion his choicest ware out of such common earth, it is possible for Him to do as much again in the most ignorant and degraded of His children. Is there not even a gleam of comfort to be had out of the woeful spectacle of Elijah's fall? If it had not been for this, we should always have thought of him as being too far removed from us to be in any sense a model. We should have looked on him as we do at the memorials of a race of giants, with whom we have nothing in common. But now, as we see him stretched under the shade of the juniper tree asking for death, behaving himself with more pusillanimity than many among us would have manifested, we feel that he was what he was only by the grace of God, received through faith. And by a similar faith we may appropriate a similar grace to ennoble our mean lives.

Several causes account for his terrible failure.

(1) His Physical Strength and Nervous Energy were Completely Overtaxed

Consider the tremendous strain which he had undergone since leaving the shelter of the quiet home at Zarephath. The long excitement of the convocation, the slaughter of the priests, the intensity of his prayer, the eighteen miles' swift run in front of Ahab's chariot, succeeded by the rapid flight which had hardly been relaxed for a single moment until he cast himself upon the desert sand. All this had resulted in sheer exhaustion. He was suffering keenly from reaction, now that the extreme tension was relaxed, and this counted largely in the unutterable depression under which he was suffering.

We are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14) and our inner life is very sensitive to our outward conditions. It has been truly said that the most trivial causes—a heated room, a sunless day, want of exercise or a northern aspect—will make all the difference between faith and doubt, between courage and indecision. Many who send for the religious teacher would be wiser if they sent for their physician. And if any are conscious of having lost the sunny gladness and buoyant faith of former days, before they speak of the mysterious hidings of God's face or lament their own backslidings, it might be well to inquire if there may not be some physical or nervous cause. And if there be, it will attract not the blame, but the compassionate sympathy of Him who knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are but dust. When we consider the speed and strain of our times, it is marvelous that there are not more among us suffering from the intolerable depression beneath which Elijah sank on the desert sand.

(2) He was Keenly Sensitive to his Lonely Position

"I, even I only, am left" (1 Kings 19:10). Some men are born to loneliness. It is the penalty of true greatness. At such a time the human spirit is apt to falter, unless it is sustained by an heroic purpose and by an unfaltering faith. The shadow of that loneliness fell dark on the spirit of our divine Master Himself when he said: "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me" (John 16:32). If our Lord shrank in the penumbra of that great eclipse, it is not wonderful that Elijah cowered in its darksome gloom. He might have had the company of his lad, but there is company which is not companionship. We may be more lonely in a crowd

than in a desert. We need something more than human beings, we need human hearts and sympathy and love.

(3) He Looked Away from God to Circumstances

Up to that moment Elijah had been animated by a most splendid faith, because he had never lost sight of God. "He endured as seeing Him who is invisible." Faith always thrives when God occupies the whole field of vision. But when Jezebel's threats reached him, we are told most significantly, "when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life" (1 Kings 19:3). In after years, Peter walked on the water until he looked from his Master to the seething waves. "When he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord save me!" (Matthew 14:3). So here, while Elijah set the Lord always before his face, he did not fear, though an host encamped against him. But when he looked at his peril, he thought more of his life than of God's cause; and was afraid of man that should die, and of the son of man that should be made as grass; and forgot the Lord, his Maker, which made heaven and earth. "When he saw that, he arose, and went for his life."

Let us refuse to look at circumstances, though they roll before us as a Red Sea and howl around us like a storm. Circumstances, natural impossibilities, difficulties, are nothing in the estimation of the soul that is occupied with God. They are as the small dust that settles on a scale and is not considered in the measurement of weight. O men of God, get you up into the high mountain, from which you may obtain a good view of the glorious Land of Promise, and refuse to have your gaze diverted by men or things below!

It is a great mistake to dictate to God. Elijah know not what he said when he

told God that he had had enough of life, and asked to die. If God had taken him at his word, he would have died under a cloud; he would never have heard the still small voice; he would never have founded the schools of the prophets, or commissioned Elisha for his work; he would never have swept up to heaven in an equipage of flame.

What a mercy it is that God does not answer all our prayers! How gracious He is in reading their inner meaning, and answering that! This, as we shall see, is what He did for His tired and querulous servant.

How many have uttered those words, "It is enough!"—the sufferer, weary of long and wearing pain; the wife tied to an inhuman husband, the Christian worker whose efforts seem in vain; "It is enough. Let me come home. The burden is more than I can bear. The lessons are tiresome. School is tedious, and the holidays would be so welcome. I cannot see that anything will be gained by longer delay. It is enough!"

O silly, silly children! Little do we know how much we should miss if God were to do as we request. To die now would be to forego immeasurable blessings which await us within forty days' journey from this; and to die like a dog, instead of sweeping, honored and beloved, through the open gates of heaven. It is better to leave it all in the wise and tender thought of God. He wants us home, but will not let us come till we have learned the last lesson and done the last stroke of work. And we shall yet live to thank Him that He refused to gratify our wish when, in a moment of despondency, we cast ourselves upon the ground, and said, "Let us die. It is enough!"

Chapter 11_(TOC)

Loving-kindness Better than Life

The holy apostle, whose earliest lessons of the love of God were conned as he leaned on the bosom of Christ, tells us, in words deep and simple as some translucent lake, that "we have known and believed the love that God hath to us." They are wonderful words for mortals to utter. A lifetime would be well spent if, at its close, we could utter them without exaggeration. But alas, many of us have learned some of our deepest lessons of the love of God in having experienced its gentle kindness amid shortcoming and failure, like that which marred Elijah's course.

That failure, as we have seen, was most disastrous. It inflicted lasting disgrace upon Elijah's reputation. It arrested one of the most hopeful movements that ever visited the land of Israel. It struck panic and discouragement into thousands of hearts which were beginning to gather courage from his splendid zeal. It snapped the only brake by which the headlong descent of Israel to destruction could have been prevented. It brought discredit and rebuke on the cause and name of God. A choir of angels might well have gathered around the truant prophet as he lay upon the desert sand and recited some such mournful words as those with which David lamented the death of Saul and Jonathan on Gilboa's fatal field: "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee... How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" (2 Samuel 1:25-27).

If ever it were befitting for a man to reap what he had sown and suffer the consequences of his own misdeeds, it would have been so in the case of Elijah. But God's thoughts are not as man's. He know all the storms of disappointment and broken hope which were sweeping across that noble spirit, as gusts of wind across an inland sea. His eye followed with tender pity every step of His servant's flight across the hills of Samaria. He did not love him less than when he stood, elated with victory, by the burning sacrifice. And His love assumed, if possible, a tenderer, gentler aspect as He stooped over Elijah while he slept. As a shepherd tracks the wondering sheep from the fold to the wild mountain pass where eagles, sailing in narrowing circles, watch its faltering steps, so did the love of God come upon Elijah as, worn in body by long fatigue and in spirit by the fierce war of passion, he lay and slept under the juniper tree.

And God did more than love him. He sought, by tender helpfulness, to heal and restore His servant's soul to its former health and joy. At His command, an angel, twice over, prepared a meal upon the desert sand and touched him and bade him eat. No upbraiding speeches, no word of reproach, no threats of dismissal, but only sleep and food and kindly thoughtfulness of the great journey which he was bent on making to Horeb, the mount of God. It makes us think of Him who, in after days, prepared in the early morning upon the shore of the lake, a breakfast such as wet and weary fishermen would love—there was a fire, and fish laid thereon, and bread. And He did this for those who, following the impulsive lead of Peter, had apparently determined to wait no more for His coming but to return to the boats and fishing-tackle from which He had called them three years before.

It may be that these words will be read by those who have failed. You once avowed yourselves to be the Lord's; and lived for a little on the uplands

where the golden light ever shines upon the happy spirit. Or perhaps you professed to enter the blessed life, and you did taste its joys and experience its liberty and victory. Or maybe you have stood up to teach others, stirring them to deeds of heroic courage and daring. But all that is over now. You have fallen, as Milton's Archangel, from heaven to hell. We need not now discuss the cause of your failure; you were overtaken in some sudden temptation, or you neglected communion with God, or you refused to live up to your light. But the sad fact remains that you have failed, perhaps as Elijah did, when everyone expected you to stand. And you are ashamed. You want to hide yourself from all who knew you in happier days. You have given up heart and hope and lie dejected and dispirited on the desert sands; you account yourself forsaken by God and man. But remember, though forsaken by man, you are not forgotten of God. He loves you still, and pities you, and yearns over you; and waits beside you, with loving tendance and provender, in order to restore your soul, and give you back the years that the cankerworm and caterpillar have eaten. We have then, in this incident, four thoughts of the love of God which must be a comfort to us all and especially to those who have fallen from Carmel's height to the level of the desert sands.

God's Love in its Constancy

It is a fact which we all admit, but which we seldom realize in the moments of depression and darkness to which we are all exposed. It is not difficult to believe that God loves us when we go with the multitude to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, and stand in the inner sunlit circle; but it is hard to believe that He feels as much love for us when, exiled by our sin to the land of Jordan and of the Hermonites, our soul is cast down within us, and deep calls to deep, as His waves and billows surge around. It is not difficult to believe that God loves us when, like Elijah at Cherith and on Carmel, we

do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word; but it is not so easy when, like Elijah in the desert, we lie stranded. It is not difficult to believe in God's love when with Peter we stand on the mount of glory and, in the rapture of joy, propose to share a tabernacle with Christ evermore; but it is nearly impossible when, with the same apostle, we deny our Master with oaths, and are abashed by a look in which grief masters reproach.

Yet we must learn to know and believe the constancy of the love of God. We may not feel it. We may deem it shut up and gone forever. We may imagine that we have forfeited all claim to it. We may think of it as Arctic travelers, dying in the icy darkness, dream of the summers of early childhood. But nevertheless, it has not altered. Staunch as the affection of a friend, true as the love of a mother, the love of God abides unchangeable as Himself. Mists, born of the swamps and marshes of your own sin, obscure the light of that sun; but it is shining yet as brilliantly as ever and will shine on until it has dispelled all shrouding veils and bathes you again in its warm and blessed glow.

O man of God, lying amid the wrecks of what might have been, take heart! Hope still in the love of God; trust in it; yield to it; and you shall yet praise Him who is the health of your countenance and your God.

God's Love Manifested in Special Tenderness

Because of Special Sin

We do not read that an angel ever appeared to Elijah at Cherith or Zarephath or awakened him with a touch that must have been as thrilling as it was

tender. Ravens and brooklets and a widow woman, had ministered to him before, but never an angel. He had drunk of the water of Cherith, but never of water drawn by angel hands from the river of God, which is ever full of water. He had eaten of bread and flesh foraged for him by ravens and of meal multiplied by miracle, but never of cakes molded by angel fingers. Why these special proofs of tenderness? Certainly it was not because God took any pleasure in His servant's sin or condoned his grave offense, but because a special manifestation of love was needed to convince the prophet that he was still dearly loved, to soften his spirit, and lead him to repentance.

Where ordinary methods will not avail, God will employ extraordinary ones. There is one memorable instance of this which has afforded comfort and hope to multitudes who have sinned as Peter did. This multitude will bless God forever for the record of the Master's dealings with His truant servant. The Lord sent a general message to all His disciples to meet Him in Galilee. But He felt that Peter would hardly dare to class himself with the rest, so Jesus sent to him a special message through an angel. "Tell his disciples, and Peter" (Mark 16:7). It is thus that Jesus is working still throughout the circles of His disciples. So eager is He to convince the fallen of his unaltered love, that He will go out of His way to show it. He will invent new and unwonted surprises. He will employ angels with their gentle touch and bake special cakes on desert stones. He will send special messages, entwined about the backslider's name. He will take the wondering sheep on His shoulder to bring it home. He will kill the fatted calf and call on the angels of His presence-chamber to make merry and be glad.

It may be that you are sleeping the sleep of insensibility or of despair, but all the while the love of God is inventing some unique manifestation of its yearning tenderness. He hates your sin as only infinite holiness can. He

yearns over you as only infinite love can. He wants to convince you of what He feels; to touch you, to soften you, to win you back to Himself. All the while that you are grieving Him and wandering from Him, He is encompassing you with blessings. Be conquered! Yield to Him! Take with you words, and turn again to the Lord. He will receive you graciously.

God's Love in its Unwearied Care

It is most likely that it was evening when the angel came the first time and touched him, and bade him arise and eat; for we are told that he went a day's journey into the wilderness before he sat down under the juniper bush. Night was spreading her temporary veil over the scorched sands, and the sun was sinking like a ball of fire on the unbroken rim of the horizon. And when the angel of the Lord came the second time, it would probably be as morning was breaking over the world. And thus, through the intervening night, the angels of God kept watch and ward about the sleeping prophet.

None of us can measure the powers of endurance of the love of God. It never tires. It fainteth not, neither is weary. It does not fail, nor is it discouraged. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. It clings about its object with a divine tenacity until the darkness and wanderings are succeeded by the blessedness of former days. It watches over us during the hours of our insensibility to its presence, touching us ever, speaking to us, and summoning us to arise to a nobler, better life, one more worthy of ourselves and more glorifying to Him.

God's Love Anticipating Coming Need

This always stands out as one of the most wonderful passages in the prophet's history. We can understand God giving him, instead of a long discourse, a good meal and sleep as the best means of recruiting his spent powers. This is what we should have expected of One who knows our frame and remembers that we are dust and who pities us as a father pities his children. But it is very wonderful that God should provision His servant for the long journey that lay before him, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee" (1 Kings 19:7).

That journey was undertaken at his own whim. It was one long flight from his post of duty, it was destined to meet with a grave remonstrance at its close: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" (1 Kings 19:9). And yet the Lord graciously gave him food, in the strength of which he could endure his long fatigue. The explanation must be again sought in the tender love of God. Elijah's nature was clearly overwrought. Without doubt he had steadfastly made up his mind for that tedious journey to the Mount of God. Nothing would turn him from his fixed purpose. And therefore, as he would go, God anticipated his needs, though they were the needs of a truant servant and a rebellious child. In wrath He remembered mercy, and provided him with the blessings of His goodness. God imparted, through a single meal, sufficient strength for a march of forty days and forty nights. Let us pause here for a moment to adore the wonderful love of God which gives men life and breath and all things, even when He knows that they will be used for selfish ends and in direct opposition to His revealed will.

Surely these thoughts of the love of God will arrest some from pursuing any longer the path of the backslider. You have failed, but do not be afraid of God or think that He will never look on you again. In thinking thus of Him, you grieve Him more and aggravate your bad behavior. Rather, cast yourself upon

His love as a swimmer flings himself upon the buoyant waves which immediately close around him and bear him up and carry him upon their sunlit bosom. Tell Him how deeply you mourn the past. Ask Him to restore you. Give yourself to Him again, resume the forsaken work, retake the abandoned post. Believe that God will again use you as a chosen vessel and pour through you His tides of blessing as an ocean may pour its flood through one narrow strait.

And as we close this precious narrative, may we all receive instruction concerning those meals which heaven prepares for us, each evening and morning, during our journey across the sands of time. At night, when we come home wearied with the day's toil, before we fling ourselves into deep slumber, the angels bid us arise and partake of that living bread and water on which alone can spirits become strong. And morning by morning their gentle touches awake us from overdue slumbers, as they whisper, "Arise and eat, lest the journey be too great for thee." Their neglect to obey the heavenly summons is the true cause of so much failure in the lives of Christian people. They do not feed enough on Christ. They slumber on, heedless and insensate, until the morning sun is high, and the angels, with their provisions, have faded away.

May we be among the happy number who never need twice calling, but who rise each morning as the first cadence of the angel's voice breaks upon their ears, to eat of that flesh which is meat indeed, and to drink of the blood which is drink indeed. Then shall we be able to withstand all assaults, to endure all fatigue, and to abide perpetually in the realized presence of God. "They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31).

Chapter 12_(TOC)

The Still Small Voice

Refreshed by sleep and food, Elijah resumed his journey across the desert to Horeb. Perhaps no spot on earth is more associated with the manifested presence of God than that sacred mount. It was there the bush burned with fire, there the law was given, there Moses spent forty days and nights alone with God. It was a natural instinct that led the prophet thither, and all the world could not have furnished a more appropriate school. Natural scenery and holy associations lent all their powers to impress and elevate the soul.

Forty times the prophet saw the sun rise and set over the desert waste. I do not know that anyone has perfectly explained the meaning of that symbolic number which so frequently appears upon the page of Scripture, and is so often associated with failure and temptation. In passing, I can only note the fact of its frequent repetition. Thus, at last, the prophet came to Horeb, the mount of God. We have to consider how God dealt with His dispirited and truant child.

God Spoke to Him

In some dark cave, among those rent precipices Elijah lodged, and, as he waited in lonely musings, the fire burned in his soul. But he had not long to wait. "Behold, the word of the LORD came unto him (1 Kings 19:9).

That word had often come to him before. It had come to him at Thisbe. It had

come to him in Samaria, after he had given his first message to Ahab. It had come to him when Cherith was dry. It had come to summon him from the solitudes of Zarephath to the stir of active life. And now it found him out and came to him again. There is no spot on earth so lonely, no cave so deep and dark, that the word of the Lord cannot discover and come to us.

But though God had often spoken to him before, He had never spoken in quite the same tone—"What doest thou here. Elijah?" (1 Kings 19:13). The accent was stern and reproachful, and seemed to mean, "Thou art My servant; thou art set to do My will; if ever thou wast needed, it is now; the tide is on the turn; a great reformation is almost ripe. Why hast thou left thy post? How camest thou hither without My bidding or My leave?" Elijah shrank from a direct reply. If he had answered truly, he must have confessed that he was utterly in the wrong, without a single word of extenuation or excuse. He had done wrong in leaving his post; and that first wrong step had been aggravated by every one which he had taken since, plunging him further and further into the dark.

If the prophet had answered that searching question of God with shame and sorrow, if he had confessed that he had failed and asked for forgiveness, if he had cast himself on the pitifulness and tenderness of his Almighty Friend—there is not the least doubt that he would have been forgiven and restored. The past would never have been named against him, and the results of his fatal flight would have been repaired. God would Himself have stood in the breach, until His child could hasten back again to his post and lead on the glorious work which he had so nobly commenced. But instead of this, he parried the divine question and evaded it. He did not try to explain how he came there, or what he was doing. He chose rather to dwell upon his own loyalty for the cause of God and to bring it out into striking relief by

contrasting it with the sinful backslidings of his people. "I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenants, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kings 19:10). All this was well known to God, and I do not think the prophet would ever have alluded to it unless he had been hard pressed to find an excuse to palliate his own cowardice and neglect of duty.

In fact, he was thoroughly demoralized with unbelief and fear. The sky of his soul was covered with clouds so dense that no star of comfort glimmered through their murky curtains. There was a tinge of self-vindication and of blame on others, which was scarcely worthy of him. He did not sufficiently realize that the fault lay with himself and that he, equally with others, was to blame for the pass to which the cause of God had come. His was a noble nature under a temporary cloud, a palace in ruins, a splendid vessel rolling rudderless in the trough of the waves. There was, no doubt, truth in what he said. He was full of zeal and holy devotion to the cause of God. He had often mourned over the national degeneracy. He keenly felt his own isolation and loneliness. But these were not the reasons why at the moment he was hiding in the cave, nor were they the real answer to that searching question, "What doest thou here, Elijah?"

How often is that question put still! When a Christian worker, to avoid some difficulty or to secure selfish gratification and ease, deserts his post and escapes to that couch of indolence or that forest glade where soft breezes blow, the question comes, "What doest thou here?" When a child of God is found in the theater, the dancing saloon, or the place of evil companionship, sitting in the seat of scorners, or walking in the way of the ungodly, again must the question come as a thunderbolt out of a clear sky, "What doest thou

here?" When one endowed with great faculties digs a hole in the earth and buries the God-entrusted talent, standing idle all the day long among the loungers in the marketplace, again the inquiry must ring out, "What doest thou here?"

Life is the time for doing. The world is a great workshop, in which there is no room for drones. God Himself worketh as the great Master builder. All creatures fulfill their needful functions, from the angel that hymns God's praise to the wasp that buries a corpse. There is plenty to do—evil to put down; good to build up; doubters to be directed; prodigals to be won back; sinners to be sought. "What doest thou here?" Up, Christians, leave your caves, and do! Do not do in order to be saved; but being saved, do!

God Taught Him by a Beautiful, Natural Parable

He was bidden to stand at the entrance to the cave; but this he hesitated to do until afterward. Did that hesitancy arise from a guilty conscience, reminding him that all was not right between him and God?

Presently there was the sound of the rushing of a mighty wind, and in another moment a violent tornado was sweeping past. Nothing could withstand its fury. It rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord. The valleys were littered with splintered fragments; but the Lord was not in the wind. And when the wind had died away, there was an earthquake. The mountain swayed to and fro, yawning and cracking. The ground heaved as if an Almighty hand were passing beneath it, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And when the earthquake was over, there was a fire. The heavens were one blaze of light, each pinnacle and peak glowed in the kindling flame.

The valley beneath looked like a huge smelting-furnace, but the Lord was not in the fire.

How strange! Surely these were the appropriate natural symbols of the divine presence. If we had been asked to describe it, we should have used these first of all. But hark! A still small whisper is in the air—very still, and very small, like the trembling echoes of a flute which is being played among the hills. It touched the listening heart of the prophet. If the more tumultuous outburst of power had expressed the storm and tumult of his nature, this elicited and interpreted a sweeter, nobler self, and cast a softening spell over his tempest-tossed spirit, and seemed to be the tender cadence of the love and pity of God which had come in search of him. Its music drew him from the cave, into the innermost recesses of which he had been driven by the terrible convulsions of nature. "And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave" (1 Kings 19:13).

What was the meaning of all this? It is not difficult to understand. Elijah was most eager that his people should be restored to their allegiance to God, and he thought that it could only be done by some striking and wonderful act. He may have often spoken thus with himself: "Those idols shall never be swept from our land, unless God sends a movement swift and irresistible as the wind, which hurries the clouds before it. The land can never be awakened except by a moral earthquake. There must be a baptism of fire." And when he stood on Carmel and beheld the panic among the priests and the eagerness among the people, he thought that the time—the set time—had come. But all that died away. That was not God's chosen way of saving Israel. And because He did not go on working thus, Elijah thought that He was not working at all, and he abandoned himself to the depths of despondency.

But in this natural parable, God seemed to say, "My child, thou hast been looking for Me to answer thy prayers with striking signs and wonders; and because these have not been given in a marked and permanent form, thou hast thought Me heedless and inactive. But I am not always to be found in these great visible movements. I love to work gently, softly, and unperceived. I have been working so, and I am working so still. There are in Israel, as the results of My quiet, gentle ministry, seven thousand, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." Yes, and was not the gentle ministry of Elisha, which succeeded the stormy career of his great predecessor like the still small voice after the wind, the earthquake, and the fire? And is it not probably that more real good was effected by his unobtrusive life and miracles, than was even wrought by the splendid deeds of Elijah?

We often fall into similar mistakes. When we wish to promote a revival, we seek to secure large crowds, much evident impression, powerful preachers; influences comparable to the wind, the earthquake, and the fire. When these are present, we account that we are secure of having the presence and power of God. But surely nature itself rebukes us. Who hears the roll of the planets? Who can detect the falling of the dew? Whose eye has ever been injured by the breaking of the wavelets of daylight on the shores of our planet? At this moment the mightiest forces are in operation around us, but there is nothing to betray their presence. And thus it was with the ministry of the Lord Jesus. He did not strive, nor cry, nor lift up nor cause His voice to be heard in the streets. While men were expecting Him at the front door with blare of trumpet, He stepped into His destined home in the disguise of a peasant's child. His going forth is ever prepared as the morning. He comes down as showers on the mown grass. His Spirit descends as the dove, whose wings make no tremor in the still air. Let us take heart! God may not be working as

we expect, but He is working. If not in the wind, yet in the zephyr. If not in the earthquake, yet in the heartbreak. If not in the fire, yet in the warmth of summer. If not in thunder, yet in the still small voice. If not in crowds, yet in lonely hearts, in silent tears, in the broken sobs of penitents, and in multitudes, who, like the seven thousand of Israel, are unknown as disciples.

But Elijah refused to be comforted. It seemed as if he could not shake off the mood in which he was ensnared. And so when God asked him the second time, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" (1 Kings 19:13) he answered in the words with which he had tried to justify himself before: "And he said, I have been very jealous—" (1 Kings 19:14).

It is pleasant to think of those seven thousand disciples, known only to God. We are sometimes sad as we compare the scanty number of professing Christians with the masses of ungodly. But we may take heart, there are other Christians besides. That seemingly harsh governor is Joseph in disguise. That wealthy owner of the garden in Arimathea is a lowly follower of Jesus. That member of the Sanhedrin is a disciple, but secretly, for fear of the Jews. For every one entered on our rolls of communicants, there are hundreds—perhaps thousands—whom God shall reckon as His when He makes up His jewels. But if you are one of that number, I entreat you, do not remain so. It puts you in a false position, it robs the cause of God of your help and influence, it is an act of treachery to Christ Himself. Beware lest, if you are ashamed of Him, the time may come when He shall be ashamed of you.

It is quite true that confession means martyrdom in one form or another. Sometimes our heart and flesh shrink back in unutterable anguish as we contemplate the possible results of refusing the act of obeisance to Baal. But, at such times, let us cheer ourselves by anticipating the august moment when the dear Master will speak our names before assembled worlds and own us as

His. And let us also ask Him in us and through us to speak out and witness a good confession, effecting that in us and by us which we are totally powerless to effect by ourselves.

We are all doing more good than we know. Elijah thought that he was doing nothing except when battling with idolatry and sin. He never thought how often he was helping those seven thousand by the indirect influence of his example. We, perhaps, accomplish less by our great efforts than we effect by a consistent life, a holy character, a daily shining. Lighthouse keepers never know how many weary, longing eyes turn in the darkness to the silent light that is maintained through the dark night. Our duty is to shine, not asking questions, not eager for great results; but content to do the will of God, consistently, humbly, and constantly, sure that God is not unrighteous to forget our work of faith and labor of love.

Chapter 13_(TOC)

Go, Return

It is a very solemn thought that one sin may forever, so far as this world is concerned, wreck our usefulness. It is not always so. Sometimes—as in the case of the apostle Peter—the Lord graciously restores and recommissions for His work the one who might have been counted unfit ever again to engage in it. "Feed my sheep. Feed my lambs." But against this one case we may put three others, in each of which it would seem as if the sentry angel, who forbade the return of our first parents to Eden, were stationed with strict injunctions to forbid any return to the former position of noble service.

The first case is that of Moses. No other man has ever been honored as was he, "with whom God spake face to face"—the meekest of men, the servant of the Lord, the foster-nurse of the Jewish nation, whose intercessions saved them again and again from destruction. Yet, because he spake unadvised with his lips and smote the rock twice in unbelief and passion, he was compelled to bear the awful sentence, "Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them! (Numbers 20:12). Most earnestly did he plead for a revocation of that terrible prohibition. But he was silenced by the solemn reply, against which there was no appeal, "Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter" (Deuteronomy 3:26).

The second case is that of Saul, the first, ill-fated king of Israel whose reign

opened so auspiciously, as a morning without clouds; but who soon brought upon himself the sentence of deposition. Yet it was only for a single act. Alarmed at Samuel's long delay and at the scattering of the people, he intruded rashly into a province from which he was expressly excluded and offered the sacrifice with which the Israelites were wont to prepare for battle. "And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came... And Samuel said, What hast thou done?... Thou hast done foolishly; thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue;... because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee" (1 Samuel 13:10-14). Early in his reign and before his further disobedience in the case of the Amalekites—for that one act of disobedience, revealing, as it did, a sad state of moral decrepitude—Saul was rejected.

The third case is that of Elijah. He was never reinstated in quite the position which he had occupied before his fatal flight. True, he was bidden to return on his way, and work was indicated for him to do. But that work was the anointing of three men who were to share among them the ministry which he might have fulfilled if only he had been true to his opportunities and faithful to his God. God's work must go on; if not by us, then, through our failures, by others brought in to supply our place. "Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria; and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room." Those words rang out the death knell of Elijah's fondest dreams. Evidently, it was not for him to be the deliverer of his people from the thralldom of Baal. Others were to do his work; another was to be prophet in his room.

All those who hold prominent positions as teachers and leaders may well take warning by these solemn examples standing on the plains of time, as Lot's wife on those of Sodom. We may not all be tempted, as Elijah was, to unbelief and discouragement. But there are many other snares prepared for us by our great enemy and strewn over with fair appearances, as the hunter strews earth and grass on the top of the pitfall which he has dug in the pathway between the river and the lair of his prey. There is the adulation given to the successful man in which so much of the human is mingled with thankfulness for the help or comfort given. There is the desire to be always prominent—foremost on every platform and first in every enterprise—to the utter neglect of private prayer. There are the insidious attacks of jealousy, depreciation of others, comparison of their standing with our own. And in addition to these are other modes of failure, more gross and evident than they, to which we are all prone, and by which, alas! too many have been mastered. Any one of these may compel God to cast us away from His glorious service and employs us in a humbler ministry, or to anoint our successors.

As children, He will never cast us away; but as His servants He may. Let us beware! One false step, one hurried desertion of our post, one act of disobedience, one outburst of passion; any one of these may lead our heavenly Father to throw us aside, as Samson did the jawbone of the ass with which he had slain heaps upon heaps. We shall not forfeit heaven; that is guaranteed to us by the precious blood of Christ. We may even be favored by a glorious and triumphant entrance thither in an equipage of flame. But we shall never again ride on the crest of the flowing tide, carrying all before us. Others shall finish our uncompleted task.

But with the danger there are sufficient safeguards. Let God prune you with the golden pruning-knife of His holy Word. Look into the mirror of revealed

truth, to see if there is any trace of blemish stealing over the face of the soul. Offer your spirit constantly to the Holy Spirit, that He may detect and reveal to you the beginnings of the sin of idolatry. Be very jealous of anything that divides your heart with your Lord. "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation" (Mark 14:38). Have perpetual recourse for cleansing, to the blood shed for the remission of sin. Trust in Him who is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of His glory without blemish, in exceeding joy.

But now, turning to the further study of the words with which God dismissed His servant from Horeb, let us notice three distinct thoughts.

The Variety of God's Instruments

Hazael, king of Syria; Jehu, the rude captain; and Elisha, the young farmer. Each was as different as possible from the others, and yet each was needed for some special work in connection with that idolatrous people. Hazael was destined to be the rod of divine vengeance to Israel at large, by whom God began to cut them short, and to make them like the dust by threshing. Ah! cruel indeed was his treatment of them! (2 Kings 5:12; 10:32, 12:3, 17). Jehu was to be the scourge of the house of Ahab, extirpating it root and branch. Elisha's ministry was to be genial and gentle as summer rain and evening dew, like the ministry of our Lord Himself whom Elisha prefigured and of whom his name significantly spoke.

It is remarkable how God accomplishes His purposes through men who only think of working their own wild way. Their sin is not diminished or condoned because they are executing the designs of heaven, it still stands out in all its malignant deformity. And yet, though they are held accountable for the evil, it is nonetheless evident that they do whatsoever God's hand and God's

counsel determined before to be done. This fact is often referred to in Scripture. Joseph comforted his brethren after his father's death, by telling them that though they thought evil against him, God meant it for good, to save people. David forbade his men to slay Shimei because, though Shimei cursed David, and cursing the king was a foul act of treason, yet "the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David" (2 Samuel 16:10). And our blessed Lord, when about to be delivered into the hands of wicked men, said that His Father was putting the cup into His hands (see Acts 2:23).

Men may do evil things against us for which they will be condemned, and yet those very things, being permitted by the wisdom and love of God, are His messages to us. Before they can reach us, they must pass through His environing, encompassing presence. If they do, then they are God's will for us, and we must meekly accept our Father's plan, saying, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

No One Can Entirely Escape from God's Personal Dealings

God's nets are not all constructed with the same meshes. Men may escape through some of them; but they cannot escape through all. If they elude the Gospel ministry, they will be caught by some earnest worker, apt at personal dealing. If they manage to evade all contact with the living voice, they may yet be reached by the printed page. If they evade all religious literature, they may still be the sudden subjects of the strivings of the Spirit. "Him that escapeth the sword of Hazeel shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay" (1 Kings 19:17).

We do not read that Elisha ever wielded the sword, and yet the ministry of

gentle love is sometimes more potent in slaying souls than the more vigorous ministry of an Hazeal or Jehu; and out of such slaying comes life.

Let us not compare man with man. Let us not despise any sect or denomination or body of Christian workers. What is inoperative with one is God's voice to another. We are totally unable to estimate the essential use of men. And let us not envy one another, because each of us has some special gift which qualifies us for the use of the dear Master and enables us to touch some who would be unreached if it were not for us. "But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you" (1 Corinthians 12:21).

And as we look around on the entire range of ministry by which the world is filled, we may be sure that everyone has at least one chance, and that God so orders the lives of men that once at least during their course they are encountered by the kind of argument which is most appropriate to their character and temperament, if only they will give ear and yield.

God Never Overlooks One of his Own

Elijah thought that he alone was left as a lover and worshiper of God. It was a great mistake. God had Many hidden ones: "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1 Kings 19:18). We know nothing of their names or history. They were probably unknown in camp or court; obscure, simple-hearted, and humble. Their only testimony was one long refusal to the solicitations of the foul rites of idolatry. They groaned and wept in secret and

spake often one to another, while the Lord hearkened and heard. But they were all known to God and enrolled among His jewels and counted as a shepherd tells his sheep. He cared for them with an infinite solicitude, and it was for their sake that He raised up the good and gentle Elisha to carry on the nurture and discipline of their souls.

It has often been a subject of wonder to me how these seven thousand secret disciples could keep so close as to be unknown by their great leader. Attar of a rose will always betray its presence, hide it as we may. When salt has not lost its savor, it cannot be hid. And the work of God in human hearts must, sooner or later, discover itself. It is to be feared, therefore, that the godliness of these hidden ones was very vague and colorless, needing the eye of omniscience to detect it. But for all that, God did detect it, and He prized it. He did not quench the smoking flax, but fanned it. He did not despise the grain of mustard seed, He watched its growth with tender love and care.

You may be very weak and insignificant—not counted in the numberings of God's captains, nor deemed worthy of a name or place among His avowed servants. Yet if you have but a spark of faith and love, if you strive to keep yourself untainted by the world, you will be owned by Him whose scepter is stretched out to the most timid suppliant. But remember, if your inner life be genuine, it will not remain forever secret. It will break out as a long hidden fire; it will force its way into the light as the buried seed in which there is the spark of life.

It may be that God, by these lines, will speak to some backslider, saying: Go, return! Return to Me, from whom you have wandered. Return to My work, which you have deserted. Return to the posture of faith, from which you have fallen. Return to the happy, holy childlikeness of former years. "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings" (Jeremiah 3:22). Oh

that the response may be, "Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our God" (Jeremiah 3:22).

Chapter 14^(TOC)

Naboth's Vineyard

In a room of the palace, Ahab, king of Israel, lies upon his couch with his face toward the wall, refusing to eat. What has taken place? Has disaster befallen the royal arms? Have the priests of Baal been again massacred? Is his royal consort dead? No, the soldiers are still flushed with their recent victories over Syria. The worship of Baal has quite recovered the terrible disaster of Carmel. Jezebel—resolute, crafty, cruel, and beautiful—is now standing by his side, anxiously seeking the cause of this sadness which was, perhaps, assumed to engage her sympathy and to secure through her means, ends which he dared not compass for himself.

The story is soon told. Jezreel was the Windsor of Israel and the location of the favorite royal house. On a certain occasion, while Ahab was engaged there in superintending his large and beautiful pleasure-grounds, his eye lighted on a neighboring vineyard which belonged to Naboth the Jezreelite. It promised to be so valuable an addition to his property, that he resolved to procure it at all hazards. He therefore sent for Naboth and offered a better vineyard in exchange or the worth of it in money. To his surprise and indignation, Naboth refused both. And Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid it be, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee" (1 Kings 21:3).

At first sight this refusal seems churlish and discourteous. But a little

consideration will justify the refusal of Naboth, and aggravate the subsequent guilt of the royal pair. By the law of Moses, Canaan was considered as being, in a peculiar sense, God's land. The Israelites were His tenants, and one of the conditions of their tenure was that they should not alienate that which fell to their lot except in cases of extreme necessity, and then only until the year of Jubilee. The transfer was always coupled with the condition that the land might be redeemed at any moment before that time by the payment of a stipulated price. If these two conditions had remained in force, Naboth would have felt less compunction at this temporary alienation of his paternal inheritance; but both had probably fallen into disuse, and he anticipated that if it once passed out of his hands, his patrimony would become merged in the royal demesne, never to be disintegrated. Taking his stand then on religious grounds, he might well say, "The LORD forbid it me." His refusal was in part, therefore, a religious act.

But there was, without doubt, something further. In his mention of "the inheritance of his fathers," we have the suggestion of another, and most natural, reason for his reluctance. Beneath those vines and trees his fathers had for generations sat. There he had spent the sunny years of childhood. Many a holy memory was associated with that spot, and he felt that all the juice ever pressed from all the vineyards in the neighborhood would never compensate him for the wrench from those clustered memories.

Naboth's refusal made Ahab leap into his chariot and drive back to Samaria and, like a spoiled child, turn his face to the wall in a pet, "heavy and displeased." At the close of the previous chapter we learn that he was heavy and displeased with God; now he is agitated by the same strong passions toward man. In a few more days the horrid deed of murder was perpetrated, which at one stroke removed Naboth, his sons, and his heirs and the

unclaimed property fell naturally into royal hands. There are many lessons here which would claim our notice if we were dealing with the whole story, but we must pass them by to bend our attention exclusively on the part Elijah played amid these terrible transactions.

He was Called Back to Service

How many years had elapsed since last the word of the Lord had come to Elijah, we do not know. Perhaps it was five or six. All this while he must have waited wistfully for the well-known accents of that voice, longing to hear it once again. And the weary days, passing slowly by, prolonged his deferred hope into deep and yet deeper regret, he must have been driven to continued soul-questionings and heart-searchings, to bitter repentance for the past, and to renewed consecration for whatever service might be imposed upon him. Using a phrase employed of Samson who was as remarkable for physical force as Elijah was for spiritual power, we may say, "the hair of his head began to grow again."

It may be that these words will be read by some, once prominent in the Christian service, who have been lately cast aside. They have been removed from the sphere they once filled. They have found audiences slip away from them, and opportunities close up. They have seen younger people step in to fill the ranks from which they have fallen. This may be attributable to the sovereignty of the Great Master, who has a perfect right to do as He will with His own, and who takes up one and lays down another. But before we lay this flattering unction to our souls, we should inquire whether the reason may not lie within our own breasts, in some inconsistency or sin which needs confession and forgiveness at the hands of our faithful and merciful High Priest, before ever again the word of the Lord can come to us.

It is also quite possible that we are left unused for our own deeper teaching in the ways of God. Hours, even years of silence are full of golden opportunities for the servants of God. In such cases, our conscience does not condemn us or accost us with any sufficient reason arising from ourselves. Our simple duty is to keep clean and filled and ready, standing on the shelf, meet for the Master's use, sure that we serve if we only stand and wait and knowing that He will accept and reward the willingness for the deed.

Elijah was not Disobedient

Once before, when his presence was urgently required, he had arisen to flee for his life. But there was no vacillation, no cowardice now. His old heroic faith had revived in him again. His spirit had regained its wonted posture in the presence of Jehovah. His nature had returned to its equipoise in the will of God. He arose and went down to the vineyard of Naboth and entered it and strode through its glades, or waited at the gates, to find the royal criminal. It was nothing to him that there rode behind Ahab's chariot two ruthless captains, Jehu and Bidkar (2 Kings 9:25). He did not for a moment consider that the woman who had threatened his life before might now take it, maddened as she was with her recent draught of human blood. All fear was but as the cobweb swinging across the garden pathway and swept before the child rushing resolutely forward. Who does not rejoice that Elijah had such an opportunity of wiping out the dark stain of disgrace which attached to him from the moment when he had forsaken, so faithlessly, the post of duty? His time of waiting had not been lost on him!

He was Acting as an Incarnate Conscience

Naboth was out of the way, and Ahab may have comforted himself, as weak people do still, with the idea that he was not his murderer. How could he be? He had been perfectly quiescent. He had simply put his face to the wall and done nothing. He did remember that Jezebel had asked him for his royal seal to give validity to some letters which she had written in his name, but how was he to know what she had written? Of course if she had given instructions for Naboth's death it was a great pity, but it could not now be helped. He might as well take possession of the inheritance! With such palliatives he succeeded in stilling the fragment of conscience which alone survived in his heart. And it was then that he was startled by a voice which he had not heard for years, saying, "Thus says the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?" (1 Kings 21:19). He killed! No, it was Jezebel that had killed. Ah, it was in vain to shift the responsibility thus! "Hast thou killed?" The prophet, guided by the Spirit of God, put the burden on the right shoulders.

Often a man, who dares not to do a disgraceful act himself will call a subordinate to his side and say: "Such a thing needs doing, I wish you would see to it. Use any of my appliances you will, only do not trouble me further about it—and of course you had better not do anything wrong." In God's sight that man is held responsible for whatever evil is done by his tool in the execution of this commission. The blame is laid on the shoulders of the principal; and it will be more tolerable for the subordinate than for him, in the day of Judgment.

Further than that but based on the same principle; if an employer, by paying an inadequate and unjust wage, tempts his employees to supplement their scanty pittance by dishonest or unholy methods, he is held responsible in the sight of heaven for the evil which he might have prevented if he had not been willfully and criminally indifferent.

It is sometimes the duty of a servant of God fearlessly to rebuke sinners who think their high position a license to evildoing and a screen from rebuke. And let all such remember that acts of high-handed sin often seem at first to prosper. Naboth meekly dies, the earth sucks in his blood, the vineyard passes into the oppressor's hands, but there is One who sees and will most certainly avenge the cause of His servants. "Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the LORD; and I will requite thee in this plat" (2 Kings 9:26). That vengeance may tarry, for the mills of God grind slowly; but it will come as certainly as God is God. And in the meanwhile, in Naboth's vineyard stands Elijah the prophet; and in the criminal's heart stands conscience with its scourge of small cords, weighted with jagged metal. This lesson is enforced again and again by our great dramatist, who teaches men who will not read their Bibles that sin does not pay in the end. No matter how successful it may seem at first, in the end it has to reckon with an Elijah as conscience, and he always finds out the culprit; and with God as an avenger—and He never misses His mark.

He was Hated for the Truth's Sake

"And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" (1 Kings 21:20). Though the king knew it not, Elijah was his best friend, while it was Jezebel who was his direst foe. But sin distorts everything. It is like the gray dawn which so obscures the most familiar objects that men mistake friends for foes and foes for friends. Many a time have men repeated the error of the disciples, who mistook Jesus for an evil spirit and cried out for fear.

When Christian friends remonstrate with evil-doers, rebuke their sins, and warn them of their doom, the Christians are scouted, hated, and denounced as enemies. The Bible is detested because it so clearly exposes sin and its

consequences. God Himself is viewed with dislike. It cannot be otherwise. The Egyptians hated the blessed pillar of cloud. The Philistines sent away the ark of the covenant. Wounds shrink from salt. The broken bone dreads the gentle touch of the physician. The thief hates the detective's lantern.

Let us not be surprised if we are hated. Let us even be thankful when men detest us—not for ourselves, but for the truths we speak. Let us "rejoice, and be exceeding glad." When bad men think thus of us, it is an indication that our influence is at the very antipodes to the bent and tenor of their lives. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:11-12).

Oh, do not turn from the surgeon's knife, or the lighthouse gleam, or the red warning light, or the deep baying of the hound—as if these were your foes. It is you that is wrong; not they.

He was a True Prophet

Each of the woes which Elijah foretold came true. Ahab postponed their fulfillment for some three years by a partial repentance, but at the end of that time he went back to his evil ways, and every item was literally fulfilled. He was wounded by a chance arrow at Ramoth-gilead, "and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot" (1 Kings 22:35) and as they washed his chariot in the fountain of Samaria, the dogs licked his blood. Twenty years after, when Jehu sent out to see, there was nothing of Jezebel left for burial. Only her skull, feet, and palms, escaped the voracious dogs as she lay exposed on that very spot. The corpse of their son Joram was cast forth unburied on that same plot, at the command of Jehu, who never forgot those

memorable words. And there, in after days, the armies of Israel were put again and again to the rout, saturating the soil with richer fluid than ever flowed from the crushed grapes of the vine. God is true, not only to His promises, but to His threats.

Every word spoken by Elijah was literally fulfilled. Jehovah put His own seal upon His servant's words. The passing years amply vindicated him. And as we close this tragic episode in his career, we rejoice to learn that he was reinstated in the favor of God and stamped again with the divine imprimatur of trustworthiness and truth.

Chapter 15_(TOC)

The Old Courage Again

In order to understand the striking episode before us, we must think ourselves out of this dispensation, the main characteristic of which is gentle mercy, and imagine ourselves back in the age that ended at Calvary. It is very important to have a right understanding of our times. We must not judge the past ages by our own high standards of forgiveness and love, learned in the life and death of Jesus Christ, who is the last and supreme revelation of God. And we must not import into our own age methods of thought and action which were once permissible and necessary, because cognate to the spirit of their times.

This lesson was once impressively taught by our Lord to His disciples. Fresh from the transfiguration, He was on His way to the cross. For some reason He did not take the usual route along the eastern bank of the Jordan, but chose the more direct course through Samaria. Traveling thus, they had probably reached the spot, of which we are soon to speak, which was once scorched and blackened by the cinders of Ahaziah's troops. Below them, in the ravine, lay a village, to which they sent a deputation, asking for entertainment in the night, which was darkening over them. But religious bigotry triumphed over natural feeling, and the request was absolutely refused. Oh, if they had known that He was about to purchase the redemption of a world and institute a religion in which there should be neither Samaritan nor Jew, but one great brotherhood in Himself—they would surely have bade Him welcome and pressed Him with hospitality, even though the mighty transaction was to take

place within the limits of their hated rival, Jerusalem! "And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But He turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" (Luke 9:54). It was as if He had said, "Remember that in Me you have passed into a new epoch; the affairs of the kingdom of heaven will be managed on altogether different lines from those with which you are familiar. I shall not destroy the law and the prophets; but I am introducing a code which shall fulfill them after a new fashion. The new regime of mercy is already begun."

Let us clearly define to ourselves the difference in the dispensations. This is after the Spirit of the Son, dwelling in the bosom of the Father; that was after the spirit of the servant, clad in ardent zeal for the glory of God. This glows with the lambent fire of the Holy Ghost; that with the devouring fire of destruction. The keynote of this is salvation; of that, vindication. The Old Testament brims with striking teaching of the holiness and righteousness of God. God, our Father, was as merciful and long suffering then as now; and He gave many sweet glimpses of His loving heart. These glimpses became more numerous as the ages brought nigh the incarnation of the love of God. But men cannot take in too many thoughts at once. Line must be on line, precept on precept. And so each preliminary age had some one special truth to teach, and that truth was accentuated and brought into prominence by special proofs and episodes. The age of the Mosaic Law, which shed its empire over the times of Elijah, was preeminently the era in which those awful and splendid attributes of the divine character—God's holiness, justice, righteousness, and severity against sin—stood out in massive prominence; as some of us have seen from the ancient capital of Switzerland, the long line of Bernese Alps rising above the plain in distant and majestic splendor, cold in

the gray dawn or flushed with the light of morn and eve. It was only when those lessons had been completely learned that mankind was able to appreciate the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Critics—who insensible have caught their conceptions of infinite love from the Gospels which they affect to despise—find fault with the Old Testament because of its austere tones and its severe enactments. They point out many things inconsistent with the gentler spirit of our times. There is nothing surprising here. It could not have been otherwise in a gradual unfolding of the nature and character of God. The holy men who lived in those days had never heard the gentle voice of the Son of Man speaking the Sermon on the Mount. They had, however, very definite conceptions of the righteousness and holiness of God, and His swift indignation on sin. This inspired many of the Psalms in the hymnal of the Old Testament saints. This stimulated them to do deeds from which our gentler nature shrinks. But for this, Levi had never slain his brethren, or Joshua the Canaanites, Samuel had never hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord, and Elijah had never presumed to slay the priests of Baal or call down fire from heaven to destroy the captains and their men.

And, as we read these deeds, we may well sink into quiet self-questioning. We need not fall into the extreme of Cromwell and his soldiers and introduce the speech or acts of those bygone days into our dealings with the enemies of truth and God. But we do well to ask whether—granting that we forego the outward manifestation—there is the same hatred of sin, the same zeal for the glory of God, the same inveterate enthusiasm for righteousness as there was in those days of force and decision and unswerving righteousness.

These considerations will help us to understand the narrative that awaits us, and will relieve the character of Elijah from the charge of vindictiveness and passion. Then we can consider, without compunction, the rising up again in

his breast of something of his old undaunted courage and heroic bearing.

The story is as follows: Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, had succeeded to his father's throne and his father's sins. He shrank in cowardly fear from the hardihood of the camp and the dangers of the field, leaving Moab to rebel without attempting its re-subjugation. He led a self-indulgent life in his palace. But the shafts of death can find us equally in apparent security as amid threatening dangers. He was leaning on the balustrade that fence the flat roof of the palace when it suddenly gave way, and he overbalanced himself and was flung to the ground. Many are the balustrades on which we lean in hours of peril, which fail us to our hurt! When the first panic was over, the king was seized with intense longings to know how his illness would turn. In a strange freak, he sent messengers to one of the ancient shrines of Canaan, which was dedicated to Baalzebub, the god of flies and the patron saint of medicine, who had some affinity with the Baal of his parents. This was a deliberate rejection of Jehovah, a daring choice of those ways which had brought the wrath of God on his father's house. It could not pass unnoticed, and Elijah was sent to meet his messengers as they were speeding across the plain of Esdraelon, with the announcement of certain death: "Thus saith the LORD... thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die" (2 Kings 1:16).

The servants did not know the stranger. They may have been imported Tyrians who had never mingled in the life of the nation, and who were ignorant of the mighty prophet of God. Years also had probably elapsed since his last public appearance. However, they were so impressed by that commanding figure and authoritative tone and so awed by that terrible reply, that they determined to return at once to the king. They found him lying on the divan covered with cushions, to which he had been carried from the scene

of his accident. And they told him the reason of their speedy return. Ahaziah must have guessed who the man was that had dared to cross their path and send him such a message. But, to make assurance surer, he asked them to describe the mysterious stranger. They replied that he was a man of hair. Long and heavy tresses of unshorn hair hung heavily down upon his shoulders, his beard covered his breast and mingled with the unwrought skins that formed his only dress. It was enough. The king recognized him at once, and said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

Two emotions now filled his heart. He wanted, in exasperation, to get Elijah in his power to vent his wrath on him. He also, perhaps, cherished a secret hope that the lips which had announced his death might be induced to revoke it. He therefore resolved to capture him. For that purpose he sent a captain and a troop of fifty soldiers. When they were struck down in death, he sent another captain and his band. These men exceeded their duty. Instead of simply acting as the tools and instruments of the royal will, they spoke with an unwarrantable insolence, "Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down!" (2 Kings 1:9) Either they did not hold him to be a prophet, or they gloried in putting the power of their master above that of Jehovah. In any case, the insult was less against Elijah than Elijah's God.

There was no personal vindictiveness in the terrible reply of the old prophet. I don not suppose for a moment he considered the indignity done to himself. I believe he was filled with consuming zeal for the glory of God which had been trodden so rudely under foot and which he must vindicate in the eyes of Israel. "If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty" (2 Kings 1:12). And in a moment the fire leaped from its scabbard and laid the impious blasphemers low. That there was no malice in Elijah is clear from his willingness to go with the third captain, who spoke

with reverence and humility. "And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose and went down with him unto the king" (2 Kings 1:15).

A thought is suggested here of the meekness and gentleness of Christ. How wonderful it is to think that He who, by a single word, could have brought fire from heaven to destroy the bands that came to take Him in Gethsemane, left that word unspoken. He threw them on the ground for a moment, to show them how absolutely they were in His power, but He forbore to hurt one hair of their heads. It was a marvelous spectacle, which the legions of harnessed angels, who waited in midair for a word to bring them to His rescue, must have beheld with speechless amazement. The explanation is of course found in the fact that He was under the compulsion of a higher law—the law of His Father's will, the law of self-sacrificing love, the law of a covenant sealed before the foundation of the world.

The only fire He sought was the fire of the Holy Ghost. "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled" (Luke 12:49). He strove not to avenge Himself or vindicate the majesty of His nature. Christ "endured the contradiction of sinners against himself" (Hebrews 12:3). "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isaiah 53:7). "When he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2:23). Oh, matchless meekness! Oh, wondrous self-control! Oh, glorious example of the spirit of His own teaching! May grace be given to each of us, His unworthy followers, to walk in His steps and to emulate His spirit, not calling for the fire of vengeance, but seeking the salvation of those who would do us hurt; dealing out not the fire of heaven, but those coals of fire which, heaped on the head of our

adversaries, shall melt them into sweetness and gentleness and love.

There is also suggested here the impossibility of God ever condoning defiant and blasphemous sin. We have fallen on soft and degenerate days when, under false notions of charity and liberality, men are paring down their conceptions of the evil of sin and of the holy wrath of God, which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

It is quite true that God yearns over men with unutterable pleading tenderness. God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). As there is not a dying sparrow in the recesses of the deepest woods over whose last agonies the Almighty does not bend with sympathetic interest and alleviating tenderness, so there is not one waif of humanity excluded from the warm zone of His infinite compassionateness and tender pity. In every outbreak of human sin, in the lot of every lost man and woman, over every street fight, at every public-house doorstep, amid the blasphemous orgies of every den of impurity and shame—that love lingers, full of tears, and longings, and entreaties. "God so loved the world" (John 3:16).

And yet, side by side with this love of the sinner, there is God's hatred of his sin. This longsuffering lasts only so long as there is a possible hope of the transgressor turning from his evil ways. "If he turn not, He will whet His sword." The wrath of God against sinful men who have definitely elected their sin, slumbereth only; it is not dead. It broods over them, held back by His desire to give everyone the chance of salvation. They may be thankful, therefore, that their lot has fallen in this parenthesis of mercy. But "because sentence against their evil work is not executed speedily, therefore their hearts are fully set in them to do evil." Yet the time of forbearance will end at last, as the waiting did in the days of Noah. Then fire will fall, of which the

material flame that fell on these insolent soldiers is a slight and imperfect symbol. And it shall be discovered how bitter a thing it is to encounter the wrath of the Lamb, "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8).

We need more proclamation of this side of the Gospel. There is an alarming lack among us of the sense of sin. Our vast populations are indifferent to the message of mercy, because they have not been aroused with the message of the holy wrath of God against sin. We need again that one should come, in the power of Elijah, to do the work of John the Baptist; and to prepare men by the throes of conviction for the gentle ministry of Jesus Christ. The crying need of our times is a deeper conviction of sin. And if this shall be ever brought about, it must be by the religious teachers being led to study the Law as well as the Gospel, and to realize for themselves, as they can only do through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Then when Elijah's fire of conviction has smitten human confidences low in the dust, there will be room for an Elisha to bind up broken hearts with the message of mercy.

We are also assured of Elijah's full restoration to the exercise of a glorious faith. In a former time, the message of Jezebel was enough to make him flee. But in this case he stood his ground, though an armed band came to capture him. It was as if he were able to repeat the familiar words without exaggeration: "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though wars should rise against me, in this will I be confident" (Psalm 27:3). And when he was bidden to go down with the third captain to the king, he did not hesitate; though it was to go through the streets of a crowded

capital and into the very palace of his foes. We are reminded of the entrance of Luther into Worms, and of the remonstrance of Ambrose to the mightiest emperor of his time. Do you ask the secret of why he was able to stand so calmly beside the couch of the dying monarch, delivering his message and retiring unharmed? Ah, the answer is not far to seek. He was again dwelling in the secret of the Most High and standing in the presence of Jehovah. His faith was in lively and victorious exercise. He was able to gird himself with the panoply of God's mail, invulnerable to the darts of men and devils. And thus might he have spoken with himself as he passed through the threatening perils of that crisis: "By thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall. As for God, his way is perfect... he is a buckler to all them that trust in him" (2 Samuel 22:30-31).

Is it not beautiful to behold this glorious out burst of the faith of Cherith, Zarephath, and Carmel? The old man, nearing his reward, was as vigorous in this as in his first challenge to Ahab. He bore fruit in old age, like one of God's evergreens which are full of sap. Glory be to Him who restores the soul of His faltering saints and brings them up from the grave and sets them again as stars in His right hand and deigns to use them once more in His glorious service!

Chapter 16_(TOC)

Evensong

It was the cherished wish of Dr. Chalmers that he should be granted a Sabbatic decade, after the six decades of work, between the sixtieth and seventieth years of life, so completing its entire week. And it was surely a natural desire on the part of one who ranks among the foremost workers of our time. Whether or not this had been a specific desire of Elijah, in God's gracious providence it fell to his lot. And after a life full of storm and tempest, it came to pass that at eventide there was light and peace and a parenthesis of rest, as if the spirit of the world which he was about to enter were already shedding its spell over his path.

There is always something beautiful in the declining years of one who in earlier life has dared nobly and wrought successfully. Younger men gather around the veteran to whom they owe the inspiration and model of their lives, and call him father, enwreathing his gray locks with crowns in which love is entwined with reverence. Seeds sown years before and almost forgotten, or reckoned lost, yield their golden returns. Memory rescues from the oblivion of the past many priceless records, while hope, standing before the thinning veil, tells of things not perfectly seen as yet; but growing on the gaze of the ripened spirit. The old force still gleams in the eye, but its rays are tempered by that tenderness for human frailty and that deep self-knowledge which years alone can yield. The crudities are ripened, the harshnesses are softened, the bitternesses are mellowed. Marah waters no longer forbid the thirsty lips,

but an Elim invites the weary. And from those revered lips flow rivers of wise and loving counsel to the younger generations grouped around. Such a life-evening seems to have been Elijah's. He did not reach a great old age. In all likelihood he showed no signs of physical decay. His eye was not dim nor his natural force abated. He probably betrayed his age more in the deeds he had done and in the mellowness of his spirit than in the infirmities of the natural man. Still there is little room for doubt that the noon of his life was well passed when he prepared himself for his final journey. And he must have been very grateful, as it was most fruitful of blessing to his country and to the cause of God, that there was granted a time of comparative calm at the close of his tempestuous career.

For those years of retirement were valuable in the highest degree, both in their immediate results upon hundreds of young lives, and in their far-off results on the coming times.

The Work of the Closing Years of Elijah's Life

His life has been called a one-man ministry, and there is much in it to warrant the description. He made his age. Towering above all the men of his time, he cleft his way through the crowds of meaner souls, and withstood the onslaughts of evil; as a rock shakes off the waves that break on it into volumes of spray. By heroic exploits and deeds of superhuman might, he strove single-handed against the tides of idolatry and sin that were sweeping over the land. In this he reminds us perpetually of Martin Luther and of John Knox; all these men were spiritual giants by reason of their faith, which could appropriate the power of God, as the lightning conductor can rob the thundercloud of its electric stores and bring them to the earth.

But though largely successful in keeping the cause of true religion from dying out, Elijah must often have realized the desirability of carrying on the work more systematically, and of leavening the country more thoroughly with the influence of devoted men. So, under Divine direction, he carefully fostered, if he did not altogether inaugurate, an institution which was a relic of former times, and known as the "schools of the prophets." When we use the word PROPHECY, we think of it as indicating a person who can foretell the future, and much confusion is introduced into our reading of Scripture. It includes this idea as a fragment of a larger meaning. The original word means "boiling or bubbling over," and so a prophet was one whose heart was bubbling over with good matter, and with those Divine communications which struggled within him for utterance. He was a spiritual geyser, the mouthpiece and spokesman of God. "Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). So these schools of the prophets were colleges in which a number of young men gathered, their hearts open to receive, and their tongues to utter, the messages of God.

The Christian traveler among the Western Isles of Scotland will hardly fail to visit one small, bare, lone spot out amid the roll of the Atlantic waves. It is thy shore, Iona, of which I write! No natural beauties arrest the eye or enchain the interest. There is but one poor village with its two boats and squalid population. Yet who can visit that low shore and stand amid those crumbling ruins without intense emotions? It was there that Columba built the first Christian church to shed its gentle rays over those benighted regions and to shelter the young apostles who carried the Gospel throughout the pagan kingdoms of Northern Britain. With similar emotions should we stand amid the ruins of Bethel, Gilgal, and Jericho, where, in his declining years, Elijah gathered around him the flower of the seven thousand and educated them to receive and transmit something of his own spiritual force and fire.

These were the missionary seminaries of the age, the repositories of sacred truth and learning; and beneath his influence, an Isaiah, a Hosea, an Ezekiel may have first received impulses which have since thrilled through the world.

These young men were formed into separate companies of fifty in different towns. They were called sons. The chief among them, like the abbot of a monastery, was called father. Clad in a simple dress, they had their food in common and dwelt in huts made of the branches of trees. They were well versed in the sacred books, which they probably transcribed for circulation, and read in the hearing of the people. They were frequently sent forth on errands of God's Spirit—to anoint a king, to upbraid a high-handed sinner, or to take the part of oppressed and injured innocence. It was, therefore, no small work for Elijah to put these schools on so secure a basis that, when he was gone, they might perpetuate his influence and guard the flames which he had kindled.

The Attitude of his Spirit in Anticipating his Translation

The old man clung to those young hearts and felt that his last days could not be better spent than in seeing them once more; though he resolved to say nothing of his approaching departure or of the conspicuous honor that was shortly to be conferred on him. Here is the humility of true greatness! He foresaw that he was to enjoy an exodus to which, in the whole history of the race, there had been but one parallel. Yet he was so reticent about it that if he had had his way, no mortal eye would have beheld it. Anyone less great would have let the secret out, or have contrived to line the heights of the Jordan with expectant crowds of witnesses. Instead of this, he kept the secret well locked up within him and tried to dissuade Elisha from accompanying

him a single step. "Tarry here" (2 Kings 2:2). Perhaps that loyal heart feared attracting to himself, either then or afterward, honor due only to God.

Alas, what a rebuke is here for ourselves! The prophet's evident desire to die alone shames us when we remember how eager we are to tell men, by every available medium, of what we are doing for the Lord. There is not a talent with which He intrusts us which we do not parade as a matter of self-laudation. There is not a breath of success that does not mightily puff us up. What wonder that our Father dare not give us much marked success or many conspicuous spiritual endowments, lest we be tempted further to our ruin! Oh, when shall we be free of ourselves? Would that we could live so perpetually facing the sun that we might never see the dark shadow of self! "I could not see for the glory of that light." The Holy Spirit of life alone can set us free from the law of sin and death. Let us urge Him to hasten the performance of His gracious office and to give us the sweet humility of this man who was willing to efface himself that men might think only of his Master and Lord.

We are also deeply impressed by the calm tenor of the prophet's course through those closing days. He knew that before many suns had set he would be standing in the light of eternity, mingling with his peers, understanding all the mysteries that had puzzled his eager spirit, and beholding the face of God; and we might have expected him to fill the preceding hours with ecstatic offices of devotion. But instead, he spent the days, as he often spent them before, visiting the schools of the prophets and quietly conversing with his friend, until the chariot swept Elijah from his side. And, as we consider that spectacle, we learn that a good man should so live that he need make no extra preparation when death suddenly summons him, and that our best method of awaiting the great exchange of worlds is to go on doing the duties of daily

life.

That was a wise and true reply of Wesley to the inquiry, "What would you do if you knew that you would have to die within three days?" "I should just do the work which I have already planned to do: ministering in one place; meeting my preachers in another; lodging in yet another, till the moment came that I was called to yield my spirit back to Him who gave it." When our summons comes, we should wish to be found, not in the place which sentiment or a false sense of religious propriety might suggest, but just doing the work which we have been appointed to do, and in the place where duty would demand our presence at that very hour. The workshop and the factory are as near heaven as the sanctuary; the God-given task as fair a height for ascension as Olivet or Pisgah.

The Affectionate Love with which Elijah was Regarded

It strongly showed itself in Elisha. The younger man stood with his revered leader, as for the last time he surveyed from the heights of Western Gilgal the scene of his former ministry. And, in spite of many persuasives to the contrary, he went with him down the steep descent to Bethel and Jericho. He followed him, even though they had to cross the Jordan, which meant death and judgment. The sacred historian accentuates the strength of their affection, as he says thrice over, they two went on; they two stood by the Jordan; they two went over. And again the strength of that love, which the cold waters of death could not extinguish, approved itself in the repeated asseveration: "As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee" (2 Kings 2:2). It is sweet to think that there were in the rugged, strong nature of Elijah such winsome qualities as could elicit so deep and tenacious an affection. We

catch a glimpse of a tenderer side for which we had hardly given him credit.

Unusual emotion also welled up in the hearts of the young men, whose reverence shared the empire with their love, as they beheld their master for the last time. With delicate reticence they would not speak on a subject which he did not mention but, drawing Elisha aside, they asked him whether the moment of separation had not come. "Yes," said he in effect, "but do not speak of it. Let there be no parting scene. Give and receive the parting farewells in expressive silence."

But in all their intercourse, how real and near the Lord seemed! To Elijah it was the Lord who was sending him from place to place: "the Lord hath sent me." To Elisha it was the living Lord to whom he constantly appealed: "as the Lord thy God liveth"—living on the other side of the great change through which his master was to pass to Him. To the prophets, it was the Lord who was taking their head and leader to Himself. Surely those who speak thus have reached a position in which they can meet death without a tremor. And what is death but, as we shall see in our next chapter, a translation!

What is the Lord to you? Is He a dear and familiar friend, of whom you can speak with unwavering confidence? Then you need not fear to tread the verge of Jordan. Otherwise, it becomes you to get to His precious blood and to wash your garments white, that you may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Chapter 17_(TOC)

The Translation

We have reached at length one of the most sublime scenes of Old Testament story. We should have been glad to learn the most minute particulars concerning it; but the historian contents himself with the simplest statements. Just one or two broad, strong outlines, and all is told that we may know. The veil of distance, or the elevation of the hills, was enough to hide the receding figures of the prophets from the eager gaze of the group that watched them from the neighborhood of Jericho. And the dazzling glory of the celestial cortege made the only spectator unable to scrutinize it too narrowly. What a wonder, then, if the narrative is given in one brief verse! "And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (2 Kings 2:11).

But there was one symptom at least, of the coming wonder, which was clearly witnessed by more than the solitary companion who had so faithfully and tenaciously kept by Elijah's side. The two friends halted for a moment before the broad waters of the Jordan, which threatened to bar their onward steps, and then Elijah's spirit was thrilled with the old omnipotent faith such as had so often enabled him to overcome the working of natural laws, by the introduction of the laws of that higher sphere which only answer the summons of a mighty faith.

True, he took off his well-worn mantle and wrapped it together and smote the waters. But that, at the best, was only an outward and significant sign. At that same moment his spirit was grappling the power of the Infinite God and was bringing it to bear on the hurrying stream. He knew that the Lord had sent him thither, and that his road lay further into the country on the other side. He saw no means of pursuing the God-marked path. He was sure that, since his way led through the waters, God was prepared to make it possible and easy for him to tread it. And he therefore dared to strike the waters, believing that divine power was working in every stroke; and the waters parted hither and thither, leaving a clear passage, through which they went.

Child of God, your path seems sometimes to lie right through a flowing Jordan. There is no alternative but that you should go straight on. Forward moves the cloud. Forward points the signpost of circumstance. Forward bids the inward prompting. But how, when Jordan rolls in front? Now is the time for faith! Where God's finger points, there God's hand will make the way. Believe that it shall be so! Advance in unfaltering faith! Step down the shelving bank, and the waters of difficulty shall part before you; and you shall find a pathway where to human vision there was none. So through parting Jordans you shall march to your reward.

The Fitness of this Translation

There was fitness in the place, Not the smiling plain of Esdraelon, with its cornfields and vineyards and dotted hamlets, speaking of the toils and homes of men. Not the desert of Sinai, so closely allied with the memory of his fatal fall. Not the schools of Gilgal, Bethel, or Jericho. None of these would furnish a fit setting for his farewell to his earthly ministry. But, away from all these; amid the scenery familiar to his early life; in view of localities forever

associated with the most memorable events of his nation's history; surrounded by the lonely grandeur of some rocky gorge—there God chose to send His chariot to fetch him home.

There was fitness in the method. He had himself been as the whirlwind, that falls suddenly on the unsuspecting world, and sweeps all before it in its impetuous course, leaving devastation and ruin in its track. It was meet that a whirlwind-man should be swept to heaven in the very element of his life. His character was well depicted in the panorama of the desert, with its shivering wind and its glowing fire. And nothing could be more appropriate than that the stormy energy of his career should be set forth in the rush of the whirlwind; and the intensity of his spirit by the fire that flashed in the harnessed seraphim. What a contrast to the gently upward motion of the ascending Savior!

There was fitness in the exclamation with which Elisha bade him farewell. He cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof" (2 Kings 2:12). Doubtless, amid that sudden flash of glory he hardly knew what he said. Yet he closely hit the truth. That man, whom he had come to love as a father, had indeed been as an armed chariot of defense to Israel. By his faith and prayers and deeds, he had often warded off evil and danger with more certain success than could have been effected by an armed troop. Alas that such people are rare! But in our time we have known them; and when they have been suddenly swept from our side, we have felt as if the Church had been deprived of one main source of security and help.

The Reasons for this Translation

One of the chief reasons was, no doubt, TO WITNESS TO HIS TIMES. The men of his day were plunged in sensuality and had little thought of the

hereafter. At the very best, the Jews had but vague notions of the other life; and those notions were probably still further darkened by the obscuring influences of idolatry and sin. But here a convincing evidence was given that there was a spiritual world into which the righteous entered and that, when the body sank in death, the spirit did not share its fate but entered into a state of being in which its noblest instincts found their befitting environment and home—fire to fire, spirit to spirit, the man of God to God.

A similar testimony was given to the men of his time by the rapture of Enoch before the Flood, and by the ascension of our Lord from the brow of Olivet. Where did these three wondrous journeys end, unless there was a bourn which was their befitting terminus and goal? And as the tidings spread, thrilling all listeners with mysterious awe, and as they heard that no sign of the rapt ones could be discovered by the most diligent search, would there not break upon them the conviction that they likewise would have to take that wondrous journey into the unseen, soaring beyond all worlds or sinking into the bottomless pit?

Another reason was evidently the desire on the part of God TO GIVE A STRIKING SANCTION TO HIS SERVANT'S WORDS. How easy was it for the men of that time to evade the force of Elijah's ministry, by asserting that he was an enthusiast, an alarmist, a firebrand! It would be convenient for them to think that his denunciations and threats began and ended with himself—the workings of a distempered brain. And if he had passed away in decrepit old age, they would have been still further encouraged in their impious conjecturings. How would they have known that he spoke the truth of God? But the mouths of blasphemers and gainsayers were stopped when God put such a conspicuous seal upon His servant's ministry. It was as if Jehovah had stepped out of the unseen to vindicate him and to affirm that he was His

chosen ambassador, and that the word in his lips was true. The translation was to the lifework of Elijah what the resurrection was to that of Jesus—it was God's irrefragable testimony to the world.

As a servant, Elijah had failed in one fatal moment; and by that moment's failure had missed a splendid chance: but for all that, the general tenor of his ministry was such as God could approve; and concerning it He could bear His sanctioning testimony to men. It may sometimes happen that our Father will greatly honor His servants in the eyes of men, while He will be very strict in His private dealings with them in reference to certain failures in duty of which only He and they are aware.

The Lessons of this Translation for Ourselves

Let us Take Care not to Dictate to God

This was the man who lay down upon the ground and asked to die. If he had had his will, he would have had the desert sands for his shroud and the desert winds for his requiem. How good it was of God to refuse him the answer he craved! Was it not better to pass away, missed and beloved, in the chariot which his Father had sent for him, and with which Ahab's, though he had run before it, could bear no comparison?

This is no doubt one reason why our prayers go unanswered. We know not what we ask. We ask for things which we would not dream of, if we only knew the infinite superiority of the lot which our Father has planned out for us. We shall have to bless Him forever, more for the prayers He refused than for those He granted. When next your request is denied, reflect that it may be

because God is preparing something for you as much better than your request as the translation of Elijah was better than his own petition for himself.

Let us Learn What Death is

It is simply a transfer: not a state, but an act; not a condition, but a passage. We pass through a doorway, we cross a bridge of smiles, we flash from the dark into the light. There is no interval of unconsciousness, no parenthesis of suspended animation. "Absent from the body," we are instantly "present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8). Oh, do not think of death as the jailer of a prison in which he is collecting the saints against some final order for their liberty. It is nothing of the sort. It is but the grim disguise of one of the angels of God's presence-chamber, specially commissioned to bring faithful souls into the audience-room of the King. As by the single act of birth we entered into this lower life, so by the single act—which men call death, but which the angels call birth (for Christ is the Firstborn from among the dead)—we pass into the real life. The fact that Elijah appeared on the transfiguration mount in holy converse with Moses and Christ proves that the blessed dead are really the living ones; sentient, active, intensely in earnest; and they entered that life in a single moment, the moment of death. Would it not be truer to speak of them not as the dead, but as those who have died and are alive forever? It must be remembered, however, that while it is far better for the emancipated soul and spirit to be with Christ, present with the Lord, the blessedness will not be complete until the resurrection of the body, which will then have put on incorruption and immortality.

Let us See Here a Type of the Rapture of the Saints

We do not know what change passed over the mortal body of the ascending prophet. This is all we know, that "mortality is swallowed up of life" (2 Corinthians 5:4). There was wrought on him a change like that which took place in the grave of Joseph, when the crucified body of Jesus became transformed into the risen body—which was largely independent of the laws of nature, but which was so like the body which He had worn for thirty-three years that it was readily and universally recognized. Corruption put on incorruption. The mortal put on immortality. The body of humiliation was exchanged for the body of glory.

Such a change, unless Christ tarry longer than the term of our natural life, shall be the portion of many who read these lines—"caught up... to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thessalonians 4:17). It becomes us then to walk as Elijah did, with alert and watchful spirit; talking only on themes that would not be inconsistent with an instantaneous flash into the presence of God. Thus, whenever our Father's carriage comes for us, and wherever it overtakes us—whether in the storm at sea, or in the railway accident; in the tumult of a catastrophe, or in the gradual decay of prolonged illness—may we be prepared to step in, and sweep through the gates, washed in the blood of the Lamb!

Was it not some reference to this august event that was in the mind of the great Welsh preacher, Christmas Evans, who, when dying, majestically waved his hand to the bystanders and looked upward with a smile and uttered these last words, "Drive on!" "The chariots of God are twenty thousand" (Psalm 68:17). May we not suppose that one awaits each departing spirit, standing ready at hand to convey it into the presence of the King, to whom be glory for ever and ever!

Chapter 18_(TOC)

A Double Portion of Elijah's Spirit

There is one incident forever associated with the translation of Elijah, which, though it largely concerns his friend and successor, is so characteristic of the great prophet himself that we must not pass it over without some notice. It is deeply significant. We are told that, after they had passed the Jordan, the two friends went on and talked. What sublime themes must have engaged them, standing as they did on the very confines of heaven and in the vestibule of eternity. Israel's apostasy and approaching doom; the ministry just closing, with its solemn warnings; the outlook toward the work upon which Elisha was preparing to enter—these and cognate subjects must have occupied them.

It was in the course of this conversation that "Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee" (2 Kings 2:9). It was a very wide door flung open by the elder to his younger friend. And at first we are surprised to think that Elijah could offer to supply anything for which Elisha asked. Is not this rather the prerogative of God? Surely God alone can do whatsoever we desire when we pray, and even He is limited by the fulfillment, on our part, of certain essential conditions. But we must remember that Elijah was intimately familiar with the mind and heart of his brother. It was not in vain that they had spent those years of ministry together. It was with the object of testing the spirit of his friend that the departing prophet had urged him again and again to leave him. And it was only when Elisha had stood the test with such unwavering resolution that

Elijah was able to give him this *carte blanche*. He knew that Elisha would ask nothing for which he could not exercise his mighty faith, or which God could not and would not bestow. He was only a man of like passions with ourselves, cast in the ordinary mold of human nature but, by close and intimate communion with God, he had reached such a pitch of holy boldness that the very keys of spiritual blessing seemed put into his hand so that he might dispense to kindred spirits the priceless gifts of God. Why should not we strive after and attain similar precious faith?

Elisha's Large Request

Elijah's confidence was not misplaced. Elisha's reply wrought along those lines which he had anticipated. He sought neither wealth, nor position, nor worldly power, nor a share in those advantages on which he had turned his back forever when he said farewell to home and friends and worldly prospects. "And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me" (2 Kings 2:9).

What did Elisha mean by this request? I do not interpret his request to mean that he should have twice as much of the faith and spiritual force as characterized his master. What he intended was to ask that he might be considered as Elijah's eldest son, the heir to his spirit, the successor to his work. There is a passage in the law of Moses which clearly proves that "the double portion" was the right of the firstborn and heir (Deuteronomy 21:17). This the prophet sought, and this he certainly obtained.

It was a noble request. He was evidently called to succeed to Elijah's work, but he felt that he dare not undertake its responsibilities, or face its inevitable perils, unless he were specially equipped with spiritual power. It is not often that we can count an Elijah among our friends, but when we may, we shall do

well to invoke his intercessions on our behalf that we may be endowed with a similar spirit. And there is at least One to whom we can all go with this sublime request, sure that He is more eager to give us His Holy Spirit than the tenderest earthly father to satisfy his children's hunger with bread. Oh, for this spiritual hunger, insatiable for the best gifts! Men of the world hunger for name and rank and wealth, and they get what they seek because they will take no nay. Blessed should we be if we were as eager after the Spirit of God; and if, instead of giving up opportunities of usefulness because we did not feel qualified to fill them, we rather sought and received a new baptism of power, a fresh endowment of the Holy Spirit.

Who need shrink from attempting Elijah's work if first we have received Elijah's spirit? Instead of relinquishing a work for which you do not feel naturally qualified, wait in the fervency of entreaty and in the expectancy of faith, until you are endued with power from on high. There is no work to which God calls you for which He is not prepared to qualify you. Let it never be forgotten that Elijah himself did what he did, not by inherent qualities, but because through faith he had received such copious bestowments of the Spirit of God; and what he did we may do again—the weakest and humblest of us—if only we are prepared to wait and watch and pray until our Pentecost breaks upon us, with or without its sound of rushing wind and its tongues of flaming fire.

Let us Clearly Understand the Two Conditions Imposed on Elisha

1. Tenacity of Purpose

Elijah tested it severely at every step of that farewell journey. Repeatedly he

said, "Tarry here" (2 Kings 2:2). But He might as well have tried to uproot a cedar of Lebanon or stir Carmel from its base. Neither Gilgal with its panoramic scenery, nor Bethel with its memories of the angel-haunted dream, nor Jericho, the border town, were able to attract or retain him. And though their course lay through the Jordan flood of death, it sufficed not to deter that eager spirit. Elisha knew what he sought; he read the meaning of the discipline to which he was being exposed, and his heroic resolution grew with the ordeal, as the waters of a stream grow against an arresting dam until they overleap it and rush merrily on their way. It was thus that the Syro-Phoenician woman prevailed with Christ. It was thus that the apostles waited for the promise of the Father, undaunted by ten days' delay.

Before giving us the Holy Ghost, our Father will certainly try us to see if we can live without Him. If we can, we may. And it is only when we give signs of a resolution which will take no denial, but detains the Angel with its imperative importunity and vows its unalterable determination to be blessed—it is only then that God who had never been really reluctant and had only been testing us, turns to us with a smile and says, "O child, great is thy importunity; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matthew 11:12).

How often we persuade ourselves that we can acquire the greatest spiritual blessings without paying the equivalent price! Thus James and John thought that they could obtain a seat each on the throne for the asking. They did not realize that the cross preceded the crown, and that the bitter cup of Gethsemane lay between them and the coronation anthem. We must pass through the Jordan; daily must we take up the cross and follow Jesus; we must be conformed to Him in the likeness of His death and in the fellowship of His sufferings; the old nature must be crucified; the divine will must be

lovingly accepted, though it cost tears of blood and bitter sorrow. Then, having evinced the steadfastness of our purpose, we shall approve ourselves worthy to be the recipients of God's supreme gift.

2. Spiritual Insight

"If thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so" (2 Kings 2:10). There was nothing arbitrary in this demand. And it would have been hardly possible to have devised a more complete criterion of the spiritual condition of this eager aspirant. To see the transactions of the spirit world requires a spirit of no ordinary purity and of no ordinary faith. No mere mortal eye could have beheld that fiery cortege. To senses dulled with passion or blinded by materialism, the space occupied by the flaming seraphim would have seemed devoid of any special interest, and bare as the rest of the surrounding scenery. Perhaps there was not another individual in all Israel with heart pure enough, or spiritual nature keen enough, to have been sensible of that glorious visitation. Had we been there, we should probably have been unconscious of anything, save the sudden disappearance of the prophet. But since Elisha saw it all, it is clear that his passions were under control; his temper refined; his spiritual life in healthy exercise; and his whole being of such an order as to admit him into the foremost rank of the spiritual world without risk. Such must we be, by the grace of God, before we can aspire to possess or wield similar powers. Our reception of the Spirit will be in exact proportion to the subjection of the flesh, and the consequent vigor of our inner life.

The Answer

"He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him." Ah, that falling

mantle! How much it meant! It is said that the bestowal of the mantle has always been considered by Eastern people an indispensable part of consecration to a sacred office. When, therefore, Elijah's mantle fluttered to Elisha's feet, he knew at once that heaven itself had ratified his request. He knew that he had Elijah's post. He believed that he was anointed with Elijah's power. I do not for a moment think that there was any emotional or sensible indication of the mighty change which had been wrought upon him. His spirit was still. There was no tremor in his pulse; no thrill of consciously added power in his frame. The torrent of spiritual force had entered him as quietly as light enters the world, and as the forces of spring thrill through the woods.

If, in patience and faith, we claim of our Father the filling of the Holy Ghost, we must never ask ourselves if we feel full. We must believe that God has kept His word with us, and that we are filled, though no celestial sign accompanies the entering glory of that power "which works effectually in them that believe." But others will become aware of the presence of something that we never had before as they see us stand by some tameless Jordan and behold the turbulent waters part hither and thither before our stroke.

Directly we receive some great spiritual endowment, we may expect to have it tested. It was so with Elisha. He "went back, and stood by the bank of the Jordan" (2 Kings 2:13). Did he hesitate? If so, it was but for a moment. He had seen Elijah go; and he believed, though probably he did not feel, that therefore the double portion of his spirit had fallen to his lot. He therefore acted upon the assurance of his faith. "He took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at

Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha" (2 Kings 12:14-15).

As soon as Jesus had been anointed with the Holy Ghost, He was led into the wilderness to be tempted. The title "Son of God," uttered over the waters of baptism, was made the subject of Satan's wildest attacks: "If Thou be the Son of God,..." So must it be ever. But difficulty, temptation, and trial, avail to bring into greater prominence, both for ourselves and others, the reality and glory of the blessing we have received. The parted Jordan proves the presence of the Spirit.

"Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" That cry has often been raised when the Church, bereft of its leaders, has stood face to face with some great and apparently insuperable difficulty. And sometimes there has been more of despair than hope in the cry. But though Elijah goes, Elijah's God remains. He takes His weary workers home, but He is careful to supply their place and to anoint others to carry on their work. It is His work, not ours. On Him is the responsibility, as to Him shall be the glory. If you ask where He is, an answer close behind you whispers, "I am here." Catch up the mantle of the departed. Emulate their lives. Seek their spirit. Smite the bitter waves of difficulty in unwavering faith, and you shall find that the Lord God of Elijah will do as much for you as for the saints who have been swept to their reward and are now mingling with the great cloud of witnesses that are watching your conflicts, your triumphs, and your joys.

Chapter 19_(TOC)

The Transfiguration

Wordsworth and all his followers were students in the school of Jesus Christ. Never breathed a more enthusiastic lover of nature than He. Lilies could not grow at His feet, or birds wing their homeward flight over His head, without attracting His swift attention. His daily talk was of wandering sheep and whitening corn, of living wells and summer rain, of the changing hues of morn and eve. We cannot wonder, therefore, at His snatching brief opportunities for communion with the scenes of natural beauty, or that He often climbed the everlasting hills—the natural altars of the world—obviously intended not for habitation, but for worship.

Such an occasion is the one referred to here. Wearied with His toils and requiring time for private intercourse with His friends to prepare them for the approaching tragedy, of which they were strangely unconscious, He traveled northward with His disciples, avoiding the larger towns, until they reached one of the smaller villages nestling on the lower slopes of Mount Hermon, which towers into the clouds and forms a majestic barrier on the northern frontier of Palestine. There they seem to have rested for about a week. Think how they may have spent those days! Watching the snows on the upper peaks flush in the dawn and glow in the sunset, as if aflame. Reveling in the fertility, which centuries before had been compared to the fragrant oil anointing the high priest. Visiting the ancient forest of cedars from which Hiram's servants had hewn the beams of Solomon's temple; or the mountain

springs, where the familiar Jordan had its source. A week would quickly pass amid engagements such as these, blended, as they must have been, with intercourse on the loftiest themes.

After eight days, Jesus took with Him His three mighties—Peter, James, and John; and as the evening shadows darkened over the world, He led them up to some neighboring summit, removed from the sight and sound of men. He went to brace Himself for the coming conflict by prayer, and perhaps for the earlier part of the night the favored three bore Him fellowship. But they soon grew weary, and presently, as afterward in Gethsemane, were wrapt in heavy sleep—though dimly conscious of their Master's presence as He poured out His soul with strong cryings and tears. We know not how many hours elapsed before they were suddenly startled from their slumbers—not by the gentle touch of morning light, but beneath the stroke of the unbearable glory which streamed from their Master's person, The fashion of His countenance was altered; the deep lines of care that had seamed it were obliterated; the look of pensive sadness was gone. "His face did shine as the sun;" not lit up as that of Moses was, by reflection from without, but illumined from within, as if the hidden glory of the Shekinah, too long concealed, were bursting through the veil of flesh, kindling it to radiance as it passed. "His raiment"—the common homespun of the country—"was white and glistening;" more resplendent than the glistening snow above, as though angels had woven it of light. But perhaps the greatest marvel of all was the presence of the august pair "which were Moses and Elias: who appeared in glory and spake of his decease [His exodus—out of death into new and resurrection life] which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" (Luke 9:30-31).

Consider the Probable Reasons

Why these Two

And Especially Elijah were Chosen on
this Sublime Occasion

The First Reason Might have been that
they Could Attest

The Dignity of the Lord Jesus

He was approaching the darkest hour of His career when His sun should set in an ocean of ignominy and shame, and it seemed as if heaven itself were astir, by delegation, to assure His friends and convince the world of His intrinsic worth. Should seraphs be commissioned? Nay; for men, unable to realize their rank, would be simply dazzled. Better far to send back someone of the human family who had passed into the unseen, but whose illustrious deeds still lived in the memory of mankind, giving weight to his witness. Yet who should be selected?

There might have been a fitness in sending the first Adam to attest the supreme dignity of the second, or Abraham, the father of them that believe. But their claims were waived in favor of these two who might have more weight with the men of that time, as representing the two great departments of Jewish thought and Scripture: Moses, the founder of the Law; Elijah, the greatest of the prophets.

It is impossible to exaggerate the prominence given to Elijah in the Jewish mind. At the circumcision of a child, a seat was always placed for Elijah; and at the annual celebration of the Passover in each home, wine was placed for him to drink—the cup for which richer Jews, was made of gold and set with jewels. And it was universally believed that Elijah was to come again to announce the advent of the Messiah. It would, therefore, have great weight with these disciples, and through them with after ages, to feel that he had stood beside Jesus of Nazareth, offering Him homage and help. And it was partly the memory of the allegiance rendered by Elijah to his Master that led Peter to say, in after years, that he had been an eyewitness of His majesty.

Astronomers tell us that our sun, with its attendant worlds, is only a satellite of some other mightier star; and that these wondrous orbs are circling around some distant center, known as Alcyone. If this is so, and if our mighty sun is only a satellite, what must not be the glories of the central body, whose majestic progress it attends! And if Elijah were so illustrious, what must not be the glories of that wondrous Being to whom he was only a servant among many!

Another Reason may be Found in the Peculiar Circumstances

Under Which they Left the World

Moses died, not by disease or by natural decay, but beneath the kiss of God. His spirit passed painlessly and mysteriously to glory, while God buried his body. Elijah did not die. Disease and old age had nothing to do in taking

down the fabric of his being. He did not sleep; but he was "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." We may not penetrate into the secrets of that mysterious borderland, which these two passed and repassed, in their holy ministry to the Savior's spirit; but we feel that there was something in the method of their departure from our world, which made that passage easier.

Yet Another Reason is Suggested in the Evident

Fulfillment of Their Ministry

They had been originally sent to prepare for Christ. "We have found him," said Philip, "of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write" (John 1:45). "For he [Moses]," Jesus said, "wrote of me" (John 5:46). "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10). But the Jews were in danger of forgetting this, and of attaching more importance to the messengers than was justifiable. They clung to the stars even when the sun was steadily climbing up the sky. It was the death warrant of Stephen that he seemed to them to slight the Old Testament by hinting that it would be abrogated and superseded by the New. Peter himself was quite prepared to treat Moses and Elijah on an equality with his Master by building three tabernacles—one for each. This could not be, and therefore Moses and Elijah were swept away by a cloud, and Jesus only was left, and the voice of God was heard insisting that Peter and the two other disciples should listen to Him alone. It was as though God had said—uttering words that lifted a

dispensation from its hinges—"As ye have listened to the Law and the Prophets, so now listen to My Son. Do not put yourselves again under the law, or rest content with the prophets, however lofty their ideals and burning their words; but give to Him all the veneration and attention that you have been hitherto wont to reserve for them. Pass from the anticipation to the reality; from the type to the perfect fulfillment. They are taken; but all that made them helpful is left."

We too must sometimes climb transfiguration mounts and see our beloved caught away from our gaze, and then return toward an unkindly and wrangling world. But let us remember that our hearts are bereft of their supports to drive us to find all, and more than all, in Jesus. He is enough for any heart, however lonely and desolate. He suffices for heaven, and surely He can for earth. All that is good in anyone was first in Him, and remains in Him forever without alloy. And as one after another is caught away, we are still rich with unsearchable wealth; we are still able to cope with all the devils that await us in the vales beneath, though we have "no man, save Jesus only" (Matthew 17:8).

Such may have been some of the reasons that led to the appearance of these two men on the transfiguration mount: standing there for a moment and then receding into the land of glory from which they came; attesting His dignity and then withdrawing—that the interest excited by their presence might not be focused on themselves, but turned at once and more intensely on the person of Jesus Christ.

Consider the Theme on Which they Spoke

They spoke not of the latest tidings of heaven; nor of their own wondrous past; nor of the distant future: but of the decease (lit. THE EXODUS) which He was to accomplish so soon at Jerusalem.

Great men love great thoughts. And where could there have been found greater subjects than this wondrous death and His glorious resurrection, which were to affect all worlds, and to involve the Son of God in shame and sorrow so unfathomable! Herein Moses and Elijah precede the greatest thinkers of mankind—Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Milton, Faraday, who have sought in the Gospel of the cross the sea-room needed by their leviathan intellects.

Heaven was full of this theme. Angels, forsaking all other interests, were absorbed in wonder, awe, and love, as they watched each step toward the destined goal. May we not imagine all the life of heaven arrested and pausing before that stupendous tragedy? It was natural, then, that these latest comers from those shores should talk of the one all-engrossing topic in the land which they had left.

Their own salvation depended on the issue of that wondrous death. If ever there were men who might have stood a chance of being accepted on their own merits, surely these were such. But they would have been most particular in disclaiming any such distinction. Looking back on their careers, they were deeply sensible of their imperfections and their sins. Moses remembered the petulance of Massah. Elijah recalled the faithlessness and fretfulness of the desert. And, in the light of eternity, they saw evil in many things which had seemed passably good in the twilight of earth. They had no merits of their own. Their only hope of salvation lay where ours does—in His overcoming the sharpness of death and opening the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

And surely our Lord would lead them to dwell on a theme so constantly present to His mind. He had always anticipated the hour of His death. It was for this that He had been born. But now it seemed very near. He stood within the shadow of the cross. And it must have been grateful to Him to talk with these lofty spirits of the various aspects of the joy that was set before Him. Moses might remind Him that if, as God's Lamb, He must die, yet as God's Lamb He would redeem countless myriads. Elijah might dwell on the glory that would accrue to the Father. These thoughts were familiar enough to the mind of our blessed Master; yet they must have gladdened and strengthened Him, as they fell from other lips. The more so, when they conversed together on the certain splendor of the resurrection morning that should follow His decease.

Let us learn how men view the work of Christ in the light of eternity. They do not dwell primarily on the mystery of the holy incarnation, or on the philanthropy of His life, or on the insight of His teachings. All these things are dwarfed by comparison with His death. That is His masterpiece—the Mont Blanc of the glorious range of His achievements in our mortal flesh. Here the attributes of God find their most complete and most harmonious exemplification. Here the problems of human sin and salvation are met and solved. Here the travail of creation meets with its answer and key. Here are sown the seeds of the new heavens and earth in which shall dwell righteousness and peace. Here is the point of unity between all ages, all dispensations, all beings, all worlds. Here blend men and angels, departed spirits and the denizens of other spheres, Peter, James, and John, with Moses and Elijah; and all with the great God Himself, whose voice is heard falling in benediction from the opened heaven.

The nearer we get to the cross and the more we meditate on the decease

accomplished at Jerusalem, the closer we shall come into the center of things, the deeper will be our harmony with ourselves and all other noble spirits and God Himself. Climb that mountain often, in holy reverie, and remember that in all the universe there is no spirit more deeply interested in the mysteries and meaning of our Savior's death than that noble prophet who now seeks no higher honor than to stand forever as near to the beloved Master as he did for one brief space on the transfiguration mount.

Chapter 20_(TOC)

Filled with the Holy Spirit

What may not one man do in one brief life, if he is willing to be simply a living conduit-pipe through which the power of God may descend to men? There is no limit to the possible usefulness of such a life. There is, on the one hand, the oceanic fullness of God; on the other, the awful need and desolation of man; guilty, weak, bankrupt, diseased: all that is required is a channel of communication between the two. When that channel is made and opened and kept free from the silting sand, there will ensue one great, plenteous, and equable flow of power carrying the fullness of God to the weary emptiness of man.

There is a splendid illustration in the life of Elijah, of which we are now taking our farewell. For more than a hundred years the tide had been running strongly against the truth of God. Idolatry had passed from the worship of Jereboam's calves to that of Baal and Astarte, with the licentious orgies and hideous rites which gathered around the ancient worship of the forces of nature. The system was maintained by an immense organization of wily priests who had settled down upon the national life like a fungus growth, striking its roots into the heart. The court was in its favor. The throne was occupied by a decadent man, the weak tool of his unscrupulous and beautiful wife—the Lady Macbeth of Jewish history. Jehovah's altars were thrown down, His prophets silenced and in hiding, His faithful worshipers a mere handful whose existence was so secret as to be known only to Him. The lamp

of truth had been overturned, and there was only a tiny spark of light feebly burning to show where once the light of true religion brightly shone.

Into such a state of things Elijah came, unarmed, from his native trans-Jordanic hills; a highlander, unkempt, unpolished, unaccustomed to the manners of a court or the learning of the schools. Withal, a man weak where we are weak, tempted where we are tempted, of like passions with ourselves. And at once the tide began to turn. The progress of idolatry received a decisive check. The existence and power of Jehovah were vindicated. New courage was infused into the timid remnant of true-hearted disciples. Altars were rebuilt, colleges were opened for the training of the godly youth, a successor was appointed, and an impetus given to the cause of truth, which was felt for many generations.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to Elijah's power with his contemporaries is in the fact that his name and work stood out in bold and clear outline for nine hundred years after his death, surpassing the whole school of Jewish prophets, as the Jungfrau rears her snowclad peaks above the giants of her chain; and furnishing a model with which to set forth the power and courage of the forerunner of our Lord. The Holy Spirit, speaking in Malachi, the last of the prophets, could find no better symbol of John the Baptist than to compare him with the famous prophet who, centuries before, had swept to heaven in the chariot of flame: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and dreadful day of the LORD" (Malachi 4:5). The bright angel Gabriel, standing, four hundred years after, amid the ascending incense of the holy place, found no easier method of conveying to the aged priest the type of the wondrous son that was to gladden his old age, than to liken him to Elijah: "He shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias" (Luke 1:17).

Whenever a notable religious movement was stirring through the land, the

people were accustomed to think that the prophet of Carmel had again returned to earth; and thus the deputation asked John the Baptist, saying, "Art thou Elijah?" and when a mightier than John had set all men musing in their hearts, as the disciples told our Lord, many of the common people believed that the long expectation of centuries was realized, and that Elijah was risen again. It was commonly believed that no other born of a woman was great enough to precede the Messiah, and that he would anticipate His advent by an interval of three days, during which he should proclaim, in a voice heard over all the earth, peace, happiness, and salvation.

All these things are evidences of the towering greatness of Elijah's character and work. With all the failures and mistakes to which such natures are prone, he was a great man and did a noble work. And the secret of all was to be found not in any intrinsic qualities, but in the fact that he was filled with the Holy Ghost. Let us pause here and ask ourselves if we can give our thoughtful assent to this statement. If we cannot, we must count much of our time and labor in these chapters wasted, for our one aim has been to establish this point. But if we can, then, as we close these chapters of stirring sacred biography, we may resolve that we will never rest until we too are filled with the Holy Ghost. We will not rest satisfied in being imitators merely, but we will seek to be filled with the same Spirit, that He may work again through us the marvels of the past.

If I may venture so to put it, God is in extremity for men who, thoughtless for themselves, will desire only to be receivers and channels of His power. He will take young men and women, old men and children, servants and handmaidens in the waning days of this era and will fill them with the selfsame Spirit whose power was once reserved for a favored few. Besides all this, the positive command has never been repealed which bids us be "filled

with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). And we cannot reiterate too often that those who feel themselves bound to strict temperance in respect to wine by the former clause, should feel the latter one to be equally imperative. Moreover, what God commands, He is prepared to do all that is needful on His side to effect. Then when, like John the Baptist, we are filled with the Holy Ghost, like John the Baptist we "shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17).

This Filling of the Holy Ghost was the Characteristic of the Church

On the day of Pentecost they were all filled with the Holy Ghost—women as well as men, obscure disciples as well as illustrious apostles—and, to guard against the leakage which is, alas, too common to us all, they were filled and filled again. Those who are described as filled in Acts 2:4 are spoken of as filled again in Acts 4:31. New converts, like Saul of Tarsus, were bidden to expect this blessed filling. Deacons called to do the secular business of the Church must be men filled with the Holy Ghost. That he was a good man, full of the Holy Ghost, was a greater recommendation of Barnabas than that he had parted with his lands. And even churches, like those in the highlands of Galatia, were no sooner brought in to existence by the labors of the apostle Paul than they were filled with the Holy Ghost. In point of fact, the Christians of the first age were taught to expect this blessed filling. And the early Church was a collection of Spirit-filled people. Probably it was the exception, rather than the rule, not to be filled with the blessed presence of God and the Holy Ghost.

There is no formal conclusion to the book of Acts, because God meant the story to be prolonged through the ages, after the same manner. Let us not think that God resembles some, who put a portico of marble to a building which they finish with common brick. He did not give an experience at Pentecost which He either would not or could not maintain. Pentecost was simply meant to be the specimen and type of all the days of all the years of the present age. And if our times seem to have fallen far below this blessed level, it is not because of any failure on God's part, but because the Church has neglected this holy doctrine. Christians have seemed to suppose that the filling of the Holy Ghost was the prerogative of a few. The majority of them have never thought of it as within their reach, and the Church has been simply paralyzed for want of the only power that can avail her in her conflict against the world—a power which was distinctly pledged to her by her ascending Lord. We never can regain or hold our true position until all believers see that the filling of the Holy Ghost is equally for them as for the first Christians, and that the barriers are broken down which once limited it to a few. We do not seek the sound of rushing wind, or the coronet of flame, or the special gifts which were conferred for a special purpose: these are the minor accessories of this filling, with which we can dispense. But what we cannot dispense with and must not dream of missing is the distinct filling of the Holy Ghost. No doubt He is in us if we are Christians, but we must never be content until He is in us in power—not a breath, but a mighty wind; not a rill, but a torrent; not an influence, but a mighty, energizing Person.

We must Comply with Certain Conditions if we would be Filled

WE MUST DESIRE TO BE FILLED FOR THE GLORY OF GOD. A lady

told me lately that she had long been seeking the power of the Spirit, but in vain. She could not understand the cause of her failure, until she came to see that she was seeking Him for the joy that He would bring rather than for the glory that would accrue to God. Ah, we must seek for the Spirit's power, not for our happiness or comfort, nor yet for the good that we may be the better able to effect; but that Christ may be magnified in our bodies, whether by life or death.

WE MUST BRING CLEANSED VESSELS. God will not deposit His most precious gift in unclean receptacles. And we need cleansing in the precious blood before we can presume to expect that God will give us what we seek. We cannot expect to be free from indwelling sin, but we may at least be washed in the blood of Christ from all conscious filthiness and stain.

WE MUST BE PREPARED TO LET THE HOLY SPIRIT DO AS HE WILL WITH US AND THROUGH US. There must be no reserve, no holding back, no contrariety of purpose. The whole nature must be unbarred, and every part yielded. There is a law in physics that forces work in the direction of least resistance. Let us present no resistance whatever to the working of the Holy Ghost. He who resists least will possess most. God gives the Holy Ghost to them that obey Him (Acts 5:32).

WE MUST APPROPRIATE HIM BY BIRTH. There is no need for us to wait ten days, because the Holy Spirit has been given to the church. This is included in the spiritual blessings with which our Father has blessed us in Christ Jesus. We need not struggle and agonize and convulse ourselves in the vehemence of entreaty; we have simply to take what God has allotted to us and is waiting to impart. Open your mouth wide, and He will fill it. Dig the ditches, and though you can discern no evidences of the entering floods, they shall be filled. Ask as a little child asks for its breakfast already on the table.

So soon as you ask, you do receive. Though you experience no rush of transcendent joy, go your way reckoning yourself filled, whether you feel so or not. As the days go on, you will find that you have been filled, and are being filled, with new power and joy and wealth. You will not long be left to the reckoning of faith, for you will be made aware of a virtue going out from you, which shall heal and save.

Tie Would Fail to Enumerate all the Blessings that will Ensure

The presence of the Holy Ghost in the heart, in all His glorious fullness, cannot be hid. It will surely betray itself as the presence of the everburning fire in the hothouse is indicated by the luxuriance of flower and fruit within its tropical inclosure, while frost and snow reign in the world without. There will be no effort, no striving after great effect, no ostentatious show. He distills as the dew upon the tender herb and descends as the summer showers upon the mown grass. This conception of His work is clearly taught by the word selected by the apostle to describe the results of His indwelling. He speaks of them as the "fruit of the Spirit," in contrast to the "works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16-26); and what deep suggestions of quiet growth, and exquisite beauty, and spontaneousness of life lie in that significant phrase!

In passing, we can do no more than enumerate some of the results of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost.

THERE IS VICTORY OVER SIN. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and death, just as the law of the elasticity of the air makes the bird free from the predominating power of the pull of gravitation.

THERE IS THE INDWELLING OF THE LORD JESUS. Christ dwells in the heart by the Holy Ghost so that there are not two indwellings, but one. And this not figurative or metaphorical, but a literal and glorious reality.

THERE IS THE QUICKENING OF THE MORTAL BODY. An expression which certainly points to the resurrection, but which may mean some special strength and health imparted to our present mortal bodies, which are the tabernacles and temples of His indwelling.

THERE ARE ALL THE GRACES OF THE SPIRIT, which come with linked hands; so that it is impossible to admit one of the golden sisterhood without her introducing all the radiant band. Love brings joy, and joy peace, and peace longsuffering; and similarly through the whole series so that the heart becomes at length tenanted, as was the grave of Christ, with angels.

THERE IS ALSO POWER FOR SERVICE. No longer timid and frightened, the apostles give their witness with great power. The Gospel comes in power and demonstration through consecrated lips and lives. The very devils are exorcised, and great crowds are brought to the feet of Christ.

This, and much more, is awaiting the moment in life when you shall definitely avail yourself of your privilege and become filled with the Holy Ghost. Then, as time rolls on, you will work great deliverances among people, careless of praise or blame. Perhaps you will know what it is to pass upward to meet Christ in the air. But certainly you will stand beside Him in the regeneration when He shall appear in glory. And then in all the radiant throng there shall be naught to divert your gaze from Jesus, or your thought from the decease (the exodus) which He accomplished at Jerusalem.

And amid the myriads of stars that shall shine forever in the firmament of heaven, not one shall sparkle with more brilliant or more steady glory than

Elijah: a man of like passions with ourselves, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, out of weakness was made strong, waxed valiant in fight, swept to heaven unhurt by death, and stood beside Christ on the transfiguration mount. Prophet of fire, till then, farewell!

THE PROPHETS STAND STRONG

VOLUME 1 & 2

ORIGINAL TITE: THE MODERN HYPOTHESIS AND
RECENT CRITICISM OF THE EARLY PROPHETS

BY

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The Modern Hypothesis and Recent Criticism of the Early Prophets

Introduction

The study of the early prophetic writings has become invested with a threefold interest through the rise of the Kuenen-Wellhausen hypothesis. Externally looked at, the reversal of the customary sequence, Law-Prophets, seemed to form the distinctive feature of this hypothesis, and around this point accordingly the battle between its defenders and opponents was at first concentrated. It appeared obvious that for the decision of the controversy everything depended on the literary and historical testimony of the earliest prophets. The question was one of verifying whether any, or how much, of the material, legislative and narrative, embedded in the Law existed in written form in ancient times. Apart from a few poetic compositions of smaller size,^[1] and some historical documents, which are, however, held to have been incorporated in and adjusted to works of much later date and whose original form can therefore no longer be precisely determined,^[2] the Prophets were the only writings in regard to whose date and genuineness in the main both sides were still agreed. All else appeared unsettled and involved in the great critical upheaval: here at least a common basis for argument had remained. But this reveals only one side of the importance to which the prophetic books suddenly attained. It was soon realized that much more was at stake than the relative age of certain writings, and that the shifting of dates on so broad a

scale had taken place in the interest of a philosophical theory regarding the development of Israel's religion. Hence the discussion was pushed into the wider field of the history of revelation or religion, into the midst of the living movement of events, where research bids fair to be rewarded not by discovery of the external sequence of writings alone, but by insight into the causal connection of the forces that have shaped the development of which the writings are mere precipitates or products. If the new hypothesis was right, then Prophecy, coming before the Law, claimed all the interest attaching to records which stand nearest to the mysterious but fascinating beginning of things. The removal of the Pentateuch from its place before the Prophets had created a clear field for that form of naturalistic theorizing to which hitherto the Law with its sharply defined supernaturalistic signature had always formed an insuperable barrier the question had now become open, What is it that lies back of Prophecy, evolution or revelation, the physical or the ethical, the imperfect or the perfect?^[3] But, contemporary records failing unless the constructions attempted in answer to this question were to be wholly baseless and subjective, a process of backward reasoning, taking its point of departure from the earliest ascertainable data, had to be resorted to; and these data were furnished by the eighth-century prophets, who were thus made to bear witness direct or indirect to the stage of religious development preceding their own times. Even this, however, does not exhaust the significance of the early prophetic writings as a factor in the critical controversy. They appear not as mere literary or historical witnesses, but as independent actors in the drama of development constructed by the critics. Even on the old view, Prophetism at its rise marks an epoch in sacred history. The modern hypothesis, however, having reduced everything in the oldest period to a naturalistic level, is bound to make this epoch a creative one; to it the prophets are the originators of the unique ethical and religious teaching

Israel has given to the world, whereas according to the traditional view the prophets simply enforced and applied and developed what was already contained, germinally at least, in the Mosaic revelation.

Neither side was slow to perceive the strategic value possessed by the prophetic writings in each of these three respects. First of all, from the conservative side the claim was upheld that the high antiquity of both the narrative and legislative material in the Pentateuch in all its parts was placed beyond attack by the testimony of the earliest prophets. Over against this the adherents of the modern view attempted to show that the prophets of the eighth century, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, contain no traces of the existence of the Deuteronomic and priestly documents, whereas references to the Jahvist and Elohist are clearly found in them; that the prophets of the seventh century, Obadiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, show, beside traces of JE, points of comparison or marks of actual acquaintance with Deuteronomy; that Ezekiel, the prophet of the exile, reveals great similarity in his ideas and manner of expression with the oldest of the priestly sections of the Law; that finally, the late writers, Malachi and Daniel, offer parallels with all parts of the Thora, and speak of the latter as an organic whole attributed to Moses. All this in entire harmony with the main contentions of the critical hypothesis.

With equal eagerness the prophetic testimony in regard to Israel's past religious development was seized upon by both parties to the controversy, although it must be admitted that here the critics were at a serious disadvantage. The defenders of the traditional view maintained, and evidently on strong grounds, that the unanimous voices of Prophecy pronounced the corrupt state of popular religion among Israel the result of an habitual declension from the higher and purer faith once delivered to the fathers by

Moses; that the antithesis between prophets and people was to be explained, in agreement with the explicit declarations of the prophets to this effect, as the natural opposition of the few faithful upholders of Israel's best traditions to the degeneracy of the apostate mass. The critics could not deny that on the whole this was a fair statement of what appeared from their writings to have been the prophets' own convictions on this point. But, in spite of this, they asserted that the data of the prophetic literature, when rightly interpreted, favored not the conservative, but the modern construction of history. And the assertion was made plausible by the demand that a correct interpretation of the past in the light of Prophecy should begin not with accepting the Prophetic judgment as historical evidence, but with explaining it, together with a number of other facts, on philosophical and psychological principles. If the prophets characterize the popular religion as apostasy, it is not so much as a piece of credible testimony that this has interest for us, but as an unconscious revelation on their part that in the course of evolution they had risen above the majority, and were so naively and intuitively convinced of the truth of their higher views as to be unable to think of them as not having been known and valid since the first beginning of Israel's history.

But the main trial of strength between the two contending views was reserved for the interpretation of the Prophetic movement itself, and its contribution to the development of Old Testament religion. The critics had to show, and endeavored to show, that the historical constellation under which their hypothesis placed the birth of Prophecy was not only consistent with but favorable to the intensely productive power ascribed to it. Given the antecedents and the environment supplied by the reconstruction of the older period, it was said, and the work of the Prophets stood out upon the background of their age luminous and intelligible; the mystery and darkness which had hitherto enveloped the genesis of the loftiest teaching of the Old

Testament were at once dispelled. The antiquated notion of objective supernatural revelation could now be discarded and the modern idea of development take its place. It was easy to trace the psychological processes in which the distinctive doctrines of the Prophetic theology were evolved. Part fitted into part, and for each truth there was a place and function in the growing organism. The ethical idealism, the monotheism, the spiritual conception of the nature and service of Jehovah, the universalism, the Messianic predictions of the prophets, all these were furnished with a rational explanation and exhibited in their mutual dependence. The veil was lifted from the reading of the old covenant and the history of its ideas almost wrote itself. In a word, it was claimed that the new hypothesis found its chief commendation and celebrated its highest triumph in the brilliant simplicity with which it solved the riddles and swept away the problems of Old Testament science.

On the other hand, those who were convinced of the correctness of the older views did not hesitate to take up the challenge thus thrown out to them. If anywhere, then here was the point where the critical theory was to be met aggressively and to be subjected to criticism in its turn. In this particular field it undertook to be positive and constructive, and its exploits were so daring and comprehensive, covering such a wide range of evidence upon which it must either plainly approve or discredit itself, that no possibility seemed left for *anon liquet* in the end. And not only did a critical examination of the hypothesis on this point seem to promise definite results, it offered the further advantage of testing the same, not in some subordinate feature, but in the center of its life on which all other parts are dependent. Should it fail to substantiate its claims here, it must break down entirely, for its own assumptions have led it to place at this point the main problem of Old Testament history, for the sake of solving which it exists. In so far as the

hypothesis could lay claim to being the most ingenious and best-balanced scheme yet devised for a purely naturalistic explanation of the phenomena of Prophecy, it was justly deemed to involve in its success or defeat the general cause of anti-supernaturalism as regards the Old Testament. Under the influence of so much that invited and stimulated criticism, it is no wonder that the evolutionary scheme was rigorously tried by the stern facts of the history of Prophetism and all its weakness exposed. It was shown without difficulty that it misconstrues the evidence on which it pretends to rest, that it fails to explain the most important elements of the prophetic consciousness and teaching, that its reasoning is more specious than logical, that in its psychological constructions it makes the Old Testament writers think in modern terms, that its assumed development stands in chronological conflict with the data of history, that it is too narrow to subsume under its categories the doctrinal wealth of prophetic revelation and its broad outlook into the future.

In that first flush of enthusiasm which is wont to attend every new discovery, whether real or imagined, the entire contents of the prophetic literature were claimed by the critics as in full harmony with their position. There was no inclination to admit that any part of the evidence appeared inconclusive or suggested problems as yet unsolved. With amazing unconsciousness of the mysteries of prophecy, the defenders of the modern view proceeded to argue their case. When hard pressed by some of the conservative representations recourse was had to an exegesis which more or less plausibly explained away the evidence of the religious vitality of the Law in the prophetic consciousness, or pointed out subtle differences between the early Prophetic and the later Deuteronomic philosophy of history, or reduced the most marvelous Messianic predictions to the level above which mere preachers of righteousness should not rise. Holiness in the Prophets was claimed to be a

totally different conception from holiness in the Pentateuch. References to the Thora were interpreted either of the Prophetic instruction itself even where the context seemed to favor no such sense, or else, if the allusion to priestly Thora could not be denied, the reader was carefully warned against a possible confusion between the written Thora of a later age and the oral Thora supplied by the priests in individual instances. With so much assurance was this method of dealing with the inconvenient parts of the evidence at first applied, that for a considerable time no necessity was felt to propose the question, whether some of the prophecies in which these phenomena occurred might not be of a later date, so that protection against them ought to be sought in critical excision rather than in exegetical makeshifts. The well-nigh universal denial of the genuineness of such sections as Isaiah 24-27 and 40-66, and the late dating by many of the prophecy of Joel had, besides, removed the most serious difficulties in advance.

In the course of time, however, a great change came over the critics in their attitude toward the prophetic writings. They began to be more thoughtful and less eager to claim that their conception of Israel's history and the testimony of the Prophets in their present shape were in perfect agreement. It was perceived that the hypothesis did not find as smooth sailing in the often-disturbed waters of prophetic revelation as was at first anticipated. Difficulty was experienced in reconciling the realistic content of many an oracle with the highly idealistic character in which the critics were accustomed to conceive the prophet. But these doubts and misgivings were not signs of any inclination on the part of the critics to retrace their steps. On the contrary, they indicated a more than ever assured conviction of the substantial truth of their conclusions. The precipitancy with which the champions of the new views had in the beginning thrown themselves upon the available evidence to press every part of it with equal ardor into the service of their cause, wore off

in the same proportion as the hypothesis was believed to have been placed on a secure basis, so as to be no longer dependent on single data for its support. A calmer tone and temper took its place, which enabled the critics to observe more accurately and to recognize more readily the real nature of the facts, than was possible before. Still more influential, however, in bringing about this change was a second cause. The criticism of the Hexateuch had run its course and been carried to that point of minuteness and perfection of detail where little attractive original labor remained to be done. New fields were to be opened up in which the critical faculty could exert the powers acquired in its employment upon the Mosaic writings. The fact that difficulties had to be admitted in squaring the modern theory with the prophetic books naturally turned the attention of the critics in this direction. So it came about that a vigorous movement for the reconstruction of the criticism of the Prophets set in, in which, so far as the situation allowed, the performances of Pentateuch criticism were reenacted, and the first canon applied was the probably late, in most cases post-exilic, origin of all such prophecies as did not harmonize in their traditional place with the evolutionary program of the history of religious ideas.

It is assumed by the pioneers in this field that the prophetic literature has been subjected to a systematic redaction guided by religious or theological view-points and involving important excisions, additions and alterations. This process reached its height during the Persian period, after the writings of the prophets had for some time possessed a certain degree of sacredness, which could not be maintained unless their contents were made to agree with the then prevailing beliefs.^[4] An extensive literary activity is believed to have developed which, in close dependence upon the older models and largely anonymous, adapted the ancient prophecies to the historical circumstances of the period; and the products of this activity, it is said, have been incorporated

into the writings of the earlier prophets, so that, in the latter, compositions of widely distant ages and of entirely distinct stages of religious development are now agglutinated. The Prophetic books are composite in a sense somewhat analogous to that in which the Legal literature is held to consist of various layers. Among German critics Stade and Wellhausen have been chiefly identified with the advocacy of this view, the former by his *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*^[5] and a number of articles in the *Zeitschrift für Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, the latter by his *Israelitische und Jüdische Geschichte*^[6] and the new translation with accompanying notes of the Minor Prophets which forms Part 5 of his *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*. To the criticism of Isaiah the principle has been applied with great boldness by Duhm's *Kommentar*, and also by Hackmann's treatise on *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaja*: most painstakingly and comprehensively, however, by Cheyne's *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*. The last-mentioned critic has likewise espoused the results of the recent criticism of the Minor Prophets from this point of view, in the Introduction written by him for the new edition of Robertson Smith's *The Prophets of Israel*.

It will be at once apparent that by this new departure the significance of the prophetic writings for the questions at issue has been essentially modified. It can be of no use any longer to appeal to traces in the early prophets of the Legal organization and spirit or of the Thora as an organic whole, or of any of the alleged products of post-exilic Judaism; for these very features have now become the criteria by which, without appeal, the late origin of every prophecy wherein they occur is established. To carry on the debate on the basis of what remains, after the critical expurgation has been accomplished, would be a wholly fruitless undertaking. The standpoint represented by the assumed post-exilic writers or redactors is in most cases identical with the conservative standpoint. Hence to rule out their testimony would be a

begging of the question on a grand scale, something resembling a judicial process in which the desired verdict were used beforehand by one party as the test for admitting and excluding evidence. A critical comparison of the old and new views, as far as the Prophetic books are concerned, was possible only while the critics were yet in a position to admit the testimony of these books in their entirety.^[7] But this period has now begun to belong to the past. The adherents of the modern hypothesis, at least the progressive ones among them, are fully aware of this, as appears from the fact that without controversial regard for their conservative opponents they proceed to manipulate and distribute the prophecies to their own satisfaction. When sometimes from the apologetic side complaints are still heard, that the critics cannot be reasoned with, because no sooner is any passage quoted from the prophetic writings making against their assumptions than they declare it of later origin, such complaints are in one sense hardly justified. In point of fact, the critics are no longer engaged in demonstrating or defending their hypothesis; they are at work in applying it.

But if, in the old sense, the apologetic significance of the early prophetic writings has for the time being been neutralized, in other respects their study with a view to the pending issues has acquired new interest. Altogether apart from the question as to the correctness of results, it cannot be concealed that a large part of the arguments once used in defense of the critical hypothesis has been by this recent move entirely discredited. The present attitude of the critics themselves is a practical confession to this effect. At a time not so very far removed they contended hotly that the prophetic evidence submitted by the apologists in favor of the high antiquity of the Mosaic writings and institutions was imaginary, distorted, unworthy of serious attention. And, behold, at present the critics of the same school, sometimes the very same men, are making use of these identical arguments to prove the identical

proposition, viz., that when these prophecies were penned, the Thora and its religious organization were supreme factors in religious life. A more complete *volte face* is scarcely conceivable. That the conclusion to be established was in the minds of the conservatives associated with the Mosaic origin of the Law, and in the mind of the present-day critics with the post-exilic date of the prophecies, is a mere accidental feature, which ought, of course, not to affect the estimate placed upon the quality of the reasoning itself. Either, the apologetic arguments were as worthless as they were branded by their opponents—and then what value can be attached to them when employed in the critical cause?—or, they are sound and conclusive now—in which case the apologists have been splendidly vindicated and ought to receive an apology from those who once scorned their conclusions and now silently appropriate the substance of them.

After all, however, this is a mere matter of historical justice, which, while apt to reflect unfavorably upon the methods of the critics in general, need not be fatal to the correctness of their main thesis. Insufficient caution and limited insight have often made it necessary to defend one truth by controverting another, because at the time it was not seen how the two could be reconciled. The apologists may have rightly pointed out traces of the existence of the Thora in the Prophets, and yet the Thora as an organic whole may be post-exilic. In the abstract the two alternatives, that the Law is pre-Prophetic or that the prophecies in question are late interpolations, come before us with an equal show of logical possibility, and we cannot refuse to consider the solution now proposed by the critics. The reconstruction of the data of Prophecy on the lines of the modern hypothesis may be *prioristic*, and we may regret that it confiscates the last common territory on which the disputed questions could be brought to a decision; it need not for these reasons be false. There is one right, however, which no amount of *a priori* treatment of

the prophetic books can take from us—the right to subject the proposed manipulation of these writings to the test of the principles which are immanent in the writings themselves. No mistake could be greater than to suppose that the critics have now finally escaped from the control of objective facts as far as the Prophetic literature is concerned. Even in applying their theory it will not do for them merely to postulate that such and such a prophecy must be post-exilic, because the ideas contained in it are according to the modern view the specific products of that late period. They will be justly expected to show that in each individual case internal indications of a literary and contextual nature, if they do not directly require, at least favor the excision made in obedience to the claims of the hypothesis. In this sense the use of a theory as a working principle and the demonstration of its scientific character go hand in hand. The most crucial test to which every hypothesis must submit consists in its application to the widest possible range of phenomena, in distinction from the narrower circle of facts to account for which it has been constructed; and its plausibility increases or decreases proportionately to the ease or difficulty with which it subsumes under itself the phenomena beyond the horizon of its original field. For this reason it may be said that, in the critical manipulation of the prophetic writings which it is at present pursuing, the modern hypothesis is putting itself on trial. Devised for the immediate necessities of Pentateuch criticism, it must now prove itself capable of assimilating the facts of Prophecy without resorting to revolutionary methods. It must show that the two lines of argument, the one proceeding from considerations external to the prophetic books, the other from internal evidence supplied by the latter, do actually converge. If, in attempting this, it should be compelled to displace a large amount of material from its traditional environment, or to resort, for the dissection deemed necessary, to violent means both will have to be counted

as serious instances against its probability. It seems to us that this is the point on which conservative scholars should, in the present situation, concentrate their efforts to expose the weakness of the hypothesis as regards the prophetic portion of the Old Testament. It should be shown not merely that the ideas in question are there, but are rightly there; and that they themselves, as well as the passages in which they occur, cannot be expunged without doing injury to the inner organism of the prophetic teaching and the prophetic books.

It must be confessed that from this point of view the representatives of the newest phase of prophetic criticism have made very light of their obligations. Little or no objective evidence is adduced to show that the assumed redaction or expansion of the ancient prophecies actually took place. Too often the excisions from the prophetic text are not justified, nor is their justification seriously attempted, on internal grounds. The utmost that can be said is that the critical reasoning here and there finds some apparent support in the darkness of the prophetic style or the corrupt state of the text, which makes it easy to assert lack of connection or detect seams of redaction at numerous points. The treatment of the prophetic word which is fast growing fashionable may be aptly characterized *as exegesis by means of criticism under the forced application of certain literary canons concerning the lucidity, straightforwardness and general perfection of the prophetic style*. If a passage presents exegetical difficulties or cannot be interpreted except at a sacrifice of that transparency we are accustomed to expect in modern literature, straightway the knife is inserted. Duhm's *Commentary on Isaiah* offers numerous examples of curtailment of the genuine text on no other ground than that the style or diction are thought unworthy of the prophet. Even less satisfactory is Wellhausen's manner, who, as a rule, simply *ex cathedra* decrees the spurious or late origin of a section omitted in his translation, whether from lack of other grounds than his general critical

instinct or from aristocratic disdain to state them, it is hard to tell. Cheyne not uncharitably calls this "the conciseness" of Wellhausen's argument. Whatever value may be placed on this part of his work, it must be acknowledged that Cheyne has, at least, given himself the trouble of working out the literary side of the critical case in reference to Isaiah. As a rule, however, the critics openly profess that in their estimation the literary or contextual arguments are merely secondary, and that the Biblico-theological criteria are the really decisive ones in determining the date of a prophetic passage. Cheyne himself admits that the phraseological section of his argument is on the whole not so decisive as in Hexateuch criticism, and assigns to the literary phenomena the last place among the marks of late origin of a prophecy.^[8] Still further than this goes Hackmann, who says that, although in Hexateuch criticism far more abundant literary data were available, nevertheless even in that department no progress was made until the religious spirit and tendency of the documents became the subject of investigation; and that to a still greater extent this method will have to be pursued in the criticism of the Prophetic literature.^[9] This is an admission that in Hexateuch criticism *a priori* principles derived from the idea of evolution, in Prophetic criticism principles derived from the evolutionary interpretation of the Hexateuch, are to be the chief canons—that in neither the literary evidence is of an independently conclusive character, and in the prophets less so than in the Hexateuch.

The necessity for these general concessions can be easily demonstrated in detail. In the following pages we endeavor to give a survey of the more important material affected by this new method of critical procedure. The examination confines itself to the prophets whose work and writings are by common consent contemporaneous with the crisis in the assumed evolution of ethical monotheism. These are the prophets of the eighth century, in chronological order—Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah. We leave Joel out of the

discussion, for although the critical views concerning the development of religion furnish the chief arguments for assigning him to a post-exilic date and the contents of his book are of great importance for establishing the high antiquity of the priestly organization, yet his case is unique because here not isolated sections but the whole prophecy is transferred to the later period, and our special purpose for the present is to examine the right of the critics to detach single passages from a context which claims for them a place in the work of the early prophets. Joel raises no such direct claim for itself, and, besides, the trend of critical opinion toward a late date for this prophet is of earlier origin than the general reconstructive movement in prophetic criticism with which we are now concerned.

I. Amos^(TOC)

We begin our review with the Book of Amos. The first passage that comes under consideration is chapter 1:2 : "Jehovah roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem." The prominence here given to Zion and Jerusalem is obnoxious to the critics, because, on their hypothesis, the temple did not obtain its prerogative of being the central sanctuary and the one dwelling-place of Jehovah until after the Deuteronomic reform. Hence the verse is suspected by some,^[10] while others attempt to put upon it a weakening interpretation. Wellhausen thinks that, as a Judean, Amos would naturally select Zion as the place from which Jehovah's judgment proceeds. From the standpoint of the critics themselves there is a serious objection to this. If, as is continually asserted, the temple on Zion was the seat of a cult not essentially different from nor better than that practiced at such shrines as Bethel, Gilgal, Dan, Beersheba and against which Amos so sharply polemicizes, it must have been simply impossible for the prophet to identify Jehovah in any way with this center of idolatry.^[11] For, according to verse 5, Jehovah is not to be found at Bethel, Gilgal and Beersheba. For this reason no other interpretation will suit than that which finds in the words a reference to Zion, not as one among the many high places of the land, but as the divinely chosen sanctuary, whence the foreign nations, and even the northern Israelites, had to expect the advent of Jehovah for judgment.^[12] It cannot be denied, therefore, that the passage is a stumbling-block to the critical theory, and Cheyne may well express surprise at Wellhausen's accepting it in 1892 without question. But it is equally impossible to eliminate the verse as it is to weaken the sense, for the suffix in **wnby#**), wherever it occurs in the subsequent verses, would

then remain without antecedent.^[13] Besides this from the later standpoint the contents and form of the statement are too innocent for an intentional interpolation.

Greater unanimity prevails among the critics in regard to the late insertion of chapter 2:4, 5, the indictment of Judah. This passage has been thrown out by Duhm,^[14] Oort,^[15] Stade,^[16] Cornill,^[17] Wellhausen,^[18] Cheyne.^[19] The case is a highly instructive one, because more openly than elsewhere the motives of the excision are here professed by the critics. Oort says: "Of the Thorath Jahwe, not in the sense of Jahwe's *instruction* but of his *law*, no mention can have been made until after Deuteronomy, and Khezabhim, 'lies,' did not acquire the sense of 'idols,' until after monotheism had become prevalent. ... The expression has no meaning until after the exile." Here then are two facts at variance with the modern hypothesis—a reference to the Thora as the recognized rule of national life, and a reference to polytheism in language which clearly implies that the unreality of all gods besides Jehovah was no longer a novel perception in Amos' day. It might be said, perhaps, that in regard to the former of these the newest critics are somewhat oversensitive, for it is quite possible, although not natural, to limit the sense of Thora here to "ordinances of civil righteousness," as Robertson Smith does,^[20] or to prophetic instruction, as others propose, and so to reconcile the genuineness of the passage with the modern view. Kuenen even admits that the words are most naturally understood of a written Thora, and yet professes to find no reason for denying them to Amos.^[21] This might be a tenable position if the prophet did not explicitly refer to the Thora as the rule of Judah's national life, from which the fathers already had departed; for the two clauses of his indictment are obviously parallel. There is surely no place in the critical hypothesis for the recognition of so ancient a written law, with such unqualified claims on national obedience. And, as regards the second phrase,

"the lies after which their fathers did walk," it is inadmissible to give this the sense of "deceitful superstitions in general," as Robertson Smith again is inclined to do; for the expression "to walk after" is regularly used of the service either of the true or of foreign gods,^[22] and "lies" is synonymous with **w#**, and **lbh**, and **wht**, and **lyl**), all designations of idols expressive of their unreality. It should be observed that the prophet employs the term without explanation, evidently expecting it to be understood of itself, which excludes his having coined it for the first time; and terms of this sort do not as a rule become common property until the conception they express has been thoroughly assimilated by the popular consciousness. There is no denying, then, that in regard to this passage also those critics who reject it are the most consistent and clearly in the right within the limits of the hypothesis. Its most plausible interpretation is such that the modern view will not bear it. And yet it is equally undeniable that these verses are not only in their place here, but cannot be removed without disturbing the context. The meaning of Amos' introductory discourse is that Jehovah will punish Israel more than the heathen, according to chapter 3:2. This applies both to Judah and Ephraim, but, as between these two, Judah is the relatively less sinful, and, therefore, fitly receives its place in the indictment between the heathen nations and northern Israel, for which latter the climax of the charge is reserved. It was impossible for the prophet in this connection to pass over Judah entirely, for Oort's view that its condemnation was implied in that of Ephraim and needed no separate mention is rendered improbable by chapter 3:1, 6:1, 2, 9:11— passages of which the two former at least are critically beyond suspicion. Finally, not a single reason of any weight, literary or otherwise, has been produced, except the above-stated *a prioriones*, to impugn the genuineness of the passage. Wellhausen, to be sure, thinks that a rejection of the Thora of Jehovah is not a sufficiently concrete sin to be referred to in connection with

the phrase, "three transgressions or four." But it is self-understood that the rejection of the Thora involved a series of single acts of transgression.

The passages 4:13, 5:8, 9, 9:5, 6, are of one nature and together fall under the critical judgment. They are excised for Biblico-theological reasons connected with the development hypothesis, by all the critics quoted above as rejecting 2:4, 5. That these verses break the connection between what precedes and follows is true in so far only as they might be omitted without causing a perceptible gap; but the same is true of a great number of passages whose genuineness is doubted by none. In all three places they serve to lend force to the prediction of judgment by declaring the transcendent greatness of him whose the judgment is.^[23] It may be said that 5:8, 9, from this point of view, form the climax of verse 6, from which they are now separated by verse 7. Even if this were conceded, a simple transposition of verses 7 and 8, 9, or the excision of verse 7^[24] would have to be preferred to the removal of verses 8, 9. But closely looked at, the case does not call for any of these remedies. The participle **Mybphh** in verse 7 belongs as descriptive enlargement to the object **l)-tybl** of verse 6 and is naturally immediately subjoined to the latter, like unto the connection between 2:6 and 7, whereupon the subject of verse 6, **hwhy** receives a similar descriptive enlargement in verses 8, 9, the whole forming in this way a chiasmic construction.^[25] The real ground of the exception taken to these passages lies in their advanced doctrine of the nature and attributes of Jehovah, which presupposes a fully-matured and long-established monotheism, thus upsetting the critical notion that the monotheism of the prophets was evolved out of their ethical idealism. Here Jehovah appears as the Creator and Ruler of nature, the omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient God, conceptions which are not supposed to emerge until the exile in Deutero-Isaiah or at the earliest in

Jeremiah. The editor, says Cheyne, "had the same conceptions of the divine nature. .. as the later writers in general."^[26]

The phrase, "sin of Samaria," in chapter 8:14,^[27] is declared a later correction by Wellhausen,^[28] whom Cheyne follows.^[29] "The sin of Samaria," says the former of these critics, must mean the calf of Bethel. But Samaria, he reflects further, never stands with Amos for Israel. Consequently the prophet cannot have written it. The whole difficulty vanishes if we consider that the cult of Bethel was in a special sense the cult of the royal dynasty and, in so far, of the capital Samaria. This is required by Amos 7:13, and receives confirmation from Hosea 10:5. What actually determines Wellhausen in rejecting the phrase is its inconsistency with his opinion that Amos condemns the sacrificial cult *in toto*. If this be so, then the prophet cannot have called a single feature, such as the calf-worship, sinful. Would it not be better to reason in the opposite direction, that, since Amos disapproves of this particular part of the cult, he did not oppose it on principle or as a whole?

The conclusion of the Book of Amos is the largest and most important section that has fallen under the condemnation of the newest criticism. Some would remove verses 11-13,^[30] others include in the post-exilic addition verses 8-10 and 14, 15.^[31] The grounds for this opinion are without exception drawn from the critical hypothesis. They are as follows: (a) The restoration of Judah and the Davidic dynasty is here predicted, and in verse 8 "the sinful kingdom" (= Ephraim) is by implication contrasted with the better kingdom (= Judah). Wellhausen pronounces this "a plump Judaism." The clash with the modern theory arises from this: that the latter makes the comparative estimate placed upon Israel as apostate and upon Judah as in possession of the legitimate cult a product of later historical development, beginning with the Deuteronomic reform, to impute which to Amos would involve from its

standpoint a gross anachronism. But, if we place ourselves upon the standpoint of the historical Amos as reflected in his prophecy, there is nothing abnormal in such a comparative judgment. As has been shown, the structure of the introduction to his book likewise presupposes that Judah is less sinful than Israel, and indirectly this is confirmed by the fact that there is no trace in verse 5, or 8:14, of any polemic against the cult and sanctuary of Jerusalem, which is even mentioned in 1:2 as Jehovah's dwelling-place. The whole matter, therefore, simply resolves itself into the question whether the religious and Messianic difference between Israel and Judah is entirely a Judaistic fiction by which the outcome of history was later artificially accounted for, or has a substantial basis in pre-exilic history itself? So long as no other evidence for the late origin of this prophecy is forthcoming, Amos must remain a witness for the latter view and, in so far, against the critical hypothesis.^[32] (b) The chief Biblico-theological reason for the attack on these verses is their incompatibility with the conception of Jehovah's righteousness attributed to Amos by the modern theory and said to be found in other portions of his book. The specifically new thing in Amos' prophecy, we are reminded, was his sacrificing the national to the ethical element in Israel's religion. He is believed to have preached for the first time that Israel must perish because Jehovah is supremely righteous. Now in the passage before us the national element, thought to have been discarded, asserts itself with great vigor. Amos, the critics conclude, cannot have thus stultified himself;^[33] cannot, to speak with Wellhausen, have made milk and honey flow from the cup of Jehovah's wrath. Obviously, this reasoning has force only if we assume that Amos' conception of Jehovah was so one-sidedly ethical as to leave no room for the exercise of grace beyond the judgment. It would be easy to show that a number of passages, whose genuineness has not been hitherto disputed, bear witness to the contrary. This Amos of absolute logical

consistency, to whom grace and righteousness not only cannot go together but cannot even succeed one the other, is a pure philosophical abstraction, and not a psychological reality. There is only this much truth in the critical contention that Amos so exclusively views the judgment as righteous retribution as to lose sight of it almost entirely in its reformatory aspect. Consequently, while fully aware of its limits and unable to close his prophecy without giving an outlook into the better future, he does not bring into causal connection the judgment and the restoration. Righteousness and grace are cleanly separated, whereas with Hosea they interpenetrate, the judgment becoming the instrument of discipline. This is the psychological explanation of the fact that no allusion is found in verses 11-15 to the conversion of Israel. (c) Another feature which has been supposed to indicate the late origin of this section is the individualism expressed in verses 9, 10, in the distinction between the righteous and sinners and in verse 15 in the phrase "thy God."^[34] According to the critics, all pre-exilic prophets consider the nation and not the individual the subject of religion. But this trait is fully protected by other passages in Amos,^[35] to which no critic has as yet taken exception, so that in order to eliminate all individualism the expurgation would have to be much more thorough. Its occurrence simply proves that the real Amos does not fit into the critical scheme of development.

II. Hosea^(TOC)

The Book of Hosea is thought to have been even more extensively interpolated than that of Amos. This was to be expected in advance, since this prophet is more versatile and many-sided than his Judean companion, and it is proportionately more difficult to adjust him to any preconceived program of teaching. In Amos there is at least the undisputed sway of one idea forcing everything else into the background, rendering it possible for the critics to claim this idea as the sole content of his prophetic consciousness, to throw upon it an emphasis exclusive of all other truth, and to remove by a few excisions what little may crop out of a different nature. Nothing of the kind is possible in Hosea. Even after all the manipulation to which the latter's prophecy has been subjected, the critics are compelled to admit that it anticipates trains of thought on the whole identified with a later stage of development. Another feature of Hosea to be remembered in this connection is the abruptness of his style. This abruptness of style, says Cheyne, "made it easy for editors to work in fresh passages;" but he seems to forget that such a characteristic may as easily become a temptation for our present-day critics to scent insertions where there are none, as it is supposed to have been for the editors to work in the same.

The center of attack is the Messianic prophecy 2:1-3 in connection with 1:7; 3:4, 5 in part,^[36] 4:15, 8:14, all of which contain references to Judah, and reveal more or less partiality for the southern kingdom and the Davidic dynasty, a feature already observed in Amos, but especially noteworthy in a prophet from Ephraim. The natural explanation of these statements lies in the Messianic promises given to David (2 Samuel 7) and in the prerogative of

Judah as possessed of the true sanctuary and relatively less apostate than the northern kingdom. But for these two facts, as has been shown already in connection with Amos, there is no place in the modern hypothesis. Belief in the special election of Judah and the Davidic dynasty is assumed to have sprung from the events under Hezekiah, the destruction of Samaria and the salvation of Jerusalem as predicted by Isaiah, and still more from the Deuteronomic reform a century later. Hosea, on the other hand, is said to have rejected on principle every form of the kingdom, the Davidic dynasty included, as apostasy from Jehovah. Because later readers found his expectations of the future on this point out of harmony with the type of Messianic prophecy which dates back from Isaiah, they supplied the deficiency by interpolations. The abrupt transition from threatening to promise in 1:9, 2:1, is held to be a sure sign of such editorial expansion of an original prophecy. As this canon is quite generally applied, we shall have to inquire more fully into its merits, which may be best done in connection with certain prophecies of Isaiah, included among the later additions to that prophet's work almost on the strength of it alone. In reference to this concrete case in Hosea, we observe that the presence of chapter 2:1-3 where they stand is required by the symmetrical structure of the first part of the book, which consists of three divisions each, beginning with the prediction of judgment and ending with promise.^[37] It is true that chapter 1-2:3, differ in this respect from the two other sections—that the disciplinary purpose of the exile does not here appear as the mediating thought between threatening and promise; but there was no need at the opening of the prophet's book to explain immediately the inner nexus of these two broad aspects of his message; it was sufficient to introduce them side by side by way of prelude, the sharp contrast serving admirably to bring out in strong relief the distinct features of each. Elsewhere also Hosea startles the reader by the suddenness and boldness of

his transitions (cf. 11:7, 8; 12:3, 4, 5). On this view it is unnecessary to look for any other connection.^[38] Some critics think that 2:1-3 anticipate the ideas of the latter half of chapter 2, that the reference to "the day of Jezreel" can be understood only on the basis of the etymology given in verse 25, that the change of Lo-Ammi to Ammi and of Lo-Ruhamah to Ruhamah in ver. 1 renders the similar change in the verse 25 superfluous—all of which are said to be indications of the secondary character of the suspected passage.^[39] On a closer view of the matter it will be seen that these points are not well taken. The thoughts of 2:1-3 remain entirely within the terms of the first chapter, in which the *political* aspect of the judgment stands in the foreground. Here the prophet's oldest son symbolizes, by his name Jezreel, the place where *the kingdom of the house of Israel* is to cease and *the bow of Israel* is to be broken (verses 4, 5). To this corresponds in 2:3 "the day of Jezreel" as a day of national victory and conquest, the day of battle in which the reunited Israelites and Judeans meet their foes. Everything in the context is subordinate to this theme and should be interpreted in accordance with it. Jehovah's having no mercy upon the house of Israel and his having mercy upon the house of Judah, His being Judah's God and no longer Israel's God, have their primary reference to the gift or withdrawal of the divine saving help in war. Consequently verse 7, referring to the salvation of the southern kingdom in the Assyrian crisis, is entirely in place here.^[40] To the same cause must be ascribed the indirect way in which the captivity is introduced, simply as the background for the national restoration, so entirely different from the manner in which it is treated in 2:4-25 and in chapter 3. The marvelous increase of the children of Israel also is preparatory to their organization into the great army which verse 2 represents as marching up from the hand to fight the day of Jezreel.^[41] Even the future king is not defined any further than in this military capacity, as "the head" which the children of Judah and the

children of Israel shall appoint themselves. Finally, this is the point of view from which the prophecy mentions the reunion of the two kingdoms. The "for" of verse 2 indicates that all these various features are dwelt upon to produce some adequate idea of the greatness of "the day of Jezreel." In so far as the same thoughts reappear in the sequel of chapter 2, they assume an altogether different color from the central idea of the second discourse, that of the religious and ethical marriage between Jehovah and Israel. Hence the symbolism of Jezreel is changed from that of "the day of battle" to that of the peoplesown unto Jehovah in the land, their increase being viewed not so much as a means to swell the Messianic army, but rather as a result of the mystical union between Jehovah and Israel. In agreement with this the reversal of the names obtains here a far more profound and tender meaning than was the case in 2:1-3.

The favorable opinion of the Davidic house expressed in some of these passages is said to be irreconcilable with Hosea's attitude elsewhere toward the kingdom in general. The places where the kingdom is referred to in condemnatory terms are 1:4, 7:3-7, 8:4, 10:3, 7, 13:10, 11.^[42] Of these the first is primarily directed against the house of Jehu, but the cessation of the kingdom is at the same time a punishment for the house of Israel, no doubt because, on a principle elsewhere also recognized by Hosea, the judgment strikes first those institutions which have been to Israel the chief instruments of sinning; this is confirmed by the juxtaposition of the kingdom, the idols, the high places in 8:4 and 10:7, 8. In 8:4, the words, "they have set up kings, but not by me, princes and I knew it not," are most naturally understood of the entire succession of kings in the northern realm, from Jeroboam onwards, because of the obviously close connection in the prophet's mind between the self-willed making of kings and the making of idols. Chapter 13:10, 11, favor the same view, for the repeated "taking away" of a king given in the divine

anger must refer to the frequent removal of dynasties and individual princes, which was one of the chief sources of weakness in the kingdom of the ten tribes. So far, then, nothing indicates that Hosea extended his condemnation beyond the kingdom of Jeroboam and his successors. Whether he went further than this and included the kingdom of Saul depends on the view taken of chapter 9:9 and 10:9 : "They have deeply corrupted themselves as in the days of Gibeah;" "O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah." The context of the latter passage is so obscure (and possibly corrupt) that its reference can hardly be ascertained, and the former, though standing in a perfectly clear connection, leaves us equally in doubt concerning the events it alludes to. What little light there is to go by would seem to fall on these passages from the history related in Judges 19-21. But even if Wellhausen and Smend should be correct in rejecting this interpretation and in understanding "the days of Gibeah" of the days of Saul's appointment to the royal office, this could create no prejudice against the kingdom of David, whose origin was altogether different. The rejection of the whole northern kingdom together with the kingdom of Saul is rather favorable toward the recognition of David's house as legitimate. On this point Hosea is in entire harmony with the judgment of the historical books which the critics are accustomed to represent as colored by Deuteronomistic ideas. Consistency would require not the excision of such clauses merely as favor the Davidic house, but the removal of all disparaging references to the kingdom of Saul as well as to that of Jeroboam and his successors, on the ground of affinity with the Deuteronomistic philosophy of history. From our standpoint we consider it remarkable that while the condemnation of the Ephraimitic kings (and possibly of Saul) is explicit, no passage can be quoted from Hosea in which the Judean kingdom is referred to in similar terms.

No argument against the passages favorable to Judah can be drawn from

those that coordinate it with Israel as equally sinful. The statements of this character appear in the second division of the book, so as to justify the inference that the prophet changed his opinion owing to a change for the worse in Judah's religious condition under the reign of Ahaz. And it is to be observed that in the later chapters no commendations of Judah occur, so that with the exception of this one change the judgment expressed is a perfectly consistent one.^[43] The interpolator who is supposed to have inserted the favorable passages did not feel any discrepancy between them and the other series, else he would not have stopped short of expunging everything to Judah's discredit. Why then should Hosea have been unable to express both opinions in successive periods? There is, moreover, one statement in favor of Judah which is entirely above suspicion so far as the context is concerned, and for the insertion of which precisely at that place no imaginable reason can be assigned—chapter 4:15. The only things breathed against it are that Judah ought to have been addressed (Wellhausen),^[44] or that the style is weak (Cheyne)—the former an arbitrary restriction upon the prophet's rhetorical license, the latter wholly a matter of taste.^[45]

Another passage here to be considered is chapter 5:15-6:4. Commenting on it, Cheyne says that the ordinary view, according to which these words are dramatically put by Hosea into the mouth of Israel as expressive of a superficial conversion, is unsatisfactory. They are rather an earnest expression of faith and zeal, and were inserted by a late writer who was thinking of his own times, not of Hosea's, and failed to realize what was natural and possible in the latter. This is but a variation on the well-known theme that an eighth-century prophet cannot express ideas or speak in a tone considered by the critics characteristic of a later development. The difficulty is all the greater since in this case the prophet speaks not in his own person, but impersonates his people. Now it is certainly true that, if the words were

"an earnest expression of faith and zeal," it would be hard to understand how Hosea could put them upon the lips of the degraded and apostate people so vividly portrayed on every page of his book. But this difficulty is wholly of the critic's own making. The explanation which understands these verses as the confession of Israel *only superficially converted* by the first blow of Jehovah's withdrawal, is the only one that suits the context. Although a certain earnestness is not to be denied in them, there are other features which fully justify the charge of superficiality (actually made by Jehovah in verse 4): the Israelites expect the return of Jehovah too soon, "after two days," "on the third day," and too confidently, "his going forth is sure as the morning;" verse 3 still reflects the fatal influence of the naturalistic conceptions, Jehovah's return being compared to the processes of nature in point of necessity. The connection with verse 5, which Cheyne finds imperfect, leaves nothing to be desired. The Perfects are historical and describe how Jehovah has responded to similar premature and transitory conversions in the past by severer judgments.^[46] Now, taking for granted that the conversion of which the words are the expression lacks depth and permanency, and is not psychologically inconceivable in such a people as the Israel described by Hosea, so that on this score we have no reason to doubt the genuineness of the passage,^[47] it should none the less be urged that in a formal point of view it presents great difficulty to the critical conception of the character and the historical antecedents of popular religion among Israel in Hosea's time. The state of mind revealed in this confession no doubt is deficient in true spirituality, but the language in which the sentiments are clothed reflects a relatively high degree of religious culture and maturity such as points back to something quite different from the primitive religion of Israel as described by the critics. Long ago it had been urged from the conservative side that such a religious past could not have produced the forms of expression of which the

early prophets avail themselves and which must have been intelligible to the people. The force of the argument is now indirectly acknowledged as often as an attempt is made, like the present one, to get rid, on the plea of interpolation, of modes of thought and language deemed unnatural and impossible at thus early a period.

Hosea shares with Amos the fate that his prophecy is left without a conclusion by the newest criticism. Wellhausen and Cheyne both deny the genuineness of chapter 14:2-10. The latter finds these verses akin to the writings of the age which begins with Jeremiah; the spirituality of the tone is surprising; to understand Hosea we must omit them; to have added to the stern warning in 14:1 would have robbed it of half its force. Against this *a priori* reasoning it should be sufficient to call attention to the numerous points of contact between the suspected verses and the main body of Hosea's book. Verse 2 reflects the prophet's well-known judgment on the worthlessness of external sacrifice; verse 3 contains a reference to the two principal forms of sin against which elsewhere his polemic is directed, political pride and idolatry, and besides expresses together with verse 4 the principle of Jehovah's free forgiving grace; while in verses 5-8 the nature blessings so long abused by Israel to the injury of true religion are represented as mere symbols and instruments through which Jehovah's personal love is communicated to Israel—all Hoseanic ideas to the very core. The whole piece is so entirely in the most characteristic vein of Hosea, so clearly the outgrowth of his fundamental conceptions, so absolutely required to round off his book harmoniously, that the later redactor would have had to possess not only a literary skill greater than that of the prophet himself to compose it, but also an unusual degree of historical sense to reproduce so well a remote situation.

A number of minor interpolations have been assumed by individual critics, the most important of which are 8:1b, 12, 14, 12:1b. The first of these deserves attention because the words it is proposed to strike out contain the significant combination of covenant and Thora, and the second because it is attempted to eliminate the reference to the Thora as existing in written form. In both cases the critical excision strikes at elements obnoxious to the development hypothesis.^[48]

The degree of reliability of the critical judgment in some of these instances may be inferred from the widely distant periods to which the Judaistic interpolations are assigned by the various critics. Oort thinks that the redactor belonged to the reign of King Josiah and that the purpose of his new edition of the prophecy was to induce the northern Israelites to reform their religion in the spirit of Deuteronomy and to recognize the Judean authority. Giesebrecht assumes that the interpolations were written towards the close of the exile. Still others make them post-exilic.

III. Isaiah^(TOC)

The complicated processes of Isaiah-criticism are here, of course, to be dealt with in so far only as they show the influence of the modern theory. The change which the last years have wrought in this field cannot be better appreciated than by comparing the chapter on Isaiah in the second edition of Kuenen's *Historisch-Kritisch Onderzoek* with the conclusions of the triumvirate of most advanced Isaiah-critics, Duhm, Hackmann and Cheyne. Kuenen, in his day a far from conservative critic, yet recognized the large sections 1-11:10; 17-20; 28-31, with minor exceptions, as substantially Isaianic. If now we inquire to what extent this result is antiquated by the three critics mentioned above, we find that a large number of prophecies are denied to Isaiah within the limits of what Kuenen considered genuine. These are chiefly 1:27, 28 (Duhm and Cheyne); 3:18-23, 25, 26 (Duhm and Cheyne); 4:2-6 (Duhm, Hackmann and Cheyne); 9:1-6 (Hackmann, Cheyne doubtful); 10:20-27 (Duhm, Hackmann and Cheyne); 11:1-9 (Hackmann, Cheyne doubtful); 19:1-15, 16-25 (Duhm, Hackmann and Cheyne); 28:5, 6 (Duhm, Hackmann and Cheyne), 23-29 (Hackmann doubtful, Cheyne); 29:16-24 (Duhm, Hackmann and Cheyne); 30:18-26 (Duhm, Hackmann and Cheyne), 27-33 (Hackmann and Cheyne); 31:5-9 (Duhm, and Hackmann in part; Cheyne). Besides this a tendency is perceptible to bring down to a later post-exilic period such sections as had already been denied to Isaiah by Kuenen and older critics. This is the case with reference to 11:10-12 (Kuenen, exilic period; Duhm, close of second century B.C. at the earliest; Cheyne, Syrian period); 24-27 (Kuenen, Persian period; Cheyne, in part, time of Alexander the Great; Maccabean period); 32:1-8, 9-20 (Kuenen, pre-exilic; Cheyne, post-exilic); 33 (Kuenen, possibly reign of Josiah; Cheyne, second half of

Persian period; Duhm, 162 B.C.); 34, 35 (Kuenen, between 536 and 458; Cheyne, about 400, possibly later; Duhm, Maccabean^[49] period.) Further, the drift of this newest criticism is toward a division of the larger sections hitherto considered coherent into a number of small fragments believed to have been patched together by a redactor. A typical example is chapter 3:1-15, on which Cheyne comments as follows 1a and 1b may be genuine, 1c is a gloss, 2, 3 may have an Isaianic basis, 4 is undoubtedly Isaiah's, 5 has points of contact with genuine passages, 6, 7 betray the editor's hand, 8-15 are Isaiah's, in which, however, 10 and 11 take the place of four lines become illegible in the editor's time. Consequently the share of Isaiah in the production of the book passing under his name is reduced to a minimum. Even with the collection and arrangement of the smaller groups of prophecies distinguished by the critics he had nothing to do. As a literary author he has almost entirely evaporated.

Each of the three above-mentioned tendencies finds its ultimate explanation in the fact that it facilitates the adjustment of the contents of Isaiah's book to the scheme of development. How the first and second subserve such purpose need not be pointed out. As to the third, the division of a larger context into a number of fragments and the implied denial of the prophet's literary activity tend to deprive the sections under attack from the natural protection which their coherence with undoubtedly genuine prophecies affords them.

The full significance of the conclusions reached by the critics can be perceived only in the field of Biblical theology. After the elimination from his work of so many important prophecies the prophet's face assumes features quite distinct from those with which students have been so long familiar. A new estimate must be placed upon his contribution to the progress of Old Testament religion if these latest results are correct. It would be useless to

deny that the old Isaiah with his wealth and grandeur of thought was a far more illustrious figure among the prophets than the new Isaiah now in process of construction. Cheyne, who never loses an opportunity to glory in the modern view for the enrichment it brings to our appreciation of the spiritual greatness of the prophets, half-mournfully admits that we must divest Isaiah and his ministry of that luminous splendor which in the old conception of his work was so warming to the heart and uplifting to the imagination. Broadly speaking, the outcome may be characterized as the restriction of the prophet's teaching within the limits drawn for Amos and Hosea, which we have already found to be artificial in their case but the inadequacy of which is still more palpable as regards Isaiah. The pronounced Universalism, the highly developed Messianic ideal, the sweet rich note of promise so peculiarly alternating with the harsh tones of judgment, the sublime faith in the sacrosanct character of Jerusalem and Zion in the Assyrian crisis, all that has hitherto been counted specifically Isaianic, must be given up; and what we keep is a stern preacher of righteousness and national destruction, the chief exponent of that cold, supremely ethical spirit which is supposed to mark the highest development of prophetism. In so far the results of the newest Isaiah-criticism seem to fall in with and to confirm the general interpretation placed by the modern hypothesis upon the prophetic movement in the eighth century. On the old view Isaiah's teaching soared high above the possibilities of evolutionary construction; now it moves within the terms of this construction. But the force of the argument that might be derived from this will be immediately broken if we inquire how the critical results in question have been obtained. The conformity of the new Isaiah to what a prophet ought to be under the modern hypothesis arises from the fact that the critics have been guided by their *a priori* idea of the true prophet in fixing the criteria for what is genuine and not genuine in Isaiah's

book. The agreement with the postulates of the hypothesis appears in the conclusion for no other reason than that it has been made the major premise in the critical syllogism.

Chapter 2:2-4 is the first important passage on whose post-exilic origin Hackmann and Cheyne are agreed.^[50] Before them Stade had already reached a similar conclusion.^[51] It is unnecessary for our present purpose to enter upon a discussion of the difficult problem which of the two versions in which we possess the prophecy, that in Isaiah or that in Micah, is the original, or whether perhaps both borrowed from some older prophet.^[52] The only question to be considered is whether there are valid reasons in its ideas or forms of expression to discard the three just-mentioned possibilities for a fourth view, viz., that the prophecy is entirely out of place in the eighth century, that it must be assigned to a much later period, and was consequently worked into the books of Isaiah and Micah at a still later date. The objections raised against the origin of these verses in the age of Isaiah and Micah are the following. Stade takes exception to the pronounced universalism here expressing itself. "The piece shows the most striking affinity with the ideas of Joel; to speak more particularly, with the ideas of those late writers who lived on the work of Ezekiel, one of whom has been pointed out in Deutero-Zechariah—it possesses no affinity whatever with the prophecy of the Assyrian period. The many peoples which come to Jerusalem to worship appear nowhere before Isaiah 66:23, Zechariah 14:16-19. The thought of Jerusalem's external elevation is a gross perversion of the Isaianic idea of her spiritual significance; the pilgrimage of the peoples finds its parallel in Isaiah 60, with this distinction, that in the latter prophecy everything proceeds naturally, whilst here a miracle takes place: this must be of secondary origin."^[53] In addition to this Hackmann points out the fact that no inward transformation of Israel seems to be required by the writer. The holy

mountain and the house of Jehovah occupy too prominent a place; the former represents the people of Jehovah and its exaltation is symbolic of the self-exaltation of Israel over the heathen, a specifically Jewish trait. The nations come to the *sanctuary* to obtain Thora: this must be understood of priestly Thora exclusively, for the prophet could give Thora in every place. Finally the intense longing for eternal peace here expressed is not in agreement with the temper of Isaiah, to whom Jehovah was still essentially a God of war, breaking Israel and the nations to pieces with elemental power. The sentiment of 2:4 reflects the experience of the later Jews, for whom war meant no longer victory but affliction.^[54] Cheyne repeats some of these arguments and adds, among others, that "in the light of Jehovah" (verse 5) is a poetic equivalent for "in the Thora of Jehovah."^[55]

Our criticism of this long array of arguments may be compressed into the statement that in so far as these features are made to resemble the physiognomy of later Judaism they are misconstrued and grossly overdrawn, and that, when reduced to their true proportions, there is absolutely nothing to be said against their Isaianic origin that does not ultimately resolve itself into some form of the general charge of incompatibility with the critical hypothesis. To begin with the physical interpretation of verse 2a, even if we render in the most realistic manner, "the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established *on the top* of the mountains," the context requires us to understand this as a mere figure of the preeminence which the religion of Jehovah will in the latter days be recognized to possess over all other cults. Even in post-exilic times no Jew could have possibly anticipated such a physical elevation of Mount Zion as to make the latter visible to the most distant peoples. The exaltation referred to is one that will attract the nations and therefore must be conceived of as spiritual in kind. All that remains, then, of the charge of grossness in the conception can at the utmost strike the figurative

embodiment of the idea, not the idea itself; and it would be unfair to deny the Isaianic origin of a prophecy for no other reason than that its poetic expression seems to fall short of a certain standard. If we divest the thought of its symbolic garb, it will be seen to express a universalism of the most ideal type, having no affinity whatsoever with the offensive traits that but too often disfigure the later Jewish expectations.^[56] Not the exaltation of Israel but Jehovah's is symbolized by the exalted site of the temple mountain and represented as that which attracts the distant nations. Of subjection of the heathen to Israel the prophecy contains not a word. Hackmann's whole contention on this point would have to rest on the single phrase, "the house of the God of Jacob," which will sustain no such weight. Equally inaccurate is it to say that the Thora for which the nations flow to Jerusalem is priestly Thora*exclusively*. This is not implied in their resorting to the temple, for the latter comes under consideration as the dwelling-place of Jehovah, who supplies all Thora whether by priest or by prophet, so that of *the mediate source* of the Thora nothing is said here. How the importance attributed to the temple can be out of place in the work of a prophet who wrote chapter 6 it is difficult to understand.^[57] The charge that no inward transformation is here required of Israel is entirely unwarranted. If the peoples who come to Jerusalem inwardly appropriate the word and Thora of Jehovah to such an extent as to forego war and submit to Him all their disputes, the same must be *fortiori* assumed of Israel. Besides, this charge has been rendered possible only by the violent severance of verses 2-4 from the following context. Obviously the prophecy has been placed where it stands for the purpose of contrasting the ideal religious and moral condition of Israel with their actual state in the present. The invitation, "O house of Jacob, come ye and let us walk in the light of Jehovah," is of itself a sufficient reminder that as yet even the chosen people do not appreciate the

uniqueness of their religion.

But if all these alleged difficulties vanish before an impartial exegesis, what must be thought of the assertion that the two main ideas of the prophecy, those of the conversion of the heathen nations and of perpetual peace, are foreign to Isaiah's mind and lie far beyond his horizon, so that where they occur his authorship is excluded? For there can be no doubt as to the actual presence of these two ideas here in their maturest form. Duhm's attempt to weaken the meaning by comparing what is here predicted with the occasional consultation of foreign oracles in the pagan world, whereby, of course, no abandonment of the national cult was intended, fails to do justice to the words. As Hackmann rightly insists, the phrase, "to walk in the paths" of a God, cannot mean less than to adopt the service of that God; and, whatever may be one's preference between the readings, "all nations," "many peoples" (Isaiah) and "peoples," "many nations" (Micah), the absolute universality of Jehovah's influence over the heathen world is implied in the assurance that peace will prevail, for if some nations were excluded from this sphere of influence, these might again make war necessary.^[58] How, then, can we prove the possibility of such advanced ideas in the age of Isaiah? As for the idea of the many peoples assembling themselves against Israel, apart from the thought of their conversion, the Isaianic character of this is vouched for by chapter 8:9, 10, 14:24-27, 17:12-14, in all of which passages the strong expressions, "far countries," "the whole earth," "all the nations," "many peoples," are used. It may be further argued that Isaiah is familiar with the thought of the future conversion of such nations as had in his time interposed in the history of Israel (chapter 11:10, 18:7, 19:19-25), and that consequently the idea of a universal conversion of the peoples may well have developed itself out of the expectation of a widespread attack upon Jerusalem expressed in the three passages just quoted. The critics have attempted to break the

force of this argument in a twofold manner. First, they have interpreted the apparently universalistic terms of chapter 8:9, 10, 14:24-27, 17:12-14 in a less comprehensive sense as applying to the various elements of which the Assyrian army was composed, so that after all Isaiah would have had only one distinct nation in view as the assailant of Israel, and Hosea 10:10 might be quoted as a parallel passage. And, secondly, it has been denied that Isaiah speaks in any of the undoubtedly genuine prophecies of the conversion of a foreign nation. In regard to the former of these assertions, it must be admitted that the context of the three passages speaks of the Assyrian attack upon Judah or Ephraim. Nevertheless, the expressions employed seem to me too absolute to be exhausted by such a reference. For the prophet speaks of the nation *staking counsel together*, and the specific intention of Jehovah in reference to the Assyrian to break him in His land and tread him under foot upon His mountains (14:25) is subsequently generalized to a purpose concerning "the whole earth" (verse 26). In view of this the conclusion is justified that Isaiah beheld in the predicted frustration of the Assyrian attack upon Jerusalem a pledge of the ultimate and permanent salvation of Israel from the world power in its largest sense. It is not impossible that even the statement in Hosea bears this meaning,^[59] although this cannot be asserted with any degree of certainty. The critics themselves have begun to perceive the precariousness of their weakening interpretation; for the newest representatives of the school, Hackmann, Stade, Nowack,^[60] now resort to declaring the passages in question suspicious, and that not on any serious objective grounds, but for the simple reason of their reference to "many nations," so that obviously here a degree of *a priorism* has been reached which precludes all further discussion. The matter at issue was the Isaianic character of the conception of a world attack upon Israel. In the course of the debate oracles are adduced of hitherto unquestioned genuineness in which this

conception appears. At first the position is taken that these oracles speak only of the Assyrian army. Then, when this is felt to be an unnatural exegesis, their Isaianic origin is boldly denied or represented as doubtful, because they contain the idea of a world attack upon Israel. All the "weak, flimsy arguments"^[61] advanced to lend some sort of external justification to this proceeding cannot conceal the fact that criticism is here moving in a circle.^[62]

The second assertion opposed to the argument formulated above is that Isaiah nowhere mentions the conversion of a Gentile nation to the religion of Israel. Here again the passages which speak unambiguously are ruled out, and where a weaker interpretation seems at all possible this is eagerly seized upon. The former applies to chapter 11:10, 19:19-25, the latter to chapter 18:7. We shall not contend here about chapter 19, because the question of its genuineness had become a debated one, apart from its universalistic content, on a purely historical basis. Chapter 11:10 is connected with the Messianic prophecy 11:1-9, presently to be considered, and stands or falls with the latter. But a word should be said regarding chapter 18:7. Duhm and Cheyne reject this verse, the latter, it would seem, primarily for the reason that it represents Jerusalem as "the center of an empire to which the neighboring peoples will hasten to pay tribute." But it is undeniable that after its amputation the discourse of verses 1-6 breaks off abruptly, and some conclusion is felt to be wanting. Nor is it easy to see why the content of verse 7 should be classified with "the eschatological inventory of the later period" (Duhm). The sense most naturally put upon the words is that under the figure of a tribute brought to the temple they speak of the worship which the Ethiopians will offer to Jehovah. So understood they do not presuppose, as Cheyne thinks, a Messiahless Israelitish empire. It should also be observed that, altogether apart from verse 7, the body of the prophecy itself contains these very significant words (verse 3): "All ye inhabitants of the world, and ye dwellers

on the earth, when an ensign is lifted up on the mountains, see ye; and when the trumpet is blown, hear ye!" Would it not be rash to assert that the prophet who thus recognized the interest of all the world in Jehovah's dealing with the Assyrian cannot have conceived the thought of universalism?^[63]

The other feature deemed unnatural in a prophecy of the eighth century is the intense longing for peace to which Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:3, 4 give expression. With the temper also of Isaiah in particular this has been pronounced inconsistent. If the latter reasoning is to have any meaning, we must attribute to the prophet a desire for continual war and a positive aversion to the thought of peace, because so only could Jehovah reveal his martial character. Somewhat more plausible appears the suggestion that the value here ascribed to peace and the sentimental delight taken in its blessings are best explained from the bitter experience and war-weary spirit of post-exilic Israel. But such an explanation could lay claim to acceptance only if all points of contact for a similar feeling in the conditions of Isaiah's time were lacking. This is of course far from being the case. Isaiah would have had to be altogether void of pity, if in prospect of the distress to be wrought by the repeated Assyrian invasions and deportations he could have failed to develop an eager desire for peace. In point of fact, there are utterances in Isaiah's prophecies which reflect precisely such a state of mind, born from compassion with his distressed and ravaged people. It is sufficient to quote chapter 28:12, where the burden of the prophet's message is summed up in the words, "Give ye rest to this weary." But this longing for peace is so little exclusive of delight in the warlike deeds of Jehovah that in both chapter 9 and 11 the Messiah appears in this twofold character of a victorious warrior and a prince of peace. If the later writers could harmonize these two aspects why not Isaiah? We have here, besides, the older evidence from Hosea, which we do not have in regard to this thought of universalism. Hosea predicts that in the future the

bow and the sword and the battle shall be broken out of this land and Israel lie down in safety (2:20).^[64]

The literary evidence collected for the late origin of chapter 2:2-4 may be passed by in silence, for Cheyne himself admits that from the style of this passage no definite conclusion can be drawn.

Next in order comes chapter 4:2-6, a passage in rejecting which Duhm, Cheyne and Hackmann are unanimous. The grounds on which this verdict rests have been best summarized by the last-mentioned critic. That the remnant in Zion shall be called holy is said to belong to the trains of thought growing out of the post-Ezekielian legislation; the idea of being written into life finds its parallel in Malachi 3:16, Revelation 13:8; the representation of the cloud by day and the fire-illuminated smoke by night to symbolize the presence of Jehovah betrays a mind fond of Hexateuch tradition, perhaps presupposes definite eschatological theories based on study of the Hexateuch; on Zion there will be in the future festal assemblies of the blessed saints, while Isaiah only once makes reference to a **yrq m** and that with disapprobation; delight in such assemblies is characteristic of the post-exilic legislation; the presence of Jehovah in the cloud is to protect from heat and rain; this belongs to the later expectation of miraculous workings of nature in the realm of glory (Isaiah 25:4, 30:26; Joel 3; Zechariah 14).^[65]

It will be seen at a glance that all these arguments derive their entire force either from the assumption that the priestly laws and narratives are of late origin or from the obvious fallacy that ideas prominent in certain periods must therefore be confined to such periods and cannot have their roots in earlier writings. Conservative scholars will gladly accept the testimony thus borne to the presence of legal ideas, of the signs of Hexateuch study, of Messianic expectations with a strong supernaturalistic color, in a prophecy

against whose Isaianic origin not a single objection of any weight of a historical or literary character can be raised, and which both by its position and contents authenticates itself as the appropriate conclusion of the undoubtedly genuine discourses in chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 4:1 cannot well have been the end of the preceding prophecy, so that the critical view necessitates the assumption that the genuine conclusion has been lost. All the ideas of the disputed verses stand, furthermore, in vital connection with the innermost spirit of Isaiah's theology, as has been pointed out by us elsewhere. [66] The prospect that the restored people will glory in the simple product of the soil forms a contrast to the luxury of the women depicted in 3:16-4:1, and embodies the thought that Jehovah and His direct gifts alone ought to be the pride of Israel (cf. 28:5). The conception of the remnant in verse 3 is Isaianic, and as to this remnant being called "holy," even if this be understood in a ceremonial sense, there is no reason to press the idea to such a formalistic extreme as to make it inconsistent with the prophet's ethical teaching, as, e.g., Duhm does, who thinks that Isaiah could not have thought a permanent state of holiness for each individual possible or desirable, because he looked forward to a Messianic era in which there would be room for agriculture. And this notwithstanding the fact that in this very prophecy the blessings of agriculture are given the foremost place in the eschatological picture (verse 2). Evidently the writer had a more reasonable conception of holiness than is imputed to him. What he thinks of is ethically conditioned for it results only after Jehovah has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and purged the blood of Jerusalem (verse 4). The manner also in which this purifying process is conceived of, viz., by extirpation of the evil elements "by the blast of judgment and the blast of burning," is entirely in harmony with the usual representations of Isaiah. Besides this the idea of the holiness of the remnant is vouched for by the closing words of chapter 6, "the holy seed is the stock

thereof," the excision of which by the critics is a wholly arbitrary proceeding. In general, chapter 6 reveals sufficient interest for the external embodiment of the worship of Jehovah to cover every single feature of chapter 4. This applies also to verse 6, which even Dillmann would reject on the ground that the pavilion against heat and storm and rain which Zion affords cannot be meant in a literal sense because in this there would be nothing new, and that an allegorical allusion to the various troubles to which man is exposed in the present world would not be after the manner of Isaiah. But the thought is poetically and figuratively expressed without being an allegory, and revolves deliverance from such discomforts of life only as interfere with the continual worship of Jehovah. Chapter 28:2, 32:2, prove how natural the use of the image of storm and rain comes to Isaiah. Finally, the idea of the predestination of the remnant to life is not without points of analogy in Isaiah's general outlook, for if it be the determined purpose of Jehovah to cut away the majority once and again in repeated judgment (6:13), it is but the reverse side of this that the number of those who are to remain till the end has been definitely fixed in his counsel. Of the offense taken by the critics at the prominence of the miraculous factor in the Messianic prophecies of the book of Isaiah, we shall have occasion to speak presently.

The linguistic evidence adduced against the Isaianic authorship of this prophecy consists in the words **hpx** in verse 5, "canopy;" **)rb** in verse 5, "to create;" **rwtsm**, in verse 6 "a covert." Of these words the first not only stands alone in the prophecies of Isaiah, but occurs only once besides in the entire prophetic literature (Joel 2:16). If unique in "reproductive prophecy," why should any suspicion attach to it as *ahapax legomenon* in Isaiah? **)rb** in the Qal species is protected by Amos 4:13, which, as we have seen, there is no reason to consider late. It is entirely unnecessary to substitute **)b** and to

render "Jehovah will come" on the authority of the Septuagint.^[67] **rwtsm** finally is an unobjectionable formation; that Isaiah always uses **rts** in the same sense is true, if always may mean once or twice;^[68] leaving aside 32:2 (rejected by Hackmann and Cheyne), the two words are equally frequent; as to its form, **rwtsm** stands on a line with **hsxm** certainly used by Isaiah, and it is here specially appropriate because suggested by the immediately preceding use of the latter.

A further example of prophecies shifted under the influence of the modern hypothesis from the eighth century to post-exilic times is furnished by the recent treatment of chapter 8:22-9:6; 11:1-9. This introduces a subject which more than any other promises to become in the immediate future the *question brulante* of the Biblico-theological discussion of prophecy. How the Messianic prediction in its wide impersonal sense can no longer find room in the reconstructed Amos and Hosea has been shown in our previous article. This very fact, however, seemed at first but calculated to increase in the critical estimate Isaiah's share in the development of Messianic prophecy, inasmuch as now not only the remarkable personal definiteness assumed by it in his book, but the very first conception of the Messianic ideal itself had to be attributed to him. Perhaps the strain thus put on the productivity of one writer was too great to be borne; for the elimination of this element from Amos and Hosea had been scarcely completed when voices began to be heard in defense of the thesis that in Isaiah also the Messiah is not original, but the creature of those unknown later writers whose work has become so curiously interwoven with the genuine discourses of the eighth-century prophet. Smend, while not yet going to the extreme of denying the genuineness of 8:22-9:6 and 11:1-9, had already been compelled to minimize the importance of these passages and of the Messianic idea for Isaiah's teaching, and to

explain the partial disappearance of the Messiah's figure from later prophecy on the ground of its accidental and temporary significance.^[69] It could easily be foreseen that what was thus declared accidental would soon be judged foreign to the prophet's mind; and this position has been actually taken by Hackmann and Cheyne, although by the latter with some hesitancy. Marti, in adopting Hackmann's conclusions, has gone so far as to declare that the prophets until the time of Deutero-Isaiah (i.e., toward the close of the exile) knew nothing of a Messiah. And last of all we have a monograph of Volz on the subject of *Pre-exilic Jahwe-prophecy and the Messiah in their Mutual Relations* (1897), in which an attempt is made to prove the following three theses (1) that the Messianic idea is foreign to the spirit of pre-exilic prophetism; (2) that in the writings of the pre-exilic prophets from Amos until Ezekiel (exclusive) there is not a single Messianic passage; (3) that the Messianic expectation as found in Ezekiel is not the natural product of pre-exilic prophecy in its original purity, but the offspring of a union upon which the latter has entered with a totally heterogeneous tendency.^[70]

In reviewing the arguments by which the elimination of an element hitherto considered of so great importance in the theology of Isaiah is defended, we shall again have to distinguish between *thea prioriones* and those derived from the historical or literary phenomena of the prophecies themselves. The former need only to be stated and to have their true character and tendency pointed out; the latter require examination in detail.

Thea priori Biblico-theological attack upon the Messianic prophecies proceeds along two lines, the one represented by Hackmann, the other by Volz. Hackmann has devoted an extensive discussion to the three passages, 2:2-4, 8:22-9:6; 11:1-9, which he groups together by reason of their internal resemblance. He condenses his estimate of them into the statement that they

are "absolute delineations of the future," meaning thereby that they appear detached from the historical basis of Isaiah's present and move in a distant time as in a newly discovered fabulous country.^[71] Though this is incorrect if taken as a denial of every point of contact between these prophecies and the historical situation in Isaiah's time, yet it not inaptly characterizes what is at once the most striking feature of the passages in question and the ground of their rejection by Hackmann and his fellow-critics. It is with the element of the supernatural in its most developed form that the critical theory comes into conflict here. The prophets are supposed to be bounded by the horizon of their own age and environment; the personal Messiah, as depicted by Isaiah, transcends these limits and moves upon the field of history against a background of eternity. Still further to the modern school the prophets stand for righteousness and conversion by acts of free will; the personal Messiah is felt to stand for the realization of a new order of things by miraculous sub-ethical acts and processes. It is plain that, apart from the general anti-supernaturalistic animus, the one-sidedly ethical conception of prophetism in general and of Isaiah in particular here biases the critical judgment. The prophet, as the moderns delight to paint him, is so entirely absorbed in the one idea of righteousness, his great discovery and gift to the world, that it must be impossible for him not only to describe the future from any other motive than that of making it the embodiment of his ethical aspirations, but likewise to expect the realization of such a future in any other way than as brought about by the voluntary conversion of Israel. Hence it is not enough that Isaiah 9:6 makes provision for the upholding of David's kingdom with judgment and righteousness, or Isaiah 11:3-5 for the righteous treatment of the poor and weak of the land: in order to accredit themselves as genuine Isaianic oracles these prophecies would have to guarantee expressly that ethical processes only will be used to accomplish this end. Righteousness and

judgment as supernatural gifts conferred upon the Messiah by the Spirit and miraculously established by him—this is the central thought of these passages and precisely this it is that the advanced critics find inconsistent with the "genuinely ethical conception of' Isaiah." The modern hypothesis has been charged with making the prophets preach the doctrine of salvation by works. It might perhaps be added that it represents them as Pelagians in their conception of free will. If some of its representations are correct, the prophet belonged to those who consider regeneration an immoral process.^[72] And yet, looked at from a purely historical standpoint, what was more natural than that one so deeply convinced as Isaiah of the inefficacy of the mere moral suasion of the divine Word should have expected from a mysterious miraculous power the transformation of present conditions? To be sure, Hackmann and Cheyne try to make a distinction between the preternatural and the supernatural, and think that the conditions described in 11:6-9 belong to the former category. But the distinction is obviously a modern and subjective one. Whether such things as the peace established between the wolf and the lamb, and the straw-eating of the ox, and the playing of the child with the asp and basilisk be considered preternatural or the restoration of nature to its normal original state, depends of course on the theological or philosophical premises from which the question is approached. Isaiah's views on this point must have differed greatly from those of a believer in the modern doctrine of evolution.

Along a different line, though not from a different point of departure, Volz makes his attack upon pre-exilic Messianic prophecy. Its political externalism, particularistic national character, and the manner in which it places the human king in the foreground, constitute to his view so many aspects in which it is in direct antagonism to the true spirit of original prophetism. The Messiah is, he claims, in the extant Messianic prophecies, a

purely political and scarcely at all a religious factor, his function being the twofold one of upholding internal order among Israel and of representing the nation externally in victorious war. Pre-exilic prophecy, on the other hand, is almost exclusively a prophecy of judgment; and if occasionally, a better future is held in prospect, not its external side but its ethical and religious blessings are dwelt upon. Further, the Messianic idea nowhere enters into an organic union with the thought of universalism; neither among Israel nor among the nations does the Messiah appear as the Mediator of the one true religion; whereas ancient prophecy tended by its very nature toward ethico-religious universalism. Finally, the prophets condemned not merely the empirical kingdom as it existed in their day, but opposed the institution of the kingdom on principle. This renders it improbable that they should have looked forward to a final political organization of Israel with a king at its head, the more so since the figure of the earthly king was bound to force Jehovah into the background in the popular consciousness.^[73]

Severe strictures can be made on the accuracy of this characterization of the Messiah and of His work as a part of the prophetic eschatology. He is by no means a political and external factor after the manner here represented. Both the religious character of His official equipment and the religious spirit in which He discharges His functions are strongly emphasized in chapter 11:2, 3. The spirit of the fear of Jehovah will rest upon him and his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah. And when it is said in verse 9 that all hurting and destroying shall cease on God's holy mountain, because the land shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, the prophet evidently thinks of the Messiah as the one who by His activity brings about this perfect state of affairs. It is far from true, therefore, that no more is ascribed to Him than the maintenance of internal order among Israel and the victorious leadership of the people in war; He is as much the embodiment and Mediator of the prophetic ideal of religion

as He is the representative of the prophetic ideal of righteousness. In regard to the alleged absence of connection between the Messiah's work and the extension of the true religion to the Gentiles, it must be admitted that in chapter 8:22-9:6, owing to the concrete events from which the prophecy is by way of contrast developed (8:22), the thought of universalism does not stand in the foreground. But even here the spirit of the discourse as a whole is rather favorable than indifferent to this idea. The increase of the Messiah's government and the peace without end present, to say the least, a side of the prophecy to which a further development of the Messianic hope in a universalistic direction might easily attach itself. As to the companion prophecy in chapter 11:1-9, even if the verse immediately following did not supplement its statements by the most explicit promise that the root of Jesse will stand for an ensign to the peoples and be sought by the nations, it is scarcely conceivable that the author intended to confine the regeneration of the world of nature and of men here depicted to the land of Israel. What would internal peace in both respects signify if from the outside the danger of invasion continued to threaten? The whole description suggests a change of conditions on a cosmical scale, although, of course, the prophet's main interest centers in his own land, Jehovah's holy mountain. And what value after all can be attached to this argument from the absence of a pronounced universalism, if we observe that from one quarter chapter 2:2-4 are declared out of place in the eighth century chiefly on account of its universalistic content, whilst from another quarter of the same camp all the Messianic prophecies are declared out of place in that early period for the precisely opposite reason that they lack the spirit of universalism? Surely here the critics are divided against themselves. The suggestion finally that the attitude of prophecy toward the kingdom in general, and the prominence of the kingship of Jehovah in Isaiah's mind in particular, render such an idealization

of the human kingship as these passages contain improbable,^[74] is entirely unwarranted. Hosea is the only prophet to whom with any show of evidence an unfavorable opinion of the kingdom as such could be attributed, and even in his case we have found it necessary to exclude from this judgment the kingdom of David. In the other prophets, however often individual kings may be attacked, there is no trace of polemic against the institution of the kingdom. As to Isaiah, chapter 1:21, 26, prove that for him the Davidic reign constitutes the ideal past in which the human kingship was the approximately perfect instrument of Jehovah's rule, and this is further confirmed by the honorable conception of the Davidic kingdom in its relation to the sanctuary which finds expression in chapter 29:1, no matter whether we accept the ordinary rendering, "city where David encamped," or that of the Septuagint, [πολις ην επολεμησε Δαυιδ](#), a question to which shall we have occasion to return later.^[75] In no wise could Isaiah have feared that his picture of the Messianic king would force Jehovah into the background. The Messiah of these prophecies is lifted so high above ordinary earthly limitations, is himself so much a figure of supernatural appearance and is represented as so absolutely under the control of Jehovah's Spirit, that every thought of his supplanting Jehovah is from the outset excluded.

Notwithstanding these restrictions, however, there is a sense in which the Messiah remains a thoroughly national figure, and in so far the critics are guided by a correct instinct in denying him a place in their interpretation of the early prophets. Radical as the opinions of Hackmann and Volz may seem, those who have intelligently watched the principles and tendencies of modern criticism will not be greatly startled at their avowal. The wonder is rather that they have not found expression and adherence before. From the beginning the new conception of prophetism has borne within itself an unsolved antinomy. In behalf of the theory of development, the ethical teaching of the eighth-

century prophets had to be differentiated as much as possible from the preceding stage of Jahvism. The point of difference was accordingly found in this, that Amos and Hosea, by announcing the destruction of Israel for its sins, sacrificed the national element in the ancient religion, which had hitherto been supreme, to the ethical element, which from its formerly subordinate place was now raised to a central commanding position. Together with the anticipated dissolution of the state, the old Jehovah with His morally indifferent favoritism for one people is believed to have disappeared, and a new Jehovah with the one attribute of strict righteousness exercised without partiality to have taken His place. Now it is easy to see that on such a view of the divine nature as is here ascribed to the evolving prophetic consciousness, no room remains for any vigorous national hopes or aspirations. Had the representatives of the new prophecy continued to be ardent patriots and to expect special favors for their own people, they would by doing so have denied their newly acquired conviction of Jehovah's exclusively ethical character. The latter had been born out of the surrender of the national idea, and therefore could not be naively associated with it any longer. It is true the first advocates of the new hypothesis went on in the old manner and placed the two elements of nationalism and ethical absolutism side by side in their interpretation of the prophetic teaching; but they did not explain their consistency.^[76] And it was unavoidable that in course of time the inner disharmony of the two should make itself felt to the critics, and that, once felt, its removal should be attempted by toning down those features that bear witness to the intensely national spirit of the prophetic faith. Some of these features might be possibly accounted for by the lingering influence of the old popular Jahvism, from which even the prophets had not entirely emancipated themselves. In view of the assumed evolution of the ethical idea of God, in sharp antithesis to the national claims of Israel on Jehovah, even this will

scarcely seem plausible. But how much greater becomes the difficulty if, far from being such a mere relic of an outgrown stage of belief, the national element in the prophetic consciousness proves to have been vigorous enough to create the entirely new figure of a personal Messiah with all the wealth of patriotic hopes it stands for. It is this that renders the conflict between the Messianic expectation and the modern view of prophetism acute, and leaves no other escape open for the latter than the bold denial of the genuineness of all personal Messianic passages in the pre-exilic prophets.

While the presence of the Messianic element in the eighth-century prophets is driving the critics into these revolutionary methods, it may furnish us with the basis for a strong argument in defense of the old position. The prophecies of Isaiah and Micah show the national Messianic expectations and the ethical ideal closely wedded. This justifies the conclusion that these are not, as the new hypothesis represents it, two mutually exclusive principles, marking by their successive ascendancy two distinct stages of religious evolution among Israel. If in the prophetic mind they existed side by side without detriment to the high ethical tone of its teaching, there is no valid reason for denying that such was the case in the pre-prophetic period also. The prevalence of the idea of a special bond between Jehovah and Israel in the ancient times no longer proves the non-existence of belief in his absolute righteousness. The ethical Jahvism forms no antithesis to the national Jahvism, and its birth cannot be explained from the death of the latter.

We now proceed to examine the historical and contextual arguments which are said to favor the excision of chapters 8:22-9:6 and 11:1-9 from the genuine work of Isaiah. Both prophecies, it is claimed, lack the necessary contact with the historical situation in the prophet's time, such as is found in all critically unsuspected pieces. This, of course, cannot mean that the two

prophecies in question, simply because they have for their background the captivity and the fall of the Davidic house lie beyond Isaiah's historical horizon. For even Hackmann, while believing that in the earliest discourses of our prophet no destruction of Judah is anticipated, yet admits that soon after the Syro-Ephraimitic war a thoroughgoing judgment was threatened by Isaiah against the southern kingdom. Now, in so far as the fall of the royal house was necessarily involved in the general catastrophe, there is by common consent not a single element here wherewith the prophet was not perfectly familiar. What is meant is rather this, that in the prophecies before us the writer fails to approach these facts of the overthrow of David's kingdom, of a protracted foreign oppression and the subsequent restoration in the manner in which Isaiah is accustomed to do this, viz., starting from a definite basis of concrete contemporary events; that oblivious of the present he plunges into the future, and by so doing betrays his later standpoint. Strangely enough it would seem to the ordinary reader as if quite the opposite were true. In chapter 8:22b, the prophecy opens with a reference to the affliction of the northeastern regions of Palestine by Tiglath-Pileser, than which no other event can have made a deeper impression on Isaiah's mind during the earlier half of his ministry. In chapter 11:1, the point of departure is furnished by the contrast between the mighty forest of the Assyrian army, whose trees Jehovah will hew down, and the shoot that is to come forth from the stock of Jesse; so that the vision of the future would again seem to unfold itself with perfect naturalness from the conditions of the immediate present. How then is it possible for the critics to speak of prophecies detached from Isaiah's historical situation? The solution lies in this, that Hackmann and Cheyne both consider 8:23b and 10:33, 34, editorial insertions prefixed to the Messianic passages to produce an artificial adjustment of the latter to Isaiah's standpoint. In other words, these critics first themselves create by their

divisive treatment of the text that lack of historic connection with Isaiah's time on which they afterwards rely to prove the late origin of our prophecies. It is true, Hackmann endeavors at length to justify this proceeding by contending that 8:22b does not fit into the terms of 9:1-6, because the regions there mentioned belong to northern Israel, whereas the expected hero is to sit on the throne of David, and because the thought of a reunion of the two kingdoms could not be so simply presupposed. In his view, then, a connection indeed exists, but it is too clumsy to be thought of for a moment as made by Isaiah. On the soundness of this judgment ultimately rests the whole weight of Hackmann's argument and in its last analysis it appears to be a judgment based not on historical but on logical or aesthetic grounds. Are we then so thoroughly familiar, it may be asked, with the mental processes of these ancient seers that we may determine offhand that their thought cannot have moved in this or that manner, because to us it appears a fanciful or mysterious manner? Are the prophets to be modernized altogether in their mode of thinking as well as in their ethical teaching? Would it not be better to form in an inductive way our opinion as to what the prophetic consciousness is capable of in the matter of combination or perspective? If the discourse here in one bold leap projects itself from the first stage of the Assyrian judgment into the final deliverance of the Messianic era without touching ground at any intermediate point, and if analogies for such a movement can be adduced from other prophecies, ought we not to think twice before deciding that this transition of thought is a psychological impossibility? Chapters 8:1-10, 17:1-8, 9-14 and 28:1-6 are of essentially the same character, and the belief that in each of these cases Isaiah himself is responsible for the combination keeps in closer touch with the facts than the view that he cannot have executed such *atour de force*, and that therefore a redactor must shoulder the responsibility. Nor need we entirely despair of

making the process more or less intelligible to ourselves. Isaiah, it should be remembered, even before the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis, viewed the coming judgment as an organic whole, the successive phases of which were to grow one out of the other. A perspective of this kind must have considerably facilitated the linking together of the two extreme parts of the whole process. In the calamities that befell the northeastern regions the prophet undoubtedly beheld the first installment of a judgment that would not stop until all but a few had been consumed, the beginning as it were of the end. In point of fact, the whole preceding context represents Ephraim and Judah as equally involved in what is impending, Jehovah becoming a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel (8:14). It required no large stretch of the imagination, therefore, to pass from the vision of the depopulated and ravaged "district of the nations" to the more comprehensive scene of the entire people walking in darkness and dwelling in the land of the shadow of death.^[77] We cannot require that the prophet should have explicitly mentioned the destruction of the remainder of Ephraim and the destruction of Judah, for these two he had not yet witnessed in their concreteness; it was natural for him to mention only those three items of which the first was given as a matter of experience, the second as the goal of the judgment, the third as the ultimate object of faith. And if it should be further asked, why 8:23b confines the dawning of the great light to the regions mentioned, whilst the darkness spoken of in 9:1 covers the whole people, our answer is that this must be explained from the strongly imaginative character of the discourse. The prophet, seeing the vision of the people restored and victorious rise in contrast with the scene of desolation that had just swept by,^[78] first fastens his eye on those parts of northeastern Palestine on which the first stroke of judgment had descended and which it was but natural should be thought of as first witnessing the reversal of Israel's fortunes. There is no need to say with

Dillmann that these sections of the country are representative of the whole, for obviously the prophecy is not conceived in the fixed forms of sober reflection; it partakes throughout of the nature of a veritable vision in which the attention is first held by a single point and then takes in a wider compass. The difficulty that the reunion of the two kingdoms was too important a thought to be incidentally presupposed is solved on the same principle. From Isaiah's historical standpoint as occupied at the opening of the prophecy this thought would indeed have required explicit assertion, for to it Ephraim and Judah were still separately existing. But the idea of their reunion under the one Messianic king is not introduced until the prophet's imagination has advanced to where the exiled people of the two kingdoms stand before him, no longer divided, but united in their common misery. Admitting that such a prospect was possible to Isaiah, and that he expected a restoration beyond it, who will assert that he cannot have simply taken the healing of the old breach for granted without expending a word upon it? A silent assumption of the fact was the most natural thing under the circumstances. Besides, if Hosea 2:1-3, 3:5, are genuine, which we have found no sufficient reason to doubt, the idea of a reunited Israel must have been familiar to both the prophet and his hearers.

The argument for the detached character of 11:1-9 is even less conclusive than the one just examined. To be sure, we must again agree with Hackmann in his interpretation of the phrase *y#y (zg* as implying the cessation of the Davidic dynasty, and in his general view that the deliverance wrought by the Messiah comes after a protracted period of oppression and not in a momentary crisis of Judah's history. There is no place for the things here described in Isaiah's immediate present; the prophecy is not "*zeitgeschichtlich*" in this sense. But we must disagree when Hackmann proceeds to build upon this the further opinion that, thus understood the

vision loses all contact with contemporary history ceases to be "zeitgeschichtlich" as to its point of departure. True, if 11:1-9 are taken by themselves, it must seem strange that the prophet should suddenly confront us, and that by mere implication, with the momentous fact of the fall of the Davidic dynasty, an event not predicted on any previous occasion except in so far as it was included in the general judgment on Judah. But this difficulty arises wholly from the unwillingness of Hackmann and others to read 11:1-9 continuously with 10:28-34. The obvious connection of these two passages explains what suggested to Isaiah the figure of "the stock of Jesse," and why it is introduced without the preparatory statement that the tree of David's dynasty will be hewn down. The insertion of every such intermediate thought would have spoiled the highly effective contrast between the lopping off of the boughs of the Assyrian forest and the raising of the new shoot from the stock of Jesse. Considering that the idea of the fall of the Davidic house is admitted by all to have lain in the background of Isaiah's consciousness; the only question is whether for rhetorical reasons he could for once let it enter his discourse in this indirect manner and overlook the fact of his having never formally announced it before. This question we venture to answer in the affirmative. It may be further asked, however, whether the rhetorical contrast in question is logically conceivable, whether the thought of the humiliation of Assyria's pride can have been connected in the prophet's mind with the idea of a Messianic restoration separated from the latter by a long interval of continuous judgment. It may be claimed and has been claimed, that if Isaiah foresaw the destruction of Assyria he cannot at the same time have expected the ruin of Judah and *vice versa*.^[79] To this we answer that the prophet need not have thought of the defeat of Assyria as precluding further punishment of Judah. The analogy of other prophecies in which, as already observed, he passes from the contemplation of one particular stage of the judgment to the

ultimate restoration, overleaping all intermediate events, leads us to conclude that in this case also he could regard the provisional deliverance connected with God's punishment of the Assyrian as a prophecy and pledge of the final Messianic salvation, though fully aware all the time that new and repeated judgments issuing into a prolonged captivity would intervene. There is no difficulty inherent in the thought, therefore, which would compel us to modify our belief in the continuity of the discourse, so far as chapter 10:33-11:9 are concerned. But Cheyne thinks he has a valid reason in what precedes for dismembering the context. He considers such the incongruity of the two figures of the Assyrian army advancing against Jerusalem and spreading terror everywhere, and of the lopping down of the forest by Jehovah. "Can Isaiah have imagined an army planting itself on a sudden like trees?" he asks; and, answering this in the negative, concludes that 10:28-32 is Isaiah's, 33, 34 the redactor's, 11:1-9 post-exilic. It is impossible to meet this argument because it is based entirely on a subjective opinion in regard to certain canons of taste to which the prophet is required to conform in the choice and combination of his figures. We are convinced that the application of modern artistic standards to the work of Hebrew prophets is an unhistorical and therefore critically unsafe proceeding. It may be questioned whether the use of metaphor in the passage before us is essentially bolder than that in the undoubtedly genuine prophecy of chapter 18:3-6, where first Jehovah appears making martial preparations against the Assyrian, then the latter's destruction is represented under the figure of the lopping off of branches and tendrils, and lastly the fallen enemies are pictured as being eaten by wild beasts.

There would seem to be the less reason for Hackmann to deny the possibility of connection between chapter 10 and 11:1-9, since he makes chapter 10, or, speaking more accurately, those parts of it which he considers genuine (verses 5-19, 28-32) refer to a destruction of the Assyrian army which was to

follow the conquest of Judah and Jerusalem, so that nothing is implied which would interfere with the full execution of the judgment threatened against the southern kingdom. We do not believe this exegesis to be correct; indeed, we consider it one of the most vulnerable points in Hackmann's entire construction. But assuming it to be correct, verses 33, 34 must on this view be admitted to harmonize perfectly with the genuine parts of the chapter, because they convey no intimation that Assyria's defeat will involve any direct favorable consequences for Judah. And, still further, on this interpretation, Isaiah could, even more easily than on our view, have linked together the cutting down of the Assyrian forest and the coming forth of the shoot from the stock of Jesse, because no other events were expected to come between, the sequence being: (1) Destruction of Judah and Jerusalem with the cessation of David's kingdom; (2) defeat of the Assyrian power; (3) Messianic restoration.^[80]

Hackmann still further claims that the tenor of these prophecies does not agree with Isaiah's outlook into the future as known from chapter 1:26 and 32:15-20. These passages, he thinks, prove that the program of what was to come after the judgment was extremely simple; in fact, involved nothing more than the two items of a purified people and a state of society in which righteousness and judgment would be firmly established. There is, however, nothing in Chapters 9 and 11 inconsistent with this similar hope; nay, its realization is expressly guaranteed by the character of the Messiah's rule. Nor is it advisable to determine from one set of passages the limits beyond which other passages should not go in elaborateness of description. If one were to judge from the majority of what Hackmann calls "the historically fixed prophecies," i.e., those that can be assigned to a definite date and occasion, he might easily infer that Isaiah's horizon was bounded by the judgment and did not include any better future at all. Such a conclusion would be equally

justified as the conclusion that the wonderful pictures of Chapters 9 and 11 cannot be by the same hand that drew the bare outlines of chapter 1:26.

Two more considerations adduced by Hackmann must briefly be noted here. The alleged absence of the Messianic figure in the later prophecies of Isaiah is made to tell against its Isaianic origin in Chapters 9 and 11. This brings us face to face with the question already touched upon above, whether there actually was a continuous later period during which Isaiah dropped the personal Messiah, if not from his personal expectations, at least from his public expression of the same, and if so, wherein lies the explanation of this fact. This question is greatly complicated by its interdependence with the chronological problems of Isaiah-criticism. Several views may be held on the subject: (1) It is possible to assign chapter 11:1-9, together with the whole context of which it forms part (Chapters 10:5-12:6), to about the same date as the later eschatological prophecies in Chapters 28-31. In this case the two would be mutually supplementary; chapter 11:1-9 would be to the Sanherib discourses what 8:23-9:1-6 are for those connected with the Syro-Ephraimitic war, and in both the figure of the Messiah would be equally prominent (so Driver, *Introd.*, p. 200). (2) Dillmann places chaps. 28-31 in the years 726-722, and chapter 11:1-9 in the first years of Sargon (until 716-715). If this could be accepted it would yield direct evidence that the prophet did not mean to abandon by the discourses of chapter 28-31 the idea of a personal Messiah, since he reaffirmed it several years later. But the trend of modern opinion is against such an early date for the prophecies of Chapters 28-31. And, apart from this, the problem would remain how Isaiah could preserve silence during this long interval of almost twenty years on this important feature, especially when meanwhile uttering discourses so vitally connected with it as those in Chapters 28-31. (3) Placing Chapters 28-31 about the year 702, and the prophecies in Chapters 9 and 11 at a much earlier date in the

prophet's ministry, we may seek an explanation for the disappearance of the Messiah from those later discourses. The explanation usually offered is that the Messianic descendant of David of Chapters 9 and 11 stood for Isaiah in contrast with Ahaz, the unworthy occupant of David's throne, hence is made prominent in the prophecies belonging to the reign of this king, but recedes into the background during the reign of Hezekiah. It has been observed that the denunciatory discourses of Chapters 28-31 are not directed against the king, but against the Judean grandees and politicians, and this may be interpreted as reflecting a favorable opinion on Hezekiah, and in so far as confirmatory of the above explanation. With Guthe and others this view forms a part of the theory above stated, ascribing a second "*Zukunftsbild*" to Isaiah. But even apart from its connection with this theory, which is not essential to it, serious objections arise. As we have seen, chapter 11:1-9 cannot be separated from chapter 10, and chapter 10:11 carries us beyond 722. How then can we bring 11:1-9 to the reign of Ahaz, unless we adopt the view that Hezekiah's accession did not occur until 715? Furthermore there are two passages certainly belonging to the reign of Hezekiah in which the Messiah is after all introduced again. These are 32:1 and 33:17. Some would make the expressions, "a king," "princes" (anarthrous) refer to the future magistrates in the abstract, but the personal Messianic sense seems more natural. The pros and contras of the various views stated cannot, of course, be exhaustively discussed here. Driver's opinion seems to us to have most in its favor and to be least open to objections. All we aim at is to show how little weight can be attached, in view of so many opposing possibilities, to Hackmann's claim that the contents of the later discourses are unfavorable to the genuineness of the Messianic prophecies in Chapters 9 and 11.

The alleged silence of later prophecy until the time of Ezra, by which Hackmann finds his conclusions confirmed, cannot count for much. Even if

proven, there would be nothing more strange in this than there must be from the critical standpoint in the diversity of Messianic expectations, some with, some without a personal Messiah, ascribed to post-exilic writers. Why, if the author or authors of chapter 9:1-6 and 11:1-9 wrote before the date of the so-called Trito-Isaiah as Hackmann assumes, is there no trace of their Davidic Messiah in Joel or Isaiah 24-27? Slavish adherence to older models can on neither view be attributed to the prophetic writers, whether we place them before or after the exile. Even within the limits of the same prophet there is freedom in the choice of forms under which the Messianic future is depicted. ^[81] In point of fact, however, there are unmistakable references in later pre-exilic prophets to Isaiah's Messiah. Jeremiah 23:5, promises the raising up of a righteous branch unto David who will execute judgment and justice in the land, and the term "branch" cannot be understood here, as Hackmann thinks, in a collective sense. ^[82] The allusion to Isaiah 9:6 is plain. Ezekiel 21:32, 34:23 *seq.*, 37:24, must be judged of similarly. This much only is true, that in Jeremiah and Ezekiel the Messianic king does not occupy the central place in their prophecies of the restoration which he occupies in Isaiah. The reason for this is possibly to be sought in the insignificance of the later kings after Josiah as factors in the historical development, as has been pointed out by Riehm. ^[83]

The linguistic indications of a late origin found by Hackmann in the two prophecies are confined to ten words. Cheyne himself however, while repeating and supplementing this list, gives warning to proceed cautiously and questions the conclusive character of five out of the ten. No doubt the list might be sifted still further. Over against such doubtful phenomena, one may well urge the unplausibility of crediting some unknown author of the post-exilic period with what has been universally and justly regarded as the highest flight of prophetic eloquence. ^[84]

Chapters 19:16-25 and 23:15-18 are assigned to a post-exilic date somewhere between 275 (Cheyne) and 150 B.C. (Duhm) for reasons drawn from the development hypothesis, such as the bold universalism expressed in the hope of the conversion of Egypt and Assyria, the high respect with which the altar, the mazzabah, the sacrifice and oblation are mentioned in 19:19, and the servants of the sanctuary in 23:18, all of which is deemed inconsistent with the prophetic attitude toward the cult. Inasmuch, however, as both sections are obviously appendices to the preceding oracles on Egypt and Tyre, and the latter have long been attacked by modern critics on historical grounds,^[85] it cannot be claimed that the denial of Isaiah's authorship is in this case primarily due to the exigencies of the evolutionary scheme. It is interesting to observe how the critical interpretation of chapter 19:19 has veered around in response to the change of opinion regarding the date of the prophecy. As long as the chapter was believed to be Isaianic, verse 19 was made much of as an argument for the nonexistence of the Deuteronomic law in Isaiah's time. It had to render service also to discredit the historical character of Hezekiah's reform. When the apologetes answered that the altar in the strange land and the mazzabah were intended by the prophet as mere symbols, this was waived aside as a shallow subterfuge. Now that verses 16-25 are declared to be late, it devolves upon the critics themselves to explain how the late writer reconciled this statement with the plain prohibition of the law, and behold the reasoning of the apologetes leaps at once into favor. Cheyne's remarks on the subject sound precisely as if they came from one of the old defenders of the Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy.^[86]

The case of Chapters 24-27 is similar to that of the sections just quoted. The genuineness of this prophecy also had been long denied before the modern reconstruction of the history of doctrine created a new necessity for such denial, and even at present the arguments adduced against the Isaianic

authorship are to some extent of a historical and literary character. Besides, although the critical analysis is applied to these chapters, it is not for the purpose of separating Isaianic material from later accretions, but to disentangle two elements both alleged to be post-exilic. For these reasons the subject does not fall within the scope of our present discussion. Nevertheless it may be remarked in passing that these chapters possess great interest from a Biblico-theological point of view. Those who are persuaded with us that no valid reasons have been brought forward against their genuineness will find much material here for refutation of the critical hypothesis. Duhm says of what he calls "the apocalypse" contained in Chapters 24, 25:6-8, 26:20-27:1, 12, 13, that it makes use of the Priest Code after a fully-developed dogmatic fashion. Priests and people appear in 24:12 as distinct social categories. In the same chapter (verse 5), "the laws," "the ordinance," "the everlasting covenant," refer to Genesis 9:1-7, a section assigned to P. "The righteous" for whom glory is destined in verse 16 are the people of the Thora. "The windows on high" of verse 18 point back to Genesis 7:11, 8:2 (both in P). "The righteous nation which keepeth truth" of 26:2 are the people faithful in observance of the law. "The name" and "the memorial of Jehovah" in verse 8 refer to the temple cult; cf. also 27:13. "Righteousness" in verses 9 and 10 means conformity to the law; "the land of uprightness" is the land where the Thora rules. Chapter 27:9 presupposes the law enjoining unity of sanctuary and prohibiting Asherim and Hammanim. In a word, no Old Testament Scripture exhibits more fully the vital connection between Messianic prophecy (in the wider sense) and the legal basis of Israel's life. The Messianic judgment is here throughout represented as resulting from transgression of the Thora, and as ushering in a new state of things, of which observance of the Thora will be the chief characteristic. It is no wonder then that recent critics have placed the component parts of Isaiah 24-27 at a

sufficiently late date to account for this lively interest in the Thora. Duhm dates "the apocalypse" from about 130 B.C., and makes most of the other fragments still later. Cheyne thinks "the apocalypse" as well as the remainder belong to the time of Alexander the Great. And both freely confess that in going down to so late a period they are determined by the features mentioned above, together with some other advanced doctrines concerning angels and the resurrection, and in general the apocalyptic character of the entire prophecy. But, although the trend of critical opinion toward these extreme dates is clearly due to the prevailing theory of development, it might be said that, inasmuch as apart from and prior to the influence of this theory similar conclusions had already been reached, the argument from the doctrinal phenomena simply lends confirmation to these and is *nota priori*.

No such excuse, however, can be offered for the rejection of the single verse, chapter 18:7, for wholly theological reasons. One of these, the implied universalism, has been noticed already. Another is derived from the phrase, "the place of the name of Jehovah of Hosts," used as an equivalent to "Mount Zion." The expression reminds of Deuteronomy 12:5, 11, and, as in 26:8, "name" signifies the specific presence of Jehovah in the temple, perhaps, as Guthe points out, in connection with the ark. Its use by Isaiah is important for three reasons: first, because it reveals the prophet's agreement with the Deuteronomic principle of unity of sanctuary; secondly, because it proves his attitude toward the temple cult in the abstract to have been one of appreciation and not of hostility; and, thirdly, because together with similar utterances^[87] it furnishes the basis for the subsequent enunciation by the prophet of the sacrosanct character of Zion, and in so far shows what little right the critics have to eliminate the latter on the ground of its incompatibility with Isaiah's general teaching.^[88]

The material next requiring our attention consists of Chapters 28-33. Modern doubt concerning the genuineness of this part of the book first fastened on chapter 33, which Ewald assigned to a disciple of the prophet, a view defended since by Dillmann. Ewald's criticism, however, was not founded on the religious tone and ideas of the prophecy, but entirely on its literary character. Stade, attaching himself to Ewald, included within the line of attack chapter 32, and boldly placed the doctrinal arguments suggested by the development theory in the foreground.^[89] It should be noticed that his discussion not only left the genuineness of the preceding Chapters 28-31 intact, but made the assumption of their Isaianic origin a vantage-ground for denying that of Chapters 32-33. And, inasmuch as Stade accepted the one group of discourses and rejected the other, both in their entirety, his treatment of the subject was still free from the divisive method which plays so prominent a role in the present phase of the criticism of these chapters. Nevertheless the similarity of ideas between Chapters 32 and 33 on the one hand, and certain sections of Chapters 28-31 on the other hand, is so close that the rejection of the former was equivalent to the insertion of the analytical wedge into the latter. Sørensen first intimated that Chapters 28-31 might be composite. He called attention to the strange effect produced in chapter 28 by verses 5 and 6 between 4 and 7, by 16b, 17a between 16a and 17b; in chapter 29 by verses 5-8 between 4 and 9, and verses 17-24 after verse 16; in chapter 30 by the peculiar transition in verse 18; in chapter 31 by the almost unintelligible verse 5; especially in chapter 32 by the open contradiction between verses 14 and 15.^[90] From the last-mentioned passage Sørensen draws the conclusion that shortly before the crisis of the Sennacherib-campaign Isaiah predicted the impending conquest and destruction of Jerusalem by the Assyrians, but that possibly after the fearful affliction of his people together with the blasphemous attitude of the invader

had changed the prophet's mood and the issue of events had failed to verify his original forecast, he may have subjected the discourses previously uttered to a revision introducing the element of hope into a once purely threatening context. The year 701, as Sörensen himself remarks, would thus become the birth-year of the Messianic hope.^[91] Here, then, the theory of the composite character of Chapters 28-31 is tentatively proposed, but no inferences are drawn from it detrimental to the genuineness of any part of the material.^[92] A further step in the disintegration process is marked by Duhm's commentary (1892). Duhm finds in Chapters 28-31 considerable sections of post-exilic origin clumsily interwoven with the original Isaianic discourse. The characteristic feature of these interpolated pieces he recognizes in their promissory eschatological import. But even he retains enough of the old view to assume that in the genuine prophecies themselves there must have been a definite promise of Jerusalem's deliverance from the Assyrians, to which this later more luxuriant development could attach itself. Plainly this was a mediating position such as could only partly satisfy the critical instinct, now feeling its way toward elimination of the element of promise on principle and not merely in its most pronounced form. Hackmann is the critic who has done away with this last remnant of the old interpretation of Isaiah. He claims to have established on the basis of a thorough analysis of Chapters 28-31, that the real message of the prophet during the Sennacherib-crisis was not one of encouragement and hope mixed with threatening, as is traditionally assumed, but a message of judgment pure and simple. Hackmann's partition of the text, with some modifications, as well as the conclusion based on it regarding Isaiah's attitude at this juncture, have been adopted by Cheyne in his *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah* (1895). The latest discussion of the subject from the advanced critical standpoint is by Brückner, who in some instances coincides with Cheyne where the latter goes beyond his predecessor

Hackmann.^[93]

It is safe to say that these operations bring us face to face with a question second in importance to none within the whole range of prophetic criticism, the question whether Isaiah predicted the miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrians. In this question, the fundamental principles now struggling for supremacy in the interpretation of the Old Testament in general, and of prophetism in particular, are focused and brought to a sharply defined issue. The modern hypothesis is bound to move toward a negative answer of this question along three of its basal lines of thought. The first of these may be indicated by the antithesis of works and grace. It is easy to perceive how the excision of the promissory parts of Chapters 28-33 strikes at those very elements in which the Church from ancient times has recognized the most precious part of Isaiah's message, and which have won for him the name of the evangelist among the prophets. The undeserved salvation of the city accomplished by Jehovah, in spite of her own sinfulness, for the purpose of manifesting His free love for Zion,^[94] forms one of the three great historic embodiments of the gospel of grace in the Old Testament; and its inspired interpretation by the prince of the prophets has been ever valued correspondingly. In more than one Isaianic passage it is linked backward to the deliverance of the exodus: it furnishes the prelude to the hymn wherewith the prophet in the second part of his book celebrates in advance the return from exile, and so occupies a central place in the history of the Old Testament doctrine of redemption. The unfolding of the idea of faith also is inseparably connected with it. On the other hand, it will be as readily perceived that the prediction of such a sovereign gracious deliverance fits badly into the critical construction of the prophetic consciousness. For according to the latter the new prophecy had its very root in the discovery that Jehovah does not and cannot deal with Israel according to grace, but

exclusively according to works; and it is impossible to charge Isaiah, the foremost of its representatives, with a fall from the height of this idea. It is in entire fidelity to its principle, therefore, when the modern hypothesis, after a period of hesitation, begins now more and more confidently to assert not only that Isaiah did not expect or foretell, but also that he could not have expected or foretold the event in question. Wherever such a prediction appears in the genuine parts of his book, it must be construed in the sense of a conditional promise made dependent for its fulfillment on the people's conversion, instead of being intended by its fulfillment to produce such conversion, as is clearly the implication of the rejected passages. With the elimination of the idea of grace the conception of faith must undergo considerable modification. It is interesting to observe how with several writers the center of gravity in this characteristic Isaianic idea is being shifted from the element of trust to that of obedience or conformity to the prophetic standard of righteousness. Says Hackmann, in paraphrase of the classical passage chapter 28:15 : "You have made the Egyptian alliance your refuge in which you think yourselves secure. ... Jahve, on the contrary, makes the foundation reliance on himself to be exercised in righteousness and judgment, honest adherence to your obligations (as tributary to Assyria) until Jahve's providence brings deliverance."^[95] Similarly Cheyne, commenting on chapter 7:9, remarks: "Trust the prophetic word, and ye shall never have *to give way*(28:16). Of course, Isaiah does not mean merely the word of promise; he implies all those moral conditions which he has expressed in Chapters 2-5. "^[96] Now it may certainly be said that the proposed analysis does not result in the removal of these important elements from the body of Scripture, but simply in their transfer to a later period of Jewish history; and that a truth valuable in itself ought to claim our acceptance equally when the product of the Maccabean age as when emerging in the time of Isaiah. But this reasoning, whatever may

be its force in other instances, is entirely unsatisfactory in the present case. For, in the first place, the distinction between the pre-exilic prophetic and the post-exilic Judaistic periods is from the critical standpoint itself far more than a mere matter of chronology. It has connected with it a certain estimate of the religious character and value of these two periods; and though the critics can of course no longer subscribe to the once current opinion about the spiritual barrenness and unproductiveness of the post-exilic age, yet even with them the judgment stands that, compared with the era of the great prophets, its piety is of a lower, less healthy type.^[97] Consequently it makes an immense difference whether the doctrine of Zion's gracious deliverance is to pass under the name of Isaiah or to be relegated with so much other material to the time of Judaism. But even apart from this inevitably resulting difference in valuation, it must be remembered in the second place that the intrinsic character of the doctrine is completely changed by its detachment from the historical basis of Isaiah's day. The view hitherto taken was that the prophet by inspiration knew and foretold the event, and that it came to pass according to his word. The modern view is that Isaiah did not predict the event, that it did not occur in the form in which in his book the prediction is put in his mouth, but in a quite different, much less supernatural form; that this slight basis of fact gave rise to a legend in which the true proportion of things was altogether lost; that finally out of this mixture of legend and history, with the former preponderating, grew the prophecies of promise now contained in Chapters 28-33 with their far-reaching eschatological implications. Granting, therefore, that the evangelical element is preserved, it is preserved in a shape which renders it well-nigh valueless. The truth of salvation preached by an accredited prophet in close connection with supernatural facts—this is what the healthy realism of the Church has always believed in and judged essential to its faith; to cease insisting upon this and deem the bare idea of salvation, as

developed in the fancy of some post-exilic writer, and lacking all adequate historical basis, sufficient, is nothing else than Rationalism and Pelagianism in principle.^[98]

The second reason which has made the denial of the genuineness of our prophecies attractive to the critics is connected with the view taken by them of the prophetic attitude toward the temple cult. In several passages of the disputed sections the promised preservation of Jerusalem is associated with the fact of Mount Zion being Jehovah's dwelling-place, where He is acceptably worshiped, whose conquest by the Assyrians might therefore be construed as evidence of the impotence of Israel's God, while for the same reason an act of salvation proceeding from that center could not but be interpreted as in an eminent sense the work of Jehovah alone. By themselves, of course, these utterances of Isaiah do not prove that the public service of Jehovah was regulated by law, and this law recognized by the prophets. The regard here shown for the temple and its ceremonies might be explained in other ways than by supposing that the writer found it invested with the rank of the only legitimate sanctuary in a Mosaic law code. On that score no suspicion need have attached to the statements in question. At the same time there is something in their tone and spirit which, while on the one hand it betrays a certain affinity with the nomistic views, seems on the other hand positively inconsistent with the critical hypothesis. For according to the latter the early prophets were not merely indifferent but actually hostile to the sacrificial cult in which they rightly recognized the pagan, anti-ethical element in Israel's religion, and over against which they placed the demand of a purely spiritual service of Jehovah consisting in obedience. Thus the popular religion of the cult and the prophetic religion of righteousness are said to have formed an absolute antithesis; and it becomes exceedingly difficult to explain how in Isaiah the demands of the latter can have been

sufficiently abated to permit his cherishing this extreme reverence for the temple. It is true, the critics do not think a compromise between the two principles in the abstract impossible, and even believe that later, in the time of King Josiah, one was actually entered upon by the formation of the Deuteronomic law book. But how antagonistic the two tendencies in reality were is proven by the very fact that in their opinion this step proved fatal to the true life of prophetism, because it broke the strength inherent in its previous uncompromising attitude.^[99] Besides, this was almost a full century later than the time of Isaiah and after the prophetic movement had passed the zenith of its power. It is a totally different thing to find Isaiah, in whom the prophetic spirit is supposed to have attained its purest and most vigorous expression, assuming an attitude toward the temple in which not only there is absolutely no trace of antagonism, but which approaches very closely to the reverence for Zion usually deemed in critical circles characteristic of the later ritualistic period. Thus the modern theory was reduced to the uncomfortable position of having to recognize in the greatest of the prophets the father of a principle diametrically opposed to what in its view was the vital principle of prophetism. Isaiah by proclaiming that Jehovah's fire and furnace are in Zion became sponsor for the idea of Jerusalem's inviolability, and was in all likelihood the authority to whom those appealed who attacked Jeremiah because he dared to predict the destruction of the holy city. The conception of Zion as the one legal sanctuary in its first beginnings had to be dated from him. Considering all this, there seemed to be almost as much justification for placing Isaiah at the head of the subsequent development in which the essential truth of prophecy was obscured, as for considering him the highest exponent of this truth. In a word the most fundamental antithesis by the aid of which the modern theory explains the evolution of Old Testament religion threatened to elude the critics' grasp. Now it has begun to be realized that this

whole difficulty may be swept away at one stroke if it should appear possible to deny to Isaiah the sections in which this peculiar favoritism for Zion and the temple crops out, and to assign them to a post-exilic date. Our prophet could then take his place with Amos and Hosea in the ascending line of the development of the ethical idea, and the excised passages can take theirs with the other nomistic portions of the Old Testament to which they bear such a marked similarity in tone and spirit.

We believe, however, that there is still a third and even more powerful motive at work in the present attempts to divide these chapters. The prediction of the sudden deliverance of Jerusalem in a crisis fraught with the gravest danger is one of the most signal instances of supernatural disclosure of the future in the whole Old Testament. Its elimination as a factor to be considered undoubtedly would make the naturalistic explanation of the facts of Isaiah's career a far more solvable problem than otherwise. Still it is not so much the desire to evade this one stubborn fact that prompts the critical analysis. As we shall have occasion to see later, even if the prediction be wiped out from Chapters 28-33, there are other unassailable passages which will continue to bear witness to its historicity. Besides, the modern view takes no serious offense at the presence of a certain naïve supernaturalism in the prophetic consciousness, not even if this on a single occasion should rise to the anticipation of a specific event and thus gain a semblance of objectivity. ^[100] But there is reflected in these chapters a supernaturalism of a more conscious and comprehensive type, such as the critics are wont to call eschatological and for which they have no place in their construction until after Ezekiel. Here speaks a prophet who knows himself the herald and interpreter of a divine plan carried out in Israel's history, who rises above the immediate present and boldly projects his interest into the future. The Messianic outlook, though lacking the personal definiteness of Chapters 9

and 11, is of the widest and farthest; it includes the transformation of nature, the reversal of all present conditions, and this to be effected by the pouring out of the Spirit from on high.^[101] A perfect society in which all sin is forgiven and from which all sickness has been banished stands at the goal.^[102] And these things are no mere by-play; they evidently engage the writer's enthusiasm by reason of their inherent importance. Now it is plain that such a frame of mind, call it eschatological or by any other name, is too remote from what the modern theory has learned to consider the central prophetic consciousness, for it to admit of natural psychological combination with the latter. It is detached from the issues of the immediate present, its horizon extends beyond the limitations within which the sober, stern moral sense of the early prophets must have confined their hopes, and it peoples this new world with images connected only by the slightest thread with the high ethical interests these teachers had supremely at heart.

Some individual doctrinal features, which by their weight help these more general considerations to turn the scale in favor of the partition of our chapters, will meet us in the discussion later on. We must now inquire what are the objective arguments used by the critics to justify what the postulates of their hypothesis thusa *priori* commend to them. The proposition to be established is that Chapters 28-33, or more strictly speaking Chapters 28-31, reveal to the critical eye two strata: one of a denunciatory character, possessing all the traits of genuine Isaianic prophecy; another, promising and consolatory in its tone, showing all the marks of a later supplementary deposit. The first argument adduced in support of this is a chronological one. Chapter 28:1-6 date from before the conquest of Samaria by the Assyrians,^[103] whereas the subsequent sections clearly reveal their connection with the Sennacheribcrisis, the remainder of chapter 28 included, which latter has so many points in contact with Chapters 29 and 30 that it cannot possibly be

separated from these. At the same time chapter 28:1-6 have obvious connection with verse 7 *seq.*, the words **hl)-Mgw** forming the connecting link. But, Hackmann reasons further, no plausible explanation has been given, nor can be given, of this combination of two prophecies of different dates on the view that it was made by Isaiah himself. Consequently it is to be regarded as one of the symptoms pointing toward the activity of a redactor who hardly confined himself to the mere arrangement of Isaianic material, but must have added from the later work of others or from his own.^[104]

It may be rightly questioned whether this difficulty is as insurmountable as Hackmann represents it. To be sure, we may agree with him in the opinion that Giesebrecht has not satisfactorily solved the problem. According to this critic, the oracle against Samaria dates from about 724. Those designated in it as "the residue" of Jehovah's people, were at that time in the prophet's intention the whole Judean kingdom. The destruction of Samaria would have the salutary effect of radically converting the Judeans, thus ushering in the fulfillment of Isaiah's optimistic expectations: "In that day shall Jehovah of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty unto the residue of his people: and for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn back the battle to the gate." Now, at a later date in the Sennacherib-period, having been compelled by the prevailing moral corruption to modify this favorable forecast of Judah's destiny, the prophet takes up again, Giesebrecht thinks, this original prophecy for the double purpose of publicly revoking the promise it contained and of holding up to the Jerusalemites the fate of Samaria, meanwhile realized, as a fearful warning of the catastrophe which was on the point of overtaking them.^[105] To this Hackmann justly objects that the prophet cannot have taken so promising a view of Judah's prospects at the late date of 724, because the discourses belonging to the crisis of 734 prove him to have expected at that time already

the judgment on the southern kingdom.^[106] Isaiah's intention cannot have been, therefore, to revoke a promise once given to the Judeans in their collective capacity. But, granting this, an exposition remains which will account in a perfectly natural way for Isaiah's repetition of this earlier oracle by way of preface to the following Sennacherib prophecies. We may understand "the residue" of the purified Israel which the prophet everywhere places at the end of the era of judgment, including remnants of both the northern and southern kingdoms, and to which as the final result of the whole process appropriate reference could be made at each important crisis of its course.^[107] In this case the oracle against Samaria serves as introduction to these later prophecies because it enunciates the basal principle of destruction of the mass and restoration of a remnant, according to which Jehovah conducts his dealings with the two houses of Israel, and as it were furnishes the text for what Isaiah had to say during the campaign of Sennacherib both in its threatening and in its promissory aspect.^[108] The phrase "in that day" need not be pressed as strictly coinciding with the fall of Samaria, but may denote the period of the restoration in general. If the later writers can be credited with the loosest possible use of this phrase, why should a more general reference of it be denied to Isaiah? And the persons designated by **hl) Mgw** are not identical with "the residue" of verse 5, but stand in parallelism with the drunkards of Ephraim in verse 1, as well as in contrast with the wise counselors and brave warriors promised "the residue" in the future (verse 6). They are the leaders at Jerusalem, whose revelry is described in verses 7-22, the priests, prophets and politicians.^[109]

A second argument relied upon to show the composite character of these chapters consists in the remarkable dualism of the contents and the abrupt transition from the denunciatory to the promising sections. A number of cognate phenomena are pointed out as lending special significance to this

fact. The threats and the promises are intermingled; those who hear the one hear the other likewise, so that the latter must have robbed the former of all force. And not only is there no indication that the widely different messages are intended for two different circles, but the contents of both are simply irreconcilable, inasmuch as in the one the destruction, in the other the deliverance of Jerusalem is predicted.

It must be granted at the outset that these observations more or less accurately describe the surface appearance of this part of the book of Isaiah. The difficulties suggested are not entirely of the critics' own making, but represent a real problem inherent in the discourses themselves. The only question is whether the hypothesis of the composite character of these chapters is the most natural way of explaining the peculiarities, and whether it does actually explain them. We have no right to resort to this hypothesis so long as the possibility remains open that the extraordinary phenomena of the prophecy reflect an uncommon historical situation. Let us remember how apparently conflicting elements entered into the divine procedure with which the prophet was confronted and the confusing scenes of which were prefigured in the discourses. Jehovah's plan involved the defeat of Judah, the Egyptians and the Assyrians alike, and at the same time the deliverance of Jerusalem, yet again so that the corrupt leaders residing in the capital should fall and the remnant survive. Now it is to be expected *a priori* that in a prophetic forecast of this necessarily complicated process the various factors entering into its solution should likewise appear with a certain bewildering effect. Assuming that Sennacherib's campaign actually followed the course and had the issue which the Biblical records require us to believe it did, it cannot be denied that divine providence worked here in a mysterious way and brought into play for the achievement of its purpose the strangest possible contrasts. Why should not something of this mystery pertaining to the real drama that ensued, have

clung to the shadow it threw before itself in the mind and words of Isaiah?^[110] To this must be added as a second consideration that some of the discourses in question are of a highly imaginative cast; indeed, show internal evidence of having been conceived by the prophet in the form of visions. Although nobody at the present day will be inclined to revive the theory of Hengstenberg, who found in the visionary state of the organ of revelation the key to the solution of all the riddles of prophecy, yet we are inclined to believe that the modern tendency is to err equally much in the opposite extreme, by entirely neglecting this element and making the prophet altogether a man of calm reasoning and sober reflection.^[111] If this element had any share in the shaping of the prophecies before us, this would result in making them a more than ordinarily exact counterpart of the impending crisis itself with all its paradoxical mystifying features.^[112]

As regards more particularly the sudden transition from threatening to promise, Giesebrecht has taken pains to show that this is not a characteristic of genuine pre-exilic prophecy, but a sign of later redaction.^[113] He admits, however, that in the application of this canon to the prophetic writings two exceptions should be allowed. It does not apply to the promissory conclusion a prophet may have appended to his book as a whole: because in this case there was evidently no danger of breaking the force of the previous announcement of calamity, which spoke strongly enough for itself; and because it was self-evident that the promise referred to a future generation. Giesebrecht himself makes this exception cover, among others, such passages as Amos 9:8, *seq.*, Hosea 14:2, *seq.*, which, as shown above, are excised by more radical critics.^[114] The consideration is obviously an important one to keep in mind in discussing the entire subject, and its bearing need perhaps not be restricted to the formal conclusion of a book or collection of prophecies. It will have to be admitted that, whereas in oral discourse a frequent

unmediated transition from rebuke to promise might easily have destroyed the effect of the prophetic preaching, the situation became essentially different as soon as the prophet sat down to commit his message to writing. For this very act signified that no longer his contemporaries alone were addressed, but later readers likewise; and the danger that the present generation might take refuge from the threatening in the promise was comparatively remote. Still, so far as Isaiah 28-31 are concerned, no mere appeal to a literary arrangement by the prophet in writing down his discourses will fully explain the phenomena.^[115] More perhaps than in any other section of Isaiah's book, what we read in these chapters impresses us not as a literary composition, but as a faithful reproduction of oral discourse delivered in the heat of the moment and still retaining all the vividness and directness that are apt to characterize oral speech. More applicable to the present case is a second restriction allowed by Giesebrecht. It relates to passages in which the change from a tone of denunciation to one of promise is obviously intended to produce a specific rhetorical effect. Although the sudden contrasts of shade and light are undoubtedly due to the inward commotion, with its rapid alternation of opposite feelings, into which the vision of Jehovah's mysterious work threw the prophet's mind, yet this does not exclude that at the same time a distinct purpose embodied itself in the form thus assumed by his discourses. That such was actually the case seems to be implied by chapter 29:9-12. The opening words, "Be ye amazed and wonder," are most naturally understood of the effect produced by the preceding Ariel-discourse with its paradoxical contents. The critics who eliminate from this Ariel-prophecy and from the surrounding discourses all references to the deliverance of Jerusalem, deprive themselves of the possibility of explaining how Isaiah's message, in such reconstructed form, could call forth the amazement here attributed to his hearers. Neither the

announcement of calamity by itself, nor the promise of escape by itself was calculated to excite wonder, for both were sufficiently familiar, the former from Isaiah's own repeated declarations, the latter from their optimistic views of the future, in which the secret alliance with Egypt had confirmed them. But both elements combined and intermingled and submitted to them in bold antithesis—this could not fail to make them wonder and stare at the mysterious message.^[116] "The vision of the whole," the prophet significantly says with a fine allusion to the complex bewildering character of the scenes just depicted, "the vision of the whole has become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed." And to indicate that the judicial darkening of their minds cooperated with the inherent strangeness of the prophecy in mystifying them, the figure receives a new turn in verse 12, where the vision is compared to a book that is delivered to him "that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned," i.e., unable to read.^[117]

What has been said has perhaps in a measure prepared us to view the dualistic and uneven character of the discourses in question without prejudice to their possible unity. The critics, however, contend that the text as now constituted presents not merely bold contrasts and sudden transitions, but absolute contradictions. As this is a question of exegesis, it can only be determined by examining the passages somewhat in detail. The points where the prophecy suddenly leaps from threat into promise and where the critics accordingly locate the editorial seams, are, apart from chapter 28:5, already discussed, chapter 29:7 or 8, 16, 30:18, 31:5, whilst Chapters 32 and 33 present features assigning them a position by themselves. We propose to inquire with reference to each of these passages what verdict a cautious exegesis leads one to pronounce on the alleged composite character of their environment.

Chapter 29:1-8, then, is made by Hackmann and Cheyne, in its original Isaianic form, a prophecy of judgment, pure and simple, without the least gleam of hope of a final deliverance. As will be seen in the table appended below,^[118] Duhm's analysis leads to a different result, in which the element of promise is retained.^[119] When a critic of Duhm's boldness refrains from applying a principle recognized elsewhere by himself, the protest raised against it by the text must be more than ordinarily emphatic. An insuperable obstacle in the way of Hackmann's and Cheyne's division lies in verse 6, "It shall be at an instant suddenly she shall be visited of Jehovah of hosts with thunder and with earthquake and great noise, with whirlwind and tempest and the flame of a devouring fire."^[120] This verse, it should be observed, is thoroughly Isaianic, both in its general tone and in its single expressions, so that there can be no question about its belonging to the original discourse.^[121] Hackmann and Cheyne recognize this and leave it intact. But it is equally certain, though perhaps not so immediately apparent, that this verse will not bear any other than a promissory interpretation. The attempt to turn it *in malam partem* does violence to the words. The phrase, "in an instant suddenly," can only serve to introduce a mysterious, supernatural interposition of Jehovah, something unexpected and unprepared for. How lame to apply this to the capture of the city and to make it characterize the latter as sudden, after all the concomitants of a lengthy siege have just been elaborately depicted!^[122] On the other hand, how striking and appropriate this same phrase, if intended to express the sudden miraculous reversal of Jehovah's attitude toward the city, first reducing her to that extremity of humiliation in which she shall speak out of the ground and her speech be low out of the dust, and then at once turning against his own instruments, her enemies, to make them as passing chaff, a vanishing dream and vision of the night (verses 5, 7)! But not only is verse 6 unambiguous, the preceding

context also contains intimations that the siege of Jerusalem tends to a crisis not of destruction, but of wonderful deliverance. Not much weight can be attached, to be sure, to the interpretation of Ariel as "lion of God," on the basis of which many find even in verses 1 and 2 the implied prediction that the besieged city will, by triumphant escape from her danger, approve herself God's lion. The objection to this is that the figure of the lion would assign an active share to the Jerusalemites themselves in the repulsion of the enemy, whereas the whole context emphasizes the exclusive agency of Jehovah in saving the city.^[123] Much more to the point for our purpose is the fact that Jehovah compares the siege He is planning against Jerusalem to that once laid by David to the fortress of the Jebusites.^[124] For, inasmuch as the latter did not result in the destruction of the city, but in her elevation to the seat of God's sanctuary and the capital of David's kingdom, so likewise the warfare of Jehovah against her will ultimately issue in the purification and glorification of Zion. The whole comparison rests on the profound thought that God must conquer Jerusalem anew because she has become His enemy: only this time His campaign is a more complicated one than that of David. Something higher than physical possession is aimed at and this explains why Jehovah's method involves the paradox of two apparently contradictory movements, of first bringing the Assyrian army before her walls, and then suddenly undoing His own work by the destruction of its instruments and the salvation of the city.

A further instance against the critical division of this prophecy is found in the discrepancy of the concrete results obtained by the various critics. Four partitions at least have been proposed. Leaving those of Duhm and Stade, who both adhere to the promissory interpretation of the section, out of account,^[125] we still have Hackmann and Cheyne, who, while agreeing in the opinion that the passage bears the evidence of composite character on its very

face by the presence of mutually destructive threatenings and promises, yet differ in important details as to which words belong to either category. It is in regard to verses 6 and 8 only that these critics coincide, both regarding the former as a prediction of judgment, the latter as an editorial accretion of promissory import. In regard to verses 5 and 7, they take directly opposite ground, Hackmann thinking it possible to save the Isaianic authorship of these verses by understanding them in an unfavorable sense as descriptive of the multitude of the besieging enemies, Cheyne judging this a forced and untenable exegesis (a point on which most will agree with him^[126]), and on this ground assigning both to the post-exilic writer. Where the judgment as to the most general meaning of the component parts of a prophecy is so uncertain, the verdict of irreconcilable dualism is scarcely calculated to inspire confidence.

We pass on to chapter 29:15-24. There the peculiar case presents itself that one single verse only of the original Isaianic prophecy has been permitted to stand by the supplementer. Everything after the words, "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from Jehovah, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" must be denied to the prophet, because it plainly implies the coming regeneration of things. Now no imaginable reason can be discovered why the later writer, who elsewhere is supposed to have dealt quite fairly with Isaiah's material, sometimes to the extent of adopting it entirely and only adding an equal quantum of his own, and who carried through this method of saving as much as possible even at the cost of joining together palpable contradictions, should in this particular instance have cut short the original so as to leave scarcely more than its opening words. What followed in the genuine discourse, if this was a pure prediction of judgment, must have been equally suitable for preservation as 29:6 or 30:14, 17. And why, we may further ask, did the later writer, after

first amputating well-nigh the whole body of this ominous message to substitute a more favorable one, mar the latter, contrary to his usual method, with new threatenings conceived by himself? It will be observed that verses 21, 22, introduce a note entirely lacking in the other alleged appendices which are throughout of an exclusively consoling character. Hackmann seems to have felt this, for he maintains that the context requires the identification of "the tyrant" and "the scorner" with the foreign enemies of Israel, as also the identification of "the meek" and "the poor among men" with Israel as a whole.^[127] A single glance at verse 21 shows the impossibility of this, for those "that cause a man to sin in a cause, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just with a thing of nought" are undoubtedly transgressors within the circle of Israel.^[128] That immediately afterwards Jacob as a whole is spoken of as sharing in the promise proves nothing to the contrary, for this is precisely the Israel from whose midst the scorner had ceased and all they that watch for iniquity have been cut off, the Israel of the remnant (cf. chapter 1:21-26).

But, it is said, everything from verse 16 onward betrays its secondary character in that it does not fulfill the expectation of a severe arraignment of the Egyptophile politicians awakened by the preceding verse. "We expect to hear how Yahwe will bring to naught their counsel, and before all the world subject them to the deepest contumely. But no! it is of Israel's approaching regeneration that we are told, and this is apparently intended for an entirely different class of persons, viz., the oppressed and miserable" (Cheyne, p. 193). This representation, however, fails to do justice to the somewhat subtle but none the less real and profound connection of the prophet's thought. The foolish perversity of those who endeavored to hide their intriguing with Egypt from Jehovah (i.e., from Isaiah) finds a fitting rebuke in the figure of the clay denying understanding to the potter. The very ingenuity wherewith

they try to deceive Jehovah is derived from Him, the Creator, who must therefore be all-knowing and all-wise Himself. So far the thought is characteristically Isaianic, as a comparison with chapter 31:1, 2, convincingly shows.^[129] At all events, then, verse 16 will have to be recognized as genuine, and this once given what follows in the subsequent verses attaches itself in a perfectly natural manner. What Isaiah condemns in the politicians is not merely the preposterous attempt to keep their secret scheming from the knowledge of Jehovah, but, as Ewald has strikingly observed, even more than this he condemns their pusillanimity and suspicion regarding Jehovah's power to bring the threatening crisis in Judah's fate to a successful issue. Deep-rooted unbelief made them scorn the prophet's counsel to seek their strength in quietness and confidence, instead of which they chose to rely on their own petty diplomacy. This underlying conceit of being better masters of the situation than Jehovah, more powerful than He to control the forces of history and guide them to the goal of Judah's deliverance, this, as the figure of the potter and the clay already intimates, constitutes for Isaiah the supreme folly of their line of action. What more effective exposure of the inherent smallness of such human policy could have suggested itself to the prophet's mind than to place it in vivid contrast with the all-embracing, world-renewing work of Jehovah, which is on the point of turning mountain-forests into fruitful fields and fruitful fields into mountain-forests, revolutionizing all those present conditions they strive to manipulate, and by its mere prospect making all worldly politics appear pitiful in the extreme?^[130] Thus it appears how unfounded the charge that verse 16 *seq.*, turn aside from the course marked out for the prophecy by its opening words and in a disconnected way join to the announcement of woe the picture of regeneration. The latter is not in the first instance brought in for its own sake, but for the very purpose of effecting, what Cheyne professes to miss, the subjection of the wily

politicians to the deepest contumely. Nor is the prediction of their approaching ruin entirely lacking in the sequel, for, as has been shown above, it is referred to in verses 20, 21.

The section just considered is important also because it disposes effectually of the assertion that the discourses of Chapters 28-31 in their present form do not clearly distinguish between the subjects to whom the threats and those to whom the promises apply. Here such a distinction is drawn with the utmost clearness desirable, for, on the one hand, we have the scorers, those that watch for iniquity, that make man an offender in a cause, lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just with a thing of naught, and, on the other hand, the meek and the poor among men.

The next seam the critics locate between verses 17 and 18 in chapter 30, the latter verse being drawn to the subsequent consoling prophecy, and in this way a sharp unmediated contrast between it and the foregoing made out. The proposed rendering is: "Therefore Jehovah is eagerly waiting that He may be gracious unto you, and is rising that He may have mercy upon you, for Jehovah is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for Him." Duhm ridicules the attempts of commentators to force an opposite meaning upon the words. I cannot convince myself that the above interpretation is sufficiently free from objections to justify such an attitude. For on this view **Nbl** loses all connection with what precedes. Jehovah's determination to leave only the smallest of remnants (verse 17) can never yield the ground for his impatience to show grace (verse 18). It is hard to understand how the editor, who made the seam, could so stultify himself as to unite two direct opposites, after this naive fashion by a "therefore." Duhm has felt this, for he suggests that the writer intended the **Nbl** to connect with his own previous interpolation, chapter 29:16 *seq.* This surely is a desperate remedy, inasmuch as all the

other alleged supplements are interlaced at the point of insertion with the Isaianic material, and have no such backward reference to a remote discourse. To this must be added that **Nbl** would make no natural connection with chapter 29:24. The question also arises whether **hbxy** and **Mwry** make a suitable parallelism when thus rendered. If Jehovah is eagerly waiting to show grace, He cannot at the same moment be rising to bestow mercy; the former presupposes a cause for delay, such as would prevent the instantaneous action expressed by the latter. Duhm, to be sure, translates **hbxy** by "is full of impatience" but this is too free a rendering in which the element of "waiting" is unduly obliterated. In view of all this, we may well fall back upon Dillmann's exegesis, which understands **Nbl** as coordinated with the same word in verse 13 and with **Nb-l(** in verse 16, and renders: "Therefore (your iniquity being such) Jehovah will delay in being gracious to you, and will keep aloof from having mercy upon you: for Jehovah is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him." But if this be the most plausible interpretation, there can be no reason any longer to complain of abruptness in the transition; the thought that Jehovah's interposition will tarry naturally paves the way for the consoling reflection that ultimately it must come for such as wait for Him and convey the blessings enumerated in the sequel.

Some additional features in the prophecy, verses 19-26, should be noted as bearing on the question at issue. The conversion of the people in Zion and Jerusalem is distinctly made, in verse 19, the concomitant of their gracious visitation by Jehovah, which meets the charge that nowhere a moral motive is supplied for the change from threatening to promise. The most obvious connection, further, prevails between verses 20, 21, on the one hand, and

verses 10, 11, of the preceding, undoubtedly Isaianic, prophecy on the other hand. As there the people are accused of unwillingness to receive Thora and of a desire to banish Jehovah from their sight, so here the prophet describes a condition in which the people will have their eyes constantly fixed upon their Teacher (Sgl.) and listen attentively to his instructions.^[131]

Chapter 31:1-9 is that part of the group of prophecies now under discussion to which the critics most confidently appeal in support of their theory. It is said to reveal evidence of the most clumsy mechanical composition even to the eye of the untrained reader. In verses 1-3 the Egyptian alliance is denounced and its utter failure through the destruction of both Egyptians and Judeans predicted. Then follows the magnificently conceived figure of verse 4, in which Jehovah is compared to a lion growling over his prey, undismayed at the shouting of the shepherds summoned against him, majestically, conscious that none can prevent him from seizing it. "So will Jehovah of hosts come down to fight *against* Mount Zion and *against* the hill thereof," unconcerned about what help the politicians may summon to save the country from the judgment He has determined to inflict through the Assyrians. Thus far all is of one tenor, threatening without qualification. "But at verse 5, " says Cheyne, "the scene is abruptly shifted. Like flying birds Yahwe will protect His city. Repent then, ye Israelites. For ye know that in that day men's idols will be useless. Yea, Assyria will fall by no human warrior's sword, or panic-stricken will take to flight. Thus saith the God who hath a fire in Zion. This may not be very consecutive, but so much at least is clear—that it accords with a passage which we have recognized as a later addition to the woe upon Ariel, viz., 29:7, 8. To the self-confident politicians it can have had no meaning; or, if it had, the meaning can only have served to lull them to sleep." In view of all which Cheyne concludes that the original woe was supplemented in post-exilic time by a late writer, whose work

begins at verse 5b. The words, "like fluttering birds," still belong to Isaiah and must have been originally followed by "so shall the inhabitants of Jerusalem fly" (or, flutter in anxiety).^[132]

The main question raised by these statements is whether the two figures of the lion seizing his prey and the sheltering birds are so absolutely discordant as to forbid our ascribing verse 4 and verse 5 to the same author. The former describes Jehovah's attitude toward Jerusalem as one of fierce anger, the latter as one of the most tender maternal solicitude and protection. At first sight the contrast seems indeed to amount to a plain contradiction. It is undoubtedly for the purpose of avoiding this that some expositors attempt to read into verse 4 a favorable meaning instead of the ominous one which the import of the figure so obviously requires. It is proposed to render: "So shall Jehovah of hosts come down to fight upon (instead of against) Mount Zion," and to find in this the thought that He will no more allow his city to be taken from Him than a lion would give up a lamb that it had seized as its prey.^[133] But how incongruous in this case the figure is to the idea intended to be conveyed by it! The lion growling over the lamb in the role of its defender! This difficulty is of course removed by making the Assyrian the prey to seize which Jehovah descended upon Mount Zion and which He will not permit the Egyptian or Judean armies to take from Him. Even so, however, the objection remains that **I()bc** means everywhere else "to fight against."^[134] And, since on this view it was more important to state upon whom than from where Jehovah makes his attack, we would expect the prophet to say: "So shall Jehovah of hosts come down to fight against the Assyrians." There is no escape then from the conclusion that verse 4 speaks of a campaign of Jehovah to be conducted against Jerusalem,^[135] in which the city is to be seized by Him as His prey. In so far the critical interpretation is undoubtedly correct. This, however, by no means proves the correctness of the further inference

that the prophet in uttering these words meant to imply the fall of Jerusalem. We have no right to press the figure to the extent of making it say that, as the lion seizes the lamb to devour it, so Jehovah will take the city for the purpose of destroying it. The point of comparison is according to the context strictly limited to this, that Jehovah proceeds to inflict upon Jerusalem a judgment which will put her at His mercy, and that He will not let the Egyptian alliance interfere with this. Now it is plain that, thus understood, ver. 4 describes not the ultimate purpose or issue of the judgment, but only the first step in its execution, that of reducing the capital to the utmost extremity through the Assyrian army. Whether this first step is to be followed in the prophet's expectation by the fall of Jerusalem or her deliverance cannot be determined from verse 4 alone, but must remain an open question to be answered by the context. Verse 5 brings the answer by saying that after thus having reduced the city to the condition of a helpless victim, Jehovah will next proceed to protect, deliver, pass over and preserve it. Instead, then, of two contradictory statements, concerning the outcome of the judgment, we evidently have the description of two successive steps in the divine treatment of Jerusalem; and all we need do is to ask whether the prophet helps us to understand the adaptation of this twofold procedure to the final accomplishment of Jehovah's purpose. This we learn from verses 6-8, where first the aim of the whole process of judgment is expressed in hortative language: "Turn ye unto him from whom ye have deeply revolted, O children of Israel," and next the two motives which may in the future be expected to induce this conversion are stated, viz., the recognition of the uselessness of idols and the acknowledgment of Jehovah's exclusive activity in salvation as manifested in the miraculous overthrow of the Assyrian: "For in that day every man shall cast away his idols of silver and his idols of gold. ... Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword not of man and the sword not of men shall devour him." It

will further be observed that the two motives here brought into play correspond precisely to the two successive methods of the divine procedure described in verses 4 and 5. The conviction of the vanity of the idols is to result from Jehovah's closing in upon Jerusalem after the failure of all foreign help. The acknowledgment of God's exclusive activity in salvation is to result from his sudden deliverance of the city at the last moment. It is clear, therefore, that the prophet conceives of the two sharply contrasted attitudes which Jehovah will assume toward Jerusalem as governed by a higher unity of design, and in so far not merely free from contradiction but carefully adjusted to one another with reference to the effect intended to be produced, the conversion of the people. The underlying thought is the same as in chapter 29:1-8 : Jehovah is to wage war against Jerusalem, a war not of extermination, but of conquest, a war which will give Him possession of the city in the highest spiritual sense, and which must necessarily consist of two distinct movements, one destroying Israel's false confidence, the other disclosing to her the true source of security, the Assyrians to be in the former movement the instrument, in the latter the victims of the divine strategy.^[136] Cheyne's observation that our passage resembles closely the second part of the Ariel prophecy is entirely correct. Only the cause of this resemblance is not to be sought in the supplementing of the two original woes by a late writer. The prophecies agree because they both apply to the reading of coming events the same profound knowledge of the principles on which the divine procedure is conducted. It is this inspired philosophy of history which enables Isaiah to discover and proclaim consistency of purpose where the critics find nothing but confusion and contradiction.

Volume 2_(TOC)

The Modern Hypothesis and Recent Criticism of the Early Prophets

III. Isaiah (continued)

We have endeavored to show that with reference to Isaiah 28-31 the main argument on which the critics base their theory of the composite nature of these sections, viz., the obvious dualism of the contents, breaks down before a careful exegesis. So far as the dualism exists it was found to bear evidence of a higher unity of design, the contrasts involved proved capable of harmonious interpretation as coordinated and mutually supplementary parts of one program of judgment. Although in several respects closely related to the preceding discourses, Chapters 32-33 differ from them by the absence of the *unmediated* contrast between threatening and promise which plays so large a part in the discussion of Chapters 28-31. Owing to the elimination of this factor, the critical treatment of these remaining two chapters has been on the whole more free from attempts at analysis: the Isaianic authorship is denied, but the uniform character, if not the actual unity of composition, mostly upheld. Duhm is the only critic who carries the disintegrating process over into chapter 32 *for the purpose of separating between genuine and spurious elements*. He gives verses 1-5 to Isaiah, makes verses 6-8 late, and separates verses 9-14 from verses 15-20, yet without detriment to the Isaianic origin of the two last-mentioned pieces. This adherence to the divisive principle has in the present case at least the advantage of saving a good deal of the contents of

our chapter to the prophet, as may be seen from the fact that Hackmann, who abandons this principle in reference to verses 1-8, also denies the genuineness of the entire section, thus keeping as Isaianic only verses 9-20, and even that with hesitation. Cheyne declares the whole chapter post-exilic, dividing it into the three parts, verses 1-8, 9-14, 15-20. Chapter 33 is considered a unit by most critics.^[137]

To view the present criticism of chapter 32 in its proper light it should be remembered that the original attack upon this chapter derived its main force from the assumption of the genuineness of the Messianic prophecies in chapters 9 and 11, and of the promissory material in Chapters 28-31. Said Stade: "A greater difference as to power of poetic representation than exists between 9:5, 6, 11:1, 9 (cf. also 29:17-21) on the one hand, and chapter 32:1-8 on the other hand, I cannot conceive." And again: "If we wish to form an idea of the person and work of Isaiah, we must do so on the basis of chapters 22, 28-31. ... I hope I have shown that in the figure reconstructed from chapters 22, 28-31 there is no place for the features gathered from chapters 32, 33. " Still further: "The prospect that Jerusalem is to be laid waste cannot be reconciled with Isaiah's ordinary expectation of the future."^[138] Now Hackmann and Cheyne no longer believe in the genuineness of these prophecies in Chapters 9-11, 28-31, and protest against finding there the historical lifelike Isaiah. Hence, while adhering to Stade's conclusion, they must deny themselves the use of his principal argument. Under these circumstances it might not seem unreasonable to expect that criticism would reverse its former judgment. If the Messianic picture of 32:1-8 was rejected because of its soberness in comparison with the glowing colors of Chapters 9 and 11, why, now that the latter have been recognized as laid on by a later hand, are not the restraint and simplicity observable in chapter 32 allowed to count in favor of Isaianic authorship? If chapter 32:9-20 was denied a place

among the genuine oracles of the Sennacherib-crisis because verse 14 foretells a long desolation of Jerusalem, thus contradicting the prospect of immediate deliverance held forth in Chapters 28-31, then this very feature ought now to strengthen the case of its genuineness with those who assume that Isaiah expected during that crisis the fall and destruction of the city precisely as here announced. So it would be indeed if modern criticism contented itself with being purely historical and with putting the sole question whether a certain prophecy can be fitted into the writer's general outlook upon the future at a given time. In reality, however, the decisive considerations with the critics lie not in the historical background, but in the religious ideas of the prophecy. Let it agree ever so well with what is known concerning the course of events in Isaiah's time and the attitude assumed toward them by the prophet, this will not save its genuineness in case the theological conceptions and general religious atmosphere on the principles of evolution require a later origin. Historically speaking, nothing more in harmony with the attitude of Isaiah, as understood by the critics themselves, could be conceived than the prophecy in verses 1-4, nothing could be made to fit more admirably into their own construction of the prophet's message in 701 than the gloomy words of verse 14. But all this can have no weight so long as the reflective and didactic tone and contents of verses 4-8 are felt to "belong to an advanced stage of national development, when ethical terminology had become a subject of study and the idea of a moral (as opposed to a merely ceremonial) reformation had sunk deeply into the minds of the faithful;" or so long as the derivation of the national renewal from the outpouring of the Spirit (verse 15), instead of a spontaneous moral act, is believed to indicate that "we are listening to none of the primitive prophets, but to one of the ablest disciples of that great prophet of the Spirit, Ezekiel."

^[139] The similarity of these and other religious ideas to those characteristic of

the excised sections in chapters 28-31 furnishes an irresistible motive for the rejection of chapter 32.^[140] Discounting this and leaving out of consideration for the present the linguistic phenomena, what remains of the critical argument will be seen to lack all convincing force. First the indefiniteness of the reference to "kings" and "princes" is appealed to as proving that the writer lived in a kingless age, and deemed it necessary to intimate that the institution of the kingdom would be restored in the future.^[141] It is plain, however, from the whole statement that the emphasis rests not on the fact that there will be a king, but exclusively on the manner in which he will exercise his rule; and this in itself suggests a contrast between him and the imperfect king of the writer's present. Besides, if there was no king, there certainly were **Myr#** in the post-exilic times; which proves that every thought of a restoration of extinct offices was foreign to the author's mind. The anarthrous form of the nouns is most naturally explained from this, that, in harmony with the context, the idea of a thorough national reform filled the prophet's soul, so that not the concrete personality of the Messiah, but the abstract quality of his reign as the main force in insuring the perfect society acquired importance. Hence the absence of the personal definiteness found in the descriptions of Chapters 9 and 11 and the coordination of the Messiah and his associates in the government, "the princes."^[142] And, inasmuch as the preceding discourses were directed rather against the Judean magnates than against the king, it was to be expected that the emphasis should be equally distributed here and the princes receive even greater prominence than the ideal king.^[143] On the other hand, a post-exilic writer, to whom the kingdom as such possessed the absorbing interest of a thing belonging to the Messianic future, would hardly have exercised such restraint of the imagination as to dwell exclusively on its ethical significance.^[144]

No more conclusive than this are the undoctinal arguments used to discredit

the Isaianic origin of verses 9-20. These may be reduced to two heads: the alleged vagueness and the alleged imitative character of the discourse. In substantiation of the former charge, it is said, for example, that, whereas the prophecy begins with reproving the women for their false security, this purpose is immediately lost sight of and a general destruction announced in terms lacking all specific reference to the women's fate. The answer to this is obvious: verses 12-14, in depicting the desolation of pleasant fields, fruitful vines, houses of joy and palaces, are meant as a solemn warning to the women that the immediate and visible sources of their comfort, which for the present still enable them to ignore the coming danger, will fail. It is true the general situation which occasioned the prophecy is not sharply outlined, we do not learn in what precisely the reprehensible feeling of ease and confidence of these women manifested itself; but what is indefinite to us may have been to the prophet and his public perfectly clear and specific because defined by the circumstances under which it was spoken. The vagueness is no greater than, e.g., that of chapter 18, the genuineness of which is questioned by nobody; the only difference is that there we are fortunately able, on the basis of other prophecies, to reconstrue the situation, whilst here we lack the data for doing this.^[145]

As to the imitative character of the style of this section, nothing less than unmistakable dependence upon post-Isaianic passages or erroneous reproduction of Isaianic material would be decisive here, since it is absolutely impossible to determine how far a writer may or may not be capable of repeating with slight variations the thought or expression of some former discourse. Suppose it were proven that verse 9 imitates Genesis 4:23, or Amos 6:1; no reason is conceivable why the imitator should not be Isaiah.^[146] Much has been made of the dependence of verse 15 on 29:17, or *vice versa*. Duhm thinks that our passage is a mistaken quotation of the older passage in

chapter 29. The change of Lebanon into garden-land and of garden-land into forest is in chapter 29 used as a figure to describe the reversal of existing conditions. According to Duhm, the writer of 32 misunderstood this, and interpreting the words in question of raising of all conditions to a higher plane, thus gave expression to the essentially different thought, that the wilderness will become garden-land and the garden-land forest. Even if this interpretation of verse 15 by Duhm were correct, it would by no means follow from this that what we have before us is a case of mistaken quotation. There is nothing unworthy of the prophet in the idea that he himself gave this new and suggestive turn to words used on a previous occasion. That the coming revolution of things would at the same time raise life to higher potentialities was a thought of sufficient importance to deserve explicit statement. The proposed exegesis is, however, far from necessary or even natural. To us it seems that the writer of 32:15 meant to express the thought thus imputed to him as little as it is meant to be expressed in 29:17. He could not well place the "forest" (r(y) above the "garden-land" (lmrb). The former is rather the wild forest in contrast with the cultivated soil, and that the writer puts lmrb above r(y) is shown conclusively by the substitution for the latter of rbdm in verse 16 : "Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness shall abide in the fruitful field."^[147] Consequently it is safe to assume that his words imply no more than a reversal of existing conditions, a result still further confirmed by the fact that according to verse 16 the rbdm = r(y) remains, whereas on the view imputed to him by Duhm all rbdm would be changed into lmrb.^[148]

If thus nothing can be discovered in chapter 32 inconsistent with Isaiah's authorship, there are, on the other hand, some features which seem positively

to exclude post-exilic origin. It is incredible, in view of all we know of that period, that one of its writers should have foretold the total destruction of Jerusalem, and that **Malw(d(** "for ever." Nor is it easy to explain how a later author could risk such a definite prediction as that contained in the words, "for days beyond a year" (verse 10).^[149] Here, as elsewhere, it is highly significant that none of the critics has ventured to fix the alleged post-exilic date of the prophecy with any degree of definiteness. It is not sound criticism to abandon a date which invests the oracle with at least a certain amount of historical meaning in order to set it adrift upon the mostly unknown sea of the post-exilic period.^[150]

The same may be said in reference to chapter 33. Without the slightest violence, the facts and conditions here presupposed can be made to fit into what we know about the course of events in, and immediately before the year 701. From a combination of the account in 2 Kings 18:13-19:37 (= Isaiah 36-37) and the Assyrian records it appears that after some sort of understanding had been reached between Sennacherib and Hezekiah and a tribute paid by the latter, the Assyrian king for some reason changed his mind, broke the agreement and renewed hostilities. Chapter 33:1 refers to this treachery on the part of Sennacherib. Verse 7 *seq.* speak of the embassy of peace sent to Lachish (2 Kings 18:14) and of the renewed havoc wrought by the invaders in the already devastated land. Verse 14 alludes to the severe threats of ruin for the sinners in Jerusalem with which Isaiah had constantly interwoven his promise of ultimate deliverance. Verse 18 finally mentions the payment of the tribute. This is a chain of correspondences as strong as can be supplied for any prophecy with an historical background, and must be considered the weightiest evidence in favor of the genuineness of our chapter. To this view of the matter indeed two objections will be raised: first, that the Assyrian inscriptions know nothing of such a course of events as is here assumed with

a renewal of hostilities after Hezekiah had first capitulated and agreed to pay a tribute of submission; and secondly, that the narrative in 2 Kings 18:13-19:37 has long been known to be a composite piece in which not successive developments in the Sennacherib-campaign are described, but three different and in some points contradictory versions given of the same occurrences. Consequently, it is claimed, we are not justified in creating a historical milieu for Isaiah 33 by making 2 Kings 18:13-16 descriptive of the first stage of Sennacherib's proceedings, instead of, what criticism has proven it to be, a compact account, and that the most reliable of the three accounts here conglomerated, covering the whole campaign. Against the former of these two objections we must urge that there is more than blind faith in the Biblical representation to make us doubt the accuracy of the Assyrian record. We have reason to surmise that some such version of events as is reflected in Isaiah 33 must stand nearer to the historical reality. In more than one respect Sennacherib's own statement gives rise to this presumption. It represents Hezekiah's tribute as sent through an envoy to Nineveh, whereas as a matter of fact it was rendered at Lachish (2 Kings 18:14).^[151] While this is already an indication that the payment belongs to an earlier stage of the campaign than the king would have us believe, inasmuch as he marches from Lachish to Libna,^[152] still further plausibility is given to such a view by what is related concerning King Padi of Ekron. This prince had been deposed by the anti-Assyrian party and delivered for safe-keeping to Hezekiah at Jerusalem. Now Sennacherib tells us that Padi was brought out of Jerusalem and replaced on his throne apparently before the final attempt on Jerusalem occurred. And that this is not inserted in the account proleptically, but in its proper chronological position, follows from the fact that the gift to Padi of part of the territory conquered from Judea is afterwards mentioned as preceding the measures taken against Jerusalem. Padi's release from his prison in Jerusalem

presupposes a submission of Hezekiah at a comparatively early stage of the campaign and a consequent suspension of hostilities against Judah. Thus the sequence of 2 Kings 18:16, 17, is confirmed, and it becomes probable that the payment of the tribute has been transferred from the middle to the end of the campaign for the express purpose of covering up the miscarriage of the later expedition against the Judean capital. That this is a reasonable interpretation of the facts, and one which may well be reached without undue harmonistic bias, will be seen from its adoption by Wellhausen.^[153]

If thus the historical character of the sequence of events assumed in 2 Kings 18, verses 13 and 17, appears to rest on a sufficiently firm basis, the further question as to the literary unity or compositeness of the narrative there becomes immaterial for the genuineness of Isaiah 33. Let us suppose that two accounts of the same episode are interwoven in Kings (one consisting of chapter 18:17-19:9a, the other of 19:9b-35, discounting later glosses and insertions). This would be inconsistent with the Isaianic authorship of Isaiah 33, only if it could be proven that the writer of this chapter had before him the unified account and treated its component parts as successive steps in the history of the year 701. Cheyne, indeed, claims that our prophecy, though late, was nevertheless written to fit the assumed situation of the Sennacherib crisis, and that the author drew the view of the order of events which underlies his composition from the narrative in 2 Kings 18:13-19:37.^[154] But of such *literary* dependence there is not a trace. It is impossible so much as to infer from chapter 33 that the writer followed a history in which Sennacherib was said to have sent twice to Hezekiah demanding the surrender of the city. All he assumes is that first some sort of pacification had been reached between Hezekiah and the Assyrian king and that afterwards the latter perfidiously renewed the hostilities. There is no evidence whatever that this information was derived from reading the account in 2 Kings. On the

contrary, the terms in which the conduct of the Assyrians is characterized are much more vivid than would have been suggested by a mere literary reproduction and reading between the lines of the verses in Kings. But we may go further than this. If the fictitious situation of Isaiah 33 is artificially constructed out of the composite narrative in Kings, how is it to be explained that no allusion to the twofold message of Sennacherib appears therein? Why does the author, who so sharply distinguishes between the first attack of the Assyrians on Judah and the later one, so entirely blend together the two stages of the later attempt upon the capital, which his source taught him to distinguish? So long as this question is not answered the dependence of Isaiah 33 on the redaction of the book of Kings must be held not only unproven, but also highly improbable.

In view of what has been said it is fair to assume that on purely historical grounds no one would have seriously called in question the genuineness of our prophecy. That, nevertheless, the present drift of criticism is toward the denial of this is plainly due to doctrinal considerations. The following are the reasons enumerated by Cheyne to prove the post-exilic standpoint of the writer. The liturgical tendency which crops out in verse 2 in the self identification of the speaker with his people, showing that not only the germ of a Church, but a Church itself existed; the prophecy is the prayer or meditation of a righteous people, and no attempt is made to bring sinners to repentance or to terrify them by warnings; the writer reveals great enthusiasm for religious services (verse 20); has a sensuous conception of the divine presence in Zion (verse 14); betrays acquaintance with the Psalms, and, since no part of the Psalter has yet been shown to have a pre-exilic basis, this proves his post-exilic date; his Messianic belief is vague and his conception of Jerusalem's enemies indistinct and un-Isaianic.^[155] Of these criteria the majority will be immediately recognized as instances of the application of the

evolutionary principle to the criticism of Isaiah. The arguments from verses 2 and 20 will lack all force for one who believes that there was a church-nation in Isaiah's time, and that the prophet could delight in its religious assemblies. There are examples in undisputed Isaianic discourses where the prophet identifies himself with the nation (cf. 1:9, 6:11, 8:10, 14:32, 17:14, 22:4). As to the writer's acquaintance with the Psalter, it is certainly not over-conservative to adhere to the belief that a solid stock of the Psalter existed toward the close of the eighth century,^[156] and that the modern view concerning the late origin of the Psalms is nothing but a corollary of the theory of development. The vagueness of the Messianic belief expressed in verse 17 ought to weigh little or to weigh on the other side with Cheyne, who himself inclines to the rejection of the more concrete pictures of Chapters 9 and 11. But it cannot even be made to count against the traditional view which retains the latter as Isaianic. The personal Messianic conception, if it enter into verse 17 at all, and not simply King Hezekiah be referred to, is introduced here as a subordinate element by way of contrast with the humiliation the present king had been made to undergo.^[157] The generalizing terms in which Jerusalem's enemies are spoken of in verses 3 and 12 are not essentially different from those employed in Chapters 8:9, 10, 14:26, 27, 17:12-14, and simply show that Isaiah had grasped the antithesis between the world and the kingdom of Jehovah, and realized the typical import of the Assyrian crisis. Cheyne himself believes that the post-exilic writer enlarged upon the extant Isaianic prophecies because he regarded them as having a still unexhausted validity, and because to him and others the overthrow of Sennacherib had become typical of the great future judgment. This proves that the typical interpretation is not superimposed on the prophecy, but suggested by the words themselves. If, however, there are sufficient historical grounds on which to affirm the Isaianic authorship, its denial on account of

the typical import alone would be unjustified. What ground have we to assume that Ezekiel must have been the first to frame the dogma of a final world-attack upon Jerusalem, and that this dogma cannot have its roots in Isaiah, except the *prior* ground that early prophecy is too naively bound up in the present, too humanly limited, to combine in one perspective the issues immediately impending with those of a remote future?^[158] The only two features which remain after the subtraction of all this, and which, if correctly interpreted by the critics, would certainly betray affinity with post-exilic Judaism are the alleged absence of the demand for repentance and the sensuous conception of the divine presence in Zion found in verse 14. But in regard to the former, we may answer that verse 14 proves the intensely ethical spirit of ancient prophetism not to be wanting here. The sinners in Zion, it is true, are represented as first wakening to a sense of the divine righteousness and of their own delinquency through the judgment, but from the writer's standpoint this in itself is evidence of their confirmed wickedness, a conception characteristically Isaianic. The prophet on his part is keenly conscious of the preponderance of the evil element among his people before the judgment arrives.^[159] What more stringent rebuke of sin and what more urgent call to repentance can be imagined than such a prediction of the fiercest of judgments, the exposure of the wicked to their own conscience? And what could be more in harmony with the import of the other prophecies in Chapters 28-31 than this distinction of a double purpose in the divine overruling of the crisis, the punishment of Assyria together with the punishment of Judah? The only difference is that in the discourses spoken before the invasion the sharp edge of the prophet's denunciation is turned more directly against his obdurate countrymen, whilst here in the midst of the calamity and under the fresh impression of the Assyrian perfidy, the foreign foe comes in for the first and larger share of the invective. Finally, the view

that verse 14b refers to a visible manifestation of God in fire, instead of being a mere figurative description of the ceaseless activity of the divine righteousness, has been first proposed by Duhm, who compares a passage in the book of Enoch, chapter 14:15, *seq.*^[160] This is a case of undue forcing of the literal meaning of words, analogous to the one we have observed on chapter 2:1. Undoubtedly the passage is dependent on Psalms 15:1, where the absence of the notion of fire puts the figurative intent beyond question. The latter is also favored by the numerous instances in which Isaiah in undisputed passages represents the divine holiness as a devouring fire (cf. 1:25, 31, 5:24, 25, 9:19, 29:6). It is true, this figure here associates itself for Isaiah with the thought of Jehovah's dwelling among Israel on Zion, and assumes the specific form that those who reside in the center of the theocracy are most exposed to the consuming power of his ethical nature. But this imposes no necessity to think of a physical visible phenomenon terrible in proportion to its local nearness. Nothing more is meant than that close association with the central institutions symbolizing Jehovah's kingship over Israel requires special purity of life. This is precisely the same thought which has found classical expression in the account of the vision of chapter 6.^[161]

Here as well as in reference to chapter 32:9-20 the critics are unable to fix upon any definite post-exilic date at which the writing of the prophecy becomes intelligible. And yet its terms are such that circumstances of the most concrete kind must have furnished the occasion for its composition. Duhm alone has ventured a specific dating. He would have us think of the conquest of Jerusalem by Antiochus Eupator about the year 162 B.C. But the two situations differ in important particulars. According to Isaiah 33, the country and outlying cities have been laid waste by the enemy, but the capital has not been touched as yet. In the year 162, on the other hand, Zion itself was compelled to capitulate and the treachery of the Syrians consisted in

reducing its strongholds contrary to the promise of the king (cf. 1 Maccab 6:18-62). Of the payment of a tribute at that particular time nothing is recorded. It is also doubtful whether the troops collected by Antiochus from "other kingdoms and from the islands of the sea" could be fitly designated, "a people of a deep speech that thou canst not perceive; of a strange tongue that thou canst not understand" (verse 19).

Our discussion up to this point has been concerned with the internal character of the disputed prophecies themselves. We have examined at some length the phenomena which are believed to point to editorial expansion of an original Isaianic stock, and have endeavored to show their inadequacy for establishing this view and the possibility of interpreting the prophecies from the standpoint that Isaiah wrote the entire collection. The matter, however, admits of being considered from two other sides. We may ask in the first place whether those sections of the present group of prophecies which even the critics retain are, as they stand in the critical reconstruction of the genuine Isaianic text, free from all promissory, eschatological material. And secondly the question may be put what light the other groups of admitted Isaianic discourses shed on the point at issue—whether the prophet faced the crisis of Sennacherib's campaign with or without the confidence that Jehovah would work salvation for His people.

In connection with the first inquiry, three passages come under consideration, Chapters 28:16; 23:18; 30:27-33. Of these 28:16 is above all critical suspicion; the two others, though denied to the prophet by Cheyne, are still considered Isaianic by Duhm; 28:25-29 also by Hackmann, who, however, protests against assigning this section to the Sennacherib-period. This protest is a virtual confession that a prophecy whose genuineness is not subject to reasonable doubt must be removed from its present position among the

adjoining Sennacherib-discourses, before the recent hypothesis of the purely denunciatory character of these discourses can be consistently carried through. In other words, the critical exegesis of the acknowledged Isaianic parts of Chapters 28-31 is irreconcilable with the plain sense of a prophecy equally entitled to recognition, but whose testimony is summarily disposed of by transferring it to some other undefined period of the prophet's life. The burden of this characteristic Mashal is the very opposite of what the critics make out to have been the burden of Isaiah's message in the crisis under discussion. It is none other than that Jehovah "pursues in His judgment a positive purpose of salvation, the building of His kingdom."^[162] Jehovah, who has instructed the husbandman to plow, not forever, but only until the ground shall be prepared for receiving the seed, and to treat with discrimination the various kinds of grain harvested from it, so as to beat out fitches and cumin with a staff or rod, whilst upon the bread-corn the sledge and cartwheel may be turned, yet with moderation lest they grind it—Jehovah, who has taught all this, cannot Himself pursue any less careful or discriminating method in His husbandry with Israel. To the plowing of His judgments also there must be a limit because out of the present empirical Israel a future ideal Israel must be produced by means of "the holy seed" (6:13); and now that the climax of His work,^[163] the final gathering in of the harvest has arrived, He proceeds to separate the chaff from the wheat of His people, but in such a careful and judicious manner that none of the latter is injured in the least.^[164] The thoughts thus elaborated are in full harmony with the view that Isaiah expected, on the one hand, that Sennacherib would bring Jerusalem to the verge of ruin, but, on the other hand, viewed the whole process of judgment as governed by the principle of salvation and not of destruction.^[165]

Chapter 30:27-33 differs from the section just discussed in that the overthrow of the Assyrian is here explicitly announced and placed in the foreground. As

above Hackmann, so in the present case Cheyne protests in advance against admitting its testimony for determining the attitude of Isaiah during the Sennacherib-campaign: "If it be really Isaiah's work it must belong to a later period than the preceding discourses." He then proceeds to argue against the Isaianic authorship with reasons largely derived from the linguistic phenomena. The few other considerations adduced are either based on the evolutionary theory, or apply in the well-known way a previously fixed standard of the prophet's capabilities in a psychological or literary respect. Of the former nature is the statement that verse 29 makes mention of a religious festival-song, and, for Isaiah, betrays too strong a sympathetic interest in festival processions. The reference to the Passover-celebration in this verse springs rather from a historical than from a liturgical motive, the deliverance from Assyria being compared to that from Egypt of which the Passover was the memorial-feast. Unless the connection between Passover and exodus be *priori* declared late, there is nothing in the sentiment expressed impossible or unnatural to Isaiah. That the phrase, "Jahve's name" (verse 27), is un-Isaianic and late can be maintained only after the unwarranted excision of chapter 18:7, already touched upon, and it may be doubted whether a late writer would so easily have represented the theophany as coming "*from afar*." The features taken exception to on psychological and aesthetic grounds are the excessive bitterness felt by the writer toward the Assyrian and the little poetic restraint exercised in the portrayal of his destruction. Cheyne thinks that a comparison of our prophecy from this point of view with chapter 18 reveals a great difference, telling strongly against the genuineness of the former. This, however, overlooks the fact that in chapter 18 not the overthrow of the Assyrian in itself, but Jehovah's intention to bring about this overthrow, unaided by any human power, is the central thought of the discourse, whilst here the punishment of Judah's enemies is dwelt upon for its own sake. Once

granted that Isaiah could, from religious and patriotic motives, contemplate the Assyrian's fall with satisfaction, no fault can be found with the form in which the judgment-scene is here depicted. Due allowance must be made for the grandly poetic manner in which the whole is conceived from which, rather than from an overflow of bitter feeling, the *verve* and the detailed character of the description must be explained. After all, Cheyne himself remarks that Isaiah's statement in chapter 18:6 is "awful," so that, as far as the sentiment embodied in both passages is concerned, the difference appears a relative one, and there is no occasion to find the one expressive of righteous resentment, the other of "vindictive pleasure." Some of the denunciations hurled by the prophet against the sinners in Zion might otherwise be criticized on the same ground.^[166]

The third passage of promissory import as yet untouched by the critical analysis is chapter 28:16. In view of its implications it may well create surprise that no one has hitherto pointed to it with suspicion. But the verse is too firmly embedded in the context to allow of the easy operation whereby the two relatively independent sections, 28:23-29 and 30:27-33, are removed; verse 17 presupposes it and verse 17 itself is an integral part of the prophecy of threatening, consequently must be Isaianic on the critical view. Where analysis gives out, however, it still remains possible to bring the objectionable verse into harmony with the hypothesis by means of a peculiar interpretation. Hackmann, in a statement already quoted in another connection,^[167] attempts to do this. He thinks that the passage with many other prophetic passages has shared the fate of being exploited by the traditional exegesis in the interest of the Messianic theology, but that the simple sense as determined by the context is sufficiently plain. This sense he paraphrases as follows: "Ye have placed your confidence in the alliance with Egypt in which ye deem yourselves secure: but this policy is carried on in

deceit and falsehood (the negotiations were kept secret as well from Assyria as from Jahve and His prophet, and besides may have involved many a questionable manipulation on the part of the grandees); Jahve, on the contrary, makes the foundation trust in himself, in the exercise of which righteousness and judgment, honest discharge of your obligations (as tributary to Assyria) are to be binding, until Jahve's providence brings deliverance; ye abandon the only secure basis of trust in Jahve and of honest dealing and rely on Egypt with the aid of fraud and dissimulation—by doing this ye have sealed your fate."^[168]

But whatever may be the case elsewhere, it is certain that in the present instance the so-called Messianic interpretation (in the wider sense) has more to support it in the words themselves than Hackmann allows. The divine act spoken of must be something more than the laying down of an abstract principle on which to suspend the fate of the Judeans. Not the hypothetical appointment, but the real establishment of a place of security is referred to. This follows from the description given of the foundation-stone. It is said to have been laid "in Zion," a statement which would be without significance unless the firmness of the foundation and the immunity of Zion in the coming crisis were in some sense interdependent. The preciousness of this stone laid in Zion is further emphasized, which again shows that it possesses a positive value in the prophet's estimation on account of the glorious structure surely to be raised on it. The same conclusion must be drawn from the fact that to faith in the foundation laid there is attached the promise of security. If trust in Jehovah still remains in the prophet's view the proper frame of mind, if there are still, as his words imply, those who exercise it, and if it still guarantees them safety, then the impending judgment must necessarily have its reverse side of protection and deliverance. Hackmann's paraphrase fails to do justice to all these features. They can be satisfactorily explained on no other view

than that verse 16 actually alludes to Zion's escape from the Assyrian attack through a divine interposition, the certainty of this escape being given in the necessity of Zion's continued existence for the accomplishment of Jehovah's purpose. It is true the prophet affirms this truth not for its own sake: he describes the divine method of salvation simply to bring out by way of contrast that the measures adopted by the politicians are utterly worthless and to emphasize that the nature of Jehovah's plan, as requiring faith, precludes their sharing in its benefits. The whole statement is obviously turned against the rulers of Jerusalem and the **Nbl** which opens verse 16 has its usual ominous sense. Nevertheless, the very manner in which it is turned against them implies that some positive provision for the preservation of Zion has been made. It is only in verse 17, where the further construction of the building on the foundation already laid is spoken of, that the statement assumes the conditional form. Not the stone is the test-principle, but righteousness and judgment appear as the line and plummet by which Jehovah determines who will become citizens of the new Zion in process of construction.

Having thus seen that in two places the discourses of Chapters 28-31 reflect the prophet's confidence in the preservation of Zion as the goal of the approaching judgment, we must next inquire what presumptive evidence to strengthen this conclusion may be gathered from other Isaianic prophecies. The utterances of Chapters 28-33 are not the only material concerned with the events of the year 701 that has come down to us from the pen of Isaiah. There are several prophecies scattered throughout the book which, with more or less agreement among scholars, are recognized as genuine and either belonging to the same period or at least looking forward to its developments. In reviewing these pieces, two questions should be kept in mind: 1. Did the prophet foresee that the Assyrian army would be overtaken by disaster? 2. Did he expect this

catastrophe before or after the conquest of Jerusalem by the enemy?

We begin our investigation with Chapters 7 and 8. Here it is plain and now well-nigh universally recognized, that the sign of Immanuel (apart from its more remote Messianic implication, with which we have not here to deal) is intended as a pledge of deliverance to Judah. But the question is to what the deliverance promised in this name refers. Is it confined to the collapse of the Syro-Ephraimitic confederacy against Judah, or does it include also salvation from some later and more dangerous crisis? The recent critics, Duhm, Hackmann and Cheyne, think that no more is implied in the name Immanuel than that, as over against Syria and Ephraim, God will be on the side of Judah. The sign actually given does not essentially differ from the sign originally offered and, like the latter, is a sign of encouragement to Ahaz and the Judeans. Within a year mothers will call their children then born Immanuel in view of the destruction of Judah's allied enemies. This restriction of the meaning of the sign is undoubtedly calculated to satisfy the modern desire for straightforwardness and simplicity in the prophetic thought. But it is open to serious objections on exegetical grounds. First of all it compels those who hold it to excise chapter 7:15 as a gloss because here a further development, the devastation of Judah, is associated with the person of Immanuel, so that His significance appears to extend beyond his birth and name-giving to His subsequent experience. And it should be observed that there is nothing in the phraseology of this verse why it should be suspected: the case is entirely one of ruling out a subsequent statement by interpretation of what precedes. Still further this view neglects the obvious change in the prophet's tone, taking place in verses 13, 14, in response to the attitude assumed by the king. It is impossible that, after having solemnly announced the principle, "if ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established," the prophet should take no cognizance of the unbelief so clearly revealed in

Ahaz's words, and repeat his original message as if nothing had intervened. The wording of verses 13, 14, moreover, the "hear ye now," the reference to "the wearying of God," the ominous **Nbl**, all lead us to expect something quite different. Again, the view in question knows not what to do with verse 17. It is impossible to take this verse as the beginning of a new prophecy uttered on a later occasion, for it is much more clearly marked off from verse 18 than from verse 16. Hence nothing remains but to declare it an editorial insertion intended to link together two prophecies of different dates. But here also it must be noted that, inasmuch as the verse contains nothing suspicious on the ground of style and language, its sacrifice is plainly due to the exigencies of this novel exegesis. And even though one were to overlook all this, verses 18-20 are at all events directed against Judah.^[169] This entails the necessity of assuming that between the dates at which verses 16 and 18 *seq.* were severally spoken a crisis had occurred in the affairs of Judah, whereby the prophet was led to substitute threatening for encouragement. But why should the occurrence of such a crisis at this point have been left unrecorded? Are we at liberty to ignore the plain indications in the text that the crisis was reached when Ahaz refused the sign, and then to postulate one afterwards, where there is no basis for it in the narrative? The same question applies to Hackmann, who places the turning-point between 8:4 and 5.^[170]

If, then, Immanuel marks not only by his infancy the deliverance of Judah from Ephraim and Syria, but also by his early youth the invasion of Judah itself, it becomes necessary, in order to insure the promissory import of the sign at its end, that to these two there be added a third stage in the significance of his career, a stage in which his name will be ultimately verified by the escape of Judah from the Assyrian danger. In chapter 7, it is true, the prophecy stops short of the unfolding of this last idea, although it is not obscurely intimated that, in consequence of the destiny expressed in his

name, the calamities that befall him must issue for his good. In chapter 8:9, 10, however, the prophet supplements this deficiency and explicitly states that the counsel of the peoples and far-off countries must come to naught because God is with the remnant of Judah in accordance with the sign given. ^[171] Of the critics at least Duhm and Cheyne^[172] acknowledge the Isaianic character of these two verses. Says the latter: "If they are not by Isaiah, they are a good imitation of his style. Certainly their energy is worthy of Isaiah. Nor is the phraseology unlike his. The ideas, too, are not alien to Isaiah."^[173] But they refuse to be guided by the passage in their interpretation of the name Immanuel, on the ground that here it is an editorial addition and forms no part of the original discourse. We are constrained to believe that the main motive for this assumption lies in the exegesis forced upon chapter 7 and in the determination to deny every meaning of the name Immanuel extending beyond the events of the year 734. Whosoever does not approach the text with this preconceived view will find its use in both verses 8 and 10 perfectly natural. In the former verse it is introduced partly to emphasize the glaring contradiction between Judah's ultimate destiny of deliverance and its nearer devastation by the enemy, partly to strike the keynote for the exultant strain of verse 9, whilst in verse 10 it fitly closes this strain as a single full-sounding peal of triumph. Taking it as a whole, the prophet could not have more characteristically expressed his belief in the continuity of the divine purpose of salvation through all the successive stages of Judah's impending judgment. But even if the name Immanuel in verses 8 and 10 were proven a later gloss, the remaining oracle of verses 9, 10, would still testify that Isaiah foresaw during the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis the frustration of Assyria's plan. For there is no sufficient reason to assume with Giesebrecht and Cheyne that these verses were added at a later date by Isaiah himself for the purpose of supplementing the foregoing prophecy against Judah with a more hopeful

view. They stand among utterances which all without exception belong to the neighborhood of 734. That the transition from verse 8 to verse 9 is psychologically quite conceivable has been shown above. The **yb** of verse 11 makes sufficient connection with what precedes, on the view that verses 9, 10, express a confidence peculiar to Isaiah and the small circle of his friends as distinguished from the trembling mass of the people, the possession of which confidence the prophet justifies with an appeal to a revelation expressly sent by Jehovah to warn him against participation in the irreligious fear of the others. And, as Duhm has already observed, the connection which verse 11 would make with verse 8 is by no means so much preferable to this, as to furnish an argument for the elimination of verses 9 and 10 from the original context.^[174] The fact remains, therefore, that we have here an early witness to the Isaianic character of the doctrine of Judah's deliverance. And, though it is not expressly stated that the enemy's counsel will be brought to naught before Zion is conquered, nevertheless the terms used, taken in connection with the statement of verse 8, that the invasion will reach "to the neck," rather favor this interpretation.

The fact that Isaiah as early as 734 predicted the ultimate defeat of the Assyrian attack upon Judah speaks in favor of the genuineness of the disputed sections of Chapters 28-33. A belief thus firmly held and triumphantly expressed is not likely to have been given up by a prophet of the temper of Isaiah at the very time when history was about to put its correctness to the test. If the critics desire to be thorough in their removal of the promissory element from the prophecies of Isaiah, they should attack this element in its root in Chapters 7 and 8. In point of fact, an attempt has been made in this direction by Prof. F.C. Porter, in an article published in vol. 14 of the *Journal of Biblical Literature* (1895). In order to avoid the difficulties which appear to him connected with the ordinary view, as well as those

besetting the modern exegesis of Duhm, Hackmann and Cheyne, the author suggests that the name Immanuel be understood as expressing "not the prophet's faith, but the false faith, the ungrounded confidence of the king and the people." "It is a name," he says, "which a Jewish woman soon to give birth might naturally give to her son, but which the experiences of such a son even in his earliest infancy would contradict." The sign would then consist "not in the name nor in the lot of the boy, but in the relation of the two, in the contradiction of the name by the lot." Prof. Porter's further statement and defense of this theory are instructive from more than one point of view. Over against Duhm, Hackmann and Cheyne his position is strong, because it avoids the mutilation of the text of chapter 7 by the arbitrary rejection of verses 15 and 17. If one of the two sides of the sign is to be sacrificed, to do so in the purely exegetical way proposed by Prof. Porter with the effect of eliminating the promise is certainly preferable to doing it by critical means with the opposite effect of removing the threatening. But what we are most concerned with at the present moment is the extent to which the author has been influenced in reaching this conclusion by his general conception of the early prophetic standpoint. The first and chief argument he urges in support of his view is "that Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah and Jeremiah are not to be regarded as the authors, but rather as the critics of the national, or so-called Messianic hope." In other words, Prof. Porter has felt and justly felt that the hitherto universally accepted exegesis of Chapters 7 and 8 is inconsistent with the modern conception of prophetism, and that the novel way in which the most recent criticism has endeavored to remove the contradiction has been unsuccessful; that accordingly, another interpretation is called for to effect a thorough and permanent reconciliation. It must be even acknowledged that the view commended by him for this purpose is in the highest degree ingenious. Nevertheless, we do not believe that it will stand

either the historical or the exegetical test. How could Isaiah, with his undoubtedly profound diagnosis of Ahaz's character, expect from the king a state of mind in which he would ascribe his deliverance to Jehovah? Ahaz's fault did not consist, as Prof. Porter attempts to make out, in false confidence, but in unbelief. He relied rather upon the power of the Assyrian than upon Jehovah as the national God. The contrary cannot be proven from the admonition to fear Jehovah in chapter 8:13, 14, for the opposite of fear which is here condemned consists not in false confidence, but in neglect of Jehovah, in the despising of the waters of Shiloh that go softly (verse 6). And if Ahaz was not subject to unbelief, why did Isaiah offer a sign at all? Further, even to Prof. Porter's exegesis, chapter 8:9, 10, remains a barrier which only critical excision can remove. In view of all this we prefer to retain the traditional exegesis of Isaiah 7 with its distinction of three stages in the career of Immanuel, and must insist upon it that the difficulties which it places in the way of the modern theory still await a satisfactory solution.^[175]

Cheyne has briefly commented upon Prof. Porter's exegesis in the *Journal of Biblical Literature* for 1897 (p. 131). He considers the difficulties in the way of accepting it insuperable, and professes unwillingness to face its ulterior critical consequences. Unfortunately Cheyne has, as he himself states on this occasion, refrained from setting forth any positive or constructive view of the development of Isaiah's expectations of the future. He intimates that, if attempting a sketch of this kind, he would take a different course from that of the German scholars. His construction would start from the most probable critical facts and explain Isaiah's apparent inconsistencies by the help of history and psychology. This is a thoroughly sound principle, and it would be most interesting to have the result of its application by Cheyne. We believe, however, that when the help of history and psychology is not scorned out of partiality to the modern hypothesis, there are no sufficient critical grounds to

abandon the unity and genuineness as a whole of Isaiah 28-33.

Chapter 14:24-27 is best assigned to the period of Sargon.^[176] Here again the overthrow of the Assyrian is distinctly foretold. Nor does it remain doubtful whether the prophet places this event before or after the fall of Jerusalem. Even if one were to follow Duhm and Cheyne in excising verse 25b, "then shall his yoke depart from off them and his burden depart from off their shoulder," there would still be the significant statement in verse 25a to the effect that the predicted catastrophe is to befall the enemy in Jehovah's land and upon Jehovah's mountains. This is not merely emphasized, as Duhm thinks, because it must appear that Jehovah and no other god has vanquished Assyria; the thought is clearly implied that Jehovah will not permit that which is his own to be wrested from Him by the invader. To what an extent this conviction of Isaiah was independent of the immediate political outlook appears from a comparison of this prophecy with chapter 20. In the latter, probably belonging to the same time, the prophet shows himself fully aware that the end of the Assyrian's victorious advance is not yet in sight. The Egyptians and all the inhabitants of the Philistine coast-land will be led captive in his train. But this does not for a moment shake his belief in Judah's ultimate escape. Why, then, should Isaiah have allowed this constant element to drop out of his message in the later period, when, so far as we know, he had no such positive assurance that the supremacy of Assyria was still indefinitely to be continued?

The last passage dealing with our subject and dating from before the time of Sennacherib is chapter 17:12-14. I see no reason to separate these verses from the preceding prophecy on Damascus and Ephraim, for the progress of thought is precisely the same as that in Chapters 7 and 8. But no matter whether, adhering to this connection, we date the oracle from before 732, or

with Cheyne from before 723, in either case it proves that at a comparatively early date Isaiah foretold the miscarriage of the Assyrian attack upon Judah.

^[177] A special feature is the suddenness of the blow here predicted: between evening and morning the enemies are swept away. As has been observed, this feature is likewise characteristic of the discourses in Chapters 28-33, so that it supplies a link of connection between the two. As in the preceding instance, the judgment upon Assyria is thought of as coupled with salvation for Judah. The triumphant tone of verse 14 admits of no other interpretation than that the oppressed will survive the oppressor.

Now it might be said that the prophecies just reviewed, while conclusive for the earlier period, do not prove Isaiah to have cherished similar expectations as late as the reign of Sennacherib. We are, however, able to trace the presence and vitality of the idea in question up to the very eve of the delivery of the discourses in Chapters 28-33. Chapter 10 and chapter 18 are by an increasing number of scholars assigned to the Sennacherib-crisis. It is uncertain which of these two prophecies is prior in time. But in all likelihood both still precede the utterances of Chapters 28-31.^[178] In both the prophet speaks of a judgment on the Assyrian as imminent. In both also this judgment is expected in the form of a direct divine interposition.^[179] Here, then, we have evidence that still immediately before the developments reflected in Chapters 28-31 the prophet's mind was powerfully stirred by the prospect of the Assyrian's punishment. Is it possible to believe that all of a sudden this expectation was obliterated from the consciousness of Isaiah, so that he could pass through a period of great tension and almost feverish productivity without betraying by a single word what had but a little while before claimed his supreme interest? If this can be believed, every idea of continuity in the prophet's thinking and feeling may as well be dismissed. The discovery that against his counsel and behind his back an alliance with Egypt was being

concluded, will not of itself account for so radical a change of outlook. For Isaiah had never conditioned his prediction of the enemies' downfall on abstention from such an alliance, not even when the offer of it was definitely made. In chapter 18 he contents himself with announcing to the Egyptians that it is unnecessary, because Jehovah alone will work the deliverance. Had the matter presented itself as conditional to his mind, it would have been necessary to state this here in precise terms. On the other hand, if the prophecy is clothed in absolute terms, and if it embodied to Isaiah a fundamental principle, the principle of the supremacy of Jehovah's purpose in regard to Israel over the plan of the Assyrian, then we must even go one step further and say: It was impossible for a man of Isaiah's temper to revoke the same or let it pass out of notice in silence. The only psychologically conceivable and theologically consistent attitude to take, in case the maturing of an alliance threatened to interfere with the divine plan, was to declare that the unbelieving promoters of the scheme would perish, that the Egyptian help would utterly fail and that after all the purpose of Jehovah alone would stand. And this is precisely the train of thought we have found to prevail in the discourses of Chapters 28-32.

Hackmann is the only writer who has as yet attempted to correlate the negative results of the criticism of Isaiah 28-31 with the data furnished by the other prophecies, so as to outline a sketch of the development of the prophet's predictions concerning the future from the beginning till the end of his activity. It is interesting to notice how this acute critic meets the difficulty here confronting him. The two factors entering into the problem are, on the one hand, the positive assurances of Chapters 8, 10, 14, 17, 18, 20, that Judah will be rescued; on the other hand, the equally positive predictions in Chapters 28-31 (as reconstructed by the critics) that even Jerusalem will fall into the enemies' hands. Hackmann removes the contradiction in a twofold

manner. First, he rules out chapter 8:9, 10, and 14:12-14 as un-Isaianic. These, it will be observed, are the passages where the deliverance of Judah is most unambiguously associated with the destruction of the enemy. In regard to chapter 18, it must be remembered that the critics amputate verse 7 on account of its Deuteronomistic implications. Even so, however, the clear meaning remains that the ruin which Jehovah is preparing for the Assyrian aims at the deliverance of his people. For this the Egyptian alliance was intended, and the prophet represents God's plan as rendering the latter superfluous. It is here that Hackmann resorts to his second means of escape from an unwelcome conclusion. He so interprets the figures of verse 4, 5, that the element of unconditional promise disappears. Jehovah is waiting and looking on from His dwelling place because Judah has not yet been properly educated in the Assyrian affliction, nor has yet sufficiently learned her true dependence on God. Unfortunately this exegesis is excluded by the manner in which the prophet himself works out the figure. What Jehovah waits for is not a condition of ripeness in the Judeans, but in the Assyrians, the moment at which the latter's plan will be on the point of bearing fruit. The whole thought of the conditionality of the divine purpose is imported into the chapter from without.

The adjustment of chapter 10 is attempted partly by critical, partly by exegetical means. This is the piece which, Hackmann concedes, lends a semblance of support to the traditional view. In its present form it undoubtedly conveys the thought that the Assyrian's destruction serves the double purpose of punishing his arrogance and of delivering the Judeans. But this, according to Hackmann, is a misunderstanding arising from reading the prophecy (verses 5-19) in the light of the much later appendix (verses 20-27). The latter alone is responsible for the combination of the two above-mentioned ideas. On the contrary, verses 5-19, when interpreted by

themselves, are not concerned with the destiny of Jerusalem, but exclusively with the fate of the Assyrian. The latter's sin does not consist in having overstepped the divinely set limits of his career by attacking Jerusalem, but in the boastful spirit in which he has performed his mission. *Not before*, but *after* Jerusalem has been conquered will the enemy be checked and rebuked. "The whole work of Jehovah," in verse 12, includes the delivery of the capital into the Assyrian's hands. Thus there is not a word of comfort for the Judeans in the whole prophecy. Hackmann endeavors to commend this exegesis by the general consideration that, after having repeatedly and emphatically announced the fall of Jerusalem, Isaiah could not in the moment of danger itself revoke all his threatenings simply because Hezekiah had at the eleventh hour been compelled by the failure of his own plans to throw himself upon the help of Jehovah.^[180]

It is not necessary to insist for the refutation of this view upon the integrity of chapter 10 as a whole. The argument may with greater briefness and more apologetic weight be based on what Hackmann and the other critics admit to be Isaianic material, verse 5-19. Beforehand, however, it should be noticed, how Hackmann approaches chapter 10, from the supposition that the dispute about Chapters 28-31 has been already decided in favor of the composite character of these chapters. On this supposition Isaiah had in all his utterances of the Sennacherib-crisis subsequent to chapter 18 predicted nothing but ruin to Jerusalem, and Hackmann is, of course, justified in asking whether under such circumstances the prophet could suddenly at the last moment change his message to one of promise. In other words, the combined force of the critically manipulated sections of Chapters 28-31 is brought to bear upon chapter 10, and is allowed to influence the exegesis. The result will be totally different, if, not prejudging the case of Chapters 28-31, but admitting the element of promise there as possibly genuine, we examine

chapter 10:5-19 on its own merits. Though Hackmann correctly affirms that in this section the central idea is the fate of Assyria, and not the future of Jerusalem, yet the prophet could scarcely avoid revealing indirectly what issue from the impending crisis he expected for the city. The first sin laid to the Assyrian's charge is that, instead of merely despoiling the nation, against which Jehovah sent him, he plans its extirpation. This places the limit to which Jehovah desires His instrument to go in afflicting Judah, this side the destruction of Jerusalem, which would have been equivalent to extirpation. When in the boastful speech put into the mouth of the great king the climax of the latter's presumption is found in this, that he thinks to conquer Jerusalem as easily as the other cities enumerated, this already indicates that to the prophet the recognition of the uniqueness of Jehovah was associated with the protection of Mount Zion. Not the invasion of the Judean country, but the attack upon the capital excites Isaiah's indignation, and this because it is inspired on the Assyrian's part by a belief in the superiority of himself and his gods over Jehovah. Though not absolutely necessary, it is most natural to ascribe to the prophet the opinion that the king will be unable to make good his boast.^[181] Finally, the phrase, "all his work on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem" (verse 12), suggests the idea of a punitive treatment issuing not into the negative result of destruction, but in the positive one of reformation. If Cheyne were right in combining 14:24-27 with 10:13, 14, this would furnish additional proof that the catastrophe is expected before the Assyrian will have succeeded in taking Jerusalem.

A few words should be said regarding chapter 22. It has been urged that the contents of verses 1-14 can be better explained if only the threatening sections of Chapters 28-31 are Isaianic, than in case the entire complex of these discourses must be considered genuine.^[182] It has further been claimed that the captivity of Shebna predicted in verse 18 cannot have been expected

by the prophet as an isolated event, but must have been thought of as comprised in the captivity of the entire city.^[183] In view of the uncertain exegesis of verses 1-14, and the difficulty of determining the exact situation there presupposed, as well as the point of time at which to place it, no sweeping conclusions on either side can be safely drawn from this passage. Expositors are not even agreed whether the tenses in verses 3-13 are prophetic or historical perfects, relate to the future or to the past. While some affirm the former, others the latter, of late a third view has been proposed by Hackmann, who would take verses 2b-5 as prediction, and the remainder as descriptive of what had already occurred. Without entering upon a discussion of the merits of these various views, we may note a few points. First, if verse 5 were to be taken as predictive (Cheyne: "A day of tumult, etc., has in store Jehovah of Hosts;" similarly Hackmann), and the words were spoken after the siege of Jerusalem had been raised by the Assyrian troops (cf. verses 1, 2, 13), it would follow that Isaiah even at that moment still expected that the enemy would return and the end would be the fall of the city, and this would contradict the hopeful passages of Chapters 28-31, and in so far prove the latter spurious. Neither of these two assumptions, however, seems to be necessary or even probable. The feasting on the housetops of verse 1 must be the same as that referred to in verse 13, and, inasmuch as the latter was inspired by the sentiment, "tomorrow we die," it describes not the joy of unexpected deliverance, but the wild orgies of despair.^[184] The Assyrian troops are still before the city. Consequently verse 5 may be translated in the present tense: "This is a day of tumult, etc." Or, if the future be insisted upon, even this does not necessarily exclude the genuineness of the promissory sections in Chapters 28-31. In view of the anxious crisis still to be gone through, Isaiah might well speak of an approaching day of tumult and trampling and confusion, while nevertheless believing in the ultimate

deliverance of the city. There is nothing in the terms used which suggests that Jerusalem must be taken, for in verse 4 "the destruction of the daughter of my people" refers to the past, to the devastated Judean country. Secondly, as regards verses 6-14, that these are retrospective follows both from the use of the tenses and from the words **)whh Mwyb** in verse 12. The prophet here speaks after the enemy has departed. But the form in which his threatening is clothed in nowise compels us to think that an impending destruction of the city was in his mind. The sentence, "Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die," is entirely general in its tone.^[185] Thirdly, it is exceedingly difficult to imagine how Isaiah, after having unremittingly represented the coming crisis as involving the destruction of Jerusalem, could, after the event had proved him mistaken, coolly claim that it had been intended to produce conversion (verse 12). The critically reconstructed text of Isaiah 28-31 certainly does not read as a preparation for a call to repentance. It strikes the note of absolute reprobation. Its terms are such as to leave no room for the inexpiable sin as a still higher stage of iniquity. After the issue had given the lie to Isaiah's dismal forebodings and justified the optimism of the politicians, the prophet must have possessed more than ordinary naiveté, if he expected the words of verse 14 to be taken for anything else than the impotent threat of a deluded visionary. On the other hand, the interpretation of Chapters 28-31 in their integrity, not only leaves room for, but distinctly brings out the thought, that Jehovah's wonderful dealings with Jerusalem are intended to lead to her conversion. Finally, that Isaiah expected the banishment of Shebna to be brought about as a result of the conquest of Jerusalem and in connection with a general captivity of the people, the words give us no right to infer.

IV Micah^(TOC)

The prophecy of Micah shares with that of Zechariah the distinction of having been among the first to which the modern hypothesis of post-exilic expansion and redaction was applied. Stade's study on Deutero-Zechariah, wherein the author disclosed his program for the new critical treatment of the prophetic writings, appeared as the opening article in the periodical which has been edited by him since 1881, the *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, and in the next installment of the same year this was followed by his "Observations on the Book of Micah." Owing to this early presentation of the case, Stade's proposals in reference to Micah have received more elaborate and exhaustive discussion, both from his own standpoint and from that opposed to his hypothesis, than any other question brought to the front by the recent development of prophetic criticism. Apart from current articles and views expressed in works on Introduction and in the latest commentaries, the controversy has called forth two extended monographs on our subject, that of Ryssel, *Investigations on the State of the Text and the Authenticity of the Book of Micah* (1887), and that of Elhorst, *The Prophecy of Micah* (1891), the former a German, the latter a Dutch treatise. In both not merely are the points at issue examined, but likewise a full survey is given of the history of modern critical opinion up to the date of publication. Since, however, neither of these two books has appeared in an English translation, it will not be superfluous to give a brief outline of the course taken by the discussion, before we endeavor to estimate its bearing upon the contest between the old and the new conception of prophetism and of its place in Old Testament history.

Stade was not the first who denied to Micah the authorship of a considerable part of the book bearing his name. Ewald, in the second edition of his *Prophets of the Old Covenant* (1867), assigned Chapters 6 and 7 to the time of Manasseh on account of the totally different historical and religious situation reflected in them. Though admitting that the chronology does not absolutely require this, yet for reasons found in the dramatic form, the style and the language of this section, Ewald thinks that not Micah, but some other prophet is the writer. In reference to chapter 2:12, 13, also, this critic anticipated the later conclusions by assuming that these verses are a marginal annotation either from the hand of Micah himself, or from an ancient reader, and that they are intended to illustrate the kind of false prophesying referred to in verse 11. ^[186] While the latter view, in this specific form, was soon shown to be untenable, Ewald's opinion about a part at least of chapter 7 received the support of Wellhausen. Wellhausen discriminates between 6:1-7:6, on the one hand, and 7:7-20, on the other. While not positively committing himself for or against the derivation of the former section from Micah, he finds that 7:7-20 is plainly written from a standpoint about a century later than the time of Manasseh and presupposes the exile, and that the obvious affinity between it and Isaiah 40 goes to support this judgment. ^[187]

Meanwhile among Dutch critics a discussion had arisen in reference to Chapters 4 and 5, which in a somewhat similar manner forestalled the views subsequently developed by Stade on this section of the book. In vol. 5 of the *Theologisch Tijdschrift* (1871), Oort published an article on "The Beth-Ephrathah of Micah 5:1." Attaching himself to the conjectural emendation of this verse proposed by Roorda, so as to make it read, "And thou *house of Ephrathah*," instead of "And thou *Bethlehem Ephrathah*," Oort infers from Genesis 35:16 *seq.*, 48:7, ^[188] 1 Samuel 10:2 and Jeremiah 31:15, that there

was an Ephrath in the territory of Benjamin, and that it is this Ephrath that is meant in the emended text of the prophet. He further identifies the "house of Ephrathah" with the house of Saul, and on the basis of this identification makes Micah predict the rejection of the Davidic dynasty, and the return of that of Saul to power in the person of the victorious ruler of the future. In the light of this interpretation, Oort then finds in the Migdal 'Eder of 4:8 another place in Benjamin^[189] associated with the house of Saul, so that this verse contains the same promise concerning the restoration of this house as 5:1. But, these two fixed points being given, it follows that 4:8 brings the contrast to 3:12 Zion to be plowed as a field—the Benjaminite Migdal 'Eder to rise to royal glory. What stands between must therefore be an interpolation. Similarly 4:11-13 breaks the connection between verse 10 and verse 14, and thereby proves itself foreign to the original prophecy. These two excised pieces form a continuous oracle of one of those false prophets so severely denounced by Micah. Micah's genuine discourse consists of 3:12, 4:8-10, 14, 5:1 *seq.* ^[190]

This hypothesis of Oort was subjected to a searching criticism by Kuenen in the next volume of the same periodical (1872). The article is written in Kuenen's best vein, and may be cited not only as a masterpiece of that objective, incisive, luminous treatment of a difficult problem in which the author stands unrivaled, but also as one of the few instances where the arguments advanced are so final and convincing as to leave the opposing view beyond all possibility of resuscitation. The attempted exegesis and analysis are shown to be impossible as well as unfounded. Kuenen does not offer any new theory of his own. In regard to 4:11-13 he recognizes the difficulty of reconciling the situation there presupposed with that reflected in the verses preceding. But even here he does not turn the obscurity of the connection into a plea for denying the genuineness of the passage. It is

further to be observed that incidentally in his argument Kuenen quotes from the concluding section of the book as from a prophecy of Micah, which leads us to infer that at the time he had not adopted the view of Ewald. ^[191]

Here the matter rested for almost ten years. The controversy was renewed along the whole line by the above-mentioned publication of Stade. Although this critic from the outset confined himself to chapter 2:12, 13, and Chapters 4, 5, being evidently of the opinion that the question of the two closing chapters of the book had been finally disposed of by Ewald, yet in the course of the discussion it soon appeared that even this later section had not yet ceased, in the opinion of at least some liberal critics, to be debatable ground. In regard to 2:12, 13, Stade undertakes to show that the symmetrical structure of the context in which these verses are placed requires their expulsion and proves the necessity of connecting 3:1 with 2:11. As to its contents, the passage has nothing in common with the Messianic utterances of Isaiah, but resembles rather Jeremiah 31:8 and Isaiah 52:12. It presupposes that Israel is in dispersion and must be gathered into a flock. All this leads him to declare these verses an exilic or post-exilic insertion from the hand of one who lived in the circle of ideas of Deutero-Isaiah. Stade also tries to assign a motive for this insertion. The interpolator may have referred 2:8-10 to crimes perpetrated on fugitives from Northern-Israel, or may have desired to place his own words about the gathering of Israel from among the Gentiles in contrast with verse 9, where the taking away of Jehovah's glory from the young children means to drive them into idolatry by ejection from Jehovah's land.

Much more complicated is Stade's hypothesis in reference to Chapters 4 and 5. It may be briefly stated as follows: 4:1-4, 11-5:4a, 6-14 reveal their close connection by the conception of the "many nations" which they have in

common. But this is a conception belonging distinctly to the post-Ezekielian development of prophecy; consequently we must assume that at some date after the exile the three pieces just named were added as a continuous discourse to the genuine work of Micah. The motive for this insertion lay in the one-sidedness of the prophecy of judgment in Chapters 1-3. ^[192] At a still later time some one who attributed the whole thus obtained to Micah wondered at the absence of all reference to the Babylonian exile, as an episode intervening between the prophet's own historical standpoint and the eschatological era to which the attack of the many nations on Jerusalem belongs. To fill this gap in the assumed perspective of Micah, the two passages 4:5-10 and 5:4b, 5, were composed and inserted. The final arrangement of the inserted material was determined by the desire to make 4:1-4 contrast with 3:12.

From three quarters these proposals received at least, a partial support, although the particular elements of the hypothesis accepted or dissented from were in each case different. First. Giesebrecht expressed himself to the effect that even before the publication of Stade's views he had become convinced of the spuriousness of chapter 4, but could not agree with the rejection of chapter 5. ^[193] In replying to this, ^[194] Stade endeavors to strengthen his position as regards chapter 5 by an extended discussion of the reference to Bethlehem in verse 1, as well as by an attempt to show that the polemic against the Asherim and Mazzeboth in verses 12, 13, proves this passage to be later than the reformation of King Josiah. On the former point it is interesting to observe that Stade seems unaware of the thorough manner in which the Ephrath-question had been sifted and conclusively settled once for all by Kuenen in the criticism of Oort above referred to (1872). Kuenen's presentation of the case, though written eleven years before, will serve equally well as an answer to the German critic, who infers from the

identification of Bethlehem and Ephrathah that the prophecy must be post-exilic, as to his Dutch predecessor, who thought that Micah, because speaking of Ephrath, must have expected a deliverer from the house of Saul—for both contentions rest on the common basis *that in the pre-exilic period only a Benjaminitic Ephrath was known*, and it was precisely this basis which Kuenen had effectually destroyed.

Second among the critics to accept Stade's conclusions was Cornill. But while agreeing with him as to Chapters 4 and 5, Cornill takes occasion from this avowal to revive the whole question concerning 6:1-7:6, the debate on which Stade had treated as definitely closed by Ewald's and Wellhausen's arguments. In his opinion, 6:1 reads as a justification of 3:12, and everything in 6:1-7:6, which had been applied to the reign of Manasseh, will apply equally well to the time of Ahaz, not excepting 6:7, so that from a chronological point of view no objection can be raised against Micah's authorship. Cornill declares that the origin of the book becomes a riddle to him, if after chapter 3 nothing is from the hand of the prophet, for to neutralize the pessimism of Chapters 1-3, the addition of Chapters 4 and 5 fully sufficed, and for appending a second piece no further motive existed. In his view the book consists of three genuine parts, to each of which a later prophecy has been joined, viz., Chapters 1-2:11, with the appendix 2:12, 13; chapter 3 with the appendix Chapters 4 and 5; Chapters 6-7:6, with the appendix 7:7-20. ^[195]

The third, who accepted Stade's results on some points, while taking issue with him on others, was Nowack. ^[196] The agreement, however, extends no further than 2:12, 13, whereas on almost every point of Chapters 4 and 5 the validity of Stade's arguments is denied. The latter's analysis is found faulty: 4:11-13 do not require 5:1-3, indeed leave nothing to be done by the Messiah;

5:2 even disagrees with the former passage in which no "giving up" is assumed; 4:11 *seq.* similarly contradicts 5:6 *seq.*, because in the latter only a remnant appears as being saved; finally 4:11-13 also clash with 3:12. Consequently these verses, instead of forming a unit with 4:1-4 and 4:14-5:3, 6-14, as Stade had contended, must, according to Nowack, be considered a later insertion which introduces a disharmonious element into the context. ^[197] Of the remainder Nowack upholds the genuineness, except of the words **lbb d(t)bw** in 4:10, which are declared a gloss; 5:4, 5, which he considers interpolated; and 4:5-8, in regard to which he is non-committal. The motive for inserting the gloss in verse 10 and for adding verses 5-8, must be sought in the contradiction which was felt to exist between Micah's prophecy of Jerusalem's conquest by the Assyrian and the actual outcome of events. As this will not apply to 5:4, 5, Nowack confesses his inability to explain the insertion of these verses. The conclusion of the article is directed against Cornill's attempt to save the genuineness of 6:1-7:6.

In a brief statement immediately subjoined to Nowack's article, Stade replied to the latter's arguments, and upheld the soundness of his hypothesis. Among those who expressed dissent from the new conclusions was Reuss. ^[198] Robertson Smith also held to Chapters 1-5 as a single well-connected book, with the qualification that in chapter 4:8 the words, "thou shalt come unto Babylon," and the whole of chapter 4:11-13, are interpolated, and that 2:12, 13, require at least to be transposed. ^[199] Cheyne contented himself with assuming the later origin of 4:5-10, 5:4, 5. ^[200] A more hearty defense of the genuineness not merely of the material attacked in Chapters 4 and 5, but of the contents of the book as a whole, was made by Ryssel in his treatise mentioned at the beginning of this article. Here all the objections made to Micah's authorship from the various quarters of the critical side are carefully

collected and exhaustively investigated. Ryssel's treatment so fully takes into account all possibilities of the problem that it may be considered the final word on the question from the conservative standpoint.

A new departure was inaugurated by Elhorst, who proposed to remove all difficulties by assuming that the prophecy was at one time written in sections forming two parallel columns on the same page. A later copyist, instead of taking first a section from the right-hand column and next one from the left-hand column, as had been the order in which the writer wished his manuscript, to be read, put all the sections of the first column and all the sections of the second column together. The following table will make plain what is, according to Elhorst, the original arrangement of the prophecy, and how from it, in his opinion, the present disorder arose:

It will be perceived that Elhorst does not draw chapter 1 within the scope of his hypothesis. He further thinks that Chapters 6 and 7 originally preceded Chapters 4 and 5, and accounts for their present position by the additional hypothesis that some copyist found the prophecy on four pieces containing chapter 1, Chapters 2, 3, Chapters 6, 7, Chapters 4, 5, respectively. By mistaking the sequence of the third and fourth pieces he made them exchange places. A misunderstanding on the part of still another copyist is assumed to explain the displacement of 7:13. While in principle accepting Stade's view of a post-exilic redaction of the genuine prophecy, Elhorst is much more moderate than Stade in its application. Even Chapters 6 and 7 in their entirety are vindicated to Micah. The only piece given to the later writer is chapter 4:9-14 + 5:8. This must be post-exilic, Elhorst thinks, because it predicts an attack upon Jerusalem subsequent to the Babylonian captivity. ^[201]

Between the discussions of Ryssel and Elhorst falls the appearance of vol. 2 of the new edition of Kuenen's *Historisch-Kritisch Onderzoek* (1889). Here

Stade's hypothesis is still characterized as "a most singular opinion," the validity of his arguments derived from the universalism in 4:1-3, from the identification of Bethlehem and Ephrathah in 5:1, from the polemic against the Mazzeboth and the Asherim in 5:9-14, is denied. At the same time the influence of Stade's criticism is perceptible in the admission that in chapter 4:6-8 the captivity and the cessation of Israel's national existence form the point of departure of the prophecy, whilst also 4:11-13 leave the Assyrian period far behind and remind us of Ezekiel 38, *seq.*, and Zechariah 12, 14. With much hesitation Kuenen concludes that 4:9 *seq.*, 14-5:5, 6-8, (also 9-14, in a less pronounced form than the present one) may have descended from Micah. Of a later exilic and post-exilic date are 4:6-8, 11-13, and the redaction of 5:9-14. Chapters 6:1-7:6 was written in all probability during the reign of Manasseh, but not by Micah. The close of the book, 7:7-20, translates us into the Babylonian captivity. ^[202]

Though this position of Kuenen marks a considerable advance beyond that taken seventeen years before in his debate with Oort, it was soon rendered conservative by the steady movement of criticism toward the denial of Micah's connection with Chapters 4 and 5 *in toto*. ^[203] Wellhausen in 1892 finds that 2:12, 13, presuppose the exile and the diaspora and simply prefixes to 4:1-5:14 the title of appendix. The only passage in reference to which he makes serious reserve is 5:9-13. This, he admits, might without difficulty be assigned to Micah. Curiously enough even here Wellhausen seems to be non-committal in regard to the authorship of 6:1-7:6; 6:1-6, he says, fit excellently into the time of Manasseh and that Micah wrote them is not impossible. On the other hand, in 7:1-6 marks of affinity with Malachi and the Psalms are pointed out. Cheyne, in the introduction to Robertson Smith's *The Prophets of Israel* (1895), thinks that "with regard to the Book of Micah, it is becoming more and more doubtful whether more than two or three fragments of the

heterogeneous collection of fragments in Chapters 4-7 can have come from that prophet." Volz recognizes no more than 4:9-10a, 14; 5:9-14, as genuine remnants. The last-mentioned passage bears, however, at present, a different meaning from that intended by the prophet, who simply predicted the destruction of military power and of cultic objects because in these the national life was embodied, and not from any reform motive. In verse 14 he thinks that not the Gentiles but Judah was threatened by the prophet in the original form of the verse. Volz is also willing to admit that in 5:4 *seq.* there may be hidden some genuine words of Micah, but these are now beyond the possibility of restoration. Chapters 2:12 *seq.*, 4:6 *seq.*, 10b-13, 5:6-8, are of one author and exilic: they were inserted to break the force of the genuine predictions of doom in whose neighborhood they stand, while for the same purpose 5:9-14 was rewritten. Chapter 4:1-4 was probably added in the time of Deutero-Isaiah. A post-exilic poet interpolated 4:8, 5:1, 3, 4a. Still later accretions are 4:5 and 5:4 *seq.* Volz acknowledges that in regard to the details of the composition of chapter 4 *seq.*, no certainty can be reached. But that the greater part does not come from Micah is absolutely certain in his view.

In conclusion of this historical review the present views of Nowack, as formulated in the volume from his hand on the Minor Prophets in the *Handkommentar zum Alten Testament*, should be noticed. As stated above, in 1884 this critic entered the lists against Stade, not merely in opposition to the latter's analysis, but equally to defend the genuineness of the greater part of Chapters 4 and 5. It is significant of the drift of present-day criticism toward the acceptance of Stade's principles that in this newest exposition of Micah all the fundamental points, which the author had contested with such skill and vigor thirteen years before, are now abandoned. To be sure, Nowack still endeavors to vindicate 4:9, 10a, 14 + 5:9-13 for Micah, but even this is qualified and greatly weakened by a "perhaps." Besides, from a doctrinal

point of view the retention of these fragments is quite unimportant, whereas the surrender of the other pieces is of far-reaching consequence. Still more significant, however, is the fact that this change of opinion is not justified by any refutation of the author's own former arguments. Apparently the difference between now and then is due to the greater force with which the *prior* principles of Stade's method appeal to the critical consciousness of the times. The facts have remained what they were, but the relative weight of all objective data has decreased in the same proportion as the idea of development has become the predominating factor in shaping the modern views on prophetism and the prophetic literature.

We now proceed to consider the bearing of the disintegration of Micah's book on the main principles of the critical hypothesis and also the *posterior* grounds, which, it is claimed, justify the analysis. The discussion divides itself into three parts. Within the limits of Chapters 1-3 only one passage is involved, viz., 2:12, 13. Here it is the Messianic element (whether in the wider impersonal or in the specific personal sense depends on the exegesis) whose right to a place among the ideas of Micah is disputed. Of the two following chapters scarcely anything is left intact, and the doctrinal interest at stake concerns four points: (1) The antiquity of the idea of universalism; (2) that of the fully developed Messianic hope; (3) the pre-Ezekielian origin of the eschatological idea of a world-attack upon Zion; (4) the pre-Deuteronomic date of the polemic against certain features of the popular cult. The debate about the authorship of Chapters 6 and 7, finally, derives its Biblico-theological interest from the testimony which the closing section (7:7-20), if genuine, bears to the promissory outlook of early prophecy.

Chapter 2:12, 13, contain the prediction of the reassembling of all Israel and

their triumphant breaking forth under the leadership of their king. The grounds on which this passage is pronounced late are partly derived from the contents and partly from the connection. As to the former, it is claimed that the historical situation reflected in these verses is not that of the age of Micah, but of the exile. As to the latter, it is deemed psychologically inconceivable that the prophet himself should have passed without transition from the fierce tone of rebuke and the stern announcement of evil characterizing his previous discourse to the note of comfort and promise which is struck in these verses. It has been suggested that these objections may be removed at one stroke by finding here, instead of an expression of Micah's own hopes, an illustration of the deceitful hopes preached by those false prophets whom, according to verse 11, the people delighted to hear. This view was held long ago by Aben Ezra, and has been revived in modern times by such writers as Roorda,^[204] Ewald,^[205] Kleinert,^[206] and others. But according to 3:11, the false prophets would not even consider the possibility of evil coming upon Israel: by admitting that the people were to be reduced to a remnant they would have in principle passed over to Micah's standpoint, and their further assurance that Israel would be reassembled again cannot have been quoted as a fundamental point of difference between them and the true prophets, unless we assume that the latter positively contradicted every prospect of restoration, which no one will maintain. Nor can verses 12, 13, be said to form an illustration of the kind of prophesying referred to in verse 11. The prophesying "of wine and strong drink" must relate to a promise of more realistic and sensual pleasures than that of the reassembling of scattered Israel.

Even if the proposed solution were not beset with all these difficulties, it would still, just as much as the ordinary exegesis, remain open to the criticism that the situation presupposed is that of the age of the exile. We

must, therefore, enquire what force there is in this argument. Of the naive form in which certain writers are wont to press it as if every literary representation of the exile as present must invariably involve its actual historical presence, we may dispose without further ceremony. It is an undeniable fact that in certain instances the prophetic consciousness projects itself into a more or less distant time so as to view future events as present or even past. The only question can be whether the starting-point for such a mental process is given in the general historical perspective of Micah. Now the prophet clearly predicts in the undoubtedly genuine portions of his book a captivity not merely of Ephraim, but also of Judah, on a no less extensive scale than that actually brought about by the Chaldeans. This is indeed denied by Robertson Smith, with whom Cheyne expresses agreement. ^[207] But what the latter calls a "capital argument" is very far from convincing. The text of chapter 2:5, from which Robertson Smith infers that after the judgment the congregation of Jehovah remains, is highly obscure and uncertain; perhaps the words on which the argument hinges belong to the sixth verse. ^[208] In verse 4 *the whole people* are made to utter the lamentation that their portion is removed and their fields are divided. Does not this presuppose a national captivity? In 1:16 also the subject, though not explicitly named, can be none other than the personified nation. That the nobility of Israel, "the glory," will flee to the cave of Adullam (1:15) by no means excludes a captivity of the mass. Nothing of course can be inferred from chapter 5:1. Even if we explain the dislike to military equipment and city civilization voiced in 1:13, 5:10, 11, from the prophet's rural sympathies, it by no means gives us the right to infer that his preference for the country districts and their inhabitants must have led him to believe that these would escape from the impending captivity. In general it may be doubted whether, after Amos and Hosea and Isaiah had plainly foretold a deportation of the people *en masse*, and a sort of

prophetic tradition had been formed on this point, Micah could have easily introduced a modification in regard to such a standing feature of the prophecy of judgment. If the evidence of exegesis plainly proved this, we should have to accept it; but this is far from being the case. There is no need, therefore, in order to escape the exilic dating of our passage to follow Ryssel's explanation, who maintains that the exiles are not here represented as constituting the whole of Israel, but that the "totality of Jacob," of which the prophet speaks, is the result of the reunion of the *Grundstock* which has remained in Palestine with the exiles returned from among the Gentiles. Decisive against this view is that the assembling evidently takes place in the foreign land, whence also the assembled forces march forth. Ryssel himself so conceives of it, but without reconciling this representation with the exegesis of verse 12 a proposed by him. So far as I see, a reconciliation could be effected only by supplying the thought that the *Grundstock* first march to the foreign land to deliver their exiled brethren, and then, reunited with these, march back to Palestine as described in verse 13. But if such had been the writer's meaning, he could hardly have failed to state it in explicit terms, since the idea, being quite novel, does not readily suggest itself. ^[209]

It must be granted then, without reserve, that the exile forms the background of the passage under review. But the critics go too far in asserting that this background must be the real historical situation of a later writer, and cannot be the imaginative situation into which Micah projected himself, and out of which he spoke his prophecy of restoration. That the exile as it actually came about fits the description ought certainly not to be used as an argument against its authenticity. Nothing appears which in any way betrays a later standpoint or acquaintance with later facts than those well within the range of vision of the eighth century. Stade indeed thinks that the words reveal affinity to Isaiah 52:15, Jeremiah 31:8, while points of contact with genuine

Messianic oracles of Isaiah are lacking. Waiving the question of the exilic origin of Isaiah 52, of course taken for granted by Stade, this critic himself will not claim that the passages cited are the models upon which the writer of Micah 2:12, 13, framed his prophecy. The similarity of thought and expression is of so general a kind that from a mere comparison nothing can be determined about the sequence of the three passages. As to Isaiah, since Stade expressed the above opinion, it has become more and more recognized that the Messianic prophecies in 8:22-9:6 and 11:1-9 have for their background the captivity of the entire remnant of Israel and the cessation of the Davidic dynasty ruling in the prophet's time. There are other utterances of Isaiah, such as 10:20, 11:11, still more closely resembling Micah 2:12, 13, but unfortunately these are excluded by the critics from the genuine work of the prophet.

After having ascertained that in the contents of the passage there is nothing prejudicial to its genuineness, we are qualified to determine more precisely how much weight can be attributed to considerations drawn from its connection with what precedes or follows. Of course, to show that a prophecy might have been spoken or written by Micah is not equivalent to a demonstration that he must be the author. Just as little, however, does a lack of close connection of itself prove the presence of an interpolated piece. It would seem a sound principle of criticism that, in a text where the contents are unobjectionable, three things are required to make out a clear case of interpolation:

(1) it should be shown that no transition of thought is discoverable; (2) that a later writer could have some adequate motive for inserting the passage where it stands; (3) that after its expulsion from the context the preceding and following words make plausible connection. Especially the second and third

of these requirements should be rigidly insisted upon. Not to do so would mean to ignore the possibility that some genuine part of a prophetic book may have become displaced and strayed into an environment where it appears foreign to the writer's momentary trend of thought without being foreign in principle to his general circle of ideas. Now turning to the case in hand, we find that the difficulty of explaining the transition from verse 11 to verse 12 furnishes the whole basis of the critical contention. Granting for a moment that this difficulty is in reality as great as it is made out to be, still it is insufficient to prove the later origin of our passage unless the other two conditions are complied with. And this has not been done. First of all, no reasonable motive for the insertion can be discovered. The general explanation, that the later writers used to append their work in such places where they felt the need of taking off the sharp edge of an exceptionally severe prediction of judgment by a qualifying promise, does not apply in this instance. Verse 11 is not the climax of a threatening passage, nor is verse 10 sufficiently severe in its tone to have called for such a remedy. Immediately after 1:16 or 2:5 would have been the proper place for interpolating a promise. Stade has suggested a twofold motive from which the insertion might be explained. He thinks that perhaps some reader referred verses 8-10 to crimes perpetrated on fugitives from northern Israel, and thereby was induced to add a prediction about the gathering of the scattered Ephraimites. Or a contrast to verse 9 may have been intended where the taking away of Jehovah's glory from the young children means to drive them into idolatry by expulsion from Jehovah's land: hence the remnant of Israel receives the promise that it will be gathered from among the *Gentiles* who serve idols. Micah, however, does not use Jacob and Israel elsewhere with specific reference to the northern kingdom. The later writer, therefore, in order to make his meaning plain would have been apt to speak of Ephraim as the

subject of the promise. And as to the second suggestion, if such a subtle antithesis had been actually present to his mind, he would surely have stated in so many words that the gathering of verse 12 was to be from among the Gentiles, and would involve the restitution of Jehovah's glory to the exiles. And after all, one cannot help asking if the later writer considered the connection of thought between Micah's words and his own sufficiently lucid, why should not Micah himself have been of the same opinion? If a contrast of this sort is actually implied, there is no reason for asserting that Micah can have had nothing to do with it, except *thea priorione* that the contrast between threatening and promise is foreign to early prophecy.

But, although no plausible motive can be assigned for an interpolation at this precise juncture, yet we might perhaps be persuaded to assume one in case after the removal of verses 12, 13, the continuity of the discourse left nothing to be desired. This, however, is by no means the case. Chapter 2:11 does not read as if intended to close the section which begins at 2:1 or at 2:6. This is acknowledged by those of the critics who believe that the appended passage has been allowed to extrude the genuine conclusion. If 2:11 and 3:1 were to be closely connected we would expect the prophet to have more formally indicated by the use of a personal pronoun that he considered his own announcement of judgment as the direct opposite to the prophesying of wine and strong drink of the other seers.^[210] On the other hand, if verses 12, 13, are genuine words of Micah, the transition from them to 3:1 by means of the simple **rm)w** is perfectly natural. As C.B. Michaelis^[211] has well said, its force may be paraphrased as follows: "But while we are yet but too far away from the longed-for times, which have just been promised, Isayin the meanwhile, viz., in order to complete the list of the iniquities of evil princes and teachers begun in chapter 2. "

Stade has taken special pains to prove that the expulsion of the passage under review is imperatively demanded by the symmetrical structure of the remainder of Chapters 1-3, considered by him a single discourse. He maintains that 3:1 is parallel to 2:7 and 3:8, inasmuch as in each of these three statements Micah defines his attitude over against the sinful rulers and the false prophets. Consequently 3:1 ought to follow immediately upon 2:11, just as 2:7 follows immediately upon 2:6 and 3:8 upon 3:7. There is no reason to deny that in a general sense the sequence of thought is thus correctly indicated. But the symmetry is not so perfect as Stade believes. That the obscure words in 2:7 are spoken by the prophet and define his attitude toward the persons rebuked and threatened in the foregoing is denied by many commentators. It is perhaps even more probable that verse 7 contains the words of the sinners instead of giving the answer of Micah. In that case the parallelism with 3:1 would entirely disappear. And, as Ryssel has already pointed out, 3:1 does not bring so much Micah's "Stellungnahme" in reference to his opponents, as rather a new description of their wickedness. Stade's synopsis of the contents of chapter 2 can thus be improved upon by leaving out altogether the item of Micah's prophetic self-assertion over against the sinful rulers and seers. If verse 7 be taken as words of the sinners, a perfect parallelism results; 2:1-2 and 2:8-9 describe the sin, 2:3-5 and 2:10 announce the judgment, 2:6, 7, and 2:11 finally speak of the resentment which the prophecy of evil awakens in those against whom it is directed. But, as will be perceived, on this scheme Stade's conclusion that 3:1 must have followed immediately upon 2:11 no longer holds. It might be said, to be sure, that if 2:6, 7, is the end of section 1, then 2:11 ought to be the end of section 2. But as section 3, consisting of 3:1-12 is enlarged over against the two preceding ones by the introduction of new elements, and has subjoined to itself a promissory discourse in 4:1 *seq.*, so the prophet might well advance in

section 2 beyond the limits of section 1 by appending the promise of 2:12, 13, which in point of proportion and progress of thought places it midway between what precedes and follows.

After all, it still remains an open question whether a transition in the prophet's mind between verses 11 and 12 cannot be made psychologically conceivable. It must be admitted that we cannot fall back upon the writer's desire to produce a rhetorical contrast, for verse 11 coming between breaks the force of the contrast. No solution can be considered satisfactory which does not take its point of departure in verse 11. Here we have the thought that those who make sensual delights the theme of their message find it easy to gain the popular ear. Now this thought was calculated to awaken in Micah a sense of the disadvantage under which he labored owing to the character of his own message. He had no bright prospect to hold out either for the present or the immediate future. Nevertheless he was conscious of being the herald of an infinitely higher and farther-reaching hope, the hope of salvation after judgment. What is more natural than that under the circumstances he should give utterance to this consciousness for his own relief, though fully aware that a salvation thus conditioned on previous calamity would have no charm for his hearers. There is nothing irrational or unworthy of a true prophet in such a train of thought. The expression of it becomes still more intelligible if we assume that verses 12, 13, did not constitute part of the spoken discourse, but were added afterwards, when, in committing the same to writing, the prophet could give freer vent to his feeling. ^[212]

Passing on to the discussion of Chapters 4 and 5, we may again divide the objections raised against the prophecies here grouped together into two classes. On the one hand, it is alleged that the historical background of some of the sections cannot possibly be that of Micah, and that the several pieces

presuppose entirely different situations out of which or for which they were written. On the other hand, it is believed that the connection of the fragments is so defective and clumsy as to exclude every idea of its representing a continuity of thought in the mind of a single author. The disorder is such that it can be understood only as the result of a more or less complicated process in which the earlier material passed through several hands and was increased by a number of additions or rewritten for the purpose of altering its original meaning.

The central idea of 4:1-5, and the possibility of correlating it to the thought of the eighth-century prophets, has been dealt with in a previous article. As regards Micah in particular, the undisputed part of his prophecy offered no occasion for any direct deliverance on Jehovah's relation to the Gentile world. The only passage throwing light on the prophet's views touching this point is chapter 1:2, where all peoples, the earth and its fullness are called upon to hear God's witness against them. An attempt has been made to limit the part of the peoples, in the transaction described, to that of witnesses, so that the idea of Jehovah's exercising rule over them would not be implied. ^[213] But if the words meant, "Let the Lord God be a witness among you," those against whom the witness is to be borne would also have been named. The passage does prove, therefore, that Micah believed Jehovah concerned in the conduct and destiny of the other nations and that the presuppositions for the universalism expressed in 4:1-5 were not wanting in his thought. But it proves more than this. If the prophet found it necessary to state at the very opening of his prophecy that the divine judgment was directed against the Gentiles as much as against Israel, is it likely that he would have allowed this conviction no further influence on the character of his message? If, as the critics believe, 3:12 is the end of his genuine discourse, there is a remarkable incongruity as well as disproportion between the announcement of the text

and the further working out of the sermon. ^[214]

Verse 4, wanting in Isaiah, Stade considers too sentimental in its tone to be of an early date. He compares 2 Kings 18:31, Leviticus 26:3-5, Deuteronomy 28:1 *seq.* Waiving the question of the late date fixed by the critics for Leviticus and Deuteronomy, it is hard to believe that Micah cannot have appreciated the blessings of peace and expressed his appreciation of them in a proverbial form.

Chapter 4:6, 7, stand in a line with 2:12, 13, so that only a few words of comment are required. Undoubtedly here, also, the exile is presupposed, but not in any form which would imply that the author knew it from actual experience. The figure of the sheep "halting" and "driven away" recurs with the use of the same words in Zephaniah 3:19, and with the use of one of them in Ezekiel 34:16. Inasmuch as these must have been familiar terms of pastoral life, their appearance wherever the figure of the shepherd and his flock appears is perfectly natural. Even if the application of this figure by these prophets to the gathering of Israel proves literary dependence, which we do not believe, there is no reason why the original should not be recognized in Micah. The prophet's discourse abounds in figures derived from his rural surroundings (cf. 2:12, 13; 4:3, 4, 12, 13; 5:6, 7; 6:15; 7:1, 2, 4, 14, and the original way in which the idea of the shepherd is brought in connection with the pastoral antecedents of David as the type of the Messiah in 5:1, 3). ^[215]

Attention has also been called to the technical use of **tyr)#**, "a remnant," in verse 7. ^[216] Standing parallel with "a strong nation," this expression, it is said, must be a title of honor and promise. There would be something strange in this only if we did not know that with Isaiah already the term **r)#** had obtained a fixed meaning in which it was associated not merely with the judgment of the present, but likewise with the restoration of the future. Still

further, exception is taken to the idea of Jehovah's kingship as dependent on Zechariah 14:9. To this the answer has been given that this idea is protected by its prominence in Isaiah. Since this kingship was identified with Israel's national existence, the restoration would naturally assume to the prophet the form of a renewal of Jehovah's rule over his people, which had been suspended by the captivity.

In verses 8-10 little is found by the critics to which suspicion can attach. In fact, verses 9, 10a are the one fragment of chapter 4 in reference to whose possible or plausible genuineness a certain consensus has begun to form itself. As may be seen from the historical survey given above, Oort., Kuenen, Nowack, Volz, concede it to Micah; even Wellhausen is not positive in expressing the contrary opinion. Against verse 8 Stade advances the trite argument that "the *former* dominion" presupposes the cessation of the Davidic kingdom. Nevertheless Stade himself considers verses 8-10 from one hand; in verse 9 on his own interpretation the later writer artificially transports himself backwards into the time of Micah as his apparent present and out of it projects himself into the Chaldean crisis as his ideal present. Why then, supposing always that Micah could imagine a restoration at all, should we deem him incapable of going through the same mental process in the opposite direction? In verse 10 those critics who uphold the genuineness reject the words, "and shalt come even unto Babylon," as a gloss added *ex eventu*. In so far as this opinion results from anti-supernaturalistic bias it would be useless to argue against it. That there is nothing external to mark the clause as a gloss is shown by the fact that other critics, like Stade, who treat the whole context as *avaticinium ex eventu*, find nothing objectionable in it and treat it as of one piece with the rest. A difficulty is further found in Jeremiah 26:19, where the destruction of Jerusalem predicted in Micah 3:12 is represented as referring to the Assyrian crisis under King Hezekiah, and as having been averted by

the repentance of people and king. But, as Ryssel and others have shown, whatever may have been the prophet's own meaning or the ultimate divine intent of the prophecy, it was quite possible for Micah's and Jeremiah's contemporaries to connect the idea of deportation to Babel with an Assyrian invasion. It would be rash, therefore, to conclude that in Jeremiah's days either the whole prophecy of chapter 4:9, 10, or at least the words referring to Babylon were not known. ^[217]

With verses 11-13 we reach that part of the chapter in the denial of whose genuineness the recent critics, however varying their views in other respects, are unanimous. As verses 9, 10a are recognized as the one fragment which may perhaps be from Micah, so this piece is before all others recognized as the one that must be late. A difference is, however, to be observed, as to the ground on which this judgment is based by the several critics. While Stade proceeds on the principle that the whole idea of an attack of many nations upon Zion is post-Ezekielian, most of the others take the position that, while the contents of verses 11-13 *in themselves* admit of Micah's authorship, yet the contradiction between them and what immediately precedes renders it psychologically impossible that both should be from the same writer. Undoubtedly Stade's view has the advantage of greater consistency. In the consciousness of the early prophets as at present defined, there is hardly a place for a prediction of this type. For not merely are the defeat and the destruction of the Gentile nations that attack Zion foretold, but in verse 11 their hostility is represented as inspired by the desire "to profane" her, i.e., to prove by the conquest of Zion that her claims to special sacredness and inviolability are unfounded. ^[218] We have here, in fact, the same thought which underlies Ezekiel's prediction of a world-attack upon the holy city, and those unwilling to believe that the early prophets ascribed such a sanctity to Zion should follow Stade in rejecting the verses on their own merit,

altogether apart from the question whether they can be reconciled with what precedes or not.

But this observation in reference to verse 11 also points out the way, we believe, in which the deeper harmony between the two apparently conflicting utterances here placed together must be sought. Evidently the point of view from which the prophet approaches the conflict of the world-power with Judah is a twofold one. In so far as this conflict is viewed as a matter between Jehovah and the people and as intended for the punishment of Israel's sin, it must result in captivity. In so far as it is viewed as a matter between the nations and Zion in its religious significance, the issue must be destruction for the Gentiles, because in Zion they attack Jehovah. ^[219] We know how in Isaiah these two modes of viewing the conflict and of forecasting its issue go side by side from almost the beginning until the end of his ministry, and that the recent critical attempts to eliminate this dualism from Isaiah cannot be considered successful. Why, then, should the appearance of the same phenomenon in Isaiah's contemporary Micah make us despair? The harmonizing of Micah 3:12 and 4:11-13 is precisely as difficult and no more difficult than the harmonizing of Isaiah 3:26, 5:13, 6:12, on the one hand, and 8:9, 10, 10:5-19, on the other hand. That in Micah the two representations stand in closer proximity than in Isaiah should not prejudice us against their genuineness, because we need not assume that they occupied the same relative position in the prophet's oral discourse. ^[220] The historical facts to which this mode of viewing the conflict and of anticipating its outcome might attach itself were given to both Isaiah and Micah in the expedition of Sennacherib, of the year 701. The developments of this crisis offered a striking illustration of the principle here proclaimed as having validity for all time. Thus we can maintain that the prophecy preserves its contact with the history of the people of God in the prophet's own age, while yet through the

clearly realized typical import of these contemporary events it is made to extend beyond these and to cover the remote future.

In chapter 4:13-5:4, several things are believed to indicate a later date than the age of Micah. As stated above, Stade has renewed the objections at one time raised by Oort against the association of Bethlehem and Ephrathah and against the description of Bethlehem as "little to be among the thousands of Judah." The data of this controversy are as follows: Jeremiah 31:15 and 1 Samuel 10:2 prove that Rachel's grave was situated not far from Ramah on or near the border of Benjamin. Now it is inferred from Genesis 35:19 (cf. 48:7) that Ephrath lay in the neighborhood of the sepulcher of Rachel.

Consequently it cannot be identical with Bethlehem, and the words in Genesis making this identification must be a gloss. The explanation of Nöldeke and Dillmann, to the effect that there may have existed two grave-pillars of Rachel, one near Ramah and another near Bethlehem-Ephrath, and that, E in Genesis refers to the latter, whilst Jeremiah and the author of 1 Samuel 10:2 have in mind the former, is rejected by Stade, because E in his narrative is supposed to deal exclusively with localities on the border of the two Rachel tribes—Joseph and Benjamin. ^[221] Further, there could not have existed a grave-pillar of Rachel in Bethlehem because the inhabitants of that place did not trace their descent from Rachel. But, if the testimony of E for the identity of Bethlehem and Ephrathah falls away, there is reason to examine critically the other passages in which the two are associated. These are: (1) 1 Samuel 17:12, where Jesse is called "that Ephrathite of Bethlehem Judah." This verse, Stade thinks, has been so seriously meddled with by a later hand that its beginning is entirely out of joint: **hzh** must at all events be removed, and, this being so, the preceding **ytrp**) may as well be thrown out as a redactorial addition. (2) Ruth 1:2, 4:11 these passages are claimed to

prove nothing because the Book of Ruth is post-exilic. (3) Three passages in 1 Chronicles, Chapters 2:19, 50, and 4:4 here Ephrathah appears as the wife of Caleb and the mother of Hur, and is explicitly connected with Bethlehem. Stade maintains, however, that Bethlehem's connection with the clan Caleb does not rest on ancient tradition and both form and contents of the passages belong to the post-exilic period. He also appeals to the fact that the adjective **ytrp**) means, in all passages except 1 Samuel 17:2, "the Ephraimite," which renders it probable that the place called Ephrath known in pre-exilic times as the grave of Rachel lay on the border of Benjamin, i.e., still in Ephraim. The conclusion of the whole is according to Stade that Micah 5:1 appears to stand on a level with Ruth and Chronicles, two post-exilic products. ^[222] In regard to the other point, the smallness predicated of Bethlehem, he refers to Nehemiah 7:26, where the men of Bethlehem and Netophah are given as 188, a small number—so that this feature likewise would point to a post-exilic writer. ^[223]

In answering all this the one essential point should be kept distinct from the accessory questions which have clustered around it in the course of the controversy. ^[224] This one essential point is whether it can be proven that Bethlehem had nothing to do with Ephrath or Ephrathah in the time of Micah. But how can this be established? Let us suppose for a moment that Stade is justified in throwing out the "Ephrathi" in 1 Samuel 17:12, ^[225] and in declaring Ruth post-exilic. This by no means settles the question. It only yields the negative result that there remains no pre-exilic passage from which we can prove that Bethlehem was in early times associated with Ephrathah. This is something quite different from furnishing the positive proof that such an association cannot have existed. Still further, though Chronicles is post-exilic and Ruth is considered so by modern critics, at any rate they bear witness to the fact that in that period Bethlehem sustained a close relation to

Ephrathah. This being so, what right have we to assume that not only the usage but the origin of the usage must be post-exilic, and that it cannot reach back into the eighth century B.C.? In one case only could such a conclusion be justified, viz., if it were possible to explain from well-known, specifically post-exilic data how the association or identification arose, or, what amounts to the same thing, to assign a definite motive for the interest of the writers of Chronicles and Ruth to bring the two names together. This has not been done nor can it be done. To quote the words of Kuenen: "It will not easily enter into the head of any man that the Chronicler's statements concerning Ephrath and her children are explainable from any sub-tendency. ^[226] On this point the Chronicler gives us simple facts in a genealogical form chosen by himself." Oort's hypothesis offered at least the advantage of explaining what interest the post-exilic writer had in transferring the name Ephrath from the house of Saul to that of David, but this hypothesis has been so entirely overthrown by Kuenen that even the author would not think of reviving it at the present day. ^[227]

As has been stated, Stade contends further that the smallness predicated of Bethlehem can be understood only from the standpoint of a post-exilic writer. Though it is true that the men of Bethlehem and Netophah appear in Nehemiah 7 as among the least numerous of the contingents there enumerated, yet we have no certainty that this relative smallness of the family resulted from the exile. It may have existed before. The writer of Micah 5:1 had a special motive for emphasizing this smallness. Obviously the thought was in his mind that the house of David when giving birth to the Messiah would be reduced to the former state of insignificance, naturally resulting from its numerical smallness, in which it existed before David's elevation to the throne gave it the highest rank among the families of Judah. In other words, the description of Bethlehem in Micah 5:1 serves the same purpose

which is served by the peculiar phrase, "the stock of Jesse," in Isaiah 11:1.

[228]

In two other respects, 5:1-3 have been declared out of harmony with their surroundings. Nowack, in criticizing Stade's analysis, remarks that in 4:11-13 there is no room for the conception of a Messiah since the total destruction of the Gentiles leaves nothing to be done by Him. And 5:2 is out of agreement with 4:11-13 because in the latter passage no "giving up" is expected. Both difficulties are met in principle by our remarks made above on 4:11-13. If the perspective here opening up before the prophet is determined by the antithesis between Jehovah and the Gentiles, and has its historical background in the Sennacherib-crisis, we at once understand why the idea of Israel's surrender to the nations and the figure of the Messiah find no place in it. But, although in the nearer fulfillment of this prophecy the Messiah plays no part and Zion appears as yet untouched by the profaning hands of the Gentiles, this by no means excludes its also finding a fulfillment in later developments which presuppose the deliverance from exile and the appearance of the Messiah on the stage of history.

Chapter 5:4, 5, are said to be inconsistent with the preceding context because they make no mention of the Messiah, whose place is here rather taken by the "seven shepherds" and the "eight principal men." Stade, who raises this difficulty, has himself suggested the solution, viz., that these verses do not describe the beginning of the Messianic period, but an episode during its course. The shepherds and principal men are servants of the Messiah. This simple explanation cannot be discredited by forcing the meaning of the words, "and this shall be peace," as if these of necessity must introduce a description of the opening of the Messianic era, which description would then differ from the one contained in verses 1-3.

Next we briefly notice the contradiction discovered between 5:6 and 4:11-13, in so far as in the former passage a mere remnant of Jacob is saved out of the judgment, whereas in the latter the daughter of Zion as such is promised victory over the many nations assembled against her. By abandoning the genuineness of 5:1-8, and placing it on a line with 4:11-13, Nowack has himself implicitly acknowledged that the inconsistency is merely apparent. The late writer to whom he attributes verses 6-8 knew, of course, that the daughter of Zion, who was in the future to destroy the many nations, consisted of the remnant of pre-exilic Israel.

A still further lack of agreement has been pointed out between 5:6-8 and 4:11-13, on the one hand, and the universalistic prophecy, 4:1-5, on the other hand. The first two passages breathe a spirit of hostility against the Gentiles, whereas the last is inspired by a sentiment of peace and goodwill toward all nations. If the point of comparison in the figure of the dew and rain in 5:7 be the refreshing and fructifying influence to be exerted by the remnant of Jacob upon the peoples, the writer must have thought that these two attitudes could go together, since they are placed in close proximity here as represented by the figures of verse 7 and verse 8 respectively. If the other exegesis be adopted, which finds the points of comparison with the dew and the rain in the prospective numerousness of the remnant and their sole dependence on Jehovah, even then ver. 8 does not exclude the ultimate realization of the ideal expressed in 4:1-4.

The last point in chapter 5 we must touch upon concerns verses 9-14. These verses contain a prediction that the objects of idolatry and the implements of war will be taken away from Israel. It is conceded by Stade, Wellhausen and others that as a whole the prophecy fits into the age of Micah. But it has become generally accepted among adherents of the modern view that the

prophetic opposition to the Mazzeboth and Asherim in particular dates from the time of the Deuteronomic reform. The Isaianic reform under Hezekiah, so far as it is historical, aimed only at the abolishment of images. Josiah in his day still found an Asherah in the temple at Jerusalem as well as at Bethel. The fight against Mazzeboth and Asherim did not begin until the Bamoth were made an object of attack. From Hosea 3:4, 10:1, 2, Isaiah 19:19, Stade endeavors to show that in the estimation of the early prophets Mazzebah is = altar, no better, no worse. Isaiah 17:8 proves nothing to the contrary, because the style is unworthy of Isaiah and the contents do not fit into the circle of his ideas. The manner in which the author of Micah 5:9-14 throws together into an indefinite category "graven images," and "Mazzeboth," and "Asherim," betrays that he does not speak from experience, whereas the author of Deuteronomy 12:3 still stands sufficiently near the old cultus to distinguish sharply between its various objects.

Those who are at one with Stade in their general conception of the origin of the Deuteronomic movement, and would yet uphold the genuineness of our passage, have replied to this reasoning that the principles of reform enforced in that movement must have had a previous history and found earlier isolated defendants, and that nothing hinders us from counting Micah among the number of these. Although Isaiah did not oppose the Mazzeboth and Asherim, Micah shows himself independent enough of his great contemporary to warrant the surmise that in this point he may have differed from or advanced beyond him. ^[229] But this reply does not meet the real difficulty. As Stade has been quick in pointing out, the condemnation of Asherim and Mazzeboth in chapter 5:12 is not introduced as something new and unprecedented. The passage becomes intelligible only if we can place back of it a long polemic against the objects whose extermination is here predicted. This leaves us no other choice than either, with Stade, to find this

earlier opposition in the Deuteronomic movement, which means to deny the passage to Micah; or to assume it in the prophetic labors of the men who preceded Micah, which will mean that the prophetic attitude on this point was from the very first in harmony with the principles of the reform under King Josiah. The passages in the early prophets which mention the Mazzeboth are Hosea 3:4, 10:1, 2, Isaiah 19:19. The Asherim occur in Isa.

17:8 only where they are named in conjunction with the Hammanim or "sun-pillars." Besides this a reference to the Asherah has been found in Hosea 4:12, where Jehovah complains that His people ask counsel at their stock and that their staff declareth unto them, since the spirit of whoredom has caused them to err, and they have gone a-whoring from under their God. ^[230] Of these we must leave out of account Isaiah 17:8, since this verse is considered by recent critics an interpolation. That in Hosea 4:12 C(alludes to the Asherah is not impossible, but far from certain. ^[231] From Hosea 3:4 many writers have inferred that Hosea took *no special* offense at the Mazzebah because it is here placed on a line with sacrifice as such, and with the two other pairs of king-prince, ephod-teraphim. That this conclusion is unwarranted appears from the fact that Hoses elsewhere openly condemns all images, and must, therefore, have opposed the teraphim on this principle alone if for no other reason. The sense of the passage is simply that all the representative forms of civil and religious life will be taken away from Israel. Whether these forms are in the prophet's view legitimate or illegitimate is not stated. In an indirect way we learn, however, that they must have been partly of the one, partly of the other category. For verse 4 gives in literal terms what verse 3 expresses in terms of the figure. Now the figure implies two thoughts: (1) That Hosea's wife shall be separated from her lovers; (2) that she shall be separated from her legal husband also. If verse 5 is to correspond to this, the same two elements must be included in it, and the prophet must have conceived of some of the things

mentioned as illegal. Of course it is not possible to go farther and prove from the words themselves that the Mazzeboth in particular fell under his disapproval. Chapter 10:1, 2, speak of the Mazzeboth after a condemnatory fashion, and place them on a level with the many altars. It is significant that not the multiplication of the Mazzeboth, but the building of them as such is reflected upon. And inasmuch as the multiplication of the places of worship was certainly connected by the prophet with the paganizing influences at work among Israel, this passage rather favors the conclusion that he considered the Mazzebah likewise an adjunct of the Baal-cult and for that reason opposed it. ^[232]

The total silence of the early prophets on the Asherah (apart from Isaiah 17:8 and our passage in Micah) deserves attention. That we have no right to construe it as implying approval or indifference is plain. Otherwise Jeremiah might with equal warrant be quoted in favor of the Asherah, since he never names it explicitly and the Mazzebah only in chapter 43:13. ^[233] The probable explanation is that the Asherim were so closely associated with pronounced and avowed idolatry as to require no special condemnation beyond that included in the general polemic against the latter. Stade has indeed objected to this on the ground that by several passages the connection of the Asherah with Jehovah worship is placed beyond question, and has even gone to the length of denying the existence of a goddess Asherah, with whom the wooden Ashera would have been associated, except in the imagination of the later writers. ^[234] But this last position has been made untenable by the testimony of the El-Amarna letters. A goddess Asherah more or less closely identified with Ashtoreth did exist. ^[235] Of course this does not disprove that the ignorant idolatrous mass of the people also brought the wooden Asherah into connection with Jehovah, but it makes it at least highly probable that the prophets whose perception of the specifically pagan element in the popular

cult was unquestionably keen would have been aware of the derivation of the symbol from the goddess, and consequently opposed it. Hosea's opposition to the use of the title Baal for Jehovah furnishes an analogy. ^[236]

The contents of verses 9-14, apart from the reference to the Mazzeboth and Asherim, fit better into the eighth century than into any other period. This is true especially of the announcement that the horses and chariots and fortified cities, i.e., all warlike implements, will be done away with. The condemnation of witchcraft and images also has its most striking parallels in Isaiah. It is the recognition of this by such critics as Kuenen and Wellhausen that has given rise to the double-faced hypothesis that verses 9-14 in their original form are from Micah and that the Deuteronomistic condemnation of Mazzeboth and Asherim was introduced by a later redactor of the piece. This proves that in all other respects the passage bears the impress of the time of Micah. No literary signs of redaction whatever are discoverable. This part of the hypothesis simply serves to get rid of an obnoxious element in an otherwise unobjectionable context.

We must now briefly review the difficulties found by the critics in the concatenation of the various pieces that compose Chapters 4 and 5. The first seam is located in 4:5, where the **yb** causes difficulty. Stade thinks the connection effected by means of it presupposes in the writer's mind the reflection that the foregoing prophecy had not been fulfilled. That is to say, if we understand Stade aright, the sentence introduced by **yb** was intended by a later writer to give the reason for the *unexpressed* thought of that writer that verses 14 had not yet come true. Whatever may be thought of the possibility of this exegesis, it is certainly not the most plausible one. If we place the emphasis of the verse on the last words, "for ever and ever," it will be seen to affirm the truth of the foregoing prophecy and to yield a perfectly natural

connection. This promise will surely be fulfilled, because Israel is the only nation which will not need to change its God. ^[237] After this statement has brought the prediction of universalism to a fitting close, the transition to verses 6-8 as to another aspect of the eschatological hope is easily effected by the general term, "in that day." In regard to verses 9-14 *seq.* everything depends on the interpretation of the three "nows" in verses 9, 11, 14.

Undoubtedly the first, **ht(**, marks a contrast to the opening phrase of both verse 7 and verse 6, inasmuch as the prophet returns from the remote future to the nearer present. This contrast, however, need not be pressed to the extent of limiting the **ht(** to the writer's historical present; it rather comprehends everything this side of the coming age. Why **ht(** should not be allowed this wider sense when by common consent of the critics the phrase **)whh Mwyb** is indefinitely used of the whole eschatological future, is hard to see. The only question is whether Micah could so use it, and this depends ultimately on whether the conception of the Messianic age had made a sufficiently deep impression on his mind to compress all preceding developments for his perspective into one scene. On this view of the matter the three visions relating to the pre-Messianic history stand between the two eschatological prophecies of 4:1-8 and 5:1-8. The grouping of the three is not determined by chronological reasons, but by the natural sequence of the main thoughts embodied in each. The promise of the restoration of the kingdom to the daughter of Jerusalem suggests the previous departure of this kingdom, the ensuing exile and the deliverance from Babylon. By force of contrast the prospect of the indignity and pain to be inflicted by the world-power upon the daughter of Zion calls up the vision of verses 11-13, where Zion appears victorious over the nations. In the third scene, 4:14-5:8, the same contrast between humiliation and victory is worked out with special reference to the

present ruler and the future Messianic king, and thus the discourse returns to its point of departure in 4:8, but enriched by the personal Messianic element. Nobody will deny that this is at least a plausible development of thought. That the material might have been distributed as well, or perhaps to better advantage from the point of view of logic or historical sequence, does not prove that its present arrangement would have been unnatural or impossible to the prophet. To this must be added that there are several recurring phrases and constructions which closely link together the various pieces. Foremost among these is the repetition of the words, "many nations," which has already induced Stade to ascribe the three pieces in which these occur to one author. Further, "Mount Zion," or "Zion," is common to 4:1-5 and 4:6, 7, and "the daughter of Zion" to 4:8, 10, 13; **Kyl(** in 4:11 points back to **Nwyc tb** in verse 10; **ht)w** opens the sentence in both 4:8 and 5:1; the address, "be in pain and labor," in 4:10, is entirely like that in verse 13, "arise and thresh;" the phrase, "the name of Jehovah," appears in 4:5 and 5:3; **l#m** in 4:14 points back to **hl#mm** in 4:8; the coincidence in the figure of the shepherd between 4:6 and 5:3 has been already commented upon. In ordinary cases these resemblances would be considered sufficient to make out a strong case for unity of authorship. As it is, the critics have to explain them on the assumption that the later writer or writers purposely assimilated their work to the older material they wished to enlarge upon. But, if in a matter of form they exercised such care, the question becomes all the more pertinent why in the more weighty matter of the harmony and connection of thought they could be so artless and careless as the critical view implies. It is much easier to believe that the prophet himself used this freedom in the grouping of his scenes than that the later redactors or interpolators, who professedly wrote in order to harmonize his work with extraneous data either of history or of hope,

should have failed to obliterate as much as possible all discrepancies of representation. ^[238]

In chapter 5 the second verse is the only one which requires comment in this connection. Volz believes that it breaks the continuity between verse 1 and verse 3, and must have been inserted at an even later date than the already post-exilic piece, 5:1, 3, 4a. His reasons for this opinion are the following. While Jehovah is the speaking person in verse 1, He is spoken of in the third person in verse 2. Or, if **yl** be referred to the writer, the incongruence remains between the subjects of **)cy** and **Mnty**. Further, according to verse 2, the Messiah is born in exile, whilst according to verse 1 He comes out of Bethlehem. Verse 2 does not place the figure of the Messiah sufficiently in the foreground. The writer of verses 1 and 3 does not look forward to a long period of oppression by the Gentiles. **Nbl** in verse 2 is meaningless. Neither the suffix in **Mnty** nor the conception of the **hdly** finds explanation in the context. The interpolation rests on Isaiah 7:14, and perhaps on Isaiah 9:5, and is due to a desire to account for the delay in the Messiah's appearance.

The first of these reasons may be disposed of by a reference to such passages as Isaiah 3:1, 4; Micah 7:18-20. Verse 2 does not state anything about the Messiah's birthplace, but simply makes His birth, or rather activity *theterminus ad quem* of Israel's surrender to the Gentiles. The interpolator could not have possibly meant to say with verse 1 before him that the Messiah was to be born in exile. If verse 2 is a mere definition of time, we do not expect it to dwell on the figure or work of the Messiah. That the writer of verses 1, 3, knows nothing of a period of "giving up" is indicated by nothing. **Nbl** makes perfect connection: it states as the reason why the Messiah must come from Bethlehem that the present royal state of the house of David shall

come to an end through exile. Finally **Mnty** is without antecedent only if verses 1-3 are violently torn out of the context and placed by themselves. In the text as it stands the antecedent is given in 4:9, 11, 14, etc. That the verse presupposes Isaiah 7:14 or 9:5 is no argument against its genuineness for those who maintain the Isaianic origin of these passages.

Chapter 5:9-14 have been objected to on the ground that, while from their present position the import of these verses ought to be promissory, it is, in point of fact, of a minatory character, it not being said that Israel will voluntarily relinquish the objects specified, but that Jehovah will exterminate them. ^[239] This overlooks that in verse 13 the voluntary relinquishment on Israel's part is implied in the words, "thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands." The ideal Israel is here addressed, who over against the wicked mass would consider even the violent extirpation of idolatry and of the implements of war a blessing. It should also be noticed that according to verse 15 this act will secure Israel's safety in the judgment which is to come upon the nations.

The last section of Micah's book in which we are interested, chapter 7:7-20, does not call for such extended discussion as it seemed necessary to give to Chapters 4 and 5. Although the promise in this case follows quite abruptly on the denunciation of 7:1-6, yet it is carefully adjusted to the latter by the statement that a severe punishment must precede its fulfillment. Only over against "the enemy," the world-power, Israel is righteous. Now the question is, whether the standpoint of the speaker is the exile of reality or the exile anticipated in imagination. It should be observed that the writer does not speak for his own person, but in the name of the people. This self-identification with Israel may have made it easier for him to forget his actual present and to enter into the spirit of a future situation. So far as we know

nothing has been pointed out inconsistent with this interpretation of the piece. On the other hand, the critical exegesis has been quite uncertain in defining the situation of the writer. At first it was thought that the exile satisfied all the requirements. But the omission of all reference to Babylon in verse 12 is decidedly unfavorable to this view. Hence, and in order to explain the broad contrast between Zion and the Gentile world, it has been found necessary to bring the prophecy down to the post-exilic period. ^[240] But here again verse 11 forbids to go beyond the time of Nehemiah when the walls were built. Was it as natural at that time to predict the return of the exiled people in the terms of verse 12 as it was from the standpoint of Micah? The same applies to the prayer for the restitution of Bashan and Gilead in verse 14, inasmuch as the depopulation of these regions must have been fresh in the memory of the prophet. The words, "as in the days of old," explain themselves from the fact that not so much the possession as the passing of these regions into the possession of Israel, is uppermost in the writer's mind. Cf. verse 15, "as in the days of thy coming forth out of the land of Egypt," etc. Nowack renders verse 14b, "which dwell solitarily in the wilderness in the midst of fruitful fields," and thinks that this proves the writer's standpoint to be post-exilic, because Israel is here represented as returned from exile but in possession only of the waste and infertile places, whilst all around the fruitful regions are occupied by the enemies. Apart, however, from the uncertainty of the exegesis, there is evidently a progress in the discourse between verse 12, which predicts the return, and 14, which pictures the situation in which the returned exiles will find themselves. This situation is explained by verse 13 when they come they will find the land desolate; hence the further prayer that the ancient conditions may be restored. Thus it is unnecessary to give (Cr) in verse 13 the sense of "earth," a rendering which makes the statement come in very abruptly. ^[241]

The closing part of Micah's book, if its genuineness can be vindicated, will be seen to have an important bearing on the origin of the monotheism of the early prophets. According to the critical hypothesis, in its most widely accepted form, the monotheistic tendency of these writers was a correlate of the conviction that Jehovah would deal with Israel on the principle of strict justice. Specifically as the God of righteousness pure and simple, Jehovah appeared unique among the gods, therefore the only God. Micah 7:18-20 formally reverses this reasoning. Jehovah is unique not because He refuses but because He delights to exercise grace: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, and have compassion upon us; He will tread our iniquities under foot: and will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old."

[1] The Song of Deborah (Judges 5), David's Song of the Bow (2 Samuel 1:19-27).

[2] The oldest material in Judges and Samuel and in the story of Elijah and Elisha in 1 Kings 17-2 Kings 13.

[3] It is not accidental that the great evolutionary constructions of Israel's history date from the time when the posteriority of the Legal to the Prophetic period had become with the leading critics a settled conviction. Kuenen's *Religion of Israel* could not have been written before his espousal of the Grafian view between 1865 and 1869.

[4] It is difficult to conceive of a mental attitude toward ancient prophecy sufficiently convinced on the one hand of its absolutely divine origin to conclude *a priori* that certain elements must be contained in it, and yet unscrupulous enough, on the other hand, to manipulate those divine oracles for the purpose of supplementing what was wanted. If we may believe the

critics, the later scribes united these contradictory mental traits in themselves.

[5] 1:14; 2:205-212; Z.A.W., 1:171.

[6] pp. 155-157. Cf. further Kuenen, *Historisch-kritisch Onderzoek*, 2:21-25; Smend, *Alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte*, 183; Giesebrecht, *Beiträge zur Jesaiakritik*, 187-220, and *Das Buch Jeremia* (who, however, rejects Stade's theory of a systematic redaction of the prophetic canon by the later scribes). Nowack, *Die Kleinen Propheten*, recently published in his *Handkommentar zum Alten Testament*, and Volz, *Die vorexilische Jahveprophetie und der Messias*, did not come to hand until after this article had been written.

[7] It would be an entirely different matter, of course, if one were to eliminate from the discussion such sections of the prophetic books on whose date critical opinion departs from the traditional view independently of a *priori* considerations. The testimony of Isaiah 40-66, for instance, might for argument's sake be excluded, without rendering further debate useless.

[8] *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, Prologue, xxi.

[9] *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 4.

[10] Cheyne's Introduction to the new edition of Robertson Smith's *The Prophets of Israel*, xvi.

[11] Cf. Guthe, *Das Zukunftsbild des Jesaia*, 22.

[12] Hoffmann, Z. A. W., 3:96, and Gunning, *De Godspraken van Amos*, 16, would have Amos think of Jerusalem as the Davidic residence in which the ideal unity of entire Israel had its center. But the judgment on the surrounding nations, and indeed on Judah itself, has no apparent connection with the political idea of Israel's unity.

[13] Hoffmann's proposal (Z. A. W., 3:97), to take **wnby#** as Hiph. of **b#y**, "I will not allow it (i.e., the people) to dwell," is artificial and has found no acceptance.

[14] *Theologie der Propheten*, 119.

[15] *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 14:116; 25:125.

[16] *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, 1:571.

[17] *Einleitung*, 176.

[18] *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, 5:71.

[19] Introduction to the new edition of Robertson Smith's *The Prophets of Israel*, xvi.

[20] *The Prophets of Israel* (new edition), 399.

[21] *Hist. Krit. Onderzoek*, 1:174.

[22] Cf. Isaiah 2:3; 2 Chronicles 17:3, 21:12, 22:3, 28:2.

[23] Robertson Smith well remarks: "In each case the appeal (to Jehovah's Lordship over nature) comes in to relieve the strain of intense feeling at a critical point in the argument" (*The Prophets of Israel*, new edition, 400). Cf. also Hoffmann (*Z. A. W.*, 3:103): "[These passages] enable us to divine what the prophet saw before his eyes and is soon to mention by name." Wellhausen appeals to Hosea 13:4, where the Septuagint has a passage of similar character which is clearly an insertion. But it does not follow from this that the passages in Amos are to be placed on the same footing. For (1) that in Hosea fails in the Hebrew text; (2) it does not fit psychologically into the context as the verses in Amos do; (3) it may be easily explained as an imitation of the latter.

[24] Kuenen and others propose to throw out verse 7 as an intrusion from 6:12. But the latter passage is only partly similar.

[25] König, *Einleitung in das A. T.*, 304. König observes that an interpolator would hardly have inserted the verses in a place apparently so inappropriate.

[26] Kuenen and Robertson Smith here also take a conservative position without fully realizing, it seems to me, the importance of the fact that such ideas were not merely natural to Amos himself, but that he could likewise assume familiarity with them on the part of his hearers. Kuenen compares Micah 1:2-4, but the expressions in Amos are stronger.

[27] The elimination of verse 26 by Wellhausen and Cheyne and that of 8:11, 12, by numerous critics, among these even König, is not directly connected with the development hypothesis. The former of these passages will be fully discussed in a later article.

[28] Wellhausen proposes to substitute "the sanctuary of Bethel."—*Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, 5:12.

[29] In Robertson Smith's *The Prophets of Israel*, 401.

[30] Schwally, in *Z. A. W.*, 10:227.

[31] Wellhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, 5:94; Smend, *Alttest. Religionsgesch.*, 183, 184; Cheyne, Introduction to the new edition of Robertson Smith's *The Prophets of Israel*, xv.

[32] We pass by the argument that verse 11 cannot be by Amos because it regards the Judean captivity as past. This is the customary denial of the possibility of supernatural prediction. Besides it overlooks the fact that "the breaches" represent the tabernacle of David as still partially standing. Cf. Cornill, *Einleitung*, 176, who here sides with Kuenen against the other critics.

[33] Wellhausen characterizes the contents of verses 13-15 as "roses and lavender instead of blood and iron."

[34] Wellhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, 5:94; Smend, *Allttestam. Religionsgesch.*, 184.

[35] Cf. chapter 3:12; 5:3, 15.

[36] The words "and David their king" in verse 5 are rejected by Wellhausen and Stade; the corresponding words in verse 4, "without king and without prince," in addition by Cornill; the whole fifth verse by Oort (*Theol. Tijdschr.*, 24:362).

[37] This symmetry is destroyed by Steiner's and Kuenen's proposal to take away the harshness of the transition by placing 2:1-3 after 2:25. There are other serious objections to this arrangement, chief among which is that in their new position the transposed verses would be a weak repetition of what immediately precedes. Cf. especially verse 25 with verse 1. See

Giesebrecht, *Beiträge zur Jesaiakritik*, 215, whose five reasons, however, are not all equally convincing. Nevertheless, the above-mentioned proposal has the value of showing that to cautious criticism there is a wide difference between the recognition that a passage may have become displaced and the readiness to infer from every apparent want of connection that a strange hand must have been at work.

[38] Calvin and Hengstenberg assume a reference to Genesis 22:17, 32:13, as to promises which would in no wise fail of fulfillment, notwithstanding the casting off predicted in verse 9. See the latter's *Christology of the O. T.*, 1:210.

[39] Giesebrecht, *Beiträge zur Jesaiakritik*, 215.

[40] Giesebrecht (*l. c.*) thinks that there is a conflict between 1:7, which promises the salvation, and 2:2, which presupposes the captivity of Judah. But unless "the land" in the latter passage be understood to mean the land of the exile (so Giesebrecht), there is no direct reference to the captivity of Judah at all. Besides this, is it not a fact that Isaiah also predicted both the final destruction of the southern kingdom with the exile of its inhabitants and the temporary deliverance of the same in the Assyrian crisis? If the two representations are inconsistent, why did not the interpolator consider them so? Or if they appeared harmonious later in view of what had actually come about, why should they not have appeared so beforehand in the prophetic vision of the future? Giesebrecht further objects to the clumsy phraseology of 1:7, "Jehovah will save Judah by Jehovah their God." But the disapproval of reliance upon the external instruments of war to the detriment of trust in Jehovah is a thoroughly Hoseanic thought and the peculiar phraseology simply serves to accentuate this idea.

[41] The "going up" is here taken in the sense of Nahum 2:2; 1 Kings 15:17. The land is not that of the captivity, but Canaan. See Nowack, *Der Prophet Hosea*, 14.

[42] Chapter 3:4 might be supposed to reject the kingdom as such, on the view that the words "and David their king" are a late insertion, for in this case it might be claimed that all the things mentioned here, by being deprived of which Israel is to be punished—king-prince, sacrifice-mazzebah, ephod-teraphim—were to the prophet's mind equally sinful. Even so, however, it

would seem a straining of the point to make him reject these things in the abstract. No more could be safely inferred than that he considered them sinful in the form in which Israel used them. On the other hand, if the words "and David their king" are genuine, it follows immediately that Hosea expected the Davidic kingdom from his condemnation.

[43] Chapter 12:1 is the only apparent exception to this. But the text is very obscure and may be corrupt. Cornill, in *Z. A. W.*, 7:285-289, proposes to read instead of **Nm)n My#wdq M(w**, and is faithful with the Holy One," **dmcn My#dq M(w**, "and is joined with Kedeshim."

[44] There would be much more cause to expect that a late writer would address Judah, his only audience.

[45] Giesebrecht (*Beiträge zur Jesaiakritik*, 214) tries to break the force of 4:15 by the suggestion that the statement may be a mere rhetorical one in the sense of "both need not have sinned; one could at least have obeyed; but both are equally condemnable." But that the prophet means to be understood literally follows from the subjoined warning that Judah should not come to Gilgal neither go up to Beth-Aven.

[46] Giesebrecht seeks to save the depth and spirituality of the words by making them expressive of a wish of the prophet, a view which destroys the connection with what precedes and follows alike.

[47] For parallels cf. 2:9, 5:6, 7:16.

[48] Chapter 8:1 is called in question by Wellhausen, *Prolegomena* (second edition) 443. In *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, 5:17, the words are retained in the translation. It is also rejected by Krätzschar (*Die Bundesvorstellung im A. T.*, 114). According to Oort (*Theol. Tijdschr.*, 24:505), chapter 8:12 is possibly from the Deuteronomistic redactor.

[49] Duhm's partiality for the Maccabean period seems to spring from the desire to point out a definite historical situation for each prophecy. The second century B.C. offers the best opportunities for the satisfaction of this desire.

[50] Here, as also in regard to Chapters 9:1-6, 11:1-8, 32:1-5, 15-20 Duhm is more conservative than his companion critics; though with some hesitation, he yet in the end declares himself in favor of the Isaianic origin of these pieces.

[51] Z. A. W., 1:165; 4:292.

[52] Cf. on this question, Ryssel, *Untersuchungen über die Textgestalt und die Echtheit des Buches Micha*, 218-224.

[53] Z. A. W., 1:166.

[54] *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 128-130, 146-148.

[55] *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 9-15.

[56] Cornill, Z. A. W., 4:88, well remarks against Stade that our prophecy presents rather a naive way of formulating the thought of the inviolable character and central significance of Mount Zion, than a gross perversion of this thought.

[57] Cf. *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 8:459. Isaiah's own first message came from the temple.

[58] *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 128.

[59] Cf. Nowack's Handkommentar, *Die kleinen Propheten*, 64, which denies the verse to the prophet on account of this universalistic conception.

[60] Handkommentar, *Die kleinen Propheten*, 64.

[61] The words are applied to Stade's reasoning by none less than Kuenen, *Hist. Krit. Ond.*, 2:40.

[62] We have left chapter 29:7 and 33:3 out of consideration here, the former because its genuineness is to be discussed later on, the latter because it stands in a context denied to Isaiah before the present movement in the criticism of the prophets.

[63] Another thought in chapter 18:7 objected to as un-Isaianic will receive attention afterwards.

[64] To be sure, this passage also has been recently denied to Hosea by Volz, *Die vorexilische Jahveprophetie und der Messias*, and by Nowack in his Handkommentar, *Die kleinen Propheten*, 23. Nowack's book did not come to hand until the article published in the April number had gone to press. In this place I can only enumerate the passages rejected in this newest contribution to the subject, so far as they had not fallen under the condemnation of the earlier critics and were therefore not touched upon in my article. These are: 2:4b, 6, 8, 9, 10c, 12, 16-18, 20-25; 4:6, 11, 14b, 15a; 5:3b; 7:4; 8:5b; 9:9b; 10:3, 5c, 10, 13, 14b; 11:9a, 10b, 11; 12:4b-7, 13, 14. Thus the critical process moves steadily onward. Volz goes so far as to speak of a Proto- and Deutero-Hosea.

[65] *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 20, 21.

[66] *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 8:460, 461.

[67] So Duhm, Wellhausen and apparently Stade (*Z. A. W.*, 4:149-151). The latter finds the idea implied that Jehovah has previously left Zion, and, assuming that this idea first arose during the exile with Ezekiel, infers from it the post-exilic origin of verses 5, 6. But Hosea 5:15 alone proves the much earlier origin of this thought and shows how it might naturally associate itself in the mind of any prophet with that of the future captivity.

[68] Chapter 28:27.

[69] *Alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte*, 222.

[70] Volz's treatise is known to me only from its review by Krætzschmar in the *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, No. 26, 1897.

[71] *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 126.

[72] Cf. Smend, *Altt. Religionsgeschichte*, 307.

[73] This last point is mentioned by Cheyne also: "The divine king in his glory so filled the thoughts and imagination of Isaiah that there seems no room for any earthly king."

[74] Stade thinks differently on this point *Z. A. W.*, 1:95, Note.

[75] Cf. also chapter 32:1, although the genuineness of this prophecy is doubted by many critics.

[76] E.g., Kuenen, *National Religions and Universal Religions*, 113seq.

[77] Hackmann rightly maintains that the words of verse 1, "to walk in darkness," "to sit in the land of the shadow of death," must refer to a more protracted oppression than either the Syro-Ephraimitic attack or the campaign of Sennacherib can have occasioned to the Judeans. It is most natural to understand them of the captivity, but then of such a captivity as was associated in thought with one country. From the later post-exilic standpoint when the Jews were widely dispersed in several countries the expressions would be less natural.

[78] It cannot be denied that the meaning of 8:21, 22, 23a is rather obscure, but in itself this furnishes no reason for denying the connection between these verses and 8:23b and 9:1-6. All that the critics have been able to do is to make 8:21-23a, some of them including 20b, *atorsolacking* both beginning and end. This is an easy but purely arbitrary manner of removing the difficulty. Inasmuch as the figure of the darkness and light in 9:1 seems to point back to the use of the same figure in 8:22, it is safer, notwithstanding the obscurity of the text, to assume the continuity of the discourse.

[79] The limits of this article do not permit us to discuss the modern notion of varying and in important respects even contradictory "*Zukunftsbilder*" in the prophecies of Isaiah. Guthe distinguishes two of these, Giesebrecht even three. According to the former of these critics, Isaiah first expected the destruction of both Ephraim and Judah, the fall of the kingdom, a long period of captivity and after that the Messianic deliverance. This eschatological program is believed to date from about 734, the time of the Syro-Ephraimitic war. Later, after about 724, the prophet was led by the course of events to modify his expectations in two particulars: 1. He now believed that the judgment would stop short of the fall of Jerusalem and that the Assyrian while besieging the city would be destroyed by Jehovah. 2. He placed the new era immediately after this deliverance in consequence of which the figure of the Messiah dropped out of his program, because, if the present dynasty remained, there was no need for a new ruler and the work first

ascribed to him. Giesebrecht inserts between these two programs an intermediate one in which he assumes the prophet to have expected the conversion of Judah entire after the judgment on Samaria and which he finds represented in such utterances as 10:20, 21, 28:1-6, where "the remnant" = Judah. Hackmann, while successfully refuting the schemes of Guthe and Giesebrecht, proposes a new one of his own in which he makes out a rectilinear development of the prophet's expectations. But the consistency of Hackmann's scheme is obtained by two radical measures: 1. The reference of Isaiah's early prophecies of judgment to the northern kingdom exclusively. 2. The denial of the genuineness of every prophecy which bases on the defeat of the Assyrian hopes for the salvation of Judah. Both positions seem to me untenable, as I hope to show in detail on a future occasion. Guthe and Giesebrecht do not deny the genuineness of the Messianic prophecy in chapter 11, but only the possibility of its contemporaneousness with the outlook of chapter 10. Nevertheless their detachment of chapter 11:1-9 from what precedes seriously weakens the defense of its Isaianic origin against such critics as Hackmann and Cheyne, because it favors the contention of the latter that the prophecy lacks contact with Isaiah's historical situation. For this reason it was necessary to point out briefly how in our view the consistency and contemporaneousness of the two viewpoints in Chapters 10 and 11 respectively can be maintained.

[80] Cheyne is non-committal in regard to the question whether verses 28-32 are intended to lead up to the climax that Jerusalem will be taken or to the anti-climax that the invader will be laid low. The whole structure of the description seems to us to speak in favor of the latter view, and is so far in favor of the Isaianic authorship also of verses 33, 34.

[81] Cf. Jeremiah 3:15 and 23:4 with 23:5, 33:15.

[82] Cf. Giesebrecht, *Das Buch Jeremia, in loco*; of the other passage, 33:15, the genuineness is denied by several critics.

[83] *Die Messianische Weissagung* (2d ed.), 138-140.

[84] The occurrence of an isolated Aramaic loan-word, especially of a military term like **N)s**, "soldier's boot," is easily explained in view of Isaiah 36:11.

Cf. also Cheyne in the Introduction to Robertson Smith's *The Prophets of Israel* (new ed.), p. xxxviii: "All the comfort that I can offer is that, though, so far as the contents are concerned, the composition of these two prophecies can most easily be understood in the post-exilic age, yet the phraseological data are not on the whole markedly inconsistent with the authorship of Isaiah."

[85] Kuenen and Cornill still maintain the Isaianic authorship of chapter 19 as a whole.

[86] The literary evidence adduced in proof of the late origin of these sections has little weight. It consists partly of hapax legomena, partly of words occurring only once in Isaiah but vouched for by other ancient writings, partly of forms declared late on the ground of other disputed passages, one contingency being suspended on another. **Nsxy**, 23:18, is a hapax legomenon; so is **q yt(**, *ibid.*; **hbcm** in 19:19 is the only example of the word in Isaiah, but it occurs twice in Hosea; the late character of **dy Pynh** in 19:16 is supported by the late origin of 11:15, and *vice versa*. Similar lists might be gathered without difficulty from the undoubtedly genuine sections. There was nothing in Isaiah's style which forbade him the use of hapax legomena.

[87] Cf. chapter 8:18, and Guthe, *Das Zukunftsbild des Jesaia*, 24, 25.

[88] That **y#**, "a present," must be late, because elsewhere occurring only in two Psalms alleged to be late, is certainly a rash inference. Nor is Cheyne justified in describing the rule of Jehovah which the Ethiopians will acknowledge by tribute as "a Messiahless, Israelitish empire;" even if this were correct it should not be counted as bearing against the Isaianic authorship, since Cheyne himself elsewhere makes the prominence of the kingship of Jehovah an instance against the genuineness of the Messianic prophecies in Chapters 9 and 11.

[89] *Z. A. W.*, 4:256-271.

[90] *Juda und die Assyrische Weltmacht in Programm der technischen Staatslehranstalten zu Chemnitz*, 1885, p. 13.

[91] The same has been suggested by the late Prof. Kusters in *Theol. Tijdschrift*, May, 1898, p. 313.

[92] Sörensen even upholds against Stade the genuineness of the larger part of Chapters 32 and 33.

[93] M. Brückner, *Die Komposition des Buches Jesaia, Kap. 28-33*, 1897.

[94] As chapter 37:35 expresses it, "For I will defend this city to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake."

[95] *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 101.

[96] "The Book of the Prophet Isaiah," in *The Sacred Books of the Old and New Testaments* ("Polychrome edition"), 141. Cf. also F.C. Porter in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 14, p. 29: "If he (Ahaz) believed in the prophetic word against Israel, he would not do what Israel did, play at politics and war, and he would fear, not an outward foe, but the God who judges righteously."

[97] It is, e.g., impossible that the comparative estimate of the religious value of the so-called Deutero-Isaiah and Trito-Isaiah should not be affected by the former being assigned to the exilic, the latter to the post-exilic period. Trito-Isaiah can never quite recover the reputation he had so long as his work was connected with Chapters 40-55.

[98] Cf. what Cheyne says in reference to the late version of the history of the Sennacherib-crisis contained in Chapters 36-37 "The alteration introduced into the portrait of Sennacherib by the Jewish writers is, for the historian, the most unfortunate of their inaccuracies. But who that rightly appreciates the spirit of the later Jews can seriously blame them? *The cultivation of a frame of mind out of which in due time evangelical religion might spring was of more consequence to them than historical exactness,*" (the italics are mine) (*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 237).

[99] In accepting a fixed law as the expression of Jehovah's demands of Israel, prophetism is thought to have sacrificed the freedom which once had been the chief source of its power. By condescending to regulate the cult it succeeded, in part at least, in uprooting it from its original soil of naturalism

and making it subservient to higher ethical aims: but the cult, however much purified, remained something external, in approving which the prophets relaxed their absolute insistence upon righteousness alone. If not yet in Jeremiah, in Ezekiel the new legal leaven so vigorously asserted itself as to modify essentially the prophetic spirit. The Deuteronomic reform laid the first foundation of Judaism. Cf. Wellhausen, *Israelitische und Jüdische Geschichte*, 94-95; Smend, *Alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte*, 279-291.

[100] Cf. Hackmann, who remarks against Sörensen that Isaiah's energy of faith and political discernment suffice to account for the prophecy of chapter 18, and that it is not necessary to explain the prophet's confidence by his having heard of the approach of an army marching against the Assyrians (*Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 99).

[101] Chapter 29:17; 32:15.

[102] Chapter 33:14.

[103] Wellhausen's view, that verses 1-4 do not relate to the real Samaria at all, but simply to Jerusalem ominously so called, and therefore date from the same period as the following sections, besides being too bold, does not account for **hl) Mgw** in verse 7; for these words referring to the Jerusalemites show that the prophet distinguished between them and the inhabitants of Samaria.

[104] *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 27-29.

[105] *Beiträge zur Jesaiakritik*, 53-69.

[106] We should go farther than this and say that not merely is there no place for such expectation as late as 724, but urge against Hackmann's own view that there is no place for it at any point of Isaiah's ministry, not even in the earliest period. The proof for this is chapter 6.

[107] So Dillmann, who, however, would confine "the residue" to those that will be left of the northern kingdom. But although Isaiah in his earlier prophecies clearly distinguishes between the judgment of Israel and that of Judah, he frequently represents the remnant as an organic unity proceeding

from both. Cf. 8:23, 9:6, 10:20, 11:11-16, 17:6-8.

[108] Cf. Meinhold in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1893, 7-46, who thinks that not only verses 1-6 but chapter 28 as a whole dates from 724 and was prefixed by Isaiah to the later discourses of Chapters 29-31 as introduction.

[109] The figure of the hailstorm and tempest of 28:2 recurs more than once in Chapters 28-31. Cf. 28:17, 29:6, 30:30. This would seem to be an indication that Isaiah, in pronouncing or penning the Sennacherib-discourses, had in mind the oracle against Samaria delivered twenty years before, and furnishes an additional reason for believing that the prophet himself placed 28:1-6 at the head of the collection.

[110] To a minor degree the same complexness of situation is already prefigured in the crisis of the Syro-Ephraimitic war (chapter 7). The deliverance of Judah is foretold and King Ahaz invited to exercise faith in it. He is rejected for his unbelief. Nevertheless the promise stands, and it is precisely the course determined upon by the unbelieving king which Jehovah uses to make true the predicted deliverance. But the deliverance itself again is double faced; while giving temporary relief it opens the door for the interposition of the Assyrians who will ultimately overwhelm Judah.

[111] Cf. Giesebrecht (*Beiträge zur Jesaiakritik*, 188), who thinks that the admission of abruptness and unintelligibility in the prophetic discourse still shows the lingering influences of the Hengstenbergian view, and directly contradicts the true character of prophecy. We on our part suspect that the one-sided emphasis thrown upon the ethical mission of prophetism and the modern form in which this is conceived of has more or less affected the psychology of prophetic revelation. Hence the seer is obscured by the preacher and popular orator. Of course the naturalistic tendency of the modern view works to the same effect, inasmuch as the visionary element in the prophetic experience marks most distinctly the direct contact with the supernatural.

[112] The suddenness in the succession of the events themselves is emphasized by Isaiah (cf. 29:5, 6).

[113] *Beiträge zur Jesaiakritik*, 187-220.

[114] He does not apply it to Hosea 2:1-3, but joins with other critics in declaring this passage an interpolation, on which see above.

[115] Hackmann suggests that Ewald would probably have explained the intermingling of the two opposite elements from the literary revision and rearrangement to which Isaiah subjected his prophecies. He thinks, however, that such explanation is not only insufficient in this particular instance, but inadmissible in every case in the present state of Isaiah-criticism, because it is far from certain that Isaiah was a literary prophet at all. The traditional conception of him as a writer has been thoroughly discredited by the latest results of the analysis of the book bearing his name. One might well ask whether this consequence of the critical operations should not of itself suffice to compromise the latter in the eyes of all sober-minded people. Amos and Hosea, who were both plain men, are admitted to have written; how then can we believe that Isaiah, who moved in the highest circles of the capital, could have neglected the opportunity offered him to secure by this means a wider hearing and longer life for his prophecies? Then there is also the problem of accounting for the transmission of so many confessedly genuine prophecies in so pure and perfect a form. If Isaiah did not write himself, and if for their preservation we are indebted to his disciples, the character of their work is such that we shall have to assume some sort of supervision by the prophet himself and this brings us back again to a point not so very far removed from the old conception of the literary prophet.

[116] Duhm and Cheyne both insist that verses 9-12 lack all connection with the preceding oracle concerning Ariel. But neither of them is successful in his interpretation of the imperatives in verse 9. Cheyne makes the verse mean "that the rulers are culpably insensible to the divine teaching in prophecy and history." Insensibility, however, is not synonymous with amazement. Cheyne's translation is: "Feign astonishment, and ye shall be astonished indeed; feign blindness, and ye shall be blind indeed;" this takes the second imperative in each pair as consecutive to the first, and understands the second of amazement and blindness produced by the events of the judgment when these come. Still the question remains why a prophecy of disaster from Isaiah should have made the rulers feign astonishment. And the thought that the reality of the judgment will *blind* the sinners is far from natural. The latter

remark bears against Duhm also, who refers all four imperatives to the future effect of the judgment and speaks of a blindness resulting from contact with the supernatural.

^[117] **rpsh** in verse 12 has the generic article. A different book from the one mentioned in verse 11, not sealed but open, is meant. The above explanation seems to me more plausible than the application of the twofold form of the figure to the two classes of the educated leaders and the uneducated mass. There will be still another reference to the strange character of the prophet's discourses if we may follow up a suggestion of Meinhold in regard to the interpretation of chapter 28:9-13 (*Studien und Kritiken*, 1893, 26-30). Meinhold thinks that "the word of Jehovah" (verse 13) characterized by the syllables Zaw Lazaw Zaw Lazaw, Kaw Lakaw Kaw Lakaw cannot, as the usual exposition takes it, consist in the *sermo realis* of the invading Assyrians with their strange tongue, because the construction with **N(ml)** shows that the speech referred to is to render ripe for judgment and consequently not identical with the judgment itself: "The word of Jehovah has become unto them Zaw Lazaw, etc., *in order that* they might go and fall backward, etc." It must, therefore, be the speech of Jehovah through the prophet. But Isaiah intimates that this speech now assumes a mysterious form for the purpose of hardening and blinding the unbelievers. Interrupted in their debauch, they had mockingly described Isaiah's words of verse 7 as Zaw Lazaw Zaw Lazaw, Kaw Lakaw Kaw Lakaw, i.e., as meaningless, stammering sounds such as are used to teach children, just weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts, the first rudiments of speech (cf. the form of 7 in the original). The prophet accepts this charge of the mockers, but adds that the dark, oracular sounds issuing from his mouth are intended to lead them on to destruction. There is much in favor of this interpretation. It is possible that expositors have been too hasty in inferring that verse 13a must express the same thought as verse 11. Isaiah may well have replied to the charge of the revelers in a twofold way: (1) that his childish language is but the preface to a more fearful strange tongue they will hear from Jehovah in the accents of the Assyrian conqueror (verse 11); (2) that the very form of the prophetic address serves the purpose of judicially confirming them in their culpable inability to understand the truth (verse 13). The common view according to which Zaw Lazaw Kaw

Lakaw signifies "precept upon precept, line upon line," or "level upon level, plumb-line upon plumb-line," and is intended to ridicule the censoriousness of the prophet's word with its everlasting admonitions, is not without difficulties. The appeal to verse 17 in favor of it is not conclusive. True, **wq** occurs here in the sense of "measuring-line," but if an allusion to verses 10 and 13 had been in the prophet's mind, he would have used **wc** in parallelism and not the different term of **tlq #m**. If Meinhold's exegesis were to be adopted it might be perhaps slightly modified by understanding **hyhw** in verse 13 as a consecutive perfect: "The word of Jehovah shall become," referring not merely to what precedes, but also to the character of the following discourses. The whole matter, however, is uncertain, so that I have not made use of it in the discussion above.

[118] (n.b. Vos's table has been converted to sentence form—J.K.)

[119] The following shows which sections of Chapters 28-33 are retained as Isaianic by the various recent critics: Duhm: 28:1-4, 7-22, 23-29; 29:1-4a, 5c-7, 9-10, 13-14, 15; 30:1-5, 6-7, 8-17, 27-33; 31:1-4a, 5b-c, 8a, 9b; 32:1-5, 9-14, 15-18a, 20. Hackmann: 28:1-4, 7-22, 23-29 (?); 29:1-7, 9-12, 13-14, 15; 30:1-5, 6-7, 8-17; 31:1-4; 32:9-14 (?), 15-20 (?). Cheyne: 28:1-4, 7-13, 14-22; 29:1-4a, 6, 9-12 (9-10), 13-14, 15; 30:1-5, 6-7, 8-17; 31:1-5a.

[120] The words **M)tp (tpl hyhw**, "it shall be at an instant suddenly," ought to be read at the beginning of the sixth verse. So Duhm and Cheyne.

[121] Cf. 5:28, 9:18, 10:17, 17:13, 30:13, 27, 30.

[122] The case of chapter 30:13, where the similar words **(tpl M)tp** refer to the coming catastrophe, is totally different, because here no description of the instrumentality of the judgment precedes.

[123] The other explanation of Ariel, which at present finds most favor, is likewise beset with difficulties. The use of the article in Ezekiel 43:15 seems to exclude the view that it is a compound with El, "the altar-hearth of God." To take it as altar-hearth simply, yields no sufficiently transparent symbolism. There must be some connection between the meaning of Ariel

and the fact of David's encamping there. The Septuagint rendering makes it probable that some words of verse 1 have been lost, and it may be owing to this that the problem has become insoluble.

[124] In verse 3 read with the Septuagint **dwdb** instead of **rwdb**, "I will encamp like David against thee." From the obvious connection between these words and verse 1 it follows that the Septuagint is right in translating: *polij hn epolemhse Daid*, "the city against which David fought."

[125] Duhm considers verse 4b as a gloss, and rejects 5a-b and 8 as editorial enlargement of verse 6, reproducing with substantial correctness Isaiah's meaning in the last-mentioned verse. Stade, on the other hand, would omit verse 7 and retain verse 8, thinking that the former arose from a misunderstanding of the figure in verse 8.

[126] Even if it could be admitted that "a dream," "a vision of the night" (verse 7) were suitable figures for expressing the multitudinousness of the enemies, the words, "the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff *that passeth away*" (verse 5), admit of but one meaning, viz., that the besiegers will be suddenly swept off the scene.

[127] *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, p. 36, Note 1.

[128] **Cyr**(is, to be sure, most naturally understood of the foreign tyrant, although even it does not bear that meaning exclusively. Cf. Jeremiah 15:21. But the case is altogether different with **Cl** and the other terms used. As Cheyne well puts it: **Cyr**(is the external, **Cl** the internal foe of Israel. Nevertheless, a few lines later, he himself again confuses the matter by saying that the **Mycl** are described as **Mycyr**((*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 195).

[129] "They look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek Jehovah! yet He also is wise, etc."

[130] The words, "Is it not yet a very little while" (verse 17), show how the immediate nearness of the vision of regeneration, due to the peculiar prophetic perspective, contributes toward rendering the contrast all the more

effective.

[131] Cheyne thinks that the author boldly conceives of Jehovah as being Himself visibly present among Israel to teach the pious, and that this points to a time when prophecy no longer existed. But this interpretation of verse 20, "thy Teacher shall not *behidden any more*," is far from necessary. The supposition is rather that at one time Jehovah was visible, when His prophets were heard, that afterwards He became hidden, and that in the future He will become visible again in precisely the same sense He was so originally, i.e., through prophetic revelation. The silencing of the prophets (verses 10, 11) is a wicked removal of Jehovah, the resumption of prophetic teaching (verses 20, 21) will be a reappearance of Jehovah; both cases are entirely parallel. The reference to conversion from idolatry in verse 22 also makes it probable that in verses 20, 21, something is described which forms a contrast to the people's previous conduct.

[132] *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 203, 204.

[133] So the Revised Version, Ewald, Dillmann, Bredenkamp and others.

[134] Cf. Isaiah 29:7, 8; Zechariah 14:12.

[135] The lion in the figure is not represented at the point where he has already seized the prey, but as uttering the growl that usually precedes his leaping upon it (cf. Isaiah 5:29). The idea is that the shouting of the shepherds fails to deflect him from his purpose. So it is declared of Jehovah in verse 2 that "He will not call back his words."

[136] From the above it appears how unfounded is Cheyne's charge of lack of consecutiveness against the passage (verses 5-9). The inner arrangement of these verses is perfectly logical and their coherence with what precedes of the closest. Especially verse 8 points back most significantly to verse 3. The Assyrian is to fall indeed, but not until all human power arrayed against him has been disposed of. Cheyne himself is constrained to admit that at least the rhythm and style of verse 8a are characteristically Isaianic. The same may be said of verse 9b.

[137] An exception is Sörensen, *Juda und die Assyrische Weltmacht*, p. 24.

[138] Z.A.W., 4:269-271. Similarly Guthe, *Das Zukunftsbild des Jesaia*, p. 45.

[139] Cheyne, *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 178.

[140] Cf. 28:29, 29:24, 30:20, 21.

[141] So Guthe, *Das Zukunftsbild des Jesaia*, 44; Cheyne, *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 173.

[142] Cf. Micah 5:4.

[143] Cf. Dillmann's *Commentar*, p. 285; Bredenkamp's *Commentar*, p. 190.

[144] Cf. Duhm's remarks on 32:1 (p. 210): "This verse presents a strong obstacle to the post-exilic dating of the prophecy; not as if it would have been impossible for a post-exilic writer to speak of a *future king*, but because he could not have spoken of him after such a matter-of-fact fashion, and would inevitably have made the Messiah more conspicuous."

[145] Cf. the excellent remarks of Hackmann on this point, *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 98. The case of chapter 3:16-4:6 is entirely parallel to that of the present passage. Guthe tries to make out a difference, because in chapter 3:16 *seq.* a judgment is threatened which strikes at the specific evil denounced, whilst here the punishment lacks all adaptation to the sin of the women. On the explanation suggested above this difference does not exist.

[146] Duhm surmises that the style of verse 9 is that of the conventional beginning of a popular song and remarks: "The discovery that there must be imitation of some other passage in this is not calculated to increase our respect for criticism."

[147] Cf. Micah 3:18; Jeremiah 26:12.

[148] Still a different view of the relation of the two passages is taken by Cheyne, who thinks that 32:15 is the older one, and that both speak of a raising of conditions above their normal level. Cheyne further suggests that the writer of 29:17 took **lmr̄b** in 32:15 for the ridge of Mt. Carmel and hence substituted Lebanon for **rbdm**, the sense being that Lebanon will in

the future have vines not only on its slopes, but on its summit, and Carmel become so thickly set with noble trees as to resemble a forest. This misunderstanding of 32:15 would of course exclude the authorship of Isaiah. But the variation between Lebanon and **rbdm** need not have had this origin. Both signify wild regions. And the use of **rbdm** in his model would of itself have been sufficient to warn the writer that **lmr** was not intended as a proper name. Apart from this peculiar exegesis, the main point of Cheyne's view, viz., that both passages refer to an improvement of conditions, offers no obstacle to the genuineness of either, except it be held that Isaiah could not have twice expressed the same thought.

[149] Duhm has well shown that this phrase is not intended as an indefinite oracular statement (so Stade), but resembles the German *über Jahr und Tag*, being equivalent to the less idiomatic phrase of 29:1.

[150] Cheyne goes no farther than: "It is tempting but unnecessary to bring down the date as low as the oppression of the Jews by Artaxerxes Ochus."

[151] Cf. Tiele, *Babylonisch-assyrische Geschichte*, 1:292.

[152] Tiele proposes to reverse the order of 2 Kings 18:17-37 and 19:10-13, making the embassy from Libna precede the sending of the army corps from Lachish. His reason for this is twofold: 1. Because the Assyrians could not reach Lachish except by way of Libna; of this I am not competent to judge. 2. Because the sending of letters obviously represents the first mild attempt to reduce Hezekiah to submission, whilst the dispatch of an army corps marks a second more vigorous step of procedure. Against this it should be observed, that Sennacherib, after hearing of Tirhaka's approach and perceiving the necessity of withdrawing the troops sent to Jerusalem and concentrating his forces, would naturally before doing so make a last effort to obtain some result from his expedition, even though he could hardly expect a bare message to succeed when the appearance of his soldiers had failed.

[153] Cf. Bleck's *Einleitung*, 256.

[154] That, while denying the genuineness of the discourse, Cheyne yet acknowledges its natural connection with the history of Isaiah's time in the

form above stated, shows how plainly the situation of the year 701 is written on its very face.

[155] *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 169, 170.

[156] Cf. Dillmann's *Commentar*, p. 293.

[157] Cf. what has been said above on chapter 32:1.

[158] Of course the concrete enemies which the prophet has in mind and which form the substratum of his typical vision of the future are the Assyrians. But the situation was so self-explanatory that it was unnecessary to mention them by name.

[159] Verse 13-26 are true prediction as well as verses 1-12 and not to be assigned to a somewhat later time. There is no necessity for bisecting a chapter which by its very form evinces its unity of composition.

[160] The later Jews had a crassly materialistic conception of the fiery base on which the throne of God's glory was supposed to rest and out of the stream of which angels were believed to be continually created (Cf. Weber, *System der altsynagogalen Palästinischen Theologie*, 160, 161.

[161] It should be observed that in chapter 6:5 also the conception of dwelling in the midst of an unclean people, as disqualifying for the vision of Jehovah, is significantly brought forward. Here nobody thinks of understanding that which terrifies Isaiah as a material fire. In like manner chapter 6:7 may be said to contain the germ of 33:15. Attention should be called to the intimate connection in which the ideas of chapter 33 stand to the fundamental teaching of Isaiah. This has been well exhibited by George Adam Smith in the *Expositor's Bible*.

[162] Dillmann, *Commentar*, 258.

[163] 28:29 has obvious points of contact with verse 21 and still more with 29:14.

[164] Guthe, *Zukunftsbild des Jesaia*, 28, thinks the parable is intended to justify the prophet's change from his earlier and darker representations of the judgment to the milder and more hopeful view of the later discourses in

which the deliverance of Judah is promised. But to express this thought the figure would have been badly chosen, for its *point* lies precisely in the intelligence and consistency of the husbandman, who in all his doings from the very first has his eyes on the harvest. If Jehovah through the prophet had predicted at one time a severer and at another time a milder issue of His judgments, He would have shown Himself in so far lacking in such intelligence and consistency.

[165] Cheyne's argument against the genuineness of the parable, that it cannot have been addressed to the sinners addressed in the preceding, has no weight, because, the piece does not introduce itself as addressed to the same persons. In reference to the alleged imitation of Genesis 4:23 in verse 23, see above; the linguistic phenomena will be discussed later; the Isaianic words are here particularly numerous.

[166] The dependence of verse 28a on chapter 8:8a is doubtful, the similarity being confined to the use of the figure of the stream reaching to the neck; if real it proves nothing against the Isaianic authorship. Equally general is the resemblance between verse 28b and chapter 29:5, which again would be conclusive only if first the secondary character of the latter verse was established.

[167] Cf. October number, p. 615.

[168] *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, p. 100, Note 2.

[169] Hackmann alone hazards the view that verses 18-25 refer to Northern Israel, and omitting verses 15 and 17 connects verse 18 directly with verse 16. But the fact that in chapter 8:1-8 a threatening against Syria-Ephraim is immediately followed by one against Judah renders a similar sequence here probable.

[170] Cf. Prof. Porter in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. 14.

[171] Duhm, to be sure, takes the impossible view that the peoples and far-off countries come under consideration only as witnesses, not as enemies to be defeated, and that the real assailants of Judah to which the oracle refers are Syria and Ephraim.

[172] Hackmann follows Stade in denying the genuineness of the verses.

[173] *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 37.

[174] Both Duhm and Cheyne have an original way of dividing the text. After eliminating the words **l)wgm(yb** (taking the suffix in **Kcr**) as a corruption of **yb**) they separate vers. 8b from what precedes and assume that it is the close of a sentence of which the first part has been lost. Cheyne in particular thinks that the wings spoken of are Jehovah's wings and that their stretching out over the land is meant in a favorable sense. Against this proposal cf. Kittel in the sixth edition of Dillmann's Commentary, *in loco*.

[175] Prof. Porter thinks that no argument in favor of Isaiah's reputation as a promissory prophet can be drawn from Jeremiah 26:17-19. He argues that, if the friends of Jeremiah did not appeal to Isaiah as a prophet of evil, at least his enemies did not appeal to him either as a prophet of the inviolability of Zion. But the two cases stand not alike. On the critical hypothesis Isaiah's prophecies were well-nigh entirely prophecies of destruction. How could the friends of Jeremiah have failed to shield their protégé with this great name, if such was really the historical tradition concerning Isaiah? In our view Isaiah's prophecies contained the announcements of ruin and of salvation for Jerusalem in close juxtaposition and curiously intermingled. This made them an unsuitable weapon in the hands of those who attacked Jeremiah.

[176] Cheyne puts it in 711 as a companion piece to chapter 20. He combines it with the prophecy 10:5-9, 13, 14, of which, in his view, it once formed the close.

[177] According to a third view represented by Duhm and Dillmann, chapter 17:12-14 form the introduction to chapter 18. In this case it would belong, together with the latter, to the Sennacherib-period.

[178] Cheyne would put the embassy described in chapter 18 as sent from Egypt after the embassy sent from Judah to Egypt according to chapter 30, 31. Hackmann adopts the reverse order, and this is to be preferred, because it is easier to understand how Isaiah could first speak of the Egyptians in the tone of chapter 18 before as yet serious thoughts were entertained at

Jerusalem of an alliance, and afterwards when the secret negotiations with that power were in full progress in the totally different tone of chapter 28-31, than *vice versa*. Cf. *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, p. 98.

[179] The exegesis of Sörensen, who finds in chapter 18 the prediction of a military defeat of Sennacherib's host and thinks that the approach of the Egyptian army produced such confidence in Isaiah, has found no acceptance.

[180] *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 103-107.

[181] Duhm and Cheyne reject verses 10-12, but on insufficient grounds. The term "idols" (if we do not emend the text of verse 10 by reading **hl)h twblmml** for **lyl)h twblmml**) does not make the Assyrian king speak from the standpoint of monotheism, but is the natural result of his having to speak with the vocabulary of Isaiah. For the expression of the thought that all the other gods were powerless before his gods no stronger word offered itself than **lyl)**, elsewhere used by the prophet to describe the powerlessness of the idols as contrasted with Jehovah. The term may have had a stronger meaning when thus predicated by Isaiah of false gods, but this would not disqualify it for forcibly expressing the conviction of the pagan king that the gods of other nations were practically nothing when arrayed against his own.

[182] Cheyne, *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 135.

[183] Hackmann, *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 108.

[184] Sörensen thinks that the words "tomorrow we die" are simply the proverbial epicurean justification for enjoying the present life; Cheyne assumes that the Jerusalemites resorted to the banquet-table to drown their apprehension of a possible return of the enemy. Both seem to me less plausible than the ordinary view given above.

[185] Whether verses 1-14 are one continuous discourse or consist of two distinct prophecies is difficult to decide. In the former case the present verses 1, 2 must be a present of retrospective vision; though speaking after the deliverance, Isaiah transports himself back to the time when the city was still besieged and the people at their mad carousal. Then from verse 6 onward this

vivid realization of a present scene gives way to the calmer description of the past. In the other case verses 1-5 were actually spoken during the siege and subsequently prefixed in writing to the discourse of verses 6-14, dating from after the deliverance.

[186] For earlier defenders of this view, cf. Ryssel, p. 10.

[187] Wellhausen, in the fourth edition of Bleck's *Introduction to the Old Testament* (1878), p. 425 (note).

[188] According to Oort, in both passages of Genesis the words "the same is Bethlehem" are due to a misunderstanding of the redactor, or are at least inserted by a later hand.

[189] Cf. Genesis 35:16-23; the words, "Ophel of the daughter of Zion," are made an interpolation like Lehem in 5:1.

[190] Oort assumes that the combination of Bethlehem and Ephrathah had no basis in fact, but was entirely due to the post-exilic scribes, who first changed the meaning of Micah's prophecy in favor of David's house, and then introduced the identification of Ephrathah and Bethlehem thus obtained into the Genesis-passages, 1 Samuel 17:12, Joshua 15:59 (Sept.) and into the book of Ruth (*Theol. Tijdschr.*, 5:510).

[191] On p. 273seq. of the same volume Oort formally acknowledges the shipwreck of his hypothesis, but also declares that, after its abandonment, Micah 4, 5, become more of a mystery than ever. This statement is followed (p. 279seq.) by some remarks of DeGoeje, proposing several emendations of the text and in general endeavoring to elucidate the connection of thought on the assumption of its genuineness as a whole. In reference to the Ephrath-question, DeGoeje suggests that it is not necessary to assume a Benjaminitic place of that name, since in Genesis after all the Judean Ephrath may be referred to, the expression **Cr)h trbb** "some way" (to Ephrath) being perhaps sufficiently indefinite in character to apply equally well to comparatively long as to shorter distances. A third part of the article consists of some further observations by Kuenen, who insists upon the two Ephraths and upon considering the words "this is Bethlehem" in Genesis a mistaken geographical gloss. While rejecting most of DeGoeje's conjectures, Kuenen

makes a valuable contribution of his own toward the better understanding of chaps. 4 and 5.

[192] It will be observed that this was written before Stade himself had fully grasped the new critical principle of the one-sidedness of *all* early prophecy as a prophecy of judgment pure and simple. He here still assumes that Micah appeared unique in this respect to the post-exilic reader. The present idea is that Hosea as well as Amos, Isaiah almost as much as Micah, were found deficient in the element of promise and were all expanded and supplemented accordingly.

[193] *Theologische Literaturzeitung*(1881), pp. 443, 444. For a later view of Giesebrecht, cf. *Beiträge zur Jesaja Kritik*.

[194] *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*(1883), p. 4seq.

[195] Z. A. W.(1884), p. 88 (note).

[196] Z. A. W.(1884), pp. 277-291.

[197] Cf. Robertson Smith on Micah in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, where the same proposal to excise 4:11-13 had been made.

[198] *Geschichte der Heiligen Schriften Alten Testaments*(1881), p. 314; cf. Z. A. W.(1883), p. 1seq.

[199] *The Prophets of Israel*(1882), L. vii (Notes 4 and 6). In excising 4:11-13, Robertson Smith follows Oort, without, however, approving of his general treatment of the context.

[200] *The Cambridge Bible for Schools, Micah*(1882), p. 34.

[201] *De Profetie van Micha*, pp. 65-108.

[202] *Historisch-Kritisch Onderzoek*, 2:369-380.

[203] One more defender of the authenticity of the entire prophecy arose in Wildeboer (*De Letterkunde des Ouden Verbonds*, 1893, pp. 174-183). On most points this author sides with Ryssel, although showing some inclination to follow Kuenen in his rejection of the passages mentioned above. An earlier

treatise of Wildeboer on Micah (1884) is not accessible to me. The genuineness of Chapters 1-5 was further upheld by Pont in *Theologische Studien* (1888, 1889). He assigns 6:1-7:6 to the reign of Manasseh and 7:7-20 to the post-exilic age.

[204] Roorda explained as follows: The false prophet admits that Jerusalem may be besieged, but maintains that it cannot be conquered, because the enemy will be compelled to raise the siege when numberless troops of warriors under the leadership of God Himself stream together to protect the walls and to beat back the enemy.

[205] Ewald assumed that Micah originally wrote the words in the margin as an example of false prophesying, and that against his intention they were afterwards put into the text by a transcriber.

[206] Kleinert sought to make the above interpretation plausible by rendering the closing words of verse 11, "and were to prophesy to this people." As Ryssel shows, this rendering is excluded by the construction.

[207] *The Prophets of Israel*, 2nd ed., pp. 290-292; Introduction, p. xxvii.

[208] Cf. Nowack's Commentary *in loco*.

[209] For the various possibilities of interpretation cf. Elhorst, pp. 43-48. Ryssel compares Hosea 2:1, 2. But even if "the children of Israel" in verse 10 be here referred to Northern-Israel, and the gathering together of Israel and Judah of verse 11 be understood as taking place in Palestine, it should be remembered that Hosea's perspective, especially in the first part of his book, represents an earlier stage of prophecy than that of Micah. To him the exile of Judah had not been as clearly revealed as to the latter, so that his picture of the restoration could more easily assume the form of a bringing back of exiled Israel to Judah. In the case of Micah such indefiniteness of speech was no longer possible.

[210] Cf. 3:8, where a similar contrast is marked by **ybn) Mlw)w**.

[211] Quoted by Hengstenberg, *Christology* (English translation), 1:411.

[212] In reference to the various attempts to find for 2:12, 13, another more

suitable place in the Book of Micah, cf. Ryssel, p. 213. Ryssel thinks Steiner's proposal to put the verses after 4:8 not without plausibility. Elhorst places our passage between 3:11 and 12. On this cf. the criticism of Kusters, *Theologisch Tijdschrift* (1893), p. 251.

[213] Cf. Kusters, *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1893, p. 263.

[214] Kusters, *l.c.*, thinks that all the passages quoted from Isaiah as bearing on this question prove no more than that Jehovah surpasses in power the gods of the Gentiles, and is able to protect his people from their attacks. Isaiah, however, not merely teaches that Jehovah can protect Israel from other nations, but also that Jehovah summons and brings these nations to execute judgment upon Israel, which is quite a different matter, and goes far beyond the theology Kusters would ascribe to that prophet. And this is true of Micah as well as of Isaiah.

[215] Cf. Nowack, *Z. A. W.*, 1884, p. 280.

[216] Kusters, *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1893, p. 264.

[217] Though there is nothing about the disputed clause to suggest its spuriousness, it should not, on the other hand, be allowed to prejudice against the genuineness of its surroundings those who find it unacceptable on *a priori* grounds. The three words can be taken out without destroying the sense of what remains. "Thou shalt dwell in the field; there shall Jehovah redeem thee," would on this view mean that the daughter of Zion must be reduced to a state of helplessness and utter exposure, symbolized by the open field as over against the fortified city. This thought is in full harmony with Micah's judgment on fortresses and cities elsewhere. Hosea 2:16 would be a parallel. Cf. Kuenen, in *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1872, p. 298, against a proposal of DeGoeje to include in the alleged gloss also the following words up to verse 11.

[218] Cf. Keil's Commentary *in loco*.

[219] That this is actually the point of view from which the whole prophecy of verses 11-13 wishes to be understood may be seen from the closing words of verse 13; the gain and substance of the nations are devoted to Jehovah, i.e., to

His sanctuary, because they attempted to rob Him and to defile His dwelling-place.

[220] Another way of removing the conflict is to take the two prophecies as referring to different times. Thus Hengstenberg finds in verses 9, 10, the Babylonian captivity predicted; in verses 11-13, the Maccabean conflict; in verse 14 the Roman oppression. Others, like Caspari and Keil, while not assuming a precise chronological succession, yet insist upon placing the event of verses 11-13 as an eschatological episode between the exile and the Messianic developments described in verse 1 *seq.* The weakness of this exegesis lies in its rendering of **ht(w** in verse 11 as "then," whereas in verses 9 and 14 it obviously means "now" and designates the writer's real or ideal present. Since the three "nows" are correlated they must be rendered alike in each case.

[221] This would not apply to Genesis 48:7, which is assigned to P, but Stade gives everything after **Krd** to the redactor who copied from the passage in chapter 35.

[222] Z. A. W., 1883, p. 4*seq.*

[223] Z. A. W., 1884, p. 293.

[224] Thus the question whether the words **Mxltb)wh** in the Genesis passages are a gloss is entirely immaterial. We do not believe this assumption necessary. DeGoeje's explanation, given in a previous note, seems quite satisfactory. It is significant that neither in Jeremiah nor in 1 Samuel 10:2 is the name Ephrath mentioned in connection with Rachel's grave. But even if the disputed words are a gloss and express a mistaken identification of Bethlehem-Judah with the Ephrath near which Rachel was buried, the glossator could not have made the mistake unless Bethlehem had been called Ephrath in his day. The whole question, therefore, reduces itself to this—whether this designation as it was then current reached back into ancient time or was a novel usage. Equally immaterial is the question whether the original reading in Micah 5:1 is Beth Ephrathah or Bethlehem-Ephrathah. According to Roorda the first Hebrew text was **htp) tyb** and the original rendering of

the Septuagint corresponding to this oikoj Efraqa. Then **Mxl tyb** was written in the margin of the Hebrew in explanation. A copyist took this to mean that **tyb** should be read **Mxl tyb** and made the change. Thus originated the present Hebrew text. A comparison of the original Septuagint with it suggested as a compromise bhqleem oikoj Efraqa, which is the present Greek text. Roorda's conjecture may possibly be correct. It is equally possible, however, that the Septuagint text contains an explanation of the Hebrew as it now stands. In that case the latter may well be original. Cf. the combination Bethlehem-Judah.

[225] There is more reason to believe that **ytrp)** belongs to the original text (whatever may be the truth about **hz)** and that the words **Mxl tybm** were added either by the writer or by a later hand to guard against the misinterpretation of **ytrp)** as "Ephraimite."

[226] Kuenen, of course, makes 1 Chronicles 2, as a whole, a tendency-piece. Cf. *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1872, p. 49.

[227] No weight can be attached to Stade's argument, based on the constant use of **ytrp)** = Ephraimite, because this adjective may well have borne a double meaning. Indeed this must be assumed on Stade's own theory, since the word must have belonged to both the place Ephrath and the larger territory of Ephraim.

[228] Cf. Volz, p. 67, who admits that an indirect polemic against the Davidic nobility must be implied. Elhorst thinks he has discovered a way in which the identification of Bethlehem and Ephrathah may be post-exilic and yet Micah the author of 5:1. Reading Beth-Ephrath, he suggests that David's family, though residing in Bethlehem, came originally from Ephrath, near Ramah, and was for this reason called Ephrathite. A post-exilic copyist then would have made the mistake of identifying Bethlehem and Ephrath. The difficulty about this is that Micah, a Judean prophet, would hardly have designated the royal house by a name recalling its Ephraimitic descent. Cf. Kusters, *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1893, p. 263.

[229] Nowack, Z. A. W., 1884, p. 284; Elhorst, p. 52.

[230] Pont finds in Micah 1:7 an allusion to the immoral significance of the Asherim. This possible allusion would become an explicit reference if, with Wellhausen, we were to change **hynnt**) in **hyr#**), a conjecture which has much in its favor; the term "hires" appears strange between "graven images" and "idols," and the "burning with fire" goes well with the Asherim which it is proposed to substitute.

[231] Kusters, *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1893, p. 267, suggests that the reference may be to the use of Teraphim, and that the Asherah cannot be meant, because the latter had nothing to do with the giving of oracles.

[232] By making Isaiah 19:19 late, the critics admit that the interpretation of the Mazzebah here as a symbolic stone must be allowed.

[233] Jeremiah 2:27 is no more decisive or explicit than Hosea 4:12.

[234] *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, 1:184, 460. Cf. also Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, 1:248.

[235] Cf. Wolf-Baudissin in Herzog's *Real Encyclopedia*, 3rd ed., 2nd Vol., Art. "Astarte" and "Aschera," p. 158; Tiele, *Geschiedenis van den Godsdienst in de Oudheid*, 1:286.

[236] The critics have all the more reason to take the view given above regarding the prophetic silence on the Asherah, since their J and E of the Hexateuch, assigned to this same period, are supposed to have changed the Mazzeboth into memorial stones for the purpose of obliterating their original meaning. Since no such attempt is made in reference to the Asherim, J and E must have either thought that these were more innocent than the Mazzeboth, which is impossible to believe, or must have thought them too inherently pagan to admit of a similar idealization. If then the silence of J and E is to be explained from the utter disapproval of the Asherah, why cannot the silence of the early prophets be construed in the same manner?

[237] Cf. Kuenen in *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 6:290.

[238] This point has been rightly insisted upon by Elhorst, pp. 46-48, 54-58. Elhorst has also shown that neither Stade nor Kuenen succeeds in making out

a much better continuity of thought than exists at present. Stade's 4:1-4, 11-5:3, 6-14 is hardly more rational than the text as it stands. Especially **ht(** and verse 2 cause difficulty on Stade's view. Kuenen's hypothesis does not explain what was the motive for the insertion of 4:6-8, and the removal of these verses leaves the subject addressed in verse 9 in doubt. Nowack finally and Volz do not make clear how the words which they tentatively concede to Micah could have existed in or been reduced to their isolated fragmentary state, nor do they make intelligible the process through which this nucleus passed so as to attain its present size and composition.

[239] Kusters, *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1893, p. 265.

[240] Cf. Giesebrecht, *Beiträge zur Jesaja-Kritik*, p. 217.

[241] Ryssel has already called attention to the following points of contact between 7:7-20 and the other parts of the book: **MIw(ymy** in verse 14 cf. 5:1; **ll(m** verse 13 cf. 2:7 and 3:4; the contrast between Zion and the world is conceived of in 7:10 after the same manner as in 4:11-13; **d()wb**, verse 12 cf. 4:8b; the shepherd-figure of 7:14 recalls 4:6 and 5:3. Little can be built on the play in verse 18 on the name of Micah ("who is a God like unto Thee?"). The critics might make use of this to explain how the later prophecy came to be put on the name of Micah.

THE WRITINGS OF WILLIAM BACON STEVENS

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Sermons by Stevens^(TOC)

The Almost Christian!

"Then Agrippa said to Paul: You almost persuade me to become a Christian!"

There was in the character of Paul, a *moral sublimity* far excelling the loftiest of mere earthly heroes. in both phases of his life, as a persecuting Pharisee, and as a Christian apostle—he was a noted man, remarkable for great qualities and peculiar developments eminently fitting him to become on the one hand a bitter persecutor, and on the other a noble preacher of the Cross of Christ. a bolder advocate of the truth, a more triumphant defender of the faith—there never has been in the whole history of Christianity. It mattered not where he was, or before whom he spoke—his one theme was Jesus Christ, and Him crucified; and in every station he magnified his office. on several occasions, however, his zeal and eloquence were peculiarly displayed, one of which is referred to in the text.

Having been apprehended in Jerusalem under false charges, Paul was first taken before the *Sanhedrin*, or Council of the Jews; and thence he was sent by Claudius Lysias to Caesarea, until *Felix*, the governor of Judea, could hear his case; and by this cruel and servile man, he was kept in confinement two years. When *Porcius Festus* succeeded to the governorship, he proposed to send Paul back to Jerusalem; but Paul conscious that he had done no wrong, and aware of the implacable hatred of the chief priest and scribes, preferred to throw himself for justice, on a heathen tribunal—rather than trust the

prejudiced decisions of the Hebrew council. and hence when Festus put to him the question, will you go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things? Paul replied, "I stand at Caesar's judgment-seat," and adds, "I appeal unto Caesar!" for it was the privilege of all Roman citizens by law, to choose whether they would be tried before a provincial or the imperial court. this exercise of Paul's right as a Roman citizen stopped all proceedings against him in Caesarea and baffled the malice of the Jews. While Festus waited for an opportunity to send Paul to Rome, he was visited by the young king Agrippa and his sister Bernice. to these royal visitors, Festus related the case of Paul, and Agrippa expressed a desire to see and hear the strange prisoner. The desire was granted, and the next day was set for the hearing.

When it came, Agrippa and Bernice and Festus with royal parade entered the audience-room. As soon as the governor had explained to the king the facts of Paul's arrest in Jerusalem and his appeal to Rome, Agrippa said to him, "You are permitted to speak for yourself." Then Paul, stretching forth his hand to arrest attention, answered for himself. What a trying moment was this for the apostle! Before him sat **Agrippa**, the son of that Herod who had slain James and arrested and imprisoned Peter. on the one side, his princely sister Bernice, brazen with incestuous crime; and on the other, Festus, whom the emperor Nero had appointed Procurator of Judea. in attendance upon these were the Chilliarchs—the great officers of state, the nobility of the province, filling up the audience-room with the insignia of royalty and rank, of military and municipal power. in their midst stood Paul, small of stature, clad in simplest toga, and attended by the sentinel to whom he was chained as a prisoner.

Was not Paul dazzled by this display of royalty and power—those flashing helmets—those gleaming swords—those polished spears? Was he not

daunted by the looks of the king and his wicked sister—by the stern gaze of the stern Festus—by the frown of the courtiers—by the dark scowl of the soldiers? Did not his tongue falter, and his knees tremble, as he stood before so prestigious an assemblage?

Behold the scene! the king—the prisoner; the crown on the head of the one—the chain on the wrist of the other. Royalty, power, wealth, in their concentrated form, seated before him; and he, a solitary disciple of the despised and crucified Nazarene, bound, guarded, standing alone in the midst of this display of pomp and power, stretching forth his hand to speak for himself and for Jesus!

Would he be dazzled? the eyes that had been made blind for three days, by the vision of Damascus, when Jesus revealed himself to him in a glory above the brightness of the sun at mid-day—were not to be dazzled by any mortal splendor.

Would he tremble? the man who counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ—had not a muscle in him to quiver at any human presence.

Would he falter? the tongue which had been commissioned by Jesus to witness for Him before kings and rulers—had been so taught by the Holy Spirit that it knew no faltering accent before the great ones of the earth.

But hark! the apostle begins to speak for himself—all sounds are hushed in that vast audience. His opening allusions to Agrippa arrest attention by their courtesy and truth. He proceeds, gathering strength and energy with each sentence—his burning thoughts, his nervous words, his impassioned utterance, his glowing eye, his whole form swelling and rocking with intense earnestness—as he relates the scene of his wondrous conversion outside the

gates of Damascus—together with the subduing effect of his speech upon the hushed and soul-thrilled audience—alarms the Pagan governor, and he cries out with a loud voice, "***You are out of your mind, Paul! Your great learning is driving you insane!***"

Thus checked in the torrent of his eloquence, the prisoner meekly answered, "I am not insane, most excellent Festus. What I am saying is true and reasonable. The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner." and then, by a bold stroke of oratory, he turns to Agrippa and says, "King Agrippa—do you believe you the prophets?" Perceiving, perhaps, the embarrassment of the king at this unexpected question, he delicately answers it himself by saying, "I know that you do!"

The earnestness of his words, and the pungency of his appeal to Agrippa's personal knowledge of many of the facts of Christ's life and teaching; roused into action the torpid conscience of the young monarch, and hardly aware, perhaps, of the full force of his own words, uttered, it may be, half in jest, half in earnest, or wrung from him by the power of Paul's speech; he says, in the words of my text, "***You almost persuade me to become a Christian!***"

Such a tribute to his eloquence was met by the apostle with kindest courtesy; and, lifting up his chained hand, he replied to the half-convicted monarch, "Short time or long—I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am!" and then, as if suddenly remembering that he was a prisoner in chains, he touchingly adds, "Except for these chains!"

As he thus finished this ***master-piece of holy eloquence***, we can imagine how the long pent-up feelings of the audience relieved themselves in almost murmurs of applause at the oratory; while yet they condemned the cause for

which he so boldly plead. The result was that they mutually agreed that Paul had done "nothing worthy of death or of imprisonment." Thus, as **Chrysostom** says, "the Jews who thus persecuted Paul and sought to slay him, were condemned by Lysias—were condemned by Felix—were condemned by Festus—were condemned by Agrippa, and ultimately God condemned them and destroyed their temple and their city for their hostility to the Gospel which Paul was commissioned to preach!"

Truly this whole scene stands before us as a grand Scriptural masterpiece, painted by Luke with that simple majesty of words; which is at once art's highest seal and glory—only he does what other painters cannot do—he makes us hear words, as well as see persons—he unfolds to us the inner thoughts, as well as outward aspects, of the actors in this assembly.

Such were the **circumstances** under which the words of the text were uttered. They express, however, not merely the feelings of King Agrippa but of a large class of men, who may be termed the **almost Christians**—men who occupy this semi-religious, yet most fragile and dangerous state.

This class, however, has several divisions, a few of which I propose to notice. There are:

1. Those who are intellectually convinced of the truth of religion

And are consequently theoretical believers. The larger part of those who are intelligently acquainted with the Bible, assent to its truth.

It is so fortified with proofs of its divinity, within and without; it is so wonderful in its manifold prophecies;

it is so elevating in its teachings;
it so meets the moral necessities of our race;
it so unfolds the past and reveals the future;
it so explains God's dealings with man and man's relations to God;
it so provides for human peace and joy here and for eternal bliss hereafter
—that there are only a few **willfully deluded** men who reject or disbelieve the Bible.

In the early days of Christianity, to **believe** the Scripture and to **show** it forth in a holy life—were mostly simultaneous acts. But in these days, since the religion of Jesus Christ has obtained a strong foothold; and especially since that religion has proved itself the foremost element of power in whatever is elevating in civilization, refining in society, stable in freedom, or noble in mind—fashioning by its plastic power the most potent governments, the best literature, the purest art, the highest social polity of the world—now, alas! **belief** of the truths of Scripture, and **practice** of its precepts—are too often disjoined! and an **intellectual** or **theoretical** assent to Christianity, is often coupled with the most **practical disregard of its duties!**

It is indeed strange, when viewed in the abstract, that truths so momentous in themselves, and so vital to the interests of the soul, if believed at all—should not be followed by a practice conformable to that belief; because such conduct is contrary to all known principles of human conduct in worldly matters. Let a man be convinced of the truth of anything, or the propriety of any course of conduct which promises him temporal advantage—and how quickly does he carry his mind's belief into active practice! Yet there are multitudes of people who believe the Bible to be God's Word—who do not receive it into their lives as a matter of living faith.

Like Agrippa, they believe the prophets—and yet will not do what the

prophets require! If religion were a matter of the intellect only—then such men would be saved. But salvation reaches us, not so much through the faculties of the mind—as through the affections of the heart. for the mind, by its clear power of reason, may be forced to accept as true—that which the heart dislikes, and refuses to acknowledge, or obey.

We are saved, not by believing Christianity as a system—but by believing in, and accepting Christ as our Savior. It is not by embracing the truth as it is in Jesus, by the processes of the intellect; but by embracing Jesus Himself as our personal Redeemer, that we secure salvation. to whatever height, then, *speculative* belief in Christ or Christianity may go—if it reaches not the point of a personal faith, in a personal and divine Savior, it is only making a man an *almost Christian*.

Simon Magus believed and was baptized, and yet the apostle distinctly says of him, that he had neither part nor lot in this: "for your *heart* is not right in the sight of God." this differentiates the Christian religion from all other religions and all other philosophies: they are all based on dogmas and beliefs—but the Christian religion is based on relationship with a Person.

2. The Intellectually and morally convinced

This leads me to mention as another class of almost Christians, "*the intellectually and morally convinced—but hesitating ones*." These are far in advance of the last class, for these are not only convinced in mind—but recognize the moral obligation resting upon them to believe—and yet hesitate to commit themselves by a decided act of faith into the arms of Jesus.

The large majority of those who habitually attend the stated means of grace,

come under this head. They believe the Bible, and they believe that it is their duty to embrace the Savior whom that Bible reveals. Ask any of them if it is not so—and they will reply, yes. Yet they go no further! They keep striking the *margin* of true religion, often touch its boundary line—yet fail to take the needed step that would plant their feet upon the Rock of Ages; and so they remain hesitating and uncertain in the valley of decision.

Many of this class are patterns of worldly morality and goodness. Their attendance in the sanctuary, and reverence for divine things, and liberality towards the institutions of the gospel—cause them to be admired and beloved. Yet it is all *external*—it does not spring from an inner heart-faith in Jesus. It is the result of early moral *training*, or the influence of *association*, or an attempt to work out, in their own strength, their salvation.

A scribe, pleased with the words of Jesus, entered into conversation with Him, and asked "Which is the greatest commandment in the law?" Our Lord fully replied to this question, and the scribe said unto Him, "Well, Master, You have said the truth—for there is one God, and there is none other but He; and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all burnt-offerings and sacrifices." Mark adds, that when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him "You are not *far* from the kingdom of God."

Here was a case of one *intellectually* and *morally* convinced of the truth—yet hesitating and irresolute as carrying out his convictions to their logical result. What was lacking in his case, was that he who had such a good understanding of the breadth and spirituality of God's law, should come out actively on Christ's side; that he should not remain on the *border land of indecision*—no longer *halt* between two opinions—but translating knowledge into *practice*,

and belief into **confession**—embrace Christ, and take his place as a professed disciple. Hence, though **not far** from the kingdom of God—he was yet outside of that kingdom, nor could he ever pass the separating line, until he deliberately and fully enrolled himself on the side of Jesus; for Jesus has Himself declared, "He who is not with me—is against me."

So long, then, as you fail to take those active steps which will place you beside Christ and His Church as an open and recognized follower—you are only an **almost** Christian.

Early religious training has a most blessed influence in shaping and beautifying the life, giving to it a high-toned morality; but **morality** is no substitute for faith—morality is no Savior. The world, indeed, may admire your exemplary life, and to the eyes of men who look at you from a worldly standpoint, and see you in the twilight of an earthly atmosphere—you may be regarded as good and noble. Yet to Him who sees not as man sees, who measures you by the measuring rod of eternal right, who beholds you in the revealing glare of His divine glory—you may be a grievous sinner! for **man** looks at the outward appearance—but God looks at and judges the heart—and we can have no lot or part with Him in Heaven unless our **hearts** are right in His sight. and this they can only become through the sprinkling of them with the blood of Jesus.

God has declared, "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins," and as when the blood of the paschal lamb was first slain in Egypt, it was not enough that the victim was killed and his blood shed—but drops of that blood were to be sprinkled on the doors of their dwellings; thus bringing the blood to every family and every house, and thus only securing exemption from the visit of the destroying angel who passed that night through all the land of Egypt, slaying all the first-born in every house unprotected by blood.

Just so, it is not enough that Christ has shed His blood on the cross—that blood must by faith be sprinkled on the door of each heart! There must be a **personal application** of that blood by faith—to cleanse our guilt and secure our pardon! and only as faith does thus put upon the soul the blood drops of Calvary—have we a right or title to the kingdom of God.

3. Those who fail to give up some one thing

Another class of almost Christians, comprises ***those who fail to give up some one thing, or fail to secure some one thing—the giving up of which, or the obtaining of which, is necessary to insure salvation.*** My meaning will be best understood by two illustrative instances taken from the Bible.

As our Lord was passing along, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him, and asked him, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

Jesus answered, "If you will enter into life, keep the commandments."

"All these things," said the young man, "I have kept from my youth up," and pressed upon our Lord the further question, "What lack I yet?"

Here was one who seemed to recognize to a certain extent, the goodness and authority of Jesus; who evinced a laudable concern to secure eternal life; who in carrying out that desire had done many right and dutiful things by an ***outward conformity to God's law.***

"What lack I yet?"

"Jesus looked at him and loved him. 'One thing you lack,' He said. 'Go, sell

everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in Heaven. Then come, follow Me.'

At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth."

Mark 10:21-22

He who searched the heart, knew what the one thing lacking was—and hence put His probing finger on the defect, and made the young man see himself in a truer light than he had ever seen himself before.

What was the result? "At this the man's face fell."

What did he do? "He went away sad."

Why? "Because he had great wealth."

The one thing which he lacked, was a willingness to give up his besetting sin! that besetting sin was covetousness.

He preferred to keep his possessions—rather than give them to the poor;
he preferred the treasure on earth—to the treasure in Heaven;
he preferred ease—to taking up a cross;
he preferred the following of his own will—to following Jesus.

This most instructive case shows us how near, how very near, a person may be to the kingdom of Heaven—and yet fall short of it! They may lack but one thing:

the giving up of a besetting sin;
the willingness to make a personal sacrifice for Christ;
the refusal to take up some cross;
the drawing back from a full following of Jesus.

Some one single sin, some one single difficulty—may thus obstruct the soul's entrance into Heaven, and prevent one from becoming an altogether

Christian.

One *sin* deliberately persisted in—will certainly keep your soul out of Heaven!

One known *duty* deliberately disregarded—will surely secure your condemnation!

And a refusal to take up a cross and bear it after Jesus—must result in being only an almost Christian, and so fail of eternal life!

The other illustrative case, showing the other side of the same truth—namely, that the absence of one thing may keep you out of heaven—is found in the parable of the ten virgins. Here the lack of "oil in their lamps" kept five of the ten virgins from entering into the marriage feast. in the case of the young man, he lacked the willingness to *give up* the one thing that he had, his wealth—and the holding on to this, proved his ruin. in the case of the foolish virgins, they failed to *obtain* the one thing which they had not, namely, oil—and the lack of that one thing, not only excluded them from the festal hall—but drew upon them the rebuke of the lord of the feast, "I know you not!"

Yet, mark how *nearly alike* those five virgins who did not enter—were to the five, who did enter. They were ...

alike virgins,

alike in their outward attire,

alike in carrying lamps,

alike in going forth to meet the bridegroom,

alike in that they all slumbered and slept while the bridegroom tarried,

alike arose and trimmed their lamps at the midnight cry "***Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!***"

And only at this critical hour, comes out the ***fatal point of difference***—that while the wise virgins had oil in their lamps—the foolish virgins had none; and to them, because they ***lacked*** this, "the door was shut!" this ***oil*** in the lamp, and without which it will not burn—represents the ***renewing and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in the heart***. We are thus taught, that we may have all the ***outside marks*** of a Christian; that we may for a long time be regarded as such not only by ourselves but by others; yet for ***lack of this oil of grace in the soul***—this unction of the Holy Spirit—only reach the door of Heaven to find it shut! and only knock with the passionate entreaty "Lord, Lord, open unto us!" to hear from within the withering reply, "Truly, truly, I say unto you: I know you not!"

The condition of the almost Christian—of the one who is ***not far*** from the kingdom of God, of him who ***lacks but one thing***—is peculiarly fragile and dangerous. How often have we noticed that a man may live all his life near some grand object in nature, such as Niagara Falls, and yet never visit them; because, being so near to them, he thinks that he can at any time he chooses go to them—and hence his very ***nearness*** causes him to ***delay*** and ***procrastinate*** and never make the oft-purposed visit. While thousands and tens of thousands will traverse seas and continents to visit or gaze at those majestic falls, whose voice is as the sound of many waters.

So it is in spiritual things. Because men know so much of the truth, understand its claims, and have so much of religious reverence and sensibility—they imagine that they can easily take the ***step*** which will make them altogether Christians; easily bridge over the narrow space between the ***not far from the kingdom***—and the kingdom itself; and at their pleasure supply the "one thing lacking"; and so they rest content, procrastinate, and die at last almost Christians! While thousands and tens of thousands who were "afar

off"—who were "aliens and strangers to the covenant of promise," who lacked not one—but many things—press into the kingdom, become altogether Christians, and are saved!

You cannot be told with too much emphasis, that no matter how much of an almost Christian you are—if you are **only almost**, then you are not a true Christian, and hence must be altogether lost! It matters not how **near** you may be to the kingdom of God—you may be so near indeed that you might touch its walls if you stretch forth your hand, or pass its gate if you took but one step—yet if you are only **near** it, you are not **in** it. and remaining outside of it—you must certainly perish.

It matters not that you lack but **one** thing—and that perhaps a very **little** thing; for if you continue to lack and die lacking it—you can not be saved. It is the aim of your soul's adversary, to make you rest contented in this **closeness** to the kingdom, in this **almost Christian** state. He will rather aid you in getting into this position, in the hope that once there, he can keep you there, flattering your soul with false hopes, deceiving conscience with false positions, and cajoling you into that self-satisfied condition, which is the sure precursor of eternal death!

I can hardly picture to myself a person in more imminent danger than an almost Christian. a man on the verge of a religious profession—yet held back by the lack of some one thing—the lack of moral courage to do, what reason and conscience and the Bible urge him to do; come out boldly in the name of Jesus, and avouch him to be your personal and only Savior, and make Him yours by a personal and a living faith. Do this and you will make practical—what before was theoretical. **Knowledge** will be transformed into **duty**; and the one condition which the almost Christian lacks to make him an altogether Christian—will be supplied. that factor is **faith**, that personal belief in and

acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Savior and Redeemer, which unites us to Him as the branch is united to the vine, so that we have a oneness of life with Christ on earth, and a oneness of glory with Him in Heaven.

Be persuaded, then, to continue no longer in this *dangerous*, this *insecure*, this *almost* Christian state. Come out on the Lord's side. Take your place as Christ's disciple! for so long as you remain hesitating and undecided ...

you are putting in jeopardy your salvation;

you are disobedient to God's commands;

you are setting at naught Christ's blood;

you are doing despite to the Holy Spirit; and

you are weaving the winding sheet of your immortal soul!

Sins of the Tongue^(TOC)

When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal.

Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go.

Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by Hell. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. James 3:3-8

Speech is at once the **glory**—and the **shame** of man.

His **glory** ...

as it distinguishes him above all earthly creatures;
as it puts him in communication with his fellow men;
as it enables him to pray to and praise his Creator;
as it allies him to angelic beings.

His **shame**—in that he uses this noble faculty ...

to dishonor himself,
to dishonor his neighbor,
and to dishonor his God.

In no work of the human mind, do we find so terse and truthful a description of the *character* and *power* of the human tongue, as in the Epistle of James. In these few verses, is found the most graphic outlines of what this tongue *is*, *has* been, *can* be, and *ought* to be. and by a series of most striking statements and illustrations, he sets forth the tongue in its qualities of good or bad; *warning* us against the bad—and urging us to *cultivate* the good.

The POWER of the Tongue

Before we proceed to discuss the quality of the tongue, let us first take up the apostle's words, and show *The POWER of the Tongue*. In doing this he uses three illustrations.

First, he compares it "to *bits*" in horses' mouths. The horse is more powerful than several men; yet by putting a small bit into his mouth, a little child can guide him, and turn about his whole huge body. As the bit is small, in comparison with the size of the horse, and yet controls the horse—so the tongue is small in comparison with the whole body, and yet it is the controlling member of that body.

Secondly, James compares the tongue to "the *rudder*" of a ship. The largest vessels, in the fiercest gales, and on the most boisterous seas—are steered by a small rudder; a little and almost insignificant piece of wood, in comparison with the gigantic ship which it controls. Yet, as small as it is, by it, the helmsman steers the rolling and toppling vessel, and guides it through storm and billows to the haven where he would be. Just so the tongue, little, and like the rudder kept almost always out of sight—yet controls the whole body. The tongue is to the life of man—what the rudder is to the ship. It steers all his movements and guides him into the *port of peace*—or into the *pit of woe*.

Thirdly, James compares The POWER of the Tongue to a **fire**. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindles," and "the tongue is a fire." a **spark** lighting on the dry wood of a forest, may cause one branch of a tree to take fire; it may spread to the trunk; it may catch the next tree, and thus progress, until the whole forest shall be burned by one little spark! So a spark-like word dropped from a tongue burning with anger or with envy—may fall into a family, a church, a community, a town, a whole country—and set them in a blaze of consuming, burning rage!

With regard to this tongue under the figure of a **fire**, James goes on to say, that "it sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by Hell." These are strong words. What do they mean?

The word "course" is, in the original, **wheel or circle of nature**, and may mean the generations of men following each other with the rapidity of the revolutions of a wheel; or the course of a man's life; or the circle of human affairs. Each of these ideas, might have been in the mind of the apostle, because, the tongue ...

sets on fire a whole generation of men;

ignites the whole course of a man's life; and

makes the circle of social life to blaze under its fiery appliances.

But James goes on to say of this tongue, which is itself a fire, that "it is set on fire by Hell." the idea is that the tongue derives all its power to do harm, from the evil influences which have their origin in Hell. that which conveyed to the Hebrew mind the most vivid impression of eternal suffering, was the **ever-burning fire of Gehenna**. this fire—originally kindled in the valley of the son of Hinnom to burn up the refuse of the city of Jerusalem, and kept supplied with its filthy fuel night and day—conveyed to the mind of the Israelite, an idea of intense **pollution**, mingled with intense **suffering**. and as

every fire kindled from the fire on the altar was regarded as holy—so every fire kindled from that in Gehenna, or Hell, was deemed unclean and defiling. Hence the tongue as a fire ignited from Hell—partakes of the nature of Hell, and becomes a hellish tongue!

But the idea conveys even more than this. The Prince of darkness who reigns in Hell over fallen angels and fallen men, is designated in the Bible, not only as a **liar** from the beginning—but as "the **father** of lies," and he is said by Paul to "work with all lying wonders and deceivableness of unrighteousness," and John calls him "the great dragon, that old serpent, the devil, and Satan who **deceives** the whole world." It is he then, who has his abode in Hell—who instigates every lie, and every filthy word, and all sinful speech of men. and hence the tongue of fire, which sets on fire the course of nature, is justly said to be set on fire from Hell, because it is instigated to do its evil by the Prince of Hell. that is the **birthplace** of each sin of the tongue, as well as each sin of the heart!

James illustrates still further the **power** of the tongue, by comparing it with **ferocious beasts** and other animals; and pronouncing it more ferocious and untamable than anything on earth!

You can sooner make the **condor** of the Andes perch upon your wrist; you can sooner make **leviathan** sport with you, in the cresting surf; you can sooner make the **boa-constrictor** coil harmlessly around your neck; you can sooner make the **lion** so gentle that a little child can lead him—than tame the tongue; for "the tongue," he says, "no man can tame." What a strong declaration this is concerning The POWER of the Tongue! Well may he say, "it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison!"

If we look into other portions of the Bible, we shall find further **metaphors** to

indicate The POWER of the Tongue.

Job calls it "a scourge or a whip" whose every blow inflicts severe wounds on the character and leaves its purple welts on the lacerated peace and reputation.

Daniel styles the tongue "a sharp sword"—a murderous weapon, which hews down those upon whom it falls, and drips with the gore of slaughtered innocence or virtue.

Jeremiah says of the tongue, it "is an arrow, shot out." a pointed arrow shot by wicked archers, against those whom they wish to pierce through with anguish, and yet themselves keep at a distance from the one whose good name they aim to destroy.

Paul, speaking of the lips through which the tongue speaks, says "the poison of asps is under their lips!"

And **James** says it is full of deadly poison—as the great venom bag from which the viper or the serpent ejects his poison lies under the tongue, and when that is excited he thrusts his forked fangs into its victim! So under the tongue of such men as slanderers, lies a **poison bag** which secretes its deadly venom, and spits it forth into the wound which its viper-tongue makes, and there it rankles and swells and does its deadly work!

These are some of the illustrations which the Bible uses in speaking of the **evil** tongue, and they show in striking light, the **power** of the tongue. Nor are these metaphors at all too strong to express the **might** and **influence** of this little member, concerning which the Bible says, "**life and death are in The POWER of the Tongue!**"

Does not all history confirm this statement. has not the strife of tongues, been

the fruitful cause of nearly all the **wars** which have saturated the ground with blood? has not an evil tongue, been that which has broken up the peace of **families** and **churches** and **communities** and **nations**? Does not lying, falsehood, deceit, hypocrisy, slander, and backbiting—issue forth from the tongue? Are not profanity and cursing, and filthy talking—the soul-destroying products of an uncircumcised tongue? Surely it is not too strong language to say with James, that "the tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by Hell!"

Particular SINS of the Tongue

Such being the general outlines of the **character** of an evil tongue; let us now descend to some **Particular SINS of the Tongue** because only as we expose and drag to light those sins—can their vileness and influence be made apparent. to enumerate all our **tongue-sins** would be impossible; for they ramify into every department of public and private life, and cover the entire face of the world. There are several, however, which the Bible brings prominently before us, and to these we must confine ourselves at this time.

1. Chattering

The first tongue-sin which I will name is that of **chattering**. "**A chattering fool comes to ruin!**" Proverbs 10:10. By this I mean thoughtless, trifling, heedless talking. Paul speaks of such chatterers, and calls them "busybodies," who out of idleness roam about retailing from house to house, the talk which they have heard. The chatterer is never so happy as when talking. He must

speaking, it matters little what he says; and hence he rattles away, telling anything, and everything, that comes into his mind. Their conversation is, as one says, "merely an *exercise of the tongue*—no other human faculty has any share in it."

There is a process in chemistry, by which you can capture the invisible gas, and weigh it, and separate it into its constituent elements. and were there a moral chemistry by which we could capture the *gaseous chatter* of these busybodies, and resolve it into its elements—its constituent parts would be folly, slander, falsehood, flattery, and boastfulness!

What a source of domestic and social misery, is found in the tongue of the *talebearer*. He indeed "scatters firebrands, arrows, and death," and says, "I was only joking!"—Proverbs 26:19. It has been well said by an English writer, that "the author of an evil *insinuation* or *slander* does not usually carry it about himself; but he ties it to a few idle vagabonds; just as Samson tied firebrands to the tails of the three hundred foxes and turned them free into the standing corn of the Philistines."

These chatterers with their fire-kindling tongues, do indeed set in a flame a whole town, a whole community. It is impossible to estimate the evils of this unrestrained fluency—this loose chattering of an unbridled tongue. It is the fruitful source of strifes, anger, heart-burnings, dissensions in families, defamation, malice. Such a tongue is indeed set on fire by Hell!

2. Slander

The second tongue-sin is *slander*. Under this head I enumerate: backbiting, or speaking evil of one behind his back;

defaming one's good name by absolute or implied blame;
detraction,
envious jealousies,
secret whisperings,
innuendoes,
and all other ways by which the tongue wounds and injures the name and reputation of another.

Twice, does the apostle, speaking of false accusers, term them Diaboloï; and the meaning of the word **Diaboloï** is slanderous, libelous, injurious; and this is the term constantly applied to the **devil**, because he is, as John styles him, "the **accuser** of our brethren." the devil then, is, as Christ says, "the **father** of lies," and every one who gives his tongue to slander, and maligns his neighbors, or utters words of falsehood or detraction—comes into the class of those false accusers, those Diaboloï of which Jesus truly said, "**You are of your father the devil!**"

There are various ways in which slander is uttered, each of which finds its illustration, and each its condemnation, in Scripture. Let me specify a few. The grossest kind of slander is **bearing false witness**—that is, saying a person did things which he did not do; as was the case with those suborned to testify against Naboth whose vineyard Ahab coveted; as was the case with the false witness, who laid to David's charge, things which he knew nothing of.

This false witness is sometimes spoken openly, sometimes in secret—but always with **malicious intent**. and in every instance the tongue which utters it, not only sets on fire the course of nature—but is set on fire by Hell.

Another way of slandering is by the use of **scandalous and opprobrious epithets**—as when Korah accused Moses of being unjust and selfishly

ambitious; as when the Pharisees called our Lord a gluttonous man. Every epithet which you apply to a man is designed to brand the *character* of that person, and render it odious in the sight of others. this is mostly done behind one's back; where for a long time, perhaps, he cannot hear of it; and where, it may be, he can never defend or clear himself of the slander. Such a tongue is indeed like a *viper's tongue*—lurking in secret, and suddenly shooting out its fatal venom!

"No might nor greatness in mortality,
Can censure 'scape. Back-wounding calumny,
The whitest virtue strikes. What king so strong,
Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue?"

Another way of slandering is to impute false motives to good actions. When we say ...

of a *liberal* man—that he is vainglorious;

of an *active* man in church affairs—that he is a Diotrephes;

of a *prudent* man—that he is miserly;

of a *devout* man—that he is hypocritical;

ascribing to the *actions* of persons—not good motives and designs, but evil ones, wherever it is possible to imagine such.

Another way of slandering is, to distort and pervert views, words, and actions

...

giving them a *false construction*;

suppressing what might appear good;

magnifying what might seem to be evil.

This is taking a man's words and deeds, and, like Romish inquisitors, stretching them upon the *rack* until they become disjointed, and the once

symmetrical form is all distorted and warped, by reason of the unjust treatment to which slander subjects it.

Another way of slandering is by ...

insinuations,

sly suggestions,

expressions of doubt,

intimations as to something concealed,

a **qualifying** of the praise of others, by some question implying distrust, or lack of confidence.

In this way, without any downright assertions—but by skewed remarks and masked calumnies—is the character of your neighbor made to suffer; distrust of him is spread abroad, and he is pierced through by the **arrow of malevolence**, which the tongue of the slanderer, like a bow bent and charged with lies, has shot against him!

A **good character** is one of the richest estates man can own. "A good name," says the wise man, "is better than precious ointment. Yes, a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches!" Yet the slanderer **steals** away this good name, and seeks to **ruin** this goodly possession. Yet how often he goes unwhipped by justice.

"Who steals my **purse**, steals trash; 'tis something,
nothing;

'Twas mine, now 'tis his, and has been slave to
thousands.

But he who filches from me my **good name**,

Robs me of that, which not enriches him,

And makes me poor indeed!"

3. Murmuring, Complaining, Tongue

The third tongue-sin which James mentions, is, the *Murmuring, Complaining, Tongue*. There are those who are always *discontent, repining,* and *complaining*. Even if *blessings* come, they murmur because they are no greater, and are ready to find fault, not only with all the dealings of their fellow-men—but with all the providences of God Himself! Nothing receives their *unqualified commendation*. There is always some abating, or qualifying, expression. They never give full credit for goodness; but always overestimate badness. *Peevishness* is the habitual tone of their talk. They look at everything through this *jaundiced medium*—and they make the air around them pestilent with the poisonous exhalations of their complaining tongue.

No character escapes their malevolence—the more polish and luster a character has—the more they delight to tarnish it, by the breath of slander. Such persons are miserable, unless they are engaged in detraction. They glory in their shame.

4. Falsehood

Is another grievous tongue-sin; and in this I would include *all kinds of lying*: the positive lie—and the negative lie; the direct lie—and the lie by implication; the malignant lie—and the sportive lie.

Every *designed* departure from truth, is falsehood; and every falsehood is ...

a sin against one's own soul,
a sin against your fellow-men,
and a sin against God—
which He will punish with fearful severity.

Were you able to sift the conversation which you hear in the common interactions of life—you would be surprised to find how much of falsehood it contains. Not the glaring, naked lie, bold, impudent, heaven-defying—but in the form of prevarication, distortion of facts, suppression of truth, or some one of the many minor forms which the tongue employs in uttering lies before God.

5. Filthy Talking and Indecent Speech

The tongue commits a great sin, when it is used in *filthy talking* and *indecent speech*. It is greatly to be lamented that even in polite, and what would pass for modest society—there is too much of tampering with this sin. Gross indelicacy would of course be avoided; but covert expressions, double entendres, innuendoes, passing allusions, indirect assertions—are too much indulged in; and with a *relish* which shows, alas! that the heart is not averse from that kind of talking, which it rather *countenances* than condemns.

The unclean tongue evidences an unclean heart—for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The unclean heart, like the *volcano*—is ever ejecting from its sulphurous mouth its unclean belchings, and pours its indecencies over the fairest aspects of society.

6. Boasting

Another tongue-sin is **boasting**. "The tongue is a little member—but **boasts** great things." Boasting results from an over-estimate of ourselves—and an underestimate of others. It is **selfishness** manifesting itself in words. It is the **inflated mind**, venting itself in **windy words**. It betrays weakness, littleness, ignorance, vanity, self-conceit, arrogance, and pride! Yet it is a sin which we daily meet with; for men ever delight to **talk about themselves**, their sayings and doings, puffing themselves up above measure. and in order to **elevate** themselves—they make **stilts** of the reputation of others, and decry the doings of their neighbors—that their own may appear more grand and towering!

7. Flattery

Another sin of the tongue, is **flattery**—or the giving of undue and undeserved praise. The desire to say something ...
which will **please** the person we are speaking to,
or which will **secure his favor**, or **elevate us in his regard**;
or the desire, perhaps, to have him **reciprocate the compliment**, and flatter us
—
are the usual **motives** for this sin of the tongue.

Yet flattery is a species of **untruth**; for it **magnifies** real merit beyond just grounds—or **feigns** a merit where none exists. Flattery is used in all ranks and classes. in the family, in society, in business, in professional life, in politics, in the church. and yet how true is it, as Solomon says, "He who flatters his neighbor—spreads a net for his feet!"

8. Profanity

Lastly, there is the tongue-sin of *profanity*—the taking of God's name in vain. I need not here speak of that *open blasphemy* which so offends the ear even of those who do not profess and call themselves Christians; but shall restrict myself to those who, while they would not swear, as *vulgar* people do—yet in various ways and by indirect methods, do take God's name in vain.

How many are the epithets, and phrases, circulating from mouth to mouth, even among good people, which, when reduced to the last analysis, is, in God's sight—a taking of His name in vain! How many ejaculations bordering on profanity, how many exclamations having the aspect of thinly-disguised blasphemies—are current in society. These tend to weaken conscience—are almost self-conscious violations of the third commandment, and always detract from integrity of character, by showing inward thoughts and emotions, which would utter themselves in profanity if they dared, and are only kept back and masked by social considerations, rather than reverence for God's hallowed name.

The Christian cannot be too careful to purge his speech of all such things, and never to let his tongue use such questionable asseverations.

The THREATENINGS of God Against All Such Sinfulness of Speech?

Such being some of the *sins* of this mighty, this unbridled, this untamable

tongue—what are **the THREATENINGS of God against all such sinfulness of speech?**

With regard to the first tongue-sin, **Chattering**, the Bible says, "A chattering fool comes to ruin!" It was commanded in the law of Moses, "You shall not go up and down as a talebearer among your people"; and the Scripture says, "The words of a tale-bearer, are as wounds"; and Solomon declares, "When words are many—sin is not absent; but he who holds his tongue is wise."

Against the second tongue-sin, **Slander**, God utters fierce denunciation. "Whoever slanders his neighbor in secret—him will I cut off." He who utters **slander** is a fool; because while he is attempting to kill the character of his neighbor—he is slaying his own!

Against the third sin, **Complaining** and **Murmuring**, there are strong threatenings; and God's deserving punishment of the murmurings of the children of Israel, are frequently mentioned in the Bible.

Against the fourth sin, **Falsehood**, God says, "No one who practices **deceit** will dwell in My house; no one who speaks **falsely** will stand in My presence." "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord!" "... all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulphur!"

Against the fifth sin, **Filthy talking**, God says, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths." "Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place." He declares that nothing that **defiles** shall enter the gate of the Celestial City, that only "he who has pure hands and a clean heart, shall ascend into the hill of the Lord." Every **impure word** is a direct violation of the seventh commandment; and every **unchaste thought** is an insult to a holy God, who has declared that only "the pure in heart shall see God."

Against the sixth sin, **Boasting**, the Psalmist says, "The Lord shall cut off every boastful tongue." Paul classifies them with backbiters, haters of God, inventors of evil things, all of whom "are reprobate," and James says—"all such boasting is evil."

Against the seventh sin, **Flattery**, God says, "A flattering mouth works ruin." "The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips!"

Against the eighth sin, **Profanity**, which is a direct violation of the third commandment, God says that He will not hold him guiltless, who takes His name in vain; and that **blasphemers** shall have their part in the lake which burns forever.

Such are some of the more marked tongue-sins among men; and from even this brief enumeration, you will perceive that the description which James gives of **this little member** is not at all exaggerated. Not an **epithet** is applied to it, which it does not deserve; not an **illustration** is used, which is not of the utmost force. With what care, then, should we **bridle** the tongue; for God says, "If any man among you seems to be religious, and bridles not his tongue—that man's religion is vain."

With what steadiness should we hold this tongue which, like the little rudder of a ship, turns about our whole course of life! With what watchfulness should we mark the **spark-dropping** words of this tongue, which is itself a fire and kindles great conflagrations! With what caution should we use an instrument of speech which has under it "the poison of asps!" With what assiduity should we seek to **tame** that most untamable of things—that it does not tear by its fierceness, and destroy society by its brutelike goadings!

Yet we cannot do this in our own strength of wisdom. Our prayer must be that of the Psalmist, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth. Guard the door

of my lips!" We must seek for **divine grace** to aid us in subduing and controlling the tongue. We must seek to have hearts created anew in Christ Jesus; for if our **hearts** are right with God—our **speech** will be also. If our **hearts** are clean—our **lips** will be clean. If our hearts are pure—our tongue will be pure. The **cleansing** process then must begin in the heart. The cleansing power must be the Holy Spirit—for He alone can sanctify it and make it pure.

Refuge, Refreshment, and Rest in Christ!^(TOC)

*"And a **man** shall be ...
as a hiding place from the wind;
and a covert from the tempest;
as rivers of water in a dry place;
as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."
—Isaiah 32:2*

In this language, peculiar to oriental countries, the prophet sets forth the **security, refuge, refreshment,** and **rest** that the believer shall find in Jesus the Messiah. Let us analyze, in a few brief words, the language of the text, and then apply it to Jesus Christ.

The "wind" spoken of, is either the hot desert-breath which sweeps up from the arid sandy wastelands on the east and south of Palestine, blasting and wilting health, strength, life, and producing intense, and often fatal suffering—or the desolating "east wind," technically so called, which caused great destruction of dwellings, fruits, and crops throughout the western coast of Judea.

"A hiding place" from such a wind would be a peculiar blessing, where one could abide until its fury was spent, and the gentle south wind again blew.

The "tempest," unlike the dry wind-storm of the desert, was a fierce gale, accompanied with rain, thunder, lightning, and hail—the fury of which is well known. By it **Paul** was shipwrecked; and its violence and

destructiveness on land and sea are matters of common notoriety. Those who have been tossed about days and nights in such tempests, when neither sun nor star appeared, or who have been exposed to its peltings without the shelter of a cave or shelter, well know the blessing of "a covert" from such a storm.

The "rivers of waters in a dry place," indicate the *abundant refreshment* that there would be in those hot and parched lands, where *rivers* were few, small, and uncertain, where *springs* were scarce, where wells were found only at long intervals and of scanty depth. Over those Arabian deserts the traveler, borne upon the camel's back—journeys day after day without seeing a stream, a spring, or a well. to him, the most delightful idea is that of cool and flowing water; water so plenteous as to be styled *rivers*, where he could not merely slake his thirst, but bathe his almost sun-baked body, and gain new vigor and strength from its reviving waves.

Still borrowing his images from the lands in and around the Arabian deserts, the prophet introduces one more figure—"the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Trees, in those sandy wastelands, are rare—but there are frequently found immense masses of rocks, the spurs of mountains or outcropping ledges of stone, which afford protection from the sun; and, as there is generally some herbage around the rock, comfort and coolness to man and beast. The tired traveler has traversed a weary land; nothing has met his eye but burning sand, and stunted saline shrubs. At length he sees the dark rock afar off. He is thirsty and hungry, wilted with heat, and sore with fatigue; and he longs to descend from his "ship of the desert," and, in the cool "shadow" and refreshing moisture of this "great rock," recruit his exhausted strength.

There is, then, great force in the language of the prophet—far greater than we

can conceive unless we have traveled in those Eastern lands. and yet, as forcible and pertinent as these illustrations are, they afford but slender ideas of the refuge, refreshment, and rest—which the soul finds in Jesus Christ.

Let us consider, then, these several NECESSITIES of the soul, and the full PROVISION made to meet its wants.

1. We Need a Refuge From the Stormy Wind of God's Wrath

The Bible declares that "the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness of men," and it necessarily must be so, so long as God is holy and man sinful. Consequently all impenitent people are exposed to this wrath, for they are in the hands of one of whom it is said, "He is *angry* with the wicked every day." a moment's calm reflection should convince such of the *extreme peril* of their position. They have not a moment's security against Divine punishment, and yet, to see them in their pride and recklessness, in their hardened indifference and daily transgression—one would suppose that they had taken out life-leases for a thousand years! When the real fact is, that they stand on slippery places, and unless plucked thence by the Spirit of God, their "feet shall slide in due time!"

The traveler by land or sea who casts his eye around the horizon and sees the dense cloud gathering blackness, and the tempest rolling itself up for the onslaught—makes all preparation to meet the coming storm, or seeks a refuge from its fury. and he who attempted to brave the storm when a *covert* was at hand—would expect nothing better than to perish in the blast. But the impenitent are warned of this coming wrath day by day; they are pointed to the words of the *Bible*, which declare it; their *consciences* tell them that it is

even so; their **reason** pronounces God's course a just and merciful one; they assent to the importance of having a saving interest in the Lord Jesus. Yet, hoping to **brave the storm** a little longer, presuming upon God's mercy still further—they go on in sin, in rejecting Christ, in struggling against the Spirit, in rebelling against God—until, in the language of Job, "Terrors take hold of him as waters! a tempest steals him away in the night, and he departs, and as a storm hurls him out of his place," for the Psalmist solemnly declares, "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and a horrible tempest—this shall be the portion of their lot!"

But what a blessed truth is it, that there is provided a **refuge** in Christ Jesus! that which so threatens us with vengeance, is the holy law of God pronouncing its just curse on every act of disobedience. It is the transgression of this law, which is sin. It is the justice of God, which requires that this sin should be punished; for the decree of this holy lawgiver is, "Cursed is every one who continues not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them." From this curse, and consequent punishment, we can be freed only in two ways: by perfect personal obedience—or by the obedience and suffering of a recognized substitute and surety. to roll off the curse from our heads by personal obedience to all the precepts of the law is impossible, because we inherit such sinful natures that "we go astray as soon as we are born." and consequently what the Apostle says is necessarily true: "By the deeds of the law, shall no flesh living be justified."

But when, by the fall of our first parents—this way of **personal obedience** was forever closed against us. We were exposed, unsheltered, to the full penalty of the violated law and its attendant curse. Christ opened a way of escape, by condescending to take the sinner's place, bear the sinner's curse—and thus, by his own obedience and death, create a new title to life; the

covenant ...

being **devised** in the counsels of the Godhead,
being **written** in the blood of the cross,
being **sealed** by the Holy Spirit.

Christ, then, having "satisfied the law and made it honorable," having "borne our sins in his own body on the tree"—"has redeemed us from the curse of the law," has effected a reconciliation with God, has made it possible for him "to be just and yet the justifier of him who believes in Jesus." and the **simple condition** upon which we are put in full and eternal possession of all the blessings of this scheme of redemption—is to "**believe** on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." to believe in him in such a way as ...

to commit to him the undivided interest of our souls,
to look to him alone for salvation,
to cast away every other help and refuge, and
to come to Christ in the simplicity of a faith that takes him at his word,
exclaiming with one of old, "Lord, I believe—help my unbelief!"

When the sinner has done this he has, in the emphatic words of the Bible,
"fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before him in the gospel" ...

he has "put on Christ;"

he has "hidden his life with Christ in God;"

he has "made the Lord his stronghold and tower of defense;"

he has found "a covert from the storm,"

for there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. The **law's dread curse** cannot reach him whose life "is hidden with Christ in God."

Justice cannot arrest him who has gained the refuge of God's own providing.

He boldly pleads what Christ has done. He boldly declares Christ to be his surety—and the **destroying angel** cannot touch a hair of the head of those,

upon the *lintel and door-posts of whose heart*—is seen the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Thus it is that Christ became a full "covert from the storm" of divine justice, and a full "refuge from the wind" of God's consuming wrath! the tempest which was due to us—was poured in its fury on him, and we are spared its blast, because our surety has borne its brunt, and now offers to all who will believe in him, the sheltering refuge of his atoning grace.

2. We Need that which will slake the thirsting of the Immortal Soul

"Rivers of water in a dry place." the soul is of celestial origin; it will never die; and it is ever panting after that which is adapted to its spiritual need, and which will satisfy its aspirations. It is the possession of this immortal soul, which makes man a being so "fearfully and wonderfully made." and though the great majority of men seem to lose sight of their souls, and are perfectly reckless as to what becomes of them—there is still at times a startling assertion of their rights, and an importunate putting forth of their needs, which shows that, though *debased*—they are not destroyed; though chained down to earth by the fetters of flesh and blood—they yet struggle for freedom and for relief.

The world, however, can offer nothing but "dry places" to the soul. Sin has blasted its pastures, and dried up its well-springs—so that, in a spiritual sense, we live "in a parched and barren land." the *world* can never satisfy the desires of the soul; these desires are unbounded by time, and unlimited by space—they stretch away into the future, they rise above the seen and the temporal. The soul has insatiate longings. There is in it, when not completely

palsied by sin, and choked in all its utterances—a thirsting after more light, more happiness, more knowledge; and such light, and happiness, and knowledge as earth can never give, because they do not pertain to earthly things. Who can recount the unsatisfied yearnings of his soul!

You feel in your own consciousness, the intense thirst of the spirit for something that you have not; and as aspiration after aspiration lures you on with the promise of *satisfying waters*—how does your heart sink within you as you find, after weary efforts to reach these *rivers of pleasure*—that it is only the mirage of the desert, the tantalizing mockery of a thirst made more painful by the very effort to reach the delusive stream! and when the soul, under the convicting influences of the Holy Spirit, is made to feel, in a very peculiar sense, the thirstings after the new birth—feeling, as it has never before felt, the worthlessness and unsatisfyingness of all that earth can offer—then how does it strain after something that will slake its thirst and satisfy its cravings; but nothing earthly contains it, and nothing earthly can impart the blessing.

To the soul thus situated, Christ offers himself as "rivers of water in a dry place." He presents himself as the one who *alone* can satisfy its needs and meet its aspirations. He stands beside every earth-hewn cistern, and laying his hand upon its curb, says of it, as he said to the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well, "Whoever drinks of *this water* shall thirst again—but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst." He sends out his prophets and apostles with the cry, "Ho! Every one that thirsts—come to the waters." His own language is, "If any man thirsts—let him come unto *me* and drink." While the Church, the bride of Christ, catching up the tones of her beloved, and joined by the stirring voice of the Spirit, exclaims, "Come! Whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely!"

There is no need of the soul which is not met and satisfied in Jesus Christ. He ...

fills it with his own fullness,
restores it to more than pristine joy,
reunites its lost affections to God,
calls out its highest aspirations,
leads it on from one stage of *glory* to another, from one peak of *knowledge* to another, forever widening its vision, forever expanding its powers—forever making it to quaff of the waters of that "river of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb!"

With what great propriety may the prophet term *Christ*, "rivers of water!" Not a *fountain*, bubbling up today and exhausted tomorrow; not a mountain *stream*, swollen with winter's snows and dry in summer's heats; not a *single river* even, that in time of drought might perchance shrink within its bed. But to express the exhaustless fullness and overflowing abundance, Jesus is styled "*rivers* of water!" the flocking crowd of Christians may here drink and drink again; the nations of the earth may quaff its pure water—but cannot *drain* it dry! There is in Christ *sufficiency* for every soul! All its holy longings, all its heavenly aspirations, and all its thirstings after righteousness—are met, and more than satisfied. When Christ is once apprehended as the *true fountain of pleasure*—then we are assured that we could ever be satisfied with the *broken cisterns of earthly comfort*, which can hold no water.

3. The soul needs spiritual rest

"The shadow of a great rock" in this "weary land." It has tried many plans of worldly greatness—and found them vain! It has traversed many ways of promised pleasure—and found them painful! It has sought out many

inventions to hold it up in the day of its prosperity—and found them "miserable comforters all."

It is the peculiar office of the Holy Spirit, to cause men to perceive the **weariness and burdensomeness of sin**. for so **accustomed** are we to sin, so **infatuated** with it, so **blinded** by nature to its evils and its sorrows—that unless made to see it with a spiritual vision imparted by the Holy Spirit—we would never feel our real wretchedness and our intolerable burden. But when we do begin to feel and acknowledge this—then do we eagerly seek for true relief and rest.

To all such, Christ is revealed as "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." He gives rest to the soul ...

by **pardoning the sins** which so weigh it down;
by **removing the curse** which we so justly deserve, and
by **imparting new life** to the fainting spirit.

And when our sins are forgiven, and the penalty of death removed, and the spirit of Christ infused into us—then, of course, there will be such a sense of **relief and comfort** as the traveler experiences who comes, after long hours of travel over a burning sandy waste—to "the shadow of a great rock," and in its refreshing coolness finds the desired rest.

Such is the gracious aspect in which Christ manifests himself to his believing people:

a refuge from the wind of adversity,
a covert from the storm of divine anger,
a source of unfailling refreshment to the hungry and thirsting pilgrim,
and a secure and blessed rest to the sin-weary and guilt-laden soul.

Sadly, then, are they **deceiving** themselves, who refuse the offered grace of

Jesus Christ. and **why** do they refuse? Because they dare not rise above the fear of man; and, in face of the taunts and jeers of so-called friends, go to Jesus. or because they are so pleased with their own garments of self-righteousness—that they will not put on the offered robe of Christ's righteousness. or because the pride of their heart is so great that they will not humble themselves upon their knees and confess that they are great and hell-deserving sinners in the sight of God, and are willing to receive salvation as the free gift of sovereign grace, "without money and without price."

And will **you** for these reasons ...
reject the Savior?
lose Heaven?
ruin your soul?

Look at them! Will they bear examination? Hold them up in the light of eternity, and with the fearful realities of the future unfolded before you—how do they look there?

Utter them at the bar of God, and tell him who "sits on the great white throne," surrounded by angels, and with the book of judgment open before him—tell him, and tell it out so loud that all the universe can hear: "I rejected you, O Christ, as my 'refuge!' I refused you as 'a covert!' I turned away from you 'as rivers of water!' I sought you not as the 'shadow of a great rock in that weary land!' and all ...

because I feared what man should do unto me;
because I could not brook the ridicule of my fellows;
because I was so engrossed in buying and selling and getting gain;
because I was so delighted with my own morality;
because I was too proud to bend the knee to you, O Christ!"

How will such *excuses* sound at the Judgment Seat of Christ?

Yet at that Judgment Seat—you must stand; before that rejected Savior—you must bow! and as you cannot stand acquitted there except through faith in him, as you cannot meet him in peace except through the salvation of his own providing—so let me urge you, pilgrim to eternity, traveler through this weary and stormy land ...

to seek this only "hiding place from the wind;"

to flee to this only "covert from the storm" of wrath;

to drink only at these "rivers of water" in the dry places of earth,

and to sit down only beneath this "shadow of a great rock" in this weary land of earth—yielding with a glad mind and heart to the invitation of Jesus,

"Come unto me, all you who are weary and heavy laden—and I will give you rest!" Yes, "rest!" Rest to your souls, rest on earth, rest in Heaven—a rest that will never end!

Parental Responsibility

"Let me not see the death of the child!"—Genesis 21:16

Thus spoke an Egyptian mother in the day of her hopeless sorrow. Moved by the jealousy of Sarah, and directed also by the Lord; Abraham, on the complaint of his wife that Ishmael, the son of *Hagar*, was mocking Isaac, rose up early in the morning, and took bread and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, and sent her away; and she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-Sheba. It was a sad morning to her, when she was thus cast out from the patriarchal dwelling, and forced not only to leave a home where most of her life had been spent—but also to seek now with her only

boy a new lodging place, a new master, and a new country.

Her aim, most likely, was to return to Egypt—but after entering the wilderness of Beer-Sheba she soon became entangled in its depths, and lost her way. The bottle of water which she bore upon her shoulder served but a short time to slake the thirst of herself and son; and now that it was all gone, and no means at hand of refilling the empty cruse, her heart fainted within her. The heat of a Syrian sun, the toils of a Syrian wilderness, the pains of gnawing hunger, the cravings of a tongue, and mouth, and lips parching with thirst, broke down their spirits and their strength, and the poor mother, placing her feeble dying son under the shelter of one of the shrubs of the desert, left him there, and "went a great way off, for she said: Let me not see the death of the child: and she sat about a bowshot away, and lifted up her voice, and wept."

Bond-woman though she was, she loved her son, and when she saw him failing through toil, and wilting with heat, and parching with thirst, and dying for lack of bread and water; her maternal feelings became so strong that she turned away from beholding the last scene of her son's agony, saying in the bitterness of her soul, "Let me not see the death of the child."

In this sentence, *Hagar* spoke as nearly every parent would speak. Let one of our children become sick, let his case wax more and more doubtful, let medicine be of no avail, let the skill of the physician be at a stand, let life seem to be ebbing away, and the post of observation grow darker every hour; at such a time what father, what mother would not utter the impassioned cry, "***Let me not see the death of the child!***"

There is no position of peril in which one of our children can be placed that will not at once awaken anxious thought, and call out deep solicitude. We are

keenly alive to all their physical suffering and exposure, and leave nothing undone to secure their health and comfort. for our children's good, we will ... suffer almost any pain, endure any hardship, labor with unflagging zeal, bear any trials; and we consider ... no effort too great, no sacrifice too costly, no toil too drudging, no exposure too reckless— if we can thereby serve their interests and secure for them honor, and competence, and health. It is right that we should feel thus. It is the natural outgrowth of those ties which God has linked with our inmost affections; and we can almost as soon forget ourselves, or be indifferent to the needs of our own bodies—as forget and be indifferent to, our beloved children.

But though we all sympathize with Hagar in the disconsolate outburst of her soul, "Let me not see the death of the child," though we all acknowledge the intense interest which we feel in our child's welfare—yet many of us are, after all, doing that to and for our child which is not merely sitting by, and *seeing* him die—but which is helping on his death, and making ready his grave!

This may seem severe language, and sensitive minds may shrink from its roughness—but it is nevertheless true; and my duty, as a watchman on the walls of Zion, is to sound this truth in the ears of parents, if so be, God blessing me, I can make them sensible of ... the *danger* of our children,

the **responsibility** for that danger which rests upon us, and the **means** which we should at once put in operation to avert the threatened evil, and secure the promised blessing.

The **proposition** that I lay down is this. **that a large number of parents in Christian lands are pursuing with their children, a course of conduct that must inevitably work out their spiritual death!** While they shrink with horror from doing that which would cause them to see the **physical** death of their child—they are doing that which, unless checked, will procure the **spiritual** death of the child. So grave a **charge** must needs be sustained by ample **proof**. Alas! the proof is too startling and overpowering to be either gainsaid or set aside.

The infinite superiority of the **soul** to the body, and of **eternity** to time, being acknowledged—I proceed to remark, that **the first** way in which parents, who cry out in view of **physical** dissolution, "Let me not see the death of the child," are yet accomplishing their child's **spiritual** death, is—by showing the child, that they regard the body more than the soul. Every parent is anxious to secure for his child sound health, and they will put themselves to much trouble and expense to **preserve** this health or **recover** it if lost. At the first threatening of disease, they apply the most effective remedies, call in the best medical advice, and cease not in their remedial efforts—until health returns, or death supervenes.

Each parent also is desirous of giving his child proper food, and so unnatural is it for one to do otherwise, that our Savior bases on this impossibility, one of His strongest reasons why men should trust their heavenly Father. "For what man of you," He says, "whom if his son ask bread—will he give him a stone? or if he ask an egg—will he give him a scorpion? or if he ask a fish—will he give him a serpent?" Such a course of action is so unnatural, that

instances of it cannot be found in well-regulated parental feelings. We restrain our children from partaking of that food which we fear will be injurious, we urge them to eat that which is wholesome, and no affectionate father and mother is wholly indifferent as to the diet of their child.

Parents are also desirous to *clothe* their children in a befitting manner—and how much pride, and display, and money, and folly—is expended on the garments that are to cover them. These are objects of constant parental thought, occupying hours and days, taxing mind and strength, and purse and time, to an extent we little imagine, until we seriously attempt to estimate the sum.

Parents also are desirous of making their children *lovely* and *attractive*. to this end they are particular in checking any clumsy habits or evil propensities; and they aim to remove every little personal defect, or develop every personal grace—subjecting to their scrutiny their walk, their posture, their complexion, their carriage, their whole system of habits; pruning the exuberance of this idiosyncrasy, stimulating the undergrowth of that virtue; curbing this trait, and spurring on that sluggish excellence; leaving nothing undone to give them beauty of features, grace of form, attractiveness of demeanor; instilling these things by repeated lessons and perpetual superintendence.

This is what most parents will do for their children; and, to a reasonable extent—what they ought to do. But in doing this, we too often do it so as to impress the child with the *superiority of the body to the soul*, and in a large majority of cases, the soul is thrust out of view as if it were a thing of no importance.

I proceed to remark, *secondly*, that we are procuring the spiritual death of our

child—by showing that child that we regard the things of *time* more than the things of *eternity*. this superior regard for *temporal* over *eternal* things, is evidenced by the fact that we lay our plans so much for time—and few or none, perhaps, for eternity. The *ends* and *aims* that we seek for our children, and which we teach them to seek also—are mostly earthly: the getting of money, or a name, or high place, or literary renown, or social pre-eminence. and to the securing of these, we toil and drudge through weary years in the hope that our child will reward all our efforts by one day gaining the coveted and sought-for blessing.

The same thing is also shown by the sedulous manner in which we cultivate our temporal interests. Whatever concerns our earthly state and condition, whatever affects our business or profession, whatever influences our relations to our family, and social circle, and the neighboring community—is a subject of great interest; and we manifest our interest by thinking deeply, and plotting wisely, and acting judiciously, taxing all the faculties of mind, and all the powers of the body to advance these interests. Our children are daily and almost hourly witnesses of our *absorption* in the things of time and sense. They hear our conversation, they perceive our changes of feeling, they note our devotion to business, to our profession, to politics, to pleasure; and ... their young hearts enter with zest into many of our schemes, they catch the *infection of our worldliness*, they grow up in the same earthiness of mind, and the present, and the worldly, and the temporal, engross the soul!

Our children rarely hear us speak of religion, unless indeed to criticize a sermon, or the conduct of some lax member of the Church. We do not, as we should, aim to draw off their hearts, too readily, alas, linked with carnal views—from the scenes around, and fasten them on things above. We do not,

as we ought, strive to win them to Christ, or to secure for them a crown of righteousness. What these children shall be *after* death and throughout eternity—seldom employs our thoughts, and if circumstances force it upon our minds, it is too often thrown out as unwelcome. The horizon of our thoughts, and plans, and hopes reach only to this present world; thus excluding from their minds as far as our precept and example go—the outlying interests of the soul which are to occupy the whole field of eternity.

Thus, those who would in view of physical danger, cry out in agony, "Let me not see the death of the child!" are doing that which will necessarily lay the soul of the child in the winding-sheet of eternal death!

How many budding hopes that might have bloomed in Heaven—lie blasted beneath the golden sandal of wealth! How many eternal interests are stranded by the courted gale of popular renown! How many a soul has been made to sell its immortal birthright, for some earthly bowl of pottage, a respectable marriage, or a fashionable establishment!

And when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed at the judgment seat—what amazing revelations will then be made, of the *sacrifices of children's souls* which parents were willing to make, in order to gain some present end or some worldly advantage!

A *third* way in which parents accomplish the spiritual death of their children, is by showing them that they regard the favor and opinions of *men*, more than the favor and Word of *God*. We are very careful to instruct our sons and daughters in all the proprieties and conventional rules of good society. We teach them to shun whatever is not in accordance with the spirit and regulations of the fashionable world. We aim to make them favorites in their respective circles, and to win the good opinions of their fellows. in all this,

we are governed by the opinions of the people among whom we move; we catch up their views and spirit, and shape our own and our children's views accordingly.

The child soon learns that these are our standards; he adopts our ways of thinking, looks to these alone as rules of conduct; and as in the education of the child, all reference to God's law and favor, is well near excluded—so the child excludes God, and Heaven, and Hell from his thoughts and plans, and he contracts his soul within the pent-up lines of an earthly existence, and makes his immortal spirit which might dwell and shine among angelic beings in glory—drudge as a menial in the service of a dying body—and all through the precepts and examples which we perhaps have, year by year, brought to bear upon his mind and heart!

What a **Moloch** is human opinion! How many thousands of children are cast into its **burning arms**, and **sacrificed** to the favor or frowns of a deceitful world, while the deafening din of **fashion's giddy throng** drowns the shrieks of agony which burst from their spirits as they die without hope, without pardon, without Christ! the judgment day will reveal that through timidity in braving the opinions of godless friends; or through fear of losing the favor of fashionable associates; or through dread of being put under the ban of some particular clique or circle—the soul of many a child has been left by its parents to perish forever!

Lastly: We aid and abet the spiritual death of our children by our irreligious example—both in doing that which is positively wrong, and in neglecting to do what is as positively required. As young as our child is—it has learned to join together precept and practice. and if we are professors of religion, it has put along side of this profession—our daily walk and conversation, and is perpetually drawing inferences from the one to the other, either for, or

against, the truth which we profess.

Uncurbed tempers, ill-governed passions, unbridled tongues, uncharitable words;

lack of meekness, and gentleness, and truth;

lack of sobriety of mind, and kindliness of heart;

the absence of that strict conscientiousness which should mark all our actions;

neglect of the Bible and of prayer;

disregard of the means of grace;

irrepressible worldliness, in ever dwelling upon "what shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and with what shall we be clothed?"

—are leaving ***indelible impressions*** upon the minds of our offspring! So that, copying our habits of thought, speech, and action—our child's character in its essential characteristics, may be formed for eternity; before its mind is able to receive the precepts which, for consistency's sake, perhaps we occasionally teach.

And not only are the positive errors and influences working out the child's death—many are still further aiding their destruction, by neglecting altogether to teach the child the way of salvation. There are multitudes of parents whose children would never even know that they are professors of religion—did they not see them now and then at church. They never think of taking their children into their closets, and there kneel down with them before God, and give them to Jesus Christ. They never think of urging upon them the necessity of now making their peace with God. They are voluble on all other topics—but silent on this! They are alive to all other interests of their children—but dead to this. and the child sees the difference, and sets down all religion as being like its father's or its mother's religion—a thing to put on on

Sundays—a garb to be worn in certain society, and under solemn circumstances—and then to be put off as an absolutely useless robe, in daily private life.

Could we who are parents take any one day of our lives, and carefully recalling all our acts—trace out the *influence* of each one on the moral character of our child, marking how each left its *indelible impress* for good or evil; and could we go a step further and observe how our *omissions of duty* respecting them—our neglecting to pray with and for them, to talk to them, to lead them to Jesus—left as fearful ravages as our positive misdeeds—we would be amazed at the *molding power* which, insensibly to ourselves, we put forth; and we would at the same time cease to wonder that so few children grew up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

On the contrary, each child snatched by the Holy Spirit as a brand from the burning, would be an astounding miracle of grace, all the more marvelous because of the immense *counteracting influences* of parents and home!

I believe that the *moral character* of children, to a great extent, depends on parents. God has placed us at the head-springs of their minds. The *responsibility* of this position, even an angel might shrink from. Yet there we are. Our child is given to us with a blank and unformed mind—that it may bear our inscriptions and our shaping. The *babe* of days ...
grows up a *child* of months;
passes through a *youth* of changing seasons;
develops into a *man* of years—and through all these plastic periods is ...
molded by our example,
instructed by our precepts, and
made to take on its eternal character!

For it is a startling fact that the great majority of conversions to Christ, take place before the time of manhood; so that each year from that point of time, lessens the probabilities of their ever becoming Christians.

Suppose that you gain all that you desire for your children; they have wealth, health, honor, happiness, and all desirable earthly good. You feel satisfied that your labor has not been in vain, and that you have not spent your strength for nothing. is this worth the sacrifice you have made? in giving an immortal soul as the price of such *earthly* ends—have you not *paid too dearly* for your temporal and carnal gains? is it not like Judas's thirty pieces of silver, "the price of blood"—the shekels of a soul's betrayal to its fiendish adversary? and will not the time soon come, when houses, money, fashion, rank—everything that earth has given in exchange for the *child's soul*—will be cast from you as Judas did his cursed coins, saying as he did so, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood!"

Father, mother, parents! What is it in your child, that you love?

Is it beauty? *Time* will erase it.

Is it grace of person? *Age* will bow that form, and wither those limbs.

Is it accomplishment of mind and heart? One touch of the *finger of mania* will unseat that mind; one *stroke of sickness* will still that heart!

And is it so, that we only love that which is ephemeral and perishing? and that all our parental affections are clasping themselves like the ivy around the crumbling and decaying flesh and blood of our offspring? Do we love in them, that which will never die—that which constitutes their highest claim upon our care—their souls? Our *lips* say yes—but our *lives*, alas! too often say no! Oh! before it is too late, let us aim to look at our child as an immortal

being, and teach him ...
that he has a *soul*,
that there is an *eternity*,
that he is a *sinner*,
that there is a *Savior*, and
lead him to that Savior for pardon and peace.

Teach him ...
to love his Bible,
to pray,
to use God's means of grace,
to consecrate himself and all that he has to Christ.

Teach him these things by your ...
personal example of weanedness from the world,
personal holiness of life,
daily precepts distilling in the heart, like the gentle dew.

Let every hour of our life, and every act of our life, proclaim aloud, that we regard the salvation of our child's soul as the *first great aim and object of his existence*.

Then, God blessing us, though we may be called to see "the child die"—the death that must pass on all the living; we will not be called to see him die that other and infinitely more dreadful death—the second death; but will be enabled to rejoice that our child when it passes from its earthly home and its earthly parents; has entered on its new life—that it has left forever a region of sin and woe, and gone to dwell forever in a land of holiness and love in Heaven!

Waiting and Watching!(TOC)

"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks—they can immediately open the door for him."—Luke 12:35-36
"What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?"—James 2:14.

The religion of Jesus Christ is made up of two parts—faith and works.

Faith is the root of works.

Works are the fruit of faith.

A belief, however true and pure, if it is accepted only by the intellect, and is not carried out into practice—translating the faith held by the mind, into active duties—is a barren faith, which will not be accepted by God, and which will not secure salvation.

On the other hand, works, however good, which do not spring out of faith in the Lord Jesus, but which are done merely from human and worldly motives—are of no avail before God, because "whatever is not of faith, is sin."

Thrice has James told us, "Faith without works is dead!"

And just as distinctly has Paul declared, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight."

Both apostles are right!

Works without faith—have no living root.

Faith without works—has no authenticating fruit.

They are the two parts of the one tree, namely, the root and the fruit. They are the two halves of the one whole—together they make up the true Christian. "In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by works, is dead!" James 2:17.

In the text, this completeness is brought out and illustrated in a forcible manner, in the three aspects in which our Lord presents the Christian, namely:

a servant,

a light-bearer,

and a watchman.

A SERVANT dressed for duty

In the first direction which our Lord gives, "Be dressed ready for *service*," we have before us the picture of **A SERVANT dressed for duty**.

The *flowing robes* of the Orientals required that in all active exercises, they should be gathered up and girt about by a belt around the waist; thus their limbs would be free and unfettered by their full and cumbrous robes. I need not tell you what the position and duties of a servant are—how it is expected of him that he should know his place, and humbly and faithfully discharge the duties of his station. He should, if possible, identify himself with his master's interest, and conduct himself in a manner which will sustain his master's honor.

The servant of Christ has ...
the noblest of all *masters*;
the holiest of all *services*;

the most honorable of all *positions*.

The servant of a *king* ever bears about him the reflected honor of the king, and the amount of this honor is in proportion to his nearness or remoteness to the throne.

Just so, the servant of the *King of kings* borrows dignity from the Being whom he serves. He wears no outward insignia of that dignity, as earthly courtiers do in uniforms and ornaments; but it is a glory which reflects itself in his daily life, and evidences his relation to Jesus by the fidelity and zeal which he shows in His service.

Basking thus in the glow of his divine Master, the servant of Christ finds ...
no work too menial,
no toil too hard,
no sacrifice too great for such a Lord.

As he studies the life of His Lord, he notes how on one occasion He said to His disciples, "I am among you as he who serves"; and he marks, also, that in very truth He did on one occasion lay aside His garments, gird Himself with a towel, pour water into a basin, and wash His disciples' feet—the Lord and Master, doing the menial work of a servant. So when the Christian marks his Master's *condescension* to servile acts and servile men—he will not deem anything he can do for Jesus either too low or too vile. The fact that what he does, he does for Christ, lifts it out of the plane of *menial* duty—and places it in the higher region of *holy privilege*.

He learns through Christ's words and acts, that ...
nothing is too low for love;
nothing is too vile for grace; and
nothing is too sinful for atoning blood.

He learns that Jesus, by going down to the lowest stratum of human society, has sanctified each and every class, and ennobled each and every duty.

So long, then, as we have His Spirit and labor for His glory, we are not merely plodding, drudging, ignorant servants—the hirelings of a day; but we become co-workers with God, fellow-laborers with the Lord Jesus—doing in His name, by His strength, for His sake—the grandest of all works—lifting up the fallen, bringing back the lost, and in every way within our means and opportunities, winning souls for Christ!

Such a *service* ought to call out ...

prompt *obedience*,

loving *devotion*,

unwearied *effort*, and

thorough *sympathy* with the aim and purpose of God in the work of man's salvation.

And then, again, mark how even our *humblest* acts of service ...

our giving *bread* to the hungry,

our giving *water* to the thirsty,

our giving *clothes* to the naked;

our *visiting* a person sick in bed, or shut up in prison

—are recognized by Christ, and owned by Him as acts of service rendered personally to Him, when He says, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren—you have done it unto me!"

So that in serving the poor, the sick, the imprisoned—we are *servicing Christ in disguise!* and by and by, those who serve Him thus *secretly*—shall have their *reward* openly, before the assembled universe! "Then the King will say to those on his right: Come, you who are blessed by My Father; take your

inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world!"
Matthew 25:34

The Christian is to be a LIGHT-BEARER

But, secondly, the text tells us that *The Christian is to be a LIGHT-BEARER* as well as a servant. Not only must he be dressed *ready* for service—but he must also *keep his lamps burning*. The Christian lives in the midst of moral darkness. *Sin* is darkness, and he lives in a world of sin—a world in which men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. *Error* also is darkness. It is the result of a darkened understanding alienated from the life of God, and hence the Christian is surrounded by the darkness of *error*, as well as by the darkness of *sin*—and together they form a *gross darkness* which can only be dissipated by "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

As disciples of Him who is "the Light of the world," "the Sun of righteousness," "the brightness of the Father's glory"—Christians are termed "children of light and of the day." They are so, because the light of Christ is in them. The light of His *life*, the light of His *love*, the light of His *joy*, the light of His *hope*—are to be found in the heart in which Christ Himself is formed the hope of glory.

Where there is this light in the heart—there *must* of necessity be a raying forth of this light in the thoughts, the words, the daily life, of the believer in Jesus. If Christ is in you—then His light will shine out through you. and if no light shines *out* through you—it is because there is none *in* you. Where the light is—there will be the shining. The absence of light—proves the absence

of Christ; for you cannot cover up His light or smother His beams. But this light of *faith* and *love* and *hope* and *joy*—is not given to us for our mere *personal* satisfaction and delight; we are made light-bearers—that we may be light-dispensers. The light is put within us, not to be hidden away—but that through us, as through a reflecting lantern, it may shine out and give light to all around; so that men may see our good works, and glorify our Father who is in Heaven.

As the light in the Holy Temple was "ever to be kept burning"—it was never to go out; so in Christians, who are *living temples*—the lights are ever to be burning. The supply of the *oil of grace* to keep them burning is ever at hand, always ready, and is exhaustless. It is given more freely to those who ask for it, than parents give good things to their children; so that any lack of supply, arises not from deficiency of material—but lack of earnest supplication.

The necessity for these lights being ever burning, arises from the personal need of the believer himself; and from the necessity of showing forth to others the light and truth which he has found in Jesus.

In a profound moral sense, the whole world, as the apostle says, "lies in darkness." in this darkness-swathed world, the Christian lives and moves and has his being. How is he to live and move and act with any peace, security, or satisfaction—unless his lights are burning and *throwing light all around his steps*, so that he can see his surroundings and his goings, and not stumble and fall into the many snares and pitfalls in his path. The personal *security* of the disciple, then, requires that he should let his lights be burning.

His spiritual *comfort* also depends on this. John, after declaring that "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all," immediately adds, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness—we lie, and do not practice

the truth; but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." Showing that a state of moral darkness, is a virtual alienation of the soul from God, and from that joy and fellowship which result from abiding in His light. and so the *personal comfort* of the child of God depends on living in the light of God.

But these lights are to be kept burning for *others*, as well as for ourselves:
to light other peoples' way,
to guide other people home,
to protect others from danger,
and to bring others into safety.

We are to shine before men so that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in Heaven.

There never yet has been a bright example of Christian life, which man has not secretly revered and honored and which has not tended to the glory of God. The holier the life—the brighter the light. The more the light shines for others—the greater is the inner glow of our own hearts, and the greater the outer glory given to God.

The *absence* of light where we expect to find it—often produces most disastrous results. Let but one *light-house* on but one dark night fail to throw out its beams to warn and guide—and it may cause the wreck of many vessels.

The world has a right to expect *light* from Christians. They are *professedly* children of light, and our Lord *designates* them as the light of the world. If they do not give light, if there is no shining out of Christ-like character before men—then are they blind guides, and dark lanterns; misleading souls and dishonoring the Father of lights.

The Christian is to be a WATCHMAN

Lastly, the text tells us that *The Christian is to be a WATCHMAN*: "Like men *waiting* for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks—they can immediately open the door for him."

The watchman-like character of the Christian is to show itself in two ways. First by watching over *himself*—and secondly by waiting for his *returning Lord*.

Over *himself* he must watch, lest he become ...
careless in duty,
remiss in keeping his light burning, and
be overtaken with drowsiness and indifference.

Self-watchfulness is the necessary prerequisite to spiritual peace and growth. How earnestly does the apostle warn us ...
of the deceitfulness of our own hearts;
of the power of worldly allurements;
of the devices of the great adversary of our souls;
of the insidious ways whereby we are entrapped into sin and error.

He who does not watch, shows that he is unconscious of danger, and this implies ignorance of his own heart and a virtual disbelief in God's word.

The more we know of ourselves, and especially the more we know of our character as seen in the light of God's countenance—the more are we aware of our danger, and the more do we realize our need of watchfulness, to be on the lookout for approaching evil, and to be vigilant in every duty and at every moment.

Only the self-confident, and the self-ignorant, are unwatchful; and the unwatchful always become an easy prey to the spoiler. All that the great deceiver asks of us is, not that we should openly abandon our religion—but simply that we not be ready for service, let our light go out, and cease to watch. He will finish the work, which we thus by carelessness and unwatchfulness begin.

In addition to this self-watchfulness there is the other position to be taken, namely, ***waiting for our returning Lord***. this may imply that outlook which all true Christians like to take in reference to the Second Advent of Christ, when He shall come again to judge the world. in primitive times, this seemed to be the constant position of the Church: it was looking for and hastening unto the coming of the Lord Jesus. Hopes like these still excite the hearts of God's children. They love to read the prophecies, which tell of His coming again; of His gathering together of His saints; of all the millennial glories which so light up the pages of the Book of Revelation. They love to think that the day is not far distant when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with all His holy angels; and when out of the wreck and burning of this wicked world—shall come forth a new Heavens and earth wherein dwells righteousness.

To the questions, How? and When? will our Lord return—many answers can be given, and on these questions, many volumes have been written. We undoubtedly find in the Bible many striking and glowing prophecies and promises looking to a complete re-ordering of things in this our world and sky, much of which we can neither grasp nor explain. They are put there, ***not*** to feed curious imaginations, and beget wild theories, and make men forget present duties in reaching after future glories. But they are put there, as ***blossoms*** of hope and joy, which by and by, under new and different

conditions from what now exist, will ripen into full flower and fruitage. and so to the Christian, his Lord will return; if not now, at least "after many days"—and then all the grand promises of the Bible shall all come to pass with a richness and fullness, far beyond what our minds with their present capacities, can possibly conceive of spiritual and celestial glory.

Leaving these things, which may be very near or very remote; we do know that it is the duty of the Christian to take the **waiting** and **watching** attitude, in reference to that period when to him personally the Lord shall come, and by **death** cause him to be "absent from the body and present with the Lord." for that day of **death** at the farthest—is very near; and its **nearness** and **uncertainty**, make it all-important that we should have our loins girded, our lights burning, our eyes watching, when that **last enemy** comes. If by faith our lives are hidden with Christ in God, then when death comes and finds us "in the Lord"—we shall die in the Lord; and of all such the Spirit says, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord!"

There is a **sequel** to this parable which must not be overlooked here, as it is full of most precious comfort and delight. Our Lord adds, "Blessed are those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them!" this blessedness, be it observed, does not consist in wealth or honor or high places, or in anything which the world esteems; but in the fact that Christ the Master, will change places with us the servants. He will be the girded and waiting servant; and we sit at table. He will come forth and serve us!

What a pregnant description of our Lord's condescension—and the servant's exaltation! the Master girded—the servant sitting! the servant eating—the Master serving! What does all this mean? Does it not mean that in the eternal

world, the servant-like character of our work will all be done away. That, freed from the special demands for waiting and watching, which now exist by reason of our sinful natures and our sinful world—we shall sit down as equals at the marriage supper of the Lamb!

The great distance which *sin* and *earth* now interpose between the servant and the Master—will then be closed up! the *servant* aspect—girded for duty, the *watching* with lights burning as at night, and the *waiting* for a returning Lord—will all be done away. The inequality will be as it were obliterated. Jesus will no more call us *servants*—but *Friends*—and will minister to us, as He passes along, all the pleasures and rejoicings of His heavenly kingdom.

There, the very same Jesus who was crucified, and ascended; the actual personal Savior—will impart to each of His disciples, and to the full extent of the receptive capacity of each—the fullness of his own joy and peace and love! and they shall be His companions, sharers of His light, partakers of His joy, occupants of His home forever and ever! With such *exhortations* to present duty, with such *hopes* brightening the future—let us ever seek to be dressed for service, our lights burning, and our souls *waiting* and *watching* for our coming Lord!

Songs in the Night Season^(TOC)

William Bacon Stevens, 1856

"Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night?"—Job 35:10

The **night** is proverbially a time of festivity and song. The cares and business of the day are then over; the taxed mind and the wearied muscles seek relaxation; the stillness of the evening invites to those pleasures which cannot be enjoyed amidst the bustle and din of business; and the darkness calling off the mind from the outdoor duties and gaieties—turns it to those domestic or social or festive gatherings, where the gladness of the heart testifies its existence by singing and the voice of melody.

But the vast majority of these songs are earth-born, and designed only for earthly ends. The bacchanalian chorus, the moonlight serenade, the orchestral concert, the parlor melody, the love-lorn ditty, and the trumpet-rousing strains of martial music—are each of terrestrial birth; and though they may deeply affect the heart, rousing it to wildest joy or sinking it to pensive sadness—yet are they evanescent, and soon are among the things of a forgotten past.

No such songs, though sung with unrivaled art, though swelling with delicious melody, though rich in tones of "linked sweetness long drawn out," satisfy the **soul**. Who that has listened to the most rapturous songs, to those which in our imagination come nearest to angelic harmony—has not, as its last cadence fell on the ear, and its last echo died away, felt a pang of sorrow

that such tones must die as fast as they are uttered? that, with a soul fitted to enjoy such vocal richness, we can obtain it so seldom and so briefly? and to all this, has there not often been joined the wish: Oh! that there were songs that would never cease to thrill! Oh! that there were voices that would never lose their tone and melody by age! Oh! that there were places where we might ever abide, and listen at will to the treasured melodies of tongue and harp in their loftiest manifestation!

There are such places—there are such voices—there are such songs. Yet when I tell you of them, the very hearts that profess most to desire them will turn away with scornful looks, and perhaps deride them as the outbursts of hot-brained enthusiasm or of canting hypocrisy. But sneer as you may—curl your lip until it becomes rigid with scorn—mock until you have exhausted the vocabulary of calumny, and defame until you are startled by your own blasphemy—I tell you in a freedom that invites investigation, and with a boldness that challenges denial—that the religion of Jesus Christ furnishes such songs, tunes such voices, and opens such places of perpetual and sublimest melody; for the mansions of glory forever resound with saintly voices singing the songs of Moses and the Lamb.

But you may say that this is all true—but what I want is a **present** gladness of heart—a present song of joy—amidst the daily cares, trials, perplexities, and Bereavements of this mortal life; and where can I find such? My answer still is—in the gospel of the Son of God, and there alone!

The time when these songs are mostly needed and desired, is in the **night season**; not the period of physical darkness—but ...
the night season of the soul;
the night season of humiliation;
the night season of adversity;

the night season of sorrow;
the night season of sickness;
the night season of death.

It is just in these times, that the true Christian rejoices in God his Maker, who gives him songs in the night.

In the life of every individual there are periods of humiliation which take down his pride and bend his spirit to the dust. It may be that the person has occupied some post of honor or profit from which he has been removed—it may be that some unexpected **blot** has marred and stained his family name—it may be that failure in **business** has injuriously affected his character, and required him to take a lowly social position; and that in consequence, the mirthful and the fashionable, who flutter only around the candle of the prosperous, turn their heads at his approach, renounce his society, and cast themselves loose from his family circle—it may be that he is visited by some sore and noisome **disease**, or by some unexpected **deformity** that clings to him like a thorn in the flesh, and ever humbles him by a consciousness of its presence—it may be that false reports have tarnished his fair **name**, and caused him to be marked and avoided—indeed, there are so many causes of humility actively at work, that it would be in vain to attempt to enumerate them. Some one of these, however, occasionally affects each person, and makes him bow his head in humiliation.

Does the Bible furnish us any **songs** for such a **night** season, when the darkness of adversity, of desertion, of reproach, and of deep self-loathing—stretches over us a black and starless sky? Yes, it does! It is furnished in the beautiful words of the prophet Habakkuk, who, as if himself suffering under just such trials—dictates to the chief singer upon his stringed instrument the following exquisite ode: "Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and

there are no grapes on the vines; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty—yet I will rejoice in the LORD! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation!" Habakkuk 3:17-18.

What a precious song is this, for the night season of humiliation and adversity! It teaches that no **earthly changes** should ever shake our confidence in God; that His favor is not dispensed to us according to our worldly advantages and position; that His ways of dealing are disciplinary, and will, if rightly improved—work out for us an exceeding weight of glory.

What though the **honors** you once wore are taken from you? If you are Christ's, there is reserved for you "a crown of life!" What though your earthly **reputation** is unjustly stained? There is laid up for you in Heaven a robe of spotless white, with which to array your ransomed spirit! What though you have, through circumstances beyond your control, failed in your **business** and shattered your fortune? You have in store for you above, treasures that never fail—the treasures of Divine redeeming grace! What though you know not whence shall come the next supply of daily bread, or where at night you shall find a place of rest; or how, when one change of clothing is worn, you shall obtain another? Your Savior passed through just such trials. He was often hungry; he had not what the foxes and the birds had—a place where to lay his head—and his clothing was the gift of poor but loving friends. You cannot in any condition of adversity, go into lower depths than Jesus went; and no Christian should be unwilling to follow his steps, though they pass through the lowly and rugged places of life.

Only take his hand in the **strong clasp of faith**, and never relax your hold, and Jesus will make the **valley of humiliation** radiant with the light of his own countenance—will put into your mouth songs of praise, and guide you

into final and unending joy!

Most forcibly was this illustrated in the case of Paul and Silas. They had been arrested in Philippi, a Roman colony, for boldly preaching in the name of the Lord Jesus; and having by the orders of the magistrates been severely scourged, were thrust into the inner cells of the prison, and, lest they should by any means escape, their feet were made fast in the stocks.

This was to them a deep humiliation. Paul was a Roman citizen, and so was Silas; and yet, they had been beaten with many stripes, they had been hooted and reviled by the rabble of the town—they had been traduced and vilified by lying and malicious tongues—they had been imprisoned in the lowest, darkest, filthiest cell of the Philippi jail, and they had received the still further indignity of having their feet cruelly fastened in the stocks. ***What deep affliction!*** you say; ***what barbarous treatment!***—how it must have chafed and humbled their spirits!—how it must have suggested in them plans of deep and far-reaching revenge! Could there be joy for them? Behold them—their clothes have been so torn by the multitude that they hang in tatters about them. Their backs have been cruelly torn to the quick, by the lictor's thongs, and the open unwashed wounds still smart with pain. Their feet are confined in such a manner as to give them no possibility of rest; and the cold, damp, inner dungeon wraps around their half naked, bleeding, exhausted bodies its chilling and unhealthy air. Can there be joy for them?

The city of Philippi is asleep—the excited populace are at rest—the thronged streets are empty, and the two strangers who had so engrossed the public mind are now forgotten in the deep slumbers of darkness. But Paul and Silas sleep not. Their pains and their constrained position will not allow them to close their eyes. and how are they employed in these wakeful hours? Hark! It is midnight! but its stillness is broken by the voice of ***singing***. Listen! It is no

song to *Bacchus*—no hymn to *Diana*—no ode to *Venus*—nor yet do these sounds proceed from the halls of revelry or the abodes of wealth. They issue from the prison walls—it is the voice of strange melody struggling upwards from the inner cell—it is Paul and Silas, the beaten, imprisoned, bleeding servants of God, praying and singing praises unto God. They had found and were then rejoicing in "God their Maker," who had given them "songs in the night."

Bereavement

The season of *Bereavement* is emphatically a night season to the human heart. The joys that once gave it delight are withdrawn; the scenes in which it once reveled with pleasure are vanished; a beloved one has been removed from the chambers of life to the chambers of death; and the eye, the voice, the hand, the form that ministered so much to its joy and comfort, is closed and hushed, and palsied, and cold, in the silent grave. You sit in darkness in your darkened dwellings—you feel that one of the great lights that ruled the *day of your life* has been put out, and there are deep shadows resting upon your spirit, which time and grace can alone remove.

To some, these night seasons recur with distressing frequency. The bright days of prosperity are short—and the dark hours of sorrow are as long and dreary as the nights of an Arctic winter. to others, there is a long and sunny period of gladness, and years pass without a sorrow to cloud the sky; when suddenly, perhaps, there steals in between your heart and the sun—the black form of death; and lo, for a time the darkness of a total eclipse shrouds your soul; or, in the more expressive language of the Bible, "your sun has gone down while it was yet day."

And when these *night seasons of sorrow* come over the soul; when, tossed

upon the *billows of affliction*, you can say with imperilled and shipwrecked Paul, that "neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and the storm continued raging!" what can give you relief? What can give *light* in your darkness? What can draw aside the curtains of your night season, and let in the bright and congenial light of day? *Friends* cannot do it, though their sympathy is indeed grateful to the mind. *Society* cannot do it, for you shun it as something discordant to your soul. *Worldly pleasures* cannot do it, for you see them in their vanity as you never before saw them, and loathe them as nauseous to your taste.

At such times, nothing can support and comfort you but a living faith in Jesus Christ, and an abiding trust and confidence in the promises of Almighty God. and when your soul looks away for its comfort from everything of an earthly character, and turns its wistful eye of faith to God—then it is, that He "gives songs in the night."

What a night of Bereavement was that which afflicted *Job*, when all his children, ten in number, were suddenly cut off at a blow; and when in addition to this he was as suddenly stripped of his riches and his honors, broken up in his family, robbed of his flocks and herds, and blasted in all his possessions! and yet, what a song in the night did God his maker put in his mouth when, instead of sinning and charging God foolishly—he caused him to say in the confidence of a lofty and unwavering faith, "the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!"

What darkness brooded over *David* in his manifold afflictions and Bereavements! Yet though he says "the waters are come in unto my soul," though he was "weary with crying"—his "throat was dried"—his "eyes failed," and he was "altogether poor and sorrowful," yet he says in the same Psalm which records this deep distress, "I will praise the name of God with a

song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving."

And this is the language of all the true children of God, because they know that "affliction comes not forth of the dust, neither does trouble spring out of the ground;" that it is *their heavenly Father* who takes away their relatives and friends, and that in thus chastening them, he is showing his love and interest in them, and so shaping his dealings as to develop their graces, bring out the highest polish of Christian character in them, and prepare them in the most perfect manner for the rewards of grace in Heaven.

If we could so rise above our momentary feelings and our narrow relations to the persons and things around us, as to take in, in one broad view, the whole compass of our lives, and the future as well as present bearings of these afflictive dispensations—could we, in fact, survey them from the point of view which God occupies, or even from that one which we shall stand at in the eternal world—then, instead of murmuring and repining, instead of charging God with harshness, and stigmatizing his dealings as unkind—we would the rather *rejoice* at the occurrence of afflictions. We would see how *indispensable* they were to the perfecting of the work of the Holy Spirit; how without them we would perhaps lose our souls; how with them and by them as a necessary instrumentality—we are fitted for higher and holier joys in glory.

Such considerations would put songs into our mouths, and cause us in every hour of sorrow's night season—to sing aloud with gladness, and to rejoice in spirit, even while the *iron* was gashing its painful way into the deepest recesses of our affections.

Stricken and mourning Christian, remember that there is no season of sorrow so dark, that God cannot find his way to your soul; and no night so black with

grief, that he cannot and will not light it up with "the pillar of his presence," to guide your feet, and to fill you with comfort.

Sickness

Is emphatically, in the estimation of the world, a night season. Suffering, restlessness, anxiety, seclusion, days of weariness and nights of anguish—are the sad and sin-engendered accompaniments of the lot of nearly every child of Adam. Few have reached adult age, over whose life sickness has not passed; whose clayey tabernacle has not been shaken by the earthquake commotions of disease, and rent by the shakings of frequent sickness. We have been made to feel ...

the *frailty* of flesh and blood,
the *folly* of earthly joys,
the *uncertainty* of human schemes.

We have been borne, as it were, upon the sick litter, to the very brink of the grave; been made, perhaps, to look down into its narrow depths, and then returned again to friends and health—to teach us ...

the *slenderness* of our hold on life,
the nearness of the tomb,
the daily advances of an opening eternity.

Yet, distressing as the period of illness is—the Bible furnishes for it *songs* set to heavenly music, melodious with angelic harmony. It assures the sick that "the Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing;" that "he will make all his bed in his sickness;" that "he will be merciful unto him, and heal his soul." Illness points the sufferer to Jesus the Great Physician, who has balm for every pain, and healing medicines for every sickness.

What a song in the night season of disease, did **Hezekiah** find, when, having turned his face to the wall and prayed—God granted him length of years instead of cutting off his days in his strength. and what a joyful prayer does **David** put into the mouths of the sore distressed, when he teaches us to say, "O Lord my God, I cried unto you, and you have healed me. Lord, you have brought up my soul from the grave: you have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. Sing unto the Lord, you saints of his, and give thanks for a remembrance of his holiness. for his anger endures but a moment; in his favor is life. Weeping may endure (or, as the original more forcibly declares, may **lodge**) for a night—but joy comes in the morning." As if sorrow was only a **wayfarer** who turned in for a night's lodging, to arise up and depart when the sun of the morning shone in at the casement.

There are no solaces for hours of sickness, like those found in the Bible; there is no comforter in disease, like the presence of Jesus Christ; there is no light that can shine into and dissipate the darkness of the chamber of afflictive illness, like the light of divine truth; and nothing can furnish the heart with gladness, or fill the mouth with a song—but the sweet words and inbreathings of the Holy Spirit.

Death

And now we come to the last night season that visits us on earth—the night season of **death**. There may be those who have never known the darkness of adversity, of sorrow, of affliction, of disease—but **all** will know the night time of death. Though your **sun of life** from its rising hour has rolled through an unclouded sky—yet, however bright its morning, however dazzling its meridian—the hour of its setting must come—the evening of life, the night time of death is at hand. Friends as dear as your own life, must be parted

from—scenes as precious with a hundred fond associations, must be abandoned—objects of interest in which the mind has long been absorbed, must be given up—the cherished hopes of years must be thrown away, and everything that fastened down your hearts to earthly scenes and objects, must be sundered, and forever.

Will God our Maker, the same God who takes away our breath—will he give songs in the night season of death? Yes, for he has promised, "Behold at evening-time it shall be light," and that "the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to him with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads." Death is to be dreaded only by those who have not made their peace with God; by those who do not receive and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as the Prophet, Priest, and King of their souls.

To those who have truly repented of their sins, who have made an unreserved surrender of their souls to Jesus Christ, and who are leading a new life, following the commandments of God and walking daily in his holy ways—death has no terrors. They feel that they *deserve* eternal punishment—but they know that Christ has borne the curse for them, and that therefore it will not fall upon their heads. They feel that they are *utterly unworthy* of salvation, and that it is not of themselves—but the free and sovereign gift of God—yet they know also that Christ has wrought it out for them, and will freely bestow it upon their souls. They know that they do not *deserve Heaven*, that after doing all that they have done for Christ, they are but unprofitable servants—yet they know that they shall be received up into glory for Jesus' sake—through Jesus' merits—by virtue of Jesus' intercession.

"Father I will that those also whom you have given me—be with me where I am, that they may behold," yes! and that they may share too, "my glory!" Hence having *loved* the Savior, having *lived* for the Savior, having *committed*

the soul into his eternal keeping—the Christian is not afraid of death. His sun as it goes down, sinks not to its rest in sorrow. His **night of death** as it draws on, sends no foreshadowing gloom into the soul. on the contrary, full of the peace of God, rejoicing in hope, strengthened by faith in Christ—he finds himself joyful while all around are sad and weeping. and as the **shadows** deepen over his mortal life, there rises from his lips the hymn of praise to the abounding grace of God, and there is put into his mouth the song of triumph, "Oh **death**, where is your sting! Oh **grave**, where is your victory! the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law—but thanks be unto God who gives us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

These are some of the "songs in the night" given us by "God our Maker." Who does not desire to **learn** these songs? Who does not wish to **sing** them? They can be learned only as we sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him. They can be sung only as our souls are filled by the Holy Spirit. But all are invited to come to Jesus and learn them; for his language is, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden—and I will give you rest!" and all are promised the renewing of the Holy Spirit—if they will but seek in faith the blessed Savior, through whom alone they can have peace and acceptance with "God our Maker, who gives songs in the night!"

"Midnight Hymn"

"I rise at midnight to thank You for Your righteous judgments!"—Psalm 119:62

In the mild silence of the voiceless night,
When, chased by airy dreams, the slumbers flee;
Whom, in the darkness, does my spirit seek,
O God—but Thee?

And, if there be a weight upon my breast,
Some vague impression of the day foregone,
Scarce knowing what it is, I fly to Thee,
And lay it down.

Or, if it be the heaviness, that comes
In token of anticipated ill—
My bosom takes no heed of what it is,
Since 'tis your will.

For, O, in spite of past or present care,
Or anything beside—how joyfully
Passes that silent, solitary hour.
My God, with Thee!

More tranquil than the stillness of the night,
More peaceful than the silence of that hour,
More blessed than anything, my bosom lies
Beneath Thy power.

For, what is there on earth, that I desire.
Of all that it can give, or take from me?
Or whom, in Heaven, does my spirit seek,
God—but Thee?

Man's Universal Epitaph!^(TOC)

"And He Died!"

*"And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years
—and he died."—Genesis 5:27*

The book of **Genesis** is the only one that takes us back to the morning of the world's creation. Others begin with the origin of various tribes and kingdoms; this, alone, traces the lineage of humanity to the first man, Adam, as he stood forth fresh from the molding hand of God.

This is, indeed, a point of vast importance; but it is not on this alone that the value of this book depends. The single chapter from which our text is borrowed, though its few short verses are taken up by mere genealogical records, is yet of more worth, in a moral view, than the teeming folios of a hundred historians, aiming only to emblazon the deeds of a nation, or set off the glory of some mighty king. this single chapter is the **headstone** at the **grave of the world** before the flood, and its verses are but the epitaphs of departed generations.

The verse of my text, forming only two lines, is the record of nearly a thousand years of the world's history; and what then better fitted to teach us

...

the transitoriness of earthly scenes;

the vanity of life;

the certainty of death—

than a passage which, in so few words, **sums** up the life of the oldest man that ever lived; but only recounts his age to tell us at his end, "**He died!**"

To get a proper idea of the life which Methuselah lived, let us imagine that he had just died, and been gathered only this year to his patriarchal fathers; and, going back to his childhood, observe the space of time which it would cover.

He would then have been ...

over one hundred years old when *paper* was first introduced into Europe;

over four hundred years old when the *mariner's compass* was invented;

four hundred and fifty years old when the *English language* began to be spoken in England;

over five hundred years old when *printing* was invented;

over six hundred years old when *America* was discovered by Columbus;

nearly seven hundred years old when the *Reformation* of Luther began, and

seven hundred and twenty when the first English colony was planted in

Virginia.

These facts are mentioned merely to give you some idea of the compass of a life which, like that of Methuselah, spanned nearly a millennium; and yet that life, the sacred historian *condenses into a single sentence*. Nay, more, the whole record of antediluvian history, embracing a period of over sixteen hundred years, from Adam to the Deluge, contains but twenty-seven names, twenty-three males and four females; and of one-half of these nothing is recorded but their names and the names of their first born.

Human Littleness!

How humbling is this view of *human littleness!* Swarming millions reduced to a few units, and the history of fifty generations condensed into six pages!

Yet every one of the thronging millions who lived in this period, carried in his own heart a history as wonderful as that which is preserved. They were

each immortal; each necessary in the machinery of life, and each, however humble or obscure, contributed to the character of the age in which he lived, and the government which protected him. **He was born—he lived—and he died**—is the **biography** of individual life for nearly two thousand years.

Take another period of the many ages from the downfall of the Roman Empire to the revival of learning in the fifteenth century, embracing nine hundred years; what is the history? More names, indeed, appear upon its meager records. More acts diversify its pages; but it was, after all, a great moral and intellectual wilderness. The mind can find in it nothing but barrenness and sand; a weary, dreary wasteland of humanity. Such is the powerful winnowing process which is going on in the annals of the world; the **chaff of earth's myriads** sink away before it; the great mass of men are represented by but a few—"the dust of an entire nation, or the humanity of a whole age—hardly suffices to form one hero."

CITIES have fared the same as individuals. Babylon, the glory of kingdoms—is now the abode of wild beasts and doleful creatures. Palmyra, the dwelling place of Zenobia; Nineveh, "that exceeding great city, of three days' journey;" Persepolis, Ecbatana, Thebes, Athens—where are they? the very **locality** of some of them is disputed, and "Ichabod" is written upon all—memorials that they once lived. What then is firm ground? Where may one plant his feet and feel immutable? Nowhere—but on the Rock of Ages! "Here is firm footing—all is sea beside."

So, also, of **NATIONS**. Many have been swept away completely, and their names only abide in history! We turn not to the old world for illustration of this—we find its most striking examples in the new. Copan, Palenque, Uxmel, and Merida, tell of nations now extinct, leaving no written annals of their existence—the very language of their inscriptions is lost. The

mysterious stones which guard, like hoary sentinels, their ruins—alone evince their greatness and their fall. this is, indeed, a **humbling picture of human grandeur**. But it is as true as it is humbling—and does it not show the **transitoriness** of everything human and earthly?

Men die, though they live, like Methuselah, many hundred years.

Cities die, and their skeleton remains lie scattered about the plains on which they once stood in pride, or else their very graves are unknown.

Nations die, and leave nothing but barren names as memorials.

Fleetingness of human life

Perhaps there is no passage in the Bible which more clearly shows the **Fleetingness of human life** than the words of the text. The life of Methuselah was the longest ever lived by man; and yet it passed "swiftly as a weaver's shuttle"—and a few strokes of the pen suffice to tell of his birth, his life, and his death!

Could we say, as we stand over a cradled infant—'this babe shall live a hundred years'—the period would seem almost interminable, and it would require an effort of mind to grasp the space. Could we say, five hundred shall be the number of the years of this child—we would scarcely hope to conceive it. How vain, then, to send our thoughts forward nine hundred and sixty-nine years as the span of one human lifetime; and yet year followed year, and century was followed by century just as slowly as they now seem to do; but when gone, how swift appeared their flight, how brief the days which they numbered!

Now, though we may not live the twentieth part of the days of Methuselah—

yet our stay on earth is sufficiently long to teach us something of the ***transient, fleeting, changeful state of being*** in which we exist. We may not see the ***mountains*** depart, nor ***nations*** fade away, nor ***cities*** crumble into ruins—but we see ***death*** ever in our midst; ***change*** ever active in the pursuits around us. Nothing today, is as it was yesterday, or as it will be tomorrow; and yet the very ***frequency*** of these changes, is one great reason why we so little note them. Nor are we able to ***feel how transitory everything is***, until we take two different points of observation, separated by an interval of years. Look upon the sun as long as you may, and you cannot see it move; and yet between the time you saw it in the morning, and the hour you beheld it in the evening—it has run nearly the circuit of the heavens!

Changes

Just so with life! Look back upon the ***changes*** of the last ten years. Changes in yourselves, your fortunes, your position, your friends, your family. Changes in your town, your state, your country. Changes in the political, and moral, and religious aspect of things. Changes in business, in offices. in summary—changes everywhere; causing you to feel, in very truth, the ***vanity of everything within and around you!*** for "the things which are ***seen*** are temporal," and "the fashion of this world passes away."

Vanity of Life

But my text also illustrates the ***Vanity of Life***. Life is not vain when viewed in its proper aspect—as the period of the soul's discipline and probation—prior to an eternal state beyond the grave. But life is vain when regarded only in its ***temporal*** aspect. When life is looked upon as a stage, and its men and women as so many actors and players. When it is regarded as an arena where

the contests of mental and physical strength are to be displayed. When conceived of in the light of an Epicurean philosopher, which says, "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die"—then life is vanity, and then does my text most forcibly illustrate it by showing that though that life is prolonged hundreds of years—yet the end is, "**And he died.**"

Now let us suppose that Methuselah, throughout his long life, had every joy and pleasure which his heart could desire; that he sought for all the delights of sense—and found them; that he courted *fame*—and it came to his embrace; that he desired *knowledge*—and obtained it; coveted *glory*—and it crowned his brow; asked for *wealth*—and it filled his coffers. Let us suppose that the glory, and wisdom, and riches of Solomon—were Methuselah's all his days; but that his heart, absorbed in these things, never prepared itself for the hour of death, and then, at last, after the slow rolling by of nine hundred and sixty-nine years—death put his cold hand upon his heart, and laid him in the tomb.

Would you not, do you not say, that such a life is vanity? What are nine hundred and sixty-nine years of unalloyed joy—compared to the mighty roll of *countless ages in the eternity to come*? What are nine hundred and sixty-nine years—to the mind of him who has declared that with him "a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years?" What are nine hundred and sixty-nine years of joy—when it is passed as "a watch of the night," or as a *dream* from which the soul wakes—to a doleful eternity?

Those two words, "**he died,**" at the end of all these records of longevity, tell, in startling language, that life, at the best, at the longest, is vanity!

But, coming down from these antediluvian days to the present time, let your attention rest for a little while on a few pertinent examples of this solemn, but

little considered truth.

Take the HERO. The man who has made his name lustrous with deeds of fearless valor; who has seen the grim and deadly front of war; who has borne off victory from his every battle-field; who has won applause from kings and senates and nations; whose name is synonymous with all that is great or glorious in the annals of military renown. Surely, the heart beats with increased pulsation as you look upon such a man. You gaze with admiration upon his person. You recount his martial prowess and his hundred conquests—and you lift up your voice with the voice of your fellows in paeans of praise to the heroic chieftain.

Is his life vanity? Yes! Why? Because it is written at the end of his life, "**And he died!**"—and his honors were all left on this side the grave! There are no martial glories or crowns of laurel, in the eternal world to which he goes.

Take the man who devotes his life to the pursuit of LEARNING. He obtains it. **Universities** strive to do him honor; the **wise** acknowledge him as their leader; **science** presents to him her goodliest offerings; **literature** lays many a costly treasure at his feet, and **wisdom** puts her hands upon his head to bless her favored child.

And is his life vanity? Yes! for "**And he died!**" is soon written upon his grave-stone—and "there is no knowledge, nor wisdom, nor device, in the grave where he goes."

Look at the RICH man. His aim when he began life was to get wealth—and he has succeeded. His **coffers** are flowing over, his **barns** are filled with plenty, desire is satiated, and he says to himself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy—eat, drink and be merry!"

He gathers an unbroken family around his fireside; death seems to have been bribed off from visiting his domestic circle; his *children* grow up beside him "like almug trees," making the air redolent with the spicery of their flowering virtues. *Friends* cluster around him; his name is as a charm in the marts of commerce, and he is hailed as lord of the exchange.

Is his life vanity? Yes! It is all summed up by the three words, "*And he died!*"—and the riches of earth are not counted *riches* in the world to come.

It matters not how you are regarded in your day and generation ...
what *honors* are heaped upon you;
what *praises* are awarded;
what *eminence* you gain;
what *wealth* you possess!

Your life is vanity—if it has passed without seeking the salvation of your soul. It is the *soul* that alone gives life a value above that of the beasts which perish; and just in proportion as the soul is neglected—is life to no purpose—except to increase your condemnation when the words, "*And he died!*" shall be spoken over your coffin!

Give me a hope of acceptance by Christ, and, though you take from me everything else—life is not vain, but is full of glory! Take that hope from me, and give me everything else that the mind can conceive, or the heart desire—and life is vanity—of no purpose but to sink me deeper in eternal woe, by so much the more as I am elevated on earth. I would not barter a well-founded hope of pardon through the blood of Christ—for all the wealth that can be coined from every gold mine of the earth!

For all the *honors* which can cluster around the *brow of fame*;

for all the *learning* that can be stored up in the *mind of wisdom*;

for all the *glory* that could flash from the concentrated crowns of a thousand Solomons

—one little hope, linking the soul to Christ by the *golden thread of faith*—is richer, more glorious, more honorable than all.

There is no vanity in life—when devoted to God.
Life is all vanity—when not devoted to God.

And while to the *worldling* the words "*And he died,*" close to him the door of joy, and open upon the portal of everlasting woe—to the believer in Jesus, those little words shut behind him the cares and trouble of this mortal life, and throw wide open before him those gates of pearl through which the Christian pilgrim enters into the golden streets of the Celestial City!

Certainty of Death

Not only does this brief record of Methuselah, tell us of the transitoriness of earthly things and the Vanity of Life—but it shows us the *Certainty of Death*. Now, as trite as the remark is, that *death is certain*—there is scarcely anything more unheeded! It is a truth so true—that it has ceased to startle us! and we live, saying with our *lips* that death is certain—but acting in our *lives* as if we expected it would never come! But, though a truism, I sound it in your ears again: *DEATH WILL COME!*

I tell the *man of business*, engrossed with his merchandise, buying and selling and getting gain, and all the while thoughtless of the future—"*Death will soon come to you!*"

I tell the *man of pleasure*, seeking only his personal ease and comfort,

sporting in every scene of gaiety, and chasing every phantom of pleasure, that "***Death will soon come to you!***"

I tell the ***student***, poring over the records of literature and science, and filling his mind to the brim with the treasures of thought and wisdom of bygone days, and who is so absorbed in the past as to forget the future, that "***Death will soon come to you!***"

I tell the ***man of ambition***, aiming to climb the ***steep hill of fame*** that he may wield power over his fellows; or leave a name which a nation shall honor and history record, that "***Death will soon come to you!***"

Whoever you are, whatever your rank, age, condition:
your ***death*** is close at hand;
your ***life*** will soon end;
the ***grave*** will soon hold your body;
and your ***soul***—where will that be for eternity?

This is our end; and, in view of the little concern which it gives, we can exclaim, in the language of inspiration, "O, that they were wise! O that they understood this! O that they would consider their latter end!"

Solomon spoke a ***solemn truth*** when he declared, "It is better to go to a house of ***mourning***, than to go to a house of ***feasting***—for death is the destiny of every man; the living should take this to heart!" Ecclesiastes 7:2.

There seems to be a delusion in the minds of most, as to the ***approach of death***. It is always kept at a distance, as if putting death far off in our ***thoughts***—would keep it away in ***fact***. And, though we have many, yes, daily admonitions to the contrary—yet we ...
banish the intruding thoughts of ***death***,

and drive away the somber pictures of the **grave**,
and keep out of view the eternal realities of the world to come,
and steel our heart against ...
a soon-coming eternity,
an all-knowing and all-holy Judge,
and a future eternal retribution!

And then we think that because ...
our **consciences** are quieted by the opiates of deceit,
and our **hearts** are callous by the perpetration of guilt,
and our **minds** are reckless through absorption in seen and temporal things—
that none of the **prognosticated evils** will come upon us! and thus we go on
day by day, growing harder and harder—until death suddenly breaks in upon
our **dreams**, and, before we can cry to God for mercy—we are hurried away
to a place where mercy never comes!

This subject demands of us, a sincere and immediate **preparation for death**.
The very **uncertainty** of death, which causes so many to defer preparing for it
—is the very reason why we should most sedulously give it our attention.
Yet, how few prepare for death—though death is the **only certain event in
human life!**

Life is uncertain—yet you sedulously attend to its duties, cares, and
pleasures.

Health is uncertain—yet you scrupulously guard it from disease.

Fortune is uncertain—yet you diligently plan new acquisitions of wealth.

Friends are uncertain—yet you aim to form new and deeper attachments.

Everything about you is uncertain—yet you live as if all things were to

continue, and you will be continued with them.

But death is **not** uncertain! Here—all is certainty! No **doubt** hangs over this event! Death will come—solemnly, fully, surely. Death, amidst a thousand fluctuations and changes—is alone fixed and certain! and the question we have to settle is: ***How shall we meet it when it comes?***

An immediate **preparation**, then, is necessary—because an immediate **death** may come. this preparation consists in an entire surrender of the heart to Jesus Christ—embracing him as our Mediator, Prophet, Priest, and King—in full and trusting confidence. So that the soul, refusing all other righteousness ...

leans only upon the righteousness of Jesus,
clings solely to the merits of his atoning blood,
and gives to him its full and unreserved affections.

Thus, only by **believing** in Jesus and **loving** Jesus—you are fully prepared to meet death, come when it will; for you have the "**faith** that works by love, and purifies the heart," and in this faith, you can conquer your **last enemy** and shout **victory** over the open grave!

Nothing will enable you to **meet** and **triumph** over death—but this loving, living faith in the Lord Jesus. All other things have been tried in vain. this alone ...

can give **calmness** and **peace** and a true **hope**;
can take away the sting of death;
make it a desirable and pleasant thing to die;
open before us bright visions of eternal joy in Heaven.

And when this faith is readily offered to you, when this preparation can be so easily attained, and when God himself assures you that it is the **only**

preparation—then is it not daring rebellion to the Almighty God—to neglect to secure this offered grace, obtain this victorious faith, and be thus **prepared** for the approach of those days in which you must die?

Will you put off this **preparation** on the **chance** of living many years yet? What assurance from God justifies such madness? Can you even boast of having **tomorrow**? Do you really know what a **day** may bring forth? If not, how vain to hope for **years**, and cast off God, and peril your soul on such vain hopes—when you cannot foresee the events of a single day, or even the incidents of the coming hour! Put **preparation** off until next year, put it off until a convenient time, put it off one day, even—and you may have put it off forever!

Opportunities Lost; Opportunities Improved^(TOC)

"Woe unto us! the daylight is fading, and the shadows of evening grow long!"—Jeremiah 6:4

"But they urged him strongly: Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over!"—Luke 24:29

I have put these two texts together because they aptly illustrate two conditions of the human mind, and two classes of men found in every community.

The first text, from Jeremiah, "Woe unto us! the daylight is fading, and the shadows of evening grow long," points to a condition of mind which is unstable in purpose, irresolute in action—letting the favorable moment for success slip by unimproved—and then, when it is gone beyond recall, lamenting its departure with doleful lamentation. This was precisely the condition of those who uttered these exclamations as recorded by Jeremiah. They had been warned by the prophet of a foreign invasion of their country; they had been exhorted to prompt and vigorous action to repel the invaders. They had ample time and means to do this—but they dallied and delayed; they let the **morning** hours of action pass unused; let the **mid-day** still find them inactive and neglectful of duty; let the enemy march up to their walls; and then, when the day was nearly spent, when they would have but a remnant of time in which to act, give way to the doleful lament "Woe unto us! the daylight is fading, and the shadows of evening grow long!"

The opportunity for success was lost; the day of action had been misspent,

and the result was, captivity and slavery. They could not be roused up to a sense of their danger and to the necessity for prompt exertion—until it was too late. The day of action was going away; the shadows of the evening which was to cover them with its darkness and sorrow, were already stretched out.

Just so it is with multitudes now in reference to the work of their salvation. The gospel of the Son of God has been preached in their ears, until it has become stale and powerless. They listen to it—but take no heed to its requirements.

They know that they are sinners in the sight of God, and that if these sins are unrepented of—they must lie down in everlasting sorrow. They know that Jesus Christ is the only Savior, able and willing to save to the uttermost; yet they accept not His offer of grace. They hear the *thunders of the law* as it peals its terrific tones from Sinai, and the *wooings of love* as they whisper in tenderest accents from Calvary—but they heed neither the *terrors* of Sinai nor the *charms* of Calvary.

They are warned of a judgment to come, and of the eternal punishment of the lost; but they listen with incredulity, and move on without fear! and so they go on, step after step, wasting the precious moments of the early *dawn* of life, the serene hours of the *morning*, the *work-time* of noon, the *declining* days of past-meridian—and they find themselves towards the close of a departing day, and with the long-drawn shadows of the evening deepening into night around them, unprepared to meet the coming darkness! and so they take up, when too late, the lament, "Woe unto us! the daylight is fading, and the shadows of evening grow long!"

There are few things so *saddening* to the mind of those who have reached

middle life—as the memory of *wasted opportunities* and *neglected duties*. If a man has been brought up in a Christian family, and educated in Bible truth—he cannot but feel the old instruction of a godly father, or pious mother, or childhood's teacher—come back upon him with almost reproachful utterances, at his *neglect* of acknowledged duties, and his *procrastination* in putting off the time of repentance and faith. He hears these warning voices urging him to accept at once the offers of redeeming love. He recalls his early teaching and recognizes inwardly its truth and his duty. He is troubled and uneasy in view of his neglect of his soul—and yet "the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful!"

Look for a moment at the opportunities which the Church affords to all attendants on her service, not only of *learning* their duty—but also of *practicing* it to the glory of God.

With almost inspired wisdom, the morning and evening and occasional services of our Church are so arranged as that each year the whole life of Jesus, from His annunciation, to His nativity; from the manger to the cross; from the grave to His ascension, from His ascension to the inauguration of the Dispensation of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, is brought distinctly before us. Not only so—but twenty-five or twenty-six Sundays of the year are specifically set apart to teach and premonish the people upon the great doctrines of the Bible; while the godly lives of the apostles and evangelists and other holy persons, whose names are in the Book of Life, are wisely commended by special lessons, because they are examples to us of saintly faith and piety which it becomes us to copy.

You can not plead ignorance of the truth. You can not plead that you have had no warning voice and no welcoming invitation.

Then, again, look at the **opportunities** for repentance and faith which God has given you in the daily providence of life.

You have been **rich**, perhaps, and He has made you poor—Why? that He may give you **spiritual** riches, which moth and rust can not corrupt.

You have been **poor** and He has made you rich—Why? that you might "remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth."

You have been **well**, and He has laid you on a bed of sickness—Why? that you might consider your latter end.

You have been **sick** and He has made you well—Why? that you should love your Divine Healer, and seek for your spiritual healing.

You have been called to **sorrow** and **mourning**—a beloved wife, a devoted husband, a darling child, an honored parent—has been taken from you—Why? that you may be weaned from earth—fasten your affections on things above, and prepare yourself to meet death in peace.

How many of these providences have each one of you experienced? Try and call to mind what they are, and mark how **loudly God spoke** to you in each one of them: "**Son, daughter, come to me; prepare to meet your God!**" Your life is full of the echoes of God's voice speaking to you in His daily providence, as well as in the inspired word and through the ministry of His Church. Yet hour after hour has glided away, and you have hesitated, wavered, procrastinated, put off to a more convenient season. The day of life has touched its meridian; it is declining towards the western horizon; the evening shadows lie upon your path—and you are not saved!

Shall **life's sun** go wholly down, shall the **night of death** wrap you in its

starless mantle, without one honest effort on your part to secure your soul's salvation?

Let us turn now to the *other* text.

The one which we *have* been considering refers to wasted opportunities; to fearful neglects; to a time of action grievously misspent, and so resulting in personal and eternal ruin.

A Wondrous Opportunity, Promptly, Gladly, Embraced and Enjoyed

The other text is just the reverse. It speaks of *a wondrous opportunity, promptly, gladly, embraced and enjoyed*. It tells of seizing upon opportune moments, and making them useful for eternity. "But they urged him strongly: Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over!"

On the afternoon of the day of Christ's resurrection, two disciples were returning from Jerusalem to their home at Emmaus, and were conversing with great earnestness as they journeyed, when a *stranger* approached and, attracted by their mournful and excited manner, asked, "What are you discussing together as you walk along? They stood still, their faces downcast." to this question one replied, "Are you only a stranger in Jerusalem, and do not know the things which have come to pass there in these days?" the stranger, for the purpose of drawing out their minds still more, asked, "*What things?*" to which they replied, "About Jesus of Nazareth. He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. and what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. in

addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."

Then the stranger said to them, "'How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?' and beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly: 'Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them."

Here was an instance of a ready seizing hold of an unexpected opportunity of grace; of an earnest constraining appeal to one for further instruction and blessing; of an unwillingness to lose so precious a season of deepening their knowledge of the truth thus marvelously given to them. and yet they did not know then, that the stranger was Jesus. He had not then made Himself known to them. He was to them only a spiritually-minded, and scripture-filled stranger, whose conversation ...

riveted their attention,

engrossed their minds,

fired their imaginations,

cleared away their doubts, and

made their souls to glow and burn with especial fervor—

as they took in His words, and as He opened to them the Scriptures.

And oh! were they not repaid? Were they not well rewarded for their devout

attention, their readiness to hear, their willingness to be taught, their earnestness to secure still further His presence and instruction?

Yet, beloved, would I speak extravagantly, if I said that Jesus *often* reveals Himself to His disciples now, with as much preciousness as He did to the two at Emmaus? I think not. They, indeed, had His *personal* presence; but yet they did not know until just as He vanished out of their sight, that He was Jesus. They listened to Him, not as their Lord and Master—but as to a wise and well-instructed stranger; they heard Him speak only two or three hours at the most, and only about the *Messianic* aspect of the Old Testament. Their eyes were blinded that they would not know Him until He made Himself known in the breaking of bread; and before they had time to recover from the surprise of the revelation, "He vanished out of their sight!"

But what, brethren, do *we* have? We have not the *unknown* Jesus—but the *known* Jesus to be our companion. We have Him to walk with us, not in one afternoon's walk of seven or eight miles—but each day of our life, and all the way of our pilgrimage. We hear Him speak to us, not in the tones and accent of a stranger—but as our own dear Lord and Savior. to us, by His Spirit—He reveals, not only the prophets of the Old Testament, and the things there written concerning Himself—but in the full canon of the completed Scriptures; in the prophecies of Revelation, as well as those thousands of years before.

We hear Him in His exquisite picture-parables, those painted windows of the Gospel cathedral, bedecked with the tracery of the divine artist! We see Him as the wondrous miracle-worker in the realms of sea and sky, mind and matter, life and death. to us, He speaks in the words of His Sermon on the Mount, and in the discourse in the upper room of Jerusalem. We listen to His prayer, on the mountain top, in the garden, and in the words of His own

matchless form! We witness His daily life, through the three years of His holy ministry! We go with Him to Calvary, see Him wrapped in linen and spices, laid in Joseph's grave! We hear Him, after His resurrection, tell doubting Thomas, "Reach here your hand and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless—but believing." We hear Him ask Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, love you me?" We accompany Him to the Mount of Olives, catch the words of His last and great commission, and watch His receding form as He is taken up and "a cloud receives Him out of sight."

Is not this, then, **better** than that which the two disciples had? His word to each of us is, "Lo, I am with you always!" "If any man loves me—my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him." Yes, He dwells in us, as an abiding guest.

But all depends on our doing as these disciples did—**constraining Jesus to "abide with us."**

He will be with us, if we seek Him, not only in His **Word**—but in the **assemblies** of His people; for He has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name—there am I in the midst of them." He will be with us in the celebration of the Holy Communion—for there He is specially set forth crucified before us. He will be with us in the worship of the great congregation—for He ever inhabits the praises of Israel. Nor in these **public** places only.

He will abide with us in our **hearts**—if we are meek and lowly in heart, for such hearts are His temples. He will abide with us in our **homes**—if, like Mary and Martha of Bethany, we ever keep a guest-chamber for Him. He will be with us in our **business**—if, like Matthew at the tax collector's booth, our ear is ever open to hear, and our hearts ever ready to obey, His call, "**Follow**

me!" He will ever be with us in our **studies**, if, like the doctors of old in the Temple, we seat Jesus in the midst, and ask Him the questions which make for our eternal peace.

There is no unwillingness on the part of Jesus to abide with us. It is that our hearts are not prepared to receive and welcome such a visitant! is not this a grievous wrong which we are doing to our souls? Shall we allow them to continue in such a condition, that we cannot, by reason of our cherished lusts, or sins, or covetousness, or worldly-mindedness—constrain Him to come in and abide with us?

Finally, there is one point which some of you have reached, to which all are hastening, when it will be settled whether we shall exclaim with the deluded and unprepared Jews in Jeremiah's day, "Woe unto us! for the daylight is fading, and the shadows of evening grow long!" or whether, in response to our constraining importunity—Jesus will go in and abide with us. The **day of life** is fast fading away to all of us; the **shadows of life's evening** are, to many of us, lengthening and deepening. Sunset is near—the **night of death** is at hand.

If your manifold and most graciously bestowed opportunities of securing salvation, and conquering your spiritual enemies, are allowed to slip away unused; if the **convenient season** passes without your making it convenient to accept the offered grace—then must you very soon—how soon we know not, for God has said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man"—then, I say, shall you soon take up the doleful cry, "Woe unto us! for the daylight is fading, and the shadows of evening grow long!"

If, on the other hand, favored as you are with such manifestations of Jesus' love and grace, you say to Him, "Abide with us," and by your faith and love

"constrain" Him to tarry with you—then how exquisitely sweet and precious will His presence be to your soul! How His life will flow into your life ... opening your *mind* to understand the Scriptures; opening your *heart* to His indwelling grace; filling you with a *joy* and *peace* which passes understanding; and enriching you with all needed strength and moral loveliness, so that you will be made "fit for the inheritance of the saints in light."

Let not Christ now present with you—pass away from you and leave you to die Christless, and to go Christless to the judgment and to eternity! **Constrain Him** to abide with you. He will readily assent. He is more willing to be your guest—than you are to be His host.

But **delay** not, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent; and when the day of grace once sets behind the horizon, it is followed by **no tomorrow**. for the uniform declaration of God's word and God's ministers, and God's Church, and God's providences is, "Behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation!" and "For in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom!" and "As the tree falls—so it lies!"

The Stones of the Heavenly Temple Prepared on Earth^(TOC)

"In building the temple, only blocks dressed at the quarry were used, and no hammer, chisel or any other iron tool was heard at the temple site while it was being built."—1 Kings 6:7

The **Temple of Solomon** was the noblest structure ever built by human hands. in the **Architect** who devised it, in the **materials** employed, in the **labor** bestowed, in the **costliness** of the work, and in the **grandeur** of its whole design—it surpassed the proudest edifices of the world.

From its first erection in the wilderness until the time of Solomon, over four centuries, the "Tabernacle," containing the ark of the covenant and its sacred treasures, was but a movable tent pitched where peace or convenience would permit. When David selected Jerusalem to be his royal city, and "the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies," he said to the prophet Nathan, "Lo, I dwell in an house of cedars—but the ark of the covenant of the Lord remains under curtains," thus expressing his uneasiness that he should be more sumptuously lodged than the ark of God, and intimating his desire to build a house of the Lord.

This very proper desire, the Lord would not allow him to execute, because he had been a warrior, and his hand had been stained with human blood; but He announced to him through the prophet, that his son should build a house for Him, and thus accomplish what he had so piously designed. Though divinely hindered from building the house, he yet busied himself in collecting materials for it of the most ample and costly character, and four years after

his decease, Solomon, who reigned in his stead, began the work of erecting the **Temple** which his father David had planned in all its parts, by the Spirit of God. Seven years were consumed by an immense army of laborers in this gigantic work, before the Temple crooned the summit of Mount Moriah, and was dedicated to the worship of the one living and true God.

There it stood for many years, the pride of Israel and the glory of the world. Grand in the massiveness of its structure—magnificent in the arrangement of its courts and porches, and gates, and holy, most holy places—splendid in the glittering radiance which its walls of dazzling whiteness flashed upon the beholder as the morning or evening sun was reflected from it, "glistening stones," glorious as a Temple erected for the worship of Almighty God—but pre-eminently honored as the place where the Most High condescended to dwell between the Cherubim in the Holy of Holies by a visible emblem, and where he communed with his anointed servant from off the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant.

In every aspect, human and divine, it was the most **remarkable** building ever erected on earth—remarkable in its human aspects—in its foundations—its materials—its structure—its costliness—its splendor; and in its divine splendor—as the only house of wood and stone in which Jehovah resided by the symbol of His presence. Leaving, however, the many interesting points suggested by this stupendous work, let us bend our thoughts upon the remarkable fact spoken of by the sacred historian in the 1st Book of Kings: "In building the temple, only blocks dressed at the quarry were used, and no hammer, chisel or any other iron tool was heard at the temple site while it was being built." 1 Kings 6:7

It is difficult to understand how a work so vast and so complicated could be erected in such a silent manner. and this fact will appear the more remarkable

if we consider the nature and dimensions of materials used. The heavy work was all of stone or marble, and some of the great and costly stones spoken of in the Book of Kings were blocks eighty feet long, ten high, and twelve wide, and many of its pillars were socketed in solid masonry. Its massive rafters were tenoned and mortised into corresponding beams; yet these ponderous masses were hewn, squared, carved and fitted to their places before they were brought to Mount Moriah, with such accuracy and skill, that Josephus says that "the smallest interstices were not perceptible between the stones," and yet no hammer, axe, or any tool of iron was needed to adjust them to their several places, and frame them together in grand yet harmonious proportions. How all this could be accomplished in so unusual a manner, can only be accounted for by supposing that God presided over his own Temple, and gave the builders this unusual art and skill.

This gorgeous Temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar nearly twenty-five hundred years ago. Another and another temple has risen on the same spot and met the same fate; the Lord of the Temple himself has come into his earthly court, not by the emblematic Shekinah—but in bodily form, and has gone back to his original glory; the nation which worshiped in those sanctuaries has been scattered to the four winds of Heaven; yet the deep instruction furnished by this passage remains—let us, through God's assistance, attempt to search out and apply the lesson.

In the New Testament the Church is termed "God's building"—"the temple of God"—"the temple of the Holy Spirit"—"the temple of the living God"—"a holy temple of the Lord"—"a habitation of God in the Spirit"—"the house of Christ." These terms denote that as God by the bright symbol of his glory manifested his presence in the movable tabernacle erected by Moses, and the stately temple built by Solomon—so does he by his spirit dwell in the hearts

of Christians as individuals and in the church collectively. in looking then at this Christian temple, let us observe:

First, the stones of which it is composed;

Secondly, the preparation of them; and

Thirdly, their destination.

1. Living Stones^(TOC)

Peter says of Christians, that as *living stones* they are built up into a spiritual house. a stone is a shapeless mass of rock. It is inert—lifeless—it could never free itself from its native quarry—could never fashion itself into classic shape and beauty, and could never set itself up as a lintel or column in any edifice of man. and such by nature is the spiritual state of all men—having no power to move—hear—see—feel—believe, because of the moral inertia which makes them as passive, hard, insensible as the stones of the earth. Hence, when God would express the hardened condition of a person or people, he speaks of such as having "hearts of stone."

But believers having been hewn out from the quarry of humanity by the electing grace of God, are termed *living stones*; not inert masses of rock, not senseless blocks of marble—but full of life, feeling, action; and they are thus designated because Christ, as the tried corner stone, the sure foundation, is called a living stone, and diffuses his own life through all parts of the spiritual temple which rests on him. So that every stone in it, from the *foundation of the apostles and prophets* to the topmost coping—is made a precious, a glistening, a living stone, through the preciousness and glory and life of Jesus, the prince of life. So long then as the soul of the believer rests on Jesus Christ alone for salvation, and on nothing else, it has spiritual life—build it upon any other foundation, and it is a senseless stone still—only as laid by the Holy Spirit upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone, can it receive in itself the life of Christ, and become through the impartation of his own vitality, a living stone.

2. Preparation^(TOC)

The way in which these living stones are *prepared* for the temple, furnishes a subject of interesting and profitable thought. The wood and stone used in Solomon's Temple were carefully prepared at a distance from the place where the edifice was to be built. The sacred house was planned out in minutest detail by David, under the direction of the Spirit of God. Each stone, column, lintel, beam, rafter, had its special and appointed place—but as yet the wood was waving its branches in the forests of Lebanon, and the stone was unquarried in the mountains of Judea.

Under the direction of appointed overseers, the Hebrew workman went up to the sides of Lebanon and cut down the designated tree, and there, before carrying it to Jerusalem, he trimmed and fashioned it by much hewing and carving for its destined place. The Phoenician stonecutter went to the mountain and split out masses of rock from the quarry, and there, by many ponderous blows, he dressed it and shaped it for its appointed position. Many an axe and sharp-edged tool passed over that tree before it became a stately pillar—and many a hammer and instrument of iron was used on that once unsightly block before as a polished stone it was fitted for the Temple's wall.

Most beautifully does all this *illustrate* the way of God in building up His spiritual and living temple. in the mind of Him who sees the end from the beginning, and who has devised all things in the counsel of his own will, this temple is already planned in its minutest part—He knows each living stone that shall compose its walls—He has designated them for their several places before the foundation of the world, though as yet many of them are still swaying their green branches in the *forests of worldliness*, or lie buried in the

stony ledges of hardened impenitence. But the Great Architect knows what tree and what rock he wants, and he lays the **axe of converting grace** at the root of this tree, and speaking by his Spirit to the insensate stone, his word becomes, in his own expressive language, as a **fire**, and like a **hammer** that breaks the rock in pieces.

But when the tree is thus felled, when the stone is thus quarried out—is it immediately fitted for its destined place in Heaven? in most cases we answer, no. Though at conversion the child of God is a marked man, though he is justified freely by the grace that is in Christ Jesus—yet how much **spiritual trimming and dressing**, how much **hewing** and **squaring** does he need to fashion him aright for the position which the Divine Architect intends he shall occupy hereafter! There are sharp angles of **character** to be rounded off—unsightly protuberances of **conduct** to be chipped away—many roughnesses of **temper** to be smoothed down—many flaws and cracks of **mind** and **heart** to be chiseled out! and then, when the general form of the stone is prepared, how much severe friction is required to give it the right polish, and bring out all its beauties—so that its smooth surface may fling back the rays of the Sun of Righteousness!

Our **earth** is the place where this is to be done; for, as there was no noise of any axe or hammer, or tool of iron heard on Mount Moriah while the Temple was building—so in the New Jerusalem above, there will be heard no crushing strokes of conviction, no sharp hewings of an awakened conscience, no sound of preparatory discipline. Heaven is not the place to prepare men for glory—but to receive them when prepared! Earth, then, is the preparing place for Heaven, and the preparation is effected by the axe, the hammer, and the tools of iron of **God's wise dispensations.** All of God's dealings with us have respect to our future existence; and these are so wisely adapted to the

peculiarities of each case, that no two persons pass through the same course, and no two result in the same development. We are not arbitrarily classed together like plants under certain species, and then each group made to experience the same indiscriminate treatment. Far from it! Each individual in the whole training of his moral nature is as much under the eye and care of God—as if there was no other being in the universe! and there is not a peculiarity of mind or heart or body—not a changing phase of life from the cradle to the coffin—that is not expressly met by *infinite wisdom* in the arrangement of his Providence and Grace.

Nor does he set in motion a course of preparation suited to your case, and then, leaving it like a piece of machinery to do its allotted work—go off to some other part of his wide domain to superintend some other of his vast designs. No! for as the *refiner* of silver never removes his eye from the molten mass in the crucible of his furnace, until he sees his own image reflected in the purged and shining metal—so God never leaves the individual soul which he has placed in the furnace fires of this world—until he either sees his own image reflected in the purified spirit, or proves it to be but sinful dross.

The greater part of the preparation to which we are subjected as professing Christians, is of a *disciplinary* character, and hence is fitly represented by the *axe*, the *hammer*, and the tool of *iron*. Prosperity not only is the destruction of fools—but in the great majority of cases, prosperity hardens the heart of the nominal Christian, so that Christ himself was forced to say how hard shall those who have riches enter into the kingdom of Heaven," and for many hundreds of years, God by the voice of Jeremiah has complained, "I *spoke* unto you in your prosperity—but you said: I will not hear. this has been your manner from your youth, that you obeyed not my voice."

Afflictions come more immediately to the heart, and operate with a more searching and purifying influence upon the life. These show one his weakness and sinfulness—lay open the moral anatomy of his nature—subject his *principles* to severest test, and cause him to retire into the chambers of his soul and learn there in the light of the Bible and in the light of conscience—his relations and duties to God and man.

Now the *axe* seems driven into the root of his happiness—now he is broken as a block of granite under the blows of the hammer of God's Word, and now the *iron of a sore adversity* has entered into his soul—and he feels himself stricken, smitten, and afflicted. in these dispensations, however severe—he is being *fitted by the hand of God himself* for a place in glory. God knows for what position in that heavenly temple he has designed us, and he knows when we are prepared for that position; nor will he permit us to receive a single blow or cut more than is necessary to accomplish his divine purpose concerning us.

Let the Christian, then, who is passing through fiery and discouraging trials and afflictions, remember that **God** is thus hewing and squaring him here, that as a well-prepared and living stone, he may by and by be built up into the living temple not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

The preparing process may be severe; the strokes frequent and heavy; the hewing into shape—painful to the flesh; the polishing into beauty—rasping to the spirit; yet every *blow* aids to bring it into form; and every tool of iron, though it cuts deep—leaves behind some chiseled beauty; and every *grating file of sorrow* that rasps the sensitive fibers of the heart—only gives it a higher polish, and makes it reflect a brighter glory. and who will complain of such severe dealings—when such *blissful ends* are attained by it? Who will murmur at the roughness of a road—which leads to such eternal joys? Who

will repine at any *chastenings*, and not rather esteem them as light afflictions which are but for a moment, when his Heavenly Father assures him that they shall work out for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?

And Oh, let the afflicted saint remember also that as those portions of the earthly Temple which were to be *most conspicuous and beautiful*, had more cutting and carving and polishing than others—so those whom God designs for eminence in glory, for pillars in his temple—are subjected to heavier blows, deeper chiselings, severer raspings in the process of bringing out in them higher beauties and a more excelling glory.

3. Destination^(TOC)

And this leads us to consider, lastly, the **end** for which these living stones, thus prepared on earth, are designed. We have seen that the stones quarried out and elaborately hewn by the Sidonians, were taken after due preparation to Jerusalem and set up in the Temple. As the house erected for God by Solomon was the most magnificent of all earthly structures, and was designed to show forth the praise of God, and be his earthly abode—so when he would speak of the glory of Heaven, where he dwells in full and visible presence, where he is worshiped in pure and perfect devotion, where he receives his people into close and holy communion, and where he manifests the unveiled perfections of the Godhead—he speaks of it under the figure of a temple—a house—a building. of a **temple**, because he is worshiped there. of a **house**, because he entertains his children there in its many mansions or apartments. of a **building**, because it has been slowly augmented since the foundation of the world.

The real end, then, for which God has chosen us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and fitted us on earth by his providential dispensations, is, "that in the dispensation of the fullness of time he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are on earth, even in Him." and this recapitulation of all things in Christ is to be effected by building all things on Christ as the sure foundation which God himself has laid in Zion. and Christians, as living stones, chosen by God and precious, "In whom all the building fitly framed together, grows unto a holy temple in the Lord. in whom you also are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." this structure the same apostle designates in another place as "a

building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

And now if we will with the eye of John gaze into the opening Heaven, we shall with him behold **no temple** there. Why? because, says this beloved disciple, "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof!" Ah yes! Christ, in whom all things are gathered together—on whom as a cornerstone, all living stones are built—in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily—is the temple of Heaven! and because we are Christ's, we also, by being, in the words of Paul, "partakers of the divine nature," become a holy temple of the Lord, having for its **walls** salvation, and for its **gates** praise.

This spiritual temple God is now building up, and it progresses just as fast as the living stones are prepared to take their places above. The first living stone ever built upon this precious cornerstone was righteous Abel, and since then Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and David, and Daniel, and multitudes of others having been hewn and squared here—have been fitted into their places in this living temple. But since Christ came, how gloriously has it increased! Apostles, and martyrs, and confessors, and saints; the aged, the middle aged, the young; the rich, the learned, the poor and the ignorant; kings, and captains, and statesman, and scholars—have been added layer upon layer! Sometimes, when persecution has raged—a thousand stones a day; and sometimes long years have passed, and scarcely a living stone has been transferred to Heaven.

And this building process is going on every day, in our midst, under our own eyes. The loving child, the youth of promise, the doating mother, the cherished wife, the fond husband, the venerated parent, the beloved sister, the manly brother—all have been taken from our midst! and while household after household have put on mourning clothes, and uttered piercing cries of

anguish as the beloved but stricken one has been taken away—angels have shouted for joy that another living stone has been set up in the heavens, to abide forever in glory!

And who of those who hope that we are living stones, who are now passing through the trials and afflictions of our needed preparation; who of us will next be taken—in what family will God select the next living stone that shall be borne from this earthly to that heavenly temple?

Or if God keeps you longer on earth, and causes you to suffer trials and afflictions of mind and body, and home and friends, and business and fortune—can you, will you repine when you know *why* he keeps you here, and *what* these tribulations are designed to accomplish in you?

Keep before your souls, God's ultimate purpose—and it will make you always to rejoice in God's present dealings. Look frequently at the *glorious end*—and you will murmur less at the sorrows of the way. and remember that the moment that you are fitted in the eye of the Great Architect to take your place as a living stone above—he will place you there, whether with the preliminary call of sickness or the sudden summons, "Come up hither!" and when up there all the preparation and disciplines of earth are over, and as the saints look back to the quarry whence they were hewn, and compare their rough and unshapen appearance then, with their present grace and beauty—will they not bless God who did not leave them in the stony ledge of impenitence, or lying as unseemly blocks at the quarry's mouth; but who caused to pass over them the axe and the hammer, and the tool of iron of his afflictive dispensation—and thus made them living stones fitted to abide in eternal beauty in the New Jerusalem above?

But this exceeding glory will be ours, only as we become living stones, by

being united to Jesus Christ the cornerstone, by a living faith. Have we this faith? Do we cling to Christ alone? Have we hid our lives in him by a self-consecration that will never recall its covenant vows? Do we walk by faith, and does this faith purify the heart, enabling us to resist the devil, overcome the world, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God?

Have we **evidences** that we are now, as the apostle says, "temples of the Holy Spirit?" Are our souls under the constant, controlling, sanctifying, influences of this blessed Spirit? for if we are not temples of the Holy Spirit on earth—we can never become "living stones" in the temple of Heaven.

Does Christ dwell in our hearts by faith, and do we feel the presence and the preciousness of such an indwelling Savior? If we do, then have we daily evidence that we are of his chosen ones, and that before long, after a few more **strokes** from the axe and the hammer—he will raise us to glory! But if not, oh wait not another day—but, while the Spirit of God even now strives with your soul, embrace the offers of his abounding grace, that you also may so look for, and long for his appearing, as to be constrained to say with the enraptured spirit of the banished apostle: "***Amen. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus!***"

The Rainbow; or, Covenant Promises Seen Through Tears^(TOC)

"I set my rainbow in the cloud."—Genesis 9:13

"And there was a rainbow round about the Throne."—Revelation 4:3

We have joined together the two extremes of Holy Writ—yoked in one text, passages from Genesis and from Revelation—placed beside each other as kindred truths, sentences written by Moses and by John; one, relating to the old world more than forty-three centuries ago, and the other, referring to a scene in that "new heavens and new earth wherein dwells righteousness," which is yet to be revealed.

Thus beautifully harmonizes the whole Word of God. Thus are its **beginning** and **ending** made to meet and form **one circle of truth**, having **Christ** for its center, and **Infinitude** for its circumference. Nor need we wonder at this unity of purpose, thought, language, and doctrine: it was all dictated by the same Divine Spirit, it is all occupied with the same Divine salvation, and its united aim is to advance the glory of God, and the redemption of man.

The passages quoted at the head of this chapter, introduce to our notice two striking, sublime, and at the same time **symbolic scenes**—in each of which we have a personal interest, and both commend themselves to our earnest attention.

The first carries us back to the morning of the post-diluvial world.

The Deluge had ceased, "The fountains also of the deep and the windows of Heaven were stopped, and the rain from Heaven was restrained." the ark

containing the eight survivors of the old world rested on Mount Ararat, the dove had been sent forth, and, after returning with an *olive leaf* in her beak, was again let go, and came back no more. The land became dry, the covering of the ark was removed, and Noah and his family went out of their floating habitation, and stood once more on the firm dry earth, the source of a new generation. The pious patriarch built an altar to the Lord, and the sweet savor of his sacrifice rose up acceptably to Heaven, and God returned to the worshipers promises of rest and peace.

But God did more than merely give a promise. He entered into a *formal covenant* with Noah and his sons, the purpose of which was, that "all flesh should not be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth." this covenant was ratified by a seal of signal beauty and expressiveness: "And God said: this is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations. I set my *rainbow* in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. and it shall come to pass, when I bring a *cloud* over the earth, that the *rainbow* shall be seen in the cloud and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant."

A few days, perhaps, after this solemn transaction, there is seen a gathering of clouds in the heavens, the sky is quite overcast, the dark masses roll in intermingling convolutions, the wind rises and sweeps down the mountain gorges—the big drops of rain fall with a heavy patter, the thunder mutters its distant warnings, and all conspire to fill their minds with terror and alarm. They recall the scene a few months back, when the first waters of the deluge fell, and the first of the fountains of the great deep was broken up; and a secret and unwillingly admitted fear steals into their minds, lest perchance

another storm may sweep them from the earth! But it is only for a moment; they think of God's promise, they remember his covenant, and, lo! as they gaze upon the dark clouds—they discern delicate tints and many-colored stripes, acquiring each moment more perfect brilliancy and form, until the whole eastern sky is spanned by the seven-fold **rainbow** of promise; and, as they look upon the beautiful arch, they recall the covenant of God, and rejoice in the assurance of safety thus given, beholding, as they do, upon the very storm which created alarm, the seal and signet-ring of a covenant-keeping God.

As a token of God's gracious assurance, it is very peculiar. It never appears but at the time when the rain is falling, and hence, viewed in itself, is rather a ground of apprehension than of peace. But God has chosen that to be a pledge of our security, which is, in itself, an intimation of our danger—that our trust might be, not in any change of terrestrial arrangements—but in the simple Word of God, a pledge repeated to us by each new-born rainbow, as it carries our thoughts back to the days of Noah, and the covenant token then first pointed out.

Look then upon the rainbow, whenever it appears in its many-colored glory, and praise Him who set it in the clouds as the perpetual token of his covenant love. "Very beautiful is it in the brightness thereof, it compasses the whole Heaven with glory, and the hands of the Most High have bended it."

But another rainbow is spoken of in the Bible. The apostle John opens his Apocalypse with the announcement "At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in Heaven with someone sitting on it. and the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. a **rainbow**, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne!" Revelation 4:2-3. The rainbow is not introduced here as a mere ornament—but as a most **expressive emblem**.

Our eye is first directed to the **throne**, that habitation, as the Psalmist terms it, of justice and judgment, and to the majestic appearance of Him who sat upon it—compared here to two precious stones, the jasper and carnelian; the **jasper**, as we gather from other passages, representing the essential holiness; and the blood-red carnelian—the punitive justice of God, Which declares "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin."

Lest, however, we should be repelled by this holiness of God, and overawed by his retributive justice—there is also seen, overarching this throne and Him who sits upon it, a **rainbow**—the symbol of grace returning after wrath, to testify of God's covenant of mercy in Christ Jesus. It is said to be a rainbow like unto an **emerald**, because to the eye of the holy apostle **green** was the predominating color, and green is of all colors the most refreshing and agreeable.

We may not, we cannot, look with unblinking eye upon the jasper-like **holiness** of Jehovah, for it is that dazzling glory which, filling Heaven with its effulgence, causes it to have "no need of the sun or the moon to lighten it." We may not, we cannot, gaze upon the blood-red carnelian-like **justice** of the Almighty, for the shocking glare would scorch the eyeballs of the mind with its scenes of burning and deserved wrath! But we may and can look upon the heavenly rainbow, "in sight like unto an emerald," and the great sign and seal of this covenant of grace, hung up over the throne of Heaven, where "He who sits upon the throne" can ever look at it, and ever repeat to his children the promise, "For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed—but my kindness shall not depart from you, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, says the Lord that has mercy on you."

What beautiful imagery Scripture employs in exhibiting the truths of God! Were we so familiar with the **figurative language** of the Bible, as to be

reminded of *blissful truths* every time we beheld those objects, which have been employed to illustrate *sacred ideas*—how would it invest the material world with new beauty, and paint every picture of nature in the hues of Heaven!

The *sun* would then ever tell us of Christ, "the light of the world."

The *moon* would remind us of the Church, deriving all her brightness from "the sun of righteousness."

The *well-spring* would speak in sparkling language of the "fountain open to cleanse from sin and impurity!"

The *river* would remind us of that stream of "living water, as clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and the Lamb."

The *grass* would preach to us of the frailty of man, "today growing up, tomorrow cut down and withered."

The "lily of the field," would beautifully set forth the protecting care of the Almighty.

Our Lord drew illustrations of his doctrine from the stars, the sea, the birds, the fish, the clouds, the fields; and the Holy Spirit has used the forms and changes of the visible world to embody forth eternal truths; so that we may truly say that God has made *nature* the eloquent expounder and advocate of *revelation*.

When, therefore, we employ such a striking emblem as the *rainbow* to set forth some of the precious truths of God, we are but following in the track of Scripture, and using God's own covenant seal to illustrate God's own promises.

The *rainbow* is made up of seven colors, caused by the different angles at which the light is refracted and reflected from the falling drops of rain. The conditions under which it can be seen are, that there must be rain falling at the time; that there must be sunlight at the time; and that the beholder must be between the two. Let us look, then, if we can see on the *dark and showery cloud of sorrow*—the rays of the Sun of Righteousness so refracted as to form the rainbow of mercy, at once inspiring hope and exciting thanksgiving.

1. We turn to Isaiah, the evangelical prophet, and find the first of these prismatic promises in the comforting words, "But now, O Jacob, listen to the LORD who created you. O Israel, the one who formed you says: Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine! When you go through deep waters—I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty—you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression—you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. for I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior!"—Isaiah 43:1-3. How much and how beautiful the light refracted from this glowing passage! As if God had said. Fear not, for He who created you out of nothing, He who formed you in the shape and fashion of humanity, He who redeemed you from the dominion of death, He who so knows you as to call you by name, and to grave you on the palms of his hands, and to make you unto him a chosen peculiar people—will not forsake you in any emergency or trial. But "when you pass through the waters" of affliction—"I, the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior," will be with you! When you go through "rivers" of sorrow—"I, the Lord your God, the Holy One of

Israel, your Savior," will not allow them to overflow you! When "you walk through the fire" and along the flame-enkindled pathway of persecution—"I, the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior," will not allow you to burn—but will protect you from the fiery trial.

What wide promises, what divine assurance! How full of hope and comfort to the sorrowful and the persecuted!

2. A few pages on, and we find another promise for our covenant rainbow; one, too, which has specific relations to the rainbow of the deluge, for that token was evidently present to the mind of God when the words were uttered: "For a small moment," says Jehovah, speaking to his ancient people, "for a small moment have I forsaken you—but with great mercies will I gather you. in a little wrath I hid my face from you for a moment—but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you, says the Lord your Redeemer." "For," he continues, "to me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again. Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken, nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you!" Isaiah 54:8-10.

This strong promise, made originally to the Israelites, is reaffirmed to each individual believer; for each child of God experiences moments when God seems to forsake him, and periods of darkness when his face seems hidden from him by

intervening wrath or sorrow. and at such times we are tempted to murmur, as if we had a right to *perpetual sunshine*, forgetting that it is our iniquities which have separated between us and God, and our sins which have hid his face from us, that he cannot hear. Yet if we are in truth his children, and do seek to honor and glorify him—he will let it be but a small moment that he forsakes us, and but a passing gush of wrath in which he hides his face from us. The *cloud* between us may for a little while be black, angry, tempestuous, electrical; but when the gust is over and the Sun of Righteousness again shines out—then will the *bright arch of hope* span the vanishing cloud! for God declares that, as when he looks upon the rainbow, he remembers his covenant with Noah never again to bring the waters of the deluge upon the earth, so this promise that He would not forever be angry with you nor rebuke you, shall be to him a token never finally to remove his covenant of peace. Sooner far shall the everlasting hills depart; sooner far the deep foundations of the earth be moved—than God's promise fail or his covenant of peace be removed.

3. Sitting with our Savior upon the grassy mount, and listening to the sermon he delivered there, we find another tinted promise of a dye so heavenly, that it at once finds its place as one of the seven-fold colors in this rainbow of hope. The words are few but condensed, the promise is brief but of intensive force, of infinite expansibility—it is the verse "Blessed are those who mourn—for they shall be comforted." But how comforted? Not with earthly sympathy, for that gives

but little solace; not with worldly support, for the world has no ***balm for a broken heart***; but comforted with the choice blessings of the Divine Comforter, by which ... ***strength*** is imparted to the weak, ***light*** to the darkened, ***joy*** to the saddened, ***peace*** to the troubled, and ***hope*** to the sinking spirit.

I know that this passage refers not so much to the mourning over the the various afflictions of life—as to mourning over ***indwelling corruption and remaining sin***. But then, what sorrow is greater to bear than a sin-burdened spirit? What grief more heavy than the weight of an oppressed and fainting soul just waking up to a consciousness of its danger? These are ***sorrows*** that the world knows nothing of; they lie out of the range of earthly vision, hidden away in the heart, pondered over in secret, confessed perhaps to none—yet how deep and poignant they are! They drink up the spirit, they weary the heart, they at times crush the soul! Yet though so dark and stormy, the slanting light reflected from the face of Jesus, draws out of this angry cloud, a ray of bright and gladdening hope, adding another stripe to the covenant rainbow of promise—as it is seen through the tears of a godly, penitential sorrow.

4. But our Savior furnishes another prismatic color for our covenant arch in the invitation, "Come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." There is

here no **restriction** as to the people invited—none as to the **rest** promised. Whether then you labor under the cares, trials, and perplexities of life; whether you are burdened by the crushing weight of poverty, sorrow, and sickness; whether you labor under the sharp convictions of sin from which you struggle to free yourself, or whether you are burdened by a sense of weighty guilt and a conscious deserving of eternal woe—in each case you are invited to Jesus with the promise of heavenly rest. There is no **mind** laboring under any of the burdens of life, there is no **soul** overworked and exhausted by the pressing cares of this mortal state, there is no **heart** aiming to work out its own righteousness under the taskmasters of formalism and morality—which will not be at once relieved of its burden and find rest in Christ!

Sooner can you find in the Bible instances of the sick and the blind going to Him for healing, and sent away uncured—than you can produce an instance of a laboring, burdened soul, accepting the invitation which calls him to the Savior, and not finding the rest which the Savior covenants to give. You may search the Evangelists through, and not find an instance of rejection to the petitioners for Christ's mercy when he was on earth. and were the records of the inner experience of all Christians since the day of Pentecost open to our inspection—we would be equally unsuccessful in noting any instance of a laboring, burdened soul being turned away from Jesus and deprived of his promised rest.

And such rest! the rest of one who has found what he has long

sought and deeply needs. The rest of one who has been wearied and overborne with ineffectual seekings after peace and hope; a rest from the dominion of *sin*, from the harrowing assaults of the *adversary*, from the restless wanderings of *unbelief*; a rest in the assured confidence of faith; a rest not of passive indifference, or inactive repose—but full of lively emotions, of holy zeal, of outgoing love; the forecast shadow of that *eternal rest* which remains for the people of God.

When, then, we reflect upon the *person* who issues the invitation, Jesus Christ, proving his large-hearted love by giving his life for the ransom of his enemies; when we consider the *nature of the rest* which he offers—spiritual, holy, rejoicing, unending; and when we mark the *broadness of his invitation*—all you who labor and are heavy laden—thus covering the whole human race, for there is no man that lives and has not some laboring care, and some burdening sorrow; and when, to all these precious facts, we add the individual experience of the truth of this promise, by each disciple of Jesus for nearly two thousand years—then we cannot fail to observe how glowingly such a promise shines on the sorrow-clouds of earth, bending over the laboring and heavy laden child of sin, at least one of the colors of the Christian rainbow of hope.

In the last interview of our Savior with the apostles before his crucifixion, he gave them many and peculiar consolations in view of his near removal from them. But though those precious chapters in John's gospel beginning with the cheering

words, "Let not your heart be troubled," were originally addressed to the sorrowing band that clustered around Him on that night of His agony and arrest—yet are they also appropriate and even designed for **believers** in all ages, for they form an important part of that Scripture which, at all times, and to all people, "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

5. Among the many thrilling sentences uttered on that memorable night, there is one so terse, so full of thought, so rich in comfort, that we may well claim for it a place in **Mercy's triumphal arch**. It is the passage "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you." the original is, I will not leave you "Orphans." Accordingly Wycliffe, in his translation, renders it, "I will not leave you **Fatherless**;" while the Rheims version, following more closely the Greek word, reads, "I will not leave you Orphans." An **orphan** is indeed sad and comfortless; his earthly props and counselors have been taken away, a painful void is made in his life, and his heart is stricken and desolate.

It is not, however, of **natural** orphanage that the words of Jesus apply, it is of that **spiritual desertion**, that loss of the props and supports of the Christian life, which too often occurs with the careless, unwatching, and prayer-restraining professor. in those days when doubt perplexes the mind, and shadows of earthiness fall upon the spirit, when there is no comfort in devotion, and zeal smoulders in the ashes of a once blazing activity, when there is the first relenting of sorrow for

such a cold or lukewarm state, and the awakening soul begins to feel the great *lapse* which it has made, and the grievous *errors* which it has committed; when the sense of deserved desertion and spiritual destitution gains ground and almost oppresses the heart, and the Christian feels that he is well near fatherless in the moral universe—an abandoned orphan with no spiritual parentage to which he can cling—then it is that there is seen stretching across this dark cloud, that hue of glory which streams from the words of Jesus, "***I will not leave you orphans!***"

You may seem to be forsaken and disinherited; you may think from the severity of God's dealings, that your Heavenly Father has forgotten you or cast you out from his presence; and you may feel as homeless, parentless, portionless orphans! Yet it is only in the *seeming* thereof. Christ's promise stands out in full prismatic beauty, the sign of that covenant of grace which assures you, with lips of peace and truth—I will not leave you orphans! I will come to you—come to you in the cheering influences of my love;
come to you in the precious outpourings of my Spirit;
come to you in the imparted strength and comfort of my Spirit;
come to you in sickness, in suffering, in sorrow;
come to you with the oil and wine of gospel truth;
come to you in the light of my own countenance, making your dark soul radiant with joy, and painting upon the lowering vapor, whose showers have but just discharged themselves upon your head—the overarching rainbow of covenant peace and hope!

6. The sixth color of this "bow in the cloud" is added by the pencil of the apostle Paul. No one of the apostles endured more persecution and affliction—or had richer experience of sustaining grace under them, than this holy martyr. His estimate of sorrow, therefore, is the more valuable, because it is evolved by the deep experience of his own life, and is the deliberate judgment of one who had tried the world and Christ, and thus was prevented from giving one-sided evidence in the matter. this judgment he has recorded in his second letter to the Corinthians; and, while it expresses his personal experience, is yet a type of all ***affliction endured for Christ's sake***, or so borne as to be subservient to His glory. His words are, "For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. for what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal!" 2 Corinthians 4:17-18.

It will perhaps increase our idea of the intensive force of this passage, if we place beside it that brief catalogue of the Apostle's sufferings which he has drawn up in this same epistle. "I have been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the

city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked!" 2 Corinthians 11:23-27.

Few of us could run up such a *catalogue of personal sorrow* as this—yet how does he speak of it? As a *light* affliction, but for a moment! and not only so—but an affliction which is an instrument of working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Mark the *two scales* under the respective heads of affliction and glory; observe the diminuendo of the former, and the crescendo of the latter. The "*affliction*" was "light" as to its character; and "but for a moment" as to its duration. While the "*glory*" has "weight" as being heavy with blessing; is "eternal" as to its permanence; is "exceeding," as passing human conception; is "far more exceeding," as expressive of its unspeakable excellence.

So *intense* was the feeling of the Apostle here, that the usual superlatives could not embody forth his thought, and he was forced to *make a new word* to give utterance to his emotion:

it is *glory*,

it is a *weight* of glory,

it is an *eternal* weight of glory,

it is an *exceeding* and eternal weight of glory,

it is a *far more* exceeding and eternal weight of glory!

What a climax! Like the rainbow, its foot, indeed, rests on earth—but it arches upward to Heaven, spanning the *dark*

cloud of affliction with a rainbow of beauty!

And if the Apostle could say this of ***himself***—so persecuted, afflicted, tormented—then ought not each child of sorrow to look at his own trials as light and momentary? We can do thus, if we have such a living faith in Christ, that we cling solely to his atoning blood, and hence regard all the adversities of life, as the ***chastenings of parental love***—designed to fit us to enjoy the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which shall be ours when the light affliction, which is but for a moment, shall be done away forever!

We are too much disposed to shroud ourselves with our sorrows, to dwell in the settlings down of the cloud, and have our hearts ever kept wet by its weeping showers. So long as we do this, we cannot have peace or comfort. We must go towards the sunshine, and just in proportion as we get into the fuller light of Jesus' face—is the rainbow more clearly seen in the cloud, and the covenant promise of Jehovah more rejoicingly believed. It is only "while we look not at the things which are seen—but at the things which are not seen," that we are enabled to lift up ourselves above surrounding and often depressing influences.

The "things seen" are the present sorrows, with their accompanying trials and sadness, and upon these we morbidly look—and as we look, we magnify, distort, add weight to them, and thus increase the burden! While, would we but look away from our trials, and open wide the lids of ***faith's eye*** towards unseen and the eternal realities, gazing by this

spiritual vision upon the future glories and blessedness of those who through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of Heaven—we would be so ravished with delight, that every sorrow would be cheerfully borne, and not a cloud of affliction could skirt the horizon of our life, upon which we could not discern the rainbow of the covenant!

7. The last color in this prismatic arch, is furnished by "the Beloved Disciple," and is drawn from a revelation to him of some of these very "things which are unseen and eternal." the Apostle, in his vision at Patmos, had "beheld, and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." While he listened to their ascriptions of praise, one of the celestial host approached and asked him, by way of calling his attention to the scene, "Who are these who are arrayed in white robes? and where did they come from?" the surprised Apostle answered, "Sir, you know."

In reply to this the heavenly visitant said unto him, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of

living water. and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes!" Revelation 7:14-17

Can human thought add anything to this picture? No! All that we can do is to ponder word by word over the terms of this description, to strive to take in **one by one** the ideas which they convey:

the white robe,
the branch of palm,
the cleansing blood,
the posture before the throne,
the mighty chorus,
the Lamb in the midst of the throne,
the absence of hunger and thirst,
the feeding in green pastures,
the drinking from living fountains, and
the wiping away from our eyes all tears by the very Father's hand, whose chastening rod had caused their flow!

Did we dwell more upon these terms, we would realize more than we now do—that they are designed to assure us of what will be our state when we pass the **valley of tears**, and stand upon the Mount Zion above! Yes, every one of these blessings shall be ours—if we have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. If tribulations are the necessary preparative, if there can be no **weight of glory** unless there has been previously the **light affliction**—then let us welcome sorrow, welcome suffering which endures but a moment here—but which brings eternal joy hereafter.

And now we have laid side by side, **seven rich and precious**

promises, as the seven colors of the rainbow—each lovely in itself, but combined, forming that ***arch of covenant glory*** which God has equally "set in the cloud" of sorrow on earth, and "around the throne" in Heaven. Behold it in its varied but exquisite hues! is it not beautiful as it springs upward—as it swells heavenward—as it bends downward, curving over our sorrow-drenched hearts, with assurances of present sunshine and of future bliss!

Having thus far looked upon the "cloud" and the "rainbow in the cloud"—let us now cast one glance at the **SUN** whose refracted and reflected rays make this arch of glory.

Many are the passages in the Bible which represent Christ as the light of the world; and Malachi especially designates him as the "Sun of Righteousness." Striking and appropriate comparison! Christ is a "Sun"—the great light-producing, light-imparting center of the moral universe. Christ is a "Sun of Righteousness," whether we regard Him as infinitely righteous in Himself, or as shedding abroad righteousness upon a dark and sinful world. Christ is a Sun of Righteousness that casts no shadow. The material sun casts shadows—nay, more, has immense dark spots on its bright disc—but the Sun of Righteousness is immaculate—unblemished in Himself, and like a vertical sun, makes no shadow. Christ is a Sun of Righteousness that cast no shadow—and that never sets. The earthly sun has its risings, its meridians, its setting, and the light of midday is soon followed by the dark of midnight. Not so with Christ; He shines out from the zenith of the spiritual

firmament, and there is no going down of His light—no **evening** to shroud his departed rays. Once shining—forever shining—without a shadow—without an eclipse—without a sunset!

Such is the **Sun** whose refracted rays paint the **rainbow of hope** on the cloud of sorrow. for though the promises which I have adduced, like the different stripes of the rainbow, are of different hues—yet the light which produces them is the pure and colorless essence of Divine glory.

In this light it is our privilege, as Christians, to dwell. Abiding in this light, we have peace, hope, joy, and prove ourselves to be "the children of light" through faith in Christ Jesus. Hence **unrenewed** men have no comfort or solace in any of the trials and afflictions of life. The heart must be surrendered to Jesus Christ, it must be washed in His atoning blood, it must be sanctified by His holy Spirit—before we can become "children of light and of the day;" but when through the sovereign grace of God, we receive this "adoption of sons," then is it our peculiar privilege to **see God's love in every dispensation of His hand**—and to **see His rainbow of covenant promise in every cloud of sorrow!**

"The Rainbow"

When the sun with cheerful beams
Smiles upon a lowering sky,
Soon its aspect softened seems,
And a **rainbow** meets the eye;
While the sky remains serene,
This bright arch is never seen.

Thus the Lord's supporting power
Brightest to the saints appears.
When affliction's threatening hour
Fills their sky with clouds and fears;
He can wonders then perform,
Paint a **rainbow** on the **storm**.

All their graces doubly shine,
When their troubles press them sore;
And the promises divine
Give them joys unknown before,
As the colors of the **bow**
To the **cloud** their brightness owe!

The Christian Leaning on Jesus' Bosom^(TOC)

"Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom, one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved."—John 13:23

The Evangelists rarely speak of themselves by name. When recording events in which they were actors—they used some descriptive epithet or allusion, sufficiently clear to indicate who was meant, without so openly naming themselves as to be chargeable with egotism. **John** especially, except when others as well as himself are concerned, never mentions his own name; but the **veil** which he throws over himself by his allusive sentences is so transparent, that, while it enhances our ideas of his modesty, it does not so conceal him as to prevent our recognizing his features and calling him by name.

The apostle had been describing the scene which took place at the Last Supper, after the declaration of our Lord, "One of you shall betray me." Startled, anxious, distrustful, at such unexpected words, the amazed disciples eagerly put to their Lord the question, "**Is it I? is it I?**" To ascertain more definitely who it was, Peter beckoned to the disciple nearest to Jesus, and who was then leaning on his bosom, to inquire "Who it is of whom he spoke?" this he did, and received such a reply as designated the betrayer, and satisfied their minds. It is in the description of this **momentary excitement** that the text occurs. Internal evidence, as well as universal consent, point to John as the one to whom these words refer, who, from this circumstance, is generally called "**the Beloved Disciple.**"

The eating customs of the East, were widely different from our own. The usual form of the table was that of three sides of a square, surrounded by couches, upon which the person reclined on his left arm, his feet being stretched toward the wall, and his right hand being free to reach toward the table. in such a **recumbent** posture as this, it would be very easy for one by gently relaxing his left arm, to lean back upon the bosom of the one next to him, as was often done in token of intimacy and affection.

John, occupying a place next to Jesus, was thus enabled to lean upon his bosom; and as it was, perhaps, a **privileged** place accorded to him—it may be for his gentler and more loving nature—he avails himself of the gracious permission to designate himself as the one "leaning on Jesus' bosom." And, as thus privileged, he also styled himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved;" for he only, so far as we know, of all the disciples, ever laid his head on Jesus' bosom. It was surely a **peculiar** honor, one well worthy of note and transmission from age to age; nor is there, in its being recorded, any undue praising of himself; for that he pre-eminently loved the Savior, and was pre-eminently **loved** by him—is evident from the fact that John alone, of all the disciples, stood by his cross, and to his loving care, Jesus committed the charge of his weeping mother.

Happy disciple! thus to lean upon the bosom of "God manifest in the flesh;" thus to feel beneath his head—the **beatings of that Divine heart** which compassed the world in its infinite love! We would have lacked one touching evidence of the Savior's gracious condescension to man, and one lovely lineament in the features of John himself—had this little incident been left out. It is full of meaning in itself—as an **act of sacred friendship**. It is suggestive of precious thoughts—as illustrative of the **intimacy** which Jesus permits. It reveals the **human loveliness** of Christ in a clear light, and draws

his disciples to him with a winning *sympathy* which would never have been felt—had not John told us, "Now there was leaning on his bosom, one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved."

Our Lord no more walks in our midst, or reclines with us at the table. on his *human* form—the eye cannot gaze, nor the head rest. But are we then excluded from his bosom? is there no such thing as leaning *now* on Jesus' bosom? Was it reserved for *John alone*—to feel the pressure of that beating heart? Can no one else pillow his head upon that sacred bosom? We cannot, indeed, in bodily form, approach his body; but we have even *closer access* than the beloved disciple; we are privileged with being brought into living contact with the throbbing heart of Christ—so that the pulses of his love are made to circulate in the channels of our own affections, and the warmth of his soul imparts a glowing vitality to ours!

What is it, then, at this day—to lean on Jesus' bosom?

We speak of the bosom of man, as being filled with noble feelings; or of man, as cherishing in his bosom, sentiments of hate and revenge. We speak of a *generous* bosom—palpitating with benevolence; or an *unfeeling* bosom—shut up and indurated in its sympathetic emotions. We use this *language*, because the *heart* has its seat in the *bosom*; and as the heart, in the physical system, is the center of animal life—the ever-welling up and distributing fountain of the vital currents; so, by a figure of speech, when we would speak of the moral center of man, the well-spring of moral emotions—we use the term *heart*, and say, his heart is right or wrong, his heart is generous or closed, his heart is renewed or unsanctified. Hence, to lean upon the *bosom*, the *outer casement of the heart*—is equivalent to saying that the person *leans upon the love and sympathy of that individual.*

To lean upon Jesus' bosom, then, is to bring our hearts into living, feeling contact with the heart of Christ. His love emanates from his heart—and hence he who rests upon his bosom—rests upon his love. The feeling of *confidence in human affection* is one of the most precious emotions of which we are capable. to know that one heart truly, fondly, unfalteringly loves us; to know that we can rest upon that love in the assured conviction that it will never decrease, never waver, but rather grow and strengthen—is a knowledge of priceless value to the sensitive and the refined.

In leaning upon the heart of Jesus, the Christian can have this confidence and certainty to a degree impossible among men. His heart is an organ of infinite love. He who trusts to it—leans upon its Divine impulses; and the nearer we are brought in contact with it—the more are we ravished by its love, and buoyed up and strengthened by its more than reciprocated affection.

But we need *sympathy*, as well as love from Christ; and in leaning upon Jesus' bosom—we lean upon the place whence his sympathies flow. There are ...

daily trials,

ever recurring temptations,

fretting cares,

distressing infirmities—

in which we seek not only support, but sympathy. It is comforting to know, if you are in trouble or affliction, that you are sympathized with; and a kind look, a soothing word, a consoling sentence, a dropping tear—will do much towards invigorating the soul, and bringing back hope and peace.

Our blessed Savior is eminently sympathetic. None ever felt so deeply for the sorrows and sufferings of the world. None ever understood so thoroughly—the needs and straits of humanity. None ever knew so profoundly—the

springs of human thought and action. He *felt* for sickness and affliction wherever seen. He *wept* at the grave of Lazarus—and over Jerusalem. He was filled with compassion for the widow of Nain, for the Syro-Phoenician mother, and for the hungry multitudes deprived of bread.

Every day drew largely upon his sympathies—yet they were as exhaustless as his divinity; and hence, every day he poured them forth freely upon the *children of need and sorrow*. Nor is the Savior less sympathizing now, that he has ascended into Heaven. He is still "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and still ministers his support and compassion to us.

The Christian needs and must have this Divine sympathy. He cannot bear alone ...

the temptations of his own heart,
the risings up of indwelling sin, or
the assaults of outward spiritual foes.

There are seasons ...

of deep depression;

of trembling anxiety;

of hesitation as to what is duty;

of exhausting conflict with the tempter—

when the soul craves sympathy with our great High Priest, and when, failing to get it, it faints beneath its load.

But if we lean on Jesus' bosom—we shall always have his sympathies; for we lean upon the bosom beneath which all his sympathies flow out. We shall feel his *compassion*, and rejoice in his *support*—just in proportion as we keep near the *fountain* whence they rise and run.

There is something else, however, that we need beside the *love* of Christ, and

the *sympathy* of Christ. It is an *intelligent understanding of the doctrine* of Christ. and this we can get only as we more trustingly lean upon his heart, for he himself has declared, "out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks."

There is such a thing as a mere *speculative, theoretical knowledge* of Gospel truth, which may rest in the intellect—and never reach down and take hold of the heart. a man may be a learned theologian—without leaning on Jesus' bosom; but no one can savingly understand Divine truth—who does not bring his head in contact with Jesus' heart.

There is a great difference between an *intellectual* knowledge—and an *experimental* knowledge of Bible doctrines. The leading truths of Revelation have been well defined, ably defended, unfalteringly held—by men who had no living faith in Jesus Christ. But he who wishes to get at the real meaning of the words of Jesus, who seeks to know him as he has condescended to reveal himself in his many sayings—will pillow his head upon his bosom that he may listen to the heart-conceived and uttered words, as they come throbbing with love from the depths of infinite affection.

How different does the Gospel appear when studied as a matter of *theology* or *exegesis*, when read with the clear but cold eye of intellect, and weighed in the world-poised balances of reason—as opposed to when perused in the confidingness of *faith* leaning on the Beloved, and feeling beneath our own souls every heaving of his bosom, every throbbing of his heart who spoke the words and made them the means of our salvation! for this reason it is, that the poor widow, the bed-ridden patient, the humble laborer—often has a richer *experimental* knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, than the learned minister or the boasting professor. All *real* knowledge of Jesus—must come from Christ's heart, and through our heart. *Love*, like another John the

Baptist, must go before the face of **truth** and prepare its way. It is not **knowing** the truth, it is **loving** the truth—which will make us growing, cheerful, active Christians! and the closer we cling to the heart of the Savior, the more will his love transfuse itself into our bosoms, and call out ardent returns.

There is yet one other and very thrilling point connected with this subject. It is, that to lean on Jesus' bosom—is to **lean upon the place whence flowed his precious blood**. It was from the spear-riven heart of Christ, that blood and water gushed out; and in leaning upon Jesus' bosom, therefore, we get close to the **fountain** opened for sin and all uncleanness. We read and hear a great deal about the blood of Christ. We come to the house of the Lord, to the communion of the body and blood of Christ; we pray that we may be washed in that blood, and sing songs of praise to God that the **crimson drops of salvation** ever trickled from the head, and hands, and feet, and heart of the crucified Redeemer. Yet how little do we understand the words we use, or the thoughts we express! We do not sufficiently consider ...

whose blood this is—the blood of God manifest in the flesh;
for **whom** it was shed—the daring enemies of this incarnate God;
the **result** of Christ's blood-shedding—producing reconciliation with God, redemption for man, pardon, peace, and eternal life. If we dwelt more on these points, the **nature** of the blood-shedding, the **cause** of its shedding, and its **resulting blessings**—we would find our views of **Christ** vastly elevated, of **ourselves** lessened, and of **sin** augmented. We would **rejoice** more in the love of Jesus; **cling** to him by a more tenacious faith, and bring forth more fully the **fruits** of righteousness and peace in the Holy Spirit.

If we would feel the preciousness of Christ's blood, we must lean upon the heart whence it flowed—and there, upon the bosom of Jesus, learn ...

the vastness of the *love* which gave it,
the greatness of the *sacrifice* which it involved, and
the unspeakable richness of the *grace*, present and future, of which it was the
purchase-money.

I have thus briefly answered the question, *What is it to lean on Jesus' bosom?* But words, however graphic, can convey but slight ideas of what the question really involves. It is something that each one must *feel* and *experience* for himself, before he can understand its nature and value. No *description* can supply the lack of experience; and, when the soul of the Christian once leans there—no description can declare his blessedness, or express his joy.

The bosom of Christ is a *privileged* place. We read of only *one* who leaned there when he was on earth; but it is now accessible to *all* who love him. It is a place sacred to love and to intimate fellowship, such as believers are privileged with, though, alas! such as believers too *seldom* enjoy.

It is a place, too, of *confidence* and *repose*—doubts vanish, distrust ceases, when the Christian's head is pressed against the throbbing heart of his Savior, and he reposes there in peace, watched over by the Savior's eye and sheltered by the Savior's arms.

It is a privileged place in times of *adversity*. The *world* may treat us coldly, *friends* may withdraw from us, *riches* may depart—but, if we can lean on Jesus' bosom, we are not downcast. for we know that there is ...

no coldness in his look,

no withdrawal of his love,

no departing of his peace—

and how harmless is every tempest of adversity that beats upon us! it only

makes us cling closer to the bosom of Jesus!

It is a privileged place in seasons of *sickness*. When too languid for the active duties of religion, when shut out from the house of God, when debarred closet devotions, when pain and disease are doing their wasting work—then how precious the privilege to lie quietly on Jesus' bosom, and find there a closet and a sanctuary—breathe out there our prayer and praise—rest there trustingly and peacefully, and feel willing that he on whom we lean, should do with us as may seem good in his sight!

It is a privileged place in times of *sorrow*. We all know how great the relief we experience in affliction, if we can pour our griefs into one faithful bosom, confident of sympathy and love. Christ permits all his followers thus to come unto him. It is a small but very significant circumstance mentioned in the narrative of John the Baptist's death, that, after he was beheaded, "his disciples came and took up the body and buried it—and went and told Jesus." ***Went and told Jesus!*** This is what we should do in our afflictions, whensoever they oppress us. Do not *brood* over them in silence—do not morbidly *magnify* them—do not shut them out from the light and peace of the Bible—but go and, leaning on Jesus' bosom, tell him your griefs, and he will stanch your bleeding heart and give you "the oil of joy, for mourning; and the garment of praise, for the spirit of heaviness."

Especially is it a privileged place to the believer, in *death*. What do those words mean, "sleep in Jesus"—but a tranquil breathing out of the soul on the bosom of Jesus, a giving up of the spirit "leaning on the Beloved?" It matters not where, or amid what circumstances, or under what agonies the Christian dies. He cannot die where Christ is not present ...

to close his eyes,
to fold him in his arms,

to press him to his heart!

It is the most desirable, the most honorable, and the most glorious of all deaths—to die as a disciple, "leaning on Jesus' bosom." Then only, does the believer **triumph** over death—then only, is death robbed of his sting. this is **dying in the Lord**, and a voice from Heaven has declared all such "blessed."

Such is the **gracious intimacy** which Christ permits. Such the **sweet approaches** which we may enjoy. Yet, how few, even among his disciples, nourish that intimacy or make those approaches! But the failing is all our own; it is from a lack of confidence in his love and faith in his promises—and from these, we should seek to be delivered at once, if we desire peace and hope. Lose not this sweet privilege of leaning on Jesus' bosom; you need such a **heart** to rest upon, such a **shelter**, such a **confidence** in Divine aid and sympathy. These can only be obtained, by thus bringing your soul into contact with the love-filled bosom of the Redeemer.

Pressing are the **invitations** to come to Jesus;
solemn are the **warnings** against staying away;
precious are the **privileges** accorded to his disciples;
and those who so love him as to lean upon his bosom with a heart-relying faith hereon earth—shall dwell forever with him in Heaven, where they shall see his face and share his glory!

The Noontide Eclipse^(TOC)

"In that day," declares the Sovereign LORD, "I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight!"—Amos 8:9

The sudden shutting out of sunlight by an eclipsing moon, is a solemn and impressive scene. The face of nature wears, at such times, a strange and peculiar aspect. The animal creation is overcome with instinctive dread, and man, even though science has taught him to unveil this mystery of the skies, is awe-struck and humbled by the sublime phenomenon.

As the earth enters the penumbra, and the rays of the sun are first shorn of their light and heat, there arises a general feeling of expectation mingled with fear. Millions of eyes are turned heavenward, and when at last the moon encroaches on the sun's eastern limb, and slowly but surely obscures his bright disc, nearly every face in the shadowy belt is gazing upon the apparently extinguished orb in wonder, and unwillingly admitted alarm.

And is not the going out of a great life, like the noontide eclipse? is there not in the covering up in the grave of a form, once noble, active, and influential, something like the obscuration of the midday sun?

There certainly is, and it requires but a slight effort of imagination to seize upon many of the points of parallel.

In human estimation the horizon of life, that point where the confines of the two worlds, the present and the future, meet and intermingle, is the far-off period of old age. Every man looks forward to the setting of his *sun of life* behind that western horizon, and scarcely dreams that it may go out suddenly

at midday. Hence, death, in the years of manhood or womanhood—after the powers of mind and body have reached their meridian height, and before the shadows of the evening begin to be stretched out—may be termed a noontide eclipse—a going down of the sun at midday.

It seems, at times, strange to us that God should so often call away people from the active and influential duties of middle life, when they are apparently in the very zenith of their usefulness, and most needed in the world. We can only stand by in mute wonder and submission, as we behold the great props of the nation or church stricken down—when their supporting shoulders were most needed to uphold the incumbent edifice; or witness the great lights of learning and science gradually fade away in the firmament—when their beams were most vivifying and enlightening. We ponder with ourselves, how differently we would have arranged the event; we even, perhaps, question the wisdom of the deed, and we ask, with an ill-concealed repining at the Divine will: *Why does God these things?*

But in this we are both ignorant and foolish. We are so accustomed to associate human machinery with divine purposes, that, when we behold a person occupying an important post in the councils of the church or nation, we at once associate the idea of such a necessary connection between the two as to make his removal perfectly disastrous.

Here is one surrounded by a large family—its supporting life and center—to take *him* away is like removing the nave of a wheel—the radiating spokes have no support, and the wheel is crushed and splits asunder at the first revolution. Here is another, the head and leader of an important system of agencies for the extension of Christ's kingdom; nothing apparently can be done without his aid and counsel; and to remove him would derange a whole system of well-devised plans, and, perhaps, destroy them altogether. Here is

another, a minister of Christ, the pastor of a large and influential congregation, the wielder of great moral strength, the doer of important service to the church, the motive power to a moral machinery, the value of which cannot be computed. His life seems essential to the church, vast schemes of benevolence are hinged on him, and to do without him is to have a noonday eclipse. He cannot be spared; he must live—or the cause he sustains, like a tower of strength, will fail. Such are, oftentimes, *men's* views of their fellow men, and taking it for granted that they are true, they act accordingly.

Several circumstances here conspire to make our views on this point exceedingly defective. One is, that we look only at a small segment of the great circle of life, while God regards, with omniscient eye, the whole circumference of our being. How often has our own experience taught us that things which we earnestly desire, and even sinfully covet as necessary to our usefulness or comfort—would have proved, had they been granted to us, sources of real evil and permanent sorrow! How often have we formed, as *we* supposed, wise plans; secured, as we thought, their completion, been suddenly disappointed in carrying them into full execution, wept bitter tears perhaps over our failure—and then found, a few months or years afterwards, that, had those plans been successful, and our long-cherished hopes been gratified, it would have been most disastrous to our peace, and ruinous to our well-being!

We make these mistakes daily; we are continually correcting and readjusting our hopes and aims, and all this arises from the fact previously stated, that we look at our life only in the small section which is presented to us day by day, and cannot take those *comprehensive* views which sweep around its entire circumference, and survey the whole at a glance.

So when we see a standard-bearer of truth, a mighty man of intellectual valor, a great central light in the moral firmament, fall in the midst of the battle, or faint in the heat of the conflict, or go out like an eclipsed sun at midday—we feel too much as if some great calamity had befallen our world which could not be repaired, and are too often led into murmuring as *unfitting* as it is *unwise*. Could we, for a moment, occupy God's point of view, and see the plans of human existence as He sees them—we would immediately perceive the infinite wisdom of causing these dreaded eclipses in human life, and in thus cutting off our hopes at the moment of expected fruition.

Not only is our range of thought limited to a very small segment of life's circle—but we still further err in basing all our views on things as they *appear* on earth. We judge according to the *worldly* aspects of the case, according to its *temporal* influence; not considering that the relations of each individual, not only to this earth—but to time itself, are but a very small part of his outstanding relations to a world to come, and the eternity that stretches away beyond the grave. "No man," says the Apostle, "lives to himself;" and we see, with our own eyes, how impossible it is for man to isolate himself from his fellows; and may it not be that other, though to us invisible connections, may link us to other classes of beings, and to future cycles of existence, which render the breaks and interruptions of earth necessary. and hence, those things which seem to mar the harmonies of life, and make discords and woes in society, are requisite to the filling up of God's designs, which take in all worlds, all space, all duration. We are, certainly, not prepared to pronounce any event disastrous, evil, or unwise—until we have made ourselves acquainted with all the bearings and influences of that event in all worlds, through all space, and for all time; until, in fine, we occupy the stand point of Divinity itself.

Could we but feel more seriously than we do ...
how small is the section of our knowledge,
how short-sighted is our vision,
what meager minds we possess,
what limits bound us on every side—
we would not, methinks, be so arrogant, presumptuous, or dogmatic; we
would not question God's wisdom, or impugn his justice, or asperse his
mercy; we would not give way to ...
such impatient repining,
such fault-finding sorrow,
such sinful despair.

We would, on the contrary, comfort ourselves under Bereavements, with the
thought that **God does all things well**; that though inscrutable to us, they
were wisely ordered by him, and his course would yet be vindicated from all
cavils before the assembled universe, when the multitudes that circle about
the Great White Throne shall shout with one acclaim "God is right—God is
true—God is just—God is love!"

We shall then see how, while He made what we deemed our interest
subservient to his glory—He yet made **his glory our highest good**, causing us
to fulfill the great ends of being more and more, as we aim to advance his
glory—the reflected splendor of which constitutes the highest bliss of saint
and seraph, in earth and Heaven.

If then, the whole of life was summed up in what we see of it this side the
grave—if we were made to be the dwellers for a little season on this earth
alone—or if the great end of existence was to glorify and exalt **ourselves**—
then, indeed, the removal of friends in the meridian hour, or the sudden
extinguishment of hope when it flamed brightest in the zenith, might be

regarded as a dire calamity—a sad eclipse. and we might even deem it cruel for God thus to cause the sun to go down at noon, and to darken the earth in the clear day. But as life here is but the dawn of an eternal being; as the earth is but the probationary school of a higher existence; as God's glory, and not self-interest, is man's chief end and aim—so are we debarred, by this exalted Christian philosophy, from unduly repining, or casting blame on God, when he obscures to us the greater lights which rule in the day of our moral, or social, or political firmament.

He never eclipses them until they have done all their appointed work. If the sun goes down at noon—it is because that was its ordained boundary. and not only may we have this assurance—but we may add to it another, namely, that God never removes his servants from earth until the hour has arrived when he requires their service nearer to his person in Heaven.

"Learn," says an old writer, "to pray moderately for the lives of Christ's people. Who can tell but what Christ and we are praying **counter** to one another? **He** may be saying in Heaven, 'Father, I will have such an one to be with me where I am'—and **we** saying on earth, 'Lord we would have him to be with us where we are.' We saying 'we cannot spare him as yet;' and Christ saying 'I will be no longer without him.' It is the force of this prayer of Christ, 'I will have them to be with me where I am'—which is the cause of the death of the godly. It is the force of this prayer that carries away so many of the saints in our day."

These are the enlarged views which it befits us to take of what, in their earthly aspect, may be called **noontide eclipses**; especially when it respects our Christian relatives and friends. Every other view is narrow, unsatisfactory, and unscriptural. The coming in of **death** between us and the dear objects of our love and veneration, at a time when they appear to ride the

highest and shine the brightest in their career of usefulness and honor—does not forever obscure their light, or obliterate their beams, any more than the intervening moon blots out the sun, which it yet for a time hides from sight. for though these loved ones are eclipsed to us—they are not obscured to the eye of God. We cannot see them again in the flesh, for they have passed within the veil; but they are still seen, still loved by their Heavenly Father, their Ascended Savior, their Divine Comforter. They shine with even a brighter light than before their obscuration; for they are fuller of light in themselves, and their beams are not dimmed by the clouds and vapors which so obscured their earthly luster. There is no eclipse in Heaven; the soul that once begins its lustrous glory there, will ever emit the same holy rays, with a perpetually increasing intensity of spiritual light!

He has gone to his God; he has gone to his home;
No more amid peril and error to roam;
His eyes are no longer dim;
His feet will no longer falter;
No grief can follow him;
No pang his cheek can alter.

There are paleness and weeping and sighs below;
For our faith is faint and our tears will flow;
But the harps of Heaven are ringing;
Glad angels come to greet him,
And hymns of joy are singing,
While old friends press to meet him.

O! honored, beloved, to earth unconfined,
You have soared on high, you have left us behind.
But our parting is not forever,
We will follow you by heaven's light,
Where the grave cannot dissever
The souls whom God will unite.

The Setting Sun^(TOC)

*"The daylight is fading, and the shadows of evening grow long."—Jeremiah
6:4*

There is something at once grand and solemn in a **setting sun**. It is the sinking to rest of the **great king of day**; the withdrawing from the busy world, the light that has called out its activity; and the covering up with the veil of darkness, the scenes that glistened with the radiance of noon.

As the sun rose in the morning, it awoke the world from slumber, and sent its teeming millions to their tasks and pleasures. As it poised itself for a moment in the meridian, it shone upon an active, bustling, life-filled hemisphere; and now that it touches the edge of the western sky, and gradually shuts its burning eye—it proclaims a day of work ended, a night of rest advancing, the cessation of toil and business, and the coming in of quiet, sleep, and silence. this change, though so little considered, is very marvelous and striking: from brightness—to darkness; from noonday with its garish light—to midnight with its somber blackness; from the din and bustle of intense activity—to the repose and silence of hushing slumber; from scenes mirthful and blithe in all the adornments of art, and decked with the painted splendors of meridian light—to scenes of stillness, darkness, and death-like sleep.

There is, however, in the **setting of the sun of life** that which is equally grand, still more solemn, and surpassingly sublime. For,

The sun is but a spark of fire—
A transient meteor in the sky;
The Soul, immortal as its Sire,
Shall never die.

The Soul, of origin divine,
God's glorious image, freed from clay,
In heaven's eternal sphere shall shine,
A star of day!

Though the **soul**, by virtue of its immortality, and the eternal interests connected with it, is thus infinitely superior to the **sun**, which is but a mass of inanimate matter, and which, when it has served its purpose, shall be blotted out—yet there are several striking analogies between the setting of the sun of nature, and the setting of the sun of life, which suggest profitable considerations. In speaking of a **human** sunset—we restrict our thoughts to those only who die in the Lord, and so sleep in Jesus.

The sun when it sets, has run a whole day's circuit; his pathway has apparently traversed an entire arch of the heavens, and slowly, patiently—but surely, it has done its allotted work. and just so the aged Christian, when he dies, is described as having "run his race," as having "finished his course." He has perhaps traversed the allotted distance of human life. He has passed each of its threescore-and-ten milestones, and now stands at the verge of the horizon, waiting to sink to rest in the everlasting arms. He has toiled a whole day of life, and has come to his grave at a "good old age," having "finished the work which was given him to do." and though all his labors have been imperfectly done, though he himself feels more deeply than he can express, his unprofitableness before God—yet he looks for acceptance, not to any merit or deservings of his own—but only for Christ Jesus' sake, who of God and by faith is made unto him "wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

We can contemplate with satisfaction, then, the aged disciple, having "borne the burden and heat of the day," patiently waiting for the stretching out of the evening shadows, and the hour of his own sunset. His life has been

consecrated to Christ. He has endeavored to walk by faith, not by sight. He has set the Lord always before him, and has run with patience the Christian race, "looking unto Jesus." He has relaxed his hold upon the world; he has renounced all righteousness in and of himself. He looks alone for salvation to the perfect and finished work of his blessed Redeemer; and, resting his whole soul and its eternal interests in the pierced hands of Him who died that he might live—he quietly awaits his appointed time, and, strong in the abounding grace of God, he is enabled to say, with a modest, though well assured triumph, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of glory, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me in that day!"

Another point to be considered is, the fact that the setting of the sun is not always like the day which it closes. The morning may have been bright—and the evening hour dark with tempests; or the sun-rising may have been obscured by clouds and mists, which gradually faded away and left a clear sky at sunset. How often, after nearly a whole day of rain and dullness, has the descending sun broken through the clouds on the horizon, and shone out between the rifted vapors with a gorgeousness all the more glorious, because of the preceding gloom! Nay, how have those very storm mists, which gathered around the west in dark and heavy folds, or which rolled upwards in murky convolutions, been so gilded with his light as to shine like burnished metal, as if the sky was plated with Solomon's "three hundred shields of beaten gold," making the whole west a scene of inexpressible glory.

So the sunset hour of Christian life does not always correspond to his previous day. We have seen the last hours of the believer shrouded in impenetrable gloom—and we have seen them gilded with hope and radiant with the forecast glories of the upper world.

The way in which a Christian dies, is not always an index of his spiritual condition. He is to be judged by his *life*—not by his *death*. The great virtues which make up Christian character are neither developed nor called into action on a dying bed; and it is not in the emotions and feelings manifested there, that we are chiefly to look for evidences of a gracious state.

Self-denial,
the mortification of our passions,
the crucifying ourselves to the world,
the resisting of earthly temptations,
the putting into active exercise, and amidst opposing difficulties, the whole class of *Christian graces* which flow out from the simple principle of loving our neighbor as ourselves; and the *manifestation* of that life of faith, of prayer, of holiness, of zeal, which necessarily results from the constraining love of Christ in the heart—all these qualities and tests of character scarcely find a place on a dying bed, so that people thus situated have few opportunities to develop the true evidences of the work of grace.

We read, indeed, of many marked and *happy* deathbeds—but we also read of many closing hours of Christian life, where the believer had no special manifestations of divine favor, where no time even has been given for the utterance of feelings, and where even a *melancholy* bordering on despair, has cast a somber hue over the going down of the disciple's sun. We have in our mind's eye, cases of each of these, where, however, not the slightest doubt existed as to the real conversion of the individual, or as to his final acceptance in the Beloved.

There are some Christians who may be called weepers and mourners nearly all their days; their deep consciousness of sin, their extreme sensitiveness to evil, their ever present fear to offend God—make their eyes to run down with

tears night and day; and so perhaps it continues until the evening sun bursts through the falling mists, and paints a beautiful rainbow of promise on the *raindrops of penitential sorrow*.

There are others whose faith is blurred and indistinct; they have no clear and well defined appreciation of the great truths of the Bible; their sky of religious experience is overcast with a thin layer of cloud, which, while it does not shut out the light or heat of the sun, prevents the eye from viewing it distinctly, or from enjoying its unveiled splendor. They live, perhaps for years, in this almost *twilight* Christianity—but as they approach the grave the vapors become thinner and thinner, until a clear strip of blue lies above the horizon, and the descending sun shines out full-orbed and glorious before he sinks to his evening rest.

There are others, whose experience is April-like: a fleckered sky is over their heads, and alternate light and shadow fall upon their path: and sometimes these come to the grave rejoicing—and sometimes sorrowing; sometimes they go down amidst a blaze of golden glory—and sometimes massive doubts and fears are banked up like clouds over the west, so that they seem to set in darkness.

These *varieties of Christian experience* are literally innumerable; but whatever their nature, we must not judge of the validity of one's hope, or the genuineness of one's conversion—by his dying hour. Yet, when that dying hour accords with a long life of piety, or a true profession maintained in health and strength; when it is but a concentrating within itself of the glories which have been more or less visible in the whole track of his experience—then is it eloquent in its revelations of the riches and peace and joy, which God generally gives to those who are faithful unto death.

And though we cannot order when or how our lives shall close upon earth—yet it should be our aim so to *live* as to secure, if God pleases—a serene, if not a triumphant exit, that our setting sun may, like the sun in the skies, grow large and more resplendent as it declines, until passing away, it shall leave behind it a trail of glory spread all over the place of our departure.

Another interesting thought connected with this subject is, that the sun is not lost or extinguished when it sets. this may seem a very trite remark concerning the natural sun—but it is not so trite when we speak of the soul-set in death. for are we not apt to grieve over the going down of our friends to the grave—as if they were to be forever hidden in its dark chamber, or as if the bright spark of their immortality had been suddenly quenched? They have gone from us; the horizon of death shuts them out of view; their light of love, of hope, of piety, shines no more upon us, and we shall never again behold them in the flesh. But they are no more lost, than the sun is lost when his red disc rolls down behind the western hills! They are no more extinguished, than the burning orb of day is quenched when he sinks beneath the waves of the ocean. For, as the sun leaving us in darkness still lights up other lands—so our departed ones shine in another sphere of existence still, not lost, not extinguished—but, if the friends of Christ, made to glow with a brighter light and a more enduring glory.

When, therefore, we stand by their coffins, by their graves, or return sad and heavy-laden to their vacant dwellings—we should not mourn for them as those without hope, we should not give vent to grief as though they were lost to us altogether. They are hidden—but not lost, removed from our sight—but not extinct. They are still alive, only with a more exquisite vitality unfettered by sin, unencumbered by flesh, undefiled by the world, dwelling as redeemed spirits in the paradise of God.

And this remark leads us to make one final observation, namely, that when we see the sun set—we know that it will *rise* again. and so when we see the body of our friends borne to the voiceless dwelling of the tomb—we know that they also shall *rise* again.

Every *night of death* is followed by a *resurrection morning*. How precious is the thought as connected with God's people, that they shall rise from the dead! How rise? With glorified bodies, upon which the second death has no power. Rise by what power? By the mighty power of God. Rise when? "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with all his mighty angels, then shall they be caught up to meet him in the air!" Rise to what? to glory, honor, and immortality in the presence-chamber of God.

How these thoughts light up with brightness, every sepulcher of the righteous! How the doctrine of the resurrection throws a halo over every Christian's head-stone, and makes each open grave a little gate leading into glory!

Reader, have you lost a father, mother, brother, sister, wife, husband, child, or loved one—and were they Christ's before they died? Then lift up your heads, wipe away your tears, cheer up your hearts—for they shall come forth again before your face. Their *sunset*, though it left you in gloom and midnight sorrow—will soon be followed by the dawn of *Resurrection* day. and when the archangel's trumpet shall sound out over land and sea, awaking the myriads who slumber in earth's bosom, then shall your beloved ones who sunk to rest in Jesus—rise again, and go forth to meet and glorify their adorable Redeemer.

Thoughts like these cluster around the *setting sun of the aged disciple* of Jesus. Why should we wish to detain him? His work is done. Why desire to

hold him back from the grave? It is through the gate and grave of death, that he passes to his inheritance above. Why be inconsolable at his departure? He is not lost, neither is the light of his mind or heart extinguished. Why mourn as those who have no hope, beside his tombstone? He shall not lie there long. He is planted there in the likeness of Christ's death—that he may rise with Christ to the resurrection of eternal life. and not many more days shall roll over you, before you and they shall all rise again; "those who have done good to the **resurrection of life**—and those who have done evil to the resurrection of damnation."

Rejoice rather when one you love, who is full of days and full of grace—sets like a sun behind the horizon of life. Rejoice, for he shall rise again! and when that morning of the resurrection dawns, it will usher in a day that has **no clouds**, a day that has **no sunset**—and a day that is followed by **no night of sorrow or of death!**

"Life's Sunset"

As calmly sinks the setting sun

To realms of gold in gorgeous skies;
When day and all its toils are done—
In glorious peace the good man dies.

As glow the stars when darkness falls,
To cheer the close of fading day,
So, brightening hopes, when death appalls
From Heaven gleam to light his way.

As peaceful clouds along the sky
Retain the glories of the sun.
In memory bright are floating by
His deeds of love in meekness done.

He dies!—as passed the dreary night.
The sun 'mid streams of light appears;
So, passed the valley, a holier light
Bespeaks the glorious crown he wears.

You, who art enthroned on high!
To me Your saving grace be given
To live, and like the good man die;
Like him, be crowned of you in Heaven!

The Law of Spiritual Growth^(TOC)

"Exercise yourself unto godliness."—1 Timothy 4:7

In the text Paul sets before us a **great aim**—godliness; the **means** by which it can be obtained, by exercise; and our **personal duty** to strive for it, by the exhortation, "Exercise yourself unto godliness."

The man who is content to pass along with an aimless existence; or, only seeking daily supplies for daily needs, never looking hopefully into the future, and never seeking to excel—does injustice to his higher nature, and grovels on a plane but little elevated above the demands of animal existence.

No **aim** can so call out all the powers of the human mind, and soul—as the aim after Godlikeness. for what is godliness? is it not God-likeness? a seeking to be like God? Yet the question at once arises, **How can man be like God?**

God is infinite—man is finite.

God fills immensity—man stands on a few feet of a little world.

God inhabits eternity—man has his breath in his nostrils, flourishing like the grass today, and tomorrow cut down and withered.

Yet with all this disparity, the Bible exhorts us to set the Lord always before us, and to grow up into His likeness. What may be termed the **physical attributes** of God, those which pertain to Him as Maker of all things—Ruler over suns and systems, the Upholder of the universe; these, man can neither comprehend nor copy, they are beyond his reach, and of them it is, that the

Bible asks, "Who by searching can find out God?"

It is God's *moral qualities* that we are to copy and emulate. These are revealed to us in His holy Word; and though these, like the other attributes of God, are infinite—yet they are held up before us as patterns for us to admire and copy.

All of God's moral attributes, are comprised in His *holiness*. for holiness is moral perfection. As applied to God, holiness means that wholeness and completeness of the divine nature, from which nothing can be taken, to which nothing can be added. It includes, therefore, truth, love, mercy, goodness, and the like; because the absence of either would mar the wholeness and completeness of the divine character. The presence of every virtue is needed to make complete the full circle of holiness, and they are all found in perfect fullness in God.

When God then directs us in the Bible, "Be holy, for I am holy"; when we are exhorted to "follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"; when we are expressly told "God has not called us unto uncleanness—but unto holiness"—we are to know that by these words, God calls us unto godliness, or God-likeness, to be like God in all those *moral qualities* wherein we can walk in His ways, and copy His acts, and manifest His spirit. in the language of the Psalmist, it is setting the Lord always before us, just as the artist always sets his model before him; and, day by day, with slow and careful process, works up his painting, or his statue, to the form and spirit of the great original.

The man, then, who sets before himself the aim to be God-like, places above him the grandest aim that a created mind can reach after. He can never, indeed, fully attain unto it; yet, like the apostle Paul, "forgetting the things

that are behind, and reaching forth unto those that are before," he presses toward the mark of his high calling. The higher the aim—the higher the aspiration. The purer the object of the heart's ambition—the purer becomes the heart that seeks it. Hence the importance of holy aims, of exercising one's self unto godliness.

Godliness, then, as spoken of in the text, is only another name for **holiness in action**, that is, **Practical Piety**. And, indeed, in one place in the Acts of the Apostles, the word is translated holiness.

Godliness, then, or **holiness**—is that for which each human being should seek after, and strive for. in its **purity**—it outranks all human aims, for it alone is perfectly holy. in its **elevating power** over thought and heart—it surpasses all calls of earthly ambition. in the **greatness of the blessings** which result from seeking after it—it outstrips all that the world can offer to its most unwearied votaries. in the **duration** of the blessedness which it imparts—it goes as far beyond what earth can offer, as eternity itself outstretches the limits of time.

But you may say this holiness, or godliness, is not attainable. It is not, to the **full** extent of the original which you are told to copy, because there are two elements in God's holiness which can never exist in man so long as he tabernacles in the flesh—the **complete absence of sin**, and the **full perfection of every virtue**. Not so with man; he is ever a victim of sin, and never presents a complete assemblage of virtues. Some one or more virtues are always lacking, even in the most perfect human characters. Some one or more virtues are always out of proportion, or imperfectly developed, so that the circle is not complete in all its parts, nor harmonious in all its operations. and so man can never be like God.

Yet there is a sense, and a most important one, in which we can be like God. Were it not so, the exhortation of the text would be a mockery. that sense is, that taking the elements of God's moral character as we find them set forth in the Bible—His truth, His love, His purity, His mercy, His goodness, His long-suffering, etc—we are to strive to make them the ***guiding principles of our lives.***

The very ***contemplation*** of these attributes of God, makes sin appear exceeding sinful; because it throws the pure light of God's holiness into the sin-filled chambers of the heart, and reveals their horrors and their shame! While the attempt to ***imitate*** these excellencies, strengthens every moral sense, gives tone and vigor to each putting forth of spiritual power, and makes the once weak and puny soul that sunk down before each trial, rise up and fight manfully in a strength not its own, and thus win victories where hitherto it had found only defeats. this gives a man a godly character, and eventually crowns him with godliness. this is what all can strive after, and secure.

Paul exhorts Timothy to "follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." Peter tells us to "give all diligence to add to our faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly-kindness; and to brotherly-kindness, charity." in the Old Testament, by the mouth of the prophet, God says of man, "I have formed him for my glory." in the New Testament, the apostle says, "Glorify God, therefore, in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." and Jesus Christ declares, "Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit."

Spiritual fruit-bearing, the bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, the fruits of the Spirit, the showing of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness,

meekestness, goodness, faith, temperance—it is in the bringing forth of these things, that we manifest our godliness, and glorify God. These are **aims** which we can attain unto; heights indeed—but heights which can be scaled and reached ...

by the **eye** which looks to Jesus,

by the **foot** which presses itself into the cleft of the Rock,

and by the **hand of faith**, which never lets go its grasp of the Crucified.

The result of this godliness will **manifest** itself in a variety of ways.

It will give a man the victory over himself. Self-conquest is the hardest of all conquests. this arises from the fact that we can never really know ourselves, because our hearts are "deceitful above all things." Hence the golden sentence, "Know yourself," inscribed in the temple at Delphi, was said to be the foundation of all human wisdom. No man can ever know himself as a moral being, so long as he measures himself by the standard of his own unenlightened conscience; or compares himself with his fellow-men; or sets aside the law of God. But the man who exercises himself unto godliness, looks at his character in the light of God's word, measures himself by the standard of God's holy law—and seeing what are his defects, and learning how only they can be remedied—he seeks to the divine Agent, through whose power alone we can achieve any goodness, for that strength and grace, which enables him to master himself, and guide himself, so that he walks uprightly and surely in the way of the Lord.

The cultivation of this holiness will enable a man to overcome the world.

Not in the sense of human conquerors—overcoming armies, nations, territory, and setting up thrones, and swaying scepters, and lording it over the subjugated people. Such conquests, those so eagerly sought after, and bought with such toil, and courage, and sacrifice, and talent—are not what the godly

man seeks after.

His victories over the world are **moral**—over its snares, its allurements, its temptations, its varied influences for evil, which beset him on every side; and persist in their attacks with an untiring energy that knows no weariness or relaxation. He looks at the world in the light of God's countenance. He measures its **honors** by the measuring line of God's law. He weighs its **riches** in the balances of the sanctuary. He surveys it, not as seen in the garish lights and false reflectors which the Prince of this world sets up in order to attract and deceive; but in the calm, clear survey of a mind filled with high and holy thoughts, conscious of its future glory, and knowing that the world and all that is therein will soon be burned up in the final conflagration.

Thus **faith in Jesus Christ**, the great root principle of all godliness, enables him to overcome the world. He finds in very deed the truth of Paul's words, that "godliness has the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come."

This godliness, so grand in itself, and in its results, can be secured, only by exercising ourselves to attain it. It does **not** come ...
of itself,
nor by retired meditation,
nor by earnest prayer,
nor by diligent reading of God's word.

All these things are **aids** and **adjuncts**—but none of them, nor all combined, will give us godliness. It is the result of **moral principles put into active exercise**—and demands the full bent, and strenuous exertion of the mind.

There is much meaning in the original word which the apostle here uses, and which is translated "exercise." the literal rendering is—**Be gymnasts in**

godliness. It is a word from which the terms gymnastic, gymnasium, are drawn. According to Plato, gymnastics, or the mere exercise and cultivation of muscular power, constituted a third part of Grecian education. There was, probably, no Greek town which had not its gymnasium; and no healthy Greek boy, who was not disciplined in its severe exercise. The culmination of this discipline found its exponent in the national festivals of Greece, the **Isthmian** games near Corinth, and the more celebrated contests of **Olympia**.

Paul, during his abode in Corinth, had been brought in close contact with these scenes, and he saw with his own eyes, how much toil, and drill, and sacrifice, men would endure for the sake of gaining the notoriety of being a conqueror at the Isthmus, or at Olympia. Day after day, and week after week, and month after month—these **aspirants for honor** would devote themselves to wrestling, boxing, running, leaping, and all other gymnastic exercise, with patience, amidst privations; with no complaint of its severity of discipline; with no hesitation to endure its hardness; in the hope that the herald would one day shout their names as **victors** to the assembled multitudes, and link their names to the Olympiad in which they were conquerors.

The idea, then, of the apostle is, that in order to attain unto godliness—we must be **moral gymnasts**, willing to use as severe discipline; willing to undergo as painful privations; willing to bear as torturing an exercise of flesh and blood; as the gymnast did, who trained himself to win the **wreath of ivy** at the Isthmian festival, or the **garland of wild olives** which crowned the conqueror at Olympia.

And why should we not? the **aims** are infinitely higher, and the **rewards** are infinitely greater. The **arena** in which we are to perform this exercise, is in the Church of God. The **methods** by which we are to do it are as various as our various temperaments, tastes, positions, talents, and opportunities. There

is no one who cannot do something; and upon all is laid the duty of living to the glory of God.

Thus true religion is a very *personal* and *practical* thing. *Personal*—because it is yourself that is to do the exercise; it is an individual act, and no amount of exercise done by those around you in the same family, the same church; can avail to your benefit. It is yourself who must be the moral gymnast in this spiritual conflict.

And it is *practical*—because the things in which we are to exercise ourselves unto godliness are all around our daily life. We are to exercise ourselves in restraining a quick temper, in checking impatience, in bridling the tongue, in ruling the spirit, in rooting out personal defects of mind and heart; in overcoming *temptations* to lust, and pride, and envy, and hatred, and strife; in bearing with the infirmities of others, in being meek under reproach, in not rendering railing for railing, in not murmuring at God's dispensations, in subduing indwelling sin.

And to this *repressive* work, which demands constant exercise, there is to be added an *aggressive* work—a watching of opportunities for good, a going out into the field of active Christian exertion, a giving up of some portion of time to works of Christian love and duty, a readiness to give liberally, to teach lovingly, to sacrifice cheerfully of our comforts—that we may do good to the poor, the base, the ignorant, the outcast, the prisoner, the sick, the afflicted. and if we can do no more, we can give a cup of cold water to some one of Christ's sorrowing ones, and that "shall not lose its reward."

Moral powers, like the muscles of the body, are *developed by exercise*.

The unused arm shrivels up;
the unused hand loses its cunning;

the unused brain loses its force.

The law of **physical** growth and strength, is exercise.

The law of **spiritual** growth and strength, is spiritual exercises—doing with our might what our hands find to do, laboring with all diligence to make our calling and election sure, working while it is day, and giving our bodies to be "living sacrifices, holy, acceptable unto God."

Our moral character is a thing of growth, and of **slow** growth; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full grain in the ear. **Character** is principle put into practice, and developed under trial. this wrestling with difficulties, with temptations, with disappointments—develops the strength and brawn of the mind; and makes strong and firm, the affections of the heart. It is a succession of ...

little daily victories over little daily **trials**;

little daily resistings of little **temptations**;

little daily puttings forth of earnest, truthful **efforts** for good

—which go to make up a well-developed character.

The sculptor, in the vividness of his imagination, mentally depicts the figure which he will chisel out of the marble block before him; but before his ideal becomes a reality, before his hand fashions what his fancy portrayed—how many weeks and months must he "exercise himself" in his art, with patient hammer, with skillful chisel, with cautious hand—before the marble **breathes** with the artist's life, and the stone speaks out the sculptor's thoughts.

So it is with the production of godliness. It is not the product of a day, the work of a few mental resolves. It is the result of strenuous exercise—the **quiet, earnest, persistent, unyielding, daily toil of the heart yearning after the glory of God, struggling to become like God.**

The drill of the soldier which fits him for the fight, is a precise and daily exercise of evolutions and handling of arms, each by itself, of the most trivial character. The soldier's *battles* are few—but his *drill* is every day. It is this *daily drill in little points*, which fits him for battle; and he could never be prepared for war—but for this daily discipline in the manual of arms, and the tactics of the field.

Just so with the Christian life. It has few great epochs, and when these occur, they can never be met with success, unless there has been a *daily exercising of one's self unto godliness*. It is not much, perhaps, that he can do any one day; but it is the *patient doing of many little things* which multiply day by day, into the great and the influential.

How much of this kind of exercising of one's self, is demanded by the exhortation, "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." What self-exercises are involved here, to bear each other's burden of poverty, of affliction, of sickness, of disappointment! in each of these to a suffering brother, prove yourself to be a brother, with a brother's warm heart, and a brother's strong hand.

Exercise yourselves in helping each other *spiritually*. Helping the sinner, out of his sinfulness;
the seeker after Christ, to find Christ;
the penitent, to the great Giver of pardon;
the conscience-troubled, to the Comforter.

Help your brother ...
out of his doubts and unbelief;
out of his backslidings and remissness of duty;
out of his lukewarmness and indifference.

Help him ...
to walk in the path of duty,
to learn his Master's will,
to conquer his evil propensities,
to lop off wrong habits,
to curb his tongue,
to rule his spirit.

Help him ...
in prayer,
in good works,
in cultivating the graces of the Spirit.
Take up one end of all his burdens, and help him to bear them for Jesus' sake.

Exercise yourselves ...
in prayer,
in strict self-examination,
in conscientious alms-giving,
in diligent reading of God's Word,
in personal labors for the salvation of souls.

Exercise yourself in daily ministrations to the poor, the sick, and the afflicted.

Exercise yourself in copying line by line, and feature by feature, the
lineaments of Jesus, who went about doing good, so that ...

His life may shape your life,
His spirit guide your spirit,
His words mold your minds,
His deeds stimulate your acts;
and thus, like an earthly mirror held to the noonday sun—you may reflect

from the surface of your grace-polished heart, the light and the glory, reduced indeed in size and in strength—but still the reflected light and glory of the Sun of righteousness.

Thus exercising yourself unto godliness, you become more and more fit for the inheritance of the saints in light; and will before long, enter into that world of light where all is pure, and true, and good, because it is the dwelling place of a Holy God!

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made!^(TOC)

Delivered before the Medical Students of the several Colleges of Philadelphia, on December 6th, 1857. by
William Bacon Stevens.

"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made! Your works are wonderful, I know that full well."—Psalm 139:14

"Your hands shaped me and made me. Will You now turn and destroy me? Remember that You molded me like clay. Will You now turn me to dust again? Did You not clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews? You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in Your providence watched over my spirit."—Job 10:8-12

Man, as he is the crowning work of creation, deserves a deeper study than any other of the works of God.

The Earth, beautiful as it is in form and structure, and garnished with all kinds of loveliness, is to endure but for a little while, and then be destroyed by fire.

The two great lights which rule the day and the night, are to shine only for a season, for the time is fixed in the future, when "the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood."

The overarching sky, glittering with countless stars, has its appointed period of duration, and then it shall be rolled together as a scroll, and pass away, to give place to that new Heaven and new earth wherein dwells righteousness.

But *man* shall outlive earth, and moon, and sun, and sky, for he only, of all created things or beings in the material universe, is endowed with immortality; and hence the expressiveness of that remark of Sir Thomas Brown: "While I study to find out how I am a little world (a microcosm), I find myself something more than the great one." Most strikingly are some of the leading features of the anatomy and physiology of man brought out in the text; thus Job declares that the body is the workmanship of God, in the words, "Your hands shaped me and made me." He declares of what material this body was made in the words, "Remember that you molded me like clay." He states the leading outlines of Anatomy in the words, "Did you not clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews?" He indicates the great vital law of Physiology in the words, "You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in your providence watched over my spirit." He shows the decay and death of this body in the words, "Yet, you do destroy me, and bring me into dust again." and he teaches the fact, that this wonderfully made body is inhabited by a God-created soul, when he says, "In your providence you watched over my spirit."

Following out some of these germs of thought, I propose to show a few of the moral truths taught by Anatomy and Physiology, and their accordance with the Word of God.

To study man, both in a normal and in a diseased state, is the object for which you have come up to the various schools of Medicine, which make this city the greatest seat of medical science in the Western Hemisphere.

But you have not learned all of man, when you can count his bones and muscles, and nerves and arteries; when you can describe each organ and function; when you have mastered the doctrines of Pathology, and the principles which regulate man as a living, organized being. There are other

aspects, other laws, other influences than those recorded in the books of Anatomy and Physiology—and to a few of these I wish to call your attention at this time, more, however, by way of planting in your minds a few seed-thoughts; which, under the cultivation of *meditation* and the *dew of the Holy Spirit*—shall bring forth perhaps, some future fruit, than from any expectation of immediate good, or any aim to cover the whole ground of man's moral relations to the Bible, and the Bible's author, God.

I shall give you no scientific discussions, and shall avoid as far as possible scientific terms—but shall seize on certain open and acknowledged facts in man's physical constitution, and let these speak, while I perform for them the office of an humble interpreter of their words, and demonstrator of their teachings.

There is a God

The first and most apparent lesson which these sciences teach, is, that *there is a God*. The simple proposition which I lay down here, is this:

Order and *adaptation* evince *intelligence*, and the character of the intelligence rises in proportion to the combinations required, and the extent and perfection of the order.

On looking at a locomotive engine, you perceive at once that it is a machine, exhibiting order in the arrangement of its parts, and adaptation in the relations of the several parts among themselves, and of the whole, to the end designed; and you infer at once that it is the product of a high intelligence. Suppose I should undertake to prove that this engine was self-built; its several parts being first self-evolved out of certain atoms of wood and iron, which by a law inherent in themselves, assumed in process of time, without any

superintending power, the forms of the fire-box, the boiler, the steam-engine, the cylinder, the driving-wheels—and that these various parts came *fortuitously* together, and lo! a steam-engine appears!

If this, by universal consent, would be deemed absurd—then is it less absurd to suppose that the human body was self-built, or only the highest development of molecular being? even though I might bolster up my assertion by the theory of Epicurus, which derived the whole universe, physical and intellectual, from the coming together by *chance* of certain self-created atoms.

If I should undertake to prove that a telegraphic battery was self-evolved out of a bar of iron, a coil of wire, a few cups of acid—which cups, wire, and magnet not only came together by *chance*, but were themselves self-produced—you would denounce me for a fool! Yet the spinal cord, with its membranous wrappings, and its thirty-one pairs of branching nerves, is an instrument of motory and sensorial power far beyond the magnet! the great nerve-centers, with their wonderful ganglionic mechanism, are magazines of forces far ahead of the most powerful galvanic battery. The continuous lines of nerves which spread like a network over the whole body, by their structure, their conductibility, their retention of impressions, and their peculiar registering power—are almost infinitely superior to the wires which stretch along the highways of the land, and whisper their electric words from a hundred telegraphic centers.

In order to give the crudest outline of the evidences of *order* and *adaptation* found in the human body, we must first sum up all its *organs*, then add the many *functions* of these organs, then the vast number of adjustments needed for the action of over six hundred muscles, and nearly two hundred and fifty bones, which alone have been estimated to furnish over one hundred

thousand instances of design.

To these must be added the manifold mechanical, chemical, and vital forces requisite for the most common operations of life. to these, as numberless as they appear, must be added the various external conditions to which this body must be **adapted** in the ever-varying stages of life, from infancy to age, in all varieties of climate, soil, productions, employments, governments, diseases, and social conditions. and when multiplying these into each other, you have reached a number **inconceivable** to the human mind—you must yet add the proofs of **design**, furnished by the operations of **conscience**, the action of the **will**, the existence of an **intellect**, and the possession of a **soul**—each manifesting itself in endless variety through the body, to which each is perfectly adjusted, and by which only they could prove their existence.

When you can give the product of this sum, then, and not until then—can you complete the full evidence of **design** furnished by the anatomy and physiology of man.

And which is the most rational conclusion: that such a being, so framed, so endowed, came into existence by **chance**; or that it is the terminus of a long-ascending series of **developments**, ranging upward in natural order and sequence, from the lowest form of animal life emerging from the sea; so that, as Dr. Oken says, "man has not been created, but **developed**"?

Or, that other conclusion—that such a being ...
could be **fashioned** only by a Divine architect,
could be **vivified** only by a Divine Spirit,
could be **preserved** only by a Divine protector,
could be **governed** only by a Divine lawgiver, and
could be **designed** only to illustrate the Divine glory.

One of the most eminent of England's living scholars, Dr. Whewell, has truly said, "There is one idea which the researches of the physiologist and the anatomist so constantly force upon him, that he cannot help assuming it as one of the guides of his knowledge. I mean the idea of a *purpose*, or as it is called in Aristotelian phrase, a final cause in the arrangement of the physical frame. this conviction prevails so steadily among anatomists that, even when the use of any part is altogether unknown, it is still taken for granted that it has some use. The development of this conviction, of a *purpose in the parts of the body, of a function to which each portion of the organization is subservient*, contributed greatly to the progress of Physiology."

The truth of these remarks is beautifully illustrated in the discovery of the circulation of the blood. "I remember," says the Hon. Robert Boyle, "that when I asked our famous Harvey, a little while before he died, what were the things which induced him to think of a circulation of the blood, he answered me, that when he took notice that the *valves* in the veins of so many parts of the body were so placed that they gave free passage to the blood towards the heart—but opposed the passage of the venous blood the contrary way—he was forced to think that so provident a cause, as nature had not placed so many valves without design; and no design seemed more probable than that, since the blood could not well, because of the interposing valves, be sent by the veins to the limbs—it should be sent through the arteries, and return through the veins whose valves did not oppose its course that way."

The argument for the being of a God from the laws of *order* and *adaptation* found in the body of man—is one of the most beautiful, powerful, all-pervading, and convincing which can be furnished by any organism. No wonder that Hippocrates, the father of medicine, was converted from atheism by studying the exquisite formation of the human skeleton; or that Galen said,

that in describing the anatomy of man, he was but composing a *hymn to the Creator*; for no one can study this master-piece of God's earthly work, without being constrained to say with the text, "Your hands shaped me and made me. Remember that you molded me like clay. Did you not clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews?" or with the Psalmist: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made; great and marvelous are your works, and that my soul knows right well."

Man is a Fallen Being

The second great truth taught by Anatomy and Physiology is, that *man is a fallen being*.

We cannot suppose for a moment that God made man *imperfect*—for this would imply either that God had not the wisdom, or the power, or the goodness, to make him perfect. that there was no lack of wisdom to devise a perfect being, is evident from the fact that every other work of God displays infinite wisdom. that there was no lack of power to make man perfect—is proved from the perfection which attaches to every other work of his hand. that there was no lack of goodness—is seen in the innumerable provisions of mercy and kindness which mark all the dealings of God with his animate creation.

God, therefore, made man perfect when he made him in his own image. But we do not see man now wearing that perfect image—it is defaced, soiled, broken. We see man only as an imperfect being. *Sickness* preys upon him, *accidents* assail him, *infirmities* possess him. Need I recall to you the manifold diseased conditions to which he is subject. What are your books of Pathology, what of the institutes of medicine—but the scientific record of the fact, that man is organically, functionally, and psychologically a fallen being!

There is no sickness in **Heaven**. There was no sickness in **Eden**. There will be none in the world of **glory**. Sickness, so far as we know—is confined to this world; and the solemn truth which it ever utters is—**man is a fallen being**. There is not an **organ** of the body which may not become the seat of disease! There is not a **function** which may not be deranged. this was not man's original state. **Whence the change?**

Physiology says that there is a change—but cannot tell its originating cause. Anatomy attests the fact—but its lips are silent as to its origin. Pathology, in its every page, confirms the truth—but puts its hand upon its mouth when called upon to assign its **cause**. It is not expected that they will state the cause of this fall—it is not in their province; they deal with facts; they are not expected to go within the secrets of the Most High God, and busy themselves with the truths of a moral revelation. We ask not that they should. All that we require of them is, that they attest the fact that man is not a perfect being. We call them to the witness-stand merely to testify to this one point; and having delivered their opinion on this subject—we shall seek elsewhere for the **cause** that solves the otherwise inexplicable problem.

There is one interesting fact, however, which is quite important to be noticed here. Physiologists and Pathologists are urgent in telling you that all disease is the result of some departure or breaking of the physical laws of our being. I would humbly lift the statement out of this **physical** element, and place it on what I conceive to be its true position, and say—all diseased conditions are the result of the violation of the **moral** laws of our being.

And I would substantiate my assertion, by the facts, open and notorious, that there is scarcely a disease or accident that can happen to man, that may not, directly or indirectly, be traced to the breaking of God's law—either in its requirement of love to **Him**, or love to **man**. There is scarcely a disease or

accident which may not be said to result either from human passions, human ignorance, or human infirmities—and each of these is the sequence of moral disobedience. for did we love God supremely, there would be no uncurbed passions hurrying us into the exciting causes of sickness. Did we seek aright God's guidance, there would be no ignorance leading us blindfolded into disease. and had we perfect obedience to God, and perfect love to our fellow-men—we would have no infirmities of the flesh, or of the spirit, which, in their unrestrained action, produce such morbid results, and such calamitous outbreaks in man and in human society.

Not only do we find a perfect coincidence between "the universal reign of sin—and the coextensive prevalence of disease," but the Bible abounds with instances, showing that God most frequently punished *moral* evils by *physical* disease; that *sickness* was a recognized and appointed *agent of God*, whereby he visited his displeasure upon men, communities, and nations. When God delivered his ordinances to the children of Israel, he accompanied it with the threat, "But if you will not listen to me and carry out all these commands, and if you reject my decrees and abhor my laws and fail to carry out all my commands and so violate my covenant—then I will do this to you: I will bring upon you sudden terror, *wasting diseases* and fever that will destroy your sight and drain away your life!" Leviticus 26:14-16

So, when the Levitical laws were recapitulated in the book of Deuteronomy, we observe that God linked with *disobedience* of them—*grievous diseases*. "The LORD will afflict you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors, scurvy, and the itch, from which you cannot be cured. The LORD will strike you with madness, blindness, and panic" summing up the catalogue with the words, "also, every sickness and every plague!"

When Miriam spoke against Moses, she was struck with *leprosy* white as

snow. When Gehazi falsified his master to Naaman, the prophet declared that the **leprosy** of Naaman should cleave unto Gehazi and his house forever.

When Uzziah, King of Judah, intruded himself into the temple to burn incense, the bright spot of the **leper** immediately appeared upon his forehead, and the priests thrust him out of the house of the Lord.

The sin ...

of King Jeroboam was visited with **paralysis** of the arm;

of King Asa with **elephantiasis**;

of King Jehoram with **incurable gastric disease**;

of Elymas with **blindness**;

of King Herod with most loathsome sickness, for he was **eaten up by worms** and died, because, says the sacred writer, "He gave not God the glory."

Thus, God himself establishes a relationship between **sin** and **disease**, which proves to demonstration, that man is a fallen being; that but for sin—there would be no disease, so that the existence of disease is an everywhere present proof of the existence of human depravity.

There are, in the Human System, the Seeds of Death

A third religious truth, taught by Anatomy and Physiology is, that **There are, in the Human System, the Seeds of Death**; which death was brought into the world by sin. Carpenter, the most learned of English Physiologists, remarks:

"It seems inherent in the very nature of vital action that it can only be sustained during a limited period, by any organized body. The organized fabric, in fact, is at the same time the instrument whereby vital force is exercised, and the subject of its operation; and of this operation, **decline** is no

less a constituent part than development, and **death** is its necessary sequence."

And a distinguished American Physiologist (Draper) declares, "that the whole science of Physiology is a commentary on the truth, that the condition of life is death." Paradoxical as this assertion of the learned Professor may seem, it is fully sustained by the facts of Physiology.

The fundamental components of the physical frame are cells. "It is by cells and their derivatives, that all the proper vital actions of the body are performed;" but it is a law of physiology "that the amount of vital action which can be performed by each living cell, has a definite limit, and when that certain point has been once reached, a diminution in the vital activity of the cell must ensue." Hence, there is a steady wasting away of all parts of the physical mechanism; there is no part of the human system exempt from this law of **disintegration** and **repair**; but the power to repair the perpetual wastage gradually ceases, and then the waste increases beyond the repair, and death supervenes.

What a striking, and I might almost say, scientific comment is this law of Physiology, on the original curse, pronounced on man in Eden. in appointing the tree of knowledge of good and evil to be the test of Adam's obedience, God said, "In the day you eat thereof—you shall surely die;" or as the Hebrew literally reads, "Dying you shall die." Death did not come upon Adam on the **literal** day on which he ate the forbidden fruit; on the contrary, he lived many hundred years afterwards; but on that day of disobedience, that day of man's ruin and man's curse—he became mortal; there was made by the same Power, which originally created him out of the dust, that change in his physical system, by which he was ever to bear about a **dying life**, by which a process of interstitial death was ever to be going on in his body; decline and

death being stamped on each component tissue, be it a cell, a fibre, a membrane.

It has been strikingly remarked by one of your own most accomplished Professors (F. Gurney Smith), that "every movement of a muscle, every exercise of the brain, whether in thought or volition; in a word, every action that we perform—causes the death of some of the cells of the organ that performs it; so that, in truth, ***we die daily—in order that we may live.***"

And, though in many instances, this ***degenerating*** process is met and recompensed by the ***regenerative*** process of the vital power; yet, like a ***life-clock*** whose weights are hung to run for an appointed time, this regenerative power has its limit, and ***somatic*** death is but the sequence of long-continued ***molecular*** death, and thus the curse "Dying you shall die," had then, has now, and as long as sin reigns in the world—shall have, its full and physiological verification.

Thus it is, that man ever bears about him the ***seeds of death***. Every ***cell*** in the human body, though seen only through the eye of the microscope, is a seed of death; and hence, all the tissues and organs of the body, made up of these countless cells—are but so many aggregates of death-seed, ripening with greater or less rapidity for the harvest of death, and the garner of the grave!

But whence comes this death? Here physical science is silent. and we must go to Scriptural Revelation for an answer. "By one man," says Paul, "sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, because all have sinned."

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned!" Romans 5:12

Death, then, wherever we meet it, is the ***result of sin***; and its sepulchral voice

ever repeats, "***Man has sinned!***"

Every ***funeral knell***—tolls the word ***sin***.

Every stroke of the hammer that drives a nail into the ***coffin***—strikes the sharp quick word ***sin***.

Every passing ***hearse***—rattles the word ***sin***.

Every stroke of the chisel upon the ***gravestone***—clicks the word ***sin***.

Every ***burial service***—tells of ***sin***.

Sin is the ***one startling monosyllable*** which rings all day long, and all night long—like the cricket's monotone from every graveyard!

Sin is the one syllable which the great sea ever moans forth from its charnel depths!

Sin is the one fearful cry which dwells on the bloodless lips of the pestilence!

Sin is the one appalling shriek which rings louder than the cannon's roar on the field of blood!

There is not a ***day***, an ***hour***, a ***minute***, a ***second*** of time—when Death as he hurls his dart into some victim's heart, does not shout the word, which tells the whole story of himself and his deeds, and that one word is "SIN!"

Man is a being framed under Law

A fourth truth taught by the Anatomy and Physiology of the body, is that ***Man is a being framed under Law***. These sciences show that there is no portion of the body which is not covered by a mechanical, chemical, or vital law. It reaches downwards to the first rudiments of man's embryonic

existence, and manifests itself in the beautiful and all pervading law of cell-growth, and it stretches upward through all the convolutions of the brain as it fills the dome of thought, and becomes the dwelling-place of the God-breathed soul. Were it not so, man would be a chaos, which science could never reduce to order, and the medical art would be a mere guesswork, the drawing of a bow at a venture, a leap in the dark, where the landing-place might be firm footing—or might be the engulfing wave.

Even the *diseases* which assail us are regulated by law, and just in proportion as these laws are discovered and their working developed, does the science of Pathology approach perfection, and put into the hands of the Physician, the invaluable data by which he can apply his therapeutic agents and prognosticate results.

Furthermore, so entirely is man under these Physiological laws, that many of them operate upon him without his knowledge of their action, and entirely irrespective of his will. Sir Charles Bell truly says, that "if the vital actions of a man's frame were directed by his will—they are necessarily so minute and complicated, that they would immediately fall into confusion. Man cannot draw a breath without the exercise of sensibilities, as well ordered as those of the eye or ear. The action of his heart and the circulation of his blood and all the vital functions are governed through means and by laws, which are not dependent on his will, and to which the powers of his mind are altogether inadequate. for had they been under the influence of his will, a doubt, a moment's pause of irresolution, a forgetfulness of a single action at its appointed time—would have terminated his existence."

Man then, in each of his physical aspects, presents himself to us as a *being under law*. But "the *natural* and *moral* constitution and government of the world," as Bishop Butler well says, "are so connected as to make up together

but one scheme, and it is highly probable that the natural is formed and carried on merely in subserviency to the latter, as the vegetable world is for the animal, and organized bodies for minds."

What this profound writer, reasoning solely on the analogies of nature, sets forth as highly probable, we know to be a fact. We know that man is a compound being of soul and body; that there is a mutual action and reaction of soul and body; that the laws which govern man's physical nature cannot, by their very nature, hold sway over the soul; that the soul exempt from physical law must be amenable to moral law, because it is a moral agent. and as soul and body make up one man, and as there cannot be two controlling and self-existent wills operating at the same time on the same being, demanding a divided fealty—so must we infer that there is but "one lawgiver;" that the lawgiver for man's physical nature is the lawgiver for his spiritual nature, and that this one lawgiver is God. We are, therefore, as amenable to God, as *moral* and accountable beings—as we are to him for our material organism and our functional agency.

And what is that *moral law* under which man is placed? Not one which man has made for himself; for he can no more make a *moral* law than he can a *physical* one. It must be the only moral law which has been given by the one lawgiver, and summed up in those compendious words of Jesus: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your strength—and your neighbor as yourself." a law covering not the *outward* conduct only—but reaching to the *thoughts* and intents of the *heart*; a law which brands as sin, any lack of conformity to its full requisitions; a law which is the transcribed will of a Holy God; a law which is at once the rule of *angels* and archangels, and the six-winged cherubim about the throne—and *man* the creature on the footstool; a law which overarches two worlds in its

provisions of love and holiness, and binds both in one covenant rainbow of promised bliss.

From this law you cannot free yourself; as well attempt to break the links in the law of **gravitation**—as free yourself from the **moral** law of your Creator. By this law, as a free moral being, you must live; by it, be judged; by it, be made either happy or miserable forever. and the only way by which you can fulfill this law is, not by any **personal** obedience—but by the **substitutionary** obedience of one who, "though in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God—but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant" in order that he might ...

stand in our place,

bear our curse,

obey for us the broken law, and

by his own infinite merits and his own precious blood-shedding—obtain a free pardon and a perfect righteousness, both of which are made ours by faith in Him.

And thus, though of ourselves we cannot obey the law, yet we do "magnify it and make it honorable" through Christ. Though of ourselves we have no merits, we are "accounted as righteous" before God, through the merits of our Divine substitute. Though of ourselves we could never secure pardon—we are freely pardoned through the precious blood-shedding of our glorious Savior. and thus, through another's pains, another's merits, another's death—we, by faith in him, are, put in full possession of all the blessings **purchased** by his spotless life and his sacrificial death; and those blessings are summed up in the words: ***Eternal life and bliss at God's right hand.***

Again, the **provisions** of God for the reparation and regeneration of wasted and diseased tissues, which are made known to us by Anatomy and

Physiology—typify the higher law of man's spiritual regeneration.

Every physiologist will point out to you these reparative laws inherent in the human body, and will explain their merciful nature and wise adjustments.

They will tell you that nature is ever striving to ...

perfect that which is lacking,

heal that which is diseased,

remove that which is worn out, and

give back form and color to that which has lost its original beauty.

Few studies are more interesting or give us better insight into some of the attributes of God, than this. Upon the **laws** which regulate recuperative action, is based the art of medicine; for the physician's part is not to effect himself the healing—but only ...

to aid nature,

to prevent foreign interference,

to stimulate tardy processes,

to adjust related parts,

to supply required material, and then

to watch the restorative process, until health rewards his toil. Now this whole process, so beautiful, so effective, so infinitely wise and good—is but the physical expression of a high moral law; and by it God would show to men that there is **healing** and **regeneration** for his diseased and fallen **soul**.

That this is so, is evident from two remarkable facts. First. That **sin** is most usually represented in the Bible under the similitude of **disease**. Now this is not by accident—but by design; not as figures of rhetoric merely—but ordained to be most expressive **types**.

When God would give the Israelites some visible picture of the

loathsomeness and destructiveness of sin—he selected the disease of ***leprosy***—the most fearful of all the maladies which afflict our race—and ordained it as the standing type of uncleanness and separation throughout the camp of Israel.

When he would typify ***error***—he uses ***blindness*** as an emblem of mental darkness.

When he would typify ***indifference to warning***—he chooses ***deafness***, whereby the ear refuses to hear the voice of reason.

When he would typify the ***corrodings of conscience***—it is by a scorching fever, emphatically called "the arrows of the Almighty, which drink up the Spirit."

When he would typify the ***loss of moral strength***—it is by paralysis, unnerving the limb and shrivelling the muscle.

When he would typify the ***gradual wasting process of sin***—it is by ***consumption***, when "one's flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen, and his bones, that were not seen, stick out.

And when God would express ***total depravity***—he does it in these medical words: "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it—but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores! They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."

Thus, there is not a phase of moral disease which does not find its counterpart in some form of physical malady.

The other remarkable fact to which I alluded in this connection is this: that

Jesus Christ, who came to save the soul, constantly stands before us in a medical character, as the **Great Physician**. When Christ came, he came as prophecy said he would—as a healer of disease; so that through his cure of earthly maladies—he might show his higher power to cure the sin-sick soul. It is interesting to mark, that the **diseases** which our Lord specially healed (though he cured all who came to him), yet those which appear most frequently on the pages of Scripture, represented the **inner** state of man; and that what he wrought in the **body** found its true significance, only as seen in the light of those deeper diseases of the **soul**—whose wants and woes were faintly shadowed out by the pains and sicknesses of daily life.

There were four marked classes of disease upon which our Lord mostly exerted his healing power, namely:

Leprosy, which indicated moral uncleanness;

Insanity, including the whole list of demoniacal possessions which evidenced the loss of a holy and controlling will;

Paralysis, which represented moral helplessness; and

Blindness, which typified spiritual darkness.

What man most needed, was light from Heaven. How could Christ better show himself as the true "light of the world"—than by pouring the light of day into the eyes of the **blind**.

Man needed some aid outside of himself to help him in his state of moral impotence. and how better could Christ display himself as "the Lord and giver of might," than by bidding ...

the **withered hand**—to be whole,

the **paralyzed**—to arise, and

the **impotent** man—to take up his bed and walk?

Man needed some guiding moral power to his mind, so that it should not be foraged upon by the spirits of evil, and be the camping-ground of error; and how better could Christ show himself "the truth," that which the mind ever felt after—but felt in vain; than by dispossessing the demoniacs, and causing the once furious and lunatic victims, to sit at his feet clothed and in their right mind?

Above all, man needed moral cleansing. Pollution, inborn and inbred, reigned within, and he was a *walking Lazarus*, with "no soundness in him." and how better could Christ show his power to purge and purify the soul, and give it spiritual health—than by healing those who were full of *leprosy* in the startling words, "I will—be clean!"

Having then taught us these great lessons by his own miraculous works on the bodies of men, and made his physical cures the credentials of his power to heal the evils of the soul—He now, though absent from us, repeats the teaching through the *diseases* which everywhere tell of sin, and the *recuperative agencies* which also tell of relief and cure.

Thus, while sickness speaks of our fall; and the struggles which the diseased organ or tissue makes towards reparation—tell of man's yearning after a moral restoration; so the provisions tell of a wide-spread remedies; and the exact adaptation of its agents, to the necessities of the sick—producing cure by something found without, and applied from without—point to a redeemer from sin and to soul-remedials, outside of and distinct from ourselves—to one who, in his office, as healer of the bodies, illustrated to our senses his higher character as a restorer of the soul—to one who brings from without, the medicine that is to heal our sickness—to one who superintends himself the whole economy of reparation—named on earth Jesus or Savior, because "He saves his people from their sins." that is, the one named in Heaven, "the

Prince of life," because the healing he bestows is eternal life; and the **results** of that cure are the endless joys of that land, "the inhabitant of which shall never say, I am sick," for in that land there "shall be no more pain, no more sorrow, no more sighing, for the former things are passed away, and God shall wipe all tears from our eyes."

The soul has no **natural remedies**—it is in ruins, and has no more power to repair its losses, than has the statue of a Phidias to replace a broken arm, or restore the lineaments of its defaced beauty. Hence, we must go **outside** of ourselves, if we would be made whole—we must go to **Jesus**, the great physician, and use the curatives he prescribes: "repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." and when, renouncing all trust in ourselves, and the panaceas of a vain philosophy, and all the prescriptions of those **moral charlatans**, who promise you salvation on other terms than those laid down in the Bible—you go direct to Christ, not stopping to relieve your blindness a little, to remove your leprosy a little, to heal your palsy a little, before you go—but go, just as you are—

as **blind** as Bartimeus;

as full of **leprosy** as Naaman;

as **helpless** as the Bethesda Paralytic;

as spiritually beside yourself as the Demoniac of Gadara

—go, just as you are, having no plea but Christ's merits, and your need; and the Savior ...

who said to the **blind**, "receive your sight"—and they saw;

who commanded the paralyzed to "rise"—and he walked;

who willed the healing of the leper—and "he was clean;"

who bade depart the legion spirits from the demoniac—and he was restored to his right mind

—will speak the word of healing to you, and say, as he said of old, "**Son, be**

of good cheer, your sins are forgiven—go in peace!"

They Teach us that Man has a Soul

Among many other interesting truths taught by the Anatomy and Physiology of man, I can mention but one more, and that is, ***they teach us that man has a soul.***

In examining the human form, we find that it consists of a number of perfectly distinct organs and mechanisms, each marvelous in itself and each united to others, and all bound into one body by a nervous system, which, found in every part, controls every part, and makes each do the bidding of the common sensorium, the brain.

We find also that it is a physiological law that no organ or function is self-acting; it must be set in action by influences outside of itself.

The ***lungs***, perfect in their pneumatic apparatus, cannot act without air; the ***bones***, constructed and arranged on the finest principles of mechanics cannot act as levers and supports without muscular contraction; the ***heart***, admirable in its hydraulic properties, cannot pulsate without blood.

The ***optic nerve*** must be excited by light; and the ***ear***, with its wonderful acoustic principles, hears only as the delicate organs are stimulated by sound.

But, when we come to the ***brain*** we find no more self-acting power there than in the organs named; its structure is merely automatic; it can display no phenomena of itself; it requires an agent outside of itself to excite its action—just as much as the lungs air, the eye light, or the ear sound. and now the question arises: ***What is that agent?*** We answer boldly, the immortal soul!

But whence, and what is, this soul?

Shall we say with the most recent and refined form of materialism, that "**mind** is a subtle product evolved out of matter, and destined to an endless existence."

Shall we say, "that the **mind** is the consequence or product of the material man; that it is not a thing having a seat or home in the brain—but the manifest or expression of the brain in action, as heat and light are of fire, and fragrance of the flower."

With Hartley, shall we say that "the **mind** a vibration of the fibers of the brain." With Hooke, shall we say that "there is a matter in the brain intended to receive the impressions of sound, which may be compared to the bells and vases which Vitruvius describes as being placed in the ancient theaters, and that thinking is the radiation of the soul from one part of the brain to another." or shall we say with some of the French philosophers, that "as the stomach secretes bile—so does the brain secrete thought."

Take any one of these, or any one of the many propositions which would set aside the doctrine of a God-created soul, immaterial and immortal, yet acting through a material and mortal organism—and you involve yourselves in doubt, perplexity, and sorrow. You must **explain** things which are inexplicable; you must **assume premises** which are not assumable; you must **draw conclusions** which are not logical; you must work upon **hypotheses** which are the wildest conjectures of prating sceptics, and commit yourselves to the guidance of men whose first labor is to quench the light of the Bible, and then, by means of the **flitting light of a decomposing philosophy**—explore the region of the soul, and seek to transmute its ethereal powers into atomic particles and ever-changing organisms.

As well might you expect to gain a knowledge of the Physiology of the **eye** or the **ear**, by first setting aside the whole science of optics and acoustics, and proceed in your studies with the expectation of finding the source of light in the retina, and the source of sound in the tympanum—and reason thence, that light and sound are but evolutions of the optic and auditive nerves—as to study the Physiology of man by first ignoring the soul as a distinct existence; and then, because you find the instrument of thought, sensation, emotion—say that these instruments are so many parts of the mind, and that this mind is nothing more than the sensory ganglia of the cerebrum, receiving to itself, as a common sensorium, the influences from a thousand nerve-centers, and sending out from it, reflex sensations, along the whole nerve-tract of the human system.

Now each of these truths which the Anatomy and Physiology of man dimly shadow forth—but which our own consciousness tells us are the great facts of the moral being—the Bible fully unfolds. Where we need **light**—it gives light; where we need **certainty**—it gives certainty; where we seek for **guidance**—it takes us by the hand and guides our feet into the paths of Peace.

The Bible tells us that God did make man's body of the dust; that His hands took pains in his construction; that He clothed him with skin and flesh, and fenced him with bones and sinews.

The Bible tells us that **man is a fallen being**; that "God made man upright—but that he sought out many inventions;" that "they have all gone out of the way; that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

The Bible tells us that **man has in him the seeds of death**; that "He comes up and is cut down like a flower, he flees as a shadow, and never continues;" that the irreversible decree of God is, "Dust you are—and unto dust shall you

return."

The Bible tells us that ***man is a being under moral law***; that this is a perfect, holy, just, and good law; that all men, as the creatures of God, are under the law of God, for He rules among the armies of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of Earth; that this law is written in the hearts and consciences of men, as well as in the broad code of the two tables—or the broader interpretation of that code, in the Gospel of Christ.

The Bible tells us that ***man has a soul***, breathed into him by the breath of God, and endowed with immortality; a soul, capable of vast expansion, vast comprehension, vast enjoyment—and which shall forever dwell in eternal woe, or rise to eternal bliss in Heaven.

The Bible tells us that there is ***reparation for our diseased and sin-prostrated souls***:

that "there is balm in Gilead, and a physician there;"

that Jesus "waits to be gracious;"

that he invites us to receive the healing which he offers;

that his cures never fail; that his power never wearies;

that his grace is never lacking;

that his language to the sin-sick in heart is, "Behold I will bring it health and cure, I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth."

Thus beautifully accord the teachings of Anatomy and Physiology and the truths of God's holy Word. It is only lately, indeed, that these sciences have given out such utterances; or rather, it is only lately that they have been noticed and interpreted, for uttered they have ever been, though the ***dull ear*** heard not their sound, and the ***bleary eye*** saw not their type.

There is yet, however, one point to which I wish to carry your thoughts—but which lies outside the province of physical science. But though not within the purview of Anatomy and Physiology, they yet point to it. I mean the *glorified body* which shall enrobe the soul in Heaven. that the soul shall have an embodied existence there; that it shall have a personal identity and corporate manifestation—the Bible fully declares. What its real nature will be—we know not. It will not be formed of the component elements of our present bodies, for Paul declares, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." It will not be fashioned of materials needing nutrition and reparation, for "it shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more." It shall not be subjected to the wearing processes of sickness and sorrow, for it shall never suffer pain, never weep a tear, and "sorrow and sighing shall forever flee away."

It is not a body of dust, to be again resolved into dust, for though "sown" in the grave "in corruption"—it will be "raised in incorruption," and "this corruptible shall put on incorruption."

It is not a *natural* or a *terrestrial* body—but a *spiritual* and *celestial* body, made like unto Christ's glorified body, the body of his resurrection, the body of his ascension, the body which he even now wears at the right hand of God. But who shall describe that body? Who shall analyze its elements? Who shall tell its functions? Who shall reveal its laws of being? Like the disciples on the Mount of Ascension—we can gaze up into Heaven, looking intently after the ascending body of him who has gone up there—but a cloud receives him out of our sight, and we come down from the mount with strained eyeballs and aching hearts!

Yet, we know this much, that our "bodies shall be fashioned like unto Jesus' glorious body." That, though "it does not yet appear what we shall be, we know that when Christ shall appear—we shall be like him, for we shall see

him as he is." that "this mortal shall put on immortality," and that planted with Jesus "in the likeness of his death—we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

"Thus, as the simplest organism of animals points, by its structure, upward to man—so man's earthly frame points to his heavenly frame, and his heavenly frame to Christ's spiritual body, and we see that all animated things on earth, point onward to Christ's glorified humanity, as the grand archetype of all that has life."

The bodies which you now bear about with you, must soon die. Your **healing arts** cannot destroy death—they can only prolong, for a little while, a **dying life**. But the soul, which inhabits your body, shall not die—it "shall return to God, who gave it."

Would we, however, rise from the grave with a glorified body, made like unto Christ's body—it can only be ...

by having our "life hidden with Christ;"

by having our hearts linked with his, by a living faith;

by having our natures renewed by the Holy Spirit;

by having our sins washed away in atoning blood;

by having our souls arrayed in Christ's spotless righteousness;

by having Christ "formed within us the hope of glory."

And thus pardoned, repentant, and believing—we shall rise to newness of life; and these vile bodies, these bodies of our fall, these bodies of dust and breath "shall be changed, and made like unto his own glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself"—and "so shall we be forever with the Lord."

Young gentlemen, I have thrown out these thoughts more by way of

suggestion than amplification, and wish them to lie in your minds as seed-thoughts, which may perhaps, by and by, ripen into goodly fruit.

Engrossed, as you are, in your study of **second** causes, you are in great danger of forgetting the **first** great cause; and though there is no created being on earth who centers in himself so many proofs of Divine wisdom, power, goodness, and truth—as **man**; and hence, none who so loudly proclaims the being and attributes of God—yet, because you are engaged in searching out physical relations and functions, for the purpose of applying to them the lessons of Pathology, the directions of Therapeutics, and the remedies of modern medicine—you are tempted to stop short of the higher teachings of Anatomy and Physiology, or repudiate them altogether. Remember the weighty words of Lord Bacon: "A little Philosophy inclines men's minds to atheism—but depth in Philosophy brings men's minds about to religion; for while the mind of man looks upon **second** causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no farther—but, when it beholds the chain of them confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity."

It was because I felt the full force of this profound remark, that I wished to bring before you, in connection with your daily studies, **higher thoughts** than you learn in the schools—and more **sacred teachings** than you find in your text-books. I wished you to feel that when you had studied man as a **material** being, you had studied only the **outside** of that structure which God built for the dwelling and temple of the soul; that you can know man aright only as you know his **moral** relations—as you know his present position in the scale of being, as you know his future destiny. and that this knowledge, this highest of all sciences, this most needed of all acquirements—can be learned only in the Word of God.

It is, however, pleasant to know that the more perfect a science becomes—the

more it accords with the Bible. in the youth of every science, there is a period when, like the prodigal in the parable—it leaves its father's house, and goes into a far country and wastes its substance in skeptical babbling. But before long, it tires of its husks and its exile, and growing wiser and more reflective—it comes back and asks to be received "as a hired servant" of the God of knowledge. and the God of knowledge, honoring a science which honors him—puts upon it the tokens of a father's love, and permits it to minister before him.

And though a surly scepticism, like an "elder son," shall become angry, and refuse to go into the house of wisdom—yet, neither the taunts of infidelity nor the scoffs of the profane, shall hush one note of that song of gladness which religion shall yet sing over every returning science as it comes back to its father's house. "***This my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found!***"

And what a beautiful ministry will that be, when the great sciences of earth shall come like the twelve Apostles of nature—to worship and kneel before him "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge!" for come they assuredly will. Nothing is more clearly discerned by the observant eye, than the fact that, every step which science takes in advance, is a step towards Scriptural revelation; and this must of necessity be so, for as science is but knowledge, as all human knowledge is confined to God's works, so must a deeper knowledge of God's works become more accordant with God's words, for they have one author—the God of truth.

It is only a shallow science—which babbles because it is shallow, which talks with braggart tongue against the Bible. It is only a vain philosophy, puffed up with its own windiness—which rails at the religion of Jesus. It is only the would-be wise men, with a smattering of scientific terms upon their lips, and

real ignorance in their minds—who lift up their vaunting voice in the exclamation of a heathen king, "Who is the Lord that I should serve him? I know not the Lord—neither will I obey his voice."

Beware of all these. They are dangerous, not from their knowledge—but from their pertness, their profanity, their folly! for if you once begin the career of the *scorner*, and go on in the way of the *skeptic*—you put in peril every interest of mind, and body, and soul, for time and for eternity. for as that black magnetic mountain which we read of in Arabian story, drew out by its irresistible attractions the iron bolts which held together the strong timbers of the gallant frigate, which seemed to float securely on the distant wave, until one fastening after another being loosened, the whole ship fell apart a disjointed wreck—so the black magnetic mountain of *infidelity* exerts its irresistible influence upon all who come within the sphere of its attraction, and though you may seem to be some distance off—yet its effects are soon apparent in the loosening of the bolts and fastenings of your moral frame, in the drawing out one by one, the clamps of *virtue*, until what was the form of a once stately character—falls away piece by piece, and you lie a helpless wreck off life's surging sea!

Rather let it be your aim to sit at the feet of Jesus, and be taught of him. for as "in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"—so the student of Christ ... *drinks* from no distant and turbid stream—but from the *living well-spring*;

and is *taught* by no false philosophers—but by Incarnate truth;

and is *led* into no alienation from God—but brought into living sonship to Jehovah;

and is *made wise* not in the imperfect science of earth—but in that knowledge which makes wise unto salvation.

And when you attain to this wisdom, you shall then find that ...
the noblest **knowledge** is to know God;
the noblest **wisdom** is to revere him;
the noblest **gift** is to love him;
the noblest **art** is to glorify him, and
the noblest **ambition** is to grow up into the Divine likeness, and receive,
through the operation of a living faith—that **sonship** by which you became
"an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ—to an incorruptible,
undefiled, and unfading inheritance in Heaven!

The Loveliness of Christ!^(TOC)

"Yes, He is altogether lovely! this is my Beloved, and this is my Friend!"—Song of Songs 5:16

Excellence mental, moral or physical—will always command attention. We are so constituted as to admire, almost instinctively, whatever is virtuous, or lovely, or of good report; and the nearer man approaches to God, the greater will be the admiration which such a character will elicit. in vain, however, do we search among men for even one example of ***perfect excellence in all the attributes of humanity***. We can find those who have been distinguished for some one or more excellencies; who have manifested a large philanthropy, or profound humility, or unswerving honor, or heroic devotion, or exulted patriotism, or expansive benevolence; but one cannot be found who embodied in himself ***all*** these perfections in full and symmetrical proportion.

Yet our text tells us of one who is "altogether lovely;" in whom every virtue dwelt, every excellence met, every glory was manifested; and we can certainly be at no loss to designate the being who merits this title, as our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But this is mere ***assertion***—let us now to the ***proof***. this proof, however, naturally arranges itself under two heads, corresponding to the two natures of Jesus Christ, human and divine; and our attention, therefore, must first be given to the ***human*** excellencies of Jesus.

But before we can rightly estimate his human character, we must take into consideration the many ***disadvantages*** which, in a worldly point of view, tended to cramp his powers, and dwarf his virtues. He had, for example, no advantages of ***birth***; for his reputed parents were so poor, that he was born in

a stable. He had no advantages of **education** in the Jewish schools, for the Rabbis themselves, astonished at his words, exclaim, "How did this man get such learning without having studied?" He had no advantages of **society**, for he dwelt in the crude district of Galilee, and in the lowly town of Nazareth; and his character in its forming stage, was acted upon only by the harsh influences of base and uneducated men. He had no advantages of **profession**; he was not a Scribe, or a Priest, or a Levite, or a Pharisee, or a Sadducee, to claim affinity with any of these powerful classes, and by them to be lifted up into notice and influence. He had no advantages of **companionship**; the first thirty years of his life were spent among the mechanics and peasants of Nazareth; and when he entered upon his mission, he chose as his **friends**, not the titled and the learned and the powerful—but the brawny sunburnt fisherman, and the outcast publicans. If, then, from any human character you subtract the advantages conferred by birth, rank, education, companionship, wealth, and influence—how little will remain as a basis upon which to erect a broad and elevated superstructure of greatness! But from the character of Jesus these must all be removed; and not only so—but they must be regarded as antagonizing elements, tending to break him down and destroy his influence.

In considering the **positive** elements of Christ's character, we shall look at him first in **PRIVATE** life. How simple and frugal in his habits! his ordinary diet seems to have been bread and fish; his journeyings were all on foot, except his last entry into Jerusalem; his lodging uncertain, the casual accommodation provided by friends, themselves poor and needy. He was modest, and seemed to shrink from the intrusive gaze of the populace. Not a **jest** or **slander** ever escaped his lips; purity, propriety, and holiness—reigned over every hour of his retirement, and the **finger of malice** could not point to a single stain or error in his entire private life.

Look at him in **PUBLIC** life—his characteristic work was "going about doing good." His benevolence knew no bounds, it gushed out in every act, and virtue went out from the very "hem of his garment." At his touch, thousands of sufferers languishing in disease took up their beds and walked; at his word the **blind** saw, the **deaf** heard, the **dumb** spoke, the **maimed** were made whole, and the **dead** came back to life and health. The whole ministry of Jesus was a ministry of philanthropy—full of sympathy, full of compassion, full of love. Where can we find him, that he is not doing good or planning good to his fellow men?

Look at him among his **friends!** He never lowered himself to anything base or ignoble; he never trifled, boasted, or deceived; he had no pride or vanity, no weakness or foible. Though poor—he never coveted riches; though humbly born—he never sought to mingle with the great; he practiced no arts to win and retain his friends; and held out no lures—but spiritual ones, to the multitudes who resorted to him for instruction and discipleship.

Look at him among his **enemies!** He is calm, self-possessed, void of malice, and majestic in the simplicity of his own goodness and truth. We see no cringing to power, no dalliance with popular feeling, no timidity, no yielding up of truth; but he stood among them in that attitude of conscious virtue, and poised benignity—superlatively grand. No passion tinged his cheek with the red spot of anger; no malice roughened into ridges his serene brow.

Composed amidst the wildest tumult, submissive to grossest insults, meek under the most demoniacal mockings—"he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep is silent before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth." Silent, indeed, to man! but not speechless to God, for when nailed to his cross, when torn with the death throes of crucifixion his lips move—he speaks, and as we listen we hear—no murmur—no reviling—no reproach—

but the words of prayer—prayer not for himself—not for his disciples—not for his mother—but for his **enemies**; and the supplication is, "Father, **forgive** them, for they know not what they do."

Look at him as a **teacher!** His doctrines are the most holy, interesting, and sublime, that ever fell from the lips of man. They were designed to revolutionize the world—and they will revolutionize the world. Yet with what **plainness** and **simplicity** did he deliver them! By the wayside, on the seashore, in the house, around the festive table, in the courts of the temple, and on the grassy mount. a beautiful parable, a touching allegory, a delicate comparison, an axiomatic sentence, an exposition in the synagogue, a night talk with Nicodemus, or a parting conversation with his disciples—were the vehicles of his mighty truths. We observe no magisterial airs, nothing dogmatic or pragmatic—but all comes out in the natural incidents of daily interaction, and with a simplicity worthy of a heavenly mind.

Look at him in his **MENTAL** characteristics. He possessed every element of mental greatness and loveliness. His teaching evidenced his divine wisdom. His interactions with various men and sects displayed his judgment. His controversies with the Scribes and Pharisees, and Sadducees, and Herodians, evinced the strength and acumen of his reason. His exhaustless fund of illustration, his ready subsidizing to his use of all nature, manifested his knowledge. and his gigantic scheme of reconciling God and man, embracing as it did two worlds, running backwards to creation's dawn, and forward through all eternity—show the breadth and stature of his peerless intellect.

"The ingredients of genuine human greatness undoubtedly are true wisdom, strength of soul, an invincible will, and an expansive benevolence." Combine these, and you make **one altogether lovely**. Such was Jesus Christ. He possessed ...

wisdom unalloyed by a single folly;
strength of mind unimpaired by a single weakness;
calmness and serenity of soul that never, in his darkest hour, forsook him;
and a singleness of aim and firmness of purpose, that knew no shadow of turning.

"A soul full of wisdom, calmly reposing on its own greatness, working out a great scheme of future good, and patiently biding the day of its triumph amidst everything to thwart and discourage, is one of the sublimest manifestations of the human mind."

But you may say that this is a character of Christ drawn by one of his professed followers; well, then, let me give it to you as drawn by a profligate infidel, who, writing of Jesus Christ, uses these remarkable words: "What sweetness! what purity in his manners! what affecting grace in his instructions! what elevation in his maxims! what profound wisdom in his discourses! what presence of mind, what delicacy, what justness in his replies! what government of his passions! where is the man, where is the philosopher who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die without weakness, and without ostentation? the death of Socrates severely philosophizing with his friends, is the most *gentle* that one can desire. that of Jesus expiring in torments, injured, derided, reviled by a whole people, is the most *horrible* that one can fear. Yet, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a philosopher—then the life and death of Jesus Christ are those of a God." Thus wrote *Rousseau*, and such is the testimony of one of Jesus' most daring blasphemers and licentious enemies.

But would we know the full loveliness of Jesus Christ, we must briefly glance at his DIVINE as well as human excellencies. At a time when the human race had completely alienated itself from God, when the wide

impassable gulf of sin lay between the creature and the Creator, when the covenant with God had been broken, and the justice of God required the destruction of the sinner—then it was, that Jesus Christ voluntarily, and by the impellings of his infinite love, "Made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant," that he might in our nature mediate between man and God, and work out in this nature, a full and complete salvation.

In order to secure this end, however, there were certain things to be done which could only be accomplished by enduring great sacrifices and sufferings of a mental, moral, and physical nature—such as no mere *human* being could bear, such as no *divine* being deserved. Yet such as must be borne, before God could be reconciled to man, and man be pardoned by God. Knowing by his divine foreknowledge all things that would befall him, Jesus Christ most cheerfully assumed our humanity, became "a man of sorrows," endured "the contradiction of sinners," suffered the reproaches of Jews and Gentiles, was persecuted with cruelty, and, after a few years, suffered death for sinful man and by sinful men upon the cross. in consequence of his faithful obedience of the law, of his infinite merits, of his vicarious death, of his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, of his present exaltation and intercession—he has made himself "the Mediator of the New Covenant," and by his mediatorial work has made it possible for God to be just to himself, to his holy law, to the holy angels—and yet the justifier of all those who believe in Jesus, and accept him in his work and offices, as the Savior of their souls.

All this was *love's work*. "He *loved* us," says the Apostle, "and *gave* himself for us."

Love prompted the rescue of the race;
love robed him in the garments of flesh and blood;
love bowed down his head as a man of sorrow;

love made him obedient to the law;
love humbled him to the death of the cross.

His whole mediatorial work, from its **conception** in the counsels of the Godhead, to its **accomplishment** on the world's first Easter morning—was but the manifestation of infinite love. Are we not right in speaking of him who did it, as "altogether lovely!" **His heart was love's original fountain**—and it welled up perpetually with **words** of love, and dripped over continually with **deeds** of love, and sent out its ever broadening **rills** of love to every quarter of the globe, making the else desert wastes of humanity, green and fertile in the graces of his overflowing affection.

As full of love **in himself**—he must be "altogether lovely." As full of love **towards others**, illustrating its depth and affluence by its unceasing outgoings, to every living being—he must be "altogether lovely." As planning out for us schemes of release from sin and Satan and death, from misery here and woe hereafter, from the frown of God, and the companionship of devils—he must be "altogether lovely." As bringing us into favor, reconciliation, and relationship with God, as introducing us into the society of saints and angels, as enabling us to overcome death and the grave, as opening to us mansions of bliss in Heaven, as elevating us to be "kings and priests unto God" in his holy temple not made with hands, where we shall **sin** no more, and **sorrow** no more, and **weep** no more, and **die** no more—but where we shall be forever with the Lord, as one who can and will do all this for us—he must be "altogether lovely!"

Yet there is still one aspect more in which Jesus Christ is altogether lovely. As nothing is truly lovely except as it approximates to divinity; and as everything is lovely in proportion as it is an emanation or reflection of the divine being—so that which is most full of God must be most full of

loveliness, "for God is love." in Jesus Christ therefore, this love is perfect; for "in him," says Paul, "dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." He is the image or human representative to us of the invisible God, for "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," and we can behold God only as we see him "in the face of Jesus Christ."

God in his own essence, being, and existence, is absolutely incomprehensible; therefore we can have no direct intuitive notions or apprehensions of the divine nature, or any of its properties. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for us."

God is a *spirit*—and we are flesh and blood;

God is *eternal*—and we are mortal;

God is *infinite*—and we are finite;

God is *omnipotent*—and we are impotent;

how then, where there is such *infinite disparity*—can we know God?

Some of the attributes of Jehovah we may indeed learn from nature: "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork." the ten thousand varieties of *idols* which natural religion has carved out for itself, prove, however, that *unaided reason* could never "by searching find out God." and even when revelation was given, how was it possible by a mere external doctrinal description of the divine nature, without any *exemplification* or real representation of it—to get a sufficient idea and a right understanding of God? Scripture, it is true, did indeed contain over and over again this doctrinal description of his nature and attributes; but what the world needed and what it sighed after, was an *embodying* of these in definite form, such as we could look upon, and study, and love, and feel ourselves attracted to, and worship. All this was done in the person of Jesus Christ. He is the image of the invisible God, "the brightness of the Father's glory, and

the express image of his person." Hence he is the complete and perfect representation of the Divine being and excellencies. It is **God in Christ** that we love and adore. It is God in Christ, "reconciling the world unto himself," who is thus "altogether lovely."

This limitless subject opens before us many avenues of thought, any one of which, if followed out, will lead us into boundless fields of high and holy and rapturous meditation.

The **character** of Christ, either in its human or divine phases, is not enough studied; it is looked at with too much of a passing glance, so that we get only hasty and superficial views, which consequently have but a faint and passing influence upon our heart and lives. We must study it, sit down before it, as a painter would sit down before the masterpieces of a Raphael—gazing upon it, pondering over it, tracing out its developing lines and beauties—until the soul becomes fired by its excellencies, and is changed into His image.

Angels and the saints in Heaven who see Christ in his heavenly glory, and who know something of his divine excellencies—must wonder at the lack of enthusiasm in professing Christians concerning the loveliness of Christ. They are amazed that we ...

look upon Him with so cold an eye;
speak of Him with so tame a tongue;
love Him with such a lukewarm heart; and
labor for Him with such a drudging heavy spirit.

It is our privilege to love this altogether lovely one, and we lose a rich and precious employment when we fail to do it. There is no higher pleasure for a redeemed soul—than contemplating the glories of Jesus. While we muse, the fire burns. There is no surer evidence of a gracious state—than a thirsting

after deeper knowledge of Jesus, and a more thorough conformity to his likeness. The great and crowning bliss of Heaven consists ...
not in its seraphic melodies;
not in its gorgeous displays of almighty power;
not in its exemption from sorrow and and sighing;
not in its ceaseless round of high intellectual joys—but ...
in seeing the ***unveiled Christ*** with undimmed eyes;
in studying the loveliness of the ever present Redeemer with unfettered mind;
in daily discovering and admiring new points of His beauty;
and in having our souls, through all eternity, made the ***receptacles*** of the light, the joy, the peace, the holiness, the love, and the wisdom of Him, who is "the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely One!"

Jesus Christ and Him Crucified![\(TOC\)](#)

A sermon, preached by William Bacon Stevens in Philadelphia, October 11, 1865, on the occasion of the ordination of Charles Quintard.

*"When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. for I resolved to know nothing while I was with you, except Jesus Christ and him crucified!"—
1 Corinthians 2:1-2*

Corinth, situated on that remarkable isthmus which united the Morea and the Peloponnesus, was one of the principal cities of Greece. If Athens boasted of its Acropolis, crowned with the statue of the virgin goddess—then Corinth prided itself in its Acro-Corinthus, towering two thousand feet above the sea, as if to guard that isthmus, which Xenophon has termed "the gate of the Peloponnesus."

Athens took the lead of Greece in *intellectual* culture and artistic treasures—but Corinth was the *common market* of the Aegean.

When Paul left Athens, he went at once to Corinth. At *Athens* he had encountered philosophers of various schools, and idolatry in its most fascinating form. He was now to meet a different class of people; the busy trader—the bustling merchant—the reckless sailor—the rough mechanic, and the varied elements which make up the noisy, sinful population of a great seaport.

Yet with a wisdom and skill imparted by the Holy Spirit, he accommodated himself to his new position, and began his great work of planting in that city, the very name of which was synonymous with immorality—the gospel of the Son of God. He succeeded. a church was gathered, and organized, and the new religion got a firm foothold in that great city. But how was this accomplished? What were the *instrumentalities* by which so great a triumph was achieved? Paul tells us in the text, "When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. for I resolved to know nothing while I was with you, except Jesus Christ and him crucified!"

He did not then attempt to plant the religion of Jesus Christ on a *worldly* basis—such as *eloquence*, wisdom, or philosophy. The propagators of all new religions have established their tenets on a worldly basis, namely, by the sword—by civil compulsion—by the arts of superstition—or by the molding power of eloquence or human wisdom. Paul eschewed each and all of these, saying, "For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you, except Jesus Christ and him crucified!"

This declaration he made not to the ignorant and the unrefined—but to those who gloried in eloquence; who made their boast of wisdom, and who regarded as *barbarians* all who came not within the magic circle of Greek learning and Greek philosophy. It shows the *boldness* of the Apostle in thus setting at naught, that on which the Corinthians so much prided themselves; and also his *confidence* in the power of the truth which he preached, when he determined to set it forth, not in its most attractive phase to a Gentile mind—but in all its apparent ignominy and reproach—when he resolved to preach at Corinth, not Christ as a *Prophet* greater than the world's greatest seers, not Christ as a *Priest* higher than the highest Pontifex of earth, not Christ as a

King seated on a throne of universal dominion—but Christ dying, Christ on the Cross, hung up between Heaven and earth, rejected by the Jews, despised by the Greeks, crucified by the Romans!

It must have seemed strange to that cultivated people to be told, that they must believe in the divine character and marvelous works and offered mediation of a Jew—a Jew crucified, a Jew whom his own nation hung on a tree—or else be forever lost. Yet as strange as it was, they were told with an **emphasis** and **directness** not qualified by courtly eloquence, or garnished with rhetorical grace—that unless they believed in and received this **crucified Jesus** as their Lord and Savior, they not only could not be saved—but would be visited with the eternal wrath of God!

The question then arises: What is it to **know** Jesus Christ and Him crucified? It is to **understand** and **proclaim** the plan of salvation, of which Christ is the central and controlling power—that scheme of grace revealed in God's word for the redemption of the world. If now we look for a moment at this great plan, we shall find that it incorporates within itself the very highest, broadest, deepest knowledge which the human mind is capable of receiving; and that which at first sight seems to be a very narrow circle of knowledge—the knowledge of Jesus Christ is, indeed, when truly understood—the widest circle which the intellect can compass, for the circumference of it takes in the very being and perfections of God, as well as the nature and destiny of man!

The aspect in which the Apostle contemplated Jesus Christ, was that of being in himself, as he says in another place, "the power of God, and the wisdom of God," centering, in himself ...

the attributes of God,
the scheme of grace,
the offices necessary for salvation,

and the perfections of humanity.

There are two points which the Apostle brings out here, of vital importance.

He says,

1st, "For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ," that is, Christ in his PERSON.

And, 2ndly, "And him crucified," that is, Christ in his WORK.

Christ in his *person* and Christ in his *work* then, is the one great theme of the Apostle.

Let us see what is involved in a knowledge of each of these points.

Person

To know Christ in his *PERSON*, it is not enough that we know a *man* named Jesus, the reputed son of Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth, who, more than eighteen hundred years ago, lived in Judea. It is not enough that we know Jesus as a *teacher*, instructing the people in the sublimest truths and mysteries, such truths as the greatest masters of human thought and the greatest founders of schools of philosophy only dimly saw or vaguely conjectured. It is not enough that we know Jesus as an *exemplar*, showing in his daily life, in his private as well as public acts, by his words as by his deeds, in the house and by the way, in his fellowship with the great as with the poor—the most spotless model of human conduct, so that his bitter enemies were compelled to say we "find no fault in him." It is not enough that we know Jesus as the *founder* of a new religion, like Confucius, or Buddha, or Zoroaster, or Mohammed.

We may know Jesus in these several aspects through the pages of history, or by the traditions of men—and yet this knowledge may be no more *influential* on our lives than that which we thus have concerning Alexander the Great, or Plato the philosopher, or Pericles the statesman.

To know Christ in his *person*—is to know, recognize, and acknowledge Him in the divine constitution of his being, by which He is revealed to us as true God and true man united in one person—the Messiah of the Jews, the Christ of the Gentiles, the Savior of the world.

It is not necessary that we should know the metaphysics of this truth or the rationale of the hypostatic union of the two natures, human and divine; it is not necessary that we should explain the philosophy of such a scheme as He came to execute, or unravel the mysteries of his own incarnation and sacrifice; but it is necessary that we should fully accept the plain revelations of the Bible on this subject, and that we should take Christ and believe in Him just in the aspect, and in all the fullness of that aspect in which He is revealed to us in the Bible.

We must know Him to be man born of a woman, made in the likeness of sinful flesh, made like unto his brethren, with a true human body, a true human soul, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David, tempted in all points like as we are, a man of established personal identity, with a full and recognized social, civil, and religious status among the people with whom He dwelt.

Having at times no food, He is hungry;
having at times no water, He thirsts;
with long journeys, He is wearied;
prostrate with fatigue, He sleeps;

witnessing grief, He weeps;
moved by compassion, He blesses;
sorrowful in heart, He sighs;
needing divine strength, He prays;
loving God, He worships;
He repays affection with blessing;
He receives the gratuities of friends with thanks;
He dies on the Cross, as a condemned malefactor;
and with the human cry of surrender, "Father, in your hands I commend my
spirit," He gives up His spirit.

Thus was He truly man. and had He not been this true man, one with us in
nature, form, function, living and suffering and dying—He could not have ...
stood in man's place,
borne man's sin,
endured man's penalty,
atoned for man's guilt, and
worked out man's salvation.

For, as Paul says, "In all things it behooved Him to be made like unto his
brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things
pertaining to God."

But much as we insist on the true manhood of Christ—He was something
more. He was true God. in union with this *human* nature, was a *divine*
nature; not such a union as elevated the human nature into the divine, nor yet
dwarfed the divine nature by the human—but each perfectly separate—yet so
conjointly acting in a way and process mysterious to us—yet fully revealed,
as to constitute Him at once the "word" which "was God," and the "word"
which "was made flesh"—the *Immanuel*, God with us.

Now to know Christ, even in this phase of his character, is to know the sublimest historical character in the annals of the world; one who by his simple teachings has ...

overtaken more institutions of error,
built up more grand schemes of right,
spread abroad more **truth**,
shed more **light**, and
dispensed more **blessing**—
than all other human beings combined!

You have only with a docile mind to open your Bible and read ...

the **acts** done by Christ,
the **attributes** ascribed to Him,
the **titles** bestowed upon Him,
the divine **worship** given to Him,
the **judgment** which He is to exercise, and
the **work** which He came on earth to do—
to be convinced that, as the Apostle says, "In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." this is that **great mystery of godliness**—God manifest in the flesh, which finite minds cannot comprehend, because the measuring lines of human reason stretch not out to the infinitude of God, and the sounding line of human thought strikes no bottom in the unfathomable depths of the divine existence!

Now, as it was necessary to believe that Jesus Christ is a **real man** in order to qualify Him to be a real kinsman-redeemer for men, so also is it necessary to believe that Jesus Christ should be the **true God** in order to qualify Him to magnify the law, bear the penalty due to it, and make such an atonement as could satisfy an infinitely holy God and vindicate an infinitely holy law. No

other than a **divine** being could reconcile God and man—for the presence of the divine **nature** gave ...

to the obedience of Christ—a divine **value**,
and to the sacrifice of Christ—a divine **efficacy**,
and to the mediation of Christ—a divine **sufficiency**,
and to the redemption by Christ—a divine **completeness**,
and to the salvation of Christ—a divine **fullness**—
without which ...

the obedience of the law would have been valueless,
the sacrifice of Christ—would have been inefficient,
the mediation of Christ—would have been insufficient,
the redemption of Christ—would have been incomplete, and
the salvation of Christ—would have been defective alike in its grace, its
hopes, and its rewards here and hereafter.

There is then no true knowledge of Jesus Christ, which does not know Him in this **double aspect** as the God-man, Christ Jesus. Thus Paul knew, loved, worshiped, and preached Him. Thus the early church recognized and honored Him. Thus all the holy angels regarded Him, and thus will He be adored by the eternal worship of the General Assembly and Church of the new-born, whose names are written in Heaven.

We perceive, then, that there is involved in the knowledge of the person of Christ a knowledge of his full **humanity** and full **deity** in his divine constitution and attributes, and this comprehends a full knowledge of God as revealed in the face of Jesus Christ, for He, says Paul, is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person.

Work

But we pass on to the second point, the knowledge of Christ in his **WORK**, expressed by the Apostle in the phrase "**Him crucified.**"

As all the knowledge which God has revealed to us concerning himself centers directly or indirectly in the person of Christ, as being the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person—so all the operations of divine grace center in a crucified Christ as being the sole object of the world's faith and salvation. God's covenant of grace is in its every part **morticed** into the cross of Calvary. Take that cross away—and atonement, redemption and restoration to the favor and enjoyment of God, have no existence. They each derive their **efficacy** from their relation to the cross. Listen to a few quotations, to show how the Bible regards the cross. What was the one theme of Paul's preaching? Writing to the Corinthians, he says, "we preach Christ crucified," and in another place he calls it the preaching of the Cross. How was Christ presented as an object of faith to the people? As a **lamb slain**, as a sacrifice, or, as he tells the Galatians, "Christ has been evidently set forth **crucified** among you."

Through what **instrumentality** was peace and reconciliation effected? "Having made peace through the blood of the Cross," "we are reconciled in one body by the Cross." How was the old legal demand against us, that handwriting of ordinances, which was contrary to us, removed? It was done by Christ, says Paul, "taking it out of the way and nailing it to his Cross." What was it that has redeemed us unto God? Corruptible things, as silver and gold? No; but the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb, a bleeding lamb, the lamb slain on the altar of the Cross.

What did the Apostle regard as the concrete, the very quintessence of knowledge? to know Jesus Christ and Him crucified! How would the Apostle express our mortification of sin and our required deadness to the world? "I

am crucified with Christ." What was the highest glory that fired the ambition of this great Apostle? "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Who is He who walks amidst the seven golden candlesticks, whose eyes were as a flame of fire, whose voice was as the sound of many waters, who had in his right hand seven stars, out of whose mouth went a two-edged sword, and whose countenance was as the sun shining in his strength? Let himself answer: "I am He who lives, and was dead and am alive for evermore."

Who is He who only of all the beings in Heaven could open the seven-sealed book and unfold the future of the Church of the world? "The **Lamb** in the midst of the throne as it had been slain." What is the chorus of that new song of the four and twenty elders which is sung by the angels round the throne, and the living creatures and the elders and ten thousand times ten thousand? "Worthy is the **Lamb** who was slain." Whence came that white-robed and palm-bearing throng who are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in his temple? Those "who have washed their robes and made them white in the **blood** of the Lamb."

And in that grand description of the marriage-supper in Heaven, when the bride of the Church has made herself ready—who is it that is represented as her spouse? One who sits upon a white horse leading the armies of Heaven, clad in white, also, on white horses; one on whose vesture and on whose thigh is a name written "King of Kings and Lord of Lords;" one who had on his head many crowns; and one—mark the emphatic language! "who was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood," the blood of the Cross, "and whose name is called the Word of God."

Thus the scheme of redemption in its every part and place, in earth and in Heaven—is linked with the **Cross of Christ**, so that he who knows Christ

crucified—knows all the truths which center in and radiate from that one fact, which constitute the whole sum of saving knowledge! We are not to be saved by Christ as a *teacher*, by Christ as an *example*, by Christ as God manifest in the flesh—but by Christ's obedience and death—by his vicarious sacrifice, by his full and sufficient oblation and satisfaction on the Cross, by his blood shedding as of a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Whatever else we may know of Christ—if we know not this, we have no saving knowledge and saving faith. But, if we know this, whatever else we may be ignorant of, we shall secure eternal life.

It is not necessary that we should understand earthly science, that we should grasp human philosophy, that we should range through secular history, that we should be skilled in the arts of painting and sculpture, that we should be learned in the affairs of government. These are all proper for us to know as dwellers on this material earth. But then, we are not to dwell here always, and our minds and souls are given us for higher ends than these. We need a knowledge that will not leave us at death, that will go with us into the eternal world, and constitute there the rudiments of that learning in which we shall be forever ripening and growing. He who *knows Christ* ...

as the way to God,

as the truth of God,

as the life of God,

as the light of the world,

as the Lamb of God,

as the redeemer of the world,

as the Savior of the world—

knows that which is the highest reach of all knowledge, those deep and precious mysteries of faith which even the angels desire to look into!

Could we see as Paul saw, the boundless circumference of truth of which Christ and Him crucified is the center, and the present and eternal greatness and glory of these truths—we would not wonder that the Apostle could say, of all human acquirements, "whatever things were gain to me, I counted loss for Christ. Yes doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." or that he should tell the Corinthians when he came preaching among them, "I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified:" for to know these two things, Christ in his *person*, and Christ in his *work*—constitutes the sum of that divine knowledge which God has revealed in his holy word.

It is upon this basis alone, that the church of the living God can be built up. The Apostle tells us, "No one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ!" this foundation is laid—laid not by man, but by God—laid in the eternal counsels of the Godhead. and upon this already laid basis, we as workers together with God are to build, and the strength and glory of our ministry depend on what and how we build thereon. If Christ in his *person* and Christ in his *office*—Christ the head of the Church, and the Church the body of Christ—are the foundation-stones, we shall build to the glory of God. But just in proportion as we substitute for these great truths, the weak fabric of human philosophy, or the painted imitations of living stones, colored by ecclesiastical art—then will our labor be in vain, and the sham work will bring upon us eternal disgrace.

There is a boasting philosophy and a science falsely so called abroad, which now as in the Apostle's day flout at the simple doctrines of the Gospel, and would supersede the ordinance of divine wisdom in the foolishness of preaching, by the words "which man's wisdom teaches," and which can only be rightly met as the stripling David met the giant of Gath, not in kingly

armor forged by human hands—but by the *smooth stones* from the brook, and the *child's sling* of a childlike faith.

The great *safety* of the minister, amidst the perplexities of science, and philosophy, and social reforms, and human philanthropies—is in keeping near Christ and his cross. As he moves away from these, their attractive power is lessened; and not only so—but just as love and light and truth are weakened by removal, so his susceptibility to error increases—so his inability to stand upright is weakened—so his liability to be swerved by profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science, falsely so called, is made more sure.

Christ is the light of the world. There is no darkness of sin or of error, which that light will not scatter—if it only is made to shine upon it. There is no false science, or vain babbling, or deceiving philosophy, which the truth of the Cross will not dissipate—when once brought in contact with it. These battles with modern infidelity—with exegetical skepticism—with boastful science—with mere earthly schemes of man's advancement—are to be fought around the doctrine of a divine, crucified Savior! the combat is not to be removed from Calvary, to the academy. The arena of the school, is not to be substituted for the church of the living God. We are placed as ministers beside the Cross—there we must fight the Lord's battles—there herald the Lord's words—there resist the enemies of the Cross of Christ—there stand and labor until we die, resolving always and everywhere to determine to know nothing among men, except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

Paul, as he stood in Corinth, might have preached to such a polished people with all the charms and ornaments of *rhetoric* and *philosophy*—but he eschewed this wisdom of words, and excellency of speech. He might have preached social reforms—political discourses—sermons on patriotism that

would have almost called from their graves the old heroes of Greece. He might, as the modern pulpit is too apt to do, have run the whole round of *popular and sensational topics*, and made the Church another market-place for those who, like the Athenians, "spent their time in nothing else but either to hear or tell some new thing." But he did none of these things!

He lived in an age of stirring events in the political world, when emperors were deposed, and armies were set against armies, and the empire of Rome itself began to crack and split beneath the rapacity of politicians; he lived among a people as excitable or even more so than ourselves—more licentious, full of idolatry, with scarcely a redeeming virtue, and whose only glory was a sunset glory, the lingering rays of a greatness that had even then gone down behind the horizon. and yet observe how Paul spurns all these things—philosophy, politics, social economics, human philanthropies; and standing on that isthmus, with the shadow of the Acro-Corinthus falling on him, and the murmur of the two seas sounding beside him, and the temples and statues of the heathen gods before him—he tells the people "I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified!"

The pulpit loses its dignity, when it descends to any other theme; the pulpit is shorn of its spiritual power, when it speaks of anything but Christ and his atoning work. We are not the ambassadors of men, nor of societies, nor of governments, nor of the world—but of God. It is God's work that we are to do, not man's—and that work is to preach the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The man who preaches to advance his own glory as a scholar or a theologian, is like Phidias, who introduced his own portrait among the effigies on the shield of Minerva, an act which the Athenians even punished as gross impiety. The man who aims simply to please the tastes of his audience, and

caters to their morbid appetite for the showy, the exciting, and the rhetorical, instead of feeding them with the bread of life—is like Nero sending his ships to Egypt, the granary of the world, not for **grain** to feed the famishing thousands of Rome—but for **sand** for the wrestlers in the circus! the man who preaches a Platonized theology, or an Aristotelian philosophy as a substitute for the pure Word of God, is like those medieval monks who erased the manuscript texts of the Epistles of Paul, and on the vellum wrote the dogmas of the schoolmen or the legends of the fathers! the man who preaches **politics** and makes the pulpit a platform for tirades against the State, or a rostrum for harangues about national politics—is like the soldier of Titus who threw a firebrand into the temple of God. The man who preaches Christ with an unrenewed heart, is like that mirror of ice made by a Polar navigator, by which he so concentrated the rays of the Arctic sun into one focus, as to kindle a fire by it, while yet itself was unthawed by its beams.

Only as we preach Christ in the love and faith and hope of the Redeemer, and with an eye single to his glory—can we fulfill the terms of our commission, follow the example of Paul, and glorify our Father who is in Heaven.

Such, brother beloved, is the glorious Gospel which is committed to your trust as a Leader of the Church, and which you are to commission others to preach. It is the most precious deposit which God can give to man. An angel might covet the work to be entrusted to you; an archangel might receive new honor in the discharge of such a ministry.

Try and comprehend the **vastness** of the theme! Christ in his person! Christ in his work! Study this truth until your **mind** is imbued with its doctrine, and your **heart** steeped in its grace. Make all your studies, however wide their range, converge to the developing of this central, sun-like truth. Seek to have Christ formed within you as the hope of glory, as the motive power of your

spirit. Hide your life with Christ in God, as the sole ground of your personal safety and salvation. Put on Christ in the outward aspects of your behavior, so that those around you shall take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus. Preach the Lord Jesus Christ fully, freely, purely. Let Him be the Alpha and Omega of all your ministrations, and thus making Christ all in all in your heart, your mind, your house, your preaching, your pastorate—yours will be a Christ-honored and a Christ-honoring pastorate. and when He who was crucified in shame shall appear in great glory—then shall you rejoice that you did so, and shall hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord!"

Love is of God![\(TOC\)](#)

"Love is of God."—1 John 4:7

No writer gives us such lofty ideas of **love** as John. His First General Epistle is an epitome of the whole philosophy of love, human and divine; and all that subsequent authors have done has been to amplify and interpret the principles enunciated by the beloved disciple.

Love is the most powerful and influential of human passions. It has been analyzed and described by more minds, and has engrossed more hearts, than any other affection. Yet the majority of writers have failed to apprehend the ***true character*** of love, and have busied themselves in describing some of its turbid and earth-polluted streams, flowing between the banks of human selfishness—instead of rising to the fountain-source of the passion, and showing us its existence as it fills the bosom of the eternal God.

John takes us up to this ***fountain-head***, and, in the words of the text, shows us the origin of all love, when he says, "Love is of God."

The point which I wish to illustrate is—that all the love in the universe is the gift of God. The proposition, as thus stated, is a very simple one; but it involves consequences of the most interesting and responsible character. Let us ***first*** unfold the ***principle***, and then ascertain some of its resulting consequences.

In another part of this love-filled epistle, John utters the sublime truth, "God is love"; and, by many, this has been considered as equivalent to the declaration of the text, "Love is of God." This, however, is not so. When the

apostle tells us that "God is love," he designs to say, not that God has had this attribute and no other—not that He has this attribute paramount to others; for, as the attributes of any mind must partake of the character of the mind which exercises them, so the attributes of God must partake of the essence of God, and be in all aspects, therefore, infinite and divine: no one attribute, therefore, can be less than divine. Each attribute—His truth, His power, His wisdom, and the like—must stand on the same footing as His love, and be equally great and glorious.

But, by the expression "God is love," John evidently wishes to convey to us the idea that love is the great motive power of the Divine Being. Love is that which shapes and guides all His attributes; so that each is manifested under the working of love, and each directed to the securing of love.

We can imagine, indeed, that God might possess certain attributes without that of love—as, for example, power, wisdom, holiness, truth. But what a **fearful** God would He be—if almighty **power** was not guided by love; if infinite **wisdom**, in its contrivings and legislations, was not pervaded by infinite love; if perfect **holiness** was only a cold and ice-like purity, devoid of the warmth and redolence of love; if **truth** was the mere mechanical utterance of right by lips on which sat no law of kindness, from a heart which had in it no pulsation of love!

Love, then, is the affection of the Divine Being, which, not operating by itself, permeates and influences each attribute, moves them in harmony, throws over them the beauty of holiness, and thus quickens into action, controls in motion, and guides to its destined end—all the workings of Jehovah. And, because every attribute is thus set in motion by love, hence we say, "God is love."

But when the apostle says, "Love is of God," he means something different from the truth just unfolded. He looks at love from another standpoint. He marks it in its human manifestations; and beholding it not so much as a great and original attribute of the Most High—but as seen in daily life, ramifying through all the grades and conditions of society, and observing its power, its workings, its sway in man's heart—he traces the affection to its source, and says, "Love is of God."

When God *created* man, He made him in His own likeness—not in the likeness of His *power* to do all things, or His *wisdom* to know all things; but of His *love* and of His *holiness*—those purely moral qualities in which he could alone be fashioned in the divine likeness; and so man was created lovely, lovable, loving, and pure.

In the *fall* which brought in sin and death upon our race, and a curse upon the ground—man was morally wrecked. He lost the image of God, in which he was made; and he no longer was, to the extent which he had been—lovely, lovable, loving, and pure. He was a *guilty* and a *polluted* being; and all his powers of mind and heart were perverted and debased by sin.

While, however, man made a total loss of holiness—there was not a total loss of love. In mercy to our race, God permitted this affection to continue—not, indeed, in its original beauty or force or purity—but still to exist, though shorn of its glory, as the great happiness-creating power of mankind; so that to the exercise of this one affection, more than to any other, is the world indebted for all that remains to it of Eden's bliss, before man was driven from Eden's bower.

A few familiar illustrations will fully establish this point.

Take the first love which one human being ever felt for another—marital love

—and mark how that is of God.

When God formed Eve, He brought her to Adam; and He implanted in them such love for each other, that not only did Adam say, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh," but henceforth it was ordained that the twain united by this marital relation, should be one flesh; that is, that they should live and act and feel as a moral unit, having one interest, one heart, one aim. Thus also Paul writes: "So ought men to love their wives, as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. for no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the Church."

In making the woman out of the rib of man; in uniting them, by the act of God himself, in holy wedlock; in proclaiming, that, by such a relation, the man and the woman are no more twain—but one flesh; in inspiring prophets and apostles to urge men to love their wives as their own bodies; and in likening the union of husband and wife to the mystical union which exists between Christ and the Church—God has indicated, by the most direct, solemn, and authoritative way which infinite wisdom could devise—that He was the author and giver of marital affection; and therefore, in respect of that emotion of the heart which is ...

the source of more *joy*,

the *light* of more dwellings,

the *comforter* of more sorrows,

the *strengthenener* of more weakness,

the *sustainer* of more hope—

than any other passion, we say that it springs direct from Heaven; so that, in very truth, this marital love is of God.

Take the second love which grew up on earth—parental love—and see how this is of God. We say, in common parlance, that it is natural for a man to

love his child, and that it is unnatural for him to dislike him. But what constitutes the naturalness of this love, other than the fact that God implanted it in parents' hearts, as a part of their moral constitution? a parent's heart is the peculiar workmanship of God. He has so fitted it up with sensibilities and affections, and so adjusted these to the necessities of infancy and childhood—that all the needs, physical, mental, and moral, of the babe and the youth—are fully provided for in the love which God has placed, as a controlling power, in the father's and the mother's heart.

What mightiness of affection is lodged in a *father's* love! How it nerves him to toil, and to spend and be spent, for his children! How it fills him with glad thoughts of home, and proud hopes of the future! and who can speak aright of a *mother's* love?—its depth, its force, its purity, its unselfishness, its long-suffering, its self-sacrificing character. Poets have essayed to portray it in verse, and sentimentalists to describe it in prose; but words feebly illustrate its nature, or enable us to compute its worth. Yet all the happiness which is spread over the face of society by parental love; which permeates each family group, each home; which links heart with heart, though sundered by continents and oceans; which draws out and gives back affection, like the sun which exhales the vapor from the earth, only to return it in dew and rain to beautify and fertilize it; all the joy and peace and comfort which springs from parental affection—is the direct gift of our heavenly Father; for this love is of God.

Take the third kind of affection, which, in the order of time, rises in the human breast—the love of children for parents—and we shall find the same truth holds here also. Before the infant mind can reason, or understand its relations, or even appreciate the kindness shown to it, there is felt the goings-forth of love; and the little delicate fibers of affection, each as slender,

perhaps, as the gossamer thread that "floats idly in the summer air," strengthen with the growth of days, become interlaced and braided with others. and thus the child, the youth, the adult, is moored to the parent's heart by cables of love, which only life-wrecking tempests can part or loosen.

Suppose that there was no love in children's hearts for parents until they came to years of discretion, what a dreary waste of unrewarded toil and self-sacrificing drudgery would be the season of childhood and youth! What would a household be, devoid of children's love? What would a parent's heart be, if its outgoings of affection found no response in prattling boys and gentle girls? and how much of the sunlight of home would become darkness, if the indescribable ways and means which evince filial love were blotted out from mind and memory and heart? Filial love constitutes a large part of human happiness, and pervades every class and condition of our race; and as it could never, by its very nature, create itself, because it is begotten before reason and judgment begin their workings—it must be divine. and so we say of this elevating affection—filial love—this love is of God.

The same line of remark applies also to that love of kindred which constitutes a part of man's moral being. The hundred social circles which this love of kindred creates, and which, like so many togged wheels, catch into and rotate each other, diffusing joy and happiness over the habitations of men—are the product of this kindred love. and this love is of God; for He it is "who sets the solitary in families," who groups men into social circles; and, bestowing upon His creatures affections, calls out these affections in the various forms of social and domestic life.

Once more: look at love in the form of philanthropy. Here we behold it breaking over the dikes and channels of marital, family, or social affection, and spreading away, like the Nile in its overflow, until it covers the entire

lowlands of our race. this love of man for his *race* is mostly the product of the religion of Jesus Christ. Before that era, the Jew loved the Jew, the Persian loved the Persian, the Roman loved the Roman; but, beyond the boundaries of one's nation, all were considered as barbarians, dogs, and enemies. There was no expansive, world-embracing love in the heart of man; there were no broadly devised and widely applied schemes for the amelioration of woe, ignorance, and sin; there were no projects for spreading knowledge, civilization, and religion to regions benighted, savage, and idolatrous; there were no outgoing affections of men, throwing their tendrils of mercy around the world, and clasping the debased and the vile in the arms of its heart-throbbing philanthropy.

This earth-encompassing and man-elevating love is of God. It is because the Bible tells us that we have one common Father, one common Savior, one common Comforter, one common salvation, and one common earthly destiny—the grave; it is because the Bible puts us all on one platform, as sinners, and seeks to raise us all to one common Heaven, and puts into our hands the instrumentalities and agencies for this lifting-up of our race, and bids us to use them in the name and strength of Jehovah—that we find stirring within us this love of our race, this desire for its advancement, this putting forth of effort for their regeneration, this Bible-spreading and Christ-preaching and gospel-publishing spirit, which seeks to enclose the world in the meshes of the gospel-net, and then draw it to the land, where Jesus stands waiting to receive and bless it.

Every blessing, then, which has flowed to our race through the building of hospitals, asylums, and benevolent institutions; through societies for the diffusion of education and wholesome knowledge; through the agencies of the Church, in its manifold institutions for the circulation of the Bible and

tracts, the establishment of schools and colleges, the publishing of papers and religious books, and the preaching of the Word—dates its origin in the influence of the constraining love of Christ upon the heart; and thus, in very deed, this love of our race, this philanthropy, is of God.

Now, what would earth be without these various kinds of love? What, without philanthropy? It would be a mass of conglomerate selfishness—a world of war, antagonistic states, of cruel governments, of social discord, and of domestic misery! There would be no hospitals and infirmaries; no asylums for the orphan, the widow, the outcast; no retreats for the aged and destitute; no homes for friendless children and disabled industry; no associations for charity and mutual aid; no societies for the amelioration of crime, disease, suffering, and the many ills which afflict our race; no boards of missions, spreading their network of divine truth over our own and foreign lands; no institutions for the circulation of Bibles, tracts, and a sanctified literature; no churches; no Sunday-schools. But all would be blotted out—and intense selfishness, with its consequent envyings, jealousies, and hatreds, would rule in the ascendant!

What would earth be without this *love of kindred*, so that, along the ties of affinity and blood—there thrilled no electric sensations of *social* love? the interlacing bonds of family with family would be sundered; society would be disintegrated, and resolved into its individual elements, except only when force or self-interest made a union of what was else repulsive and undesired.

What would the world be without *filial* or *parental* love? a family where there was parental authority without parental love, and where filial obedience was required without filial affection rendered—would not be a home—but a prison! the parents would be jailers; the children would be as felons; and the *law of brute force alone* would bind them in one household of domestic

tyranny!

And above all, what would earth be without *marital* love? What if there was no heart-union between man and wife; no love to cheer, soften, and irradiate the lot of woman; no responsive affection to nerve and lift up and make happy the soul of man—if the marriage tie was only a bond of self-interest or of lust—a bond as galling as the manacle of the convict in the chain-gang, and each day made more chafing by the bickerings of hate and the collisions of selfishness?

It is scarcely possible even to imagine a world devoid of love, where all that is congenial and loving and sympathetic; all that welds together households and families and society; all that imparts the highest earthly pleasure; all that ...

sweetens toil,
and soothes care,
and comforts sorrow,
and solaces Bereavement;
all that raises man above lust and sordidness, and a mere sensuous existence;
all that typifies and illustrates, feebly indeed, yet truly—the purity and bliss of Heaven—should be completely blotted out!

It would be as if some *demon from the pit* should pass through this world, and turn ...

its green fields—into sand-wastes,
its forest-crowned and picturesque hills—into bald rock,
its floral kingdom—into bramble-land,
its dancing, leaping, silvery waters—into asphaltic streams,
its exquisitely tinged clouds and its brilliant sunsets—into black gloom,
its thousand bird-melodies—into discordant screams;

and, rending into tatters the robe of beauty, which, like a bridal veil, covers without concealing, and covers only to enhance—the loveliness of nature, should force its divinely-molded form into a tunic of sackcloth, and cover its face with a hood of darkness!

No, not even this would be as sad, as full of misery, as would this world be—if each fountain of affection were sealed up, and no love were to pervade, warm, cheer, beautify, ennoble, or make godlike, the human race.

Seeing, then, that with all man's sins and ill-doings, with all God's punishments and curses, He has continued to us this love, the question arises: Have you ever seriously thought how much you ought to love God, who has given you the inestimable blessing of human affection? Can you sum up your **debt** to Him for this one gift? Can you ever sufficiently **praise** Him for its continuance and blessing?

Yet, when man rebelled against God, and cast off His sway, and virtually said to Him, "We desire not a knowledge of Your ways!"—God might most justly have stripped him of love, and left him to the curse of the loveless and the unloved. It was His love to us—which caused Him to continue love in us. There is no love among the **fallen angels**. There is no love in **Hell**. There is authority there; and fear, and servile obedience, and defiance, and tongue-gnawing pain, and smoke of endless torment, there—but there is no love there. and God, who cleansed the old world's sins by a **deluge**, and purged the foul cities of the plain with **fire and brimstone**, and stayed the heaven-climbing aims of the Babelites by a **confusion of tongues**—could as easily have plucked out love from man's heart, and left him to his sins and his love-shorn existence, as He could have inflicted any other punishment! But He did not! He continued love to him; and hence all the love that exists, and which blesses man in every relation and condition of life, is of God.

This is a truth but little considered; yet it presents an aspect of God's character which is full of mercy, and which demands boundless thanks. We revel in this love—yet how heedless of its Author! We expend this love upon our fellow-creatures—yet how little is given to God! and it is a grave question, which I put to the conscience of each person: How can you refuse to exercise towards God the affection which is His by right of creation, and which, in its outgoings, constitutes the supreme felicity of earth? Can you give a good reason for not loving God? He is a God of love; and, as you love earthly beings in proportion to their loveliness—so should you love Him who is all love, and who has manifested His love by the most wonderful displays and the most marvelous sacrifices. If it is dishonorable to refuse gratitude for services rendered; if it is base to be the recipients and users of continual favors—and yet make no acknowledgments—then must you condemn yourselves, for turning away from the love of God, for using the affections He bestows for *selfish* ends, and giving no thanks or glory to Him who made you a being susceptible of loving and being loved.

It was a most forcible appeal which Paul made to the Romans, when he asked, "Do you despise the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" It was an equally strong appeal which he made to the same Church, when He said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God—that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." and it is in the spirit of these apostolic appeals, that I ask: Can such exhibitions of love on the part of God—call out from you no love to Him?

There is one other aspect of the subject which I must touch upon, though only touch.

As wondrous as is the fact, that, notwithstanding our sins, God still continued to us human love; and highly exalting as that fact is of His grace and mercy—it is not so great a display of His love as that manifested in providing for man's *redemption*.

In those few but majestic words of John, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish—but have everlasting life"—we have the faint outline of a love which we can never fully understand, because it is an eternal love, an infinite love, a love which only God can feel, and only God describe.

So impressed was the apostle with this, that he says, "Herein is love, not that we loved Him—but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins." As if He had said: It matters not where else you see love, or what else you see of love—herein is love. and the love herein displayed, in this prior love to us, in this sacrifice made for us, in this gift bestowed upon us, in these blessings offered to us—this love takes precedence of all other love, even as God, who shows it is higher than all the gods of heathen mythology, or than all the imaginings of heathen philosophy.

We have not time now to give even a linear sketch of this divine love, as seen in the reciprocal affection of God the Father and God the Son; as beheld in the love evinced in the gift of the Holy Spirit; as shown in the life and sufferings and death of the Son of God; as witnessed in the mighty preparation whereby was ushered in this work of love; as viewed in the love of Christ to the Church; or as heard of in God's Word, in connection with those provisions of glory and greatness with which He endows His saints in the kingdom of Heaven.

This love of God has provided an atonement for sins; the full and eternal

benefit of which, in bestowing pardon and peace, are offered to you on the terms of faith in Jesus. Will you reject this blood-bought reconciliation? this love has given you a divine **Savior**, to save you from your sins, and to be ... the **Prophet** to teach you, the **Priest** to sacrifice for you, and the **King** to reign over you; so that your salvation is complete in Him. Will you slight this Redeemer?

This love has bestowed upon you the Holy Spirit ... to convict you of sin, to guide you to Christ, to bow your else unbending will, to teach you all truth, to sanctify your soul, and to be the Comforter of your heart. Will you do despite to this Spirit?

This love has revealed for you the Word of truth—the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation. Will you heed its holy teachings?

This love has surrounded you with the **means of grace**—the Church, which is Christ's mystical body; the ministry, which is of Christ's ordaining; the sacraments, which are of Christ's institution; the preached word, which is the testimony of Jesus. Will you misimprove these **instrumentalities of grace**, and go down to eternal death from under the very droppings of the sanctuary?

There is nothing which your soul needs for its peace and happiness on earth—for which this divine love has not made ample provision. and there is nothing which it can ask for or require, to its full enjoyment in the world to come—which has not been stored up for it in those mansions which the

pierced hands of the loving Savior have prepared for his redeemed in Heaven.

Would that I could impress upon all those who are unreconciled to God by faith in Jesus Christ, that they are fighting, not against God's stern decrees of justice, not against His almighty power, not against His infinite wisdom—but against His love; that the warfare of their souls discharges itself into the heart of Jehovah; and that the enmity of the unrenewed man is directed against the love of the God of love!

Remember also, that one of the most fearful elements in the condemnation of the lost, is ...

not that God's *justice* smites them with legal power,

not that *omnipotence* holds them in its almighty grasp,

not that *wisdom* approves the decision which consigns them to eternal woe,

nor that *holiness* requires their eternal exclusion from Heaven

—but that they rejected the overtures of love! that its divine movings in the grace of God the Father, in the death of Christ, in the pleadings of the Spirit—were in vain; that the mighty affections of God were so slighted; and that they dared to trample under foot God's beloved Son, and do despite unto the Spirit of His grace.

And, as the remembrance of a *slighted love*, will be one of the most fearful instruments of eternal sorrow—so an accepted love of God in Christ, will be one of the most joyous elements of eternal bliss. The happiness of Heaven lies not primarily in freedom from pain and want and woe; not in exemption from change and death; nor does it consist in its exultant songs, its perpetual day, its mental enlargement, its intellectual satisfaction, its lofty tone of thought, its companionship with the angels and archangels. The great bliss of Heaven lies in the presence of perfect love! the saints' hearts are full of love; the angels' hearts are full of love. Everything that is *done* there, and *said*

there, and *thought* there—is influenced by love. Love pervades that world, and enfolds it in an atmosphere of divine affection; for He whose *name* is love sits upon the throne, and pours out, from the fountain of His infinite affection, all the love which warms the inhabitants of that land of glory! for there is not an affection manifested by saint or seraph, which is not traceable up to this fountain, and of which we can not say, "This love is of God!"

The Missionary Woman^(TOC)

*"Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, 'Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?' They came out of the town and made their way toward him."—
John 4:28-30*

In the interesting conversation which the woman of Samaria had with Christ, He told her ...
of the emptiness and unsatisfying nature of earthly comfort,
of the exhaustless fullness of his grace,
of the spiritual character of God and the true worship which He required,
of the displacement of the merely *sensuous* and *local* in worship, by that which is spiritual and universal, and then he had crowned this sublime teaching by the equally sublime—but startling declaration to her, of His being the Messiah, the hope alike of the Samaritan and the Jew.

The words of Jesus reached the heart of the woman; her understanding was opened to receive the truth; she drank it in as indeed *living water* from a living well-spring; and so completely was she possessed with the marvelous declaration of Christ being the Messiah that, forgetful of her errand to the well of Jacob, she "left her water jar, and went her way into the city, and said to the people: Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did. is not this the Christ?" in answer to her appeal, the sacred narrative says, "Then they came out of the town and made their way toward him."

Here, then, we have the simple sketch of a *missionary woman*, and the first woman who ever preached Christ to those who were aliens and strangers to the commonwealth of Israel. Anna, the prophetess, had spoken of Him, when

a babe, to all who looked for redemption in Israel; but this woman was the first to speak of Him to the *Samaritans*. She may, therefore, properly be regarded as the *first Christian missionary woman*. Looking at her in this light, let us use her example as a theme by which to discuss what a woman *can* do for Christ, what a woman *ought* to do for Christ, and *why* she ought to do it!

What a Woman CAN Do for Christ

In endeavoring to understand *what a woman CAN do for Christ*, we must gauge her ability by her mental powers, her physical constitution, her moral development, and her social position. With regard to her *mind*, there is no truth of revelation which she is not fully capacitated to grasp and understand as well as man. With regard to her *physical* constitution, it is eminently adapted for the sphere in which God designed she should move, in the orbit of the family circle—a wife, a mother, a daughter, a sister. With regard to her *moral* powers, she has in even a higher degree than man, the elements which make up a pious character—faith, love, hope, and zeal.

Her *nature* is more gentle,
her *heart* more impressible,
her *affections* more easily molded, and
her *mind* more open to holy influences.

With regard to her *social* position, she stands as a wife, a mother, a daughter, a sister, a teacher, a nurse, a friend—at the very well-spring of man's power and greatness; and can exercise her plastic influence in infancy, in childhood, in hours of sweetest love, in the quiet of the family circle, in seasons of distress and sickness, in times and ways which are only open to a woman's love, and which consequently place in her hands, opportunities of influence,

higher even than pertain to the sterner power of man.

What a Woman OUGHT to Do for Christ

The ability of women to do great things, being thus established, I proceed, next, to show *what a woman OUGHT to do for Christ*. She ought, first, to give her heart to Christ. Woman's heart is formed for love. Love is one of the elements of her power—and by its exercise she almost rules the world. In the person and character of Christ, there is presented to her heart, the most lovely and love-inspiring Being in the universe. The heart of woman is attracted by *virtue*. In Christ is found the highest assemblage of virtues.

Woman loves what is noble, honorable, generous. Jesus blends these qualities in amplest harmony. Woman's homage is drawn out by greatness of mind, breadth and depth of knowledge, profound wisdom, persuasive eloquence, and commanding influence; who then can better claim this homage than Jesus, "in whom dwelt all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Woman's love is excited by deeds of benevolence, by self-sacrifices in the cause of others—and who has larger claims on her love, then, than Jesus, whose benevolence towards mankind led Him to sacrifice Himself on the cross for our salvation! There is nothing that is worthy of attracting woman's love—which is not found in the character of Christ in the very highest degree! and according to the very principles which should regulate the outgoings of her own affection, she ought to love Jesus Christ with a fullness and devotion surpassing that given to any mere human being.

I wonder not that *more* women than men love Christ; my only wonder is that *all* women who know of Christ, do not love Him. They will admire the

character of some hero of romance; they will yearn for the love of some noble and generous champion of benevolence and goodness; they will delight in the favor of some distinguished military chieftain, some great writer, some eloquent orator, some able jurist—why will they not love and admire and adore Him ...

in whose **character** every virtue meets—and no vice is found;

in whose **mind** all wisdom centers—and no folly exists;

in whose **heart** all goodness dwells—and no sin abides;

in whose **soul** there is a benevolence that embraces the world in its love;

in whose **life** there was a self-sacrifice before which all earthly heroism fades;

in whose **works** there was a nobleness and grandeur with which not all the military glory of the world can compare;

in whose **death** there was a blessing born to man, without which the world would have rolled on its allotted years in its pathway of sin—and then been hurled into the blackness of darkness forever!

Every woman who does not love Christ—contradicts the very first principles of her nature. Every woman who does not love Christ—does violence to the dictates of her conscience, her judgment, and her heart. Every woman who does not love Christ—dishonors her own soul by denying entrance into it of the purest, highest, holiest love which is embodied in the Savior of the world.

As soon as a woman loves Christ, and has gone to Him as her soul's Savior—then it is her duty to tell others of Christ; and imitating the zeal of the woman of Samaria say, "Come, see Him. Come, hear Him. Come, love Him. is not this the Christ whom you need?"

But you may ask, how can she do this, when the apostle, and the voice of the whole Christian church, forbid her **preaching** or **teaching** in the great congregation? I answer, let her tell others of Christ, and let her do work for

Christ—in her several spheres and relations of life.

Is she a WIFE, and has she an unbelieving husband? Let her, by her holy life, her winning gentleness, her persuasive love—seek to confirm the assertion of the apostle, that "the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife."

Is she a MOTHER? Let her "learn to show piety at home," that her daily walk and conversation may be a daily *sermon* distilling its truth as the *dew* upon the hearts of her household, as they behold in her the beauty of holiness. It is in a mother's power, to mold the mental and moral future of her offspring in a great measure, and the saying is as true as it is terse, "Those who rock the cradle—rule the world!"

It was a touching little anecdote which was told me, during the preparation of this sermon, by one of my parishioners, and illustrates the truth which I have just stated most forcibly; that on asking her little grandson, who had just finished reading the "Pilgrim's Progress," which he liked best, Christian or Christiana? he replied, after a moment's thought, "I like Christiana best; for when Christian set out—he went alone; but when Christiana set out—she took her children with her."

A *holy home influence* will, by God's added blessing—make a holy household, and this is peculiarly a woman's work; for ...

in her *keeping* is the infant, yet budding mind;

in her *control* are the opening affections of the heart;

in her *guardianship* are the springing sensibilities of the soul.

Placed at these head-springs of spiritual and intellectual power, she exerts an *influence* no man can wield; for she molds whole generations before the schoolmaster teaches the first elements of education.

Is she a SISTER? What a powerful influence can a loving, gentle sister exercise over even rough and wayward brothers!

She can restrain—when curbing is necessary;

she can direct—when guidance is required;

she can encourage—when a cheering word is needed;

she can nurture—when there is a virtue to cherish, as no man can do.

There is a **moral magnetism** about a godly sister, which acts positively—in calling out good qualities; and negatively—in repelling vices in a brother's bosom. The **drawing** or **repelling** influence is ever felt, and few men have become thoroughly bad, who have had pious sisters.

Is she a DAUGHTER? the blendings of filial love with youthful piety—are eminently beautiful to a parent's eye, and produce effects in a parent's heart which no moving eloquence of man can beget! and it can be her privilege, as it is her duty, to win them to Christ.

Nor do a woman's duties stop at the circumference of the **family** circle. She is a member of **society**. Society, be it high or low—is what woman makes it. Men do not control society—but are controlled by it; they come into it from their trades, their counting-houses, their offices, their professional duties—and yield themselves to the influences which are already at work within that circle, set in motion by women. The **tone of society**—is always what the moral tone of woman is. Let that be refined, sound, and pious—and society becomes pure and pious.

She is shut out from the pulpit—because Paul says, "Let your women keep silence in the churches." She is shut out from the **caucus** and polls—because modesty, purity, and every feminine virtue forbids her going there. She is shut out from the glory to be gathered in slaying men on the field of battle—

because a woman's hands were not made to be imbrued in blood. She is shut out from the courtroom and the senate—because her mind is not made to deal with the questions, or contend with the parties which meet in those arenas.

But there is still open to her a large outlying territory where she can work to equal if not *greater* advantage than man, and where her labors have already counted for good in a most wonderful manner.

In the Sunday-school field, woman finds an appropriate sphere. She is particularly fitted by God for instructing and molding youthful mind and affections, and hence she makes the best teacher of children, especially in Bible truths and in moral culture. No woman has ever fully entered into this work who has not been able to say, in spirit if not in words,

"Delightful work! Young souls to win
And turn the rising race,
From the deceitful paths of sin,
to seek the Savior's face!"

Again, take up the list of *benevolent institutions* in which woman can labor with propriety and effect, and see what a wide scope is here given to her active and useful powers:

in homes for the orphan,

in refuges for children,

in institutions for the relief of poverty and distress, as also

in reformatory, disciplinary, and crime-preventive societies.

In all these associations, woman finds a befitting and noble sphere of Christian labor, where the eye of a God of love bends its kind look upon her deeds, and the bounty of a God of mercy, rewards her toil.

Look again at another and almost unoccupied field where Christian female

influence is needed—but lacking. I mean *Hospitals* and *Infirmaries*. in the rebound which Protestantism made from Romanism in the fifteenth century, the Reform Churches swung far away from the whole system of monasteries and nunneries and religious orders; and, in condemning them, aimed not so much at reforming the abuses, as breaking up the system itself. But while the principles of many of the religious orders of the church of Rome are—contrary to God's Word, injurious to the church, and baneful to the individual; some of them were good, and, if properly regulated, might, and ought, to be again engrafted into the working machinery of Protestant benevolence.

The question arises—shall this vantage-ground be occupied by the Church of Rome alone? or shall Protestants be afraid to call out and subsidize this latent power, because the Church of Rome has surrounded these institutions with error, superstition, and ecclesiastical tyranny! It is a matter of rejoicing, that the Protestant communities are waking up to a sense of their deficiencies on this matter, and to the importance of establishing some kind of sisterhoods or institutions where pious Protestant women can devote their time, talents, and energies—to the noble work of following in the footsteps of Jesus, who, when on earth, "went about healing all that were sick," and proving himself the Great Physician of the soul—by being the Great Physician of the body. in England, and on the Continent, there are many of the Protestant institutions which, freed from all the objectionable features of the Romish Church, retaining all that is valuable with the added elements of a pure faith and sound worship—are doing great good, and quietly working their way into favor with all branches of the Reformed Church.

Our blessed Lord made the healing of the sick—the medium through which he often cured the soul; and he told his disciples, as they went up and down

Judea, "Heal the sick." the apostles did this to such an extent that not only were *handkerchiefs* taken from their bodies carried to the sick and laid on them—but even the sick were brought out into the streets, that at least the *shadow* of Peter passing by might heal them.

The early Church felt it to be one of her special duties to provide for the sick and the needy. Hence *hospitals* arose at once, the outgrowth and the exponent of Christianity; and if the hospital is emphatically characteristic of the beneficent spirit of Christianity, why should not the *nursing* of the sick in hospitals and elsewhere in the abode of the poor and the wretched, be also an emphatic mark of Christian character? Especially when our Lord, putting Himself in the position of one in *prison*, one *naked*, one *hungry*, one *sick*—said to those who questioned, "When did we see You sick, or, in prison—and come unto You?" replied, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren—you have done it unto me."

And I hope that the time is not far distant, when much of the now not only unoccupied—but absolutely wasted, talent of our pious women will be organized into efficient instrumentalities for serving Christ, after the pattern of Christ, and in the spirit of Christ, and for the glory of Christ.

And yet once more let me beg you to look at the *mission field*, and mark there, what woman can do for Christ. As a *wife* to cheer and comfort her toiling missionary husband; as a *mother* training up in a pagan land a model Christian family; as a *teacher* fitted to instruct old and young; as a *pious female* exhibiting to the eyes of the heathen, who have ever degraded women, a type of lofty womanhood, made such by the elevating power of the religion of Christ; and as a *nurse* to the sick, a *counselor* to the afflicted, and an *example* to native females seeking entrance to the fold of Christ—the pious woman finds in the missionary work one of the noblest fields of

mental, physical, and moral labor—one worthy her noblest powers, one absorbing her deepest affection, one that makes her a co-worker with God, and makes her rank with those women which Paul says labored with him in the Gospel.

Some of the most successful missionaries have been women, and their faith, labors, example, prayers, wisdom, have been productive of blessings to the heathen, which no arithmetic can compute. I regard the true-hearted missionary woman—she who, under the constraining love of Christ, leaves home, friends, country—and devotes her life to painful and self-denying labors among the heathen, that she may teach them the way of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ—I regard such a woman as the noblest of her gender.

Poets who burn the incense of praise, in the *censers of verse* to the titled and the beautiful—may offer no perfume to her. **Painters** who catch the glowing radiance of the beauty that dazzles royal courts—may sketch no likeness of her. **Sculptors** who make the cold marble almost breathe with the glowing charms of regal loveliness—may never deign to model her form.

Biographers who write the mirthful life of the courtiers—may not honor her with a single memorial. The **world** that seeks for glitter, for pomp, for sensation—may pass her by uncared for.

But the **Holy Spirit** cares for her and adorns her with the ornaments of his beautifying grace! **Christ** cares for her and gives her the title to an inheritance in Heaven! **God** cares for her, and has a mansion prepared for her in glory! and when the votaries of fashion and of pleasure, the peeresses, the princesses, the queens of earth, shall be stripped of their courtly robes and crowns, and be driven, as most of them will be, away from the presence of the Lord—then will these missionary women receive, in the presence of the

assembled universe, the plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

The works of a **Dorcas** at Joppa, of a **Phoebe** at Cenchrea, of a **Lydia** at Thyatira, of the beloved **Persis** at Rome in the apostles' times; and the deeds of a Paula in Palestine, of an Hellena at Constantinople, of a Fabiola at Rome, in the primitive church; and the wonderful labors in our own day of a Mrs. Fry in ameliorating the prison systems of England; of a Mrs. Chisholm in softening the rigors of penal emigration; of a Mrs. Hill, in rousing up the female mind of Greece; of Ann Judson as showing the endurance and heroism of a missionary's wife; of a Catharine Marsh who has taught us what a holy mind and will can do with "English hearts and hands," and a Florence Nightingale who has introduced the most wholesome reforms into the whole department of military and civil hospitals, and made known to us what women **can** and **ought** to do as nurses, for the sick and the afflicted—all have illustrated what woman can do for Christ, and shown the almost supernatural strength which is lodged in her soul, that only needs some great stimulus to develop it into healthful exercise. These evince ...

the power and actings of a woman's faith,
the zeal and energy of a woman's works;
the depth and glow of a woman's love!

WHY a Woman should Consecrate Herself to Christ?

And now, in **conclusion**, let me say a few words upon the question—**WHY a woman should consecrate herself to Christ?** and the simple answer is—because Christ has done everything for her. He honored woman by condescending when He took upon Himself our nature to be born of a woman. It is through Christ alone, that woman has been elevated. Where the

gospel of Jesus does not prevail—woman is degraded and dishonored. There is no country on the face of the earth, where woman is not debased—except where the religion of Christ prevails. and just in proportion as that religion is pure and active—is the female gender elevated and refined.

Did you but know the sad condition of woman in *Pagan* lands, and how fearfully the enmity of the serpent has been manifested against the daughters of Eve; and could you contrast ...
their darkness—with your light,
their debasement—with your refinement,
their pollution—with your purity,
their servitude—with your freedom,
their superstition—with your living faith,
their dwarfed and stunted minds—with your growth and development
—you would feel that you were indeed raised to Heaven in point of privilege. Yet for every step in this ascending series of blessings—you are solely indebted to Christ! and could Christ's influence and teachings and Church be now blotted out—not a half of a century would pass before the shadows of a coming night of *barbarism* and *degradation*, would fall upon the female gender, deepening in blackness until her glory, which now shines like a sun full-orbed in the social firmament, diffusing light and love and joy—would be totally eclipsed, and a darkness that might be felt, would brood like midnight over the world!

But Christ has done more for woman than merely given her this high *social* position. in all the *religions* of the world outside of Judea, though elysiums and heavens of bliss were offered to *men*—none were offered to woman, except as to an *inferior* being. If she entered *Elysium*—it was merely to serve man. If the Koran gave her admission to *Heaven*—it was only to be the slave

of man's lust. There was for her no hope of the future in any of the systems of man's devising. to the entire mind of female heathendom, the future life was an abyss across which no ray of light gleamed, and she lived almost a brute's life and died a brute's death, scarcely knowing that she had a soul, ignorant of the life beyond the grave.

But Christ brought life and immortality to light for the whole race. to a woman, was first confided the secret of the Savior's incarnation. At a woman's suggestion, was wrought the first miracle which Jesus exhibited. to a woman, it was first announced that Christ was the Messiah. to a woman, was first made the sublime declaration, "I am the Resurrection and the Life". to a woman, Christ first appeared after His resurrection. and in all this, He foreshadowed the new position which woman was to hold in the Christian system.

Her *faith* was to be the same as man's;
her *hope* based on the same atoning blood that his was;
her *love* drawn out by the same Being whom man loved;
the *Church* which was to enfold man, was to enfold her also;
the places of assembly where man was to worship, were to be shared by woman;
the *truth* which was preached to man, was to be taught to her;
the *promises* which were held out to the one, were equally given to the other;
the *Savior* in His preciousness was no dearer to man, than to woman;
for her, as well as for man, Christ had conquered death and Hell;
the door which He opened into Heaven admitted her with man;
and the *mansions* which He went before to prepare, were to be occupied by woman, not as a panderer to man's impurity, not as a slave to his lust, not as an ornamental companion to his house and his feast in paradise—but as a

fellow-heir and a fellow-laborer and a fellow-believer in Christ; fitted for the same intellectual pursuits, sharer of the same spiritual glory!

This, then, is the reason why you should love and labor for Christ. He has **redeemed** you, **sanctified** you, **saved** you, **enlightened** you, **elevated** you, **honored** you, and given you equal rights with man to an inheritance in Heaven! There is not a blessing of the gospel which is not yours! There is not a hope of glory which is not yours. As woman's heart is formed for faith—she ought to exercise it toward Him who alone is the Author and Finisher. As woman's heart is formed for hope—it ought to anchor itself on Him who is within the veil, even Jesus Christ.

Emulate the conduct of this humble Samaritan peasant. Listen to Christ when He speaks to you in His Word. Be taught of Christ the great truth which will make you wise unto salvation; and when you have received Christ into your own heart—then go forth, as she did, within the circle of your influence, and tell the name and fame of Jesus! Wake up an interest in Him all around you! Be the **missionary woman** in your house, your church, your community, your country. and rest not, until, having brought others to Jesus, you can have the satisfaction of hearing them say, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world!"

Causes of Unanswered Prayers^(TOC)

"When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."—James 4:3

The question is often asked, "Why are not my prayers answered? and why, if granted, are the answers so often apparently contrary to my requests?" These are important queries, and to reply to them will be the object of this discourse.

Since God has declared himself to be a *hearer of prayer*—it was requisite that he should institute the way by which we could have communion with him. The human mind, unaided, could never have invented a method of approaching the Most High, or been able to indicate on what terms God would hear and answer prayer. He must tell us the way, and he must designate the terms, in and through which he will be approached. and it follows that unless we know this way, or knowing it, unless we follow his instructions—we can neither come to God aright, nor be received with favor.

The directions which God has given us on this subject are few—but simple. We are to pray from our hearts, asking for those things which are agreeable to his will—with faith, believing—prompted in our supplications by the Holy Spirit, and offering them in and through the all-prevailing name of Jesus Christ. These plain terms must, in every respect, be complied with, or the prayer will be offered in vain.

It would be well if every Christian would carefully understand what prayer is, and keep before him the several elements of which it is composed; and then would he always possess *a guide to acceptable devotion*, as well as a test

whereby he could try the nature of his petition; whether it is presented aright, or whether it be not offering to God the mere service of the lips, "while the heart is far from him."

To facilitate this, I shall state a few *causes why our prayers so often fail of success.*

Lack of Faith

Foremost among these, perhaps, is a *lack of faith*. There can be no acceptable prayer—where there is no faith. for if we do not believe God's Word, and confide in his promises—we not only dishonor him, but engender within ourselves that *distrust* which abstracts from prayer all its life and strength. All Christians, however, have a general kind of faith; they have a belief in God's word, and a sort of trust in all his promises; but when they descend to *particular* points, and are required to exercise faith in all positions and relations—to believe every word of God, and confide in each of his promises, the smallest as well as the greatest—then it is, that distrust and weakness of faith begin to manifest themselves.

There are a multitude of prayers offered to God, with something like this feeling: "Well, perhaps God will hear and answer; perhaps not. At any rate, I may as well pray; and if the answer comes, well; if not, I at least have done my duty." Now, such a feeling as this, though it is not positive infidelity, is so near to it as to be most offensive to God, and can only bring forth his severe displeasure. The faith that he demands of us is, that we should believe *implicitly* that he *hears* and will *answer* every prayer which is offered to him aright.

It is a great sin to present to God any petition other than that which he has

directed, and in any other way than he has pointed out. But this being attended to, it is even a greater sin to offer it unaccompanied by the faith that can assure itself that God will hear, and will answer.

The *matter* of prayer is one thing, the *manner* of prayer is another. If the manner of presenting our prayer is right, and the matter wrong—then, of course, will it miscarry. If the matter is right, and the manner wrong—the prayer is likewise fruitless of good. James says, "Let a man ask in faith, without wavering: for he who wavers is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. for let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." We should never offer a prayer that we do not wish answered; and, wishing it to be answered, we should implicitly believe that it will be heard and answered, if in accordance with the Divine will. Whenever you bow before the mercy-seat, you should ask yourself: Do I want this and this mercy? has God promised to grant it? and if you feel your need and acknowledge his promise, then pray with a certainty and an assurance of faith that wavers not any more than the solid rock, because your promise rests upon him in whom "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

In this lack of faith—this semi-infidelity of the people of God—this distrusting of God's care, or goodness, or power—this unbelief in the full import of his promises—this unwillingness to confide unwaveringly in his will and wisdom, and to take him at his word as a God of truth—ay be found one of the great reasons why our prayers are not heard and answered.

If one of our fellow men pledges us his word, or gives us, upon ample security, his promissory note—we receive them with implicit confidence; and all that God requires of us is to give to his word and his promises, the same belief that we award to a mutable, fallible, and dying creature like ourselves. for how many prayers that now lie unanswered before the mercy-seat, would

return, full freighted with blessings—if we only believed in the truth of God as we trust in the veracity of men.

Another reason why our prayers are not answered is, that we evince a **practical unbelief** in God's ability to grant us our requests. I say, practical unbelief; for, in theory, all Christians believe in the omniscience and omnipotence of Jehovah. Yet, in practice, in the details of life, how few regard these doctrines! We are too much accustomed to measure God's ability—by our ability; and, if a thing appears to us improbable or impossible, then do we immediately act as if these contingencies affected God as well as ourselves, and presented the same barriers to him as they do to us!

Probabilities and possibilities respect **ourselves** only, and must ever govern us in our future plans and expectations; and human sagacity is tested by its ability to forecast these plans, so as to swing clear of all contingencies, and educe these expectations, unclogged by any countervailing hindrance.

But such ideas as these, should never gain a place in our minds when we come before God in prayer; for not only is it true, as Christ said, that "all things are possible to him that believes," but it is also true, as the Bible elsewhere declares, "with God nothing is impossible."

Whenever, then, we ask for anything in accordance with God's will, never stop to calculate the chances of his hearing, or speculate upon the difficulties that interpose to his granting our requests. If it is a proper request—pray, and act in the full assurance that he will hear and answer, notwithstanding every apparent difficulty in the way of granting it. Only pray, and believe that God is what he is—and all will be well. But if you regard him as a being less than infinite in his perfections and attributes, the strength of your prayers will be graduated by your view of his character, and, of course, will fall short of the Bible standard, and thus fail of being either heard or answered.

Indulgence of someone or more known sins

Another great hindrance to the success of prayer, arises from the *indulgence of someone or more known sins*. The Psalmist has distinctly declared, "If I regard iniquity in my heart—the Lord will not hear me." to pray, and yet to commit willful sin, or still to pursue a course of secret or open iniquity, is not only *mocking* God with lip-service—but is also acting with hypocrisy, professing one thing but doing another. a God of holiness cannot, consistently with his own character, listen to the prayer of a deliberate sinner. and accordingly he tells the wicked Israelites, through his prophet, "When you spread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; and when you make many prayers, I will not hear." And, in another passage, we have the distinct assertion, "God hears not sinners"—that is, those who continue in known transgression. for not only is such a life repugnant to the holiness of God, it also opposes every principle of piety in our own hearts; for where sin dwells—there can be found neither faith, nor humility, nor obedience, nor love to God, nor a well-founded hope, nor heavenly desires, nor a righteous life; and if these exist not in the heart, vain are all the words of the lips.

A *praying spirit* and a *sinning heart* cannot dwell together; and when the life does not correspond to our devotions, then can we never expect answers of peace. Hence the necessity of carefully examining ourselves when we come before the Lord, that we may approach him with *clean hands* and *pure hearts*, knowing that the indulgence of any sin, however small and insignificant it may appear to us—will assuredly expel from our souls the spirit of grace and supplication, and cut off all communion ... with the Holy Spirit, the Prompter of prayer;

with Jesus Christ, the Intercessor; and
with God, the Hearer of prayer.

Remissness in the Performance of Our Christian Duty

Is also another reason why our prayers are not answered. Prayer is not the only duty which God has laid upon us; there are others equally obligatory, such as watchfulness, self-examination, reading of God's word, giving of alms, resisting temptation, fleeing from evil. and the performance of these is so interlocked with prayer, that prayer without them is as useless, for all purposes of growth in grace, as these are without prayer. We may, for example, beseech God to deliver us from evil, and to give us an increase of holiness; yet if we entertain evil thoughts in our minds, and make no efforts to grow in grace—we cannot receive an answer of peace. in the moral, as in the physical world, God has established a connection between *means* and *ends*; and these *ends* only become ours, through the established *means* which lead to those ends. The means which God has ordained for our advancement in holiness are plainly declared to us in the Bible; and when we ask for deeper piety, for greater love, for increase of faith, and joy, and peace, and holiness—the answer will come to us through the appointed channels of watchfulness, meditation, self-examination, the diligent performance of each duty, and the carefully weeding out from our hearts the tares and the brambles of sin, fit only for the burning.

Prayer does not beget for us a direct infusion into our hearts of the grace desired; and if, after praying for advancement in grace and knowledge and faith, we proceed to follow our own ways, and indulge in negligence, presumption, and worldliness of mind—neither watching nor examining our

hearts; neither reading nor meditating on God's word; neither striving against and fleeing from temptations—our prayers, however proper in themselves, or however earnestly offered, or however correctly presented in the name of Jesus—will not only be frustrated—but cannot, in the nature of things, be answered, unless we expect God to set aside all the ***appointed means*** through which he answers prayer.

No ardency or frequency of prayer can excuse us from performing all the duties enjoined upon us as Christians; the neglect of these will breed neglect of prayer—just as surely as the neglect of prayer will beget remissness in the performance of Christian duty.

Whenever we pray for blessings concerning which God has established a certain ***instrumentality***, it is not enough that we pray—but we must ***use the instrumentality*** also—or the prayer will return empty. Suppose all the Christians in the world were to unite in lifting up their hearts to God for the conversion of the world, and yet not make one effort for its restoration to God—would that be praying aright? and would there be much reason to believe that such prayers would be answered?

This tendency, in the minds of many to ***divorce prayer*** from all the ***instrumentalities*** which God has connected with its being answered, is one fruitful source of evil, and a cause why so many prayers are uttered in vain.

To illustrate this: suppose that you are threatened with shipwreck—the storm rages fearfully—the waves break over the ship—the vessel is dashed upon the rocks, and is broken up—every hope of escape seems gone, and in the extremity of your distress you cry unto God to save you from this threatened death! But how do you expect he will save you? By a miracle?—by the direct interference of his omnipotence?—by bearing you through the air, and

landing you safely on the shore? Or, do you not rather look for an answer to your prayer by means of human agency, and by physical and natural instrumentality? By a life-boat—by a cable fastened to the rock—by the buoying up of some part of the wreck, until it is washed upon the beach. and suppose that, having prayed to God for support, you yet refuse to use the instrumentality which, in answer to your prayer, he has furnished for your safety. You decline to get into the life-boat, or object to being drawn ashore by a rope, or will not commit yourself to some means provided for your escape—can you be saved?

God answered your prayer; not only giving you, instantaneously, the end desired—but by giving you *means* adequate to secure that end; and if you refused the means—then you could not expect the end. Just so with spiritual blessings. God answers us through the instrumentality of duties; and we find the end we desire, when we use the means he has enjoined.

We do not persevere in prayer

Another reason why our prayers are not answered is, because *we do not persevere in prayer*. We learn the necessity of perseverance in prayer, from the various exhortations to it which we find in God's word; but especially from two parables related by our Savior: "The Friend at Midnight," recorded in the eleventh chapter of Luke, and "The Unjust Judge," in the seventeenth chapter of the same Gospel; and each of them illustrates important points connected with this subject.

The parable of "The Friend at Midnight" was spoken immediately after teaching his disciples what is now called the "Lord's Prayer;" at the conclusion of which he said: "And I say unto you, ask—and it shall be given you; seek—and you shall find; knock—and it shall be opened unto you."

The three repetitions of the command are more than mere repetitions; since to seek, is more than ask; to knock, more than seek; and thus, in this ascending scale of earnestness, illustrated as it is by the effect which, in the parable, is ascribed to *human importunity*, an exhortation is given not merely to prayer—but to increasing urgency in prayer; even until the suppliant carries away the blessing which he desires, and which God is only waiting for the due time to arrive, to give him.

By the parable of "The Unjust Judge," Christ designed to have men reason thus: if a human judge, an *unjust* judge, a reprobate judge, fearing neither God nor man, will relieve the cause of a widow, simply because she wearies him with her importunity—then shall not God, who knows our needs—a just God, who has commanded us to pray—answer the very petitions he has enjoined? and though he delays answering for awhile, is it not that he may make the answer more gracious—more liberal—more esteemed?

If we then faint in prayer, or offer unto God our petitions in a fitful manner, having neither perseverance nor importunity—can we expect that he will answer? Does it not show that we do not *really desire* the blessing craved? for did we long for it as the friend at midnight did for loaves, or the widow for redress from the unjust judge—we would not so soon give over praying—but would redouble our earnestness, knowing that "the kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and that the violent take it by force."

Asking things which do not accord with God's Purposes of Discipline or Mercy

One other way in which we ask and receive not, because we ask amiss, is by ***asking things which do not accord with God's purposes of discipline or mercy.*** We must not forget the great truth, that God uses this world as a ***school of discipline,*** to fit us for a holier state above; and all his purposes towards us must be interpreted by this view of our earthly pupilage. in this state of discipline, ***trials, afflictions, disappointments, blastings, etc***—are the necessary instruments whereby our souls are ***purged*** and ***fitted*** for Heaven. Yet we often pray that God would relieve us from this trial; that he would exempt us from this threatened affliction; that he would drive from us this cloud of sorrow. But, in his infinite wisdom, he knows that to grant these requests would be productive of evil rather than good; as it is "in the furnace of affliction" that God often chooses his saints; and "through much tribulation that they enter into the kingdom of Heaven."

Paul "besought the Lord thrice" that he would remove from him "the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him;" but God only replied, "My grace is sufficient for you."

Or, again, looking at the world with the eye of ***sense,*** rather than of ***faith***—we ask God to give us temporal blessings, such as seem, to ***our*** short-sighted view, consistent with our welfare and his glory. But he knows our need better than we do, and he sees that were he to grant our request, it would be the means of sending leanness into our souls. He knows that the existence of our piety depends on not answering our requests, and that our souls' welfare requires, perhaps, things the very opposite of those for which we pray.

If God really loves us, he will answer us—not so much according to our requests, as according to his purposes of mercy. and to accomplish these will require him, at times, to do the very things which we most earnestly desire

him **not** to do; for his ways are not our ways, neither are his thoughts our thoughts.

If we ask that we may be humble, God does not give us directly the **grace of humility**—but opens, perhaps, to our hearts a view of the deep depravity and vileness of our souls.

If we seek for nearer access and communion with God—he takes away from us some earthly idol, that the affections may be transferred to him.

If we desire enlarged views of God's character—he does not at once, by some sudden work, enlarge the boundaries of our mind, or give new power to our intellect; but he teaches us what we wish to learn by his providences, fearful and alarming, perhaps, in their manifestations—yet illustrative of his glory and attributes.

If we desire weanedness from the world—he strikes from under us, perhaps, the earthly props in which we trust, and in which we place our hope.

If we plead for growth in grace—he answers, perhaps, by causing us to pass through the brick-kilns of oppression, or the fires of affliction.

And when we pray, Lord, increase our faith—how often does the answer come in the shape of some trial, or Bereavement, or vicissitude, which, showing us the vanity of earth, causes us to look with increasing confidence to God, and to place a more enduring trust in the promises of the most high.

Thus it is, that while our prayers are **answered**—they are not always answered in the way **we** either expect or desire. It is our duty to pray—and we must leave it to God to answer us **when** and **how** he will. No prayer offered to him in faith, and in accordance with his will, is lost; they are all treasured up before the Lamb, in those "golden vials" spoken of in the

Apocalypse—their incense shall yet ascend in precious fragrances before the throne—their cry shall yet be answered; and all those who have offered petitions unto the Intercessor, shall yet lift up their thankful hearts, and say with David, "Blessed be the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplications. The Lord is my strength and my shield, my heart trusted in him and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song will I praise him!"

Follow Me![\(TOC\)](#)

"Jesus answered: If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me!"—John 21:22

After our Lord's resurrection, he met a few of His disciples by the shore of the Sea of Galilee. In that interview, He put the question to Peter, three times, "Do you love Me?" and as Peter had previously three times denied his Lord, now he three times declared his love and faith, and three times did the risen Savior re-commission him, as it were, to his apostleship, by the threefold direction—"Feed my sheep."

Our blessed Lord then went on to say, "I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

It seems that Jesus then moved forward, and Peter with Him. They had gone but a little way, when Peter, turning round and seeing John following, asked Jesus, "Lord, what shall this man do?" as if he had said, "You have told me what will befall *me* in my old age. Now what about *John*—what will be his fate?" to this question, our Lord replied, "Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me." Thus his indiscretion and curiosity were rebuked. He was virtually told that it did not befit him to be asking about things which did not pertain to his own specific duty. That duty was to follow Christ; leaving others to their own responsibilities and duties.

The one simple duty laid on each one, is to follow Christ. Yet, as in Peter's case, so now—many hesitate and stop and turn about and seek to settle certain *other* questions before they obey. They ask to have this *doubt* resolved, that *doctrine* made clear, that *mystery* unraveled—and so put off the real work of personal salvation, for side issues and idle questionings of no real consequence or value.

In dealing with the men of His day, our Lord ever repressed this spirit, this itching desire, to know the unknowable, and to pry into secrets which it is "the glory of God to conceal." When one asked Him, "Lord are there few that will be saved?" He answered, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." When another asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven?" He took a little child, and set him in the midst, and said, "Except you are converted, and become as little children—you shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven." Thus He ever *restrained* ...

this reaching out of the mind into fruitless inquiries;
this seeking to be wise beyond what is written;
this warding off of personal duty by a questioning curiosity.

Here is one who hears Christ's command, "Follow me"—but instead of doing that promptly, he, as it were, stops and asks—"but, Lord, about this difficulty in theology, I can not reconcile God's sovereignty and man's free agency. I cannot unravel the mystery of the Trinity." These, and many other similar questions, are virtually the replies which many make to the call of Jesus, "Follow me." It may not take this definite shape—but, more or less, it enters into many a mind roused to duty by Jesus' call, and yet stifling the claim of duty, by questionings about related truths or unsolved difficulties. But if you do not obey Jesus until all these questions are answered, and these difficulties

removed—then you will wait forever.

"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law." Deuteronomy 29:28

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts—neither are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts!" Isaiah 55:8-9

The difficulties and mysteries of Scripture, necessarily result from the relations between God and man:

God the infinite—man the finite;

God the holy—man the sinner;

God a Spirit—man a creature of flesh and blood;

God in Heaven—man on earth;

God inhabiting eternity—and man the creature of a day;

God the Sovereign of the universe—and man the tiny, puny rebel to His throne!

Mark these contrasts—measure their diversity. The very statement of them shows how impossible it is for man to be able to fully comprehend God or His dealings.

The question was asked of old, "Who, by searching, can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty?" and Solomon, the wisest of men, declared, "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter." for if man knew as much as God—he must have the mind of God and the wisdom of God!

For eighteen hundred years the mind of man, with its measuring lines—has

been endeavoring to fully understand God and His ways, and compute the measurements of His great truths—and yet they are no nearer the solution now, than when first revealed. There they stand in the firmament of theology, the great unresolvable nebulae of revelation; and no magnifying power of man's optics, and no space-penetrating power of man's devising—can unfold those mysteries, which at once challenge and test, the faith of man.

There can be no revelation of God which is free from mysteries—because human language cannot embody celestial thoughts and modes of divine existence. and the human mind could not comprehend terms and phrases which would truly reflect the person, glory, and work of the Almighty.

Divine thoughts, before they can be taken into our minds, have to be diluted into human words.

Divine things have to be symbolized to us, by human or earthly types.

And divine beings have to be described to us, by terms borrowed from human existences and of purely earthly signification.

Hence, in the process of translation, dilution, and illustration—no one attribute of God, no one truth of God—can be fully revealed and understood.

We can only see the earthly side and the earthly terminus—the heavenly side and the heavenly starting-point, are all beyond our reach—far away out of sight! and there we must be content to let it be, ever standing with our eyes upturned to Jesus, holding in one hand the great doctrines of revealed truth, and in the other the precious assurances:

"What I am doing, you don't understand now; but you shall know hereafter."
John 13:7

"Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."
1 Corinthians 13:12

Though human reason, in consequence of its finite capacity and moral infirmity—cannot solve these difficulties; yet there is a method of solution at once simple and satisfactory. It is the simple formula which Jesus gives. "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." that is, in the act of obedience to God's will—we learn the truth and reason of the will which we obey. As it is said in the book of Ecclesiasticus, "Mysteries are revealed to the meek, and he who keeps the law gets the understanding thereof." this is proved to be true by the experience of every humble child of God before whose daily doing of God's will, all doubts and difficulties subside, and he can say with sublime faith, "I know in whom I have believed."

Here is another who, when Christ calls, "**Follow me,**" turns about, and says—"but, Lord, what about these **differences** between science and revelation? I must wait until I see these discrepancies removed, and until I see the two brought into accord, lest I commit myself to some false theology or unscientific revelation."

To this class let me say, that the Bible was given you for the simple purpose of telling you about God and the way of salvation. Its one great teaching is—man is a sinner, and Christ is a Savior, and man can be saved from the guilt and penalty of sin, only by faith in that Savior. this truth it teaches with sunlight clearness. It is what you must know, or perish. It is the only book which teaches it. He is the only Savior revealed from Heaven. If this Book and this Savior are set aside, you give up the only **chart** by which you can navigate safely the sea of life, and the only **Pilot** who can steer your soul into

the haven of rest.

If someone of the hundreds of unfortunate passengers in the steamship Schiller, when it struck the rocks, and the cry was made, Save yourselves by the life-boat! had said, "Stop! I must first find out how the ship got on this reef—I must first satisfy myself that this life-boat is properly constructed!"—what would have been said of such a man? that was no time to discuss questions of tides and drifts and variations of compass and the scientific principles of lifesaving apparatus; the man had something else to do. The ship was going down; the waves were breaking her up; he must escape or drown; the life-boat was at hand, cling to it—he is saved; reject it—he is lost.

What if science, as at present understood, and the Bible, do not agree? Shall we be troubled thereat? I think not. I rejoice to know that what is termed modern science and the Bible do not agree. I would be sorry if they did agree! Modern science is changeable—the Bible is unchangeable!

The science of today is not the science of last year, and will not be the science of the next year.

The Bible of today, is the Bible of all the Christian centuries; and will be a thousand years hence—just what it was nearly eighteen hundred years ago, when the canon of Scripture was closed!

Mark the changes which have taken place along the whole line of sciences since the beginning of this nineteenth century. What a catastrophe then would it have been—had it been proved that the Bible and science as known at the beginning of this century, fully agreed; that all the assertions of the Bible could be squared with the facts of science as then understood! the great tidal waves of science which have rolled over the world since, would have left the Bible stranded and ruined!

And just so now—could it be made clear today that every truth in the Bible accords with the received theories of science—what would become of the Bible fifty years hence, when science will have moved on with even more rapid strides, and left behind more wrecks of theories and more stranded speculations?

In the meanwhile, the Bible stands still in the solitary grandeur of its own perfection. It waits, as the ages roll on, for confirmation and acceptance. It was said by one of old, "God is patient, because He is eternal;" and the Bible, as the book of the God of truth, has this attribute of its divine Author. Its strength is to sit still. It does not go out hastily to meet a half-formed science and embrace it as an ally—lest it should turn into a foe. It calmly tarries in the consciousness of its own truth—as the advances of science come nearer and nearer—and every advance of true science does bring it nearer to the Bible. "Forever, O LORD, Your Word is settled in Heaven!" Psalm 119:89. "The grass withers and the flowers fade—but the Word of our God stands forever!" Isaiah 40:8

The **opposition** to that Bible, comes only from a class whose utterances, Paul has justly characterized as "***the profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely so called.***"

True science, like the wise men of the East, brings to the holy Jesus its gifts, and bows adoringly at His feet.

Science "falsely so called," like Herod, asks hypocritically of the same wise men, Where is the new-born Jesus? but asks not to worship—but to destroy; not to crown Him king—but to massacre with a sword!

After all, what have these questions between religion and science really to do with your salvation? They are questions which cannot be settled, because

science is not settled; and science will not be settled, so long as there is an undiscovered fact in nature, or an inquiring mind in man. The one thing for you to do is to follow Jesus. All other questions will adjust themselves; but unless you follow Him, you must be forever lost.

Here is another, who, when Jesus says, "Follow me," turns about and, Peter-like, asks—"but, Lord, what about these people who make a **profession** of religion—but who I know from their daily life, are not true Christians? What shall these men do?" Methinks I hear Jesus reply, What is that to you? Will you shut yourself out of Heaven, because of other men's hypocrisy? this world is the world of discipline and probation, where character is formed and tested—the eternal world is the world of judgment and separation, where results are reckoned and awards pronounced.

The religion of Jesus Christ has to work upon a totally depraved nature, and in the midst of a sinful world. Let these two important factors never be forgotten when estimating any work of grace in fallen man. There must of necessity be **flaws** and **defects**—by reason of the defectiveness of the **nature** on which it works and of the **defiled world** in which it operates. this has been so from the beginning of Christianity. Among the twelve disciples, there was a Judas. Among the converts on the Day of Pentecost, there were an Ananias and Sapphira. of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor, among whose Seven Candlesticks walked the Son of God, all were faulty—but one. The parables of the **tares and wheat**, and of the **net** cast into the sea and filled with fishes good and bad; are designed to teach us not to look for **perfection** in the present ordering of things; but, on the contrary, that deceit and hypocrisy and evil living, are to be expected even in the Gospel field, the Gospel net, and the seven-branched candlestick.

What if there are **hypocrites** in the Church—will you add to your sin, by

tying theirs around your neck? Will you refuse to recognize the good and the true, and act up to your known duty—because among those who profess and call themselves Christians, are many who only have a name to live—but are spiritually dead? is this the principle which you act upon in daily life? Do you condemn all merchants, because some are cheats? Do you discredit all banking institutions, because some are worthless? We must each stand on our individual character, and we shall each be judged for our personal doings—and no hypocrisy of others will excuse or even palliate our disobedience to our Lord's command, "Follow me!"

WHO is it who commands you to follow Him? is it some great philosopher? Some wise statesman? Some world-renowned hero? Yes. He is all this—and much more. Jesus Christ is the greatest of all philosophers, of all statesmen, of all heroes. But this is a low and earth-born view of Christ. for raising ourselves to a higher plane of thought, we find that He who commands us to follow Him, has declared Himself to be "the way, the truth, the life." the way to God is only found then by following Him who has said, "No man comes unto the Father—but by me." the truth of God—the truth which is in Jesus; the truth by which alone we are sanctified; the truth that only sets men free in the true liberty of the child of God—is found only as we follow Christ, the Incarnate truth. The life—that eternal life, that life with God in His heavenly kingdom, that life over which the second death has no power—we can find only as we follow Jesus. for the apostle John declares, "this is the record, that God has given unto us eternal life—and this life is in His Son."

Jesus again declares, "I am the *light* of the world," being to man's spiritual nature—what the *sun* is to man's physical being—the sun in the moral heavens—the great light that rules the spiritual day. and so he who would be truly enlightened, can find this light only as he follows Jesus, who has

declared, "He who follows me, shall not walk in darkness; but shall have the light of life."

But this call must be ***promptly obeyed***. It brooks no delay. When, on one occasion, Jesus called out to a man "Follow me," he replied, "Lord, allow me ***first*** to go and bury my father"; Jesus answered, "Let the dead bury their dead." When, on another occasion, one said to Jesus, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-by to my family;" Jesus replied, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom." Nothing can take ***precedence*** over this call—"Follow me." Nothing can warrant its ***postponement***. Nothing atone for its ***neglect***. It is the first, the greatest, duty of today; for "now is the accepted time; behold! now is the day of salvation."

Spiritual Death!^(TOC)

"For there was not a house where there was not one dead!"—Exodus 12:30

The **plagues of Egypt** were the most afflictive that ever scourged any nation.

They were designed ...

to humble the pride of Pharaoh,

to secure the release of the Israelites,

to show the terrors of an angry God, and

the vanity of that idolatry which then swayed the Egyptian mind.

By the first plague, all "the waters of Egypt being turned into blood"—God demonstrated His superiority over their **imaginary river god**, and the baseness of the element which they revered.

By the second plague, "the coming up of frogs and covering the land"—the Nile, the object of their worship, was made an instrument of their punishment.

By the third, the "plague of lice"—the superstition of the people was reproved, and the bodies of the boastful priests defiled.

The fourth "plague of flies," showed them the impotence of the god whom they worshiped, that he might drive away the very gad-fly which now stung them in every part.

The fifth plague, "the murrain among cattle," was the manifestation of God's hand against the living objects of their worship; for the sacred bull, the cow, the heifer, the ram, fell dead before their worshipers.

The sixth plague, "the infliction of festering boils," baffled the skill of their physicians, and visited them with a disease, which neither their deities could avert, nor the art of man alleviate.

The seventh plague "of hail, rain, and fire," showed them that neither **Osiris** who presided over fire, nor **Isis** who presided over water, could protect them from the thunder, and hail, and fire, of Jehovah.

The eighth "plague of locusts," set at naught the gods in whom the Egyptians trusted to deliver them from these insects.

The ninth plague of "three days of darkness," evinced that the sun and the moon which they worshiped as the soul of the world and the ruler of all things, were but servants and creatures of Israel's God.

But the tenth and last of these plagues, the destruction of "all the first-born in the land of Egypt," was the severest of all. It came nearer to the hearts of the people, produced more general sorrow, and resulted in effecting the deliverance of the Israelites from the tyranny of the king. The former plagues had proved ineffectual—they had rolled over that imperious king, and court, and people—the devastating billows of God's wrath, rising higher, and waxing stronger, as each successive wave swelled and dashed itself against the throne of Pharaoh! Yet the monarch's heart was still hardened, and he refused to let Israel go. Shall God give up the contest? Shall he let Israel remain in the brick-kilns and under taskmasters? Shall Pharaoh exult and say: My heart was stouter than God's arm—I still clutch His people in my grasp, despite His boasted power? No!

"And the Lord said unto Moses: I will bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt—afterwards he will let you go hence." "About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the first-born in the land of Egypt

shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sits on the throne, even unto the first-born of the maid-servant who is behind the mill—and all the first-born of beasts." the sacred record tells us how God made good His word: "And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on his throne—unto the first-born of the captive who was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle. and Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt—for there was not a house where there was not one dead!"

Herodotus informs us that it was the custom of the Egyptians to rush from the house into the street to bewail the dead with loud and bitter outcries, and every member of the family joined in these sad lamentations. What, then, must have been the horror of that scene, when, in the darkness of midnight, that whole nation, roused from their slumbers by the *angel of death*, rushed forth with the loud shrieks of agony and despair, to wail over their dead, now lying cold and still in every house from the palace to the dungeon! Truly did God say of it, "There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more!"

Not a house in which there was not one dead! What a record! History furnishes no parallel instance. The terrific pestilence which raged in Athens in the second year of the Peloponnesian War, so minutely and thrillingly described by Thucydides, when the dead and the dying lay piled upon one another, not merely on the public roads—but even in the temples; the terrible epidemic which Livy mentions as desolating Rome; the plague that ravaged Florence in the middle of the fourteenth century; the equally murderous one that decimated London in the latter half of the seventeenth century, so graphically portrayed by De Foe; and that modern scourge, the *Cholera*,

which, born and cradled in Asia, has marched as a pestilence in its strength westward over Europe, and heedless of three thousand miles of ocean, has planted its crushing feet upon these shores, trampling down thousands and tens of thousands in its path!

All these, as direful as they are, and were, can scarcely compare, in the number slain, in the desolation made, in the sorrow produced, in the suddenness of the stroke, in the universality of Bereavement, in the nationality of the wailing—with the tenth and last plague of God, when at midnight, the angel of the Lord passed through Egypt and smote all the first-born, wringing from every family and heart a shriek of anguish! "For there was not a house in which there was not one dead!"

Can you conceive such a scene? Can you, by the strongest effort of imagination, picture out the woe of such an hour? No, it must ever lie in the midnight darkness that enshrouded the scene! that wild wail that rose from millions of simultaneously stricken hearts, can neither be imagined nor described. The very consideration of such a subject gives us pain, and we willingly turn away from its scenes of sorrow and death.

Yet, may it not be said of nearly every family in this church, this city, this land: ***there is not a house where there is not one dead!*** I answer, Yes! I do not mean that death at some time or other has gone into your midst and taken away one of your family group; for solemn and truthful are those words of the poet:

*"There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there;
There is no fireside, howsoever defended,
But has one vacant chair."*

But I refer to the "dead in trespasses and sins." It is this solemn fact of the prevalence in each household and family of this *spiritual death* to which I wish to turn your anxious thoughts; and if the Holy Spirit will but enable me to speak as I ought, and seal what you hear upon your hearts—you will soon perceive that, as terrible as was the condition of the Egyptians—more dreadful still is the state of our households in each of which there is at least one spiritually "dead in trespasses and sins."

In the Bible, alienation from God, spiritual ignorance, carnal-mindedness, unbelief, living in worldly pleasures, continuance in trespasses and sins—are each called death—spiritual death. and justly too, for how can the soul that is alienated from the life of God, be alive unto God? and if we are not alive unto God—there is no spiritual life in us; and whoever is devoid of spiritual life—is spiritually dead. How can a soul that is carnally-minded, engrossed with the things of the flesh—have life? So impossible is this, that the apostle with great emphasis declares, "For to be carnally minded is death!" How can he be truly alive, in the spiritual meaning of that word—who has no faith in Jesus, who in his unbelief refuses to receive Christ in any of His offices, or benefits? It is impossible, for John says, "This is the record that God has given unto us, eternal life; and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son—has life; and he who has not the Son—has not life." and a greater than John, Jesus Himself, declared: "Except you eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, you have no life in you;" showing that unbelief, or the non-receiving of Christ as He is set forth in the gospel, is spiritual death.

How can his soul be termed alive, in its Bible acceptance, whose whole being, mental, moral, physical—is engrossed in the pleasures of this sinful world? Never, until you can revoke Paul's declaration, "She that lives in pleasure is dead, even while she lives." Hence we draw the plain and solemn

inference from these and other passages of Scripture, that all those who are living in sin, in mere worldly pleasure, in carnal-mindedness, in spiritual ignorance, in alienation from God—and without that saving faith in Jesus Christ which puts us in possession of all the benefits of His meritorious death and passion—are spiritually dead.

They are dead to all the higher purposes of their immortal souls; dead to their heavenly inheritance; dead to the glory of God; dead to the redemption that is in Christ Jesus—so that, though they live and breathe and have an earthly being; though they move amid the mirthful and business scenes of this world; though they employ their minds about science, art, and literature; though they build cities, and govern kingdoms, and marshal armies, and win the fading crowns which mortals give to mortals; and though they may be loved, and honored, and esteemed for moral worth and social virtues, and the sweet amiabilities of a life spotless to the eyes of men—yet God pronounces them ***dead***—for He sees their hearts, He knows their inner state, and His decision is the sentence of a God of holiness and truth.

You see nothing to ***distinguish*** the persons thus said to be dead from any others—but all things rather tell of life, of hope, of joy—and not of death and woe. But this ***spiritual*** death is none the less real, because invisible to mortal eye. Could the material film which blears the eye of the soul be removed, and we be permitted to gaze at those around us as they are viewed by God and angels—we would see more doleful evidences of death in the spirit of the impenitent and unbelieving, than we see with the eye of sense in the chamber of physical mortality and beside the opened grave.

I say more doleful evidences, for then would we behold scenes of deepest anguish—

here, a man sleeping the sleep of death, in ignorance;

here, one "dead in trespasses and sins";
here, one inanimate to all the eternal interests of the soul;
here another, lifeless in carnality;
here one wrapped in the winding-sheet of his own hypocrisy;
and there another, lying *morally* pulseless on the flower-decked bier of
worldly pleasure, ready to be buried in the self-dug grave of his deceitful
lusts!

This surely is a sad condition. Would that it could be in some measure realized. But such is the carnal-mindedness of our nature, such the deception of the great adversary, such the prevailing influence of seen and temporal things over unseen and eternal things—that though reason, and conscience, and Christian friends, and the Bible unite in telling you your death-like state—you listen only as to the mutterings of far-off thunder; gaze only as to the flashes of distant lightning; and then bend anew—your thought, and mind, and heart, to the concerns of time and sense, to the utter exclusion of the things of the world to come!

But are not the things of the world to come, the *paramount* things even of this life? for is not this life "the dim dawn, the twilight of an eternal day" which will break fully upon us beyond the grave? the character of that *future*—is determined by the character of this *present*. The soul will be in eternity—what it becomes in time. Hence as there is no knowledge, nor work, nor device, in the grave where we go—so the destinies of the immortal soul for eternity—lie within the shaping influences of the present hour.

Life's great work is not to live well and honorably on earth—but to fit yourself to live well and honorably *hereafter*. Life's great end is not to glorify ourselves here—but to prepare ourselves for glory hereafter, and that can be done only by glorifying God now with our bodies and spirits which are His.

The time is not far distant, when we shall look back upon the years of this mortal life, and be amazed that we could allow our immortal soul to be absorbed in the base, contemptible, babyish, fleeting affairs of this probation-world—and neglect the momentous and eternal interests of our souls! "Fool that I was," you shall exclaim, "to be alive to everything to which I should have been dead—and to be dead to everything to which I should have been alive! to barter the salvation of my soul, the favor of God, the joys of Heaven, and eternal glory ...

for a few hours of sordid pleasure,
for a few grains of glittering dust,
for a few acclamations of human breath,
for a few treasures of worldly learning—
all of which have now **vanished** as a dream, and left me hopeless, joyless, peaceless, Heavenless forever!"

Give to this subject but one hour's serious thought, implore upon it light from above, to guide your mind, study it in its Bible truthfulness and be willing to look at it as the greatest interest of your soul, and conscience—and you will not fail to learn that you are indeed spiritually dead, and that if you continue in this state, **eternal** death, the **second** death, will be your remediless portion!

Is there any help or escape from this spiritual death? There is! the call of Paul to the Ephesian Christians still rings in our ears, "Awake you that sleep and arise from the dead—and Christ shall give you light." Through Christ, who is the Resurrection and the Life, there is deliverance. He died—that you might not die. He rose again—that you might rise from the death of sin. He lives in glory—that you may live and reign there also. He holds out to you every promise, the Holy Spirit visits you to rouse you from your insensible state, and God is waiting to be gracious. Everything now is favorable to your

salvation, every agency on God's part is at work to secure it, nothing is lacking to make eternal life yours—but the bowing of your stubborn will, to the will of God; and even this, the great stone that lies at the door of your moral sepulcher—even this, God will aid you in rolling away, as soon as you yield to the monitions of the Spirit and are made willing in the day of His power.

How imperative, then, is the duty which rests upon Christians to seek the salvation of all with whom they are connected by ties of blood or love. Did you truly believe what the Bible declares concerning your unconverted friends—you would be constrained to mourn over them with a bitter wailing. Were you to see your wife, husband, father, mother, brother, sister, son, or daughter—wasting away in disease, and struggling in the agonies of mortal death—how would your hearts be wrung with sorrow! Yet you see them out of Christ, you know that they are not followers of Jesus, you are assured by God himself that they are dead in trespasses and in sin, and you know that this *spiritual* death is but a step removed from the *second* death, the *eternal* death—and all the while you appear unconcerned about their salvation, unmoved at their perilous condition! You behold them day by day sinking down to everlasting woe—and put forth no helping hand, lift up no warning voice, make no energetic effort to rouse them from their death-like stupor, and point them to Him who alone can give them spiritual life here and eternal life beyond the grave! Does not such conduct virtually give the lie to God? Does it not practically declare that the Bible is not true? Does it not show that you esteem the *bodies* of your friends more than their souls, and that you regard their temporal interests as paramount to their spiritual? and does not such conduct in professing Christians falsify the teachings of the pulpit, the monitions of conscience, and the declarations of the Scripture?

And can you do this, O Christian—and be *guiltless* of the blood of those souls whom your *indifference* and *carelessness* has laid in the winding-sheet of eternal death? Christian father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister—weigh well and prayerfully, the responsibilities which rest upon you towards your unconverted children, friends, relatives, and dependents. There is perhaps one dead in each of your houses. It may be that one is near and dear to your heart. Oh, go out then to Jesus like Mary, and say, "I know that even now, whatever you will ask of God—God will give it to you." Go to Him like Jairus, and say, "My daughter is even now dead—but come and lay your hand on her and she shall live!" and He who gave back the breath to Lazarus, and to the ruler's daughter, and to the son of the widow of Nain—will rouse your beloved one from the sleep of spiritual death, will breathe into that dead one spiritual life, and as the "Resurrection and the Life," will raise you up together, and make you sit together in heavenly places to the praise of the glory of His grace—who, when you were dead in trespasses and sins, quickened you into spiritual life here, and ushered you into eternal life hereafter!

The Lamb Slain!^(TOC)

"The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world!"—Revelation 13:8

We do not sufficiently regard Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God. We have indeed some general ideas of him in this character—but they are too often vague and unsatisfactory, and leave but faint impressions on our minds. As, however, few aspects of the Savior are more precious unto us than that which represents him as a **Lamb**, and as few terms are more frequently applied to him than this—there being over thirty places where he is especially designated as a **Lamb**—so it befits us to study this phase of our Redeemer's manifestation, and, by long dwelling upon the precious truths which it involves—fill our hearts, as "followers of the Lamb," with such an appreciation of his love and glory, that we shall be permitted to sing "the song of Moses and the Lamb," in that New Jerusalem of which this Lamb is both "the light" and "the temple."

The Bible speaks of the Lamb slain—the Lamb redeeming—the Lamb conquering—the Lamb on Mount Zion—the song of the Lamb—the Lamb's wife—the marriage supper of the Lamb—the Lamb's book of life—the followers of the Lamb—and the duty of all to "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world."

We invite attention, at this time, to the first of these divisions, "the Lamb slain;" as that sacrifice lies at the foundation of the Christian religion.

A **sacrifice** implies the idea of an atonement—a reparation—a reconciliation. These again presuppose, a law broken—a right denied—an injury done. The opening pages of Revelation, therefore, which tell us of the **fall** of man, tell

us also of the subsequent *sacrifices* offered unto God. in the fall, man had broken God's law, denied God's right to rule, and inflicted an injury upon his own soul, and the souls of all his posterity. By sacrifice, an *atonement* was made for sin; *reparation* was given for a broken law, and a *reconciliation* effected with a once offended God. Hence they stand ever against each other: the bane—and the antidote; the death incurred—and the life secured. The divine image *lost* by the sin of the first Adam—the divine image *restored* by the sacrifice of "the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven."

For several thousand years, however, these divinely appointed sacrifices had no value in themselves; for "the blood of bulls and of goats," as Paul distinctly asserts, "could not take away sin." They were, it is true, offered from the days of Adam to the days of Christ. They were appointed by a ritual given by God himself—they were offered up by priests of his own choosing—their blood flowed in the courts of the Temple built to his honor, and 'filled with the emblems of his glory; and through these, an atonement was made for sin, and a reconciliation was effected with God. **But how?**—by the material blood that followed the sacrificial knife? or that which tipped the horns of the altar? or that which was sprinkled on the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies? Did the forfeited life of innocent animals propitiate the anger of an offended God? and did his eye delight itself in the expiring throes of the victims which bled at his altars? Did the value of these offerings reside in the material part of the service? No!

All the sacrifices ever offered by God's command derived their value only as they typified and illustrated the one great sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary! To this cross of Christ, on which was slain "the Lamb of God," all sacrifices looked. in this, all found their antitype. By it, all had efficacy; and only as the offerer had faith to look beyond the animal slain and the blood

shed, to the promised Messiah, who should appear "once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," did he derive any spiritual or lasting benefit or pardon by his sacrifice. Hence, of the very first recorded sacrifice it is said, that "by faith Abel offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain." Hence also of those patriarchs who, like Abraham, "longed to see Christ's day," and, by the forecast vision of faith, "did see it and rejoiced," the apostle says, "these all died in faith, not having received the promises—but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them."

Nothing can be plainer than the fact, that the whole Levitical service, in all its parts and developments, found its end and fulfillment in Jesus Christ. in *Him*, it can all be explained and made to appear as the wise provision of a God of mercy. Without Him, it is a meaningless and bloody ritual—at once profitless to the soul, and disgraceful to the Bible.

But it may be asked, could not God have devised some other way of reconciliation? and does it not manifest unpleasant features of character, when we see the Most High commanding the death of innocent animals, and staining his temple with the blood of spotless lambs? It is enough for us to know that God has not devised any other way; and as he is a God of infinite wisdom—so the very fact that he has provided this plan is plain evidence that it is the *best* and *only* way of reconciliation. And, as to its exhibiting anything repulsive in the nature of God that he should thus command these sacrifices—we shall find, on the contrary, that a true understanding of this peculiarity of the Divine economy, will invest him with new majesty, and elevate and refine our views of his holiness, and purity, and truth.

To illustrate this point, let us take our stand in the Garden of Eden, beside the guilty pair, before they hear "the voice of the Lord walking in the garden at

the cool of day." What was to be done for these guilty ones? God's law had been disobeyed—God's love had been slighted—and the threatened curse had been incurred. As soon as this had taken place ...

the image of God, in which man was made;
peace with God, which man had enjoyed;
love to God, which man had cherished; and
the eternal life, which God had promised on the condition of obedience
—were all destroyed.

It is also evident that God might justly have left man where he had voluntarily placed himself; that he was under no obligations to help or save him; and that he would still have been a just and holy God—had he made *no* overtures of grace and mercy! Had God left our first parents to themselves, and to the developments of the sin which they had committed—they never could have devised a way of return to him; never could have reinstated themselves in the divine favor; never could have atoned for a violated law; never could have secured eternal life; but must have gone on growing in sin, deepening in iniquity—until they took up their abode with everlasting burnings!

Just at this point, then, comes in, with its life-giving power—the plan of our redemption. Without lowering the demands of justice, without abrogating one jot or tittle of the holy law—mercy placed in the hands of the guilty pair, the promise and the prophecy, "that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." in other words, that one would be born of woman who should destroy "the old serpent, the devil," and restore us to the favor and the blessedness which, through this subtle tempter, we lost in Eden. this was the starting point of hope, of promise, of prophecy—faint in its outlines, and general in its terms. But, as the time wore on, it became, through new

prophecies and developments, brighter and stronger, waxing in influence and power, until the coming of this Messiah became the dominant hope in the mind of the Israelite, and at the same time had grown to be also "the desire of all nations."

But Christ was not to come until "the fullness of time" had arrived—that is, until that fit and proper time which God saw to be best for the advent of so great a blessing. As this, according to our computation of years, was put off nearly four thousand years from man's fall (though not put off to the mind of him with whom "a thousand years are as one day," and with whom time past, time present, time future, is an *eternal now*), how was this hope and blessing to be made effectual to those who had lived before the coming of Christ? Was the prophecy given in Eden, that mere filament of truth—sufficient to sustain the hope and anticipations of a dying world? No; men are material beings, and need to have their faith stayed up by material signs and symbols; and therefore God devised a way by which the blessings of the Christian covenant might be made of immediate use, and through which the death of Jesus could avail to the salvation of the antediluvian and the Israelite, as well as to those who saw the Lord with the eyes of sense, or who now behold him with the retrospective eye of faith. that plan was the institution of animal sacrifices. By this institution, innocent animals of a particular kind and character were slain, and their blood offered to God as a propitiation for the sins of the offerer, or of the family, or of the tribe, or of the great congregation. By this offering, what is called an *atonement* was made, and the sins of the offerers were covered and pardoned.

But how could the blood of animals do this? and how is it that, "without the shedding of blood, there could be no remission of sins?" Plainly in this way. By sin, man's life was forfeited; every soul had brought upon itself eternal

death; it had "been forfeited to God, and as a debt due to his justice, it should, in right, be rendered back again to him who gave it." the enforcement of this claim, of course involves the eternal death of transgressors; but, in the institution of sacrifice, God provides a way of escape from this doom, by appointing a **substitute**, namely, the soul or life of a beast for the soul or life of a transgressor; and as the seat of life is in the blood (the Hebrew word for **life** and **blood** being one and the same), so the blood of the beast, its life-blood, was to be shed in death, and offered upon the altar of God, in the place of the higher—but guilty life of man, which had become due, and which by right should be offered up to divine justice.

When this was done—when the blood of the slain victim was poured out, or sprinkled upon the altar, and thereby given up to God—the sinner's guilt was, as the Hebrew word expresses it, **covered**; a screen, as it were, was thrown between the eye of God and his guilt, or between his own soul and the penalty due to his transgression. in other words, a life that had not been forfeited, was accepted by God in the place of a life which was forfeited; and the soul, ceremoniously cleansed by this vicarious offering, was yielded back to the offerer, as now again a life in peace, and fellowship with God, receiving life for himself out of the death of the animal, and remission of sins through the substituted blood of the victim slain upon the altar. The necessity of offering an innocent animal arose from the fact that if the animal had been **guilty**, its own life would have been forfeited for itself, and could not be used then as a substitute for man; but not being guilty, and not being forfeited for itself, it could be vicariously used, and offered in lieu of a life that was guilty, and thereby forfeited to God.

This, in very brief language, is what may be termed **the philosophy of sacrifices**. this vindicates their origin from any cruelty, establishes their

worth as a ***plan of mercy***, and met the needs of the human race until the great sacrifice, "the Lamb of God," was offered on the hill of Calvary.

A careful survey of the Levitical law in connection with the Epistle to the Hebrews, shows us, that all the ***sacrifices*** there enjoined, the ***rites*** there directed, and the ***arrangements*** of the tabernacle and temple service there set forth—derived their ***value and efficacy*** from Jesus Christ alone. The effect of his death was reflected backward, to the Patriarchal and Levitical dispensations, by which salvation was granted to those who came to him, not indeed as now, by a direct approach—but through the victim on the altar, which then typified him, and showed forth his death and its blessed results until he came.

Among the animals sacrificed by the Jews, the Lamb held a pre-eminent place; and therefore, as well on account of his gentleness and spotlessness of character, as from the offering up of himself as the substitute for guilty man, Jesus Christ is well termed "the Lamb of God;" and because ***the efficacy of Christ's death flows backward*** to our first parents, in the infancy of the world; and because with him who inhabits eternity there are no distinctions of time, he is said to be "a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" the retroactive virtue of his death dating four thousand years before his blood actually flowed upon the accursed tree. It needs but a very few words to show how Christ, in his life and death, met all that was ***typified*** by the sacrificial lamb, and thus became the full and glorious ***anti-type*** of every offering under the old covenant of works.

As there were so many different kinds of sacrifices among the Jews, we have not time to trace out the minute analogies and relations of Christ to the various sin-offerings, and trespass-offerings, and burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, and meat-offerings there recorded. We must, therefore, seek certain

points which, in a great degree, are common to all, and show how Christ, as the Lamb of God, covered these points so as to embody, in his own sacrifice, everything that was peculiar to the offerings of olden times.

1. The first point to be noticed is, that the *victim* offered in sacrifice was *not guilty*. The animal had no sins of its own to answer for; it stood, indeed, in the sinner's place; but this *vicarious substitution* gave it only a *ceremonial guilt*—and not actual and internal guilt.

So Christ was guiltless. The apostate who betrayed him, the king who condemned him, the centurion who crucified him, testified to his innocence. He stood indeed in the sinner's place, and, thus standing, was *legally guilty*—but only thus, for sin never stained his soul, being, in the words of the apostle, "Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."

2. Another point, common to all sacrifices, was, that they should be the *best* of their kind. The lame, the diseased, the old, the imperfect, were rejected; and the best of the flock and the herd, and of the fruits of the ground, were to be offered. a failure in this particular, vitiated the whole sacrifice. Jesus Christ is "the first born, the highest of all the sons of the earth;" "He is the chief among ten thousand;" "He is altogether lovely;" "He is the brightness of the Father's glory," for "in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."
3. Another point incident to these sacrifices, especially to to all burnt-offerings and sin-offerings, was the *laying of the hand* of the offerer upon the head of the victim, before its blood was

shed in death. By this symbolic act, the offerer, who was guilty, conveyed to an animal, not guilty—the sins for which the offerer had incurred the penalty of death; but transferring them from himself, by this laying on of hands, to the innocent animal—that animal, thus bearing the sins of the offerer, was **treated** as if guilty, and its blood, its life, paid the penalty required by an offended law. this implied a sense of **guilt** on the part of the offerer; this implied that he acknowledged that for this guilt he **deserved to die**. But it implied also, that God had provided a substitute, faintly represented by the victim at the altar, which substitute would, in the fullness of time, offer himself, not for the sins of one person, or one nation—but "of the whole world."

Thus Jesus Christ had "laid on him the iniquities of us all." We do not indeed approach him with our bodily hands, and lay them on his head, confessing our sins the while; but it is distinctly declared that "he bore our sins in his own body on the tree;" and **faith** goes to him with its hands laden with transgressions, and lays all its guilt upon his head, for he is an **infinite sacrifice**, and is able to bear away the sins of the whole world.

4. Another common point was, that the **blood of the victim was shed**. in Leviticus, God says, "For the life or soul of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls, for it is the blood which makes atonement for the soul." Hence Paul also declares, "Without shedding of blood, there is no remission." that the

blood of Christ was shed, all earth and Heaven testified. It flowed from his head, his hands, his feet, his sides, his back; a sad and painful sight to the *eye of sense*—so sad that the sun could not look upon the scene, and the earth trembled as she beheld it; and yet a joyful vision to the *eye of faith*—for it sees in those drops a fountain of cleansing, a lave of salvation; the trickling rillhead of that river of life, on earth indeed red and bloody—but in Heaven as "clear as crystal," flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb!

5. The last point to be noticed was, that this blood was to be *sprinkled*, on ordinary occasions, *upon the altar*, round about; but on the day of atonement also upon the *mercy seat in the holy of holies*, carried in there by the high priest, who, on this day, himself shed the blood of the victim. The sprinkling of the blood upon the altar and the mercy seat, told, in symbolic language, that *God had accepted the gift and substitute*—and on account thereof, the offerer received pardon and peace. Hence, it was not enough that Christ's blood was shed; there must be something to indicate that the blood of him who bore our sins, and who "was made sin for us," had been accepted by God; therefore Christ is said, as our great High Priest, to have "passed into the heavens," bearing in his hand, not the blood of bulls and goats, "but his own blood." and sprinkling it there, "before the mercy seat on high," we are assured that his sacrifice is accepted, his atonement complete.

Jesus Christ, then, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, *meets every type and shadow of the olden*

dispensations, and gives to them that perfection and efficacy which they had not in themselves.

It was morally and physically necessary, then, that Christ, as the Lamb of God, should be slain, in order to to secure our salvation. There was, so far as we know, no other way, whereby a dishonored law could be magnified, its penalty removed, and the loss of eternal life by disobedience, be repaired. He alone could fill up the mighty breach which sin had made. Sinless, he alone could offer his life-blood, that was not forfeited, for the life, the blood of man, that was forfeited. As the "seed of the woman"—he alone could fulfill the prophecy and "bruise the serpent's head." As the Divine "Messiah—he alone could bear the iniquities of the world on his own shoulders. As the Lord of life—he alone could crush the power of death, and give man the resurrection of life! Heaven would never have been inhabited by any of the human race—had not Christ entered in there with his own blood, and, as our great high priest, made intercession for us, and secured those mansions which shall be ours in glory!

All this results from his being slain—slain from the foundation of the world—slain as the Lamb of God, the great vicarious sacrifice for the human race.

How he was slain, I need not stop to tell. The story of his death is familiar to us all—alas! so familiar that it fails to arrest our mind and engross our heart.

Would that we could be made to feel the **deep solemnity** of

that crucifixion scene, and to comprehend the magnitude of the issues which hung upon that dropping blood! I know that the physical circumstances of that event were solemn in the extreme. The mere crucifixion of any slave has in it that which would excite compassion; but this event has no parallel in the history of the world—never was a death like the death of Jesus. Great men, and kings, and heroes have died, and *nature* uttered no moan of sympathy; but she shut her *burning eye* and *trembled* like a thing of life and love—when Jesus hung upon the cross, and even now wears the scars of the wounds which then rent her throbbing breast.

But these things, as stupendous and unnatural as they were—are as nothing compared to the moral interests which cluster round the slaying of the Lamb. By that event, the government of God was magnified and sustained to its utmost bounds. a way was made by which the alien, man, could be reconciled to God—and the self-outcast rebel, become a child of glory. The power and dominion of sin was broken! Death was overcome! Heaven was opened, and the once lost soul—found, washed, robed in Christ's righteousness, and admitted to glory—is made a king and a priest unto God forever! Such is the wonder-working power of "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world!"

1. The Direful Malignity of Sin!

As we look at this slain Lamb—let us mark *the direful malignity of sin!* It was sin which ...

drew Christ from His throne in glory;
humbled Him to the state and condition of humanity;
made Him "a man of sorrows" all His days;
hunted His life from infancy, and
finally nailed Him to "the accursed tree!"

Had not man sinned—Jesus would never have become incarnate! Hence, every pang and woe which He endured in body and soul, from His miraculous birth to his ignominious death—was inflicted by sin!

Christians! wearers of Christ's name! professors of Christ's religion! Will you love sin? Will you be in league with and cherish that in your heart—which slew the Lamb of God? O, if you love sin; if you are resolved not to forsake it; if you do not hate it as the enemy of Christ, and your own soul—you are hugging that to your heart, which drove the nails into the hands, and which thrust the spear into the side of the Lamb of God!

2. The Work of Love!

But we see in the lamb slain, not only the work of sin—***But the Work of Love!*** As we gaze for the last time upon the face of some dear friend, as he lies cold and silent in the coffin—how memory calls up the many scenes and evidences of love which that dead friend has manifested towards us! Anger—if we had any—envy, malice, are banished; and as we look upon the face of the dead—we think only of the love, the deep affection that once filled that now silent heart. Just so, when we look upon this Lamb slain, gazing, by faith, upon the features of the Crucified—let us call up his love, think over all he has done for our soul, recall his words of affection, remember ...
how often we have grieved him—but he has never grieved us;
how often we have turned away from him—but he never from us;

how often we have forgotten him—but he has never forgotten us!

Review the whole history of this Lamb of God, and as we feel that he crowned all this love by dying in our stead, that we might have life, let us ask ourselves what ***return of love*** ought we to make to him who loved us before the foundation of the world; loved us even unto death, and now loves us with a love as large as his infinite heart, as boundless as his eternal being!

"Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne!" Revelation 5:6

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" Revelation 5:12

God's Ownership of Souls^(TOC)

"Behold, all souls are mine! the soul that sins, it shall die!"—Ezekiel 18:4

This passage contains the statement of two facts which have a most important bearing on man's moral destiny:

1st, that our souls belong to God.

2nd, that He will punish every sinning soul.

That our souls belong to God, is *theoretically* generally conceded—yet, in its full truth, it is but little acknowledged, and exerts but little influence on our hearts and lives. Yet few truths are more important or deserve deeper consideration. Let us give to them, then, at this time, our calm and patient thought.

1. Behold, All Souls Are Mine!

Who speaks this? the Lord God. Here, then, is a distinct declaration of His right of property in the souls of men. Upon what, then, is this right based?

The right of a *man* to any property is ever subject to the modifications or changes to which all human legislation is liable, and which at times, have overturned all human government. There is, then, no absolute and unqualified right of man to any property which may not be interfered with, or destroyed; for there is nothing stable this side of Heaven. Such is the weakness and insecurity of human rights to human possessions.

You may say a man has a right to do what he will with his property; for

example, he may give it away, or keep it, as he will. Not so! With his rights are interlaced the rights of others, and the rights of God. Human laws and divine laws have thrown their meshes around each man, and he cannot act irrespective of the will of the law, or of the will of God, without violating his obligations to both. He must adjust his rights to the rights of others, and to the claims of God—and hence his will is fettered, and can never act in an absolute and independent manner.

So also of man's control over himself, or others. He can never act as he will. His control is always a control under law, limited by statutes, human or divine. He cannot do what he will with his person, if it interferes with the rights of other persons; his line of duty is prescribed by many legal limitations, ever keeping in check his will and ever guiding his every step.

But when we turn from the rights of *man* to the rights of *God*—what a contrast! God's right of property in these souls is not *derived*, as man's is—but *original*; His, not by conveyance from another—but by right of *creation*. He made man out of dust; He made the dust out of which man was made; and, having made man in his physical being, He then breathed into him "the breath of life," and "man became a living soul." Here, then, is the *absolute* and *unqualified* right of God, by virtue of the act of *creation*—to the souls of men. There is no right behind this right; it is the primordial right of the *Creator* to the *creature* which he has made by the word of His power.

And this soul which God has breathed into man, is perpetually conserved and sustained by God. God did not breathe into man the breath of life—and then leave the spirit which he has thus imparted to take care of itself. No—He daily, hourly preserves that soul, ministers to it the elements of its life, and sustains it in the being in whom He breathed it. But for this *perpetual conservation*, the soul would cease to be, and man would cease to be; and

hence by this right, therefore, as well as by the right of creation, God can truly say, "All souls are mine."

As the **Creator** of the soul, and the **Upholder** of the soul—God can do what He will with the soul. There are no codes of law to guide Him, no interlacings of other rights with His right to fetter or restrain His will. on the contrary, His will is His own law, and hence it is said, "He does according to His will, in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." His will, no one can question, no one control; it is as infinite as His own nature, as holy as His own essence—and hence the law, which is but an expression of His will, is said to be "holy and just and good." Here, then, is a right of property in us beyond anything which human laws can know or impart: God's right to the souls of men by **creation**, by **preservation**, and by **governmental** control—an inalienable, absolute, and eternal right.

Now if you will compare for a moment the tenure by which **you** hold any property or right, with the tenure by which **God** claims your soul as belonging to Him—you will see at a glance, that the highest and absolute rights of men are as worthless and defective titles, compared with the true original right of our divine Creator. Your right is given to you by others: God's right is self-derived. Your right rests upon deeds and conveyances, the whole value of which resides in certain legal technicalities, or official seals, or judicial records. His right lies in the sole proprietorship of a creating and an upholding God. Your rights are restricted by other rights; your will is fettered by other wills; your tenure is morticed in with other tenures. His rights are based on the counsels of His own will—the one **sole controlling will** in the universe. How truly, how sublimely, then, may He, the Creator and Upholder of all things, sitting on the throne of Heaven, declare, "Behold, all souls are mine!"

"All souls." What a **compass** does this give to His spiritual proprietorship! All human souls are His. Every being who ever lived on this earth in whom God breathed the breath of an immortal spirit, belongs to God. The souls of all fallen angels are His. They have alienated themselves from God, cast off his authority, placed themselves in open rebellion to Him and His moral government, and are using the great powers of mind with which they are endowed to thwart the divine will, and spread ruin and woe throughout the earth; yet they can not release themselves from the ownership of God. He has never vacated His right to their souls. They are His, despite their rebellion; His, despite their sin; nor can they ever free themselves from the absolute right of God to do what He will with His own.

The souls of the dwellers in Heaven belong to God. Each and every order of spiritual existences, from the lowest who waits before the throne, to the tallest archangel in the hierarchy of Heaven—belongs to God; for by Him, says the apostle, "were all things created, which are in Heaven and in earth; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers."

What a mighty proprietorship is this!

To be able to stand on this world, and say of each generation of its hundreds of millions of beings, as they pass in a procession sixty centuries long, "Behold, all these souls are mine!"

To stand like Uriel in the sun, and say of the thronging myriads which inhabit the planets of this solar system, as they sweep their swift orbits around the central light, "Behold, all these souls are mine!"

To go down to the gates of the world of darkness, where the angels "which kept not their first estate are reserved under chains" for the judgment, and say, in the hearing of these fallen spirits, causing each to tremble as it is

uttered, "Behold, all these souls are mine!"

To sit upon the throne of Heaven, surrounded by the countless throng of angels, and say, "Behold, all these are mine!"

Oh, surely, He who can say this must be the great and glorious God! the question now arises, for what *purpose* did God make these souls? Let God Himself answer. By the mouth of Isaiah He declares, "I have created him *for my glory*; I have formed him; yes, I have made him"; and again, He says, "This people have I formed *for myself*—they shall show forth *my praise!*"

God's glory is, then, the great object of man's creation; and the chief end of man is to glorify God. The ownership of our souls being then vested in God, and the object of the creation of those souls being God's glory—there result from these two facts, certain *inferences* which are of most weighty import.

That Man Holds His Soul in Trust From God, for the Use of God

The first inference is: *that man holds his soul in trust from God*, for the use of God. God has not given you a soul to do what you please with it, irrespective of Him. He has, indeed, implanted in you a will; but with that will, He has also given two laws—the law of conscience, and the moral law of Sinai; and that will must guide all its volitions according to these laws, and any breach of either is known to, and punishable, by God. You are held responsible for every act of that will, and each putting forth of that will in opposition to God's will is sin.

In human law, where a person holds property belonging to another, in trust

for certain purposes—he is bound to adhere strictly to the terms of his trusteeship; and nothing short of the power which constituted or recognized him a trustee, can discharge him of his obligation, or change the terms of his trust. Each deviation, therefore, in the use of the property from the original design, is a highly criminal breach of trust, and attended with human disgrace. Yet how many there are who would scorn to pervert from its original use a trust *estate*—who would die, sooner than disgrace their names by untrustworthy acts—who do, every day, use God's souls, with which they are put in trust—in doing and thinking, in feeling and loving things which are hateful to Him, and insulting to His glory.

The terms of trusteeship inscribed on each soul are—"Occupy until I come." Occupy the powers, the affections, the sensibilities, the will of this soul—for me. Occupy as my steward, for my glory. and whenever these souls are used for any purposes contrary to God's will, then is there in you a great breach of moral trust, and that is *sin*.

But not only is there a breach of trust in thus *misusing* the soul with which you are placed in trust, there is also involved in such conduct, absolute *treason* and *rebellion!*

God says your soul is His, consequently He has a right to rule over it and receive its allegiance as its governor and king; but you cast aside His rule, and give your allegiance and obedience to God's enemy! is not this treason, rebellion? Writers on constitutional and civil law tell us, that it is high treason—where a man is adherent to the king's enemies. and do you not adhere to God's arch-enemy? Christ declares, "He who is not with me is against me."

Locke, in his work on Civil Government, says, "Rebellion is an opposition not only to *persons*—but to *authority* which is founded in the constitution

and laws of the government." Are you not opposing yourself both to the person and authority of God; rebelling against His divine sovereignty, and breaking, day by day, the great and foundation laws of His kingdom? Adjudging your conduct then by the plain principles of human law—you must stand charged with rebellion against God, in opposing yourself to His rightful authority, and with high treason against your divine King—in adhering to, and aiding and supporting His enemy, the Prince of Darkness. There is no possible escape from these conclusions. They are the verdict of conscience, of reason, of revelation; and by this verdict, you will be sentenced at the day of judgment.

But we are not yet done with this inference, that you hold your souls in trust for God; for your conduct in withholding your souls from Him is not only a ***breach of trust***, not only ***treason***, not only ***rebellion***—but it is absolute ***robbery*** of God! If you keep from God, what belongs to God—is it not robbery? God thinks so, for He charged His people of old with robbery, when they withheld from Him the service and love which was His due. By the mouth of the prophet Malachi He asks, "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed me." "But you say, Wherein have we robbed You? in tithes and offerings." "You are cursed with a curse: for you have robbed me, even this whole nation." If those who withheld "tithes and offerings" robbed God—then how much more those who withhold the love and devotion of their souls?

Now is it not strange that while, if you are honest, you are forced to confess that you occupy this position—that you yet feel no dishonor or disgrace concerning it. I speak to you who are men of honesty and honor, who would eat the crust of poverty sooner than betray a human trust—do you feel no sense of shame in betraying the divine trust which God has placed in your

charge? I speak to you men of patriotism, who would shed your blood sooner than join the enemies of your country or foment rebellion against the government which protects you—do you feel sad smiting of conscience, no goadings of remorse, at your **treason** in adhering to the enemy of all righteousness, in being a child and follower and servant of him who plotted rebellion in Heaven, who plotted rebellion on earth, and who is ever waging war with God? I speak to you men of honesty and business integrity, who would scorn to do an act of fraud, who would beg, sooner than rob—do you feel sense of shame in thus robbing God of the love and service and devotion of your souls? that **love** which should be God's—you give to another; that **mind** which should be used for God—you use for another; that **service** which should be God's—you give to another.

All Misuse of this Trust, is Sin

This brings us to the second inference which is—that **all misuse of this trust, is sin**. God requires us to love Him with all our soul; this, He says, is the first and great commandment. Each lack of conformity to this law is sin, for the apostle distinctly states, "Sin is a transgression (or lack of conformity to) of the law." Each soul, then, which withholds itself from God, does, by that act, break the first and great commandment, and consequently commits sin. and now, what does God in the text say of such sinning soul?

The Soul that Sins—It Shall Die

What a fearful doom is this! Yet it is the doom which the **owner** of the soul pronounces upon every soul which spurns His ownership and does not render

Him true and faithful worship. What is meant by this **death** of the soul—human thought cannot understand; because we know not what man **loses** when he loses Heaven—or what man **suffers** when he enters Hell. The two great elements of this death of the soul are:

1st, the absence of all that constitutes everlasting life.

2nd, the presence of everything that constitutes everlasting despair.

There is forever present to the soul—the consciousness of this its twofold misery. The death of the soul does not deprive it of its consciousness—it is ever conscious, ever sensitive, ever active. It is dead, indeed, as the apostle states, in trespasses and sin. Dead to all influences of spiritual joy and peace. Dead to all enjoyments of eternal bliss in Heaven. Dead to all love to God and things holy and divine. There is no living joy in such a soul, no active love, no calming peace, no animating hope. Like the Dead Sea—nothing pure, good, lovely, healthful, lives in it, moves over it, grows around it. It is a bleak, bare, stagnant, desolate pool of bitter sorrow, barren of every delight, and breeding only the noxious exhalations of a miasma, which ever wraps the soul as in the winding sheet of eternal death.

When to this loss of Heaven, and this absence of everything that can give life or joy—you add the other great element of spiritual death—the presence and endurance of every **woe** which God has denounced against the wicked; the withdrawal of the light of His countenance and the restraining influences of the Holy Spirit; the giving up of the soul to the full development of its own lusts and passions; the ever-present goadings of a conscience fully awakened at the judgment, and never again to be seared or silenced; the agonies of a **remorse** that ever preys upon the spirit with more than the tearing fangs of a vulture; and the ever-increasing **guilt** which grows up in that soul as the ages roll on—then will you be able, in some measure, to know what is meant by

the words of the text, "The soul that sins, it shall die!"

Continue to withhold your souls from God—and that doom must be yours. But if, recognizing God's right to your soul, you give it to Him to be washed in the blood of Jesus, and to be robed in his spotless merit—then is your salvation sure, and the soul which God breathed into you at your birth, will live forever a redeemed soul in Heaven!

Faith Touching Christ's Garment^(TOC)

"For she said within herself: If I may but touch his garment—I shall be whole!"—Matthew 9:21

In many minds, the subject of religion is invested with peculiar and multiplied difficulties. These arise from various causes, such as ...
early education,
social influence,
mental temperament,
doctrinal teaching, and
the natural workings of the unrenewed mind.

The difficulties take the complexion of their originating causes, and are therefore, to a greater or less extent, influential in keeping away the sinner from the sinner's only Savior.

From God's revealed character, we should not suppose that he would institute a religion for all men, that would be so difficult to obtain or practice as to make it almost impossible for them to embrace it. on the contrary, his character as a God of infinite wisdom, goodness, and truth—leads us to believe that he would give a religion so **comprehensive** as that all men could enjoy it, so **simple** as that all could understand it, so easily **found** and **embraced** as that all could lay hold upon its hope and secure its salvation. What we would thus naturally expect—actually exists.

God has instituted one religion for the whole world. It is so **simple** in its scheme, that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein." It is so **readily understood**, that the ignorant savage, the unlettered slave, can

comprehend it. It is so ***easily embraced***, that the opening reason of childhood, and the sluggish mind of ignorance, can believe and be saved.

To show the nature of the supposed difficulties of religion, and the real simplicity of the plan of redemption as it relates to sinners, I have selected these words, as one of the most conclusive illustrations of the simple nature of saving grace.

While Jesus was on his way to the house of Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, to raise his little daughter from the dead—a woman having an issue of blood, which had afflicted her for twelve years, and who, in the language of Luke, "had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any— came behind him and touched the border of his garment;" "for she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." No sooner had she touched Jesus, than "the woman was healed from that moment."

The first point in this narrative which arrests attention, is the ***great faith*** this woman had in Christ's power and willingness to heal her. During many long and comfortless years, had she suffered from her disease. Medical skill had in vain sought to stanch the problem. Physician after physician had been called in, until she had spent all her living; yet had she been made "nothing better— but rather grew worse!" Relief from merely human agents she despaired of; her wasted body and exhausted means, cut off all hope from man. Yet in the midst of her distress, she had heard of Jesus, of his words and his works, and as a last hope, she turned to him who had so often healed the sick and comforted the afflicted.

This, however, was perhaps a natural feeling, engendered by the manifold reports she had heard of his wondrous miracles, or provoked by that ***urgency of suffering*** which had brought her to the brink of despair. The point to be

noticed, then, is not so much the **fact** of going to Jesus to be healed—as the **way** in which it was done. All that she had heard of Jesus, warranted the belief that, if she went to him as others did, with open and distinct requests for mercy—the Savior would hear and heal her; but no instance had she known of such an approach to him as she purposed, and nothing warranted the course she was about to pursue. She said within herself, not, ***If I ask him, he will heal me***—not, ***If he lays his hand upon me, I shall be cured***—not, ***If he sees me, wan and feeble as I am, he will have compassion upon me***. But, strange language and strong faith: "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole!" Her faith invested him with power to heal, even though he spoke not a word, nor stretched forth his hand, nor even saw the person whom he cured. and not only was her faith thus strong—but it had such confidence in him, that it invested his clothes with miraculous power; and in her estimation, even "the hem" of his outward garment, that fringe of blue, with which all the Jews were required by the Levitical code to border their robes, and which was most distant from his person—had a power beyond the skill of all physicians, and beyond the power of all remedials of earth.

This it was, which showed the strength and grasp of her faith—a faith that saw in him not only a healer—but that saw in the secret touch of the **border** of his garment, power to heal and a virtue to save. No **previous** instance of such a faith had ever occurred; it stands alone.

This illustrates just what the unrenewed man must do now. He is **morally** diseased; he is sick; there is no health in him. Sin has vitiated all his appetites, deranged his powers, attacked the functions of life—and left him a diseased and sickly wreck of humanity, beyond the restoring power of nature, beyond the skill of all earth's physicians; even though, like the woman in the text, he spends upon them all his living. Cure **himself**, he cannot; be cured by

his *fellow-men*, he cannot. There is life-giving, health-restoring power only in one—and, unless he seeks him, his case is hopeless.

So felt the woman, so must he feel; and, feeling thus, he must, like her, having heard that Jesus can and will heal—go to him for healing; and go with precisely that simple faith, that implicit confidence—which believes him to be all that he is represented as being—which looks with confidence to his doing all that he professes to do—and which clings to him for a health and life that can be found in him alone, and found, too, even in the very hem of his garment!

For, as the high priest Aaron, when set apart to his holy office, was so plentifully anointed with the consecrating oil of the sanctuary, that, when poured upon his head, "it ran down even to the skirts of his garment"—so our High Priest, Jesus Christ, has been so anointed "with the oil of gladness above his fellows"—that grace pervades all his robes, and virtue goes out even from the very hem of his garment!

Another point to be noticed in the case of this woman, is the fact that *she had to overcome many difficulties in getting to Jesus*. Her womanly diffidence; her reluctance to make known her case; her lonely condition; the very restriction which the Levitical law threw in the way of such a person's mingling in society, accounting all in her condition as ceremonially unclean; her frequent failure to get help from others; and, perhaps, the counsel of some doubting friends, who told her that, as no such case as hers had ever been healed—so it would be useless to apply for help; with various other things, conspired, doubtless, to keep her back from Jesus.

But, then, the thought of her disease; her past years of pain and sorrow; her wasting, ebbing life; her helpless and now penniless state: the dark prospect

before her of a lingering, noisome, miserable life, with the **grave** opening to view in the not far-off horizon. These things gave **desperation** to her faint resolve, nerved with iron sinews her faltering heart; while the **possibility** of cure, the **dim hope** of success, and the thought that she might yet cast off her loathsome disease, and go forth again clean and in health—confirmed her resolve to go to the blessed Jesus.

She rises from her bed of sickness; she summons her half-flagging courage; her spirits flash up within her, as the embers of expiring life are fanned by hope, and flush her cheeks with the fever of special effort. She goes; she sees the Savior; a great crowd is around him, and her heart even now half fails. Shall she go back? No! Her resolve is made, her hope brightens, the sight of his kind face strengthens her faith. She mingles in the multitude; with persisting power, she presses toward the center of that group; she edges in through this and that opening in the throng; unheeding the rebuffs, she urges on her way. At last, the wished-for object is gained; she has overcome all difficulties; she has crowded her way to her Savior.

His back is turned to her, yet **faith** says, "It does not matter—just touch his garment!" It is a moment of extreme interest. Shall she touch? Will a touch avail? Will that dreadful issue of blood be dried up? in the confidence of that faith that had brought her thus far, she says to herself, "If I may but touch his garment—I shall be whole!" and then, stretching forth her weakened fingers, she touches that garment—its hem, only—when, lo! as quickly as she touched, she is conscious of returning health! Her faith has not been disappointed; "she is made immediately whole!"

In like manner the **impenitent** sinner has many **difficulties** in the way of getting to Jesus. There is the **natural repugnance** of the unrenewed heart, which "hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest its deeds should be

made manifest that they are not of God." There are ***old sinful habits*** to be broken up, ***evil company*** to be renounced, ***heart sins*** to be plucked out, and new courses of action to be adopted. There are opposing friends and sneering companions, and the fear of ridicule and mockery. There is perhaps ... a ***sinful business*** to be given up, some ***unhallowed lust*** to be sacrificed, some ***besetting sin*** to be cut off, some ***dreaded cross*** to be borne.

There are ... the evil suggestions of a wicked heart, the cavils of unbelief, and the whispered blasphemies of Satan.

These are some of the ***difficulties*** in the way of the soul, when, having felt its deathly sickness and its need of healing—it begins to resolve to go to Jesus, and yet finds its path clogged and blocked up by these manifold obstacles.

Satan pleads for delay; he says, "Do not go now—you are not as sick as you suppose—you can soon heal yourself without such an effort."

The ***flesh*** pleads for delay, and says, "Do not go to Jesus yet. God has given you these appetites and passions—why should you crucify them, and thus cut off the prime enjoyment of this mortal life?"

The ***world*** pleads for delay, and hangs out all its ***Vanity Fair flags***, and sets before you its ***painted follies*** and its ***false pleasures***, and begs you to taste its joys before you cast them all away for "the wormwood and the gall" of that ***repentance*** which the inexorable Jesus demands.

Friends cluster about you, and plead for delay: "Do not go ***now*** to Jesus—

wait until a dying bed or old age. Do not clothe your soul in sackcloth, and do not disfigure your face with ashes—now in the *morning of life*, or in the noon-tide of your days."

But, though thus beset and besought—though thus hemmed in with difficulties—your case, like that of the woman of the text, is fatal, unless healed by Jesus. and if you would be saved—if you would not take up your abode in everlasting burnings—if you would not be an eternal enemy of God and your own soul—if you would not "drink of the cup of God's fury" forever—you must, like the woman, come to some solemn resolves. You must go to Jesus—or go down to everlasting damnation! this is your only alternative: Christ—or Satan; Heaven—or Hell; eternal life—or eternal death!

And when such dreadful issues are before you, can you hesitate? No! Brave all the opposition—oppose the united forces of earth and Hell—rather than lose your soul, when Jesus stands ready to heal it with his salvation. There are no difficulties, on *Christ's* part, in obtaining salvation; all the difficulties are in *yourselves*; remove these and you shall find a willing Savior—so willing, that salvation flows from the very "hem of his garment"—and you have but to touch it, and live forever.

Another point of deepest interest, in the case of this woman, is, that she was *immediately* healed. From the narrative in Luke—we learn that she was healed as soon as she touched the hem of Christ's garment, and before the Lord spoke to her. for when Jesus said, "*Who touched me?* When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you." But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me." Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came

trembling and fell at his feet. in the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed!" the Savior knew who it was who touched him—but took this method to cause her reveal herself, and to make known the miracle.

In like manner, is the *soul* healed of its horrible issues of sin and lust—as soon as by faith it touches the hem of Christ's garment. It is not, as in physical disease—a long healing process, first from *active* to *baffled* disease; then from the subsiding of the malady to convalescence; and then from convalescence to perfect health. But as soon as the *faith* of the penitent reaches forth its hand to Jesus, and touches him, that moment it not merely *begins to recover*—but "is made immediately whole." the *touch* and the *healing* are the work of the same moment. The *pardon* follows immediately upon the *application*, and in no instance will it fail that virtue will go out from Jesus to all who touch him with a living faith. for not only in the instance recorded in the text—but subsequently, when our Savior was in the land of Gennesaret, and when the "men of that place sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased, and besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment," the sacred record states that "as many as touched were made perfectly whole."

This pardon of sin, which, in every instance, immediately follows the *touching of Christ by faith*—must not be confounded with the work of sanctification, which, beginning then, goes on in strength until it is perfected in glory. We are *justified* before God, as soon as faith procures us pardon through the blood of Christ. We are *sanctified* by a lifetime process through the power of the Holy Spirit; and this results in an *evidence* that we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ.

From this narrative, we learn the *simplicity* of the plan of salvation. I said, a

short time ago, that there were no difficulties in the way of obtaining salvation from Jesus Christ; that all the difficulties are in ourselves. Whatever was to be done on the part of God toward making plain and easy a way of access to him, has been done. He has given his Son to die for us, that we, through him, might have eternal life; the Holy Spirit has striven with us, to convince us of sin, and to lead us to Jesus; and Jesus himself has come down to our world, taken the sinner's place, paid the penalty due by us, satisfied the demands of justice, made it possible for God to be just to himself, "and yet the justifier of all who believe in him," and therefore offers us salvation through simple faith in, and acceptance of, his infinite merits and atoning death.

In what few and easily understood words, are the *offers of salvation* made! "**Look** unto me and be you saved;" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ;" "Come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." There is here *no complicated system* to be understood—there are no depths of philosophy to be sounded—there are no great stores of learning to be acquired—there is no vast reach and compass of mind to be obtained—before we can become united to Jesus by a living faith. How little of either of these had the thief on the cross, and yet Christ said to him, "This day you shall be with me in Paradise!"

Where were the vast attainments of the Philippian jailor? Yet he believed and was baptized! What superior knowledge or wisdom had the gathered throng on the day of Pentecost? Yet three thousand became converted to God that day! Indeed it is one of the very excellencies, as it is one of the distinguishing features of the religion of Jesus, that "to the poor the Gospel is preached;" "That not many *great*, not many *wise*, not many *noble* are called—but that God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and the

foolish things to confound the wise;" perfecting his praise "even out of the mouth of babes and sucklings."

Look then at the simplicity of the means of grace, as manifested on the part of God; and look at the difficulties which your own impenitent soul throws in the way, and then decide the question, Shall I overcome these difficulties, or succumb? Shall I struggle to free myself, or rest ensnared? Shall I press towards the mark, or sit down in my sins? Shall I, conscious that there is a death disease in my moral frame, that is draining my life, and will soon lay me in the chambers of eternal death—go to Jesus, and, like the woman, touch the hem of his garment and be healed? Or, shall I be deterred by the self-imposed obstacles in the way, and let the malady that now infects my soul work out within me the pangs and the horrors of that "second death from which there is no resurrection?"

May the resolve and language of your heart be—

"I'll go to Jesus, though my sin
Has like a mountain rose;
I know his courts, I'll enter in,
Whatever may oppose.

"Prostrate I'll lie before his throne,
And there my guilt confess;
I'll tell him I'm a wretch undone,
Without his sovereign grace.

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know
I must forever die!"

Is there Reason or Profit in Prayer?^(TOC)

"What is the Almighty that we should serve Him? and what profit should there be if we pray unto Him?"—Job 21:15

Thus spoke skeptical men in the days of Job. Thus speak skeptical men now. The doctrine that prayer has power with God and secures special blessings for men, has ever been assailed by the **rationalist** as contrary to reason; and by some **scientists** as contrary to the law of nature. The argument of the former is—that God is too great, and too far removed above us, and too much occupied with the vast movements of suns and systems, to take heed to the requests of the little creatures of this little world. The argument of the other is—that nature being organized and governed by fixed and immutable laws, no amount of human petition can cause God to deviate from his uniform law, for the gratification of individual requests.

Both of these lines of objection start from a wrong basis, and each takes for granted a condition of things which we are not willing to concede.

We do not grant to the **rationalist**, that the great God is so removed from us by reason of the vast universes which He governs—that He can not attend to the little needs of the dwellers on this globe; for the very minuteness of God's **creative** power, shows the minuteness of His **superintending** power. The presence of God in the lower and almost invisible forms of life, as seen only through the microscope—proves that nothing is too small to be beneath His notice, and daily personal supervision and government. for the same God who gave the laws of life to the microbes under the microscope—gave the laws of life and motion to the planetary systems of the telescope. this fact the

Bible distinctly asserts, when it assures us that He who "in the beginning created the Heaven and the earth," is the same God who gives beauty to the *lilies* of the field, who notes the fall of *each sparrow*, and who numbers "the very *hairs* of our head."

We do not grant to the *scientist*, that the laws of nature are so uniform and immutable, that, therefore, the prayer of a human being cannot avail to cause any deviation in those laws; because, what are called "the laws of nature" are but the *actings of God's will upon the works of God's hand*. Until we have ascertained exactly how God's will works in and through an instrumentality which He has ordained, we are not able to say whether prayer itself may not be a recognized factor in the workings of nature, just as any other agent, such as light, heat, or gravitation. Until we know all of God's will, we cannot say that prayer is against His will, and the assertion that it is so, is presumptuous ignorance.

God has not left us to mere inferences as to what His will is on this subject. We have among the various recognized and authenticated revelations of God's will, His distinct *command* that we should pray to Him. His distinct *promises* of good to those who do pray, and the divine *example* of Christ Himself who at times spent whole nights in prayer to God.

If prayer is unscientific, then is our *religion* unscientific—for one of its essential elements is prayer. If prayer is unscientific, then is our *Bible* unscientific—for that is full of *exhortations* to prayer. If prayer is unscientific, then is our *blessed Lord*, He of whom it is written that "in Him dwells all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," unscientific—for He was eminently a man of prayer. If prayer is unscientific, then is the *Holy Spirit*, the Spirit "who searches all things even the deep things of God," and who is specially revealed to us as the Spirit of grace and supplication, unscientific—

for it is He who, when we know not what to pray for, "makes intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered." If prayer is unscientific, then is **God** Himself, I speak it reverently, unscientific—because He has revealed Himself as a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God.

The question of prayer, is not a question of **natural** science; it comes within the domain of **moral** science. The very men who object most to prayer on scientific grounds, are guilty of the absurdity of testing a moral question by scientific rules. They take the question out of the realm of morals—and seek to test it by the criteria of scientific investigation. Such a practice is destructive of all fair dealing and opposed to all sound laws of science.

Moral questions must be judged of by moral evidence; mathematical questions must be judged by mathematical evidence; botanical questions must be judged by botanical evidence.

Prayer, is a question which lies entirely between God and the soul of man, and is consequently quite removed from the field of scientific research, and out of the region of scientific analysis.

The points we desire to be satisfied upon, are these:

Is the soul of man so constituted as to make prayer an essential element of his spiritual being?

And, secondly, has God made known to us His mind and will in reference to prayer?

To the first question—we have but to look into our hearts to find an ever-present answer. Man's soul is made for prayer. It seems to be a part of its nature to seek aid, protection, and comfort—from something higher and greater than itself. There is this yearning in every bosom. It is the instinct of universal humanity. There cannot be found in the entire human family, a

man, who, in time of alarm or danger, does not in some manner seek the interposition of a higher power. Upon this instinct, are founded nearly if not all the religions of the world; for the prayer element of religion, is that which is its controlling element; and no religion has yet been discovered where supplication to some superior power or being, does not exist as an important part of that religion.

When we look then at the *universality* of this *instinct for supplication*, and learn that only by prayer (and that too at times by "groanings which cannot be uttered," that is, by the yearnings and longings of the soul which are too deep, too strong, too tumultuous to be formulated into words) can the higher aspirations of the soul find their outlet—are we not warranted in saying that the *soul* is as much made for prayer—as the *eye* is made for light, the *ear* for sound, and the *lungs* for air? Most assuredly we are! Prayer and the soul are fitted to each other just as life is fitted to the human body, so that it is indeed true that "*Prayer is the Christian's vital breath.*"

As to the second question, has God made known to us His mind and will in reference to prayer? I answer emphatically, Yes! the Bible, which is the only book that reveals to us the will of God, is full of His thoughts on this point. Here let us remember that this volume, the Bible, is *God's voice* speaking to us in the world of morals and in the domain of spiritual life; just as much, and just as authoritatively, as the volume of nature is God's voice speaking to us in the world of material things, and in the domain of physical life.

If the man of science plants himself on the authority of the one—we plant ourselves on the authority of the other; with this important difference, that we recognize both as the manifestations of the one living and true God. His *physical* characteristics shining through the works of nature, as revealed to the scientist; His *spiritual* attributes, shining through the words of

Revelation, as made known to us by holy men of old "who wrote as they were moved of the Holy Spirit."

But, leaving argument, let us go to facts. Each person of the ever-blessed Trinity has made known His will on the subject of prayer.

God the **Father**, in a multitude of passages, direct and indirect, shows that He hears and answers prayer. He declares that "His ears shall be intent unto the prayer" of His people; that the prayer of the priests, the Levites, and the people "came up to His holy dwelling-place even unto Heaven;" that His house "shall be a house of prayer for all nations."

God the **Son, commands** us to pray—**taught** us by a special form how to pray, and what to pray; set us the **example** of prayer; told us that certain blessings could only be obtained by prayer, and assured us, that "whatever we would ask in His name—He would give it unto us."

God the Holy **Spirit**, is specially made known to us as "the Spirit of grace and supplication"; as "the Spirit that helps our infirmities" in prayer; as the being who Himself makes intercession for us.

Here then, in brief, we have the clear and definite utterances of the triune God on the subject of prayer. and now then who is to be believed—the scientist, with his finite mind, his short span of time, and his narrow knowledge; or the Infinite, the Eternal, the Omniscient God? Who shall be believed—the philosopher, who is not able to unfold the full principles of his own life; or the Divine Redeemer who so knew the nature and the worth of the soul as to redeem it with His own blood? Who is to be believed—the man who can master only a small segment of the small circle of human knowledge (for that is all that the most profound scholars and thinkers can do); or the Holy Spirit, that Divine Spirit, "who searches all things, even the deep things of God,"

whose special function, as the Spirit of truth, is "to guide you into all truth"?

These questions furnish their own answers. and now the question comes back to us, "***What profit shall we have if we pray unto Him?***" To answer this question aright, we must go to Him who first instituted prayer, and see what ***promises*** He annexed to its due performance. in the Bible, where God's directions and promises are fully recorded, we find words like these: "Before they call—I will answer; and while they are yet speaking—I will hear." "You shall go and pray unto me—and I will hearken unto you." "Thus says the Lord: Call upon me—and I will answer you." "Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered." "The Lord is rich in mercy to all those who call upon Him." "You are good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all those who call upon Him." "He will be gracious at the voice of your cry—he will answer you." "In everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known unto God." "Pray without ceasing." "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."

These verses, which are but a ***sample*** of what the Scriptures say upon the subject of prayer—show what great ***benefits*** and ***blessing*** result from it; guaranteed to us by a God who can not lie, by a God who is unchangeable, and all of whose promises are "yes, and amen in Christ Jesus."

We may answer the question of the text, "What profit shall we have if we pray unto Him?" by appealing to the ***personal experience*** of multitudes of all past ages.

Here history and biography come in as witnesses to the profit and value of prayer. When a large number of scientific men, who have had ample time and opportunity for rigid examination, affirm with united voice, any given scientific truth—we readily accept the truth on the authority of competent

men able to verify it by full observation. Thus, all our astronomical knowledge is based on the telescopic observations and mathematical calculations of a very few observers and calculators, scattered here and there in a few observatories. The common mind is not capable of testing the truth of these observations and calculations; yet the world readily accepts them; and our clocks, and our almanacs, and our arrangement of civil time, and all our navigation at sea, and a hundred other things—are based on these observations of these few star-gazers. Here the testimony of a few, is received and acted upon by the many; because they have confidence in the ability of these few, to speak upon this subject. In this case the whole question comes down to one of competent witnesses; and indeed every assertion of scientific men, on scientific subjects, is resolvable into a matter of competent observers, and competent testifiers.

Apply this test to prayer. Call in witnesses, competent witnesses, men whose testimony is unimpeachable; men who have had large personal experience and observation on this subject; men who have witnessed its effects on families, tribes, and kingdoms. Summon these witnesses not from one *land*—but from all lands; not from one *nation*—but from all nations; not from one *age*—but from all ages; not from one *class of society*—but from all classes. Gather up their united testimony and give it voice—and it is clear, uniform, and universal as to the *comfort* and *profit* of prayer.

On this subject, we have this great advantage, that while the asserters and observers of any given scientific truth in any one department of natural science, are necessarily *few*—and while the testimony of these few is often conflicting; on the subject of prayer, the number of witnesses to its profit is innumerable—and the unanimity of their testimony is complete.

Summon witnesses from the *patriarchal* dispensation, and *Abraham* "the

father of the faithful" and "the friend of God"; **Isaac**, through whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed; **Jacob**, who received the surname of Israel because he wrestled with the angel and prevailed in prayer; **Joseph** the governor of all Egypt—will each testify to the power and profit of prayer.

Summon witnesses under the **Mosaic** dispensation, and **Moses** himself, the great lawgiver; and **Joshua** the great captain; and **David** the sweet psalmist of Israel; and **Solomon** the wisest of kings; and **Elijah** the prophet of fire; and **Isaiah** the evangelical prophet—testify with one accord, that there is joy and comfort and profit in prayer.

Call up witnesses from the **New Testament** worthies, and a great cloud of witnesses rise up from almost every page, to assure us that prayer is a privilege and a blessing. So that as a question of history, and observation—the proof is ample to establish the doctrine, that prayer is in accordance with God's will and profitable to man.

We can answer the question of the text, lastly, by appealing to the personal experience of the children of God **now** and here. This, of course, varies with individual piety; yet there are certain common effects, which belong to all Christians who kneel before the mercy-seat.

In looking back over our own religious history, how many instances rise up to the mind of temporal blessings; either in the shape of direct mercies, or averted evils, which we have received through prayer! How often, when threatened with calamities—personal, domestic, or social—has prayer dissipated the threatened trial, or enabled us to bear it in sweet submission! How often in hours of sickness and sorrow, has prayer like the breath of the morning driven away the murky cloud, or painted a rainbow on its bosom!

In every event of our lives, we are conscious that prayer has altered, molded,

guided, and controlled our doings. that the unseen—but really spiritual influences which prayer has called down upon us, have, as by a *holy alchemy*, turned the very evils which beset us into sources of joy, and made our very trials minister to our growth in grace.

One of the most eminent of the scientists who has written against prayer, and who proposed what has been termed "a prayer gauge" to test the physical value of prayer, reduces all prayer in times of sorrow and danger, to the "simple impulse to pour out the feelings in sound"; "similar in kind," as has been said, "to the cry of the rabbit, when the greyhound is almost upon her; or the bleating of a sheep, that has lost her lamb; or the cry of a dog, under the lash. a voice convulsively sent out into space, whose utterance is a physical relief."

Is this so? has God thus mocked us? Tell me, you mother, watching by the bed of a sick child! Tell me, you mourner, just bereaved of a beloved friend! Tell me, you child of God, struggling with poverty and trials! Tell me, you disciple of Jesus in the hour of death!—are your cries, your supplications, your agonizing pleas for mercy, for light, for comfort, for acceptance—are they but "the simple impulse to pour out your feelings in sound?" Are your prayers but as the inarticulate moanings of the brute creation? Everything that is deep and true in our nature, rejects such a theory. We know by experience, that it is not so. We feel that prayer at such times, is something more than a voice convulsively sent out into space, for securing physical relief. We know that prayer is but the vocalizing of deep, inner emotions of the soul—that the words thus uttered, have an *ear* expressly fitted to hear those cries—the ear of the Lord Almighty; and that He who bends His ear to listen to the prayer of the lowliest—will answer those prayers in the fullness of His divine grace, and with all the tenderness of a father's love.

We sometimes learn the value of a blessing by its being taken away, even as the poet says—"How blessings brighten—as they take their flight!"

How better, for example, could we show the value of *light*—than by supposing that there were no sun or moon or stars? or the inestimable worth of *water*—than by imagining that all the fountains and rivers were dried up? How vividly and practically would this withdrawal of light, and water, make us realize, as we never felt before, the value of these *common* and every-day blessings; which, because they are so common, and so intertwined with all the thoughts and words and deeds of our life, are too often unheeded or undervalued.

So what would be the moral condition of the world—were there no prayer? Suppose, that in all our churches, the service of prayer should be hushed! that in all our households, the family altar should be abolished! that no human lips should utter a personal supplication! No prayer in times of sickness, danger, or death; none in days of trial and sorrow and Bereavement; none in hours of prosperity and gladness—what a dreadful world would this be! How long could our religion would exist without prayer? Shut off from God, from the mercy-seat, from communion with Christ—and the soul would soon be a shriveled, hopeless, godless spirit, fettered to earth; its *wings of prayer* broken, and its heavenward soarings forever restrained.

Blessed be God, we are not left to this condition of *hopeless wretchedness*. We have the pledged promises of God; the evidence of all past history since the creation; the testimony of patriarchs, prophets, kings, priests, apostles, martyrs, confessors, for nearly six thousand years; and the individual experience of each Christian of the present day—concurring to establish the efficacy, and profit, of prayer. Having then ...
a prayer-hearing God;

a throne of grace to which we are invited to come "with boldness";
a divine Intercessor, before the mercy-seat on high;
the Holy Spirit as the spirit of grace and of supplication
—having these, let us hold fast our faith in prayer, and use it as a divinely
appointed instrument for obtaining the best and noblest blessings, for the
soul, and for the body; for time and for eternity!

The Compassionate High Priest^(TOC)

"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. for we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need!"—Hebrews 4:14-16

In the Jewish economy, the High Priest occupied solemn and peculiar relations. a descendant of **Aaron**—anointed with the holy oil—clad in garments made for glory and for beauty—unblemished in person, sacred in office, and standing once each year before the mercy-seat in the Holy of Holies as the mediator between God and his people Israel—he became invested with a sacredness and a majesty of character befitting to him who stood among men as the representative of God.

To this pompous office, the Jews had become much attached, and the design of Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews was to transfer their love of this office as a Mosaic institution—to Christ, a High Priest greater than Aaron, in the new and Christian dispensation. this he does by showing how Christ was in all points equal to the Jewish high priest, and in many ways far exceeded him; thus establishing claims to their regard and obedience beyond those which pertained to the Aaronic priesthood.

This position we shall better understand, by showing wherein they were analogous, and wherein the priestly office of Christ exceeded that of Aaron or his sons.

The Aaronic high priest must be called of God. "No man," says Paul, "takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was. So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him: You are my Son; today I have become your Father!"

Hebrews 5:4-5

The Aaronic high priesthood was unchangeable. It could never depart from the family of Aaron. So Christ being made a High Priest, changes not, "but abides a priest continually." He "has an unchangeable priesthood."

The Aaronic high priest was to be *anointed with the holy oil*. The very name of our Savior (Christ, or Messiah,) showed that he was anointed by God to execute his mediatorial office; set apart to the office, not with the anointing oil employed in the solemn consecration of Aaron and his sons—but with the antitype of that oil, "the Spirit of grace" poured upon him without measure by the hand of God. Acts 10:38

The high priest must be without blemish, and holy. He must be sound and healthy in body and mind. Aaron and his sons were also originally sanctified externally by a long series of most solemn offerings and ceremonies; their garments were styled holy, and "*Holiness to the Lord*" was engraved on a plate, which they were directed to wear upon their miters. "Such a High Priest," says Paul, "is Christ, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," of whom even his enemies declared they found "no fault in him." His very garments were holy, for the sick and infirm but touched the hem of them—and they were made whole.

The Aaronic high priest only could enter into the Holy of Holies once each year, and then only with *blood*. So Christ entered into the "most holy place" above with the *blood* wrung from him in Gethsemane and on Calvary. The

Aaronic high priest only could make a ceremonial atonement for the sins of the people; and Christ, as the High Priest of our salvation, "by a sacrifice and oblation of himself once offered, made a full, perfect, and sufficient" atonement for the sins of the world.

These are some of the more prominent *analogies* between the priesthood of Christ and the priesthood of Aaron; and, were we to pursue the comparison further—we would find that the symbolic and temporary ministrations of the one, had their end and perfection in the spiritual and unchangeable priesthood of the other.

But there are qualities and attributes far above these, which show the superiority of Christ's high priesthood. The high priest of the Jews was a sinful being. The High Priest of the gospel was holy. The one, had to make atonement for himself as a sinner; the other, "knew no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth." the high priest of the Jews was a man—weak, frail, mortal man—born of dust to be buried in the dust. But the High Priest Jesus, "is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

The high priest of the Jews was on earth, and only entered into the Holy of Holies once a year to make an annual expiation for the sins of the nation on the great day of atonement. But our High Priest is in Heaven, the true Holy of Holies, and there "he ever lives to make intercession for us;" so that not once a year merely—but at all times; not at Jerusalem only—but in all places, we can have "boldness of access to his mercy-seat."

The Christian dispensation, then, outvies the Levitical in the glory and exaltedness of its great High Priest who has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. and hence the Apostle subjoins the exhortation to the Hebrews, "let us hold fast our profession," for they were particularly inclined

to apostatize from Christianity, and go back to Judaism, being tempted by their unconverted brethren to regard the Mosaic religion and the whole Jewish ritual as far more elevated, splendid, and magnificent than the Christian—in comparison with whose temple, service, and gorgeous ceremonials—the origin and rites of the religion of Jesus appeared base and insignificant. By therefore showing these Hebrew Christians that we had a High Priest not only equal in office and dignity—but far more exalted than the high priest of the temple, he urged them to hold fast their profession, not to relinquish their grasp on Christianity, because there was no such external ritual in the primitive church—no such altars, sacrifices, offerings, priests, as in the Jewish church—for all these were more than met and answered by the plenitude of grace in the new dispensation.

And, in view of their peculiarly exposed position to the assaults of the tempter, he brings the touching argument, "for we have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are—yet without sin." Ah, my brethren, this was just such a Priest as man needed—a Priest that could *feel* for him; a High Priest that was *compassionate*; a great High Priest who could be touched with the feeling of our infirmities—one in all points tempted as we are—yet without sin. There was nothing like this in the old dispensation. It was reserved for the gospel to introduce to man a High Priest, who, while exalted in the heavens, could yet be touched with the feeling of our infirmities—who was tempted with all the temptations of humanity—yet did not sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

Christ, then, our great High Priest, is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and O, to creatures so full of infirmities as ourselves—how delightful to have a spiritual ruler who understands them, and is touched with

them with an abiding sympathy.

Sin has shorn us of our glory, and strewn the earth with curses, and planted the path of man with infirmities and sorrows. We are prone to suffering—we are subject to disease—we are victims of adversity, and we stagger under the weight of our mental and physical infirmities, from the tiny footsteps of childhood to the feeble tread of threescore and ten. Under these *infirmities* we groan being burdened; we feel the workings of the curse of sin, every day of our life; and the loss of limb and function and strength and health, which is everywhere going on around us—show us the sadness and misery of man's earthly condition.

These infirmities, through the influence of the body on the mind and soul—often lead us into sin and temptation, become avenues of assault upon the heart, and the means whereby faith is weakened, and love chilled, and hope repressed, and the soul bereft of its holy aspirations. in *sickness*, how much are we tempted to impatience and repining. in *Bereavements*, how apt to murmur and complain. in *adversity*, how often do we show the restive and untamed spirit of a worldling! No infirmity of mind or body can overtake us, without begetting some unholy feelings towards our Creator.

Now Jesus, our blessed Master—suffered the ills of life when on earth; hunger, thirst, cold, poverty, reproach, buffetings, and all the infirmities of man. His compassionate heart is therefore touched by our sorrows, and deeply sympathizes with all our distresses. Frequently was this exhibited when on earth. He was moved with *compassion* when he saw the multitude scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. He had compassion on the multitude without bread—at seeing in the throng sick people, whom he healed—at the sight of blind men, whom he restored to sight—at a leper, whom he cured—at a child possessed of an evil spirit, which he cast out—at

beholding a mother's grief, whose son he restored to life. Yes, his mission to man was prompted by *mercy*, and his life on earth was full of *compassion*.

We know how delightful it is when suffering under any sickness or calamity, to have the *sympathy* and *pity* of those we love; to feel that in their bosoms are kindred emotions of tenderness and regard, causing them to weep with those who weep. But how much more cheering is it to the Christian, bowed beneath some burdensome sorrow—to know that he has the compassion and sympathy of his *Savior!* To know that Jesus, the Son of God, our ever-living High Priest in Heaven—is touched with the feeling of his infirmities! the Christian can know no need, no affliction, no suffering—which Jesus does not feel, and towards which his compassions do not flow out! and this is not a mere *inoperative* compassion, expending itself in *words* and *professions*—but it is a sympathy joined to a *willingness* to do, and an *ability* to do, for our relief. for having been himself tempted, he is both *able* and *willing* to support those who are tempted. Many people have borne the same afflictions which befall us—who are not *willing* to sympathize with us. Many are willing to sympathize with us, who have not experienced like tribulations. and many are both able and willing to extend to us their compassion—who are yet unable to do anything for our comfort or relief.

But our compassionate High Priest unites all these. He has been a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs, and can therefore sympathize experimentally with us. He is willing and prompted by the benevolence of his heart, to give to us his kind compassion; and, as God in the plenitude of omnipotence, "he is *able* to save to the uttermost all who come unto God through Him," and to "wipe away all tears from their eyes."

The *sympathy of Christ* to his disciples on earth is a tender sympathy; for "as a father pities his children, even so he pities those who fear him." It is an

extensive sympathy—there is not an infirmity of man which it cannot reach. It is a *proportionable* sympathy—answerable to our peculiar needs, and to every occasion. It is a *perpetual* sympathy—so long as he continues a High Priest, and we remain subject to infirmities—so long will our blessed Jesus be touched with the feeling of them.

Man has no such sympathy as this for his fellow-man. *Angels* who never wore our nature, can have none like it—it is only the man Christ Jesus, both God and man, who centers in himself this plenitude of mercy and this unselfish compassion.

The reason why our great High Priest is so sensibly affected by our suffering condition, is stated by the Apostle to lie in the fact that "He was in all points tempted like as we are—yet without sin." the Greek word here used is more general in its meaning than the English word "tempted." It adverts both to trial by affliction, and temptations to sin; implying no more, however, than that of being susceptible to temptation, resulting from the possession of a human nature. It means then to put to the proof, to try the nature or character; and this proof can be made either by allowing one to fall into temptation, properly so called, where some strong inducement is presented to the mind, and where it becomes thus a trial of virtue; or by subjecting a person to afflictions or sufferings, so that his character is proved, that the principles and motives of conduct may appear. Jesus Christ was subjected to both of these in as severe a form as ever was presented to man; his whole life being little else than a long conflict of faith with sense—holiness with sin—virtue with temptation. Yet, blessed be God, the *tempter* was repelled, the *sin* was overcome, the *flesh* was nailed to the cross—for he rose from each assault a conqueror—vanquishing every foe, triumphing in every contest. He alone, then, who has conquered sin, and overthrown the tempter—can support us in

the temptations of the one, or the assaults of the other, and enable us to be victor over both.

When thrust at by the enemy of our souls—when attacked by his fiery trials, when seduced by his gilded lures, when teased by the insinuations and cheating whispers of this "father of lies"—it is cheering and animating to the half-subdued soul to know, that Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are; and that, having been tempted, he knows what humanity can endure, and will not allow us to be tempted above that we are able to bear. in Christ, we are invincible—though sin, death, and Hell wage war upon the soul. Out of Christ, we are the victims of the first temptation, and fall an easy prey to the spoiler of our souls.

Such being the *nature* of our compassionate High Priest—the Apostle argues thence our *duty*, and urges upon us our *peculiar privileges*.

Is he thus tender towards our infirmities, and does he thus support us in our temptations? Then should we hold fast our profession. Why should we relax our hold, when He whom we serve is able and willing to sustain us? We serve not an impotent Prince or a weak Sovereign. He under whom we have enlisted, is omnipotent. The banner under which we are marshaled, is one that never yet was lowered to any foe; and the weapons by which we war, are "mighty through God, to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan." Why, then, should we relax our hold, when "the Lord Almighty is with us—and the God of Jacob is our refuge?"

Why should we go back to the world? the question there meets us, "What shall it profit a man, to gain the whole world—and lose his own soul?" What can the world give, in barter for your faith? What will it palm off upon you, in lieu of your hopes? What will it sell you, for the joys of the Spirit? O, go to

its shambles, and its money-changers, and see what trade you can make for the religion of Christ; and when you have learned the price, decide whether you will hold fast your profession. Shall you give up the contest because it waxes warm? Shall you retreat because of the danger? Does the toil overcome you, and do you faint and grow weary because of the burden and heat of the day? Had your Savior been influenced by such motives, what would have become of your soul?

Have we such a compassionate High Priest? then should we **confide** in him. He knows our infirmities—he is cognisant of our needs—he is touched with our sorrows—he feels for us in our Bereavements, and sympathizes in all our adversities. Divine wisdom could not have provided for the soul a more full and perfect counterpart in kind, though in degree infinitely removed above us. It is just such a High Priest as man needs; and there is no necessity of his moral nature that he does not meet and satisfy.

And then, too, he is **willing** to aid and support us—more willing than we to ask. and should we not, therefore, **confide** in his mercy and tenderness? Look upon his face—do you see there a forbidding aspect? Are any frowns gathered there? is repulse expressed there? or does it not rather **beam with a love** as infinite as his own perfection, and glow with a smile of compassion, which is the sunlight of the soul?

If you cannot confide in Christ, in whom can you? If you fear to go to him with your cares and your sorrows—then to whom will you resort? He **suffered** for you; he **sorrowed** for you; he **bled** for you; he **died** for you. Shall not his sorrows, his tears, his stripes, his blood, his death—all experienced for you, beget your confidence? You confide in an earthly friend—but could all the men of earth combined, work out for your soul the ransom which Jesus made for it on Calvary? Oh, is it not, I ask, black ingratitude not to trust him?

is it not an insult to his love to withhold your confidence? Reason it out upon the principles which regulate human friendship, and see in what position it places you to your adorable Redeemer. Yes, confide in Him in all times, in all places, in all circumstances.

Are you poor? He had nowhere to lay his head.

Are you in distress? He too was afflicted with grief.

Are you the object of reproach and scorn? He was despised and rejected by men.

Are you persecuted? He was reviled, and buffeted, and scourged.

Do you weep in silence? He shed tears, as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Are you mourning under Bereavement? He wept at the grave of Lazarus.

Do the pains of death take hold of you? They were endured by Christ in their highest extremity.

You cannot in your ***greatest woe***, exceed his anguish—or in your ***keenest afflictions***, excel his grief. and the valley of the shadow of death cannot appear darker and more terrible to you, than it did to the Crucified, when he cried, "my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me." All these points are so many guarantees that your confidence is not misplaced—so many invitations to place your hope and trust in his loving-kindness. Confide fully in Christ; be not distrustful of his compassion, for "He is faithful, who promised."

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace." the mercy-seat of the Jewish temple was inapproachable to the multitude. Only the High Priest

could go in before it once each year, and then only with blood and incense—but the ***throne of grace*** erected in the heavens, is accessible to all. It is a ***throne***, because occupied by a King; and is the seat of the Majesty on high; but it is named Grace, because of the clemency and compassion of Him who sits upon it.

Approach this ***throne***—and we are sure of an audience. The ***golden scepter of mercy*** is ever held out to us, and we are sure of ***grace to help in every time of need***. Boldly go to that throne, and offer your request in faith upon the merits of Christ, and in confidence upon the mercy of that great High Priest who is passed unto the heavens, Jesus the Son of God—remembering that he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, that he supports us in our temptations, and gives to all who call upon him, "grace to help in every time of need!"

"Clinging to Jesus"

Holy Savior, friend unseen,
Since on your arm you bid'st me lean,
Help me throughout life's varying scene,
By faith to cling to Thee!

Blessed with this fellowship divine,
Take what you will, I'll ne'er repine;
E'en as the branches to the vine,
My soul would cling to Thee!

Far from her home, fatigued, oppressed,
Here she has found her place of rest;
An exile still—yet not unblest.
While she can cling to Thee!

Oft, when I seem to tread alone

Some barren waste with thorns o'ergrown,
Your voice of love, in tenderest tone,
Whispers, "Still cling to me!"

Though faith and hope may oft be tried,
I ask not, need not, anything beside;
How safe, how calm, how satisfied.
The soul that clings to Thee!

Blessed is my lot, Whatever befall:
What can disturb me, what appal,
While as my rock, my strength, my all,
Savior, I cling to Thee?

Delayed Mercies Resulting in Greater Glory to Christ^(TOC)

"So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick." When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days."—John 11:3-6

It is very pleasing as we read the writings of the evangelists, to light upon passages which unfold the workings of Christ's heart, in its domestic and social relations. While those who deny the **divinity** of Christ in their efforts to elevate His human character, sink the divine—it is also true that those who believe in His Godhead, are apt to overlook the human side of His life, in their aim to defend the fundamental doctrine of the Bible that "God was manifest in the flesh." Both aspects of Christ's character are to be studied. The one, that we may the more worthily worship and adore Him; the other, that we may more readily imitate His example, and follow in His steps. We bow with reverential awe, before the **divine** in Christ; we copy with reverential love, what is **human**.

Both sides of Christ's character are, however, remarkably developed, and intermingled in the portion of Scripture from which the text is taken. We see Him as a **man**, and as a **God**. As a **man**, groaning in spirit, sympathizing with sorrow, and mingling His tears with weeping mourners. As **God**, waking the dead, and proclaiming Himself the "Resurrection and the Life."

His **divinity** reveals itself in His words and deeds;

His *humanity* reveals itself in His groans and tears.

Our blessed Lord had no home of His own. "The foxes," He said, "had holes, and the birds of the air had nests—but the Son of man had nowhere to lay His head." the house, however, of Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus seems to have been a place to which He frequently resorted, not only because it was convenient to Jerusalem, but also because He found there quietness, peace, and love—the essential elements of domestic happiness.

From several incidental notices in the Bible, we learn that the family of Bethany was rather above the middle class of life, had ample means, a large circle of influential friends, and was regarded with great respect, not only in their own village—but also in Jerusalem. But that which most endears the family to our notice is the fact related by the apostle—"How Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." to be specially singled out from so many of the families of Judea, and to receive the special love of Him who was Himself altogether lovely, and who also could read the very thoughts and intents of the heart—was one of the highest honors which could be conferred on a domestic circle. But neither ...

their comfortable home,

their united hearts, nor

their friendship with Jesus—

could keep away *sickness* from their door. It entered into their house, and laid their only brother upon a bed of pain and languishing. Despairing, perhaps, of human help, and remembering the love of their friend Jesus—the sisters sent unto Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick!" How exquisitely tender was that message! It was not like the nobleman of Capernaum urging, "Sir, come down, before my child dies!" It was not like the message of the ruler of the synagogue, "My daughter Holy Spirit died—but come and lay Your hand upon her, and she shall live!" It was not like the

message of the good Centurion sending the elders of the Jews to Jesus, beseeching Him that He would come and heal his servant. It was not like the Syro-Phoenician woman, crying after Jesus with importunate voice that He would cast the evil spirit out of her daughter—but it was a simple message to Jesus, announcing the *fact* that Lazarus was sick. It contained no *request*, it did not presume to dictate what should be done, it asked not that He would even come and see him, much less come and heal him.

The sisters, in the fullness of their own love both to Jesus and Lazarus, felt that all that was needed was that Christ should be informed of his sickness, and that His *love* and *wisdom* would dictate what was best to be done. What *perfect submission* and *unreserved confidence* was here! and how was it more beautifully brought out by that appeal to Jesus' own love for the brother, "Lord, behold, he whom *you* love is sick." I can scarcely imagine a more touching and submissive message. They stated a fact, appealed to His love—and then rested their case. What a lesson to us all is here!

The appeal, as tender as it was, appeared to be unheeded. Jesus was only a day's journey from Bethany and could perhaps have reached the sick bed of Lazarus before the fatal change, and the sisters doubtless expected His visit, and indulged high hopes that He would come and heal their brother. As the sorrow laden hours slowly rolled by, their watching eyes and waiting hearts grew dim and faint when no approaching footsteps told of Jesus, and no arrest was made to the fatal disease.

But our Lord had *higher ends* to subserve than merely to restore health to a sick friend. Note the language of Christ when told of the sickness of Lazarus, "This sickness is not unto death—but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." the sickness, then, of this beloved friend, was a preordained event for a specific end, and with that bed of languishing,

was to be associated the glory of God, and with the recall of life to the dead, the Son of God was also to be glorified in the sight of earth and Heaven.

Had Jesus gone at the first intimation of Lazarus' sickness to Bethany and raised him up from sickness as He did Peter's wife's mother—it would indeed have been a miracle of mercy which would have produced a *momentary stir* in the village, and then been forgotten. The time had come, however, for Christ to make a marked unfolding of His power and His mission, and He would seek an occasion which would best illustrate His design. to that end, Lazarus *must die*, must be buried, must be turning into corruption. Hence Christ abode still two days in Perea after He had been told that Lazarus was sick.

Not until the third day did He say to His disciples, "Let us go into Judea again," accompanying His remarks with the declaration, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep;" and when His disciples, mistaking His meaning, said, "Lord, if he sleeps, he shall do well," Jesus plainly told them, "Lazarus is dead!" Two days before, He had said that Lazarus' sickness was "not unto death"—and yet he died; so that the first words of Christ must be interpreted to mean, the final outcome of this sickness shall not be unto death; its immediate result was death, its remote result resurrection, and the bringing in of great glory to God. Overlooking, therefore, its immediate and temporary result—death, and looking to its final result—life from the dead, our Lord spoke truly when He said, "This sickness is not unto death—but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

And now is brought out another reason why this sickness was permitted to end to all human appearance in death: "And I am glad," says Christ, "for your sakes, that I was not there, to the intent you may believe." These disciples had

witnessed many mighty works of Jesus; still they were "slow of heart to believe," and needed perpetually recurring evidences of the power and glory of their divine Master. Such a miracle as that which He purposed would tend very much to establish their faith; for, all things considered, it was the most striking miracle performed by Jesus, and their witnessing it must have tended vastly to the increase of their faith.

At length—to the weeping, hoping sisters, O how long seemed those four days! At length Jesus arrives, and the sisters see Him, and almost with upbraiding voice and blighted hope exclaim, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died!" the conversation which ensued was designed to test their faith, and prepare the way for their full reception of the temporal and spiritual blessings which He was purposing to impart. and here again, peer out some of the beautiful human traits of Christ's character. to use the language of a Scotch divine, "Martha's grief is not so overwhelming as to prevent her utterance. She is calm, and cool, and collected enough to enter into argument. She can give expression to her convictions and her hopes. She can tell that her faith is not shaken, even by so severe a disappointment. Not so her sister Mary. She, indeed, when at last she is emboldened by her Master's kind message, goes forth to meet Him, and her reverence, her devotion, her faith, are not less than those of Martha. But her heart is too full for many words. Her emotions, when she sees the Lord, she can not utter. She can but cast herself down weeping before Him and say, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died!' She adds not a word more. She lies prostrate and silent at His feet."

And now observe how the Lord's demeanor towards the two sisters was exactly suited to their respective tempers and their different kinds of grief. Martha's distress was of such a nature that it admitted of discourse. Jesus

accordingly spoke to her, and led her to speak to Him. He talked with her on the subject most interesting and seasonable—on the resurrection of the body and the life of the soul. When Mary, on the other hand, draws near in the anguish of silent woe—Jesus is differently affected, and His sympathy is shown in a different way. He is much more profoundly moved. He does not reply to her in words, for her own words were few. Sorrow has choked her utterance, and overmastered her soul.

But the sight of one so dear to Him lying in such helpless grief at His feet, is an appeal to Him far stronger than any supplication, and His own responsive sigh is an answer more comforting than any promise. 'When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping who came with her,' for it was a melting scene, 'He groaned in spirit, was troubled.'

When He had asked of the bystanders, 'Where have you laid him?' and received the reply, 'Come and see'—His sympathetic heart could restrain itself no longer, and a scene occurred which, though recorded in only two words, describes one of the most touchingly sublime incidents in the whole gospel—'**Jesus wept!**' O most blessed mourner, with whose tears your Savior mingles His own! O sympathy most unparalleled! O glorious Savior, to mingle Your tears with the tears of human sorrow!

To each, the Lord addressed the very consolation that was most congenial. to **Martha** He gave exceeding great and precious assurances in words such as never man spoke; to **Mary** He communicated the groanings of His spirit in language more expressive to the heart than any words could be. With Martha, Jesus discoursed and reasoned; with Mary, 'Jesus wept.'

Thus is it now. There is a most wondrous **adaptation** of Christ's consolations, to the Christian mourner. No matter what your **grief**, what your

temperament, what your *situation*, what your *state of mind*—He will give you the very cordial, the very refreshment of which you stand in need. Like a skillful physician, He adapts His healing balms to the various wounds of the spirit. for the sorrow that seeks vent in words, and desires by words also to be soothed—there are the Savior's open ears, the Savior's speaking lips. for the grief that is silent, and which lies silent at His feet—there are the Savior's uplifted hands and the Savior's tears.

The sorrow-bowed and weeping party now stand by the grave. Mary had often gone to the grave to weep there, for affection consecrates the spot where the loved one lies. and now Martha and Mary, and all the Jews who had come from Jerusalem to comfort the sisters, and probably many of the Bethany people also, stood in silent mourning before the cave, never for a moment anticipating the scene that was about to transpire. Indeed, when our Lord, as if to give a premonition of what He was to do, told those around, "Take away the stone," which covered the entrance to the grave, Martha, as usual, ready to speak as well as prompt to act—remonstrated by suggesting that corruption had already begun its work, that she could not bear the exposure of that decaying face, "for he has been dead four days." With a gentle rebuke, and with an allusion to a former conversation not reported by the evangelist, our Lord replies to her remonstrance, "Did not I say unto you, that, if you would believe, you should see the glory of God?"

Lifting up His eyes to Heaven, He offers a thanksgiving prayer—a moment of silent expectation follows, and the loud voice of Jesus utters the mandatory words, "Lazarus, come forth!" All eyes turn to the open cave, and almost start from their sockets—as the slowly moving form, bound hand and foot, obeys the summons and stands, not a dead—but a living Lazarus in their midst. Jesus had told His disciples, "I go to awake him out of his sleep"—and now

the awakened Lazarus stood before them. Jesus had told Martha, "Your brother shall rise again"—and now the risen Lazarus proved the truth of His declaration. Jesus had told the sisters that, if they would believe, they should "see the glory of God"—and now that glory was wondrously manifest in their sight. Jesus had announced Himself, "I am the Resurrection and the Life"—and now His deed at the grave of the dead Lazarus vindicated His right to be called the Lord of life and glory.

Wonderful Savior! Just now You were groaning in spirit and were troubled; just now You were weeping in sympathy with a weeping woman, and, lo! while the tears are yet on Your cheek—You send Your quickening voice into the chamber of the grave, into the ear of the dead—and the wrapped, and stiffened, and lifeless body—breathes, and moves, and lives—restored to health, to joy, to his sisters' home, to his Savior's love! the blighted hopes of the sisters have been turned by Christ, into the highest blessing.

And now let us notice how this sickness of Lazarus did redound to "the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." Here let me remind you that the moral glory of God to which reference is here made, is represented to us, as Paul tells the Corinthians, only "in the face of Jesus Christ." "For God," he says, "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Hence our Lord Himself said on a subsequent occasion, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him."

How then was Christ glorified by this miracle? By the evidence which He gave of the possession of divine power. Looking at the miracle in a merely physical aspect, it was a mighty deed to raise the dead. Human skill or power could not *preserve* life when it was in the body, could not keep out death

when he approached, much less bring back the soul that had fled, and snatch the body from the cold arms of the destroyer! He alone who could **create** man—could raise man from the dead. He alone who at the first could breathe into him the breath of life—could call back that life when once fled. It is such a miracle as only a divine Being could perform; and it was done, not as the Apostles did their miracles, in the name of another and by invoked power which did not inhere in them. Jesus did this in His own name, invoking no power, and calling no aid from without—but in the consciousness of His divinity, and in the putting forth of His own will, He sent out His voice and cried, "**Lazarus, come forth!**"

This miracle proved Jesus to be the Conqueror of death and the grave. This, however, involves nearly the whole mediatorial work of the blessed Savior. Death was the curse pronounced because of sin. Had there been no sin—there would have been no death. "By one man," says Paul, "sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned." Hence each death-bed, coffin, funeral, grave—tells of sin. Death as the curse procured by sin, could not be abolished until sin was done away. Now Christ "was manifested," says John, "to take away our sin; and in Him was no sin." Hence Christ, says Paul, "has redeemed us from the curse of the law," or death, by "being made a curse for us." He who in consequence of His sinlessness did not come under the curse of death—voluntarily took upon Himself that curse, and by obeying the law which we had broken, on the one hand, and enduring the curse which our disobedience had merited on the other—He has destroyed for all who believe in Him—the power of sin, obtained for them a justifying righteousness, freed them from the curse of the law, and thus exempted them from eternal death. He conquered **death** by conquering **sin** which brought in death; and we, weak, trembling believers, are thus enabled to triumph in His triumph, and can say, "Thanks be unto

God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." What a supernatural power was required for this!

This miracle glorified Jesus, and glorified God through Him—by showing that Jesus was the Lord of life and glory. He had already proclaimed Himself the life of men, the life of the world. John declared, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." Here He declares with solemn effect, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." He was the life, as being the Prince of life, the Lord and Giver of life—from Him all created life flowed, in Him it had its origin, for "by Him," says the apostle, "all things are held together."

Especially was Christ to show Himself the Lord of life, in the work of the resurrection. It was His voice which was to raise the sleeping dust, His Spirit which was to quicken the dead. He was the Author and Worker-out of the resurrection. Men would die because all had sinned—but men would live again, some to shame and everlasting contempt, some to glory, and honor, and immortality. Jesus would give life to all; but the life of the wicked would be to them an eternal death—a perpetual dying out in the soul of hope, joy, peace, love, and everything that made life a desirable existence; but the life which He would impart to believers is His own life—eternal life in His own kingdom, among His own angels, before His own throne, abiding in His eternal home.

Such, in brief outline, are some of the ways in which this miracle glorified Jesus Christ. It illustrates His *human sympathy*. It teaches us the *source of all true comfort in sorrow*. It shows us the interest which Christ feels in the grief of those He loves. It tells us of the blessed hopes which Christ inspires in the mourner's heart. It warns us never under the pressure of grief, to distrust the love or power of Jesus, or to be cast down at the apparent keeping away of the Savior from the house of mourning. It illustrates His *divine*

power—a power reaching beyond this life, a power over the grave and death, a power which only God possesses, and which only God could manifest. It illustrates His mediatorial and redeeming glory, as the Conqueror of sin, the Spoiler of the grave, the Victor of death, the Giver of eternal life. It shows us that redemption's work was fully accomplished, the captives to sin fully enfranchised, the victims of death fully disenthralled, the tenants of the grave fully set at liberty in, and by, and through Him who is the Resurrection and the Life, and who has declared, "He who believes in me, though he were dead—yet shall he live; and whoever lives and believes in me, shall never die." Never die the eternal death—never die to all the glories, the holiness, the bliss of heaven—but live! Live beyond the grave, live in unending glory as a saint in light!

The Personal Presence of the Comforter^(TOC)

"And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world can not receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him; but you know Him; for He dwells in you, and shall be in you."—John 14:16-17

The true Christian has three Comforters, and each of them is divine. God the **Father** is styled by Paul, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, as "the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation." God the **Son**, in the words of the text, speaks of Himself as one Comforter; and Paul tells us that "our consolation" or comfort "abounds by Christ." God the Holy **Spirit** is specifically named by Jesus Christ in several instances as "the Comforter," and His peculiar office as such is fully unfolded in the last discourse of our Lord to His disciples before His crucifixion.

Thus each person of the ever-blessed Trinity is a Comforter, divine in character, infinite in fullness, eternal in duration. There is, then, no true comfort or consolation, that the heart can desire, which may not be found in God the **Father** as the God of all comfort; in God the **Son** as the Paraclete with the Father; and in God the **Holy Spirit** as "the Comforter" who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

The Greek term **Paracletos**, here translated Comforter, and in another place translated **Advocate**—is peculiar to the writings of John, and is found in no other part of Scripture. We have no word in English which exactly corresponds to it in meaning; that meaning being, according to the etymology

of the word, "one called to be beside another." this explanation brings before us its true classical use, which "denotes a person who represents another in a judicial cause." It was the custom in the ancient tribunals for the parties to appear in court attended by one or more of their most influential friends, who were called in Greek *paracletes*, in Latin *advocates*. These paracletes, or *advocates*, gave their friends—not from fee or reward—but from love and interest—the advantage of their personal presence, and the aid of their judicious counsel. They thus advised them what to do, what to say, spoke for them, acted in their behalf, made the cause of their friends their cause, stood by them and for them in the trials, difficulties, and dangers of their situation. in this sense, our Lord is said by John to be our *Paraclete*—where he says, "We have an *Advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"—One in Heaven before God, who appears there in our behalf, represents our cause, urges our plea, ever living to "make intercession for us."

While on earth, our Lord had counseled, advised, spoken for, and on behalf of, His disciples. They had looked to Him for aid, support, comfort, truth, grace; and thus with Him ever at their side, He had been to them a paraclete, or advocate. He had most thoroughly identified Himself with them, had taught them to pray, to preach, to live, to work miracles, and the mysteries of the kingdom. But He was now to *leave* them. His bodily form was to be removed. Yet, with a sweetness of compassion peculiarly touching, He says, "I will not leave you comfortless"—*orphans*, undefended, unadvocated, unsustained. "It is expedient for you that I go away; but I will pray the Father, and He shall send you another *Comforter*, that He may abide with you forever."

This "other" Comforter is the Holy Spirit, as our Lord declares in the twenty-sixth verse—"But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit." and this Comforter

is said to proceed from the Father and the Son, sent in Christ's name, in answer to Christ's prayer, and to carry on Christ's work in the world, from which Christ was now to depart.

Let us, then, consider the *personal presence of the Comforter*, who is the Holy Spirit—as the great and abiding blessing of the individual believer and of the Church.

There can be no doubt that the believer now stands in a better relation to God, and Christ, and the mysteries of redemption—than those did who were privileged to behold our Lord with their bodily eyes, and hear His words, and touch His hands, and follow His person. this truth will be apparent if we analyze the *office* and *nature* of this Comforter as described by Christ Himself.

What are the points where the soul of man needs comfort? Or, to put the question in another form: What are the things which give real distress to the soul?

A sense of guilt;
a consciousness of being under the curse;
absence of the divine favor;
exposure to doubt and error;
uncertainty as to the future.

Comfort comes to such a one, not by removing the sense of guilt—but by implanting a *hope of pardon*. Comfort comes to one lying under the curse of the law—by showing him that that curse is borne by another, and he is exempt from its infliction. Comfort comes to one feeling the absence of the divine favor—in the sweet assurance that God is reconciled to him in the face of Jesus Christ. Comfort comes to one exposed to doubt and error—in the consciousness that he can be led by the Spirit into all truth. Comfort comes to

one uncertain as to his future—when he knows that his life is hid with Christ, and that when Christ who is his life shall appear, he "shall appear with Him in glory." to each of these special cases, it is the office of the Holy Spirit to minister; and no other being can relieve the real distress of the soul; for even the scheme of salvation—devised in the infinite love of God the Father, and wrought out in the infinite love of God the Son—is valueless to save the soul—unless **applied** and made effective, by the Holy Spirit. So that in very truth, in very essence, He is the Comforter.

This Comforter, Christ says, "the world can not receive," because it "sees Him not, neither knows Him." By the **world** is here meant carnal men engrossed in things of time and sense. Thus Paul says, "The carnal mind is enmity against God." and again, "To be carnally-minded is death." the world's aims, views, and plans—are earthly, temporal, sensual; the very opposite of the aims and plans of the Holy Spirit, so much so, that the world can neither see them or know them. "The natural man," says Paul, "receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." the things of the Spirit, can be seen and known only by those whose eyes have been anointed by the Spirit with the power of spiritual vision.

The apostle puts the question in this form: "What man knows the things of a man, except the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knows no man—but the Spirit of God." It is neither by any worldly learning, or worldly schemes, or worldly philosophy—that we are to receive the Comforter. on the contrary, the possession of a worldly mind puts us in a non-receptive condition; and as soon can sunshine dwell in a dark dungeon—as the Comforter abide in a worldly heart. The Comforter will displace the world—or the world will keep out the Comforter.

"But you," says Christ, addressing His disciples, "know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be *in* you." the persons whom our Lord addressed were crude, uncultivated, unlearned men. Had they attempted to establish schools like Hillel, or Gamaliel, they would have been frowned upon by the Scribes and Pharisees as ignorant pretenders. Had they gone to Alexandria and given themselves out as teachers of religion, the Egyptian philosophers would have sneered at their pretensions. Had they visited the Greek Academy—the Stoics, and Cynics, and Platonists of Greece would have mocked at their words and turned a deaf ear to their teaching. But to these Galilean peasants and fishermen, was given by Christ Himself—the Spirit of truth itself, the very Lord and Giver of life, who was to dwell with them, in them, and abide there forever.

Truly may we also lift up our eyes to Heaven and say with Jesus, "I thank you, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, that you have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes." and truly may we say with the apostle, "The world by wisdom knew not God," and that "The wisdom of the world is foolishness with God." Yes, we have what the profoundest minds of earth have sought for in vain—the Spirit of truth; and from these men, not from the temples of India, not from the halls of Alexandria, not from the schools of Athens—has gone forth the truth, which has enlightened, revolutionized, and redeemed the world!

The *truth* which this *Spirit of truth* as the Comforter is to reveal, is "the truth as it is in Jesus." When Jesus says of this Spirit that "He shall guide you into all truth"—it does not mean that the Holy Spirit will guide you into *natural* truth, or *scientific* truth, or *philosophical* truth; but into those great central spiritual truths—the atoning death, the justifying righteousness of Jesus Christ; those poles on which turn as on an axle, the whole scheme of

redemption and grace. As it was by this Spirit of truth, that the prophecies concerning Christ were uttered which fill the Old Testament; as it was by the Spirit of truth that Jesus was conceived by the Virgin Mary; as it was by this Spirit of truth that He was anointed for His ministry after His baptism—so is it declared that His office is to take of the things of Christ and show them unto men. Hence Christ says of this Spirit, He shall teach you all things. He shall testify of me. He shall glorify me. He shall show you things to come. He will guide you into all truth.

Who can so teach all things—as the Spirit that "searches all things; yes, the deep things of God?" Who can so testify of Christ—as the Spirit who revealed His person and advent through three thousand years of prophecy? Who can so glorify Christ—as the Spirit who formed His human body and anointed Him for His ministry? Who can so show us things to come—as the Spirit who has established His veracity as the Spirit of truth by an ever-augmented stream of fulfilled prophecy, from the fall of Eden, to the song of aged Simeon? Who can so guide into all truth—as the Spirit of truth who leads the soul to truth itself, the incarnate truth, even Jesus Christ?

There is no spiritual truth which starts not from Christ, or centers not in Christ. Touch any point of the vast circumference of divine truth which you please, and trace back thence any radiating line—and it will lead you directly to Jesus; for as there is but one fountain of light in the solar system, so there is but one fountain of truth in the moral firmament—Jesus Christ, "In whom dwells all the fullness of the God-head bodily."

Now this truth of Christ, which this Spirit of truth teaches us, is not mere abstract dogmas, or inert but logical speculations—it is living truth, and it is quickening truth; it has life in itself and imparts life; and herein it contrasts with the teachings of all mere human philosophies. for **human** philosophy,

like the aurora borealis—flashes and coruscates in the night season, attracting thousands of eyes by its brilliant scintillations, evoking countless speculations and conjectures—but permanently lighting nothing, warming nothing, vivifying nothing; and when they fade leave the sky darker than before. But "the truth as it is in Jesus," which the Spirit of truth reveals, like the sun—floods the world with its rays, and not only *enlightens* it—but *warms* it; and not only warms it—but makes it teem with life; and not only vitalizes it—but beautifies it; shining not fitfully—but permanently; not in one section of the sky alone—but from under the whole heavens; not to die away in deeper darkness—but to culminate in the meridian light of Heaven.

Not only is this Comforter a *teaching* Spirit—but Christ says, "He dwells *with* you, and shall be *in* you." Let us examine for a moment the force of those two little prepositions *with* and *in*.

A twofold power of the Spirit is here implied: an *outward* guarding, protecting, helping power—and an inward *controlling*, animating, and sanctifying power. The one preposition *with*, implies an agency acting from without and in concert with ourselves; the other preposition *in*, implies an agency at work within, developing itself from the heart outward.

It would be esteemed a rare privilege to have a great and truly noble person dwell with us, a Paul, a Chrysostom, an Augustine; to have such an one be our perpetual monitor, and adviser, and exemplar; to have him show us how to act, how to speak, how to live; to have the benefit of his oversight, his wisdom, his favor. But then the person thus favored might never fully copy the devotion of an Augustine, the eloquence of a Chrysostom, or the holiness of a Paul. How different, however, would the case be if there was a process by which the spirit of those great men, in its wholeness, could be infused into the minds and hearts of others, so that instead of dwelling with an Augustine

—Augustine should by his spirit dwell in them; instead of living with a Chrysostom—Chrysostom should live his life in them; instead of copying a Paul beside us—Paul should dwell in us as the abiding spirit. What a difference there would be! the indwelling spirit of an Augustine, would make a second Augustine; the infused spirit of a Chrysostom, would make another golden mouthed preacher; and a Paul living in us, would reproduce the spirit and the deeds of the great apostle in our own life and work.

The Comforter, as the Spirit of truth, not only dwells with us as a guest; but dwells *in* us as the inner controlling, shaping, enlightening, sanctifying Spirit, evolving out of Himself through the functions and faculties of our being, the fruits and graces of a holy life, and the beautiful character of a true Christian. and what a beautiful character must necessarily be developed by such an indwelling Spirit!

The artist who paints a picture, or chisels a statue—impresses a certain amount of his own genius on flat canvas or cold marble. It is not a beauty developed from within, working outward; but something put upon the passive canvas or marble, by an outside process that never goes beneath the surface, never imparts life within. But the artist power of the Holy Spirit is seen, in that taking up His abode *in* the heart—He renews and sanctifies that heart, and the outward life is but the development of the inward grace.

The Comforter, as the Spirit of holiness—hallows each thought and affection, and the man becomes holy. The Comforter, as the Spirit of wisdom—enlightens each faculty of the mind, and the man is made wise unto salvation. The Comforter, as the Spirit of truth—guides the intellect into all truth, and the man stands forth truth's freeman with the fetters of doubt and error broken at his feet. The Comforter, as the Spirit of grace and help—teaches how to pray and what to pray for, and the man goes boldly to the throne of grace.

The Comforter, as the Spirit of strength—energizes all the powers of the man for effective labor, and the man becomes stalwart in the strength of God. The Comforter, as the Spirit of the fear of the Lord—imparts a wholesome dread of offending, and reverence to God, and the man seeks to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.

And when there is at work in the soul such agencies—active, powerful, divine; and when the soul necessarily develops outwardly the animating spirit within—must there not result a moral beauty, a beauty made up of the blended features of holiness, truth, wisdom, prayer, reverence—which, combined, will produce a loveliness of life and character beyond the imagination of the artist, or the conception of the poet, or the dream of the philosopher?

Can such divine power dwell *with* us, and *in* us—and not be to us full of comfort so as indeed to merit the name, the Comforter?

But the *indwelling* of the Comforter not only molds our life on His own model, and reproduces in us His own features—but it turns each heart in which He abides, into a temple. "Know you not," says the apostle, to the Corinthians, "that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you?" and again he says, "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" And, writing to the Ephesians, he speaks of Christians as being "built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." These are words that startle us by their boldness, and awe us by their mystery. Christians then are temples—temples of the Holy Spirit! Habitations of God through the Spirit! a temple is set apart from common and worldly—to holy and divine uses; in it (the temple from which the apostle drew his illustration), were offered sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving; it was sacredly preserved from pollution and defilement, and in it God specially

manifested His presence. It was God's **house**, reserved for God's **use**, and occupied for God's **glory**. So the Christian heart is a living temple in which God dwells by His Holy Spirit. It is not his, for he is bought with a price, and has become God's, and nothing unhallowed or irreverent should enter there.

In this **temple of the heart**, God communes with us by the Holy Spirit. in it, He assures of pardon, and speaks words of love; and all the while that the Comforter dwells there, He is **beautifying** it with His grace, **purging** out every spot, and making it fit for the holy use to which the Holy Spirit has consecrated it.

The Christian then carries about with him a temple; he is himself a temple, and in him abides the Comforter. and thus the "God of all comfort" is ever **enshrined in the Christian soul**; not, as the **shekinah** of the Jewish temple, local and definite in form and material, a mere symbol of divinity—but **divinity itself** in its enlightening, controlling, life-giving, soul-renewing power, diffused through every part of our sentient being, and hallowing the whole man as a consecrated "habitation of God through the Spirit."

The crowning glory of this abiding of the Comforter in us, is that He will abide there **forever**. He comes to us not as a casual visitor, here today and gone tomorrow; but He takes up His abode in us, makes His home there, turns it into His dwelling, and having thus made it His temple—He inhabits it forever; for even death does not remove Him, for He dwells in us forever.

Tell me, then, does not the Holy Spirit well deserve to be called the Comforter?

This Comforter becomes ours in answer to earnest prayer. God has said that He is "more ready to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him, than parents are to give good things unto their children." this gracious promise—so full, so

paternal, so appealing to our own consciousness and sympathy—can be made ours by asking the God of all comfort to bestow upon us the gift of the Holy Spirit according to Christ's own promise, and for the satisfying of our own spiritual needs. Such request made in faith, in Christ's name, will be heard—will be answered; and thus can we secure all the rich blessings which ***an indwelling Comforter*** can bestow upon a human soul!

The Parables of the New Testament Practically Unfolded^(TOC)

Preface

This work is designed to be, as its title indicates, a *practical unfolding* of the Parables of our Lord.

The author has not attempted to give the several explanations which various writers, in different ages, have made of these Parables, for that would require many volumes. Nor has he sought to store up in these pages the treasures of exegetical criticism which have been accumulating since the days of Origen and Augustine. Neither has he inlaid his interpretations with those numerous gems of classical lore which tempt the scholar on every hand by the beautiful and pertinent illustrations which they furnish in support of the propriety and truthfulness of these Parables. Such a plan would have made the book more valuable to the *student* and the *theologian*—but it would have made it less acceptable to the popular mind, which it has been his special aim to reach, enlighten, and expand.

Waiving all these, he has kept steadily in view his original aim, and believing that there is a *deep spiritual meaning* in each one of these similitudes, which it befits us as Christians to know and understand—he has sought to develop this with clearness and fidelity. If he shall be the means of alluring others to a more earnest study of these inimitable Parables, these "apples of gold in pictures of silver," and to a better understanding of their *precepts* and *doctrine*—he shall devoutly thank God, and feel that his labor has not been in

vain in the Lord

The Parable^(TOC)

Presentation of *moral truth* in the form of Parables, is one of the most ancient as well as one of the most interesting forms of literature.

Parables are found as far back in the earliest ages of the world; they exist in most of the cultivated languages of the East; they are used by the poet, the historian, and the philosopher; they are listened to with delight by all classes of people, and, as Jerome has well said—are among the favorite vehicles for the conveyance of moral truth throughout the Oriental world.

Many of these ancient parables are happily couched, and possess both point and beauty. Many of them are picturesque and forcible to a high degree; but a careful study of all merely *human* parables, from whatever source gathered and by whoever uttered—will soon show how superior to them all, in every point—are the Parables of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To these Parables we shall confine ourselves, not only because they embody every parabolic excellence—but also, and chiefly, because they present to us by means of a series of exquisitely wrought pictures, the great truths which lie at the foundation of man's salvation from sin, and his final condition beyond the grave.

We have a *personal interest* in these Parables. There is not one from which we may not gather a personal lesson—for, though addressed to men who lived eighteen centuries ago, yet ...

so analogous are our spiritual needs to theirs,

so similar our relations to God, and

so applicable to all the phases of humanity, and all the changes of time, with

a divinely perpetuated and self-adapted vitality—that they are just as important to the Church now, as when first uttered!

They embody *truths* that cannot die;
they illustrate *principles* that must ever operate on society;
they afford *directions* that are ever needed; and
they minister *reproof* and *comfort* with as much freshness and pungency today—as when first uttered by our blessed Lord.

The study of the Parables, therefore, cannot fail to prove deeply interesting. They are so many *portraits* of the *duties* and *principles* of the Christian religion; and they hang around the four walls of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—as *pictures drawn by a heavenly artist to embody heavenly truth.*

And as, in recommending to a young student of sculpture, the statue of Apollo Belvidere as the most perfect specimen of art, the teacher adds, "Go and study it; and if you see no great beauty in it to captivate you, go again; and if you still discover none, go again and again: go until you feel it, for be assured it is there."

So we say to the student of the Parables, "go and study these parables, and if you see not their beauty at first, go again and again, gaze at them, ponder upon them, pray over them, until you feel them—then will they impress their lineaments upon your own soul, and be the model of your daily walk and conversation.

The word *Parable* means a *similitude* taken from natural things—in order to instruct us in spiritual things. It has been defined as a "fictitious narrative, invented for the purpose of conveying truth in a less offensive or more engaging form, than that of direct assertion."

In this respect, the Parable is not unlike the **FABLE**—yet they are essentially distinct. The genuine Fable does not move at all in the field of actual existence. It allows irrational and inanimate things from the kingdom of nature—to think, act, speak, and suffer. But the Parable derives its material only from within the range of possibility and truth, and from events and scenes that have their likeness in the occurrences of every day life.

"The Parable is constructed to set forth a spiritual and heavenly **truth**. this the Fable, with all its value, does not do; it is essentially of the earth, and never lifts itself above the earth. It never has a higher aim than to inculcate maxims of prudential morality, industry, caution, foresight; and these it will sometimes recommend even at the expense of the higher self-forgetting virtues."

The **Parable** also is essentially different from the **ALLEGORY**. The Allegory is a figurative sentence or discourse, in which the principal subject is described by another subject resembling it in its properties and circumstances.

That exquisite passage in the eightieth Psalm, where David portrays Israel as a **vine** which God brought out of Egypt; and that more precious declaration of our Lord in the 15th chapter of John, where, alluding to the same natural object, he says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener," etc., are specimens of the **Allegory**, which carries its own interpretation along with it. While the Parable must be interpreted by its author, or by its resemblance to the truths with which it is placed side by side.

Several instances occur in the Bible where the Parable is spoken of as synonymous with the **PROVERB**. The Proverb is a short, condensed sentence, full of pith, and barbed with a distinctive point. But the Parable is

elaborate, figurative, fictitious, and its meaning lies parallel with the whole current of its narrative.

"Physician, heal yourself" is termed by Luke a Parable—it is in rhetorical strictness a Proverb. The same may be said of other passages of the New Testament. "To sum up all, then, the Parable differs from the *fable*, moving as it does in a spiritual world, and never transgressing the actual order of things natural. It differs from the *proverb*, inasmuch as it is longer carried out, and not merely accidentally and occasionally—but necessarily figurative. It differs from the *allegory*, comparing as it does one thing with another, at the same time preserving them apart as an inner and an outer, not transferring, as does the allegory, the properties and qualities and relations of one to the other."

In using Parables as the *media of instruction*, our blessed Lord conformed to ancient usage and to the constitution of the human mind, which is so much more influenced by the *senses*, than by *abstract ideas*. Parabolic writing ... is naturally adapted to engage attention, is easily comprehended, is suited alike to the lowest and to the loftiest capacity, leaves strong impressions on the mind, gives great force to truth by strikingly personifying it, and enables one to unfold doctrines distasteful to the natural heart, by images which attract the mental eye, which convey the truth directly to the soul, before passion and prejudice have time to array themselves against its reception.

This was peculiarly the case in reference to the doctrines which Christ promulgated. The Jewish mind was not prepared for their reception—certain truths, such as ...

the bringing in of the Gentiles,
the dispersion of the Jews,
the abrogation of the temple service,
the atonement and death of Christ,
the resurrection and ascension,
the final judgment—

could only be gradually unfolded, and must first be taught in Parables; for had our Lord spoken plainly, the multitude would not so easily have listened to his words; but being insensibly drawn by the happy incidents, the touches of history, the beautiful illustration, to hear his discourses—they were taught many doctrines and truths to which their hearts would have offered malignant resistance, had they been conveyed in any other form.

The **perfection** of the Parables of Christ is evident to the most casual observer. They are perfect and inimitable models, "apples of gold in baskets of silver."

There is nothing superfluous, nothing gaudy. Each is a **picture** to the mind's eye—complete in all its lights and shadows, and perfect in its groupings and design.

With reference to the Parables, we may say what Luther does of the Bible at large, that "it is a garden of God, with many a lovely tree laden with lordly fruit; and that, often as he had shaken the boughs and received the delicious fruit into his bosom—yet had he ever found new fruit when he had searched and shaken them anew."

Admirably, then, did our Lord adapt his instructions to the mental and moral necessities of his hearers; and we might appeal to his Parables alone, in proof of the divinity of his mission.

The *fables* and *allegories* of the heathen world, were interwoven with their fictitious history, with their debasing mythologies, with their poetic extravagancies—and were designed to support that idolatry and polytheism which it was the object of the gospel to destroy. The moral instruction, if any was intended, must be dug out from the rubbish of poetical images and superstitious conceits. a very slight comparison of the abstruse allegories of Plato, the monstrous fables of the Jewish Talmud or the Asiatic Vishnu—with the Parables of the gospel, will suffice to show, that while delicacy, wit, virtue, truth, are continually violated in the former—that purity, elegance, pathos, point, and sublime power are found in the latter. The former, like the *ignes fatui*, are born in the foul fens and marshes of man's depraved nature—and are earthly, sensual, devilish. The latter, like the guiding pillar of fire in the camp of the Israelites—is heavenly, spiritual, and divine.

But a quality which distinguishes them above all other parables, is the *universality of their application*, and the perfect, real value of their instruction. in their original delivery, they were wisely adapted to the people and the time at which, and for whom, they were spoken. Yet they are *equally valuable now*, and in all parts of the world, "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." They never weary the mind, never become distasteful to the soul, never grow old and obsolete, never lose their force or beauty—but will ever be read with delight, ever be studied with interest, and ever be esteemed the most *precious* as well as most *beautiful* and *instructive* passages of God's Holy Word.

The Sower^(TOC)

The Parable: Matthew 13:3-8

"Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Mark 4:3-8

"Listen! a farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times."

Luke 8:5-8

"A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. Some fell on rock, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown." When he said this, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

The Interpretation: Matthew 13:18-23

"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Mark 4:14-20

"The farmer sows the word. Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown."

Luke 8:11-15

"This is the meaning of the parable: the seed is the word of God. Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop."

The many mighty works which our Savior did in and around Capernaum, drew together large multitudes to see and hear Him. Some, like the Scribes, and Pharisees, and Herodians, mingled with His audience "to entangle Him in His talk;" others came to bring their maimed or diseased friends to be healed; others, impelled by curiosity, grouped around Him to see the wondrous miracles which He performed; while few assembled to listen to His words of heavenly wisdom, or to be instructed in the things concerning the Kingdom of God.

Knowing the hearts of all men, He was aware of these varying dispositions in His hearers, and distinguished in each the motive which led them to His teaching. Accordingly, He addressed to them a parable which met their several cases, and illustrated their different receptions of His truth.

So great, however, was the crowd, that, in order to avoid the press, Jesus was compelled to get into a ship, and push out a little from the land, while His audience sat down upon the sea-shore; which, gently rising from the beach, made a fine natural amphitheater, where each could see and hear.

How *picturesque* the scene which meets the eye of the mind! the dense crowds of the people, mingling all ranks and classes; the turbulent Galilean; the restless Gadarene; the sanctimonious Pharisee; the brisk Scribe; the dark-browed Herodian—all clustered in waiting silence on the borders of the lake. to the *right* was the town of Capernaum, with its busy market and toll-booths, where the clay cottage of the fisherman leaned against the stone walls of the palace. *Behind* Him lay the Sea of Galilee, dotted with boats passing to and fro between Tiberias, Gennesaret, Dalmanutha, and Capernaum. *Around* Him were the bronzed-faced sailors, leaning upon the tackling of their ship, with their nets dragging at its side. and there *He* stood ...

a fishing-boat His *pulpit*;

the sloping banks of Tiberias His *temple*;
the rippling waves and rustling winds His *choir*;
preaching the doctrines He had brought from Heaven, and speaking, "as
never any man spoke," of the things which make for our eternal peace.

But hark! He waves His hand to command silence; the shifting multitude
stand still; the hum of voices is hushed, for Jesus opens His lips, and truths
such as earth never heard before, leap from his tongue with an eloquence as
simple and majestic as His own character.

The *truths* were divine—the *illustrations* earthly; perhaps his eye at that very
moment caught the form of some Galilean farmer, traversing his newly
ploughed field, and casting his seed about him on the right hand and on the
left:

some falling upon the still standing *thorns*;
some upon the *rocky ledge*;
some on the *beaten footpath*; and
some into the *upturned furrows*—
while *birds* hovered behind him to pick up the uncovered seed which lay
scattered upon the rock or the wayside.

Taking this scene as His text, He uttered the *simple* yet *exquisite* parable of
the Sower, wherein He designed to represent the different *soils* of the human
heart, and the different *receptions* and *results* which the seed of the Gospel
meets with, as it is sown broadcast over the world.

Our Savior here distinguishes several kinds of hearers who attend upon the
Gospel ministry; and in some one or other of these four classes—does every
man in Christendom find his true position. The *causes* of this diversity are
skillfully analyzed, and the *results* of such kinds of hearing, are distinctly

classified in his exposition of the parable, which, in answer to their request, He subsequently made to His disciples.

Wayside

Let us, then, as little children, sit at the feet of Jesus, while he unfolds to us this beautiful parable. His mild eye invites inquiry, and we look up and ask, "**Lord, who are meant by the WAYSIDE hearers?**" He replies, "When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it—the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. this is the seed sown along the path."

The peculiar wording of the parable, as recorded by Luke, intimates a subdivision of this class of wayside hearers into:

the **indifferent**, who allow the birds of the air to pick up and devour the seed; and the **infidels**, who treat it with contempt and tread it under foot.

Of this latter class we shall not speak—as no infidels will probably read these pages. of the former, "the indifferent," we desire to give a few marks and warnings.

The wayside path is a public thoroughfare, beaten smooth and hardened by the feet of travelers, so that seed dropped there cannot sink in—but is speedily picked up by the birds, or trodden down by men.

Of many a **human heart** may it be said, it is a wayside path, where **all thoughts** travel; where evil imaginations, and sinful feelings, and corrupt desires meet and exchange salutations; where the "lusts of the eye" stand peering at the corners of the street; where the "lusts of the flesh" look in at the windows of her house, "which is the way to Hell, going down to the chambers of death;" where the "pride of life" flaunts its train and trappings,

that it may excite the buzz of admiration, or the homage of the vulgar.

The heart of such a man is trodden down and made hard like a wayside, by overrunning thoughts and sins. When he enters the house of God—his heart is thronged with evil imaginations; when he bows in prayer—his spirit prays not; when he stands up to sing God's praise—his soul only sends back echoes of earthly ditties; and when the minister broadcasts "the seed of the word," it falls upon his affections as upon a wayside—to be either trodden under foot by negligence, or else picked up by the evil one, who comes like the birds of the air to snatch away the newly dropped grain of gospel grace.

How many ostensible worshipers of God there are who, Sunday after Sunday, sit under the **broadcastings** of the Sanctuary, and yet heed them not, because of the pre-occupancy of their thoughts and affections by the great adversary of souls! the word reaches only the outward ear, it never vibrates on the tympanum of the soul. on these wayside hearers, the word of God has no effect at all, and herein they differ from the three remaining classes: in one of which it has at least a **momentary** effect; in another it has an **imperfect** effect; and in the last a good and **productive** result.

But on this class, it is entirely devoid of benefit.

Once their hearts were susceptible and tender; once they were stirred with the story of a Savior's love and death; or trembled at the threatenings of a sin-hating God. Whence then this change? Whence this stony-heartedness, this **hardened** wayside soul? They have resisted the strivings of the Spirit again and again; they have stifled the oft recurring convictions of sin; they have not sought to understand the truth—they have even affected to disbelieve it; they have allowed other and worldly impressions to overpower their minds, and

have yielded to the hostile influences of sin, which, like hovering birds, have waited to catch up and bear away the seed as fast as it fell upon their hearts! this course, persisted in for a series of years, while, at the same time, all the outward duties of life, and all the external requirements of religion, have been perhaps attended to, has conspired to make them gospel-hardened—and no pleadings of *Divine love* can rouse them, no thunders of *Sinai* break up their indifference.

The one prominent characteristic here is *heedlessness*—a total *inattention* to truth, a complete *negligence* of the means of grace, a continued *carelessness* concerning their souls, and a total *thoughtlessness* about God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Such a process inevitably lays waste the soil of the heart, beats it down, hardens it, and makes it barren of all spiritual life.

Of all mournful spectacles, this is among the most mournful; for, combined with a seeming respect for the Gospel, and a high-toned morality, and an honorable discharge of life's duties—there is ...

a willful resistance to the Holy Spirit;

a deliberate rejection of the blessed Savior;

a hardened impenitence towards Almighty God;

and for such men, though they may flourish on earth—there is reserved *the fearful and eternal punishment of an insulted God!*

STONY-Ground

But our inquiring glance is again directed to the Savior, and we ask, "*Lord, who are designated by the STONY-ground hearers?*" "The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places," he replies, "is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has *no root*, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he

quickly falls away."

The several Evangelists, in recording this parable, have a slight variation here: Matthew says, "rocky places," Mark, "stony ground," Luke, "rock." the idea designed to be conveyed by each is, however, one and the same, namely, a **rock** with a **superficial covering of earth**, just enough to fructify the seed, and give it a temporary germination, not enough to allow it **deepness** of root, and consequent permanence and fruit.

Just so, there are many hearts which are, indeed, stony—but which are yet coated over with a thin layer of sensibilities and emotions, just enough of **soil** to start the **seed of the word** into vegetation—but not enough to give it depth of **root** or perfectness of growth.

A great multitude of those who attend the ordinances of grace have delicate and excitable natures.

Their **minds** are, to a certain extent, interested,
their **imagination**s are pleased,
their **sensibilities** are touched, and,
at times, they seem powerfully **affected** by the truth.

Their **feelings** are all quickened into excitement,
they listen with intense interest,
tears start to their eyes at the story of the Savior's love and death,
they resolve to break off from their sins, and turn to God, to abandon their evil companions, and to unite themselves with the Church. The **gospel seed** has fallen upon the thin soil, it has taken root—but before long some mirthful associate, some irreligious jester, some scheme of pleasure, or some plan of business—calls off their minds; and the seed which began to germinate so rapidly for good—perishes as soon as the **hot sun of persecution** is up,

because "it has no **root**."

Much of the religion of the world is the product of mere emotion, acted upon by an excited imagination. It is a piety springing up from the **thin soil of morality**, which lies upon the top of man's rock-like heart.

Such "rocky-ground hearers" may, for some time, appear well, especially if the seed has fallen into some cleft of amiability. But let persecutions arise, let tribulations sweep over the Church—and their **slender stalks of grace** are uprooted, and lie withered and destroyed. or ...

let such be exposed only to the minor persecutions of ungodly friends and relatives,

let them be ridiculed and despised,

let them be avoided and neglected,

let the tribulations through which every child of God must pass as he travels heavenward, come upon them

—and "in the time of **testing** they fall away," being soon "offended" at a religion which exposes them to such trials. And, rather than bear the taunts of **men**—they dare the frowns of **God**, and so return to the **world** which they once promised to renounce!

In the **wayside** hearers, the seed is caught up by the wicked one. But in the **rocky-ground** hearers, the seed takes root, springs up, and is then wilted by the scorching sun. in the one case Satan "catches away that which was sown, lest they should believe and be saved." in the other case, he brings to bear outward and inward **trials** consequent on a shallow reception of the truth, compared here to the scorching rays of the sun, or to the burning desert wind, which began to blow when the sun was up. Had the plant been **rooted** deeply enough—that heat would have furthered its growth and hastened its ripening. Just so, these tribulations would have furthered the growth in grace of the

true Christian, and ripened him for Heaven. But, as the heat scorches the blade which has 'no depth of earth' and has sprung up on shallow ground—so the troubles and afflictions which would have strengthened a *true* faith—cause a faith which was merely temporary to fail. So, having no "root in himself," or inward root, he "but endures for a while," "and in time of testing falls away."

There is great emphasis in the words, "having no root in himself." Such people have ...

no deeply rooted convictions of *sin*,
no deeply rooted sense of the need of a *Savior*,
no deeply rooted resolves of abandonment of their iniquities,
no deeply rooted faith in the Lord Jesus,
no deeply rooted principles of a Christian life.

And where these radical elements are lacking—there everything will be loose, shifting, and superficial.

Only those who are *rooted and grounded in Christ*—whose hope, whose faith, whose love, whose joy, like so many roots, strike down deep into the gospel soil, and entwine around the very heart of Jesus, drawing thence their life-sap, and circulating it through all the arteries of the soul—can bear the *storms of adversity*, the *sun of persecution*—and so endure unto the end.

Beware against trusting to these shallow impressions;
beware of this mere surface religion;
beware of these slight and transient resolves of reform, which, like "the morning cloud" and "the early dew," soon vanish away.

THORNY-Ground

But listen! Christ is describing the THORNY-ground hearers, and says they are such "as hear the Word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful."

Here we have a good *soil*, and *depth* of soil—but a soil in which are already planted the germs or roots of evil. Consequently, when the seed of the Word is sown in it, it springs up indeed—but the thorns spring up with it and choke it, so that it "becomes unfruitful."

This applies to the *nominal members* of the church: "Those who do not quite cast off their profession, and yet come short of any saving benefit by it; the good they gain by the Word—is insensibly overcome and overborne by the things of this world."

This, then, is the picture of one in whose heart grace is struggling for existence against ...
the cares of this world,
the deceitfulness of riches,
and the lusts of other things.

The originals of this portrait are to be found in every Sunday congregation. They are punctual in their accustomed place in the house of prayer; they maintain a devout appearance; the seed is received into their hearts, it takes root, it springs up—but alas! side by side with the upshooting blade of grace—is the choking thorn-stalk, drawing its life-sap from the same soil, and by its speedier, ranker growth, impoverishing that soil, to the damaging of the tender sproutings of the good seed.

Instead of pausing at the first appearance of these thorns, and plucking them up by the roots; instead of bestowing a careful husbandry upon the soil, watching the gospel seed, and rooting up everything that would choke its

growth—they allowed ...
the concerns of business,
the plans of wealth,
the schemes of ambition,
the love of feasting, parties, amusements,
and the cares and anxieties of life—
to grow up unchecked, until they ...
overtopped the plants of grace,
sucked out the strength of the affections,
impoverished the soul, and
left the good seed to become choked, and "bring no fruit to perfection."

Several things are mentioned here as **choking** the work of grace in the heart:

1. The Cares of this World

Namely, those feverish anxieties, active energies, fruitful plans, fretting worries, perplexing aims, connected with providing for the needs of our worldly existence. Everything in fine, that hinges upon the question, "What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and with what shall we be clothed?" These cares must necessarily take up a large portion of our time. Our physical necessities, our social relations, our public responsibilities—demand much and earnest attention. Inattention to them is sinful, and directly violates the precepts of the Bible. The **curse** is upon the earth, and the brow of man must sweat with labor to force from it a precarious subsistence. All this is granted. But because these duties of self-support and family support are so important—shall we make them paramount? Because we must live on this earth for a

little while, shall we adopt the epicurean maxim, "Let us eat and drink—for tomorrow we die," and center all the interests of life in a mere animal existence? is the body **alone** to engage attention? Have we no higher aims than what center in flesh and blood?

Here then lies the defect in this class of thorny-ground hearers—they do not keep the things of **time** and **sense** in subordination to **spiritual** and **eternal** things. They do not regard the needs of the **soul** and its care, as the **first** object to be attended to—watching against whatever encroaches on it, or is detrimental to its interests. But, on the contrary, they are so careful of the interests of business and daily life—that they check even the sproutings of grace itself, lest it should interfere with success in worldly schemes.

True religion will never prevent a due attention to **legitimate** business and necessary cares of this life. and these, on the other hand, will never interfere, when duly regulated, with the strict performance of our religious duties. The moment that the cares of this life, be they what they may—**crowd** out humble, frequent, heartfelt prayer, or make the reading of God's Word distasteful, or make the duties and services of the Christian's daily life irksome—that moment must the man take his stand, and either root out the **thorns**, or allow the thorns to choke the soul!

2. The Deceitfulness of Riches

Another enemy of the Christian life is found in "the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things, coming in and choking the Word, making it unfruitful." The deceitfulness of riches prepares the way for a whole retinue

of soul-strangling lusts! Observe, here, it is not riches—but the deceitfulness of riches. Riches themselves are God's gift—are valuable in their legitimate use; but they become deceitful when we ...

put our confidence in them,
rest our happiness in them,
trust our hopes to them, and
regard them as the chief good of our existence.

"Those who would be rich," says Paul, "fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition!" How earnestly should we take heed to a warning so solemn and so sobering as this!

That riches are deceitful, we all know. They promise much comfort—but he who has the *most money* has the *least enjoyment* of it.

They cannot heal disease;
they cannot ward off evils;
they cannot restore the unbalanced mind;
they cannot heal family feuds;
they cannot give peace to the burdened conscience;
they cannot purchase an entrance into Heaven.

They take to themselves wings and fly away:
the tempest wastes them,
the fire burns them,
the ocean wrecks them!

They are yours today—tomorrow you may but clutch at their shadow.

Yet, though we all *assent* to these truths in our minds—the great *aim* of the majority is to get rich! and when that desire seizes upon the soul, like Aaron's

rod, it swallows up all other aims, and becomes the ruling passion! Then the labor is to get money; then is heard the horse-leech cry of avarice, "Give! give!" Then are the sympathies for the poor, and the sensibilities to sorrow, seared—lest **gold** should ooze out through those tender channels. Then is **mammon** erected into an idol, and worshiped with more than Eastern devotion. Then is the man consecrated to lucre, "filthy lucre;" and he takes more delight in the company of Bunyan's **Mr. Muck-rake**, talking of gains and bargains—than in associating with the godly, communing about God and Heaven.

"It is easier," says Christ, "for a camel to go through the eye of a needle—than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." It is a fearful thing when the **lust for wealth** gets headway in the soul. It must be narrowly watched—and immediately checked: for if we do not guide our wealth into channels of benevolence, and baptize it for Christ and His Church—it will drive us into spiritual unfruitfulness, and ruin our immortal souls!

Especially in these days, is this warning needed. The vast increase of the precious metals by the discoveries in Australia and California; the remarkable unfoldings of mercantile and commercial wealth through the many new avenues of trade and the use of the steam engine; the rapid development of the agricultural and industrial resources of our country by the building of railroads, canals, telegraphs; the wonderful stimulus imparted to all branches of trade and all the pursuits of men, by the inventions and science and energy of the present century—have had, in some respects, a very **sad moral influence**, and have done much to keep the Church in a comparatively lethargic state.

Everything, now, is excitement and hurry! the long-established methods of trade are found too slow and quiet; dashing operations, bold schemes,

hazardous adventures—are rife on every side. The game of business is deeply, and very seldom fairly, played. Young men are inveigled into courses that, a few years ago, would have been denounced with horror. Clerks are taught the *tricks of trade* and the artifices of decoying, to the utter destruction of their moral sensibilities. and consequent upon this, are habits of wasteful expenditure, of dissipation, of dishonesty, of rash speculation, of ruin.

In social life, this *deceitfulness of riches* manifests itself in *personal* and *household* display, in ...

building sumptuous dwellings,
furnishing them with gorgeous furniture,
giving luxurious balls and parties,
dressing in costly garments,
aiming to dazzle and outshine at the fashionable watering-places,
an affectation of cultivated manners, bolstered up by a smattering of foreign travel, picked up from Murray's Guide Books, during a three-months' tour in Europe.

These things are grievous *thorns*, growing up in the heart—choking the plants of Divine grace! the man who yields to their influence at all, soon becomes entirely absorbed. There is so much of rivalry, of jostling, so much to excite and spur on effort—that a course of social extravagance, once entered upon, progresses with an ever accelerating speed, until the majority are landed in bankruptcy and disgrace!

Nor is this great evil confined to what are termed the *upper classes*. The grades of lower society are ever striving to climb upwards; and they toil up the rounds of the social ladder, deeming no position on it beyond their reach, and ready to make any sacrifice to attain their desire. Hence they ape the manners and habits of the wealthy, seek to pursue a course which will

recommend them to their notice, and the whole burden of their daily toil is to secure a standing in fashionable circles!

Is it possible, with such processes as these going on in the soul—for the seed to bring forth fruit? What has the religion of Christ to do with such scenes of luxury, prodigality, and heartless sociality? What has the Spirit of God to do with the struggling after *rank* and *name* and *wealth* that so occupy the heart?

There is as much incompatibility between *worldliness* and *spirituality*—as between fire and water. One must, of necessity, destroy the other. this is no new truth, though the present times enforce it with new emphasis. Long ago the Searcher of Hearts declared,

"You cannot serve both God and Mammon."

"Whoever will be the friend of the world—is the enemy of God."

"He who is not with Me—is against Me."

"He who takes not up his cross and follow after me, cannot be my disciple."

"Seek *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

You must, therefore, take your stand in this matter. If you prefer that your heart should bring forth *thorns*—fit only for the burning of Hell—yield to the influences of the world, and they will spring up with rank luxuriance, and cover your moral nature with the brambles of iniquity!

Go on and enjoy the pleasures of sin! Say to your soul, "Take your ease—eat, drink, and be merry!" Shut down the window of your heart that looks out upon eternity, and curtain it around with the painted tapestry of present delights. and then, throttling conscience and hoodwinking reason, cajole yourselves that all is well for time and for eternity. Lull yourself with these *opiates* of the deceiver—until death shall break the spell, and you wake up—a lost spirit amidst eternal burnings!

If these inevitable outcomes to such a course are too fearful for you to risk—then, in the name of Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, and through

the given grace of Almighty God—set about the work of plucking up these thorns, and of cultivating these sproutings of the true seed. Address yourselves to watchfulness, and prayer, and self-examination, and careful culture of your souls. And, distrusting your own strength, rely only on the Divine aid, to enable you to labor with unrelaxing diligence and unsleeping vigilance in the effort to "work out your salvation with fear and trembling—for it is God that works in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Under these three classes, namely, the *wayside* hearers, the *stony-ground* hearers, the *thorny-ground* hearers—may be ranked all who sit under the ministry of the gospel, who are yet out of Christ.

And here observe that the failure in each of these cases to bring forth fruit, was not any defect in the *seed* sown, nor in the *sower* who scattered it, nor in the *sun* and *rain* and *dew* which visited all alike. The difficulty was not so much *outside* the man—as *within* him. in one case—there was no receptive power; in another—there was no deepness of soil; and in the third—there was pre-occupancy of the ground by the rank and choking thorns. Man's ruin is in every instance self-produced—and the consciousness of this, will be one of the most fearful elements of his everlasting woe.

GOOD-Ground

But we once more look up to our Divine teacher, and say, "*Tell us, Lord, we beseech you, who are the GOOD-ground hearers?*" And He responds in those cheering words, that they are those who, "hear the word and understand it. They produce a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Though the Scriptures positively declare that "there is none that does good—

no, not one," yet there are those, speaking after the manner of men, who may be said to have "an honest and good heart." that is, they receive the truth without questionings and disputings; they do not twist and cavil at the word; they treat it honestly, and act upon it with simple-minded sincerity, and a desire to profit.

Such people, when they hear the word, give it their attention, and hence, applying their hearts to wisdom, "understand it," recognize it as God's word, and embrace it as suited to their needs—thus forming a contrast to the wayside hearers, who understood not the word of the Kingdom, and consequently did not believe it. But this understanding of the truth can only result from the **teaching of the Spirit**; because "the natural man," says Paul, "receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." the fact, therefore, of their understanding the word—proves that the Holy Spirit has been at work in their hearts, making them receptive of truth, and enlightening their minds, making them to comprehend the truth.

The spirituality of this work is still further evinced by the additional mark mentioned by our Lord, that such "having heard the word, keep it;" do not allow Satan to "catch it away," as the birds picked up the seed dropped upon the wayside—but "keep it" in their **memories**, pondering it over in careful, prayerful meditation; "keep it" in their **hearts**, as the counselor and the guide of their lives; hiding it there, that they may not sin against God.

There is much force in the word here translated "keep it." It means, to occupy, to dwell in, and in classical usage is applied to the "tutelary gods," who had an abiding place in every household, and as, among the heathen, no family or individual was considered safe without the guardianship of one or more of these tutelary gods dwelling in their halls or rooms—so should no

Christian feel himself safe from the evil influences of his great adversary, without having the seed of the word occupy and dwell in his soul; not to be an occasional visitor, not a temporary tenant—but permanently abiding there in full, undisturbed possession.

Our Christian character does not depend so much on our *hearing* the word—as on our *keeping* the word. It will not benefit us to have it pass through the mind—it must *dwell* there. It must be kept there with a jealous guarding and a scrupulous care, as the *greatest treasure* confided to our hands.

The necessary result of this indwelling of the "good seed" in the "good ground" is, that it will be productive. But the seed will not fructify *equally* in all, nor will the *soils* produce a like amount of harvest. There are *circumstances* of ...

early education,

natural disposition,

social position,

mental temperament,

business relations,

idiosyncrasies of character,

intellectual advantages—

which are ever operating upon the *soil of the heart*, increasing or lessening its fertility. Consequently some bring forth thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.

Our own experience testifies to the truth of this. We see one Christian fertile in the graces of the Spirit, abundant in fruit, rejoicing in hope. and we see another, who manifests but little increase, producing but small results. But in all cases there is *some* increase. *Fruit production* is the absolute condition and requirement of the Christian life. this alone evidences that we have

received the seed, that we have *kept* the seed, and that the *soil* is good. and while the ratio of increase is *variable*—the increase itself is the necessary exponent of Christian vitality.

This fruit manifests itself in two ways:

First, in a growth in grace, whereby our hearts become more and more conformed to the image of God's dear Son, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

And secondly, by increasing efforts for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

But this *inner* and *outer* work of the soul are so interlaced that they cannot be separated. Where there is a growth of holiness in the heart—there is always found deeper love for Christ; and where that exists—there of necessity springs up a love for the souls for whom Christ died, and a desire to labor for and with Christ in so bringing men to the truth, as that our blessed Savior "shall see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied."

But this fruit, says our Lord, is brought forth "by persevering." Perseverance is that grace which enables one to bear afflictions, calamities, and oppositions—with constancy and calmness of mind, and with humble submission to Almighty God. It is an essential element of Christian character, and as such is much insisted on by the Apostles John, and James, and Peter, and Paul, as well as by Christ himself.

Lack of perseverance is the mark of an unbalanced *mind* and uncurbed *will*. It is a dangerous trait even in a worldly character, because it leads to rash and hasty measures, and produces a chafed and irritated spirit. Much more then must it be adverse to godliness of heart, and to all productive efforts in the cause of Christ. With what truth might the Apostle say to us as to the

Hebrews, "You have need of perseverance!" and with what earnestness would he repeat to us, what he urged upon them, "run with perseverance the race set before you!" For, unless we persevere with unshaken steadfastness, enduring patiently the reproach and opposition of the world, stemming with even mind and submissive will, the difficulties which lie before us— we cannot bring forth fruit, we cannot glorify God, we cannot secure "the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus."

In gathering up into a few closing reflections the teachings of this parable, we remark:

first, that we are personally responsible for every particle of the seed of the word sown in our hearts;

secondly, that no "wayside" hearer can be saved;

thirdly, that no "stony-ground" hearer can be saved;

fourthly, that no "thorny-ground" hearer can be saved;

and lastly, that **only** the fruit-producing hearer can enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

Reader! in which class are you?

The Wheat and the Weeds^(TOC)

Matthew 13:24-30

*"Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the **wheat**, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the **weeds** also appeared.*

"The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'" "An enemy did this,' he replied.

"The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'" "No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.'"

Matthew 13:36-43

"Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."

He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one,

and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

"As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear."

This parable, like that of the Sower, is drawn from the walks of agriculture, and needs no explanations to unfold the terms used, or the personages introduced. The field, the wheat, the weeds, the servants, the landowner, the enemy sowing weeds at midnight—are each intelligible to the common mind, involving no points of thought, or usages of life—diverse from those with which we are daily conversant.

There is one peculiarity about this parable, however, which it has in common with that of "The Sower," namely, its subsequent interpretation by our Lord himself, in answer to the special request of His disciples. Since He, therefore, who uttered it, has condescended to unfold it, it is more glorious to follow His footsteps than to mark out any new path of our own. When He instructs—we have nothing to do but listen, practice, and obey.

"The field," says our Savior, "is the world;" a thought so great that we are really startled at its magnitude. and looking at it in its merely human aspect, as the utterance of a Jew, whose nation was separated from all other nations by theocratic institutions, which constituted them "a peculiar people," and who, from this national standpoint, regarded the Gentiles as "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise"—there is

something in it morally sublime; indicating a *mind* of vast breadth, a *soul* devoid of prejudice, a *heart* that expanded its affections to the circumference of earth, and a *faith* that looked upon the far off—yet certain result, with the calmness of anticipated triumph.

But Christ was not a narrow-minded Jew, bound down by national prejudices. He was *God* as well as *man*; and His utterance here was the Divine annunciation of a truth brought from Heaven, and by Him revealed to man. So that it is a *prophecy* as well as an *assertion*; it is the glorious prediction of His own assured success, as well as the statement of an ultimate fact. and uttered as it was in the day of His humiliation, with but a handful of followers, amidst the scorn and neglect of His own countrymen—it showed God bringing the *future* before the eye of the present, with a clearness of vision and distinctness of statement which could only result from an omniscience that saw "the end from the beginning."

The narrow province of Judea sufficed for the Jewish Church, which was only designed to be the *temporary depository of God's law and promise*, the forerunner of that dispensation which the Messiah, "the hope of Israel," would, "in the fullness of time," establish "for all nations." the laws and ritual of the Jewish Church absolutely precluded it from ever becoming universal; it was a church which, as a church—could only flourish in certain latitudes and longitudes, and contained within itself the elements of its own dissolution. Its great office was:

to be the depository and keeper of revealed truth;
to prefigure Christ by type and ritual;
to announce His advent by an ever augmenting voice of prophecy;
to receive Him into its bosom when He appeared;
and then to give place to a dispensation, which, rejecting the Jewish ritual and

the Jewish boundaries—would be equally adapted to every land and climate, and become the sole religion of the world.

In this *world-wide field* was to be sown "good seed" by "the Son of man." this "Son of man" is none other than Jesus Christ; that being one of His peculiar titles, and by which He most frequently designated himself; thus rightly appropriating the title under which Daniel prophesied of the Messiah's kingdom and glory.

"The good seed are the children of the kingdom." that is, those individuals in whom the good seed of God's word had so taken root and fructified, as to identify themselves with it, in such manner that they might well be called "the good seed." Not indeed in the abstract, as that which was *sown*, for as children of the kingdom they were not sown—but as being the *fruit* of that which had been sown by the Son of man, and which, in the parable of the Sower, is called "the word of God." This, falling into "good ground," takes root and springs up, and develops itself into "children of the kingdom," who are thus, by a figure of speech, called the "good seed."

Wherever "the word of God" finds lodgment in the heart and receives, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, fructifying power—there will it ever bring forth a child of the kingdom. this is its only and its legitimate fruit; hence, Peter speaks of Christians as "being born again, not of corruptible seed—but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever;" "and this," he adds, "is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." Thus the *preached Gospel* is that good seed, which, in the field of the world, will ever produce the children of the kingdom.

It is said to be sown by the Son of man, because the word, which is the seed, "proceeds out of His mouth," and because it is by His authority and

commission that the blessed Gospel is preached, or scattered broadcast, throughout the world; for His irrevocable promise to His ministering servants, the seed-sowing farmers of His Church, is, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world;" so that, through all time, to all classes of people, throughout all the habitations of men—the ministers of the Gospel have the promised presence of "the Son of Man," giving ... *efficiency* to their sowing, *fructification* to the seed, and causing it in every part of this world-field to bring forth "the children of the kingdom."

This is one, and the bright side of this parabolic picture. We turn with reluctance to the other, wherein we behold ...

another kind of *seed*,
another *sower*, and
widely different *results*.

"The Son of man," who sowed the good seed, had "an Enemy," here called "the Devil," who, after the wheat had been cast into the ground, and while the sowers slept—came stealthily into the field, and "sowed weeds among the wheat, and went his way." From the Bible we learn that the *devil* is a person, not an idea. that he was once an angel of light—now a fallen spirit; that he is the deceiver of the world, the enemy of God, the earthly antagonist of Jesus Christ; that he is "the spirit who rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience;" that he is full of deceit, subtlety, and falsehood; that he is "a murderer from the beginning," and "the father of lies;" "the accuser of the brethren," and "as a roaring lion, he walks about seeking whom he may devour."

His great aim is to thwart the moral and redemptive purposes of God in man's creation; which he first attempted, and with apparent success, in the garden of

Eden, in that fearful assault upon the faith and obedience of Adam and Eve. But when, at the very moment of his seeming triumph, there was uttered the hope-inspiring promise, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head"—then were all his mighty energies gathered into one effort to oppose that "seed of the woman," even Jesus Christ, and overthrow Him and the kingdom which He came from Heaven to establish.

This was the one aim of all his multifarious movements before and at the coming of Christ; this caused him to make that daring assault on Jesus himself, when the blessed Savior was weak through protracted fasting, and unsustained by human aid, in the wilderness. this led him to enter ...

into **Judas** to betray his master,

into the **high priests** and **scribes** to condemn Him,

into the **people** to cry out "crucify him,"

into **Pilate** to deliver Him to his soldiers to be hung upon the accursed tree.

And ever since, he has waged a relentless conflict with the Great Head of the Church and His ministers, and the children of the kingdom—being ...

unremitting in toil,

unrelaxing in vigilance,

unsparing in deception,

unblushing in effrontery,

unscrupulous in his wiles to entrap the souls of men, and lead them as captives to his own abodes of eternal sorrow.

This is that arch-enemy of God and man who sowed "weeds" in the field of the world; and it marks the great **wiliness** of this enemy—that he sowed that kind of seed which, in its upspringing, would require some time to develop its true characters, its first appearings being so like the good grain, that only when it had taken too deep root to be plucked up without injuring the wheat

also, could its real character be detected.

The "weeds" spoken of, were not another kind of seed from the wheat—but of the same kind, only a perverted or degenerate wheat. Thus we find that all the grievous heresies and defections that have been produced in the Church are not the results of bald and undiluted falsehoods—but of degenerate or perverted truths, retaining enough of the truth to catch the conscience—yet using the little truth only as a means of making more deadly the error which it was designed to advance.

The danger of any soul-destroying error, is in proportion to the amount of **truth** which it enfolds; the nearer the truth, while it yet avoids it—the more deceptive does it become! It is when Satan "transforms himself into an angel of light" that he most effectually seduces the children of the kingdom; and never did he come so near uttering the truth in its letter, and yet fail to speak it in its spirit—as when he thrice tempted the blessed Savior, backing one of his assaults with a quotation from the Word of God.

The ingenuity of the deceptions, and the protean shapes of evil which the devil assumes—are such as no unaided mind can either comprehend or unravel. It requires the aid of God's Holy Spirit to enable us, like Milton's Ithuriel, so to touch him with the **spear of truth**, under whatever form he may be disguised—as to cause him "to return to his own likeness."

As in the case of the Son of man, the seed which was sown was not "the **children** of the kingdom," but that which produced them; so here, the weeds scattered by the devil were not "the children of the wicked one," but that which brought them forth—those **evil principles** and **thoughts**, which in their germination result in men of such sinfulness and guilt, as well to deserve the denunciation, "**Children of the wicked one.**"

In this class are included all who are not the "children of the kingdom;" for there are but these two moral families in God's household—termed sometimes,
"children of light"—and "children of darkness;"
those who "walk by faith"—and those who "walk by sight;"
"men of the world, who have their portion in this life"—and men who
"confess themselves to be strangers and pilgrims upon earth, seeking a better country, that is, a heavenly one;"
men "alive unto God"—and men "dead in trespasses and sins;"
the "friends" of Christ—and the "enemies" of Christ.

We may thus search through the Word of God, and though we find these two classes described under diverse names—yet we never discover any *third* or *middle* family; a matter which our blessed Lord has set at rest in the most positive terms by saying, "He who is not with me—is against me, and he who gathers not with me—scatters abroad."

It is indeed a fearful thing to be one of the children of the wicked one; to have such a moral paternity as only the devil can furnish ...
to be one of his fiendish household,
copying his example,
animated by his precepts,
following his rules, and
day by day *ripening* for the weeping, and the wailing, and the gnashing of teeth, which shall be the portion of the children of the wicked, forever and ever!

In consequence of this double sowing, we find springing up in this world-field, wheat and weeds; and to the question of the servants of the landowner, "Do you want us to go and pull them up?" the reply is, "No, because while

you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn."

In this answer, as we understand it, lies the real force and import of the parable; which seems to have been uttered to show that in the **visible** Church of Christ on earth—there will ever be the bad **mingled** with the good, and that those who look for an unalloyed communion here, will not find it until after the harvesting, "at the end of the world." We draw then, from this statement, these four propositions:

1. Intermixture of the Children

That in the visible Church, there is a present **intermixture of the children** of the kingdom, and the children of the wicked one.

Here, the term **visible** distinguishes it from the **invisible** Church—composed of those who "are very members incorporate in the mystical body of Christ, which is the blessed company of all faithful people," and who are known only to God himself. The word **men** confines it to this earth, in contradistinction to that community of which "the whole family in Heaven and earth is named," embracing angels and the spirits of the just made perfect, as well as beings still on earth. The word **faithful** restricts the term Church to those who believe in the Lord Jesus, and consequently excludes all associations of imposture—infidelity or heathenism.

The **visible** church is the Church militant on earth, not the Church triumphant in Heaven; the Church warring in the wilderness on earth—not the Church at rest beyond its swellings in the Canaan above. But though the visible,

militant Church, is in general terms "a congregation of faithful men," yet it manifestly embraces many who have no **real** faith towards God, and no true love to Jesus Christ, and no new birth of the Holy Spirit. and such has been the fact through the entire period of the Church's history.

We need but casually read the records of the Old and New Testaments, to see how many there were who by hereditary descent, or outward profession, became members of the **visible** Church, under the Patriarchal, the Levitical, and the Christian dispensations—who yet had neither part nor lot in the blessings of the covenant of grace, because their heart was not right in the sight of God.

In the band of our Lord's Apostles—was a Judas;
in the little Church of Samaria—was a Simon Magus;
in the Church of Pergamos—were those "who held the doctrines of Balaam;"
in the Church of Thyatira—was a Jezebel-like woman;
in the Church of Sardis—were those whose works "had not been found perfect before God;"
and in the Churches of Rome, Corinth, Colosse, Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica—were those "who had a name indeed to live—but who yet were dead in sins and sins."

And what was true then—is true now.

In every **Gospel field** we find **weeds** growing up with the wheat!

In every **ecclesiastical net** are enclosed good and bad fish!

In every **fold** of Christ are there sound and tainted sheep!

Into every **ark of the Church**, as into the ark of Noah—there enter both **clean** and unclean beasts.

This is indeed a lamentable fact, and one that should make us walk humbly in the presence not only of God—but of a carping, sneering world. and yet it is a fact which, in the end, both illustrates and promotes the glory of the grace of God: for by this state of things, not only are the goodness, mercy, long-suffering, forbearance, and other attributes of God more gloriously displayed—than if he immediately visited sin with prompt punishment.

The character of His children, and their fitness for Heaven, are greatly benefitted by the very processes of trial and temptation through which, in consequence of this *intermixture* of good and evil, they are called to pass. Thomas Fuller, in the fifth book of his "Holy State," gives these *six reasons why God permits the wheat and the weeds to grow up together* in the field of the Church until the harvest:

1st. Hypocrites can never be severed, but by Him who can search the heart.

2dly. If *men* would make the separation—*weak* Christians would be counted no Christians; and those who have a *grain* of grace, under a load of imperfection, would be counted as reprobates.

3dly. God's vessels of honor for all eternity not as *yet* converted—but wallowing in sin, would be made castaways.

4th. God, by the mixture of the wicked with the godly—will try the patience and watchfulness of his servants.

5thly. Because thereby He will bestow many favors on the wicked to clear His justice, and render them the more inexcusable.

Lastly: Because the mixture of the wicked grieving the godly, will make them the more heartily pray for the day of judgment."

2. The bad resemble the good

The second proposition is, that the bad members of the Church in many respects resemble the good—but have a different origin and a different termination.

The weeds mentioned in the parable are probably the darnell or degenerate kind of wheat which, in its early blade, closely resembles true wheat. The Rabbis say that the weeds of Palestine are like the wheat, except that the ears are not so large, nor the grains so many, nor the quality so good.

Just so, in the Church of God—the bad or unsound members SIMULATE the good in very many particulars. Their outward profession, appearance, and participation of ordinances—are the same. They ... are perhaps liberal in the support of church institutions, show great regard to the sanctuary and sacraments, go through the same outward round of religious duties—and thus grow up together until the harvest.

But they DIFFER from the children of the kingdom in their origin—they have not been born again by that spiritual regeneration which is effected by the Holy Spirit. The seeds which have sprung up with such *semblance* of goodness, are weeds sown by the wicked one, producing *counterfeit graces* and *spurious doctrines*, with which multitudes rest satisfied, because at least it gives them an outward position in the Church of God.

Sometimes these seeds are received unwarily at first, and when they spring

up, they look so much like the true wheat, that the recipients never trouble themselves to examine whether the resemblance continues, or whether, after all, it is not **darnell** that they are cultivating, instead of wheat. Many there are, who rest their salvation on the fact, that once they had convictions, and, as they supposed, conversion; and, wresting to their own destruction, the doctrine that man cannot fall from grace—they settle down their hopes upon a past experience, and say, "**once saved—always saved,**" and thus grow up as rank and noxious weeds, fit only for the burning!

But God has not left us to **uncertainty** in this matter. Though we may be deceived about others—we have at least the means of detecting the falsity within ourselves. He has given us the proper **tests** and **criteria** by which we may discriminate between the good and the bad seed—so as to know whether or not **we** are the children of the kingdom, or the children of the wicked one.

If we are really anxious to know the truth and the whole truth, as to our souls' sanctification and justification—we can know it by **marks** and **evidences** of that personal spiritual kind, beyond the artifices of the devil to counterfeit or invalidate; for the Bible distinctly declares, "Whoever **does** the will of God—shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God."

3. No Thorough Separation

The third proposition is, that no **thorough** separation can take place in this life.

The command is, "Let both grow together until the harvest," and the reason assigned is, "lest while you gather up the weeds—you root up also the wheat with them." While the eye of **God** beholds with unerring certainty, who are the weeds and who are the wheat—**man** does not. and were it left to him to

root up the weeds, he might leave many stalks of weeds, supposing them to be genuine wheat—and pluck up many stalks of wheat, under the mistaken notion that they were weeds.

The terrible *persecutions* which have taken place between different sections of the Church, for the so-called purgation of the church, afford sad examples of the way in which human servants, had they the power, would root up what they would call the "weeds" in the field of the Church. We have great reason to bless God that He has removed this power from the hands of short-sighted and narrowminded men. The Church has never used the *extirpating sword*, but to the disgrace of its name, and to the dishonor of its Divine head.

What Christ has commissioned the Church to do is, to plant and sow and cultivate the seed of the Word with best skill—but not to root up weeds. this He has reserved for His commissioned angels, who, when sent forth, "they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!"

So far is this passage, therefore, from sanctioning persecution, it strongly, though inferentially, condemns it. It reserves the final *decision* to omniscient power—and the final *gathering* to angelic reapers, ministering spirits, swayed by no human passions, and acting under the eye and finger of their Eternal King.

4. Separation shall take place

The fourth and last proposition is, that both the parable and the interpretation given by our Lord, emphatically show, that a *separation* shall take place at some future day.

Whatever, then, may be the condition of the Church of God now, there is a day coming, when "judgment shall begin at the house of God."

Then shall this *mixture* of good and evil end.

Then shall the *weeds* be gathered for the burning—and the *wheat* for God's barn.

Then shall there be a *separation*, total, complete, and forever—of the true and false professors, who now grow up together in the field of the Church.

As it is the design of another parable, namely, "The Draw-Net," to represent this special truth, we shall not dwell upon it here; but, simply announcing the fact that such a separation will take place by Divine command, under Divine direction, and for purposes of Divine judgment—we pass to the final result of such a severing of the good from the bad—first, as to the weeds; and then, secondly, as to the wheat.

The "**WEEDS**" are first reaped, then bound "in bundles to burn," then cast "into a furnace of fire," producing "wailing and gnashing of teeth"—words designed to show the *intensity* of the suffering of the wicked in the world to come; for it is only by terms borrowed from physical pain, or from implements and instruments of bodily torture—that we can set forth the unspeakable anguish of soul which they shall experience who "lie down in everlasting sorrow," "where their worm never dies, and their fire is never quenched."

The fierce struggle of contending passions;
the unchecked power of evil, rising and swelling with tumultuous rage;
the writhings of a spirit bereft of every hope, and haunted by despair;
the goadings of a conscience quickened into intense activity by the memory

of the past;
the forebodings of an ever-increasing torment, waxing keener throughout eternity;
the remembrance of what is **lost**—Heaven, the soul, God's pardon, Christ's favor, everlasting bliss;
and the consciousness of what has been **self-induced**—weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth forever!

Oh! this, this is the fire that ever burns with gnawing—but never-consuming flame! this is the furnace, "seven times heated" by the fuel of an ungodly life, in which **retributive justice** shall cast the unrepenting soul, and leave it there—to memory, to conscience, to Satan, to despair. Well may the prophet say, "**Woe** to the **wicked!** Disaster is upon them! They will be paid back for what their hands have done!"

With equal truth does God declare, "Say unto the **righteous**, it shall be **well** with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings." Their condition, after the day of judgment, shall be one of splendor and rejoicing.

Freed from the body of this death,
removed from a world of sin,
exempt from the temptations of the adversary,
full of love and peace and joy—
they shine forth in their true characters, as "children of light and of the day." While on earth they were "lights in the world," but the light was **obscured** by their imperfections and sins; it was more frequently hidden under a bushel, than set on a candlestick. But now, the clouds of error, of unbelief, of sin, have been rolled away—and, in the clear sky of Heaven, they manifest their true character, and shine forth "as the sun" in the kingdom of God; and there they shall shine, says the prophet Daniel, "**forever and ever!**"

The Mustard Seed^(TOC)

Matthew 13:31-32

"He told them another parable: "The kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."

Mark 4:30-32

"Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade."

Luke 13:18-19

"Then Jesus asked, "What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air perched in its branches."

Few words—but pregnant truths! the aim of our Savior was to find some comparison or similitude that would best illustrate the outward growth and

development of the Kingdom of God. in asking the question of those around him, "What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to?" He did not design that they should answer it, for they could not, being ignorant of the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven. But by **starting** the question, he excited their minds to action, caused them to feel more forcibly their inability to reply; and, by stimulating their curiosity, produced a deeper desire to understand the nature of that kingdom of which Jesus spoke. When, therefore, after bending to Him their attentive ears, they heard Him compare it to a grain of mustard seed, they must for the moment have been shocked at the **insignificance** of the resembling object, so different from their preconceived ideas of the glory and magnificence which they supposed would usher in the Messiah's reign.

Unbiased as we are by those temporal and national views of the person and reign of Christ, which blinded the minds of the Jews; and looking at this Kingdom of God, not from a prophetic standpoint, as something yet to take its rise—but from a historic one, wherein we see it **already begun**, and in process; we can see the felicity of the comparison, and mark its close resemblance.

The grain of mustard seed is indeed "the least of all the seeds that are sown in the earth," and it was in this sense, doubtless, that our Lord spoke of it—alluding rather to the relative size of the seed, and the developed plant, than to the seed in the abstract, because the seeds of poppy and rue are smaller than those of mustard, though the plants themselves never rise beyond the character, of humble herbs, whereas the mustard seed "becomes a great tree," and "shoots out great branches."

Thus **small and insignificant** was the first germ of the Kingdom of God in its earthly manifestations. We say earthly manifestations, because, as it existed

in the mind of the Triune God, it was a Divine idea, compassing at once all its results, and could not, therefore, be either small or insignificant.

But on earth, how did **Christ**, who is Himself the grain of mustard seed, out of which grew the great tree of Christianity, first appear? As an infant! wrapped in swaddling-bands and lying in a feeding trough! Could **reason** see anything in Mary's child, born in a stable, to foreshadow such prestigious results? Certainly not. and when, after thirty years of obscurity, working, doubtless, in the mean while, at the carpenter's bench with his reputed father, "Jesus began to teach and to preach"—who saw in the plain Nazarene, anything to indicate a **greatness** that would fill the earth with its glory? Who would recognize in Him, the revolutionizer of the world? Or, beholding Him at the beginning of His ministry, selecting as His disciples—not the titled, the wealthy, the influential—but fishermen and tax-gatherers, ignorant and crude Galileans—who would not have said, looking at the subject on mere worldly grounds—that here, surely was a great mistake, to entrust to such uncouth and uneducated men, so great a treasure as the Gospel professed to be; that, if Jesus' design was to make converts and popularize His doctrines, He should have selected well-skilled Scribes, or learned Pharisees, or influential Sadducees—men who, from their social or intellectual position, would have been treated with respect, and listened to with reverence. But to call a man from his fishing nets and tackle, and tell him to go preach the Gospel; to call another from his publican's seat and tax-table, and commission him to declare the whole counsel of God concerning man's highest and eternal interests—seemed to finite minds like "casting pearls before swine," or attempting to achieve great ends by totally inadequate means!

And when at last, after three years, going up and down throughout the cities of Palestine, the founder of this new religion was arrested, condemned, and

crucified like a slave—who would have supposed that his tenets could survive the dispersion of His disciples, and His own ignominious death?

Thus the *life* and *death* of Christ, in its human aspects, was emphatically, as to its apparent insignificance—a grain of mustard seed.

Nor does the case appear to be much better *after* Jesus had ascended on high. The disciples whom He left behind Him, had all at one time deserted Him, and were now so timid and so few that they all assembled in an upper room for fear of the Jews. The idea, humanly speaking, was absurd—that less than a dozen *illiterate Galileans* could overthrow the old religions of the world, and set up a new one, which would extend from the rising to the setting sun! the mind could see in it no relation between the *insignificant cause* and the *desired effect*:

They were to preach the Gospel to every creature—yet could speak no language but their provincial tongue.

They were to disciple all nations to Christ—yet every one of them had lately forsaken Him and fled.

They were to uproot the idolatries of earth—yet were themselves feeble and superstitious.

They were to overturn the skillfully wrought schemes of human philosophy—yet were themselves untaught in the schools.

They were to conquer the world to the scepter of Jesus—yet now shut themselves up in an upper room "for fear of the Jews."

Great names, literary honors, the patronage of kings, the favor of the people—they did not possess. to mortal view, it was the greatest absurdity—to commission poor, illiterate, unpolished men to convert the world, then just passing from the Augustan age of its glory, to the faith of the son of a carpenter in Nazareth, whom the Jews had cast out of their synagogues, and

the Romans crucified as a malefactor!

The Stoics, with Zeno at their head, had tried to reform the world, and failed. Socrates, and Plato, and the Academicians had attempted it, with no better success. Aristotle and the Peripatetic school had aimed at it, and met the same signal defeat. How preposterous, then, to send out eleven fishermen, craftsmen, and publicans—without books, without money, without arms, without popular favor—and expect them to succeed where the proudest wisdom and the loftiest philosophy had signally failed!

Such was the *small*, and, in its earthly appearances, *insignificant* aspect of the beginnings of the Christian religion. How like a grain of mustard seed in its *littleness* and *apparent worthlessness!* But from this "least of all seeds"—we turn to behold its *results* in the great tree, shooting out great branches, gathering the birds of the air under its shadow.

In warm climates, the mustard seed grows to an almost incredible size. The Jerusalem Talmud says, at Shichin there was a mustard stalk which had three branches, and one of them was cut down, and they covered a potter's booth with it. One of the Rabbis says: "I have one stalk of mustard seed in my field, and I go up to it as one goes up to the top of a fig-tree." Ovalle, in his travels in Chili, thus confirms the Scripture account: "The mustard plant," he says, "thrives so mightily in Chili, that it is as big as a man's arm, and so high and thick that it looks like a tree. I have traveled many leagues through groves which were taller than man and horse, and the birds build their nests in them, as the Gospel mentions." this happily illustrates the wondrous greatness into which the religion of Christ *grew* from its small and obscure beginnings.

The Apostles, in obedience to the Divine command, tarried at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. that power came in the descent

of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Then it was, that they began to preach "Jesus Christ and Him crucified—unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." and what was the **result**? Fifty days from the ascension of Jesus, three thousand were converted under the preaching of Peter. in less than three years, churches were gathered "throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria." in seven years, the Gospel was first published to the Gentiles; and in thirty years, Christianity had spread through the numerous districts of Asia Minor, Greece, southward to Egypt, and westward to Rome.

In a hundred years from the time of Christ, Justin Martyr, writing to the Emperor Adrian, declares: "There is not a nation, either Greek or Barbarian, or of any other name, even of those who wander in tribes and live in tents, among whom prayers are not offered to God the Father, in the name of the crucified Jesus." "We are but of yesterday," says Tertullian, writing a little later, "and have filled all places belonging to you. Your cities, islands, castles, towns, councils; your very camps, wards, companies; the palace, senate, forum; we have left you only your temples. should the numerous hosts of Christians retire from the empire, the loss of so many men, of all ranks and degrees, would make you stand aghast at your desolation." in the fourth century, Chrysostom declares, "The Apostles of Christ were twelve, and they gained the whole earth. If you go to India, to Scythia, to the uttermost parts of the world—you will everywhere find the doctrine of Christ enlightening the souls of men."

Such was the "great tree," "shooting out great branches," which sprung from the "grain of mustard seed!" History has nothing that can compare with it; it stands an **everlasting miracle** of the Most High God.

Eighteen hundred years have passed since the Apostles went forth from their upper room—how does the religion of Jesus stand now? Survey a map of the

world, and mark on it the countries most celebrated for law, order, civil and political rights—and there you will find the religion of Jesus. Point out on it the lands most noted for virtue and morality, for social blessings and individual happiness—and there you will find the religion of Jesus. Designate the places where learning is most encouraged, where the mind has wrought out its proudest triumphs, where intellect has scattered its richest treasures—and there you will find the religion of Jesus.

And why is this? Why is *civil* and *religious* liberty found only where the Bible is free? Why does *learning* flourish most under Gospel rule? Why is *society* the most elevated and refined where the tenets of God's word prevail? Why is all that is great, and good, and lofty, and inspiring in law, government, literature, science, art, and morality—are only found among the nations of Christendom; while all that is debasing in intellect, tyrannical in power, degraded in morals; whatever strips man of his glory, society of its safeguards, government of its virtue—are found where the religion of Jesus does not prevail?

Can we solve the problem on the principles of human philosophy? Gibbon tried it in his five celebrated reasons, but most signally failed. Can we explain it by the maxims of political science? Machiavel and Montesquieu, and Guizot and Bacon, each assert that its wondrous development is an anomaly in the government of the world. Can we match it by any parallel, in any country, of any religion, by any impostor? the voice of universal history answers, No! It stands alone, the wonder of the universe; the triumphal monument of Jesus, on the plains of a fallen humanity.

But its *present triumphs* are only a small part of its *final conquests*. Prophecy, reaching far into the future, has declared that "the islands shall wait for His law;" that "the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto

Him;" that "the Gentiles shall come to His light, and kings to the brightness of His rising;" that "all nations shall be blessed in Him;" and that "the whole earth shall be filled with His glory."

Thus that *grain of truth*, as small as a mustard seed, sown at Jerusalem by the Son of man—has grown up into a tree of life, "sending out its boughs unto the sea, and its branches unto the river."

Thus has it already gathered flocking nations under its shadow; and it shall *yet* increase, until "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ," and ...

the Herod-hunted child of Bethlehem,

the despised carpenter's son of Nazareth,

the hated teacher of Galilee,

the crucified malefactor of Pilate—

shall reign as the King of nations, as He now does King of saints!

The Leaven^(TOC)

Matthew 13:33

"He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of Heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."

Luke 13:20-21

"Again he asked, "What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."

Under this figure, borrowed from household economy, our Lord represents the **diffusive power** of His truth, when brought in contact with the human heart. In the parable of the Mustard Seed, He illustrated the outward, visible growth of Christianity in the sight of the world. Here, however, He brings out its increase and power in a new aspect—its **spreading** rather than its accretive property—its internal, penetrative, and diffusive energy, rather than its external outspreading and magnitude.

Yeast, or **leaven**—is a small piece of fermented dough, which, placed in a larger mass of meal or paste, produces fermentation, and thus, by the escape of the generated gas, diffuses a lightness, or, in technical phrase, raises the dough with which it was intermixed. The word is generally used in the Bible in a bad sense; and, accordingly, there have not lacked interpreters, who, saying with Cyril, that "yeast, in the inspired writings, is always taken as the

type of sin," have contended that the design of its use here was to indicate the damnable heresies and corruptions which would ferment in and adulterate the Church, puffing it up with vain delusions, and eventually making it a mass of apostasy and crime.

This, however, is a forcing of language beyond its legitimate construction. The character of the parable, viewed in its contexts, is against such interpretation; and we hence regard the word yeast as used here in an exceptional sense to its ordinary employment—our attention being directed, not to its fermenting and puffing up properties—but to its *penetrative* and *diffusive* powers, by which the whole mass in which it is hidden soon partakes of its own nature. Using the figure, therefore, in a *good* sense, it illustrates, in a forcible manner, the *work of grace*—first in the individual heart, then in the great mass of humanity.

It is the property of grace to change the whole soul into its own likeness. The incipient operation of the Holy Spirit may be as small and apparently as insignificant as a little piece of yeast; but once hidden in the heart—it will work little by little, until the man becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. The principle of holiness, of love, of faith, of godly sorrow, or any other which is wrought by the Holy Spirit—cannot remain inactive in the heart. The moment that any of them are introduced there—there begins a commotion, an inward struggle for ascendancy between the new principle of grace and the old principles of sin, which is continued even until death. As sin and holiness cannot commingle—they necessarily antagonize: one must displace the other—they cannot co-exist in the same heart with the same power.

The heart, however, is by nature depraved; it is preoccupied with evil; it is, in the words of Scripture, "full of iniquity," and sin has so blinded its perceptive powers, and hardened its sensibilities, and perverted its judgment, that it now

"calls evil good—and good evil," loves its present depraved condition, "and rejoices in iniquity." the **character** of God is not loved, the **Son** of God is not loved, the **law** of God is not loved, the **word** of God is not loved; nothing pertaining to God is an object of regard; He is not in their thoughts; they "desire not a knowledge of His ways."

But as soon as the Holy Spirit infuses into that heart, as **vile** as it is, and **dead** as it is in trespasses and sin—the first element of holy love, there begins a change there, which, working silently, gradually, yet effectively—will soon **leaven** the soul with the power of Divine grace.

One by one, the old sinful affections and passions of the soul become eradicated or changed.

The things in which the man once took **supreme delight**—now afford no joy.

The **emotions** which he once cherished—are now uncultivated.

The **plans** which once absorbed his energies—are now neglected.

The **passions** which once were rampant in his breast—are now tamed.

The **desires** which once engrossed his thoughts—are now viewed with disgust.

The things which he formerly **hated** and **shunned**—communion with God, love to Christ, delight in the Sacred Scriptures, the cultivation of holiness of life, the walking by faith and growing in grace—are now sought for and cultivated with assiduity and delight!

Grace is completely **transforming** in its nature and power. It causes everyone whom it visits—to wear its own likeness, and grow up into its own image! and when it once **begins** its work, though its **progress** may be slow, it will

nevertheless go on unto perfection, not resting until Christ is formed in the soul the hope of glory.

It is perhaps important to a right understanding of this truth, that we should distinguish here between *regeneration* and *sanctification*. Both, indeed, are the work of the same Holy Spirit, and therefore too often confounded—though in reality quite distinct.

Spiritual regeneration, or that new birth of the soul, so emphatically taught by our Lord in His discourse with Nicodemus—is the work of the Spirit of God, by which He causes the rebellion of the heart to cease, and the sinner to yield himself as a humble servant of Jesus Christ. this act of faith, whereby the penitent lays hold on the Savior as "the hope set before him in the Gospel," is the work of a *moment*. Up to a certain time, He was a transgressor and an unbeliever. Then the *Holy Spirit* visits his soul ...

opens to him a view of his sins;

points him to the Lamb of God;

makes him hear the thunders of Sinai;

holds up before him the sacrifice of Calvary;

melts him with the displays of love;

woos him with the invitings of grace;

warns him with the threatenings of the law;

and, under the influence of one or more of these—he is led to break off from his sins, to repent, and to believe on the Lord Jesus; and the turning point is on the hinge of a single moment.

There may be long and tedious processes of thought gone through before reaching that point; but when reached, the act of submission, of belief, of embracing Christ—is the act of a moment, and not a lengthened, tedious operation.

Nor does it follow from this that all are able to date the hour when they were born again; for they may have been so carefully trained in youth, and so gradually led to Jesus, that it would be impossible for them to discriminate the time when He first became precious to their souls. But, as they were **born** once in nature—and now are **born** again in the Spirit. As they were once enemies of Christ—they are now His friends. As they were once exposed to Divine wrath—they are now freed from condemnation. and as, when they were not in one of these states, they must have been in the other, because there is no **middle** path.

It follows, even in the case of those who are unable to mark the exact time of their conversion, that their change, or regeneration, was effected by the Holy Spirit in an **instant** of time. All the examples of conversion in the Bible, all the terms and phrases which designate this change, and the experience of each believer, confirm this statement. Regeneration, then, is that work of the Holy Spirit, whereby there is begotten in the soul an entirely new principle of spiritual life, so that henceforth the man lives, "not unto himself—but unto Him who loved him and gave himself for him!" and so radical and thorough is this change, that the recipient of it is with truth said to be "a new creature in Christ Jesus," in whom "old things have passed away," and with whom "all things have become new."

The Hidden Treasure^(TOC)

Matthew 13:44

*"The kingdom of Heaven is like **treasure hidden** in a field.
When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went
and sold all he had and bought that field!"*

There are no less than seven parables in this thirteenth chapter of Matthew. They cluster together like stars in a constellation, forming, in the firmament of truth, a parabolic Pleiades. The first four were spoken in the hearing of the multitude by the sea-shore. But after Jesus had sent the people away, and "went into the house," He first, at the request of His immediate disciples, unfolded the parable of the Weeds of the Field, and then proceeded to speak three more parables, of which that under consideration was the first.

In the earlier parables, our Lord had spoken of Christianity in its **general** aspects and effects. He now brings it down to the **personal** needs of each individual, showing that it is not merely to be observed and admired at a distance; that it is not a thing about which we may or may not be interested without involving any moral consequences—but is, on the contrary, a matter of **intense personal importance**—that which each one must possess or lose his soul.

"The kingdom of Heaven," says our Lord, "is like a treasure hidden in a field." the **value** of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ does not lie upon the **surface**. It is indeed a treasure of great worth, even when regarded only in its historic or its literary aspect; as illustrating ancient

manners and customs, as enforcing certain moral precepts, as exhibiting much rhetorical elegance and power. Hence, we often find the Bible prized and lauded by those who are not animated by its spirit. Poets, philosophers, statesmen, heroes, magistrates of highest name, have rendered profound praise to the inspired writings, who, nevertheless, "received not the truth in the *love* of it," and did not become "new creatures in Christ Jesus."

The reason of their commendation is obvious. There are in the Bible ... such pages of history, such strains of poetry, such teachings of wisdom, such maxims of state policy, such illustrious deeds of valor, such profound principles of eternal and universal law—that even the prejudiced infidel has been forced to concede their merit; so that throughout Christendom the Bible has established itself, not only as the great *moral* classic of the world—but *Art* finds in its scenes its sublimest subjects, and *Science* acknowledges it as her loftiest standard.

All this, however, is not the particular value here alluded to. The Gospel has a *deeper worth* than what is thus patent and generally acknowledged; its real preciousness lies in its spiritual blessings, by which it imparts to the soul "durable riches and honor."

The blessedness of its *faith*, by which the soul is united to Jesus Christ; the *peace*, "passing all understanding," which it imparts to the heart; the "*joy* unspeakable" with which it ravishes the inner man; the "*hope* that makes not ashamed," pointing the drooping spirit to its bright inheritance in Heaven; the abundant supplies of *grace* through the manifold gifts of the Holy Spirit,

which are bestowed upon the prayerful seekers for the Divine favor—these are some of the *inestimable blessings* which constitute the riches of this "treasure hid in a field." He who admires the Bible because of its external excellencies, admires, indeed, a most rare and costly casket—but he knows nothing of what the casket contains! It is only the man of faith, who, with the *key of prayer*, unlocks this casket—who truly beholds the treasure, and understands its value.

There was, therefore, great propriety in Christ making this treasure to lie *hidden* in a field; and this he could the more naturally do, because in Eastern countries, where there are no banks, or safe places of public deposit, and where, owing to the despotism of the rulers, or the relaxed state of society, property is unsafe—it is not uncommon for people to make deposits of their treasures in the *ground*, selecting obscure and unattractive places, and there hiding them away. and as, in the convulsions which so often shake oriental nations, the owner of such a treasure might be cut off before he could have time to designate its locality to his friends or family—so, the secret dying with him, it would perhaps a long while continue there until by accident it was discovered.

The parable brings before us just this case. a person has by chance discovered concealed treasure; he sees enough to know that it is there, and that it is very valuable; but yet, respecting the law which made all that was in the earth the property of its owner—he seeks to buy the field at its assumed value, keeping all the while the secret to himself, as a piece of knowledge to which he had exclusive right by reason of his exclusive discovery. Paying to the owner of the field the full price that he asks, the finder "sells all that he has," and buys the field, knowing that the treasure hidden there will remunerate all his outlays, and make him rich for life.

Two points are to be noted here:

The Discovery of this Treasure

The man who found it was *not expecting* or *seeking* it. He did not know of its existence; it was by the merest accident that he stumbled upon it; he may have been examining the field for the purpose of ascertaining the quality of its soil, the nature of its situation, or its agricultural capabilities, and while thus engaged, some fortuitous event brought him to the spot of concealment, and directed him to its hidden treasure.

Here, we think, lies the *distinction* between this parable and the following one. In that, the merchant was on the search for goodly pearls; it was his set aim and business; here, however, there was no seeking for hid treasure until chance brought it to his notice.

Thus is it often with men in spiritual matters. From the force of early habit, or because of the propriety of the thing, or from motives of a literary or secular character, some may be daily reading God's Word, intent on giving breadth and vigor to their minds—but neither seeking nor caring for its buried treasure. They are looking at the Bible in every light but its true one, and seeking in it every blessing but that which is spiritual. While thus engaged, the Holy Spirit opens the eyes of their understanding to perceive that, which by nature they cannot know, and lo! they behold glimpses of a hidden treasure, which at once awakens joy and excites increased desires after a deeper and more *experimental knowledge* of God's blessed Word. When the soul is thus wrought upon by the Holy Spirit—everything is changed. The field of Scripture, in which this precious treasure has so long been hidden, now becomes, in his estimation, of *infinite value*. It is that ... which puts him in possession of *salvation* and *eternal life*,

which makes him an *heir of God*, and
which gives him the *riches of Divine grace for time and for eternity!*

For the discovery of this, he is not indebted to the research or acumen of his own powers—for by no intellectual effort could these hidden treasures be brought to light, but to the Holy Spirit, who gave him that spiritual discernment and spiritual taste, by which he was enabled to discover and appreciate the peculiar blessings of grace as they lie concealed from the natural eye and the carnal mind. Such is the cause of the man's discovering the treasure.

Value he puts upon this treasure

This brings us to the second point, namely—the *value* which he puts upon this treasure.

In the parable it is said, that, "in his *joy*," the man "goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field." this is precisely the feeling of the finder of Divine grace. in the joy of his discovery, he is ready to renounce everything of an earthly nature that conflicts with his possessing it, and would willingly part with that which the world most highly esteems, that he may gain it as his own.

Such was the feeling of Paul. As a member of the Jewish community, and observing rigidly its Levitical observances, he had, at one time, to use his own language, great "confidence in the flesh," that is, great reliance on his own self-righteousness, a trusting for salvation to his rigid Phariseism; but, when he was arrested on his persecuting journey, and made to see the truth as it is in Jesus, when the scales had fallen from his eyes, and he beheld the long-hidden treasure before him—then he quickly abandoned all that he held

most dear, saying, "But whatever was to my profit—I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss—compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish—that I may gain Christ and be found in him. I want to know Christ!"

This is the very spirit of the man finding the hidden treasure. He puts upon it, its true value; he estimates everything else as comparatively worthless; he feels the force of the Savior's assertion, "He who loves father or mother more than me—is not worthy of me;" and that if we would be His disciples, we must "forsake all and follow him." And, in the spirit of these injunctions, he is ready to give up everything which impedes his progress in the Divine life, or that conflicts with his getting possession of these hidden treasures of the Gospel.

The first aim of life, now, is to be "rich towards God;" to obtain that *soul-wealth* which consists in faith, and love, and joy, and peace in the Lord Jesus; to receive within himself "the pledge of his inheritance." Whatever pursuit formerly engrossed his mind—is now abandoned, or made subservient to his new aim. Whatever passions ruled in his soul, and led him captive—are now mastered or made to do willing service to his Redeemer. He no longer "lives unto himself," but unto Him who loved him, and gave Himself for him!

It is-impossible to put too high an estimate on this Gospel treasure. in whatever light we regard it, whether in itself, as an emanation from God; or in its effects, as renewing the soul, and making it fit for the inheritance of the saints in light—it is of priceless value!

In comparison with it, those things which the world most prizes, and after which men most strive—are as worthless dross! They have lost their

accustomed place in his thoughts. He has found nobler riches; and he will part with all that earth can give him, though it could multiply its gifts a thousandfold, that he may gain this priceless treasure—the salvation of his soul.

We can never estimate spiritual blessings *above* their real value. In truth, we can never give them their *true* worth—we always underrate them, because we do not and cannot now see the full blessedness and glory which they contain. So much of the Christian's happiness lies in the eternal world, and so large a portion of it is revealed under figures which the mind can scarcely comprehend—that we completely fail in estimating their worth.

The pleasures of the world we always set down at too high a figure; they ever appear in *inflated* magnitude and unreal importance. But the pleasures of true religion are always set too low. The world, the flesh, and the devil aim to depreciate their value, by ...
distorting their character,
maligning their influence,
and perverting their power.

But it will all be of no avail, to him who has truly found Christ. To all such "Christ is precious," "the Chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely one." His soul finds its full joy and delight in Him. Christ is formed within him, as the hope of glory; his heart has become a temple of the Holy Spirit; his life is hid with Christ in God; and, walking in faith, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, constant in prayer—he moves on through life without any fear of the future, knowing that, when the earthly house of his tabernacle is dissolved, "he has a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!"

The Pearl of Great Price^(TOC)

Matthew 13:45-46

"Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."

The ***difference*** between this parable and the one of "The Hidden Treasure" seems to lie in this: that in the latter, the man came upon the treasure unexpectedly, when he was neither thinking of nor looking for such a thing; while in the parable of the Pearl, the merchant is seeking after the pearls, and has made it his business and his care to secure the very articles which he most desires.

The two parables, therefore, furnish us with ***types of two different characters***: the man who, Paul-like, is arrested by the Holy Spirit and made to discover the hid treasure when he was neither seeking nor expecting it.

And secondly, those who, Berean-like, are "searching the Scriptures daily," that they may gather thence the pearls of grace and truth.

The character of the first we have already considered, and we confine ourselves now to a brief delineation of the latter.

The "merchant" in the parable was "seeking fine pearls." that was the object of his daily care and labor. Ordinary pearls would not answer, they must be "fine pearls, of great value." These were the object of anxious pursuit, because upon obtaining them rested his reputation as a pearl dealer, as well as

his profits from their sale. in his diligent search, he is rewarded by discovering one "of great value," and such was its size, and perfection, that to obtain it—he sold out all the fine ones hitherto collected, and embarked his whole fortune in this one pearl, knowing, from the estimation in which the pearl was held by oriental princes, and the enormous prices which were paid for large, round, smooth, and unclouded ones—that he would be able to command greater gains by the sale of this single pearl of great value, than from all the pearls of inferior value, however "fine" they might be.

We occasionally meet with people who have, like **Timothy**, been carefully instructed in the Scriptures "from a child;" or who, like **Samuel**, have early been impressed with Divine truth, and who, possessing earnest and inquiring minds, anxiously seek for that which will satisfy and comfort the soul. They deliberately set themselves to seek the truth; they are not careless and ignorant people—but of meditative minds, of tender consciences, of craving souls, who believe that there are "fine pearls" of grace to be found in God's Word, and who diligently seek them—while at the same time they have such defective views of the character of Christ as to make them rest short of that single-hearted faith in Him which alone secures salvation.

There is a **moral twilight** as well as a natural one; and many there are in this twilight state, who, like the man when half healed by Jesus of his blindness, "see men as trees walking." They have **glimmerings** of the truth—but have not got clear and distinct views of it; they see it looming up amidst partial darkness—but not standing out sharp and clear in outline against a noontday sky. Such people are apt, with a great deal that is true, to **mix** up deadly errors. They seek to augment their own righteousness; they bring in their own morality as a ground of salvation; they wish to **do** something which shall merit God's favor; they seek to blend their work with Christ's perfect and

finished work, and thus make a joint stock of their redemption. They lean perhaps too heavily upon rites and ceremonies, upon sacraments and ordinances: all "pearls" in themselves—but not to be trusted or counted of value in comparison to the "one pearl of great price."

No matter, however, with what defective views a person comes to the Word of God, if he approaches it with a *sincere desire* to know God's will and do it; if there is a *moral honesty* about him, that will not let him rest until he find the truth—then God will meet him in His Word, and reveal Himself to his mind, and cause him to find in Jesus Christ and the plan of salvation that rests on His precious death and sacrifice, the "pearl of great price." for Christ declares, "He who does the will of God, shall know of the doctrine whether it is from God;" and the promise of God is, "You shall find me—when you seek me with all your heart."

When such people behold this pearl of great price—then are their eyes opened by the Holy Spirit to behold its excellency and value. They are seized with a *quenchless desire to possess it!* Their former discoveries in truth, on theories of religion, in which, as "pearls," they long traded and delighted—now appear in their real worthlessness! And, willing to sell off that which they have hitherto obtained, they venture their *eternal all* upon this Pearl of great price. Nothing now will satisfy the soul of the true believer, but Christ! He must possess Christ! He must make Him his own by a living, personal, appropriating faith! Thus is he made to "put on Christ," to be "conformed to His image," and to rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

It matters not what *pearls* we may possess—pearls of *morality*, or *virtue*, or *education*, or fine *culture*—if we have not Christ, they are *valueless* for all the purposes of salvation; while he who has found Christ, has found that which swallows up all lesser pearls, in its priceless excellence and perfect

beauty!

We are taught by these parables that we must make every sacrifice, in order to obtain the rich blessings that are found in the Lord Jesus. to this duty, we are urged by every consideration that can sway human conduct; and he is derelict to every duty to God and to his own soul who, when Christ is set before him as his Redeemer, fails to go to Him as such, and to secure from Him the pardon and the peace which He alone can bestow.

It is a matter of wonder and adoring gratitude, that God condescends to put within our reach, so unspeakable a gift. He was under no *necessity* to save us. But Christ loved us even when we were sinners, and by offering Himself to satisfy the demands of justice—was enabled to effect our ransom, and yet preserve unimpaired the attributes of the Most High God. For, on Calvary, "mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace embraced each other."

Since **God** then has given us this Pearl of Great Price, since **Christ** offers himself to us in all the fullness of His redeeming and mediatorial efficacy; since the **Holy Spirit** pleads with us to accept His overtures of grace, and "buy the truth and sell it not," buy it "without money and without price"—then ought not we, for whom this rich provision is made, to renounce everything on which we lean, or in which we trust, that we may obtain this hidden treasure of the Gospel, and possess for ourselves this Pearl of Great Price?

The Draw-Net^(TOC)

Matthew 13:47-50

*"Once again, the kingdom of Heaven is like a **net** that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. this is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!"*

While the parable of "The Weeds" illustrated the fact that there is, and will be until the end of the world, an *intermixture* of good and evil in the field of the Church—the parable of "The Draw-Net" is evidently designed to show the *final separation* that shall take place in God's appointed time.

While our Lord has so constructed some of his parables as that their unfolding should elucidate nearly all the great doctrines of religion—he has, in the lavishness of his instruction, uttered many others, designed to set forth single, elemental truths; even though several of them may seem to repeat the same ideas, or overlap each other in their covering of the same ground.

Thus, we can easily draw out from the parable of the *Weeds*, all the instruction contained in the parable of the *Net*. But Christ, wishing to fix its especial point upon the minds and hearts of his auditors; or because many of his hearers would better understand a figure drawn from the *fisherman's* life

than the *farmer's* field, and acting also upon the prophetic injunction, that "precept must be upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little"—uttered yet another similitude, and made the draw-net of the Capernaum fisherman, as well as the field of the Galilean gardener—illustrate the character of his Church here, and the *separations* that shall take place in it at the end of the world.

The figure which is at present before us is that of a *draw-net*. this is a large net, one edge which is provided with *sinkers*, and the other with *floats*. It hangs vertically in the water, and when its ends are brought together or drawn ashore, encloses the fish. this operation is familiar to all who live by the sea-side, or upon lakes, and needs no further explanation.

When we remember that most of our Savior's disciples, to whom this parable was more immediately addressed, were fishermen, and that He had called several of His Apostles from "casting their net into the sea," to become "fishers of men"—we discern a force and directness in this similitude which they could not fail to appreciate.

The point of special interest in this parable is, the ultimate *separation* that shall take place between the common occupants of this net, when it is drawn to land.

By the *draw-net* is represented the Church; by the *fish*, the members of that Church; and in this net are enclosed all kinds of fish, both "good and bad;" showing, as in the parable of the Weeds, the *mixture* of sound and unsound professors in Christ's earthly kingdom.

Concerning this fact we need neither argue nor speculate. It is a revealed and an experimental truth, notorious even to human observation, much more so to Him, "who searches the thoughts and tries the hearts of men."

Into the ***net of the Church*** were "all kinds of fish," even as in the parable of the Marriage of the King's Son—the "servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all, as many as they found, both bad and good."

Just so, the Gospel is preached to all classes and conditions of men; and some from each of these, ***professedly*** obey the call, and unite themselves to the visible Church. this state of things continues as long as the net is in the sea; but, when it is full, when God's purposes, in reference to his earthly Church, shall be completed—then will it be "drawn to shore"—the shore of ***eternity***; and there, under the eye of God, shall "the good be gathered into baskets," and "the bad shall be thrown away."

There is a time coming, when the mixture of lost and saved, which now pertains to the Church shall be done away—when the sound and faithful professors of Christ's religion shall be delivered from the presence of the evil disciples, by whom their righteous souls have been so long vexed; when, separated from all evil ***in*** themselves and ***around*** themselves, they shall be, in their finite capacity—as holy as God is holy. and when the wicked, severed from the holy, shall be consigned to their merited doom.

Separation in the contents of the Gospel net

The ***character of God*** requires this final separation in the contents of the Gospel net!

This ***separation*** will be necessary on the part of God, in order to vindicate his justice. It is said of Him, "Righteousness and justice are the ***foundation*** of His throne." this justice requires that the ***penalties***, as well as the ***rewards*** of His law—should be vigorously rendered. The penalties of the law against

transgressors are very stringent and severe; and not to inflict them would be to dishonor that law, both in its enactments and sanctions, and to falsify every attribute of the Divine character. should God fail to punish the breakers of His law—He would not be just to Himself, His statutes, or His creatures. He proclaims Himself repeatedly a "God of justice!" How could He be so, unless He sustained the penalties which He has denounced against sin? He has declared again and again, that His "law is holy," and His "commandment is holy, and just, and good;" and that He will uphold it in its letter and spirit, in its length and breadth. But how can He do this, if He relaxes the *sanctions* by which it is enacted, and the *penal clauses* by which it is guarded? He has declared that He "will by no means clear the guilty." the *conscience* that He has put within His creatures, tells them that they have fully incurred the displeasure of their God, and deserve His reprobation: and He must fulfill His righteous threatenings.

It would not be just in a human lawgiver, to make a stringent law, and annex to its infraction severe penalties—and yet never design that they should be carried out! this would be a mockery of justice, and a deliberate insult to the majesty of law. Nor would it be just for human laws to take no cognisance of criminals, to permit crime to go unpunished—and, by withdrawing the penalties due to the guilty, virtually exempt guilt from punishment, and place it on the same legal level with obedience and goodness! Better have no law; better give up a community to the workings of the individual passions of its members—permitting each to "walk in the light of his own eyes, and after the counsel of his own heart;" than to allow a law to be made null—and then void by stripping it of its sanctions, and taking from it its punitive and coercive power.

Justice requires that *human* laws should be *enforced*; the well-being of

society is indissolubly blended with their administration; and if justice speaks with an uncertain voice, or with a *fickle* voice, or with a *partial* voice, or if it is silent—then society is torn asunder limb from limb, and the body politic lies a mangled and bleeding corpse at the feet of anarchy and crime! Much more, then, is it necessary that **God's** law should be sustained, and that His justice should stand out in clear and full outline, in the sight of the universe.

But the *truth* of God, as well as His *justice*—requires this final separation between the good and the bad. He has said that it would take place—His veracity is at stake upon the issue. But that God should falsify His word, that He should fail to *do* what He has *said* He would do—cannot for a moment be entertained by those who believe Him to be "a God of Truth," "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

The plain declaration of the Most High God is, "The wicked shall be turned into Hell—and all the nations that forget God!" "The soul that sins—it shall surely die." "There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked." These, with many others of similar import, are the positive assurances of God. and hence, as "God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that He should repent," so will He do what His truth has pledged Him to do, namely, "Separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!"

The holiness of God also demands this eventual separation. So exalted and indescribable is this attribute of the Almighty, that we seem to *sully* it, even by speaking of it. We can scarcely talk of it without our very breath staining its glory; for all *our* ideas of holiness consist in the relative freedom of a person from sin, and in proportion to the sinlessness of anyone, is his holiness—a state of sin being the stand-point from which we judge, because we are only conversant with a world of sin.

Perfect, essential, self-existent holiness, such as belongs to God, surpasses our comprehension. a holiness that has no relation to sin, because it existed before sin—a holiness that can be measured by no standard, because itself overtops every standard; a holiness so **holy** that even the **heavens** "are not clean in His sight," so **pure** that "He covers himself with light as with a garment," so **magnificent** that "He charges even His **angels** with folly," so **resplendent** that it fills all Heaven with its effulgence, and so **ravishing** that the celestial harpers make it the theme of their chants as they fall down before Him, veiling their faces with their wings, as they cry, "**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!**"

Such a holiness is as much above our conception—as are the ideas of **eternity** or **infinitude**. When we can depict the **sun** in mid-day luster with the colors of the painter's pallet; when we can measure the outer limits of **space** with the telescope—then perhaps may we be able, with the instrumentalities of earth-born words, to convey an adequate idea of the holiness of Jehovah.

God's holiness is a subject which we shall ever study—and in which we shall never weary. But to know it in its fullness, to comprehend it in its infinitude—cannot be done by any created mind!

God's holiness, so ineffably glorious—demands the **severance** of the wicked from the good. The God who possesses it "cannot look upon sin but with abhorrence," and has declared that nothing unclean shall come into His holy habitation; that into it "nothing shall enter that defiles or makes a lie;" that only "the **pure in heart** shall see God." Consequently there must be a **dividing** process when the net of the Church, now enclosing good and bad fish, shall be drawn to **shore**—the shore of eternity.

In like manner, we might show that **each** of the attributes of God requires this

separation in the visible Church. But it need not be dwelt on now, because, if even one attribute required such a separation, that would be enough; for God's character is not made up of diverse and opposing elements—but is a moral unit, and each attribute so *harmonizes* with the others—as that a violence done to one—is done to all; and that which is requisite to the integrity or upholding of one attribute—is equally necessary to the maintenance of every other perfection of the Divine Being.

For the happiness and perfection of His believing people

Leaving, therefore, the point which we think has been so clearly established, namely, that the *character of God requires this final separation in the contents of the Gospel net*; we further remark, that *this separation is necessary also, to the happiness and perfection of His believing people*. The condition of true Christians in the *visible* Church is one of *mingled joy and sorrow*. They have indeed great cause for *rejoicing*; they have sources of *pleasure*, Divine alike in their origin and their comfort; they have a *hope* "that makes not ashamed;" they have a *peace* "that passes understanding;" there is "no condemnation" for them, because their lives are "hidden with Christ in God." And, in view of the assaults of their last enemy, *death*—they are enabled to exclaim, "Thanks be unto God, who gives us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

Yet, at the same time, it must be confessed that what the Apostle said is strictly true, "if in this life only we have hope—we are of all men most miserable." the very fact that we have been renewed in the temper and disposition of our minds, that we have been born again of the Holy Spirit, that old things have passed away and that all things have become new—only

makes us realize more vividly our sad condition, to be thus dwellers in an ungodly world, and to be thus of necessity so mixed up with sin and corruption and unbelief in the walks of daily life.

The true Christian finds everything around him antagonistic to his thoughts and feelings.

He loves Christ supremely—the world hates Him supremely.

He delights to do God's will—the world revels in its disobedience.

His heart is set on heavenly and Divine things—"the heart of men is fully set in them to do evil."

He longs for a release from a place where his soul, like that of righteous Lot, "is vexed with the filthy lives of the wicked!"

He is daily pained at the manifestations of sin and unbelief.

He mourns at the spiritual destitution of his fellow men, and at the rampant evils which rear themselves unbridled, and devour the vitals of society with rapacity!

Sin meets his eye wherever he turns!

In the ***Church***, he sees hypocrisy, formality, self-righteousness, censoriousness, lukewarmness, and backsliding.

In the ***family***, he finds peevishness, ill temper, discord, variance, strifes, evil surmisings, and positive hatred.

In the ***state***, he perceives crimes of every sort and hue, the decalogue broken in each one of its commandments, and iniquity restrained only by the strong right arm of law.

In ***business***, he is made to witness fraud, greed, deceptions, lying!

So that, look where he will, he is constrained to say with the Psalmist, "***Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!***"

We are ever made to feel that we are in an enemy's country; that here, as the

Patriarchs confessed, "we have no abiding city—but we seek one to come;" that "we who are in tabernacles of flesh do groan, being burdened"—burdened with the remaining corruption of our own hearts; burdened with our daily short-comings and omissions of duty; burdened with our positive transgressions; burdened with our often infirmities; and burdened with seeing and hearing the ungodliness which surrounds us, and which is ever crying to Heaven for vengeance.

Such being our condition, it follows that we need deliverance from this state of trial, that we may be brought out "into the glorious liberty of the children of God." As this is a world of probation, we do not expect that this *separation* of good and bad will take place here, for it would cease to be probation were all sin and temptation removed from our path. But must such a mixture *always* exist? No! a time of deliverance is at hand; the year of release draws near; and before long the trumpet of Jubilee, proclaiming that "the acceptable year of the Lord" shall come—it shall ring out its silver notes of freedom and of rest. God loves us, and will not always allow us to be overborne by the wicked and evil world. He has thoughts of mercy towards us, and hence will keep us in tribulation only for a little season. His gracious words are, "Though you have lain among the pots—yet shall you be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

Therefore, "look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draws near!" His gracious purposes in keeping us in the *furnace of affliction* being accomplished—we shall be removed thence, having our *dross* purged away, and shall come out as fine gold, fit for the master's use. Then shall His suffering people be made joyful in the Lord! They shall be *separated* from whatever has annoyed and troubled them here, and manifesting themselves in

their true character, as "children of light and of the day." They "shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

It is necessary, then, to the felicity of His saints, to the full development of Divine grace in the soul, and to the accomplishment of God's purposes in their election and regeneration—that there should be a sending forth of angels "at the end of the world," to "separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!" Reason and revelation assent to and confirm this truth. It is the hope of the Christian, as he takes his *weary pilgrim steps* towards the Celestial City; and it is the joy of the dying believer, as he puts off this tabernacle of clay, and looks forward to the *mansion of rest*, "into which nothing shall enter that defiles, or makes a lie."

It is remarkable that in this parable our Lord does not say what will become of the righteous, after they are gathered "into baskets," though He tells us what will become of the wicked; as if the parable was uttered more for *warning* to the evil professors—than for encouragement to the faithful. In the parable of the Weeds, indeed, He has told us that, after the *separation* there spoken of, "the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father;" and as the righteous are one and the same class in each parable, so we infer that all those who, out of the Gospel net, are gathered "into vessels," will enjoy a felicity and glory surpassing human conception, and only to be represented to the human mind by comparing them to *suns*, shining in full-orbed glory in the firmament of Heaven.

Most fearful, however, are the words which indicate the course of justice upon the wicked. "The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!" this is the same punishment that was to be inflicted

upon the children of the wicked one in the parable of the Weeds.

It cannot escape the notice of the Bible reader, how frequently the element of *fire* is made to act a part in the *punishment* of the ungodly. Whether those numerous passages in which this idea is brought out are to be taken literally, so that we are to learn thereby that the wicked, after the resurrection, shall indeed dwell with everlasting burnings; that the quenchless flames of material fire shall ever wrap themselves about their guilty yet unconsumable bodies, causing them to gnash their teeth for pain, and wail for anguish—is not for us to assert or deny. One thing is certain, that, by the use of such language, God designs that we should gather the most *frightening and horrific idea of woe*, of which it is possible for the human mind to conceive; that we should understand by this, the *intensity* and *unbearableness* of the doom which will be visited upon the ungodly, and that this punishment shall never end; for all who love not the Lord Jesus Christ shall be cast into Hell, "where their *worm* never dies, and their *fire* is never quenched!"

This is the idea that we should ever keep in mind—that there is reserved for the unbelieving an anguish of spirit, which in its inflicted sorrows shall be, like furnace fire, ever preying upon—yet never consuming, its undying victim! the warning is boldly, fully given. There is no deception about its *nature* or its *duration*. The Bible holds it up before men in full view, and writes it out in such frequently repeated and magnified letters, as that "he may read, that runs;" so that men are left without excuse, if, in spite of remonstrance, and invitation, and appeal, and the pleadings of mercy, and the overtures of grace—they deliberately go down, step by step, to that *woe* which is emphatically expressed by being "cast into the furnace of fire," where "there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth!"

The Unmerciful Servant^(TOC)

Matthew 18:21-35

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"

Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

"Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

"The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' the servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

"But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded.

"His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'

"But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed

and went and told their master everything that had happened. "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' in anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless—you forgive your brother from your heart."

This parable, which Porteus says "is one of the most interesting and affecting that is to be found either in Scripture or in any of the most admired writers of antiquity," was drawn from our Savior by the inquiry of Peter: "Lord, how many times shall I **forgive** my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"

In a conversation with his disciples just before, our Lord had directed what course to pursue in reference to a brother who sins against you, and in what way to seek redress of our grievances. The subject arrested the attention of Peter. The duties enjoined and the precepts delivered by Christ, were new, striking, important. Peter was anxious for more information, and for some specific rule. He knew, doubtless, that the rabbinical law of forgiveness said, that "three offences were to be remitted—but not the fourth," and putting what, perhaps, he supposed an extreme case, he asks if he shall forgive his brother "Up to seven times?" thus more than doubling the number which the Talmud required him to pardon.

To this question Christ promptly answers, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times;" thus inculcating a **breadth of forgiveness** widely removed from the narrow law of the Rabbis on the one hand, or the **supposed liberality** of Peter on the other.

But our Lord did not design to affix any *definite limit* to the number of offences which it was our duty to forgive. *Seven*, as is well known, was, among the Hebrews, a number representing *perfection*, and therefore is frequently used in the Scriptures to denote frequency, fullness, multitude; so that, to forgive "seven times" means to forgive many times—but to forgive "seventy-seven" expresses the full and perfect forgiveness which should be manifested towards all offenders.

Here, then, was the utterance of a great and heaven-born principle—the *unlimited forgiveness of injuries!* And to illustrate this principle on a scale commensurate with its real greatness, our Lord related the parable of "*The Unmerciful Servant.*"

In this parable "a certain king" is represented as taking "account of his servants," or fiscal managers, to whom were committed the farming and collecting of his royal revenues. He had scarcely "begun to reckon," before his attention was drawn to one who "owed him ten thousand talents." When he "was brought unto him," it was found that he had nothing with which to pay, being hopelessly bankrupt. He was evidently a tributary prince or treasurer, in whose custody were placed the revenues of the realm, and who had abused the confidence of the king by appropriating to himself "ten thousand talents." this amount, even taking the talent at its lowest value, was more than equal to the enormous sum of fifteen million dollars, and evinces, at once, the elevated dignity to which this servant of the king was raised, and the boldness of the embezzlement which he attempted on the royal treasury.

Confessing his inability to pay, the king, termed here "his master," because, in those countries, all subjects, from the lowest to the highest, were the virtually *owned* servants of the monarch, "commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made." this

severe penalty for *insolvency* was one often used in the East, as is testified to by sacred and profane writers; and, even in the Roman law, wife and children being part of the father's possessions, were sold with him into slavery, when he could not pay his debts.

As soon, however, as he learns the order of his king, and knowing the miserable servitude into which it will plunge him—an abasement, the more galling because of the height from which he fell—he falls down, and, in oriental fashion, "worships him"—prostrating himself upon his face before him—"saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will payback everything!" Touched with the *abject misery* of the suppliant, and feeling in his own heart the relentings of compassion—the king orders his fettered prisoner to be loosed; revoked the sentence which consigned him to the auction-mart of the slave; restored to him his wife, his children, his goods; and "forgave him the debt."

What a sense of relief must that wretched criminal have experienced as the word "forgive" fell upon his ear! What a change in his condition—from a prostrate, condemned beggar, ordered out for sale, with his wife and children—to freedom, wealth, and happiness!

Yet his subsequent conduct proved how unworthy he was of this royal clemency; for, as the sacred narrative leads us to infer, he had scarcely gone out from the presence of his king, relieved of his extreme debt, when he met "one of his fellow servants," who "owed him a hundred denarii," or about fifteen dollars. But, instead of being softened by the *mercy* which he had experienced—he lays violent hands on him, and "took him by the throat, saying, Pay back what you owe me!"

The action of prostration, the plea for patience, and the promise eventually to

pay all, which he had just made to his king—is now made by his fellow servant to himself. There is an identity of act and language, in order to give greater force to the unforgiving nature of this imperious creditor. Though that abasement and plea found mercy *for* him—it obtains no mercy *from* him. One would have supposed, that touching that tender chord would have procured at once a compassionate response; that the hundred denarii would at once have been forgiven, in view of the ten thousand talents remitted by his master.

But no! *Avarice* is ...

deaf—and cannot hear;

blind—and cannot see;

heartless—and cannot feel.

It has no affections of mercy—no finely strung sympathies! It is *relentless* in its grasp—cruel in its aims; and the horse-leech cry of its insatiate appetite is "give! give!"

To get gain, it will steal from the treasuries of kings; or grind the face of the poor! It will wrench open the clenched hand of poverty for its uttermost farthing; and wring from the widowed mother, the pittance which gives her children their daily bread. of all such oppressors, God declares, "His food will turn sour in his stomach; it will become the venom of serpents within him. He will spit out the riches he swallowed; God will make his stomach vomit them up. He will suck the poison of serpents; the fangs of an adder will kill him. What he toiled for he must give back uneaten; he will not enjoy the profit from his trading!" Job 20:14-18. and this is but part of that remarkable portraiture of a wicked, grasping, avaricious man, drawn at such full length in the book of Job.

Refusing to listen to the cry of his fellow servant, the *heartless creditor*

"went and cast him into prison until he should pay the debt." this conduct was soon reported to the king, who, indignant at his course, ordered him into his presence, and, addressing him in stern and angry words, said, "Oh, you wicked servant! I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?" Well might the king be "angry;" and, with a justice which commended itself to every observer, he revoked his cancellation of the debt, and "turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed!" He merited his doom by his *avarice*—and he brought it upon himself by his *extortion*.

Having thus shown the injustice of this man's proceeding, and the iniquity of an unforgiving spirit, Christ draws the *moral*—"This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart!"

The design then of the parable is to teach us *forgiveness of injuries*, and the Christian grounds of it. The doctrine of heathen philosophers on the subject of *forgiveness* of injuries, was altogether vague and unsatisfactory. Some, indeed, as Plato, Maximus Tyrius, Epictetus, and Marcus Antoninus, commend clemency. But others, of equal name and learning, as Aristotle, Cicero, Democritus, held *revenge* to be a duty, and forgiveness of injuries to be a narrow-minded weakness. Cicero, in his "Offices," gives it as the character of a good man, "that he does good to those whom it is in his power to serve, and hurts no man unless he be provoked by an injury."

Many modern infidels have followed in the track of ancient moralists. Bayle declares that the precept prohibiting revenge "is contrary to the law of nature," and Tindal goes so far as to make the doctrine of forgiving injuries an objection to the Gospel. It was important, therefore, that there should be

some divine and immutable legislation on this subject, so that the world would know the truth, and have before it a certain guide. this great want the Lord Jesus supplied, not only by the delivery of this parable—but in various other passages, in a manner at once clear, full, and authoritative.

Let us examine, then, the **basis** on which this doctrine rests, and the **arguments** by which it is sustained. The foundation of this virtue is the revealed fact, that God has announced himself as **a sin-pardoning God**. Had there been no forgiveness in the Divine mind—there could have been none in the human; for while the vices of men are self-begotten, their virtues are in every instance copies in miniature of some of God's perfections. Hence the whole superstructure of forgiveness of injuries, and of loving our enemies—is built upon those unfoldings of the Divine character, which represent Him as a God who pardons iniquity and shows mercy to the unrighteous. It was necessary that this trait should first be seen in Him, that He should **pattern** it forth in His own acts, and **illustrate** its workings in His own dealings with the sinful and the rebellious; for how would we know what it was, or how it was to be exercised—had we not previously beheld it in operation; or how could we have been commanded to exercise a virtue, which God had not himself manifested in nature or revelation? But He has not thus required a moral impossibility of us. How He has forgiven, is admirably set forth in this parable; and the relations between ourselves, as debtors, and God, as a merciful creditor, are there strikingly illustrated.

We are **debtors** to God in sums beyond our ability to pay; we owe him love, obedience, faith, and the duties of a Christian life; we owe him our minds, our souls, our bodies. and when He calls us before Him to take an account of us, He finds us in arrears to the full extent of the Law, which we have not obeyed, and of the salvation which we have rejected, so that as he "who

offends in one point of the Law, is guilty of all;" and as he who is not with Christ, "is against him"—it follows that we are **moral bankrupts**, owing more than ten thousand talents of service—yet unable to pay down the first instalment of spiritual duty! He has called upon us to "bring all the tithes into the store-house," tithes of Christian offerings and devotion—and we have brought none. He has given us talents, with the injunction, "occupy until I come"—and we have gracelessly "wrapped them in a napkin," or buried them in the earth. He has called to us, "give an account of your stewardship"—and we have stood before him as speechless bankrupts.

Could we fully obey God's law, we would then fully pay all our moral indebtedness to Him, for, in the words of the Prophet, "what does the Lord require of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" He who keeps God's law does all this; hence he who keeps the law does all that God requires, and cannot therefore become a debtor.

But, as each act of **disobedience**, each **failure in duty**, each moment's continuance in a state of rebellion, is a debt, a perpetually accumulating debt—not one item of which we can, of ourselves, pay; and which, aggregated, are faintly represented by the ten thousand talents of the parable—so do we find ourselves in the condition of this servant, brought into the presence of our Lord, with a perfectly unpayable debt, threatening us with its impending woe! If we cannot balance our accounts with God, He will, He must, if He is true to Himself and just in His moral government, require us to make up our delinquencies, "even to the uttermost farthing;" and, as we cannot pay all that is due unto Him—so must He visit our defaulting souls with the punishment due to such great transgressors.

This punishment is everlasting ruin, to be sold, not as the Jewish law directed, for six years only—but forever; and thus made the slaves of the

Prince of Darkness, with no year of release at hand, no jubilee of emancipation in prospect. The language of the Bible in reference to every unrenewed man is, that "he is sold under sin," that he is "a servant of iniquity." For, "know you not," says the Apostle, "that he to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey—his servants you are, whether of sin unto death, or of righteousness unto holiness?" in this condition of bankruptcy and servitude, lay the whole human race; and had God, like an inexorable creditor, refused to forgive us our debt, we would, even now, be under the hand of tormentors, and yet without any hope of paying what was due unto him.

But this was not like God. He was a God of mercy, as well as justice. and in His counsels, He has purposed to "deliver from curse and damnation, those whom He has chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honor." to this end Christ became incarnate of the Virgin Mary—"God manifest in the flesh"—taking upon him the sinner's nature; standing in the sinner's place; and by the one sacrifice of himself, once offered—made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, atonement, and satisfaction for the sins—so that now forgiveness of sin is proclaimed to mankind, a forgiveness which is bestowed freely; and without price, upon all who **believe** in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who make him the alone hope of their salvation.

The greatness of this act of forgiveness, we can never know this side the eternal world, because we can never, here, fully measure ...
the **malignity of the sins** which we have committed,
and the **dreadfulness of the curse** which has been remitted,
and the **blessedness of state** to which, through this forgiveness of sins, we are to be introduced.

These elements, which enter into a consideration of the munificence of God in pardoning our debts, are but faintly understood here; but in the world to come, where we shall see ...

sin in its full deformity,

and the *curse* in its direful reality,

and the *bliss* of Heaven in its unspeakable glory

—then shall we know somewhat of the infinite grace and mercy which God manifested when he was "moved with compassion" toward us, and "freed" us from the bondage of death, and "forgave us the debt."

Its consideration will fill us with ever-increasing praise and wonder. Its greatness will loom up more and more clearly. The mercy of God will develop its riches with a perpetually growing glory. And, as the great cycles of eternity turn upon the axles of love—we shall still discover new grace, new grandeur, new cause of thanksgiving—that there was with God forgiveness of sin, that the ten thousand talents of man's indebtedness to His holy law have been remitted, and guilty mortals were now, through the payment of this debt by our Divine Substitute and Surety—made "kings and priests unto God."

It is this forgiveness ...

divine in its nature,

eternal in its duration,

world-wide in its compass, and

unchangeable in its operation—

which is the basis on which rests the superstructure of what we term, the virtue of forgiving the sins of our fellow men.

The arguments by which we enforce and sustain this virtue, have great force

and authority, and may be reduced to two general heads, namely: those which are derived from our relations to **God**, and those which spring from our relation to our fellow **men**.

Beginning with this lower argument, we find a forgiving spirit is that by which we most secure the love and favor of our fellow men. We are **all** erring creatures! We daily offend in word or deed, designedly or undesignedly, against those around us. If each of our offences was severely judged and rigidly condemned—we would be forever miserable, and the sweet amenities of life would be altogether lost; so must we be ever ready to forgive others; for he who makes haste to take his fellow servant by the throat, with the inexorable demand, "pay back that you owe me!" will be most likely to meet with the same rough treatment himself. The uncommiserating, unforgiving man—is generally uncommiserated and unforgiven. There is always a fearful reaction to the outgoings of hatred and revenge. There is a return tide which washes back upon the heart, the evils that flowed from it; and it often rolls in upon the soul with aggravated power.

Surely we are too sinful ourselves—to act rigidly towards the frailties of our fellows. We too much need forgiveness—to be ourselves unforgiving. The cultivation or manifestation of a unforgiving spirit—is sure to bring down upon us the unpitying vengeance of those among whom we dwell. So that policy, pride, self-love, personal comfort, social position, and other even selfish motives—combine to press upon us this important yet too much neglected duty; for the experience of the world confirms the truth uttered by James, "He shall have judgment without mercy—who has shown no mercy."

Rising to those higher motives derived from our relations to **God**, we find that the forgiveness of injuries done to others, is one of the **conditions** of our salvation. this truth is clearly established by God's Holy Word. in the sermon

on the mount, our Lord declares, "If you forgive men their sins—then your Heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you forgive not men their sins—then neither will your Father forgive your sins."

On another occasion he instructed His disciples, "When you stand praying, forgive if you have anything against any—that your Father also which is in Heaven may forgive you your sins; but if you do not forgive—neither will your Father who is in Heaven forgive your sins." and on yet another occasion he exhorted them, saying, "Forgive—and you will be forgiven. for with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

Were anything more necessary to establish this point, it is found in the last verse of this parable, where deserving and ignominious punishments are threatened if we do not "from our hearts" forgive every "one his brother their sins." These passages, every one of which fell from the lips of Christ himself, prove demonstrably that one of the conditions on which we receive salvation—is forgiveness of others in the injuries which they have done to our persons, our names, and our estates; and that this forgiveness must be not of the lips, not in professions merely—but "from the heart;" and will be judged of by Him "who searches the hearts and tries the thoughts of the children of men."

And as we cannot **begin** the Christian life without taking this initial step—so neither when once taken, can we **continue** it under any other condition. There can be no sanctification in the heart which is filled with strife and anger. The Holy Spirit is a spirit of peace, of love, of unity, and He cannot tabernacle with discord and anger; and whatever then drives away the Sanctifier, or neutralizes His influence, hinders our sanctification. And, consequently, we can never, so long as He is absent from the heart, "be made fit for the inheritance of the saints in light." Let no one who harbors an unforgiving

spirit pretend to say, I am a Christian. John has denounced such as *liars*; for, says this "beloved disciple," "if he loves not his brother whom he has seen—then how can he love God whom he has not seen?"

In looking at this subject in the light of our relations to God, we further discover that an unforgiving spirit not only will destroy the grace of God within us—but will turn our prayers into invocations of wrath. Our daily prayer is, "forgive us our debts or sins—*as* we forgive those who sin against us. that is, we pray that God would forgive us—just in proportion as we forgive others. If we forgive others wholly—then we pray that we may be wholly forgiven. If we forgive but little—then we pray that we may be forgiven little. If we forgive not at all—then we pray that we may not be forgiven.

What a fearful prayer! To go upon our knees, to clasp our hands and close our eyes, to bow our heads—and then, in the solemn tones of prayer, ask God *never* to forgive us our sins! never to blot them from the book of His remembrance! But as we cherish with emotions of hatred, the sins of our fellow mortals against us—so we beg God to cherish the remembrance of our transgressions, and to nurse up His wrath against us until the judgment hour!

He surely is unworthy to receive of God forgiveness of his ten thousand talent debt—who is unwilling to pass over the hundred denarii trespass of his fellow servant!

"And think not," says Archbishop Leighton, "to satisfy God with *superficial* forgiveness and reconcilements, saying I will *forgive*—but will not *forget*," etc. Would we be content of such pardon of God? to have only a present forbearance of revenge, so that He would not quarrel with us—but no further friendship with him? and yet such are many of our reconcilements of our

brethren. God's way of forgiveness is both *thorough* and *heartly*, both to forgive and to forget. His language is, "I will *forgive* their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." and if your forgiveness is not so—then you have no portion in His, for you only ask God to "forgive you as you forgive others."

Lastly, there is laid upon us, a *Divine injunction* to the performance of this duty. in addition to the directions of our Lord, already quoted, there are very many other texts enforcing the same truth.

Paul's sentiments may be condensed in his directions to "owe no man anything—but to love one another," "be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you."

James' views are expressed in the words, "He shall have judgment without mercy—who has shown no mercy."

Peter's earnest exhortation is, "above all things, have fervent charity among yourselves!"

And *John* declares, "he who loves not his brother, abides in death."

And when to these apostolic testimonies you add the great law that comprehends within itself all the duties of the second table, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself;" and the grand *exemplification* of this rule in the example of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose *steps* we are to follow, *whose* mind we are to possess, whose *spirit* we are to copy—then what more cogent motives could be found to press upon us this holy and forgiving spirit with which God is so well pleased?

As Christians then—as followers of the meek and forgiving Jesus—as those who hope that the immense debt of their sins has been forgiven by God—let

us go out into the world and act towards our fellow men as God has acted towards us; for to forgive, as we are forgiven by God—is Divine!

The Laborers in the Vineyard^(TOC)

Matthew 20:1-16

"For the kingdom of Heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

"About the third hour he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went.

"He went out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour and did the same thing. About the eleventh hour he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

"'Because no one has hired us,' they answered. "He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'

"The workers who were hired about the eleventh hour came and each received a denarius. So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. 'These men who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you

have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'

"But he answered one of them, 'Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? or are you envious because I am generous?'

"So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

The **materials** out of which this parable is constructed require but little explanation, except what is necessary to understand the Jewish method of computing time. They reckoned the day from sunrise to sunset, dividing it into twelve portions or hours. Consequently, "early in the morning," the time at which the "landowner" first went out to hire laborers—answers to our six o'clock.

The "third hour," to our **nine** in the morning.

"The sixth hour," to our **noon**.

"The ninth hour," to our **three** in the afternoon.

And "the eleventh hour," to **five** o'clock, or an hour before sunset.

At these several hours "the lord of the vineyard" went out to the market-place (or bazaar, as it is termed in the East, the ordinary resort of porters and laborers waiting for employment), to get workmen for his vineyard, and hired five different sets of laborers.

"When even was come," the steward was directed to "call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning from the last unto the first." the eleventh-

hour laborers therefore advanced, and "received every man a denarius"—a sum equal to the usual daily wages of a laborer, and the pay of a soldier. Seeing this, those who had labored all day supposed that, when their turn to be paid came, they would receive more, "and they likewise received every man a denarius." They had labored three, six, nine, and eleven hours more than the first paid laborers; they had toiled, some of them, through "the burden and heat of the day," and they thought that they had a **right** to more wages; and though they took the stipulated denarius—yet they "grumbled against the landowner," as if he had done them great injustice.

Turning, however, to one who, perhaps, was foremost in complaining, he said, "Friend, I do you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?" I did not compel you to labor; I hired you at the usual wages; you agreed to my offer; you have done your part, which was, to labor until sunset; I have done mine, which was, to pay you a denarius. Where is the injustice of this? Therefore, "Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? or are you envious because I am generous?"

Many interpretations have been given to this parable. The different **hours** specified have by some been referred to the **several ages of man**. The call to labor in the Lord's vineyard being made in many cases, "early in the morning" of life, as with Samuel and Timothy; in others, at the third hour, or youth, as in the cases of Joseph and Josiah; in others at the sixth, or manhood hour, as was done to the Apostles of the Lord; in others at the ninth, or declining hour; and in some extraordinary cases, as the penitent thief at the hour before life's sunset.

Other commentators refer the periods at which the laborers were hired, to the **several ages of the world**; as that the first call was made in the world's "early

morning," in Eden; the third-hour call was in the day of Noah; the sixth-hour call, in the times of the Mosaic dispensation; the ninth-hour call was in the day of Christ's advent; and the eleventh was the mission to the Gentiles.

Various other interpretations have been made of these calls; but it will be unnecessary as well as unprofitable to consume time in running out any of these analogies, as we shall thereby be led away from the *scope* and *import* of the parable, as they unfold themselves in the circumstances under which it was delivered, and the *moral* which our Lord deduced. The points which are distinctly brought out in the parable, and which it is important for us to know, are these:

First. That There is a Vineyard in Which to Work

Under the similitude of a vineyard, the Bible frequently represents the Jewish and the Christian Church. It seems to be a favorite idea of the olden prophets, being used by David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel; and our Lord often employs the same imagery to illustrate the relations which the **Church** holds to himself and to the world. The fitness of this language to express what is designed is peculiarly felicitous; for a vineyard was most prized and esteemed of all possessions; required most careful care at all seasons of the year, and yielded to the diligent gardener a larger return than any other culture.

The Christian Church is now what the Jewish Church was in the Levitical dispensation, "the *vineyard* of the Lord Almighty." It is *fenced off* from the world by the forms of a public profession of faith in Christ; *planted* with the "choicest vine," even Christ, "the true vine;" and *dressed* by gardeners of

God's calling and appointment, whose duty it is so to superintend the culture, as that it shall bring forth fruit to the glory of "the Lord of the vineyard."

In this vineyard, or **visible Church of Christ**—there is much work to be done, more than sufficient to tax all the energies of mind and body; and the call is, "Go work today in my vineyard!" There is the work of weeding out and cultivating one's own heart, until it becomes fruitful with all the graces of the Spirit. There is the work of maintaining purity of life and faith in the particular church with which we are connected. There is the work of bringing those around us under the influences of Gospel truth and Gospel institutions—the vast **home** work of the Church, embracing all agencies and instrumentalities necessary to the tillage of the domestic field. There is, lastly, the work of spreading the religion of Jesus "into the regions beyond;" the great **foreign** work of the Church, by which it is to act upon its Lord's commission, "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

"The whole world lies in wickedness," and the **earthly instrumentality** whereby it is to be converted to God, is in the keeping of professing Christians. They are to be "co-workers with God;" and, if they fail to labor to the extent of their ability, the responsibility of lost souls and of disobeyed commands will rest upon them forever.

Second. All Who Are Not Laboring in Christ's Vineyard Are Idle

Not that they are **physically** idle; not that they are **intellectually** idle; nor yet that they are **morally** idle, for that is impossible, as every man in one sense is morally active. The **soul** is ever working; **thoughts** are busy there, **passions** wrestle there, **affections** move there—and never is there a moment when

there is vacuity and repose.

But by "idle" is meant **unprofitably employed**. All unprofitable employment of our TIME is **virtual** idleness, even in a worldly and business aspect—how much more so in a heavenly and spiritual one!

Everything is **morally** unprofitable which has not a tendency to advance the glory of God and the salvation of our souls. Unconverted men, though they may be busy about their farms, their studies, their merchandise—are not doing anything for the glory of God, or for the salvation of their own souls; hence, all unconverted men are spiritually "idle."

They may be diligent in working out a worldly morality—but they are spiritually idle! They may be sedulous in building up a self-righteousness by works of charity, of ritualism, of penance, of will-worship, of Pharisaic devotion—but they are only busy idlers in the sight of God. Their **works** are vain—their **labor** shall not profit—and their **toil** shall only end in their deeper ruin; because they are not working in the field of the Church, and consequently are not obeying the injunction of the Divine Landowner, "You also go and work in my vineyard!"

Thirdly. It is Never Too Late to Go Into the Vineyard of the Church

This remark is made not to encourage presumption—but to rebuke despair.

The uncertainty of life,
the possibility of grieving away the Holy Spirit,
the danger that our mental powers may not be preserved to us in our last
sickness, or

that we may be suddenly summoned to the bar of God—warn us with great force against any **delay** in making our peace with God. to postpone, therefore, a profession of Christ's religion because we may, **perhaps**, enter the vineyard at the eleventh hour—is most daring rebellion and impiety towards God, and a solemn trifling with our soul, which should fill us with trembling and alarm!

When we say, therefore, that it is not too late to go into the vineyard, we do not mean that it will not be too late if we put it off to a future day; for we know nothing of the future, not even "what a day may bring forth." But we mean that if we have put it off to the **present** time, it is not too late **now** to go to Christ.

All the invitations of the Gospel are addressed to us in the **present** tense. The language of the Bible is, "Behold, **now** is the accepted time; behold, **now** is the day of salvation." "**Today**, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." "Exhort one another daily while it is called **today**." "Son, go work **today** in my vineyard."

There is no **tomorrow** in all the offers of grace, or in all the overtures of the Spirit. Tomorrow is a fiction of time—it never comes. It is a **present work** that we have to do—there is a **present time** allotted to us for doing it; there is a **present Spirit** given to begin and carry on the work. Avail ourselves of these **present privileges**, and the future shall be bright with heavenly glory; neglect them, and the future shall be dark with eternal woe.

You may have passed the "early morning" of your life, and "the **third** hour" may find you out of the vineyard. We call to you, then, in this third hour, this dew-time of youth: "Go also into the vineyard." You may have reached the meridian of life, and the "**sixth** hour" may find you still "idle." and we call to

you, therefore, in the noon of manhood: "Go also into the vineyard." You may have progressed into the afternoon of life, and "the *ninth* hour" may find you still unengaged in Christ's service; and we call to you, therefore, in this waning period of the day: "Go also into the vineyard." or it may be that "the shadows of the evening are stretched out," and the sun of your existence, already far down in the western sky, is hastening to his setting; and at this *eleventh* hour you are and have been "all the day idle." and we cry out to you, therefore, with but one hour of daylight in your possession, and the night of death fast coming on: "Go also into the vineyard; and whatever is right, that shall you receive."

Few, however, who pass the third and the sixth hour out of the vineyard, enter it at the ninth or the eleventh hours. We know of many who gave themselves to God's service in life's morning, in life's noon-tide; but the number of those who become His in the *evening* of their days, are very few; and the Bible records but one eleventh-hour convert, the thief on the cross. *One*—that none might despair! *Only one*—that none might presume!

Fourthly. God Will Reward All Who Labor for Him, When Their Work is Done

It is not until the *evening* comes, that the Lord of the Vineyard will "call the laborers and give them their wages." We often labor in this world without seeming to receive any reward; nor should we expect to receive it here. But, though long delayed, it will come at last, for "He is faithful who promised." It is, to a great extent, withheld from us here, because our work is not all done when we are removed from the vineyard. We live and we work in our

influence and in the agencies and instrumentalities which we set in motion—long after we have passed away. Though dead—we yet speak to future generations; and, as it is a principle of the Divine economy, to hold us responsible not only for our actual words and overt deeds—but for everything that ***results*** from our example, our ***influence***, our ***labors***—so is it impossible to mete out the rewards which pertain to us through Divine grace, until, in the final closing up of earthly scenes and accounts, it shall be seen what we accomplished for Christ; not merely what we did for him while ***living***—but what we did for him through means and institutions and influences which emanated from us, and which were in active operation long after we had slumbered in the dust!

Hence it is that the day of judgment is placed at "the end of the world," because then only shall all the lines of ***influence***, good and bad, be fully run out. Then, only, will all the results of our lives, good and bad, be fully developed.

Take, for example, the work done by the apostle ***Paul***. Could he have been rewarded (speaking after the manner of men) during his lifetime? is not the power of Paul still felt? is not the ***influence*** of Paul still at work? And, though he died eighteen centuries ago, does he not speak to the dwellers in the nineteenth century, and to the inhabitants of England and America, as forcibly as he did to those who lived in the dawn of the Christian era, and who heard his oral teachings in Damascus, Corinth, and Rome? So of Augustine, Wycliff, Luther, Cranmer, Martyn, Simeon, and a whole galaxy of sainted ones, who now shine "as stars in the firmament." They have gone to their rest, and left their work, as the world would say, unfinished; but not so; their work is still going on, and will continue until time shall be no longer.

It matters very little, therefore, whether we see much of the ***fruit*** of our labors

while we tabernacle in the flesh—but when the evening of the world comes, when the Lord of the Vineyard shall say, "Call the laborers" to the judgment, and "give them their wages," then shall we receive "according to that which we have done, be it good or bad." Then only, can the sum total of our work be cast up; then only, the whole amount of labor be known; then only, the reward be rightly bestowed.

Lastly, the reward that we shall receive will be nothing that we can claim of *right*—but will be bestowed upon us by the *free sovereign grace* of God.

And here comes out the true intent and purpose of the parable. in the arbitrary division of the Bible into chapters, made by Hugo in 1240, the chapter containing this parable was unfortunately cut off from the 19th chapter, whereas it is, in fact, a continuation of it. in that 19th chapter we find that a "Young Ruler," with much external reverence for Christ, had come to him with the inquiry, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Our Lord told him what to do, and put his sincerity to the test by ordering him "to sell all that he had, and give to the poor"—a test which revealed the latent *covetousness* of his heart, and one which he did not attempt to carry out, for "he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."

This striking example of clinging to the seen and the earthly, rather than to the unseen and the heavenly—gave occasion for Christ to say, "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God"—which so amazed the disciples that they exclaimed in wonder, "Who then can be saved?" But Peter, foremost among the disciples in speaking as in acting, said to the Savior, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed you; what shall we have therefore?" We who, unlike the rich young man, have left all and followed you. in the spirit of a hireling who was looking to *wages* rather than to work—he seemed to think that something

was **deserved** by them who had made such sacrifices, and who at the first call had gone into the vineyard; and, in the working of a self-complacent mind, he wished to know what they would receive.

Our Lord replies to them and says, "Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life!" adding, "but many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first." and then follows the parable under consideration, designed to show that the **rewards of grace** are not for the first called alone, and do not follow the length of Christian service—but that while all shall receive the promised wages, namely, eternal life—God will do as he wills with his own infinite blessings, bestowing them when, where, and how he will, according to his own good pleasure.

The value of the work stands not in the amount of **labor** performed, in the number of **hours** employed, or in bearing the burden and heat of the day—but in the spirit in which it is done. and that spirit should be **humility**, not boasting of long service, or arduous service; not grudging at others' preference or others' wages, but regarding any pay as undeserved, and all reward as out of God's infinite grace, and not for the worthiness of individual merit.

And as the **work** stands only in **humility**—so the **reward** stands only in **grace**. Do what we may; heap up labor upon labor, and sacrifice upon sacrifice—yet there is so much of **sin mixed** with all that we do, that were we to receive according to the real merit of the works performed, they would each be cast out of God's sight as sinful, and we ourselves be driven from his presence! If the reward then is of grace, "it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work is no more work."

Would that we could feel this more! It would humble our proud hearts; it would bridle in our rampant spirits; it would abate our self-elevating minds, flattering ourselves that we deserve more, and grudging whatever is bestowed upon others; it would bring us more like docile, feeble, little children, to the feet of Jesus, causing us to cling to him by a simple faith, and to lean only upon the merits of "His blessed passion and precious death."

And then, too, how will it enhance the value of the reward—to know that we deserved nothing! that the best, the most diligent, the most faithful, was, after all, but an ***unprofitable servant***—and that the reward is the expression of the overflowing love and bounty of our God, given to us, not for our service or for our deservings—but on account of Christ's pleadings and in virtue of his perfect sacrifice!

The Wicked Farmers^(TOC)

Matthew 21:33-44

"Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.

"The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. Last of all, he sent his son to them. 'They will respect my son,' he said.

"But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance.' So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

"Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?"

He will bring those wretches to a wretched end," they replied, "and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

"'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed."

Mark 12:1-12

He then began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed.

"He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

"But the tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.

"What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. Haven't you read this scripture: "'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

Then they looked for a way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them. But they were afraid of

the crowd; so they left him and went away.

Luke 20:9-16

He went on to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out.

"Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.'

"But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over.

'This is the heir,' they said. 'Let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

"What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others."

When the people heard this, they said, "May this never be!"

There are **two aspects** under which this parable may be viewed: one as it respects the Jews; the other as it regards the world at large. It was delivered in the court of the temple, to the chief priests and scribes who had gathered around Jesus to cavil at His words; and just after His triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

The Jewish application of this parable is evident from collateral Scripture and historical facts, as will appear from a very brief analysis. The "certain man,"

or "landowner," as Matthew expresses it, is God; and the "vineyard" is the Jewish Church. Under the appellation of a vineyard, David, Jeremiah, and Isaiah speak of their nation; and there is much show of truth in the supposition that our Lord, when he framed this parable, alluded to the words of Isaiah, "For the vineyard of the Lord Almighty is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant; and He looked for judgment—but behold oppression; for righteousness—but behold a cry."

The "farmers" to whom he let it out were the priests and Levites and scribes, to whom were committed the moral and religious culture of the nation. The going "into a far country," means in the original that He left them for a time, which indeed was done, when the *Shekinah*, the emblem of His glory, was removed from them. The sending of servants, "when the time of the fruit drew near," "to the farmers, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard," for the rent of the same, as was and is customary in Eastern countries, refers to the Prophets whom God sent to His people through the whole period of the Levitical dispensation, beginning with Moses, and ending, eleven hundred years after, with Malachi.

The *treatment* which these ancient ministers received is well described by the conduct of the farmers towards the servants sent to receive the fruits of the vineyard; they "beat one," "stoned another," "killed another," treated one "shamefully," "wounded" another, and "cast him out of the vineyard." Both the Prophets Elijah and Daniel complain that the Jews have slain the prophets with the sword. Jerusalem especially had this reputation, as our Lord testifies: "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets, and stones those who are sent unto you;" and Paul, when he enumerates the long list of worthies in his catalogue of the faithful, in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, says that, "Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison.

They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated."

Elijah, Elisha, Ezra, Nehemiah, Jeremiah, Micaiah, and Eleazar "had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings," Sampson and Daniel were in "bonds and imprisonment," Zechariah was "stoned" in the court of the Lord's house; Isaiah, according to ancient tradition, was "sawn asunder" with a wooden saw, by order of king Manasseh; the "Lord's priests" at Nob were hewn in pieces with the sword of Saul, and "the prophets of the Lord" were cut off by Jezebel, the wife of Ahab; Elijah, and Elisha, and John the Baptist, "wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins;" and all of them were more or less "destitute, afflicted, tormented;" for this was the way in which these wicked farmers, the Kings and Priests and Levites, treated the servants sent by God "to receive the fruit of the vineyard."

After repeated messages and great forbearance, the lord of the vineyard asks, "What shall I do?" and he resolves, last of all "I will send my beloved son; it may be they will respect him when they see him." and so in the last days of the Jewish economy, when temple, and altar, and synagogue, and priest, and Levite, and ritual were to be done away, and to give place to the higher, holier ministry, temple, and service of the Christian Church—God, who loved His vineyard notwithstanding the treatment which His servants had received, determined to give the Son of His bosom, "His only begotten" and "well-beloved Son," to die for His rebellious children. "It may be," He says, "they will respect my Son;" the dignity of the person sent and of the person sending, ought to inspire a reverential regard, and reason might have well argued, "they will respect my Son."

This Son came; He left "the glory which He had with the Father before the

world was," the courts of Heaven, the worship of angels, and came to the farmers of earth to receive the fruit of His vineyard. "But when the farmers saw Him they reasoned among themselves, saying, this is the heir; come, let us kill Him, that the inheritance may be ours!"

Yes, Christ was "the heir;" "heir of all things," as Paul says; heir in His mediatorial character, and by Divine appointment; but in order to kill this heir, the chief priests and scribes and Pharisees "counseled together." It was the one vengeful purpose of their lives, the one great aim of their efforts, begun by Herod at the birth of this heir, and consummated by Pilate and Caiaphas when they hung Him on the accursed tree.

In pursuance of this foul design "they cast Him out of the vineyard," saying, "Away with Him," delivering Him into the Roman power, and with the cry, "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" they "killed Him" on Calvary!

"What, therefore," asks our Savior, "shall the Lord of the vineyard do unto them?" His audience, not as yet perceiving the *force* of the parable, replied, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will rent out His vineyard unto other farmers, who shall render Him the fruits in their season:" thus unwittingly condemning themselves, and pronouncing their own well-deserved doom. Nor was it long before their own sentence was carried into execution; for by the invasion of the Roman army into Judea, the vineyard of God's planting—the Holy City—was destroyed; its temple, the glory of the whole earth, was burnt with fire; its palaces were razed to the ground; its streets were filled with ruins; its walls were broken down, and with a havoc unparalleled in the history of the world, those farmers were destroyed by fire, by pestilence, by famine, and by the sword.

The siege of Jerusalem began about the feast of the Passover, one of the three

festivals when all the males of the nation were required "to present themselves before the Lord:" and when, therefore, more than three million people were pent up within its walls. of these, over eleven hundred thousand were killed, and nearly a hundred thousand others were carried captive into Egypt, Rome, and the colonies of Augustus. Not only was their land, the beautiful and almost consecrated hills of Judea, given to others, to the Roman, the Syrian, and the Egyptian—but their Church was broken up, the veil of its temple was rent in twain, its oblation ceased, its priesthood was abolished, its splendid ritual was done away, and those who were once restricted to the outer courts of the Jewish sanctuary—are now made to draw near unto God, even into the inner courts of a more glorious temple, built up by Christ of "lively stones," on Himself, "the chief corner stone," a temple whose only High Priest is the Lord of Glory, whose only sacrifice is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," whose incense is "the prayers of saints," whose choral service are the hymnings of the redeemed, whose "walls are salvation, and whose gates praise."

This parable must have tingled upon the ears of the priests and Pharisees, and when they came to understand its import, they immediately, "the same hour, sought to lay hands on Him, for they perceived that He had spoken this parable against them!" and had they not "feared the people"—they would immediately have caught Him, and cast Him out of the vineyard, and killed Him.

But this parable has a **Christian**, as well as a Jewish aspect. It is true that we have not killed the Prophets; we have not cast the Heir of the Lord of the vineyard out of the vineyard; we have not imbrued our hands in His blood; but if sin is the same in all ages, as we know that it is; if man's nature is the same through all generations, as experience proves—then need not the sinner

congratulate himself that he is guiltless of the blood of Jesus, for their lies in his heart a principle which, if fully developed, would lead him to do precisely what the Jews did—slay the prophets, and cast the Heir, even Christ, out of His vineyard.

Both hate God,
both disobey His laws,
both set aside His Gospel, and
both say in their acts, if not in words, "we will not have this man to reign over us!"

Each human heart is a vineyard of God's planting, and through His Holy Word He has sent to you Prophets and Apostles to receive the fruit of your tillage. Have you listened to the words of His servants, and returned to Him the hire of your vineyard? Nay, has not Christ himself stood at the door of your heart knocking, and saying, "Rise and let me in!"—and have you not suppressed as much as possible all thoughts of Him, and refused Him entrance? and where, in the sight of God, is the *difference* between the Jews and yourself? But that, in the former, the *overt act* of insult and murder was superadded to the *inward feeling* of enmity and rebellion?

Everyone who does not receive Christ into his heart, does virtually "cast Him out of His vineyard!" Everyone who refuses to listen to the call of God's ministers, does in fact treat the servants of the Lord badly. Everyone who withholds from the "Landowner" the wages of righteousness, does, to that extent, strive to take from Him the inheritance. Each one of these assertions, as strong as they may seem, is borne out and sustained by the Word of God.

"He who is not with me," says Christ, "is against me." "He who hears you," says the same blessed Savior to His disciples, "hears me; and he who despises

you—despises me; and he who despises me—despises Him who sent me." "Will a man rob God?" asks the Prophet Malachi; "yet you hate robbed me. But you say: How have we robbed you? in tithes and offerings!" that is, in not rendering to God that which He requires; and His requirement of each human being is, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your **heart**, and **mind**, and **strength**—and your neighbor as yourself."

There is no evading this **responsibility** on the one hand, and this **accountability** on the other—the one you must bear through life, and the other will meet you at the bar of God. and there you will be judged, not so much for what you did as for what you did not do; not so much for overt acts—as for the **inward feelings of your soul towards your adorable Redeemer.**

We have seen, though briefly, what the Lord did to the wicked farmers. and what shall he do to the **impenitent** now? They give no heed to the messages He sends; they yield to Him no revenue of praise; and in their hearts, they crucify His Son afresh, and "put Him to an open shame." They break His laws, reject His love, refuse His salvation, choose to "walk in the light of their own eyes, and after the counsels of their own hearts!" and what shall He do to them? the Apostle answers for us: "Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more **severely** do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? for we know him who said, 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' and again, 'The Lord will judge his people.' It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!"

We are emphatically taught by this parable, that **God will hold us responsible for our treatment of Jesus Christ.** He held the Jews, the farmers of his

ancient vineyard, responsible for their conduct towards his servants and his Son; and fearfully have they been made to endure, even to this day, the severity of that self-assumed curse, "May His blood be on us and on our children!" and they will continue to endure it "until the fullness of the Gentiles is brought in." But as the sin of **unbelievers** now is more aggravated, in many of its aspects, than that of the Jews in the time of Christ's earthly ministry—so will God, in accordance with the **principles of eternal justice**, hold every living soul, who has heard of Christ, responsible for his conduct towards that blessed Jesus.

Even those who take a comparatively low view of our moral relations to God, acknowledge that we are responsible for the right use of our time, our money, our talents, our influence. and shall God hold us strictly accountable for these, in one sense, minor and inconsiderable things—and not make inquisition of us for our treatment of that "unspeakable gift," his well-beloved Son? the supposition is impossible! God must cease to love "His only-begotten Son," must ignore His law, must annul His covenant, must vacate His attributes, must revoke His word, must change the very elements of His being—before He can allow the rejectors of Christ and His Gospel to go unpunished; and hence the force of that declaration of Christ, after His resurrection and just prior to His ascension, "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved—but he who believes not shall be damned."

Unbelief is the **crowning sin** of the ungodly! and until Christ is believed in by a faith which "purifies the soul"—all other changes will be of no avail.

We may correct this evil habit;
we may prune away that sin;
we may turn from debauchery to purity;
we may turn from profanity to reverence;

we may turn from covetousness to charity;
we may polish our characters until we shall appear beautiful to ourselves and others;

we may even have a sentimental regard for Christ, and experience a sort of respect for His ordinances, and join with external devotion in the praises of the sanctuary—

yet, build up these characters as high as we may, adorn them with every worldly ornament, set them off with every earthly virtue—unless Christ is formed in our hearts as the hope of glory—they are nothing "but white-washed sepulchers, which, indeed, appear beautiful outwardly—but within are full of dead bones and all uncleanness!"

On the other hand, no matter how evil may have been our former course, no matter what the turpitude of our character, though our sins are as black as midnight, and as numberless as the stars, and as vile as Hell itself; yet, if we now receive Christ into our hearts in the fullness of a faith that trusts in Him alone—all will be well! "Though your sins are like scarlet—I will make them as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson—I will make them as white as wool!" for this blessed Jesus had declared, "Him who comes unto me—I will never cast out."

Keep, then, this "beloved Son" no longer out of the *vineyard of your heart!*

The Marriage of the King's Son; The Great Banquet^(TOC)

Matthew 22:2-14

"The kingdom of Heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

"Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet!'

"But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

"Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

"But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' the

man was speechless.

"Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. for many are invited, but few are chosen.'"

Luke 14:16-24

"A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'

"But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.'

"Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.'

"Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'

"The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.'

"'Sir,' the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.'

"Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.'"

We have placed these two parables together, because, though uttered at

different times, and designed originally for different purposes—they have such a general unity of structure, similitude, and interpretation, that for all practical purposes they may be regarded and unfolded as one.

It is peculiarly interesting to observe the rich and attractive drapery in which our Lord *clothes* His doctrines. He presents before the mental eye that which is usually full of joy, "a great banquet;" that which is overflowing with gladness, "a marriage banquet." And, that the attractions might be heightened by the splendor of wealth and the pomp of station, He introduces *royalty* itself—a King preparing a bridal entertainment "for his son"—thus taking the highest banquet of earth, to shadow forth "the marriage supper of the Lamb" in Heaven.

No people were more accustomed to make weddings occasions of festivity, than the Orientals; for they celebrated the nuptials of sons and daughters with a *display* and *magnificence* equal to their rank or wealth, extending the festivities over several days: hence the Greek word used here by Matthew, and translated "marriage," is put in the plural number, because these feasts continued a succession of days: as we learn from the direction of Laban to Jacob, "Fulfill her *week*;" or keep her usual marriage feast. and it is recorded of Sampson, that at his marriage he "made a feast *seven days*;" for so used the young men to do." and the Rabbis inform us, that this seven days of feasting was "a matter of indispensable obligation upon all married men."

It was customary also to celebrate the inauguration of kings and sovereigns with feasts, similar to the wedding banquets; for on the day on which they assumed the government of the land to which they were appointed, the kings or rulers were considered as affianced or solemnly united to their country—which is therefore compared to a bride.

When Jesus Christ, therefore, was to enter upon His mediatorial reign, God made a marriage feast at the espousals of His Son with the Church, and set out the banquet with the fat things of the Gospel of His grace. and in this comparison there is much propriety; for both the old and new covenants are several times spoken of by Prophets and Apostles, as **marriage contracts** between God and His people. Indeed, of all human relationship, this is the most frequently and the most elaborately used, to express the oneness, intimacy, and affection that exists between Christ and the Church.

John introduces this figure with great effect in his description of the future glory of the Church: "And I heard," says he, "what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: Hallelujah! for our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! for the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)" "Blessed are those who are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."

Well might there be "a feast of fat things on God's holy mountain," when His only begotten Son was **espoused** to the Church; when he took His earthly Zion to His bosom as His bride, and gave to her the **dowry** of the Holy Spirit.

When the banquet spoken of in the parables was prepared, the servants, in both cases, were sent out to those who had been previously "bidden," with the message, "Come, for all things are now ready!" in accordance with the oriental usage, by which the guests to a feast were twice called; first, invited some time before, that they might prepare themselves; and secondly, summoned a short time previous to the banquet, that they might be there promptly.

Thus were the **Jews**, to whom these parables were addressed, twice bidden to the Gospel feast; first, by the prophets, long before; and again, by Christ's apostles and disciples, saying, in the name of their Lord and King, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner. My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet!" the message was urgent, ample, and seasonable—and we would have supposed that it would at once have been responded to with alacrity and gladness.

On the contrary, however, they to whom the message came "made light of it," and "all, with one consent, began to make **excuses**," pleading the most trivial affairs as a reason for slighting both the entertainer and the entertainment.

What though one had "bought a piece of ground?" the ground was not a perishable, movable thing, that "he must needs go and see it" **now**. It would lie in the same situation and have the same quality of soil tomorrow, that it had today.

What though another had "bought five yoke of oxen?" he could test their strength and quality **tomorrow** as well as now; and it was not necessary therefore that he should neglect the banquet to "go and prove them."

What though another had "married a wife?" that could not be plead in excuse for such unjustifiable neglect; for his wife was not given to him to enjoy only **today**, to be removed tomorrow—but was his for a lifetime, and hence he could the more easily spare a portion of time now, to the calls of his lord and master.

There was neither **validity** nor **force** in any of these excuses; and to the contempt and refusal of some, was added insult and murder by others; "for rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them;" which thing was true of the Jews, who evil-treated and slew, by cruel deaths, nearly all the

Apostles of our Lord.

These *insults* to his servants, and *murders* of his messengers, the king hears of with anger—but he lays aside his revenge until the feast is over.

Resolved that the wedding and the banquet which had been prepared should be "furnished with guests," though those who were first bidden were unworthy, servants are "sent out into the highways, the streets and lanes of the city," who "gathered together all, as many as they found," "the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind;" and thus "the wedding banquet was furnished with guests."

This circumstance has been thought by some, unacquainted with oriental manners, unnatural and improbable; but ancient and modern writers unite to attest its truthfulness. Dr. Pococke, a distinguished Eastern traveler, says that "an Arab prince will often dine in the street, before his door, and call to all that pass, even to beggars—to come and sit down to his table." and to this day, in several parts of Asia, it is as common for a rich man or prince to give a feast to the poor, the maimed, and the blind, as it is in Europe or America for gentlemen to entertain those of their own rank or order.

Thus were the Gentiles, "the maimed, the halt, the poor, and the blind," as the Jews esteemed them, called to the Gospel feast, when their despisers, the Israelites, had haughtily rejected the repeated invitations; for Christ had just before declared, "many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God; but the *children of the kingdom* shall be cast out!"

As there was still "room," after many had been gathered out of the streets and the lanes, the servant was commanded, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in—that my house may be filled."

Much and injurious stress has been laid upon the word "compel," as though it were constraint under physical fear or force. The word, it is true, may admit of that interpretation—but it cannot mean here anything more than that *moral compulsion* which results from the stress of argument and the force of personal appeal. Because the one servant to whom was given the direction, "compel them to come in," could not by his personal power force, against their will, a sufficient number of people to occupy the seats of so great a banquet. It therefore means, *an internal constraint, through the pressure of powerful motives.*

The invited guests having taken their places, the feast proceeds. a circumstance, however, is brought out in the parable of the Marriage Banquet, which is of too much practical importance to be overlooked. It is said, "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' the man was speechless!" in all large oriental weddings, the guests were expected to appear in particular robes, generally white, which were furnished by the master of the feast. this is an ancient custom, for we find instances mentioned by Homer, and it is also alluded to by other classical writers.

We may, therefore, naturally enough suppose that this king, having invited guests to his feast from the highways and hedges, would order his servants to see them all properly clad out of his own wardrobe, that they might be not only cleanly in their apparel—but also, being dressed alike, might all feel themselves on one level, and thus avoid those distinctions which difference of garments so often makes.

Not to have a wedding garment was, therefore, a mark of *disrespect* to the host, to the feast, and to the guests. Indulging these feelings of hatred, and

manifesting them by an open refusal to appear in the prescribed dress, it is not to be wondered at that, when confronted with the king and questioned by him as to his appearance, the man should be "speechless,"—that conscious guilt should muzzle his mouth with shame, for his conduct manifested a state of mind and heart worthy of punishment; nor was it long delayed, for the incensed king ordered his servants to "bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness," beyond the glare and lights of the halls and courts; where, instead of pleasure and delight, he would have "wailing and gnashing of teeth"—the fruits of a bitter but unavailing sorrow.

This *wedding garment* is, by some, regarded as *faith*; by others, *a holy life*—but Calvin well says, "It is needlessly contended, whether the wedding garment is faith or a pious and holy life; because, neither can faith be separated from good works, nor are good works practicable without faith. Christ, however, only meant that we must so comply with the call of our Lord, as to be renewed in spirit, after his image, remaining constantly in union with him, that the old man, with his defilements, must be put off, and the new life diligently applied to, by which means our *garment* might become suitable to our honorable calling.

In his Epistle to the Romans, Paul urges us "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." this we are to do after having cast off the works of darkness"—those deeds and thoughts and feelings which belong to us in our carnal and benighted state. These are the defiled garments of our depraved nature; but when, through the grace given unto us, we cast these away and come to Christ, his language is, "Take away the filthy garment from him; behold, I have caused your iniquity to pass from you, and I will clothe you with change of clothing!" and that change of clothing is the *wedding garment of Christ's righteousness*—seamless and spotless, which he gives to each believer, and

in which alone he can appear with acceptance before the Great King. Thus arrayed, the devout soul can sing with the Prophet, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness!"

We have reason to fear, however, that many who sit at the *earthly* table of the Lord's House—are aptly represented by the man "was not wearing the wedding garment." They have heard the invitation, they have gone in to the banquet—but they went in the soiled and earth-stained garments of their own morality, and never sought "to be clothed" with that robe of righteousness which Christ bestows upon all who come to him in true penitence and faith.

The eye of *man* cannot tell whether we are thus arrayed or not—but when "the *King* comes in to see the guests," all shall be revealed; for, in the language of the Prophet Zephaniah, "The Lord has prepared a sacrifice, he has bid his guests; and it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel." and what a startling question will that be, which the Lord shall then put, "Friend," a *seeming* friend, because a nominal companion, "how did you come in"—the Church and at my table, "not having on the wedding garment?"

You cannot say that you did not *need* it, for God distinctly says, "Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." You cannot say that it was not *offered* to you; for it is freely bestowed, yes, even pressed upon your acceptance by the ministers of Christ. You cannot say that it will make *no difference* whether I have one on or not, for it is emphatically stated, that you can only secure the favor of God, by being thus robed in the garment of salvation. to the stern interrogation of our Lord you, like the man in the parable, will be "speechless!" Your mouth will be muzzled with shame, and your face

covered with confusion—and you shall be cast out into outer darkness, beyond the light and glory of Heaven, into the blackness of eternal sorrow! and there you will be left to spend eternal ages, writhing under the wrath of an angry God!

Have **we** this wedding garment? the hour is not far distant when the King will "come in to see the guests"—are we prepared to meet his all-searching gaze, by having put on Christ, as "our wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption?" or have we been so careless, or hypocritical, or unbelieving, as to neglect this sole garment of salvation, and thus procure for ourselves eternal banishment from the presence of God?

Ascending now from **particular** incidents to **general** inferences—we remark that these parables illustrate three important points, namely:

1. The freeness and fullness of the Gospel feast
2. The perverseness of the human heart
3. The righteous vengeance

I. The Freeness and Fullness of the Gospel Feast

The Gospel offers everything for our spiritual needs and appetites, and leaves unsatisfied no craving of the soul. Are we weak in the faith, of feeble knees, and stammering tongues, "babes in Christ?" Here is found "the sincere milk of the Word, that we may grow thereby." Are we strong and masculine in our spiritual energies and capabilities, with our "senses exercised to discern both good and evil?" Here is to be had "the strong meat" of doctrines and mysteries. Are we crying out with one of old, "My leanness! my leanness!"

Here is that **bread of life**, and **wine of grace**—that will make us muscular and robust in spiritual health. Are we "hungering and thirsting after righteousness?" Our souls "shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness"—every holy appetite shall be appeased, for at the **table** of the Lord are found those memorials of dying love, of which whoever eats in faith, does, in the language of the martyr Latimer, "Eat with the mouth of his soul, and drink with the stomach of his soul, the body of Christ." this is bringing us to a more than angels' banquet, and feeding us on more than angels' food!

And to this "feast of fat things," which God has spread upon His holy mountain, the Church—**all are invited**. God has sent out His servants, His ministers, to summon all to this marriage supper of the Lamb, and the invitation runs in these words: "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come you to the waters, and he who has no money, come; yes, buy wine and milk, without money and without price!" "Come, for all things are ready!" "And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and whoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely!" for the assurance of the Bridegroom is, "Him that comes unto me I will never cast out." Nothing can be more **full** and **free**—than the invitations of grace! God's ministers are commissioned to go into all the world, to call men everywhere to repentance, to offer ...
pardon to the guiltiest,
peace to the most rebellious,
mercy to the scarlet-dyed transgressor!

These free offers are made without any prerequisites on our part of worth or merit. We are not to work out one part of our salvation—and expect Christ to do the rest. He must save us **wholly**—or not at all. All that is required of us is, to feel our sinfulness and our need of a Savior, and to take him as our sole Redeemer. He will work in and with us, to do the rest.

These free offers of grace are made in good faith on the part of God. He "is not a man that he should lie." He is not a deceiver, promising much—and fulfilling little. "Has he said it—and shall He not do it? has he spoken—and shall it not come to pass?" "Heaven and earth," he says, "shall pass away—but my word shall never pass away." So that we may rely with the most implicit trust in the free salvation offered to us by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

These offers of grace are also as **full** as they are **free**. They cover all sins, for "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin." They extend to **all our spiritual needs**, for Christ Jesus "is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." They leave nothing to be supplied by human means or merit, for we "are complete" in Christ." They open to us full and unending glories in the world to come, for, once there, we "shall go no more out forever."

II. The perverseness of the human heart

In making light of, and declining Gospel invitations. We might suppose that offers of mercy thus free and full would be accepted with delight, and that sin-burdened men would hasten to embrace the salvation offered "without money and without price;" but our experience teaches just the reverse, for it is at this point, that the perverseness and depravity of the human mind manifest themselves, in making light of and declining these invitations.

Of the **great majority** of those to whom the Gospel invitation come, may it be said, that they either "make **light** of it," or else "with one consent begin to make **excuse**." that which is the most pressing need of their souls for time and

for eternity, that which involves the highest interests of their moral natures—is made to occupy a subordinate place, or, too often, no place at all; while the farm, the merchandise, the cares of the family, things fleeting in themselves and comparatively of small value—are permitted to take an all-absorbing precedence. this is virtually saying that God's estimate of the *soul* and *sin* and *salvation* is wrong—and ours is right. and thus, acting according to the counsel of our own minds and the deceitfulness of our own hearts—we reject the overtures of grace, and continue on in sin and unbelief. Such a charge may shock the sensibilities of some, and they may deny that they are guilty of making light of the invitations of grace, or of excusing themselves from attendance on the Gospel feast.

It is true that you may not have made a mock of the truth, or openly scoffed at the ministers of God, or laughed at the ordinances of the Church; you may, on the contrary, regard the Bible with profound respect, and reverence His servants and His sanctuary with many kindly demonstrations. When the Sabbath bell rings out its call to prayer, you may bend your head in worship. When the organ peal fills the vaulted roof, you may lift up your voice in the swelling chant. When the ambassador for Jesus proclaims the truths of salvation, you may listen as unto a very lovely song of one that has a pleasant voice, and can play well upon an instrument." So that throughout your *external conduct*, there shall be visible no impropriety of word or deed. and yet, after all this, you may be fully obnoxious to the charge of the text.

We can illustrate this proposition by a single supposable case: You are sick; a physician has been called in, and after due examination of your symptoms, he has left certain prescriptions, which he assures you will relieve your disease. Your common sense, your experience, your judgment, confirm his words; but, in spite of all this, you refuse to follow his directions. You do not *laugh*

at them, the matter is too serious; you do not **scoff** at them, for your reason tells you that they are proper remedials; but you do not **take** the required medicines. on repeating his visit, the physician finds you no better; and learning that you had refused to take his prescriptions, he tells you that he is sorry that you "made light" of them. "Oh, no, sir," you reply, "I did not make light of them—I did not laugh at them or turn them into derision—I doubt not that they are very valuable." "But," interrupts the physician, "did you **follow** my directions?" "Why, no, sir, I did not." "And does not this simple refusal to do as I directed," he might say, "show that you make light of them—that you do not prize them? is it not treating me with the most practical levity and slight?"

The Great Physician of Souls has come to you and found you **languishing under the disease of sin**. "Your whole head is injured, your whole heart afflicted. From the sole of your foot to the top of your head there is no soundness—only wounds and welts and open sores!" He comes to you with the **Balm of Gilead**, and tells you what will cure your dreadful malady. His prescriptions commend themselves to your reason, judgment, and conscience. You will die unless you conform to His directions; yet day after day you hesitate, you put off compliance, refusing to take that which will make you spiritually sound and healthful in the sight of God. is not this making light of Christ in a manner insulting to Him and ruinous to your own soul?

Nothing can be plainer than the proposition, that we make light of that which is worthy of being received, and which it is important for us to receive, when we do not receive it into good and honest hearts. What more worthy of our reception, than the offers of grace in Christ Jesus? What more important to our eternal interests? Yet, not accepting them, not providing for our souls' highest needs—we are in very truth making light of them, to the peril of our

souls.

Should you, however, instead of silently neglecting Christ, attempt with much honeyed plausibility to **excuse** yourself from His service, pleading your daily cares and domestic duties in extenuation—your condition would not be much better.

Excuse yourself! **To whom?** to God your Creator for not obeying Him! to Christ your Redeemer for not loving Him! to the Holy Spirit the Sanctifier for doing despite unto His offered Grace!

Excuse yourself! **From what?** from the service of God! from union with Christ! from the renewing of the Holy Spirit! from peace of mind! from joy of heart! from hope of Heaven! from eternal life!

Excuse yourself! **For what?** for a few days' continuance in sin! for the fear of sneering friends! for the dread of coming out from the world! for lack of moral courage to acknowledge yourself as a sinner, needing salvation, and seeking it where only it can be found, at the foot of the cross! How will such conduct appear in a dying hour—when the vanities of the world are dissolving, and the realities of eternity rising into view? How will it appear at the judgment seat of Christ, before those open books, and that great white throne, and the once rejected Savior, then sitting there in His divine glory? God inviting—and man making light of the invitation! this is a wonder hitherto unheard of in the moral universe.

III. Righteous Vengeance

We notice the righteous vengeance which will overtake those who make light of the invitation, and excuse themselves from the feast.

In the parable of the Marriage of the King's Son, it is said, that when the king heard of the rejection of his invitation, "The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city!" this is an evident allusion to the fate that befell Jerusalem, where these very things came to pass. in the parable of the Great Supper, the master of the feast declared, "None of these men that were bidden, shall taste of my banquet;" while he who neglected to put on the wedding garment was "cast into outer darkness!" All these are **figurative illustrations of God's wrath** against the deliberate and wanton rejecters of the Lord Jesus; and they indicate the positive determination of the Most High, that He "will not in anyway clear the guilty."

As a God of holiness, He must, by the very necessities of His nature, punish sin as long as sin exists. this **punishment** of sin must also be commensurate with the **greatness** of the sin. and though, in one sense, all sins are great, because committed against a great God, and because they are violations of a great law; yet there is a **grade** in transgressions, rising in **degrees** of guilt from the simplest thought of evil—to the sin against the Holy Spirit, which, our Lord says, shall never be forgiven.

We cannot classify our sins, because we do not know their real malignity or influence. Yet we can easily see that transgressions such as are implied in making light of Christ, and refusing the overtures of grace, must be very grievous, and must evoke severe vengeance. and what we thus argue on principles of ordinary reason, the Bible declares, by setting forth in language of the most vivid and decided kind—the greatness and the woe, of those who thus draw upon themselves swift destruction.

But we turn from the consideration of these mournful yet impressive truths, to listen for a moment to a voice which speaks to us in one of the parables, uttering the sweet invitation, "Come, for all things are now ready!" It is the

voice of mercy, speaking from the very throne of God. It is a voice calling to each sin-stricken heart in tones of comfort—for it is full of promise, hope, and joy. It tells us that "all things are now ready" on Earth. The incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ—by which atonement was made for sin, and death and the grave stripped of their victories—have taken place, and their blessed results are now ready to be applied to the hearts and consciences of men. The Church on earth is ready to embrace you; the earthly ministers of Christ are waiting to receive you; the ordinances of grace are ready for your participation; so that in every particular we can say, "all things" on earth "are ready—come unto the marriage banquet!"

This blessed voice also tells us, "Come, for all things are now ready" in **Heaven**. Christ has swung open to us its long-closed door; and, having gone before to prepare the way, has fitted up those mansions in His Father's house, destined for the occupation of believers. Everything is prepared in Heaven: angels wait there to receive us; the spirits of the just watch for our coming; the gates of pearl are opened to admit us; the harp, and crown, and robe, and palm-branch are made ready for our use; the marriage banquet is already spread out beneath the sunless sky of glory; so that, in every particular, we can say, "all things" in Heaven "are ready, come unto the marriage."

And with this **invitation** there is also coupled the **assurance**, "and yet there is room!" There is room in the **Church** for more disciples. There is room in the **mercy of God** for the very chief of sinners. There is room in the **blood-filled Fountain** of Salvation for multitudes more of the vile and the degraded. There is room in the grace of the Holy Spirit for all classes, ages, sexes, stations, climates, and kindred.

There is room in Heaven—the number of its inhabitants is not yet completed; its "many mansions" are not yet all occupied; its wardrobe of wedding garments is not yet exhausted.

And not only **room** in Heaven—but **welcomes**; and not only welcomes—but **anthems of joy**, as one after another shall come from the North and from the South, from the East and from the West, and sit down, with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, to the marriage banquet of the Lamb.

If we perish now, after this full and free provision, the fault is all our own—for God still says to us in His holy Word, "Come, for all things are ready!" Come, for "yet there is room!"

The Ten Virgins^(TOC)

Matthew 25:1-13

"At that time the kingdom of Heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

"Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'

"'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'

"But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. and the door was shut. Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!'

"But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.'

"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour!"

The simple diction, the attractive similitudes, and the solemn moral of this parable—invest it with peculiar interest. Many ancient and modern writers have attempted to compose similar allegories—but in elegance, fitness, and didactic force—they fall far below this parable of our Lord.

We are here introduced into the stirring and picturesque scenes of an oriental marriage.

The nuptial ceremony in the East is always one of *display* and often *magnificence*, is full of *excitement*, and marked by many peculiar customs—an understanding of which is necessary to a full appreciation of this beautiful parable.

These marriage festivals lasted sometimes several days—but the period of greatest public interest was that when the bridegroom conducted his bride from her parent's house, to her future home. this was usually done at night, when the parties, accompanied by their respective friends, joined in glad procession, and the scene, lit up by countless torches, and enlivened by choral songs or instrumental music, was peculiarly exciting and delightful.

The custom still prevails in Asiatic countries, and we have been present at an Eastern wedding, where the ceremonies observed corresponded very much to those here described. We well remember the moving lamps glittering like so many fireflies in the darkness; the strains of music varying in volume, in measure, in expression—yet mostly jubilant; the advancing procession; the shout of those stationed at the bridegroom's house, as the head of the nuptial column came into sight, "behold the bridegroom comes!" and the expressions of joy and hilarity which lighted up every countenance and animated every heart, and while beholding this scene we felt, as we had never before done, the force and fidelity, as well as emphasis of the Parable of the Ten Virgins.

The *design* of this parable is to *enforce Christian watchfulness*; and nothing could more aptly illustrate its necessity, than the felicitous similitude here employed.

By "the kingdom of Heaven" is meant the state of things under the gospel dispensation.

By the "virgins," the members of Christ's church—the professors of his religion, who should be like virgins in the purity and innocence of their lives and conversation.

The number *ten* was doubtless mentioned because it was a favorite one among the Jews. According to the Mishna, a congregation consisted of ten people, and less than that number did not make one; and whenever there were ten people in a place, they were obliged to build a synagogue, etc., etc.

The *Lamps* represent the *profession* of godliness, the *Bridegroom* is Christ, his *Spouse* is the Church.

The words rendered respectively "wise" and "foolish," mean, the former: sensible, prudent, having sagacity and discernment. and the foolish: dull, sluggish and slow, evidencing the lack of those very qualities which make up the character of the wise. and the wisdom and folly of each five was seen in the fact mentioned by our Lord, "That those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

The obscure ideas which this passage conveys to an English reader, is made clear by a recurrence to Eastern customs. Rabbi Jarchi says that it was the custom in the land of Ishmael to bring the bride from her father's house to her

husband's house in the night, and to carry before her about ten staves. Upon the top of each staff was the form of a brazen dish, and in the midst of it pieces of garments, oil, and pitch, which they set on fire; holding these in one hand, they carry in the other a vessel full of oil, with which they replenish from time to time their else useless lamps.

The having or not having "Oil in their vessels with their lamps," is the *hinge* upon which turns the whole moral of the parable.

Many and very diverse have been the interpretations given of this emblem; and many a controversial battle has been fought upon this narrow verse.

Looking only at the *intention* of the parable, and the *circumstances* under which it was uttered—we feel warranted in saying, that while the "lamps" represent the outward profession of religion, the "oil in their vessels with their lamps," signifies the *grace of God* in the heart, by which only true religion can be nurtured and sustained; for wherever the Spirit of Christ is not, there, of course, is an absence of that oil of grace by which the professor can become "a burning and a shining light."

Resemblance

Taking then the wise and foolish virgins as exponents respectively of *true and false professors of religion*, let us notice first the points of *resemblance* between them:

They were both virgins in name and character, *outwardly* unimpeachable and chaste in conduct.

They were both attendant on the bridegroom, had received and obeyed the external calling which enrolled them as his attendants.

They were both invited to the marriage-feast, and had held out before them the bliss of that festive occasion, when they would sit down with the bridegroom at the nuptial supper.

They both had lamps, the **outward** signs and evidences of being attendant on the bridegroom, the symbols of a professing faith.

They both, while the bridegroom tarried, slumbered and slept; relapsed from a watchful state—into a careless, nodding, sleeping condition.

They both arose at the midnight cry, "Go out to meet him," and "trimmed their lamps," to comply with the summons.

Just so with the similarities with regard to true and false professors.

They both are all nominal Christians, visible and outward attendants on the bridegroom Christ.

They both have all the lamp of a holy profession, and maintain the same general character for virgin purity Christ.

They are both ...

strict in the performance of all moral duties,
constant in their attendance on the house of God,
give, perhaps liberally, for the support of the Gospel,
manifest much zeal for Christ, and
bear towards men, the form and visage of true devotion.

Dissimilarity

These are some of the points wherein the true and the false professor **agree**. They travel thus far in the same visible path, and the eye of the **world** cannot,

up to this point, detect any difference. But to the eye of Him who sees in secret—there is a marked and eternal dissimilarity. For, secondly, the points of *dissimilarity*, though not so numerous as those of resemblance, are very distinct and significant:

The wise virgins had taken *oil* in their vessels with their lamps—but the foolish virgins neglected this precaution, and when the first flame of enthusiasm or mental fervor was burnt out—they had no supply of grace to sustain the light of life.

They differed also in the fact that, while, at the midnight cry, the lamps of the wise virgins were still burning, and only needed "trimming," the lamps of the foolish had altogether "gone out." Consequently, while the one class was prepared to go out to meet the bridegroom—the other was embarrassed and unprepared. The midnight hour was no time wherein to buy the needed oil; and, though they attempted to repair their indiscretion, it was too late. The wise virgins, joining the procession with trimmed and burning lamps, passed on in the bridegroom's train, and "the door was shut!"

The broad difference thus indicated still exists between the *sincere Christian* and the *hypocrite*.

The *lamps* of the false professor often go out in *this life*, when they who have begun in the spirit, end in the flesh, and they break out perhaps into open apostasy. How often, in the language of Job, is "the candle of the wicked" thus "put out," for they have not, with the lamp of profession—a heart filled with the *oil of grace*. this oil of grace, lodged in the heart—is the sole replenisher of the lamp of profession.

Each Christian's heart must be like the bowl of the golden candlestick which Zechariah saw in vision in the Sanctuary, wherein was kept the oil—pure—

costly—elaborately prepared; which, through golden pipes, "fed the seven lamps on the top thereof." Every lamp of the Christian profession must draw its *oil* through these golden pipes of the Sanctuary, and from this golden bowl, filled with the oil of God's Spirit.

That life of outward devotion, of external profession, which is not daily fed by the indwelling grace of the Holy Spirit—is a foolish virgin's lamp. It will do while they slumber and sleep—but will fill them with sore dismay when the cry shall be made at midnight: "Behold the Bridegroom comes; go out to meet him!" when they shall discover—alas! too late—that they have "no oil in their vessels with their lamps."

Results

Such being the points of *similarity* and *dissimilarity* between the wise and foolish virgins—we now turn to examine the respective *results* in the case of each.

The *wise* virgins, though sleeping when the midnight cry was heard, "arose, and trimmed their lamps," and were soon in a condition to go out and meet the bridegroom. Joining the nuptial procession, they moved along to the bridegroom's house, and "went in with him to the marriage."

The *foolish* virgins, like the wise virgins, arose and trimmed their lamps—but having no oil with which to replenish them, sought to borrow some from their sister virgins, and failing in this, "went to buy" some. While thus engaged, the bridegroom came. The procession moved on; the wise virgins passed in to the feast. and when afterward the other virgins came, they found the streets dark and deserted, and when they reached the bridegroom's house, "the door was shut!" in vain they cried, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" His reply was, "*I*

don't know you!"

In like manner, will the ***false professors*** fail to gain admittance to the marriage-supper of the Lamb in Heaven. Lacking the ***oil of grace***, they will not be able to join with the bridegroom's train; and when in despair they besiege the ear of God with the cry, "Lord, Lord, open unto us!"—they will find the door shut, and will hear the voice of the Heavenly Bridegroom saying from within, ***"I don't know you!"***

There is no entreaty that will then avail—the virgin chasteness of an ***outward morality***; the lamp of a once bright profession; the companionship of the wise virgins—will each be worthless. What is needed at that midnight hour, and to gain an entrance through that open door to the marriage-feast—is the burning lamp fed with the oil of grace, and shining out in the holy faith and pious works of one made "wise" by the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord Jesus gives us the ***moral*** of this parable in the words, "Watch, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man comes!"

Watchfulness

Is an essential requisite of Christian character; and this watchfulness must be exercised in reference to things within and things without.

We must watch the ***affections*** of the heart—their character, their direction, their force.

We must watch the operations of our ***minds***—their motions, thoughts, imaginations.

We must watch the outgoing ***desires*** of our soul—their aim, their tendency,

their exciting cause.

We must watch also our outward *temptations*—the snares spread for our feet, the wiles of the adversary, and the manifold arts and transformations whereby he lays in wait to deceive.

If it is true in politics, where we have but *human* enemies to contend with, that the price of liberty "is eternal vigilance"—much more in religion, where we wrestle not against "flesh and blood—but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world," is it true that the price of eternal life is unrelaxing watchfulness.

The *unwatching*—will soon be a *conquered* Christian.

The *Christian's lamp needs daily replenishing* from the fountain of all light. The *oil of grace* needs daily renewal, and must be daily sought for at the mercy seat.

Especially is there a necessity for this constant *preparation to meet the Bridegroom*, in view of the uncertainty of the time when He will appear.

That "He will come and will not tarry," is a revealed and certain truth. But *when* He will come—the week, the day, the hour—we know not. *How* He will come—suddenly or slowly, at home or abroad, with lingering disease or unforeseen accident—we know not. Hence the necessity of being *always prepared*, of having our lamps always "trimmed," and of having "oil in our vessels with our lamps," that when the summons comes, we may be prepared to obey it, and go in unto the marriage supper of the Lamb in Heaven!

There are, then, in the visible church, such people as correspond in character to the "foolish virgins;" and it befits us then to mark well the points wherein they are deficient; and seek, where only it can be found, at the throne of grace

—for that wisdom which is liberally given by God, that fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom, and by which we are made "wise" unto everlasting life.

There is, then, such a thing, as an *oilless lamp*. Many such lamps are carried by the professed attendants of the Bridegroom, Christ; and it behooves us to see to it that there is oil in our vessels, the oil of grace, as without it we have but "a name to live—but are dead."

There is, then, to be heard a midnight cry. "Behold the Bridegroom comes, go out to meet Him!" and we must see to it that we arise and trim our lamps, that Death surprises us not in our slumber, and find us *unprepared* for the summons that must soon ring upon our ears.

There will be found, at last, by every possessor of a lamp which has "gone out"—an unopened door and a rebuking Savior. So it is of the utmost importance that we should diligently seek every needed preparation, so that we may go in with the Bridegroom to the marriage supper, and not come at the last, after fruitless effort to buy the oil of grace at human shambles, amidst the unillumined darkness of the midnight of death—to that unopened door, only to hear from within, in response to our knocks, and our cry "Lord, Lord, open unto us," the stern rebuff, "Truly I say unto you: *I don't know you!*"

That we may, therefore, avoid the doom of the foolish virgins, and secure the position of the wise virgins—let us give all diligence to our Lord's injunction, "Watch, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of Man comes!"

Pounds and Talents^(TOC)

Matthew 25:14-30

*"The kingdom of Heaven is like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. to one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the **five** talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the **two** talents gained two more. But the man who had received the **one** talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.*

*"After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the **five** talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.' "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'*

*"The man with the **two** talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.' "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'*

*"Then the man who had received the **one** talent came.*

'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

"His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

""Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. for everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. and throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!""

Luke 19:12-27

Jesus said: "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten pounds. 'Occupy until I come,' he said.

"But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.'

"He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it.

"The first one came and said, 'Sir, your pound has earned ten more.' ""Well done, my good servant!' his master replied.

'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.'

"The second came and said, 'Sir, your pound has earned five more.' "His master answered, 'You take charge of five cities.'

"Then another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.' "His master replied, 'I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? Why then didn't you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?'

""Then he said to those standing by, 'Take his pound away from him and give it to the one who has ten pounds.' ""Sir,' they said, 'he already has ten!' "He replied, 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away. But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me!'"

These parables are **similar**, without being identical. They were delivered on different occasions, and for different purposes; but though they have some points of divergence, they have many of convergence, and are sufficiently alike in parabolical structure and practical design to be treated under one head, as enforcing the one great truth pertaining to the **trusts** confided to us by God: "Occupy until I come!"

In the parable of the **Pounds**, spoken in the house of Zaccheus, and recorded

by Luke, where it is said, "A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return;" and of whom it is subsequently added, "but his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, "we will not have this man to reign over us;" there is evidently a historical allusion to the political condition of Judea under the Roman power.

But, while it had this historical basis, it had also a **prophetic** aspect; for that "nobleman" was Christ, "heir of all things," "the first-born of every creature." that "traveling into a far country," was the coming down of the Lord Jesus from Heaven to earth. that "kingdom" which he came "to receive," was the Church. that "calling his own servants, and delivering unto them his goods," was the selection of His Apostles and ministers, and the committing to them the "gifts" and "graces" which are the spiritual "pounds" and "talents" of the Church. that "taking his journey," in the one case, and that "return," in the other, was His ascension into Heaven. that "hatred" of "his citizens," and their sending "a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us," was the secret enmity and open opposition of the human heart against the spiritual reign of Jesus Christ.

In both of these parables, we find that certain moneys were given to certain servants.

The first bestows "talents:" giving to one "five talents," or about six thousand dollars; "to another two," or nearly twenty-four hundred dollars; "to another, one," or twelve hundred dollars.

The second gives to each of ten people a pound (mina), equivalent to twenty dollars.

In the first parable, our Lord was addressing His Apostles only, to whom had been specially entrusted large gifts, for the planting, erecting, teaching,

governing of the Church; well expressed by the term "talents," as distinguished from those lower—yet still important gifts, which pertain to private Christians, and which, when Jesus addressed His "disciples," He called by the humbler designation of "pounds." in both instances, however, the pounds and the talents were given to be *improved* and *augmented*, by such an occupancy or *use* as would increase the amount originally bestowed, and bring in large profits to the holder.

Years roll on; the several servants pursue different courses with their talents and pounds; until, "after a long time," as Matthew expresses it, "the lord of those servants comes and reckons with them;" or, as Luke says, the returned nobleman "commanded these servants to be called unto him to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much each man had gained by trading."

On presenting themselves before their respective lords, it is found, that some *improve* their means more than others. He to whom five talents had been given had "traded with the same, and made five more talents;" "likewise he who had received two, he also had gained another two."

One of those to whom one pound had been delivered came, "saying, Lord, your pound has gained ten pounds;" and another reported, "Lord, your pound has gained five pounds."

In the case of the recipient of the talents, there was simply a *duplicating* of the original sum received, evincing *diligence* and *fidelity* in the trust committed to them; but in the case of the pounds, the increase was vastly greater; instead of being twofold, it was, in one instance, tenfold, and in another, fivefold; and this, too, with less original capital, thereby showing a greater zeal in the lord's service, and deeper wisdom in business plans than

those to whom had been committed the more valuable talents.

And as our Lord uttered no words without meaning, may not this be designed to show us, by a delicate yet truthful allusion, that not those alone who receive even two or five talents, the higher denomination of God's gifts, shall be rewarded with kingly munificence; but that those who *rightly employ* even the humbler trust of a single pound, may, by faithful effort, so improve the little, as to become a ruler over ten cities or over five cities; far outstripping, in real increase of grace and fruit, those to whom had been entrusted higher gifts and larger portions.

It is not those who have "talents," costly though they be, and minister as they may in the high places of the Church, admired, honored, blessed—who will prove themselves the most active accumulators of the Divine blessing, or receive the most flattering plaudits. on the contrary, some humbler Christian, scarcely known even in the Church to which he belongs, some diligent cultivator of his single "pound," may, through prayer and faith and zeal, bring in from his small portion a larger revenue of glory to God and blessedness for souls, than the more richly endowed and more conspicuous possessor of his Lord's bounty.

The *rewards* bestowed upon these profitable servants, varied with their several degrees of *fidelity*. The possessor of *five* talents, whose industry had "gained five more talents," receives the approbation of his lord, and the assurance that he would make him "ruler over many things." the diligent improver of *two* talents obtains the same commendation, with the promise that as he "had been faithful over a few things," he would make him "ruler over many things." While both received the invitation "enter into the joy of your lord;" implying, according to Oriental usage, that the lord had celebrated his return by a sumptuous feast, to which these his servants had been invited,

and by this invitation and participation of the feast, received freedom, and thus as "freedmen" were designated to rule over others.

The indefiniteness which attaches to the rewards in the parable of the talents, does not obtain in that of the pounds. Here all is distinct: for he whose pound had gained ten pounds, and he whose pound had multiplied to five, were severally made rulers over ten and five cities; in evident allusion to the custom formerly prevalent in the East, of assigning the government or revenues of a certain number of cities as rewards to meritorious officers, as Artaxerxes assigned several cities to Themistocles for his services in the cause of Persia; of which cities, Myus was to supply him with viands, Magnesia with bread, Lampsacus with wines.

The **disproportion** between fidelity in the use of a single pound of Hebrew money, and the reward consequent thereon, of being made a ruler over five or ten cities, cannot fail to arrest attention. and yet how beautifully does this apparent disproportion illustrate a marked feature of the Divine economy, whereby God rewards not deeds—but **motives**; not results—but **principles**. So here the principles of **faithful zeal** to the **humblest trust** is requited—by transferring that lowly laborer to a broader field of action, where this principle, so fully tested in small matters, has now scope for noble and efficient development.

And a blessed thought it is, that we are not rewarded so much for the outward and visible ministrations of duty, as for the **inward and spiritual principles** which guide our souls, which principles indeed are not of our own getting—but are implanted in us by the Holy Spirit. Hence it follows, that the humblest servant of God may attain to heights in glory, and reaches of power, far above what may be accorded to the more seemingly active and fruitful professor, because of the different **principles** which were the motive power in

each.

In both parables, however, we find one instance of *misimprovement of the money bestowed*. The recipient of "one talent," after wrongfully accusing his lord as "a hard man," tells him, "I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the earth." and one of the receivers of the pound brings it back, saying, "Behold, here is your pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin;" at the same time laying grievous things to his charge. Their lord answers in both cases—if you knew that I was an austere or hard man, "taking up what I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow"—you should have put my money "into the bank," and then at my coming I would have received mine own with *interest*.

By pursuing such a course you would have lost nothing, even though I was such a one as you represent me to be; while my money, instead of lying idle, would have been gathering the usual percent of interest from those whose business it was to exchange the different coins of Eastern currency for the shekel of the temple; and who thus, upon their little tables or counters, carried on a profitable trade with "the strangers, Jews, and proselytes," who resorted to Jerusalem for business or devotion.

Unable to answer a word in extenuation of such neglect, they are both deprived of the sum originally placed in their keeping, and cast as "unprofitable servants" into outer darkness; or as *enemies* of their lord, are brought and slain before him. Such was the deserved end of those who could impugn the honesty, clemency, and goodness of their respective masters, as well as abuse, by not rightly employing, the trusts committed to their care. The *bearing* of these parables is very plain, and the *truths* they teach are very important.

God has committed to us certain interests which pertain to man as a moral and accountable being—the present and future interests of the soul. These, like the ten pounds to the ten servants, are committed alike to all. But, though God has given a soul and a conscience, and the light of nature, to every child of Adam, and for the occupancy of which *trust* each will be called into judgment at the great day—yet do we also learn, by the parable of the Talents, that, over and above these interests, which are common to all, there are *special deposits of ability and grace* made to some individuals, which bring them under heavier responsibility and demand of them peculiar fidelity and zeal.

Among these may be mentioned:

First, Superior Mental Endowments

The varieties of mind are as great as the varieties of features and temperament; and while some people evidence so low a rationality, as to seem but one link removed from a high order of instinct—others exhibit powers of intellect so gigantic, so noble, so elevated above the mass of minds, as to compel the homage of the world. Whenever God has bestowed these superior endowments, it has always been with the injunction, "Occupy until I come."

He did not bestow them merely to subserve individual aggrandizement, that the possessor might leave behind him the impress of his genius stamped upon the laws, literature, science, or institutions of the world; but to cultivate them to their utmost capacity, and put them to their highest efforts in advancing the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Not that all minds should occupy themselves solely on religious topics; not that all such mighty men of thought should preach the Gospel; but that the ultimate aim and tendency of all

mental efforts, on whatever subject they may be occupied—should be "to glorify our Father who is in Heaven."

We assert, without the fear of contradiction, that there is no department of solid learning which does not, if rightly cultivated, lead the mind directly or indirectly to God, and none which cannot directly or indirectly be made to augment his glory. All the lines of **knowledge** center in God; and the circle of **sciences**, as it is called, is but the earthly circumference of that wisdom which radiates from the Omniscient Mind. The more diligently, therefore, we follow up any one of these radii to its center—the nearer do we get to God. Yet the vast majority of great-minded men cast off God and restrain prayer, and, in the selfish pursuit of personal **honor**, and the embalmment of **fame**, employ their powers rather **against**, than for, God; rather to the dishonor than the honor, of their Creator.

It is lamentable to observe, even with superficial eye, the **enormous waste and misapplication of the human mind**. See intellects of the highest order, bending almost angelic energies to the purpose of ministering to the amusement, the pride, the sensuality, the taste, the pomp of this fallen world! There has, for example, been more waste of mental strength in striving after the batons and ribbons and titles of military glory, than would suffice to convert the world to Christ. The intellect which has been lavished upon the **drama**, in writing and acting **plays**—would, if concentrated on the advancement of Divine truth, have made the earth "a dwelling-place of righteousness."

What a glorious spectacle would earth present, could we behold all its noble intellects bowing, like the wise men from the East, at the feet of Jesus, and presenting unto him "the gold, frankincense, and myrrh" of their sanctified minds! for every mind, no matter how tall, how strong, how rich, which is not

consecrated to Jesus—is morally lost, and can never fulfill the purposes of its creation. An intellect, unbaptized by the blood of Christ, and unsanctified by the Holy Spirit, is an immortal curse! the curse may not come in this life—but it will fasten upon it beyond the grave!

Ever keep in view the solemn fact, that God has given you minds to educate for eternity, and to be expended in his glory; that he has enjoined upon you, "Occupy until I come;" and that you can only fulfill the injunction by cultivating all your powers as under His eye, and for the bringing in of His kingdom.

Secondly, Superior means of Personal, Social, or Civil Influence

As among the talents or pounds committed to our care, we mention, Secondly, ***Superior means of Personal, Social, or Civil Influence***. These may arise from birth, education, fortune, standing in society, or personal endowments. Through the operation of one or more of these, you come to be regarded with more respect or attention; your opinions are more esteemed; your views are sought for, your wishes consulted; and you find yourself wielding an ***influence*** more or less potent upon the circle around you.

Whatever enables you then to mold or guide the opinions and actions of your fellow men—is a talent, a pound committed to you, with the injunction of the Divine Giver, "Occupy until I come;" and hence you are bound to make your ***influence*** healthful in all its operations, and ***beneficial*** wherever exerted.

God demands that this influence should be on His side; that all the advantages which He has conferred upon you—should be used in His service, and not be ***selfishly*** employed in seeking ***personal*** or family aggrandizement

and distinction. It is a lamentable fact that most of the *influence* which goes out from the educated, wealthy, and high-born classes—is baneful and debasing. They are the leaders in all *sinful* fashions and *worldly* schemes—but very rarely are they found doing the work of the Lord. Yet what a change would pass over society, if those who stand at the head-springs of social life and civil affairs—directed their aim to the spiritual welfare of the souls of men, and put forth their influence under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit! this is what God requires; this is the purpose for which He conferred these advantages, and for their proper use and occupancy, He will at the last day make rigid inquisition.

Thirdly, Wealth

Is another of the talents committed to the occupancy of some. As "we brought nothing into the world—and can carry nothing out of it," it is evident that what financial means we have are the gift of God; and hence, we are exhorted in the Bible, "you shall remember the Lord your God—for it is he who gives you power to get wealth." the property which we call ours, we hold only as tenants at will. God is the proprietor of all; we are but the *stewards* of His bounty, solemnly responsible to Him for the disbursement of that wealth, be it more or less. If now we *squander* it on our own selves or lusts or pleasures; if we withhold it from Christ, and refuse to use the Master's means for the Master's work. If when *self* calls—we pour it out freely; but when *God* calls—we dole it out with reluctance; are we not sinning against our own souls and a holy God?

There is much force in the word "occupy;" it means, literally, to trade, to negotiate, as in commerce or business; and so we are to trade or carry on a *spiritual commerce* with the wealth which God has given us. We are to put it

out to the *bankers*—those benevolent treasuries where we exchange dollars for Bibles, tracts, missionaries, Sunday-schools. We are to make investments in the *Bank of Christian Enterprise*, that we may gain the interest, the *dividends of grace and love* which He imparts to all who spend and are spent in His service.

We are to trade with our wealth in such ways—that we may lay up treasures in Heaven; for every investment of worldly means, made in the cause of Christ, and for His sake—will repay us, not only a large percentage of happiness here—but be honored by our Lord with special grants of favor in the world to come.

Fourthly, Religious Privileges

We might indicate many other talents committed to our trust; but time allows of but one more specification, and that is, our *Religious Privileges*. Greater gifts than these, no man can receive. The pardon of God; the sacrifice of Christ; the renewing of the Holy Spirit; the revelation of the Divine will; the ministry of reconciliation; the Church of the living God; the ordinances of grace! Can we adequately comprehend the *value* of talents like these?

In the possession of them we are peculiarly distinguished, "the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage." But for what *purpose* were these given? Have we sought the offered pardon? Have we been washed in the sacrificial blood of the Redeemer? Have we been sanctified by the Spirit of Holiness? Have we made *God's Word* a light to our feet and a lamp to our path? Have we been led by this ministry to "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world?" Have we united ourselves to this mystical body of Christ? Have we been nourished and strengthened by the sacraments of Christ's institution? Have we, in fine, so spiritually traded

with these "unspeakable gifts," as, thereby, to make rich increase in grace and godliness? Are we diligently "occupying" them until we are called to "enter into the joy of our Lord?"

Final Reckoning

But the *Final Reckoning* is before us, and let us briefly mark its results.

Those who have traded with their pounds and talents, and duplicated or multiplied them, are commended with the plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servants!" They are bidden to enter into the joy of their Lord, and are appointed to rule in the heavenly kingdom. They are made to sit "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." They "are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb." They "judge angels." They are crowned and anointed "as kings and priests unto God."

On the other hand, those who despised their Lord, and wrapped their pound up "in a napkin," or buried their talent "in the earth"—are "cast into outer darkness," and are visited with the pains and *eternal woe!* and the one great thought which, like a red-hot share, shall plough its furrows in their inmost souls, is, that they had *talents* committed to their trust; they had *pounds*, with which to trade; but, by their own obstinacy and sinfulness—have *willfully put themselves into that place of torment*, "where their *worm* never dies, and their *fire* is never quenched."

And, lest any should think that, because they have *moderate* or *common abilities*, and are not among the gifted, the wealthy, the influential, therefore they will not be condemned—our Savior has brought out very distinctly the fact that the *misapplication of small abilities* will meet with deserving punishment. Do not say, "Since so *little* is committed to my charge—that it

matters not how I administer that little. What signifies the little, whether it be done or left undone?" for God requires as much fidelity and zeal in those to whom **little** is given—as in those to whom much is bestowed. The misimprovement of one talent, the hiding away of a one-pound ability—will call out the judgment of God.

Remember, also, that, in both cases of delinquency, the servants did not **waste** or **destroy** the money given them—they only allowed it to lie idle and unimproved. this was their sin; and the simple **misimprovement** of even one-pound abilities, the allowing to lie idle and unaccumulating but a single talent—is a crime so great in the sight of God, who has entrusted us with these for the promotion of our salvation, and the advancement of His glory, that He will punish it with casting such **spiritual idlers**, such **moral sluggards**—into outer darkness, "where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Every motive that can influence human conduct, urges us to be faithful to the **abilities** and **endowments** which God has given us. The **love** that we should feel for the Giver, the value of the **trusts** committed to our care, the short **time** in which we are permitted to occupy them, the prolific increase which the right use of our pounds and talents will produce, the certainty of our Lord's return to inquire: "how much every man had gained by trading;" the **fearful doom** which awaits the **neglecter** and **idler** even of the smallest trust, and the **magnificent rewards** of glory, of praise, of authority, of sovereignty, which are promised to the diligent and the faithful—all conspire to press upon us the duty of rightly occupying our several talents, until, gaining for our Lord a revenue of glory here by their spiritual increase—He will say to each of us, at the last, "**Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord!**"

The Good Samaritan^(TOC)

Luke 10:30-37

*"A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. a **priest** happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a **Levite**, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a **Samaritan**, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'*

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" the expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

The **law of benevolence** never received a more beautiful illustration than in the parable of the Good Samaritan. The tact with which it was introduced, and the judicious selection of its circumstances, are only equaled by the felicity of its similitude and the force of its appeal.

For the purpose of putting to the proof Christ's knowledge and wisdom, an *expert in the law*, on one occasion, asked Him the momentous question, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" As one conversant with the law, our Lord referred him back to the law, and asked him what that said upon the subject. He immediately returned the prompt reply, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." Jesus replied, "You have answered right; do this, and you shall live."

But the expert in the law was not prepared to fulfill the broad provisions of this law, and hence, in order to justify any remissness, or to excuse the performance of his duty under the plea of ignorance, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" for the Pharisees, to which sect the expert in the laws mostly belonged, acknowledged none as neighbors, but those of their own faith and nation.

Instead of giving a categorical reply, our Lord brings before him the case of a man, who, on his journey from Jerusalem to Jericho, about fifteen miles to the south-west, on the river Jordan, fell among the thieves which infested the lurking places of that wilderness road. These bandits not merely robbed the traveler of his money—but "stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead."

While thus lying weltering in his blood, "a *priest* happened to be going down the same road," for thousands of priests and Levites dwelt at Jericho, and passed to and fro as they went up to Jerusalem to minister before the Lord, or returned from the Temple, having finished their course of service.

This priest saw the wounded man—but, instead of pausing to alleviate his suffering, and thus fulfilling, only in a higher degree, the Levitical law which

declared, "You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fall down by the way, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely help him to lift them up again"—"he passed by on the other side."

Soon a **Levite** came to the place, and, moved by a curiosity that had in it no element of compassion, "came and looked on him;" saw his helpless state; and yet, unmoved by the sight, he also "passed by on the other side."

But that which the wounded man's own countrymen refused to do, the nation's enemy, a **Samaritan**, did; for "a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him."

This compassion was no mere barren emotion—but **active** and **practical**. He went to him where he lay in his blood; and bandaged his wounds, pouring on **wine**—the styptic qualities of which were well known; and allayed the pain of the wounds with the soothing **oil** of Samaria; carefully binding up his wounds, and preparing him for removal from his painful position.

Nor did his compassion end here. He set the miserable man "on his own donkey;" and, walking by his side to support him in his seat and to guide the donkey—he "brought him to an inn," and there tarried with him all night, ministering those attentions which the traveler so much needed, over and above those which he had received at the wayside.

On the morrow, before he left to go on his journey, he paid the innkeeper in advance, for the care of the sick man—giving him two denarii—a sum equal to the full pay of a laborer for two days, and therefore ample for the needs of the sick man until the Samaritan could return again. Having committed him to the care of the innkeeper, with the promise, "when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have," the compassionate Samaritan departed.

Spreading out this scene before the eyes of the expert in the law, our Lord puts to him the question, "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" the expert in the law replied, "He who showed mercy on him;" a correct judgment, and one which settled at once the great principle of *moral relationship between man and man*.

It was not possible for our Lord to take stronger antagonistic elements whereby to illustrate the *fusing power of neighborly affection*, than the Jew and the Samaritan. There existed between the two peoples, a national hatred of the most implacable kind. The Samaritans had built on Mount Gerizim a temple, in opposition to the one at Jerusalem; they had established a priesthood in rivalry of the Aaronic order; they rejected all of the Sacred Scriptures but the five books of Moses; they paid no heed to the tradition of the elders, which the Jews so tenaciously held; and though, according to the glosses of the Pharisees, the Jews might buy from the Samaritans, they were not to borrow anything from them, were not to receive them into their houses, were not to accept from them any kindness, and were bound under an *anathema* not to eat or drink with them. Thus, as the woman of Sychar truly said to Jesus as he sat at Jacob's well, "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans;" and thus also, when the enemies of our Lord wished to stigmatize Him with the most contemptuous epithet, they termed him "a *Samaritan* who had a demon!"

When, therefore, Jesus selected, as the representative of that love which he would inculcate, the deeds of a despised Samaritan, and when he compelled Jewish lips to utter praises to the compassion and kindness of this "alien and stranger to the commonwealth of Israel," he gave expression in the most forcible form possible, to the broad, binding, universal nature of that second table of the Law, which Himself had summed up in the command, "You shall

love your neighbor as yourself."

Those who, like Origen in the early ages of the Church, search for a **hidden and mysterious sense** under the plain and literal text, interpret this parable in reference to the fall and recovery of man. Such is the explanation made by Luther and Melancthon, in former days; by the Baptist commentator John Gill, by the learned Jones of Nayland, and by the recent work of Trench, to say nothing of minor and uninfluential authorities.

These writers differ about many of the details of the parable—but their general views may be thus expressed: the "certain man" is "Adam as he is the head and representative of his race." the going "down from Jerusalem to Jericho" is emblematical of his going out from Paradise into a world of thorns and briars. His falling "among thieves" indicates the malignant powers of Hell, who assail the sinner and rob him of his heavenly birthright. His being stripped "of his clothing," marks his despoliation of the robe of original innocence. His "wounded" state shows the work of sin upon man, which makes him, "from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, to be full of wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores, which have neither been healed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." Their "leaving him half dead" exemplifies the fact that Adam did not die in body the day in which he sinned—but that having pronounced against him the sentence of death, he may in truth have been declared "half dead." By the **Priest** and **Levite** is meant the Patriarchal (as in that age each head of the family was priest in his own house) and the Levitical dispensation, which, of themselves, could do nothing to recover lost man, "for it was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin." "But what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," was at length effected by Him whom the Jews called "a Samaritan," even Jesus Christ. The **journey** which He took was that

of His incarnation, by which He "traveled in the greatness of His strength" from Heaven to earth, and coming in the capacity of a Great Physician, He had oil and wine. The *wine* of His own cleansing and purifying blood, and the *oil* of His own anointing grace, which heals all our infirmities. He is said to set him on His own animal, because of man's own inability to move by himself in the direction of his salvation. His being brought to an *inn* represents his admission to the visible Church; the ministry is "the innkeeper." the Old and New Testaments "are the two denarii" which this "Host" is to expound and administer as being steward of the manifold grace of God.

Such is the *drift* of these *ingenious interpretations*. They are very prettily wrought up, and, to some extent, perhaps, profitable; but such imaginations will not admit of a close scrutiny, and lead us away from the real intent of our Lord when he spoke the parable.

There may very often be parallels and coincidences between these beautiful similitudes and certain other truths of Scripture history, or doctrines of revelation—but these must not lead us astray from the plain design of the parable, which, in nearly every instance, can be ascertained by carefully studying its context and its bearing.

The *plain import* of this parable seems to be to teach us the *necessity of actively obeying the second great commandment*, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," as an essential prerequisite to inheriting eternal life.

First, Benevolence is Not to be Circumscribed By National Boundaries

It urges us to this duty, first, by showing that ***benevolence is not to be circumscribed by national boundaries***. Because the ancient Jews were prohibited from being familiar with idolatrous nations, and were enjoined to maintain a perpetual enmity with Amalek and the seven nations of Canaan, whom God had cast out before them and devoted to ruin—they came to regard themselves as warranted to ***hate*** all of mankind but their own nation; and did, in a great degree, confine their love and regard to their own kindred and people. As the Jews were, in an especial manner, the chosen people of the one living and true God—so were they particularly required to hate the ***ways*** and uproot the ***idolatries*** of the Canaanite nations, who were ever striving to seduce them from the worship of Jehovah.

On this point, the Divine injunctions were rigorous and inflexible; and properly so, because, as ***familiarity with sin*** lessens the hatred of it; and fellowship with transgressors insensibly begets a following in their steps; hence, God would break off all fellowship with such wicked nations, that He might preserve "unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Yet at the same time, the laws which God enjoined upon the Jews, in respect to strangers who happened in their land as travelers, or who came to sojourn there, were of the most lenient and tenderly protective kind. "You shall not oppress the stranger; for you know the heart of a stranger, seeing that you were strangers in the land of Egypt."

The time, however, had now arrived for breaking down this national seclusion. The purpose of God, in fencing off the Jews from other nations, and constituting them emphatically a ***theocracy***, had been accomplished. The Messiah had come. The ***Christian dispensation*** was opening up to view, and that dispensation was not designed for one nation or people only—but for the

whole world. Christianity knows no geographical **boundaries**, no **limits**, no **barriers** of language, customs, climates, pursuits. It recognizes no **distinctions** of gender, of color, of estate, of education. It represents us all as of one blood, the offspring of a common Father, for whom is provided a common Redeemer, and before whom lies a common **death**, a common **judgment**, a common **eternity**.

To meet this wonderful enlargement of God's scheme of grace, which lay folded up in the Jewish theocracy, as the germ in the seed corn—there was required a new promulgating and a more vigorous enforcement of the duties of the second table of the Divine law. that promulgation of the law our Savior made when He summed up the decalogue in two commands, on which He told us hung "all the law and the prophets." and that vigorous enforcement of this second great command, our Savior made in the touching parable now before us. and what our Lord thus **taught**—He practiced. National boundaries did not circumscribe his compassion. The Roman centurion, the Syro-Phoenician mother, the woman of Samaria, partook of His benevolence. and herein He has left us an example **not to permit our charities to be pent up within the narrow bounds of our own state or nation**—but, overleaping these, to find in every child of Adam, no matter what his birth, his education, his position, his abode—a "neighbor," an object of regard, and, if need be, of compassion.

The acknowledgment of the expert in the law, that he who had "showed mercy" to the wounded man, had most proved himself a neighbor, even though he was a Samaritan. and the solemn injunction, "Go and do likewise;" make it imperative on us to practice similar compassion to all our race, and like liberality of **mind** and **heart** and **purse**.

Secondly, Not to Circumscribe our Benevolence by our religious sympathies

The parable teaches us, secondly, not to circumscribe our benevolence by our *religious* sympathies.

Those of the same "household of faith" may have more claims upon our kindness—but not to the exclusion of others. The Apostle's injunction is, "Do good unto *all* men;" and he adds, because of the nearer affinity into which religion draws us, "*especially* unto those who are of the household of faith."

Nothing could exceed the bitterness of the religious enmity between the Jew and the Samaritan. With rival temples, rival priests, rival altars, rival sacrifices, rival kingdoms—each stigmatized the other as idolaters, and waged mutual persecutions with a deadliness of hatred peculiar to religious animosities. Yet in this parable, the wounded Jew, whom the Priest and Levite of his own nation heeded not in the hour of his extremity—was succored and relieved by the hated Samaritan. He did not stop to calculate the force of his religious differences; he did not pause on his journey to taunt and revile this helpless Jew; but, as soon as he saw his necessitous condition, "he had compassion on him."

Religious differences, then, should have nothing to do with enlarged Christian benevolence. Sectarian charity is selfish charity, because based on motives of personal or denominational aggrandizement. Had the Samaritan thus reasoned—he never would have relieved the plundered Jew. Had Jesus thus thought—he never would have spoken this parable; for this rebukes that narrow spirit, and inculcates a ***broad philanthropy*** which disregards the

fences and *boundaries* of sects and denominations, and which is willing to expend itself on everyone who needs attention, because each sufferer whom our charities can reach, is the "neighbor" whom we are bound to relieve.

He who confines his benevolence within the limits of his religious creed ... casts dishonor upon the God whom he pretends to worship, disregards the plain commands of the Bible, and manifests a narrowness of mind and illiberality of spirit, degrading to the Christian name!

Thirdly, Not to Limit Our Sympathy and Benevolence By Personal Friendships

This parable teaches us, thirdly, not to limit our sympathy and benevolence by personal friendships. Between the Jew and the Samaritan there was no social fellowship. The Jew cursed the Samaritan publicly in the synagogue; declared that he who received one into his house was laying up curses for his children; and would no more eat of their food than they would taste swine's meat! and this enmity, manifesting itself through all the minute fellowship of adjoining nations, was fully reciprocated by the Samaritan, who sought in every way to annoy and vex the Jew. But all this weighed nothing in the case before us. Nor should such personal considerations weigh with us.

In his sermon on the mount, our Lord remarked, "You have heard that it has been said, You shall love your neighbor—and hate your enemy;" this was the moral code of the Pharisees and Scribes, in which God's law had been mutilated by human traditions; but Christ recovers His law from these Talmudic perversions, by the authoritative command, "But I say unto you:

love your enemies; bless those who curse you; do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."

This is the *sublime morality* of the Gospel, so contrary to the spirit of the Jews; and the reason which Christ gives for its exercise is as sublime as the precept: "That you may be the children of your Father who is in Heaven: for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." Let your *kindness* be as limitless and as unconstrained by personal feelings—as God's; for it is a necessary qualification to our being the children of God, that we should love our enemies.

The hate of men—we must meet with love, their cursing—with blessing, their spite—with goodness, their persecution—with prayer. The kindness and sympathy of Jesus were not restricted within the circle of his immediate friends: "He went about doing good" to all classes, in all places, at all times, under all circumstances; yet often "had nowhere to lay his head;" often "was hungry;" often "wearied," and always "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

He went even to Samaria, and there opened living fountains in the hearts of those who heard and believed on Him, even though at first rebuffed and almost insulted. in the very hour of his betrayal and arrest in Gethsemane, He imparted healing mercy to one of that midnight band who had gone out to bind Him! and on the *cross* He gave pardon and life eternal to the *thief* who—but a short time before, was reviling His holy name!

The broad command, then, enforced by this parable, and corroborated by the other teaching of Jesus Christ, is, that we are to show kindness, mercy, and charity—irrespective of nation, kindred, friendship, or creed. that each man

has a claim upon his fellow man—both by the common law of humanity and the superadded law of God.

In what an elevated position does this parable place the Christian dispensation! How nobly it contrasts, on the one hand, with the spirit of the Jews, whose hatred of other nations called out the reproaches of Tacitus and Juvenal and Diodorus Siculus; and, on the other hand, with the tenets of the best and wisest of the heathen philosophers, with whom ...

revenge was a virtue,
forgiveness of injuries a weakness,
and *love of enemies* unknown.

All human philosophies fall short, far short, of the Divine teaching of Jesus, "Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you;" for they all are founded on selfishness—while Christian love is based on the manifestations of a Divine love, and its required imitation by those who would be called "the children of God." But this true spirit of love can be found only in hearts renewed by the Holy Spirit.

It is not the product of natural amiability; it does not result from the gushings of human sympathy; it is not evoked by tender education. It is only as we love Christ—that we can love all men in Christ, and for Christ. If we indeed love Him with all our heart—we love everything which He loves; and everything which engages His affection becomes magnified in importance and invested with new interest to us. When, therefore, we mark how deeply and self-sacrificingly He loves our race, how much affection and labor and care and blood He has expended on it—surely we find the highest possible motives for loving our fellow men.

Love for them filled the Divine heart of Jesus; love for them evoked the mightiest operations of the Holy Spirit; love for them called forth the highest reach of the love of God the Father—and are we most God-like when we imitate Him in manifesting a holy and sanctified affection towards our fellow men. Hence that strong assertion of John, "If a man says, I love God—and hates his brother; he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen—how can he love God whom he has not seen?"

This parable also furnishes a great **missionary argument**; not by way of direct precept—but by induction. If the law of Christ's Gospel requires us to love our neighbor, to the extending to him of all needed support for the supply of his **physical** necessities—then surely it requires, with all the added force of the supereminent value of the **soul** over the body, that we should love the souls of our neighbors, and give them the spiritual supports which they need for salvation.

And as the word "neighbor" has been so broadened as to comprehend all mankind, irrespective of creed, color, country; so must our love, if we would have it co-extensive with Gospel requirements, go out world-wide; so must it busy itself about the millions of our race who are now lying "half dead" in sins. So must we, like the Samaritan, give to them those means of grace, and those aids in securing eternal life, which God has put in our power. So should we seek to bring them to the "Inn," the Church, and thus show forth our love to Christ, by evincing tenderest love for those who are yet unblest with Gospel light, and uninvited by the offers of salvation.

He is not a true lover of his race, who draws back or refuses to come up to the missionary work; for, as mankind can only be made holy, and consequently happy, through the applied blood of the cross, as this blood of cleansing can only be applied through **faith** in the Lord Jesus, and as he can be believed on

only as he is preached to the nations—so a **true philanthropy**, that which strikes down to the root of things, is that which would exert itself to send out living preachers or Bibles into all the corners of the earth, until all should know the Lord, from the rising to the setting sun. Christ's heart was a **missionary** heart, and everyone who has Christ formed within him the hope of glory, has a missionary heart also.

In **conclusion**, though we do not believe in the fanciful interpretation of this parable, to which we have alluded, we may at least use it as **illustrative of the exceeding love of our Lord Jesus for us miserable sinners**. If we admire the conduct of the Samaritan—then infinitely more must we admire the love of Christ. He beheld us robbed of the image of God, wounded by sin, lying helpless in our fallen humanity. and when we were so **dead in iniquity** that we could not help ourselves; when the Patriarchal dispensation stalked by on the other side, and offered no help; when the Levitical dispensation came and looked on us through its shadowy ceremonies, and then, leaving us in our blood, passed by also on the other side—then Christ came, and though we were His enemies, He pitied us, bound up our mortal wounds, by the oil and wine of Divine grace; Himself bore our infirmities, took the whole charge of our cure, and healed us, not like the Samaritan, by giving money from His bag—but

blood from His **heart**, riven by the soldier's spear;

blood from His **head**, drawn out by His thorn-crown;

blood from His **hands** and **feet**, started by the spikes of the accursed tree; and

by this precious blood-shedding, He obtained for us relief from our enemies, spiritual health here, and life eternal beyond the grave!

The Rich Fool! (TOC)

Luke 12:13-21

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. and I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."' "But God said to him, 'You fool! this very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

A striking feature in the parables of Jesus Christ, is their adaptation to the immediate circumstances in connection with which they were delivered. They are not fetched from afar—detached and isolated allegories. They are not strained and forced into positions to which they are not adapted; but they fall in most naturally with the subject of His discourse, and are **mortised and tenoned** so aptly to the occasion, that we can scarcely see the **joint** by which

they are framed together.

The parable of the *Rich Fool* furnishes an instance of this felicitous illustration.

In the midst of a discourse to his disciples, one of the company, impatient of spiritual truth, and anxious only for worldly benefit, said unto Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." But Jesus, aware of the jealousy of the Jews, should he exercise any judicial functions, said unto him, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?"

Whether this was a real cause, wherein a wronged brother desired one like our Lord, whom he considered a just umpire, to arbitrate between them—or whether, like the question of the Herodians about the tribute-money, or the efforts of the Scribes and Pharisees to extort from him a judgment concerning the woman professedly taken in adultery, a mere *pretense* to entrap him in his words, and, by causing him to exercise civil jurisdiction, furnish a ground of complaint against him, as a traitor or usurper—we know not. He was not entrapped—but, disclaiming all civil authority, and persisting in that of the Teacher, He warns him whose heart is so set upon a worldly inheritance, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

This great truth—that the real interests of life, the soul's life, lie outside our worldly possessions—a truth so opposed to the usual doctrines and feelings of the worldling, He enforces by a short but forcible parable, wherein *covetousness*, in its relations to God and man, time and eternity—is comprehensively portrayed.

Having delivered this parable and sealed it upon the mind by an aphoristic moral, Jesus resumes his discourse to his disciples, and leaves the offended

brother to ponder the solemn truths which he had heard.

The first thing presented to us in this parable is the fact, that the riches of this man were honestly acquired. It was the legitimate produce of his fields. "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop." His wealth was not wrung from poverty, extorted by oppression, or amassed by fraudulent trade. It was not the result of greed and avarice, seeking out every avenue to gain and every method of accumulation—but the product of honest industry, crowned with the Divine blessing, "which makes the earth to bring forth abundantly and the clouds to drop fatness."

It was highly important to the success of this parable, that the riches of this man should be of this honest sort, for, had they been ill-gotten gains—the rebuke, in the minds of most people, would have rested upon the manner in which he acquired riches, rather than in the trusting to riches itself, however honestly obtained.

With the increase of his wealth, however—there is found no opening of his heart. The liberality of God to him calls out no liberality from him towards his fellow men; but, intent only upon hoarding up what he has: "He thought to himself—What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops."

"He thought to himself!" how expressive of the internal working of covetousness, which dares not utter itself in words—but which plots its plans in the recesses of the heart, away from the sight of *men*—but not away from the eyes of *God*.

Having revolved the matter on wholly selfish principles, never once thinking that he was God's *steward* to disburse those riches, rather than his banker to hoard them—he comes to a resolve "I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods." Beautifully

does Ambrose allude to his perplexity about "having no place to store my crops." "No place!" "You have barns—the bosoms of the needy; the houses of the widows; the mouths of orphans!"

To relieve the poor and the destitute did not, however, enter into his calculations; self-aggrandizement was his end and aim, as is evident by the address which he makes to his soul in view of the increase of his riches: "Soul, you have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry!" He felt himself placed by his actual abundance, beyond the caprice of fortune, and not thinking of the uncertainty of life, he settles down in the comfortable assurance, that henceforth his life will be one of enjoyment, with no cares to perplex, no toil to fatigue, no poverty to cramp, no fear to paralyze the desires and affections of his heart.

To human eyes, how bright and beautiful was his prospect! the future lay spread out before him enameled with light; visions of joy danced in jocund rounds before his eyes. He had ...
no thought of sorrow;
no care for the morrow;
no concern for eternity.

He had entrenched his heart about with gold—adversities surely could not make a breach there! He had arranged all his schemes of life—death surely would not interrupt his long-cherished plans! He had just reached the point where most of all desired to live—the grave surely would not yawn beneath him at such a time!

It never seems to have occurred to him, that God, and not himself, was the

disposer of his wealth, his happiness, his life. Absorbed in the things of time, his crops, his fields, his barns—he totally forgot his soul, or had any other idea of it, than that of a gross and sensual substance that could be filled and satisfied with the groveling things of earth. He was a *materialist* in doctrine—and a *sensualist* in practice!

But in this state of peace, plenty, and pleasure—his thoughts stretching out into the future, and his plans maturing to perfection, he is suddenly aroused by the voice of God, saying unto him, "You fool! this very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?"

What a startling annunciation this! the curfew bell of the soul—extinguishing every light of hope and of joy, leaving it in the blackness of darkness forever! He was a "fool" to imagine that the soul needed no preparation for an exchange of worlds—for none he made or even thought of. He was a "fool" for supposing that his soul would be satisfied with wealth or pleasures of this world. He was a "fool" for believing that life had no other purpose than self-gratification, no other ends than sensual delights. He was a "fool" in thinking that his riches were his own, to hoard them in barns—rather than entrusted to him as a steward to disburse to the Lord's poor, and for the Lord's service.

Alas! how quickly do his dreams of pleasure, and schemes of greatness, and hopes of life—vanish at the solemn voice of God! Barns, stores, fruits, pleasures are scattered by that dread annunciation, "***You fool! this very night your life will be demanded from you!***" Instead of building for a barn him—they must dig a grave! Instead of having "much goods laid up for many years"—he had nothing laid up for eternity! Instead of his soul taking ease and being merry—he must lie down in everlasting sorrow, saying "to *corruption*—you are my father; to the *worm*—you are my mother and my

sister." So great is the change, so sudden the surprise, so mighty the wreck of wealth—when God calls the sinner to his judgment bar.

It was a saying of some of the Jewish doctors, that the angel Gabriel drew out the souls of the righteous by a gentle kiss upon their mouths. But not thus gentle was the death of the rich fool; for in the language of Theophylact, "Fearsome angels, like pitiless exactors of tribute, required of him, as a disobedient debtor—his soul." His departure was like that described by Job: "The wicked go to bed rich but wake to find that all their wealth is gone. Terror overwhelms them like a flood, and they are blown away in the storms of the night. The east wind carries them away, and they are gone. It sweeps them away. It whirls down on them without mercy."

Of the rich man thus driven away in his wickedness, Jesus well asks, "Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" He gathered—but another shall scatter; he laid up in store—but another shall lay out in waste; and what he provided for himself shall be used by others. in the words of the Psalmist, "He heaps up riches—and knows not who shall gather them."

Having thus interested them in the parable, our Lord draws out the *moral* in a short but comprehensive sentence. "So it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

"So,"—there is emphasis in this word, as it throws us back upon certain results, brought out in the rich man's case, which will find their parallel in the results of all who like him, "lay up treasure for themselves, and are not rich towards God."

"So," in the suddenness with which they shall be called away from their barns and wealth.

"So," in the scattering at their death of the riches, so carefully gathered in their life.

"So," in the requirements which will be made of their stewardship at the bar of God.

"So," in the folly of their course in setting their hearts solely upon things present and earthly.

"So," in the final ruin and misery which await all such *rich fools* beyond the grave.

But what is meant by "laying up treasure for himself?" the great pursuit of life, with most men—is the acquisition of wealth, as in the possession of it they expect to find their *chief good and happiness*. that money is the *great idol* of mankind—is evident to the most superficial observer. It is true that the people of this world have "Lords many and gods many"—but to *Mammon* is paid the chief homage of their hearts, and minds, and strength. Other idols have strong and powerful attractions—but their altars are deserted when *Mammon* beckons them away. The softest blandishments of *pleasure*, the most stirring scenes of *ambition*, the attractive pursuits of *learning*—yield to his superior claims.

All, of every rank and condition, are gathered together to the dedication of "the image of gold," which the Prince of this world has set up in the plains of earth. for money ...

life is imperiled,

health is sacrificed, and

youth is blighted in the bud.

For money ...

peace is discarded,
home is abandoned, and
friends are deserted.

There is nothing men will not do to get money! to acquire it, they will break every law of God, and every edict of man. They will ...

stifle conscience,
hoodwink reason,
quench the Holy Spirit, and
barter every hope of Heaven!

Such is the universal passion, as demoralizing to man as it is hateful to God.

Leaving this **general** truth, and descending to **particulars**—the man who lays up treasures for himself, is one who **regards his own interests alone**. The eminently selfish man—such a one strives for riches, because riches beget honor. Want is always subservient to wealth; poverty always pays homage to plenty. He strives for riches—because riches bring pleasure. With wealth, he can gratify ...

his senses,
his appetites,
his passions.

With wealth, he can ...
build lordly mansions,
set up a stately equipage,
array himself in costly garments,
and fare sumptuously every day.

He strives for riches—because riches create **influence** and friends. "The rich man," says Solomon, "has many friends;" and again, "the rich man's wealth is

his strong city." a **moneyed** man is always an **influential** man. He is always surrounded by those who **call** themselves friends, though in reality, they are fawning sycophants, human parasites. If born in poverty—his ambition is to rank among the rich; if born to fortune—he seeks to excel his ancestral wealth. If he springs from ignominy—he wishes to throw a mantle of gold over his mother's shame. is he ignorant? wealth can atone for stupidity. is he learned? wealth can ennoble knowledge, for "the crown of the wise is their riches."

Thus does the man, who lays up riches for himself, manifest, at all times (though it is often covered up from public view by an **outward benevolence**, which, after all, is **concentrated egotism**)—a grasping avarice, a clenching covetousness, a blunted conscience, a contracted, indurated heart. **SELF** is the **center**, self the **radius**, self the **circumference** of his plans!

He who lays up riches for himself—is one who regards this world alone. All the **aims** of such a man are **bounded** by the horizon of earth. He does not look beyond the earthly and sensual gratification which riches bestow—and he **thinks** not and **cares** not for another state of being. He counts upon life as extending many years. He boldly lays down plans which stretch far into the future. He toils on as if there was no death to interrupt his labors—as if life's tide would never ebb, as if earth had for him no grave. The **world** ...
fills his eye,
engrosses his mind,
absorbs his affections,
and consumes his strength!

Oh, the short-sightedness and narrow-mindedness of the rich man! Well did David pray, "deliver my soul from men of the world—who have their portion in this life!" Well might our Lord declare, "It is easier for a camel to go

through the eye of a needle—than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven!" Well may God say of such, "**You fool!**" for when he shall be brought down to the grave, it shall be said, "Lo, this is the man who did not make God his strength—but trusted in the abundance of his riches; therefore shall his riches, like canker, eat into his soul forever!"

This is an outline sketch of one "who lays up riches for **himself!**" and if it appears so selfish and groveling to us—how abhorrent must it be to Him, who, looking beyond the outside coverings, searches the **thoughts** and tries the **hearts** of men!

But what is involved in the idea of **being rich towards God?** this implies two things:

1. Such a using of riches, as shall result to the glory of God. How this can be done is indicated in the 33rd verse of this chapter, "Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." and by the 20th verse of the 6th chapter of Matthew, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust does corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

Riches are used to the glory of God, and thus become, in a figurative sense, "treasures in Heaven," when the possessors of them regard themselves as **stewards of God's bounty**, and expend what they have, in the extension of Christ's kingdom on earth.

It must be confessed that much of the so-called *benevolence* of the day is nothing but *refined selfishness*, or *egotistical philanthropy*. Many give largely to a charitable object, because they know that a *trumpet* will be sounded before their alms, and it will "be seen by men." this is not true *Christian* benevolence, which, regarding ourselves as "bought with a price," and nothing that we have as our own—uses all in subordination to the one sacred principle of "doing all to the glory of God." the noblest use, then, to which wealth can be put—is to use it in carrying on those ordinances of grace and institutions of religion, which are linked with Christ's glory and man's salvation.

As these ordinances and institutions are extended, souls are saved, and every soul saved is a treasure laid up in Heaven. and as these means of grace are, in their earthly operations, sustained by money—so do we, through these benefactions, fulfill our Lord's injunction, and "lay up for ourselves treasures in Heaven," beyond the reach of thief, of rust, and of moth.

2. The expression, being rich towards God, implies a being rich in respect to God or Divine blessings. Under this phase of the subject, the riches do not consist in silver and gold, and goods, and fields, and barns, and plenty—but in that *wealth of soul* which is given by "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the

riches of His grace." He only is truly rich—who has "put on Christ;" "for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." for of such Christians, the Apostle says, "all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's." He, therefore, who is so living by faith in the Son of God as to be daily advancing in godliness of heart, is, through the power of the Holy Spirit, laying up in Heaven treasures of love, joy, hope, peace—those *soul-riches* which will endure unto everlasting life.

When called from earth, instead of being like the rich fool—wrenched away from all his goods, wherein he trusted and delighted—he will pass to the full possession and enjoyment of that eternal, all-glorious, and undefiled inheritance which Christ has reserved for him in Heaven. He has sent his treasures before him—and death will bring him to his possessions again.

These two classes comprise all members of the human family. Under one or other of these heads, may each living being be ranked. to which do *you* belong?

Are you one of those ...

laying up riches for yourselves?

endeavoring to satisfy your immortal soul with the husks of earth?

who live only for the world?

who concentrate all their interests in time?

who virtually ignore the soul, and Heaven, and God?

And do you not for such conduct, deserve to be called **a fool**? This is **God's epithet**—the deliberate judgment of infinite knowledge and wisdom; and it will be confirmed by and by by the accordant verdict of the universe. and what will you do when He whom you have thus far despised, shall say, "You fool! this night your soul shall be required of you!"

To all such, let me urge at once a radical change of conduct. Be no longer one of those who lay up treasures for themselves—but join yourselves to those who are **rich towards God**. Use your substance in such a manner as shall best prove your love, and gratitude, and reverence for God, and best advance the glory of His name and the salvation of souls.

And especially seek those **spiritual riches** which alone are to be found in Christ Jesus. The riches of faith, of hope, of love, of joy and peace in the Holy Spirit—"durable riches," which will ever increase in value, and ever impart bliss, when the world, with its treasures of gold and silver and precious stones, shall be burned up! Let your possessions be laid up in "everlasting habitations," not stored up on a world devoted to destruction!

The Barren Fig-Tree^(TOC)

Luke 13:6-9

A man had a fig tree, planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?'

"Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

This, like several other of our Lord's parables, has a double signification: one immediate, pertaining to the Jews; one ulterior, referring to all time.

It primarily refers to the **nation of Israel** as a people whom God had chosen to be "His people," whom he had assiduously cultivated by special and long-continued mercies, and from whom it was very natural that He should expect **fruit** in some measure answerable to the **blessing** and **labor** bestowed.

They proved, however, barren and unfruitful; and when He looked that they should have borne fruit, He found nothing but the most aggravated barrenness! in consequence of this, they were cut down as "a barren fig-tree;" rooted up from their ancient home, and scattered, like autumn leaves, by every wind under the expanse of Heaven.

In a more enlarged sense, this parable evidently refers to the **unfruitful**

professors of Christ's religion, or to those who are barren of all fruit of righteousness, under the influences and within the enclosure of the Gospel vineyard.

The professors of Christ's religion are emphatically "planted in the vineyard of the Lord," the Church; for under the figure of a vineyard, the Bible represents both the Old and New Testament Church. in this spiritual vineyard they have better soil, better care, better protection, than in the world without.

There the Gospel is fully preached;
there the sacraments are duly ministered;
there the dews of the Spirit more surely descend;
there the early and the later rain of reviving grace falls;
there the Sun of Righteousness shines with full-orbed splendor, and the winds of the Spirit blow, and the gardeners of God labor, to bring the trees of His planting to maturity and fruitfulness.

Whatever is necessary to enrich the soil, has been abundantly lavished, so that when we find any therein who are barren, we know that it is no fault of the ground, or of the sun, or of the rain, or of the gardener—but of the tree itself—it is sapless, graceless. and a professor of religion, whose heart is devoid of spiritual vitality, and in whom there are no pulsations of a godly life, can no more bear fruit than a tree planted in the richest soil, and tended by the closest care, which yet has no sap, no vegetable blood vitalizing its trunk, and circulating through all its branches. The one case is just as impossible as the other.

What Christ seeks, and what He has a right to expect of all the trees of His vineyard—is fruit, good fruit; not the **leaves of profession** only, which fall with the frosts of time; not the **blossoms of promise** merely, which drop off

before they come to maturity; but "fruit fit for repentance," "fruit unto holiness," "fruit unto eternal life."

That there are *unfruitful professors*, is evident to all who look into the condition of the visible Church. We see them occupying the same position year by year—yet never discover any fruits of righteousness. Their lives give no evidence of piety; they are indeed outwardly *moral* and *religious, decent* in all the externals of Christian duty—but there is an evident lack of *inward grace*. You discover ...

no ardent love for Christ;

no kindling up of soul under the preaching of Divine truth;

no warm out-springings of heart towards fellow Christians;

no generous liberality in the cause of Jesus;

no delight in talking about the Savior;

no enjoyment in private prayer or meditation;

no desires after greater conformity to the Divine likeness;

and no strong cryings of soul after more faith, more love, more grace, more consecration of spirit.

Where we mark the absence of these things—we have indubitable evidence of an unfruitful professor, a barren fig-tree.

But, giving to the parable a wider scope, still we may say that all who live in Gospel lands, and within the sound of the church-going bell, are, in one sense, planted in the vineyard of the Lord, in contrast to those who dwell in heathen lands, where the Gospel of the Son of God has not been proclaimed. All those who live in Christian countries, and within reach of the means of grace, even though they do not avail themselves of it—dwell, as it were, under "the droppings of the Sanctuary," and partake more or less of its influence.

The influence of the Bible,
the influence of the Church,
the influence of Christian institutions,
the influence of a sanctified press,
the influence of the godly lives of individual Christians
—have a power fully molding effect upon society. These influences
combined, shape and fashion to a great extent the views and opinions of the
people; and restrain, modify, and govern even those who are ashamed to
acknowledge their power. Nay, even the skeptic, the licentious, the profane,
the rabid infidel, deny it as they may—are under their potent sway, and are
kept from committing the *gross outrages* which their brutish morals permit—
by the *overawing power of Christian principle*. It is a blessed thing to be
connected by any links with the people of God, for the streams of mercy
which flow to them, and the streams of godly influence which flow from
them—make broad bands of verdure on each side of their borders.

From each one upon whom God has bestowed these numerous favors, the
Master of the vineyard expects and seeks for *fruit*. It was to make us fruit-
bearing—that He surrounded us with these privileges and blessings, and we
are guilty of great ingratitude if we allow ourselves to be barren; for if we
yield no fruit of righteousness after so much has been done—the fault is all
our own.

Yet, in the midst of the concern of the Lord of the vineyard to obtain fruit, He
manifests the greatest patience. "For three years now I've been coming to
look for *fruit* on this fig tree and haven't found any!" implying that He had
given ample time for it to manifest its fruitfulness if it had any—days,
months, years have passed, and yet no fruit appears.

He does not, at the first indication of barrenness, cut us down. There is no

hasty procedure with our Lord—He is long-suffering and full of forbearance, waiting to be gracious. Men act in hot haste, and repel injuries with prompt chastisement; but God arises to judgment only after long delay, and when the *overtures of mercy* have been signally disregarded.

Beautifully has the Psalmist illustrated this, where, speaking of the perverseness of the children of Israel, and God's longsuffering towards them, he says, "Yet He was merciful; He forgave their iniquities and did not destroy them. Time after time He restrained his anger and did not stir up His full wrath."

Thus is it now. *You* have perhaps been receiving blessings and mercies from your youth up, and many a *blossom of hope* has cheered the eye of watching friends. You have been watered and nursed as tender plants in the heritage of our Lord, and many a *bud of promise* has indicated the beginning of spiritual life. Yet manhood, and mid life, and old age have been reached, while, as yet, no fruit appears. During all this while, Christ has waited to be gracious. He has stood by looking at you in pity, calling to you in love, making the ground around you fertile with the rich blessings of the Gospel—but the *barrenness* is not removed—the *fruit* does not appear. When the angels sinned, there was no patience and forbearance exhibited towards them; their punishment followed close upon their sin, for such high-handed rebellion required highhanded justice.

But He has not dealt so with us. His bearing has ever been that of a God waiting to be gracious. "The patience of God," says Peter, "waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being built, even one hundred and twenty years;" and the entire history of the Jews is a record of God's forbearing mercy. In the days of Moses the Lord inquired, "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation which murmur against me?" Hundreds of years afterwards

Nehemiah exclaims, "Many years did you forbear them." and later still, the Prophet Jeremiah adds, "The Lord could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings." the New Testament exhibits the same feature of the Divine goodness. "God endures," says Paul, "with much patience the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction!" and Peter declares that the Lord is patient to us, not willing that any should perish—but that all should come to repentance.

Thus is it now. God patiently waits upon sinners, to be gracious. He kindly stands at the door of their hearts knocking for entrance, and there you have kept Him until He says, "My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." But mercies having failed, forbearance being no longer a virtue—God now comes to some determination: "For three years now I've been coming to look for **fruit** on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?"

There are two reasons why God should cut down the barren fig-tree:

1. Its own uselessness, and
2. Its using up the soil that might be better occupied.

It was worthless in **itself**, and made the **ground** worthless on which it stood. The spiritually unfruitful man, be he a professor of religion or not, is useless in **himself**, and takes up room in the vineyard with his presence. for as there is no **middle ground** of action, all who are not doing moral good, are doing moral harm; according to the striking words of Christ, "He who is not with me—is against me."

Life is wasted to him who brings forth no fruits of righteousness. It may be crowded with what the world esteems noble and generous deeds; it may teem with the fruits of honor and fame; the life of such a man may call forth praises, and his death eulogies, while his name may be given to applauding

history. Yet, if he has been toiling for the glories of time alone; if he concentrated his energies upon the ever-changing present; if he has made no provision for his soul, and secured no peace with God through Jesus Christ—then he is a barren fig-tree, a useless cumberer in God's moral vineyard.

The test of *spiritual usefulness* consists in doing works which shall survive the things of time and sense. The region of such labors is the *soul*—the higher and eternal interests of our being. Here, is where fruitfulness must be seen. We must do deeds that shall live after the trumpet of the Archangel shall sound; deeds that conscience can approve in the hour of death—deeds that Christ can applaud in the day of judgment—deeds that will be remembered with delight through eternity.

It will not be asked in the last day, did you build a city, or erect a kingdom, or lead an army to victory? But did you bring forth fruits of righteousness, did you cultivate the graces of the Spirit, did you do the humble works of a child of God. Have you labored to extend the kingdom of Christ, and win souls to His scepter? and if you have, though poor in this world's goods, and looked down upon by this world's nobles—you shall prove yourself to be a tree of God's planting, soon to be transplanted into the Paradise above!

Not only are the lives of unconverted men *useless* as regards their souls, they are also *wasters* of the ground. Their lives and their influence prove a *hindrance* to the Gospel. They oppose its progress in their own hearts, and throw the whole weight of their authority and example upon the side of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Every unrenewed man virtually and publicly declares, that he is opposed to the religion of Jesus Christ; that he has no confidence in the ordinances of the Church, no belief in the revelation of God. This, we repeat, is the virtual declaration of each unrenewed man; it is the *language of his daily life*. this may seem harsh judgment—but it is only

plain Bible truth.

Suppose an individual should present himself before you, and show you title-deeds properly drawn up and duly authenticated, which were to place you in possession of a great yet distant estate. You listen to his story, read the deeds, examine the seals; if now you proceed no further, and take no steps to secure this property—but on the contrary turn away from the whole subject—you **say** as strongly as **actions** can say, that you do not believe the report of the messenger, and that you discredit his pretended titles; and by your neglect of him, you virtually give the lie to all that he has said and shown you. this would be the judgment of every unbiased mind.

Apply this to the Christian religion. The ambassador of Christ comes to you with the Word of God. He points out in it the title-deeds to an inheritance reserved in Heaven for you; he shows you the means by which to secure it; he offers to conduct you through the processes necessary to attain it; he solemnly pledges the veracity of God to its truth; and he establishes the genuineness and authenticity of his message by evidence that cannot be overthrown. If now you turn your back upon Christ, and refuse to believe on His name—you virtually declare your disbelief in the whole thing. or if, professing to believe it with your lips, you put off the work of salvation to a future day, you in effect say, I do not believe that God will be as strict as He says He will; I will try His patience a little longer; and though the Holy Spirit says, "**Now** is the accepted time, behold, **now** is the day of salvation," yet I will run the risk of postponing repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, because He knows that I intend some time or other to become a Christian, and He will not therefore cut me down as a cumberer of the ground.

In this delusion, many sinners pass months and years, until they are

"suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy!" We are too apt to forget that there is a time beyond which God's Spirit will not strive—there is a boundary line over which mercy never steps.

At the very point when the forbearance of God seems to end, an *intercessor* appears. Christ comes into view, and pleads for "one year" more of probation. "Let it alone this year also—and if it bear fruit, well; if not, after that you shall cut it down!" He does not pray that it should never be cut down—but not now. Every sinner is at this moment under the condemnation of eternal death; and the reason why he is not executed is, that Christ pleads, "**Let him alone this year also!**"

This, however, is a *reprieve*, not a *pardon*—a reprieve for a short time—yet long enough to make full trial. During this reprieve God is giving him the culture and tillage necessary to fruitfulness: the means of grace, the bleeding Savior, the striving Spirit, the ordinances of the Church.

His position is one of extreme peril, and of extreme solicitude. of *peril*, because the time is short—the isthmus of probation between the *land of hope* and the *world of despair* is very narrow, and his feet stand on slippery places. of *solicitude*, because upon his resolves this year, may hinge the destiny of his soul forever.

If, through the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit, sought for and received as the free gift of God, that he becomes a "tree of righteousness," and "brings forth fruit"—then it is well.

"Well" in life,

"well" in the hour of death,

"well" at the day of judgment,

"well" throughout eternity!

If not, then, after that probation ended, he shall be "cut down" as a "cumberer of the ground." and a fearful thing it will be to be "cut down," after having been by baptism planted in the vineyard, after having had years of spiritual culture under Gospel vine-dressers, and especially after having been spared yet longer on probationary ground, through the intercession of Christ Himself as the Master of the vineyard; for to the *guilt* of *disobeying* the commands of God, and of *slighting* the ordinances of the Church—there is superadded the despising of the Lord Jesus, under circumstances of the most deliberate contempt, which cannot fail to call down the wrath of the Almighty.

To all such we commend the declaration of Paul to the Hebrews, "How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!"

The Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin^(TOC)

Luke 15:3-10

Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? and when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in Heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

"Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? and when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' in the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

The three parables recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, were spoken by our Lord, in order to rebuke the murmuring of the Scribes and Pharisees, whose great complaint was, "***This man receives sinners, and eats with them!***"

It seems that multitudes of the publicans and sinners had drawn near to Christ "to hear Him." These classes, hated as vile extortioners, and profligate livers

—were regarded as beyond the pale of mercy, and outside the sympathies and courtesies of social life. The **learned Scribe**, swollen with the traditions of the elders, and proud of the distinction which his legal knowledge secured—affected to despise the vulgar tax-gatherer, and the outcast sinner. The **phylacteried Pharisee**, with his long prayers, and ostentatious clothing, and minute ritualism, and self-created holiness—disdained the exactors of tribute, and the notoriously unclean, and would have felt that his fringed garments were **soiled** by a touch of such transgressors! and though their curiosity was stimulated to the utmost to hear the Lord—yet they complained that they had to listen to His teachings in company with the **publicans** and the **profligate**, saying in disparagement of the Savior, "This man **receives** sinners—and **eats** with them!"

This murmuring of the Pharisees and Scribes elicited three parables from our Lord, designed to illustrate the **seeking love** and **receiving grace** of God, and to vindicate his course in thus receiving **sinners** and eating with them.

As the Savior of men, it was important that we should know the **grounds** and **methods** of His procedure, when He undertook the restoration of our race. and these He condescends to set forth, not by labored argument, not by philosophical analysis—but by **parables**, illustrating to the humblest, as well as the highest, the **purposes** and **dealings** of God toward His rebellious children.

It is wonderful, when we think of it, what weighty, sublime, and eternal truths—are embedded in the simple parables of Jesus. While the **sages** of the world wrapped up their enigmatical propositions and mysterious sayings in the coverings of philosophy, or the embroidered robes of rhetoric; while the doctrines of human ethics were couched in language high above the comprehension of the common person—our Lord proclaimed His truths with

clearness and fullness, and His language and illustrations, so far from covering up His thoughts, were rather like the *atmosphere*, enveloping all things indeed—yet the medium of a clear and perfect vision. It is easy enough to take a *pigmy* thought, and make it walk on high on the stilts of bombast and hyperbole. It is common enough to see a little thin idea that would not burden an infant's brain, puffed out with gaseous words, until it looms up and floats away in airy nothingness. But it is evidence of a mind of Divine compass and power, to condense the *infinite and eternal truths* of the Godhead, in its schemes for man's redemption—into words so few, and illustrations so simple, that the ignorant, the degraded, the little child even—can perceive and understand them.

In both the parables of the *Lost Sheep* and the *Lost Coin*—Christ takes common and almost everyday occurrences to illustrate why He received sinners and ate with them: illustrations which, while glorious as the unfoldings of Divine love—are yet exquisite in their very plainness and simplicity. a man losing a sheep from his flock, a woman losing a piece of money from her bag—are familiar and every-day occurrences; yet, in the hands of the Savior, they are made to stand out as the exponents of the *great principles* of the Divine economy in the salvation of mankind.

The shepherd missed one *sheep* from his flock; and, accustomed as the Eastern shepherds are to know the face of each, and even to call each sheep by name—this loss would soon be discovered; and when known, the faithful shepherd would at once seek to reclaim the wanderer. Leaving the rest of the flock in the wilderness, not, indeed, in the sandy, howling wastelands—but in the uninhabited yet grassy and pastoral plains or valleys, where they would have herbage and shelter—the shepherd goes out to seek and save that which was lost. He goes into the mountains; he exposes himself to perils; he endures

fatigue; he experiences great anxiety; but does not give up the search "until he finds it." and then, instead of *beating* the wayward sheep, or crudely driving it before him, or roughly upbraiding it for wandering—the shepherd takes the long-lost one in his arms, lays it on his shoulders, saves it from the weariness of travel and the accidents to which it might be exposed. and thus, bearing his *precious* burden, "comes home," and "calls together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them: Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!"

But as, among his auditors, there were doubtless those who would better understand a *different simile*, our Lord condescends to take a very humble figure, and says, ""Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Does she not light a lamp,"—because the oriental houses have few openings or windows, and the extra light would be needed, "and sweep the house"—not merely look through it, removing the furniture to make the search more thorough—but sweeping its floors, sweeping it by the light of the lamp. and to the cleansing of the broom, she adds the *diligent search of the eye*, and leaves no place unexplored "until she finds it."

In the recovery both of the lost sheep and the lost coin, we find peculiar evidences of joy and peculiar language to express it.

The returning shepherd, as he comes within sight of his flock, which he had left, now quietly browsing on the plain or folded for the night, calls out to the dwellers in the tent, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!" And, as they came out to meet the shepherd, weary and faint with his tedious search, and see the wandering sheep safe upon his shoulders—they respond loudly to his call, and mingle together their pastoral rejoicings.

And when the *poor* woman, for we are led to infer that she was such, finds

her lost coin, she gathers her friends to tell them of her success, and calls upon those who once sympathized with her loss, "**Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin!**"

In what a graphic manner do these two parables set forth the **seeking love of Jesus to our lost and sinful race!**

We are wanderers from God—"all we, like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way," and had lost ourselves upon the **dark mountains of sin and unbelief**. The innocence which was once ours, and the companionship of God which we were once privileged to enjoy, were voluntarily renounced; and, forsaking the green pastures and still waters of the Lord's providing—we have strayed away from the Good Shepherd into the rugged paths and dangerous crags of sin and woe!

Originally made in the likeness of God, and once bearing in our souls the image and superscription of our King—we have now lapsed from our rightful owner, and fallen away into the **dust and earthiness of a deep moral debasement**. But Christ, infinite in His love and mercy, did not leave us thus lost and wandering. He sought us out; He addressed Himself to the work of our recovery; He girded Himself about with the vestment of humanity; He came to this sin-cursed earth, and wandered up and down in its highways and hedges, enduring the malice of enemies, the rebukes of the proud, the suspicions of friends, mockings and buffetings and countless sorrows—until, arrested as a malefactor, condemned as a blasphemer, crucified as a slave—the Good Shepherd had given his life for His sheep, and, that they might be saved, bowed His head and died! "He was **wounded** for our transgressions, He was **bruised** for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed!"

In a most emphatic manner did Christ "go after the sheep that was lost—until He finds it." the **love** that prompted the search was an **infinite** love; its well-spring was in the beginning; it had flowed from all eternity, and its fullness and richness are best illustrated in the **costliness** of its sacrifice, and the **value** of its atonement.

It was not the lost sheep seeking out the Shepherd, and making efforts to get back to the fold! There was in us, no desire to return—we loved our sins and we reveled in them! and man even slew the Lord of life and glory—because he sought to redeem him from his sins. It was like the diseased and loathsome patient—killing the **physician** because he would rescue him from his sickness, and give him health and soundness instead of corruption and pain!

What Christ did as our Good Shepherd, to seek and save us—may be learned in the wonderful record of His life. for the thirty-three years of His earthly pilgrimage, were so many years of toil, anguish, endurance, and search after the wanderers from God. No **dangers** daunted Him, no **fatigue** exhausted Him, no **calumny** turned Him aside, no **assaults** of enemies caused Him to desist. He plunged into the deepest thickets of sin! He entered the most forbidding morasses of life! He exposed himself in the most dangerous and darksome valleys of humanity, without regard to His own comfort; and at the sacrifice of His own blood—that He might find His lost sheep, and laying them on His shoulders return with them to His Father's fold rejoicing, seeing in their recovery, "the travail of His soul," and being "satisfied."

These parables were designed by our Lord to illustrate the **great concern which He felt for lost souls**. The value of the soul is well known to the Lord Jesus. We do not know it, because our arithmetic is finite, and it has no numbers to compute the worth of an immortal spirit. We judge of everything by worldly standards, by what it can give us, or what it can do for us, as

beings of time and earth. Consequently, that which enables us to rank high, to amass wealth, to secure praise, to dwell at ease, to live in pleasure—is that which most absorbs our thoughts and engages the powers of our being. Hence, the soul, in its eternal interests, is overlooked, or regarded as a ***disagreeable something***, ever standing in the way of our pleasure and advancement, which we would gladly be rid of if we could.

The Blessed Savior, having created the soul, having endowed it with its wondrous powers, having given it immortality as its birthright—knows its worth. and when He saw us wandering into sinful and forbidden paths, He knew the greatness of the loss which would ensue, and hence manifested such Divine concern to secure its recovery and salvation. He was happy in the glories which he had with the Father before the world was; He was blessed in the worship of the Angelic Host who ministered before Him—but all this availed not! His eye saw, His heart loved our race, even though it was fallen and rebellious—and "not willing that any should perish," He came down to deliver from eternal ruin, all who would believe on Him, and receive Him as the Savior of their souls.

There was deep concern in Heaven for the soul of man. **God** felt it, and so felt it as to give His only begotten Son, that "whoever believes on Him might not perish—but have everlasting life." and when it so moved the mind of **Jehovah**—how ought **our** minds to be under deepest concern for their recovery! Did the shepherd leave the ninety-nine unwandering ones, and go out into the mountains to seek and save one wanderer? Just so did the Lord of Glory leave the innumerable company of unsinning angels, that He might go forth to find the lost sheep, man. Just so did He light the ***candle of revelation***, and with the ***broom of a holy law***, sweep the floor of this earthly house of our tabernacle—until he found the coin which was lost, relaxing no effort which

Divinity could devise or execute, to recover the wanderer, and search out the lost; for "He delights not in the death of a sinner—but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live."

The parable of the Lost Sheep also teaches us the ***tender care and compassion of our Lord towards the recovered wanderers***. What could illustrate this more than the shepherd's act of laying the lost sheep, when he found it, "on his shoulders," and so bearing it home?

When Christ finds the wandering sinner—He does not roughly upbraid him, He does not drive him harshly before Him—but throws around him His loving arms, takes him to His bosom, lays him on His shoulder, where no harm can reach him, protects him by His hands, and pledges the mightiness of His own power to return the wanderer to the fold of God.

And with what joy is the sinner welcomed! It is faintly shadowed forth in the rejoicings made by the friends and neighbors of the shepherd, and the woman at the recovery of the lost sheep and the lost silver. It is more emphatically declared, in the words of the Savior, after the parable of the Lost Sheep, "I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in Heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent!" and in almost similar words after the parable of the Lost Coin, "In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents!"

In this twice-uttered declaration Jesus enunciates the truth, that there is an interest and a sympathy felt for man by the angels in Heaven; a truth confirmed by several other passages of Scripture, wherein they are not only represented as "ministering spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation," but as desiring to look into the mysteries of man's redemption!

There is something very sublime in the thought that *angels* take an interest in the moral affairs of this earth. Were our world the only orb which Divine power had framed and peopled, and poised in the else solitary field of space—there would be something of condescension in such holy beings, dwelling in the presence of God, stooping to interest their mighty minds and spotless souls in the spiritual affairs of men.

But when we are compelled to believe, however humbling to human pride, that the earth which we inhabit is so small as to appear but a sparkling *point* to some planets, and not visible at all to other planets, even of our own solar system; while myriads of suns, with attendant *families of worlds*, spangle the floor of Heaven, and mock the powers of the most potent telescope; then the condescension of the heavenly host becomes more marked and significant, and seems to indicate that there must have been some *special display of God's glory on this little earth*, to which other greater and brighter worlds were strangers; and hence they concentrate upon this spot a more intense gaze, and feel for us a more vivid interest. The solution of this interest is found in the fact that, for all that we know—this earth is the spot where was seen the *highest display of God's moral glory*, and where was waged the great battle of God's supremacy, in which sin and death were conquered, and grace and salvation won!

We know not that any other world *revolted* from God; we infer, indeed, from the transactions which took place here, that all other portions of His universe adhered to the holiness of their original creation; and if, as we justly suppose, that this earth alone broke out in rebellion, and threw off its allegiance to Jehovah—we can well understand how, for a time, the fact of such an *outbreak* would be heralded throughout the skies, and how the questions — "*Shall rebel man be punished? Can rebel man be saved?*" would for a

season occupy the thoughts and fix the deepest interest in the heavenly host. In such a case, the littleness of the terrestrial spot was nothing—the greatness of the *principle* at stake was everything. The smallness of the world was lost sight of, in the magnitude of the issue.

The great principle that was here to be established, and the mighty wonder that was here to be disclosed—was the principle that "God could be just and yet the justifier of him that believes on Jesus;" and the solemn mystery of a "God manifest in the flesh, seen of angels, believed on in the world," and redeeming that world by "humbling Himself unto death, even the death of the cross."

Hence angels gathered around this single wandering world; hence they watched the dealings of God with its sinful inhabitants; and hence we find them, in all ages of the world, mingling their services to carry on the scheme of grace in its various manifestations—Patriarchal, Levitical, and Christian. Angels came to Abraham, and Lot, and Jacob, and Moses. Angels appeared to David, to Elijah, to Daniel, to Ezekiel. Angels foretold the birth of Christ to Zecharias, to Mary, to Joseph, to the Bethlehem shepherds. Angels ministered to Christ on the mount of temptation, in the garden of Gethsemane, at the rock-hewn sepulchre, and announced to the women who had gone there to anoint the Savior, "He has risen! He is not here! come see the place where the Lord lay." and angels shall attend Him in His second advent to judge the world, for Matthew says, "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all His holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory."

All these angelic appearances are connected with the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The incarnation of Christ is the greatest moral epoch in the universe of God; and as this incarnation was "for us men and our salvation," hence it

would necessarily be a matter of profound interest to angelic beings, whose service was in the presence of God, to *watch the results* of that great mystery, and to rejoice, as each new convert to Christ gave proof of the power, and wisdom, and grace of God in planning out such a perfect and complete salvation.

They rejoice that God's grace, and Christ's blood, and the Spirit's power, have not been bestowed in vain. They rejoice that another soul is "snatched as a brand from the burning," and has become "an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ to an inheritance" in heaven; and though supremely happy themselves, though dwelling in the presence of God, "in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures forever more," yet such is the depth of their interest in Christ, who is their Divine Head, such the outgoing of their affection to Him in all His mediatorial work—that they find it a source of ecstatic joy to follow out the wondrous exhibitions of His redeeming love, as it flows down to the individual heart, and newly creates the soul in righteousness and true holiness!

Warranted by the repeated words of Jesus, we can imagine the angels—forgetful, as it were, for a time, of the "just who need no repentance"—bending all the force and concern of their celestial interest upon one poor sinner, watching his wandering steps as he strays away further and further, now almost stumbling with fear, as his feet tread nearer and nearer to the slippery edge of ruin; and now all excitement, as, arrested by the call of mercy—he listens, turns, retraces his steps, is found by the Good Shepherd, is laid upon His shoulder; and as the once *lost* one is brought back to the fold, we can conceive that there would rise from that heavenly host, from every rank and order, till the wave of their mighty congratulation would reach the Eternal Throne, the ecstatic exclamation, "He is found! One sinner more

saved! One saint more for glory!"

The Prodigal Son^(TOC)

Luke 15:11-32

"There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on

his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate. "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

The parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son—were spoken by our Lord on one occasion and for one general purpose.

The occasion, as we have already seen, was the carping of the Scribes and Pharisees at the gracious reception which sinners received from Jesus; and the general purpose was, to ***illustrate the seeking love and pardoning mercy of God toward the wandering, the lost, and the prodigal.***

Our Lord had already, to a great extent, vindicated his procedure in receiving sinners, by showing, through the two preceding parables, that it was natural

that he should feel a deep interest in those who, having wandered—had now been reclaimed, having been lost—were now found. But many, probably, of his hearers were fathers, who, uninfluenced, it may be, by similitudes drawn from pastoral or domestic life, might yet be deeply touched by an appeal to parental emotions, the natural outgushings of a heart for their sons. Nothing, then, could be more relevant, both to the audience which he addressed, and the truth which he wished to enforce, than the touching incidents related in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

We picture to ourselves the venerable *father*, blessed with an abundance of this world's goods, and happy in possessing two sons, to whom he looked for comfort in his advancing years.

But discontent has already begun its work upon the *younger son*; and, after long nursing his unhappy feelings, and long manifesting an increasing bitterness of spirit—he seizes upon some trifling excuse, and, in an exacting and unfeeling way, demands, "*Father, give me my share of the estate!*" He wishes to get it into his own hands, to spend it as he pleases, without either parental advice or control.

Hitherto, the two sons had shared their father's house, table, bounty, and love; but, on occasion of the peremptory demand of the younger—the father, in the words of the parable, "divided his property between them."

Waiting "not many days," only long enough to convert his "share of the estate" into ready money, he turned his back upon his father and his boyhood's home, and "took his journey into a far country;" where no parental control would restrain him in his course of sin; where, master of himself and of his means—he could do whatever he desired.

In this "far country," mingling with the dissolute and abandoned—he soon

"squandered his wealth in wild living!" Deserted by his parasitic friends, who attached themselves to him only so long as they could draw out the sap and strength of his financial substance—he found himself "in need," with "a famine" pressing upon him, and not a friend to lean upon for even a temporary support.

In this starving, desolate, ruined condition—he seeks, as a last resort, for some menial employment, by which he can at least satisfy his hunger, and secure a temporary shelter. He let himself out for hire to "a citizen of that country," and is sent by him "into his fields to feed swine"—the basest of all employment, one abhorred by the Jews as unclean, and so despised by the Egyptians, that swine-herders were the only people excluded from their temples.

But the *depth* of his misery was not yet reached, for such were the cravings of hunger, and such the miserable portion of food allotted him, in this time of famine, that "He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything!"

O wretched object! stripped of his money, shrunken with hunger, turned out as a swine-herder into the fields, a beggar and a stranger in a far-off land—with the glad remembrances of a former and happy life, making more vivid and sorrowful his present wretchedness. There he lay, the younger son of a liberal and bountiful father—loathsome, degraded, wretched—a melancholy picture of self-begotten misery and woe!

How long he remained thus is not stated. The next intimation we have of him is, that "he came to himself," as if all this time he had not been himself—had been acting as a crazy man; and had now only just awoke from his demented condition, and looked at himself in a true light. He compares himself not with

his former condition and circumstances, when, as a son, he sat at his father's table, and lodged in his father's mansion, and was waited on by his father's servants. So low is he debased in his own eyes, that he does not raise himself to the height of this comparison, which, on first thought, we might suppose would be the very one that would be uppermost in his mind; but he himself humbly compares himself to his father's *menials*.

And as his thoughts wander afar off from the swine and the husks around him, to his distant boyhood's home, they bring up before him the *plenty* which fills his father's house—the very "hired servants" of which have "bread enough and to spare"—while he, the son, whom those full-fed servants once obeyed, now "perishes with hunger!"

The thought stings him to the quick, and he resolves, under the influence of the deep emotion, "I will arise, and go to my father!" No longer will I sit down here in these distant fields, watching these loathsome swine—but remembering the love and care of my father, and the plenty that fills his barns and table! to him I will go; yet not as a son; this relationship I have forfeited by my base desertion—but as a servant, and not as a servant only—but as a confessing, humbled penitent, for I will "say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before you, and am no more worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants."

His *resolve* was followed by *action*. He "came to his father;" and we can almost picture his *appearance* and *feelings* as he reaches his native fields, and comes within sight of his father's house. Wan and weary with his journey, faint with hunger, emaciated with long fasting and walking, his face furrowed by the *ploughshare of care*, and his brow corrugated by the *turbulence of mental anguish*, clad in the tattered and besmeared garments of a swine-herder, and leaning heavily upon his staff—he stands on the brow

of the first hill from which he can catch a glimpse of his once happy home, and as it meets his eyes—they fill with tears; and his heart is too full for utterance.

The terrible contrast between his present and his past condition; the fearful wastings of life, health, strength, money, which a few months have made; the pictures of childish happiness enjoyed there; intermingling with the deep shadows which darkened his life in the land he had just left—must have crowded thickly upon his mind, and made his weak frame tremble as these emotions wrestled within him.

The father spies the returning prodigal even "when a great way off;" feels in his heart the wellings up of compassion towards his son, and not waiting to see what was the temper and condition of that son, he "runs to meet him," "falls upon his neck" with joy, and "kisses him" with parental affection. The son, overpowered by this affectionate display, begins his premeditated speech; "***Father, I have sinned against Heaven in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.***" The father stopped to hear no more; the sentence, "***Make me as one of your hired servants,***" was arrested on his lips by the father's orders to the servants, "Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!"

Thus by these four signs, the free-man's robe, the patrician's ring, the sandals of honor, and the feast of gladness—did the father manifest the highest regard for his son, and confer on him the highest honors of his house.

What a ***contrast*** between the morning and evening of that day! the ***morning*** swine-herder, the way-worn beggar, the hunger-pinched prodigal—is now, at

eventide, the robed and ringed and sandaled son, the restored wanderer, the feasted guest, the joy of his father's heart and home!

While thus merry, father and younger son together, "the *elder* son," who, when the meeting took place," was in the field superintending his laborers, drew near to the house, and was astonished to hear sounds "of music and dancing." Inquiring of "one of the servants" "what these things meant?" he was told the story of the prodigal's return. Instead, however, of *rejoicing* at the coming back of his erring brother, and going in and congratulating his father, and joining in the festive scene—he becomes "angry, and would not go in."

The kind father, hearing of his feelings, goes out to him, and aims to soften down his anger; but the surly brother rebuffs him by relating his long-continued goodness, and hints even at unrewarded services—while his dissolute brother no sooner returns from disgrace and beggary and crime, than there is "the fattened calf is killed for him." the ill-natured attack of the elder brother, both upon his father and the prodigal, is met by the gentle yet forcible reply of the father, "My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!"

Such is the exquisitely beautiful parable of the Prodigal Son, which Trench calls "the pearl and crown of all the parables of the Scripture;" and of which Lavater says, "Had Christ only come to earth for the purpose of delivering this parable, on that account alone should all mortal and immortal beings have concurred in bending the knee before Him."

In considering the *moral* of this parable, we find that it resolves itself into four stages, namely:

the prodigal's departure,
the prodigal's degradation,
the prodigal's return, and
the prodigal's reception.

In each of these courses of action, there is furnished a complete type of the human heart; and in the reception which the returning wanderer meets with, there is set out the free and pardoning love of a great and holy God.

The prodigal began his *departure* by the exacting request, "*Give me my share of the estate!*" The desire to throw off the reins of God's government and to be independent of Him—is the root sin of all sins. It was this which cast down the rebel angels; which entrapped Adam into disobedience, and by which death was brought into the world and all our woe.

As soon as the heart begins to be conscious of its relations and duties to God—it grows restive, and commences its efforts at departure. The sinner selfishly craves "his portion of goods" from God, as if God was bound to divide unto him his living; and where there is this perversity of mind, God often permits men to make the experiment which they desire. He gives them "their portion in this life;" appears to bless them, and crown their lives with mercies.

So far, however, from being satisfied—they collect the energies of mind and body, their influence and their resources, and having "gathered all together", they commence their career of apostasy and sin. this career is a rapidly downward and an increasingly *wicked* one; for when the soul has once so compacted its energies as to cast off its filial duty to God, and the checks of his Fatherly control—there is nothing to impede its downward course, for all *human resolves* are powerless upon the rushing wheels of passion-driven

man. The soul that has departed from God, has commenced a series of sins which will ever augment in *size*, and increase in *power*, and deepen in *guilt* throughout eternity!

This departure from God, is a *willful* one. It is not God the Father thrusting the son out of his house, and exiling him to a "far country"—but the son voluntarily breaking away from the Father, and recklessly plunging into ruin, preferring the "far country" to his father's house. that "far country" is *this fallen world*.

We are here at a great moral distance from our Father's Home. We here waste the powers of mind and body in riotous living, in doing those things which God forbids and our consciences disapprove—and the pangs of spiritual need soon seize upon us. for in this far off land there is a *famine* in all those things that the soul most needs; and the world, so far from satisfying our spiritual cravings—like a hard master, sends us, immortal beings as we are, to the vilest of employments and the basest of food.

It is markedly emphatic of the *debasing influence of the world*, that our Lord should select such a *loathsome* and, by the Levitical law, almost *accursed* employment as a swine-herder, as an illustration of the *depths of misery* to which it would reduce us, having first caused us to "waste our substance in riotous living."

All those drudging activities to which men sell their souls for hire, are, in comparison to those employments of holiness in which they should be engaged—as brutish as the swine-herder's! So also is the *food* which the world offers to the starving spirit but *husks*—worthless, unsatisfying. The soul can never thrive upon such bestial diet, and it famishes for something real, true, holy—something suitable to its needs here and its destinies

hereafter.

As soon as the grace of God visits such a soul, it becomes at once conscious of its needs. There is an opening of the eye to its miseries, a disenchanting of the **spell** which has so long perverted the judgment—and the poor debased sinner begins to feel ...

his wretchedness,

his degradation,

his perishing condition!

The **sin** of his departure from God comes into clear view; his **guilt** in his subsequent course stands out in its true light; the **woe** of his present position darkens over him—like a lowering cloud charged with the arrowy lightnings of an angry God. and the future lies before him—a yawning, bottomless gulf of woe, to the brink of which he feels that he is speedily hastening!

This is the hour when the Holy Spirit begins his work of conviction, holding up the sins of his life in the light of God's countenance, and causing him to mourn with a **godly sorrow** that needs not to be repented of. He shows him that he is "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." and having convinced him of his undone condition—He points him to his Father's house, stirs up within him a desire to return, and strengthens him to resolve, **"I will arise and go to my Father!"**

Not, however, until driven from every "refuge of lies"—does the sinner desire to return. His proud heart rebels against going back to God, from whom he so vauntingly departed. The doctrine of **free grace** ill comports with his boasted self-righteousness and independence. If he could, by any works of penance, hew out for himself a salvation, so that the merit of it would be all his own, and of which he could say, "my power and the might of my hand has

gotten me this victory"—he would gladly do it. and he makes a great variety of attempts to obtain peace of mind before he turns with a simple faith to "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

Then it is that the sinner "comes to himself." Up to this period, he is **beside** himself.

He calls good evil, and bitter sweet;
his moral sense is perverted;
his mind acts without due control;
he yields himself as a servant to sin;
he "loves darkness rather than light;"
he runs greedily in the way of sin;
he seeks his own selfish ends supremely;
he is under the governance of merely worldly influences;
he shuts his eyes to the future, and
he madly rushes on to eternal ruin!

Now, however, this **delusion** is being broken up. He begins to look at things in their just relation—**reason** recovers its ascendancy, and **reflection** busies itself with his past life. Now he thinks on God, his Father, and what he has left in his Father's house, and the rich provision there made for the souls of His servants, and the fullness of bread therein for all who will resort there. He begins his repentance by a resolve to break off his present course of life, (for there is no **repentance** where there is a **continuance** in sin) saying, "I will arise;" I will sit no longer in these distant fields, in this brutish servility. "I will arise," and renouncing my employment, will "go to my Father."

And this indicates the second essential element of true repentance, which is a **turning to God**; for when the Holy Spirit produces in the soul that godly

sorrow for sin which is the result of his convicting power—then there results a **repentance** which manifests itself in **a turning away from sin—and a turning unto God**, with full purpose of heart to serve Him in sincerity and truth. The **resolve** to return is accompanied by a **penitent confession**, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before You!"

Under the enlightening influences of the Spirit, the sinner is taught to behold his **iniquities** in a new point of view. Hitherto, he has regarded **sin** only as it has affected his **worldly** interests and standing. Its **heinousness** has been measured by the discomforts of mind or body to which it has subjected him. Now, however, the mere **earthly** aspect of sin, is overtopped by its appearance in the light of God's countenance. He sees it to be **that abominable thing which God hates!** And as the **holy character of God** rises into view, he beholds more clearly, the **baseness** of his iniquity; and so filled is he with a sense of his **vileness** in God's sight, that he exclaims with David, "Against You, and You only have I sinned!"

The idea that he "has sinned against Heaven," against the laws, the love, the mercy, the long-suffering, the holiness of the **God** of Heaven—is the absorbing idea of the repenting sinner. He never thought before of **sin** as it appears in the view of God, and of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit; and he is amazed at its grossness and baseness, and exclaims, "Behold, I am vile!" "I **abhor** myself, and repent in dust and ashes!"

For **humility** necessarily follows true repentance and confession. It is impossible for the soul to say, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven"—without that **conscious worthlessness** on account of guilt so humbling to the soul, as also to call out the further exclamation, "I am no longer **worthy** to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants."

To occupy the lowest place in the Church militant or Church triumphant, is far too good for the now abased penitent. to be a "doorkeeper," "a hired servant," is all to which the prostrate, sin-stricken soul dares aspire. and he feels that, to be "*least* in the kingdom of God"—is higher honor than to be the *greatest* in the kingdoms of men.

And well may the soul be humble, when it contemplates the number, malignity, and constancy of its *sins* of thought and word and deed, secret and open, of omission and commission, on the one hand; and the character of *God*—holy, supreme, eternal, infinite—against whom it has sinned, on the other hand. in the presence of such *mountain-like* sins, and before such an *ineffably glorious* God—what position can the penitent take—but that of deepest humility and self-abasement; putting his hand upon his mouth, and his mouth in the dust, crying, "Unclean, unclean!" "God be merciful to me, the sinner!"

From the depths of penitent *humility*, rises the most vigorous Christian *action*. He will *love* Christ the most—who has seen most of the plague of his own heart, and been made to feel most keenly, the bitings of the "famine," and the worthlessness of the "husks" in that "far country" of sin, wherein he was in bondage. and he will *work* for Christ the most energetically—who *loves* most ardently, for there is no motive power to action so strong, so enduring, so elevating as the constraining love of Christ.

Hence the prompt carrying into effect of the resolve, "I will arise and go to my Father!" He arises, departs, leaves all behind him, and bends his eager steps towards his Father's house. He does not allow any doubts as to his Father's readiness to receive him, to disturb his mind. He does not stop to make himself more respectable, more externally worthy. He does not hesitate and say, "If my Father wants me or loves me, it is easy enough for him to

send out his hired servants and find me, and bring me home."

In the confidence of a **faith** in his Father's readiness to receive and willingness to forgive, which is based on the immutable promise of God—he goes to that Father; for, over the gateway that leads to His mercy-seat is inscribed in bold letters, "Him who comes unto me—I will never cast out!"

As soon as there is this putting forth of the **hand of faith**, and laying hold on Christ as the hope set before us in the Gospel—there is a **sensible appreciation** of the fact that our Father, while we "were yet a great way off," has seen us, has had compassion on us, has come out to meet us; and has, with more than oriental manifestations of His love, taken us to His bosom and led us to His earthly courts.

As beautifully as the touches of this exquisite parable illustrate the **tenderness** of an earthly parent—they come far short of expressing the infinite, the divine, the eternal love of God for us miserable sinners, or the wonderful displays of His compassion when He gave His well-beloved and only-begotten Son "to die—the just for the unjust—that we might be reconciled to God."

Oh, impenitent man! Obey the motions of the Holy Spirit, and leave your swine-like lusts, your worldly husks, your servitude to sin—and arise and go to your Father! You will soon see that Father hastening towards you; His Divine love moving Him to truest compassion, and causing Him to meet you while "yet a great way off;" for the language of this loving Father is, as Hosea tells us, "Oh, how can I give you up? How can I let you go? How can I destroy you like Admah or demolish you like Zeboiim? My heart is torn within me, and my compassion overflows!"

The **rich provision** which God makes for the repenting sinner illustrates his

abounding love still further. The prodigal comes in the rags of his degradation, and is, by the ministering hand of faith, clothed in the robe, "the **best** robe," of Christ's perfect righteousness, so that he exclaims with Isaiah, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness!"

The **hand** which squandered his Father's gifts, and doled out husks to the swine—is now adorned with a **ring**, the covenant ring of a new and everlasting alliance, the "token and pledge" of a blessed union with the Lord.

He comes, with **feet** lacerated and wearied with the roughness and harshness of the sinner's way, and receives the **shoes** of the "preparation of the Gospel of peace," by which he is enabled to tread with confidence in the path of duty, and run with fleetness in the way of God's commandments.

He comes, hungry and famished—and God spreads the Gospel feast for him in His house, "a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined!" and this eucharistic feast, at which the truly penitent and believing soul feeds by **faith** on the body and blood of Calvary's Sacrifice, and is nourished and strengthened thereby—is but the foretaste of that more glorious reunion when, with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, "he shall sit down to the marriage-supper of the Lamb in Heaven!"

He comes in sorrow and humility, feeling that he is unworthy to be called a son, and desiring to take a low place, even as "a hired servant"—and he is received with every demonstration of joy. The church on earth rejoices, and welcomes him with music and thanksgiving. Christ rejoices, for He then sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied. and "there is joy in the presence of

the angels of God," for this their earthly "brother was dead—and is alive again; he was lost—and is found!"

The Unjust Steward^(TOC)

Luke 16:1-9

Jesus told his disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. So he called him in and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.'

"The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg—I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.'

"So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' "Eight hundred gallons of olive oil,' he replied. "The manager told him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred.'

"Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?' "A thousand bushels of wheat,' he replied. "He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.'

"The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted wisely. for the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings."

Commentators, while they have done much to **explain** the parables, have also

done much to **obscure** them. They have sometimes created more **obstacles** than they have removed, and, by their multifarious explanations, have involved passages in perplexity, which before were clear and simple.

It is the duty of the biblical scholar to study when to let the subject plead its own cause, and when to play the able advocate for its rendering or its doctrine—but never to overlay the words of God with **human** explanations, however ornate or beautiful.

These remarks apply with some force to the parable under consideration, which some of the ancient fathers looked upon as the most difficult and obscure of all; and one learned divine has gone so far as to declare that it is not only difficult, but impossible to give its true meaning.

The error under which most of the expositors of this passage have labored, has been that of attempting to fit an interpretation to **every circumstance and incident** of the parable, instead of attempting to seize upon and elucidate its **main** scope and design. "A parable, and the moral accommodation of it, are not," as one well observes, "like two planes, which touch one another in every part—but like a globe upon a plane, which only touches in one point."

Though this may not be true of all the parables, it is certainly very near the truth as it respects this, for the one point of contact here between the parable and the moral accommodation of it to men, is the word "wisely:" the incident in the first part of the parable being designed to show that the steward acted "wisely," or with temporal prudence and foresight, in making provision for the future; and the latter part of it, or application, being intended to urge upon us in reference to our soul's future, a spiritual wisdom, corresponding in its prudence and foresight to this wise acting in the things of earth.

"Wisely," then, seems to be the key word of the parable, opening before us

"the two-leaved gates" of the similitude and the application.

Let us examine the similitude or parable first, and then the moral or application. In applying the term "wisely" (or "shrewdly") to the unjust steward, it signifies merely temporal wisdom, sagacity, discernment, foresight to perceive danger, and wit to provide for it, according to the best classical usage of the word as found in the writings of Aristotle, Xenophon, Plato, and Euripides. In this strictly worldly sense, the unjust steward acted "wisely," in making full provision for the future.

When **accusation** was made against him that he had "wasted" his master's goods, and he was called upon to answer to the charge by giving an account of his stewardship, he was at a loss how to proceed, and asks the anxious question, "What shall I do?" The charges against him, he knew to be true; dismissal from office must inevitably follow an examination of his accounts; how therefore to acquire a livelihood when discharged from his present lucrative station, perplexed his mind. Unaccustomed to labor—he could not work; puffed up with pride—he could not beg; and between his inability to do the one and his unwillingness to do the other—he had but a poor prospect for the future.

He soon settles the matter by adding iniquity to iniquity, and completing a long course of dishonesty by open fraud. He makes his resolve, comforts himself with the assurance that it will secure him a home, and then proceeds to carry his plan into operation.

He immediately summons his master's debtors, looks over the various amounts which they had obligated themselves to pay for their lands or dwellings, rentals which, to this day, in Eastern countries, are mostly paid in the produce of the land, as corn, oil, wheat, wine. Finding that the first to

whom he spoke was bound for "a hundred measures," or about a thousand gallons of olive oil (a valuable article of oriental commerce), he tells him to take his "bill" or lease, erase the hundred, and "sit down quickly and write fifty," thus, cancelling at a stroke one-half his debt.

He then calls a second, and learning from his answer that he was to pay "a thousand measures of wheat," or over 1400 bushels, he directed him to strike off one-fifth, and thus make his obligation but "eight hundred." Two, only, are mentioned—but the tenor of the narrative implies that there were other debtors, and that the like reduction was made in all their contracts; and this the steward could easily do, because he was the one to whom the revenue was paid; and as these "bills" or obligations were in the handwriting of the renters, countersigned and witnessed by the steward; hence, it was very easy so to collude with the debtors as to produce the changes in the debt of each which are specified in the parable. The result of this was, that he placed each under an obligation to himself, varying, probably, with the ability of each to meet that obligation, and thus made sure of a welcome among these "debtors" when his master should discharge him from his stewardship.

He reasoned upon the general law of reciprocity, and though he was faithless to his master, he believed these obliged debtors would be faithful to him.

For this act of **worldly wisdom** the master of the steward was forced to commend him, for, though he saw the crime, he could not but praise the **foresight** and **sagacity** by which he secured to himself both friends and home.

Much unnecessary obloquy has been thrown upon our blessed Lord, by attributing the **commendation** of the **unjust steward** to Him, rather than to the master of the steward. From the time of the emperor Julian, who made this an occasion of vilifying the character of Christ, down to the neological

interpreters of the present day, it has been made an instrument, either of attacking the character of Christ, or of giving Divine support to knavery and fraud. The peculiar construction of the original Greek words, as well as the propriety of the thing itself, renders it certain that the "master" indicated, was the steward's master, and not Jesus Christ. It was, then, the same "master" mentioned in the third verse, "for my master takes away my stewardship;" and the same "master" mentioned in the fifth verse, "How much do you owe unto my master?" who, in the eighth verse, "commended the unjust steward, because he had acted wisely."

At this word 'wisely,' the parable proper ends. and now, with a sort of parenthetical remark, that "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light," Christ enforces the *true moral* of the parable in the emphatic words, "I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings." in which application to His disciples, "yourselves" answers to the "steward" of the parable; the "friends" to the "Lord's debtors;" "when you fail," to the removal of the steward from his office; and "the welcome into eternal dwellings" is antithetical of the temporary lodgings into which the steward was received by his earthly friends, when "put out of the stewardship;" and all turns upon the word "wisely," which is the hinge of the parable.

This we learn from looking into the parable itself. Why was it uttered? to teach us to *waste* goods entrusted to us? to teach us to *cheat* and *defraud* our employers? to show us how to make our fellow-men accomplices in our crimes? to commend injustice? Certainly not! So that we are shut up to the word *wisely* as the true pith of the parable, or else must discard it as teaching nothing worthy to be learned.

What, then, in reference to the wise actings of this steward, would our Lord have us imitate? What are the *real lessons* which this parable was designed to teach? that *we should use our riches with a wise reference to our soul's future existence*, and, regarding them as treasures given us in trust, and ourselves as stewards, amenable to our Divine Lord—so spend our "worldly wealth" in the cause of God, the extension of the Church, and the relief of human misery, as that we do by a figure of speech "make friends" thereby; "friends" who, when we "fail," or "die," shall, as it were, receive us "into everlasting habitations."

"We shall find friends there," says Luther, "for the good deeds we have done, the kindness and beneficence we have shown to the poor; these shall not only be witnesses of our brotherly and Christian behavior—but shall also be commended and recompensed. Then one shall come and say, 'Lord, here is a person who gave me a coat, a little money, a piece of bread, a cup of water in the time of need!' Yes, as Christ tells us in the 25th chapter of Matthew, He Himself, shall come forth and testify before His Heavenly Father, angels, and saints what we have done for Him, and how we have thereby approved our faith." Luther also adds this important remark, "it is not *works* which gain Heaven for us—but Christ freely grants eternal life to those who *believe*, and give *evidence* of their faith in works of love and the right employment of their earthly goods."

Riches, termed here "worldly wealth," or the false, fleeting, uncertain riches of earth, in the abstract have neither moral good nor evil. They are, so long as unused, passive and innocuous. It is *riches in motion* which gives them a definite character; and here they move under two laws, and in two directions, the law of *selfishness* and the law of *love*: the direction towards *God*—and whatever tends to advance His glory; and the direction towards *earth*—and

whatever abets its lusts and pleasures.

As, then, we cannot live in the world without making use of wealth after some sort, so must we use it as to make friends by it—not consuming it upon our lusts, not squandering it in frivolous schemes and pursuits, not hoarding it up for family aggrandizement; for then it truly becomes ***unrighteous mammon***—one of the most powerful instruments of vice and wickedness! Then truly, as the heathen poet writes, is "gold more destructive than the sword;" and becomes, as an Apostle declares, "the root of all evil." But we must appropriate it to works of mercy, feeding the hungry, relieving the poor, assisting the afflicted, ministering to the heirs of salvation, extending the gospel of Christ; thus putting it out to interest in God's service, so that in the end we shall receive ***unfading riches*** for ***filthy lucre***, with the ***interest*** of grace here, and glory in Heaven.

This is the way to "provide ourselves bags which never wear out;" "a treasure in the heavens which never fails," where no thief steals, no moth destroys, no rust corrodes. Into these habitations, all will be received when discharged from earth, who have that ***faith*** which, working by love, brings forth the ***fruits*** of righteousness and true holiness. The steward was received into the wooden tenements or clay-built cottages of his master's debtors, and by earthly and mortal friends. The friends have long since departed, the dwellings have long since crumbled away; but "the friends" which the right users of ***money*** make, are in Heaven, and the "habitations" into which they will welcome us are "everlasting;" for the inheritance of the Christian is "incorruptible, undefiled, and passes not away."

Let us imitate then the ***foresight*** of the unjust steward in making provision for the future—by acting wisely for the eternal interests of our souls. Let us imitate the ***alacrity*** and ***promptness*** of the unjust steward, who lost not a

moment in view of his imminent discharge, to secure friends and homes—by being as prompt and eager in the prospect of our failing life to gain the favor of Him who is "a friend, that sticks closer than a brother," and a mansion among the "everlasting habitations;" "for we know," says Paul, "that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

And finally, let us remember, that it behooves "the children of light" to be as wise, as cautious, as circumspect, as far-seeing, as prompt in devising, and as liberal in executing every good plan for the salvation of souls, and the glory of God, as "the people of this world are shrewd in dealing with their own kind."

Yet how seldom is this the case! How very far the spirit of Christian enterprise falls below the level of worldly enterprise! We need then, as "children of light," to go to the "Father of lights" for that illumination which will enable us to act with more judgment, tact, zeal, and forecast in our spiritual concerns, beseeching Him that He would strengthen us "with the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, and daily increase in us your manifold gifts of grace, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and true godliness, and fill us, O Lord, with the spirit of your holy fear, now and forever!"

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Luke 16:19-31

*"There was a **rich man** who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a **beggar** named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat*

what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

"The time came when the **beggar** died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The **rich man** also died and was buried. In Hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire!'

"But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

"He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

"Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'

"'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

"He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead!'"

In some respects, this is one of the most remarkable parables uttered by our Lord. It brings before us...
the two extremes of **life**,

the two extremes of *death*, and
the two extremes of *existence beyond the grave*.

Each of these couplets may be regarded as an *act in the parabolic drama*.

The *characters* employed in their representation, being...

a beggar,
a rich man,
the patriarch Abraham,
and attending angels.

While the *scene* is laid...

in Earth,
and in Heaven,
and in Hell.

The consideration of these several acts will put us in possession of the true scope of the parable, and enable us to explain its minor features and design.

The *first act* exhibited before us, is the *two extremes of life*—a very *rich* man—and a very *poor* man.

The RICH MAN presents himself as being "dressed in purple and fine linen and living in luxury every day." Nothing could more clearly indicate his wealth and splendor; for though, in later times, robes of purple have been appropriated to royalty alone—yet in Christ's day it was the dress of the rich, the great, and the favorites in the courts of princes. Robes of purple were very costly, because of the scarcity of the shell-fish (murex trunculus) from which the Tyrians obtained their celebrated *dye*; or from the rareness of the purple fish, from which, according to Pliny, the Phoenicians extracted their rich varieties of purple.

Of nearly equal costliness was the "fine linen," in which the rich man was clothed; consisting of an under-vest or tunic, composed chiefly of the Egyptian flax or Bambusa, which was of a soft texture, and so expensive, being worth its weight in gold, as to be worn only by princes, priests, or people of great estate. In saying, then, that he was "dressed in purple and fine linen," nothing more was needed to indicate the *costliness* and *magnificence* of his attire.

But he "lived in luxury," as well as dressed royally; and that not occasionally—but "every day." His life was a daily feast, full of everything that could gratify the palate of an epicurean lord. Of course, his *dwelling* was in keeping with his *wardrobe* and his *table*. And when we say, therefore, that he was gorgeously arrayed, sumptuously fed, and nobly lodged—we cover the whole ground of *luxurious living*, and that *outward splendor* which is so much coveted by men.

Turn now to the BEGGAR. His name is Lazarus. The name of the rich man has not been mentioned (for the term Dives, the Latin word for "rich, magnificent," is a conventional name given to him by uninspired writers)—but that of the beggar has been recorded. The names of *multitudes of the poor*, whom the world knows not of—will be found recorded in "the Lamb's Book of Life," and engraved on the palms of the hands of the crucified One—while the names of but *few of the rich*, the wise, the noble, are written there; for they are the "men of the world who have their portion in this life."

Of this Lazarus (a name derived, as some think, from a Hebrew word, signifying a *helpless person*; or according to others, from a word which is interpreted *God is my helper*), it is said, that he was laid at the gate of this rich man, full of sores, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from his table; moreover even the dogs came and licked his sores.

The portal of a great mansion was often a place of resort for beggars, that the passers in and out might give them alms; a custom mentioned as far back as Homer, in the *Iliad and the Odyssey*, and still kept up in many parts of the Eastern world. This *description* of Lazarus, like that of the rich man, is brief—but emphatic, the strokes which draw his condition are few—but masterly, and give us a full insight into his *wretchedness* and *want*. He was helpless, for the verb, *was laid*, being in the passive voice, implies that he was *borne and placed there by the aid of others*—consequently was himself helpless. "Was laid at his gate" like a common beggar, a miserable dependent mendicant.

"Full of sores" diseased all over his body with grievous ulcers, which must have been intensely painful by their number and malignity, increased by his daily exposure and by the lack of proper sanatives and emollients.

"Desiring to be fed with the crumbs," not asking to sit at the rich man's table, nor yet to eat with his servants—but only for the broken refuse crumbs which fell from the platters and was swept into the streets.

"Even the dogs came and licked his sores"—he was so miserable that he was unable to fray away the dogs, which, attracted by the blood and sores of his diseased limbs, came and licked them, thus reducing him almost to the level of the brute creation.

These are the outlines of a misery rarely met with—and present to our imaginations, *a loathsome and repulsive object*.

Such was the relative condition of the two in this life. The one, with a stately mansion, princely clothing, sumptuous fare, numerous servants, courtly friends—having all that heart could wish or money buy; filling himself day by day with these objects of sensuality and pride, and neither *thinking nor*

caring for the poor, the sick, the houseless, the hungry; absorbed in self, living for the present, reckless of the future!

The other, without a home, a bed, a table, with no companions but dogs, no resting-place but the gateway, no clothing but rags; hungry, diseased, helpless; a burden to himself, an offence to the rich; gathering a scanty pittance from the alms of travelers, and satisfying a craving hunger with the crumbs which he shared with dogs!

Who would not *envy* the rich man?

Who would not *shun* the condition of Lazarus?

But the *scene changes*, and brings us to the *close* of their respective lives. "And it came to pass that the beggar died; the rich man also died and was buried." *Death is the common lot of all*. Death blends the scepter and the spade, and knocks with equal pace at the gates of the *palace*, and the hovels of the *poor*.

The *beggar* died first. There is, however, no record of his funeral. He was hurried into the ground, perhaps unhonored, unwept, uncared for, "buried with the burial of an donkey, cast out beyond the gates of Jerusalem."

Not so with the *rich man*: "He died and was buried;" interred, doubtless, with pomp and ceremony; for the wealth which commanded friends when living, could command mourners when dead.

Here, again, who would not prefer the condition of the rich man to that of Lazarus? The one dies surrounded by skillful physicians, faithful nurses, helpful attendants, and is borne to the costly tomb with all the insignia of courtly grief. The other passes away alone, is confined in his rags, and, without a mourner to drop a tear, and is hurried out of sight.

Thus closes the *earthly history* of Dives and Lazarus. Here the *curtain of life* drops—and the bodies return to the worm, their native dust, and corruption.

The scene again changes, and the *future*, with its vast consequences, opens before us.

Dives and Lazarus again come into view—but how changed their eternal destinies!

The *rich* man! Where is he? "In Hell, lifting up his eyes in torment!" Where were his riches, his purple robes, his sumptuous fare, his lordly mansion? Could none of these save him? Could none of these buy him a place in Heaven? No! stripped of his wealth, his robes, his feasts, his friends—he is thrust into Hell, where his riches and luxuries but *feed the flames* which *burn*, but never *consume* their victim.

The *beggar!* where is he? His body, perhaps, had scarcely the semblance of an earthly burial—yet his *soul* was borne "by angels into Abraham's bosom." What though *princes* even carried the body of Dives to the tomb? Lazarus had the higher honor, for *celestial spirits* conveyed his soul to glory!

The Jews expressed the *happiness of the righteous at death* in three ways: "They go to the garden of Eden;" "they go to be under the throne of glory;" "they go to the bosom of Abraham." And it was in reference to this general idea, that our Lord introduced this expression, to denote the *future happiness* of Lazarus.

He was in the *bosom of Abraham*, "the Father of the faithful." He whom the rich man scorned to have at his table—was received into the arms of Abraham, "the friend of God;" resting in the highest felicity which the Jewish

mind could imagine!

The repose of Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham is represented in the parable as being seen by Dives, for it is stated that "in Hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and **saw** Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side." Here again our Savior **accommodates his language** to the common notions of the Jews, who were taught by the rabbinical writers to believe, that the gates of Paradise, were near by the gates of Hell; **separated**, indeed, by an impassable gulf—yet within eye-range and ear-shot of each other.

As soon as the rich man saw Lazarus he recognized him, and calls him by name, and begs to Abraham, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and **send Lazarus** to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire!" Brief words—yet expressive of **intense woe**. The tormenting flame, the parched tongue, the quenchless thirst—a thirst so great that the only blessing it asks is one drop of water from the "tip of one finger"—superadded to the humbling position of a beggar—asking like a miserable mendicant for a favor from the hands of him whom, on earth, he spurned with contempt, constitute the elements of his unearthly agony.

His request, as small as it is, is denied. He is bid to **remember**, that he, "in his lifetime, received his good things;" he was one of those "men of the world" described by the Psalmist, "who have their portion in this life," who flourish here "like a green bay-tree," "whose hearts were as fat as brawn," and who, in consequence, lifted up their proud spirits against God, asking, with all the insulting haughtiness of Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord that I should serve Him?"

All this he is bid **remember**, and as his busy **memory** wakes into more than usual activity—he remembers God's calls of mercy rejected, his opportunities of grace slighted, his vows of obedience broken—and guilt, transgression,

rebellion, gather around his mind with most harassing power. Among all the fearful torments of the lost—none will exceed those which memory will furnish in the perpetual review of the past!

Undaunted by the denial of this request, he begs another: "Then I beg you, father—send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment!" By the first reply of Abraham, he ascertained that there was *no hope for him*, and abandoning all attempt to get a *personal* favor—he turns his thoughts to his relatives on earth, who, pursuing, as he knew, the same course which he had followed—would, like him, take up their abode in everlasting burnings!

For their sakes, therefore, he pleads that Abraham would "send Lazarus to his father's house," to warn them by his horrendous end—of the dreadful fate which awaited them, if they continued in their sinful course. Abraham replies, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them!"

In the request of Dives, there was a virtual implication that he had not been sufficiently warned, an idea which is still further sustained in his rejoinder: "No, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent!" evidently hinting that Moses and the Prophets were not a *sufficient* warning, and that had a *messenger* from the unseen world visited him, as he wished Lazarus to do his brethren—he would have repented, and avoided that place of torment; thus aiming to charge upon God, what he had brought upon himself!

But Abraham closes the dialogue with the solemn yet emphatic assertion, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead!"

The phrase "Moses and the Prophets" is a common formula to express the

writings of the Old Testament. And the assertion of Abraham proves that where the teachings of these sacred books are disregarded—no amount of **personal revelation** will be productive of benefit. For the same evil dispositions and perverse will which hinder men from believing the truths contained in the Scriptures, attested as they are by signs and wonders of most miraculous power, would lead them, after the first startling excitement was over—to disbelieve even though one went unto them from the dead.

The point at issue between Dives and Abraham, resolves itself into this question: Is a **standing Revelation** from God, better suited to man as an accountable being—than a **special and individual** one? This opens too wide a subject to be fully discussed here—yet it cannot be dismissed without some statements which will go far to solve the question.

We might settle the matter in a very summary way by saying that whatever plan a God of infinite wisdom has devised—is that which is best adapted to man as a spiritual and immortal being. A **standing** Revelation is that plan which God has devised—therefore a standing Revelation is that which is best adapted to man as a spiritual and immortal being.

Those who acknowledge both the major and the minor premises, as duly assumed, will unhesitatingly adopt the conclusion—for the syllogism is a perfect one, and in the simplest form.

Waiving however this strictly logical argument, which is amply sufficient for all honest and reverent minds—we can discover many reasons why there is more weight, and should be more influence, in a **standing** Revelation than in a **private revelation**, made to particular people, in different times, places, and conditions.

A **standing** Revelation is not so easily counterfeited. It is of universal

application, and thus bears equally on all. It is more easily appreciated and understood, as it concentrates upon itself the interpretation of thousands of strong, educated, and prayerful minds. It is more *permanent* and *unchanging*. It is better fitted to unfold the great lineaments of Jehovah's character. It is more consonant to the analogy of nature, wherein God operates through general laws, those standing and irreversible statutes of His physical kingdom, which we term the *laws of nature*, and upon the permanence of which is based all human science.

We go further, and assert that the *evidence* which sustains our standing Revelation, is greater than any which could be given by one coming from the spirit world. For consider what would be the nature of the *evidence* which such a messenger from the dead would give! It would be that of a private individual, who could tell only his personal experience, and would possess merely the authority of a traveler to the spirit land, narrating what he had seen and heard.

But is the evidence of such a one, at all comparable to the evidence of the Bible? Is the narrative of a finite creature—to be preferred to the Revelation of the infinite God? Is the story of one who tells only what his limited observation has gathered—better than the words of Him who knows the end from the beginning? Did Lazarus who rose from the dead—have a better knowledge of the unseen world than He by whom He was raised?

Let us look a moment at the respective value of the two kinds of evidence. In the case of the Bible, the grounds on which we receive and believe it, are its public, unimpeached, and wondrous *miracles*; its numerous, comprehensive, and far-reaching *prophecies*; the unparalleled *preservation* of its sacred books; the ever accumulating mass of *historical* proof; its numerous collateral and corroborative monuments; its peculiar and supernatural

doctrines; its perfectly demonstrable *inspiration* by the Holy Spirit; its reception by the universal Church; its minute *adaptation* to the multifarious needs of the soul; the *regenerating power* which it has already exercised upon the human race. And this evidence appeals to the affections of the *heart*, to the faculties of the *mind*, to the *conscience, reason, and judgment* of mankind.

In the case of an *apparition from the dead*—there would only be the personal irresponsible authority of a single individual—appealing not to your judgment and reason, for that would be lost in your fright; not to the sober faculties of your mind, for those would be paralyzed with fear; but to your excited imagination, to your stimulated imagination, startled into intense action by the standing before you of one "from the dead."

Let any candid mind say if this is any evidence at all, worthy to be compared to that which underlies the massive fabric of Scriptural Revelation! We know that just in proportion as the *imagination* is excited beyond its healthful operations, or the passions stimulated beyond their legitimate action, that... the reflective and judicial faculties of the mind are depressed and weakened; the perceptions of the *intellect* are distorted; the decisions of the *judgment* are perverted; the operation of the *will* is irregular; and no *true* judgment or decision can be had or reached by an individual whose mind is either *paralyzed with fear*, or *bewildered by excitement*.

It is perfectly absurd, therefore, to place the evidence afforded by an *apparition from the dead*—on a footing with that which upholds "Moses and the Prophets."

But, further, the very grounds on which men object to the testimony of the

Bible, apply with greater force to the evidence of "one from the dead." The objections to the Bible are mainly on two grounds, namely, as a revelation of the will of God, and as a system of moral doctrines. The objection to the Bible because it is a revelation from God—lies harder against a man from the dead, than against the Scriptures—for what would his message be but a revelation? And a revelation of things beyond the cognisance of your senses, or the testimony of your fellow men! And so, of course, on Hume's principles—it must be discarded, or else you are placed in the dilemma of accepting the evidence of a *solitary* and individual revelation, and rejecting the vast and ever accumulating evidence which sustains the Word of God. Which is most reasonable? Which demands the greatest credulity?

If the objection to a standing revelation be on account of its *doctrines*—then, if the man from the dead taught the doctrines of the Bible, you would no more believe him than you would "Moses and the Prophets." And if he taught doctrines *contrary* to the Gospel—then, before you can receive them, you must demand for their confirmation a proof as strong at least as that by which we prove the Scriptures to be of God, and even stronger, to counterbalance the *prima facie authority* of Revelation.

When such evidence can be produced, then will we "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it;" but as no such has been given, and none possibly can be—we dismiss the objection as one originating in the *pride of the sinful heart*, unwilling to bow to the humbling doctrines of the Cross—rather than in the deductions of a calm reason, or an unbiased judgment.

But the falsity of these *subterfuges* will still more strongly appear, if we remember the fact that the very condition of things desired by the rich man in the parable *has already* taken place—and yet the anticipated results have not followed. One has come to us from the dead! Jesus Christ has already risen

from the dead. And, what is of great importance to our case—he rose for the very purpose of **confirming** the doctrines of Revelation; for Paul so rests the whole superstructure of the Gospel on the resurrection of Christ, that he says, with great emphasis, "If Christ has not risen—then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain—and you are yet in your sins!" Yet how few believe the words of Jesus; how few repent at His warnings of wrath, or His invitations of grace!

The very men who most clamorously say "but if one came unto us from the dead, and told us the facts concerning the unseen world, that sin is punished with unspeakable woe, and that persistence in our present course, will bring us to that place of torment—we would certainly repent," are those who most sedulously refuse to listen to the teachings of the Savior who **did** come from the dead, and who tells us in the Gospel what He sees and knows of the world to come.

To the open ear of the sincere inquirer, the Scriptures speak out clear and full—and he who yields to their guiding voice will, at death, be "carried by angels into Abraham's bosom!" But, to the willfully closed ear—no attestations, come from wherever they may—will prove effectual, for persistent unbelief will cast them all aside, and rush with infatuated step over every barrier, until death ends his earthly career, and "in Hell, he lifts up his eyes, being in torment!"

Instructive Suggestions

This parable is full of ***instructive suggestions***:

This parable teaches that the condition of the soul, in the eternal world—is not at all affected by the condition of the body in this world. "God is no

respector of people." Spiritual qualifications alone, shall decide our position in eternity.

This parable teaches that a man may be poor and miserable and despised on earth—and yet be dear to saints, to angels, and to God. Joseph in Pharaoh's dungeon, David hiding in caves, ***Elijah*** "hunted like a partridge upon the mountains," the ***Apostles*** regarded as "the off-scouring of all things;" and above all, the personal history of our ***blessed Lord***, who was "a man of sorrows," and "had nowhere to lay his head"—amply sustain this precious truth.

This parable teaches that riches, honors, and friends—are no security against death and Hell. "Riches," says Solomon, "are no profit in the day of wrath!" And Zephaniah boldly declares of the ungodly, "Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath!"

HONORS are but rainbows painted on the spray of popular applause, vanishing as soon as formed; even as the Psalmist says, "Man being in honor, abides not."

FRIENDS are but flesh and blood, as mortal and as impotent as ourselves; "none of them" writes David, "can, by any means, redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." He, therefore, who trusts in either of these, trusts in that which will fail him in the day of judgement!

This parable teaches that those who revile the godly and the poor in this life—shall respect and envy them in the life to come. The rich man took no notice of Lazarus when living—but was most anxious to secure his services when in eternity. And who are they "of whom" the Apostle says "the world was not worthy?" Its kings? its poets? its heroes? its philosophers? No! but the lowly, despised, and persecuted servants of God—those who "had trial of

mockings and scourgings; yes, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments, who were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, who wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented." The world does not write *these names* in its history with illuminated capitals—but they are written in the "Lamb's Book of Life!" They are not decked with *earthly* honors—but they are dressed with kingly robes, and wear kingly crowns in Heaven!

This parable teaches that all those who have their "good things in this life"—can expect none in the eternal world. So much are we under the dominion of the *temporal* and the *material*—that the present too often absorbs our thoughts to the exclusion of the spiritual and the eternal. The cry of most men, like that of the departing Prodigal, is, "Father, give me the portion of the estate now." They are under the sway of *sense*—they do not walk by *faith*. They live only for the *present*, and come under the class described by David, "men of the world, who have their portion in *this* life." They have chosen their *part*—but it is a worldly one, and when called hence they lose it, and have no heavenly portion in the future.

This parable conveys a solemn warning to the rich. It is to be observed that our Lord does not charge the rich man with any *positive crime* or immorality. He merely states that he was rich, and lived in a style corresponding to his wealth, which may be said of many a truly good man. But he was *evidently* one who "trusted in his riches," of whom the Savior declared, "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle—than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." The *snare of wealth* lies in "its *deceitfulness*," and he who would avoid its entangling meshes, must use his riches as a steward's trust, for which he must give *account* at the judgment-seat of Christ.

This parable should prove a consolation to the pious poor. What though he

begs his daily bread, and lies in rags at the gates of the rich? Was not Jesus born in a stable? And were not the birds and the foxes better housed than He?

The poor Christian may have no *earthly treasure*—but he has "an inheritance reserved for him in Heaven."

His body may be full of sores—but God says to his soul, "Your beauty was perfect through my loveliness, which I had put upon you."

He may have but "crumbs" to eat here—but he has an invitation "to the marriage-supper of the Lamb!"

He may have no *companions* now—but angels minister to him as one of the heirs of salvation, the Holy Spirit dwells in his heart as a Comforter, and Christ is to him "a friend who sticks closer than a brother!" And, from the lowest deep of earthly abasement, he can look up to God, and say, "*Abba, Father.*"

Therefore, to all the poor and humbled Christians, we say, in the words of the once lowly and despised—but now glorious and exalted Savior, "Look up, and lift up your heads—for your redemption draws near!"

And finally, this parable teaches that our eternal future corresponds to our earthly character. We enter the world of spirits with precisely the same moral feelings with which we leave this present world. "As the tree falls—so it lies." He who at death is sinful—will be sinful still. He who at death is holy—will be holy still. This being the case, as God's Word positively assures us, and there being guaranteed to us only the *present moment of time* in which to prepare for this unending future, with how much emphasis should this consideration speak to us of the necessity of making immediate preparations to meet our God!

We may be summoned before Him at any moment. If called hence in an unrepenting and unbelieving state—we shall enter that unseen world only to spend an eternity amidst the torments of the lost, with an impassable gulf between us and the land of bliss! An "impassable gulf!" No passing now! No passing ten thousand ages hence! No passing forever! Once in Hell, lifting up our eyes in torment—and we are there forever!

For though there is *remorse* in Hell,
though there is *sorrow* there,
though there is *weeping* and *wailing* there—
there is no *repentance* there, no *faith* there, no *Savior* there!

Now, there is mercy and forgiveness! Now, the blood-filled fountain is open! Now, the arms of Jesus are outstretched to receive us! Now, the Spirit pleads and moves upon our hearts! Now, the instrumentalities of grace are freely offered. Seize them now, "for now is the accepted time! Now is the day of salvation."

The Unjust Judge; the Importunate Friend^(TOC)

Luke 18:1-8

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. and there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'

"For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!'"

And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. and will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Luke 11:5-8

"Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.'

"Then the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is

already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.'

I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs."

The parable of the **Unjust Judge** grew out of the circumstances related by Luke in the seventeenth chapter. The Pharisees had demanded of Christ, "when the kingdom of God would come?" this impertinent curiosity he justly rebukes; but, at the same time, takes occasion, from their question, to foretell his disciples the dire effect that would attend the destruction of Jerusalem, rivalling the horrors of a deluged world, or the ravages of Sodom's conflagration.

This announcement was calculated to depress their spirits and shake their faith: for, be it remembered ...

Christ offered no **outward inducement** to men to become His followers;

He gave no flattering encomiums;

He held out no rich patronage;

He presented no anticipations of earthly pleasure, wealth, ease, or honors.

But, on the contrary, He told them that shame and reproach awaited them; that they "would be hated by all men for His name's sake;" and that "whoever killed them, would think that he did God service."

In order, therefore, to teach them that they should not faint in the day of adversity, that there would be a deliverer and a deliverance, and that the way and means of securing much of their needed help was in their own reach—he relates to them the parable of the **Unjust Judge**. The elements of the parable are quite simple, and need but little elucidation. of the judge, two things are

said—that he "neither feared God—nor cared about men."

This was a proverbial expression, used even by such classical writers as Homer and Euripides, denoting consummate and unblushing wickedness; indeed, most of the heathen writers employ the term to signify one totally abandoned to all evil.

Take away from man "the fear of God"—and you fill the soul with every inward sin, and make it "a cage of unclean birds." Take away from man "a regard for man," a proper respect for human opinion, when sound and wholesome—and you surround him with every outward sin, and make him a selfish despot, grinding out from his fellow men whatever may contribute to his own lusts or aggrandizement, reckless of their happiness—and solicitous only for his own. Strike out from the heart both these elements—the fear of God and a regard for man—and you make him ***a monster with a human shape—but with a devil's heart!*** When such sit upon the bench of law, or in the seat of equity, we may take up the lamentation of Isaiah, and say, "Our courts oppose the righteous, and justice is nowhere to be found. Truth stumbles in the streets, and honesty has been outlawed!"

The other character introduced to us in this parable is a ***widow***—a name which stirs the fountain of sympathy by telling us of sorrow, loneliness, and Bereavement. Like a vine torn by the scathing lightning from the tree around which it clung, and left to trail in the dust—yet leaving still some tendrils clasping the rifted trunk—so is woman when ***Death*** writes "widow" on her broken heart.

The introduction of this widow here gives increased interest and pathos to the parable. Left to struggle alone with the world, her natural protector gone—she has evidently been defrauded by one of those craven-hearted men, who,

while they dare not oppress their own gender—yet cowardly triumph over unprotected womanhood. The cases of such were specially provided for by God, and judges were bound by the Divine law to see that justice was meted out to the widow. "You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless," was the command of Jehovah; and among the curses pronounced upon Mount Ebal, was that uttered by the Levites, "Cursed be he who perverts the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow; and all the people shall say, Amen!"

This poor widow then came to the unjust judge for simple justice, and he, by the law of God and man, was bound to give it to her; but either through indifference or indolence—for a long time he refused to give her audience. But put off once, she came again; rebuffed today, she returned tomorrow; and with an energy born amidst sorrow and nursed by oppression—she persisted in her appeal until the judge listened to her cry. to this he was moved, not by duty or compassion—but by her *importunity* acting upon his selfishness. for he gives the reason of this conduct when he says, "Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!"

Let us turn now to the parable of the *Importunate Friend at Midnight*.

The subject of our Savior's discourse at the time this was uttered, was prayer. He had Himself been "praying in a certain place;" and His disciples, standing probably at a respectful distance—yet observing His words and actions, felt a desire to know something of prayer themselves; reasoning, with much truth, that if He, their Lord and Master, needed to pray—much more was such devotion necessary for them. in addition to this incentive, they were stimulated still further to offer the request, from the fact that *John* had taught his disciples to pray—had given them probably a form of prayer as the guide

to their devotion; and, therefore, not to be behind John's disciples in the privileges of grace, they approach Jesus with the request, "Lord, teach us to pray—as John also taught his disciples."

Jesus immediately complies, by giving to them as a formulary what is commonly denominated the Lord's Prayer; that remarkable collection of petitions and ascriptions, which contain within themselves the elements of every prayer that can ever be offered by the faithful heart to our Father in Heaven. Each need of the renewed soul, each object of its most anxious desire, everything for which it can pray aright—lie enfolded in some one or other of the petitions of this prayer—as the majestic oak lies enrap up in the acorn. The more we meditate upon the paragraphs of this prayer—the more profound and comprehensive do they appear; no human mind can grasp the full meaning of any one of the sentences of this prayer, or sound the depths of its spiritual mysteries. It carries in itself the proof that Christ is Divine, for only a mind possessing Divinity could frame a prayer that should concentrate every possible aspiration of the soul, and every known attribute of the Godhead; giving to a few crude disciples a set of words which they readily comprehended and used, which yet, at the same time, is a form of prayer suited to ...

every age of life,

every period of time,

every class of people,

every nation of earth, and

to every condition of the soul, from the time that it draws the first breath of spiritual life, until at the hour of death it exchanges the prayers of earth for the praises of Heaven.

Having given His disciples this model prayer, and thus taught them for *what*

they should pray, the necessary *elements* of acceptable petition—He proceeds to show them *how* they should pray, and this He does in two ways: first by parable, then by precept; the parable giving more emphasis to the precept—and the precept more point to the parable.

It is not unusual in those hot countries to journey in the night, thus avoiding the burning rays of the sun, and enjoying the refreshing coolness which then prevails. The coming in, therefore, of a friend at midnight is quite in keeping with oriental usages, and supplies an important element of the parable. Had the friend thus surprised by an unexpected visit gone to his neighbor in the day time, to ask for "three loaves," he would easily have obtained them; but going at midnight, when his house was closed, its doors barred, his family at rest, and rousing him from the first sweet sleep of the night—was a test of friendship and liberality of no ordinary kind.

To the request, then, for "three loaves," to supply the necessities of this traveler, the man "from within" answers, "Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything." These reasons for declining do not weigh against the necessities of his hungering, fainting friend, therefore he goes not away at this rebuff—but presses his request more and more with shameless earnestness, until the landowner, wearied with his importunity, rises, and "gives him as much as he needs."

The key-word of this parable, then is, *IMPORTUNITY*—an *earnest persevering effort to obtain his request*. this was the point to which the Savior wished to direct the attention of his disciples, and by the means of this parable He designed to enforce the duty of earnest, persevering prayer. and in this respect the parable is not unlike that of the Unjust Judge, and though there are points of difference—yet so far as it regards the setting forth of

importunate prayer, they may be regarded and treated as one.

That *spirit* which these parables enjoin is still further enforced by the *precept* with which our Lord follows up the similitude of the Midnight Friend: "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. for everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

The *end* which our Lord had in view in uttering the parable of the Unjust Judge was, as He declares, "that men ought always to pray—and not to faint;" and from the two parables, combined, we learn these truths:

First. That men "ought always to pray."

Secondly, that we must "not faint" at the apparent delay of God, and the pressure of our adversary.

Thirdly, that this prayer must be importunate.

Lastly, that persistent and earnest prayer will always prevail, and that everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

First. Men Ought Always to Pray

We usually give form to our petitions by praying on our knees, with closed eyes and solemnly uttered words; but to pray always in this manner is impossible, physically and mentally. Hence our Lord must mean something else than the formal and distinctive act of prayer when he said, "Men ought always to pray;" and Paul also must have had in his mind something else than set, closet petitions, when he exhorted the Thessalonians, "*Pray without ceasing,*" and the Romans to be "*persistent in prayer.*"

Prayer is the expression of the soul's desires; but "God is a Spirit" and the soul is immaterial, and there is needed, therefore, no intervention of words or posture, no utterances of the tongue, no postures of the body, in order to have fellowship with Him. There may be true prayer ...

without words,
without a closet,
without the bended knee,
without the shut eye.

There may be true prayer ...

in the thronged street,
in the busy market,
in the din of the workshop,
in the bustle of the store,
amidst the books of the office, and the activities of professional life.

When the soul is so attuned to God's will that there is an ever-growing harmony between it and God, and an ever-increasing conformity of mind and heart to Jesus Christ—then is that soul in a praying frame—ready at any moment to commune with its Heavenly Father ...

now darting out a desire,
now ejaculating a petition,
now breathing out a holy wish, and
now silently reflecting back the manifestations of Divine love, with a glow of emotion and tenderness of sensibility peculiarly affecting.

He who cultivates this *spirituality of mind* lives in an *atmosphere of prayer*, and breathes the spirit of supplication. He is always in a praying condition. It requires no violent wrenching off of his mind from seen and earthly things, before it can be fastened on unseen and eternal things; but it passes from his

avocations to the Throne of Grace with an easiness of transition evincive of the little hold that things on earth have upon his heart, and of the powerful attraction of the Mercy-Seat.

It is the privilege of the Christian to have this perpetual fellowship with God, to have his soul thus brought into fellowship and communion with the adorable Savior; and where we fail to enjoy it the cause is in ourselves, and not in God—for His ear is ever open to our requests, being "more ready to hear than we to pray, and more willing to give than either we desire or deserve."

In this *praying state*, men "ought always" to keep their souls, because it is the only truly *healthful* state of the soul, its only truly *happy* state, its only true *preparative* to the unveiled enjoyment of God in Heaven.

Secondly. We Must Not Faint

At the apparent delay of God, and pressure of our adversaries. In ourselves, indeed, we would often faint, for our strength is weakness, and our strongest resolutions are but as the thread of the gossamer around the sinewy arms of some giant passion. But we should "faint not," because we pray to an almighty God; we go to a throne of grace from which we are never excluded; we offer our prayer through the Savior, who is always a prevailing intercessor; and we are aided by the Spirit of grace and supplication, who "helps our infirmities."

The widow fainted not, even though she had an unjust judge to appeal to; and because she fainted not—she gained her petition. and if this weak, unprotected woman, by the mere force of importunity, wrung from the hands of a judge "who neither feared God, nor regarded man"—redress of her

grievance, shall not God's own children, if they faint not, in due time reap from their heavenly Father, full and satisfactory answers to their requests? Can He, who is all justice and all love, do less for His importuning children than this "unjust judge" did for the afflicted widow? Indeed, Christ Himself puts the question, "Shall not God avenge His own elect, who cry night and day unto Him, though He bears long with them?" and He answers His own question by declaring, with marked emphasis, "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily."

The "elect" of God have, as we learn both from the Bible and experience, "an adversary," that great adversary "the Devil, who goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." this "adversary" of God and man is none other than that "ruined archangel," who at the head of legions of other fallen angels, is plotting, though impotently, the overthrow of the moral government of God on earth. to this end they assault the Church of God and "His own elect" with peculiar virulence and power, level against them every fiendish weapon, spread out every deceiving lure, and seek to entrap their souls into eternal ruin. They torment the children of God with fears, and doubt, and spiritual darkness; they harass them with innumerable temptations, and leave no point unassailed, from the infusing of secret unbelief to the open and iron-hearted persecution of the saints by fire and fagot, by sword and scaffold, by dungeon and death.

Every child of God feels the enmity of this adversary, and groans to be delivered from his power; some he vexes more than others—but all are made to bear the marks of his violence, and to endure his hatred and reproach. But do you think that God will allow this to go on unavenged? Can he, as a Father, see His children prostrated by this prince of darkness—and not hasten to their rescue? Can He, as a covenant God, behold those who have laid hold

upon His covenant, assaulted and persecuted by this great adversary, and not avenge them? "I tell you," says Christ, "He will avenge them speedily!" and though, from God's "bearing long" with the machinations of this adversary, it may seem as if He did not regard His suffering people—yet there is only a **seeming** hiding of His power, for He has declared, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay!"

For when His people are almost faint and despairing, then shall He arise to judgment, and making bare His arm, shall put His hand on the throat of His enemies. this was proved in the destruction of Jerusalem, when those who had cried out concerning Jesus, "**Crucify Him! Crucify Him!**" coupled with the horrid imprecation, "**His blood be upon us and on our children,**" and who had visited their wrath upon the first Christians, were suddenly shut up within the walls of the city, and subjected to a series of trials, and sufferings, and deaths until then unheard of in the annals of retributive vengeance.

In every age since, not a persecution of the Church has existed which has not been followed by the avenging curse of God. Nay, further, not a leader or originator of any of the great persecutions which have been directed against Christianity in its first planting among the nations, or in its subsequent revivals, who has not been made "to drink of the wine-cup of the wrath of God." Collect the biographies of all the sword-armed or torch-bearing antagonists of the Church, whether you find them among Roman emperors or Roman pontiffs; whether among Gallic princes or Gallic cardinals; whether among Spanish kings or Spanish inquisitors; whether among English sovereigns or English prelates—and you shall find that all have experienced the vengeance of Almighty God.

There is scarcely an exception to this remark, from the time of Pontius Pilate, who, like Judas, "went out and hanged himself," and Herod Agrippa, who

was eaten up of worms and died; down to the imbecile Charles IX, before whose crazed vision the bloody scenes of Bartholomew's day ever glared its spectral horrors; or Mary of England, the "bloody Mary," who reigned amidst rebellions, and died amidst the taunts and triumphs of her hating subjects. It is a truth written in God's Word, "He will avenge his elect!" It is a truth written on the breastplate of God's justice, "He will avenge them speedily!" It is a truth that all history reiterates and confirms, "Jehovah shall tread down His enemies!" and so will it ever be unto the end of the world. God often "bears long" with sinners in order to test the faith of His people, and to show to the world how grievously men will sin if left for a season to themselves—but when his disciplinary course is over, his *punitive* course begins, and there is no escaping out of His hands.

Thirdly. Christ Requires Earnest and Importunate Prayer

We learn from these parables that christ requires earnest and Importunate Prayer. A few formal phrases, a few languid petitions, a few ascriptions of praise, and a few acknowledgments of mercies—are not the kind of prayers which are pleasing to God. He requires deep-felt, heart prayers—the wellings up of desires from souls who feel their sin and their need of a Savior, and who burn with love and zeal.

It is not "eloquent prayers," elaborately carved and polished by the tools of rhetoric, for refined ears—that are pleasing to God. It is not a harangue addressed to men under the form of prayer to God—which He approves; neither is it "much speaking," or "vain repetitions," which engage His attention.

Do you wish to pray aright? Go to God as a sinful child; go to Him as your Father, reconciled by the death of His Son; go in faith and hope, in love and adoration. Tell Him your fears, your trials, your doubts, your sins. Unburden your soul at the gate of his ear. Go with a broken and a contrite heart, looking only for acceptance in and through the merits and sacrifice of Jesus Christ—and you shall assuredly be heard, for the word of His promise is, "Whatever you shall ask in my name, believing, you shall receive," and "Him that comes unto me—I will never cast out."

Fourthly. Persistent and earnest prayer will always prevail

To use in part the words of another, the widow was a stranger, not at all related to the judge; but Christians are "God's elect," His favored, His "peculiar people." the unjust judge was not interested in granting her petition; but God's honor and truth is concerned in relieving the needs of His people. There was little hope of prevailing with such a merciless and unjust judge; but we address a loving and compassionate Father. The widow, moreover, had none to intercede for her; but "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." She was in danger of irritating the judge by her entreaties; but the more importunate we are—the more is God pleased, for "the prayer of the upright," says Solomon, "is His delight." She, notwithstanding all her difficulties, obtained her request; how much more shall we, who, in lieu of difficulties, have such abundant encouragements!

The same line of argument and the same inferences can be drawn from the parable of the Friend at Midnight, though we need not stop to recapitulate them here.

To unfold fully the encouragements which we have to importunate prayer, would require a volume rather than a page. We find them in the attributes of God; in the covenant made with Christ; in the manifold promises of His holy Word; in the recorded instances of its success, as in the cases of Jacob, and Moses, and David, and Daniel, and Paul; and in our own experience of God's faithfulness and truth, in reference to *every earnest cry* which we have uttered in His ear.

In order to the putting forth of this earnest importuning prayer, there is needed more "faith on the earth." *Faith is the essential basis of all prevailing prayer.* There is no acceptable prayer without it. Our prayers will be fervent and effectual—just in proportion to the strength and vitality of our faith. If we have but a faint belief in God's government and care; if we have but little trust in Jesus Christ, as our only Savior; if we believe but in part the full and free promises of grace; and if, instead of the manly, vigorous walk of faith, we take the tottering steps of an infantile belief—then will our prayers be weak, ineffectual, unedifying.

But if we cling to God's Word with unrelaxing tenacity; if we yield ourselves up to Christ in undoubting confidence; if we hold fast the precious promises, and, steadying ourselves by the *staff of hope*, walk with firm step in the pathway of the just—then shall we reap the rich results of our devotions. Our prayers will be heard—and will be answered; and blessings uncounted, unmerited, and unspeakable in richness and in glory, will descend upon our souls.

Nor should our prayers be confined to our own needs alone, for we find in the parable of the Importunate Friend, a great incentive to intercessory prayer for others. The poor widow pleaded for herself; her own wrongs, her own necessities urged her to continually press her suit. But in the other parable,

the one who came to borrow bread from his friend did not ask it for himself—but for a traveler who had unexpectedly presented himself at his door. His whole importunity was in behalf of another's necessities, not his own; and he continued pleading at that midnight hour, and before that bolted door, until he gained his request.

While, therefore, we should, like the widow, plead with unrelaxing earnestness for our *own* spiritual needs—we should likewise present importunate supplications to Almighty God in behalf of those whom His providence has placed under our care, those near and dear to us by the ties of kinship or affection. The promise is not, Ask for yourselves only, and you shall receive; seek for yourselves alone, and you shall find; knock only for personal admittance at the door of Heaven, and it shall be opened. But it runs in this broad language: "Whatever you shall ask in my name, believing, you shall receive." "Truly I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in Heaven." How often do we find in the narrative of our Savior's miracles, that He wrought special deeds of mercy upon people brought to Him by others, and because of the faith of those who brought them!

The man who was let down on a bed before Him through the broken-up roof of the house, was healed because of the faith of those who had borne him to Jesus. The servant of the Capernaum centurion, the daughter of the Syrophenician woman, and many other cases, were each healed by Jesus because of the faith of those who applied to Him for aid and favor.

The preceptive part of Scripture sustains the truth thus taught by the parables and the miracles of Jesus. Paul begs an interest in the prayers of his fellow Christians. He told the Corinthians that they had helped to deliver him from dangers through their prayers; he assured the Philippians that he knew that

his afflictions would "turn to his salvation through their prayers." He often speaks of remembering others in his prayers, and James distinctly urges, "Pray one for another."

Intercessory prayer for each other is then the plain and bounden duty of the children of God; they should come with boldness to the Throne of Grace; they should plead the necessities of their *friends* with the importunity of that midnight landowner; they should faint not in their application, even though at first God seems to say, "I cannot rise and give you anything." Pray on; God will hear, will arise, will open to you the windows of Heaven, and give you, not "three loaves" merely—but will rain down upon your soul and the souls of those for whom you intercede, "heavenly manna," that "angels' bread," which shall strengthen and sustain both you and them, until you enter the promised land above!

The Pharisee and the Publican^(TOC)

Luke 18:9-14

"To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable:

*"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a Publican. The **Pharisee** stood up and prayed with himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this Publican. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'*

*"But the **Publican** stood at a distance. He would not even look up to Heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'*

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

*The **two characters** introduced into this parable were well known as **types** of the two extremes of Jewish society; and the contrast is the more striking, because of the preference given to the humble Publican over the haughty Pharisee.*

Pharisee

A brief examination of the characteristics of the two classes will enable us to obtain clearer ideas of the people brought to our notice, and of the truth which this parable was intended to convey. The **Pharisee**, as he thrusts himself more prominently forward, will first claim our attention.

Until the Babylonish captivity, the Jews, as a body, were united in opinion; but after their dispersion, they imbibed many erroneous dogmas, and, grafting the fragments of a Greco-Oriental philosophy upon the long-accumulating traditions of the elders—they sought by these to interpret the Holy Scripture; and thus, for more than a century before Christ, the people became divided in doctrines and split up into factions, both political and religious. The three prominent parties were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes.

Of these, the Pharisees were the wealthiest, the most learned, and the most influential, and were so called from a Hebrew word which signifies to *separate*, because they separated and distinguished themselves from others, by affecting uncommon sanctity, and by wearing a peculiar garment. Thus Paul calls the Pharisees "the strictest sect of our religion," and Josephus says that "they were the most religious of any of the Jews, and the most exact and skillful in explaining the laws."

The two sources whence we obtain our knowledge of Phariseeism are the writings of Josephus, and the books of the New Testament. Josephus was himself a Pharisee, and he has presented the views and characteristics of that sect with force and minuteness in his several writings. His opinion was that of one interested in the case, and his representations are the most favorable that could possibly be made; yet, when closely examined, we cannot fail to discover how fully the leading features of this sect as portrayed by their apologist and expounder, and as drawn in Holy Writ, agree. The *coloring* is different—but when denuded of all masks and sophistry, the *lineaments* are the same.

We will take the Bible view of their case, because it is Divinely true, and because it is important to a right understanding of this parable, that we should

look at them through the delineations of the Holy Spirit.

From the New Testament, then, we learn that this sect was held in high repute as *expositors of the law*; that they were ...

very methodic in unfolding the Scriptures;

full of proselyting zeal;

rigorous in ritual observances;

oppressive in their exactions;

ostentatious in their charity and religion;

pompous and self-inflated in their affected holiness; covering up an intense love of sensual pleasures, by a pretended stoicism;

diligent in the performance of every outward rite, that they "might be seen by men," while "inwardly they were ravening wolves;"

haughty and imperious to inferiors—yet cringing parasites of royalty and power;

neglecting the *weightier* matters of the law, yet minutely critical in tithing and doing what the law did not require;

"serpents" in wisdom—but leaving the trail of their slimy deeds behind them;

"vipers" in the sudden and unexpected stings which they fastened wherever they thought they could strike their fangs with impunity;

"graves," over which the people walked and knew not the hollowness beneath until they fell into the pit;

"white-washed sepulchers," which indeed "appear beautiful outwardly—but within were full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness."

They substituted human traditions for God's Word.

They made their boast of the law by wearing broad phylacteries, and yet dishonored the law.

They turned their prayers into instruments of covetousness and extortion.

They "compassed sea and land to make one proselyte," and then made him

"twofold more a child of Hell than themselves."

They united in the one aim of destroying Jesus, and effected their purpose through bribery, blasphemy, perjury, and a bitter vindictiveness, which could slake its thirst for blood only in the opened veins and riven heart of the Messiah!

So that it is unquestionably true, as has been well remarked by Mosheim, "that the religion of the Pharisees was for the most part founded in consummate hypocrisy; and that in general they were the slaves of every wicked appetite; proud, arrogant, and avaricious; consulting only the gratification of their lusts—even at the very moment when they professed to be engaged in the service of their Maker." Yet ... their pretended claims to the guardianship of the law; their rabbinical learning; their great outward sanctity—gave them such influence with the people, that if they gave out any report they were believed. While their political influence was so vast, that at times they virtually ruled the people through the almost automaton hands that held the scepter.

No wonder, then, that John the Baptist, and our blessed Lord, whose omniscient eye took in at a glance their whole character, denounced them in the strongest terms as "serpents," as "generations of vipers," as unable to escape the damnation of Hell!

Pulican

We turn now to contemplate another class. As the *Pharisee* was in the highest repute among the Jews, for sanctity—the *Publican* was regarded as the lowest of the race, in vice. At the time of our Savior, Judea was a

province of the Roman Empire—subject, therefore, to Roman taxation; and the Publicans were the officers employed to collect the taxes. There were at this time two sorts of people called Publicans; the **Mancipes**, and the **Socii**. The "Mancipes" were those who farmed the taxes of the several provinces, and had the oversight of the inferior Publicans. They received their accounts and collections, and transmitted them to Rome. These Mancipes were sometimes Roman knights; and Cicero makes honorable mention of them in his orations.

The "Socii" were a lower class of Publicans, to whom the Mancipes rented out their several districts in smaller sections, and whose duty it was to collect from the people the sums levied by the senate.

While, then, the Mancipes were generally men of morality—the Socii or lower class, were spoken of with great contempt by heathen, as well as Jewish writers. Theocritus says of them, "Among the beasts of the wilderness, bears and lions are the most cruel; among the beasts of the city, the publican and the parasite." the reason of this general hatred was their **rapacity** and **extortion**; for they oppressed the people with unlawful exactions in order to enrich themselves.

Besides, **Publicans** were peculiarly odious to the Jews, who looked upon them as the instrument of their subjection to Rome, and who consequently regarded them as out of the pale of civilized society. Accordingly (in the New Testament), we find them joined with **harlots** and **sinners**, and other **profligate** people. Hence the objection made to our Lord, that He was "the friend of publicans and sinners," was designed as a reproachful slur upon His character. The Publican in the parable was one of this lower or despised order, with whom the self-righteous Pharisee thought it sinful to converse, and whom he regarded as "the offscouring of all things."

In conformity with the custom of the Jews, both the Pharisee and the Publican went up into the temple to pray at the hour of prayer. in common discourse, the word "temple" comprehended all the chambers, courts, and colonnades connected with the sacred edifice on Mount Moriah. When, therefore, it is said that the Pharisee and the Publican; that Peter and John; that Paul and Timothy; went up into the temple—nothing more is meant than that they went into one of the courts of the temple, and not into the sacred building itself, which contained the Holy and Most Holy Place. for into the Holy Place none but priests were admitted, and into the ***Holy of Holies*** only the High Priest could enter, and he but once a year, and then only with the blood of the atonement and the censer of burning incense. Into the temple, strictly so called, our Lord himself never entered, though He frequently visited its courts and walked and taught in its porches.

The "hour of prayer" was the "third and ninth hour" of Jewish time—corresponding to the nine o'clock in the morning and three o'clock in the afternoon of our computation. and the place where prayers were accustomed to be made, was that part of the temple called "the court of the Israelites," which was divided into two portions by an ascent of fifteen steps—the lower being appropriated to the women, and the higher to the men.

But though the Pharisee and the Publican came with the same apparent purpose to the temple—yet how widely diverse in their devotions! "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself." There is something quite emphatic in the phrase prayed "with himself," as if his prayer was for his own satisfaction, for the gratification of his own pride, for the laudation of his own merit. He in whose heart there is no godly humility, will always pray "with himself," rather than to God.

The Publican "stood," also, because it was not permitted to pray in the temple

in any other posture; though elsewhere kneeling and bowing of the head were practiced. "I will either," says an old divine, speaking of the posture in prayer, "I will either **stand** as a servant before my Master, or **kneel** as a suppliant to my King; but I will not dare **sit** as an equal."

The prayer of the Pharisee (if such it can be called) was, "God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get." There is in this prayer, great self-delight, ostentatious devotion, and a boastful liberality. There was **no humility** of soul, no confession of sin, no craving of Divine pardon. It was rather the **proud heart condescending to tell God how good it was**, and how much it had done for Him; while, at the very moment of prayer, disdain for a fellow worm dwelt in his heart and was uttered by his lips. He "went up" to the court of the temple, and "stood" in the attitude of prayer, to pronounce in the ear of God a **eulogy upon his own virtues!**

The Publican, "standing afar off," at the other side of the Men's Court, was so abased in his own estimation that he "would not so much as lift up his eyes unto Heaven—but smote upon his breast, saying: God be merciful to me a sinner!" Here is manifested ...

conscious guilt,
deep penitence,
profound humility,
sincere confession,
and earnest petition.

The words which he utters are **few**—but he condenses in them the whole force and fervor of his soul. The prayer is **brief**—but effective. It comes from a heart awakened by the Holy Spirit to a sense of its guilt, and made conscious of merited wrath. The **cry for mercy** proves that there was a **felt**

deserving of judgment. The appeal to God evidenced a knowledge of sin as committed against Him, and of pardon as flowing only from Him. The calling of himself "a sinner" was a confession of iniquity, which was the first step to repentance; while repentance and conversion were not far distant from him who was so overpowered by *conscious vileness* and *needed grace*, as to pray, with smiting upon his breast, "***God be merciful to me a sinner!***"

This petition therefore, in its closest analysis, develops all the elements of genuine prayer, and illustrates the fact, how the deep yearnings of the heart can be condensed into one terse and vigorous ejaculation, that shall enter into the ear of the Lord Almighty.

What a *contrast* to the prayer of the Pharisee! There is here no boasting, no self-laudation, no ungenerous comparison of himself with others—but self-renunciation, self-abasement, and an unreserved casting of himself upon the mercy of God, as his only shelter from the curse of His broken law!

The result of these two prayers our Lord gives us in the concluding words of the parable, saying, "I tell you this man (the Publican) went down to his house justified, rather than the other; for every one who exalts himself shall be abased, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

The prayer of the Publican secured for him the favor of God; and, being pardoned through the abounding mercy which he so earnestly craved—he became, in the sight of God, as one who had not sinned, as a *righteous* or *justified* person, to whom pertained the promise of eternal life, and from whom had been removed the condemning power of the law, for he was "justified freely" by the grace of God.

The Pharisee received no such answer to his prayer. He had prayed "with himself"—and of course God did not hear him, to answer him; he sought no

mercy—and consequently none was received. So he went down from the temple to his house just as he went up—a proud, self-righteous hypocrite!

This parable has *two very important designs*, namely:

1. *To rebuke religious pride or Phariseeism*, and
2. *to point out the true way in which sinners should sue for pardoning grace*, agreeably to the moral drawn by our Savior Himself: "Every one who exalts himself shall be abased, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

Religious pride or *Phariseeism* exhibits itself in a great variety of ways; and though its marks cannot always be read in the *outward* character—its ravages in the soul are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

1. The first sign of religious pride or Phariseeism, is to "trust in themselves that they are righteous."

Following the course of thought suggested by the parable, we remark, that *the first sign of religious pride or Phariseeism, is to "trust in themselves that they are righteous."*

The Pharisees vainly supposed that they made themselves righteous by their own works; and not only so—but, by a delusion stranger still, they supposed that God would look upon those works only as precisely as *man* looked upon them. They had so completely corrupted the Word of God by their traditions, that they had lost a true knowledge of some of His most necessary attributes.

As for understanding the nature of true righteousness, either as resulting from a perfect obedience to God's law, or as a casting of the soul upon God's mercy, through faith in an anticipated

Redeemer—it scarcely found lodgment in their minds.

They reduced their religion to human standards; estimated their good works at a human valuation; and then measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves—came to indulge much self-conceit. and because friends flattered them, and parasites praised them, and the common crowd stood in awe of their apparent sanctity—they esteemed themselves to be the most religious men of the day, the possessors of a righteousness that would fully justify them in the sight of God.

In this low standard of religion, and in this self-righteous judgment—they are followed by many professedly **good people** at the present day.

Because such people have been guilty of no great crime; because they are not notorious evil-livers; because they are zealous for the outward services of religion, and the visible means of grace; because they are regular in the discharge of public duties, and possess great worldly integrity blended with an unimpeached **morality** and an attractive amiability—they readily, under the flattery of friends, think within themselves, that they are righteous. The adversary of their souls ... lulls them into **security** with this deceptive thought; makes them more and more pleased with their state; keeps from them as much as possible, whatever will alarm their fears, or break up their delusion; and thus causing them to tread in slippery places, "their feet

shall slide in due time!"

The true Christian casts away all his personal righteousness in which he once trusted, as filthy rags—and trusts for his righteousness to the imputed merits of his dear Redeemer, made his by that appropriating faith which is itself the gift of God. He loathes himself; his language is, "**Behold, I am vile!**" He is ready to put his hand upon his mouth, and his mouth in the dust, and cry "**Unclean! unclean!**" He sees ... in himself, nothing but vileness;
in God, nothing but holiness;
in the law, nothing but righteousness; and
in Christ, the sole Redeemer of his soul from the impending curse of God.

Thus he finds no righteousness of a justifying character *in himself*; it is all derived from Christ, and he is accounted as righteous "only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by faith."

So long as a man "trusts in himself that he is righteous," he will never seek to be clothed with Christ's righteousness. But this is the only righteousness which will avail with God, or secure our salvation. Hence the absence of it, like the simple lack of the wedding garment—will insure being cast into outer darkness, "where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

2. ***A second mark of religious pride or Phariseeism, is to "despise others."***

This is a natural and necessary result of self-righteousness—a

great part of which consists in comparing one's self with those around, and drawing invidious conclusions—as the Pharisee in the temple did, in reference to the Publican.

There are, it must be confessed, proud and haughty professors of religion, who look down upon their fellow Christians ... because they occupy lower stations in the Church or in social life, because they are less educated and refined, or because of their less apparent piety.

They are *keen-sighted* in detecting the errors and failings of their friends and neighbors; and they delight to depreciate real talent and true worth, in the hope that, by so doing—they will elevate their own position and character. Hence, they are devoid of that "love" which "is kind, does not envy, does not boast, is not proud, and is not self-seeking" without which, says Paul, "the tongues of men and of angels," "the gift of prophecy," the possession of a "faith" that "could move mountains," the bestowal of "all I possess to feed the poor," and the giving of one's "body to be burned"—is profitless and vain. for prophecies "shall fail," tongues "shall cease," knowledge "shall vanish away"—but "love never fails," for it is the greatest of the three abiding graces of the Christian life.

The *despising of others* proves us to have an *unkind* and *ensorious* spirit, widely at variance with the Gospel of Christ. It proves us to be under the influence of malignant and selfish passions, which are, in all instances, of *Satanic origin*. It proves us to be devoid of the Spirit of Christ, who was no

respector of people. and Paul tells us, "If any man has not the Spirit of Christ—he is none of His." It proves us to be deficient in self-knowledge, or in an understanding of our true position before God, or of our true relation to Jesus Christ. It proves that we are puffed up in our fleshly minds, thinking of ourselves above what we ought to think. It proves, in fine, that we have not the first element of the true Christian—but that all our professions, from the foundation-stone to the turret, being laid upon the *shifting sand*, will soon fall and bury us in its ruins!

3. ***A third trait of religious Phariseeism, is the cultivation of a mere ostensive piety.***

The Pharisees practiced their religion "to be seen by men."
The wide phylacteries,
the enlarging of the borders of their garments,
the long prayers,
the soundings of the alms-trumpet,
the washings and ablutions,
the sanctimonious visage,
the rigid fastings,
the scrupulously paid tithes—
were all done for show—to make an outward impression upon the minds of others! and this was carried to such an extent, that our Savior compared them to white-washed sepulchers, "which indeed appear beautiful on the outside—but within are full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness!"

Nor has this feature of Phariseeism been done away. It exists in full

vigor at the present day. We would not be uncharitable—but are we not warranted by the Bible and daily observation in saying, that a large portion of the ***religion of Christendom is a surface religion*** ... a praying of the lips, and not of the heart; a bowing of the knees—but not of the soul; a singing with the voice—but not of the spirit; and a going up to the courts of the Lord, not with singleness of purpose to worship Him who is a Spirit in the beauty of holiness—but because it is the decent custom of society, and to be gazed at by the great assembly?

Religious forms are necessary to the fencing in and protection of the faith—but whoever ***trusts*** in them, rather than in the faith which they enclose—is leaning upon the ***hope of the hypocrite***, which "will perish with the giving up of the spirit."

We are made true children of God, not by becoming strict keepers of religious rubrics, or becoming minute ritualists; tithing, as it were, the anise, mint, and cumin, to the exclusion of the weightier matters of the law—but by being born again of the Holy Spirit. We must observe rubrics, and conform to rites, and obey laws, as means whereby we gain important religious benefits; but not as an ***end***, to ***rest*** in them alone. Whoever trusts to the ***forms of religion*** alone for salvation, trusts to the mere ***scaffolding*** of the Church, which shall be taken down when the whole building, "fitly framed together, grows unto a holy temple in the Lord." God recognizes no religion which does not dwell in the soul, which does not spring from His Holy Spirit, and which does not work by faith

and purify the heart.

4. ***A fourth trait of Phariseeism, is to boast of one's goodness.***

We have been struck, on reading some of the ancient Rabbis, with the ***unblushing egotism of the Pharisees***. Humility was unknown, self-praise was a virtue, and their perpetual ambition was to seek out the chief seats and high places of earth.

The sound common sense of modern society puts a strong restraint upon this ***egotistical spirit***, so that it does not betray itself as much now, as then. Still there is much of it abroad, masked under ***affected humility***, seeking to win praise by a ***false meekness***—which only half conceals the pride of heart which lurks beneath.

But no true Christian is a ***boasting*** Christian. One of the first works of the Spirit of God upon the heart, is to take down the ***idol self***, and erect ***Christ*** on its vacant pedestal! and when Christ takes possession of our heart, we feel ...

so vile and sunken in His presence,

so worthless and unprofitable,

so leprous with sin, and

hell-deserving with an ever accumulating guilt

—that we, like the Publican, scarcely dare lift up our eyes to Heaven, much less to ***boast*** of our goodness or make a parade of our virtues!

A boasting Christian is a living defamation of the cross of Christ! Instead of talking of our goodness, or praising our

piety—let us look at our *sins* in the light of God's countenance, and bewail our *shortcomings* beneath the outstretched arms of the Crucified One!

When we can work out our salvation—then we shall be privileged to boast; but so long as salvation is "not of works—but of grace," being in very truth "the gift of God"—"Boasting is excluded." for the poor, humble, Christ-dependent *penitent* is justified by God—before the praying, fasting, tithing, almsgiving—yet boasting Pharisee!

2. The other lesson which this parable teaches, is the spirit in which sinners should approach God, as indicated by the prayer of the Publican, and the words of our Savior, "He who humbles himself—shall be exalted." By reason of original sin, which "is the fault and corruption of everyone of the offspring of Adam," we have alienated ourselves, and that radically, from the love and favor of God. Return to Him we must, before our sins can be pardoned, and our souls be saved. But how shall we return? We cannot come to Him as *claimants* of His favor, for we have no claims—as we have forfeited every right and title to His regard. We cannot come as *purchasers*, bartering our own goodness for God's mercy—for our boasted righteousness is as filthy rags, vile and worthless. Nor can we throw ourselves just as we are upon God's clemency, and run the risk of acceptance and consequent salvation, for "God out of Christ" is a consuming fire; and such presumptuous conduct would be only rushing "upon the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler."

The only way of access to the mercy of God, is through the *blood of Jesus Christ*. this is the way of His own appointment, to which He has annexed all His promises and blessings, and out of which, seek it as much as men may—they will find no salvation. We can be saved only in God's way; and every

attempt to **scale the gate of Heaven** by schemes of man's devising, is insulting to God—as it virtually discredits His wisdom, mercy, goodness, and truth. and it is ruinous to man, for the Bible distinctly declares that there is "no other name under Heaven given among men, whereby they can be saved."

We must come to God, then ...ssss
conscious of our condition as sinners,
confessing our iniquities,
forsaking and truly repenting of our sins,
pleading for mercy for Jesus Christ's sake,
and resting the strength of our plea on the infinite merits and perfect sacrifice of the Lamb of God, "who takes away the sins of the world." this is taking God at His word, and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as our only hope and salvation. and when, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, we are enabled to lay hold on this "hope set before us" in the Gospel—then do we find a **peace** and **joy** which the world can neither give nor take away.

These are the authenticating seals of the Spirit, "whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption," certifying to us, under the hand of the Third Person of the adorable Trinity, that "there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."

This is the only way to approach God, through **repentance** and **faith**—and these are the **gifts** of God, to be sought for by earnest prayer and supplication; for it is only in Christ that God is found "reconciling the world unto Himself."

Great, then, is the **encouragement** which the truly penitent and believing have to come to Jesus. What though, like the Publican, they are regarded as

the *off-scouring* of all things? Christ came "to save sinners!" What though they feel their *vileness* so as to cause them to smite upon their breast in anguish, and be afraid to lift up so much as their eyes to Heaven? the deeper the consciousness of guilt—the more they feel the need of a Savior, and the more precious becomes His salvation.

We cannot be too *humble*, for "He resists the proud—but gives grace unto the humble." We cannot be too full in our *confessions*, for "He who confesses and forsakes his sins shall find mercy." We cannot be too *penitential* for our transgression, for it is "the broken and contrite heart with which God is well pleased." We cannot be too strong in our *faith*, for "without faith it is impossible to please God." We cannot be too importunate in our *supplication*, for "the kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."

Come, then, in humility, in godly sorrow, in true repentance, in simple faith, in earnest prayer—to the Throne of Grace; and, like the Publican, we shall find acceptance with God, and go down to our house justified before Him!

**THE BIBLE
THE FOUNTAIN OF TRUE
WISDOM**

ORIGINAL TITLE: CLAVIS BIBLICA

BY

ADAM CLARKE, LL. D. F. A. S.

"Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not—For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus ' sake,"—2 Corinthians 4:1, 5

CLAVIS BIBLICA:

or,

A Compendium of Scriptural Knowledge: Containing a General View of the Contents of the Old and New Testaments; the Principles of Christianity derived from them, and the Reasons on which they are founded: with Directions How To Read Most Profitably The Holy Bible Originally drawn up for the instruction of two High Priests of Budhoo from the island of Ceylon. By Adam Clarke, LL. D. F. A. S.

"Thus saith the Lord; Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls,"—Jeremiah 6:16.

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Principles of the Christian Religion

Direction for Profitably Reading the Word of God

Introduction^(TOC)

A LETTER to Adam Sree Goona Munhi Rat'hana, Vadheygay, and Alexander Dherma Rama, Apotantreygay, formerly Teerunanxies, or High Priests of Budhoo, in the Island of Ceylon. Millbrook, Feb. 14th, 1820

My Dear Friends,

Having heard in your own country, though indistinctly, of that supreme God who is the sole object of the Christian 's worship; and of that Christ through and by whom he dispenses salvation to the human race; you took a long and painful journey from your native island to visit that favored nation where this God is more especially known and adored, that you might learn among his genuine followers to know his nature and the nature of that worship which himself has prescribed.

In the course of his unsearchable but gracious providence you were placed under my care; and it has been my earnest and anxious study to lead you to this God, through the Son of his love, who died for the offenses of a sinful world, and rose again for the justification of men; and has commanded repentance and remission of sins to be preached in his name among all nations. And it is with great satisfaction and gratitude to God that I hope I can say neither your application nor my endeavors have been in vain.

You have learned to know that God who is the Father of the spirits of all flesh; and who is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. You have sought his favor through the Lord Jesus Christ, and he has often afforded you the drawings of his Spirit. These he has granted you only as a specimen of what he will

communicate if you follow on to know the Lord; that is, if you search the Scriptures diligently, and pray much to God, placing your whole confidence for salvation in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. In short, he will give you to know and to feel that you are not only turned from idols to the living God; from vain hope and superstitious fears, to that hope which maketh not ashamed, and that fear which is the beginning of wisdom; but he will also give you to know and feel that you are adopted into the family of heaven, and become the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

After long and carefully studying our holy religion, and finding that our blessed Lord commands his disciples to baptize all converts to Christianity with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, you have applied to me for that baptism; and after having been well instructed in its nature, importance, and design, you received it in a most solemn manner in the public congregation, where prayers from more than a thousand hearts were offered up to God for your present and eternal happiness; and you there felt that, in answer to those prayers, and your fervent supplications, God did pour out his gracious Spirit upon you, so that you found such peace of conscience, such joy in God, as your tongues were incapable of expressing. Thus, then, by this public profession you have put on Christ: you have assumed the Christian name; you have promised to be his faithful, loving, obedient servants to the end of your days: in a word, "to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful desires of the flesh; and to keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of your life." Thus you have taken the true God to be your God; and he has taken you to be his children. You have promised to be obedient to him; and he has engaged to furnish you with that grace and strength without which no good act ever was or ever can be done. For this heavenly help you must continue to pray,

humbly offering all your desires, prayers, and obedience unto God, through Jesus Christ your Savior, who alone can make them acceptable in his sight who is the Fountain of infinite purity and justice. You have also promised to take up the cross of Christ; "not to be ashamed of Christ crucified, but boldly confess him, and fight manfully under his banner against the world, the flesh, and the devil." Be steady: God's grace will ever be sufficient for you; and; after having guided you by his counsel through life, he will, if you continue steadfast in the faith, at last receive you into his eternal glory, by Christ Jesus. Amen.

As your stay with me has been too short to acquire both the English language and a general knowledge of the sacred writings, and the doctrines they contain, and you may possibly soon return to your native land, I have drawn up the following short but comprehensive view of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and the principles of religion derived from them; to which I have added a few directions, by attending to which you will never read this divine word without gaining an increase of heavenly knowledge and an increase of religious experience. I wish you to have always at hand those principles which have often been the subject of my teaching and of your learning; that, understanding them and the reasons on which they are founded, you need not be afraid of your most cunning adversaries; but be always able to give them that ask you a reason of the hope that is in you; and which I trust you will ever feel it your duty and interest to recommend to the notice and consciences of your heathen countrymen, who are still lying in that darkness out of which, by the mercy of the true God, you have now risen. I know that it is your present purpose to announce to the heathen in your own country, and in continental India, the gospel of the grace of God. In reference to this, should God call you to such a work, I wish to give you a few particular directions.

1. If you go forward in the spirit of the original apostles and followers of Jesus Christ, trusting not in man but in the living God, he will enable you to pull down the strong holds of sin and Satan, and that work by which he is pleased will prosper in your hands.
2. Remember that, as the souls of sinners are saved by the mere mercy and power of God, by the same principles is the world to be converted; Human might, authority, or influence, can do little here: "it is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," that this great work is to be performed. Zechariah 4:6.
3. The primitive disciples of Jesus Christ, when they went to the heathen, as you are now going, had nothing to recommend them but the simplicity and holiness of their lives, and the excellence of the doctrine which they preached; and they had no support but that which they received from their Lord. But this was sufficient to pull down the strong holds of sin and the devil. The weapons of their warfare were not carnal, such as worldly men use; but they were spiritual, such as God furnishes: and they were, therefore, mighty through God. They had Christ in their hearts; they had a powerful love for the perishing souls of men; and they went forth in his strength, proclaiming to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.
4. The same work is still to be done; and the same grace and simplicity of heart are equally requisite now as formerly. Do not suppose that human strength and human learning,

howsoever useful, will accomplish now what it required the arm of the Almighty to perform in those primitive times. The hearts of sinners are as dark and as hard now as formerly; and nothing but the light of God can illuminate them, and nothing but the power of God can make them soft. Trust, therefore, in him, both in behalf of your own souls, and in behalf of those to whom you may minister: and point them, and ever go yourselves, to that "Lamb of God who teeth away the sin of the world," John 1:29.

5. There is one thing more, of which it may be requisite to apprise you. As preachers of the gospel of Jesus, do not expect worldly honors: these Jesus Christ neither took to himself, nor gave to his disciples. If you be faithful, you will have that honor that comes from God: his Spirit will say in your hearts, "Well done, good and faithful servants." Instead of receiving the honor that comes from men, you may possibly be despised, defamed, and persecuted. For the laws of Christ condemn a vicious world, and galling it to revenge; and as the religion of Christ gives no quarter to vice, so the vicious will give no quarter to that religion. Do not wonder, therefore, if you should be mocked, insulted, and abused: "if they have persecuted me," said Jesus, they will also persecute you." This the primitive disciples found: but they tell us that, far from being discouraged on this account, they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name's sake," Acts 5:41. His true ministers have ever found the same spirit in the unconverted. You have read of the persecutions of the primitive Christians; and you have also read of the many

holy men, bishops, ministers, and others, who have lost their lives in this country, when lawless power, false religion, blind zeal, and brutish bigotry prevailed: but these blessed martyrs all died in triumph—they glorified God in the fires; and, when consuming at the stake in the raging flames, they possessed the highest comfort of God, and rejoiced that ever they were born! Should you be ever called to bear the same testimony, you will doubtless find the same grace and support.

I mention these things because their occurrence is possible—yet it is not very likely that you will be called to suffer personal abuse. Wherever you go, whether in India or Ceylon, you will be under the protection of the mild, excellent, and powerful laws of the British king. These laws you know are vastly superior to all those of which you have heard or read. Of this king (under whose government you have received the light of life; and in whose paternal kingdom you have found, though strangers and foreigners, a place of refuge; and among whose subjects you have found so many friends and brothers) you can not but speak well. I know you love him and his administration; and I know that you will declare to your countrymen what blessings they enjoy who live among the Christian subjects of a Christian king. And I am sure I need not add that you will ever feel love, attachment, and gratitude to that religious society (the Wesleyan Methodists) who cheerfully took you by the hand on your first landing in this country, and placed you under my care; with the wish that you should have every thing necessary for your bodies and your souls. How this wish has been accomplished, while under my roof, yourselves know best. If I have been faithful, my work is with the Lord: and for my cares and anxieties I ask only an interest in your prayers.

To what I have said in the foregoing pages, I need scarcely add any thing farther—The Holy Scriptures tell you that "your adversary the devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Peter 5:8, therefore watch, pray, believe, love, and obey.

WATCH against his temptations; watch against your own spirits.

PRAY much in private. Pray for God's grace to make you humble and teachable. Pray for his Spirit to help your weakness. Pray for divine light, and pray for holiness of heart.

BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus, as having died for you. Believe on him as your Intercessor at the throne of God.

LOVE him who first loved you, and called you from darkness into his marvelous light. Love him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

OBEY him affectionately in all things: obey him as your Master, your King, and your God; and continue in his truth until death.

PERSEVERE in doing his will; i. e., whatever he commands. Persevere in suffering his will, cheerfully bearing whatever affliction or trial he may permit to come upon you. "I now commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them who are sanctified."

I am, my dear friends, your affectionate teacher and servant in Christ Jesus,

Adam Clarke.

General Account of the Sacred Writings^(TOC)

"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me,"—John 5:39.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,"—2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

That collection of writings delivered by divine authority to the Jews by Moses and the prophets, and which the Jewish Church has always received as divinely inspired, includes thirty-nine books, the names of which are the following: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

These books collectively have had a variety of appellations, each of which serves to point out some excellence of those writings, as contradistinguished from all others.

The Jews have divided them into three classes, which they have termed, 1. Torah; 2. Nebyim; 3. Ha-ke-thubim: or, as we sometimes express it, The Law, The Prophets, and The Hagiographa.

The Law, included in the Pentateuch, or first five books, they considered as coming immediately from God himself to Moses.

The Prophets, greater and smaller, (with which they connected Joshua, and Judges the two books of Samuel, and the two books of Kings,) they received as extraordinary messengers, deriving their authority from God without the intervention of man; and delivering predictions and arguments as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

The Hagiographa, containing the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles, they acknowledged as divinely inspired also; but not to have been given on such extraordinary occasions as those on which the law, and the different oracles delivered to the prophets, had been communicated.

1. The whole of these books collectively, they sometimes termed Ha- Mikra, The Reading; emphatically signifying that these records were alone worthy to be read and studied, because of their importance, antiquity, and divine inspiration. It was from this epithet of the sacred writings of the Jews, that Mohammed borrowed the word Al- Koran, which he prefixed to his pretended revelations; and which has the same meaning with the Hebrew Ha-Mikra, both signifying The Reading.
2. In order to distinguish these sacred books from all others, they were termed by the Jews, in those places where the Greek language prevailed, Al-Graphai, The Scriptures, or Writings, as being alone worthy of being written and preserved; 1. Because of their high importance. 2. Because they contained the most ancient writings in the world; the Decalogue, or Ten

Commandments, a part of the book of Exodus, being probably the first regular production in alphabetical characters ever seen by man, and the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, being unquestionably the oldest record in existence.

3. Testament, Berith, or Covenant, was another term used at a very early period to designate these divine oracles; as they contained the covenant, or agreement made between God and the people of Israel.

St. Paul calls the sacred books before the time of Christ, he Palaia Diatheke, The Old Covenant, 2 Corinthians 3:14, which is a very proper and descriptive title of the grand subject of those books. This apostle evidently considers the Old and New Testaments as two Covenants, Galatians 4:24, and, in comparing these two together, he calls one the "Old" Covenant; the other the "New;" one the "first;" the other that which is "recent." In opposition to the Old Covenant, which was to terminate in the New, he calls this "better, more excellent," Hebrews 7:22, 8:6, and "everlasting," Hebrews 13:20, because it is never to be changed, or terminate in any other; and is to endure endlessly itself.

The word "covenant " we borrow from the Latin "convenio," from "con," together, and "venio," I come; signifying a contract or agreement made between two parties; to fulfill the conditions of which they are mutually bound. The Old Covenant, in its essential parts, was very simple; I WILL BE YOUR GOD, YE SHALL BE MY PEOPLE—the spirit of which was never changed. The people were to take Jehovah as

the sole object of their religious worship; put their whole trust and confidence in him; and serve him in his own way, according to the prescribed forms which he should lay before them. This was their part. On his side, God was to accept them as his people; give them his Spirit to guide them, his mercy to pardon them, his providence to support them, and his grace to preserve them unto eternal life. But all this was connected with the strict observance of a great variety of rites and ceremonies, at once expressive of the holiness of God, the purity of divine justice, and the exceeding sinfulness and utter helpless state of man. A great part of the four latter books of Moses is employed in prescribing and illustrating these rites and ceremonies; and what is called the New Covenant is the complement, or fulfillment and perfection of the whole.

4. When the writings of the evangelists and apostles were added, to distinguish them from the others they were termed *He Kaine Diatheke*, The New Covenant, or Testament, signifying the New agreement made between God and ALL mankind, the Gentiles as well as the Jews, the first or Old Covenant being made principally in favor of the latter; which new covenant was ratified by the incarnation, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as the succeeding collection of PRINCIPLES point out.

The books containing this New Covenant or Testament are twenty-seven in number; and have been divided into four classes—I. The GOSPELS. II. The ACTS of the Apostles. III. The EPISTLES. IV. The APOCALYPSE, or Revelation.

The names of these books are the following: The Gospel of St. Matthew, of Mark, of Luke, and of John: The Acts of the Apostles, probably written by St. Luke. The Epistles of St. Paul—To the Romans—First and Second to the Corinthians—To the Galatians—To the Ephesians—To the Philippians—To the Colossians—First and Second to the Thessalonians—First and Second to Timothy—To Titus—To Philemon—and to the Hebrews—The Epistle of St. James—The First and Second Epistles of St. Peter—The First, Second, and Third of St. John—The Epistle of St. Jude—And the book of the Apocalypse, or Revelation; probably written by St. John, the author of the gospel and the three epistles mentioned above.

Having given a general view of the Bible, as a collection of sacred writings, it may be necessary for the benefit of the young and inexperienced to give a more particular account of the contents or subject of each book, included in this collection.

The Books of the Old Covenant[\(TOC\)](#)

I. The Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses

Genesis

This book has its name from the Greek word [genaesis] used by that ancient Greek version of the Scriptures commonly called the Septuagint which signifies generation, or origination; because this book gives an account of the origin or beginning of all things. It begins at the creation of the heavens and the earth; gives an account of the creation and fall of man, the history of the first inhabitants of the world, the origin of nations, the call of Abraham, and the history of the Hebrew patriarchs, and ends at the death of Joseph: comprehending the space of about 2400, or at the lowest computation of 2369 years.

Exodus

The name of this book is also borrowed from the Greek [exodos] Exodus, which signifies the going out or departure; because the departure of the people of Israel from Egypt to go to Canaan, or the land of Judea, promised by God to their father, is the most remarkable fact contained in the book. It gives an account of the birth of Moses, the Jewish lawgiver; and contains a history of the transactions of one hundred and forty-five years, beginning at the death of Joseph, B. C. 1635, where the book of Genesis ends, and coming

down to the erection of the tabernacle in the wilderness of Arabia, at the foot of Mount Sinai, B. C. 1490.

Leviticus

This book has the name of Leviticus, because it treats principally of the Levites, the descendants of Levi, the son of the patriarch Jacob, who were all devoted to the service of God in the tabernacle and temple. It also gives an account of the priests, the sons and descendants of Aaron, the brother of Moses; and of all the ceremonies to be observed in the different sacrifices and religious feasts prescribed by God. It seems to contain little more than the history of what passed during the eight days employed in consecrating Aaron and his sons to the priesthood. The above occurrences are supposed to have taken place in the year of the world 2514, i. e., 1490 years before Christ.

Numbers

This book has been called Numbers from its containing an account of the numbering and marshaling the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness, or desert of Arabia, to the promised land. It comprehends the history of between thirty-eight and thirty-nine years; i. e., from 1490 B. C. to 1451 B. C., and gives a distinct account of the several stages of the Israelites' journey; the various occurrences in the way; their trials, rebellions, punishments, deliverances, conquests, i.e., with the several laws and ordinances not mentioned in the preceding books; together with a repetition and explanation of several others which had been previously mentioned. The whole forming a most interesting history of the justice, mercy, and providence of God.

Deuteronomy

This book has its name from the Greek, Deuteronomion, which signifies the second law, because it contains a repetition of the preceding laws. It includes an account of what passed in the wilderness from the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, to the seventh day of the twelfth month of the same; making in the whole the history of the transactions of exactly five weeks. Beside a repetition of the previous laws, this book gives us the finest illustrations of each, so that it may well be called a spiritual comment on the laws of Moses; and also an account of the death of this most eminent man, and all his last discourses with the people. It is continued about seven days after his death. For he began to deliver his first discourse to the people in the plains of Moab the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year, chapter 1:3, and died on the first day of the twelfth month of the same year, aged one hundred and twenty years.

II. The Historical Books^(TOC)

Joshua

This book was probably written by the person whose name it bears; and is properly a continuation of the book of Deuteronomy. It begins where that ends, immediately after the death of Moses; for by this great man Joshua was appointed general and leader of the Israelitish people; and under his direction it was that they entered the land of Canaan. It contains an account of all Joshua's battles; his conquest of the land; division of it by lot to the twelve tribes according to their different families; exhortations to the people; remarkable providences of God; and concludes with Joshua's death, at the age of one hundred and ten years, 1443 years before the Christian era. It seems to include the period of about eight years.

Judges

This book contains a history of a high class of Israelitish civil officers, called by the name of judges, raised up at particular times by the especial providence of God, to deliver the people from their enemies, and to govern them according to the law of God. The duration of this species of government, from the death of Joshua to the reign of Saul, was about three hundred and forty-eight years. But as this book does not include the government of Eli and Samuel, the last two judges, but ends at the death of Samson, which happened in the year of the world 2884; consequently it includes the period of only three hundred and twenty-three years.

Ruth

This book, which contains the interesting history of the woman whose name it bears, is a sort of appendix to the book of Judges, and introduction to the books of Samuel, next following. Ruth was a Moabitess, who was married to a Hebrew of the name of Mahlon, born in the land of Moab, where his parents Elimelech and Naomi had gone to sojourn in a time when a famine had obliged them to leave their own country. Elimelech dying, Naomi, his widow, returned to Judea, her daughter-in-law Ruth accompanying her, whose husband had lately died. Arriving at Bethlehem, Ruth was soon known by a kinsman of her own named Boaz, who took her to wife, from whom sprang Obed, the father of Jesse, who was the father of David, the progenitor of the Messiah. The book seems to have been written to ascertain the genealogy of our Lord.

First Book of Samuel

Samuel was an eminent prophet, and the last of the Israelitish judges; and most likely the author of the materials which constitute the two books that go under his name, though probably compiled by another hand. The first book contains an account of the Israelitish affairs under the government of Eli the high priest, who was the fourteenth judge; under Samuel, the fifteenth; as also an account of Saul, the first king of Israel, his reign and death, with which the book concludes. It seems to include a period of about one hundred and fifteen years.

Second Book of Samuel

This book is a continuation of the preceding; and includes the history of the

reign of David, the successor of Saul, and comprises the period of about forty years.

First Book of Kings

This book gives an account of the death of David; the reign of Solomon his son; the building of the temple; the death of Solomon; the division of the empire under his son Rehoboam into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah; the idolatry of the ten tribes under Jeroboam, who seized on that part of the empire called the kingdom of Israel; and the transactions of the various kings of Israel and Judah down to the death of Ahaziah, king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. The whole including a period of one hundred and nineteen years.

Second Book of Kings

This book contains the history of the Jewish and Israelitish kings down to the destruction of Judah by the Chaldeans, succeeded by the Babylonish captivity; including a period of three hundred and eight years.

First Book of Chronicles

This and the following book have their name from the Greek word "chronica," from "chronos," time, signifying a narrative of events, registered according to the times, reigns and years, in which they happened. The first book, in the first nine chapters, contains several genealogies, from the creation down to the Babylonish captivity. The rest of the book gives the history of the reign of David, beginning at the death of Saul, B. C. 1056.

Second Book of Chronicles

This book contains the history of the king of Judah, from Solomon to the Babylonish captivity. It is very similar to the books of Kings; giving in many places the same events; but scarcely ever mentions the idolatrous kings of Israel; confining itself in general to the kings of Judah who reigned in Jerusalem.

Ezra

In this book we are informed that Cyrus, king of Persia, into whose hands the Babylonian empire had fallen, permitted the captive Jews, whom he found scattered through his provinces, to return to their own land, under Zerubbabel, one of the Jewish princes, and Jeshua the high priest: the opposition they met with till the accession of Darius to the Persian throne, who gave leave to the Jews to rebuild their temple which had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; and sent Ezra, a man of great eminence, to assist them in the work. This man was full of faith and the Holy Spirit: he collected all the sacred books of the Jews, placed them in that order in which they now stand, and rendered the returned Jews the most important services. Ezra flourished about four hundred and fifty years before Christ.

Book of Nehemiah

This is a continuation of the history of the Jews after their return from captivity. Nehemiah was cupbearer to Artaxerxes Longimanus—or, as the Persians call him, Ardsheer Dirazdest—the long-handed Ardsheer, who, at his request, permitted him to go to Jerusalem, several years after Ezra had gone thither to settle the Jewish state, which was in great disorder. He took two several journeys to Jerusalem, rebuilt the walls, restored the divine worship, rectified a number of abuses, and again returned to the Persian

court. He was a man of amazing resolution and fortitude, tempered with much wisdom, piety, and prudence; and is a model for all civil governors. Nehemiah flourished about four hundred and forty years before Christ.

Esther

This woman was a Jewish captive; and became queen to Ahasuerus, king of Persia, about four hundred and fifty-eight years before Christ. She was, in this capacity, the means of preventing the massacre of the whole Jewish nation, which had been plotted by Haman, prime minister and favorite of the king. It details the whole history of these transactions, and of the wonderful providence of God in raising her to the throne, preserving the Jews, and defeating their enemies.

III. Poetical Books, and those which Contain Maxims^(TOC)

For the Government of Life

Job

This book gives the history of an Arabian chief illustrious for his riches, patience, and piety. It contains principally conversations in a highly poetical strain between him and his friends, concerning the providence and perfections of God. He was at first very rich and affluent; but God permitted him to be deprived of his property and children, and also to be sorely afflicted in his body: all which he bore with exemplary patience, which was at last rewarded with a double increase of temporal blessing, and the high approval of his Maker. When he flourished, is very uncertain.

Psalms

This is a book of one hundred and fifty most elegant and spiritual hymns, chiefly written by King David. As poetic effusions, they excel every thing written by man; and from their depth and sublimity, their just descriptions of the majesty and perfections of God, the nature and consequences of sin, and the heights and depths of holiness, properly challenge a distinguished place

among the inspired writings of the Old Testament.

Proverbs

This book contains a very large collection of wise sayings, spoken at different times by Solomon, king of Israel, and other eminent sages; affording counsels and maxims for the direction and regulation of every department, office, and circumstance of life. They are delivered in a high oriental strain; and may be said to contain all the wisdom of the ancient world.

Ecclesiastes

A book supposed to have been written by Solomon in order to show the vanity of the world, and of human life, whether in high or low estate: and that no happiness can be expected by the human soul, but in the fear, love, and obedience of God.

Canticles, or The Song of Solomon

This is a very highly finished Hebrew ode, which, if literally taken, seems to describe the great love and affection which subsisted between Solomon and his queen, the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. But most commentators suppose it to be an allegorical poem, in which Solomon represents Christ, and his queen the Christian Church. Taken in this sense, it shows the great love which Christ bears to his genuine followers, and the duty and affection which

they owe to him. It is in the form of a pastoral.

IV. The Major Prophets^(TOC)

Isaiah

This most eminent and holy man began to prophesy about seven hundred and sixty years before Christ, under Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh, kings of Judah. This last king was extremely wicked; and under his reign, and by his command, it is said that Isaiah suffered martyrdom, being sawed asunder with a wooden saw! He is supposed to have been of the blood royal of Judah; and is the most sublime of all the prophets. His prophecies are so clear and minute, that they appear rather to be narrations of things past, than predictions of things to come. Of these prophecies the first five chapters are supposed to have been delivered in the reign of Uzziah; the sixth in the reign of Jotham; the seventh to the fifteenth in the reign of Ahaz; and the rest in that of Hezekiah. His predictions of the advent, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glorious conquests of Jesus Christ, are so clear and pointed, as to have gained him the title(name) of the evangelical prophet. He spoke clearly also of the calling of the Gentiles; and foretold the ruin that Nebuchadnezzar brought on the Tyrians, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, and Philistines; and also the ruin of Nebuchadnezzar himself, and the Babylonish empire. He is supposed to have prophesied about fifty or sixty years.

Jeremiah

This man was a priest of the tribe of Benjamin; and entered on the prophetic office about the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, king of Judah, seventy

years after the death of Isaiah. He foretold the ruin, captivity, and restoration of the Jews, and the destruction of the Babylonish empire. He also predicted the calling of the Gentiles. He lived to see the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, and suffered much himself; all which he feelingly describes. When Jerusalem was taken, and the king of Babylon had committed the government of the land to Gedaliah, Jeremiah continued in Judea: but Ishmael, who was of the seed royal, having slain Gedaliah, the remaining Jews, fearing the Chaldeans, fled to Egypt, whither this prophet was carried, and there died or was put to death. He prophesied about forty-five years, during the reigns of Josiah, Jekoiakim, and Zedekiah, and under the government of Gedaliah; about five hundred and eighty-eight years before Christ.

Lamentations

The Lamentations of Jeremiah, composed after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the captivity of Judah, are divided into five distinct chapters, which are so many beautiful elegies bewailing those sad events. Chapter 1-4, are written in acrostics, each verse beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in consecutive order. The third chapter is written in double acrostics; and the fifth in single lines, without this artificial order.

Ezekiel

This prophet was one of the Jews who were carried captive to Babylon, with Jehoiakim, king of Judah. He began to prophesy in Chaldea, about the fifth year of the captivity, before Christ five hundred and ninety-five years; and continued about twenty-five years. He preached against the iniquities of the Jews; and foretold the destruction of several neighboring nations, enemies to

the Jews. He was chiefly sent for the edification of the poor captives in Babylon. He foretold the calling of the Gentiles, and the glorious state of the church of God, under the similitude of a temple, the parts of which he very minutely describes. He is on the whole very obscure.

Daniel

This prophet was also one of the captives in Babylon, whither it is supposed he was carried when very young. He was contemporary with Ezekiel; and was famous for wisdom, penetration, and piety. His prophecies concerning the Messiah, the destruction of Jerusalem, the formation of the Chaldean, Persian, Greek, and Roman empires, and their revolutions, are so very clear that their very dates are fixed. That concerning the advent and death of our Lord is the clearest prophecy ever delivered: though he lived nearly six hundred years before our Lord, he foretold the very year in which he should be manifested, and the year in which he should be cut off. He, and his companions, after running great risks, and suffering great hardships, were raised to great honors in, the kingdom of Babylon. His prophecy is a lasting monument against the Jews of the truth of the Christian religion. He died about five hundred and thirty-six years before Christ.

V. The Twelve Minor Prophets^(TOC)

Hosea

This prophet is thought by some to have been the earliest of all the prophets. He was certainly contemporary with Isaiah; and exercised his office in the kingdom of Israel, about the same time that Isaiah exercised his in the kingdom of Judah. His prophecies are chiefly directed against the ten tribes, previously to their being carried into captivity. He also predicts the coming of the Messiah, and the glorious state of the Christian church. He flourished from seven hundred and eighty-five to seven hundred and twenty-five years before Christ.

Joel

This prophet was contemporary with Hosea, and flourished about seven hundred and eighty-five years before the incarnation. His prophecy may be considered in the light of a very solemn sermon, warning the Jews to repent of their sins; foretelling a grievous famine which was to be occasioned by an innumerable host of locusts; promises the repentant God's mercy; and foretells in a very pointed manner that great outpouring of the divine Spirit which should take place under the gospel dispensation.

Amos

This man was neither of the sacerdotal nor prophetic order: but was a herdsman, a keeper of cattle, in the territory of Tekoa; and was sent by God

to call the people of Israel to repentance, and denounce the divine judgments against the workers of iniquity. He foretells the judgments of God which were to fall on the Syrians, Philistines, Tyrians, Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites. He flourished about seven hundred and eighty-seven years before Christ.

Obadiah

This is the shortest of all the prophets. His prophecy refers to the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, whom he threatens with utter destruction, because of their cruelty and oppression to the Jews. It is supposed that he lived about five hundred and eighty-seven years before the Christian era; and was contemporary with Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Jonah

Jonah was a native of Gath-Hepher, in Galilee; and was sent by God to denounce his judgments against the Ninevites: but, fearing for his personal safety, he determined on leaving his own country; and so took ship, and endeavored to escape to Tarshish. Meeting with an extraordinary storm, the sailors, concluding that there must be some person aboard against whom there was divine wrath, questioned him on the subject. He confessed his sin, was thrown overboard, and was swallowed by a fish, in whose belly he remained three days and three nights; and was a type of our Lord's death and resurrection. The fish having cast him up on dry land, he went to Nineveh, delivered the divine message; the people trembled, fasted, and repented, and were saved. He is supposed to have flourished about eight hundred and sixty-two years before our Lord.

Micah

This prophet was sent to reprove both Israel and Judah for their manifold sins, which he did with great warmth and fidelity. He foretold their captivities; comforted the godly; and predicted the incarnation of our Lord, mentioned the very place of his birth, Bethlehem, described his offices as King and Priest of his people, and foretold the glory of the Christian church in the latter days. He flourished at the same time with Isaiah and Hosea, about seven hundred and fifty years before the Christian era.

Nahum

Though the Ninevites had repented at the preaching of Jonah, they did not continue to bring forth the fruits of repentance. This prophet was, therefore, sent to foretell their destruction, and the ruin of the Assyrian empire, of which Nineveh was the capital. This destruction was effected by the Medes and Babylonians, about sixty years after. Nahum lived under the reign of Hezekiah, about ninety years later than Jonah, or about seven hundred and seventy-two years before the Christian era. He is the most sublime and energetic of all the minor prophets.

Habakkuk

The preceding prophet foretold the destruction of the Assyrians who carried the ten tribes into captivity; and Habakkuk foretold the ruin of the Chaldeans, who completed the captivity of this unhappy people, by carrying away the two tribes that remained. He is supposed to have been contemporary with Jeremiah, and to have flourished about six hundred and twenty-six years before our Lord. The prayer in the third chapter of this prophecy is inimitably

fine.

Zephaniah

This prophet was sent to the Jews under Josiah to foretell them of their approaching captivity by the Chaldeans, on account of their idolatry, and other heinous offenses; of which he strenuously exhorts them to repent. He foretells also the destruction about to be brought on the Philistines, Moabites, Ethiopians, and Assyrians. He flourished about six hundred and thirty years before Christ.

Haggai

This prophet, with the two following, was sent to the Jews after their return from the Babylonish captivity. He reprehends their negligence in not building the temple, being more intent on their secular interests than on the glory of God; on account of which God sent a dearth, by which they had been grievously distressed. At his instigation, the people resumed the work, which had been sadly neglected, and the temple was soon finished: and though that temple was much inferior to that built by Solomon; yet he foretold that its glory should be greater than that of the former; which was accomplished in the Messiah's honoring it with his presence and preaching. He lived about five hundred and twenty years before Christ.

Zechariah

This was the second prophet sent to the Jews after their return from captivity; and he encouraged the people to proceed with the building of the temple. There are many prophetic visions in this book which relate to the Jews; and several prophecies relative to our Lord; his riding into Jerusalem as a King;

the thirty pieces of silver, for which Judas sold his Master; the destruction of the Jews; and the calling of the Gentiles. He flourished about five hundred and twenty years before our Lord.

Malachi

This was the third and last prophet sent to the Jews after their return from the Babylonish captivity. From his prophecy, it appears that the Jews were in his time generally corrupted. They had not only neglected, but profaned the divine service; these he sharply reproveth; and encourages them much who in those times of degeneracy continued faithful. He foretells the coming of Christ, and very clearly speaks of his forerunner, John the Baptist. He intimates that no other prophet would be sent to them; and that they must be careful to observe the law of Moses till the advent of the Messiah. He flourished about three hundred and ninety-seven years before the incarnation; and was the last prophet ever sent to the Jewish people. His book, therefore, properly closes up the canon of the Old Testament.

About this time Ezra, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, had made a complete collection of all the sacred books of the Jews, in which all the major as well as the minor prophets were included; though some think that Simon the Just added Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Malachi, to Ezra's work. This is the same collection which exists to the present day; to which nothing has been added, and from which nothing has been taken away. See Ezra.

The next extraordinary messenger with whom the Jews were favored, was JOHN THE BAPTIST, of whom this prophet (Malachi) so clearly speaks. After him came GOD MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH; who before his ascension to heaven, commissioned his disciples, who were afterward called

apostles, to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, beginning first at Jerusalem," Luke 24:47. This was accordingly done; and the word of the Lord had free course, ran, and was glorified.

The Books of The New Testament^(TOC)

General Account of the Books Contained In the New Testament

*"Whatever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope,"—
Romans xv, 4.*

I come now to consider the writings of the New Covenant, which were the effect of this revelation of Jesus Christ, and the mission of his apostles; and shall divide them into four classes—

- I. The Historical Books: including the four gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles
- II. The Thirteen Epistles of St. Paul
- III. The Catholic or General Epistles: viz., of James, Peter, John, and Jude
- IV. The Apocalypse, or book of the Revelation

Of these different books I shall endeavor to point out the author, the time when written, and the chief subject of each.

I. The Historical Books, Viz[\(TOC\)](#)

The Four Gospels, and Acts of the Apostles

St. Matthew

This evangelist is supposed to be the same who is also called Levi, son of Alphaeus. He was by birth a Jew; and, like the rest of our Lord 's disciples, a native of Galilee; and appears to have been at first a collector of the public taxes under the Roman government. He was called by our Lord to be a disciple when sitting in his public office by the seaside, near the city of Capernaum.

He was placed by our Lord in the number of his apostles, and continued with him during his life. After the ascension of Christ, he was at Jerusalem; and received the Holy Spirit with the rest of the disciples, on the day of Pentecost. His gospel (i. e., his history of the incarnation, preaching, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord) is generally allowed to be the most ancient part of the writings of the New Covenant. It is very probable that he wrote this book in Hebrew, about the eighth year after the ascension of our Lord, or A. D. 37, and that it was, by himself or some other, translated into Greek about A. D. 61.

Matthew being a constant attendant on our Lord, his history is an account of

what he saw and heard; and, being influenced by the Holy Spirit, his history is entitled to the utmost degree of credibility. Whether he was martyred for the truth, or died a natural death, is uncertain.

St. Mark

This is the same who is called John Mark; and who traveled from Jerusalem to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, and afterward into other countries. Acts 12:25; 12:5.

It is supposed that he wrote this gospel at Rome, about A. D. 64, and that he died at Alexandria, in the eighth year of the reign of Nero, the Roman emperor. It is very probable that he had seen the gospel written by St. Matthew, as he omits several things which are amply detailed by that evangelist. At the same time he inserts several curious particulars not mentioned by any of the others.

St. Luke

St. Luke is the most elegant of all the evangelical writers; his language being purer and much more free from Hebraisms than any of the rest. He was an early convert to Christianity, and was St. Paul's fellow laborer, (Philemon, verse 24,) and accompanied him when he first went to Macedonia; and from Greece, through Macedonia and Asia, to Jerusalem; and from Jerusalem again to Rome, where he stayed with him the two years of his imprisonment in that city. It is generally believed that he finished and published his gospel

and the Acts of the Apostles in Greece, about A. D. 47, both of which he dedicates to Theophilus, an honorable Christian friend of his in that country. His gospel, like those of the preceding evangelists, gives an account of the birth, preaching, miracles, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord. It is supposed that he died in peace about the eightieth or eighty fourth year of his age.

St. John

This evangelist was the son of a fisherman named Zebedee, and his mother's name was Salome. They were probably of Bethsaida; and the father and his sons James and John followed their occupation on the sea of Galilee. Both these brothers were called to the apostleship; and John is supposed to have been about twenty-five years of age when he began to follow our Lord. It is likely that he was one of our Lord 's relatives; and was that disciple whom it is said our Lord loved: that is, he had a peculiar affection for him. He was also an eye and ear witness of our Lord 's labors, journeyings, discourses, miracles, sufferings, crucifixion, death, resurrection, and ascension.

The gospel of John presupposes the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke: the grand facts he has in common with them; but he supplies many particulars which are not found in the others. St. Matthew seems to labor to prove the fact of the reality of our Lord 's incarnation or humanity: on the other hand, John takes up the eternal divinity, which he powerfully establishes; and gives us many invaluable discourses and conversations of our Lord with his disciples, as well as several miracles that are not found in the other evangelists. No one of the gospels gives us the whole history of our Lord; we must read all four, to have this complete. John was banished by the Roman

emperor, Domitian, to the isle of Patmos, in the AEgean Sea: but his successor Nerva having recalled all the exiles banished by Domitian, John returned to Ephesus, where he died, aged upward of one hundred years. The holy Virgin is said to have lived with him till her death, which took place about fifteen years after the crucifixion.

Acts of the Apostles

The book of the Acts of the Apostles is the fifth and last of the historical books. It was doubtless written by St. Luke, probably about A. D. 63; and is dedicated to the same noble personage, Theophilus, to whom he dedicated his gospel. The design of the apostle in writing this book appears to have been twofold: 1. To relate in what manner the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost were communicated on the day of Pentecost; and the subsequent miracles performed by the apostles, by which the truth and divine origin of Christianity were confirmed. 2. To deliver such accounts as proved the claim of the Gentiles to admission into the church of Christ. In this book we see how the Christian church was formed and settled—The apostles simply proclaimed the truth of God, relative to the passion, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; and God accompanied their testimony with the demonstration of his Spirit. The consequence was, thousands embraced Christianity, and openly professed it at the risk of their lives. They were converted, not merely from one religious sentiment to another, but from sin to holiness. Their tempers, passions, and moral prospects were all changed; and they only lived to bring glory to God, and to do good to men. This mighty change is everywhere in this book attributed to the power of the Holy Spirit, which took of the things which were Christ 's, and applied them to the souls of the people. Such was the Christian church at its formation: and such it must be to the end of the world, if it deserve the name of Christian.

II. The Thirteen Epistles of St. Paul^(TOC)

The Epistle to the Romans

Paul, at first called Saul, was born of Jewish parents at Tarsus, a city of Cilicia. When young, he was sent to Jerusalem for the purpose of receiving a Jewish education; and was placed there under a most eminent doctor or rabbi, called Gamaliel. He joined the Jewish sect called Pharisees, who were at once the best learned, the most proud, hypocritical, and intolerant of all the Jews. Paul absorbed much of their spirit, as he acquired the whole of their learning. He became proud, overbearing, and haughty; and grievously persecuted the Christians: but as he was on his way from Jerusalem to Damascus, with authority from the chief priests, to bind and variously persecute all that bore the Christian name, he had a most remarkable vision, which see related in Acts, chapter 9, in consequence of which he carefully examined and embraced the Christian faith; and afterward became one of the most zealous promoters and successful defenders of that cause which he had before so inveterately persecuted.

Of his labors, sufferings, and travels, we have an ample account in the book of the Acts. He was long imprisoned at Rome; and at length suffered martyrdom, having his head cut off, by an order of the Roman emperor, Nero, on June 29, A. D. 66.

Rome, to whose inhabitants, or rather to the Christian church there, this epistle was directed, was the metropolis of the Roman empire, and the mistress of the world.

The occasion of writing this epistle was the following—Many Gentiles as well as Jews having been converted by the preaching of the gospel, the latter refused to admit the former to all the privileges of the church of Christ, unless they submitted to be circumcised; as they supposed that this was the only gate through which they should be admitted into the fold. In this epistle St. Paul shows that the Jewish rites and ceremonies were done away; that all men, both Jews and Gentiles, had sinned against God; and that no sacrifices or observances of the Jewish law could make atonement for sin; (for by its works no soul could be justified;) God had therefore appointed a new way of salvation, the sacrifice of Christ, and faith in that sacrifice. That this privilege was not granted to the Jews alone, but equally to the Gentiles; that none could be saved but in this way; and that those who were thus saved stood upon the broad ground of God's infinite mercy, and were equal in their religious rank, rights, and privileges. This view of the subject gave the apostle ample scope, 1st, to show the absolute inefficacy of human works, whether consisting in moral obedience or in observation of religious rites and ceremonies, to purchase the favor of God, or make an atonement for sin: and, 2d, the sovereign efficacy of the death of Christ, and faith in the merit of that death, to bring the soul into the favor of God, and give it a right to eternal life—that sacrificial offering of Christ being the sole ground procuring these, and faith the means of applying its benefit to the guilty conscience.

First Epistle To The Corinthians

Corinth, to which this and the following epistle were sent, was one of the most celebrated cities of Greece. It is situated on a gulf of the same name; and was anciently the capital of the Peloponnesus, or Achaia. It was joined to the main land by a narrow isthmus, or neck of land, that had the port of Lecheum on the west, and the port of Cenchrea on the east, by which it

commanded the commerce both of the Ionian and AEgean Seas. By the port of Lecheum it received the merchandise of Italy, and of the western nations; and by the port of Cenchrea it received that of the AEgean Sea, the coasts of Asia Minor, and of the Phoenicians. As this city abounded in riches, so did it in luxury and corruption of manners: and no place in the habitable globe needed the gospel of Christ more than this did. Here a church was founded, the principal members of which were eminently endowed with the gifts and graces of God's Spirit: but as some dissensions had arisen among them concerning things lawful and unlawful, what might be done with a clear conscience, and what ought not to be done, they wrote to St. Paul to give his judgment, and settle these disputes. This first epistle is in answer to that letter; in which, among other things, he discusses the question of the unlawfulness of eating things offered to idols: and enters at large into a consideration of that most important doctrine, the resurrection from the dead, and its proofs drawn from the natural and moral world, and from the resurrection of the body of our blessed Lord.

Second Epistle to the Corinthians

The preceding epistle having been well received, and its exhortations and reprehensions having produced the desired effect, the apostle writes this to comfort and confirm them in the truth. He reproveth a false apostle who had insinuated himself among them, and endeavored to render their minds evil affected toward himself. In this epistle he vindicates his own doctrine and conduct against the aspersions of that false apostle, gives an affecting account of his own trials and sufferings, and strongly exhorts them to holiness of heart and life.

Epistle to the Galatians

Galatia or Gallograecia, was anciently a part of Phrygia, in Asia Minor bounded on the east by Cappadocia, on the west by Bithynia, on the south by Pamphylia, and on the north by the Euxine Sea.

The church of God founded in this place seems to have been greatly perplexed and disturbed by some Jewish teachers, who endeavored to persuade the converted Gentiles that unless they were circumcised, and kept the law of Moses, they could not be saved. Many having been stumbled and turned aside by these teachers, the apostle wrote to them, 1. To vindicate his own apostleship which those false teachers had undervalued. 2. To assert and maintain the doctrine of justification by faith, from which they had been departing. And, 3. To call them back to the liberty of the gospel from which, under those bad teachers, some of them had apostatized. He proves at large, 1. That no rites or ceremonies of the Jewish law could avail in their justification. 2. That their own works could avail nothing in reference to their acceptance with God; the only way of salvation being by faith, and that this was the original way, for Abraham was justified by faith long before the law was given. 3. That the curse of the law was upon every sinner, and is not removed but by the sacrifice of Christ.

Epistle to the Ephesians

Ephesus was a very famous city of Ionia, and once the metropolis of that part of the world. The grand subject of this epistle is to prove that the great mystery of God, which had been hidden from all former ages, was opened and explained by calling the Gentiles into the church, making them one with the converted Jews, and placing them under the one great and Only Shepherd, Christ Jesus. The apostle also shows the necessity of the doctrine of justification by faith; enters into a description of the heights, lengths, and

breadths of Christian holiness; points out the enemies of true believers; shows them the spiritual armor with which they are to defend themselves and concludes by giving them the most pointed directions relative to the cultivation of their hearts, their moral conduct, and particularly their exact fulfillment of all the relative duties.

Epistle to the Philippians

Philippi was a town of Macedonia, in the confines of Thrace, and near the northern extremity of the AEgeanSea. St. Paul first preached the gospel here about A. D. 53, and established one of the most pure and excellent churches. False teachers had crept into this church also, against whom he warns the people exhorts them tounity and concord, points out to them the glory which shall be revealed to the truly faithful, speaks of the blessedness of his own experience, and thanks and commends them for the contributions they sent to supply his wants.

Epistle to the Colossians

Colosse, or Colossa, was a city of Phrygia Pacatiana, now a part of Natolia, in Asia Minor, situated on an eminence on the south side of the river Meander. There is a very great similarity between this epistle and that to the Ephesians. It contains the very depth and essence of Christian doctrine and Christian experience; strongly excites to holiness of heart and life; and exhorts to a regular fulfillment of the relative duties, viz.,parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants, etc..

First Epistle To The Thessalonians

Thessalonica, now called by the Turks Salonichi, is a seaport town of Turkey,

in Europe, and anciently the capital of Macedonia. Paul and Silas preached the gospel in this city about A. D. 51 or 52. This epistle is probably the first that St. Paul wrote: and it appears that the church of Thessalonica was the purest of all the apostolic churches. The apostle finds scarcely any thing among them to reprove. They had received the whole truth as it was in Jesus, and their conduct was conformed to it. They had a faith that worked, a love that labored, and a hope which enabled them to bear all afflictions patiently, and wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus. The directions which he gives in the last chapter, relative to the perfection of their Christian faith and character, are of the utmost importance; and intimately concern all Christian churches, and all who bear the Christian name.

Second Epistle to the Thessalonians

It appears that the second epistle was written shortly after the first, the main design of which is to warn the people against crediting a false report which they had heard relative to the sudden appearing of Christ to judge the world; which they had so far received and credited as actually (at least some of them) to give up their secular affairs, as being inconsistent with the expectation of so solemn an event, so speedily to take place. On this subject the apostle sets them right by giving just notions of the future judgment, predicts a certain apostasy from the faith, and exhorts them to obedience and fidelity in all the circumstances of life in which God may place them.

First Epistle to Timothy

Timothy, the person to whom this epistle is addressed, was the son of a Gentile, by a Jewish woman named Eunice, the daughter of a Jewess named Lois. It is likely that, at the time that Lois was converted to the Christian

faith, her husband was dead, as was also the husband of Eunice; and that the grandmother, mother, and son lived all together. Their son Timothy became strongly attached to St. Paul, received the Christian faith in its power, became an evangelist, and traveled with the apostle through different parts, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. The apostle having left him in the City of Ephesus to superintend the church in that place, he wrote this first epistle to him, probably about A. D. 64 or 65, in which he gives him direction, 1. To oppose those fables invented by Jewish teachers to recommend the observance of the Mosaic law as necessary to salvation. 2. To oppose those uncertain genealogies by which certain persons wished to show their descent from Abraham, on the persuasion that they should be saved merely because they were his descendants. 3. That he might oppose a foolish inclination which they had to the discussion of intricate questions, which, instead of leading to godliness, engendered strife. 4. The apostle gives him suitable directions how to act the part of an evangelist; how to rule the church of God; and how to repress irregularities, and maintain truth.

Second Epistle to Timothy

This was in all probability written a short time after the first; for the same sort of persons, doctrines, and practices are reprobated in the second which were condemned in the first. The same commands and instructions are given to Timothy in the second as in the first. The same remedies for the corruptions which had taken place at Ephesus are prescribed in the second as in the first. And in this second epistle every thing is addressed to Timothy as the superintendent both of the preachers and laity in the church of Ephesus. All which prove that, as the same persons and the same state of things continued when this second epistle was written, as when the first was written, consequently both must have been sent within a short time of each other.

In this epistle St. Paul strongly exhorts his son Timothy to hold fast the form of sound words which had been delivered to him; shows him what and how to preach; predicts the evils of the latter times and his own approaching martyrdom; and sends salutations to different friends.

Both epistles are a treasury to the church of Christ, and of the utmost consequence to all preachers of the gospel.

Epistle to Titus

From frequent mention made of this person in St. Paul 's epistles, we learn that he was a Greek, and most probably a heathen till converted to Christianity by St. Paul. He accompanied this apostle in several of his journeys; and was at last left by him in the island of Crete, as superintendent or bishop of the churches the replanted. Crete is a very large island in the Mediterranean Sea; being about one hundred and eighty miles long, by about forty broad.

This epistle is very similar to the First Epistle to Timothy. They are both principally occupied in describing the qualifications of those who should be appointed to ecclesiastical offices; and the ingredients in this description are nearly the same in both epistles.

Timothy and Titus are both cautioned against the same prevailing corruptions; the phrases and expressions in both letters are nearly the same; and the writer accosts his two disciples with the same salutations; which shows, not only that the two epistles were written by the same person, but nearly about the same time, viz., A. D. 65.

Epistle to Philemon

Philemon seems to have been a person of consideration, affluence, and charity, in the city of Colosse and a distinguished Christian, who had a church at his house; and frequently entertained the Christians and Christian ministers who passed that way.

The occasion of writing this letter was the following—Onesimus, a slave, had on some pretense or other runaway from his master, Philemon, and come to Rome, where St. Paul then was as a prisoner, though dwelling in his own hired house and guarded by a Roman soldier. Onesimus, having found him out, was converted by the apostle, who wrote this letter to his friend Philemon in behalf of one who, though formerly unfaithful, was now restored to a better mind. The recommendation is managed with great skill and address, and was no doubt successful. The epistle contains no pointed reference to and particular doctrine of Christianity; but is a model for recommendatory and intercessory letters. It was probably written about A. D. 62.

Epistle to the Hebrews

This is allowed to have been the last written by St. Paul of which we have any knowledge; and was most probably composed in A. D. 63. The design was to prevent the Jews who had received the gospel from turning back again to Mosaic rites and ceremonies. And, to accomplish this design, he shows them that the law was but the shadow of good things to come, and the gospel the substance; that the former without the latter was without meaning, and without use; and that every thing in and under the law pointed out some corresponding spiritual good under the gospel. The major part of the epistle is a comment upon the law, and the most beautiful illustration of it that ever was or can be given. On the prophetic, sacerdotal, and regal offices of Christ,

it is both ample and luminous; and no man can read it without having his head enlightened and his heart mended. It is by far the most elegant, the most argumentative, and the most useful epistle of the great apostle of the Gentiles. In it he concentrates all his learning, all his legal knowledge, and all his evangelical experience and unction. The epistle everywhere shows the hand of a master; and that hand was guided by the unerring wisdom of the eternal Spirit.

III. The Catholic or General Epistles^(TOC)

The Epistle of James

James the Less, one of the disciples and kinsmen of our Lord, has been most generally supposed to have been the author of this epistle; and that it is the oldest of all the apostolical epistles, and perhaps prior to any of the gospels. It seems to have been written to comfort and edify the believing Jews, who were scattered through the different nations of the earth. It is written much in the style of a Jewish prophet; and seems to be a connecting link between the law and the gospel, as John the Baptist was between Judaism and Christianity. The style of it is elevated, and the diction compressed and clear; and the lessons of morality and submission to the divine will which it conveys are not surpassed by any thing found in the writings of the other apostles.

First Epistle of Peter

Peter was a native of Bethsaida, in Upper Galilee; and by trade a fisherman. He and his brother Andrew were called early to be disciples of Christ. Being married, he had removed his family to Capernaum and his house there seems to have been the usual residence of our Lord when in those districts. He is generally supposed to have obtained the crown of martyrdom at home, at the beginning of Nero's persecution, about A. D. 64 or 65.

His epistles seem to be written to the believing Jews and Gentiles; especially

those who were suffering persecution, or were obliged to leave their country on account of the gospel, and take refuge in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. He exhorts them to patience, submission, perseverance, and holiness, after the example of our Lord; and concludes with suitable exhortations to the elders to guard and feed the flock of Christ.

Second Epistle of Peter

This is addressed to the same persons as the first, and on nearly the same occasion. He shows that the believing Gentiles, though uncircumcised, were entitled to the same privileges as the believing Jews; exhorts them to patience and steadiness in their Christian profession; warns them against false prophets, and professing Christians whose lives were unholy; refers to the day of judgment, and wonderfully describes the action of the fire by which all things shall be destroyed; but predicts a renovation of all things, so that a new heaven and a new earth should be, by the power of God, generated as out of the old.

First Epistle of John

The writer of these three epistles is the same as John the evangelist, of whose history we have already had a sketch in speaking of his gospel. This epistle appears to have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem, and probably A. D. 68 or 69.

The design of this epistle is to inculcate the doctrine of holiness of heart and life springing from love to God and man. Indeed this love seems to be his text, and he has written the whole epistle on this text. His own soul was filled with this heavenly fire; and it shone on and warmed all around.

Second Epistle of John

This epistle is of a private nature, being written to an eminent Christian matron in or near Ephesus, probably a deaconess of the church; or one who was in the habit of accommodating apostles and itinerant evangelists. He commends her for her piety—for the Christian state and discipline of her family; warns her against false doctrines and false teachers; and concludes by hoping shortly to pay her a visit.

Third Epistle of John

This is also an epistle of a private nature, being written to an eminent Christian friend of the name of Gaius, to whom he earnestly wishes—1. Health of body; 2. Health of soul; and, 3. Prosperity in secular affairs. He commends him for his charity and hospitality, warns him against a troublesome person of the name of Diotrephes, and promises to pay him a visit shortly. Both these persons must have been near the apostle's habitation, as he was now about ninety years of age, and consequently incapable of taking any long journey. Both these epistles are supposed to have been written between A. D. 80 and 90. The exact time is not known.

Epistle of Jude

We know no more of this person than what he tells us himself, in the beginning of this epistle, that he was "a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." But, as there were several Judas and several Jameses, we know not which is intended. It is not directed to any particular church or people, but to Christians in general; and hence it has been called a "general epistle."

He warns the churches of Christ against false teachers, and against apostasy;

and describes the false teachers of the time in the most vivid colors. The exhortation in verses 20, 21, is forcible and affectionate; and the doxology in verses 24 and 25 is well adapted to the subject, and is peculiarly dignified and sublime. It is supposed that this epistle was written about A. D. 64 or 65.

IV. The Apocalypse, or Book of the Revelation[\(TOC\)](#)

This is generally allowed to be written by John the evangelist, author of the gospel and of the three epistles lately reviewed; and that it was written while he was an exile in the isle of Patmos; and published after his return, about A. D. 96. It is undoubtedly the latest piece of the New Covenant: after which the divine Spirit has not thought proper to add any thing farther to the Christian code. This, therefore, finishes and seals up vision and prophecy under the New Testament, as Malachi does under the Old.

The book opens with a splendid appearance of the Lord Jesus, as the Ancient of days, in his sacerdotal vestments; who dictates to John seven epistles, or letters, which he orders him to send to seven churches in Asia Minor; viz., Ephesus, Smyrna Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.

After these, there are a profusion of hieroglyphic [symbolic] representations; accompanied by a tissue of most solemn prophecies, supposed to regard not only the church, but the different governments of the world, from that time to the day of judgment. Several of these prophecies appear to have been already fulfilled, some in the act of being accomplished, and others remain which respect future ages. The book is written with great dignity and majesty of figure, metaphor, and coloring: and several of the prophecies in it bear a striking similitude to some in the prophets Ezekiel and Daniel. Obscure as it is, God pronounces a blessing on all them who shall read it; and because it closes the canon of the New Testament and revelation in general, God thus speaks—

"If any man shall ADD unto these things, God shall add unto him all the plagues that are written in this book. If any shall TAKE AWAY from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book," Revelation 22:18, 19.

With this apostle the reader may well add, "Unto him that LOVED us, and WASHED us from our sins in his own BLOOD, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to HIM be glory and dominion for ever and ever, amen," Revelation 1:5, 6.

All these books collectively, whether given to the Jewish or Christian church, are sometimes termed THE SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT; and generally through all Christian countries, and in almost all languages, The Bible from a Greek word Biblos, a BOOK, as being the only book that teaches the knowledge of the true God; the origin of the universe; the creation and fall of man; the commencement of the different nations of the earth; the confusion of languages; the foundation of the church of God; the abominable and destructive nature of idolatry and false worship; the divine scheme of redemption; the immortality of the soul; the doctrine of the invisible and spiritual world; a future judgment; and the final retribution of the wicked in the pains of eternal perdition, and of the good in the blessedness of an endless glory.

From this Bible, or collection of sacred writings, the following principles have been extracted; which, though they do not contain every particular, yet they exhibit the grand principles of revealed religion; and, in several cases, the reasons on which they are founded. I have endeavored to deduce them in their dependent and progressive order, that the mind may be easily and gradually led from primitive to secondary and ultimate truths, through the

whole economy of divine justice, mercy, and grace, as far as these things are revealed to us in the sacred writings, or seem fairly deducible from the different parts of divine revelation.

This is a desideratum, or thing to be desired, but not yet furnished, which few catechisms, creeds, or confessions of faith attempt to supply, though in them we might reasonably expect to find such principles.

I have seen most compositions of this kind; but have not found in any of them such a condensed synopsis, or general view of those principles, on which every Christian must found his faith, if he wish it not to stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. Bodies of divinity, so called, are out of the question; as being by far too voluminous for the purpose; nor do they in general contain principles, but rather systems of doctrines, most of which are founded on party creeds.

These Scriptures we know to be revelations from heaven—

1. By the sublimity of the doctrines they contain; all descriptions of God, of heaven, of the spiritual and eternal worlds, being in every respect worthy of their subjects and on this account widely differing from the childish conceits, absurd representations, and ridiculous accounts, given of such subjects in the writings of idolaters, and superstitious religionists, in all nations of the earth.
2. The Bible is proved to be a revelation from God, by the reasonableness and holiness of its precepts; all its commands, exhortations, and promises having the most direct tendency to make men wise, holy, and happy in themselves, and useful to one another.

3. By the miracles which it records: miracles of the most astonishing nature, which could be performed only by the almighty power of God: miracles which were wrought in the sight of thousands, were denied by none, and attested through successive ages by writers of the first respectability, as well enemies as friends of the Christian religion.
4. By the truth of its prophecies, or predictions of future occurrences, which have been fulfilled exactly in the way, and in those times, which the predictions delivered many hundreds of years before had pointed out.
5. By the promises which it contains—promises of pardon and peace to the repentant, of divine assistance and support to true believers, and of holiness and happiness to the godly, which are ever exactly fulfilled to all those who by faith plead them before God.
6. By the effects which these Scriptures produce in the hearts and in the lives of those who piously read them; it being always found that such persons become wiser, better, and happier in themselves, and more useful to others: better husbands and wives; better parents and children; better governors and subjects and better friends and neighbors. While those who neglect them are generally a curse to themselves, a curse to society, and a reproach to the name of man.
7. To these proofs may be added the poverty, illiterate and defenseless state of our Lord 's disciples and the primitive

preachers of his gospel. The Jewish rulers and priesthood were as one man opposed to them; they sought by every means in their power to prevent the preaching of Christianity in Judea; the disciples were persecuted everywhere, and had not one man in power or authority to support them, or espouse their cause; yet a glorious Christian church was founded even at Jerusalem; thousands received and professed the faith of Christ crucified, and many of them gladly sealed the truth with their blood. When they had preached the gospel throughout Judea, they went to the heathens, preached the gospel in different parts of the Lesser Asia, Greece, and Italy. In all these places they had to contend with the whole power and influence of the Roman empire, then entirely heathen, and the mistress of all the known world! Christian churches, nevertheless, were founded everywhere; and even in Rome itself, the throne of the Roman emperor! Here they were as defenseless as in Judea itself; they had to contend with all the idolatrous priests, with all the Greek philosophers, with the secular government, and with the many millions of the deluded and superstitious populace, who, instigated by furious zeal, endeavored by the most barbarous acts of persecution to support their false gods, idols, temples, and false worship: yet, before the preaching of these poor, comparatively unlearned, and totally defenseless men, idolatry fell prostrate; the heathen oracles were struck dumb; the philosophers were confounded; and the people were converted by thousands; till at last all Asia Minor and Greece, with Italy, and the various parts of the Roman empire received the gospel, and abolished

idolatry ! Had not this doctrine been from God, and had not He by his Almighty power aided these holy men, such effects could never have been produced. The success, therefore, of the unarmed and defenseless apostles and primitive preachers of Christianity is an incontrovertible proof that the gospel is a revelation from God; that it is the means of conveying light and life to the souls of men; and that no power, whether earthly or diabolic, shall ever be able to overthrow it. It has prevailed, and must prevail, till the whole earth shall be subdued, and the universe filled with the glory of God. Amen.

All these are proofs which cannot be contradicted, that these Scriptures are a revelation from God; and, consequently, the only complete directory of the faith and practice of men.

"The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament," said an eminent scholar, "have God for their Author, the Salvation of mankind for their end, and Truth without any mixture of error for their matter."

As a revelation from God, they have stood the test of many ages; and as such maintained their ground against every species of enemy, and every mode of attack. Truth is mighty, and must prevail.

This revelation is now complete. God will add nothing more to it, because it contains every thing necessary for men, both in reference to this world and that which is to come: and he has denounced the heaviest judgments against those who shall add to it, or diminish any thing from it.

Principles of the Christian Religion^(TOC)

I. There Is One God, who is self-existing, uncreated, infinitely wise, powerful, and good: who is present in every place; and fills the heavens, and earth, and all things. Now, as THIS ONE God is eternal, that is, without beginning or end, and is present everywhere, and fills all space, Isaiah 44:6-8, there can be only ONE such Being; for there cannot be two or more eternal, or two or more who are everywhere and fill all things. To suppose more than one supreme Source of infinite wisdom, power, and all perfections, is to assert that there is no supreme Being in existence. A plurality of eternal beings would resemble a plurality of universes, eternities, and infinite spaces; all which would be contradictory and absurd. Isaiah 44:6, 7, 8.

II. This one infinite and eternal Being is a Spirit: i. e., he is not compounded, nor made up of parts; for then he would be nothing different from matter, which is totally void of intelligence and power. And hence he must be invisible; for a spirit cannot be seen by the eye of man: nor is there any thing in this principle contradictory to reason or experience. We all know that there is such a thing as the air we breathe, as the wind that whistles through the trees, fans and cools our bodies, and sometimes tears up mighty trees from their roots, overturns the strongest buildings, and agitates the vast ocean; but no man has ever seen this air or wind, though every one is sensible of its effects, and knows that it exists. Now it would be as absurd to deny the existence of God, because we cannot see him, as it would be to deny the existence of the air or wind, because we cannot see it.

As to reason and sense, the wind is known to exist by the affects which it produces, though it cannot be seen; so God is known by his works; and a genuine Christian is as conscious that this divine Spirit works in, enlightens, and changed his heart, as he is that he breathes the air, and feels the action of the wind upon his body; and is either chilled, cooled, or refreshed, by its breezes. John 4:24 ; 3:8.

III. In this God there are found three persons, not distinctly or separately existing; but in one infinite unity; who are termed Father, Son, and Spirit; or God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; all existing in the one infinite and eternal God; neither being before or after the other, neither being greater or less than the other. These three divine persons are frequently termed among Christians, The Trinity. 1 John 5:7 ; Luke 3:22.

IV. This God is the Creator, Governor, and Preserver of all things: all creatures, animate and inanimate, owe their being to him; and by him they are all supported. John 1:3 ; Nehemiah 9:6.

V. The works of creation show God to be infinitely powerful, wise, and good. His power is seen in the vastness or magnitude of his works; his Wisdom is seen in the skill and contrivance so evident in each, and in the whole; and his Goodness is seen in the end for which each has been formed: for he has made all intelligent and animate beings capable of happiness; and he has so contrived their bodies, minds, and different parts, as well as the things by which they are surrounded, that this happiness is, in general, within their reach. Psalm 104:24.

VI. Man is one of the chief works of God. His soul was created in the image of God, i. e., in righteousness and true holiness: and his body was formed out of the dust of the ground. There was no imperfection in his body, a machine

of the most complicate, curious, and difficult contrivance: and no sinfulness in his mind; for God, who is all perfection, could make nothing that is imperfect; and He who is infinitely holy could make nothing that is impure. Genesis 1:27.

VII. But from this state of perfection and purity man fell, by his disobeying the commandment of God; and so became liable to sickness, death, corruption, and dissolution in his body; and became ignorant, sinful, and vicious in his soul; which imperfections and sinful inclinations he communicated to all his posterity: for as the stream must ever be the same with the fountain from whence it flows, so all generations of men must necessarily have the same kind of nature with those from whom they are descended. Adam, the first man, was made in the image and likeness of God; but, when he sinned, he lost that divine image; and then, when he begat children, it is said in the sacred writings that he begat them in his own image, Genesis 5:3, i. e., sinful and corrupt like himself. And in this state all human beings that are born into the world are still found: and their sinful dispositions lead them unto sinful practices; so that the whole human race are fallen, and all are sinners against God and their own souls. Psalm 14:3.

VIII. God, who is infinitely good, showed his mercy to fallen, sinful man by promising him a Savior who was to come in that time which God should see to be the most suitable. Genesis 3:15.

IX. This Savior was no less a person than the Lord Jesus Christ, who in that suitable time was to take upon him the nature of man, by assuming a human body; which he subjected to death, that he might make a sacrifice and atonement for all those who were partakers of the same nature, i. e., for the Whole Human Race. Matthew 1:21, 28; Hebrews 2:9.

X. Jesus Christ, as man, could suffer and die; as God, he was incapable of either, but it was necessary that his human nature should suffer in order to make an atonement; and it was necessary that his Deity should be united with that humanity, in order to make its suffering of infinite value, that thereby a suitable atonement might be made for the sins of the world. 1 Peter 3:18.

XI. The law which God gave to men was given to human nature. That nature transgressed this law; on that nature, therefore, divine justice had a claim; and from it that justice had a right to demand satisfaction. To have destroyed that human nature existing at the time of the transgression in the first human pair only, would have been inconsistent with the innumerable purposes of divine justice, mercy, and providence; therefore God permitted them to live and propagate a posterity upon the earth: but in his infinite love he found out a Redeemer for this fallen nature. But this Christ or Redeemer took not upon him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, that is, human nature, that in the nature which sinned he might make the expiation required. Hebrews 2:16.

XII. It was also necessary that this Redeemer should be infinitely divine and perfect; as the end of his great undertaking was not only to purchase pardon for a world of offenders, but to merit eternal happiness for mankind. Now an infinite happiness cannot be purchased by any price less than that which is infinite in value; and infinity of merit can only result from a nature that is infinitely divine or perfect. Colossians 1:17.

XIII. Accordingly we find that, about 4000 years after the creation, this Jesus Christ was born in Judea, of a virgin, whose name was Mary, in whose womb his human nature was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost; and about thirty-three years afterward, having wrought multitudes of miracles, the most astonishing and beneficent, and preached that heavenly doctrine called the

gospel or good news, he gave up his life at Jerusalem as a sacrificial offering for the lives of all mankind. He was buried; rose again, by that divine power which could not suffer death, on the third day, according to his own predictions; and gave commission to his disciples, (holy men to whom he had taught the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,) to go into all the world, and preach his gospel to every creature; which they and their successors have done, and are doing: and by these means Christianity has been spread and established in the earth; and will finally prevail in every nation of the world according to his own most positive declarations. Luke 2:11; Isaiah 53:9; 1 Timothy 2:6; Mark 16:15.

XIV. God has assured mankind that there is and can be no salvation but through Jesus Christ: that for the sake, and on the account, of his sacrificial sufferings and death he can forgive sins; and on no other account will he show mercy to any soul of man. Ephesians 1:7.

XV. As all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and are consequently exposed to endless punishment, and no man can make an atonement for his own soul, God has commanded all who hear the gospel to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; that is, to believe on him as having died for them, and to believe that his sufferings and death are a sufficient sacrifice for their sins; and, consequently, to offer this sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ as a ransom price for their souls, Mark 16:16.

XVI. But it is not likely that any person will feel his need of Jesus Christ as his Savior, unless he feel that he is sinful, guilty, and cannot help himself: hence the Holy Scriptures require men to repent; that is, to turn from and be deeply sorry for their transgressions, to mourn and be distressed for having sinned against God, and to implore his mercy through Christ Jesus, by fervent and continued prayer. Acts 3:19; 18:30.

XVII. Scripture gives no hope to any man, that his sins can be blotted out, or his soul saved, by anything he can do, or has done, or by any sufferings through which he can possibly pass: every man, therefore, must come to God through Christ, to be saved by free grace and mere mercy alone. Romans 3:24 ; Ephesians 2:8.

XVIII. When a sinner comes thus to God, with a broken and contrite heart, believing and trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation, God freely pardons him; and he knows and feels that he is pardoned, because his darkness and distress are all taken away; and the Spirit of God bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God: this God has promised; and, therefore, it is the privilege of every Christian to know that his sins are forgiven him for Christ 's sake: and of this fact there are thousands of living witnesses in the Christian church. Let it ever be remembered that genuine faith in Christ will ever be productive of good works; for this faith worketh by love, as the apostle says, and love to God always produces obedience to his holy laws. Romans 5:5; Romans 8:16.

XIX. Pardon or forgiveness of sin implies that the man's guilt is taken away; and that he is no longer in danger of falling into endless punishment: but it does not imply that the evil of his nature is wholly removed; for this is a separate work of God's mercy. Romans 5:1; Romans 8:1.

XX. Hence God promises his Holy Spirit to sanctify and cleanse the heart, so as utterly to destroy all pride, anger, self-will, peevishness, hatred, malice, and every thing contrary to his own holiness. 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Romans 8:13; Ezekiel 36:25-27.

XXI. The work of pardon on the conscience is called Justification; the work of holiness in the heart is termed Sanctification—these two comprise the

whole salvation of the soul in this world. He who is completely sanctified, or cleansed from all sin, and dies in this state, is fit for glory. Revelation 3:5.

XXII. Let it be therefore remembered, that Repentance must go before Justification; that Justification must go before Sanctification; and that Sanctification must go before Glorification. Consequently, he who does not repent and forsake sin can not be justified; he who is not justified cannot be sanctified, and he who is not sanctified cannot be glorified.

XXIII. As the grace that produces any of these states may be lost through sin, or carelessness; hence the necessity that the true repentant should continue to watch and pray till he is justified that, when justified, he should continue to watch and pray, and deny himself, and take up his cross, till he is sanctified; and, when sanctified, he should continue the same course, believing, loving, and obeying, till he is glorified. As he will be in danger as long as he lives of falling from grace, so he should continue to watch and pray, believe, and maintain good works, as long as he breathes; for while thus employed, humbly trusting in the Lord Jesus, he cannot fall. 1 Corinthians 9:27; 2 Peter 2:18; Mark 14:38; 13:37; 2 Peter 2:10.

XXIV. Jesus Christ has ordained only two sacraments, or religious ceremonies—The first Baptism, by which we enter into his church; and the second the Lord's Supper, often called the Sacrament, by which we continue members of his church. The former implies being dipped in, or sprinkled with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The water is an emblem of the cleansing and purifying influence of the Holy Spirit; and the whole of the act itself signifies a consecration of the person to the endless service and glory of the ever blessed Trinity, that is, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in whose name he has been baptized. The second or holy sacrament is an emblem of the sacrificial death of Christ; the Bread which is

used signifying his Body that was crucified, and the Wine his Blood that was shed for the sins of the world. But the bread and wine are only emblems of this body and blood; not changed into that of our blessed Lord, as some have erroneously imagined. He, therefore, who receives the holy sacrament professes thereby that he expects salvation only through the incarnation, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. Matthew 28:19; 26:26, 27, 28.

XXV. The body is mortal, and must die and mingle with the earth, out of which it was made: but it shall be raised again by the power of Christ, in what is called the Resurrection from the dead. But the soul is immortal, and can neither die nor perish; but in the resurrection the body and soul shall be again united, both of the "just and of the unjust. Hebrews 9:27; 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52; John 5:28, 29; Ecclesiastes 12:7.

XXVI. After the resurrection comes the general Judgment, in which God shall render unto every man according as his works have been: those who have lived and died in sin shall be sent into hell, and be thus for ever banished from God and the glory of His power: those who have here received the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and have been faithful unto death, shall be brought into the kingdom of glory, and be eternally with the Lord. John 5:29; Revelation 2:10.

XXVII. In the interim, from death to the resurrection, all souls shall be in a state of conscious existence; the wicked having a foretaste of the misery that awaits them, and the good having a foretaste of the blessedness which is prepared for them. But neither can be supremely happy or wretched till the souls are joined to their respective bodies; otherwise a day of judgment would be rendered unnecessary: for as the works for which they shall be punished or rewarded were done in the body; so they must be joined to their bodies before they can be capable of bearing the due degree of punishment,

or enjoying the fulness of eternal glory. Luke 23:43.

XXVIII. Those who, at the day of judgment, are sentenced to punishment shall never escape from perdition; and those who are taken to glory shall never fall from it. Both states shall be eternal. Matthew 25:46.

XXIX. The Bible, from whence the above principles are drawn, is a revelation from God himself; and declares his will relative to the salvation of men. The words contained in it were inspired by the Holy Spirit into the minds of faithful men, called Prophets and Seers in the Old Testament; and Evangelists and Apostles in the New. These all spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance. Revelation 22:19; 2 Peter 1:21.

XXX. This Bible, or the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, are the only complete guide to everlasting blessedness: men may err, but the Scripture cannot; for it is the Word of God himself who can neither mistake, deceive, nor be deceived. 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

XXXI. From this Word all doctrines must be derived and proved; and from it every man must learn his duty to God, to his neighbor, and to himself. Isaiah 8:20.

XXXII. We have, therefore, three grand gifts, for which we should incessantly magnify God—First, His Son, Christ Jesus. Second, The influence of his Holy Spirit. And, Third, His blessed word 1 John 4:10; Luke 11:13; John 5:39.

XXXIII. This word shows us that God is Love: that he hateth nothing that he hath made; that he is loving to every man, and is not willing that any should perish, but that all shall come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. 1 John 4:16; Psalm 145:9.

XXXIV. It shows us that Jesus Christ tasted death for every man, and that the whole human race may believe in him to the saving of their souls. Hebrews 2; 1 Timothy 2:6; Ezekiel 18:23; 33:2; 2 Peter 2:1.

XXXV. It shows us that God sends his Holy Spirit into the hearts and consciences of all men, to convince them of sin, righteousness, and judgment; and that his light is to be found, even where his word has not yet been revealed. John 1:19; John 16:8, 9, 10, Romans 2:14.

XXXVI. On this ground the Bible informs us, God will judge the heathen who have never been favored with this divine revelation. Those who have acted conscientiously, according to the dictates of this heavenly light in their minds, shall not perish eternally; but have that measure of glory and happiness which is suited to their state; while those who have acted contrary to it shall be separated from God and happiness for ever. Romans 2:12; Luke 12:47, 48; Acts 10:34.

XXXVII. By this light even the heathens are taught the general principles of right and wrong; of justice and injustice: not to injure each other: to be honest and just in their dealings; to abhor murder, cruelty, and oppression; and to be charitable and merciful according to their power. John 1:9; Romans 2:14

XXXVIII. Those who have been favored with divine revelation shall be judged according to that revelation. They have received much, and from them much shall be required; for the Bible assures us that those who have the gospel, and do not obey it, shall be punished with an everlasting separation from the presence of God, and the glory of his power, in that place of misery where their worm, the accusation and self-reproaches of a guilty conscience, shall never die; and their fire, the instrument of the torment, shall never be quenched. 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Mark 9:44.

XXXIX. Thus we find that God will judge the heathen by the law which he has written in their minds; and he will judge the Jews by the law which he has given them by Moses and the prophets; and he will judge the Christians by the gospel of Jesus Christ, which he has given them by the evangelists and apostles; and he will judge the Mohammedans according to the opportunities they have had of knowing the gospel, and the obstinacy with which they have rejected it. And this will be an aggravation of the punishment of the Jews, Mohammedans, and other unbelievers, that the gospel which would have made them wise unto salvation, has been rejected by them; and they continue blasphemously to deny the Lord that bought them.

XL. As the sacred Scriptures were mercifully given to man to promote his present as well as his eternal happiness; hence they contain directions for every state and condition of life: on husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, they enjoin mutual love, affection, obedience, and fidelity. To governors and the governed they prescribe their respective duties; kings and civil officers, as the representatives of God, they enjoin to use their authority for the protection and comfort of the people: the people they command to love, honor, obey, and pray for their secular rulers; to submit to those laws which are formed for the peace, good order, and prosperity of the state; and to hold in abhorrence every thing that might tend to disturb the peace of the community. In a word, they require all men to love their neighbor, every human being, as themselves; and in all circumstances to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them. Matthew 7:12; Luke 10:31; Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:21-33 ; Ephesians 6:1-9; Colossians 3:18-25; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; Titus 2:1-6; 3:1, 2; 1 Peter 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-5.

XLI. From the foregoing principles we see that whatever is worthy of the infinite perfections of the One Eternal Being and whatever is calculated to

produce the present and everlasting happiness of mankind, is taught in the Bible; and that these truths have never been fully nor clearly taught, and most of them not at all, in any system of religion which has been adopted by even the wisest of the heathen nations; that where this book of divine revelation has been received, there is found the greatest portion of wisdom and true greatness; and the largest share of political, domestic, and personal happiness; and that none in such nations are wretched, ignorant, or miserable, but those who do not obey its dictates.

XLII. As this religion positively commands its professors to love God with all their hearts, souls, minds, and strength, and their neighbor, any and every human being, as themselves, hence it is the duty of all Christian nations and people to exert themselves in every possible and reasonable way to send this glorious light of revelation to all the nations of mankind who have not yet received it; and while they continue to use that prayer which Jesus Christ has mercifully taught them, in which is contained this petition, "Thy kingdom come," they should keep a constant eye on the condition of the heathen, and labor to send them that gospel so essential to their peace, their comfort, and their happiness.

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned. Mark 16:16.

And I saw an angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the Everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth; and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and Give Glory to Him. Revelation 14:6, 7.

Direction for Profitably Reading the Word of God^(TOC)

Having thus laid down at large the principles of the Christian religion, and the reasons on which they are founded, and given a general view of that divine revelation from which they are extracted, it may be necessary to give a few directions to those who seriously ask the question, "How may we profit most, and grow wise unto salvation, by reading the sacred writings?" I answer—

1. Deeply consider that it is your duty and interest to read the Holy Scriptures.
2. When you read, consider that it is God's Word which you read; and that his faithfulness is pledged to fulfill both its promises and threatenings.
3. Read the whole Bible, and read it in order; two chapters in the Old Testament and one in the New, daily if you can possibly spare the time; and you will have more time than you are aware of; if you retrench all needless visits, and save the hours spent in useless or unimportant conversation.
4. Think that the eye of God is upon you while you are reading his word: and read and hear it with that reverence with which you would hear God speak, were he to address you as he did the prophets and people of old; for, be assured, that he considers it as much his word now as he did when he first

spoke it.

5. Remember that the word of God is not sent to particular persons, as if by name; and do not think you have no part in it, because you are not named there. It is not thus sent: it is addressed to particular characters; to saints, sinners, the worldly minded, the proud, the unclean, the dishonest, the unfaithful, liars, Sabbath -breakers, the repentant, the tempted, the persecuted, the afflicted, etc., etc..
6. Therefore examine your own state, and see to which of these characters you belong, and then apply the word spoken to the character in question to yourself; for it is as surely spoken to you as if your name were found printed in the Bible, and placed there by divine inspiration itself.
7. When, in the course of such reading, you meet with a threatening, and know from your own state that this awful word is spoken against you, stop, and implore God, for the sake of the sufferings and death of His Son, to pardon the sin that exposes you to the punishment threatened.
8. In like manner, when you meet with a promise made to the repentant, tempted, afflicted, etc., having found out your own case, stop, and implore God to fulfill that promise.
9. Should you find, on self-examination, that the threatening has been averted by your having turned to God; that the promise has been fulfilled, through your faith in Christ; stop here also, and return God thanks for having saved you from such sore evils, and brought you into such a glorious state of salvation.

Thus you will constantly find matter in reading the book of God to excite to repentance, to exercise faith, to produce confidence and comfort, and to beget gratitude; and gratitude will never fail to beget obedience. He who reads the Bible in this way must infallibly profit by it.

10. It is always useful to read a portion of the Scriptures before prayer, whether performed in the family or in the closet. In doing this, mark some particular passages, that they may become a subject for your petitions; by attending to this, all formality and sameness in this sacred duty will be prevented; and you will have an abundance of materials for petitions, supplications, thanksgiving, etc.. And thus your prayers will never be tedious, unsatisfactory, or unedifying, either to yourself or to others.
11. Remember that in reading, you keep the eye of your mind steadily fixed upon Him who is the end of the law, and the sum of the gospel; for even the Holy Scriptures can make you wise unto salvation only through faith in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:15.
12. Let the Scriptures, therefore, lead you to that Holy Spirit by which they were inspired: let that Spirit lead you to Jesus Christ, who has ransomed you by his death. And let this Christ lead you to the Father, that he may adopt you into the family of God.

FAITH PAPERS

BY

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Introduction^(TOC)

An acquaintance with the nature of evangelical faith and the mode of its exercise is the most important of all knowledge. The deepest familiarity with politics and history, the profoundest intimacy with ethics and, philosophy, the greatest proficiency in the arts and sciences, and the most brilliant exploits in statesmanship and military achievements, will fail in happifying and saving the soul, and must go out in darkness without a sin conquering faith. To fail at the mercy-Seat, where faith alone can succeed, is to fall everywhere and forever.

Every careful reader of the Scriptures has not failed to notice that much greater efficiency than appears in the Churches is graciously tendered to the saints. And under this light the general Christian heart yearns, by the promptings of the Holy Spirit, to realize in experience and work the Saviors statement, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do. All earnest Christians long for this gift, but, through spiritual blindness, many are searching for it where it can never be found. It is not to be found in travel amidst classic ruins, nor in the learning furnished by the schools of philosophy, nor the knowledge obtained in the seminaries of theology, nor yet in the wisdom of methods and plans. Nothing succeeds here but that meek, lowly, and humble faith discussed in these pages, and which unites its subjects to the risen, glorified, and almighty Christ. Hence any effort that promises success in spreading the knowledge of this all-important grace ought to have the encouragement and support of the universal Church.

Great numbers who read the FAITH PAPERS, as they appeared in the

different issues of the now extinct BeulahLand, testified to their great worth and the benefit which they received from them, and congratulated the author upon his happy method of presenting and elucidating the subject of faith. Now that these papers are to be given to the Church in a more durable form, and with conditions for much wider distribution, it is gratifying to know that they must enter upon a much larger mission of usefulness.

The subject is so thoroughly analyzed, the points are so well taken, the different phases of the grace so well illustrated, and all brought into such narrow compass, that the mass of Christian readers can command the work, can understand the subject, and must be greatly edified and helped in their spiritual life by the perusal of the book. The author, and the friends of wholesome religious literature, may feel assured that He who guided in writing the papers, has His hands also upon their publication and circulation, and will glorify Himself by this contribution to the means of Christian enlightenment.

Preface^(TOC)

These Faith Papers are designed to present experimental aspects of faith.

Hence, they are written in the terms of experience rather than those of doctrine. They have, however, as the author believes, a sound Scriptural and doctrinal basis. Each of these Papers is adapted to meet a definite soul want.

They are spiritual specifics for the cure of some form of unbelief. The first five treat of Saving Faith, and the last five of Special Faith. The thought of these Papers was evolved by the author when driven to special prayer and searching of the Word of God in the midst of a continuous revival work, as a presiding elder in the Ohio Conference. May they scintillate the holy glow of the hallowed flame whence they sprang! These Papers first appeared in a now extinct periodical, The Beulah Land.

Subsequently, the first five were published in tract form. The circulation of these brought so many testimonials of their helpfulness to souls, together with so many requests from able ministers and eminent Christian workers that they be given permanent form, and having for five years waited to carefully review and apply the faith-principles herein taught in pastoral evangelistic work, the author now commits them in this volume to the Church, devoutly praying that they may have the sanction of the Holy Spirit as they go forth to the world.

Paper First^(TOC)

The Way to Faith

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service"—Romans 9:1

There are states of heart which render faith impossible. An impenitent heart, a willful heart, or an unconsecrated heart, is incapable of believing unto salvation. To say to a soul in the heyday of sin; or to an unawake Ned heart, or to an enlightened child of God who refuses to give himself wholly to the Lord, Believe, and thou shalt be saved, is to expect him to do what he can not do. His state of heart is obstructive to faith. No man can believe unto salvation when he will, irrespective of his condition of heart. There are essential antecedents to the exercise of faith. There are states of heart which lead to faith. The attainment of these is the way to faith. There are two steps to faith for a soul under gospel illumination.

The first is conviction. Only the soul that is feelingly conscious of its unsaved condition, its spiritual destitution, and its utter moral helplessness is capable of laying hold of the promises of God so as to rest in them alone for salvation. Inwrought conviction makes the soul reach out beyond itself for help, and makes it willing to accept the Divine Word as its sure support against despair. Such conviction, either for the guilt of sin or the presence of inbred sin in the soul, as brings a sense of extreme need of salvation, is the heart-pang by which faith is begotten. When such a crisis of conviction is

reached, faith becomes such a necessity to the soul that it must believe. In the distress of such spiritual emergency, it instinctively cries out: Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. It was in the throes of heart-rending conviction that the jailer at Philippi believed and was saved. Never did Dr. Adam Clarke believe unto full salvation until his soul became so agonizingly conscious of in bred sin, and so painfully desirous for deliverance from it, as that he felt he must believe and be saved, or super add to his sin of heart the condemnation and darkness of unbelief.

This first step in the way to faith is a short one; it may be quickly taken. Do you say: I am waiting for conviction? Then, it will never come; it never comes to those who are waiting for it. It only comes to those who want it, who invite it, who seek it. Any one who accepts Gods Word as the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to him, if he is either an unforgiven sinner or an unsanctified believer, can in a little while be filled with so much conviction as will make him long for salvation more than they who watch for the morning. Let the impenitent soul come face to face with a few of Gods commands and appeals, such as Turn ye, why will ye die? Be ye also ready, The wages of sin is death, He that believeth not shall be damned, and take them to heart as his, and he will very soon have such a sense of lostness as will make him cry out, I must, I will believe. Let a believer who is not fully saved think upon the words of the Lord, Be ye holy, for I am holy, Without holiness no man shall see the Lord, Wash you, make you clean, and there will come to his heart such a sense of unlikeness to God and unfitness for heaven as will make him cry out, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? and will bring him where faith must lend its victorious power. We challenge any truly converted person who is walking in the light of the witness of the Holy Spirit to his acceptance with God, but has not the witness of heart-purity, and is skeptical in respect to the existence of

inbred sin in the soul and the need of full salvation, to consent to such a divine inspection as David subjected himself to when he laid bare his heart unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do, and said: Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be in me any wicked way. He will not have waited long in that powerful light until he will begin to plead, Create in me a clean heart, O God, and will be ready to receive entire sanctification by faith.

A few years since I had in one of my Churches a class-leader. He was an excellent man; but in some way he had become pronounced in his skepticism respecting, and his opposition to, the experience of entire sanctification. He thought the doctrine of sin in believers a mere fancy. He was doubtless honest in all his misconceptions and unbelief. It was all the more difficult to bring him to a right way of thinking, for he was useful and consistent in his life. I yearned to see him brought into the fullness of Gods love. We never argued or contended together on the subject. We lived and labored together in love. About a year and a half after I became his pastor we were having an evening meeting at which were present over two hundred of my members. The theme turned on heart-searching. After some remarks to the effect that we are incapable to search our own hearts, that God alone can search the heart and bring to the light of our consciousness what of evil or good may be hidden from our most careful introspection, I proposed that we all bow before God and silently wait for such revelation respecting our hearts as he might give while we should breathe into his ear the prayer: Search me, O God. Every person in the congregation bowed, this beloved leader with the rest. No one led in prayer; each went to God for himself. In a few minutes sobs began to rise, first from one pew, then from another. The whole lecture-room became a Bochim, a valley of weeping.

Having remained about ten minutes upon our knees, we arose. I said: If any one has discovered any thing in your heart that has surprised you and that is painful to yourself, you may speak of it. Instantly this class-leader arose and exclaimed, O, my heart, my heart I never knew that all this was in my heart pray for me, and fell upon his knees in the pew where he was standing. A season of prayer was held at once. A few days after, he found perfect cleansing from the sin which he had seen in his heart. Within six months after, on his dying bed, he constantly repeated:

The cleansing stream, I see, I see!

I plunge, and O, it cleanseth me.

He was not too swift in seeking a consciousness of indwelling sin and inward cleansing from it. They who would have a conscious sense of the guilt or the defilement of sin, without which they can not believe unto Salvation, can soon attain it. The preaching, the Christian testimony, and godly admonitions which bring the most immediate and powerful conviction for outward and inward sin, will bring forth the most immediate fruit of faith.

The second step in the way to faith is consecration. To the awakened sinner this means self-surrender to God. He chooses his service, bows to his yoke, and cries: I am thine; take me as I am. When this is accomplished, believing ground is reached where the soul easily and almost imperceptibly believes and is saved; though sometimes there is a struggle to believe after the surrender is complete, because Satan makes a powerful stand at this point against the soul, because one more step is to bring it out of his captivity. But the soul has come to the position that commands faith, and here it can rout the adversary by a desperate act of faith in saying: I can, I will, I do believe.

To the believer that is seeking heart-purity this consecration means complete

self-dedication to God. Without this, faith for cleansing is impossible. To attempt to believe unto full Salvation until all is put upon the altar of God, is useless effort and wasted time. When I was seeking a clean heart, the moment I got the consent of my heart to say, I am thine, wholly thine for evermore, believing that the blood cleansed and that the altar sanctified, followed immediately and naturally. And I have never found any difficulty as I have walked in the way of holiness in believing, when I have been conscious of being wholly the Lords.

We are so slow to take the final step of consecration. We hesitate and shrink from letting all go on to the altar which sanctifies the gift. Consecration is the offering of ourselves up to God according to his word. It need not take long it should not. Satan may say, God requires more than you can give or do, your children, your property, your life; reply: God only requires what is best. He only demands a reasonable service.

The adversary will argue: It is hard to give all to God. Joyfully rejoin: His commandments are not grievous, and in keeping of them there is great delight. O soul, convinced of the need of heart cleansing, remember, if it be hard to the natural heart to give all to God, that it will prove harder yet to not make the consecration.

Said a sister to me, as her pastor: I ought to wholly consecrate myself to God, but I cant. I replied: Don't say you cant, but you wont. Yes, she replied, that is it; but I mean it is so hard. True, said I; but it is harder not to do it. Do it, and God will dwell in your heart, bless your home, and lead your children to salvation; but do it not, darkness will come to your soul, your children will grow up irreligious, and, possibly, you yourself will lie down and die without the hope of heaven. She refused to make the consecration, and my words proved prophetic. All the apprehended evils suggested came, and more; and

suddenly one day she dropped out our life.

O, how much harder it proved to her, as it will to any soul, not to consecrate itself to God, than to give all to him. Who then!

Dear reader, do you long to know the faith that brings full salvation. At once present yourself a living sacrifice to God, under the conscious need you feel to be cleansed from all sin, and you may at once believe unto righteousness. Do the eyes of any one fall upon these words, whose heart is sore with the unrest, the ache, the fearfulness of conviction for sin, and you are offering yourself up to God in complete consecration? You need wait no longer, only believe, resolutely trust the immutable word of the Lord, and your heart shall joyously shout:

Hallelujah! tis done, I believe on the Son;

I am saved by the blood of the crucified One.

Paper Second^(TOC)

The Way of Faith: What to Believe

"The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thitherto: that is, the word of faith which we preach"—Romans 9:8

The thing to be believed, in seeking salvation, either in pardon or entire sanctification, is the work OF GOD, especially as embodied in the exceeding great and precious promises of the Bible. For this reason the apostle Paul calls it (Romans 10:8) the word of faith; that is, the word to be believed, and which, when believed, brings salvation. Often earnest seekers of salvation are exhorted to believe, to trust; just what they are most anxious to do, but they do not know what to believe. Hence their efforts to believe are like beating the air; they do not bring salvation. What all seekers need to have made known to them is, that the thing they are to believe is the work OF GOD. It is the only sufficient ground of faith; it is the word of faith whosoever believes it shall be saved.

When a boy thirteen years of age, I became deeply convicted of sin, and earnestly anxious to be saved. I went to an altar of prayer in the midst of a glorious revival of religion in my native town. There for three nights I sought the Lord in the pardon of my sins, All who spoke to me told me to believe, and nothing was I more anxious to do than to believe; yet no one told me what to believe. I presume they thought I knew; but I did not.

Finally, on the third night of my struggle, an old saint of God came to me,

and laying his patriarchal hands upon my head, as I bowed there bewildered and almost disheartened, he said: Son, Jesus says if you come to him, he will receive you and save you; believe his word, and you shall be saved. I did it instantly, and as instantly the peace of pardon and the joy of salvation filled my soul. Just so soon as I knew what to believe, I did it quickly, and was saved. Praise the Lord, for the word of faith, which, when believed, brings salvation !

A few years since, a college friend, a graduate of the Ohio Wesleyan University, was bowing with many others as a seeker of full salvation. His conviction of inbred sin was pungent, and his struggle intense for deliverance from it. As I knelt by him to encourage and instruct him, he said: O, give me a promise, give me a promise! He seemed to know that he must believe Gods Word in order to be saved fully, but Satan was just then so darkening his mind that his memory could not recall any one of its many precious promises, although he was well versed in the Scriptures, and was a superior Bible -class teacher. I repeated in his ear, as he was begging for a promise, this: Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him. (Hebrews 7:25) The words were scarcely off my lips before he exclaimed: That is what I wanted; I believe it; praise the Lord, O my soul, I am fully saved. Ever since he has known the joy of a full salvation. This word of faith is sufficient. It is the word of the Lord, more immutable than the stars in their celestial order, or the eternal hills in their grand repose. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. This word is indorsed to us in the name of Jesus, written in his own blood. All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him are amen! This word is the very voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to our hearts. Whosoever believes it shall not be confounded.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,

Is laid for your faith in his excellent word

This word of faith is available. It is nigh thee, says the apostle, even in thy mouth and in thy heart. It is the truth our minds have accepted and our lips have professed, but which we have been slow to believe as the very word of God. There is not a gospel -enlightened soul, either sinner or believer, but knows and has in his heart the word of truth, which is able to make him wise unto salvation. The word to be believed has been put in our mouths and lodged in our hearts by the instructions of home, or the teachings of the Sabbath -school, or the preaching of a living ministry. It is at hand. No new revelation, or interpretation, or further light of the Holy Spirit is essential to faith. The word is nigh us, even within us. Whosoever will believe shall be saved. This word of faith if effectual believed, it is found to be spirit and life. As chemical action immediately ensues when the proper fluids come in contact with the proper metals in the electrical jar, producing the ethereal fiery current, so the moment the soul believes the word of faith, spiritual action ensues; life, light, warmth, rest, satisfaction, instantly possess the heart. The full virtue of the word of faith passes at once into the soul when touched by its faith. The word when believed is immediately the power of God unto salvation to the soul.

If the word believed be, He is just and faithful to forgive us our sins, the peace of pardon is at once realized. If it be, Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, trusted, immediately

Refining fire goes through the heart,

Illuminates the soul;

Scatters its life through every part,

And sanctifies the whole.

Or, should the word accepted in faith be, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, the Pentecostal power suddenly fills the soul.

When, therefore, we believe the word of faith, simultaneously therewith is effectuated in us all the salvation, power, and blessedness proffered to us in the exceeding great and precious promises of God. For when received, not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, it effectually worketh in them that believe. (See 1 Thessalonians 2:13) This has been verified times without number by Gods children. Our peace is in believing; according to our faith it is done unto us; to them that believe, he is precious as a justifier, or sanctifier, or anointer, with power.

Mrs. Phoebe Palmer was wont to say: The Holy Spirit speaks to my heart by the work, and when I believe it, I at once experimentally apprehend, as Jesus has said, that his words are spirit and life. Life effectual is the Word in any soul when believed by it.

Faith the mighty promise sees,

And looks to that alone;

Laughs at impossibilities,

And cries: Hallelujah, tis done!

A sufferer who was rapidly declining under the progress of a painful disease, and had been earnestly seeking for the white robes of entire cleansing from sin in her heart, in which to meet the king in his beauty without abashment, said to me, as I entered her sick-room one morning:

Last night the Holy Spirit threw out to me a line of promise. I seized it, and I

am now gloriously saved. Her abundant entrance in to life eternal, a few weeks later, proved that her confidence in the word of faith was not misplaced, but brought the true end of faith, even the salvation of her soul.

So it is ever; just when the trembling sinner puts faith in some sweet promise of Gods Word, he finds it

A sure support against despair.

The moment the child of God, seeking full redemption in the blood of the Lamb, begins to sing,

In the promises I trust,
in the same breath will continue:

Now I feel the blood applied;

Jesus saves, he saves me now.

Dear reader, having come to the fountain of cleansing by a complete dedication of your soul and life to God, the way into its crimson flood is the way of faith; and the way of faith is to believe the Word of God; that is, accept it as true to yourself. The Holy Spirit now declares, The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and promises that according to your faith it shall be unto you. Dear soul, at once respond,

Lord, I believe thy every word,

Thy every promise true,

and you shall know the joy of entire sanctification by faith alone. As you lay down this paper, may you at once enter the way of faith, which is believing Gods word.

Paper Third^(TOC)

The Way of Faith: How to Believe

"All things are possible to him that believeth."

The faith which saves the soul is believing what God says, and believing it because he says it. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. When God told him he was going to give him a son, Abraham, without any outward proof and against hope, chose to believe God because he had said it, and according to his faith it was done unto him.

Gods word is his testimony concerning the divine purpose to save the soul that believeth in Jesus. If we receive the witness of men (which we do), the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. You say: I know what is to be believed; that the infallible word of God is the sole ground of faith.

But you ask: Can I trust the word of the Lord?

Does not the inquiry sound sacrilegious? and does not the echo of it almost startle you? Why cant a human heart trust the word of the Lord, if it will?

God certainly does not enjoin as a sole condition of salvation a thing which it is impossible for us to perform. There is only one state of heart in which it is impossible for it to believe the word of God, and that is when it is unwilling

to submit to God. The soul that gives itself up to God can believe his word, if it chooses to do so. But you say: I have thought that saving faith is the gift of God. Then, you have thought wrong; for such is not the teaching of the Bible. It does say that Ye are saved by grace through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. But this teaches that the whole scheme of redemption that of salvation by faith is by the gracious favor of God, and not that the faith by which salvation is secured is the gift of God. Saving faith is not the gift of God in any proper sense.

The ability to believe, the power to trust God, belongs to every man, through the involuntary help of the Holy Spirit, vouchsafed by the atonement. But the exercise of this gracious capability devolves upon us.

We have the power to believe, and have presented us the word of God, which is to be believed; and when we choose to believe that word, that is faith.

Saving faith is not a gracious state of the heart wrought by some sovereign power of the Holy Spirit; nor is saving faith a kind of an entity, a tangible something God bestows upon the heart, and then, in view of its presence in the soul, sends salvation. To expect God to give us faith in this sense is a forlorn hope, though we may pray for it; for faith is our own act. No one, not even God, can perform it for us. It is not a thing that can be given us; it is a thing to be done by us.

A few years since, during the progress of a revival in one of my churches, there was a man who had for twenty years been a regular attendant upon the services of a certain Christian Church; he was exemplary in his morality, had a warm feeling for Gods people, and was a great Bible student. All during these years he had wanted to be saved, but having gotten the wrong notion that the faith which saves is the gift of God, he had been waiting for God to

give him faith so that he could be saved. He was sitting one evening in my church while an interesting service was going on. I had occasion to remark, during its progress: Jesus says, Trust me, I will save you; and you say, I can trust thee, precious Savior; thou hast died for me. That single remark led him to see that he had been waiting for faith to be given him, while Jesus had been waiting all these years for him to put faith in Him. I knew nothing of what was then transpiring in his mind until the service was through. After which he came up to me, his face bright, and taking my hand, he said: Jesus has saved me! I said: When? O, just a few minutes ago. I have been wanting to be saved for twenty years, but have been waiting for God to give me faith; and when you said, Jesus says, Trust me, and I will save you, I saw that for twenty years I had been waiting for God to put faith into me, when he had been waiting all these years for me to put faith in his word. He was very happy. It was the day of salvation to him.

It is a cheat of Satan to keep souls seeking salvation, either in conversion or entire sanctification, from the blessing they desire, by persuading them that they cant believe, and that God must give them faith before they can believe.

The soul can believe God. He has not fixed an unreasonable and impossible condition of salvation when he says: Believe, and thou shalt be saved. He only requires what we can perform.

Faith being the exercise of the power we possess to believe Gods word, it is a voluntary act. The soul must recognize that it can believe; must choose to believe must say, I will believe; and persistently reckon pardon or purity its own on Gods word, in the face of every temptation to doubt, arising from any source whatever. In every struggle for salvation the soul will believe something, it will either believe the word of the Lord as whispered to it by the Holy Spirit, or it will believe the word of Satan whispered by his tempting

voice. At every stage in seeking the Lord there is either defeat in believing Satan, or victory in believing Jesus. Faith is believing God.

Doubt is believing Satan. We can resist a temptation to doubt, just as we can a temptation to envy, revenge, or uncharitableness. When the tempter says to the child of God who has been unjustly treated, Seek revenge, Be unforgiving, Demand redress, let him say: Get behind me, Satan, thou art an offense unto me; I will not indulge in envy or ill-will; I will not cherish bitterness. Thus resisting the devil, through the Holy Spirit helping him, Satan will flee from him, and he is kept from falling into sin and marring his communion with God. So when Satan comes to the heart seeking salvation, and tempts it to doubt, saying, You cant be saved; you are too bad, or have waited too long, or you cant keep salvation if you find it; the soul thus buffeted by Satan must resist these insinuations of the adversary by clinging to the word of the Lord, which is able to save all them that believe it; and Satan will depart, leaving the soul in a sweet repose of trust and the consciousness of a precious salvation.

One evening, years since, I was called to visit a woman, well on in years, who was thought to be rapidly sinking under a very painful disease. She had been a stranger to me. On entering her room and taking her by the hand, I said: How are you? O, she said, I am suffering so; every nerve seems to be on fire, and I am not saved! O, I am so miserable! The lines of suffering and despair blended together in her face. I said Are you asking the Lord to help you? O yes, she replied, but Jesus doesn't help me.

Sometimes it seems as though I am going to be saved, and it begins to get a little light; then something says, Jesus wont save you, and then it gets so dark. I said: Mother, do you know when you begin to feel that Jesus is going to save you that it is because you begin to believe the words of Jesus which say,

If you trust me I will save you; then Satan begins to say, Jesus wont save you, and you begin to believe Satan, and it gets so dark with you? Now, mother, when Satan says this, you say, Jesus will save me, for he says so, and I will believe him; and reject the words of Satan. Doing this, the clouds will lift from your soul, and you will be saved. She was silent for a moment or two, and then calling to her daughter, who was in an adjoining room, she said: Come here, daughter. Her daughter, half frightened, thinking she might be worse, hurried to her bedside. She exclaimed: O, daughter! I am saved! All my darkness is gone, and my pains are gone; I am so happy! I just quit believing Satan, and O, Jesus has come to me! Her joy was unspeakable. Her pains returned, but not her fears.

Within five minutes she came into a sweet, abiding faith by resisting the temptations of the adversary to doubt the word of the Lord. So when Satan contradicts your seeking heart, saying, You cant believe, Jesus wont save you, resent this falsehood and say:

I can, I will, I do believe

That Jesus saves me now.

Are you a seeker of pardon? Take some promise of Gods Word; make up your mind to believe it; say to yourself, what God says is true, whether you feel it to be so or not. God says: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. You say, in the response of faith: Lord, I choose to believe this; I will believe this; I do believe I am saved. And when Satan says, as he is most likely to do, How do you know you are saved? do you feel it? answer boldly: No, I do not feel it at all but it is so, for God says so; and I would rather trust his Word than my own feelings, however joyous.

Resting thus unwaveringly on Gods Word, though tempted by the adversary

that your faith is not real, you will not wait long before the peace of pardon and the witness of acceptance will be given you.

Are you a child of God seeking full salvation? Seize upon some declaration of Gods Word, such as The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin; apply it to your own heart; confess to yourself, to Satan, and to God, that it is true to you, even you, because the Lord hath spoken it; refuse to listen to the lying voice of Satan that it is not so. Let no inward feeling or outward sign dissuade you from your voluntary choice to count Gods Word true to yourself. And according to such a faith it shall be done unto you. What every seeking soul needs most to know is that it can believe unto salvation if it will; and that choosing to count Gods Word as true in the face of every temptation to distrust it, is faith. Have you given all to Christ? Are you now longing to be fully saved? Are you persuaded that

Tis the promise of God

Full salvation to give

Unto him who on Jesus,

His Son, will believe?

You may at once begin to sing:

I can, I will, I do believe

That Jesus saves me now.

Should we lose every other line from the volumes of sacred song now existent and this latter couplet remain, we could sing the world to pardon and the Church to purity. It contains the rationale, and expresses the progress of faith from its beginning to its consummation. About a year since there was a

lady who had been seeking the Lord for many months, but not finding the light, warmth, and rest of conscious salvation, had become so much discouraged that she had no heart to come forward longer to the altar of prayer. One evening she was sitting in her pew, dark and sad in her heart. An interesting consecration service was going on, in the midst of which was sung the chorus

I can, I will, I do believe

That Jesus saves me now.

It had been repeated several times in connection with stanzas of that grand old salvation hymn:

Alas! and did my Savior bleed.

As the melody of its simple music reiterated it in her ears and heart, it came to her in power, and she began to say to herself: Why, yes, I can; why shouldn't I believe the Lord? I will; yes, I may, if I will. I do; yes, I do believe that Jesus saves me now. It was done. She was saved. Her soul was exulting in the Lord.

The method of faith is for the soul to recognize that it can believe Gods word, then choose to believe it, which always carries it over to the consciousness: I do believe. Believing is our part, and is antecedent; saving is Gods part, and is consequent. All the blessed effects of faith, pardon, adoption, entire sanctification, are the Lords doings, and are marvelous in our eyes; and they are all possible to him that believeth on the Son of God.

Dear reader, as you lay down this paper, say: Lord, I believe.

Thou dost this moment save,

With full salvation bless.

Glory to the Lamb!

Paper Fourth^(TOC)

The Witness of Faith: its Elements

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself"—1 John 5:10

The witness which the soul may have assuring it of salvation is twofold:

1st. The witness of faith;

2d. The witness of the Holy Spirit.

By the mouth of these two witnesses, every soul is to be established in saving grace. The witness of faith is antecedent; the witness of the Holy Spirit subsequent. These two witnesses are concurrent. They bear testimony to salvation. The witness of faith is the conscious reception of salvation; the witness of the Holy Spirit is the conscious realization of salvation.

A gentleman fell heir very unexpectedly to an immense fortune. He could hardly believe that so much wealth had been bequeathed him. The legal papers were presented him, and on their testimony he accepted, received the bequest as his own, but could not realize that he was rich made so in a moment. When, however, he began to handle the moneys, and count the stocks, and control the lands into the possession of which he had come, then came to him the realization that he was rich, that he was a millionaire.

The order of his experience was, first, the witness of faith; that is, the conscious reception of all this wealth on the testimony of the legal evidence.

Then followed the conscious realization that he was, indeed, munificently endowed. So when the soul believes the exceeding great and precious promises of Gods Word-that is, consciously accepts the heavenly treasure of salvation it has the witness of faith; it knows that it does receive salvation. But when the preciousness of this pearl of great price, the joy of the possession of this found treasure, the sweetness of saving power received, is consciously realized, it has the witness of the Holy Spirit.

The witness of faith is the John the Baptist which heralds and introduces the mightier witness of the Holy Spirit which cometh after it. The elements of the witness of faith are:

I. The souls conscious acceptance of Gods Word as true to itself

That is, the soul, irrespective of any outward sign or inward feeling, without any inner light or warmth, or witness previously given, accepts salvation on Gods Word alone; it counts true to itself the promise, that whosoever believeth on the Son shall be saved. It does not ask that the infallible Word of the Lord, which shall endure, though heaven and earth pass away, shall be corroborated by any collateral surety. It accepts the Word as so sure and effective, as that all confirmation of its verity is not only unnecessary, but would be sacrilegious, if desired.

There is a beautiful incident in the life of Ahaz, king of Judah, which illustrates how faith accepts the Word of the Lord as true, and disdains any collateral security. The kings of Syria and Israel had entered into a formidable alliance against Ahaz, and moved their combined forces against his capital, Jerusalem. When this was told Ahaz and his people, there was great consternation in the palace and the capital. The heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people was moved as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. In the midst of this crisis the prophet Isaiah was sent by the Lord to say to Ahaz: Take heed and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted, because Syria and Ephraim have taken evil counsel against thee. It shall not stand; neither shall it come to pass. If ye will not believe, ye shall not be established. At that moment the old king set his heart to believe the promise of the Lord which had just been given him, and accepted it as true to him and his capital.

Then the Lord spake to Ahaz and said to him: Ask again; ask it either in the depths, or in the heights above. It was as though God had said to him, I will give you additional assurance, if you desire it. This was really a test of his faith; for faith is not made perfect, if the heart seeks something more than the Word of the Lord to command its confidence. The genuineness of Ahaz's faith then asserted itself, and he said in holy confidence: I will not ask (a sign); I ask no collateral security to God's Word; no sweeping whirlwind, or crashing earthquake, or descending fire do I ask; it is the Word of the Lord, and it shall come to pass.

But how many seeking hearts, to whom God has given his Word, that according to their faith it shall be done unto them, ask a sign, a warmth, a light, a witness, or some other inward phenomenon, before they are ready to accept the Word of the Lord as true; but none is ever given. Whoever consciously accepts the Word of the Lord as true to himself, will have the witness of faith in himself to his salvation.

A professor in a university on the Pacific Coast had been for ten years a seeker of full salvation, but did not come into its enjoyment. One day an aged minister, traveling in the interest of the American Bible Society, was stopping at his home. They fell into conversation on Christian experience.

This aged minister told how many years since he had found, and been able to walk in conscious cleansing from all sin. The professor listened with interest, and when the old saint was through, he said to him: Father, I have been seeking that blessing for ten years. I believe I have put all on the altar, and that I live with all on the altar; but I haven't received the power of sanctifying grace in my soul. Said the aged brother: Do you want to receive it now? The professor replied: Yes. Well, said the minister, let us kneel down right here, and you may receive it now. One who has received full salvation, knows it

may be received right away. The fully saved soul is very alert, and precipitous in its faith. They had been sitting side by side in the professors parlor. The professor was a little reluctant to believe that the struggle of ten years could end right away. He doubtless thought the old man very sanguine. But they knelt together. Now, said the minister, Professor, are you wholly given to God? and with much tenderness and honesty of heart, he said: I believe I am. You have put all on the altar? Yes.

Well, Professor, the Lord says, The altar sanctifieth the gift; is it true or not? He dare not tempt God, and say it is not, and with a faltering, and almost coerced faith, he said, It is true, and instantly the refining fire went through his soul.

The conscious acceptance of the Word of God as true to itself, by the soul, is characteristic of the witness of faith.

II. The conscious commitment of the saving work to Christ

When the soul consciously relinquishes its own efforts to save itself, and puts itself to be saved into the hands of Him who came to save it, and does this so really to itself, that it dismisses all concern for its salvation; not that it feels that it is saved, but because it knows that it has committed itself unto him whose sole business is to redeem from all iniquity, it has the witness of faith.

Not long since, a gentleman, a comparative stranger to me, but who had reasonable evidence of my integrity, said to me: I have been owing a gentleman in the town in which you live, seventy-five dollars. I want to pay it, but can not leave my home to do so. Will you take the money to him? I said: I will. He handed me the amount. When I took it, I saw an expression of relief come to his face, and he felt an evident satisfaction which showed that he counted his debt paid. He had committed to me the work of canceling the note held against him. He knew I would do it. It was in effect to him the payment of his debt. The burden was off his mind; he felt that his business integrity for fidelity in meeting his claims was vindicated. His conscious commitment to me of this business, brought him the rest which the witness of faith always insures.

He got clear of concern for its payment several hours before it was paid, because I took the care of its payment off him, which I could not have done if he had not confided in my word of promise to him. So, when the soul commits the concern of its salvation unto Him who is able to save unto the uttermost, then it begins to take up the triumphant shout which the witness of

faith always inspires-

Hallelujah tis done: I believe on the Son

I am saved by the blood of the crucified One.

This conscious commitment by the soul of its salvation to Christ is characteristic of the witness of faith.

III. A conscious act of trust by the soul

The soul is conscious of its own voluntary acts. We know when a person or plan commands our confidence. We know when we believe. There may be much struggle in order for the soul to settle down and accept the evidence which solicits its faith; but when it passes from the attitude of distrust, or even questioning, to that of trust, it knows it. When the soul sets itself about to trust for salvation, the Adversary comes with his insinuations against, and contradictions of, the Word of the Lord; moreover, he seeks to divert the soul's attention from the glorious promises, the ample provisions, and mighty power of the gospel, to its own weakness, waywardness, and unworthiness, so that the soul must close its ears to the voice of Satan, and look steadily to Jesus, the author and finisher of its faith.

But when the contest is ended, and the soul has made up its mind to trust the sure word of the Lord, it becomes just as conscious that it believes as that it sees, or hears, or lives. Faith is an act to be performed. It is a thing to be done, and like any other act in which the mind is concerned, when it receives the light, so the heart knows when it receives Jesus—when it believes on the Son.

One evening, nine seeking hearts arose from an altar of prayer, burdened and unhappy because they had not accepted salvation on the Word of the Lord. They looked forlorn and sad. The congregation joined in singing that sweet salvation hymn,

Tis the promise of God full salvation to give
Unto him who on Jesus, his Son, will believe,

accompanied by the faith inspiring chorus:

Hallelujah! tis done: I believe on the Son;

I am saved by the blood of the crucified One.

As its lines were successively repeated, first one, then another, of these seekers came into the witness of faith, and began in heart, and some of them with voice, to say, rejoicingly:

Hallelujah! tis done.

What is done? Why, I believe on the Son. What then? Why, I am saved by the blood of the crucified One.

Before all the stanzas had been sung through, eight out of the nine had experienced the witness of faith. One, a railroad engineer, had not come into the rest of faith. The pastor said to him: Brother, when you make up your mind to believe on the Son, you will begin to sing-

Hallelujah! tis done:

I am saved by the blood of the crucified One.

But his mind was so intent on having a blessing and the witness, that he could not, for the time being, be led to an immediate act of trust. His vocation took him away from the services several days. About the third day after, the pastor met him on the street coming from his locomotive. As soon as he saw the pastor, he exclaimed:

Hallelujah! tis done:

I am saved by the blood of the crucified One.

His soul was happy in a conscious trust in Jesus, his precious Savior. He said:

Yesterday, while I was taking my train over my regular trip, at the rate of twenty miles an hour, it all came over me, Why not believe on the Son? and I did, and though traveling at such a rapid speed, salvation overtook me there and then, and ever since I have been singing in my heart:

Hallelujah! tis done:

I believe on the Son I am saved

Glory to the Lamb!

This glorious witness of faith to his soul was soon supplemented by the witness of the Holy Spirit itself. His reception of salvation was soon followed by his realization of salvation.

How glorious is the witness of faith! It is in us. This consciousness of faith is a light unto our path, and when every other light of experience is extinguished, this illuminates the soul, and still it sings

Trusting thee, I can not stray,

I can never lose my way.

Glory to God! He that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself.

Paper Fifth^(TOC)

The Witness of Faith: its Experience

"In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls"—1 Peter 1:5, 9

The witness of faith is just as conscious an experience as is the witness of the Holy Spirit. It comprises emotions of joy, peace, and gladness peculiar to itself. There is a faith-feeling just as there is a fear-feeling or a love feeling.

There is no true faith without feeling. Who can confide in a friend without any emotion of pleasure? Or who can accept in good faith the promise of another, and not feel a gladness of heart? As Dr. Lowrey wrote some months since, in *The Divine Life*: The truth is, faith is a matter of feeling. To speak of believing without feeling is very misleading; for where believing begins, feeling also begins. A man without any faith-feeling may begin to believe; but when he does so, he also begins to feel the emotions which accompany faith. Faith is all experience as well as an act of the soul, and the witness of faith is both the consciousness of all act performed and of a feeling experienced. This faith-feeling is just as real as the feeling which is concomitant to the experience of the Holy Spirit's witness. And not only so, but in its own kind there is as great an intensity of emotion in the experience of faith as there is in the experience of the Holy Spirit's witness.

Joy in believing and joy in the Holy Ghost, though different forms of joy, may both be alike unspeakable and full of glory. When faith is immediate,

lively and unwavering, it not only brings salvation and joy in believing, but more-joy unspeakable and full of glory. The experience of the witness of faith is most precious. The following are some of its most interesting phases:

I. A sense of rest Faith always brings rest of soul

They who believe, do enter in to rest.

Faith and rest are Siamese twins; they are inseparable. When faith is wanting, rest is wanting; and when rest is wanting, faith is wanting.

President Finney used to frequently say: Whenever you get out of rest, you are out of faith. The witness of faith brings a rest to the soul from all fear as to its saving interest in Christ. Having consciously received the Lord Jesus as its Savior, it no longer fears. Faith is a complete antidote to fear. Faith is the stronger one which casts out the strong man, fear, from the soul. All fear of law, of judgment, of penalty, and of every other evil thing, departs, when faith possesses the heart. Faith emancipates from fear.

There comes also with the witness of faith a rest from the seeking or struggle for salvation. The pursuit is over; the faith that saves is realized; salvation is received; expectation is at an end; anticipation has become attainment. The impulse to weep and struggle and pray for salvation subsides. When President Finney alone, praying in great agony of soul, experienced justification by faith, there was such a cessation of mental anxiety and of the impulse to pray, that walking home, he was tempted to think that, instead of being converted, he had only fallen into indifference.

But it was the true rest of faith that always marks the end of seeking and the beginning of receiving salvation. It is such a rest that all concern for salvation vanishes. The soul that believes on the Son of God has no concern about

salvation.

Moreover, this rest of faith frees the seeking soul from anxiety about the witness of the Holy Spirit; for faith commits both the saving work and the witness of the same to Christ so implicitly that it can have no restless longing for either. I read, not long since, this sentence, which is a golden spiritual axiom: In proportion as a seeking soul is anxiously concerned for the witness of the Holy Spirit, in that degree it is doubting. Sometimes, indeed most generally, the last bulwark of unbelief that surrenders to faith is to accept salvation on the Word of the Lord without the witness of the Holy Spirit, and to rejoice that the Holy Spirit in his own time and in his own way will attest the saving work that shall be wrought in us. A young man came to me in great trouble. I was just starting to my pulpit on Sabbath morning. He was weeping, and was a very picture of distress. I could only talk with him a few minutes. He told me his trouble. I said to him: I will fix matters so that your trouble will be at an end. I did not say when or how I would do it. He wiped away his tears; a restful expression took the place of the worried features he wore when he entered my door. I had done nothing; I had only promised to do something. He believed me, and rest came to his troubled heart. He left me within five minutes bright and happy. I attended to his case as soon as I could, and saved him from the trouble which threatened him, and did not see him again until two days afterward. I met him on the street. I supposed his first inquiry would be, Have you attended to my case? that he would want a witness that I had done what I had promised; but he conversed with me several minutes, and asked nothing about what I had promised, and was about to leave, when I said to him:

Your matter is all adjusted.

O, said he: I knew that was all right I had no anxiety about it, since you said

you would attend to it. He had all this while been unconcerned about any assurance that I had done it; he had not worried himself about such an assurance, nor had he worried me about it. So the soul, when it accepts Gods promise of salvation by faith, rests from all concern about the witness of the Holy Spirit; it doesnt worry itself, nor does it worry the Lord about it. As long as the soul is fretting about the witness, and pestering the Lord about it, it has not yet the rest of faith; for faith brings rest from all such unnecessary anxiety, I said to a lady who had accepted Christ by faith for full salvation: Have you the witness of the Spirit? She instantly said: No, and I don't care; for I know it will come. She had the witness of faith, and that earnest of the promised witness of the Holy Spirit was sufficient for her.

II. A sense of possession Faith is an act of claiming, of receiving

It takes what is proffered in the promises of Gods Word; so that with it there springs up in the heart a sweet sense of ownership, and the soul begins to say: Jesus is mine, I am saved.

Joshua was commanded of the Lord to say to the children of Israel: Ye shall pass over this Jordan to possess the land which the Lord thy God giveth you to possess it. Then he added: Every place where the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that I have given unto you. Wherever Judah should set his foot that should be his; where Benjamin should set his foot, that should be his. Each should get his inheritance by setting his foot upon it. Now, think you not, when either had set his foot upon a given territory, he did not instantly and instinctively feel, This is mine?

Think you not that he would have defended his proprietorship against every other contestant? And would he not have felt at once a joyful sense of ownership of the tract he had thus pre-empted? So when the soul sets the foot of its faith upon pardon or full salvation as promised to him, there does come to it immediately such a precious persuasion of possession as fills it with a gladness which can not be quenched by any lack of further witness, or by any temptation of the adversary to think otherwise. The instant the foothold of faith is set upon the promise, the soul begins to sing:

And all its riches mine.

The witness of faith is always

It is done

I believe on the Son;

I am saved by the blood

Of the crucified One.

An old colored man, who had a marvelous experience in grace, was asked: Daniel, why is it that you have so much peace and joy in religion? O Massa! he replied, I just fall flat on the exceeding great and precious promises, and I have all that is in them. Glory, Glory! He who falls flat on the promises, feels that all the riches embraced in them are his.

III. A sense of satisfaction

Faith is a state of satisfaction. Persons sometimes say: I am trusting, but I am not satisfied. That is impossible for the soul that is trusting for salvation is satisfied with salvation by promise, and anticipates soon salvation by power. If your home were under order from the court to be sold tomorrow, to cancel a judgment against you for one thousand dollars, and you had no money wherewith to redeem it, and a friend should, tonight, present you with a note on the Bank of England for one thousand dollars, do you think you would say to him: I am not satisfied? Would you feel, I havent any money ! Would you not rather experience the sweetest satisfaction? and would you not joyfully tell your wife and children: I have one thousand dollars; our home is saved? Yet that bank-note is only a piece of paper; it is neither silver nor gold; the judgment is still upon your home, but somehow that banknote commands so implicitly your confidence that you are most delightfully satisfied. So when the soul accepts in like faith any one of Heavens bank-notes of promise as the pledge of either pardon, purity, or power, a satisfaction takes possession of the heart that is unspeakable and full of glory; for Heavens bank of grace can not fail, and Heavens paper is payable at sight. The value of the witness of faith has been greatly underestimated in the instruction of seekers of salvation. It should be emphasized as the objective point in seeking salvation. The struggle of most seeking hearts is for the witness of the Holy Spirit, and in most cases this is so prominent in their minds as to hinder them more than any other thing in attaining it. It is the vain struggle to have God do his work, which he will certainly do without our anxiety or struggle about it. The real struggle should be for the seeking heart to do its part; that is, to believe unto salvation, and so attain the witness of faith which always brings a glorious

rest and satisfaction of soul. We have seen souls come into the joy of pardon or full salvation, receiving the witness of the Holy Spirit thereto.

Then we have seen these in an hour, a day, or a week, doubting the divine work wrought in their hearts; some even casting away their confidence and forfeiting their pardon, or cleansing. The cause of this was evident. When their emotions subsided, the tempter came and said: Where is your salvation? you have no feeling; and not having clearly discerned that they were saved by faith, they concluded they were deceived, and lapsed into darkness. Suppose they had learned that only trusting they were saved; then when an abatement of the joy came which was concomitant to the witness of the Holy Spirit, they would have repelled the temptation of the adversary by simply singing, I am trusting, Lord, in thee, and they would not only have retained the rest of faith, but there would doubtless have come a renewed and more powerful witness of the Holy Spirit. Here is a spiritual axiom that is invaluable: The witness of faith attained, the witness of the Holy Spirit always follows; and the witness of faith maintained, retains and increases the power of the witness of the Holy Spirit.

A man, in a meeting I held, had been very clearly and powerfully converted. It was a wonderful conversion, such as no one should ever doubt; but within three days I found him bordering on despair, walking in darkness, and about to conclude that he was not saved. The intensity of heart emotion, and the corresponding nervous excitement, which the first realization of saving grace brought, had subsided, and he feared that it had all been excitement and no salvation. I said to him: Are you still given to God? He replied: Yes. Have you ceased to trust Jesus to save you? O! said he, that was the way I was saved, wasn't it? I just trusted. O, I will trust on! and instantly rest came again into his heart, and in a few moments the Holy Spirit's witness was renewed in

great power to him, and ever since he has been a stable and growing Christian, and now walks in the blessing of perfect cleansing, through the blood of the Lamb, by faith. It is said, one reason why the work of conversion and entire sanctification under Mrs.

Phoebe Palmer has such permanence in the hearts of those whom she led to Christ, was because she emphasized so constantly the faith that saves.

Whosoever believeth shall not make haste.

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing!

Paper Sixth^(TOC)

The Fullness of Faith: its Characteristics

"A man full of faith"—Acts 6:5

Faith is well defined to him who possesses it; it is but imperfectly apprehended until experienced. He who has faith in any degree, hungers and thirsts for it in a larger degree; a taste of faith makes the soul eager for a feast of it. Every believer has faith, but not every believer is full of faith; with much faith there may coexist much lack of faith. Therefore Paul longed to see the faces of the brethren at Thessalonica, that he might perfect that which was lacking in their faith. The soul may have saving faith, and still lack a fullness of faith. In this series of FAITH PAPERS we have hitherto been presenting the subject of saving faith; we now take up the subject of special faith, which, under various phases, is as clearly distinguished in the Scriptures from saving faith as saving faith is from unbelief.

Much of the misapprehension which exists respecting the nature of faith arises from confounding faith in its saving measure with faith in the measure of its fullness. SAVING FAITH is a voluntary act of the soul, by which it appropriates salvation THE FULLNESS OF FAITH is a state of the soul in which it apprehends divine and spiritual things; it is a temper of mind an entirely new frame of heart: it is faith shorn of none of its saving efficacy, graduated into the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of thing not

seen by the baptism of the Holy Ghost in his indwelling presence received into the soul. Let us notice some of the characteristics of THE FULLNESS OF FAITH:

I. A consciously exclusive confidence in God

Having the fullness of faith, the soul continuously exclaims, under all circumstances, with the Psalmist, Wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him; it is such a vision and persuasion of Gods almightiness, all-lovingness, and all-faithfulness as that the soul is given a set God-ward it will not look for help self ward, man-ward, earth-ward, circumstance-ward,—or other-ward. Faith in an imperfect measure is often deluded by favorable circumstances or promising indications, only to be disappointed. I recall in my own early ministry how my immature faith was disappointed on one occasion in its hopes, because it unconsciously reposed on indications. A protracted meeting was begun; the attendance was large; general interest good; my heart prophesied to itself a glorious revival.

But the interest evanesced; the results were meager. My faith had been misplaced. As I now know, I had great faith in the indications, and but little faith in God.

A noted evangelist taught me in a very abrupt way a lesson of faith. I had been chosen to welcome him to the city where he was to labor. I met him on his arrival at the depot; introduced myself to him, when he at once informally said to me: Have you faith in God? I replied: Our preparatory services have been good; the indications are favorable. Instantly he rejoined:

We cant depend on good meetings, favorable indications, or any thing of that kind. Have you faith in God? Then as I came to think of it. I found that I had much faith in the auspicious meetings already held, and in the coming

evangelist, but very little faith in God.

The soul that is full of faith never becomes confounded by unconscious dependence upon apparent encouragements. Neither will discouragements dismay it. Oppositions, adversities, difficulties, do not enter into its calculations. It believes fully that all things are possible to him that believeth. It anticipates revivals in the face of prevalent deadness; expects victory where opposition is the most formidable; and keeps in heart where providences are the most disheartening. The fact is, a soul full of faith can't be discouraged, because it knows it shall not be disappointed. It shouts for what is to be done, even when, to human appearance, there is no hope of success. It says, We are fully able to go up, though the rabble of unbelief clamors: We can't. It utters the victorious hallelujahs which bring the walls of every frowning Jericho into the dust.

A pastor, who had not yet entered into the fullness of faith, closed a weekly prayer meeting, heart-sunken with discouragement, because of the few present and the unpromising outlook for the Church, when a good brother present came up to him and said What a good meeting we had tonight! The Lord is going to revive his work. That was the outlook of faith in its fullness. A pastor went to his field of labor; every thing was unpromising; religion was in great decline. His wife said: There can be no success here.

His reply was: Faithful is he who hath promised, who also will do it. That faith was honored in a most wonderful ingathering of souls and a great quickening of the Church a few months later. Faith in its fullness is

A faith that shines more bright and clear

When tempests rage without,

That when in danger knows no fear,

In darkness feels no doubt.

That sister most nearly discovered the secret of the Revelation Thomas Hansons power as an evangelist, who said: He is a knot of faith. A man full of faith.

A man full of faith is a man of God. He has a sustained conviction that God can not be unfaithful, and has an impressive sense that he is, and that he is rewarder of those who trust him.

II. A consciously vivid apprehension of Christ

Having the fullness of faith, Christ is to the soul, the Son of God indeed.

The divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ becomes a spiritual verity, rather than a doctrinal conception. He who is full of faith can not be a Unitarian, for he knows by spiritual cognition that Jesus is Lord. The soul on the heights of the fullness of faith falls in adoring love at the feet of Jesus, and exclaims My Lord and my God, as never before. The sacrificial work of Christ receives under the illumination of faith in its fullness a new interpretation to the heart. The mystery of the cross becomes the glory of the soul.

The blood of the cross is exalted into infinite worth; it is seen as the sole ground of reconciliation, justification, sanctification, and eternal redemption; it is recognized not as a part, but as the whole of the atoning work; not as its symbol, but as its substance. The blood has wondrous significance to one who is full of faith; he sings of it with a sense of appreciation greatly augmented over that which he felt the hour he first believed.

That sweet apostrophe so often sung,

O the blood, the precious blood,

Which Jesus shed for me!

thrills his heart with raptures that are inexpressible. The substitutional propitiatory significance of the death of Christ is no longer a dogma, but a felt truth. Moreover, the name of Jesus becomes freighted with a power that

is measureless; it is seen as

The name high over all;

as the prevailing element of successful prayer; as the mediatorial channel of all communion and communication between God and man as the true Jacobs ladder which joins earth and heaven, and this Christian life into a Bethel-a house of God. Christ becomes the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the all and in all to the soul which has come into the fullness of faith. So realized is Jesus to the soul in sensible glory that it exclaims:

O could I speak the matchless worth;

O could I sound the glories forth,

Which in my Savior shine,

Id soar, and touch the heavenly strings,

And vie with Gabriel while he sings,

In notes almost divine!

I once called upon a lady who had gone through deep waters of sorrow.

When I met her she had not been inside of a church for four years, though a Christian. The death of her husband had so saddened her by the peculiar circumstances under which it had occurred, that she could not summon courage to take her accustomed place in the house of God. Besides, the shadow of sorrow rested so deeply upon her heart that she had kept, all through those four years, lights burning every night in every room of her house, not out of superstition, but because she felt that natural darkness, superadded to the darkness of her sorrow, was more than she could bear. I said to her: Jesus will help you and comfort you. She replied petulantly:

You ministers say Jesus will be this and Jesus will be that to the soul, but he has been nothing to me in this sorrow. I saw she was not in condition to be talked with much. She was holding on to Jesus as her Savior, but had not embraced him as her Comforter. She was made the subject of special prayer by a few to whom her case was reported. A few weeks afterwards she came to one of our morning meetings. I was almost startled when I saw her enter the door. A few minutes after the meeting began she arose, and said in almost an exclamatory tone; It is true, it is true! Jesus can help a broken heart! O, he came into my soul yesterday, and I blew out all the lights last night, and my soul and my home are now brighter than when all were burning. When she opened her heart and received the Comforter, there sprang up in her heart a fullness of faith which realized Jesus to her in all his matchless worth. Such faith is the souls Mount of Transfiguration, where it beholds in beatific visions the glories which in our Savior shine.

Dear reader, may you allow the Holy Spirit to translate you to this heavenly place; for once there you will desire to build tabernacles, and will sing:

Here I should forever stay,
Weep and gaze myself away.

III. A consciously higher appreciation of Gods Word

The Bible is an infallible book to the soul that is full of faith. It is then received as a divine revelation, as the very Word of God. It becomes a volume all instinct with holy inspiration. The plenary inspiration of the Holy Scripture passes from being a merely doctrinal conception into a spiritual apprehension. He who has come into a fullness of faith drops all questioning and quibbling as to the complete inspiration and divine authority of the Scriptures; their very enigmas, difficulties, and obscurities are accepted as significant; and what is incomprehensible in them is believed even more fully than what is clearly understood. The fullness of faith not only accepts the Bible an inspired book, but it also renders it an illuminated book. It reads it by a new light, and sees in it new meaning. The soul, full of faith, sings:

Holy Bible, Book divine,

Precious treasure, thou art mine!

The Bible, hitherto uninteresting, becomes a supreme delight.

Once in my ministry a lady came to me who was a very creditable worker in my Church, and a converted woman, and she said to me: I dont love to read the Bible. I havent a relish for it. I find that I prefer to read the magazines and the best authors and current papers. There must be something wrong. I know I ought to love the Bible. I said: There is something wrong. You need that baptism of the Holy Spirit that will unseal the book, and illuminate its pages so that your soul will exclaim, How I love Thy law! About two months after

she came to me and said: O, the Bible is a changed book to me now! O, it is a new book, such a precious book! I only wish I had more hours in which to linger over its pages! I asked her what had transformed it so wonderfully to her? She replied: I went with it open before me on my knees one day, and I said: Give me, Lord, a heart to love and delight in thy Word, and there came to me such a view of its truth, and such a sense of its divine origin, that my heart was filled with a completeness of faith in it, and ever since it has been a glorious enjoyment to me.

The fullness of faith comprises such an immediate confidence in God, such an apprehension of Christ, and such a full reception of the Bible as the Word of God, as gives to Christian experience an effectiveness, enjoyment, and completeness that saving faith alone does not compass. Have we this baptism of faith? The triumphant experience of Stephen is not beyond the reach of every believer. He was a man full of faith. We, too, may be full of faith.

Lord give us such a faith as this,

And then, whate'er may come,

Well taste, e'en here, the hallowed bliss

Of an eternal home.

Paper Seventh^(TOC)

The Fullness of Faith: its Effects

"Who through faith wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions"—Hebrews 11:33

Faith is always effectual: it eventuates in results; it brings something to pass. What it brings to pass, however, depends upon its aim. If it claims pardon or purity or power, according as it is, so shall it be done unto it. To say, Trust in the Lord and care nothing for results, is misleading. That would not be faith at all, for it belongs to faith to believe for something; it must anticipate results. Faith is always accompanied by effects. Some effects are promised to faith in its saving exercise, and other effects are promised to it in the exercise of its fullness. The effects possible to the one are different from those possible to the other. Saving faith compasses pardon, regeneration, witness of adoption, and entire sanctification; while faith in its fullness compasses a range of spiritual experiences and states not possible to lower measures of faith. Faith in its fullness brings to pass conversions, and results in the domain of personal consciousness which would not otherwise transpire.

Let us consider the effects of the fullness of faith in two respects

I. Its achievements

It renders the personality of the man who has it effective for God; his finite capabilities are raised to superhuman power; it endows him with power for spiritual results. Barnabas was full of faith and of power. Power is the inseparable concomitant of fullness of faith; they are hemispheres of the same globe. The simplest definition of power is faith in God. He who is full of faith is mighty through God. Deprive D. L. Moody of this faith, and all his native personal force would achieve nothing in the great work of evangelization; he would be powerless.

Nothing other than John Wesley's superadded faith made his scholarship, culture, and marked individuality so effective and far-reaching for good as they have proved. This fullness of faith empowers all religious activities: it gives weight to our words of testimony, exhortation, and instruction; freighted with it they carry a spiritual *avoirdupois* which may break stolid hearts into penitence, or exert a spiritual force that may lift souls up to God.

With it a sentence often achieves more than a sermon without it.

An aged Christian lady visited a worldly, irreligious man at his home, and said to him: You ought not to lose your soul. Just what he had heard before in sermons and exhortations; but as they fell from the lips of that saintly woman, freighted with a great faith, they weighed, as he said, upon his heart so that he could not eat or sleep or work, or do aught else, until he had given his heart to Christ. Mr. Finney was a man of such faith that his words of reproof and appeal went in an *airline* to the heart, producing immediate impression in the soul. He met at one time a worldly young woman, who

belonged to the family in which he was a guest, coming out of the Church at the close of one of his impressive services. He said to her: Where are you going? She replied: Home. Yes, rejoined Mr. Finney, to your long home.

Her countenance fell, she grew sober, walked silently and tremblingly to her home, and when Mr. Finney arrived she lay upon the floor in an agony of distress on account of her lost condition. I know a lady whose words in ordinary conversation have a spiritual edge which faith alone can put to language. Sitting one evening in the midst of a social company, she began to speak so impressively, in a natural and unpretentious way, of the Lord's dealings with her soul that some began to weep. Noticing it, she modestly asked the privilege of praying. When they arose, a husband and wife had found the joy of a restored salvation, and a young lady had been enriched with the pearl of great price. Her words had been words of faith. Such a faith imparts an effectiveness to pulpit utterances, home counsels, and Sabbath-school instruction, as they can not have without it. The fullness of faith empowers the life of the child of God; it makes it tell; it invests it with a quietness of manner, a sweetness of spirit, and an earnestness of demeanor that is more influential in winning souls to Christ than any other thing. There was a young man who had become infatuated with the deceits of Ingersollism. He thought he had come to a full acceptance of its errors, and had about concluded that the Church was nothing to be respected, the Bible a human invention, and religion a mere fancy. Just about this time he went to write at the same desk in an office where there stood opposite him a devoted young man, full of faith and the Holy Ghost. There they stood facing each other, pushing busily their pens for several months.

Occasionally the young skeptic would flaunt out his reproaches upon Christianity, and his infidel objections. His godly associate refrained from

any sharp retorts, and declined all controversy, but kept his soul so full of faith that he wore a bright face, carried a good spirit, and maintained an irreproachable life. One evening this skeptical young man fell in with the pastor of the Church to which his religious business companion belonged.

As they walked together this disciple of Ingersoll said very abruptly: I have made up my mind to join your Church. The pastor, much surprised, said: I am glad of it. Come next Sabbath and I will receive you; and now tell me what has changed your mind. O, said he, I have been writing for several months at a desk with a young man, a member of your Church. He never gets out of humor; he always seems so happy, and he is so kind that he has burned all my infidelity out of me, and I want just what he has, and I believe he has religion. The next Sabbath he united with the Church, and is now a happy and useful Christian. That Christian young man lived a life of faith, and it told. The fullness of faith always enables the Christian to live a spiritually energized life for God. The works and labors of love in Christian life are multiplied and enlarged under the power of a fullness of faith. It originates greater things, plans larger enterprises, inaugurates bolder endeavors, and compasses richer results than faith in its minor measures.

Its works for the salvation of men are wonderful; it always abounds in the work of the Lord. It carries forward a sustained work of prayer. The man full of faith is pre-eminently a man of prayer; he, like Payson, is audacious in prayer; asks large things, and asks with a boldness whose demands God never denies. Said one who listened to one of the simple prayers of that prince of faith, Bishop William Taylor, He isnt backward in asking the Lord for great things. No man of faith is. Success crowns the man full of faith; he doesnt fail; his labor is not in vain; whatsoever he doeth prospers; fruit appears; results follow. The fullness of faith accomplishes the grand achievements of

transforming its possessor into a power for God, and of precipitating divine movements in the Church, the world, and human hearts, which eventuate in marked results in the salvation of souls.

II. Its experiences

All the effects of faith within the domain of personal consciousness are real and precious. The conscious experiences which result from saving faith, such as a sense of pardon, adoption, and a new life, are not to be undervalued; yet there remain coexistent with these disagreeable elements of consciousness, such as doubts, fears, and clouds. These commingle with the peace, joy, and light of the converted soul, so that it often sings

Een the rapture of pardon is mingled with fears.

And the cup of rejoicing with sadness and tears.

Its enjoyments are, at best, variable. The particular improvement in the realm of experience which the fullness of faith brings is that it clears the skies of the soul, disperses its shadows, and secures to it a sustained light, warmth, and enjoyment in God. There are several new elements of experience which it ushers in.

1. Full assurance

It so fully persuades the soul of its acceptance with God, makes it so conscious of his indwelling presence, and so assures the soul of the verity of spiritual things, that the soul walks in the light and sings,

Not a clouddoth arise

To darken my skies.

Doubts vanish; their hideous specters never even flit across the soul; and the

experience of the seraphic Faber becomes verified to the heart:

I know not what it is to doubt;

My heart is always gay.

The soul stands on the solid ground of conscious certainty respecting its salvation and hope. It walks now by faith. Some speak often of walking by faith as though it were a rough, dark way. They say: I have many doubts, much darkness, no joy, but I am walking by faith. By no means are they. Faiths way is not such; it is a cloudless way, a smooth way, a joyous way. The way that is cloud-cast and doubt-strewn is the way of sight. The fullness of faith is a vision of soul, where its eye, as it sweeps the horizons of time and eternity,

Reads its title clear

To mansions in the skies,

rejoices in hope, walks above the world and sin, and to it

The invisible appears,

And God is seen by mortal sight

The exclamation of one when faiths full orb had risen within his soul was, Lo, what a witness! Clearer than that of my adoption it is a perfect globe of assurance.

2. Freedom from fear is another new phase of experience of soul

which attends the fullness of faith

The dread of duty which haunts so many Christian lives, and which paralyzes the souls sensibilities for enjoying God, quits the soul. Crosses become delights, service joy. Faith in its fullness emancipates the soul from the bondage of doing duty in the dread of it, and brings it the liberty of doing duty in the love of it. This is accompanied by a freedom from the fear of Gods will. The chief reason why so many Christians hesitate to offer themselves living sacrifices unto God, is that they fear to say, Thy will be done. They fear that he may choose some suffering or disappointment or persecution or bereavement for them. But the soul full of faith adores Gods sweet will; it is so persuaded of the divine all-lovingness, that he will not choose for it what is not best, as that it has no concern about what his will is concerning it. The bondage of dreading a loving Fathers will is supplanted by the liberty of delighting in it. This embraces, also, no fear for the future. Said a Christian woman: I have grace sufficient for the present, but I don't believe I could endure the trials and temptations some have, should they come to me. Had she been full of faith she would have been quiet from the fear of evil. The soul full of faith fears neither coming age or service or death. It lives in no fear of backsliding or spiritual decline, or fruitless years to come; its confidence is like Pauls: I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him. A Christian woman was in the habit of saying in the presence of her saintly colored servant, who was always happy: Dinah, suppose this should happen, or that should come to you, some great sorrow, accident, or misfortune. Why, missus, said Dinah, I never supposes any thing; its your spouses that make you so miserable. I knows all things work together for good to dem what loves de Lord, and that makes me happy all de time. Dinah was full of faith. Such a soul never supposes any thing about the

future, and so rejoices in hope.

3. Heavenly mindedness is another new element of experience in the soul full of faith

Heavenly mindedness is a state, not a mere emotion of soul. The heart becomes possessed of heavenly thoughts and feelings. It lives on a celestial altitude of experience in the midst of pressing duties, cares, and perplexities. It is an experience akin to what some saints have realized during long periods of decline, as they anticipated their early translation to heaven. Said Mrs. Professor Lacroix, days before her death, I am done with earth; I have begun to live in heaven. Thus by the power of a fullness of faith, the soul, not waiting for the near approach of death, may be lifted into an experience where it begins to live the heavenly life while yet in the body. Then, as one has beautifully written: It goes to heaven before it gets there locally. God transfers his kingdom and glory to the heart, making it a province of the land of light in advance. The whole realm of its inner being is annexed to the heavenly empire, and its citizenship is transferred from earth to the heavenly city. O glorious, wondrous faith, which enables us to know

Our heaven begun below!

Dear reader, may the Lord lead you to this fullness of faith, so that having your conversation in heaven you may exultantly sing

Yet onward I haste to the heavenly feast:

That indeed is the fullness, but this is the taste,

And this I shall prove, till with joy I remove

To the heaven of heavens in Jesus love.

Paper Eighth^(TOC)

The Fullness of Faith: its Attainment

"Full of the Holy Ghost and of faith"—Acts 11:24

The fullness of faith is a work of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when the apostle Paul sets forth the fruit of the Spirit he puts into the precious cluster faith. Now, since the Spirit himself, in fullness, is only given to believers, after they have exercised saving faith (that is, it is a Post-conversion experience), therefore, the faith which flows from his indwelling must be some enlargement and enrichment of faith which does not belong to it in its initial character. Faith, in its saving measure, is faith with hands and feet unloosed, yet with eyes that are darkened and wings that are bound: it is a clinging chrysalis it neither sees nor soars. But faith in its fullness is faith with eyes wide open, and wings unbound. Faith never reaches its fullness until it transmigrates from an exercise into a state of soul, until it can apprehend, as well as appropriate, the things which are freely given it of God. When faith, without losing any of its saving virtue, by the power of the Holy Ghost in us becomes the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, it has reached its majority, it is full grown. The process for the attainment of the fullness of faith differs from that for the attainment of faith in its saving efficacy, because they differ in experience.

Saving faith is a thing done by us, a conscious, voluntary act by which the soul accepts salvation; the fullness of faith is a state wrought in us by the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Being a grace wrought in us, it must be definitely

sought and received as any other grace is obtained. Two things are very essential to the souls attainment of the fullness of faith, it must know the source and the antecedents of this experience.

I. Its source

The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the cause, and fullness of faith the effect.

The fullness of the Holy Spirit implanted in the soul is the perennial fountain whence proceeds the ceaseless stream of fullness of faith.

Barnabas was full of the Holy Ghost and consequently full of faith. When the Pentecostal grace is come, faith in its fullness has come. All lack of faith in true believers is the result of not having the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The gift of the Holy Ghost is to be distinguished from the ordinary operations of the Holy Spirit in awakening, regeneration, and adoption; it is His personal indwelling in the soul. When he has thus possessed the soul as a refiner, he purges away the dross of native unbelief from the heart; as an illuminator, he reveals Jesus as the author and finisher of faith; and as an empowerer, he spiritually energizes the soul to apprehend all the fullness of God in the promises of his Word. The fullness of the Holy Spirit himself received in to the soul is the source of all fullness; not a grace of the Spirit can exist there in its fullness without his indwelling presence. Fullness of joy, fullness of love, fullness of faith, all inhere in the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Faith can not be trained into the stature of fullness. The fullness of faith is a product of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Hence the early Church gave great attention, as a desideratum to the new converts, that they should be filled with the Holy Ghost. Therefore we have in the Acts of the Apostles numerous records of individuals and of multitudes who received the anointing. Philip, the evangelist, had no sooner secured the conversion of hundreds in Samaria than the apostles hastened thither to impart the gift of the Holy Ghost. So that the

fullness of faith became then a common, instead of an unusual, experience. Stephen was full of faith and the Holy Ghost. Saul of Tarsus, after his conversion to God on the Damascus road, under the instruction of a humble disciple, Ananias, was filled with the Holy Ghost; and there began his wonderful career of faith, of which, as life went on, he could say: The life I now live I live by the faith of the Son of God; and when it was closing could triumphantly exclaim: I have kept the faith. Now men and women get converted, live in Church for years, and do not so much as know whether there be any Holy Ghost as a source of a fullness of faith, This grace of faith, being a work of the Holy Spirit, bears his divine imprint. It is a spirit of faith; the soul is pervaded by its inspirations; it enters into all its states, experiences, and activities. The whole life has an air of faith; it is repose to the manner, confidence in the tone, steadiness in the demeanor. It is a spontaneous activity of the heart.

Faith is no longer self-operated, but divinely operated. What is written comes to pass: I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes. The causative power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us enables the soul to trust without effort or dint of will. The volitional becomes absorbed in the affectional emotions of the heart. Faith now works by love; believing becomes automatic it believes itself.

Faith is no more a task or wonder. To some it seems marvelous to have faith, but he who has operative in him the power of the Holy Ghost thinks it marvelous not to believe. The strain of faith is removed, and it is so easy to believe. More still, faith becomes, under the power of the Spirit, a sustained movement of soul. The Holy Spirit dwelling in the soul is a tremendous mainspring of feeling, thinking, and willing, coiled up in the center of spiritual life, to which every wheel of grace is attached, keeping it in

continuous motion. This mainspring can't run down; its energies are eternal.

Neither can the faith which it operates run down. So that faith in its fullness is not a fitful, wavering, and evanescent, but a prolonged, unabated, ceaseless experience of soul. The manifoldness of faith under the power of the Spirit is glorious; it is adequate to such a variety of wants, and compasses such a wide range of blessings; all things are possible to it, strength, consolation, wisdom. God withholds from it no good thing.

Moreover, it is available. We have it. Let emergencies, crises, unexpected trials, providences, or duties arise, and it is on hand. So many of God's children have to work up faith for every new demand. If sorrow comes, they have to tug and toil for faith to bear it; if some new responsibility or service is thrust upon them, they have a severe struggle to get faith for it.

So ministers and Churches squander a large part of the time given to special revival effort in getting faith for it.

But when the fullness of faith is had, we have faith for every occasion, duty, and work; when the service or sorrow comes, the faith for it is at hand. The baptism of the Holy Spirit imparts to the soul full salvation; this removes the inherent unbelief, unspiritualness, and moral darkness of the soul, out of which arise the doubts, the fears, and the unrest which attend an immature faith, and which constitute the disabilities that render faith feeble and fitful.

There are those who desire faith great faith but who do not desire as well heart-purity, the only soil that can yield a fullness of faith. The kingdom of God in full salvation is a spiritual unit; it is indivisible. He who wants it, its joy or its faith must take the entire kingdom. Receiving it, the soul becomes rich toward God; rich in faith, rich in love, rich in all goodness.

The grace of full salvation is not merely one of many manifestations of the Holy Spirit; it is not a blessing from the Holy Spirit, but the baptism of the Holy Spirit, comprehending his personal, conscious incoming into the soul, cleansing it from its sin ward tendency, filling it with all the fullness of God, and imparting to it a fullness of faith, of love, and of power. It is more than a blessing. Said an excellent woman not long since who had found full salvation: I have been getting blessings for years from the Lord; but this is more and better than they all. The fullness of faith and the fullness of love are not seriatim ingraftings upon the souls experience, but are scions of the one implanted tree of life, the Holy Spirit indwelling in the soul. Hence to seek a fullness of faith, exclusive of the sanctifying and enduing baptism of the Holy Ghost, is to limit the Holy One of Israel. He never imparts his graces without imparting himself. The soul that cries,

Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove,

With all thy quickening powers,

will get the Holy Spirit himself,

and in him will find all the fullness of faith.

II. Its Antecedents

1. An unequivocal experience of saving faith

There are no possibilities of faith in its higher degrees without saving faith attained and maintained. To renounce or undervalue saving faith, renders the fullness of faith impossible: For we are partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. Fullness of faith is saving faith expanded by the power of the Holy Ghost until it sweeps vast areas of divine blessing beyond the range of saving grace. George Muller, the founder of the Bristol orphanages, says he finds no difference in kind between the faith by which he trusts Christ to save his soul, and that by which he trusts God to feed, clothe, and shelter two thousand orphans. It is only saving faith given a wider range. Faith in its saving virtue is the germ faith in its fullness is the fruit. There must be first the blade of saving faith, then the ear of fullness of faith. The believer who would attain the grace of faith in its fullness must cry out: Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

2. The consecration of saving faith

To God An indispensable antecedent to the attainment of a fullness of faith is to put the talent of saving faith on the altar of God, as one of the powers of the soul made alive to him, to be transformed by the renewing of the Holy Ghost into a stature of fullness.

That faith by which the convert, or babe in Christ, feebly clings to the cross a

faith so weak that it barely brings the peace of pardon, consecrated to God may transmigrate suddenly from a faith that saves into a faith which brings full assurance and a glorious apprehension of things not seen. Saving faith given to God unfolds into a fullness of faith.

3. The exercise of saving faith

Saving faith is the only spiritual capability whose exercise can bring the fullness of faith. The faith which claims Christ as a Savior has only to receive him as the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, and, lo! the promise of the Father descends; faith bursts into unclouded vision; its perfectness is come.

There are many who sigh over their infantile, weak, wavering faith, who, would they but use it in laying hold of some such promise as How much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, would find it lifted into power and glory. By faith, faiths increase we claim.

Dear reader, may the Lord perfect

that which is lacking in your faith

Spirit of Faith, come down:

Reveal the things of God.

Paper Ninth^(TOC)

The Gift of Faith

"To another faith by the same Spirit"—1 Corinthians 12:9

The Bible treats of a phase of faith differing from both faith in its saving exercise and faith in its fullness; this it very properly designates the gift of faith. When Paul enumerates the gifts sovereignly bestowed upon believers in the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians, the gift of faith is prominent in the list. The gift of faith operates in spheres which are not available to saving faith or to the fullness of faith; it apprehends results which only the supernatural illuminations of the Holy Spirit reveal to the soul as possible to faith. Without such a supernatural revelation the existence and exercise of charismatic faith, or the gift of faith, is impossible.

There is a gift of faith; it has not been withdrawn from Gods people; it, like other manifestations of himself, the selfsame Spirit worketh in them who believe, as hitherto. Several features of the gift of faith may be profitably considered.

I. Its office

The gift of faith is a divinely inwrought assurance given the soul that God will do in, for, or by the person upon whom it is bestowed, certain apprehended results, and this persuasion is so indubitable that it becomes the very substance of the things desired, and the very evidence (or proof), the conclusive testimony of the things not seen (not verified). Hence this faith is vital in certain of its relations. It is an indispensable qualification for the execution of some divine order by the person upon whom it is bestowed.

1. This gift is the indispensable accompaniment of the divine missions

To which God appoints men

When God calls one to the work of evangelist, teacher, prophet, or healer, he accompanies it with such an endowment of faith upon the soul as that the fruit of evangelism, teaching, prophecy, or healing shall appear. This gift attends such only in their divine callings, and is effective only for their legitimate work. Sometimes the range of this endowment of faith is narrow, limited to only one phase of results, with one evangelist to the conversion of sinners, as with Philip of Samaria and Thomas Harrison of today; with E. P. Hammond to the conversion of children chiefly; with another to the sanctification of believers principally, as Dr. Sheridan Baker; with Miss Sarah Smiley, to teaching alone; with George Muller, to building orphanages;

with Dr. Cullis, to faith cures; with Francis Murphy, to reform inebriates. The divine call is the pledge of the divine anointing of faith for its work.

2. It is the indispensable antecedent of supernatural results

In nature and mind through human agency

The birth of Isaac in the ordinary course of nature was impossible. Many years after Abraham had believed the covenant promise of God by which he obtained justification, God appeared unto him; talked with him; promised him a son by Sarah, and called his name Isaac. By this revelation of the Almighty God, Abraham is persuaded that what he has promised he is able to perform. He received the gift of faith, gave glory to God, and laughed outright from the delight of assurance which illuminated his soul.

According to this faith, divinely imparted to him, it was done unto him. The miracle of the incarnation was through faith. The angel Gabriel being sent of God, came to a devout Galilean damsel residing at Nazareth; he saluted her: Hail! thou art highly favored; the Lord is with thee. Troubled in mind by the sudden appearance of this seraphic visitant, and his strange salutation, she is assured and comforted by a second message: Fear not; thou hast found favor of the Lord. Thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. This supernatural manifestation irresistibly persuaded her that it was the divine purpose that she should be the mother of the Lord.

She consented to the mission, saying: Be it unto me according to thy word.

A divinely wrought faith possessed her heart. The divine Benedict us from the lips of Elizabeth, under the power of the Holy Ghost, confirmed it, saying: Blessed is she that hath believed that there shall be a fulfillment of the things spoken to her from the Lord. Then breaks forth the shout of Marys Spirit. imparted faith in the inspired Magnificat, My soul doth magnify the Lord, etc., jubilant with all the anticipations which had their wondrous realization in the Advent. God gave Mary faith for this mission, and according to her faith it was done unto her. When God would make Ananias an agent for the salvation of Saul of Tarsus, he appears to him in a vision in the person of the ascended Lord, speaks to him, commissions him, discloses to him Sauls state of heart, silences his fears, assures him of the persecutors true conversion, and of the divine purpose to make Saul a chosen vessel. All this brings the heart of Ananias into a sure confidence that the work committed to him shall not fail. He went; he succeeded; he witnessed the salvation of the great apostle to the Gentiles. So it is ever: when God would have an extraordinary work achieved, or some unusual event transpire which is not according to the observed course of nature or mind, he works into some heart the supernatural persuasion that he will do this thing to, for, or by him.

These Scriptural citations are given only as samples of how, in like manner, God now sometimes imparts this gift of faith to his humblest disciples, enabling them to effect results, secure deliverances, promote revivals, and to do other mighty works.

Miss Sarah Smiley had been long an invalid; one day it came to her: The Lord is thy healer! It came so irresistibly that her heart responded, Even so, Lord; it was faith, for her healing. The next day she arose from her bed, grew stronger day by day, and has ever since been a successful evangelist.

A wife was impressed while praying to ask for the preservation and salvation

of her husband, who was an officer on a Mississippi River steamer, then distant from home. The assurance of faith came that her desire was granted. The day following a telegram came to her that the steamer had burned, and that her husband had perished. She read it, folded it up, and said to the friend who delivered it: It is not so; he is saved from the flames and the waves, and shall be from his sins. A few days after, he arrived home, was soon converted, and lived for many years, a praise in the Church.

Mr. Finney had visited a place to hold revival services. He was the guest of an excellent Christian woman. After he had held the first service, he determined to leave; his hostess urged him to stay, but he said he would leave. She then said: Well, if you do go, God will send a revival anyhow.

Mr. Finney stayed, and a most wonderful revival followed. She had the gift of faith for a revival. A young lady, backslidden in heart, filled with skeptical notions, reluctantly accompanied her godly father to church one night. Her mother in enfeebled health remained at home. While engaging in prayer, she was drawn out in supplication for her daughters restoration to divine favor; while on her knees, an assurance of faith was given her that her daughter should not come home without being saved. Lo! when she returned home, she reported how the Lord had restored unto her the joy of salvation ! The gift of faith is antecedent to and promotive of all such results as lie beyond the range of the blessings of grace promised to saving faith, and the experience of faith in the measure of its fullness,

3. It is the source of the prayer of faith

That which is called in the Scriptures the prayer of faith springs out of the endowment of faith. The soul, becoming supernaturally assured by the Holy Spirit through the Word that it is Gods will to do certain things by, for, or to

it, instantly takes up prayer for that thing. What are often spoken of in Christian life as special answers to prayer, are those things given which were asked for when the soul was lifted into an assurance that God would grant those very things. The asking was prompted by the assurance of faith that had been given.

II. Its Order

The gift of faith like every other gift of the Holy Spirit as a special endowment is inferior to the graces of the Spirit; for the apostle supposes it possible to have all faith so as to remove mountains, and yet be destitute of love, the very substance of Christian experience. Indeed, he teaches that if endowed only with the gift of faith, I am nothing. Several things suggest the inferiority of the gift of faith to the grace of faith in its saving exercise and the measure of its fullness.

1. The gift of faith is not obligatory

The Scriptures nowhere enjoin that the soul must have faith to remove mountains, or heal diseases, or work miracles. Such faith is not essential in order to please God. It is indeed rather the reward of pleasing him than a requirement for pleasing him. He that cometh to God [for salvation] must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. He that believeth not [unto salvation] is condemned already.

These and other passages teach that saving faith as a voluntary act of the soul, or the fullness of faith as a gracious state of the heart, is obligatory.

The gift of faith is not optional, hence not obligatory. The holiest saint can not have it when he wills. It is neither commanded of us, nor at our command. The Holy Spirit divideth (apportioneth) it to every man (in Christ) severally as he wills, and that which is conferred upon one by divine sovereign endowment is not obligatory. The grace of faith is not an endowment, and is therefore a requirement. The possession of the grace of

faith is a duty; the gift of faith is not. No one feels condemnation if he have not faith for the healing of his body, or any other supernatural result; but he does experience condemnation if he does not believe the record which God hath given concerning his Son for the salvation of his soul.

2. The gift of faith is not a constant experience

It is not an abiding manifestation of the Holy Spirit; it is transient, variable, occasional. It is not given once for all, for ail things, and in all degrees.

Paul had it for the healing of the father of Publius and others on the Island of Melita, but not for the restoration of Trophimus, whom he left behind at Melitum. But now abideth faith [the grace of faith], hope, charity [love]; that is, these are the staple graces the permanent experiences of Christian character. Whosoever believeth (present tense, meaning, begins to believe and continues to believe) shall be saved; that is, saving faith as a habit of the soul and the fullness of faith as a gracious state of the heart are the constant and not the variable qualities of Christian life. He who finds himself without the faith which brings marvelous things to pass may continue to rejoice, if he still have the grace of faith. But he who finds the faith which brings salvation wanting may well repine; for

Its work will not be done,

Till we the crown obtain.

3. The gift of faith is not essential

To salvation or Christian character

It has no saving efficacy; it is no ground of hope. The Savior warns us of the worthlessness of a hope based on miracle-working faith: Many shall say unto me in that day, Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works? but then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. When the gift of faith has been bestowed, it does not necessarily bring new or deeper grace into the soul. One may be full of the grace of faith; have all the mind that was in Christ; be complete in all the will of God; be as saintly as Fletcher or Wesley, and not have the gift of faith. It does not follow because one is fully sanctified that he will have faith for healing, or other wonders. Yet not a few persons who know of the eminent piety of Dr. Steele or other holy people expect them while full of faith in all its gracious power to also possess the gift of faith which they may not at all have, because it has not been divinely conferred upon them. Not long since a noted man of God-anointed doubtless as a teacher of the deep things of spiritual life, and doing a wondrous work of evangelism, though a great cripple and sufferer as he was entering for the first time a church where he was to labor, a brother present having heard that he was a man of faith, said to another: Why dont he throw away those canes? That remark only evinced how little that person knew of the divine method respecting faith revealed in the Scriptures; that one may be full of faith, and yet not have the gift of faith, or might have the gift of faith for a work of evangelism and not for the healing of the body at all, as happened to be the case which he commented upon. Since therefore the gift of faith is not obligatory, constant, or essential, it is inferior to the grace of faith. But while it under ranks the ordinary graces of the Holy Spirit, it is not to be discarded or depreciated, but coveted; for the apostle says, Covet earnestly the best gifts, and then enjoins this order: Follow after charity

[love], and desire spiritual gifts; as though he would say: Attain saving and gracious faith, even unto perfection in love, then desire and expect if it be the will of God that he impart unto you the gift of faith with its accompanying endowments.

III. Its origin

Faith can not exist in any form without evidence. The ground of saving faith is the written Word of the Lord promising salvation. As saving faith and faith in its fullness are given sufficient testimony on which to rest, so also faith as an endowment is provided a sure foundation by the illumination of the soul through the Holy Spirit, assuring it by the Word that God will do a given thing to, for, or by it. There are several conditions under which the gift of faith is bestowed.

1. When Praying.

He who is a man of prayer, lives much in the closet, takes every thing to the Lord in prayer, most frequently receives the gift of faith at some times and in some degrees. Many of the marked cases of healing, providential deliverances, and unexpected conversions which have occurred, came as the culmination of much submissive supplication, the Holy Spirit at last saying: According to your faith be it unto you.

2. When doing the Lords work.

Those who are abundant in labors for God, who are faithfully executing divine missions, are not infrequently given a faith that is wonderful in its assurances and realizations. He who lives wholly consecrated to God will not be left long without works of faith. There will break in upon such a soul at times divine illuminations of Gods purpose to use it as will beget a faith that shall achieve more than the removal of mountains.

3. When in great emergencies.

There come soul crises, providential straits, imminent perils, urgent necessities, and glorious possibilities, which make us cry out: Who is sufficient for these things? It is at such junctures that the gift of faith is often imparted, and what hitherto seemed impossible, presumptuous, and irrational becomes credible and easy.

4. When living in the fullness of the Spirit.

The normal method of the operation of the Holy Spirit in the distribution of his gifts is to confer them upon those who are saved and baptized with the Holy Ghost.

Doubtless, as the Church advances in spirituality, and the number of the fully saved multiply, the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the gift of faith will become more frequent. This is not an uncommon endowment now, as some suppose. This gift has not been withdrawn from the Church. Every day is eventful in some as veritable works of faith as in the apostolic times, and these marvels of faith are to increase as the dispensation of the Spirit advances toward its high noon of millennial glory. Praise the Lord !

The gift of faith, like every other work of the Holy Spirit, has its own witness in the human consciousness. They who have never felt it can easily deny it, theorize against it, and decry it, and be very good people too. But it is a real experience; it is a white stone which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it. Let us live for God; pray without ceasing, keep our hearts fully saved, and then, if God may choose, he will work in us the endowment of faith; for The gift of faith is all divine.

Paper Tenth^(TOC)

The Prayer of Faith

*"The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up... The Effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much—James 5:15, 16
Praying in the Holy Ghost—Jude 20*

The prayer of faith is a specific kind of prayer distinctively presented in the Scriptures, and so denominated, because it is an inevitable manifestation of the gift of faith.

The apostle James, in giving inspired instruction as to the method of procedure for the miraculous healing of the sick, says, The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and then elucidates what constitutes such prayer by renaming it effectual, fervent prayer, and by presenting the praying of Elijah as a specimen of it. There has been in all ages of the Church, and there is now, a current belief, well supported by the warrant of Scripture and of Christian experience, in a kind of prayer styled prevailing prayer, which brings to pass results that prayer, in its ordinary offices, does not, and the vital factor in such prayer is the extraordinary faith which originates and accompanies it. The prayer of faith being a thing so peculiarly of its own kind in the realm of the spiritual experiences of faith, an extended treatment of it is essential to making intelligible the whole life of faith. Several discriminations respecting the prayer of faith are necessary.

I. The prayer of faith is a work of the Holy Ghost

It is one of the offices of the Holy Spirit to inspire in the hearts of believers prevailing prayer. Romans 8:26: We know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for [in] us with groanings which can not be uttered. It is by the agency of the Holy Spirit alone that any soul is spiritually empowered to offer effectual, fervent prayer. There is a supplication in the spirit and a praying in the Holy Ghost, as such. Both the Authorized Version and the New Revision fail to convey the true meaning of the original in James 5:16. The Authorized Version reads: The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. The word fervent is superfluous, and the word effectual makes the sentence mere tautology, saying no more than that an effectual prayer is effectual.

Neither word is found in, nor suggested by, the original. The New Revision gives it thus: The supplication of a righteous man availeth much, which is weaker still, and simply translates the word *deesis* supplication or prayer without any rendering whatever of the attached participle in the original. The original reads: The prayer (*deesis*) of a righteous man, being in energized (*energeo*), avails much; that is, prayer inwrought and empowered by the Holy Ghost in the soul of a righteous man avails much becomes prevailing, Such prayer as one has said, is an inner prayer framed within our prayer; a divine voice within our voice of supplication; God offering to himself the petitions we desire of him. The order in which the Holy Spirit works in the soul the prayer of faith is clearly revealed. First, he illuminates it, helping its spiritual inapprehension respecting what it ought to pray for beyond the sphere of

gracious blessings. The righteous man knows that he ought to pray for wisdom, strength, comfort, etc., for these and like blessings are promised to him; but whether he ought to pray for recovery from sickness, or for deliverance from temporal ills, or for some other supernatural results, he does not know. But when he should pray for these things the Holy Spirit begins to reveal them to him as allowable, and that it is the will of God to grant them, so that he is able to pray not as hitherto, If it be thy will, but in the full persuasion that it is Gods will; for the Spirit now maketh intercession for him according to the will of God.

Then, accompanying this illumination, there springs up in the soul an insatiable desire for these things which the soul would not hitherto ardently desire, lest it might not maintain its submissiveness to Gods will. But now the unequivocal assurance by the Holy Spirit that it is his will to do these things for it makes It break out in strong desire.

It groans, not in agony, not in doubt, not in uncertainty, but in heart longings.

This groaning which enters into the experience of prevailing prayer is a depth of desire which transcends utterance, and which the most impassioned vocal supplication could but faintly express. Simultaneously with the movement of the Holy Ghost, which brings this illumination and mighty desire, there comes an assurance of faith, so as that the soul knows it has the petitions it desires of him; it rests implicitly, awaiting the realization of the things prayed for. Those who have found wrought in them the prayer of faith by the Holy Ghost will easily recognize its genesis as here delineated. The heart actuated by prayer as the immediate gift of the Holy Ghost is in the most exalted and empowered state possible in the body. It burns in a threefold flame of divine illumination, holy desire, and fervent anticipation. When this spirit of prayer seizes the soul, whether in the hush of the night watches, in the solitudes of

the closet, or in the public walks of life, it irresistibly carries its suit.

Such a frame of prayer is not at our command. We can not lift ourselves into it by any dint of effort or protracted reflection. It comes upon devout souls by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit, in his office of inspiring prevailing prayer, is no doubt now, as ever, in continuous operation upon the hearts of believers. There are as mighty men of prayer among Gods people today as ever heretofore, those of whom Elijah was but the prototype, yet unsuspected and unrecognized as being the Lords special agents for the operation of his gracious and providential plans. But while there are many today who are occasionally or continuously baptized with this spirit of prayer, there is a promised prayer-Pentecost to visit the Church as prophetically discerned and proclaimed by Zechariah when there was disclosed to him, under the spirit of inspiration, the divine purpose, saying:

I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication.

When that outpouring of the Holy Spirit shall come upon Zion, as come it will, ushering in the grand Pentecostal era of supplication, then shall not a few only, but the whole Church pray in the Holy Ghost.

II. The prayer of faith invariably succeeds

Success in prayer is more than access in prayer. Access is conscious audience with God; success is getting what you ask for. Paul had access to God when he prayed in repeated supplication for the healing of his body in the removal of the thorn in the flesh; but his prayer did not have success.

The thorn was not removed; the cure was not granted; and simply because he did not offer the prayer of faith for it, and his lack of faith arose from his having no inwrought persuasion that it was the will of God that he should be healed. As access in prayer is a conscious, blessed experience, so also is success in prayer; it is a conscious, indubitable persuasion that the thing asked for is granted. When the saintly Fletcher of Madeley was lying in the last stages of consumption, and his condition was pronounced hopeless, John Wesley visited him, fell upon his knees at his bedside, and began to pray for his recovery. He had uttered only a few petitions when he sprang to his feet, and exclaimed: He shall not die, but shall live and declare the works of the Lord. Wesley knew he had succeeded. Fletcher recovered, and lived eight years to do the most effective work of his long and useful life. The prayer of faith does avail much. It brings to pass much that is not possible to prayer in its ordinary exercise. Prayer, in its usual offices, avails for all that is essential to spiritual life, growth in grace, and the ordinary blessing of Providence, but does not avail for special interventions in behalf of souls and the Church.

These results are only possible to inspirational prayer, or prayer in the Holy Ghost, which is distinctively the prayer of faith. The Tyndale prayer-test,

insisted on a few years since, was unscientific and unreasonable, inasmuch as it proposed that any company of righteous persons who might choose should go into the ward of a hospital and pray for the recovery of a hopelessly sick patient, and, if immediate recovery should ensue, it would demonstrate the efficacy of prayer for results beyond the ordinary course of nature. In that proposition, however, there was not a single condition upon which the Bible teaches that God will heal the sick in answer to prayer. To have been a proposition compassing the Scriptural doctrine of prayer for supernatural results, it should have allowed that the suppliants must be a company of devout persons, consciously persuaded that it was the will of God to heal that patient, and believing that he would do it in answer to their prayers; or, in other words, it ought to have been a challenge to some person or persons who were consciously endowed with the gift of prayer for the healing of that patient. Inasmuch as it is not promised in Gods Word that prayer, in its ordinary office, shall accomplish such supernatural results, but only prayer as a specific endowment of the Holy Ghost, the so called test was no test at all.

The prayer of faith always succeeds. A most touching spectacle of prayer occurred seven years since when, for almost three months, all Christendom was on its knees before God in supplication for the recovery of President Garfield. Yet he did not recover, and many good people began to say: What profit is it that we pray unto Him? And the skeptics said: Prayer is a failure, as we have always held. Was all that prayer useless? No; the spirit of it was eminently proper and Scriptural. The people did as they should have done; they, with prayer and thanksgiving, let their requests be made known unto God. They did say in their closets, at their family altars, and from their sanctuaries: If it be thy will, let our Chief Magistrate live. All the prayer offered in that spirit was useful, but it was not successful; it did not avail for the Presidents recovery. And why? Because in all the prayers prayed no

petitioner offered the prayer of faith. No one had the persuasion it would be done; no one apprehended that it was the will of God that it should be done.

Every one said: If it be thy will. But faith never can build on a contingency, or an if; its ground is always a divine assurance, given either by the Word or the Holy Spirit of God. Had there come into the heart of the most ignorant, obscure freedman, who was a child of God, the assurance that it was the will of God to restore President Garfield, if he would believe, that humble soul might have, and doubtless would have, prayed the prayer of faith, and according to his supplication it would have been done unto him.

For the prayer of faith never fails; it prospers in the thing whereunto it is sent.

Its answer is specific in kind in respect to the asking, while in degree most frequently it is above that which we think or ask. Elijah asked for rain; it came not in showers, however, but in torrents. Hannah asked for a son; he was given, but was a mighty prophet as well. Hezekiah plead for life; it was given, not in a temporary respite from death, but in fifteen years of regal life. The simplicity of the prayer of faith, in its inception compared with its effectiveness, is marvelous. Said a man to one noted for the results of his praying: I suppose you struggle a great deal in prayer. O no, he replied, I scarcely know when I pray. When I desire any thing of the Lord I just look up to him in my soul and say, Thou wilt do it, and feel that it will be done.

When the soul is given the spirit of prevailing prayer there is fulfilled the promise (Isaiah 65:24), And it shall come to pass [in the dispensation of the Holy Ghost] that before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear; that is, the Holy Spirit shall inbreathe a spirit of prayer so quickly as that the soul shall receive the thing desired before the petition for it can be framed into words, and that while it is putting it in words God

will be doing for it the thing desired.

It is no uncommon experience for a devout heart just to think of something it would have of the Lord, and while forming the purpose to ask it of the Lord, to be made conscious that it is granted, and the succeeding prayer for it to become rather praise that it shall be done. Praise the Lord, O my soul!

The phenomenal manifestations of impassioned utterance, vehement gesticulation, or ecstatic emotions may attend or not the prayer of faith, but are no essential part of its power. When Elijah opened the windows of heaven there was no demonstration, only a prostrate, voiceless form, and but for the apostle James allusion to the wonderful event we should not have known that he prayed at all. The prayer of faith enters the heart by the inspiration of the Almighty, and never fails to rise as high as its source in almighty results. The prayer of faith being itself supernatural, what wonder is it that it accomplishes supernatural results.

III. The prayer of faith is possible only on certain conditions of heart

1. He who offers it must be righteous

The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. God will not trust the gift of prevailing prayer with those who are discreditable in character or superficial in piety. The great men of prayer, from Abraham to William Taylor, have been godly, righteous men.

Indeed, a consciousness of being right with God is an indispensable qualification for successful prayer at all. Hence the apostle says: Whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight.

If religious character is essential on the ordinary plane of prayer, how much more vital in the higher altitudes of supplication? It is only holy men whom God calls up into the mount alone with himself. Peter, James, and John were taken up by the Master to the heights of Tabor to learn the lesson of prevailing prayer, because spiritually eligible for it. A low state of Christian experience and a life of imperfect devotion to God disqualify us completely for becoming recipients of the gift of prayer. Not all who have been noted for piety have been called to be pre-eminent in prayer, but none have been noted for prayer who had not been pre-eminent for piety.

2. He who offers the prayer of faith

must have faith in prayer

It is possible for one to be righteous and yet lack a profound faith in prayer itself. There are good men who have no adequate apprehension of the vital relation prayer has to Gods plans and purposes; who are not impressed with its immense worth; who think of it as a mere exercise, useful to the individual, rather than being a principle of the divine government; a law by which God has chosen to effect certain results. Hence they are skeptical of prayer as a real power, and appreciate it only as a gracious movement of the heart toward God. Now, God never bestows, even upon a righteous man, the power of prevailing prayer, who, for any cause, is incredulous respecting the largest possibilities of prayer as being at present available. Faith in prayer is indispensable to praying in faith. The little child that is able to comprehend the simple precepts and promises of Gods Word in respect to prayer may have a faith in prayer which will render it eligible to offer, as many a child has done, the prayer of faith. Indeed, these things are hidden from the wise and prudent, and are revealed unto babes. So the humble go on believing in prayer, and praying, believing, and see wonderful things, while the opinionated, skeptical, wise, good people go on praying, knowing none of these things in respect to prayer.

3.He who offers the prayer of faith must have the spirit of prayer

The habit of prayer, says Mr. Spurgeon truly, is good, but the spirit of prayer is better. This comprises an inclination to pray; a fondness for prayer; a continuous drawing out of the soul in prayer; so that, as one has said, I am not fifteen minutes without supplication rising in my soul to God. It is taking

every thing to God in prayer, the soul spontaneously looking to God in care, duty, grief, service. One who has come into the spirit of holy communion with God will be fitted for the descent of the power of prevailing prayer upon him when God may choose to confer it upon him, as he doubtless will, at some times and in some measure. We do not believe any one can long live in the practice and spirit of prayer without sooner or later having imparted to his soul the ability to offer prevailing prayer for results which are beyond the reach of prayer as a gracious exercise. Here is the profession of faith which all devout hearts make that have been baptized with the spirit of prayer.

This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us; and if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask we know we have the petitions that we desired of him.

Having such a spirit of prayer, the soul awaits in exultant expectation for God to do for it exceeding abundantly above all it now thinks or asks. That is, that God will both enlarge its asking and its receiving as well. This spirit of prayer is the only soil in which God will plant the gift of faith whence springs the prayer of faith.

Dear reader, may you live in the spirit of grace and supplication, and so be fitted to receive of the Lord the gift of prevailing prayer!